



PRINCIPAL AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

Richardson Hall, Room 351
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October 8, 2020

Dear Members of the Board,

I have received and carefully reviewed the Final Report of the Building Name Consultation Advisory Committee, as well as Dean Mark Walters's summary report on the consultation process regarding the name of Sir John A. Macdonald Hall (both attached). I am grateful to the members of the Advisory Committee for their thoughtful and assiduous work, to Dean Walters for his circumspect assessment of the arguments on all sides of this complex issue, and to everyone who contributed their thoughts and opinions during this process.

I recognize and respect the diversity of those opinions, as well as the honest emotions from which they are inseparable. The University has been asked to decide whether or not it should retain the name of Sir John A. Macdonald Hall, and it is clear that the question has exposed a very significant division in our community. While it is likely that division will in some form persist even after the question has been answered by the Board, my hope is that all participants in the consultation process will at least feel they have had a chance to express their views.

I accept Dean Walters's recommendation that the conclusion reached by the Advisory Committee should be adopted, and that it is in the best interests of the University and the Faculty of Law for the name "Sir John A. Macdonald" to be removed from the law school building. Dean Walters has laid out and assessed with great thoroughness the arguments for and against this course of action, so I shall not rehearse them here. I am particularly persuaded, however, by the way in which he frames our immediate challenge: "whether, despite all of the remarkable things Macdonald did for this country, maintaining his name on the law building is consistent with the identity, character, and aspirations—in short the values—of the community of students, faculty, staff, and alumni that has made and continues to make this building its home. The

name on the building helps to define who we are and who we want to be. It is a question about *us*, not *him*."

If one of our aspirations as a university is to answer, in all ways that are appropriate and possible for us, the Calls to Action of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, it is obvious that where the name upon a building effectively denies Indigenous students the right—denied to no others—to study without shadow or hindrance, that name should be removed. Greater than our obligation to respect and understand the past is our obligation to seek truth, equity and justice in the present and future, and with a particular regard for those in our society who have been, or continue to be, denied those rights.

I strongly endorse Dean Walters's recommendation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Deane', written in a cursive style.

Patrick Deane
Principal and Vice-Chancellor