



ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA CHIEFS
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ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA CHIEFS RESPONDS TO FINDINGS OF SPECIAL REPORT ON ABORIGINAL CORRECTIONS

Winnipeg, MB – March 8, 2013 Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Grand Chief Derek Nepinak continues to be disappointed at the government's lack of leadership in addressing the critical concerns facing First Nations. The Special Report on Aboriginal Corrections by Correctional Investigator of Canada, Mr. Howard Sapers released Wednesday March 7, 2013 is further evidence of Canada's failure to properly address the injustices imposed on this country's first peoples.

"The Special Report speaks to the overrepresentation of First Nation people in federal correction institutions and the lack of progress to improve the disparity in correctional outcomes, continues to cloud Canada's domestic human rights record," said AMC Grand Chief Derek Nepinak. "Rather than governments addressing the root causes of the issues impacting First Nations people in this country, this government blames the victims and as a result the penitentiary system has become a warehouse for our citizens in this country," Grand Chief Nepinak added.

There are a number of factors that interact to produce the overrepresentation of First Nations people as offenders with high re-involvement rates. These same factors interact to make First Nation people more susceptible to victimization:

- It is well documented that First Nations people are differentially impacted by the operation of the justice system as it now exists, that the effects are adverse and that systemic discrimination is prevalent;
- There has been an historical repression of First Nation custom and tradition, social structures and support systems, and
- Official justice system interventions have been culturally alien or irrelevant and poorly understood by our First Nation citizens.

"What's more concerning, is rather than implementing valid recommendations to curb the trend of First Nations people from over populating Canada's prisons, particularly from the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry and the Supreme Court Gladue decision, the government adds to the growing problem by not addressing the root causes of incarceration," added Grand Chief Nepinak. "The special report highlights the fact that this government is once again failing the First Nations people of Canada," concluded Grand Chief Nepinak.

AMC strongly urges the Government of Canada to properly invest in education and social programs to lift First Nations people out of poverty rather than incarcerating them at alarming rates.

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