



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MEDIA RELEASE: Niagara Region Anti-Racism Association Calls For Watson Statue to be Removed Permanently as Symbol of White Supremacy and Militarism**

ST. CATHARINES, ON – on Monday, July 27, 2020 the Niagara Region Anti-Racism Association made the following written submission to the St. Catharines City Council urging it to remove the Private Alexander Watson statue permanently, not just relocate it, as it is ultimately a symbol of white and Anglophone supremacy and militarism and therefore should not stand anywhere:

Dear Mayor and Councillors.

The statue of Private Alexander Watson is ultimately a symbol of identification with white and Anglophone supremacy and militarism and therefore has no place anywhere other than the dust bin of history. It should not be relocated but should be disposed of and destroyed. Any heritage value of the statue is tainted by the living heritage of racism, and to overlook this is to overlook the systemic inequity that the North-West Rebellion's defeat brought forward, which Private Watson died contributing to.

The defeat of the Metis and First Nations in the North-West Rebellion reverberated across Canada and was a high water mark in establishing not only white and Anglophone supremacy but specifically the systematic oppression of Canada's Indigenous peoples that served as the model for Apartheid in South Africa and elsewhere, such as the Pass System. It was not just an obscure conflict in a land far away. Chief Poundmaker said that after the Rebellion "[being] Indian was like being in a cage."

Any claim that the statue has long been part of our heritage or has come to symbolize war veterans in general should recognize that this heritage has been one of on-going genocide of the Indigenous, and a symbol of militarism because it celebrates and promotes war in general under the cover of sympathy for veterans who needlessly suffered in senseless slaughters for empire.

Signed,

Saleh Waziruddin

Erika Smith

Marcel Stewart

for the Niagara Region Anti-Racism Association