



David 
Merner

Creating a Green Party
Indigenous Advisors
Circle



A sustainable future goes hand in hand with a just future. Canada prides itself on being a just nation, that honours the rule of law and opportunity for all. Yet, Canada is failing to meet its own legal responsibilities to Indigenous Peoples. In reality, most Indigenous Peoples face racism and stark systemic barriers daily. It lives within our institutions, our police forces and our population. But it is within our power to change this.

It is the responsibility of our Federal Government to rebuild its relationship with Indigenous peoples, signaling to businesses, governments and Canadians alike that we will no longer tolerate racism in this country, in any form.

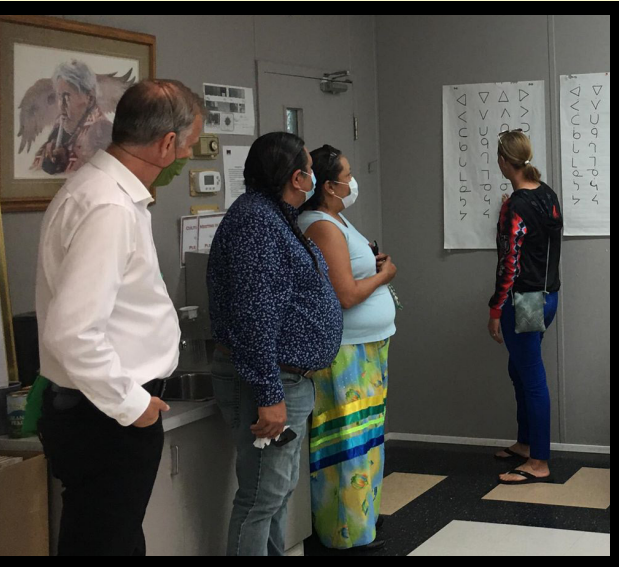
Canada is greatly impoverished by its continued oppression and subjugation of Indigenous Peoples. A new relationship will invigorate us all.



Stolen Lives

Every day, Indigenous children are taken away from their parents in Canada. Most Indigenous children taken in this way are being raised outside their families and cultural traditions. The laws put in place to protect these family bonds are systematically ignored. Similarly, systemic racism is deeply entrenched in our justice system, with Indigenous peoples vastly over-represented in our prisons and vastly under-represented in our legal professions.

Stolen Lands



Even the most coercive treaties signed between colonial governments and First Nations are not being respected in Canada, including innumerable instances of lands simply being stolen from Indigenous people after those lands were recognized by treaty as Indigenous lands. These thefts have been ignored by countless federal, provincial, and municipal governments. And current treaty processes across Canada remain gridlocked as Canadian governments insist on “certainty” and the termination of Indigenous rights, while those same governments also refuse to provide funding certainty to Indigenous governments. In essence, access to lands is fundamental and essential to survival for any nation.

Stolen Liberty

The Indian Act is deeply racist colonial legislation originally drafted with the intent to wipe out First Nations culturally and politically. It subjugates First Nations to the Crown and pits them against themselves, even within communities. Better options have been extensively examined through work done by the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Green Party has committed to working with Indigenous Peoples on their efforts towards self-determination.

Ending Systemic Racism in Canada

The Green Party of Canada must commit to holding the space for difficult discussions about the historical and ongoing wrongs in Canada, as well as solutions for moving forward. This includes addressing systemic racism in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police - long evident to Indigenous people in Canada and recently recognized by the Commissioner of the RCMP.

Reconciliation Now

The Green Party of Canada must lead by example where it can to build a new, just and equitable future for Canada. That work starts with

practical steps to end systemic racism at every level, from our homes and communities, to provincial and federal governments, to the United Nations. That action must start with respect, and the recognition of Indigenous peoples' voices and choices for the future. If I am elected as the new leader of the Green Party of Canada, I promise to hold space for Indigenous voices through a permanent Indigenous Advisors Circle.



First Nations, Inuit and Métis Advisors Circle

In recognition of the fact that Indigenous voices have the moral authority and generations of knowledge to lead on climate action, the Circle will provide guidance to the Green Party Leader. This will help to build a comprehensive Indigenous platform for the next federal election. That platform will truly reflect Indigenous needs and perspectives. I will also work with Green Party members to implement the policy and other recommendations of this Circle within the Green Party of Canada. It is an honour to be able to name the first members of my Indigenous Advisors Circle today. They have agreed to reach out to Indigenous people across the country, asking them to join the Circle.

Core Members



Desmond Bull

Desmond G. Bull is an elected councillor for the Louis Bull Tribe of the Maskwacis Nation in Treaty 6 territory of Alberta. As an environmental steward, Desmond led the installation of eight PV (Solar) systems on Louis Bull Band buildings. These were installed by trained band members, 100% owned by the Tribe, and fully funded through grants/subsidies, infrastructure development, sponsorship and fundraising. Desmond envisions creating a MWh electrical system to provide all electricity for his Tribe and create energy partnerships with surrounding communities.

"We are all in this together."



Lorraine Rekmans

Lorraine was the Indigenous Affairs Critic for the Green Party of Canada from 2008 to 2020 and has run as a candidate for the Green Party five times. She is a small business owner in Kemptville, Ontario and is of Algonquin and French descent. She is Turtle Clan and a member of Serpent River First Nation. She also serves as Treasurer and member of the Board of Directors of the Forest Stewardship Council of Canada.

"I have always believed that the Green Party of Canada was the only hope for true reconciliation, partnership and collaboration because the Party is built on principles which closely align with my traditional teachings. I am committed to working with this Advisory Circle to support the party and the Leader in all work towards a just and healthy future for us all. Our teachings tell us we all have a responsibility to serve."

Core Members



Bruce Weaver

Bruce is a Kanienkehaka man of the Turtle Clan, living in Guelph, where he is active in his community, leading sharing circles, acting as a Firekeeper and promoting TRC work by facilitating Kairos Blanket Exercises in schools and faith groups.

"I believe that an advisory circle will be both an acknowledgement of the GPC's respect for our traditional ways and a respectful manner of hearing diverse Indigenous voices."



Brandi Farr

Brandi is an Anishnaabekwe and youth from Saugeen First Nation in Ontario. She is an experienced Climate Leader in Al Gore's organization, the Climate Reality Project, and sits on the board of the Bagida'waad Alliance, which is an Indigenous-led and -managed climate action group in Saugeen Ojibway Nation territory.

"An Indigenous Advisory Circle will allow for a diversity of Indigenous voices and ensure that there are designated seats at the table for us. This will allow more Indigenous people to provide input to the political process in Canada."

Meet David



As a husband, father to four daughters, and a long-term community volunteer, David understands the importance of commitment, hard work, and fun.

As a graduate of Harvard, U of A, Oxford, and U of T, he understands the importance of clear thought and getting the facts.

As legal counsel at the Department of Justice and the Privy Council Office in Ottawa, and as a key architect of the transformation of British Columbia's justice system into one of the most innovative in the world, David knows the innermost workings of government, and how to fix them.

Thanks to his experience as an organizer and volunteer at The Land Conservancy of B.C., the Habitat Acquisition Trust, and Mediate BC, and as an observer of elections in Haiti and Ukraine, David understands the power and importance of grassroots organizations and democracy.

He also understands the current government and why it puts winning power ahead of the welfare of people and the environment. David was a Liberal volunteer, organizer, and candidate, but left the party forever the day Justin Trudeau announced the purchase of the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

David believes that there IS a place in Canadian politics for ethics, collaboration and a sustainable environment. But the Trudeau government has shown that it must be forced to finally back its empty promises with real action. From issues like proportional representation, to improving the lives of Indigenous peoples, to making Canada's economy a thriving green example for the world, David is ready to go on Day One.

David Merner

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