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June 25, 2021

To: All Building Trades

Re: Marking Canada Day

Dear Colleagues,

As we approach celebrating 154 years since the establishment of the Canadian federation, we must not lose sight of our country's difficult colonial heritage to better-understand today's challenges and opportunities facing Canadians. Recent events such as the horrific uncovering of Indigenous mass graves at Residential schools and the toppling of Victorian-era statues have exposed fault-lines between colonial legacies from the past and widely-shared, present-day norms about basic decency which shape how we reflect on those past events.

Even the harshest denunciation of past atrocities is rendered moot if it is not followed-up by meaningful actions *today* that address systemic inequalities. In that sense, unions have a critical role to play in tackling income inequality in particular, by advancing the right to collective bargaining which benefits *all* workers, regardless of race, class, gender, or any other social marker. Asserting the collective power of workers has been a driving force that has given rise to middle-class prosperity which we must continue to expand to all segments of our population.

Canada Day gives us an opportunity to reflect on the past, but ultimately to come together and build a better and more inclusive country which in my view, is the ultimate goal of Reconciliation.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Dillon,
Business Manager and Secretary Treasurer