

Outrage over early parole

Sahtu MLA upset at justice system that released notorious residential school supervisor after serving a fraction of his sentence, again

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NWEL file photo

Grollier Hall was the residence for out-of-town students attending the Catholic residential school in Inuvik from 1959 to 1997. Four Grollier Hall dorm supervisors were eventually convicted of sex crimes committed against students living here in the 1960s and 1970s. They are Jerzy George Maczynski, Jean Comeau, Martin Houston and Paul Leroux.

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Notorious Grollier Hall sex offender gets full parole

Man abused 20 boys while working at residential schools in Inuvik and Saskatchewan

by Daniel Campbell
Northern News Services
Saskatchewan

A man who abused young boys in residential schools in Inuvik and Saskatchewan is out of prison after serving just 10 months of a three-year sentence.

Paul Mary Leroux was sentenced for eight counts of indecent assault and two counts of gross indecency on Dec. 12, 2013. He committed the crimes against eight young boys, ranging in age from 11 to 15 years old, during his time as staff at the Beauval Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan, between 1959 and 1967.

Leroux is known to many residential school survivors in the Northwest Territories. In 1998, he was convicted of three counts of indecent assault, attempted buggery (sodomy), attempted indecent assault and nine counts of gross indecency. He committed those crimes at Grollier Hall, Inuvik's notorious Catholic student residence, between 1967 and 1979, while working as a supervisor there. His victims were teens, aged 13 to 19.

After serving only three years of a 10-year sentence in a federal penitentiary for his offences in Inuvik, Leroux was released on full parole before facing the Saskatchewan charges. Now 74, Leroux is out again.

Patrick Storey, spokesperson for the Parole Board of Canada, confirmed Leroux was granted full parole on Dec. 30. He was previously granted day parole on Sept. 25, fewer than 10 months into his three-year prison sentence. Storey was unable to disclose where Leroux is currently serving his parole.

'We're still dealing with it'

Sahtu MLA Norman Yakeleya, who is also the former executive director of the Grollier Hall Healing Circle, says Leroux's early release



Notorious sex predator Paul Leroux has been released from prison, after serving 10 months of a three-year sentence for crimes committed against eight young boys in Saskatchewan in the 1950s and 1960s. Here, Leroux is pictured on June 16, 1997, while on trial in Inuvik for crimes committed between 1967 and 1979 against students living in Grollier Hall. In 1998, Leroux was convicted of those crimes, but only served three years in a federal penitentiary before being granted full parole.

raises questions about the justice system.

"Coming out of jail after one year serving in Saskatchewan, you scratch your head and wonder if the court system really knows his behaviour, his impact on a child's life," Yakeleya said.

Leroux's victims are now adults and carry the weight of the crimes committed against them to this day, he added. "A lot of those guys today are men who have families and children. A lot of crap happened because of one man. It affected the whole community and region,

a lot of young boys and families." At his sentencing in Battleford, Sask., in 2013, Justice Murray Acton stated Leroux could have been sentenced to 17 years in prison if the courts combined all his offences. However, Acton said such a sentence would be "crushing" to the accused and "obviously, long and harsh," and so handed down the lighter sentence, citing Leroux's advanced age and the fact that he hadn't re-offended in 40 years as mitigating factors.

When Leroux was arrested in Vancouver in June 1997 and brought to Inuvik for trial, Vancouver police made "one of the largest seizures

of (child pornography) ever made," then-Vancouver Const. Anne Drennan told *News/North* at that time. Yakeleya said Leroux's influence in the Sahtu, Mackenzie Delta and Beaufort Delta is "unbelievable" and still being felt today. As a survivor of Grollier Hall himself, Yakeleya said Leroux's release is very personal for him.

"There was a price we paid as former students by either being sent there or taken as young students ... people in the community should remember that a price was paid by the former students."

Yakeleya said many survivors aren't getting the proper help they need in the NWT.

He called for a treatment centre specifically for residential school survivors in the NWT.

"Today we're still dealing with it. It's not going away as the government thought it would. It's because of one man."

Yakeleya said he'll continue to advocate for residential school survivors in the North, as well as continue to educate the public on the issue.

"Hopefully, there will be a time in the NWT where the residential school is something of the past, so that our children no longer need to carry their parents' hurt and pain," Yakeleya said.

The parole board agreed to release Leroux to full parole because they believed he did not pose an "undue risk" to the community, Storey said.

The conditions of Leroux's parole include not going near children under the age of 18 unless accompanied by a responsible adult who knows his criminal history, not purchasing, acquiring or possessing pornography or sexually explicit material in any form and not going near places where children are likely to be, including schools, parks and pools.