

National Affairs by Claire Hoy ? False hope, activist theory will dominate

And so it begins.

The long-promised inquiry into Canada's missing and murdered aboriginal women promises to achieve ?justice and healing,? but isn't likely to do much more than reiterate the same findings of countless other commissions and inquiries, except this one is certain to do more strident finger-pointing at the police and society in general.

Why? All you have to do is look at the five commissioners chosen by the Liberals to conduct this inquiry and you'll see that every one of them is not simply an authority in aboriginal matters but an established activist with a similar point of view.

Not much room here for conflicting viewpoints. It's more a question of going in with a certain bias and spending \$53.86 million (which is sure to increase even more) to turn these biases into ?truth.?

There can be no doubt that aboriginal women are murdered in Canada at an alarming rate, about six times as often as non-aboriginal women.

But there can also be no doubt that the commissioners and the Liberal government believe that, as Status of Women's Patty Hajdu put it, the inquiry will examine ?how racism and sexism are embedded in the very institutions that are supposed to protect women and girls.?

?Changing these attitudes and practices will require a steady and honest gaze,? she said.

Well, if the Liberals really wanted a ?steady and honest gaze? at the problem, they wouldn't continue to perpetuate the myth that aboriginal female murder victims are generally ignored by police ? fact is, the solve rate for aboriginal and non-aboriginal murders are virtually the same.

Nor would they ignore the other reality, that the bulk of these murders are committed by aboriginal men. When the RCMP pointed this out a while back, the Liberals went ballistic, even though it's true. And they would also acknowledge that, as bad as the situation is for aboriginal women, aboriginal men and boys go missing and are murdered about three times more than their females.

And yet, in the great partisan hoopla surrounding the launch of the inquiry last week, there was not a single mention of the plight of aboriginal men. Nada.

Nor, of course, would anybody discuss the giant elephant in the room ? and none of the political parties ever will ? and that is the absolutely guaranteed problems of continuing to pour billions of dollars into a system which is, with some exceptions, virtually designed to fail.

It is fine to dream about a mythical time before white settlers came when aboriginals all lived in peace and harmony with each other ? a time that never happened ? and blame the general society for the current third world conditions of many of our aboriginal Canadians.

But as long as we continue to have people living in remote areas, with few resources and little hope of improvement, the situation isn't likely to improve.

But hey, nobody wants to talk about that.

Instead, they want to blame the police for widespread indifference to aboriginal victims, an accusation that is easily refuted by the facts, but which activists ? including elected politicians ? continue to mouth to anyone who will listen. And, since that's an established part of the aboriginal narrative, there's no problem getting the mainstream media to listen and repeat.

There is no doubt that Canada has not always done well for its aboriginal population. And there are examples of racism ? as there are everywhere else.

But when you have built an entire lifestyle which offers little hope for its young people, both male and female, to improve their lot, we should not be shocked that so many turn to alcohol, drugs and unsavory ? and highly dangerous ? forms of earning a living.

It seems to me that the wanton waste of so much potential is one of the great failings of our otherwise pretty darn good country. Yet, it continues.

And it will continue long after the well-paid commissioners, the teams of lawyers and the legions of activists have had their say in this current inquiry, joining a multitude of reports which pretty much end up repeating each other, sparking a short-lived nationwide exercise in hand-wringing and eyebrow-furrowing, before the report is shelved and life continues pretty much as it has since Confederation.

That's the real pity here. The curse of false hope and activist theory designed as truth.

