

The Canada Comedy Hour Presents:

Meet the Sinclairs! or,

Hide the bodies, you schmucks!

Announcer: Hi everyone and welcome to the Canada Comedy Hour! I'm your very nice host, Wink Harper!

Canned music and applause.

Wink: Tonight's show is brought to you by our sponsors, the friendly folks at Cameco Limited: our very own Canadian Uranium company. As they say at Cameco, we dig, and you pay. *(laughter)* Tonight on the show, it's Meet the Sinclairs!

Canned Applause

Wink: We're so pleased to have with us tonight the man who chaired Canada's very own Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the TRC: Murray Sinclair! *(scattered applause)* And with him is appearing another Sinclair, but he's no relation to Murray, not by blood at least: Reverend Jim Sinclair of the United Church of Canada! *(even less applause)*

Wink: For those of you who don't know, Murray Sinclair is the former judge who helped all us nice Canadians feel good about that not so nice matter of dead little Indian children. And Jim Sinclair is a top honcho in one of the churches that put all those kids in the ground! *(boos, catcalls)* But come on now, Canada! It's time to forgive and forget all that nasty stuff, right? After all, the whole thing is really quite funny! That's why we're here tonight: to make everything positive! *(applause)* So without further ado, let's bring on Murray and Jim Sinclair, who are appearing tonight with the authorization of their lawyers.

Applause

Wink: Welcome to the show, gentlemen. *(pause, awkward noises)* Uh, Murray, are you able to fit into that chair okay?

Murray: *(grunting)* Yeah, it should work ... ow, shit!

Wink: Time to go easy on all the bannock and donuts, eh Murray?

Laughter

Wink: And Jim Sinclair, please take a seat. Welcome to our show!

Jim: *(smoothly)* Thank you, Wink. And just for the record, let me say in all humility that I'm happy to be here tonight to dispel the awfully hurtful things being said about our family in Christ, for we are not to walk humbly in the service of ...

Wink: *(interrupting)* Hey, Rev, hold off on the sermon, will you? I'll get to you.

Laughter

Wink: So, Murray.

Murray: *(defensively)* What?

Wink: What's the deal with all those Indian kids?

Murray: Who?

Wink: Uh, well, you know ...

Murray: Oh! You mean the residential school brats?

Wink: That's right. Them.

Murray: Right. I've got a statement from my lawyers about all that stuff. *(pause, sound of rustling papers)* Aw shit, now where the hell is it?

Wink: Take your time, Murray.

Laughter

Murray: Okay, I've got it! *(pause, clears his throat)* "According to our painstaking research and without acknowledging any prior knowledge of or complicity in the alleged incidents, our Truth and Reconciliation Commission has concluded that *(pause)* ... some children died in the Indian residential school system."

Wink: Some?

Murray: That's right.

Wink: So how many is some?

Murray: Well, I haven't checked with our legal department about the specifics.

Wink: So what, did your solicitors dig the graves? *(pause)* Don't answer that, Murray. I wouldn't put anything past a lawyer.

Laughter

Murray: *(chortling)* You should try living with one.

Greater laughter

Wink: Hey, that's a good one, Murray! You're a real funny guy! *(laughter)* So anyway, about those dead residential school children ...

Murray: *(interrupting)* There were only two of them.

Wink: What?

Murray: Only two kids died in those places.

Wink: Two dead children. *(pause)* So that must mean there were only four kids in all one hundred and thirty Indian residential schools.

Murray: What do you mean?

Wink: Well, you said yourself on the TRC record that half the children died in those places. That means there were only four kids in all the schools. I guess they moved around a lot.

Laughter

Murray: Look, I'm just quoting the lawyers. Or somebody.

Wink: You also said on record that over 150,000 kids were in the residential schools. Half of that makes, let me see ...

Murray: *(interrupting anxiously)* Stop it right now! I want my lawyer!

Wink: Gee, I'm sorry, Murray. I didn't mean to upset you.

Murray: *(petulantly)* Well you did! You're not being very sensitive!

Wink: Okay, Murray, then let's change gears. Tell our listeners how much your TRC hit Canadian taxpayers?

Laughter

Murray: *(sheepishly)* Well, I guess it's, like, somewhere around \$68 million.

Wink: Wow. That's quite a bite!

Murray: *(defensively)* Look, we had a lot of legitimate expenses on the TRC!

Wink: Like what, you chubby-faced enemy of the people?

Laughter

Murray: Well, our offices, for one thing. And all those pens and paperclips. You wouldn't believe all the paperwork we had to do!

Wink: *(skeptically)* Uh huh.

Murray: Then there were all the luncheon meetings ...

Wink: *(interrupting)* Yeah, we heard about those. Mighty fancy spreads you laid out for yourselves, Murray. Fresh trout, filet mignon, baked Alaska, and all the booze you could guzzle down!

Murray: Look, don't blame me for any of that! That's just your standard protocol for Canadian government commissions.

Wink: I don't doubt that, Murray. Not for one minute. *(laughter)* I see you've also got quite the sweet tooth.

Murray: What do you mean?

Wink: A Ms. Elsie Two Feathers from Dauphin, Manitoba says she saw you scarf down more than a dozen pastries during just one session of your TRC forum. *(Laughter)* Apparently Elsie and her friends even gave you an Ojibway Indian name after that.

Murray: *(happily)* Really? What is it?

Wink: It translates as "Eats Many Muffins".

Laughter

Murray: (*indignantly*) Look, Wink, just for the record, I'm on a weight loss program.

Wink: You could have fooled me. (*laughter*) Anyway, Murray, I can see your name sake here is sweating buckets to say something. (*pause*) So, Jim Sinclair, what is it?

Jim: I have to interject, Wink, to say that you're giving the wrong impression about what went on in the Indian residential schools.

Wink: Really?

Jim: Yes. Nobody ever died in there.

Wink: But Murray says they did.

Jim: I don't care what he says. I know for a fact that nobody ever died in an Indian school. At least, not the ones run by our United Church.

Wink: Nobody?

Jim: Nobody.

Wink: And how do you respond to that one, Murray?

Murray: Well, I don't know. I'd have to ask ...

Wink: The guys in suits. Got it.

Jim: (*exasperated*) Look, Wink, what I meant to say was, well, it just wasn't possible for any children to die under our care, by natural or foul means.

Wink: And why do you figure that?

Jim: Because we're the body of Christ, Wink! We walk humbly with the Lord and we do justice and we are merciful towards all; for did the Lord not say, suffer the little children ...

Wink: *(interrupting)* Uh, Jim?

Jim: What?

Wink: You may want to look at this.

Jim: Oh. *(pause)* Oh my. *(pause)* Well, that has to be a fake.

Murray: *(anxiously)* What is that, anyway?

Wink: Well, Murray, it's an official death record from December 1969, from a west coast United Church Indian school. It shows that half the children had died there that year. They list hundreds of dead children just in that one school. It says a lot of them were buried in the hills behind the place.

Murray: *(nervously)* Alright, okay, so there were a lot more than two kids. But I didn't kill them!

Laughter

Wink: The funny thing is, Murray, is that this death record never ended up as evidence in any of your TRC records. Care to explain why?

Murray: *(defensively)* Why are you picking on me? I didn't write the policy!

Wink: What policy is that, Murray?

Murray: Nothing that mentioned dead residential school children could appear on our TRC record or be taken down as evidence. The churches insisted.

Wink: Wow. The serial killer writes the official record. That's quite an investigation, Muffin Man. *(Laughter)* So, on that note, gentlemen, let's talk about the "G" word.

Murray: The what?

Wink: Genocide, Murray.

Murray: Oh, we never use that term, Wink. We prefer "cultural abuse".

Wink: Say, what?

Murray: Cultural abuse. It sounds nicer. Not so hard on the ears.

Wink: Or on the bank accounts, eh Murray? *(laughter)* Okay then, we'll play in your ballpark. What is this "cultural abuse" thing, anyway?

Murray: It's when we didn't appreciate their language.

Pause

Wink: Yeah? And?

Murray: And nothing. We were just, you know, kind of insensitive to the Indians.

Wink: Right. And by "we", you mean who exactly?

Murray: Well, the white people, of course.

Wink: But you're an aboriginal yourself, aren't you, Murray?

Pause

Murray: Oh. Right. Sorry, I forgot. *(laughter)* Well, okay, I meant, they were insensitive, uh, to us. The Indians.

Wink: Is that how all those kids died, Murray? From 'cultural insensitivity'?

Pause

Murray: I'll have to get back to you on that.

Wink: I'm not holding my breath. *(Laughter)* Oh, what is it, Jim? You look like you just swallowed a jalapeno.

Jim: I told you already! No children could possibly have died under our care!

Wink: You guys really have got to get your stories straight. *(Laughter)* Murray, I'll tell you, I'm confused. I thought you and the churches were partners on the TRC.

Murray: We were.

Wink: Well, Jesus Christ on a gurney, guys! I've had better partnerships with my ex-wives! *(Laughter)* Are you much of a church goer yourself, Murray?

Murray: *(hesitantly)* Well, sometimes. But just at Christmas.

Wink: I hear your wife's a loyal United Church member. She's a church officer, as a matter of fact.

Murray: *(defensively)* So?

Wink: So, on the TRC that you chaired for seven years, Murray, did you ever actually ask the churches or your wife or Jim here what they did with all those dead children?

Pause

Murray: Well, no.

Wink: Now that's great police work, Numb Nuts! Leave out the prime suspects to the crime!

Laughter

Jim: I deeply resent that, Wink! There was no crime, just a few unfortunate incidents!

Wink: Really, Rev? Like what?

Pause

Jim: Never mind.

Wink: Oh, come on, Jim! Tell us about those "unfortunate incidents"!

Jim: (*haughtily*) I don't have to tell you anything.

Murray: He's right, Wink. It says so right in our TRC mandate. The churches didn't have to answer any charges or reveal any of their evidence.

Wink: Wow. Isn't that against the law, or something?

Murray: Yeah. So?

Pause

Wink: You know, guys, I don't want to be a Debbie Downer or anything, but this is all smelling like a big, fat coverup to me.

Murray: (*angrily*) There you go! I knew it! I knew you were working with that bastard!

Wink: Which bastard is that, Murray?

Murray: Jesus, Wink! Are you covering for him?

Wink: Who?

Murray: You know very well who. That creep out on the west coast!

Wink: Look, Murray, why don't we switch gears again ...

Murray: (*interrupting*) Sure. Fine! Just let him get away with it again!

Wink: Who's getting away with what, guy?

Murray: (*screeching*) Him! He's out there, lying about me, teasing me! As if he's the only one who's ever published death records or occupied a church!

Wink: Oh. I get it. You're talking about ...

Murray: (*interrupting hysterically*) Stop it! I don't want to hear his name! That's what we told the Globe and Mail! You ever print his name again, you quote that little white prick, and you're gonners! Slam dunk!

Wink: You mean the Globe and Mail newspaper?

Murray: Yeah! And the CBC!

Pause

Wink: Wow, Murray. This is getting interesting.

Murray: What do you mean?

Wink: Why don't you tell us more. I mean, about the Globe and the CBC.

Murray: What's to tell? We said, you ever mention that Kevin Annett again and you're toast. *(pause)* Oh shit.

Wink: *(gleefully)* Busted!

Laughter and applause.

Wink: *(playfully)* Kevin Annett! Kevin Annett!

Jim: *(alarmed, crying out)* Stop it! Stop saying his name! It burns! It burns! Oh, someone stop the burning!

Wink: *(concerned)* Gee Reverend, do you need some help? You're turning red again.

Jim: Just don't say his name! Please!

Murray: That's not very funny, you know, Wink. Talking about Annett!

Wink: The cat's out of the bag now, fat man! So why not tell us all? *(pause)* Murray?

Murray: *(dejected)* I want my lawyer.

Wink: You said you told the media not to report on Kevin Annett, that unmentionable United Church clergyman.

Jim: *(interrupting)* He's just an ex-United Church minister! And I never knew him, ever! I never met him once!

Wink: Hold that lie, Rev. We'll get back to you. *(laughter)* Okay Murray, so about this ex-Reverend from the west coast. Did the media play ball with you?

Murray: Well, naturally they did.

Wink: The CBC. The Globe and Mail. They agreed not to mention Kevin Annett anymore, or his work?

Murray: Well of course, dummy. Have you seen him quoted in the news?

Pause

Wink: So, what else did your media buddies agree not to mention, Murray?

Murray: Oh, come on, Wink.

Wink: Come on, what?

Murray: You don't really expect me to answer that, do you? *(pause)* Can I go now?

Laughter

Wink: Oh, be good, Murray. I've got more for you. But first I want to get back to Jim. *(pause)* Reverend, are you still with us?

Jim: (singing softly) I am the church, you are the church, we are the church together!

Wink: *(yells sharply)* Wealthy donors!

Jim: (looks about) What? Where?

Laughter

Wink: Hey, welcome back, Rev! *(laughter)* So, Jim, this Kevin Annett who you claim you never knew. Wasn't he in fact the intern at your North Bay United Church, from 1988 to 1989? You supervised him all that year.

Jim: No, I didn't.

Wink: This is your signature, isn't it? From Kevin's final year evaluation?

Jim: I've never seen that before. And even if I have, that's not my signature on it.

Wink: To quote from your report, Jim "*Kevin Annett's work is exemplary and of the highest quality. He has a fine and promising career to look forward to in the United Church of Canada*". *(pause)* Your words, Reverend.

Jim: No, they weren't.

Wink: Well, I guess there were two Jim Sinclairs that year at St. Andrew's United Church in North Bay, Ontario.

Jim: There could have been.

Laughter

Wink: Jim, would you care to comment on why such an outstanding minister ended up getting tossed out on his ear, smeared, and blacklisted by your church just a few years later?

Pause

Jim: *(singing)* I danced for the fishermen, for James and John ...

Wink: Take a nap, Reverend.

Laughter

Wink: So, Murray.

Murray: *(wearily)* What now?

Wink: Getting back to the TRC.

Murray: *(agonized)* Do we have to?

Wink: We've spoken to many of the actual residential school survivors. They claim they never got a chance to speak at any of the TRC forums. They say that you censored them when they tried to speak. You even shut off their mikes.

Murray: We prefer to call that achieving reconciliation.

Wink: One of them said she was threatened by you with arrest or worse if she talked about her burying other children at night at the Brandon residential school.

Murray: There were no burials. There are no mass graves.

Wink: What?

Murray: You heard me. And even if there were, there weren't. Got it?

Wink: Then what happened to all those dead kids' bodies?

Murray: Alright, cut! That's it! Call the lawyers! I'm out of here!

(Sound of chair moving, disturbance)

Wink: Okay, okay, calm down Murray! No more talk of mass graves and coverups!

Murray: (*angrily*) You promise?

Wink: Absolutely.

Murray: And no talk about the electric chairs?

Pause

Wink: The what?

Pause

Murray: (*nervously*) Oh. Never mind.

Laughter

Wink: Gee, I'm sorry about all this, Murray. This has become a real downer of a show.

Murray: Yeah, it sure has. You even had me worried that you were going to mention that rumor about me and that Denise woman. I just want to say for the record that I was never near that hotel on the night in question!

Pause

Wink: Oh. Okay. (*pause*) Anyway, Murray, I didn't mean to step on your toes tonight.

Murray: Well you did, Wink. You were getting almost, well ...

Wink: Almost what?

Murray: You know. What's the word? (*pause*) Investigative!

Wink: *(laughing)* Not a chance, Murray. This is Canada!

Laughter and applause

Wink: Murray, one final question before we let you shuffle off to your next cozy sinecure. What was the best thing your Truth and Reconciliation Commission achieved?

Murray: The best thing?

Wink: That's right. Give us something nice and hopeful.

Murray: Well, I'd have to say it was our Class A rating.

Wink: Our what?

Murray: The Federal Tourist Board, dummy. We've got our Class A rating back from them now.

Wink: I don't get it.

Murray: Come on, Wink. Get with the real world! Foreign investor confidence in Canada was falling with all that talk of dead Indian kids and mass graves and medical experiments. Trade and tourism were declining. But now that things are officially wiped clean and Canada's healed and we have that cute little Justin T. at the helm, the tourist bucks and foreign investment are rolling in again, especially from our good friends in China.

Wink: That's wonderful, Murray. But tell me something: how are the actual survivors helped by all that?

Murray: What survivors?

Laughter

Wink: Jesus, Murray, you really are a funny guy! We've got to have you back on the show! But before we sign off, let me ask your intrepid colleague here whether he has anything to say. Jim? *(pause)* Reverend Sinclair?

Murray: Let the poor guy sleep, Wink.

Wink: I think he's faking it, actually. I saw his eyes open there for a moment. *(pause)* Anyway, Murray, any final comments for our audience?

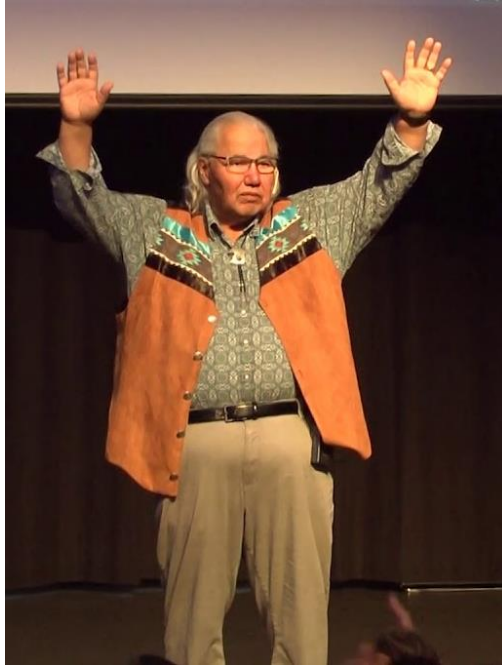
Murray: Yeah. Like I said, don't believe anything you might hear about me and someone named Denise.

Wink: Our lips are sealed, Murray. After all, we're true blue Canadians on this show!

Prolonged applause and upswell of canned music.

Wink: Thank you Canada! And we'll see you all next week, when we'll have as our special guest the CEO of GoldCorp, a really nice guy named Dave Garofalo. Dave will be dispelling all those bad things people are saying about him and his Canadian strip-mining company. Dave is quite the song and dance man, and he'll be doing his own comedy improv as well! So be sure to tune in next week. *(Applause)* And so as we say here on the show: Keep positive, Canada! And keep healing!

Canned music and fade out.



"Eats Many Muffins" surrenders to police after being caught in flagrant delicto.



Jim "Mister Denier" Sinclair on hearing the news that he won't face prosecution.

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