

IN OUR OPINION

They all deserve compensation

As taxpayers, we must all expect, even demand, that our elected representatives do not spend our tax dollars wantonly.

That said, in the case of the Woodlands Schools class-action settlement, British Columbia Attorney General Mike de Jong is correct in saying the government is protecting taxpayers by refusing to compensate victims of abuse prior to a cutoff date of Aug. 1, 1974 — a date established by a Supreme Court of Canada ruling.

Unfortunately, abiding by that cutoff date means that approximately 500 of the 1,600 survivors of mental, physical and sexual abuse will not be awarded a plug nickel for their suffering.

That might be the legally correct decision, and, in terms of minding the public purse strings, it is certainly the most frugal decision, but — and that's a big but — it is not the right decision morally.

This paper supports the government compensating all the victims of abuse at Woodlands School. And, yes, we recognize a decision to support all the victims carries with it some risk. Frankly, it's a risk worth taking.

In the end, we are not talking about an unthinkable sum of money, and, as pointed out, many of the 500 who are not being compensated are living in poverty.

The government should do the right thing on this file.

MURPHY'S VIEW

IN HIS LAST SECONDS BEHIND THE NEWS ANCHOR DESK, TONY PARSONS COMES TO A SUDDEN REALIZATION

