

Foreword

By Chief Stewart Phillip

As Indigenous Peoples, we have witnessed how the official history of British Columbia has attempted to legitimize the theft of our traditional lands and the efforts to destroy our ways of life. However, since contact, we have continually resisted encroachment in our territories and the infringement of our political and territorial rights. Confronted with policy after policy designed to achieve our assimilation into the “fabric of Canadian society” we have fought back, upholding our relationship to our lands and speaking out against our dispossession. The phrase “Indian land question” embodies this struggle, as it was used by BC government officials and reserve commissioners confronted by the “problem” of our continued demands to have our title and rights to our lands and resources recognized and respected.

The Union of BC Indian Chiefs is pleased to present *Stolen Lands, Broken Promises: Researching the Indian Land Question in British Columbia*. In March 1973, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs held its first community research workshop to address the fundamental research issues of concern to Indigenous people in British Columbia. The success of that first workshop and the demand for others like it led to the establishment of a central research and resource facility to develop Indigenous peoples’ research skills and meet their research needs. Since that time, the UBCIC Research Department and Resource Centre have benefited from informed and specialized staff, community members willing to share their knowledge and experiences and discussions with professionals in a variety of fields. *Stolen Lands, Broken Promises* reflects over 30 years of expertise and an unwavering commitment to empowering our people through information sharing and research skills development.

The struggle for a just resolution to the “Indian land question” and for self-determination defines the work of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs. We believe that undertaking historical research *ourselves* can be of great benefit in understanding the current situations of so many of our communities. It is our hope that *Stolen Lands, Broken Promises* will provide communities with the tools they need to begin and carry out their own research projects. Each of these projects contributes to the protection of our political and territorial rights and to strengthening our social, cultural and economic traditions for future generations.



Chief Stewart Phillip
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