

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

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News Release

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UBCIC Denounces The RCMP's Treatment of Sexual Assault Victim and Demands Immediate Justice

(Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver, B.C. – May 22nd, 2019) Last week, APTN released disturbing video footage from 2012 of an RCMP officer abusively interrogating an Indigenous youth who had reported a sexual assault.

The officer questioned the young woman, asking if she was sexually aroused during the assault, what she did to try to stop it, and at one point accuses her of falsifying the report. Though the young woman was in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) at the time, the social workers with her offered no support throughout the interview and allowed her to be questioned alone by two male officers for over two hours. The victim later reported she was punished by her foster parents and MCFD social workers for making the report.

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), stated: "We vigorously condemn and strongly denounce the actions of the RCMP officer and MCFD social workers for further victimizing this young woman in a time of crisis. Their actions are starkly indicative of the deeply embedded racist devaluation of Indigenous women and girls that exists broadly in Canadian society. We demand that the Liberal government and the RCMP take immediate action to address this particular incident and the shameful legacy of violence towards Indigenous women and girls".

"Indigenous women and girls demand justice. We have been the target of extreme violence for too long, and we will not be silenced anymore," stated Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer of the UBCIC. "This vulnerable young woman was victimized when she was assaulted, and instead of honouring her story and seeking justice, she was further victimized by the system that was supposed to help her."

On June 3rd, 2019, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls will release its final report. The inquiry came after years of advocacy efforts led by grassroots Indigenous women who called upon the Canadian state to address the systemic and root causes of violence faced by Indigenous women and girls. In responding to this story of the interrogation, Judge Marion Buller, Chief Commissioner of the Inquiry, stated that this story was like many she and the other commissioners heard during the inquiry hearings.

Media inquiries:

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UBCIC is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

For more information please visit www.ubcic.bc.ca