

This is an extraordinary issue given the gravity and significance of the current situation across Canada. Included are some responses from MPs and MLAs to the below letter. As well there are few pertinent articles to the topic.

In Support of the Wet'suwet'en

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We, the undersigned, are so very sad and sorely disappointed. We were hopeful that finally the Government of Canada was serious about reconciliation with the First Peoples of this land that the white man named Canada. We thought that finally Canada would treat the First Peoples as equals with equal rights and equal voice to what happens to the land on which they have lived for millennia. We thought that finally the imperialist attitude instituted and enforced by the Indian Act would come to an end so that the hereditary cultural and spiritual lives of our brothers and sisters indigenous to this land would be respected, honoured and valued above financial and material profit. We hoped that finally people would matter more than money, more than power and control over 'the other', anyone not in agreement with those with the means to control.

We were hopeful that the Government of B.C. by legislating the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), was serious about addressing the situation with our First Peoples. We hoped that now all nations would be treated with the dignity and respect they deserve and would be truly consulted so as to build consensus.

As the world comes to realize that fossil fuels are destroying our planet, we hoped our elected officials would take the necessary measures to stop the mining and transportation of fossil fuels. Mining and shipping is only one part of the destruction, which enables the further attack on our planet by selling these fuels so that climate change is perpetuated. Then, we dig some more and ship some more and on and on it goes. Our young people watch and are more and more disappointed and disenchanted by the little value their elders put on the future. The more mining and burning of fossil fuels the more we are taking away the lives of our young and those yet unborn.

We hoped but that hope is eroding as both federal and provincial governments continue to ignore the calls of our youth, of our elders, and of our First Peoples.

(Continued next column)

(From last column) In Support of the Wet'suwet'en

Our hopes have been further dashed as we see the legal system and government officialdom disregard the legitimate and valid concerns of not only the Wet'suwet'en but all people of conscience and love for Creation. But our hopes and disappointment do not begin to compare with the continued betrayal experienced by the Indigenous peoples of Canada and other parts of the world.

The actions perpetrated on the Wet'suwet'en territory are an embarrassment and a violation. They stand to protect their home from further invasion and occupation. They stand to protect Mother Earth from further destruction; the Wet'suwet'en stand in non-violent action to protect our global well-being.

And what do those in charge do? They violate the human rights of the people of that territory; they demean and disregard them as human beings. The government protects the corporations' drive for financial gain by fooling many into believing it is more important to have 'a job' no matter how temporary, rather than clean water, clean air and clean land that can sustain the many for generations yet to come. Just as at the beginning the white man, the business man, the invader used their military or financial prowess to take control either through force or the low-hanging fruit of immediate relief from suffering.

Sadly, the means to relieve the poverty, the lack of safe drinking water, the lack of education and health standards of the rest of Canadian society, is in the hands of those in our legislative bodies, but they feed the corporations rather than those in need. So the balance of power in the hands of the few over the many continues; imperialism continues with laws created to have power and control.

Therefore, we demand all levels of government honour the Wet'suwet'en and those who support them by stopping the destruction through the mining, development and selling of fossil fuels and fully engage in sustainable renewable development in harmony with the Wet'suwet'en and all who stand to protect Mother Earth.

We also demand that all levels of government cease and desist from the invasion and occupation of Wet'suwet'en territory.

(Continued page 2)



Statement on Conflict on Wet'suwet'en Unceded Territory

By: GENERAL SYNOD COMMUNICATIONS: FEB. 11, 2020

Further to our “[Statement on the situation in Wet'suwet'en First Nation](#)” of January 11, 2019, we as Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglicans once again raise our voices to express our disappointment, distress and ongoing concern regarding events on the unceded (non-treaty) territories of the Wet'suwet'en First Nations.

We are disappointed that talks between the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs and the colonial Government of British Columbia have failed. We are disappointed that despite calls from the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Amnesty International Canada, amongst many others, to cease work until there has been resolution to the conflict, the RCMP (contracted by the Province of British Columbia) have maintained a presence in the area for over a year and work on pipeline construction has continued. We are disappointed that, although the BC government is the first jurisdiction of its level to formally adopt the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), it has not honoured its stated commitment by failing to hold true nation-to-nation consultation that included the hereditary leadership of the Wet'suwet'en people.

This disappointment escalated to distress as we witnessed the pre-dawn, militarized, forced removal of the Wet'suwet'en from their unceded territory on February 6, 2020. The establishment of an “Exclusion Zone” further contravenes the inherent right of First Nations to have unobstructed access to their traditional territories, as per the UNDRIP. It has also prevented complete and free media coverage which would assist the public in gaining a fuller understanding of what is occurring on the ground.

Our ongoing concern is for the safety of all involved in this conflict, and particularly the unarmed, peaceful Wet'suwet'en land and water protectors and their allies. We share the concern that the MMIWG Final Report Calls for Justice 13.1-13.5 have not been addressed in the planning and implementation of the Coastal Gaslink Pipeline. We call on the governments of Canada and British Columbia, along with Coastal Gaslink to “complete gender-based socio-economic impact assessments on” this project and “include provisions that address the impacts of projects on the safety and security of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA people.”

We continue to thoughtfully and prayerfully support the traditional, hereditary leadership of the Wet'suwet'en people, whose law and traditions pre-date Canadian law and is their inherent right to hold and practice and who are facing real-life hardship and danger. We are grateful to them for their commitment to and defense of Creation for all of us. We renew our commitment to continuing to find ways to stand in solidarity with them as we persist on our own path of seeking to decolonize our institutions and structures.

(Continued next column)

(From last column) **Wet'suwet'en Unceded Territory**

We are calling on the Government to meet and speak to the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs and to have the RCMP stand down as they de-escalate the situation.

Signed by:

The Most Reverend Linda C. Nicholls Archbishop and Primate

The Most Rev. Mark MacDonald National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop

The Most Rev. Melissa Skelton Archbishop of the Ecclesiastical Province of BC and Yukon

The Rt. Rev. Barbara Andrews Bishop of the Territory of the People

The Rt. Rev. David Lehmann Bishop of Caledonia

The Rt. Rev. Logan McMenamie Bishop of British Columbia

The Rt. Rev. Lynne McNaughton Bishop of Kootenay

The Rt. Rev. Lesley Wheeler-Dame Bishop of Yukon

(From page 1) **In Support of the Wet'suwet'en**

We demand that all levels of government truly work to implement the full intent of UNDRIP, the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In Universal Kinship and Loving Peace,

Laura Savinkoff Coordinator--Boundary Peace Initiative

Endorsed by:

The Kelowna Peace Group: contact Mark @ marcos@uniserve.com

The Regina Peace Council: contact Ed @ 306-718-8010

Nadine Podmoroff

Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents people of diverse backgrounds officially brought together in 2002 because of our mutual concern for the rise in world conflict. Our mandate is to participate in multilateral non-violent conflict resolution in support of global human rights, ecological and environmental sustainability and international law through education, sharing of information, dialogue and activism locally and globally. We encourage and seek your participation in our mutual work for true peace based on social justice, equality, accountability, integrity, honour, respect, etc in order to build a better world today and future generations.

BPI web site: www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org

BPI regular meetings are suspended until at least 3 people commit to meet monthly. To commit or for info call (250) 444-0524 or (250) 442-0434 or email L4peace@telus.net.

STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY

From: Nelson, B.C. Chapter of the Council of Canadians.
January 17, 2020

The Nelson Chapter of the Council of Canadians supports the demands of the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs and remains in solidarity with Wet'suwet'en land defenders. We demand the Governments of Canada and British Columbia end their violence against Indigenous People immediately and respect the sovereignty of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation.

On January 4, 2020 Wet'suwet'en House Chiefs representing all 5 clans oversaw the successful eviction of Coastal GasLink (CGL) employees from Unist'ot'en and Gidimt'en territories. GasLink workers received an eviction letter and have not been permitted to access the territory to continue work since the eviction. As far as is known, CGL intends to commit trespass on Wet'suwet'en lands and continue construction. They will likely rely on RCMP violence to force their way into Wet'suwet'en territories once more.

The province has proclaimed they will implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which includes Free, Prior and Informed Consent, but has failed to intervene in this issue. Currently, the province, federal government, RCMP, and CGL have all violated Wet'suwet'en law.

A United Nations committee working to end racism is urging Canada to immediately stop the construction of three major resource projects in B.C. (the Trans Mountain Pipeline, Site C Dam and Coastal GasLinks Pipeline) until it obtains approval from affected First Nations.

The Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs demand the following:

- That the province cease construction of the Coastal Gaslink Pipeline project and suspend permits.
- That the UNDRIP and our right to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) are respected by the state and RCMP.
- That the RCMP and associated security and policing services be withdrawn from Wet'suwet'en lands, in agreement with the most recent letter provided by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination's (CERD) request.
- That the provincial and federal government, RCMP and private industry employed by CGL respect our laws and our governance system, and refrain from using any force to access our lands or remove our people.

You can make a difference by acting in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en Nation. Send an email demanding that they act immediately to protect the rights of the Wet'suwet'en Nation and stop RCMP violence on Wet'suwet'en land defenders by contacting Mike Farnworth, BC Minister of Public Safety,

mike.farnworth.MLA@leg.bc.ca .

Responses to the BPI letter of concern

Hello, Laura:

Thank you for writing to me concerning the protests related to the Wet'suwet'en dispute in Northern BC.

Federal ministers and the Prime Minister are directly involved in assessing the situation and looking for a way through these issues quickly and peacefully. Of course, there is growing frustration with the impact the protests are having on our rail services and, by extension, our economy. More than that, the disruptions mean discomfort and disruption for families, especially those very dependent on the railways.

The right to peaceful protest is a fundamental right in Canada, but individuals who choose to use this right must do so in accordance with the law. There are active court injunctions in place that were taken by CN to ensure service can resume, and they must be respected.

We know there have been many times in Canada's history when protests, at times 'illegal', have occurred. History tells us that the most effective response for the long run is genuine communication coupled with the patience to understand why some will go so far as to break the law to make their point. This is our preferred way forward. The alternative, although tempting to some, has proven itself to be destructive in past situations.

It is critical to understand that police forces in our country act completely independently of all levels of government. First and foremost, their priority is to ensure the safety of all people in Canada.

There is time for all parties to engage in open and respectful dialogue to ensure this situation is resolved peacefully, and we strongly urge these parties to do so and, as the national government, we will be directly involved to bring that result about.

I appreciate your thoughts on this issue. Please stay in touch.

Sincerely, Ken Hardie MP Fleetwood-Port Kells

Good Morning Laura,

Thank you for copying MLA Jackie Tegart on your email. MLA Tegart appreciates being informed of issues of importance to British Columbians.

It is of utmost importance that a healthy and productive dialogue takes place between the BC government and BC First Nations. It is the government's responsibility to further reconciliation in our province, and to show respect for First Nations. Development and construction should not hinder this dialogue, and should not come at the expense of BC's diverse and delicate ecosystems.

Thank you for your advocacy on this issue.
Best Regards, MLA Jackie Tegart Fraser Nicola

Hi Laura,

Thank you for sharing your e-mail with MLA Michelle Stilwell.

Michelle Stilwell, MLA Parksville-Qualicum

WHAT'S UP?

All are welcome to join us on **April 25th** for **'Creative Solutions to Climate Crisis@ Holy Trinity Anglican Church Hall on 7th Street** in Grand Forks from **10 am to 4 pm:** hosted by the BPI with funds from Peace In, Peace Out! Admission is by donation and includes a Borscht lunch. Our guests are: **Tamara Lorincz**, a PHD candidate at the Balsillie School of International Affairs at Sir Wilfrid Laurier University and a member of the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace will inform on how the military affects climate change: **Genevieve London** from Portland, Oregon will speak on how to develop and implement sustainable energy policy: **Graham Watt** will relate climate change to local events. Let's learn together so as to work together.

Coming up soon is the BCSIPC conference hosted by the Kelowna Peace Group. Watch for details.

Talking Israel/Palestine in the Okanagan; a series of presentations by Robert Massoud the founder of 'ZATOUN--Fair Trade Olive Oil from Palestine' will run from **Feb. 29th to March 8th** in various locations. For more info go to the BPI website or email zatoun.sinteriorbc@gmail.com



The BPI welcomes your input. Articles are the author's responsibility and may not be common consensus of members. To submit articles contact Laura at **250-444-0524 or 250-442-0434** or email L4peace@telus.net.

The BPI is a member of: BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Canadian Peace Congress, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War and an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. We work with a wide range of local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.

(From Page 3) **More responses and statements**

Hello Laura,

Thank you for taking the time to write to MLA Olsen and including our office in this discussion. We appreciate hearing from you and greatly value your feedback. I will bring your comments to the attention of MLA Olsen to help inform his advocacy in the legislature.

It has always been the B.C. Green Caucus' position that the Costal GasLink (CGL) pipeline project poses significant risks to B.C.'s economy and environment, the health and safety of our residents, and to our commitment to the reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

With respect to the ongoing situation in the Wet'suwet'en territory the primary imperative and responsibility of all should be to find a just, peaceful, and respectful resolution. MLA Olsen and his BC Green Party colleagues remain committed to doing whatever we can to help make that happen.

The B.C. Greens recognize our role is to be the voice that our province needs to realize its full potential. When we forced the other 83 MLAs to vote 14 times to subsidize LNG, we knew that now, more than ever, British Columbia needed politicians who would stay true to their values, advance the well-being of people before that of the profits of multinationals and prioritize economic prosperity for every single person in this province. Eighty-three MLAs voted for LNG, and we will not topple the government that was elected by the people of this province. If British Columbians want another outcome, they must take those concerns to the voting booth and elect MLAs who will better represent their values.

Recently, MLA Olsen travelled to Wet'suwet'en territory to speak with the hereditary chiefs, the RCMP, and the Wet'suwet'en people. It is clear that respect, humility, an open mind, and a willingness to learn are critical elements of reconciliation. We have inherited a colonial legacy and the heartbreaking issues that come with it. We all have a responsibility to our children that we lean in and work out our differences so that the next generation does not inherit these issues.

The hereditary chiefs are clear what the next step is: they want government-to-government dialogue between their leaders and the leaders of the provincial and federal governments. As a Member of the Legislative Assembly and as the interim leader of the BC Green Party, MLA Olsen will bring this message to his colleagues in government.

The B.C. Green MLAs continue to work with the NDP government because we made a commitment to our constituents and to all British Columbians to work every day to advance the issues that are important to them. British Columbians are not as divided as it seems today: we all want a safe future for our children, access to clean water, healthcare, childcare, and quality education. And over the past three years, we have made -for the first time in many years- progress on a number of these files. It is our duty to continue this work. It is what the people of British Columbia have elected us to do. MLA Olsen and the B.C. Green Caucus will stand firm in their opposition to the CGL project as well as fully embrace our responsibility to find a just and peaceful resolution to the current impasse in Wet'suwet'en territory. This will take patience and compassion.

(Continued on page 5)

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs.
Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings,
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6

Go to the Government of Canada website for MP
contact information at <http://www.canada.gc.ca>