



CANE/AIIE
Canadian Association of Nurses for the Environment
Association d'infirmières et infirmiers pour l'environnement

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Thursday November 19th 2020,

To the honourable Justin Trudeau, Jagmeet Singh, Carolyn Bennett, Marc Miller, John Horgan, Scott Fraser, Doug Caul, Jennifer Strachan, Brenda Lucki,

We write to you today as the Canadian Association of Nurses for the Environment (CANE), a nursing organization advocating for the necessity of both a healthy environment and an intersectional lens so as to achieve a healthier society.

We affirm our support for the Secwepemc persons and allies that have been taking a stand to protect their land and water from the Transmountain Pipeline, also known as the Tiny House Warriors.

The Secwepemc people are sovereign on their unceded land and have the inherent right to occupy and use their lands throughout their nation.

Canadian and British Columbia governments both have affirmed a “commit[ment] to nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous peoples based on a recognition of rights [&] respect” ([Canada 2017](#)). Canada has endorsed and BC has legislated the United Declarations of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).



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We join these Secwepemc Tiny House Warriors in upholding that Indigenous peoples have a right to their traditional lands and to control these lands, as per UNDRIP Article 26: they must be heard and respected when they have said no to a development project.

Given your governments' commitments, we are dismayed that Premier John Horgan continues to intervene in Indigenous governance by misnaming colonially imposed band councils as "Nations" ([February 2020](#)) and acting as if Indian Act band governments have jurisdiction outside of their reserves (i.e. [July 2020 Rocky Mountain Goat](#)). As stated by Judy Wilson, a Secwepemc Chief Councillor of the Neskonlith Indian Band, "Aboriginal Title and Rights are held collectively by the Indigenous People's, not by one or two Indian Act Bands" ([July 2020 First Nations Drum](#)).

Furthermore, we join Secwepemc Kanahus Manuel, Mi'kmak Dr. Pam Palmater, and many other Canadians in calling for an end to the criminalization of indigenous peoples who affirm their constitutional rights as sovereign of their lands.

In closing, we denounce the process and lack of clear follow-up by RCMP investigating Kanahus Manuel's attack on April 19th 2020, and support the letters of [Amnesty International of April 27th 2020](#) and [Greenpeace of May 11 2020](#) in this regard.

We ask:

- (1) That Premier John Horgan and all government representatives cease calling band councils "Nations", confounding hereditary and colonially imposed leaderships;
- (2) That all government representatives cease confusing what is band council jurisdiction with Indigenous Rights and Title that are held collectively by Indigenous peoples of a given nation and land;
- (3) That land defenders not be arrested nor criminalized for their affirmation of sovereignty,
- (4) That RCMP complete and mediatize the investigation into Kanahus Manuel's attack;
- (5) That government representatives respect and not interfere with the process of Secwepemc collectively making decisions for their lands, waters, and livelihoods.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Jessica Madrid, President

Jacqueline Avanthay-Strus, President-Elect

Jennifer Morin, Past-President

June Kaminski, Treasurer, Memberships & Webmaster



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