



News Release

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First Nations Leadership Council mourns the loss of respected Dakelh Elder-Statesman Harry Pierre

Coast Salish Territory/West Vancouver - The First Nations Leadership Council is deeply saddened by the sudden loss of respected Dakelh Elder-Statesman, Harry Pierre, 65. He died this morning at the Prince George Regional Hospital.

Harry Pierre enjoyed a long political career starting in the 1960s, often serving as Chief of the Tl'azt'en (klaz-den) Nation. He also served a term as Tribal Chief of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, elected in 2003. He was one of the founding Chiefs of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs in the late 1960s and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council in the 1970s. He also supported the creation of the First Nations Summit in the early 1990s. As a Summit delegate, he always spoke about the importance of the environment, frequently saying 'protect the land and the land will protect you'.

"Chief Pierre was an outspoken fighter and advocate for our people," said Tl'azt'en Grand Chief Edward John, member of the First Nations Summit's political executive and the First Nations Leadership Council. "He made sure our people always questioned the authority of government to unilaterally impose on our lives and lands without regard to our concerns and rights. One example was in the 1960s when he led our people during an extended blockade against a railway line that was being pushed through our

communities and lands. He was also a tireless advocate for First Nations youth and encouraged them to continue to maintain their language and cultural ties to the land.

“He will be sorely missed by family, friends, and colleagues... by his community, by everyone really,” added Chief John.

“The Union of BC Indian Chiefs is deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Harry Pierre. We shall greatly miss Elder Pierre's strong, visionary leadership as he relentlessly upheld and defended the rights of his people. His unwavering vision of a just resolution of the Land Question in BC shall serve to guide his People for many generations into the future,” said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of the B.C. Indian Chiefs and member of the First Nations Leadership Council.

“We are deeply saddened by the sudden loss of our highly esteemed elder, Harry Pierre. Words cannot express the deep and meaningful contributions our respected leader made for our First Nations people and communities as he embodied the teachings, values, and political will of our people. He is a mentor, leader, and friend whose legacy will be enduring,” said Shawn Atleo, Regional Chief of the B.C. Assembly of First Nations and member of the First Nations Leadership Council.

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The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the First Nations Summit, Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the BC Assembly of First Nations. The Council works together to politically represent the interests of First Nations in British Columbia and develop strategies and actions to bring about significant and substantive changes to government policy that will benefit all First Nations in British Columbia.

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