

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

News Release

February 2, 2023

FNLC Supports Manslaughter Charges Against RCMP Officers in Death of Dale Culver

(Xwməθkwəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̓x wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliiwətał (Tseil Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) supports BC Prosecution Services' manslaughter charges against two Prince George RCMP officers, Cst. Paul Ste-Marie and Cst. Jean Francois Monette, who were involved in the death of Dale Culver, a First Nations man from northern British Columbia. The FNLC stands with Dale Culver's family and the Gitxsan and Wet'suwet'en communities who have been struggling for justice and answers for his violent death.

"For too long we've been fighting for justice for Dale, another First Nations man who died in the custody of the RCMP. This is a positive step that contributes toward a transformative national effort to ensure all Indigenous and racialized people in Canada are not subject to the discrimination and injustice that is so deeply inherent in the justice system," stated BCAFN Regional Chief Terry Teegee.

"I'm relieved these charges are finally being laid against the two RCMP officers involved in Dale Culver's tragic death, providing a step closer to justice for his family, friends and community who have been demanding explanations for many years. Changes to the extensively flawed justice system must continue and must be accelerated. Investigations into RCMP conduct, including police-involved deaths, are taking far too long with extensive delays and little communication with families and communities." stated Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, UBCIC President.

Hugh Braker, First Nations Summit Political Executive, stated, "Dale Culver was one of many First Nations men who have died while in police custody over many years. These charges will send a strong message to, what we hope is a minority, of those in law enforcement working in the Canadian justice system who are racist and full of hate for Indigenous peoples and people of colour, that there is no longer a place for them in the system. Building trust, cooperation and safe spaces for Indigenous peoples must be a priority for local police authorities. Inevitably, people will draw analogies to the case of black American Tyre Nichols' death in the U.S. As did Nichols' family in the U.S., we too demand immediate changes in the police forces of Canada. Whether the victims are black people in Quebec or Indigenous people in the Prairies or B.C., there must be substantial change in the police forces.



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Dale Culver died in police custody in 2017 after being violently apprehended and pepper sprayed. As he was held in custody, he soon began having difficulty breathing and medical assistance was called but he died shortly after the initial struggle. Five and half years after his death, and long delays in investigating police-involved deaths, the crown attorney is further acting on the Independent Investigation Office of BC's recommendation of charges against all five RCMP officers who were involved.

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