



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
EMPOWERING OUR NATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMC stands with First Nations in Saskatchewan and Debbie Baptiste in their calls for justice and RCMP accountability

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) issues this statement in support of First Nations in Saskatchewan and the mother of Colten Boushie, Debbie Baptiste. The AMC expresses outrage at the information in the report by the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission (CRCC) into RCMP conduct in the killing of Colten.

The report advised that Ms. Baptiste, as a First Nation woman, was racially discriminated against by RCMP members when they came to notify her of her son's murder. RCMP officers asked Ms. Baptiste if she had been drinking and proceeded to treat her as if she herself was under investigation, lacking respect and general humanity. These reported actions are symptomatic of systemic racial discrimination against First Nations by the RCMP. More troubling, however, is the indication that the RCMP destroyed key evidence from the Colten Boushie murder.

"The AMC stands in solidarity with the Federation of Sovereign Indian Nations (FSIN) and Ms. Baptiste in their calls for justice and accountability from the RCMP for how the CRCC handled the investigation. The AMC is further extremely concerned at the actions taken in destroying key evidence knowing that this matter would be examined in civil court at a later date. This obstruction of justice by members of the RCMP concerning Colten's murder is unacceptable to the Chiefs in Manitoba and must be dealt with decisively. Subsequent statements from RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki dismissing the destruction of evidence as 'not criminal' is simply a deflection and a further example of long-standing systemic racism as evidenced through this dismissive tone at the top brass.

At present, First Nations confidence the RCMP Commissioner and in the force itself is dismal at best, and I do not express this lightly," said AMC Grand Chief Arlen Dumas.

Grand Chief Dumas continued, "The AMC stands with Colten's First Nation, Red Pheasant Cree Nation, his Mother Debbie Baptiste, and all First Nations across the country as they voice their collective outrage and demand justice. The AMC fully supports the FSIN in its call for the Director of the CRCC to resign and for Commissioner Lucki to finally do something substantive to address the systemic racism within the ranks of the RCMP."

Grand Chief Dumas added, "Approximately three years ago, First Nations in Manitoba and their allies marched in the streets of Winnipeg in support of our sisters and brothers in the FSIN in protest of the egregious jury verdict that found Gerald Stanley not guilty in the shooting and murder of Colten. Now, this report exposing RCMP misconduct with respect to Ms. Baptiste and further allegations of evidence destruction is beyond reprehensible and continues to chip away at the ever-eroding relationship First Nations once had with the RCMP."

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About the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

The AMC was formed in 1988 by the Chiefs in Manitoba to advocate on issues that commonly affect First Nations in Manitoba. AMC is an authorized representative of 62 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba with a total of more than 151,000 First Nation citizens in the province, accounting for approximately 12 percent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Inineu (Cree), Anishininew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.