

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

News Release

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FNLC CONDEMNS RACIST REMARKS BY BC CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE CALLING FOR FIRST NATIONS TO BE “CONQUERED”

(xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) is loudly denouncing the deeply racist remarks made by Conservative Party of BC candidate for Juan de Fuca–Malahat Mike Hicks, who stated [during a local election debate](#) that First Nations needed to be “conquered.” Such language invokes a violent history of colonialism, dispossession, and attempted assimilation, and reflects deeply troubling attitudes toward First Nations peoples. The FNLC unequivocally rejects this rhetoric and calls on Hicks and the Conservative Party of B.C. leadership to publicly retract these remarks.

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), stated, “The Conservative Candidate has given public expression to the grave and dangerous notion of mobilizing the Canadian military forces to ‘conquer’ First Nations People in BC and Canada, and expressed blatant, colonial racism. For generations, our people have survived deliberate attempts to conquer our Nations, steal our lands, and destroy our cultures. To hear a political candidate invoke that same language today is absolutely appalling. First Nations are not peoples to be conquered, controlled, or subjugated. We are sovereign Nations, and we will not tolerate the normalization of this kind of hateful rhetoric.”

Regional Chief Terry Teegee, British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), stated, “There is no place for racism of this nature in British Columbia’s political discourse. Language about conquering First Nations is fundamentally incompatible with reconciliation and the recognition of our inherent and constitutionally protected title and rights. Political leaders have a responsibility to challenge racism, not perpetuate the colonial attitudes that have caused generations of harm. These remarks demand a clear and unequivocal response.”

Chief Shana Thomas, First Nations Summit Political Executive, stated, “The suggestion that First Nations need to be ‘conquered’ is an affront to our dignity, sovereignty, and right to self-determination. Our Nations have spent generations fighting for recognition of our title and rights and working toward just and respectful relationships with the Crown. There can be no meaningful reconciliation while such profoundly racist and colonial attitudes continue to be expressed by those seeking public office. The Conservative Party must clearly reject this type of language and if their candidate will not apologize, he should be withdrawn.”

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The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), First Nations Summit (FNS), and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC). www.fnlc.ca

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