

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

News Release

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Comments of Premier David Eby counterproductive to true, lasting reconciliation

(xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) The First Nations Leadership Council is shocked and appalled with Premier David Eby's comments to media regarding a recent BC Supreme Court decision.

Premier Eby is quoted saying:

"We're committed to reconciliation," said Eby. "This decision upends a lot of our work and we need a fast decision (on appeal)."

"These are profound issues that are hard to consider in the absence of the real people ... the homeowners, the business owners, who will be affected by this decision," said the premier. "I want the court to look into the eyes, metaphorically speaking, of the people who will be directly affected by this decision and understand the impact on certainty for business, for prosperity and for our negotiations with Indigenous people."

First Nations are real people. They have inherent human rights to their land. Premier Eby's comments echo the dehumanizing and racist doctrines first relied upon to justify the theft of First Nations' lands, territories, and resources in BC – doctrines that perpetuated belief in the inherent inferiority of First Nations. By artificially pitting recognition of and respect for First Nations' human rights against the interests of who he refers to as "real people", Premier Eby has employed a strategy that belongs firmly in a dark and less enlightened time.

We call on Premier Eby to immediately clarify and withdraw these divisive comments.

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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). <https://www.fnlc.ca/>

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