



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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**NEWS RELEASE**  
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## **BCAFN outraged at RCMP Surveillance of First Nations Organizations, Calls for an Inquiry into Systemic Racism in Policing**

**(Lheidli T'enneh Territory/Prince George, BC)** The British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) is outraged and deeply disturbed by the release of Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) records indicating the surveillance of First Nations political organizations throughout the 1960s and 70s. This news further legitimizes the continued calls from First Nations across Canada to reform the justice system in alignment with First Nations-led justice strategies, and to immediately conduct an independent investigation into systemic racism embedded within Canada's police services.

Through an investigation led by CBC Indigenous, newly declassified RCMP files confirm the operation of a *Native Extremism Program* which involved wiretaps, paid informants, covert operatives and surveillance at homes, offices, airports and bars of legitimate First Nations advocacy organizations. The files also confirm for the first time that the Liberal government in mid-1970s approved covert RCMP wiretaps and other methods to monitor telephones of the National Indian Brotherhood, known today as the Assembly of First Nations, as well as regional organizations including the Union of BC Indian Chiefs.

These actions represent an abuse of the human rights of Indigenous peoples, a vast misuse of colonial power and a concerted effort by the government to manipulate and undermine First Nations governments, thus damaging the legitimacy and trust in Canada's justice system, as well as the government's ability to fairly and responsibly carry out its constitutional responsibilities for First Nations peoples. In order to address this serious transgression, a full inquiry into the extent and impact of these programs, as well as any existing First Nations surveillance programs, is required and must be done in full partnership with First Nations across this country.

"Colonial governments have always acted to delegitimize First Nations governments, organizations and political mobilization movements through the use of colonial violence, marginalization and oppression," stated BCAFN Regional Chief Terry Teegee. "Asserting our inherent title and rights as recognized by Canada cannot be viewed as extremist ideology, nor should we be subject to state-sanctioned surveillance or manipulation. First Nations founded

and tended to the lands of what is now Canada long before the arrival of European settlers, and continue to hold internationally recognized rights which safeguard our freedoms. First Nations exist today as a result of our unity, shared history and collective strength, and we have the collective right to organize how we see fit without fear of state repercussions”.

This public revelation is but one aspect of a broken justice system and its inability to provide basic services to First Nations peoples. Since 2024, at least 12 First Nations have died as a result of their interactions with colonial police services. First Nations continue to call for reform of the justice system to prevent further harm from occurring. In June of 2025, Canada released the Indigenous Justice Strategy, which includes distinctions-based chapters, co-developed by First Nations. To date, no commitment or federal funding has been made by Canada to implement this strategy.

“Canada’s inaction to address the deaths of First Nations by police services, and the lack of any commitment to implement the national First Nations Justice Strategy, demonstrates the position of the current government,” continued Regional Chief Terry Teegee. “We are not going anywhere, and we demand accountability and reform from Canada to move forward together”.

The BCAFN and the national AFN continue to call for reform of the justice system in alignment with the First Nations Justice Strategy, and an immediate inquiry into the existence and impacts of these surveillance programs and the ongoing systemic racism in federal police services. Canada must take action to address the colonial nature of the RCMP to ensure adequate, effective and meaningful partnership with First Nations, and trauma-informed police interactions.

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