June 20, 2019 |

Statements

Statement from the BC Federation of Labour on National Indigenous Peoples Day

This year, National Indigenous Peoples Day comes at a critical moment for Indigenous rights recognition in Canada and BC.

Key legislation to entrench Indigenous rights, Bill C-262, is stuck in the Senate and Prime Minister Trudeau has abandoned his commitment to ensure it passes it into law. “This legislation would create a framework for reconciliation and a process to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into Canadian law” says BCFED President Laird Cronk.

“To see the Liberal Government concede defeat to Conservative Senators is profoundly disappointing. This Bill has the support of the democratically-elected House of Commons and should be passed immediately.”

This month, the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls called on Canada to cease enacting genocide and repeated the call for the UN Declaration to be implemented. Here in British Columbia, the report from the Downtown East Side Women’s Centre (DEWC) entitled *Red Women Rising* has highlighted the voices and stories of community members directly affected by colonial violence and structural oppression and put forward over 200 recommendations to government.

“This National Indigenous Peoples Day, we call upon union members and other British Columbians to read the *Red Women Rising* report and commit to take action on the 200 plus recommendations found within,“ says Secretary-Treasurer Sussanne Skidmore. “That includes bringing the report’s call for implementation of the UN Declaration in BC; a commitment we expect the current Provincial government to meet this fall.”

The BCFED is also encouraging British Columbians to take personal action by joining the call to pass Bill C-262, and by reading the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls report, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s calls to action, and the UN Declaration.

The best way forward on the path to reconciliation is to participate in a radical culture shift that places the voices and experiences of Indigenous people in the spotlight and follows them as they lead the way to the implementation of their rights, and justice for their people.

Resources:

- The Red Women Rising report
- You can join the call to pass Bill C-262
- The report from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- The Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action
- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples