



McMaster Indigenous Student Community Alliance (McMaster)
McMaster University
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Solidarity with Wet'suwet'en

The McMaster Indigenous Student Community Alliance (MISCA) stands in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en Nation as they assert their sovereignty over their traditional territory. As a traditional Indigenous government that has not made any treaties with Canada, the Wet'suwet'en Nation has the sole jurisdiction over Wet'suwet'en Yintah. Having sent the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to enforce injunctions made against people upholding their sacred responsibility to defend their land, Canada has invaded another nation. Even in 2020, the settler state continues to attack Indigenous Nationhood to steal land.

Canada's response to the Wet'suwet'en Nation's self-defense and solidarity actions have been shameful. The RCMP have been deployed to violently enforce injunctions made by Coastal Gaslink on lands in which they have no jurisdiction, echoing similar events throughout Canada's anti-Indigenous history. Politicians of every stripe have shown their true colours either through silence, hypocritical rhetoric or through doubling down on settler ignorance and privilege. While activism and land defense take major personal sacrifice to participate in, some politicians and media chose to slander those taking a stand. It is up to the people to stand up to injustice when Canada is incapable of doing so. These series of events, while shameful, are not surprising. This is the Canada we have come to know.

The invasion of Wet'suwet'en Yintah shows us that reconciliation is a farce. Canada is still invested in securing title to Indigenous lands. Despite talk of renewing nation-to-nation relationships, the government of Canada continues to manipulate the masses to extinguish Indigenous Nationhood. Each political party's power is tied to the ongoing dispossession of Indigenous Peoples, making each one of them complicit in the invasion of Wet'suwet'en Yintah. This is not any one politician's fault - the Canadian state has been maintained by land theft and Indigenous oppression since its inception.

Major changes need to be made to rectify the ongoing colonial violence committed by the government of Canada. MISCA recognizes the immediate impact of the RCMP invasion of Wet'suwet'en Yintah. We demand that:

- The RCMP are withdrawn from Wet'suwet'en Yintah.
- All arrested land defenders and activists are released without condition.
- The LNG project to be cancelled indefinitely.
- Financial redress be made to the Wet'suwet'en Nation for the harm caused during the invasion and as compensation for dragging land claims through court for several years.

- *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia* be enshrined in Canadian law to protect Indigenous rights in the future.

MISCA also recognizes the dangerous precedent that the invasion of Wet'suwet'en Yintah creates for Indigenous Sovereignty elsewhere in Canada. We demand that:

- The *United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) be enshrined in the Canadian Constitution while excluding *Article 46.1*.
- The modern treaty process is overhauled to respect Indigenous Nationhood instead of seeking land surrenders.
- Indigenous communities receive adequate support for infrastructure before any further modern treaties are negotiated to eliminate decisions made under duress through extortion.
- Indigenous content be added to all levels of educational curriculum across the country to provide truthful information about Indigenous-Settler relationships and responsibilities.
- The government of Canada to commit to divesting from the fossil fuel industry and invest in renewable energy.

These are major demands, but we believe that we cannot settle for any less. The earth is facing a climate crisis, yet Canada insists on ignoring this fact by pursuing the completion of TC Energy's and Coastal Gaslink's LNG pipeline. The provincial NDP government of British Columbia, while claiming to be champions for addressing climate change and respecting Indigenous rights, are fully backing this project. There is ample evidence to prove that this project will only worsen climate change while also infringing on the sovereignty of the Wet'suwet'en Nation. By forcing the completion of this pipeline, the Government of Canada is setting up future generations of Indigenous Peoples and Canadians alike for failure. These changes will not come unless we stand up and make them happen. The Wet'suwet'en Nation is taking the lead in this cause and MISCA stands in solidarity with the land protectors and their supporters.

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The McMaster Indigenous Student Community Alliance