

Press Release- September 19, 2021

Martha Martin and her family, who organized the event at the BC Legislature on September 18th 2021 would like to begin by acknowledging the Lekwungen Nations, who have hosted and guided us over the last few days.

Our event was guided by the words of Elder Joan Morris, to keep our hearts and minds open and look and work towards a common goal for our children and grandchildren.

The event on September 18th was to honour and call for justice for Chantel Moore and a number of families who have lost loved ones or faced violence and brutality from Police and RCMP in Canada.

The goal of this event was to find a way to move forward together, not only under the name and memory of Chantel, but more her daughter, who has since lived in fear and anger towards police and RCMP. Martha Martin has been waiting for Police and RCMP to start that work, but when she noticed that was not going to happen, she decided she would take the lead.

The event, which was moved to the back of the BC Legislature, was a peaceful gathering following the words of our Lekwungen hosts and in line with our Nuu-chah-nulth protocols. The event included a space for truth and stories by families and victims to be shared and witnessed, and then to be lifted up and honoured by Martha's family. Martha and the organizers invited the chief of police, Del Manak, to come and speak at the event to begin the work of bringing down barriers and working together.

After Chief Manak spoke he was blanketed by the family and given gifts to acknowledge the relationship which was being created.

At one point after the Chief spoke, a group of people not connected to the event approached Manak and poured a cup of liquid on him.

This was witnessed and brought to the attention of Martha and the event organizers. The event was immediately halted, following Nuu-chah-nulth protocol, where the act was condemned . The MC spoke to how our goal is to move forward together in unity in line with our protocols and guiding words by our elders. This act and any acts similar, move us in the wrong direction and is something we will not condone.

Chief Manak was brought up on stage and in following our tradition was lifted up, apologized to, and given acknowledgements to correct this senseless act. Once both parties felt the work was done, the event resumed.

Songs, prayers and stories were shared, tears and pain were shed, and the start of important work was done.

Following the closure of the event, and in returning to our respective homes, Martha Martin and her family were very disheartened to see the reasons and truths of the event undermined without our knowledge. The pain was heightened to have our relatives who we were honouring be used to create and gain angry press.

The press releases and news surrounding the event for Chantel Moore on September 18th 2021 spoke to the act against Chief Manak as well as the arrests which subsequently followed, taking away from the important work that happened at the event for Chantel Moore. The family was disheartened further to see Chantel's name used to forward others' agendas and not in the direction of a better future. We are saddened to see releases and press focused not on the good work that was done but on the actions of a small few.

We do not agree with any acts of violence on either side.

The event was planned and organized as a peaceful event. We cannot stand idly by and see the good work that has been done taken advantage of to create further division.

In moving forward, we want to once again come together and turn the focus to the important work we have ahead of us.

Martha Martin has looked to highlight and call for action on a number of key elements following the shooting of Chantel:

- We should not have to protest and plan events such as these to call for justice for our family members
- Going forward we want to see body cameras on all police and RCMP officers
- We want to see funding and action being put towards having a better/safe system in place for working with individuals experiencing mental health crises and wellness checks
- We want to see any member of the police and RCMP who discharge a gun be taken off duty until a proper assessment has been completed
- We want to see trained civilian support to be involved in wellness checks
- We want to see better diversity and separation from law enforcement for external investigations
- We want to see further de-escalation training
- We want to see changes to police/RCMP oversight structures, to ensure accountability and discipline for individual officer's actions

- We want to see racism and discriminatory acts acknowledged and acted upon.

In respect,

Hjalmer Wenstob

Speaker for Martha Martin

Re: Event for Chantel Moore September 18, 2021

Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations