



TŜILHQOT'IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

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Media Release
May 8, 2019

Tŝilhqot'in supports the decision to remove Judge Matthew Begbie Statue in New Westminster

Williams Lake, BC (May 8, 2019): The Tŝilhqot'in National Government approves of New Westminster City Council's decision to remove the statue of Judge Matthew Begbie from its provincial courthouse.

In October 1864, Judge Begbie wrongfully convicted six Tŝilhqot'in War Chiefs of murder and sentenced them to death by hanging in one of the largest mass executions in Canadian history. Both provincial and federal governments have exonerated the six War Chiefs of any crime or wrongdoing and recognized the six War Chiefs as heroes of the Tŝilhqot'in people.

The history here only sheds light to a negative relationship between First Nations and colonizers. Removing the statue of Judge Begbie allows for healing and reconciliation to take place for Tŝilhqot'in communities. Furthermore, it reflects an era of cultural understanding and appreciation for the Tŝilhqot'in and all Indigenous peoples.

Quotes:

Chief Joe Alphonse, Tribal Chair, Tŝilhqot'in National Government

"From the Tŝilhqot'in perspective, Judge Begbie represents a legacy of betrayal, pain and tragedy for our people. Removing Judge Begbie's statue from public spaces does not remove him from history, but rather recognizes *our* history and *our* experience as Indigenous peoples. We are grateful for the leadership shown by the New Westminster City Council and for the understanding and compassion for our people that this decision reflects."

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