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SCO SUPPORTS INQUEST INTO DEATH OF TYSON ROULETTE WHILE IN CUSTODY

Family Deserves Answers – Grand Chief Daniels

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ANISHINAABE AND DAKOTA TERRITORY, MB — The Southern Chiefs Organization (SCO) is pleased to learn that Manitoba’s Chief Medical Examiner has called an inquest into the 2019 death of Tyson Roulette.

“This is a welcome development given the tragic circumstances surrounding Tyson’s death,” said SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels. “We are hopeful that this inquest will provide us with some concrete answers about the care, or lack thereof, of our people while incarcerated.”

Tyson was serving a sentence at Stony Mountain Institution, when he was found hanging in his cell on December 8, 2019, by correctional officers who were conducting their scheduled rounds. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner was notified of Tyson’s death and an investigator attended the prison, where it was declared that the manner of death was suicide.

“There are so many questions that need to be answered in a time like this,” continued Grand Chief Daniels. “Tyson’s family and loved ones need to know the truth and to receive some much-needed closure.”

The inquest was called in accordance with The Fatality Inquiries Act. The goal is to determine the circumstances relating to Tyson’s death, and to determine what, if anything, can be done to prevent similar deaths from occurring in future.

Meanwhile, SCO will continue to work to reduce the overrepresentation of First Nation citizens within the colonial criminal justice and corrections systems. Our goal is to provide our community members with alternative measures that revolve around accountability and restorative justice, and recognize the systemic racism inherent in the current systems.

“The prevention piece is the real key here,” concluded Grand Chief Daniels. “It’s no secret that our people are disproportionately represented in the justice system, and far too often, tragedies such as this happen to our people while they are within colonial systems. Already this year, there have been two heartbreaking deaths of our people while in custody, William Ahmo and Dwayne Simard.”

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The date, time, and location of the inquest has yet to be determined by the Chief Judge of the Provincial Court of Manitoba.

SCO will continue to provide updates as soon as they are made available.

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The Southern Chiefs' Organization represents 34 First Nations and more than 80,000 citizens in what is now called southern Manitoba. SCO is an independent political organization that protects, preserves, promotes, and enhances First Nations peoples' inherent rights, languages, customs, and traditions through the application and implementation of the spirit and intent of the Treaty-making process.

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