



Labour for Palestine Vancouver: Selina Robinson must resign

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For Immediate Release

Labour for Palestine Vancouver calls for the resignation of Selina Robinson as the Minister of Post-secondary Education and Future skills on the basis of her interference with the employment of Dr. Natalie Knight and her ongoing racist comments about Palestine, Palestinians, and Indigenous people.

We denounce Selina Robinson's interference in an autonomous public post-secondary institution's Academic Freedom and personnel policies in the termination of Dr. Knight. We are further outraged by Robinson's racist and hateful comments about Palestine and Palestinians, and her offensive comparisons between Israeli settlers and Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh nations. She has damaged relationships and broken trust with communities across BC that is beyond repair. Selina Robinson must resign from her position as Minister of Post-secondary Education and Future Skills.

Dr. Knight made comments in support of the Palestinian right of resistance in the face of more than 75 years of Zionist settler colonialism, ethnic cleansing and apartheid. The comments were "rigorously investigated" by Langara's Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression Advisory Committee and were found not to be hate speech or violate any policies. Nevertheless, without due process Dr. Knight was terminated following statements by Minister Selina Robinson. Robinson's use of her post to pressure Langara to fire a professor who made comments against her own personal political views is dangerous and unprecedented. It sends a message to all workers that if academic freedom no longer applies to professors, we also cannot speak out in defence of the right of Indigenous people to self determination and resistance to occupation.

Selina Robinson's comments that Palestine was "a crappy piece of land with nothing on it" in a Jan. 30 at a public panel is the same justification for genocide that colonizers made in Canada—the doctrine of terra nullius. She further compared the occupation of Palestine to a fight between the Tsleil-Waututh and the Squamish First Nations over land. These racist remarks and support of colonial narratives are an impediment to Truth and Reconciliation in British Columbia, and as such it is clear that Robinson cannot remain in cabinet.

Labour for Palestine Vancouver demands the resignation of Selina Robinson from David Eby's NDP cabinet. We call for justice for Dr. Knight and all workers who have been made unsafe for supporting just resistance against colonization due to Robinson's actions and remarks. We further call on the Langara administration to take immediate measures to ensure the safety and protection of faculty, students and staff.

For more information or comment: labourforpalestinevancouver@gmail.com