# Family of Tootsie Jimmy-Charlie demands apology from Federal Government and RCMP for racist handling of her murder and investigation

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WHITEHORSE, YT — The family of Tootsie Jimmy-Charlie, an Indigenous woman whose life was suddenly and viciously taken in Whitehorse 55 years ago, is anxiously awaiting a formal apology for the racist handling of the investigation into her murder that characterized her murder as a “misadventure” to the Whitehorse dump near the Porter Creek subdivision.

Set to take place on August 5, 2022, the RCMP will be issuing a long-awaited acknowledgement that they did not do enough to properly investigate Tootsie’s murder, which occurred sometime between March and May 1967. In addition to hampering closure for the family and community, failing to properly investigate Tootsie’s death has put other Indigenous women’s lives in danger for decades. The family expects a formal apology from the federal government is forthcoming.

Canada’s genocidal laws directly contributed to the murder of Tootsie and the subpar investigation that followed. In 1967, Canada did not substantially recognize Indigenous peoples’ legal rights, including the right to access legal representation, and this allowed the RCMP to conduct an inadequate investigation that culminated in a racist coroner’s report and the RCMP’s failure to pursue the investigation further.

The coroner’s report, dated May 1967, included several statements that demonstrate negligence in the investigation, as well as abject prejudice towards Indigenous people, including an egregious section that deemed the discovery of Tootsie’s remains as “uneventful.” Her daughter, Darlene Jimmy asks, “how can a body being found in a dump ever be considered ‘uneventful’ or a ‘misadventure’? To this day, the dump in Whitehorse remains far from everything. Their report makes it sound like she just walked there herself and died on a pile of garbage. No one does that. No one.”

Her family is now demanding that the racism embedded in the report be removed and the formal apology acknowledge how it contributed to the harm and grief the family experienced. “Although we will be relieved there is a public acknowledgement of the wrongs that were perpetrated by these institutions, it remains to be seen what is included in the formal apology,” says Tootsie’s son, Jackie Jimmy. The family also notes that the lead investigator of Tootsie’s death is still alive and kept a journal of the investigation that the family is requesting to review. Tootsie’s sister, Mary, added “we would appreciate an opportunity to have a conversation with that officer.”

Ultimately, the Charlie family hopes that this apology marks a step forward in undoing the systemic racism that contributed to Tootsie’s death and the ongoing genocide against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. “This needs to end,” says Maje Raider. Adding, “Governments and institutions cannot disregard the systemic racism and misogyny that continues to allow Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse people to be murdered and go missing with no proper investigations, supports, or closure for their families.”

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For more information or to arrange for interviews, please contact:

Ann Maje Raider

majerraider@yahoo.ca

867-334-8265