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For immediate release

JUSTICE FOR NICOUS D'ANDRE SPRING PROTEST ON FRIDAY

Montreal, February 9, 2023 - On Friday, February 10, at 1 pm, the Justice for Nicous Action Committee will hold a demonstration and march against the killing of Nicous D'Andre Spring at the hands of correctional officers in Bordeaux Prison, otherwise known as the Montreal Detention Center. **The demonstration will begin at the Roddick Gates of McGill University at 1 pm to rally and march to the Montreal Courthouse to amplify the demands for Justice for Nicous D'Andre Spring.**

Nicous D'Andre Spring was a 21-year-old Black man. He was a talented poet and artist, son, uncle, brother, mentor, and friend to many. Nicous was invested in youth centers such as West Haven, the YMCA-NDG TeenZone, J2K, and the Rec. On December 20, 2022, Nicous was arrested by SPVM officers. It is unclear why he was arrested in the first instance, but given the long history of racial profiling, it is not unreasonable to assume that this may have been a factor in his arrest and detention.

Quebec's Ministry of Public Safety (MSP) has confirmed that Nicous Spring was supposed to be released from Bordeaux after a bail hearing held on December 23. However, Nicous was held illegally for another day amongst other detainees who should have been released. He had not been tried or convicted for a crime, like 75% of inmates in provincial detention centers awaiting trials and deemed innocent until proven guilty.

The details of his death remain unknown, though it is clear that he was handcuffed, assaulted, and pepper-sprayed multiple times while wearing a spit mask after complaining about being detained illegally. Subsequently, Nicous succumbed to his injuries at the hands of correctional officers, resulting in his death at the Bordeaux detention center on Christmas Eve.

“Nicous’s death is like smoke from a blazing fire in the correctional facilities all across Canada, the abuse of power is prevalent and those involved in his death must be charged.”

Svens, Prison reform Advocate

“No mother should have to bury her child. Black mothers should not have to live in fear of the heart shattering phone call that Nicous’s mother and so many other Black mothers receive that they have lost their son to the cruel hands of the state. We will fight for Nicous, and for his family who have lost their beloved.”

Nanre Nafziger, a community member, educator and parent.

It is also known that more broadly:

- In November 2022, the Correctional Investigator of Canada revealed that

- In November 2022, the Correctional Investigator of Canada revealed that systemic concerns and barriers, including rampant racial discrimination, stereotyping, and bias, are as pervasive and persistent as ever in federal prisons. Black prisoners represent 9.2 percent of the total incarcerated population despite representing only about 3.5 percent of the overall Canadian population, the report says.
- More than a third of them are young Black men aged 18 to 30. The investigation also found that Black prisoners were more likely to be over-represented at maximum-security institutions, involved in **"use of force incidents,"** involuntarily transferred, placed in solitary confinement, institutionally charged, and assessed as "higher-risk."
- During that investigation, Black prisoners relayed their experiences of discrimination, differential treatment, stereotyping, racial bias, and consistent use of derogatory or racist language by CSC staff.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-black-indigenous-prisoners-overrepresentation-1.6636962>
- This is not by accident. Racism is not only rampant in these systems - policing, and prisons are inherently racist and violent. The lack of oversight in the department of corrections is purposeful. They know that these systems will continually harm and kill Black people disproportionately. These patterns have carried on for decades and are foundational to the institutions of policing and prisons. There is no policing without violence against Black and Indigenous peoples.
- According to 2021 research, Quebec's correctional services group inmates by skin tone: light, pale, medium, and dark. This discriminatory classification is not used anywhere else in Canada. <https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/researcher-discovers-government-document-listing-quebec-inmates-by-skin-colour-1.5670564>

As members of the Black Community and **Justice for Nicous Spring Action Committee**, we demand:

1. The Quebec government and Department of Corrections instate a civilian oversight board that involves no police, correctional officers, or other arms of state security (current or former).
2. A full acknowledgment and apology from the city of Montreal, the SPVM, and the department of corrections (clarify with Blain)
3. That citizens are involved in the inquiry process.
4. That testimonies and results of inquiries from prisoners who were present for Nicous's death be released.
5. The footage of Nicous's death is fully released and placed in possession of his family as per their request.
6. The officers involved in Nicous's death and the supervisor responsible for overseeing them should be fired and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, with their names released to the public.
7. The reasons for Nicous's arrest and continued illegal detention be explicitly laid out and made public.
8. That over-policing of Black, Indigenous, and racialized immigrant communities in

8. That over-policing of Black, Indigenous, and racialized immigrant communities in Montréal be stopped immediately, and that funds directed to this over-policing be directed into community services such as youth centers, rape crisis centers, housing services, food security initiatives, and infrastructure.
9. An end to the use of spit masks by correctional officers.
10. An end to racial profiling and disproportionate incarceration of people of African descent in Quebec and Canadian prisons.

Media contact:

E-mail: k.coppry@gmail.com

Phone: 5146525914

#JusticeForNicous Action Committee

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