

**ActionDignity Statement against Police Brutality***October 30, 2020*

*\*Trigger warning: In the third paragraph there is a description of a violent incident.*

In June 2020, ActionDignity released a statement in support of Black Lives Matter. This statement was incredibly hard to write but necessary because of the change that we want to see in Calgary. Unfortunately, since June, we have yet to see changes in the city.

Recently, as a result of the trial against Const. Alex Dunn of Calgary Police Services (CPS), a video recording of the 2017 arrest of Dalia Kafi has been released by the trial judge. This video has since gone viral.

The video is incredibly difficult to watch as the officer escalates the situation with Kafi. In the video, we see the officer slam a handcuffed Kafi to the ground, face first, and the force of the throw causes Kafi's head to bounce off the concrete floor. One officer, who was present during the incident, described it as the "worst use of force," he had ever witnessed. After the incident, Kafi underwent surgery for a broken nose and had to receive stitches on her lip.

Kafi has had to endure an incredibly traumatic couple of years. With the trial underway, and the video made available to the public, this is undoubtedly a challenging time for her. We join Kafi in her search for justice. This never should have happened to her.

This video demonstrates police action that is abhorrent, and we empathize with the pain felt in the Black community. We deeply acknowledge and stand with the broader Black community.

We would like to highlight the process that CPS underwent after this incident. Const. Dunn was suspended for one year with pay. Recently, Const. Dunn has been brought back into the CPS for an administrative role. Both the treatment of Kafi and Dunn have amplified concerns that we have with policing. While Dunn received paid time off, Kafi received a broken nose. This is the problem with policing in Calgary.

These practices are in stark contrast to how the Calgary Police Services has been making headlines in the last couple of months. First, Police Chief Mark Neufeld was lauded for stating that there is systemic racism in the CPS. However, most recently, CPS Const. Geoff Hoover wrote an article for the Calgary Police Association's Magazine 10-4 where he described Black Lives Matter as a "police hate group." Equally concerning is how Hoover dismissed experiences of racism by stating that "systemic racism does not exist." This calls into question the internal process of the CPS – do they believe in systemic racism or do they not?

Furthermore, we would like to highlight that we have yet to see action and real changes after the City of Calgary's Public Consultation on Anti-Racism. Most of the moving testimonies from community members focused on police brutality and the racism that has long existed within policing.

The result of Const. Dunn's trial, CPS's steps to apologize to and redress Dalia Kafi, and substantial changes CPS will undertake, are tests if there is actual resolve and commitment to go beyond empty rhetoric. ActionDignity believes that it is past the time to move from words to action.

