



## **ACLU of North Dakota Statement on Excessive Use of Force Against Pipeline Protesters**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cannon Ball, N.D. --

Eyewitness accounts and video footage of nonviolent pipeline protesters engaged in civil disobedience near Cannonball, North Dakota on Saturday, September 3, 2016, highlight the use of excessive force by Dakota Access, LLC (DAPL) private security personnel on protesters.

American Civil Liberties Union of North Dakota Policy Director, Jennifer Cook:

“Dakota Access private security personnel used violent tactics on groups of men, women, and children who used nonviolent direct action, such as walking in the path of oncoming construction equipment while singing and using boisterous speech, to halt DAPL’s bulldozers from digging up land the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe believes contains sacred ancestral burial sites and other culturally significant sites. The violence that occurred on Saturday on private property was brought by DAPL’s armed private security forces who used lunging, biting dogs and pepper spray as weapons on people who were unarmed and posed no immediate physical threat to them. Such conduct is escalating an environment already filled with tension and is reminiscent of the shameful tactics used by the Birmingham police against non-violent protesters in the 1960s.

The ACLU of North Dakota stands with those peaceful protesters and urges DAPL to cease the use of violent tactics against protesters engaged in nonviolent civil disobedience. We also urge state officials and law enforcement to serve everyone fairly and equally in this dispute by ensuring nonviolent protesters are not met with excessive force by DAPL private security personnel.”

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