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A report to the people in the Central Arctic communities -- by your Territorial Councillor.

February 27, 1973

I want to write this report to the people of the Central Arctic to give you a better idea of what happened at the last session of the N.W.T. Council from January 19 to February 12, 1973.

This was the main Estimates session, the session when the council votes on the money the Government of the N.W.T. will spend during the next year, it is therefore, a very important session.

For the Central Arctic communities money was voted for the following new things which will interest you:

Gjoa Haven got \$15,000 for airstrip work
Cambridge Bay \$10,000 for road construction
Spence Bay \$60,000 for a water system
Coppermine \$35,000 for a fire truck on wheels and the tracked fire truck now in Coppermine to go to Gjoa Haven
Gjoa Haven \$20,000 for a dump truck
Cambridge Bay \$7,200 for a portable swimming pool
Cambridge Bay \$3,500 for a truck for Government Tradesmen
Gjoa Haven \$2,000 for extension of the fuel pipe line
Coppermine \$18,000 for installation of bulk fuel tank
Spence Bay \$20,000 for installation of bulk fuel tank
Cambridge Bay \$1,900 for changes in the Industrial Garage
Spence Bay \$1,060,000 for a new school
Holman Island, one more temporary classroom
Cambridge Bay \$30,000 for adult education centre
Cambridge Bay \$3,000 for furnishings for the adult centre
The Government education department had asked for \$6,000 for a car in Cambridge Bay, this was not approved because I requested that it not be sent and instead the government should support the taxi service owned and operated by an individual in Cambridge.

I made a motion and got council support, that when the government has heavy equipment operator's courses, they should hold them in the settlements and not in the south. That way we would get useful and needed work like roads and airstrips made in the settlements while people were being trained.

My motion for a hospital in Cambridge Bay, also received council's support and the Commissioner will now approach the Dept. of Health & Welfare for assistance and money.

I moved that general freight to the Central Arctic be shipped by air rather than barge, as it has been proven to be not only cheaper but for building materials, it allows the materials to arrive in the spring so we can take advantage of the summer season to work. Council supported this motion.

Council also supported my motion of establishing the governments treasury office in Cambridge Bay, rather than Fort Smith. All of you know how long it sometimes takes to get a pay cheque from the government, with the pay office in Cambridge it should speed up payments greatly.

I asked the Administration to support the request from the people of Cambridge Bay to allow useful work at reasonable rates under the welfare program and there is already supposed to have been a man, Mr. Hunter, to Cambridge Bay to set up the program with the people there.

An item which caused a great fight in council and one which I am very unhappy with, was a new gymnasium for the jail in Yellowknife, which will cost \$166,000. The Commissioner's office wanted this gym badly, but the motion was defeated 8 to 2 on the first reading. Only Mr. Searle and Mr. Parker, who are both from Yellowknife voted for it, all the other members spoke strongly against it. However, some days later the Commissioner asked for another vote on the gym for the jail and this time the council voted for the \$166,000 gym in a 7-6 vote. Those who voted for it were: Mr. Searle from Yellowknife, Mr. Phipps from Resolute Bay, Mr. Pearson from Frobisher Bay, plus the entire block of APPOINTED members. Deputy Commissioner Parker from Yellowknife, Dr. Hamelin from Quebec, Air Marshal Campbell from Ottawa, and Mr. Genest from Toronto, I want to point out that these last four councillors are not elected by people of the N.W.T., and therefore do not represent any of the people, but rather appear to represent the administration, and the federal minister who appoints them. Those who voted against the jail gym were: Mr. Trimble from Aklavik, Mr. Butters from Inuvik, Mr. Rabesca from Rae, Mr. Kaeser from Fort Smith, Mr. Adams from Rankin Inlet and myself, all of us elected by the people of our areas. We all felt that the money would be better spent in the communities for those people who live there within the laws rather than on those few who break the laws and go to the jail.

On Northern Rental houses for the Central Arctic I can report the following information which I have just had from Mr. Hancock, the Director of the Dept. of Local Government. The list as it stands at the moment is this:

Spence Bay will get 5 houses
Gjoa Haven will get 5 houses
Cambridge Bay will get 5 houses
Coppermine will get 4 houses
Holman will get no houses
Pelly Bay will get no houses

These housing figures make me very unhappy, it is for less than we need, particularly am I unhappy for Pelly Bay where the Commissioner on his visit on September 15, 1972, in a public meeting told the Pelly Bay people that his government were planning to put 5 new houses into Pelly Bay this coming summer. So far it looks like a broken promise, however, I have not given up and am still working hard to get something for houses for Pelly. At the same meeting the Commissioner also promised the Pelly Bay people a new classroom, this year, and that too there was no money for in the estimates, another empty promise.

I am very unhappy when people from the government come into the settlements and make promises to the people and then don't keep these promises. I am particularly unhappy where this person is our Commissioner, because I feel that he is one person we MUST be able to trust if our government is to have any respect and meaning at all. On the same trip in September, Mr. Hodgson promised the people of Coppermine in a public meeting, that he would come back in December to report on his efforts on houses for Coppermine, he has not been here yet.

All these broken and empty promises and also the way the administration with a block vote from the APPOINTED members pushed through the money for the gym for the jail against the wishes of the majority of the elected members has added to the belief of myself and other elected members that if we are to ever get meaningful government at the N.W.T. council level for the people whom we represent, and who elected us, then we must join together as a group and work for the best interest of the people who elected us.

Six of us (there are 10 elected members) have therefore joined together in a party, which still has no name, and we plan in the future to support each other and work for the best interest of our people. As soon as I have more news on this matter, I will report back to you. The six members are: Mr. Adams from Rankin Inlet, Mr. Butters from Inuvik, Mr. Kaeser from Fort Smith, Mr. Rabesca from Rae, Mr. Trimble from Aklavik and myself. These six councillors represent the majority of Eskimo and Indian people in the N.W.T. I would hope that you will all support me in these efforts.

I plan to travel to all communities starting in early April, and I look forward to meeting you all again there.

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