

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

8<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY, 64<sup>TH</sup> SESSION

TABLED DOCUMENT NO. 25-64

TABLED ON Feb. 13, 1978



Tabled Document No. 25-64  
Tabled 13-2-78

PROJECT NORTH / PLAN NORDIQUE

An inter church project on northern development / Un plan interéglise sur le développement du nord  
154 Glenrose Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4T 1K8 Telephone (416) 481-3574

February 6, 1976.

Mr. Bill Lyall,  
Territorial Councillor,  
The Government of the N.W.T.,  
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Dear Mr. Lyall;

I read with some concern statements attributed to you by The Canadian Press and reported in the February 4th edition of the Toronto Globe and Mail. I am afraid that if you are reported accurately, that your statements are inaccurate and strangely reminiscent of recent attacks by other territorial councillors against Native leaders and members of the Northern clergy. One cannot help but wonder of such slanderous statements, so short on fact and so long on invective, serve any useful purpose in the on-going debate about land claims and northern development.

You should know that Project North has never publicly or privately advocated a back-to-the-land policy of Northern development. You must know that Project North has never articulated any policy on behalf of any Native people. Project North has never come north except at the express invitation of the Inuit and Dene people and works always under the direction of the elected land claims organizations. Project North has never received one-cent of remuneration from any Northerners and indeed offers what skills it has in communication and southern support completely without strings.

Our directions come from the Inuit leaders both in the Land Claims Commission and in ITC and the people to whom we take our lead. I am sure that if you took the trouble to check our mandate from the churches and from people such as John Amagoalik you would find that the position of Project North and the position of the people seeking a just settlement of land claims is very similar.

We are not Southern Eskimoese, a term which is slanderous, I suggest, to your own people and simply maintain an office here in order to relate to the churches which support our work and to the south in general as requested by the Northern Native organizations.

I trust you will wish to clarify your remarks in the interest of truth.

Yours truly,

Hugh McCullum,  
Staff Co-ordinator.

cc John Amagoalik  
Michael Amarook

## Toronto church group disaster for North, Eskimo leader says

**YELLOWKNIFE (CP)** — An Eskimo member of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly has criticized what he calls "Toronto Eskimos" for the damage they have done to the way of life of the northern natives.

Bill Lyall, told the assembly's current session that officials of Project North — a Toronto-based inter-church group set up to support native people — would get a hostile reception if they returned and again

told the native people to go out and live off the land.

Mr. Lyall, member for the Central Arctic, is a former businessman, licenced mechanic and commercial fisherman.

"I say to those persons who have helped put us in a horrible economic position, who have advocated a back-to-the-land policy: You did not know what the hell you were talking about. You sure as hell did not learn anything about the land while you were up here."

Mr. Lyall urged the assembly to erect a monument to the Toronto Eskimos. He said the inscription should read: "I came (North) with nothing, I leave with lots, and I leave nothing worthwhile behind."

He said Hugh McCullum and Tony Clarke of Project North should come North now and tell the 65 or 70 people of Coppermine, who are now unemployed, that they should go back to the land and see what kind of reaction they will get.

"Sealskin prices are down and

everywhere in the Arctic trappers are not getting the catches of white fox that they used to over the past few years."

Unfortunately, Mr. Lyall said, there was nothing to fall back on. The oil industry was doing little work in the "hostile" economic development climate of today's North.

"We . . . are now expected to pick up the pieces and repair the damages."