

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
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PRINCIPLES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT

OF AN ENERGY POLICY

Presented by the Honourable George Braden

To the Legislative Assembly

For Discussion

March 1980

1. "The long term aim of this government is to achieve energy self-sufficiency for the North".

The Northwest Territories would be "Energy Self-Sufficient" through provision of energy to meet its own needs, at reasonable prices, without fear of disruption by forces outside its control.

Self-sufficiency is required to assure that serious interruptions in the supply of energy do not occur. An assured supply, at reasonable prices, will allow our potential for economic growth to be attained in the future. Furthermore, supply must be guaranteed in order to avoid unacceptable disruption to our human environment.

2. "To achieve energy self-sufficiency, the North must have a degree of control over renewable and non-renewable resources."

Recognizing that important questions concerning land and resource ownerships remain to be resolved through aboriginal rights negotiations and future constitutional development, energy self-sufficiency can only be achieved through control of Northern resources by Northern residents through their institutions of government. This government will seek to ensure that imminent federal decisions on non-renewable resource development, such as the Norman Wells development, will not prejudice control in the future, nor our goal of energy self-sufficiency.

3. "Fuel and power must be available at a price which does not unfairly handicap Northern governments, domestic consumers and the Territorial business community.

There is a need now to negotiate an energy pricing system with the Federal government that removes the energy cost handicap that Northerners must face. Preliminary to these negotiations, this government will conduct a study to determine to what extent the high cost of fuel depresses Northern economic activity and therefore to recommend the nature and size of a subsidy.

As well, we require detailed knowledge of who the chief energy users are, and the characteristics of their consumption. Preparation of such a "demand analysis" will be undertaken now.

In the long term, Northern institutions of government will be able to adjust energy prices as appropriate without recourse to other jurisdictions.

4. "Alternative energy sources should be adopted whenever practicable and cost effective."

Given the high cost of oil, alternative energy sources in the Northwest Territories must be identified and, if feasible developed. This government will undertake to examine these alternative sources at the community and regional levels, including but not restricted to coal, wood, small scale natural gas, and hydro electricity.

5. "This government should assume a lead role in energy conservation measures in the Northwest Territories.."

An effective unified approach must be taken to conservation programs such as public education, the design of energy billing systems and questions of building design.

Common and unified effort is also required for the development of a Northern Building Code and for energy pilot projects such as NCPC waste heat reclamation and garbage incineration for steam generation.

The relationship between conservation and NCPC electric power rates will be examined. It is quite possible that under the existing legislation, serious conservation measures would not reduce electricity billings as much as expected.

6. The energy-related efforts of government departments and agencies will be coordinated under the authority of a Minister responsible for Energy.

It is clear that a number of departments within this government as well as several agencies, study groups and foundations, are currently working on aspects of the energy problem of the Northwest Territories.

Some overlap in activity is evident and some aspects are not being adequately dealt with.

To organize this government's effort for the complete and effective treatment of the energy problem, work should be coordinated by a Minister responsible for energy.