

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
10TH ASSEMBLY, 4TH SESSION

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WESTERN CONSTITUTIONAL FORUM

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MAR 14 1985

Mr. Billy Day, President
Committee for Original Peoples
Entitlement
P. O. Box #2000
INUVIK, NWT
XOE-OTO

13 March 85

Dear Mr. Day,

I was disappointed to learn from your letter of March 11th, that you are no longer willing to meet with WCF on March 15, 1985, as we had previously agreed.

Selecting a boundary is becoming a very difficult and painful process. I understand the fears many of the people you represent have about being a minority in a western territory. It is a concern they share with the Dene and Metis who will find themselves in the same predicament if division takes place. At the same time, I realize that the Inuvialuit have a history of interactions and relationships which bind them to the west.

The WCF is very serious about exploring a wide range of mechanisms including regional government by which the rights of the Inuvialuit could be protected. However we consider it a bit unreasonable of you to demand that we endorse W.A.R.M. before negotiations even begin, and this stand is even more unreasonable when you offer no substantial commitment in return.

We have not categorically rejected W.A.R.M. as you suggest. We are prepared to treat this proposal very seriously in any future negotiations between the WCF and the Inuvialuit.

We have worked hard to prepare ourselves for the March 15th meeting. A bit more time will not do any harm. We continue to look forward to receiving the position papers on these issues you made a commitment to provide. This is a complex matter and it deserves careful thought and preparations.

Mr. Billy Day, President
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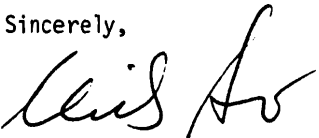
However it would be a shame if such a meeting was cancelled altogether. The WCF has looked forward to a serious working meeting with the Inuvialuit for over two years. In quoting the January agreement of the Constitutional Alliance that the Inuvialuit will be in a western territory, we have always made it clear that the agreement was subject to the WCF and Inuvialuit reaching an agreement on principles whereby the future of the Inuvialuit would be secure.

Larry Tourangeau is right when he says, "We'll never know what could be accomplished unless we try." I think we have an obligation to the people we represent and to the people in the east who appear to want division so badly to make a serious and genuine attempt at reaching an agreement.

At the same time I want to clearly state once again that we will not interpret such a meeting as a commitment on the part of the Inuvialuit to join the western territory. A decision to join the west would be subject to the WCF and the Inuvialuit reaching a mutually acceptable tentative agreement on principles and then subject to the ratification of these principles by Inuvialuit communities.

I earnestly hope that you will reconsider your decision to cancel our meeting and that a new date can be set for the near future. In the meantime the WCF will continue to analyze the W.A.R.M. proposal and to consider what rights and guarantees we are able to offer to the Inuvialuit.

Sincerely,



Nick Sibbeston
Chairman

