

NWT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY NEWS RELEASES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OCTOBER 16, 1995 ELECTION RESULTS RELEASED

YELLOWKNIFE (January 22, 1996) - The official voting results of the October 16, 1995 territorial general election have been published by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, Jean Pierre Kingsley.

The election saw electors in the Northwest Territories voting for a record 91 candidates who were contesting 23 seats in the Legislative Assembly. In the electoral district of Nahendeh, Jim Antoine was elected by acclamation. Maintaining the territorial tradition of consensus government, all candidates ran as independents, rather than as members of a political party.

Section 162 of the *Northwest Territories Elections Act* requires that a report be published after each general election. The statistical report has been prepared in English, French and Inuktitut and includes, by polling division, the number of votes cast for each candidate, the number of rejected ballots and the number of names on the official list of electors together with any other relevant information. Also included in the report are the poll-by-poll voting results of the May 8, 1995, by-election in Aivilik.

Copies of the report, entitled "Official Voting Results - Election of the Thirteenth Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories 1995" are available to members of the public by calling 669-2230 in Yellowknife or toll free, 1-800-661-0784. The Chief Electoral Officer is preparing a detailed report on the administration and costs of the 1995 general election which will be presented to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in April.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

13th LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTION EXPENSE REPORTS
YELLOWKNIFE (January 22, 1996) - Election expense reports for candidates who sought election in the October 16, 1995 territorial general election are available for public review and are being published in newspapers across the north.

Constituency by constituency results will be published in the appropriate regional and local papers. The complete set of returns will be tabled by the Clerk at the next session of the Legislative Assembly, which resumes February 14, at 1:30 p.m.

Copies of the returns filed by the candidates and official agents are available to electors through written requests to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly between January 15, 1996 and June 15, 1996.

The return sets out the total amount of money received and spent by each candidate. All donations of more than \$100 in cash, or in goods and services, are listed. Candidates may spend up to \$20,000 of their own money but may only receive a tax-deductible receipt for \$1,500.

The deadline for filing returns was December 15, 1995, 60 days after the October 16, 1995 election.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ARVIAT TO HOST 5th NUNAVUT LEADERS' CONFERENCE

YELLOWKNIFE (January 25) - Nunavut Caucus Chair John Ningark announced today that Arviat will host the 5th Nunavut Leaders' Summit, February 9-11, 1996.

Premier Don Morin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and Nunatsiag MP Jack Anawak, Jose Kusugak, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), John Amagoalik, Chief Commissioner of the Nunavut Implementation Commission (NIC), the eleven Nunavut M.L.A.s and regional Inuit organizations have been invited to attend the three day conference, hosted by Kivallivik M.L.A. Kevin O'Brien.

The meeting will be an opportunity for Nunavut leaders to be informed on the current status of preparations for the establishment of Nunavut on April 1, 1999 and agree on a timetable for the remaining thirty-seven months. Major agenda topics include: discussions on the incremental costs of creating two new Territories - both capital and ongoing maintenance - and establishing the office of the Interim Commissioner.

Mr. Ningark said, "It is timely for Nunavut Leaders to collectively assess where we are with the creation of the Nunavut Government and to establish the events that have to occur from now to 1999. We hope by the end of the three day summit that we will have our countdown schedule established and the mechanisms set in place to get us there."

The Nunavut Leaders' Summit is an annual meeting of the principal decision makers guiding the development of Nunavut.

- 30 -

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96-05

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TUTCHO RECOMMENDED FOR APPOINTMENT AS LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER

YELLOWKNIFE (March 20) - Members of the Legislative Assembly passed a motion earlier today recommending the appointment of Judi Tutcho as the Northwest Territories new official Languages Commissioner.

"We are very pleased to recommend Ms. Tutcho for appointment to this important position. Dwindling language funding and increased demand for services will present to her a large challenge," said Seamus Henry, chairman of the Languages Commissioner's Recruitment Committee. "We are confident she will be up to the task."

Born in Deline, Ms. Tutcho earned her Bachelor of Education from the University of Saskatchewan. She also holds a N.W.T. teaching certificate and is a graduate of Arctic College's Teacher Education Program.

A long-time educator, Ms. Tutcho has most recently been the principal of the Techtseo Ayha School in Deline. She is fluent in both English and North Slavey.

Section 18(1) of the *Official Languages Act* permits the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories to appoint a Languages Commissioner after approval of the appointment by resolution of the Legislative Assembly.

The Languages Commissioner is responsible for ensuring the recognition of the rights and privileges of each of the N.W.T.'s eight official languages and compliance with the spirit and intent of the *Official Languages Act*. Her appointment is to be effective May 1, 1996.

Ms. Tutcho will replace former Languages Commissioner Betty Harnum whose term expired January 31.

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96-06

YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE MLA CALLS FOR SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMY

Yellowknife (March 25, 1996) Jake Ootes, MLA Yellowknife Centre is calling on the territorial legislature to establish a Special Committee of MLAs to discuss ways to repair the Northern economy.

"We, in this house, must not only deal solely with deficit management. Let's not just roll along and let these cost-cutting measures lead us to despondency," Mr Ootes said in the Legislative Assembly Friday. "Let's wrestle with this ugly problem."

Mr. Ootes said while recognizing the government has to get its financial house in order, the same priority has to be given to the economy and job creation. He said he agrees with comments, made earlier last week, by his colleague Kevin O'Brien, MLA Kivallivik, that the Legislative Assembly has to deal with the social and economic concerns facing the N.W.T.

The Legislative Assembly, led by MLAs, has to develop some key strategies to address job creation which in turn will alleviate some of the demand for social programs, Mr. Ootes said.

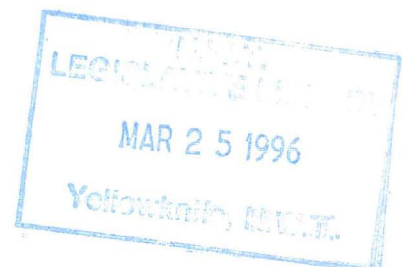
The special committee would give MLAs an opportunity to review ways to replace the shrinking federal dollars the N.W.T. receives. Mr. Ootes suggests membership on the committee be limited to four members. The committee could look at issues such as unemployment and review reports such as the SCONE reports from 1989.

He also suggested the committee could also consider opportunities to create internships for youths involving business and industry and creating entry-level jobs.

Mr. Ootes said he supports Premier Don Morin's plan to establish an Advisory Council on the Economy and Employment. The special committee would complement that process and provide valuable ideas that could be discussed by the business community and industry.

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96-07

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WESTERN ARCTIC RESIDENTS ASKED TO NAME NEW TERRITORY

Yellowknife (March 28, 1996) Residents of the Western territory are being asked to come up with a name for the new territory in preparation for division in 1999.

"This is a unique and exciting opportunity for residents in the Western Arctic to participate in naming the new territory," said Jane Groenewegen, Chairperson of the Name the Western Territory sub-committee. "Not only will residents be asked to submit suggestions but they will also choose the name in a vote to be held in November."

More details on the process for choosing a name will be released in late April but Mrs. Groenewegen said leaders are looking for a name that is easy to pronounce and spell. The name can be an existing word or a new word. Use of the official languages of the Northwest Territories is also an important consideration.

A number of options for submitting names are being explored including a 1-800-phone line and distributing packages to schools and local government offices.

Michael Miltenberger, Chairman of the Western MLAs Caucus, said leaders want to receive suggestions from all residents who have names they think would be a good choice. "This is an important first step in creating a new identity for the West after division and the creation of Nunavut," he added.

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Northwest
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96-08

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAMING THE WESTERN TERRITORY

Yellowknife (April 19, 1996) Residents in the Western Arctic can now submit suggestions for a name for the new territory after division in 1999.

Suggestions can be submitted by mail to the Western Caucus of the Legislative Assembly, by calling the 1-800-661-0784 toll-free line and the constituency offices of Western Arctic MLAs. Suggestions can also be sent via the Internet on North of 60 at new_name@gov.nt.ca.

"We want to hear from everyone in the Western Arctic who thinks they have a good suggestion for a name for our new territory after division," said Jane Groenewegen, Chairperson of the Name the Western Territory sub-committee. "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to suggest a name for the territory where we live."

The deadline for sending in suggestions is July 31, 1996. Leaders are looking for a name that is easy to say and spell. Names may be an existing or original word and could be in any of the Western Arctic's official languages.

When submitting names, residents are asked to include their suggestion, proper spelling and their name and address. The reason for suggesting a name is optional.

Information packages have been sent to schools, band councils, Metis locals and municipal offices in the Western Arctic.

Western Arctic residents will vote on a name for the new territory later this year.

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96-09

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ARVIAT TO HOST 5th NUNAVUT LEADERS' CONFERENCE

YELLOWKNIFE (April 23) - Nunavut Caucus Co-chairs John Ningark and Levi Barnabas announced today that Arviat will host the 5th Nunavut Leaders' Summit, May 10-11, 1996.

The Summit had previously been scheduled for February 9-11.

The Hon. Ron Irwin, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, Premier Don Morin, Nunatsiaq MP Jack Anawak, Jose Kusugak, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), John Amagoalik, Chief Commissioner of the Nunavut Implementation Commission (NIC), the eleven Nunavut M.L.A.s and regional Inuit organizations have been invited to attend the two-day conference, hosted by Kivallivik M.L.A. Kevin O'Brien.

The meeting will be an opportunity for Nunavut leaders to be informed of, and discuss, the current status of preparations for the establishment of Nunavut on April 1, 1999 and agree on a timetable for the remaining thirty-six months. Major agenda topics include: discussions on the incremental costs of creating two new Territories—both capital and ongoing maintenance— and establishing the office of the Interim Commissioner.

Mr. Ningark said, "It is crucial that Nunavut Leaders collectively assess where we are with the creation of the Nunavut Government and to establish the timetable for events that have to occur from now to 1999. We anticipate that by the end of the two-day summit we will have our countdown schedule established and the mechanisms set in place to get us there."

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96-10

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER'S REPORT TABLED

Yellowknife (May 3) - The Hon. Speaker Sam Gargan today tabled the Chief Electoral Officer's Report on the 1995 Territorial General Election which recommends a workplan for the countdown to Division.

The report provides a three-year blueprint to ensure that the Legislative Assemblies for Nunavut and the Western territory will be ready for Division in 1999.

The report, prepared by Chief Electoral Officer Jean-Pierre Kingsley, recommends that boundary commissions be appointed for both Nunavut and the Western territory by August 1996, starting work in September.

The process and establishment of new electoral boundaries will take two years, including the required six-month waiting period before the new boundaries come into effect, making it essential that the boundary commissions start work this fall.

"It is recommended that firm decisions be reached by December 1996 on a structure for electoral administration in the two territories with the two electoral offices to be operational by April 1997, and the appropriate interim funding in place to April 1, 1999," Mr. Kingsley said in his report.

The report also recommends that the Legislative Assembly consider appointing a Commissioner of Elections for the Northwest Territories, similar to that in the federal election system. This position would review and investigate all complaints and alleged breaches of electoral law.

The 54-page report also outlines the 37 complaints received during the 1995 territorial election and the action taken to address the concerns.

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96-11

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NUNAVUT LEADERS' SUMMIT

Yellowknife (May 14) - Members of the Nunavut Caucus are not happy with the \$150 million that the Government of Canada has allocated towards the creation of Nunavut.

"The money the federal government has promised for the creation of Nunavut is a far cry from what we expected," said Nunavut Caucus Co-Chairman John Ningark. "We are going to have to work together to realize our dream of Nunavut. We are up for the challenge, collectively we can do it."

Several members of the Nunavut Caucus expressed concerns, at last weekend's Nunavut Leaders' Summit in Arviat, that \$150 million is just not enough money to create the new territory.

Mr. Ningark noted when the approximately \$31 million that the federal government will take from the \$150 million for infrastructure and transitional dollars is taken into consideration, the amount allocated for the creation of Nunavut is little more than \$118 million.

"That's less than the territorial government spends in its capital budget annually," Mr. Ningark said.

The Nunavut Caucus is also very concerned about funding for Nunavut and the Western territory after 1999. At the Arviat Summit federal officials confirmed that a large share of the costs for division and the creation of Nunavut will be based on the formula financing agreements for the two territories.

Nunavut MLAs said that's why it is crucial for negotiations to begin immediately on funding agreements for the two territories after division. Finance Minister John Todd will be meeting with Nunavut Tunngavik's secretary-treasurer in the near future to discuss these funding formulas.

"We do not want to see the new territory of Nunavut and our sister in the West start off from a poor financial position that we can never get out from under," Mr. Ningark noted.

Nunavut leaders also agreed in Arviat that recruitment of an interim commissioner has to begin immediately to ensure the timelines for division are met.





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"With the creation of Nunavut scheduled for April 1, 1999 it is crucial that an interim commissioner be in place by the fall," said Caucus Co-Chairman Levi Barnabas.

Nunavut leaders reached consensus on a process for recruiting and selecting an interim commissioner. The interim commissioner will be appointed by the Government of Canada in consultation with the Government of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.

Nunavut MLAs also said having Public Works Canada managing infrastructure development will be a duplication of services.

"More work has to be done on infrastructure and the roles of all the parties," said Mr. Barnabas. "There are still some outstanding issues but all parties are committed to working together to find resolutions."

Summit delegates also agreed that the three parties should meet more regularly as they move closer to Division and the creation of Nunavut.

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96-12

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MLAS ROLLBACK COST OF LIVING INCREASE

Yellowknife (May 21) - Members of the Legislative Assembly have agreed to rollback the 2.1 per cent automatic increase in their expenses and living allowances that they received earlier this year.

"It was clear from the number of petitions MLAs received on the issue of their compensation that the public wasn't satisfied," said Hay River MLA Jane Groenewegen. "This motion will eliminate the 2.1 per cent increase to our expenses and allowances we received earlier this year."

Mrs. Groenewegen introduced a motion in the Legislative Assembly today calling for the rollback. The *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* automatically provides for the annual increase based on the Consumer Price Index for Canada.

The 2.1 per cent increase paid to Members of the Legislative Assembly since the increase was effected April 1 will be recovered immediately.

"MLAs are committed to doing their share to help reduce the deficit and deal with the fiscal difficulties facing our government," said Yellowknife Centre MLA Jake Ootes, who seconded the motion. "This further demonstrates that we, as politicians, are willing to lead by example."

MLAs reduced their base salary and indemnities by seven per cent in March in response to recommendations in the *Report of the Commission on MLA Compensation*. MLAs also agreed to eliminate their three per cent supplementary pension plan bringing their pension plan more into line with employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

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96-13

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GOVERNOR GENERAL TO VISIT NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Yellowknife (May 24) - Their Excellencies The Governor General and Mrs. LeBlanc will visit the Northwest Territories next month.

Commissioner Helen Maksagak on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories will host the Governor General and Mrs. LeBlanc during their visit to Yellowknife June 19 and 20 and the Hay River Reserve June 21.

While in Yellowknife His Excellency will present the official Canadian Ranger Crest to the Rangers at the Canadian Forces Northern Area Headquarters, attend a luncheon at the Legislative Assembly and visit school children.

The Governor General and Mrs. LeBlanc will be on the Hay River Reserve to celebrate the first National Aboriginal Day.

This will be the first trip to the Northwest Territories for the Governor General and his wife. Additional details of the visit will be made available closer to Their Excellencies' scheduled date of arrival.

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96 - 14

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Investment Search Sub-Committee Commences Work

Yellowknife (June 17, 1996) -- Members of the Investment Search Sub-Committee are heading to the Maritimes next week as part of the Legislative Assembly's effort to attract new investment dollars to the Northwest Territories.

"This trip is a chance for Members to see firsthand the programs that have been developed in smaller provinces in an effort to attract more investment and create jobs," said Finance Minister John Todd.

The Sub-Committee is a joint working group consisting of Mr. Todd and Members designated by the Legislative Assembly's Government Operations Committee.

"We need to be aggressive in our attempts to attract new investment to the Northwest Territories," said Yellowknife North MLA Roy Erasmus, Chairman of the Government Operations Committee. "We hope to come back with some ideas on improving the partnership between government and the private sector."

This trip is a follow-up to initiatives announced earlier this year by Mr. Todd and Premier Don Morin. In his 1996-97 Budget Address, Mr. Todd said the government would "aggressively market the Northwest Territories as a developing, but stable environment for both small and large scale investment."

Mention of the Legislative Assembly's plan to attract new investment dollars and capital is also included in *Building A Foundation for the Future: The Northwest Territories Agenda for Change*. The Premier has also established a 16-member Panel on the Economy and Employment to advise the government on how to improve the economy of the Northwest Territories and the relationship between government and the private sector.

Members traveling to the Maritimes on Tuesday include Mr. Todd, Mr. Erasmus, North Slave MLA James Rabesca, Mackenzie-Delta MLA David Krutko, Iqaluit MLA Ed Picco and Natilikmiot MLA John Ningark.

Members of the Sub-Committee will meet with various groups in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. In New Brunswick they will meet with officials from the Advantage New Brunswick Program, a program designed to attract new businesses to the province and diversify the economy. They will also have meetings with officials from the Service New Brunswick Program and the New Brunswick Venture Capital Program.



In Nova Scotia, MLAs will meet staff with the province's Equity Tax Credit Plan and the Community Economic Development Agency.

Sub-Committee members will be briefed by officials on initiatives undertaken to ensure economic benefits from the Voisey Bay development remain in the province and the Edge Program while in Newfoundland.

The Investment Search Sub-Committee will report to the Legislative Assembly when the Session resumes in the fall, Mr. Erasmus said.

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96-15

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PREPARES FOR GOVERNOR
GENERAL VISIT**

**Yellowknife (June 17) - Plans for next week's visit of the Governor General
and Madame Diana Fowler LeBlanc have been finalized.**

Governor General Romeo LeBlanc and Madame Diana Fowler LeBlanc will arrive at the Department of National Defence hangar in Yellowknife at 9 p.m. June 19.

The Governor General and his wife will present the official Canadian Rangers Crest to Rangers at a ceremony at the Department of National Defence Northern Headquarters at 10 a.m. June 20.

Residents of the City of Yellowknife can meet the Governor General and Madame Fowler LeBlanc during a walk from the DND Northern Headquarters to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. Their Excellencies will leave Northern Headquarters at 10:45 a.m. June 20, stopping along the way to lay flowers at the Mining Monument and to plant a tree with local Boy Scouts.

A luncheon will be held Thursday in honor of Their Excellencies at the Legislative Assembly. The luncheon is being hosted by the Hon. Sam Gargan, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and the Hon. Goo Arlooktoo, Deputy Premier of the Northwest Territories.

The Governor General and his wife will also visit with students at J.H. Sissons, Ecole Alain St-Cyr and St. Patrick's schools in Yellowknife. The Governor General will also take part in the Order of St. John Jerusalem presentation Thursday.

On June 21 the Governor General and Mrs. LeBlanc will fly to Hay River and spend part of the day on the Hay River Reserve. Residents of Hay River can greet the Governor General and his wife during a visit to the Town of Hay River office. Their Excellencies will travel to the Hay River Reserve to meet with Chief Pat Martel and tour the Dene Cultural Institute and the Nat'sejee K'eh Centre.

The Governor General will also officially open the Yellowknife Midnight Classic golf tournament June 21. Their Excellencies will leave Yellowknife for Calgary June 22.

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96-16

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Commissioner becomes first Inuk woman to be granted Coat of Arms

Yellowknife (June 25) - The Hon. Helen Maksagak, Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, is the first Inuk woman in the world to be granted a Coat of Arms following last week's visit by the Governor General of Canada and his wife.

Governor General Romeo LeBlanc presented Mrs. Maksagak with the Coat of Arms during a private barbecue at her residence June 21.

The design of the Coat of Arms also includes a number of firsts: the first time a parka hood was used instead of the traditional steel helmet and the first use of an inukshuk.

The shield is purple with an inukshuk in the centre symbolizing Mrs. Maksagak's work as a community leader and role model, a fulfillment of the prediction made for her to be a spiritual mother to the motherless. This also draws a parallel between Mrs. Maksagak's life and the purpose of an Inukshuk, to guide and direct and be a stable point of reference in a changing world. The six stones of the inukshuk represent Mrs. Maksagak's six children.

The crest is set on an Inuit parka hood celebrating the Commissioner's Inuit culture. Above the parka is the upper half of the figure of an Inuk woman wearing a parka similar to those worn by women in Cambridge Bay, the Commissioner's home community, and holding an ulu. The half-figure represents Mrs. Maksagak's service to her community.

The shield rests on a bank of snow and open water and is adorned by a caribou and an Arctic wolf on either side.

The motto on the shield, *Apkutikson Nalunaikniagiga*, is the Inuvialuktun translation for *I will show the way*. This motto was chosen to reflect Mrs. Maksagak's mission and determined spirit.

The granting of the Coat of Arms allows Mrs. Maksagak to use it on letterhead and her family will be able to use it in perpetuity.

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96-17

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MLAS FIND NEW IDEAS FOR ATTRACTING INVESTMENT

Yellowknife (June 28) - Members of the Investment Search Sub-Committee have returned from meetings, with Ministers and senior officials in Atlantic Canada, with some new ideas and approaches to attracting investment capital to the Northwest Territories.

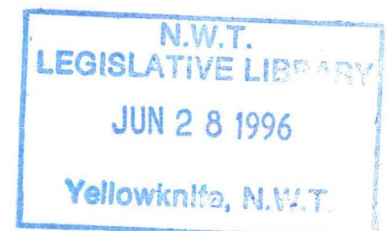
"Members of the Sub-Committee found that the problems faced by Atlantic Canada businesses in finding reasonably-priced investment capital were quite similar to the problems faced by N.W.T. businesses," said Government Operations Committee Chairman Roy Erasmus. "We were impressed with the results that governments in Atlantic Canada had in designing programs that attracted new investment in the region."

Sub-Committee members believe some of the initiatives currently at work in Atlantic Canada could work in the Northwest Territories. Finance Minister John Todd said the working group wants to move quickly on the ideas and information they heard about in the Maritimes.

"We hope to move aggressively on the work of the Investment Search Sub-Committee with implementation of some of the recommendations as early as this fall," said Mr. Todd. "As I noted in my Budget Address, this Government is committed to investigating initiatives to attract new investment in the Northwest Territories economy and create much needed jobs in our communities."

In the 25 meetings with officials in Fredericton, Halifax and St. John's Sub-Committee members took particular interest in:

- The aggressive campaign the New Brunswick government has initiated to "seek and capture" new business investment.
- The income tax incentive program adopted by the Province of Nova Scotia that allows communities and regions to play a primary role in attracting investment in local businesses.
- The Immigrant Investment program that has been established by Nova Scotia and is in the final stages of development in Newfoundland and New Brunswick. Through this program, lower cost investment capital is made available to finance new businesses or expansions.



- The Atlantic Fund, a partnership between the banks, the Government of Canada and the Atlantic Canada governments. This fund will actively seek out equity investments in businesses across the region.
- The labor venture fund in Nova Scotia that provides financial incentives for residents to invest in Nova Scotia businesses.
- The successful corporate tax incentive programs adopted by the Province of Newfoundland to encourage new businesses or the expansion of existing businesses.

Sub-Committee members were also very impressed with the efforts of the Government of Newfoundland in maximizing the economic benefits of the Voisey Bay Project and of the potential to adapt this model to large scale non-renewable resource projects in the Northwest Territories.

In addition, the Sub-Committee examined the information technology initiatives of the governments of New Brunswick and Newfoundland and the foundation was set for future co-operation in this area. This will be of significant assistance in the implementation of the digital communications initiative announced in Mr. Todd's 1996-97 Budget Address. Telemedicine and other distance health programs as well as distance education initiatives in Atlantic Canada offer potential solutions for the Northwest Territories in enhancing the cost-effectiveness of these essential services.

The Sub-Committee will submit a detailed report on these and other initiatives for consideration by the Government Operations Committee at its meetings in July. Recommendations on specific programs and initiatives will then be forwarded to the Legislative Assembly in its fall session.

Other Sub-Committee members who traveled to Atlantic Canada were Iqaluit MLA Ed Picco, Natilikmiot MLA John Ningark, Mackenzie-Delta David Krutko and North Slave MLA James Rabesca. The Sub-Committee was formed to identify initiatives and programs to stimulate new investment in the Northwest Territories.

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NEWS RELEASE

CONFLICT COMPLAINT AGAINST GROENEWEGEN DISMISSED

Yellowknife (July 11) - Chief Conflict of Interest Commissioner Joel Fournier has dismissed a conflict of interest complaint against Hay River MLA Jane Groenewegen.

In the complaint received May 2, 1996 by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly Greg Rowe from Hay River Mobile Park Ltd., the successful bidder on the contract, alleged that Mrs. Groenewegen had interfered in the process. He also accused her of crossing the lines of what proper, noting Greenway Holdings Ltd., a company in which Mrs. Groenewegen has a controlling interest, had also submitted a proposal for a small portion of the space being tendered. The report states that it was suggested to Mr. Fournier in many of his interviews that this case may have been motivated by political bias.

But Mr. Fournier said he was satisfied that while Mrs. Groenewegen erred in her judgment, it was in good faith. He suggested that Mrs. Groenewegen, who recognized early in the process the potential for conflict, should have stayed out of the process completely or insisted that Greenway's proposal be withdrawn.

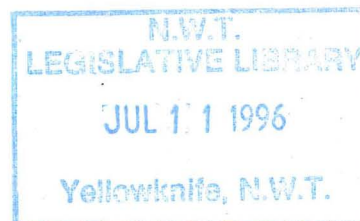
Mrs. Groenewegen said she agrees that she should not become involved in this issue and felt at the time compelled to respond to the requests of a number of her constituents to allow their concerns to be heard by the minister.

"There are many areas of concern that MLAs, still involved in business, have to be aware of to comply with the conflict legislation," said Mrs. Groenewegen. "This situation has brought this to my attention early on in my role as MLA for Hay River. Now I can continue with the work of representing the best interests of my constituents."

The Chief Conflict of Interest Commissioner investigates complaints made against Members of the Legislative Assembly. The above noted complaint was dismissed July 10, 1996.

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96-18

For Immediate Release

Deadline for Name the Western Territory Approaches

Yellowknife (July 18) - Northerners have less than two weeks to get their suggestions in to name the Western territory after division.

"Initially we heard from those who definitely want to keep the name Northwest Territories," said Hay River MLA Jane Groenewegen, Chair of the Name the Western Territory Sub-Committee. "In the last two weeks we have heard from those who want to see the name changed. For example the name Nahendeh, suggested earlier by two MLAs in the Assembly, has been suggested several times recently."

Western MLAs are planning to meet in September to determine the next step in the process. If a vote is necessary, Western MLAs will select up to five names from those suggested to be on the ballot, most likely the five most popular suggestions.

Members will review the list to ensure that a name which is disrespectful or offensive doesn't make it on the ballot.

"With only two weeks left to make suggestions all Western residents are urged to let us know what our land should be called on April 1, 1999," said Mrs. Groenewegen.

Suggestions can be sent by mail to the Western Caucus of the Legislative Assembly, by phoning 669-2200 (in Yellowknife) or toll-free 1-800-661-0784, by fax at 873-0276 or toll-free fax 1-800-661-0879 or via the Internet on North of 60 at new_name@gov.nt.ca. Suggestions can also be sent to the constituency offices of Western MLAs.

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96-19

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Name Suggestion Deadline Extended

Yellowknife (July 29) - The deadline for name suggestions for the new Western Territory has been extended until August 31, 1996.

"Many people are on holidays and some of the aboriginal assemblies have yet to meet so it's possible that some suggestions might not get in by the end of July," said Hay River MLA Jane Groenewegen, Chairperson of the Name the Western Territory Sub-Committee. "Extending the deadline should allow every person or organization who wants to make a suggestion to do so."

To date 183 names have been proposed, with the most frequently suggested name being "Northwest Territories."

People can submit their suggestions writing to the Western Caucus c/o Legislative Assembly of the N.W.T. or by calling toll-free 1-800-661-0784.

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96-28

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMMITTEE RELEASES INVESTMENT TRIP REPORT

Yellowknife (July 31) - The Standing Committee on Government Operations supports the report of the Investment Search Sub-Committee and is forwarding it and its recommendations to the Premier's office.

"We are recommending that the Premier direct his cabinet to proceed immediately with further examination and investigation of the proposed investment support program," said Committee Chairman Roy Erasmus.

Mr. Erasmus and the Hon. John Todd, Finance Minister, released the three-part report, in Yellowknife today, on the recent trip to Atlantic Canada by members of the Investment Search Sub-Committee. The report is being released in an effort to stimulate public discussion.

The report states that the Government has to create an environment where people will be willing to provide the necessary risk capital to fund the start-up and expansion of businesses in the Northwest Territories.

"We have to create an environment where both residents and non-residents are encouraged to invest in the Northwest Territories," said Mr. Todd. "By enhancing business opportunities we can create more employment for N.W.T. residents and reduce the Government's dependence on federal transfer payments."

The report outlines the Investment Support Program and the four complementary elements, including:

- Aggressive N.W.T. "Investment Prospecting",
- WELCOME - an N.W.T. Corporate Investment Incentive Plan,
- NorthTIIP - a Northwest Territories Taxpayer Investment Incentive Plan;
- Aurora - a government-controlled Immigrant Investor Fund.

Mr. Todd noted that on-going funding for this strategy is minimal, compared to the projected benefits. He said the Sub-Committee expects the Government's direct expenditures for the strategy can be fully recovered within two years.



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96-21

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CO-ORDINATED EFFORT IS KEY, SAYS SOCIAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Yellowknife (August 13) - Members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs are encouraging government departments to work together in a co-ordinated fashion to ensure that the benefits of major program initiatives are maximized.

Committee members met last week in Yellowknife to discuss the Government's progress on several initiatives including Income Support Reform, Community Justice, Community Wellness and Community Empowerment. Members noted that while the four initiatives are important and necessary they will not work in isolation of one another.

"These programs are all inextricably linked," said Michael Miltenberger, Deputy Chairman of the Committee. "There must be a co-ordinated and integrated approach at both the planning and delivery levels for it to work."

During the August 7 to 10 meetings Committee members met with Education, Culture and Employment Minister Charles Dent, Health and Social Services and Justice Minister Kelvin Ng and senior department officials.

Other issues discussed in the context of these initiatives included the changing role of Regional Specialists, the focus of regional workshops and conferences, training and monitoring and evaluation.

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96-22

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEMBERS OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY CONCERNED ABOUT FAIRNESS

Yellowknife (August 12) - Three Members of the Legislative Assembly are advising their fellow Members that as the Government enters the second year of its deficit management plan, all communities need to be treated fairly and equitably.

"When we started the difficult process of trying to balance the Government's budget most members quickly realized that it would be a two year process," said Inuvik MLA Floyd Roland. "However, everyone pulled together in supporting a wide range of reductions."

Most MLAs did so because we had all agreed that the reductions would be fair and equitable and that everyone in the North was going to share in the burden of dealing with our huge deficit, Mr. Roland explained.

Mr. Roland, Thebacha MLA Michael Miltenberger and Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry have provided their fellow MLAs with detailed information on the number of jobs affected in each community as a result of government cutbacks and other initiatives. The detailed figures were gathered with the assistance of staff in the GNWT departments, health and education boards, the colleges and the Housing and Power Corporations.

"There is a significant disparity in the level of reductions to different communities," said Mr. Miltenberger. "It is clear that some communities have already done their share to help fight the deficit in 1996-97. It is also clear that other communities will have to make the major contributions during the reductions which may come in the business plans for 1997-98."

Mr. Henry points out the morale in the Public Service, particularly in communities where a large percentage of the cuts have occurred, is at an all-time low and has to be addressed.

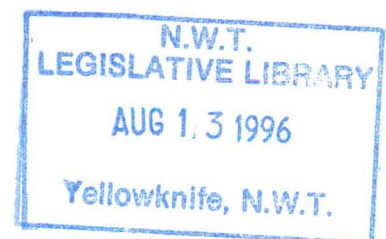
"We said everyone was going to take their fair share of the burden; this will have to happen in the second year of our deficit reduction plan," Mr. Henry said. "When we review the 1997-98 business plans all Members and Ministers will be able to use this information to help us ensure that the reductions over the two years are fair and equitable to all communities and N.W.T. residents."

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96-23

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

YELLOWKNIFE NORTH MLA ROY ERASMUS SAYS FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MUST DO MORE TO SETTLE CLAIMS

Yellowknife (August 13) - A Yellowknife MLA is warning that the federal government's failure to properly address Aboriginal land ownership issues in its recent conditional approval of the BHP Diamonds project could lead to trouble for the company.

"I believe in development. And it's very encouraging that both the federal and territorial governments seem to have listened, to some extent, to Northerners' concerns about the environment and about benefits from the project," says Roy Erasmus, MLA Yellowknife North.

"But the federal government should put at least as much effort into settling Aboriginal claims as it does into supporting mineral exploration."

The federal government responded to the report of the federal environmental assessment review panel on August 8. Federal Indian Affairs Minister Ron Irwin said the project had federal Cabinet approval conditional on substantial progress on a legally binding environmental agreement among the company, government and aboriginal groups, and on Impact and Benefit agreements between BHP and each aboriginal group, prior to the granting of major licences and permits required for project construction.

But the federal government also agreed with the panel's three recommendations regarding land claims and Aboriginal rights, in spite of opposition from several Aboriginal groups in the region.

Erasmus supports NWT Premier Don Morin's call for Ottawa to fast-track land negotiations with the Dene and Metis in the region, as they have promised to do for the native people of Labrador faced with the massive Voisey's Bay development. He says that means more resources and a timetable, not just the federal government's commitment to ongoing negotiations.

Erasmus, a lawyer by training, points out that the federal government has a legal obligation to protect Aboriginal interests. He says it's hard to see how they are protecting the interests of the Treaty 8 Yellowknives in his riding, when the government is continually stalling talks and the federal land claims policy is applied differently in the western N.W.T. than it was in Nunavut.

"During the environmental assessment review panel hearings, we learned that the federal government all of a sudden will not allow either the Yellowknives or the Dogrib to select 'lands in an advanced state of exploration'," Erasmus says. "That's different from what they told me when I was working as a negotiator for the Yellowknives, and it's different from the way they treated the Inuit."

Both the Yellowknives and the Treaty II Dogrib had hoped to claim the land on which BHP proposes to build its project.

Erasmus says no one he has talked to in industry has ever heard of "advanced exploration." "It's either exploration or development," he says. "The federal government's promise to 'clarify' the status of lands under exploration and to provide Aboriginal groups with a definition of 'advanced exploration' is nonsense."

"What are they trying to do – stall things until every bit of land up here is in 'an advanced state of exploration?' The government does not have a legal leg to stand on."

Erasmus also disagrees with the federal government's view that its land claims policies and processes are appropriate and sufficiently flexible for resolving the outstanding Aboriginal claims in the region.

"And that's not just my opinion," he adds. "Moderate groups in favor of sustainable northern development, such as the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, have also noted serious inequities in the application of federal policies on land selection and interim protection in this region. CARC called for a review of federal claims policy and practice, and the government would be wise to heed this call."

Erasmus says federal attitude towards Aboriginal claims leads him to fear that the necessary licences and permits will be approved in 60 days regardless of how much progress is actually achieved in environmental and Impact and Benefits negotiations.

"Two months is not much time, at least for the people in my riding, considering nothing has been accomplished in discussions with BHP over the last two years," he says.

"The federal government should seriously consider proposals from CARC and others to allow a reasonable amount of time for Impact and Benefit Agreement talks prior to project construction, with an arbitration process based on the standards established for such agreements in the best existing northern land claims. This need not lead to any significant delay in project construction."

Erasmus warns that the unsettled state of affairs creates serious legal risks for BHP and other companies hoping to develop mineral properties in the region.

"By failing to address Aboriginal land ownership in the generous and open spirit Canadians expect, the federal government is, in effect, encouraging Aboriginal peoples in the region to resort to litigation to stop the project," he says. "The BHP Diamonds project is one of the most promising developments to come to our region in a long time. It could be a model for the future."

"Why on earth is the federal government putting something this good at risk?"

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96-24

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**YELLOWKNIFE MLA CALLS FOR MORE CAPITAL SPENDING
IN CITY**

Yellowknife (August 19) - Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry is calling on the territorial government to allocate emergency capital money for the City of Yellowknife in light of the conditional approval for the BHP Diamond project.

"If the Government of the Northwest Territories wants to ensure the maximum benefits stay in the North then we have to be ready for the development," Mr. Henry said. "Yellowknife is to be the point of hire and that means the city has to have the necessary infrastructure in place."

Mr. Henry said he wants to see capital spending allocated to Yellowknife accelerated, if need be, to ensure that the city can accommodate additional residents and businesses that may move North because of the diamond project.

He points to the Gerry Murphy Arena as one example of infrastructure that desperately needs to be replaced. The city's high schools need to be expanded.

"We have to invest now," Mr. Henry said. "It's no good trying to attract mine workers if we are not ready to provide the recreational or education standards and facilities that the south has to offer."

He said he hopes other N.W.T. communities recognize that they will share in the benefits of the BHP project and therefore support any moves to maximize the benefits for Northerners.

"We are already behind the eight ball on this so we need to move quickly," he said. "This project promises a significant amount of money and jobs for the Northwest Territories so we have to ensure the city is attractive to prospective residents and businesses."

Mr. Henry has met with other Yellowknife MLAs, the Mayor and City officials to plan a strategy to ensure that the city is prepared for the BHP Diamond project.

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96-25

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TELL EMPLOYEES AFFECTED BY DIVISION, URGES SEAMUS HENRY

Yellowknife (August 22) - Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry is calling on the territorial government to release within the next six months a list of employees whose jobs will be affected by Division.

"We have to let our employees know what the future holds for them as soon as we can," Mr. Henry said. "People can deal with change as long as they are advised."

He wants the government to compile a list of all civil servants whose jobs will be moved out of the Western Arctic to Nunavut when the Northwest Territories divides in 1999. He then wants each employee to be notified as soon as possible after the list is compiled.

The poor morale in the civil service has to be addressed, Mr. Henry noted. He said by letting people know if they will have a job after 1999 or if their job will be moved to Nunavut could go a long way towards restoring a more positive morale.

Mr. Henry also urged ministers to establish good rapport with staff in their departments as another initiative to improve the morale. He encouraged ministers to visit their departmental staff, especially the junior ranks, and talk to them to let them know the job they do is valuable and appreciated.

He points to the situation in Japan where industry bosses frequently visit the shop floor and meet with their front-line workers, showing they care.

"I'd be interested to know how many ministers have taken time to visit their departments and have coffee with their staff," Mr. Henry said. "Right now we have a lot of people who are wondering about their future and this kind of action could help alleviate some of the fear out there."

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LOOK AT THE WHOLE PICTURE, HAY RIVER MLA SAYS

Yellowknife (August 23) - Hay River MLA Jane Groenewegen says MLAs have to present the whole picture when stating that their constituents have taken more than their share of government capital and position reductions.

"MLAs agreed when we started the reduction process that cuts would be made where they would affect Northerners the least," Mrs. Groenewegen said. "We agreed to avoid front-line workers, responsible for delivery of programs and services at the community level., as much as possible."

She said she understands it's difficult for MLAs to accept reductions that affect their constituents. She said Inuvik MLA Floyd Roland, Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry and Thebacha MLA Michael Miltenberger, in a recent press release, stated that "all communities need to be treated fairly and equitably," insinuating that their communities have taken more than their share of position and capital reductions.

She points to the fact that all three of these communities are regional centres with a proportionately larger number of management positions and civil servants than other N.W.T communities.

"Some communities have not had the economic benefit and luxury of this level of government presence over the years," Mrs. Groenewegen said. "For example my community of Hay River only has 169 government employees for every 1,000 people compared to Yellowknife with 204, Inuvik with 245 and Fort Smith with its 259."

These numbers have to be taken into consideration when MLAs talk about what is fair and equitable. If we are reducing management positions, it makes sense that these reductions would occur in communities where these positions are located, she said.

Mrs. Groenewegen also suggests that this same reasoning has to be taken into consideration when comparing cuts between East and West. She noted that most of government, including headquarters, is located in the West so it would be natural to expect that the "West", particularly Yellowknife, would experience reductions in manpower due to fiscal restraints and upcoming Division.

"Cuts at regional and headquarters levels are also in keeping with the government's well-known strategy and move towards community empowerment," she said.

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96-26

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETS WITH AUDITOR
GENERAL OFFICIALS**

Yellowknife (September 4) - Members of the Government Operations Committee held meetings in Yellowknife August 26 to 28, including a public review on August 27 of the Auditor General's Report for the year ending March 31, 1995.

"Members had many concerns arising out of the Auditor General's report including the continuing need by government departments for supplementary appropriations," said Committee Chairman Roy Erasmus. "Members told Government officials that departments have to do a better job of forecasting their expenditures."

Members were assured by Mr. Lew Voytilla, the government's comptroller-general, that changes in the way departments are doing business plans and budgets should reduce the need for supplementary appropriations.

Committee Members also expressed concerns that some boards and agencies are not reporting regularly. Mr. Erasmus said Members are considering regular reviews of these organizations.

Other concerns arising out of the Auditor General's report included the outstanding pay equity dispute between the Government and the Union of Northern Workers and the cost of environmental restoration of polluted sites. Members were concerned that the two issues are large possible future liabilities that aren't shown on the Government's books and therefore are unaccounted for.

Mr. Erasmus said Committee Members will be looking for improvements in these areas in future reviews. The Committee will also be receiving regular variance reports so it can monitor how effectively departments are implementing approved budget changes in an attempt to avoid overexpenditures.

Following their meetings on the Auditor General's report, Members also looked at a number of other government initiatives including the results of the Investment Search initiative and Community Empowerment. The Committee will continue to push the Government to make progress, with the Federal Government, on Division and related financing matters.

Committee Members also looked at the Government policies for forgiveness and write-off of loans and will be reviewing this issue further when the Business Credit Corporation report is released.

The Committee will provide a full report to the Legislative Assembly when the House reconvenes October 2.



Northwest
Territories Legislative Assembly

NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE

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96-27

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MLAS SUPPORT DROPPING PAYROLL TAX

Yellowknife (Sept. 23) - Members of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure say they strongly support Finance Minister John Todd's suggestion that the Government eliminate the one per cent payroll tax.

"We are calling on the Government to drop the one per cent payroll tax in time for the 1997 taxation year," said Committee Chairman Ed Picco.

He said if the net benefits of operating the payroll tax don't substantiate having the tax, then it is time to eliminate it.

Committee Members met Monday with Mr. Todd. He told the Committee that the net benefit of the tax is about \$700,000. The Government collects about \$12 million from the tax but pays back about \$11 million in tax credits to Northerners. The administration fee is about \$300,000, leaving the net benefit at \$700,000.

Finance Minister John Todd told members of the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce last week that the Government was considering dropping the tax. Mr. Picco said Committee Members strongly endorsed that position and encouraged Mr. Todd to proceed with the idea in their meeting Monday.

The payroll tax was an initiative approved by Members of the Twelfth Assembly.

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Member for Iqaluit
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IQALUIT MLA TO LOBBY OTTAWA

Yellowknife (October 23) - Iqaluit MLA Edward Picco says he intends to lobby federal ministers over the most recent round of cuts to CBC North Television and Radio.

"With the cuts to aboriginal broadcasters such as the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation and Television Northern Canada these cuts to the CBC could be the final nail in the coffin of aboriginal radio and TV services," said Mr. Picco. "In the Eastern Arctic we do not have any private radio or television stations to pick up the slack if CBC is forced to downsize."

He said he wants to meet with Sheila Copps, the federal minister of Communication and Canadian Heritage to voice his concerns over the cuts to CBC. He said Ms. Copps has been to Iqaluit and he thinks she is familiar with the unique situation in the N.W.T.

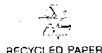
Mr. Picco is concerned that the cuts will mean Inuktitut radio and television services will be curtailed. He noted that 80 to 85 per cent of the residents in Nunavut are Inuit and speak Inuktitut.

"Cuts to CBC TV's only territorial-wide programs, Igallaq and Northbeat, are not acceptable," he said. "With the advent of Nunavut and a new western Territory the hopes and aspirations of Northerners have to be maintained and enhanced and not marginalized."

Mr. Picco also said he fears that Iqaluit, the community he represents in the territorial Legislative Assembly, will be severely affected by layoffs and downsizing because of the cuts. CBC's Eastern Arctic headquarters are based in Iqaluit.

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96-28

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**TAKE CARE IN PROGRAM CHANGES, SAYS STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL PROGRAMS**

Yellowknife (October 31) - Government departments within the Social Envelope need to continue to search for new and better ways to provide services to communities and at the same time keep spending under control, say Members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs.

"Over 60 per cent of the government's budget is in departments within the Social Envelope," said Committee Chairman Tommy Enuaraq. "The only way to keep spending under control is to address the high rate of social problems and the demands of our rapidly increasing population."

The N.W.T. Housing Corporation and Departments of Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment, and Justice form the Social Envelope. Members of the Social Programs Committee have spent the last two weeks reviewing the initial 1997-98 business plans with staff from the four departments.

Committee Members said programs such as income support, community justice and community wellness could be the answer to reducing the demand on social programs and the costs associated with those services.

However, Members stressed that these initiatives have to be well thought out and accessible to communities if they are going to work. Departments can't just spend money, they also have to show positive results for the funding spent, Mr. Enuaraq said.

The Committee continued to stress the need for a planned approach to changes, rather than making changes just to save money.

"Last year, the government had to take some drastic steps to bring the budget under control," said Deputy Chairman Michael Miltenberger, MLA for Thebacha. "This year when we make changes to programs we have to look at the impact those changes will have on other people and other programs."

The Committee also gave support to initiatives such as early childhood intervention and investing in people. "People can't help themselves unless they are given the skills and opportunities to be healthy," stated Mr. Miltenberger.

96-29

DIVISION TO BE A PRIORITY FOR WESTERN CAUCUS

Yellowknife (October 31) - Division of the Northwest Territories is fast approaching and Members of the Western Caucus say it is time for the Federal Government to start paying attention to the needs of the new western Territory.

"To date the Federal Government has focused on Nunavut, providing millions of dollars for infrastructure, training and funding the Nunavut Implementation Commission to provide advice on setting up the new territory," said Caucus Chairman Michael Miltenberger, MLA for Thebacha. "Now it is time to pay attention to the West to ensure both territories get off on the right foot."

Caucus Members said they will make Division a priority from here on in, noting there are less than 900 days left until the Northwest Territories divides. Division is going to have a major impact on the economy, government structures and finances of both territories.

Western Caucus Members want to ensure there is a fair and equitable distribution and that the concerns of the West are heard. Members said the Federal Government has provided some funding towards drafting a new constitution but it is doing so reluctantly and in bits and pieces.

The Western Caucus intends to work closely with their Nunavut colleagues to ensure that the April 1, 1999 deadline is met.

Some Caucus Members are also concerned that the Territorial Government has focussed on Nunavut and is not addressing the needs of the western Territory.

"We are creating two new territories," said Mr. Miltenberger. "Western Caucus Members intend to play an active and key role in the decision-making process when it comes to Division."

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For Immediate Release

Fort Smith Pulls Together for the Future

Yellowknife (November 25) - Residents of Fort Smith are working together to find new opportunities in the wake of government restraint.

Despite being a "government" town, people are showing their initiative by identifying and aggressively pursuing a variety of economic activities, says Thebacha MLA Michael Miltenberger.

"The people of Fort Smith are very practical and they know the government can't continue spending more money than it has," said Mr. Miltenberger. "At the same time, they aren't willing to sit back and let someone else control their future. Everyone is working together to find those opportunities which are out there and make them a reality."

November was a busy month for meetings and announcements which will help Fort Smith remain prosperous in years to come. Some of these initiatives include:

- a Mine Training Symposium which brought together industry officials, educators, aboriginal leaders and the territorial government to solve anticipated problems with training within the new explosion in the mining industry. "With the resources of Thebacha Campus and industry support, we will finally have a way to train northerners for northern mining jobs," said Mr. Miltenberger, a co-host of the symposium along with Aurora College and the NWT Chamber of Mines;
- the announcement that Fort Smith will be one of only two communities in Canada to pilot "Challenge for Change", which helps young people overcome the challenges in their lives, will provide new jobs and will again establish Fort Smith as a place where people of all ages can learn and grow.
- a meeting was held November 13 on the new draft constitution. Many residents attended, expressing their hopes and concerns about the future of the western territory and Fort Smith's place in that territory. Strong support was given for ensuring the constitution be developed carefully and in a democratic way.

- Premier Don Morin confirmed that Fort Smith will remain the Regional Centre for the South Slave and that Thebacha Campus of Aurora College would be used to the fullest extent possible. He said he was pleased to see how the community is pulling together and that it is "the only way to get results."
- a Hydrogen (alternative fuels) Conference was also held where industry leaders discussed the possibilities of hydrogen use in the North as a cheap alternative to our rising energy costs. Fort Smith leaders are helping provide the vision to see this innovative approach to reality.
- BHP and the NWT Community Mobilization Partnership visited Fort Smith on November 20th and gave presentations to the public and business sector. The meeting was well attended by an enthusiastic group looking for ways to advance the local economy in partnership with BHP.

Mr. Miltenberger said he is impressed with the efforts of people in Fort Smith. He is pleased to see the ambitious approach his constituents are taking towards securing their future.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NO SCROOGE HERE, SAYS SEAMUS HENRY

Yellowknife (December 11) - Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry wants his constituents to know that he isn't playing Scrooge this year by not mailing out Christmas cards.

"I just decided that in these tight times there are people who could make better use of the money that I would normally spend on Christmas cards," Mr. Henry said. "That money, about \$500, will be split between the Yellowknife Women's Centre and the Salvation Army."

Many people set Christmas cards aside after looking at them once and Mr. Henry said he thinks there is a better use for the money. He said he hopes in future years other leaders, corporations and businesses follow his example.

Mr. Henry wishes everyone in the Northwest Territories, and especially his constituents in Yellowknife South, a very Merry Christmas and all the best in 1997.

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