

NWT Legislative Assembly News Releases

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| 99-37 | Sept. 9 | New symbols adopted by the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories |
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Northwest
Territories Legislative Assembly
Member for Yellowknife South

99-01

For Immediate Release

YK South MLA wants more money in housing pilot program

Yellowknife (January 15) - Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry is calling on NWT Housing Minister Goo Arlooktoo to put more money into a new program aimed at helping Northerners purchase a home.

"This is one of the best and most successful programs that this government has introduced," Mr. Henry said. "We need to find more money or to reallocate dollars so that more people can take advantage of this program."

The program, the Minimum Down Payment Assistance Pilot program, provides potential homeowners with money for a down payment -- \$10,000 in the western NWT and \$15,000 in the east. The program is geared at residents, who otherwise, would not be able to purchase a home because they do not have the necessary down payment.

The program has proved very successful since it was launched December 1, particularly in the Western Arctic where numerous people have taken advantage of the pilot program, Mr. Henry said.

He said he will be pursuing this matter further with Mr. Arlooktoo in the hopes that he will put more money into the program to satisfy any requests prior to March 31. He also urges the government to recognize the value of the program and to consider extending it beyond March 31.

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99-02

For Immediate Release

Legislature hosts exhibit showcasing Canada's Parliaments

Yellowknife (January 21) - Yellowknifers and visitors to the city are invited to visit the Legislative Assembly Building and take a walk behind the doors of legislatures across the country.

The Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories welcomes the exhibit "Behind these Doors" on its cross-Canada tour. The exhibit will be on display in the Great Hall of the Assembly Building from January 19 to March 31.

The display showcases key features of each of the Parliament Buildings across Canada. The product of a unique collaborative partnership, this exhibit displays images and objects contributed by the Parliament of Canada and the Legislatures of each province and territory.

"We are honored to have this first-class exhibit in our building," said the Hon. Sam Gargan, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. "This display is the result of the efforts of individuals from parliaments across Canada and highlights the uniqueness of each parliament."

The display was launched in June, 1998 at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and the Northwest Territories is the first jurisdiction to receive the display in its cross-country tour.

"Behind these Doors" conveys the richness of regional expression and the strength of our shared parliamentary traditions. Handsome images of government chamber doors and ceremonial maces complement diverse displays. Highlights include architectural elements of copper and mosaic, decorative details of plaster and crystal, and costume accessories of needlework and silk.

The exhibit is open Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and on weekends and holidays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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99-03

For Immediate Release

Conflict of Interest Review Panel Named

Yellowknife (January 21) - The three-member panel who will review conflict of interest legislation, policies and guidelines pertaining to Members of the Legislative Assembly and senior government officials has been named.

Mr. Robert Clark, currently the Ethics Commissioner in Alberta, will chair the panel that will also include Sue Heron-Herbert of Yellowknife and the Hon. E.N. (Ted) Hughes. (Copies of the review panel members' biographies are attached)

Besides serving as the Ethics Commissioner in Alberta Mr. Clark is also that province's Information and Privacy Commissioner. He was also a Member of that province's Legislative Assembly from 1960 to 1981 and has served as a Cabinet Minister. He is a teacher by profession.

Ms. Heron-Herbert is a well-known northerner who has extensive experience as a consultant in the Northwest Territories working in various fields including justice, constitutional development, aboriginal self-government, and womens' issues. She is currently the acting Executive Director for the Mackenzie Court Workers, a part-time position.

Mr. Hughes, a former Judge of the District and Surrogate Courts and the Court of Queen's Bench in Saskatchewan, served as the Commissioner of Conflict of Interest for British Columbia from May 1991 to March 1997. He is also currently the Conflict of Interest Commissioner for the Yukon and has chaired several commissions of inquiry.

Members of the NWT Legislative Assembly passed a motion last month to establish the panel to review and assess existing conflict of interest legislation, policies and guidelines. The panel will also consider the present duties and powers of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner to determine whether legislative amendments are required to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of that office. A copy of the terms of reference for the review panel, who are scheduled to begin their work immediately, is also attached.



The review panel will receive written submissions from interested persons until Wednesday, February 17, 1999. Submissions can be sent to the review panel care of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, Box 1320, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9. Comments can also be faxed to (867) 920-4735 or toll-free 1-800-661-0879.

Panel members will prepare a report and recommendations for the Management and Services Board by April 15, 1999. The report will be released publicly.

Contact:

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Robert C. Clark
Office of the Ethics Commissioner for Alberta

Background:

On August 3, 1989, a Review Panel was established by Order-in-Council 425/89 "to review Alberta legislation and guidelines that relate to conflict of interest rules applicable to Members of the Executive Council, Members of the Legislative Assembly and senior public servants in Alberta". The Chairman, His Honour, Chief Judge E.R. Wachowich, and the two other panel members, Dr. Walter Buck and Mr. Frank King, reported the panel's findings to the Hon. Don R. Getty in 1990 and the report was tabled that year in the Alberta Legislature.

The Government responded to the report in 1991 by introducing Bill 40, the *Conflict of Interest Act*. The Bill closely followed the draft legislation proposed by the Review Panel; however, the Bill dealt solely with Members of the Legislative Assembly. The Government advised the House that conflict of interest rules for senior officials would be handled separately.

Bill 40 received Royal Assent on June 25, 1991. Part 7 of the Act was proclaimed into force in order to allow the Legislature's Select Standing Committee on Legislative Offices to proceed to advertising, interviewing, selecting, and recommending a candidate for the position of Ethics Commissioner. This all-party Committee uses an open competition procedure to fill vacancies in all four Legislature Officers positions.

The Committee received 289 applications and established a short list in excess of 50 candidates. The full nine-Member, all-party Committee interviewed 10 finalists in February 1992 and unanimously agreed on its recommendation. The Committee made its recommendation to the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Order-in-Council 188/92 was signed March 12, 1992, appointing the first Ethics Commissioner effective April 1, 1992. The Committee's report and its recommendation were unanimously agreed to by the Legislative Assembly on March 23, 1992.

Ethics Commissioner:

Robert C. Clark was first appointed Ethics Commissioner in 1992 and was re-appointed to that position for a second five-year term commencing April 1, 1997.

Bob Clark was a Member of the Legislative Assembly from 1960 to 1981, and his past political experience includes roles in provincial government ministries as Minister of Youth and Minister of Education, as well as the Leader of the Official Opposition. In addition, Bob has been a consultant, with Public Affairs International (later Hill and Knowlton) and served as a Board member and Chairman of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation.

Bob is a teacher by profession and received an Honourary Doctorate of Law from the University of Calgary in 1989. He also currently serves as Alberta's Information and Privacy Commissioner.

Bob resides with his wife Norma in Carstairs, Alberta. They continue to be energetic volunteers and members of the community and local church. Bob has been very active in the provincial sports scene and was inducted into the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame in 1974. He continues to be active in this area as volunteer President of the Olds Grizzlies Junior A Hockey Club for eight years, and is currently volunteer Chairman of the Board of the Alberta Junior Hockey League.

Contact Information:

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Note: Area code will change effective January 25, 1999 to (780)

Sue Heron-Herbert

- Educated at the Joseph Burr Tyrell School in Fort Smith, NWT.
- Graduated from the Lethbridge Community College with a diploma in Law/Conservation Enforcement in 1974 and completed two years of three year degree from the Osgoode Hall Law School at York University in Toronto, ON.
- Currently employed part-time as the acting Executive Director for Mackenzie Court Workers to oversee the day-to-day operations of the board.
- Extensive experience as a self-employed consultant - provided consulting and facilitating services to a number of local and territorial organizations on a wide range of topics including constitutional development, teaching, Premier's Panel on the Economy, community justice and social development, community empowerment, and strategic planning for women's groups.
- Director of Community Justice with the Department of Justice, Government of the Northwest Territories from June 1994 to August 1996.
- Senior Negotiator on the Sahtu and Dogrib Treaty 11 Land Claims with the Ministry of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, Government of the Northwest Territories from January 1992 to June 1994.
- Self-employed consultant from November 1991 to January 1992 including work for the Special Committee on Health and Social Services for the NWT Legislative Assembly, the Arctic Environment Strategy Program for the Metis Nation of the NWT, and family law.
- Ratification co-ordinator for the Dene/Metis Comprehensive Claim Ratification Committee from June 1990 to November 1991.
- Research director for the Dene/Metis Negotiations Secretariat in Yellowknife from November 1988 to May 1990.
- Executive Consultant to the Dene Nation from October 1987 to November 1988 researching and preparing briefing documents, developing position papers on negotiations, training, devolution and self-government and preparing activity reports and budgets.
- Executive Director of Mackenzie Court Worker Services in Yellowknife from November 1983 to October 1987.

- Director of Research for the Office of Specific Claims and Research, Indian Association of Alberta in Edmonton from December 1982 to July 1983.
- Assistant Director of Indian Government Program, Indian Association of Alberta in Edmonton from May 1982 to September 1982.
- Research Analyst for Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Research, Indian Association of Alberta in Edmonton from January 1982 to May 1982.
- Participant in the Northern Careers Program, Public Service Commission in Fort Smith from May 1979 to September 1979 and again in May 1981 to September 1981.
- Office Manager /Program Co-ordinator for Shawinigan Stanley on the Slave River Hydro Feasibility Study from June 1980 to September 1980.
- Legal secretary for Cooper, Johnson in Yellowknife from February 1977 to July 1977.
- Assistant Air Operations Officer for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in Yellowknife from June 1975 to August 1976.
- Extensive experience as a volunteer with numerous national, territorial and local women, aboriginal and community organizations.

E.N. (Ted) Hughes, Q.C.

- Born Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and educated there, graduating from the University of Saskatchewan with B.A. in 1948 and LL.B. in 1950.
 - Private Law practice - Francis, Woods, Gauley & Hughes, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan from January 1, 1952 to October 31, 1962.
 - Judge of the District and Surrogate Courts of Saskatchewan and subsequently of the Court of Queen's Bench of Saskatchewan from November 1, 1962 to October 31, 1980.
 - Ministry of the Attorney General, Province of British Columbia, Victoria, B.C. from November 1, 1980 to September 30, 1990. (Deputy Attorney General from December 1983 to September 1990).
 - Commissioner of Conflict of Interest for British Columbia under the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act* from May 1991 to March 1997.
 - Commissioner of Conflict of Interest for the Yukon, appointed April 25, 1996 for a three-year term.
 - Appointed July 1, 1996 as a Chief Federal Negotiator for the Government of Canada in tripartite land claim negotiations between the two senior levels of government and First Nations. He presently represents Canada in the treaty negotiations with Klahoose First Nation, Sliammon Indian Band, Homalco Band, Laich-Kwil-Tach Council of Chiefs and the Winalagalis Treaty Group.
 - Chair in 1983-84 of the Task Force on Legal Aid Services in British Columbia; Chair in 1987-88 of the Justice Reform Committee established by the Attorney General of British Columbia; Chair in 1990-92 of the Law Society of British Columbia's Committee on Gender Equality in the Justice and Legal System of British Columbia; 1993-95 Member of Canadian Bar Association Standing Committee on Equality.
 - Commissions: Chair in 1991 of Commission of Inquiry in Manitoba re contentious issues between Winnipeg Policy Department, Crown Counsel and members of Manitoba Bar; Chair in 1992-93 of Commission of Inquiry established by the Government of the Northwest Territories re Fort Smith Health Centre; Chair in 1992-93 of Commission established by the Government of Saskatchewan re the shooting death in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan of Leo Lachance by Carney Milton Nerland; Chair in 1996 of Independent Review into April 1996 riot at Headingley Correctional Institute, Manitoba.
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Review Panel
on
Conflict of Interest Legislation, Policies and Guidelines

Panel Membership

Membership: Mr. Robert Clark (Chair)
 Ms. Sue Heron-Herbert (Member)
 Mr. E.N. (Ted) Hughes (Member)

Terms of Reference

1. To review and assess the appropriateness, adequacy and effectiveness of the conflict of interest provisions contained in Part III of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*, and any policies, procedures and guidelines developed which relate to conflict of interest for Members of the Legislative Assembly;
2. To assess the appropriateness, adequacy and effectiveness of the conflict of interest policies, procedures and guidelines established by Executive Council for senior government officials;
3. To consider specifically what are appropriate standards regarding financial dealings for Members of the Legislative Assembly, senior government officials and their respective spouses;
4. To consider the present duties and powers of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner to determine whether legislative amendments are necessary to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the office;
5. To consider the recommendations made by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner in the Commissioner's annual reports and any other matters relating to conflict of interest;
6. To seek input from Members of the Legislative Assembly, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, senior government officials and from the public on the issue of proposed amendments to the conflict of interest provisions of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* and to policies, procedures and guidelines relating to conflict of interest;

7. To make recommendations to the Management and Services Board by April 15, 1999 with respect to proposed amendments to the conflict provisions of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* and to conflict of interest policies, procedures and guidelines for Members of the Legislative Assembly and senior government officials.

Under Motion 14-13(6) of the Legislative Assembly, the Review Panel report will be released publicly.



Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly

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NEWS RELEASE
NEWS RELEASE

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99-09

YK North MLA wants Equal Pay Hearings in Yellowknife

Yellowknife (January 26) - Yellowknife North MLA, Roy Erasmus, is very displeased with a decision by the Canadian Human Rights Commission and the Union of Northern Workers through PSAC to hold the vast majority of hearings regarding equal pay in Ottawa rather than Yellowknife.

"In the north, it is common to hear issues locally Mr. Erasmus says. "That's why the territorial court circuit sends legal representatives to each northern community to hear court cases."

Mr. Erasmus points to a case involving a Dettah hunter charged with shooting along the Ingraham Trail. Although the community of Dettah is very close to Yellowknife, court proceedings were held in Dettah so people affected by the case could attend the hearings.

The YK North MLA fears that, hearings in Ottawa will not allow the public the same opportunity to be involved as they would if held in Yellowknife.

"The Northwest Territories and northerners have unique issues regarding program delivery, hiring practices, and fiscal demands, Mr. Erasmus adds. "Northern issues are distinct from southern ones. By hearing both the federal complaints and the territorial complaints in Ottawa, by the same tribunal process, northern concerns and northern people are being shortchanged."

At least 250 days have been scheduled to examine the outstanding complaint of the Union of Northern Workers. Only three days of these hearings are scheduled for Yellowknife in March. In a release this morning, the CHRC and UNW indicated that they would like the majority of meetings to be held in Ottawa.

"The Union of Northern Workers and the Canadian Human Rights Commission are placing an enormous financial burden on the territorial government and Northerners, by taking this position," Mr. Erasmus says. "Costly GNWT trips to Ottawa for a complaint about northern issues doesn't make sense. Its money that would be better used in the North for delivering government programs."

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99-05

For Immediate Release

Western Identity Committee Encourages New NWT Celebrations With \$5000 Grant

Yellowknife (February 1) – The Special Committee on Western Identity will give each community in the Western Arctic a one-time grant of \$5000 to assist in funding local events to celebrate the creation of the new Northwest Territories.

Committee Chair, Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry, says the new territory has much to be proud of and much to celebrate. "The Committee is encouraging communities to take ownership in their new territory -- to recognize the things we stand for and get out there and celebrate them. The grant will help to get things going."

Mr. Henry added that while Nunavut emerges on April 1, the new NWT goes through more of a metamorphosis. "We will continue to use our name for the time being, so we already have various official symbols in place, like the flower and bird. On April 1, we will get a new geographical boundary and in the fall, with the first Session of the new legislature, we will unveil a new mace, flag and coat of arms."

Each community will determine how it will allocate its \$5000 grant, which must be used between March 15 and August 15, 1999. Once events and dates have been determined, they will be added to the official calendar of NWT celebration events to be produced and distributed by the Committee.

Members of the Special Committee on Western Identity include Mr. Henry, Nunakput MLA Vince Steen, Mackenzie-Delta MLA David Krutko, Sahtu MLA Stephen Kakfwi and North Slave MLA James Rabesca.

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99-06

For Immediate Release

YK North MLA wants provision for judicial review included in new Conflict of Interest Legislation

Yellowknife (February 2) – Yellowknife North MLA Roy Erasmus says he will recommend to the panel reviewing the NWT Conflict of Interest legislation that a section should be added to allow for a judicial review of the process.

“People do not lose their constitutional rights when they become MLAs,” he said. “If an MLA is concerned that his or her conflict inquiry was not done according to the rules set out, he or she should be able to have the courts review the process just as any other citizen in this country.”

Mr. Erasmus said he is glad that the legislation, policies and guidelines are being reviewed. He points to the January 15th, 1999 decision of NWT Supreme Court Justice John Vertes to reject an application to have a judicial review of the conflict of interest inquiry against Mr. Don Morin as an example of why he thinks changes are needed to conflict of interest legislation.

“There is no way that parliamentary privilege should extend to a Conflict Commissioner’s report or inquiry,” he said. “In his decision Justice Vertes states that the inquiry and report are protected by parliamentary privilege.”

Parliamentary privilege gives MLAs the power to discipline a fellow Member. According to Mr. Erasmus this means that MLAs need to be assured that the reports they use in disciplining other MLAs and the processes involved in compiling a report have been done fairly and properly. The legislation clearly lays out the guidelines for conflict of interest hearings.

The Yellowknife North MLA points out that there are no MLAs who can judge whether or not a conflict of interest inquiry and report have been done according to the principles of natural justice. To have a clear understanding of the process involved in an inquiry means hearing the legal arguments from both parties, going through thousands of pages of transcripts and documents and examining the different areas of concern regarding the commissioner’s conduct.

There is no process in place for this, and more importantly, he said, MLAs are not trained to be able to determine whether or not a report has been conducted properly. Only a judge can.

Mr. Erasmus said he is concerned in Mr. Morin’s case that the Conflict Commissioner’s lawyers were the only ones who were against having the process and report reviewed.



"I don't even want to hear of a Conflict of Interest Commissioner not having enough confidence in her own work that he or she hides behind parliamentary privilege," he said.

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99-07

For Immediate Release

Western Political and Aboriginal Leaders Renew Partnerships

Yellowknife (February 2) - Western MLAs and aboriginal leaders in the Western Arctic have re-affirmed their commitment to work together and strengthen partnerships towards building a new Northwest Territories.

Individual members of the Aboriginal Summit spoke with members of the Western Caucus last week to discuss common goals in the development of a strong new Territory.

"A strong partnership with aboriginal leaders and their governments is imperative if the new NWT is to succeed," said Michael Miltenberger, Chairman of Western Caucus. "We have to show that we are committed to working together for the benefit of all people in this territory to gain political stability both before and after April 1st."

"We know that there are a number of key issues that both the Legislative Assembly and Aboriginal governments have to address that makes it both necessary and practical for us to work together," said NWT Premier Jim Antoine. "Our meetings were able to open new channels of communication and that is a positive step forward."

A small working group of elected leaders will be established to begin discussions on the principles that would lead to the establishment of a political accord. The accord will set out the ongoing relationship between the parties and will be brought back to both groups for approval.

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Northwest
Territories Legislative Assembly
Member for Mackenzie Delta

99-08

For Immediate Release

Mackenzie Delta MLA call for public inquiry into Inuvik Health and Social Services Board

Yellowknife (February 4) - Mackenzie Delta MLA David Krutko is calling on Premier Jim Antoine to request a public inquiry be held into services being provided by the Inuvik Regional Health and Social Services Board.

"I am very concerned that the services my constituents are receiving is not adequate," he said. "I have received numerous letters and petitions from my constituents telling me stories about them or a relative being misdiagnosed and then finding out too late that it is much more serious such as cancer in the late stage."

Mr. Krutko tabled a petition in the Assembly on November 9, 1998 asking that the matter be looked into and that a public inquiry be held. The Hon. Kelvin Ng, Minister of Health and Social Services, told him that the services being provided by the board are adequate.

However, Mr. Krutko said he doesn't agree, and more importantly neither do his constituents.

"My constituents are the ones being served by the board and they are quickly losing their confidence in the board to adequately take care of them," he said. "The number one issue for Canadians is the quality of health care delivery and Northerners should be guaranteed that they are indeed receiving adequate care."

Mr. Krutko wants the Premier to review this matter and call a public inquiry immediately to ensure that his constituents receive the health care they deserve. He also recommends that representatives of Aboriginal organizations be full participants in the inquiry.

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99-09

For Immediate Release

New Website Becomes Interactive Hub for Western Identity Activities

Yellowknife (February 12) – An innovative website promoting the new Northwest Territories was launched today by the Special Committee on Western Identity.

Committee Chair, Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry, says the website will give residents of the west an opportunity to build and promote their western identity. "We're anticipating people of all ages will regularly visit the site and contribute to the various interactive activities.

"Residents of the new territory are encouraged to tell us what they're thinking and feeling about themselves as northerners and our new status come April 1. This innovative website is one means for them to do that. We encourage people to visit and revisit it because it will be constantly evolving as public participation increases," added Henry.

Viewers will have the opportunity to announce their community celebration plans, post photographs, share tall tales, enter the flag and coat of arms contests or participate in the public discussion board. Along with many other features, the site also provides information on the official symbols of the NWT, as well as historical, tourism oriented and cultural data.

The website, which is being constructed in phases, can be found at <www.NWT99.com>. It is one tool among many the Committee will use to identify common threads among residents of the new territory. The public can keep abreast of Committee activities, as well as those of their fellow northerners, as we move along in the creation of the new Northwest Territories.

In addition to Mr. Henry, the Special Committee on Western Identity includes Nunakput MLA Vince Steen, Mackenzie Delta MLA David Krutko, Sahtu MLA Stephen Kakfwi and North Slave MLA James Rabesca.

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99-10

For Immediate Release

Thebacha MLA Pushes for Alternative Energy Options

Fort Smith (February 18) - The territorial government needs to develop an energy strategy that would provide greater use of alternative energy, says Thebacha MLA Michael Miltenberger.

"All northerners knows that energy and power are some of our highest costs both as individuals and as a government," he said. "Here in the north we are also the first to notice global warming and climate change. People in the Northwest Territories are concerned about the environment and the cost of living. Use of alternative forms of energy could address both issues."

Mr. Miltenberger believes new technologies such as hydrogen fuel and more effort into the areas of hydro and wind would have tremendous benefits for all Northwest Territories residents.

He, along with Fort Smith business people and a government representative, attended the *9th Annual Canadian Hydrogen Conference - Hydrogen Power Now* in Vancouver. The conference attracted people from around the world and provided practical examples of alternative energy use. For example the use of hydrogen-fueled vehicles by British Columbia as well as information on emerging technologies that will increase the viability of alternative fuels.

Mr. Miltenberger has encouraged the Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, to develop an energy strategy and to assist local businesses in accessing national funding to pilot options that would be feasible in the north.

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For Immediate Release

Fort Smith and Hay River MLAs and Mayors United In Pursuit of Secondary Diamond Development in the South Slave

South Slave (February 18) - The Mayors and Members of the Legislative Assembly for the two largest communities in the South Slave, Fort Smith and Hay River, have reached agreement on a common approach to pursuing the opportunities and jobs arising from secondary diamond development.

Following preliminary discussions early this week, they have identified some specific actions they will undertake immediately beginning with meetings with all South Slave leaders to develop a unified position on diamond opportunities.

"The support of all South Slave leaders is critical," said Hay River Mayor Jack Rowe. "Now that there is basic agreement that we want to work together on this issue, we need to make sure everyone in our communities is on board."

Thebacha MLA Michael Miltenberger and Jane Groenewegen, Hay River MLA, will be involved in helping the communities work with government and the mining companies to explore options. After meeting with other South Slave leaders, the group will:

- write to the Minister for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development to ask that, at a minimum, the NWT diamond quota negotiated with BHP be split equally (50%/50%) between Yellowknife and other communities ;
- work with Aurora College, ECE & RWED to set up training at Thebacha Campus similar to the pre-employment diamond training currently running in Yellowknife which will ensure more northerners are ready for the potential jobs in communities in the South Slave ;
- make a possible joint presentation to the Diavik hearings to encourage sharing benefits of secondary industry with the South Slave and other regions;
- ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment for a South Slave representative on the Ministerial Mine Training Committee to ensure that South Slave communities have a voice at that table; and
- meet with all South Slave leaders, Aurora College and relevant government departments to discuss economic potential and business opportunities from secondary diamond development and develop a plan for what training and other services need to be in place to take advantage of the opportunities.

Fort Smith Mayor Peter Martselos stressed that there could be lots of benefits to go around and that it is important these benefits are shared throughout the communities.

"We know that other communities are also interested in the jobs from secondary diamond development, " he stated. "If Diavik goes into production and some of the other exploration is successful, the potential for many jobs in secondary industry is great. If we work together, we should be able to keep jobs in the north."

For more information, contact:

J. Michael Miltenberger
MLA, Thebacha

Peter Martselos
Mayor, Town of Fort Smith

Jane Groenewegen
MLA, Hay River

Jack Rowe
Mayor, Town of Hay River



99-11

For Immediate Release

Hay River MLA Jane Groenewegen comments on Beryllium Processing Mill

HAY RIVER (February 19) -- Hay River MLA, Jane Groenewegen has serious concerns with Highwood Resources Ltd. establishing a beryllium processing mill within the municipal boundary of Hay River.

"Judging by the amount of concern shown by the residents of Hay River and surrounding area, I think it would be irresponsible to give Highwood Resources encouragement or any indication that could be interpreted as community support for the establishment of a processing mill in Hay River," said Mrs. Groenewegen.

She has also stated that "I have observed the efforts of Hay River residents over the past three months, lobbying the Mayor and Council to cease any further consideration of an application or proposal from Highwood Resources. The motion put forward by Councilor Dean McMeekin at Monday's Committee of the Whole meeting will, if passed by Council, go a great distance toward alleviating the concerns of Hay Riverites. It is evident that many citizens have grave misgivings with respect to a beryllium processing mill being established within our municipal boundaries. Jobs and economic development are important, but not more important than the preservation of our quality of life, the protection of our environment, and the health of our citizens."

"After extensive research, groups such as the Hay River Dene Band, Enterprise Settlement Council, Metis Local 51, West Point Dene Band, and the Beryllium Information Group feel that this project does not meet acceptable environmental standards. Out of respect for our citizens and our neighbors, I add my voice in strongly discouraging any further consideration of this project and support the motion which will go before Council next Monday night to express their opposition to the proposed beryllium processing mill in Hay River," said Mrs. Groenewegen.

"Although I am usually reluctant to get involved in matters which fall within the jurisdiction of the Town of Hay River, I felt this was an exception given the large number of constituents who have raised this concern with me."

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FORT GOOD HOPE (FEB. 19) -- The Member of Legislative Assembly for Sahtu, Stephen Kakfwi, is thanking communities in his constituency for their support following a recent call for his resignation made by the Chairperson of the Sahtu Secretariat Inc. and the Grand Chief of the Tribal Council.

A news release issued by SSI Chairperson Ruby McDonald and Grand Chief Raymond Taniton on Feb. 12 called for the resignations of Mr. Kakfwi and Premier Jim Antoine after their visit to Calgary to meet with oil and gas companies. Mr. Kakfwi says both Ms. McDonald and Grand Chief Taniton had misunderstood the nature of the trip and thought it was an attempt to negotiate the transfer of responsibility for oil, gas and minerals to the territorial government. They were reacting to a news item in the Calgary Herald.

"Ms. McDonald and I discussed the Calgary visit for about 1 1/2 hours on Wednesday, February 17," Mr. Kakfwi said. "I thought Ms. McDonald understood that we had gone to Calgary on a courtesy visit to introduce the new Premier to oil and gas companies -- nothing more. Therefore, I was dismayed to hear her continuing to criticize us on the radio Friday."

Mr. Kakfwi is in the Sahtu on a regular constituency visit. "It is clear to me, after meeting and talking with chiefs, councils and the public, that Ms. McDonald and Grand Chief Taniton did not consult the Sahtu leadership before issuing that news release. Many people have approached me to apologize for the embarrassment caused by the news release," Mr. Kakfwi said, noting in particular the statement issued this morning by the K'asho Got'ine Charter Community Council in Fort Good Hope, a letter of support from the mayor and council of Norman Wells, and the support he received at a public meeting in Deline.

"I've confirmed that there was no consultation and there is no support for this from the Sahtu Chiefs or from the Fort Good Hope and Colville Lake Land Claim Organizations" said Kakfwi.

"I wish to personally apologize to Premier Antoine and assure him the people of the Sahtu continue to support him. On their behalf I have invited the Premier to tour the Sahtu so my constituents can express their support firsthand."

"This whole business started with a misunderstanding and ended up embarrassing the people of the Sahtu and myself, the MLA for the area. I hope that, in future, people will take the time to check the facts before making this type of public statement."

Contact (until NOON February 20)
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598-2530
598-2053

After February 20
669-2366



Northwest
Territories Legislative Assembly

Member for Yellowknife North

99-12

For Immediate Release

YK North MLA calls for independent body in GNWT hiring process

Yellowknife (February 22) - The Territorial Government needs to involve an independent body in their hiring process to restore faith that the system is fair to all northerners, says Yellowknife North MLA Roy Erasmus.

"People have expressed concern that different departments follow different hiring practices and there needs to be consistency," he said. "The government's hiring practices are not open, accountable and transparent."

Mr. Erasmus said that there appears to be little accountability in the senior management level with regard to the number of direct appointments or the way that applicants are selected for both interviews and jobs.

"Some employers have looked south for workers without providing opportunities for either casual or local applicants to apply," he said. "This makes people both uneasy and frustrated with the perceived lack of impartiality in the process."

Mr. Erasmus said there is no way for applicants to know that the hiring practices are fair. Involving an independent body would ensure that not only are the government's hiring practices fair but they are perceived as being fair and open, he added.

The Yellowknife North MLA said he supports Premier Jim Antoine's comments that he is committed to restoring public confidence in the government. In his televised address earlier this month Mr. Antoine said it was his goal to make sure the government is open, accountable and transparent in all its business.

Mr. Erasmus said that without this outside, independent body he fears that the process will continue to lack credibility.

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MLA, Yellowknife North
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99-13

For Immediate Release

Reinstate the Personnel Department, says Mackenzie Delta MLA David Krutko

Yellowknife (February 25) –The GNWT needs to reinstate the Department of Personnel and appoint an independent body to review its hiring process in order to restore integrity and provide a fair process for all northerners, says Mackenzie Delta MLA David Krutko.

“I am receiving complaints from my constituents that there are too many direct appointments and transfer assignments that circumvent the hiring process,” he said. “The no-layoff policy of the GNWT is also a concern because it means that there are numerous internal job competitions and northerners who are not permanent employees of the government can’t apply on these jobs.”

Mr. Krutko also said his constituents have told him that when they are being interviewed the process is inconsistent from one department to another. Reinstating the Personnel Department would ensure that there is consistency in the interviewing process.

He said he does not believe that eliminating the Department of Personnel saved the government any money or improved services.

“As an open government we must put the interest of the public first and ensure that all northerners are treated fairly in the hiring process,” he said. “Restoring this department and establishing an independent body will help us to ensure that the integrity of the process is restored and give people faith that they were treated fairly.”

Mr. Krutko also urges the government to freeze all direct appointments and transfer assignments until a review in this matter is conducted.

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99-15

For Immediate Release

Yellowknife (March 29) - Western MLAs have elected Nunakput MLA Vince Steen and Thebacha MLA Michael Miltenberger as the two new cabinet ministers for the new Northwest Territories for after April 1st.

Both Mr. Steen and Mr. Miltenberger were elected on the fourth ballot during the Territorial Leadership Committee meeting held earlier today. The election for two new Cabinet Ministers was necessary after the resignation of the four Cabinet Ministers from Nunavut who resigned due to division of the NWT.

Mr. Steen was elected to the Legislative Assembly during the 1995 General Election and since then has served as a Member on the Standing Committee on Infrastructure. Prior to his election to the Assembly, Mr Steen served two terms as Mayor of Tuktoyaktuk and four years on the board of the Tuktoyaktuk Community Corporation. He has also served on numerous boards and councils including the Tuktoyaktuk Hunters and Trappers Committee and the NWT Game Council.

Mr. Miltenberger was also elected to the NWT Legislative Assembly in 1995. He has served as the Chairman of the Western Caucus and is a Member on the Standing Committees of Government Operations, Rules and Procedures, and Social Programs. Mr. Miltenberger was the Fort Smith Regional Superintendent of Health and Social Services prior to his election to the NWT Legislature. He also served on the Fort Smith Town Council from 1983 to 1989 including a term as Mayor and was the Speaker of the South Slave Regional Council and was a board member on the NWT Association of Municipalities.

A formal motion within the Legislative Assembly will sanction the election of Mr. Steen and Mr. Miltenberger later today.

Mr. Steen and Mr. Miltenberger will be sworn in as Cabinet Ministers at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 30, 1999. Premier Jim Antoine will assign portfolios to his Members of Cabinet at a later date.

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99-14

For Immediate Release

Western Caucus recommends Cabinet introduce legislation to increase Assembly to 19 Members

Yellowknife (March 12) -Western Caucus has agreed to recommend that the number of Members in the Legislative Assembly be increased to 19 from the current 14 in time for the next General Election.

"The Caucus will recommend the Government prepare the necessary amendments to *the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act,*" said Michael Miltenberger, Caucus Chairman. "However, the legislation will still have to be debated and approved by a majority of the Members in the Assembly."

Three of the five additional seats would be allocated to Yellowknife with one in Hay River and one in Inuvik.

"After consultation with leaders from the Aboriginal Summit and extensive debate amongst ourselves we have agreed to recommend the additional five seats in the Legislature," Mr. Miltenberger said. "This was a decision that we did not make lightly however the majority of Members finally reached agreement that based on last week's court decision this was what we had to do in order to comply with the judgement."

The judgement said that the total population of an electoral district could not be more than 25 per cent above the average. Members also did not want to see the elimination of smaller ridings.

The Western Caucus will also recommend to the Government of the Northwest Territories that they not appeal the decision of NWT Supreme Court Justice Mark de Weerd. However, Members have indicated they will recommend support be provided to the Aboriginal organizations who intervened in the case should they decide to appeal the decision.

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99-16

For Immediate Release

Conflict of Interest Review Panel Releases Report

Yellowknife (April 8) - Members of the Conflict of Interest Review Panel today released their report and recommendations on ways to improve the NWT's Conflict of Interest legislation, policy and guidelines.

"Our recommendations provide new solutions for strengthening the conflict of interest rules in the Northwest Territories," said Bob Clark, Panel Chairman. "This includes a model to restructure the procedure that deals with complaints which we believe would enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the conflict of interest regime."

Panel Members - Mr. Clark, Sue Heron-Herbert and Ted Hughes, Q.C. - presented their report to the Hon. Sam Gargan, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, as required by the motion to establish the panel.

The report includes 38 recommendations on ways that the legislation could be improved and made more efficient. The recommendations are attached.

"These recommendations, if implemented, would make the Northwest Territories a leader in establishing ethical standards and in holding accountable its elected officials and its senior appointed officials," the report states.

Copies of the report are available through the Public Relations Office, Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, Phone: 669-2230 or toll-free 1-800-661-0784 and E-mail: ronnab@assembly.gov.nt.ca. The report will also be available on the Legislative Assembly's Web Site later today at www.assembly.gov.nt.ca.

Contact:

Ronna Bremer
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E-mail: ronnab@assembly.gov.nt.ca

VIII SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel has proposed significant changes to the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*. Our recommendations build on past experiences, and examine the lessons to be learned from the recent public inquiry. We also benefited from the input of those who appeared at the hearings, and those who provided written submissions. Our recommendations expand the scope of the conflict of interest rules to apply to Deputy Ministers and those in equivalent positions.

Our recommendations also provide new solutions for strengthening the conflict of interest rules. This includes a model for restructuring the procedure dealing with complaints which we believe would greatly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the conflict of interest regime.

These recommendations, if implemented, would make the Northwest Territories a leader in establishing ethical standards and in holding accountable its elected officials and its senior appointed officials.

- ◆ Recommendation #1 - The Conflict of Interest Commissioner should be readily available so that Members of the Legislative Assembly can obtain advice in a timely manner.
- ◆ Recommendation #2 - The Conflict of Interest Commissioner should carry the responsibility as the sole source of advice to the Members of the Legislative Assembly regarding conflicts of interest.
- ◆ Recommendation #3 - The Conflict of Interest Commissioner should conduct an orientation seminar for all new Members of the Legislative Assembly after each election.
- ◆ Recommendation #4 - The Conflict of Interest Commissioner should, within the jurisdiction of his or her office, develop guidelines to assist Members of the Legislative Assembly.

- ◆ Recommendation #5 - The Members' annual disclosure statements should be filed with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and it should be his or her responsibility to prepare the public disclosure statement pursuant to Section 78 of the Act.
- ◆ Recommendation #6 - Members of the Legislative Assembly should be required to meet with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner on an annual basis to review their disclosure forms.
- ◆ Recommendation #7 - Section 79.3 (1)(a) of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* should be amended to remove the 45-day grace period for the late filing of disclosure statements.
- ◆ Recommendation #8 - The *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* should be revised to state that failure to comply with the requirements for filing disclosure statements is a breach of a Member's conflict of interest obligations and may be the subject of a complaint.
- ◆ Recommendation #9 - A Member should be permitted to have an interest in a private company that is a party to a contract with the Government of the Northwest Territories if the Member has entrusted his or her interest to one or more trustees on the following terms:
 1. The provisions of the trust shall be approved by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner;
 2. The trustees shall be persons who are at arm's length with the Member and approved by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner;
 3. The trustees shall not consult with the Member with respect to managing the trust property, but may consult with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner;
 4. Annually, the trustees shall give the Conflict of Interest Commissioner a written report stating the nature of the assets in the trust, the trust's net income for the preceding year and the trustees' fees, if any;

5. The trustees shall also give the member sufficient information to permit him or her to submit returns as required by the *Income Tax Act* (Canada) and shall give the same information to Revenue Canada.
- ◆ Recommendation #10 - The Conflict of Interest Commissioner should submit an estimated budget to the Legislative Assembly for approval annually. The funds should be supplied directly to the Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner.
 - ◆ Recommendation #11 - The Conflict of Interest Commissioner should maintain a separate office which is readily accessible to Members of the Legislative Assembly and members of the public, but which is outside the Legislative Assembly building.
 - ◆ Recommendation #12 - Public education should be a fundamental component of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's function. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner should develop a pamphlet for public distribution informing the public of their rights under the *Act*.
 - ◆ Recommendation #13 - The Assembly may consider combining the Conflict of Interest Commissioner position with another Legislature office.
 - ◆ Recommendation #14 - Section 66 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* should state that a Member has a conflict of interest when the Member exercises an official power or performs an official duty or function in the execution of his or her office and at the same time knows that the performance of the duty or function or the exercise of the power might further his or her private interest or the private interest of his or her spouse or dependent child.
 - ◆ Recommendation #15 - Section 67(a) of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* imposes a high standard of ethical conduct of all Members and should be retained. With this section in place, it is not necessary to legislate with respect to the specifics of an apparent conflict of interest.

- ◆ Recommendation #16 - Section 80 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* should state that a Member who has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that another Member is in contravention of Part III of the *Act* may, by application in writing setting out the grounds for the belief and the nature of the contravention alleged, request that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner give an opinion respecting the compliance of the other Member with the provisions of the *Act*.

- ◆ Recommendation #17 - Members of the public should be subject to the same requirements for laying a complaint as Members of the Legislative Assembly. However, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner should have the discretion to meet with a member of the public to receive a complaint, and to accept a verbal complaint in circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.

- ◆ Recommendation #18 - The Conflict of Interest Commissioner should investigate and determine which of these three processes is appropriate:
 - a) A further and more extensive investigation of the matter to be carried out and completed by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner;
 - b) Dismissal of the complaint as provided for in Section 81; or
 - c) The holding of a public inquiry by an Adjudicator.

- ◆ Recommendation #19 - An investigation and report by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner should be the desired process to be followed in the interests of time and costs.

- ◆ Recommendation #20 - In making a preliminary investigation and determining how to proceed, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner may meet with the complainant, the Member against whom the complaint is made, and any other person the complainant or the Member believes could assist the Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

- ◆ Recommendation #21 - If the Conflict of Interest Commissioner decides that the matter should be disposed of pursuant to Section 81, he or she should dismiss the complaint with written reasons and reference it in his or her annual report.
- ◆ Recommendation #22 - In a further and more extensive investigation, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner or his or her lawyer should examine under oath in the presence of a court reporter or obtain a statutory declaration from every person whom the Conflict of Interest Commissioner believes can usefully contribute to this matter. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner should then file his or her opinion with the Speaker together with a transcript of all the evidence on which his or her decision was based, and those documents should be available for public scrutiny.
- ◆ Recommendation #23 - If, during the course of the investigation, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner determines that the public interest would be better served by a public inquiry, he or she may terminate the investigation and have the matter moved to a public inquiry.
- ◆ Recommendation #24 - If the Conflict of Interest Commissioner determines that the matter should proceed to a public hearing, he or she should inform the Legislative Assembly (if in session) or otherwise the Management and Services Board and request that an Adjudicator be appointed forthwith to conduct a public inquiry.
- ◆ Recommendation #25 - A public inquiry should be conducted by a sole Adjudicator, and following its conclusion the Adjudicator should file his or her report with the Speaker. That report should be made public.
- ◆ Recommendation #26 - The Adjudicator should be either a Conflict of Interest Commissioner or a former Conflict of Interest Commissioner from another jurisdiction or a former Conflict of Interest Commissioner from the Northwest Territories. If such a person is not available, the Adjudicator should be a Judge of the Northwest Territories Supreme Court, named for that purpose by the senior Judge of the Court.

- ◆ Recommendation #27 - The Conflict of Interest Commissioner and the Adjudicator should have all of the summoning powers available under the *Public Inquiries Act*.
- ◆ Recommendation #28 - No legal costs should be paid for any party other than the Member against whom the complaint is made. That Member's legal costs should only be paid if he or she is exonerated. Costs of Commission counsel will be paid.
- ◆ Recommendation #29 - The Conflict of Interest Commissioner or Adjudicator as the case may be should have the sole responsibility for determining if there has been a contravention of the conflict of interest provisions.
- ◆ Recommendation #30 - The Conflict of Interest Commissioner or Adjudicator should recommend a sanction where he or she finds that there has been a contravention of the conflict of interest provisions. The Legislative Assembly may order the imposition of the sanction, or may reject the recommendation, but the Legislative Assembly must not further inquire into the contravention or impose a sanction other than the one recommended by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner or Adjudicator.
- ◆ Recommendation #31 - Judicial Review of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's or Adjudicator's decision should be prohibited.
- ◆ Recommendation #32 - Section 82(4) of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* requiring that an inquiry by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner be conducted in accordance with the principles of natural justice should be deleted.
- ◆ Recommendation #33 - Section 84 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* should be amended to state that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's or Adjudicator's report shall be considered by the Legislative Assembly within 10 days after it is laid before the Assembly, and a determination must be made with respect to any recommended sanctions before the end of that session.

- ◆ Recommendation #34 - Deputy Ministers and those functioning at an equivalent level should be subject to the same standards as Ministers. These requirements should be legislated and should include the filing of an annual financial statement, and an annual meeting with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner.
- ◆ Recommendation #35 - The restrictions on Deputy Ministers and those functioning at an equivalent level should also apply to their spouses and dependent children. However, Deputy Ministers and those functioning at an equivalent level should have the right to apply to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner for an exemption, and such an exemption may be granted in situations where it would not be contrary to the public interest.
- ◆ Recommendation #36 - Deputy Ministers and those functioning at an equivalent level should be subject to post-employment restrictions with respect to lobbying activities and assuming employment with organizations which had significant dealings with their government department or agency. The period of restriction should be 6 months.
- ◆ Recommendation #37 - The Conflict of Interest Commissioner should, after giving notice to the Deputy Minister or senior officer functioning at an equivalent level, report any concerns that have come to his or her attention involving a Deputy Minister or senior official functioning at an equivalent level to the Premier and the Minister responsible. The Premier and the Minister responsible should be required to report the steps taken to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner within 60 days. That information should then be included in the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's annual report.
- ◆ Recommendation #38 - The *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* should include provisions which state that no job action may be taken against any person as a result of that person either bringing matters to the attention of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner or assisting the Conflict of Interest Commissioner in the course of his or her work.

IX PANEL MEMBERS

SUE HERON-HERBERT is a well known northerner who has extensive experience as a consultant in the Northwest Territories working in various fields including justice, constitutional development, aboriginal self-government, and women's issues. She is currently the Acting Executive Director for the MacKenzie Court Workers.

E.N. (TED) HUGHES, Q.C. is a former Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench in Saskatchewan. Mr. Hughes served as the Deputy Attorney General of British Columbia from 1983 to 1990, as the Conflict of Interest Commissioner for that province from 1991 to 1996 and has chaired several commissions of inquiry. He is currently the Conflict of Interest Commissioner for the Yukon.

ROBERT C. CLARK is a former Member of the Alberta Legislative Assembly from 1960 to 1981, has served as a Cabinet Minister, and was leader of the Official Opposition. Mr. Clark is currently the Ethics Commissioner in Alberta as well as that province's Information and Privacy Commissioner.

99-17

For Immediate Release

Speaker receives Conflict of Interest Panel Report

Yellowknife (April 8) - The Hon. Sam Gargan, Speaker of the Legislature, has received the report of the Conflict of Interest Review Panel.

Mr. Gargan received the report from Mr. Bob Clark, Panel Chairman, earlier today. Members of the Review Panel were required by motion to provide their report to the Assembly's Management and Services Board.

Mr. Gargan thanked Mr. Clark and his fellow panel members - Ms. Sue Heron-Herbert and the Hon. Ted Hughes for their efforts. He said members of the Management and Services Board will now move to implement the recommendations contained in the report.

The report is available through the Legislative Assembly's Public Relations Office by contacting the individual listed below. It will also be posted on the Legislative Assembly's Web Site later today. The address is www.assembly.gov.nt.ca.

Contact:

Ronna Bremer
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E-mail: ronnab@assembly.gov.nt.ca



99-19

For Immediate Release

Tu Nedhe MLA responds to Conflict of Interest Review Panel's Report

Yellowknife (April 8) - Tu Nedhe MLA Don Morin responded today to the Report of the Conflict Review Panel by saying that he believes many of the recommendations made by the panel will lead to improved legislation in the NWT and clearer guidelines for MLAs and senior officials.

"I have had an opportunity to review the Report and its recommendations quickly and would like to take this opportunity to thank the Panel members for their hard work and well-thought out recommendations," said Mr. Morin. "They have done a tremendous amount of work in a very short time frame and have produced a report with many positive recommendations for change in the way we deal with complaints of conflict of interest."

Members of the Conflict of Interest Review Panel released their report and 38 recommendations earlier today in Yellowknife.

Mr. Morin said he was pleased with the recommendation that the definition of conflict of interest be changed, and agreed with the Panel's view that the present definition be changed from one where a member is in a conflict if there is the "mere existence of an opportunity to benefit" to a "more practical and efficient" definition where the member is in conflict if they actually act to further their private interest.

"I think that this will lead to more fairness in the handling of conflict of interest complaints while still ensuring that politicians do not benefit from the performance of their public duties," he said.

Mr. Morin noted with approval the recommendation that members of the public be able to make verbal complaints regarding conflict of interest, stating that he felt this would make the process more accessible to the average citizen.

He said he was particularly pleased that the Report focused on the inappropriateness of the existing structure for investigating and hearing complaints. In its report, the Review Panel commented that "It is important to



make sure that the person hearing the evidence at the public inquiry is independent and impartial. It is of the opinion that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner is not the best person to perform this role given his or her previous involvement in the matter at the investigative stage.”

Mr. Morin stated that the Panel’s views in this regard are a vindication of the position he took throughout his inquiry, noting that he had consistently maintained that the former Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Ms. Crawford, should not have conducted the inquiry into the Groenewegen complaint because she was the person who had first received and investigated the complaint.

“I look forward to implementing these recommendations,” said Mr. Morin. “So as to ensure that no other politician has to be subjected to the same process that I and my family endured.”

While Mr. Morin was essentially complimentary and pleased with the Report, he did express some surprise at the Panel’s recommendation that the requirement that hearings be conducted in accordance with natural justice be deleted from the legislation. “Every other citizen of Canada is entitled to be treated fairly and in accordance with the principles of natural justice which are simply principles of fairness,” said Mr. Morin. “I do not know why politicians should be treated any less fairly than members of the public.”

“I look forward to further considering these recommendations and debating the legislative amendments in the House,” said Mr. Morin. He concluded by again thanking the Panel members for their valuable input and recommendations.

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99-19

For Immediate Release***MSB Appoints Acting Statutory Officers***

Yellowknife (April 13) - The Management and Services Board have announced the appointments of two acting statutory officers for the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Bob Clark has been appointed as the Acting Conflict of Interest Commissioner for the Northwest Territories. His appointment is effective today.

Mr. Clark is currently serving his second five-year term as the Ethics Commissioner in Alberta and is also the province's Information and Privacy Commissioner in Alberta. He was a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta from 1960 to 1981 and has also served as a Minister in the Alberta Government.

Recently Mr. Clark also chaired the Northwest Territories' Review Panel on Conflict of Interest Legislation, policies and guidelines pertaining to Members and senior GNWT staff.

The MSB has also confirmed that Ms. Elaine Keenan Bengts has been appointed as the Acting Information and Privacy Commissioner for the Northwest Territories effective April 1. Ms. Keenan Bengts was appointed to a two-year term as the Commissioner in 1997 and will continue in that capacity for the interim.

Ms. Keenan Bengts, a long-time Northerner, has operated her own law firm, Keenan Bengts Law Office in Yellowknife for 12 years. She was the first Information and Privacy Commissioner appointed for the Northwest Territories.

"Both Mr. Clark and Ms. Keenan-Bengts appointments will be in effect until the Legislative Assembly makes permanent appointments," said the Hon. Sam Gargan, Speaker and MSB Chairman. "This will allow time for the development of legislation and administrative structures as recommended in the Conflict of Interest Panel's report released yesterday."

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99-20

For Immediate Release

Mackenzie-Delta MLA appeals for help for Ms. Roberta Vaneltsi

Yellowknife (April 22) - Mackenzie-Delta MLA David Krutko says he is pleased that the NWT Legislative Assembly passed a motion yesterday to help Ms. Roberta Vaneltsi gain access to her children however he doesn't want it to stop there.

"The Government needs to pressure the Federal Government until they take some action to ensure that Ms. Vaneltsi is reunited with her children," Mr. Krutko said. "She has been fighting to get her children back for five years and it is time for this Government, the Canadian Government and Canada as a whole to get involved."

Ms. Vaneltsi is the Gwich'in woman whose two children were taken by their father Petr Cerny to his native homeland of Czech Republic almost five years ago and he has never returned to Canada. At the time the parents shared joint custody and Mr. Cerny was permitted by a court order to take the children, Roman and Petra, to his homeland for one year.

However, since that date Ms. Vaneltsi has been awarded sole custody by the Supreme Court of the Yukon. Mr. Cerny has consistently ignored the Canadian Court's order and has refused to return the children to their mother or to even permit them to travel to Canada to see her.

Members of the Legislative Assembly passed a motion in the Legislature yesterday calling on the Federal Government to express its strong concerns with Mr. Cerny's actions and the lack of actions on behalf of the Courts of the Czech Republic. The motion refers to the Czech Republic's being a signatory to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and this requires the Czech Republic to take action. (A copy of the motion is attached).

Mr. Krutko said not only are the children being denied the right to see their mother, they are also being denied, as aboriginal children, the chance to experience and learn about their aboriginal culture and heritage. Ms. Vaneltsi is originally from Fort McPherson however she now resides in Yellowknife.

"We have to make this a political and public issue so that people in the NWT and Canada are aware of this situation," he said. "I commend Ms. Vaneltsi for her undying will to get her children back. This has undoubtedly been a difficult five years for her however she continues to find it in herself the strength and will to continue her fight."



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NEWS RELEASE

99-21

Master Team of Artisans Selected to Create New NWT Mace

Yellowknife (May 17, 1999) – A team of three outstanding artisans, well-known in the northern arts community, have been selected by the Special Committee on Western Identity to create the new mace of the Northwest Territories. Bill Nasogaluak, Dolphus Cadieux and Allyson Simmie will design and manufacture the traditional symbol of authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Committee Chair, Seamus Henry said the mace is an instrument of the people, and as such, should be a symbol that every resident of the territory can take pride in. "Without a doubt, I am confident we have selected a proven group of world class artisans whose work is of the highest quality. As a team, they will be producing an historical symbol for our territory. I believe it will be among one of the most unique maces in the Commonwealth, if not the world."

Originally from Tuktoyaktuk, Mr. Nasogaluak is a master sculptor and painter. His traditional Inuvialuit upbringing has had a strong influence on his work, which can be found in collections across North America and Europe.

Mr. Cadieux was born and raised in Yellowknife, and has been a practicing artist for over 20 years. His wide variety of work, which includes painting, printmaking, sculpting and mosaic work, can be found worldwide. Several of his pieces are part of the permanent collection at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife.

Ms. Simmie has been a practicing metalsmith and artist for over 12 years, based in Ontario. After several years of teaching and promoting precious metal jewellery making in the eastern arctic, she most recently designed and instructed the first metal jewellery making program in the western arctic in Rae-Edzo.

Collectively, the team is well known for their work with two other artists on the lifesize commemorative sculpture created last year for the Great Northern Arts Festival. The piece now resides at the visitor's centre in Inuvik.

The design of the mace will be kept confidential until the official unveiling at the first sitting of the 14th Legislative Assembly after the territorial general election.

The Special Committee on Western Identity is responsible for recommending the official symbols of the new territory. In addition to Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry, committee members include Nunakput MLA Vince Steen, Mackenzie-Delta MLA David Krutko, Sahtu MLA Stephen Kakfwi and North Slave MLA James Rabesca.

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Member for Yellowknife South

99-22

For Immediate Release

1
YK South MLA wants immediate action on call for a Nunavut Trade Mission.

Yellowknife (May 19) - Yellowknife South MLA, Seamus Henry wants Premier Antoine to initiate a Trade Mission to Nunavut.

" Last month I asked Premier Antoine if he would support a trade mission to Nunavut as I see a great potential for industry and service providers in the West to take part in the formation of Nunavut. We cannot sit back and wait to be asked, we have to be aggressive and initiate contract or else we will most certainly loose out to southern suppliers". Henry said.

These comments come after learning of certain contracts in Nunavut that have already been lost to southern suppliers simply because businesses in the West did not have the contacts necessary in Nunavut. Henry warns, "We will surely here of more contracts such as these if we don't get on with planning a trade mission".

On April 19th Mr. Henry made a statement in the Legislative Assembly outlining the need for a government led trade mission to Nunavut and called upon Premier Antoine to lead one.

"Other Canadian jurisdictions such as Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec have been busy organizing and leading groups of business people north to take advantage of the new economic opportunity that is in Nunavut". Henry went on to say that our northern-based firms who have the knowledge and expertise are already loosing out. Henry did receive a favorable response from Premier Antoine however the timing of an initiative such as this is crucial and Henry calls for action now before other business opportunities in the West are forever lost in Nunavut, especially as we enter the construction season.

"I will be addressing this issue again with the Premier and hope he will place action behind his words, we cannot afford to wait any longer. The House isn't scheduled to convene until the end of July and that will be too late for any prospects for the coming season." Said Henry.

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NEWS RELEASE

99-22

Search Begins for New Territorial Flag and Coat of Arms

Yellowknife (May 20, 1999) – The public search for ideas and designs for a new flag and coat of arms for the Northwest Territories was officially launched today with the release of a lively and colourful brochure produced by the Special Committee on Western Identity.

Committee Chair, Seamus Henry, said the brochure will be mailed to every household in the Northwest Territories and special kits will be sent to every school over the next few weeks. "There's a lot of public interest in these symbols. We've already had quite a few submissions over the last several months for designs. The Committee is anticipating a big response because people of all ages have a lot of pride in this territory and it's a chance to be a part of history."

Mr. Henry added that it was appropriate for a forum, such as the Youth Parliament held today, to be used as the means to announce the launch. "The youth are our future. They were very excited about the competitions and their opportunity to participate."

The brochure outlines details of the flag and coat of arms competitions, as well as suggestions, examples, research sources and points to consider in the designs of official symbols. A special submission form has also been included for ideas for the coat of arms for those who do not wish to draw a design. The deadline for both competitions is July 30, 1999.

In addition to mail distribution, brochures will be available at municipal offices in each community. An online version of the brochure will also be available on the NWT '99 website at www.nwt99.

The Special Committee on Western Identity is responsible for recommending the official symbols of the new territory. In addition to Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry, committee members include Nunakput MLA Vince Steen, Mackenzie-Delta MLA David Krutko, Sahtu MLA Stephen Kakfwi and North Slave MLA James Rabesca.

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99-24

For Immediate Release

Standing Committee to consult on electoral boundaries

Yellowknife (May 21) - The Standing Committee on Government Operations has agreed to hold public hearings on the bill dealing with electoral boundaries.

The Standing Committee on Government Operations agreed to conduct public hearings on Bill 15, *An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*.

Bill 15 received Second Reading in the Legislature on March 24, 1999 and was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for review. This Bill proposes to amend the current electoral boundaries to provide for a 19-seat Legislature in accordance with the March 5, 1999 ruling of Justice Mark de Weerd in the Friends of Democracy et al Court challenge.

Chair of the Committee Roy Erasmus noted that the Committee only has 120 days to conduct its review. "Members felt it was imperative that we make every effort to allow NWT residents the opportunity to provide input on this issue of crucial importance to the future of governance in the north," he said. "Due to obvious time and fiscal restraints however, the Committee will restrict its hearings to the larger, regional centres."

Exact dates and locations are yet to be finalized but the Committee is expected to visit Inuvik, Fort Simpson, Rae-Edzo, Fort Smith and Hay River in addition to Yellowknife between June 14th and July 16th.

In addition to Yellowknife North MLA, Mr. Erasmus, the other Members of the Standing Committee on Government Operations are Yellowknife Centre MLA Jake Ootes, Hay River MLA June Groenewegen, Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry, Mackenzie-Delta MLA David Krutko, Tu Nedhe MLA Don Morin and James Rabesca, MLA for North Slave.

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Northwest
Territories Legislative Assembly

Member for Yellowknife North

99-25

For Immediate Release

YK North MLA calls for Federal Government to act on Giant Mine clean up

Yellowknife (June 3) – The Deton'cho Corporation has come forward with a comprehensive and feasible proposal to clean-up the arsenic at Giant Mine and it is now time for the Federal Government to move quickly to accept the offer, says Yellowknife North MLA Roy Erasmus.

“This proposal is workable and keeps benefits from the clean-up in the hands of the landowners, the people who live here and have a vested interest,” he said. “The Federal Government now needs to accept responsibility for the clean-up and get it moving.”

The Deton'cho proposal has been sent to the Hon. Jane Stewart, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, asking for her support to start the clean-up process.

Mr. Erasmus said if the Federal Government is truly concerned about the environmental crisis at Giant Mine they will support the Corporation's proposal. He praised the initiative of the corporation in preparing the proposal. He also said that the bands represented on the corporation are on side with the proposal and now organized labor has thrown its support behind it as well.

“The only stumbling block now seems to be Ottawa's apparent reluctance to accept full responsibility and move forward,” he noted. “Millions of dollars worth of gold were taken from the land and in exchange the landowners and local people are left with a potential environmental catastrophe.”

The Deton'cho proposal strikes a balance between dealing with the arsenic clean-up and keeping current mine workers on the job producing gold. The proposal also recognizes that a full reclamation of the site, both surface and sub-surface, will take decades and having people on-site who are familiar with the mine is a valued resource.

The proposal also suggests using local people, including current workers, to clean up the arsenic on the mine site.

“The land is one hundred per cent owned by the Yellowknives Dene so they have a vested interest in ensuring that the area is cleaned up to a level that is non-threatening to human life,” Mr. Erasmus added.

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For Immediate Release

99-26

Yellowknife (July 14) – Yellowknife South MLA, Seamus Henry commends Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development for keeping the interests of the North his priority.

“I am very pleased and would like to commend Minister Kakfwi for taking a proactive approach to ensuring the North get as much benefit as possible from any secondary diamond industries”.

These comments come in the wake of recent media announcements that Minister Kakfwi has made significant progress for the NWT in ensuring that northern diamond manufacturers get their fair supply of rough diamonds thorough negotiations with the partners in Diavik Diamond Mines Inc.

“Minister Kakfwi can be a tough person to reckon with at times but I am very pleased we have him working on behalf of the North. I’ve seen the negotiations between BHP and the GNWT evolve and I am optimistic Minister Kakfwi will continue to keep the interests of the North his top priority. We should all look forward to the benefits secondary diamond industries will have to our economy”.

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99-27

For Immediate Release

Assembly to be dissolved October 21st

Yellowknife (July 30) - MLAs today unanimously agreed that the 13th Legislative Assembly should be dissolved on October 21st, 1999 to allow for a General Election for the 14th Legislative Assembly on December 6th, 1999.

A request will now be sent to the Governor in Council, as per section 9(3) of the *Northwest Territories Act*, asking that the 13th Legislative Assembly be dissolved on October 21st. The four-year term of the Assembly would have expired on November 16th.

If the Legislature is dissolved on October 21st the writ will be issued the following day and the election will be held December 6th. Guidelines and policies will be in place, as in past elections, to ensure that incumbents do not have any advantages over other candidates.

This election will be the first NWT election since division of the Northwest Territories and the creation of two new territories in Canada's North. Voters will elect 19 Members to the 14th Legislative Assembly as agreed to by the Members earlier this week.

A copy of the motion passed by the Legislature has been attached.

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Motion
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Dissolution of the 13th Legislative Assembly

WHEREAS the four-year term of the 13th Legislative Assembly expires on November 16, 1999;

AND WHEREAS it would be desirable to hold the general election earlier than December 31, 1999;

AND WHEREAS under section 9(3) of the *Northwest Territories Act*, the Governor in Council, after consultation, may dissolve the Legislative Assembly, thus causing a new Legislature to be elected;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake that this Legislative Assembly requests that the Governor in Council dissolve the 13th Legislative Assembly by October 21, 1999 to permit a general election for the 14th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories to be held on December 6, 1999.

Date of Notice/ᐱᓴᐅᑦ ᐱᓴᐅᑦ ᐱᓴᐅᑦ ᐱᓴᐅᑦ	July 28, 1999	Moved by/ᐱᓴᐅᑦ ᐱᓴᐅᑦ	Mr. Erasmus
Date of Introduction/ᐱᓴᐅᑦ ᐱᓴᐅᑦ ᐱᓴᐅᑦ ᐱᓴᐅᑦ	July 30, 1999	Seconded by/ᐱᓴᐅᑦ ᐱᓴᐅᑦ	Mr. Dent
Disposition/ᐱᓴᐅᑦ ᐱᓴᐅᑦ ᐱᓴᐅᑦ			
Carried/ᐱᓴᐅᑦ ᐱᓴᐅᑦ	July 30, 1999	Ruled out of Order/ᐱᓴᐅᑦ ᐱᓴᐅᑦ	

99-28

For Immediate Release

Good first step, Government Operations Committee says

Yellowknife (August 2) - The Government has taken a step in the right direction with its plan to meet with NWT leaders to hear what they have to say on a process for constitutional reform, say some Members of the Government Operations Committee.

"This is a good first step however we will be watching in the fall for the Government to come forward with legislation to establish a constitutional process as recommended in our report or to come back with another process that the leaders have suggested," said Committee Chairman Roy Erasmus.

Mr. Erasmus is one of four Members of the Government Operations Committee who held public hearings in June and July to hear peoples' thoughts on plans to increase the number of MLAs to 19 from the existing 14. The other three Committee Members are Tu Nedhe MLA Don Morin, North Slave MLA James Rabesca and Mackenzie-Delta MLA David Krutko.

Committee Members urge aboriginal and community leaders to participate in the consultation as quickly as possible. Mr. Erasmus said this will give the Government time to draft the necessary legislation in time for the fall sitting of the Legislature, should they agree with the Committee's recommendations.

Mr. Erasmus said he believes that when the Government meets with NWT leaders they will hear many of the same concerns that the Committee heard in their public hearings. The concern about the shifting of power to larger communities is valid and has to be addressed, he added.

Committee members believe that their recommendations will allay these fears and will guarantee equal representation and participation in the process from aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples.

"However, the Government has to implement all of the recommendations, they can't just pick and choose one of them such as the sunset clause and think that this will reassure their constituents," he said. "The sunset clause alone will do no good."

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99-2829

For Immediate Release

Major changes proposed to *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*

Yellowknife (August 3) - Changes are being proposed to legislation that determines what and how MLAs are paid, conflict of interest laws and the appointment and administration of Cabinet, which will make the system more transparent.

"The changes being proposed will make major strides in providing the transparency that the public wants and will make the system easier to understand," said Speaker Sam Gargan on behalf of all Members. "It will also reaffirm that our compensation system for MLAs is fair compensation for the work that they undertake and for their expenses in representing constituents."

A new *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* will be introduced in the Assembly in the fall session and will only be effective for the 14th Legislative Assembly.

The changes proposed would streamline the current system where MLAs are paid various indemnities for different aspects of the job by rolling the indemnities into an annual salary. Under the current scheme MLAs receive a living allowance on days when they are away from their home on Legislative Assembly or constituency business. It is proposed that this be replaced with an accountable allowance. (A backgrounder has been attached with more details on the type of changes that are being proposed.)

"The public has expressed concerns about the accountability of salaries paid to Members and what we are proposing is a system that would improve the reporting of allowances and expenses paid to and on behalf of MLAs," Mr. Gargan said. "This is one of the recommendations suggested by members of the independent MLA Compensation Commission."

The second part of the Act where changes are proposed involves the conflict of interest provisions for Members. These proposed amendments are a result of the recommendations made earlier this year by the Conflict Review Panel.

The final section of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* that could change is the part dealing with the appointment and administration of the Executive Council.

Another example of the Legislature's commitment to increased transparency is a plan to open the meetings of the Management and Services Board. The regulations and policies of the board, which is responsible for the management of the Legislative Assembly, will also be published and tabled in the House.

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Background on Changes to *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*

Part 1 - MLAs' Compensation and Services

In the life of the 13th Assembly the MLA Compensation Commission was established to review compensation paid to MLAs. Commission members recommended at that time that the system used to pay MLAs should be simplified by replacing the various indemnities with a single annual salary.

The Commission also recommended that more accountability was needed in the allowances paid to Members. Commission members suggested that more detailed public disclosures of MLA salaries, benefits and allowances.

Commissioners also recognized that it is accepted that MLAs should be fairly paid for the work they do.

The Management and Services Board and Members of the Legislative Assembly considered these findings and instructed that the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Assembly Act* be amended taking into consideration the MLAs Compensation Commission recommendations.

The proposed changes to the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* would result in a system that is fair to Members and accountable and transparent to the public. The changes will be effective for the 14th Legislative Assembly however, the new Act will be introduced in the fall session.

Part 2 - Conflict of Interest

The second part of the Act proposed for changes are the conflict of interest guidelines for Members and senior staff. These changes include implementing suggestions made the Conflict of Interest Review Panel in their report last April.

Panel members recommended changes to four main areas of the existing legislation:

- a stronger Conflict of Interest Commissioner's office;
- a defined procedure for dealing with conflict of interest investigations;
- a less expensive and more timely alternative to full public inquiries where warranted; and
- a regime where NWT residents know what is expected of MLAs and senior appointed GNWT staff and how and where to voice concerns.

Part 3 - Cabinet

The final section where changes will be made is in the administration of Cabinet. For example the proposal suggested during last week's sitting of having two Cabinet Ministers from constituencies in the north, two from the south and two from Yellowknife is one idea being considered. Another is the formal appointment of a Deputy Premier.

Part 4 - What overall impact will the proposed changes to the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* have:

- ensure that the remuneration paid to Members is fair, simple, transparent, easily understandable and accountable;
- will roll various indemnities (i.e. constituency and Committees) currently paid to Members into a basic salary;
- these amounts would be clearly set out in a schedule to the Act
- provides certainty for Members in knowing what their entitlements and benefits are;
- provides a system that the public can easily understand and increases accountability for allowances paid to Members and for expenses paid on their behalf;
- bring the administration of the compensation system more in line with other Canadian jurisdictions;
- requires that a report detailing each Member's authorized expenses be tabled in the Legislature for public scrutiny;
- provide an avenue where Members will be deducted a daily amount from their salaries when absent from session or committee meetings without reasonable cause;
- salary will be adjusted to match public service salary increases or decreases;
- provides more flexibility for Members in the use of their constituency budgets with appropriate guidelines in place;
- meetings of the Management and Services Board will be open to the public;
- the regulations of MSB will be published and the policies will be tabled in the Legislature for public scrutiny;
- implement easier to understand and more transparent conflict of interest legislation; and
- bring conflict of interest legislation more in line with standards in other legislatures.

99-30

For Immediate Release

Stall plans for adult and young offenders facilities until more consultation, Erasmus says

Yellowknife (August 5) - Yellowknife North MLA Roy Erasmus is questioning the Government's plan to co-locate a new correctional centre for adults with a new home for young offenders and wants them to stall the plans until proper consultation is done.

"This is a serious departure from standard practice in the North and the Government has yet to consult with MLAs and the general public on whether or not it is acceptable to house youth and adult offenders in such close proximity," he said. "I know the Minister has said the two populations will not be mixed however, no system is foolproof so even the concept of having the two groups share facilities needs to be reviewed."

Mr. Erasmus said he supports the construction of the two facilities and recognizes the need is there however without proper consultation he questions the Government's actions. He is concerned about the plan to either situate the youth in one wing of a larger facility or have the youth and adult facilities located next door to each other.

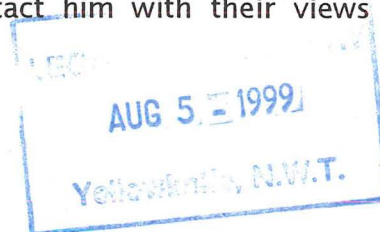
The project has changed substantially since it was first proposed and the Government should have gone back to MLAs when it changed its plans, Mr. Erasmus said.

"It went from a renovation of the existing jail to a new jail and from a P3 project for the young offenders to one overall project. Cabinet's own policy dictates that when something such as this happens, the three Yellowknife MLAs who are not on cabinet and the Standing Committee on Social Programs are to be consulted," he said. "That didn't happen and that is wrong. We have a system in place to provide checks and balances and the Minister and the Government have chosen to ignore this."

He is calling on the Government to backtrack and consult with the Social Programs Committee and the public before proceeding further on the plan.

Mr. Erasmus urges his constituents to contact him with their views on co-locating these two facilities.

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99-31

For Immediate Release

Social Programs Committee Urges Renewal of Corrections Facilities Planning Process

Yellowknife (August 5) – Members of the Social Programs Committee are urging the Government to renew its planning and consultation phases of the proposed replacement of the Yellowknife Correctional Centre and its co-location with a new Young Offenders facility.

“We have concerns with the way the new project was approved by Cabinet and the lack of consultation with the appropriate Standing Committee, affected MLAs and the public,” said Committee Chairman Don Morin.

The Committee has contacted Premier Jim Antoine’s office requesting an early indication of the renewed consultation and planning process. Mr. Morin said the Committee wants to be involved fully and that there should a process to consult the public as well.

Committee Members are concerned that if the plan is to house adult and young offenders within the same institution or even have them share the same facilities that there may be contact between the two groups.

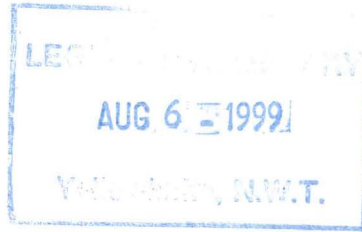
“We want to be absolutely sure that, if indeed, this is the way to go, every possible measure is taken to ensure there is absolutely no contact between adult and young offenders,” said Roy Erasmus, MLA for Yellowknife North and a member of the Social Programs Committee. “We also feel very strongly that this is an issue on which the public must have every opportunity to provide their input.”

Mr. Erasmus also pointed out that while these young offenders may have come into conflict with the law they must be protected.

Jane Groenewegen, MLA for Hay River, is also a member of the Social Programs Committee.

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99-32

For Immediate Release

Time for voice of reason on correctional facilities, says YK South MLA

Yellowknife (August 6) - Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry says it is time to bring a level head to the discussion over plans to construct new youth and adult correctional facilities in the city.

"There is all this rhetoric being spouted about concerns over the potential for adult and young offenders to mix if the two facilities are co-located," he said. "However, inmates are out in the community on a regular basis and have the opportunity to come into contact with our children and teens and yet you don't hear the same critics speaking out against this."

He said precautions and rules could be put into place that would restrict the contact young offenders would have with adult offenders. He said he believes that Corrections staff would take the necessary precautions to keep the two groups apart and to ensure the two would just share the same facilities.

Mr. Henry said he understands the concerns of Members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs that they weren't properly consulted. He agrees that it is important for the Government to follow the proper process when it comes to capital planning and consulting committees.

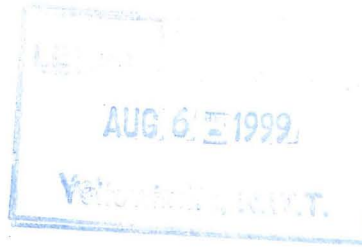
"Committees are there for a reason and yes the Government may have made a mistake in not going back to the Social Programs Committee but do we stall the project for this oversight?" he asked.

Mr. Henry also said he is concerned that if the two facilities are built in separate locations there will be additional costs incurred. He said it is important that the project is as fiscally responsible as it can be.

He also said the project offers the Government the opportunity to garner some revenue from housing both Nunavut inmates and also those inmates from the north that would normally serve their time in federal institutions down south.

"If we delay this project this is money that will be lost that we could use to improve programs such as education and medical services that are continually being demanded by MLAs," he added.

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99-33

For Immediate Release

Go back and consult small communities, says Mackenzie-Delta MLA

Yellowknife (August 6) - Mackenzie-Delta MLA David Krutko wants the Government to reconsider its plan to build new adult and young offenders facilities in Yellowknife.

"It might be more appropriate to have smaller facilities built in the regions rather than one large centre in Yellowknife," he said. "No one has asked people in the smaller centres what they think and they are as affected by this decision as anyone else."

Mr. Krutko said having regional centres would make it easier on families to see family members who might be in either the adult or youth facility. He said this contact is important for families to maintain relationships.

He also said in light of self-government and community empowerment discussions building a huge new facility might be putting the cart before the horse.

"This might be one area that communities identify that they want to take over," he added.

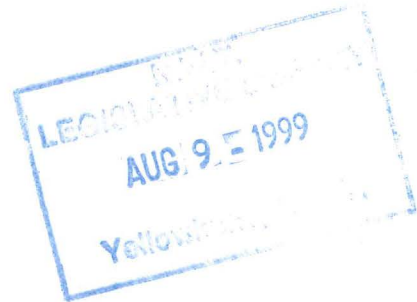
Mr. Krutko also said he shares the concerns raised earlier this week by Members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs and Yellowknife North MLA Roy Erasmus about housing young offenders with adults.

"People need to be asked what they think about putting young offenders with adult offenders and that hasn't been done," Mr. Krutko said. "The government needs to do the responsible thing and stall this project until they have properly consulted MLAs and communities."

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David Krutko
MLA, Mackenzie-Delta
Phone: (867) 669-2267 or toll-free 1-800-661-0784





99-34

For Immediate Release

Krutko calls for action on Tsiighehtchic fire

Yellowknife (August 9) – Mackenzie-Delta MLA David Krutko wants the territorial government to do what is needed to either put out or get under control a fire that is burning eight kilometres from the community of Tsiighehtchic.

“There is real concern in the community that they may have to be evacuated if the fire gets any closer,” he said. “The government should put whatever resources and manpower are necessary immediately to get the fire under control.”

He said the residents of Tsiighehtchic have been told to prepare an emergency response plan and fear that the next step is evacuation. Mr. Krutko also said that the smoke is causing health hazards for elders in the community and the local Renewable Resources Council is concerned about the impact on the fish and wildlife in the area.

Concerns have also been raised in the community about occasions when the Dempster Highway has been closed. Mr. Krutko said residents are concerned that there may be a medical emergency and the highway will be closed or a helicopter couldn't get in to the community because of smoke.

The fire started out as a 1500-hectare fire on June 18th however it has been left to burn itself out and is now a 100,000-hectare fire. Mr. Krutko said he wants to know who made the call to let the fire continue to burn.

Mr. Krutko said he appreciates that the Government has listened to the concerns of his constituents and will be stationing a Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development official in the community today to answer questions from concerned residents.

“This is a step in the right direction however it is now time to address the larger issue of the fire,” he said.

Contact: David Krutko
MLA, Mackenzie Delta
Phone: 669-2267



99-35

For Immediate Release

Tu Nedhe MLA followed proper procedures

Yellowknife (September 7) – Tu Nedhe MLA Don Morin says he followed proper procedure in filing a conflict of interest complaint against Hay River MLA Jane Groenewegen.

“When I initially requested this information earlier this year I was told that Mrs. Groenewegen had not filed the names and details on who contributed to her legal defense fund and was told I had to wait 90 days to file a complaint,” he said. “I now understand that she has since filed the information on who the contributors were, therefore complying with that aspect of the legislation however this was the only way I could get the information for my constituent.”

Mr. Morin said it is his understanding that there is still one outstanding area that Mrs. Groenewegen has failed to comply with and that concerns how the money donated to the fund was spent. Mr. Morin said he has been interviewed by Mr. Bob Clark, the NWT’s Conflict of Interest Commissioner, and expects his report to be made public in September.

Mr. Morin said he requested the information on behalf of a constituent who wanted to know who had contributed to Mrs. Groenewegen’s legal defense fund in her conflict of interest complaint against Mr. Morin.

Attached are copies of the letters documenting Mr. Morin’s inquiries and subsequent conflict of interest complaint. The list of contributors, which is now a public document available in the Public Registrar at the Clerk’s Office of the Legislative Assembly, is also included.

Contact:

Don Morin
MLA, Tu Nedhe
Phone: (867) 669-2265 or toll-free 1-800-661-0784



August 16, 1999

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories
P.O. Box 1320
YELLOWKNIFE, NT X1A 2L9

Attention: David Hamilton

Dear Sir:

Pursuant to s. 80 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*, I would like this letter to stand as a formal complaint with respect to the conduct of the MLA for Hay River, Jane Groenewegen, which I allege violates the conflict of interest provisions of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*. I have a specific complaint as follows:

1. Legal Defence Fund

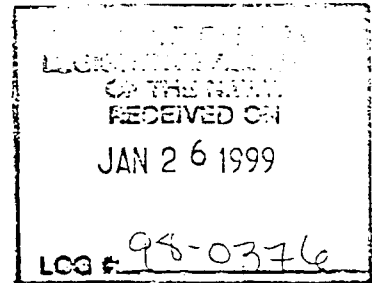
During the course of a well publicized hearing into my conduct last year, the MLA for Hay River publicly solicited money for the Jane Groenewegen Legal Defence Fund. She collected money for herself to allegedly offset legal bills she incurred in relation to developing "a case" against myself. However, on December 7, 1999, the Assembly passed a motion recommending that her legal fees be paid. To my knowledge, the MLA for Hay River has never publicly disclosed the amount of money raised, the source of the money (e.g., the individuals or businesses that contributed to her fund) nor provided an accounting for how this money was spent. I query whether the public soliciting of funds by the MLA and the lack of accounting for these funds, violates s. 67, s. 76 or the disclosure provisions of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*. I would ask that you review this matter and advise as to whether the member has met all of her obligations with respect to the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* and with respect to the Legal Defence Fund.

I would ask that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner review this complaint and advise as to whether you are of the view that this complaint constitutes a contravention of the conflict of interest provisions of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*.

Yours very truly,



Donald Morin
MLA



January 25, 1999

MR. DAVID HAMILTON
CLERK

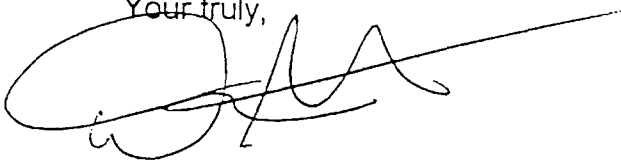
Dear Mr. Hamilton:

Can you provide me with a list of people's names that donated to the Defense Fund for Jane Groenewegen, MLA Hay River? This list was supposed to be made public.

If you require further information, please call me at 669-2265.

Thank you.

Your truly,



Don Morin
MLA Tu Nedhe

cc: Ms. Jane Groenewegen, MLA Hay River



FEB 21 1990

MR. DON MORIN
MEMBER FOR TU NEDHE

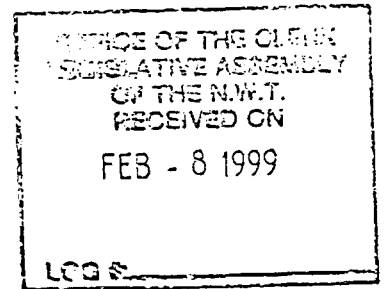
Request for Information on Defense Fund

In response to your January 25th letter, I am unable to provide you with the information requested. As of this date, there has been no information filed with me under the conflict of interest provisions in relation to the Defense Fund established by the Member for Hay River, Mrs. Groenewegen.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

David M. Hamilton
Clerk

cc: Member for Hay River



February 8, 1999

MR. DAVID HAMILTON
CLERK

Defense Fund

Further to my request for information on the above, thank you for your quick response. However, I would like to know if under the conflict of interest provisions that the Member for Hay River, Ms. Jane Groenewegen has any time limits to make this public information and if so, how long?

Thank you.

Yours truly,



Don Morin
MLA Tu Nedhe



FEB 09 1999

MR. DON MORIN
MEMBER FOR TU NEDHE

Information Concerning Defense Fund

In response to your letter of February 8, 1999, I would like to draw your attention to section 77.(3) which indicates that a member has 90 days to file a supplementary disclosure statement from the date of the occurrence. I also wish to draw your attention to section 78.(1.1), which is the section that provides, that when a supplementary disclosure is filed, a supplementary public disclosure is prepared. I am attaching these sections for your reference. Beyond this information, I am unable to assist you further until a supplementary statement is filed.

You will note I have copied my letter to the Member for Hay River and the Conflict of Interest Commissioner in the event I may have provided inaccurate information.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

David M. Hamilton
Clerk

Attachment

cc: Member for Hay River
Conflict of Interest Commissioner

Contributions over \$100 to Groenewegen Legal Support Fund

Buckerfield

1	Dave Buckerfield, Hay River	\$250.00
2	Sandra Lester/Glenn Smart, Hay River	\$250.00
3	Patterson 92-3087 Ltd., Hay River	\$1,000.00
4	Cameron & Kyler Clement, Hay River	\$1,000.00
5	953731 NWT Ltd., Resolute	\$2,500.00
6	Jane Groenewegen, Hay River	\$1,035.76
7	Jane Groenewegen, Hay River	\$1,336.29
8	Jane Groenewegen, Hay River	**\$67.40 (Exception)
9	Jane Groenewegen, Hay River	\$196.87
10	Damolis Card and Gift Shop, Yellowknife	\$500.00
11	Dan Short, Yellowknife	\$150.00
12	M. Shott, Fort Smith	\$125.00
13	Patricia Thomas, Yellowknife	\$200.00
14	Paul Fleury & Co., Yellowknife	\$200.00
15	Jacquelyn Burles, Yellowknife	\$200.00
16	Calvin & Alice Mains, Hay River	\$200.00
17	Bill Phillips, Fort Smith	\$250.00
18	Cheryl Best, Yellowknife	\$200.00
19	Joe and Colleen Gagnier, Hay River	\$200.00
20	Betty Schofield, Hay River	\$250.00
21	Wrights Hardware, Hay River	\$500.00
22	Joy Stewart, Hay River	\$1,000.00
23	Jack or Jan Op Der Heije, Yellowknife	\$1,000.00
24	Mary Broussard, Yellowknife	\$200.00
25	Judith Langille, Hay River	\$500.00
26	Fred H. Ross, Cambridge Bay	\$300.00
27	Roger Leveille, Hay River	\$500.00
28	Tom Macdonald, Hay River	\$200.00
29	Gerald or Christine Baron, Rae	\$110.00
30	Territorial Quick Print, Hay River	\$250.00
31	John & Marilyn Carroll, Hay River	\$125.00
32	Pamela Taylor, Hay River	\$150.00
33	Nunavut Employees Union, Iqaluit	\$500.00
34	Gameti Gospel Fellowship, Rae Lakes	\$150.00
35	Ralph Ricketts, Hay River	\$125.00
	TOTAL AMOUNT over \$100: 35 Receipts	\$15,721.32
	TOTAL AMOUNT under \$100: 205 Receipts	\$15,650.95
	TOTAL AMOUNT for all donations	\$31,372.27

99-36

For Immediate Release

Legislative Assembly launches commemorative book

Yellowknife (September 8) - A book commemorating division and celebrating the efforts of the men and women who have contributed to the political evolution of the Northwest Territories was released at the Legislative Assembly Monday.

"This book is probably the most comprehensive record of the political evolution of the Northwest Territories prior to April 1st, 1999," Speaker Sam Gargan said. "It combines a look at our history, personal stories and highlights from each of the Councils and Assemblies from 1951 to 1999 with lots of photographs from years passed."

Work on the book began last October and was completed early this spring. Nancy Ann Gardiner edited the full color coffee table book that includes a foreword written by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien.

Copies of *History in the Making: Under Northern Skies* will be sent to libraries and schools in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

The book, which retails for \$45, is currently available at Canarctic Graphics and the Book Cellar in Yellowknife and is expected to be in bookstores across the North and in some southern Canadian jurisdictions soon.

Contact:

Ronna Bremer
Public Relations Officer
Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories
Phone: (867) 669-2230 or toll-free 1-800-661-0784

99-37

For Immediate Release

New symbols adopted by the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Yellowknife (September 9) - The Northwest Territories has three new official symbols - the diamond (gemstone), the Arctic Grayling (fish) and the tamarack (tree).

Members of the Legislative Assembly today adopted recommendations from the Special Committee on Western Identity to recognize the three new symbols. This marks the first time that an official gemstone and fish have been recognized as official symbols of the Northwest Territories.

The Special Committee on Western Identity recommended that the official tree be changed from the Jack pine to the Tamarack since it is more commonly found in all areas of the Northwest Territories. The jack pine was named the official tree of the NWT in 1990.

The Assembly also agreed to recommend to the Members of the 14th Legislative Assembly that a Committee of the new Assembly continue the work on a new Coat-of-Arms and flag. The new Mace for the NWT will be unveiled at the First Session of the 14th Legislative Assembly probably in January 2000.

The Committee had earlier recommended that the mountain avens (flower), gold (mineral), gyrfalcon (bird) and tartan be maintained as official symbols.

Contact:

Ronna Bremer
Public Relations Officer
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Fax: (867) 920-4735
E-mail: ronnab@assembly.gov.nt.ca



Northwest
Territories Legislative Assembly

Member for Yellowknife South

99-38

For Immediate Release

Yellowknife (September 28, 1999) – Yellowknife South MLA Seamus Henry indicated today he will not be letting his name stand in the December 6th Territorial Election.

"After much soul searching I have decided not to run in the next election so that I can dedicate more time to my family and business interests," states Henry. "The past four years have been challenging and rewarding for me, however I have to prioritize what is most important to me in my life and my family takes precedence."

"It has been an honor for me to serve and represent the residents of Yellowknife South and I sincerely appreciate all the people who have supported me over my term," Henry said.

Henry indicated his decision not to run in the next election hasn't been taken lightly as he has enjoyed being in politics and will miss many aspects of serving in public office. He did not rule out the possibility to serve in public office at sometime in the future.

Contact:

Seamus Henry, MLA

Yellowknife South

Phone: (867) 669-2287 or toll-free 1-800-661-0784





Northwest
Territories Legislative Assembly

Member for Yellowknife North

99-39

For Immediate Release
Clean-up Giant Mine says Erasmus

Yellowknife (October 5) – The Federal governments commitment to immediately begin the surface clean-up of the Giant mine site is good news, says Yellowknife North MLA Roy Erasmus.

“The clean-up can’t wait for the governments to decide who is responsible for paying for clean-up,” says Erasmus. “Planning should proceed immediately while the Federal government finds the estimated \$10-13 million needed for the reclamation.”

Erasmus points to the lay-offs of the 280 Giant mine workers expected this week and says the clean-up could provide much needed employment opportunities for these former employees. He stresses the urgency to proceed with the clean-up before the unemployed workers leave the North.

“Having people on-site that are familiar with the mine is a critical component of the reclamation and their experience will be invaluable when addressing the underground arsenic trioxide,” the Yellowknife North MLA says. “Environmental health and public safety should be our first priority.”

Mr. Erasmus also adds that the potential for environmental contamination is extreme from the hazardous wastes left at the mine site. An inventory of all the materials and buildings on the mine property has already been done and could be used to begin the next stage of reclaiming the area.

Although a long-term solution on the best way to deal the Giant mine site has not been decided, the Yellowknife North MLA feels that in the short-term, it is to everyone’s advantage to begin dealing with the issue.

“Studies have predicted that it will take at least twenty years to cleanup the site of Giant Mine – above and below ground,” says Mr. Erasmus. “Work can begin immediately on the site above ground and provide much needed local employment.”

Contact: Roy Erasmus
MLA Yellowknife North
Phone: (867) 669-2296 or toll-free 1-800-661-0784

99-40

For Immediate Release

MLA Krutko offers support to teachers and urges GNWT to treat all employees fairly

Yellowknife (October 18) – Mackenzie-Delta MLA David Krutko says he supports a recent vote taken by teachers that gives their union the right to strike if new contract talks with the Government aren't successful.

"I support the teachers in their right to strike and agree that all GNWT employees should be treated fairly and equally," he said. "The Government has to realize that it is not only nurses we are having difficulties attracting and retaining in some of the smaller communities."

He said the higher costs of living in smaller and further north communities and the fact that the Government did away with its staff housing sometimes makes it difficult to attract not only nurses but also teachers and other professionals.

Mr. Krutko supports the GNWT's initiatives to recruit and retain nurses but said it is creating an unequal playing field for GNWT employees and he doesn't think that is right.

"I feel all employees should be treated equally and urge the Government to revisit this issue and see if there is some way they can ensure that all employees are treated fairly," he added.

Mr. Krutko says he is confident an agreement can be reached without a strike being necessary and that all parties will work co-operatively towards that end.

Contact:

David Krutko
MLA, Mackenzie-Delta
Phone: 9867) 669-2268 or toll-free 1-800-661-0784



ELECTIONS NWT

News Release

Date: December 6, 1999

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Northwest Territories Legislature Elected

Yellowknife – Nineteen members have been elected to serve in the 14th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

"The new voting opportunities that were introduced in this election were well received and gave eligible electors two additional ways to cast their ballot," said David Hamilton, Chief Electoral Officer.

Unofficial results show that voter turnout was down from the 1995 territorial election with 70% of the 19,694 eligible electors on the official list turning out to cast their ballot.

A judicial recount is pending the official addition in the electoral district of Yellowknife South. Section 137(1) of the *Elections Act* requires a returning officer to apply to a judge for a recount if the number of votes separating the candidate receiving the highest number of votes and any other candidate is nil or less than 2% of the total number of votes cast in the electoral district.

All writs of election have to be returned to the Chief Electoral Officer by January 5, 2000.

(unofficial results attached)

Contact:

Brian Armstrong
Coordinator, Training & Information
Elections NWT
Phone: 920-6929 or 1-800-661-0796
Fax: 873-0366 or 1-800-661-0872
e-mail: Brian_Armstrong@gov.nt.ca
Website: www.electionsnwt.com





Unofficial Results
Election of Members to the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly
December 6, 1999

Votes Received		Votes Received	
Deh Cho		Kam Lake	
Sam Gargan	228	Beaton Mackenzie	74
Michael McLeod	382	Steve Petersen	68
		Tony Whitford	584
Frame Lake		Mackenzie Delta	
Charles Dent	352	Grace Blake	150
Bill Schram	69	David Krutko	443
David Wind	288		
Great Slave		Nahendeh	
Bill Braden	274	Jim Antoine	546
Marie Coe	149	Paul Matthew Gammon	312
Roy Desjarlais	47	Bill Lafferty	43
Bill Enge	144		
Suzette Montreuil	152	North Slave	
		Georgina Franki	32
Hay River North		Leon Lafferty	332
Joanne Barnaby	210	George Mackenzie	267
Ron Courtoreille	187	Alfonz Nitsiza	20
Paul Delorey	270	James Rabesca	81
Julien Lefebvre	28	James Wah-Shee	121
Jerry Morin	30	Henry Zoe	303
Ken Thomas	9	Isidore Zoe	20
Rod Tordoff	54		
		Nunakput	
Hay Riv�r South		Vince R. Steen	318
Jane Groenewegen	(acclaimed)	Vince Teddy	262
Inuvik Boot Lake		Range Lake	
Mary Felice Beckett	50	Alex M. Debogorski	67
Chris Garven	20	Everett Kasteel	56
Floyd Roland	350	Sandy Lee	460
		Dave Ramsay	329
Inuvik Twin Lakes		Roger Russell	73
Roger T. Allen	216		
Glenna Hansen	178		
George Roach	81		



Unofficial Results
Election of Members to the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly
Decemeber 6, 1999

Votes Received

Sahtu
Stephen Kakfwi 466
Winter Lennie 301

Thebacha
Jeannie Marie-Jewell 471
J. Michael Miltenberger 554
Marilyn Napier 92

Tu Nedhe
Sabet Biscaye 167
Steven B. Nitah 210
Noeline Villebrun 29
Daniel Walton 80

Weledeh
Roy Erasmus 229
Joe Handley 648
Mark Heyck 122
Blake Rasmussen 123

Yellowknife Centre
Bernie Hughes 256
Jake Ootes 400

Yellowknife South
Brendan Bell 359
Mary Beth Levan 181
Pat McMahon 347

99-41

Busy start to new year for Members-elect

Yellowknife (December 8) - Members-elect to the 14th Legislative Assembly will have a busy start to the new millennium beginning with the swearing in of Members, election of the Speaker, Premier and Cabinet Ministers and the opening of the First Session.

An intensive four-day orientation session is scheduled to begin on January 12th for the 19 Members-elect. These sessions will include briefings on the workings of the Assembly, Committees and the administrative duties of Members. Members will also be briefed on the status of the Government following dissolution of the 13th Legislative Assembly and the transition to the 14th Assembly.

Another key item will be to determine the process for selecting the Speaker, Premier and Cabinet Ministers. The meeting of the Territorial Leadership Committee for the election of the Speaker, Premier and Cabinet Ministers is tentatively scheduled for Monday, January 17th and Tuesday, January 18th (if necessary).

Members-elect will take their Oaths of Office and Allegiance in a ceremony scheduled for 11:00 a.m. on Friday, January 14th that will be followed by the unveiling of the new mace of the Legislative Assembly.

The First Session of the 14th Legislative Assembly will begin at 1:30 p.m. on January 19th, 2000 in the Chamber of the Assembly Building. The Premier and Cabinet Ministers will be sworn in later that afternoon.

Contact:

Ronna S. Bremer
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