



NEWS Briefs

Marijuana seized

A Fort Smith man is facing a narcotics trafficking charge after RCMP there seized half a pound of marijuana.

Police searched a private residence Aug. 21 and found the drug.

Kim Reynolds, 28, is charged with possession of a narcotic for the purpose of trafficking.

Reynolds will appear in territorial court Oct. 6 in Fort Smith.

Emergency training

Nahendeh MLA Jim Antoine wants volunteers in communities to have better training and equipment available so they can help more in emergencies.

Antoine says he'll ask the legislature this fall to fund volunteer training and provide for more equipment to be on hand when and where it's needed.

His decision comes after a summer of tragedy in Fort Simpson and Wrigley. The Mackenzie River communities were shocked earlier this summer by the drowning of elder Johnnie Tonka and again in mid-August by the drowning of cousins Jerry and Marcel Moses.

Antoine says having caches of equipment on hand would help a lot

Shape up or ship out, Kakfwi warns

Civil servants won't block transfer of powers to communities

by **Ronna Bremer**
Northern News Services

Fort McPherson

Civil servants who don't believe in self-government for the communities need to change their attitudes or get out, says Stephen Kakfwi.

"I don't need people hanging onto my ankles when I want to go somewhere. I need people to help me get there and a much more positive approach. A much more positive attitude is required on part of civil servants," the intergovernmental and aboriginal affairs minister said after speaking to the Gwich'in assembly in Fort McPherson last week. "And those that don't provide that have to be put out to pasture."

Kakfwi said he is aware of skepticism from some civil servants on the government's plan to implement community transfer agreements but said both he and Government Leader Nellie Cournoyea are committed to the idea.

He said people in the communities have indicated they want that control and are ready

to start talking, but they need to see some action from government.

The days of government employees controlling communities and aboriginal people are long gone, he said. "Any illusions that they still have some remnant of power that they used to exercise in the past is long gone."

Kakfwi said the self-government package negotiated in the national constitutional deal supports the right of aboriginal peoples to govern themselves.

He told Gwich'in at the assembly that the time is ripe for them to start discussions with the federal and territorial

governments on self-government and community transfer.

Kakfwi said the Gwich'in need to take advantage of the momentum created by the signing of their claim earlier this year. "You have the right to take any of these (government services) you want."

Kakfwi said representatives from the federal and territorial government will be meeting with the Gwich'in in September to start developing a process for negotiating self-government.

How soon self-government initiatives could be implemented depends on how well the negotiations go, he added.

He admitted talks have slowed considerably since the community transfer announcement was made last fall.

Part of the delay was caused by MLAs who passed a motion

in the legislative assembly last fall saying they want to be involved in the decision-making.

Kakfwi said MLAs have to get on-side. He said he doesn't want to see "the legislature possibly conflicting with what I see is the political agenda and direction of the communities."

As the lead minister in the transfer agreements, Kakfwi needs to have the support of communities, aboriginal leaders and MLAs behind him. He urged Gwich'in to let their MLA know that they want to proceed with these transfer agreements.

"Any indication that the legislature is balking or hesitating is just bad, bad news. It's not meeting the needs of communities. It's not pushing the government workers to go flat out to meet this objective of government."



Stephen Kakfwi wants MLAs onside for transferring powers to the community.

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