

## INTER-AGENCY STATEMENTS ON SOCIAL ISSUES

THE GROUPS REPRESENTED HERE TODAY SERVE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ACROSS THE NWT. THEY ARE DIVERSE GROUPS BUT THEY SHARE A GROWING CONCERN FOR THE ALARMING SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF OUR PEOPLE.

1. THE STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCIL STATES THAT APPROXIMATELY 4000 SEXUAL ASSAULTS TOOK PLACE IN THE NWT LAST YEAR. THE MAJORITY OF THE VICTIMS WERE GIRLS UNDER THE AGE OF 19.

*EACH PINK BALLOON REPRESENTS 200 SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS.*

**QUESTION: THE TERM POSITION OF THE CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE CO-ORDINATOR FINISHES IN JULY; DOES THE GOVERNMENT PLAN TO RE-NEW THIS POSITION?**

2. THE YELLOWKNIFE DAYCARE ASSOCIATION STATES THAT THERE ARE ABOUT 2300 CHILDREN IN THE NWT WHO REQUIRE CHILD CARE; THERE ARE ABOUT 700 LICENSED SPACES AVAILABLE. 66% OF THE WOMEN IN THE NWT WITH CHILDREN UNDER 6 WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME.

*EACH VIOLET BALLOON REPRESENTS 80 CHILDREN WITHOUT LICENSED DAYCARE.*

**QUESTION: WHAT DOES THIS GOVERNMENT PLAN TO DO ABOUT THIS SITUATION?**



3. THE NWT FEDERATION OF LABOUR STATES THAT THOUSANDS OF NORTHERN WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES - ESPECIALLY SINGLE MOMS, WORKERS WITHOUT UNIONS, AND YOUTH - SUFFER FROM INADEQUATE ENFORCEMENT OF OUTDATED LAWS SUCH AS THE 1974 LABOUR STANDARDS ACT. A MILLION DOLLARS SPENT ON RCMP SQUADS COULD HAVE HIRED A DOZEN QUALIFIED INSPECTORS TO MAKE SURE NWT SAFETY LAWS AND WORKPLACE LAWS ARE PROPERLY ENFORCED.

*EACH EMERALD BALLOON REPRESENTS 1 YEAR WITH AN OUTDATED LABOUR STANDARDS ACT.*

**QUESTION: WHEN WILL THE TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE OVER TWO YEARS AGO BY BOTH BUSINESS AND LABOUR AT YOUR OWN 1990 LABOUR STANDARDS LAW REVIEW PANEL?**

4. THE NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE STATES THAT ONE IN 10 CHILDREN IN THE NWT GOES TO SCHOOL EACH DAY WITHOUT FOOD IN THEIR BELLIES.

*THE SILVER BALLOON AMONGST THE 9 WHITE BALLOONS REPRESENTS THE CHILD WHO CANNOT LEARN BECAUSE OF THE GROWLING IN THEIR STOMACH.*

**QUESTION: HOW DOES THE GOVERNMENT PLAN TO PRIORIZE THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND THE BASIC HUMAN RIGHT TO FOOD?**

5. THE LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF THE NWT STATES: THE 1986 CENSUS REPORTS THAT 44% OF NWT RESIDENTS OVER THE AGE OF 15 ARE FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE. SEVENTY-TWO PERCENT OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE OVER AGE 15 ARE IN THIS GROUP. EACH YEAR IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, BETWEEN SEVEN AND EIGHT HUNDRED STUDENTS LEAVE THE SCHOOL SYSTEM BEFORE GRADUATION.

*EACH PEACH BALLOON REPRESENTS 40 STUDENTS WHO LEAVE SCHOOL EACH YEAR.*

**QUESTION: BEFORE PROGRAMS CAN BE PRESCRIBED, ASSESSMENTS MUST BE DONE. ARE YOU AWARE THAT IN THE WESTERN ARCTIC, EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS ~~MUST~~ CONTINUE TO BE CONDUCTED IN THE SOUTH. WHY?**

6. NORTHERN ADDICTIONS SERVICES STATES THAT IN THE SPRING OF 1991, THEY OPENED A NEW 32-BED REHABILITATION CENTRE ON DETAH ROAD. THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES PROVIDES OPERATING FUNDING FOR 20 OF THE 32 BEDS. SHORTLY AFTER OPENING THE NEW CENTRE, THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES COMMISSIONED LINDA BELL, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF BELLWOOD HEALTH SERVICES, TO PERFORM AN EVALUATION OF NORTHERN ADDICTION SERVICES.

*EACH TEAL BALLOON REPRESENTS AN EMPTY BED AT NORTHERN ADDICTIONS.*

**QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE GOVERNMENT'S PLANS FOR**

IMPLEMENTING LINDA BELL'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVED SALARIES, INCREASED STAFF LEVELS, AND EXPANDED SERVICES AT NORTHERN ADDICTION SERVICES, AND WHY DOES THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES CONTINUE TO REFER NWT RESIDENTS TO SOUTHERN TREATMENT CENTRES (AT AN ANNUAL COST OF APPROXIMATELY \$500,000) GIVEN THE 12 EMPTY BEDS AT NORTHERN ADDICITON SERVICES?

7. THE YWCA STATES THAT LAST YEAR ONLY 20% OF ABUSED WOMEN UTILIIZED SHELTERS, WHILE THE OTHER 80% CONTINUE TO BE BEATEN. THIS GOVERNMENT MUST ENSURE THAT WOMEN WHO ARE BEING BEATEN ARE ABLE TO SEEK SAFE SHELTER.

LAST YEAR ONLY 2.4% OF MALE ABUSERS HAD ACCESS TO COUNSELLING TO STOP THEIR VIOLENT BEHAVIOR. THIS GOVERNMENT HEEDS TO MAKE FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMMING A PRIORITY IN THE TERRITORIES.

LAST YEAR CHILDREN MADE UP 51% OF THOSE IN SHELTERS; HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN NO NEW RESOURCES MADE AVAILABLE FOR THESE CHILDREN IN ORDER TO STOP THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE.

*THE BLACK AND BLUE BALLOONS REPRESENT THE BATTERED WOMEN OF THE NWT.*

**QUESTION: WILL THIS GOVERNMENT MAKE STOPPING THE**

**CYCLE OF VIOLENCE THEIR FIRST PRIORITY?**

8. **C.L.A.S.S. STATES: WE REPRESENT THE 240 FAMILIES - CHILDREN, WOMEN AND MEN - WHOSE FAMILY MEMBERS ARE ON STRIKE AT ROYAL OAK MINE. WE FUNDRAISE IN ORDER TO TAKE CARE OF OUR OWN BUT IF THIS STRIKE GOES ON MUCH LONGER, WE WILL HAVE TO TURN TO SOCIAL SERVICES FOR ASSISTANCE TO FEED OUR FAMILIES. WE OBJECT TO THE EXPENDITURE OF \$58,000 A DAY ON A RIOT SQUAD WHICH HAS SERVED TO INFLAME TEMPERS AND INCREASE THE POTENTIAL FOR VIOLENCE.**

*EACH RED BALLOON REPRESENTS \$2,900 A DAY SPENT ON THE RIOT SQUAD.*

**QUESTION: HOW CAN THE GOVERNMENT JUSTIFY THE EXPENDITURE OF THIS MONEY WHICH COULD BE USED TO ASSIST MANY OF THE GROUPS REPRESENTED HERE AND WHEN OUR SOCIAL PROGRAMS ARE IN JEOPARDY?**

9. **THE NWT COUNCIL FOR DISABLED PERSONS STATES THAT OVER 5000 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES LIVE IN THE NWT. THE GOVERNMENT MUST PROVIDE MONEY AND POLICIES THAT ENABLE THOSE PERSONS TO LIVE PRODUCTIVE LIVES IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.**

*EACH YELLOW BALLOON REPRESENTS 250 PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY.*

**QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE MLA'S PREPARED TO DO TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF NWT PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES?**

10. THE ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING STATES THAT THE TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT SPENDS \$100,000 EVERY YEAR FOR EVERY MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PERSON FROM THE NWT LIVING IN A SOUTHERN INSTITUTION.

*THE 10 SILVER BALLOONS REPRESENT 10 NORTHERN PEOPLE IN A SOUTHERN INSTITUTION AT A COST OF 1 MILLION DOLLARS TO THIS GOVERNMENT.*

**QUESTION: WILL THE GOVERNMENT OF THE NWT AGREE TO GIVE A PORTION OF THIS MONEY TO THE YELLOWKNIFE ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING EVERY TIME A NORTHERNER FROM A SOUTHERN INSTITUTION RETURNS HOME AND RECEIVES SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE ABE MILLER CENTRE?**

11. THE YELLOWKNIFE WOMEN'S CENTRE STATES: SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS, MANY OF WHOM ARE CHILDREN, ARE CONSTANTLY PLACED IN JEOPARDY BY GOVERNMENT FAILURE TO ABIDE BY THEIR OWN CHILD WELFARE AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS. AN ADULT ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECEIVES ONLY \$148 PER MONTH FOR FOOD AND ALL PERSONAL CARE ITEMS. OUR COST OF LIVING IS AT LEAST 25% HIGHER THAN THE COST OF LIVING IN ALBERTA WHERE AN ADULT RECEIVES THE SAME RATE OF \$148.

*EACH PURPLE BALLOON REPRESENTS \$1 WHICH A NWT SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENT IS SHORT FROM THE ALBERTA STANDARD.*

**QUESTION: WILL THE GOVERNMENT MAKE A COMMITMENT TO ASSESS THE REALISTIC COST OF LIVING IN THE NWT AND ADJUST THE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE ALLOWANCE ACCORDINGLY?**

12. THE NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF THE NWT WOULD LIKE TO BRING THE GNWT'S ATTENTION TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES. THE NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION WOULD LIKE TO STATE THAT THEY FULLY SUPPORT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT WOULD ADDRESS THE ISSUES AND CONCERNS THAT FACE ABORIGINAL FAMILIES IN THE AREAS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE. WE SUPPORT THE WISHES AND DESIRES OF THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES IN THAT THEY MUST BE ALLOWED TO IDENTIFY AND INITIATE THEIR OWN PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

IN THE RECENT RELEASE OF THE COMMISSION FOR WESTERN CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, ONE OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS WAS THAT THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES RECEIVE RECOGNITION AND FUNDING FOR THE HEALING PROCESS TO BEGIN IN PREPARATION FOR TRANSFER OF PROGRAMS AND A MOVE TOWARD SELF-GOVERNMENT.

**THE LIGHT BLUE BALLOONS REPRESENT THE SKY UNDER WHICH WE ALL MUST LIVE AND WORK TOGETHER.**

**QUESTION: WHEN WILL THIS GOVERNMENT SERIOUSLY ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF COMMUNITY HEALING?**

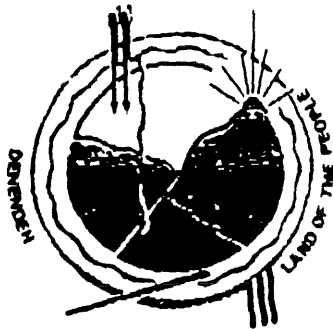
## **CONCLUSION: GOAL STATEMENT**

WE RESPECTFULLY REQUEST THAT THE ASSEMBLY PUT ASIDE THEIR DIFFERENCES AND WORK TOGETHER AS A TEAM IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THESE PRESSING ISSUES. DYSFUNCTIONAL COMMUNITIES CAUGHT IN THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF VIOLENCE, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, ILLITERACY AND SUBSTANDARD HOUSING CONDITIONS CANNOT PROPERLY BENEFIT FROM DECENTRALIZATION OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. WE ASK THAT YOU COMMIT YOURSELVES TO HEALTHY PEOPLE FIRST AND WE ASK FOR A BUDGET THAT REFLECTS THAT COMMITMENT.

WE DO NOT WANT TO SEE CUTS TO SERVICE DELIVERY POSITIONS OR TO HELPING GROUPS OR AGENCIES. WE WANT TO SEE CUTS IN GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION, CUTS TO ALL UNNECESSARY GOVERNMENT TRAVEL, PARTICULARLY OUTSIDE THE NWT, AND CUTS TO ALL UNESSENTIAL CONSTRUCTION. WE WANT TO SEE THE USE OF NWT HELPING ORGANIZATIONS MAXIMIZED, WE WANT THE USE OF OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS, GROUPS, ETC. MINIMIZED AND EVENTUALLY ALL BUT ELIMINATED.

**QUESTION: WILL THE GOVERNMENT DISCUSS HOW THESE GOALS CAN BE ACHIEVED?**





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June 19, 1992

Ms. Lynn Brooks  
 Executive Director  
 Status of Women  
 YELLOWKNIFE, NT

Dear Ms. Brooks,

Dene Nation would like to support the initiative been put forth concerning the Governments cutbacks of Programs and Services. Dene Nation would like to identify the major issue regarding the Health Transfer that took place, April 1, 1988 without the consent of the Dene.

Our question to the Government is "What is the Government of the NWT doing in way of transferring the responsibilities of Health to Dene First Nations?".

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Erasmus".

Bill Erasmus  
 Dene National Chief

BE/erl/ad

