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Dear Mr. Patterson,		and the second second			ther to the Town Council	
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We are writing this open letter to the Town Council of Iqaluit and to you the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and for that matter to anyone who will listen, pleading for attentive ears and compassionate hearts. The housing crisis here in Iqaluit has become a disaster. Home owners are being met with new and unexpected leasing fees for back payments. Would-be home owners are having horrendous problems in a sea of red tape to hook up water and sewage or even get their lots approved.

There are those who would like to build their own homes but cannot enter the HAP program due to the Territorial Government's refusal to allocate more than 20 homes a year for Igaluit. This figure is a <u>TOTAL</u> of HAP homes and public housing a year. This arbitrary limitation stands in flagrant contrast to the most recent housing survey done by the GNWT indicating that 212 homes are needed now but according to their five year plan only 20 homes will be allocated a year. What is even more tragic is that the same survey identifies 84 families on the Iqaluit Housing Authority's list who are desperately waiting for public housing.

If this alone wasn't sufficient matter to raise a few eyebrows, let alone a few political pencils, there is another group on whose behalf this letter is primarily written. There are perhaps 20-30 persons in this town of 3,300 who have no place to sleep each and every night. Some walk the streets or halls of the Brown Bldg. and Apartment Complex. Some sleep in storage rooms or in abandoned sheds, anywhere to find protection from the cold and survive another night. One social worker stated that these cases were "common" and that he has 20 people who do not have a place to sleep. One couple and their two children actually sleep in a friend's closet. These situations should not be considered "common" rather they are "extra-ordinary", they are "attrocious" and the problem cries out not for charity but justice.



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What is the solution? Well we have no answers but we do have a few questions!

- Why don't we have a hostel here in Iqaluit that provides emergency shelter for the night from 10:00pm till 7:00am. This could be very basic: a cot to sleep on in a quiet room, access to a toilet and wash basin and a common room for talking and watching TV?
- 2) Why couldn't such a hostel be equiped by the Canadian Red Cross or surplus from the Military consisting in fold up cots?
- 3) Why couldn't such a hostel be located at:
 - a) Ukiivik Residence, in a wing of presently empty rooms.
 - b) Katavik, Bldg #626
 - c) Bldg #624 right beside Katavik and presently unused?
- 4) Why couldn't such a hostel be staffed by students from Arctic College who are presently enrolled in such courses as:
 - a) Public Administration: 1,2,3,4.
 - b) Management: 1.
 - or

or

c) Human Resources Management?

Surely these students and instructors must be looking to complement their courses with practical experience in the "real" world.

We ask these questions because we do not think that we have to re-invent the wheel here. There are already existing facilities and resources that merely have to be set in motion. We may not have the perfect building, the perfect system, even the budgeted funds but people are walking on the brink of survival each day right here in our own town. We therefore, as religious leaders and concerned citizens, request the Town Council and the GNWT to address these questions and present in a public forum their answers not to us but to those for whom their survival depends.

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Rev. Michael Gardener St. Jude's Cathedral Anglican Church

Copies: Mayor & Town Council of Iqaluit Bishop Reynald Rouleau Bishop John R. Sperry Nunatsiaq News C.B.C. -Iqaluit Yours truly,

Rev. Andrew Macbeth Our Lady of the Assumption R.C. Mission