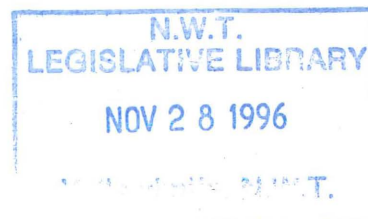




November 25, 1996

TABLED DOCUMENT NO. 03-13(4) JABLED ON NOV 27 1996

The Honorable Mr. Stephen Kakfwi
Member of the Legislative Assembly for the Sahtu
Government of the Northwest Territories
Box 1320
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 2L9



Dear Mr. Kakfwi:

We appreciate you and Mr. Steve Iveson having been present for our public meeting of November 23 in Norman Wells. This was our first opportunity as a community to discuss the draft constitution, Partners in a New Beginning and we believe that it was opportune.

The process of providing us with an historical perspective and background to the development of the draft aided our discussions. We gained a better understanding of the principles behind the draft. The information also gave us an improved perception of the inherent right to self government and why it is so much a part of the draft constitution considerations. We now know why aboriginal people are to be ensured representation in any decision-making institution. This input allowed our meeting to proceed in an atmosphere of good will and of receptiveness.

Concerns, however, were expressed during our deliberations and we believe that they are important considerations during your further review of the draft constitution. Concerns for:

- a lack of a clear understanding of self-government as there seems to be no consensus about it
- the impact that self-government would have on a new western territory
- the essential need for a strong and fiscally responsible central government for the new territory
- fiscal responsibility has not been identified in the guiding principles
- that any new government should be no larger than today and potentially smaller
- the fear that business has about which direction Government might take or any replacement or new form of government might take in searching for new revenues through increased taxation
- that any additional costs directly related to the provision of self-government should be born by the Federal Government through additional funding, not the new Territorial Government
- the current government should focus on the constitution particularly as it will inevitably affect the process of Community Empowerment, government restructuring and implementation of land claims agreements

Having been given the support of the public who was present at our draft constitution review meeting, Council wishes to advise that they support the guiding principles with one addition. Add to the principles that **any new government needs to be affordable, efficient and responsible.** Along with this addition and the principles outlined in the draft your government can be assured that Norman Wells considers the guidelines to be the proper foundation upon which to develop a constitution reflective of a new western territory. We are convinced that development of a constitution for the west based on these principles will meet the needs of its residents in all respects.

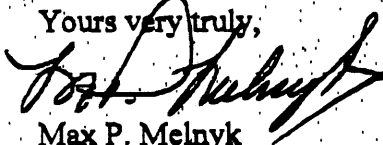
Council cannot support any one particular model of the legislative assembly and their various proposals for representation and governance included in the draft. The Town of Norman Wells emphasises its belief in a single strong central government for the new western territory. We agree when it is suggested that first determining the response of the Federal Government will be necessary to determine if any part of the draft proposals are unconstitutional or not legally viable. After which we will be able to develop an appropriate and responsive central government that encompasses the basis of the guiding principles.

We also believe that an early beginning of negotiations with the Federal Government is imperative. It is absolutely essential that discussions be concluded quickly recognizing that division will occur in 1999. There certainly is little value in working diligently toward an agreement amongst ourselves simply to have it rejected by the Federal Government. Constitutional acceptability, legal constraints and fiscal limitations will all have a bearing on the final shape of any legislative model. Without a full understanding of these, the correct form of governance cannot be fully developed. Having a better understanding and provided that we adhere to the guiding principles, we can then develop the shape of the physical structure of government in the new western territory satisfactorily.

Again, we appreciate the assistance and guidance that you provided in our deliberations. It made it more possible to undertake our review of the Draft Constitution from a knowledgeable and informed basis in the spirit of good will and understanding. We look forward to being afforded the opportunity to participate in any future deliberations regarding this extremely important topic.

In summary, Council of the Town of Norman Wells strongly supports the continued development of a new constitution for the New Western Territory.

Yours very truly,



Max P. Melnyk
Mayor