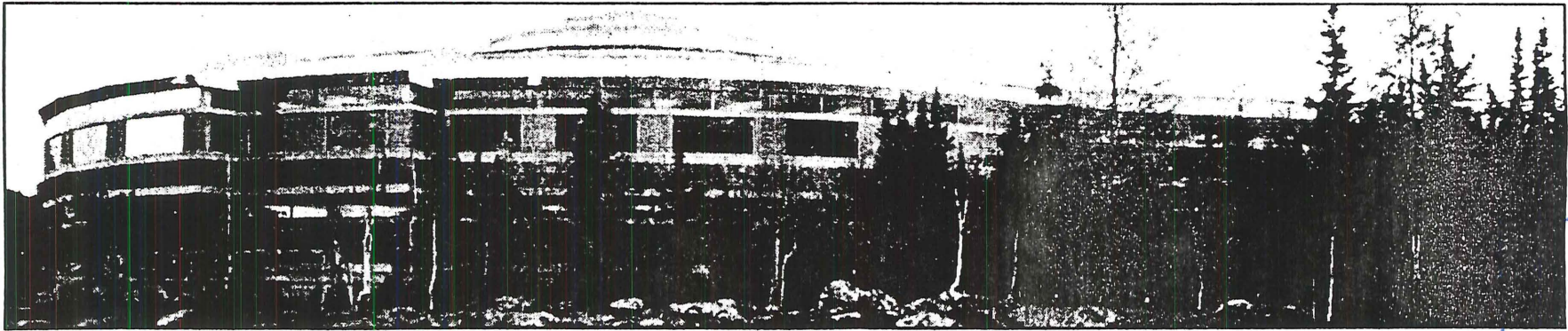


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Saving babies from booze

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NEWS

Briefs

Ward loses engine

Well-known Northern aviator Max Ward blew an engine in his Challenger Jet, the Marjorie Morning Star, Saturday night and was forced to complete an emergency landing in Rankin Inlet.

A new engine has been ordered from Switzerland and Ward's engineer is expected to replace the blown one by the end of this week.

Meanwhile, the high-flying Ward, who blew the engine at 30,000 feet, has already flown to England in another aircraft.

Man lying on road

An RCMP officer returning from Rae on Hwy. 3 Sunday narrowly avoided hitting a man lying

Constitution day!

by P.J. Harston
Northern News Services

A draft constitution for the Western Arctic, unveiled today, has been compared to racist South Africa by Yellowknife's mayor.

Mayor Dave Lovell said a legislature made up of two assemblies — a general assembly and an aboriginal assembly — is reminiscent of South Africa's old apartheid system.

"The whites of South Africa tried that, and you can see where they got," he said in an interview Tuesday. "I just think what they're doing here smacks of real racism and special privilege for special groups."

But Yellowknife North MLA Roy Erasmus, who helped draft the document, said it's

Guaranteed aboriginal seats rankles mayor

a good attempt to bring aboriginal self government into a system of public government.

In the draft constitution, the legislature would be made up of two assemblies; a general assembly containing 14 members and an eight member aboriginal peoples assembly, with members elected to five-year terms.

The 14 would be elected by the general public in each of 14 electoral districts.

The eight would be elected by (one from each) the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in, Sahtu Dene and Metis, Dogrib, Deh Cho Dene and Metis, Treaty 8 First Nations, South Slave Metis,

and the North Slave Metis.

A six member cabinet would be comprised of four members from the general assembly and two from the aboriginal assembly.

To pass legislation on the first vote, a majority from both assemblies would be required.

If legislation went to a second vote, a two-thirds majority of the 22 would be required.

"To have it set up so the aboriginals could block legislation is also not a go," said Lovell.

Lovell said his main problem with the draft is that aboriginal people get to vote twice, which isn't fair to other seg-

ments of the population.

While he agreed that a certain number of seats must be guaranteed for aboriginal people, he doesn't think this is the best way to do it.

"Bill Erasmus (Dene Nation Chief and one of the draft's architect's) came up with a better idea.

It would allow aboriginals to vote either for a general assembly member or an aboriginal member, but not for both," said Lovell.

Lovell sat in on constitutional working group sessions as an observer.

He said his impression of the draft is that it was drawn up

by "a bunch of people in a closed room without a vision of reality."

"I can't believe they'd actually come up with something like this. I don't know what they were smoking," said Lovell.

The 12-member working group that put together the draft recommends that public consultations begin immediately and a final constitution be ready for public ratification in eight months or less.

Officials have said the federal government will need more than a year to approve any changes in the Northwest Territories Act, which will govern the Western Arctic when Nunavut and the west divide in 1999.

