

Creating Nunavut

The Nunavut Caucus *Action Plan*



Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories
Nunavut Caucus





February 1998

The Nunavut Caucus is pleased to present **Creating Nunavut - The Nunavut Caucus Action Plan**. It was produced in consultation with all Members of the Nunavut Caucus. The purpose of this document is to highlight the issues related to the creation of a Nunavut Government that we feel are most important. Throughout the process to create two new territories, the Nunavut Caucus will continue to represent the people of Nunavut in ensuring government programs and services remain at their current levels.

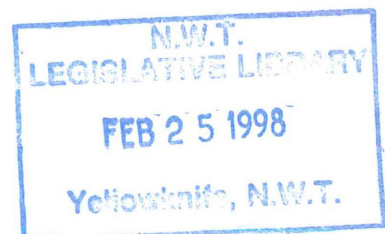
In outlining the actions we intend to take on key implementation issues, the Nunavut Caucus will continue to play a positive and productive role in the creation of two new territories. We will continue to foster dialogue with all of the parties in this process in order that issues can be dealt with in a co-operative manner. It is particularly important to maintain regular communication with our Western Colleagues in the Legislative Assembly as more division-related issues face both caucuses.

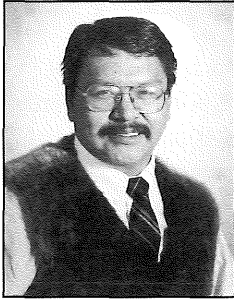
If you have any further questions on this Action Plan or any other matter related to the creation of Nunavut, we welcome you to contact any Member of the Nunavut Caucus.

John Ningark
Co-Chair, Nunavut Caucus

Levi Barnabas
Co-Chair, Nunavut Caucus

The Honourable Goo Arlooktoo
Minister Responsible for Nunavut Transition





Goo Arlooktoo
MLA, Baffin South

Creating Nunavut - The Nunavut Caucus Action Plan

Introduction

April 1, 1999 represents an historic moment in Canadian history. The establishment of the Nunavut Government will be the fulfillment of the long held aspirations of the people of Nunavut to have their own government. The Nunavut Caucus will continue to work on maintaining government programs and services in Nunavut at current levels in order to achieve a smooth transition on April 1, 1999.

To make the creation of Nunavut a success, much work still needs to be done. The Nunavut Caucus recognizes and supports the significant role being played by the Office of the Interim Commissioner, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the Nunavut Implementation Commission, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the federal government. The Nunavut Caucus can play a positive and productive role in a number of issues that are especially important to us. The Nunavut Caucus also recognizes that a responsible and democratic Nunavut government will be in place on April 1, 1999. In planning for the creation of two new territories, the Nunavut Caucus will concentrate on issues that deal with the implementation of a new Nunavut Government.

In the creation of Nunavut, the Nunavut Caucus will be guided by the following principles:

- Division will not negatively affect program and service levels in Nunavut.
- The Nunavut Caucus will continue working to create a viable and secure territory in Nunavut.
- The Nunavut Caucus will continue to work with the Western Caucus to ensure that division issues are resolved in an equitable and cooperative manner that protects the interests of Nunavut.
- The federal government has committed to cover transitional and incremental costs of creating two territories.

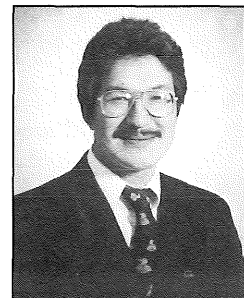
This action plan identifies key implementation issues for the creation of Nunavut that will be addressed by the Nunavut Caucus.

Partners

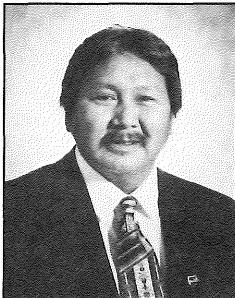
There are a number of organizations that have a role in the process to create two new territories. The Nunavut Caucus will continue to work to maintain open communication with the following partners:

Western Caucus

- Regular dialogue between the Nunavut and Western Caucuses on the division-related matters that face MLAs on a daily basis is critical to the successful transition to two new territories.
- By promoting and maintaining open and regular communication with the Western Caucus today, the Nunavut Caucus hopes to create a co-operative relationship between the two new territories in the future.



Levi Barnabas
MLA, High Arctic



Tommy Enuaraq
MLA, Baffin Central

Interim Commissioner

- The Interim Commissioner is mandated to create a functional government in Nunavut by April 1, 1999. Senior government officials are being hired shortly to assist in implementing the new Nunavut Government. As part of the implementation plan, it has been recognized that the new Nunavut Government will not be able to deliver all the programs and services to Nunavut residents on April 1, 1999. The Interim Commissioner may enter into temporary contracts for the delivery of programs and services after the creation of two new territories to ensure that there is not a reduction in the levels of government programs and services in Nunavut.
- **The establishment of a new Nunavut Government is a major challenge. The Nunavut Caucus, in cooperation with the Minister Responsible for Nunavut Transition will work with the Interim Commissioner and Nunavut Senior Officials to focus on the key implementation issues. The Nunavut Caucus will also continue, as elected Members of the Legislative Assembly, to be involved in the formulation of policies, programs and services of the Government of the Northwest Territories.**

Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI)

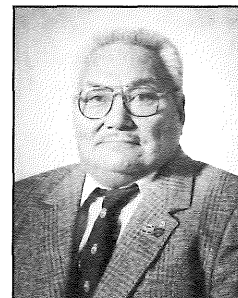
- NTI has an important role to play in the establishment of Nunavut as a signatory to the Nunavut Political Accord and to the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. As a result, the other parties will continue to consult with NTI on division-related activities.
- **The Minister Responsible for Nunavut Transition and the Nunavut Caucus will work with NTI on issues of mutual concern in establishing a new Nunavut Government.**

Federal Government

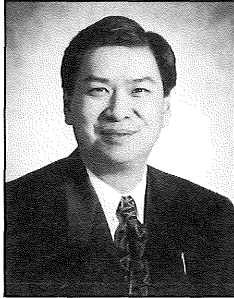
- The federal government has committed to fund any incremental or transitional costs that result from the creation of two new territories. Transition costs are the one-time costs of setting up the new Nunavut Government such as the costs to build offices and houses in Nunavut communities. Incremental costs are the ongoing costs of operating two new governments. Transitional and incremental funding is a very important aspect to relations with the federal government in the division process.
- **The Nunavut Caucus will continue to monitor, in conjunction with the Minister Responsible for Nunavut Transition, ongoing discussions on transitional and incremental funding which is a critical issue for the successful implementation of a new Nunavut Government.**

Nunavut Implementation Commission (NIC)

- NIC has played a significant role in advising the federal government, the GNWT and NTI on the design of the new Nunavut Government. NIC will be co-ordinating Nunavut Day celebrations in 1999.
- **The Nunavut Caucus will consult and work with NIC on division issues in which NIC are involved.**



Mark Evaloarjuk
MLA, Amittuq



Kelvin Ng
MLA, Kitikmeot

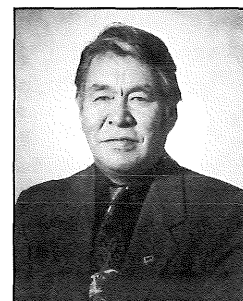
Legislative Assembly and Elections

The first Nunavut election is scheduled for February 1999. The Nunavut Caucus will work to ensure that decisions are made which will allow for the first Nunavut election to occur.

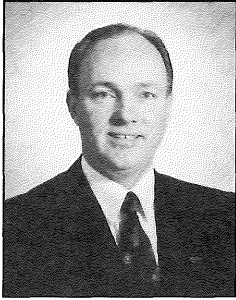
- In January 1998, a Nunavut Leaders Summit was held. Participants agreed that the first Nunavut Legislative Assembly would have 19 members. A federal Order-in-Council to allow for the 19 member Legislative Assembly is being prepared.
- **The Nunavut Caucus will work with the Minister Responsible for Nunavut Transition in ensuring the Order-in-Council is finalized in a timely manner.**
- In order that the first Nunavut elections are held in February 1999, changes will be needed to the *Nunavut Act*. The Nunavut Caucus will work to keep the people of Nunavut well informed about the electoral process in order that as many people as possible participate in this important election.
- **The Minister Responsible for Nunavut Transition and the Nunavut Caucus will be active in ensuring the timely passage of these amendments. Both the Nunavut Caucus and the Minister Responsible for Nunavut Transition will continue to monitor the state of election preparations.**
- With the creation of two new territories, there will be a requirement to decide how the Nunavut Legislative Assembly will operate including such issues as the structure and role of Standing Committees and the procedures of the Legislative Assembly.
- **The Nunavut Caucus will monitor preparations for the new Legislative Assembly and work with our partners in Nunavut to provide input on how it will operate in Nunavut.**
- Another key question for the Nunavut Caucus is the appointment of the first Commissioner of Nunavut. The federal government has the legal authority to appoint the first Nunavut Commissioner.
- **The Nunavut Caucus, together with the Minister Responsible for Nunavut Transition, will make recommendations to the Premier on the appointment of the first Commissioner of Nunavut.**

Government Design

- *Footprints in New Snow 2* has proposed a decentralized model of government for Nunavut, with the establishment of auxiliary centres throughout Nunavut where both headquarter and regional positions would be located.
- **The Nunavut Caucus supports, subject to funding availability, the decentralized model of government and will work to ensure that implementation of the Nunavut Government design addresses decentralization.**
- The Government of the Northwest Territories' Transition Action Plan, tabled in October 1997, estimated the cost of decentralizing government functions as outlined in *Footprints in New Snow 2* to be over \$18 million. This is a transitional cost that must be addressed by the federal government.
- **The Nunavut Caucus will support efforts made by all parties to ensure that adequate transitional funding is secured from the federal government for decentralization.**



John Ningark
MLA, Natilikmiot

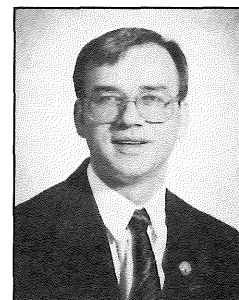


Kevin O'Brien
MLA, Kivallivik

- It is evident that not all aspects of the Nunavut Government can be up and running by April 1, 1999. Office space availability, the need for experienced personnel, the limited yearly amounts allocated by the federal government for infrastructure development and the short time period to division means some regional and headquarter positions in the new government are best phased in over several years. This phasing in provides greater training opportunities with the construction of offices and houses, while, at the same time, promotes a more orderly approach to establishment of the Nunavut Government.
- **The Nunavut Caucus supports a phased in approach to the staffing of the Nunavut Government.**
- The GNWT is proposing that both the NWT Power Corporation and the Workers' Compensation Board should continue as shared organizations between the two new territories. Legislation to create a shared Power Corporation was introduced in October 1997; similar legislation is expected for the Workers' Compensation Board.
- **The Nunavut Caucus will ensure, in the Legislative Assembly and Standing Committees, that the views of the people of Nunavut as well as our Nunavut partners are heard and given due consideration in the legislative process.**
- Preparing legislation for Nunavut is a time consuming but critical task. Legislation requiring amendment or repeal before and after division needs to be identified. Key statutes will be translated into Inuktitut.
- **Regular briefings from the Statute Review Commissioner will allow the Nunavut Caucus to monitor progress that is being made in this area.**
- Another important aspect to the government design in Nunavut is representation on boards and agencies that will perform vital program and service functions, such as the Social Assistance Appeal Board.
- **The Nunavut Caucus will monitor progress in ensuring Nunavut boards and agencies have the representation required to carry out their duties in order that program and service levels remain unaffected.**

Financing

- The 1999/2000 fiscal year poses some complex challenges for budget preparation. The Nunavut Caucus needs to ensure that a process is established for Nunavut budget planning for the 1999/2000 fiscal year.
- **The Nunavut Caucus will provide input on the issues related to the budget preparation process.**
- Another important aspect of preparing budgets for Nunavut is the negotiation of a new formula financing arrangement for Nunavut.
- **The Nunavut Caucus will be monitoring formula financing discussions very closely through regular updates from the Minister of Finance and the Minister Responsible for Nunavut Transition.**



Edward Picco
MLA, Iqaluit



Manitok Thompson
MLA, Aivilik

Training and Human Resources Development

- In order to meet the objective of creating a representative public service in Nunavut, the Nunavut Unified Human Resources Development Strategy is designed to increase education and training opportunities for Inuit to prepare them for the public service.
- **The Nunavut Caucus will continue to work with the Government of the Northwest Territories staff on staffing and training priorities.**

Nunavut Celebrations

- In 1999, Nunavut will celebrate the attainment of a long-held dream. The people of Nunavut will have an opportunity to take part in the celebrations. The NIC has taken on the task of coordinating the planning for Nunavut Celebrations that will include events in all communities.
- **The Nunavut Caucus will support NIC's efforts to make the celebrations a success through involvement in the Nunavut Celebrations Steering Committee.**

Conclusion

The period leading up to April 1, 1999 promises to be a challenging time in creating two new territories.

As the elected Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, the priority of the Nunavut Caucus will be to represent the people of Nunavut to March 31, 1999. We will continue to work to promote and protect the wellbeing of the people of Nunavut by maintaining current levels of government programs and services.

In identifying the key issues related to the creation of two new territories, the Nunavut Caucus is clearly focused on implementation issues. The work of instituting a new Nunavut Government will proceed so that a functional government will be ready by April 1, 1999. The parties must continue to work cooperatively towards this objective.



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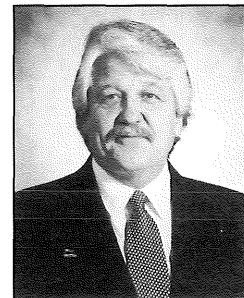
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