

TABLED DOCUMENT NO. 103 15(3) TABLED ON FEB 14 2005



Handwritten signature/initials

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2018
JAN - 5 2005
xc Bob, Gabi + Rick
HON. Joseph L. Handley's
Office

PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE

2004 0 December 13, 2004
1970

xc all Ministers + MLAs

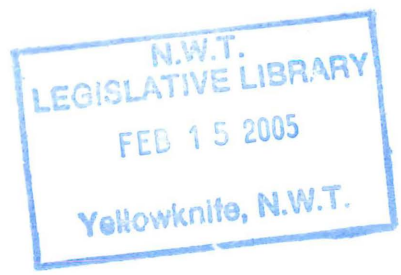
Handwritten signature: Joe

Dear Mr. Handley:

Thank you for your letter of November 2, 2004, regarding the ballistic missile defence system being developed by the United States. I appreciate your perspective on this important issue and understand your concerns about the potential impacts on your territory.

I want to emphasize that no decision has been taken concerning the participation by the Government of Canada in a ballistic missile defence system with the United States and the scope of any Canadian involvement is subject to discussion. You should also be aware that the United States has not requested the use of Canadian territory for any missile defence facilities or testing, nor has it asked for any specific level of Canadian involvement. A decision on whether to cooperate will only be taken after considering Canada's national interests. If the Government of Canada should decide to cooperate with the United States on missile defence, it would determine the parameters of engagement.

The Government of Canada remains committed to ensuring that the territories are kept apprised of any developments regarding possible Canadian participation in United States' missile defence plans. I understand that officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs have been in regular contact with territorial officials on this issue, and they have indicated interest in jointly reviewing the territories' position paper on missile defence.

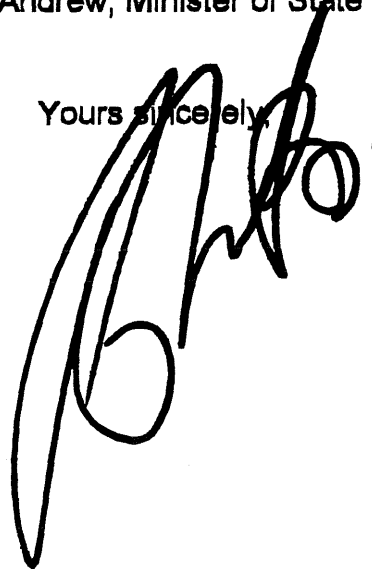


The Honourable Joe Handley
Government Leader
Government of the Northwest Territories
P.O. Box 1320
Legislative Assembly Building
2nd Floor
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
X1A 2L9

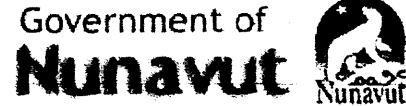
Thank you again for sharing your perspectives on this important issue, and I look forward to building upon the positive working relationship between our governments.

I am forwarding, for their information, a copy of our exchange of correspondence to the Honourable Lucienne Robillard, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, the Honourable Pierre Pettigrew, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Andy Scott, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Honourable William Graham, Minister of Defence, and the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Minister of State (Northern Development).

Yours sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name of the sender, written over the closing text.

FAXED
11.02.04



November 2, 2004

The Right Honourable Paul Martin, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Langevin Block
80 WELLINGTON STREET
OTTAWA ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Martin:

We write to you today regarding the proposed ballistic missile defense (BMD) initiative. As Premiers, we recognize that issues of national defense fall under federal jurisdiction. At the same time, however, matters of security, the environment and use of the land are issues that affect us all and for which we share responsibility.

In the recent Speech from the Throne, the Government of Canada acknowledged Canada's North as an area of unique cultural and ecological significance. In addition, the need to jointly develop a Northern strategy with Territorial partners, Aboriginal people and Northern residents, that includes protecting the Northern environment as well as Canada's sovereignty and security, was highlighted. In the same speech there was also reference to managing our relationship with the United States. Your reply to the Speech from the Throne stated that the issue of BMD would be debated in the House of Commons prior to a government decision.

As Territorial Premiers we have interests and concerns regarding BMD and Canada's possible participation with the United States on the BMD initiative. Your officials have advised that if Northern Premiers have issues regarding BMD, these should be made explicit in advance of any final decisions being made on Canada's participation in the BMD initiative. This letter outlines our interests and concerns.

First and foremost, since our people and lands would likely see the first impacts of any missile deployment or incident, we believe we have a right to consultation prior to any final agreements being reached with the United States. Second, we want to ensure that the safety and security interests of our people are respected. Third, prior to any testing or positioning of missiles in Canada's North, we believe full socio-economic and environmental impact assessments must be undertaken. Finally, we believe that any participation

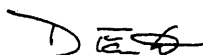
agreement on BMD must be predicated on a commitment by Canada to further develop northern capabilities for emergency response related to potential BMD incidents. For your information we are attaching a paper that provides greater detail on these issues.

It should be noted that as Northern Premiers we are not taking a position either supporting or rejecting participation in BMD at this time. Any decision on our part to support or reject the program needs to be an informed one. This will require information on the actual nature of the program and Canada's contribution. In addition, as Northern Premiers we would also want to consult with Aboriginal leaders prior to making a final decision. In the interim, however, and as suggested by your officials, we are providing information on our interests and concerns so they can be of assistance to you in your negotiations and deliberations.

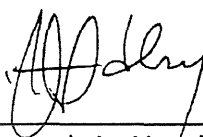
Further, in order to assist in moving this issue forward we wish to suggest the following first steps:

- The Minister of Defence provide Northern Premiers with an early briefing on the current status of the BMD initiative and how our interests and concerns will be reflected; and
- The Federal government begin discussions with Aboriginal governments in the Territories on the issue of Ballistic Missile Defence and possible impacts on Aboriginal people and their governments.

In closing, we look forward to continuing the positive working relationship that we have established with you over the past months. And again, we wish to express our appreciation for your stated commitments to work together to develop a strong Canadian vision for the North. We look forward to an early reply.



Hon. Dennis Fentie
Premier
Yukon



Hon. Joseph L. Handley
Premier
Northwest Territories



Hon. Paul Okalik
Premier
Nunavut

Attachment

c. See attached distribution

c. The Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, P.C., M.P.
Minister of State (Northern Development)

Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell, M.P.
Nunavut

Mr. Larry Bagnell, M.P.
Yukon

Senator Nick Sibbeston
Northwest Territories

Senator Willie Adams
Nunavut

Senator Ione Christensen
Yukon