



Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly  
Member for Great Slave



May 5, 2006

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER  
MINISTER HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

HON. FLOYD ROLAND  
MINISTER PUBLIC WORKS AND SERVICES  
MINISTER FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT BOARD

**Demolition: - Dene Konia Facility, Hay River**

Your decision to call for – and then days later cancel – tenders to demolish the existing Dene Konia facility in Hay River came as a complete surprise and an extreme disappointment

Given the long history of your departments' delays, studies and broken legislative rules, I am increasingly alarmed about the future of the behaviorally disturbed children and their families needing the kind of care this facility should be providing.

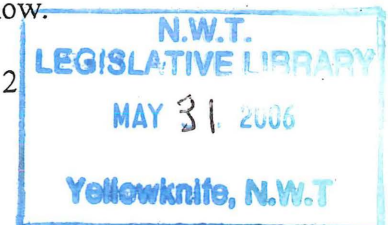
The failure of your departments to coordinate planning, costing and implementation of this project speaks to serious communication issues that exist in cabinet, and between cabinet, standing committees and MLAs.

Minister Miltenberger, as you disclosed to me recently, your disbelief of PWS's costing estimates, and the suggestion that your department might go out and seek its own new estimate, is a disturbing comment on efficacy of our own governmental process.

Any suggestion that yet one more review is needed will only add to the teetering stack of assessments, plans and reviews that dates back to at least 1993.

This is a shameful and all-too-often repeated waste of resources and taxpayer's money spent on phantom projects without any results to show.

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In May of 2005, you convinced the Legislature to spend \$3.2 million to renovate Dene Konia to accommodate moving the TTC program from Yellowknife. This marked your first violation of FAA rules, (Directive #302, Budgetary Control, section 5) requiring notification when plans change. That was also, I would remind you, a betrayal of the troubled youth, their families, the staff and a wide network of support agencies built up around the city since the TTC was organized over 15 years ago.

I would remind you also of the admission by a deputy minister that this was all done for political purposes. There were never any sound program or financial reasons for the decision.

Your second, and third violation of the FAA directive occurred when you called for demolition tenders, and then cancelled that call, without notifying the affected MLAs or the appropriate standing committee. Specifically, the change from a renovation project to a demolition, is what we should have been notified of.

These were material changes in the nature and scope of the project that you got the Legislature to approve last May. It was only a few months ago that FMBS and committees agreed to amend the FAA directive to require departments to inform members and committees when this kind of situation arises. I am astounded you would ignore this policy so soon after we revised the directive to help avoid just such a blunder.

Your departments must account for violating the spirit of consensus government, and FAA policy, in failing to advise MLAs and the responsible committees. Your cavalier disrespect and denial of the role played by MLAs and Committees is contemptible.

Ministers, as significant as these legislative and procedural issues are, they pale in comparison to the severe disruption your actions will inflict in the lives on the young clients, their families, and the staff of contractor Bosco Homes.

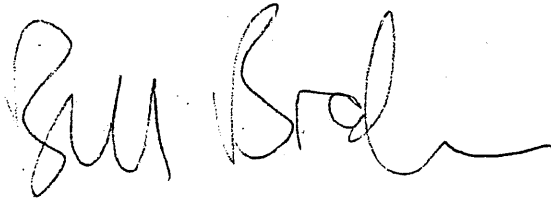
Your dithering on how to achieve this project will no doubt disrupt the schedule for moving the TTC from Yellowknife to Hay River by the fall of

2007. I understand further that Health and Social Services has yet to sign a transitional contract with Bosco Homes and they are presently without even a current contract. To me, this is an abuse of the professionalism and trust that Bosco has demonstrated to us over many years of service to our community.

I will continue to hold you to account for the violations of our legislative and consensus procedures. However, I emphasize that my greatest concern is for the welfare of the young people and their families who need this service. I would remind you of the many messages of concern you have also received from the Yellowknife Catholic School Board, the Yellowknife Public School Board, the YWCA, medical and mental health practitioners, staff of the TTC, and 707 citizens who signed a petition tabled on October 19, 2005, to continue services in Yellowknife.

In this context, I wish to see a tangible, sustainable and affordable solution to restoring this desperately needed service to Yellowknife. Regardless of whether or how you choose to build a new facility in Hay River, my sincere desire, and that of the 707 people who petitioned us, is to see the service continue in Yellowknife.

I am prepared to work with you on a renewed strategy to keep this service in Yellowknife. I look forward to talking with you in the near future.



Bill Braden  
MLA Great Slave

C     Bosco Homes  
       Jane Groenewegen, MLA  
       Paul Delorey, MLA  
       Standing Committee on Social Programs  
       Community Stakeholders

