

Summer  
2008

## DENNIS BEVINGTON MP Western Arctic



# STANDING UP FOR NORTHERNERS

Dear Friends,

It is with real pleasure that this month we are able to provide a newsletter in both of Canada's official languages. This service is provided by the House of Commons and it is fitting that we can deliver this communication to our francophone community members across the NWT.

In the future, we will also focus on finding ways to provide information in the very important Aboriginal languages in the NWT, Gwich'in, Tlicho, North and South Slavey, Chipewyan, Cree, Michif, Inuktitut (Inuvialuktun, Iuinnaqtun).

There is nothing more important to the preservation of culture than to see language prosper. In April, I had an opportunity to meet with Aboriginal language instructors in Inuvik and hear about their challenges and hopes. They reported that resources were limited, especially in the smaller communities.

With oil at more than \$125 dollars a barrel, money will be very tight across the North this year. Our economy in the NWT, not including the mines, uses almost 300 million litres of heating oil, gasoline and other fossil fuels. With all of these products up more than 50 cents per litre, this amounts to a massive \$150 million hit to our total expenditures. While we can encourage people to look at different ways of heating their homes, to becoming more energy efficient and changing their lifestyles, there will still be many that will find the situation very difficult.

That is one reason we are not advocating a direct carbon tax to deal with reducing our impact on the environment. The NDP is continuing to advocate a cap on big carbon producers, with a penalty for those that don't make their limits. That penalty would go into a Canada-wide retrofit fund to really raise the energy efficiency of our buildings.

I will continue to back the efforts of our public and Aboriginal governments to move ahead with devolution and resource revenue-sharing. I am also making the point to this Conservative government that the windfall profits that they are making from our Norman Wells oilfields should be going into a fund for Northern infrastructure.

With the NDP Caucus, I am focusing more attention on the expanding Alberta Tar Sands and the impacts they are having on the land, water, wildlife and people of Northern Alberta and the NWT.

Tripling the size of the Tar Sands by 2015 -- as is now planned -- is an environmental disaster, and the Federal Government must exercise its authority to prevent it.

I hope that everyone will enjoy their Northern summer, and take advantage of this time to enjoy your community, family and friends. I look forward to seeing many of you as I travel around the North this summer.

Dennis Bevington, MP Western Arctic



Northerners on Parliament Hill on June 11, 2008, the day of the apology to Residential School students. Back row: Dave Poitras, Jonas Antoine, Dennis Bevington, Bill Erasmus, Terri Brown, Joe Beaverho, Stella Desjarlais; Front row: Ursula Zoe-Casaway, Elsie Casaway, Alphonsine McNeely, Terry Villeneuve and Alice Liske.

### MP Dennis Bevington comments on the Apology to Indian Residential School Students on June 11, 2008

The Western Arctic MP is relieved the Prime Minister has finally acknowledged Canada's responsibility for the assimilation of First Nations, Metis and Inuit people in an attempt to destroy their families, culture, heritage and language. It is estimated that 10,000 Aboriginal people from the Northwest Territories were removed from their communities and forced into Residential Schools, where they suffered mental, physical and sexual abuse.

"Although the abuse suffered will never be forgotten, I am grateful that my constituents and Aboriginal people all across the country can finally take some comfort in today's apology. I hope this can serve as a first step in the healing process," said Bevington.

Now, Bevington says it is up to the Conservative government to follow up this apology with action.

"I once again urge the Prime Minister to sign the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. If Canada wants to prove to First Nations, Metis and Inuit people that they have the same freedoms and rights as all other Canadians, then we must endorse this declaration," says Bevington.

## Gas prices: Solutions for average consumers

As gas prices smash the \$1.50/litre barrier, with wages struck in neutral, it's getting harder to make ends meet. Yet even now, the Harper Conservatives' idea of leadership is to stand up for profitable Big Oil—doling out tax breaks and backdoor approvals for tar sands projects.

**Jack Layton's NDP is leading a different kind of campaign—for fairness for average consumers.**

NDP Bill C-442 would create an **Oil and Gas Ombudsman** to investigate consumer complaints of unfair price gouging at the gas pumps.

Jack Layton has proposed a **cap-and-trade system** to crack down on big industrial polluters—more effective and fair than a carbon tax on fuels.

Layton's cap-and-trade plan will generate billions annually to invest in developing **affordable green solutions** to help the rest of us burn less fuel.

The NDP **opposes Harper's \$50.5-billion corporate tax giveaway** that rewards profitable oil companies without addressing consumers' needs.



Dennis pictured here with a delegation from Deline on a recent visit to Ottawa. Left to right; Danny Gaudet, Jane Modeste, Raymond Tutcho, Patricia Modeste, Morris Neyelle, Dennis, Peter Menacho, Dolphus Baton and Joseph Tetso.

## In the House of Commons:

### Dennis speaks on bioenergy for the north

" Right now across the Northern Canada, and it is not just in the Northwest Territories, it is in Yukon, Nunavut, northern Quebec, Labrador, we are experiencing a massive increase in heating costs and costs of generation with fossil fuels, fuel oil. Fuel oil prices affect hundreds of thousands of people across northern Canada and many rural people in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. It affects rural people in Ontario, the Maritimes and Quebec who are not attached to a natural gas distribution system and use fuel oil. These costs are going through roof.

Are there any solutions? There are solutions and we are putting those solutions to work in Yellowknife right now. We are buying biomass products from Alberta and running our larger buildings and many homes on wood pellets. It is easily transportable, cellulosic material that is simply pelletized and provides that opportunity.

This can spread right across northern Canada. This could have been available to everybody in the country if there had been one thing, and that was parity in the bioenergy market where the greenhouse gas reductions were compared with biofuels and bioenergy, where values and incentives were based on how much we could return to the different types of objectives that were set into the policy.

If that were the case, we could do so much more to reduce the cost of living for people across country who are not attached to a natural gas delivery system.

Personally, as a Northern resident, although I use biomass myself, I have full sympathy for us in building our bioenergy industry across the country. Yet there is no parity and no discussion of this. Nor is there any discussion of the way to use different forms of energy. We are on a biofuel path that may or may not be appropriate. This does not mean we should preclude the other forms of bioenergy available to us".



Dennis with Sister Celeste Goulet from Tulita, on the day of her PMA Award for Excellence in Childcare on May 15 in Ottawa.



Dennis with Alice Liske and Lee Crapeau, along with hundreds of people who celebrated National Day of Action in Ottawa on May 29.

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## Showing thanks to those who protect us

On Friday May 23, at least 400 Yellowknife residents gathered outside City Hall to show their appreciation for our Police, Armed Forces, Fire, and Emergency Response and Parks Officials.

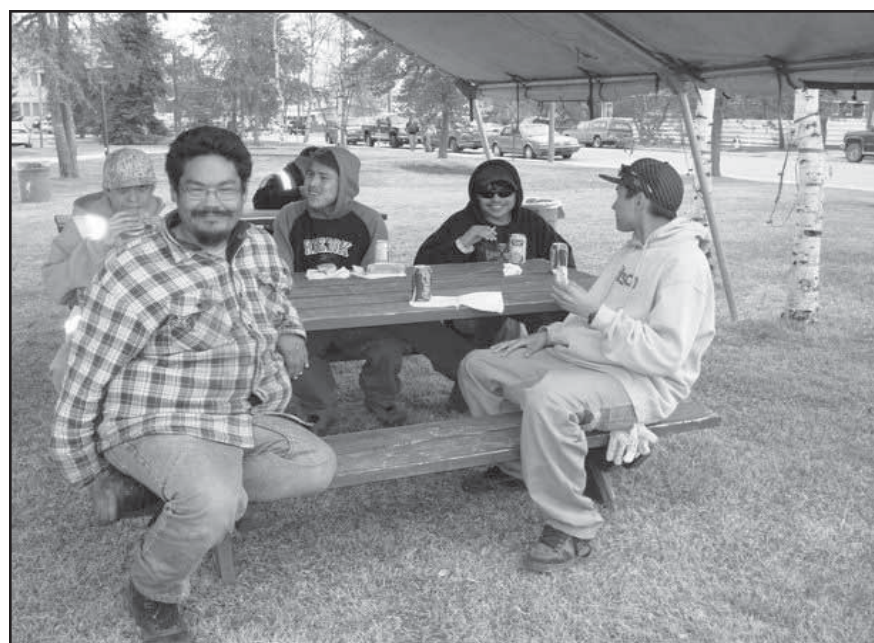
Hosted by my Constituency Office, the “First Annual Support Our Protective Services Community BBQ” was held to recognize and honour those individuals who protect our communities. Other federal MPs hosted similar events across the country.

In the true spirit of appreciation, the event was sponsored by Petersen and Auger, M&M Meat Shops, Northern Food Services, Yellowknife Direct Charge Co-op, the City of Yellowknife, the Northern Territories Federation of Labour, and the Workers’ Safety and Compensation Commission.

With the help of dedicated volunteers, we served up hamburgers, hot dogs, refreshments and cake to members of our protective services and citizens of Yellowknife. I handed out official House of Commons Certificates of Appreciation to representatives of all agencies who attended: G Division Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Joint Task Force North, Yellowknife Fire Hall, Yellowknife Airport Fire Department, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Yellowknife Municipal Enforcement.

I would like to extend a very special thank you to the following volunteers. I couldn’t have held such a successful event without you:

Kathryn Paton, Dave Grundy, Amy Doerksen, Mark Heyck Joanne Rogers, Tara Kearsey, Heather Oliver, Summer Halliday Rodney Connell, LCol Paul Fleet , Capt Jean Godin, MCpl Pierre Jobin, MCpl Ron During, Cpl Alexis Harvey Sgt Tim Sanistreet, Sgt Stephane Leduc, OCdt Tim Templeman Cpl Jane Strong, Cpl Patrick Ash



Young people enjoying the barbeque in Yellowknife.



Above: Sgt. Ken Morrison and Auxiliary Cst. Angela Norris at the BBQ.



MP Dennis Bevington presented Certificates of Appreciation to all NWT Protective Services Agencies during the First Annual Support our Protective Services BBQ at Yellowknife City Hall on May 23. From left to right: Chief Lee Strowman, YK Airport Fire Dept; Assistant Deputy Minister Ernie Campbell; GNQT Dept of Environment & Natural Resources (accepting for Renewable Resources Officers, Forestry Officers and Environmental Protection Officers); MP Dennis Bevington; Yellowknife Fire Chief Albert Hedrick; Brigadier General Chris Whitecross, Joint Task Force North; G Division RCMP Chief Superintendent Tom Middleton. Missing from photo is a representative of Yellowknife Municipal Enforcement, which also received a certificate of recognition.



Dennis with the Canadian delegation at the Ice Cape Research station near Ilulissat, Greenland. The Arctic Ocean Conference was held on May 27-29. Participants came from Canada, Denmark, Norway, and the Russian Federation and the United States of America. The Canadian delegation included scientists, who met with other world scientists.

## Arctic Sovereignty

On May 27th and 28th I went with the Canadian Delegation to the international conference on the Arctic Ocean held in Greenland. The nations at the conference (Canada, Russia, Denmark, Norway and the USA) agreed that the best way to deal with the question of Arctic Sovereignty is through diplomacy and the international legal system and not only through military muscle. They felt that the UN Law of the Sea had adequate rules to allow them to settle issues around the ownership of Arctic Ocean waters. I was pleased to hear that other Arctic nations with coastlines on the ocean have the same view on how to protect the Arctic that the New Democratic Party has.

We feel that the best way to protect the Arctic is by working with Northerners from across Canada build better lives, much as the three Premiers stated last year. This would be best accomplished by actions such as building community and transportation infrastructure, the full and complete implementation of land claim and self-government agreements, assistance to improve energy conservation and the use of alternative energy, the completion of land use and other environmental management plans, housing assistance and the use of civilian means to enforce Canadian and territorial laws.

It is unfortunate, that the Conservatives have only chosen the route of military force to deal with Arctic Sovereignty. The Conservative plan is to build more military bases and buy a fleet of ineffective patrol boats that have been referred to as slush breakers. Just like their position on Climate Change the Conservative policy on the Arctic is out of step with the rest of the world. It was clear at the conference that organizations like the Arctic Council can continue to play a very effective role coordinating international efforts on scientific research, environmental protection, and cooperating on other multinational concerns.

There is of course a role for the military in Canada's North through activities like increased support for the Rangers, increasing surveillance of our land and waters or improving search and rescue capacity, a need the Conservatives are ignoring.

The conference reaffirmed to many Canadians, that the way to protect the Arctic is through helping Northerners build better lives, through international diplomacy and cooperation and not solely through military means.

## TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

The Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established June 1. It is a court-mandated Commission, which is the result of an agreement amongst Residential School Survivors and representatives of Aboriginal people, churches and the government of Canada. The Commission is charged with the tasks of assisting Canadians to know and understand the truth of our Indian Residential School legacy and of promoting reconciliation through new relationships embedded in mutual recognition and respect. The three members appointed to the TRC are;

Justice Harry LaForme, Chair  
 Claudette Dumont-Smith, Commissioner  
 Jane Brewin Morley, Q.C., Commissioner

The TRC will be an official independent body that will oversee a process to provide former students and anyone who has been affected by the Indian Residential Schools legacy, with an opportunity to share their individual experiences in a safe and culturally appropriate manner through statement-taking or truth-sharing.

This includes First Nations, Inuit and Métis former Indian Residential School students, their families, communities, the Churches, former school employees, Government and other Canadians.

The TRC is a component of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. It has a five-year mandate.

### Finally, good news on climate change!

**With time running out for future generations, the House of Commons has adopted Jack Layton's law to reduce climate-changing emissions!**

Passed on June 4, over Stephen Harper's objections, Layton's *Kyoto Plus Bill (C-377)* sets the national emissions targets and timelines that scientists advise to fight dangerous global warming.

**By 2020: 25% reduction** of emissions below 1990 levels.

**By 2050: 80% reduction** of emissions below 1990 levels.

**NOW: interim targets every five years**, with public progress reporting.

**Next steps to build on this climate change victory:**

Once the Senate passes this bill, the federal government must meet these targets and timelines—*or stand in contempt of Canadian law.*

Layton has proposed a "cap-and-trade" system to **make big polluters cut their emissions** and pay for what they do emit.

Revenues generated from "cap-and-trade" would be invested in **affordable green solutions**—such as greener cars—to help the rest of us emit less.