

DENNIS BEVINGTON

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT WESTERN ARCTIC
Community Newsletter Winter 2010



Dear Friends,

This winter has been one of great ups and downs. By the time you receive this, the Vancouver Olympics will have been played out and the greatest winter sports event the World knows will have a Canadian stamp all over it. The NWT will have had one competitor, Brendan Green, in the biathlon, and we all are proud that he has achieved his goal.

At the same time, our new year started with another monumental human tragedy, this time in our own North America, with the earthquake in Haiti. Northerners have shown again their warmth of heart and generosity in raising funds through January and February with events and individual donations.

The Prime Minister's actions at the end of December to prorogue Parliament till March 3rd has meant that much work in legislation over the past year has been wasted and those 22 sitting days this year are gone. We need new rules in Parliament to ensure that this anti-democratic behaviour is made more difficult in the future.

March will see the new Federal Budget coming forward. Last year, although we had record spending to stimulate the economy, there was no sense of strategic investment. With the recent announcement of our greenhouse gas emission targets for 2020, we will definitely require a plan moving forward that can deliver real results. As well with a deficit this year approaching 60 billion, we know that sometime in the future, we will face the choice of reducing government services or raising more revenue. The NDP position is that we should not continue to cut corporate taxes as is proposed by both the Conservatives and Liberals.

The cost of living still remains the greatest impediment to northerners. Our population dropped again this year, and that hurts us all. Across the NWT, in big communities and small, people need a better federal tax deduction, more help to reduce energy costs and better transportation infrastructure.

Please share your ideas and concerns with me. Through letters, emails or if you see me in your community, I appreciate hearing from you.

Dennis

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Joint Review Panel Report on the Mackenzie Gas Pipeline

After the release of the Joint Review Panel's report On the Mackenzie Gas Pipeline on December 30th 2009, a multi community consultation tour was conducted by Member of Parliament for the Western Arctic. Four communities in the Sahtu region and Inuvik were visited over 7 days.

During this time, it became evident that the JRP report was accepted by most as a final determination of the issues for northerners around this proposed development. Most of the leadership that was consulted and that had time to view the document felt that the report was a strong yes for the project. As well, they felt the National Energy Board, in its deliberations over the next four months would likely support the positive statement of the Panel. This being, if the project was carried out carefully, following the recommendations in the report, it would yield a very positive and sustainable result to the people of the NWT. Some groups had yet to see the report and its recommendations; others were engaging consultants to respond to their different regional perspectives.

There was no consensus as to the possibility that the proponents of the project would go ahead in the near future, but most felt that it would eventually be built.

Two major directions were identified in all communities for immediate action. One was the advancement of the release of some of the monies from the 500 million dollar Mackenzie Valley Social impact fund set up by the government of Canada in its 2007 Federal Budget. As it stands now, this would not occur until a definitive decision had been made by the pipeline proponents. There is a sense that to wait for this point would be counter-productive to the effective use of the fund. Of the five regions that are engaged in the planning for the use of these funds, three have completed the process, two are expected to finish by April... **cont'd p. 3.**



Right: Yellowknife Mayor Gordon Van Tighem, Yvette Gonzalez, CEO, NWT Association of Communities, and Dennis.

After Copenhagen: Fighting global warming

Heading into December's climate summit in Copenhagen, so many Canadians had hoped for a fair and binding treaty to cut carbon emissions. Failure to achieve that is a serious setback for the effort to tackle global warming. Canada's Harper government hindered talks more than it helped. Our negotiators walked in with one of the weakest positions in the industrialized world. Canada was derided as "Fossil of the Year." And in the final days, our negotiators were excluded from key multilateral talks.

When it comes to greening our economy, everyday Canadians are miles ahead of their government—and New Democrats are on *your* side.

Our *Climate Change Accountability Act* sets science-based emission targets matching the European Union's. By passing it in 2010, Parliament can set Canada on a constructive path as the world moves toward a binding emissions treaty in 2010.

We're proposing practical solutions to make Canada a green energy leader—with greener buildings, greener transportation and more renewable energy. This century will belong to the new energy leaders, no matter what the treaty targets are.

Instead of protecting big oil, it's time to lay a course for a greener future for the rest of us.



Dennis took part in a protest rally in Yellowknife against the prorogation of Parliament.



Josh Campbell, Dennis and Jean Francois Des Lauriers enjoying perogies after the protest rally against prorogation.



MLA Nahendeh Kevin Menicoche, Joan Bevington, Fort Simpson mayor Sean Whelly, and Dennis.



Dennis joined Aurora College students in Fort Simpson at their annual Christmas party.



Dennis with Tu Nedhe MLA Tom Beaulieu at the NWT Legislative Assembly for the 2010 budget address.

Joint Review Panel Report..cont'd from page 1

The other was the need to accelerate the development of road infrastructure along parts of the proposed route of the pipeline. This would include the 150 to 200 million dollar investment in the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk road, which has now had its routing study completed, a study that was supported by the Government of Canada.

In the Sahtu, there was strong support to complete the link between Wrigley and Norman Wells. With the construction of the Blackwater Bridge, a 15 million dollar investment from the Government of the NWT ongoing, the proposal to move forward with Highway Description Funding as outlined by our Minister of Transportation should be a priority. The Bear River Bridge, tendered two years ago unsuccessfully, is the only remaining crossing on this route. The question of the connection north to Ft Good Hope was acknowledged by all that community consultation was still required, but that is could be dealt with in separately from the other road proposal.

The Sahtu region was very supportive of road efforts that would be initiated within their region, and permit businesses and people in their communities to benefit from the economic activity around road construction. The possibility of designing a large scale training project was a popular idea.

There was discussion as well on the specifications for any road construction. The difference between a highway development and a simple all season roadways could make substantial cost differences in construction.

There were other concerns raised by individuals concerning their community development and the sensitivity of wildlife and the environment. People were generally doubtful that the Government of Canada would live up to the idea of sharing any royalties on the project 50/50 with northern governments.

People were concerned with the great difficulty that industry appeared to be having getting through the regulatory processes that are mandated in the NWT.

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Dennis and Eileen Erasmus from Yellowknife in Ottawa on October 5, 2009, at the National Awards Ceremony. Eileen was a recipient of the 2009 Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence.

Helping Haiti's survivors

On January 12, a massive earthquake devastated the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince, killing as many as 200,000 people and leaving millions homeless. As those tragic consequences continue to unfold, the best of Canadians' compassionate spirit has been on display.

FINDING LOST LOVED ONES: Friends and relatives still seeking information on Canadian citizens believed to be in the affected area can contact:

Foreign Affairs & International Trade Canada:
1-800-387-3124

MAKING DONATIONS: Humanitarian organizations still need your help. (Visa and MasterCard have answered Jack Layton's call to waive transaction fees on Haiti donations.)

Humanitarian Coalition
www.humanitariancoalition.ca
1-800-464-9154
Red Cross
www.redcross.ca
1-800-418-1111
UNICEF
www.unicef.ca
1-800-567-4483

HELPING THROUGH IMMIGRATION: Canada has taken positive steps, including expediting some immigration processes. New Democrats are urging the prime minister to help more families reunify here—especially by changing rules to allow Haitian-Canadians to sponsor siblings, uncles, aunts and older children for immigration.

DENNIS ON AVIATION SAFETY

“I do not support outsourcing safety testing or safety monitoring to the private sector. I think it is an important core responsibility of government and my department,” said Transport Minister John Baird in response to my December 1st, 2009 oral question concerning aviation safety.

I intended to continue holding the Minister to account on the problems surrounding the implementation of his department’s approach to aviation safety. Unfortunately the prorogation of Parliament has made that more difficult. Stephen Harper’s decision to shut-down Parliament has also put in jeopardy an aviation safety study by the Standing Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Communities which I initiated. Because of his undemocratic actions, there will be further delays to Canadians getting assurance that aviation in this country is safe.

Transport Canada has already outsourced its responsibility to ensure aviation in Canada is safe. Beginning in 1998 Transport Canada began a process transferring safety certification and monitoring of business aviation to the Canadian Business Aviation Association (CBAA). Today the safety of aircraft owned by companies for their own use is overseen by an organization whose purpose is to ‘act as the collective voice of business aircraft operators’. The now infamous ‘corporate executive jet’ falls under this heading. This outsourcing is part of a larger initiative at Transport Canada called Safety Management Systems (SMS).

Safety Management Systems require an airline or aircraft operator to develop a pro-active system of safety monitoring and correction. As a concept SMS is a good idea, however it is being used by Transport Canada to shirk its duty and ensure the Canadian aviation industry is safe.

In an SMS related press release on Transport Canada’s website, the former minister Lawrence Cannon calls the new system, “A systematic, explicit and comprehensive process for managing safety hazards adds an additional layer of safety to our aviation system making the industry more accountable instills a positive safety culture to help improve the safety performance of operators.”

However, recent crash investigation reports by the Transportation Safety Board (TSB) reveal that this is not the case. These reports particularly highlight the delegation (aka outsourcing) of safety responsibilities to the CBAA as significant factors leading to crashes.

Reporting on the 11 November 2007 crash of a business jet operated by Jetport Inc. on a flight from Hamilton, Ontario, to Fox Harbour, Nova Scotia, the TSB said, “Through its assessment process, Transport Canada had identified deficiencies in the CBAA’s management of the private operator certificate process, including the limited oversight of the CBAA-accredited auditors and the lack of a functioning quality assurance component. While Transport Canada initially rejected the CBAA’s proposed corrective action plan and no revision was produced, the assessment was closed out without any documentation of the process. Had Transport Canada required mitigating action on the part of the CBAA, there would have been an opportunity to identify deficiencies in Jetport’s SMS through the audit process.”

Member of Parliament Western Arctic Dennis’s Statistics for 2009

Days in Ottawa - 150
Days in Yellowknife - 45
Days in NWT communities - 40
Days at home in Fort Smith - 113
Words spoken in Parliament - 39,332, that’s 44th out of 308 Members of Parliament
Check out website: www.howdtheyvote.ca

Canada Revenue Agency Telephone Numbers

As of February 22, 2010, the new extended evening and weekend hours for Individual Income Tax Enquiries telephone service will begin. Telephone agents will be available Monday to Friday (except holidays) from **8:15 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. (local time)** weekdays, and from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays (except Easter weekend). The automated service will remain available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Enquiries T.I.P.S. (Tax Information Phone Service) 1-800-267-6999

This automated phone service provides information to individuals and businesses.

Individual income tax inquiries 1-800-959-8281

Tax information for individuals, including personal income tax returns, instalments, RRSP’s, and the Working Income Tax Benefit Hours of service and service standard.

Telerefund 1-800-959-1956

This automated phone service provides information about your income tax refund.

For all other inquiries, go to www.cra-arc.gc.ca



Dennis with MLA Inuvik Twin Lakes Robert McLeod, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, and Inuvik Mayor Denny Rodgers.

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