

Joan Scottie
Letter to Nunatsiaq News
November 21, 2008
NTI, Inuit associations do not serve Inuit

I would like to make some comments and update some people who wonder about those who have concerns about the negative impacts we may face from proposed uranium mining.

I shouldn't say "may," as some people already suffer from broken spirits, since we are being ignored even before the first microgram of yellowcake is dug up.

First of all, I am really ticked off that our community representative on the Kivalliq Inuit Association, Edwin Evo, had only one question for Areva. ("Promised uranium mine wins KIA plaudits," Nunatsiaq News, Nov. 7)

Late in 2006, Baker Lake Concerned Citizen's Committee requested one year of operational funding from KIA and from Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. to set up an office to inform and update the concerns that people have about what is happening with the many uranium exploration projects and the proposed uranium mine in our hunting grounds.

We received a letter about four months later from the NTI president saying that our request for funding proposal was denied.

He says that beneficiaries already have a voice through our KIA representative, and also through the local community lands and resources committee. He also explained the various institutions of public government that were formed to protect and regulate our environment.

This is just to explain to you my side of story and some of the obstacles showing how the CLARC is insufficient as an alternative to the concerned citizen's committee.

For example, last year Areva worked on a feasibility study and environmental assessment of the Kiggavik Project. There were many proposed projects such as two all-weather routes, proposed docking sites, and a bridge crossing the Thelon River.

As part of their public consultation, they met with handful of committees, including the HTO and CLARC committees. The CLARC committee is supposed to be a voice, as the NTI president stated, for our beneficiaries, operating under KIA with representatives from the HTO, elders, youth, the hamlet and KIA.

As a representative for the HTO, I strongly stated that we cannot possibly have community input unless we meet with the people that we represent. I suggested to the CLARC that we request \$3,000 to meet with elders, youth, and hunters separately to get their comments and input.

I stated that we cannot make decisions without consulting with them. After all, this is a consultation process. This was in month of May. The letter was written and given to our KIA

rep, Edwin Evo, for his action.

In early October of this year, the CLARC met on some other business and I raised the question again of how we can possibly decide on important issues without knowing what our people want. I asked about the status of the \$3,000 in funding we requested last May. Our KIA rep responded "I don't know."

All I can say for KIA's joyful celebration is that you do not hear, or give us a voice for our comments and input. You make thousands of dollars from our hunting grounds and you cannot even spare us a lousy \$3,000!

It's all because you are afraid that once our beneficiaries start meeting, sharing concerns and getting a voice, it's going to be a different tune than the music you're dancing to.

In short, the Kivalliq Inuit Association and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. does not serve us. They are only thinking about filling their wallets from our hunting, fishing, and traditional land, the root of our cultural and traditional spirit, quickly selling it to foreign companies, to people who do not share our beliefs.

Joan Scottie
Baker Lake