

MEDIA LINES**December 6, 2000**

Issue: Breakdown of negotiations towards removal of children at risk due to solvent addiction in Davis Inlet

LINES:

The main issue should be straightforward: Our first and foremost priority at this moment is the health and safety of the children of Davis Inlet.

Our prime focus is to work with the province and the Innu to provide assistance to the children of Davis Inlet as soon as possible.

Our immediate priority is to get professional help and care to the children of Davis Inlet; to assess their situation; and to identify the treatment and care that they require.

What is required right now is the cooperation of Innu leadership in facilitating the assessment of the children.

The proposed agreement tabled by the Innu went beyond the scope of what we had come to do and beyond the scope of commitments made on November 26, 2000, by the provincial and federal governments.

We are committed to support the commitments that were laid out in the November 26 agreement between the Premier, Minister Tobin and the Innu Nation.

We believe that any plans in the longer term should flow from the assessment of the children's needs. These plans would include both care for those children who need to be removed from the community and support to the community itself.

In terms of today's meeting, the Innu representatives have just walked out and we are extremely disappointed. However, our primary concern remains getting professional help to the children of Davis Inlet and we are prepared to assist the province and Innu in getting help to those children without further delay.

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