

## Key Events in Innu Seeking C&FS Control

**1965 The Memorandum to the federal Cabinet** states that:

“...they (particularly the Indians) remain as distinct and separate communities clearly identifiable by language, culture, way of life and problems; third that these two groups have required and will need for some time in the future, **special programs similar to those provided Indians and Eskimos elsewhere...**”

**January 1992.** A house fire in Davis Inlet left six children dead. The Innu Nation conducted its own inquiry into conditions and issued the “*Gathering Voices*” report which called for Innu control over key services. The report asserted that:

“ We must govern and run our own affairs. We need to solve our own problems and not have the white agencies do it. We need self-government. **We have to take over all the government institutions: the school, Social Services; the clinic, policing, the store and so on. We should have Innu teachers, social workers, nurses, police and so on...**”

The report also found a variety of specific actions were needed in key areas including:

- 👉 relocation
- 👉 job training
- 👉 **control over social and education services**
- 👉 respect for our culture
- 👉 drug and alcohol treatment based on family units,
- 👉 policing and justice initiatives
- 👉 working together; and,
- 👉 **focusing on the children.**

**February 1993.** The Innu present a seven point plan to federal representatives entitled “*Hearing the Voices: Government’s Role in Innu Renewal.*” This included requests for action on:

- 👉 relocation
- 👉 a family renewal centre
- 👉 **building on Innu abilities** (to be able to deliver programs)
- 👉 self-government and rights
- 👉 acknowledgment of obligations
- 👉 immediate treatment for troubled youth; and,
- 👉 implementation commitments.

**1993.** Many youth high on gas and threatening suicide, are captured on video. A request for the **Canadian Human Rights Commission** to conduct an independent inquiry into the Innu situation was agreed. The resulting report made several recommendations including:

- 👉 relocation to a site chosen by the Mushua Innu;
- 👉 direct funding arrangements that ensure the Innu **have access to all federal funding programs, and services that are available to status on-reserve Indian peoples...**while preserving the unique aspects of existing arrangements such as outpost;
- 👉 **devolution of programs involving the province where appropriate;** and

👉 funding required to carry out the recommendations.

**1993.** At the request of **the Royal Commission**, the Innu held extensive community-based sessions. This ended with consensus recommendations for actions including:  
 ..healing ourselves; treatment and education; country-based opportunities; sexual abuse healing; care of our spirituality; self-government; improved governance; policing and justice needs; **Innu influence over services.**

**1994.** The federal government presented the Innu with a "**Statement of Political Commitments**". That statement made commitments on:

- 👉 relocation;
- 👉 Outpost;
- 👉 Treatment including country-based components;
- 👉 Innu justice and policing program;
- 👉 emergency funding for health and safety issues;
- 👉 resumption of land claim and self-government negotiations;
- 👉 **devolution of federal programs and to work with province to devolve other programs and services.**

In **1996.** The Mushuau Innu, federal and provincial governments signed the **Relocation Agreement**. The document includes: commitments to...

**"enter forthwith into negotiations regarding the devolution to Mushuau Innu of certain programs and services currently provided by Newfoundland and Labrador."**

And specifically for the federal government to...

**"enter forthwith into negotiations regarding the devolution to Mushuau Innu of certain programs and services."**

**In 1997 a federal Order In Council** was passed to authorize:

..." the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and other Ministers as appropriate, to consider the Innu people at the communities of Sheshatshiu and Davis Inlet as if they were Status Indians on reserve land, for the purpose of providing them with programs and services."

In **1998, devolution plans** were provided to both governments, a Mushuau Innu **leadership retreat** held at Border Beacon, and an **8-point healing plan** was submitted. Each document noted the need for Innu control of key services.

In **1999, the Mushuau Innu Integrated Healing Strategy** was tabled with government officials. Developed by the Innu it included action on **devolution of social services** and education as essential parts to recovery.

**In 1999, a Referendum on Registration** was held due to the failure of equivalency. The newsletter explaining the question before voters noted that ..

**"the second important benefit is that devolution from government control to Innu control of programs -including education, health, and social services-will be much easier.."**

**In September 1999,** the Sheshatshiu Innu table a comprehensive **Proposal for Progress**. The holistic healing plan includes a request for immediate use of the AFA **for income assistance and...**" To take an incremental approach to control over Child and Family Services.." The proposal notes the offer of assistance from **Mik'maq Child and Family services** of Nova Scotia

to guide the process.

**November 1999.** What has become known as the **St. John's Accord**, was signed in which stressed devolution of education and work on governance regimes in preparation for Innu control over other programs.

**January 2000, an Innu Capacity Development plan** is submitted to DIAND. It includes the need to develop human resources, governance and administrative systems, and policy for each First Nation program area including social services. (This was resubmitted in February 2001)

In **September 2000, the Auditor General** issued its annual report which included a review of the relocation project and found:

“.. that success has been jeopardized because, among other things, **there is little evidence that the Department fully identified, adequately planned and effectively implemented the necessary measures to remedy the social pathologies.**

Consequently, there is a significant risk that the causes of these conditions will not be adequately addressed through the relocation. In this event, suffering will continue and substantial sums will have been spent without achieving intended results.”

In **October 2000**, a proposal to provide for active social workers in the Innu communities and develop a plan for Innu control over social services, was provided to the DIAND region. (It was subsequently re-submitted again in Spring 2001)

In **November 2000**, Innu leaders traveled to Ottawa to meet with **the Prime Minister** and several federal Ministers to secure commitments to treatment for youth and holistic implementation of healing and recovery plans including devolution.

**By June 2001**, presentations had been made to both Innu communities where the federal-provincial discussions to reach a bilateral C&FS agreement were disclosed. Innu were told their involvement would begin after a financial arrangement was reached.

**January 2002.** Professional Social Workers in the two Innu communities release a report on their views of service standards in the communities; it stressed that only Innu-Social worker teams can do the type of work required, and that 8 new social workers and 8 more front line workers are needed to address Child welfare.

**January 2002.** The Maintable on Registration advised that there was still no federal –provincial agreement on C&FS and that the Innu had asked that commitments to devolution be transferred to the Maintable Registration process. In February 2002 this was agreed.

**April 2002.** A first meeting of a group to address Child and family services devolution is held.

**May 2002.** A proposal is submitted to DIAND to fund Innu participation in C&FS devolution.

**November 2002.** A draft MOU for an Interim strategy to deliver C&FS is tabled at the working group.

**December 2002** The costs of the draft proposal is developed using comparable figures of the local Board where available. Concerns are expressed on:

- 1) operations costs will be more than federal formula;
- 2) capital is needed to build adequate offices;

- 3) housing of BSW's in Natuashish is a barrier and;
- 4) what services outside of federal funds will be required by province and how will they be funded.

**January 20 2003** Program Committee endorses draft proposal, costs, and the highlighting of key issues. Although the Committee recognizes that refinement of data is still needed, the Innu ask for assurance that the main funding and devolution issues will be recognized and addressed by Maintable before proceeding further.

**March 2003.** Bart Jack writes to Mark Davis indicating that:

“... the Innu had already explained at two Maintable sessions that Interim Delivery of C&FS would require more funds than the DIAND directive would produce. We had also asked that alternative sources, including leave-on-the-table funding, be considered and some direction on feasibility of sources be provided. As there had been no positive response to those previous presentations, some clearer indication of senior level support for the magnitude of funds was necessary, before the Innu could invest more effort in the Interim approach. In summary, we were prepared to move ahead but wanted three things;

- 1) Endorsement in principle by Program Committee members of the work-to-date and of the “ballpark” cost estimates,
- 2) Endorsement of establishing the position of Interim Director immediately with a mandate to oversee implementation of Interim Delivery and of the Implementation Group;
- 3) Support for going to the next Maintable to seek its endorsement of the same two points and direction on where to seek funds for the foreseeable gap.”

**April 2003.** Province proposes a revised approach to Innu delivery of C&FS through a Joint Province-Innu Board.

**June 2003.** Innu note that new approach is a good one BUT reminds participants that it cannot simply pass along federal funding levels and restrictions to a new agency. All agree that any new agency must focus on the best interests of the children and adopt practices defined by that, rather than by funding terms. The province indicates it may need to revise legislation to allow for the proposed new board and that a position focusing on Innu children would be created.

**Summer 2003.** Innu asked to estimate items and scope of needs for a planned submission to Cabinet on the federal healing strategy. Among the items contained in the MC recommendations from the Innu is to supplement Innu C&FS by at least the \$600,000 per year anticipated by the earlier working group report and for additional authority to do so.

**Fall 2003.** The revised C&FS MOU reflecting the joint Board, is stalled as Innu note that there remains no commitment outside or inside the MOU beyond passing along federal C&FS formula funding from the province to the Joint Board, and that the earlier questions remain unaddressed.

**December 2003** Health Labrador Corporation has undergone an independent review of its

fiscal situation. The Deloitte-Touche report is released and it makes several observations and conclusions about the existing C&FS system including:

1) Service Standard.

“...unacceptably low social work and community service worker complement in some of the coastal communities and Sheshatshiu that has been documented by HLC and by the Social Work Workload Review...”;

2) HLC Cannot meet mandate.

“...highly unacceptable situation in the coastal communities and Sheshatshiu where children are at substantial risk because of a critical lack of social workers and community service workers to ensure their personal safety, health and well-being under the Child Youth and Family Services Act.”

3) Low funding.

“Designated maintenance and operations funding with maximum limits are provided to HLC through the Canada/Newfoundland and Labrador Child and Family Services agreement in effect from June 1, 2002 to March 31, 2003. (The operations funding portion does not cover the actual 2002/03 operating costs in Natuashish and Sheshatshiu.)”

4) More funding needed.

“CYFS additional costs (estimated by HLC management) based on 25 positions for the 2003/04...total \$3,701,183.”

5) Innu C&FS funding needs to change.

“The additional funding requirements in the recovery plan model assume that the current CYFS Agreement can be renegotiated to ensure HLC gets full cost recovery on the relevant cost of servicing the Innu communities. This is not consistent with our understanding of similar agreements across Canada that are currently in force. If DOH&CS is not able to revise the current CYFS Agreement, an additional \$8.0M in funding will be required, over the next five years, from other sources (primarily DOH&CS) to meet the requirements of the recovery plan model.”

**2004** Labrador Health receives additional funds for social workers, administrative and clerical positions.

**November 2004** Labrador Health hires a Director of Innu CY&FS

**April 2005** Health Labrador becomes Labrador Grenfell Health.

**December 2005.** Maintable indicates interest in C&FS research and asks Program committee to reconvene.

**January 2006.** Committee meets in Halifax and Innu make clear that while research is useful alongside devolution where services can actively be integrated and improved; research itself cannot proceed separately. The community based case model should drive activity and the governments should respond to the questions that stalled devolution two years earlier.

**April 2006.** An informal meeting to determine what might be done is held. Agreed to contact

the First Nations Caring Society and see if it could help on both research and devolution sides of issue.

**Spring 2006.** Legislation amended to allow for proposed new Board for Innu communities.

**May 2006.** Innu and DIAND reps meet with Caring Society Director to develop a proposal. Innu and DIAND review proposal later same month.

**June 2 2006.** Program Committee meets to hear Caring Society proposal. Agreement to recommend proposal and associated Committee actions to Maintable.

**June 12 2006** Maintable meeting hears Program Committee proposal. Defers decision. Later indicates that it will not be approved.

**Fall 2006** Deloitte Touche conducts review of Labrador Grenfell health.

**October 2006.** Although Committee is inactive, SIFN proposes to capture out of province children-in-care cost savings by renovating houses to allow families to be approved foster care sites. An Innu agency would then operate as other placement agencies and bill C&FS for services at less cost than in Ontario. Profits from cost savings would be reinvested in the community. Minister rejects proposal.

**March 2007.** Maintable asks C&FS Committee to reconvene and prepare workplan, terms of reference, and a budget.

**September 2007.** C&FS Committee recommends terms of reference, workplan, and budget to Maintable. Members advised that no funds are available but that Committee work should continue.

**January to April 2008.** No Committee meeting is convened for a variety of reasons.

**April 2008.** Technical meeting in St. John's. History of file reviewed, main issues summarized and INAC's new "Alberta Model" presented.

**May 2008.** Briefing of all parties on options to address main issues.

**June 2008.** Maintable asks the Innu to determine their preference for a funding model to proceed with devolution under.

**October 2008** Innu leaders meet and provide terms for proceeding with C&FS Devolution.

**November 2008.** Innu advise maintable of their terms for proceeding and the committee is tasked with providing a costed workplan to achieve mutual objectives of C&FS Devolution.

Still missing data on the Provincial inquiry into C&FS ?