

*Supply*

The situation at Davis Inlet that my friend from Labrador referred to earlier is a situation that has saddened Canadians and people around the world. It has brought many of us to the realization that these conditions exist in our country. They are conditions that many of us would not accept as being prevalent in 1993. For those of us who live in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and for people who live across the north generally, this situation is one we are reminded of often, and tragically perhaps not often enough.

At the end of January we saw some pictures that reminded us that children and families were suffering. They made us see a community that was having a great deal of difficulty in coming to grips with itself and with some of the problems before it. What is clear though is that this community, with the help of the Innu Nation, with the help of aboriginal people across Canada and with the help and encouragement of non-aboriginal people across Canada, is coming together to face the reality of the question.

Last summer, after a tragic fire in February 1992, the people of Davis Inlet decided in a report called *Gathering Voices* to look at the community of Davis Inlet, to look at the people, and to look at the families. They would try to judge for themselves what it was that was having an impact on their community, what the current conditions were that were having an impact on their children, what some of the historical realities were that led them to this position and this condition, and what some of the future opportunities might be. All of us, from time to time, are forced to look at ourselves and accept some hard realities. All of us from time to time should be prepared to suggest to ourselves that things need to change. The people of Davis Inlet went through quite a process. The reports that they have written, the comments that they have made and the talk about alcohol abuse, substance abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, child abuse and spouse abuse could not have been easy for the more than 460 people of Davis Inlet to talk about and to come to terms with. It could not have been easy to talk about it to the outside world and to write it down and publish it in a document that goes from testimony to commentary with photographs and poems and writings of young people and old people from today and from the past.

• (1925)

I hope I am not being presumptuous, but I think the report said that the healing must come from within. The report also said that the people felt that they could and must take that step and that the hope was there.

What also rings through, tragically enough, from the young people and from the children is that what drives them to the abuse and what has some impact on suicide is the lack of hope. None of us individually or collectively can live in this world without hope. They talk about nothing to do. They talk about an inability to see the future. They talk about the lack of hope.

Where do we go from here? Where does the community of Davis Inlet go from here? I think many in the country are aware that the Innu people of Davis Inlet were moved on to the island that they occupy today in the mid-1960s. I think many are aware that in the late 1940s the commission of the government tried to relocate about 75 people to the north. Two years later they were back in old Davis Inlet. During the first war when the caribou stopped moving through Labrador for a period of time, the people of Davis moved to where the trappers were and where the merchants were.

Today they live on an island in just under 100 houses that lack water and sewers. Many of the homes are in terrible repair and have insufficient insulation, roofs and foundations. Water is available from a central spout. It is not so much the physical condition of the community that I read about and the people of Davis that I talk to speak of. It is the culture, social relations, emotions and gut of the community that they are most concerned about because those are the future.

As we talk about relocating the community and the future of that community it is not again the physical movement of the community and what it will look like in terms of cluster houses or spokes. It is what that community will be.

The most important thing of the process that we are going through is to ensure the vision that the people of Davis Inlet have for their community. This will lead them to decide on how that community will work, to deal with the questions of how the education system will function and to see how health care will meet broad