

I will bring your concerns to the attention of my colleague the Honourable Monique Landry, Secretary of State.

#### Health Care Costs for Inuit

As this case is presently before the courts, I would prefer not to speculate on the outcome and its repercussions on the "special relationship between all aboriginal people and Canada".

I should mention, however, that the government of Canada is fulfilling its financial obligations in providing the Government of the Northwest Territories with a fully funded health care regime which includes continued financial assistance in the form of contribution agreement payments to provide hospital services to status Indians and Inuit.

#### Canadian Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy (CAEDS)

DIAND is one of three departments responsible for CAEDS (along with the departments of Industry, Science and Technology and Employment and Immigration). Although available funding has had to undergo a major reassessment within the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, I would like to note that the government will still spend \$347 million on Aboriginal economic development programs in 1993-1994. The government's commitment to improving the development and employment prospects of Aboriginal people is reflected by the exemption from reduction of programs such as Indian and Inuit post-secondary education and Pathways to Success. We believe that education and skills training are two of the most effective means for Aboriginal people to improve their economic and social conditions.

#### Future Directions

I have carefully read through the recommendations that you have put forward to the Standing Committee. Please be assured that the Committee will give them full consideration.

In conclusion, I believe that there have been many unheralded Aboriginal success stories to which this government has made a significant contribution. The Native Agenda, announced by the Prime Minister in 1990, has been a real stepping stone to a brighter future for Aboriginal people.