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DFN Leadership Conference Call
January 20, 2011

Attendance:

Chief Jim Antoine	
Chief Isadore Simon	Stanley Sanguéz
Chief Joachim Bonnetrouge	Elder Ted Landry
Chief Lloyd Chicot	
Chief Roy Fabian	Elder Pat Martel
Chief Tim Lennie	
President Marie Lafferty	Elder Barb Sloat

Staff:

Georges Erasmus	Patrick Scott	Leona Louie
Richard Lafferty		

Absent:

Chief Abner Cayen/elder
Chief Fred Tesou/elder

Opening Prayer – Grand Chief Samuel Gargan

Chief Antoine asked Grand Chief if he shared document with everyone and if there was a response. Devolution will be signed off next week, gave update on his view of the document that was sent out.

Stanley Sanguéz – Richard Nerysoo declined the AiP.

Georges indicated good interview by Grand Chief. Sam added that nothing is binding and courts will not touch a nonbinding AiP. Georges added that there has to be something else in there. Edehzhie, subsurface would remain in place until negotiations are over. That is why you can't do anything in court, major step. Usually an AiP has 85-90% of what will be in the final agreement and sometimes more. To have so many parties and aboriginals against, the only partner they need is Canada and they will move ahead.

Reality is what the Aboriginal governments are after. They will be weakened; the GNWT. Agreement could be changed between AiP and final agreement. Don't know if they are prepared to do that. Between those stages, try and break up the solid role that the people have against it. Make it clear you are dissatisfied.

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MOTION CARRIED

Chief Roy Fabian – Signed an MoU back in 1998, would that help here? Georges indicated it could help here. Get the GNWT to sign a MoU on how they will deal with this issue. What is going to happen is we are not going to let it go. They know that.

Georges indicated in some ways, the work that was being done, Richard attended these meetings,

Richard Lafferty has a copy of Tlicho and it is attached to that. GNWT proposes of changes in their draft. What they did was dread all the really progressive components of the protocol, working group worked hard to get at. The only thing I see is, in the letter to the Grand Chief, it is highly unlikely that this AiP will be at the table. No different than 1995, they have no legacy.

As many leaders that could make it to that meeting should attend, you will see something that we are not united on. Imperative to stand with other regions until it is favourable to us. Negotiators don't care about our interests. Last meeting in November, they had two tables; GNWT was facing the feds and aboriginal groups on the outside. It is between the feds and GNWT and they want us to sign on to it.

Chief Joachim Bonnetrouge strongly believes Dehcho and Akaitcho have a lot of veto. We have to consider putting something like a court injunction to stop the signing on January 26th. If that is a possibility, I don't know what else could stop them.

Chris Reid added that because this is an AiP, it will have language in it that it will say it is not legally binding. Simply argument for GNWT, they have to say it is a guide for a final agreement. There have only been a few cases, unusual cases where they were affected by a court case and I wouldn't recommend that. If that is the way that the leadership want to go, I could recommend a lawyer. It is a political thing next week. All kinds of political protests could happen next week. Agree with Richard. Stand alone resource management system in the Dehcho. Why set up a separate table? It is a distraction. This should be all at the negotiations table.

Elder Pat Martel speaking in the language.

Sam responded to Pat. It does create uncertainty to our process as well.

Richard Lafferty indicated that he is glad they gave us this paper that explains why they are taking parts out of the draft protocol. They are basing it on the 2001 intent. We didn't want it limited to, but they removed that wording. It causes potential uncertainty. It is based on documents we didn't agree with in the first place. Agree with Chris and elder Martel if there is not going to be any acceptance of this, no use in signing. Leave it at the main table. There was a good working group to try and change that and there was no support from the GNWT. When there is agreement years down the road, then we could take them to court. I don't know what they will do to our main table.

Grand Chief Sam Gargan asked Georges if he had seen a copy of the protocol agreement, for use for all aboriginal people.

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Georges Erasmus responded that Chris made comments when we met at night. If we are going down this road, add things to very specific rather than generality. DRMA, higher royalties, MVRMA, those things you would have to add to it. Adequate financing is needed; it will be a huge issue. Financing will be a big issue. It is like Chris also said, do we want to divide our efforts to go down that road when we are having difficulty on points. It may be academic, unless you stop them, they will be well on their way. They will get devolution and whoever gets elected next fall, will be pushing this. Don't know if Floyd Roland will get elected again.

Chief Roy Fabian added that we have to look at the whole picture. We are looking at small parts of a bigger picture we wanted to create. For me, when I think about it, in the Dehcho Process, the government pushed us, we went into Comprehensive process and there are still a lot of problems with it. The government is flexing their muscles saying they are going to do this whether or not the Dehcho is in support because the Dehcho don't have any guts. There is no legal recourse. There is other ways of addressing this issue. We are going to have to make a move and make them realize we are not fooling around here.

Overall, the issue of sovereignty, they are throwing that in our face. Tlicho, Sahtu, Gwich'in and Inuvialuit have signed agreements and signed out. My take on this, listening to this whole process, we have to let Canada know we are dead set against what they are doing. I am going to recommend to my council not to sign the Framework Agreement. Canada believes we will never take them to court. They gave us five options at KFN.

DFN is being pulled apart. They are playing that game. ADK is doing that. Back in Dene nation days, we believed in public government, now I don't believe in that. It is going to be based on aboriginal government. Want to see what they do with that. Has a problem with Michael McLeod, he used to sit on the Negotiating Team, travelling with Ministerial Envoy. If he doesn't support the Dehcho, he shouldn't be in there.

Richard Lafferty added those 2003 are binding documents now and they won't change them or go beyond them because they removed wording. Cabinet is in hiding too and MLAs are behind the cabinet. Talk to as many leaders as you can on Sunday. Hope a lot of you make it there.

Chief Roy Fabian says he would like to caution you guys. Daniel Squirrel added to the discussion, speaking in the language

Chief Joachim Bonnetrouge indicated for the Dehcho to send the GNWT a strong message and of great concern on this devolution and AiP. Time will tell how many people will be onside. Beliefs and values we still carry today. We need to send that message directly to Canada. Don't know how many people will be traveling on Sunday. It will be good to get a reading on where the other chiefs are at too. Today we should begin formalizing a statement to Canada. Good points made by Chief Fabian.

Richard Lafferty has been thinking about the court scenario, likely we wouldn't get anywhere with it. Richard Nerysoo has been more outspoken than anybody. Support the claim areas to take them to court; they would have more ground work than we have. Support the Gwich'in to take that lead. Jackson Lafferty will not get re-elected, told by his people.

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We could encourage and support other regions to take that action and we support them.

Chief Tim Lennie – Admit these would come to head some day. Continued as chief to state there is a FA/IMA that was signed. We should make a statement as Joachim said. They are negotiating in bad faith, jeopardizes the Land Use Plan also. It is a main table issue and we should deal with it. It is hard to deal with these issues over the phone. There needs to be some kind of agreement. We should state our position but not certain what is happening at the main table and that should be clearly stated to the government.

Elder Pat Martel heard Roy and what he said, he has good points. We've been doing that for years, we get together and disagree with these people and discuss how we are going to stop it. We do that and then nothing besides that. Richard was talking about this meeting on Sunday, organize for some chiefs to go over there and have something for them to do. People talk about it and say we will get our own people in there and we could get what we want out of the government and that never happened. I think we need to tell them at the table. Media is going to be there too. From now on, we should be upfront; GNWT is not working for us. Territorial government is going to be signing on, on our behalf.

Grand Chief Sam Gargan indicated the Minister Duncan will be in Yellowknife for the signing as well.

Chief Jim Antoine - Power, authority and treaty was never given up. Premier and everyone in the territorial government know about it. No MLAs are saying anything about it. We knew this was going to happen long ago. We had four months to look at it, would have been good to do a good analysis of what it means. We had discussions, facts and positions. Agree with a lot of the leaders here on the history and what we done. We as Dene people have never agreed to give up our power and authority to anybody. They are making an agreement without us. They are saying they are doing it on behalf of us. We have to say that, we didn't give up our power, authority and treaty. Recommend that as many chiefs as possible attend this meeting. Tell the Premier that we didn't give them him authority to give this to them. Get BCRs from individual band offices and they are going to sign it anyways.

The problem I have is what does it really mean, our aboriginal and treaty rights? Indian and Northern Affairs will be handed this. Decisions are being made on my behalf and not fully understanding it. If it does go ahead, what does that mean? Premier and cabinet are of the mine that they represent all of us. It has to be made clear that we don't sanction.

Grand Chief Samuel Gargan – Chris, you heard a lot of comments made, look at the document and give us your advise on that. We need to make a statement on this.

Elder Ted Landry speaking in the language. Chris got disconnected but back on line.

Chief Roy Fabian added that we need to say something. Jim stated that in September when this hit the table, statements could have been made. Our DFN feeling is about that whole process. Now governments decided what they are going to do and reacting to the process. We need to think about what proactive things we could do to get Canada to see we are serious about this.

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Chief Jim Antoine has left the call @ 3:20 pm, had other commitments. Jim indicated that Chiefs Roy Fabian and Chief Joachim Bonnetrouge should attend the meeting.

Richard Lafferty would like to recommend that you cc your letter to the other regions and Grand Chiefs. They want to support each other. Include them in what you are telling the Premier and cabinet.

Georges Erasmus added that we need a decision on approval of this. We could decide to go over there in protest.

Grand Chief Samuel Gargan – Chiefs who would like to attend can call our office with your names. Chief Tim Lennie indicated that he supports what Georges said. Richard would like everyone to meet before the meeting.

Chris Reid has to leave call. In terms of the methods, if there is going to be a protest, purpose is to get national news. Georges is right if there is a protest on the day of the signing. Message should be this devolution is not in support for the people of the Northwest Territories.

Richard Lafferty suggested that the meeting next week happen in Yellowknife in conjunction with the Devolution. Ria will look into this.

Meeting ended at 3:35 pm.

Closing Prayer – Stanley Sanguéz

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