

Possible Criminal Charges — Canadian Natives Ask Slur Investigation

OTTAWA—Inuit Tapirisat (Eskimo Brotherhood) of Canada is calling on federal law enforcement officials to determine whether criminal charges should be laid against those responsible for a Northwest Territories Government training manual which describes native people as "lazy, uncreative, unthrifty, and adolescent."

John Amagoalik, Director of Land Claims for the National Inuit Organization says a letter is going to the Solicitor General of Canada asking him to consider whether the training manual for jail personnel contravenes federal defamation laws.

At the same time, Inuit Tapirisat calls for a full scale public inquiry into the operations of the N.W.T. Government because there is reason to

believe the training manual represents only the tip of the iceberg so far as racist attitudes and policies are concerned.

"Flimsy excuses and half baked apologies are not good enough," says Amagoalik, and "resignation at the level of the chief of correctional services may touch the symptoms but won't cure the disease. The mere fact that his slanderous document exist is further evidence of the kind of colonial racist mentality that underlies an artificial government which has been imposed on the people of the north."

Amagoalik was also "appalled" that the Territorial Government would attempt to "hide behind" Peter Ernerk, the Inuk minister of Social Development.

Ernerk issued a statement apologizing to the native people

on behalf of the government.

"I don't know how the Territorial Government can have such gall," said Amagoalik. Peter Ernerk wasn't even there in 1971 when the manual was printed."

Amagoalik says the Inuit of Canada share the outrage expressed by officials of the National Indian Brotherhood, who released copies of the offensive training manual at their annual meeting in Whitehorse this week. "Is it any wonder that the native people of the Northwest Territories are asking for political self determination," he asked.

Amagoalik added that the new Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, Warren Allmand, should be commended for his decisive action in demanding a full explanation and native

people will be pleased that he shares their anger over these racial slurs. At the same time, Inuit Tapirisat urges Allmand to consider ordering an inquiry that will delve deeply into the affairs of Territorial government.

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