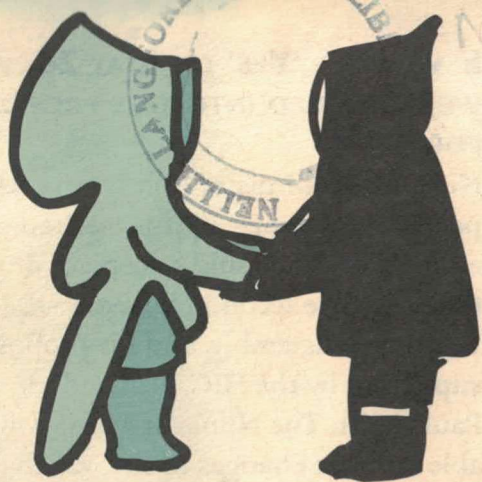




◆ COULD 'AFFIRMATIVE ACTION' APPROACHES ALSO ACHIEVE A BALANCE BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN POLITICS?

Past experience suggests not. Many countries have tried various affirmative action measures (policies which give preference to a particular group of people) in politics, but they haven't been very successful. In Canada, the Liberal, Conservative and NDP parties have all tried affirmative action policies – and none of them are even close to having equal participation by men and women. But having 2 MLAs for each electoral district – one man and one woman – would achieve this goal simply and efficiently. This is **not** affirmative action, and it doesn't discriminate against anyone – but it would be more effective than any affirmative action strategy.

◆ IS NUNAVUT THE ONLY JURISDICTION CONSIDERING SUCH A PROPOSAL?

No. Countries like Sweden and Norway have used various methods to achieve more balance in political representation, and some countries (such as Scotland and France) are considering proposals similar to the recommendations made by the NIC.

◆ IS THIS PROPOSAL DEMOCRATIC?

Yes, absolutely. MLAs would be elected in a completely democratic way, on the basis of merit. No one would have to vote for a candidate they don't want to support. The proposal conforms to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The NIC, NTI, Pauktuutit, and many men and women across Nunavut believe that this proposal is really an improved kind of democracy – one that will give the people of Nunavut a better, more balanced government.

◆ WHO CAN I CALL TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL?

Nunavut Implementation Commission
(819) 979-4199

Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
(819) 979-3232

Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association
(613) 238-3977

Association Francophone d'Iqaluit
(819) 979-4606

These organizations would be happy to send you further information or answer any questions you may have.

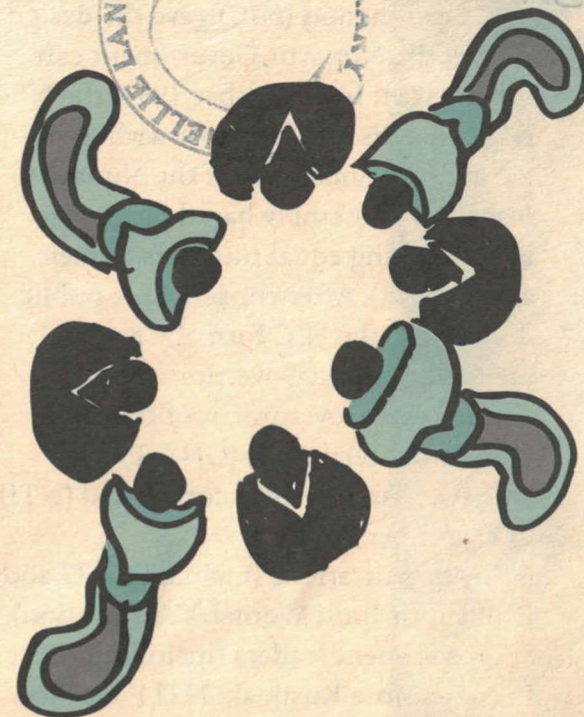
◆ SOME FINAL THOUGHTS...

Before casting your ballot, you may wish to reflect on what will be achieved if people vote 'Yes', and what will be achieved if people vote 'No'...

IF PEOPLE VOTE 'YES' on May 26, they will be agreeing that Nunavut doesn't have to be a copy of the existing government. Instead, the Nunavut government will be a better, healthier government than what we have now. The balance and respect between men and women which characterized Inuit society for centuries would be restored, and men and women legislators could work together on the social problems and other challenges which the new Nunavut government will face. People around the world would respect Nunavut as a pioneer in achieving reconciliation between men and women, and for finding a way for men and women to be true partners in decision-making.

IF PEOPLE VOTE 'NO' on May 26, what will be achieved? **Nothing.**

A Nunavut legislature of between 20 and 22 MLAs will be elected in the same way that the NWT legislature has been elected, and there is every reason to expect that an overwhelming number of those MLAs will be men.



***For our families
and our future!***

**Facts about the proposal for
gender parity in the Nunavut
Legislative Assembly**

The Nunavut Implementation Commission (NIC) gave the design of the Nunavut Government careful thought. In December 1994, the NIC released a discussion paper with a proposal for the make-up of the Nunavut Legislative Assembly based on gender parity (having equal numbers of men and women). After considerable public discussion, the NIC formally recommended it to the Government of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) in December 1996.

Many organizations (including NTI and Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association) and prominent leaders (including NTI President Jose Kusugak, NTI First Vice-President James Eetoolook, NTI Secretary-Treasurer Natsiq Kango, Pauktuutit President Martha Flaherty, several members of the Nunavut Caucus, DIAND Minister Ron Irwin and Ambassador Mary Simon) have joined John Amagoalik and the NIC Commissioners in publicly stating their support for the gender parity proposal. On May 26, the residents of Nunavut will vote to decide whether to have gender parity in the first Nunavut Legislative Assembly. You will be asked:

Should the first Nunavut Legislative Assembly have equal numbers of men and women MLAs, with one man and one woman elected to represent each electoral district?

☐ Yes ☐ No

This pamphlet summarizes the gender parity proposal, and answers questions voters may have about it.

◆ **WHY IS GENDER PARITY (EQUAL PARTICIPATION BY MEN AND WOMEN) IN THE NUNAVUT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IMPORTANT?**

Men and women should be given every opportunity to participate fully in all aspects of Nunavut society. Equal participation by men and women in politics is an important part of this vision, but women face systemic barriers which limit their ability to participate in politics at the territorial level. The NIC, NTI and Pauktuutit all believe that gender parity is a simple but effective way to give Nunavut better, more balanced government – at no extra cost.

◆ **HOW WOULD THE MLAS BE CHOSEN?**

When Nunavut's first election is called, the names of men who want to run for MLA would go on one list and the names of women who want to run for MLA would go on another list. Men could nominate both men and women, and women could nominate both men and women – there would be no restrictions on people.

On election day, each voter would be given two ballots – one for candidates on the list of men candidates and one for candidates on the list of women candidates.

In each electoral district, both the man with the most votes and the woman with the most votes would be elected. Since each electoral district would be represented by one man MLA and one woman MLA, the Nunavut Legislative Assembly would have an equal number of men and women MLAs.

◆ **SHOULDN'T MLAS BE ELECTED ON THE BASIS OF MERIT?**

Yes, absolutely. With this proposal all MLAs – both men MLAs and women MLAs – would be elected on the basis of merit, just as MLAs are today.

◆ **WOULD HAVING TWO-MEMBER CONSTITUENCIES AND GENDER PARITY COST MORE THAN A LEGISLATURE WITH SINGLE-MEMBER ELECTORAL DISTRICTS?**

No. Since the number of MLAs would be the same with or without two-member constituencies and gender parity, the cost of running the Legislative Assembly would be the same either way.

◆ **WOULD HAVING BOTH A MAN AND A WOMAN MLA IN EACH DISTRICT MEAN TWICE AS MANY MLAS?**

No. Canada, the GNWT and NTI have agreed that there will be between 20 and 22 MLAs in the Nunavut Legislative Assembly. The question now is only how those 20 to 22 MLAs will be selected.

◆ **IF WE VOTE 'YES' ON MAY 26, WILL WE BE LOCKED INTO THIS PROPOSAL FOREVER?**

No. DIAND Minister Ron Irwin proposed that a review of this method of electing MLAs should take place during the life of the second Nunavut Legislative Assembly, and his proposal is supported by the NIC, NTI and Pauktuutit. The Nunavut MLAs will be able to make changes to the way that MLAs are elected after that review takes place, so there's really no risk in giving this proposal a try.

◆ **WOULD MEN VOTE ONLY FOR MEN, AND WOMEN VOTE ONLY FOR WOMEN?**

No. Each voter would cast two votes – one for a man and one for a woman.

