



PRIORITIES

“As National Chief it will be my responsibility and my honour to uphold the Charter of the Assembly of First Nations and execute all mandates delegated and directed by the First Nations-in-Assembly. This is the structure through which our people speak in one voice of the pressing issues confronting First Nations across our country. In preparation for my candidacy, I travelled the country listening to the voices of our people in political meetings, and at community functions. The following issues have captured my attention and my commitment. It is my vision to collaborate with all stakeholders, achieve consensus and facilitate their resolution.”

~Perry Bellegarde

These priorities form the basis of my campaign:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYMENT

One of the hallmarks of a people’s ability to be truly self-governing is economic self-sufficiency. We must continue to move toward economic self-sufficiency by taking strides to:

- Facilitate strategic partnerships with the private and public sectors
- Create opportunities for resource revenue sharing
- Facilitate sustainable economic development projects

EDUCATION & TRAINING

It is imperative that we create the framework for regionally-based First Nations school systems. These systems will not only give our children an education that allows them to compete in our National and global economies. It will also reinforce the teachings that inspire our children to remain true to the languages and traditions sacred to First Nations people. The first steps we must take are:

- Form a task force to create the framework required
- Secure adequate funding for capital structures, curriculum development and competitive salaries for teachers such that First Nations students graduate with excellent math and science skills



- Ensure the financing and the opportunity for all First Nations Grade 12 graduates to attend post-secondary and technical institutions
- Facilitate the Canadian school systems to include Treaty and Aboriginal rights education, as well as First Nations languages as fundamental parts of the curricula for K-12 students; My goal is to create understanding and awareness .

ENVIRONMENT

As First Nations people, our duty goes far beyond the ‘duty to consult’; it is our duty to ensure that Mother Earth is delivered safely into the hands of future generations. In order to do so, we must:

- Facilitate First Nations involvement in all major industrial developments; the Canadian government and industry can learn from our traditional knowledge of environmental protection and preservation
- Develop strategies to ensure that sustainability becomes the norm in all economic development activities and projects
- Educate our First Nations communities about the impacts of partnerships with industry on climate change such that wise decisions are made which mitigate the global climate change crisis

FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN THE FEDERAL CROWN AND FIRST NATIONS

We must develop new fiscal arrangements between the Federal Crown and First Nations in order to close the socio-economic gap that exists between First Nations communities and the remainder of Canada. This will require that we take action to do the following:

- Negotiate the removal of the 2% cap on First Nations funding
- Develop new fiscal arrangements that are based on need, remoteness and total First Nations population, on and off-reserve
- Including inflationary increases in any new funding formula developed
- Foster new investments in First Nations communities



JURISDICTION

- Develop our own laws and constitutions (First Nations Acts) for areas such as Child and Family Services, Citizenship, Education, Environment, First Nations language revitalization, Health and Justice

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Forty years ago, there was an urgent need to preserve First Nations languages; now there is an emergency with only 2 out of 58 First Nations languages predicted to survive. We cannot allow our people to experience such a loss to our traditions and culture. I propose the following:

- Develop long-term sustainable funding for the revitalization and preservation of First Nations languages
- Work with the federal government to ensure the development of its First Nation language policy and strategy
- Create a National First Nations Languages Institute for research and education to ensure that our languages are saved for future generations
- Facilitate the Government of Canada to understand that taking meaningful action regarding First Nations language revitalization is consistent with the Apology of June 2008 and the spirit of *reconciliation*