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September 25, 1973

TO: Minister J. Chretien, 400 Laurier Ave., Ottawa  
Commissioner S. M. Hodgson, Government of the NWT  
Mayor F. Henne, City of Yellowknife  
Colin Wynne, Alderman, City of Yellowknife

The Dogrib Band lives at the end of Latham Island in Yellowknife. The City of Yellowknife is cutting off all water delivery to the people who live in Rainbow Valley who can't pay their water bill. There are many poor people in the Valley and many families will be affected. This means we will be forced to drink the water of Yellowknife Bay which is full of aircraft and skidoo oil and gas and is unsafe.

In the early 1950's, our band lost four children from drinking arsenic poisoned water which was ruined by the mine. Many others were sick.

At that time the fish and trees were dead and I went and took Dr. Stanton to see it. When he saw it I asked him to make a law that no Indians would ever pay for water again.

He said "sure I will do that. I will fight for you". From that time on, we never paid for our water.

Now for the last few years they are after us to pay. Why should we pay others who poisoned our water?

Most of the people in the valley don't get enough welfare to have food; we can't pay \$5.00 a month for water too. None of us have the money, and even if we did, we should not be forced to pay after all this trouble.

Starting tomorrow people will begin having to drink the water from Yellowknife Bay and soon our people will be sick and maybe some will die again.

No one should have made these rules to push us this far like this.

I want you to fight for us and make sure that we receive clean, safe water delivered to us free.

Please act fast because we will be running out of safe water tomorrow.

Others have become rich in our settlement of Yellowknife who can afford to pay for clean water which comes out of their taps, but we, the owners of the land have only barrel water delivered to count on.

Signed,

Michael Sikyea.

*Michel Sikyea*