



# Memorandum/ Note de Service

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June 27, 2007

**To/Destinataire:** National Board of Directors

**From/Expéditeur:** John Gordon

**Subject/Objet:** **AFN National Day of Action**

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As you may be aware, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has designated June 29<sup>th</sup> as a National Day of Action for their Make Poverty History for First Nations campaign. PSAC has endorsed this campaign, and our statement of solidarity is attached and is posted on the PSAC website.

Events are scheduled across the country on June 29<sup>th</sup>. The AFN is calling for peaceful actions that raise awareness and educate the public on the magnitude of First Nations poverty in Canada. More information on the National Day of Action can be found at: [www.afn.ca/nda](http://www.afn.ca/nda)

My office has received a number of queries about membership participation in the National Day of Action, the potential of picketing federal buildings, and the possibility of blockades. While we are certainly encouraging membership participation on June 29<sup>th</sup>, members should be on approved leave and/or participating on their own time. If faced with a picket line, members should follow standard picket line protocol, and be escorted into the building by their manager.

The AFN is promoting peaceful actions only on June 29<sup>th</sup>. PSAC shares the hope that June 29<sup>th</sup>, and the Make Poverty History Campaign for First Nations, will raise awareness and help to put an end to First Nations poverty in Canada.

In Solidarity,

John Gordon  
National President

c.c. NAIM Circle  
Regional Coordinators

## **PSAC Supports the Assembly of First Nations' National Day of Action to Make Poverty History**

The PSAC stands in strong support with the Assembly of First Nations' National Day of Action to Make Poverty History. We encourage all members across the country to participate in the actions taking place on June 29, and in the AFN's Make Poverty History for First Nations campaign.

The Make Poverty History for First Nations campaign highlights the struggles facing First Nations people and communities. First Nations and all Canadians must take action together and demand that Canada's political leaders honour their commitments to end poverty.

Too many First Nations children, elders, families and communities are living in conditions that should not be acceptable to anyone in Canada:

- 1 in 4 First Nations children live in poverty.
- First Nations youth commit suicide at 5 to 8 times the Canadian rate as a result of poverty and despair.
- High school graduation rates for First Nations youth are half the Canadian rate.
- Close to 1 in 4 First Nations communities are under boil drinking water advisories.
- Mould contaminates almost half of all First Nations homes.
- More than half of First Nations people are not employed.
- Diabetes among First Nations people is at least three times the national average.
- First Nations suffer from Third World diseases such as tuberculosis at 8 to 10 times the rate of Canadians in general.

More than half of First Nations people are under 23 years of age. If poverty is not addressed today, it will continue to negatively impact First Nations families and communities into the future.

To break this cycle, First Nations people need strong, stable, self-determining governments, economic development opportunities, accessible health care, safe housing, and quality education close to home. We all must work together to create a strong and stable foundation for First Nations to make the decisions that affect their lives and plan for their own future.

The National Day of Action is an opportunity for all Canadians to stand together in support of a better life for First Nations people. The Assembly of First Nations is promoting education, awareness, and action through peaceful rallies across the country. Improving the lives of First Nations will make Canada a stronger, healthier, and better nation for all Canadians.

For more information, please visit the Assembly of First Nations at: [www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca)