



PRESS RELEASE

BLACK ADVOCACY COALITION

YELLOWKNIFE, November 02, 2021

Black Advocacy Coalition demands a public apology from Councillor Niels Konge

During a committee debate on November 1, 2021, City of Yellowknife Councillor, Niels Konge expressed his disapproval on implementing a vaccine policy that would allow residents access to City of Yellowknife facilities by comparing the policy to Black people not being allowed to sit at the front of buses due to racial segregation in Canada.

While Black Advocacy Coalition does not wish to comment on a vaccine policy, it strongly condemns Councillor Konge's remarks. Black people faced racial segregation for nearly a century in which they were subjugated to oppression, abuse, physical, emotional and social violence based on the colour of their skin.

Black people were systematically excluded and denied equal access to opportunities and services based on their race. The comparison between a century of racial segregation and a vaccine policy that would temporarily exclude unvaccinated individuals from community facilities is inaccurate, misinformed, and tone deaf.

We are shocked and disappointed that Councillor Konge found it appropriate to make such a comparison. Comments of this nature especially on public forums reveal a severe lack of understanding of the issues that Black people faced and perpetuates the inequities and discrimination that Black people continue to experience today.

It is unacceptable for an individual serving a community that consists of Black, Indigenous and other racialized groups to be repeatedly misinformed of their histories.

Black Advocacy Coalition demands that Councillor Konge give a public apology to the Black community immediately and that he educates himself to a better understanding on the issues racialized communities face prior to making future comments.

BACupNorth will continue to advocate for and amplify the voices of all racialized people in the Northwest Territories. Contact us at bacupnorth@outlook.com.