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Canadian Circumpolar Library
B-03 Cameron Library

(403) 492 4409

March 22 1995

Brian Lewis, M.L.A.
Yellowknife Centre
Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly

Dear Mr Lewis

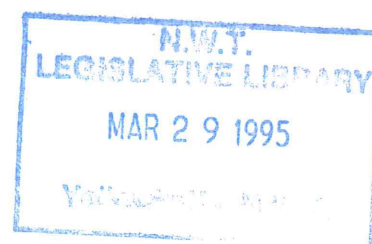
I am writing to support your position that the budget for the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife continue to provide for a permanent professional librarian position.

I am a colleague of Ms Robin Minion of the Canadian Circumpolar Library here at the University of Alberta, and I have extensive experience in working with library materials relevant to the north, including the publication of a bibliography on Nunavut.

As do all librarians and archivists, I believe that a library and archive such as the Prince of Wales Centre has created over the years, serves as the collective memory of a community, a record of who we are, what we have done and how we did it, and a foundation for what we can do in the future. The collective memories gathered at the Prince of Wales Centre are a unique and central part of the identity of the north.

In this decade, when the Territories are approaching a real turning point -- new deals for native peoples, political division into two jurisdictions, more educational facilities, economic development in mining, tourism, new roads -- the Centre is more important than ever. It will be a vital element of the north coming into its own in the new century.

On the local scene the Centre is a generator of revenue in tourist dollar. Many visitors to Yellowknife are Canadians with personal or family connections with the Territories, and they are eager to know more, by visiting the Centre, of what life was like 'back when'.





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Overseas visitors too, for example the recent influx of Japanese tour groups, are fascinated by the unique life of the north, and the Centre is an ideal place to show it to them.

On a world scale, the collection at the Centre is used by researchers and scholars from universities and governments in many countries. What is learned here is applied elsewhere to the benefit of, for instance, First Peoples in other circumpolar countries.

The Centre and the collection need the support and services of an experienced librarian -- which you now have-- and a realistic operating budget for the foreseeable future. If funding is withdrawn, what use is the collection? Would anyone would like to see it sitting in boxes in a closed building, or, worse, contemplate it vanishing altogether into a vault in Ottawa, under federal control?

I urge the Minister to re-consider any budgetary changes that would remove the librarian's position, or have a negative impact on the Centre. Such changes would be short sighted and a false economy.

Please use this letter as you think fit to support your position.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda N. Seale".

Linda N. Seale, M.L.S.