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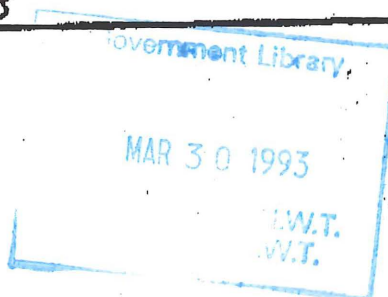
Date: MAR. 26

To: JOHN WINGARK
MLA for NATIUKKIT

From: MORLEY HANSEN, BLANDINA MARRIK

Comments: INFORMATION REGARDING
STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Number of pages including cover sheet: 3



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**To: John Ningark
MLA for Natilikmiot, GNWT**

**From: Morley Hanson/Blandina Makkik
Nunavut Sivuniksavut (TFN Training Program)**

Mar. 26, '93

Dear Mr. Ningark,

We have just learned that the Department of Education is reviewing its policy regarding financial support for students pursuing post-secondary education. Simona Arna Isaq-Barnes has informed us that you would be willing to receive submissions regarding this review and would convey them to the review committee. Since we have worked with post-secondary students from Nunavut for several years there are a few points that we would like to raise regarding this issue.

The present financial support system for students which covers travel expenses, tuition, books and monthly living allowance appears quite generous. However, the living allowance component of student assistance (approximately \$525.00 per month) is inadequate. Students make it through the TFN program only because we supplement this support with an extra monthly allowance of \$500.00. One of the main goals of the TFN program is to encourage and prepare students to go on to college and university. In the past, many of our graduates have wanted to go on to higher education and they were perfectly capable of doing so successfully. Most of them however decided not to, simply because they realized that they wouldn't be able to succeed financially on the amount of money available to them.

Trent University in Peterborough has become a popular university for our students. However, just to live in residence there requires more money per month than the GNWT monthly living allowance. A few students have gone there successfully but it was very difficult for them and they were forced to seek assistance from family and friends.

Another important point is the one of taxation. On one hand, while Dept. of Education financial support appears quite generous most people do not

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realize that all this support is considered taxable income. Even though students are told this at the beginning of the year by student services it is next to impossible for them to put a major part of their \$525.00 per month living allowance aside just so that they can pay their income tax in the spring. As a result, they end up being hit with a very large tax bill in the spring. A bill that they are in no position to pay. After one year of our program and two years at Trent University, one of our former graduates ended up owing Revenue Canada over \$5,000.00! How can we continually encourage students to go on to higher education if this is one of the results?

On several occasions we have made these points to Student Services, only to be told that they are governed by Department of Education policy and that anyway, their goal is only to assist students, not pay their way. As you well know, for most students from the Nunavut area there are no other sources of financial support and if they are going to be successful in higher education, their main expenses will have to be covered.

We recently assisted in the production of a study of the human resource needs for the future Nunavut Government. The study showed that many of the jobs that will be created will require university or college education and that unless more people get this kind of education there won't be enough local people qualified to fill those positions. It is our personal experience here in this program that more and more young people do recognize this need for higher education and they are wanting to go further. It is also clear though, that under the present student financial support system they will not be able to succeed. We encourage you to do everything you can to improve the Post-Secondary Student Financial Assistance Policy.

Yours truly,


Morley Hanson/Blandina Makkik

