

TABLED DOCUMENT NO. 62 - 12 (4) TABLED ON DEC 9 1993,

FORT SIMPSON DENE BAND COUNCIL

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December 8th, 1993

Jim Antoine, MLA
Nahendeh
Legislative Assembly
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Not protected contracts

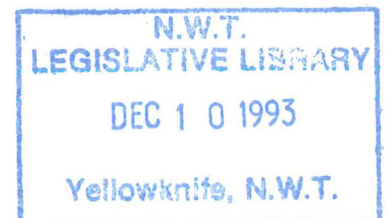
Fax No.:

Re: CBC Radio Interview with Schober and Rowe - Direct Negotiation

On December 1, 1993 CBC Mackenzie reported on Government Contracting Practices. Mr. Miller interviewed a Mr. Schober and a Mr. Rowe regarding the awarding of Contracts by Direct Negotiation. I have been in contact with Mr. Miller requesting an opportunity to respond to the negative information made public in the radio interview and have been refused the occasion to do so. I am faxing you my response to this as you may be able to get it made public.

Mr. Frank Schober in the interview stated that his Construction Company in Fort Simpson is barely holding on for lack of business due to direct negotiation that the NWT Housing Corporation has executed with the Fort Simpson Dene Band. Mr. Schober has received monies from the contract with the Band. Last year, (1992 HAP) contracts with Franklyn Enterprises amounted to close to \$73,000.00 for Mechanical and Plumbing Work. This year for the 1993 ACCESS Project contracts with Franklyn Enterprises has amounted to over \$87,000.00. The Fort Simpson Dene Band is making sure that the best interests of the whole community is being looked after by ensuring that community businesses are receiving benefits from our contracts. We have awarded contracts to community businesses even though they are not the lowest bidders to make sure that local people's businesses have a fair share.

We have done a Labour and Community Impact Breakdown in regards to this year's ACCESS project. For materials, supplies and sub-contracts just about half of the funds have been spent in the community and just over half have been spent "Northern". Only \$216.92 has been spent "southern". All of our Labour Dollars have been spent within the Community.



- 2 -

The Fort Simpson Dene Band Membership represents approximately 70% of the population (there are close to 900 members on the Band List and approximately 1,100 people in the town). Historically there has been an imbalance of power in Fort Simpson and opportunities for economic development and equal access to employment for the Dene has been sadly lacking. Not once has Franklyn Enterprises or Rowe's Construction sub-contracted the Band for work when they have been awarded contracts. We recognize the fact that the G.N.W.T. has implemented Negotiated Contracts to assist Aboriginal organizations in the training and skills development of Aboriginal peoples. These enhancements will certainly assist our membership and our organization in accessing future economic growth.

The negotiated contracts with the Government of the NWT has allowed the Band to make commitments towards the training of it's membership. This year we have 11 trainees registered under the "Construction Worker Training Program". We have 4 registered Carpentry Apprentices as well as 3 Tradesman that we are presently in the process of documenting experience and of skills upgrading so that they may challenge the "Trade Certification Exam". If this contract had gone to a competitive bid we would not have been able to afford of do all of this training. Through the completion of our training programs these individuals will be able to access employment that is equal in pay and benefits to the majority of the non-Dene.

Franklyn Enterprises and Rowe's Construction are basically saying they want access to government monies through government contracts. That it is unfair that Aboriginal Companies are receiving them over their non-Dene companies. However, are they aware that the monies in the Territories that exist at this moment are aboriginal dollars and that the GNWT is operating on the obligations of Treaty. The Territorial government exists because of the relationship between the Federal Government and the Dene. The non-Dene have been living free in the North for a very long time and they continue to complain that they want more.

The Fort Simpson Dene Council wishes to express their appreciation to this government for the existence of Negotiated Contracts. Without these awards, the Band membership (the majority of the people in this community) would continue to be denied the rights and opportunities taken for granted by other residents of the Northwest Territories.

Mahsi Cho,


Chief Herb Norwegian