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20 March 1996

Facsimile To:

Levi Barnabas
Member of the Legislative Assembly
Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories
Yellowknife, NT

From:

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Dear Mr. Barnabas:

Re: Collective Agreement: Union of Northern Workers

I am asking for your help in preventing either major layoffs or drastic reductions in pay and benefits for employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories in the current negotiations.

You and I both know that Arctic Bay has an experienced and dedicated group of government workers, as follows:

Gail Redpath, Nurse - 7 years	Claudette Girourad, Dental Therapist-9 years
Sarah Taqtu, Health Centre- 5 years plus	Iga Qamanirq -Health Centre 3 years plus
Morty Iqqaqasiq - CHR-4 years plus	Martha Willie- 4 years plus
Tommy Kilabuk-DPW	Joanasie Kigutaq- DPW
Aseena Allurut- GLO	Mishak Allurut - Renewable Resources
Rhoda Olayuk- School	Komangapik Muckpa -School
Frank May - NTPC- 11 years	Berry Tibbitt- Nunavut Arctic College-7years
Rhonda Claes- Social Services	

To layoff these people or severely cut their wages and benefits not only hurts the workers but also hurts the community in several ways. First, the service and attention to the needs of the people here are cut back just when these services are needed the most. Second, purchasing power is taken out of the community, and this extends not only to businesses but also to the extended families of many of the employees. Third, it will make it very difficult to get replacements in some areas, particularly nursing, where there is already a shortage. Lastly, the uncertainty of the contracts does not allow for long-term planning. For instance, I was considering buying the government house I live in, but I can't do that unless I know what the future will be.

As we look forward to the creation of Nunavut on 1 April 1999, we need a strong, experienced and committed workforce. Cutting and slashing that workforce will hurt Nunavut. The workers did not cause the deficit and we should not be made the scapegoats now for its elimination.

Thanks for your help.

Best regards,

Berry Tibbitt

