

TABLING STATEMENT

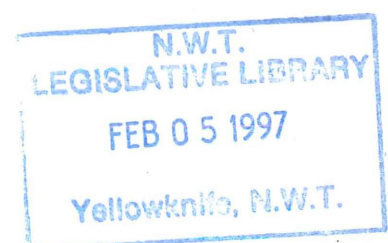
NWT LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY



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MEMBER: MR. MARK EVALOARJUK
TOPIC: SUPPORT FOR NUNAVUT LIBRARY SERVICES

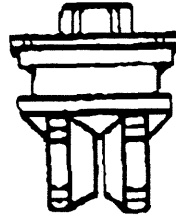
Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a package of two letters that I received in support of Nunavut Libraries and outlining concerns with proposed reductions to Nunavut Library Services. The letters are from Philippa Ootoowak, the local librarian in Pond Inlet, and Mireille Mathieu of Igloolik.



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Mark Evaluardjuk, M.L.A.,
Amittuq,
Gov. of NWT,
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2L9.

February 3, 1997

Dear Mr. Evaluardjuk,

As Local Librarian in the community of Pond Inlet for the past eight years, and Chairperson of the Library Board for two years prior to that, I have seen the Baffin Region community libraries develop and grow into active, efficient and well used public library services. This is in no small part due to the tireless and supportive work of our Regional Manager, Yvonne Earle. I cannot stress to you enough the importance of this vital role of Regional Manager and ask that you voice your concern with the lay off of this position along with the other MLA's of the Nunavut Region. The Amittuq area has the two best used community libraries in the region where Inuktitut language is a top priority and the support of the Regional Manager is essential to maintain the quality of service that we now provide.

I am particularly concerned with a number of the comments made by the Minister for Education, Culture and Employment and can only wonder where he is obtaining his information from? The following are some of the points that should be questioned:

- 1.) The community libraries will be greatly affected by the lack of a Regional

Manager as has been evident in the western region since the cancellation of the Community Services Librarian in Hay River. The often slow delivery of service affects the east when requesting materials from their libraries. Does the minister assume that there is still funding for training and on going support services?

- 2.) How many training trips to the communities or regional workshops have been conducted by HQ staff over the past 2-3 years as compared to the Baffin and Keewatin regions who were under Regional Managers?
- 3.) Why is it that the only region whose holdings are completely documented in the system is the Baffin Region? This would have taken years to accomplish without the Regional Manager to co-ordinate operations.
- 4.) Who will Local Librarians consult about local issues such as relations with Hamlet Councils and office staff, Education Authorities, school principals etc.?
- 5.) The time difference of two hours alone can cause endless frustrations when trying to make contact with HQ or Yellowknife. Telephone, Fax and computer "down time" are not uncommon occurrences, added to a mail service from the west that can take weeks, all cause communication problems for the Local Librarians. Who will pay the added long distance charges if there is no Regional Manager to answer questions, as the communities will not be able to afford this on the proposed drastically reduced budgets?

At this time a petition to "Save Nunavut Libraries" is being circulated in Pond Inlet and being signed by Library users of all ages. If the proposed budget changes are passed the funding for our Library will be reduced from \$22,209.60 (96/97 fiscal year) to \$8,504 (98/99 fiscal year). With this massive cut in budget added to the lack of support from a Regional Manager, does the Minister honestly believe there will be no reduction in the level of service to the communities who need it most of all?

Please, therefore, voice the concern of your constituents, many of whom are too young to vote but whose lives will be drastically affected by a Government who apparently places such a low priority on Literacy. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Philippa Ootoowak

Philippa Ootoowak

Local Librarian

c.c. Simon Merkosak, Mayor of Pond Inlet, NT.
Jesse Nutarak, Chairperson DEA, Pond Inlet, NT.
Ed Picco, M.L.A Iqaliut, NT.
Carmen Levi, Regional Superintendent, Iqaluit, NT.

Igloolik, February 3rd, 1997.

Mark Evaluardjuk
MLA Amittuq
Legislative Assembly
Government of the NWT
Yellowknife

Dear Mark,

I wish to tell you how we in Igloolik are concerned about the planned changes to the Library Services.

The money that the government now spends on 19 community libraries in the NWT will be distributed to 59 communities. The existing libraries will lose the greater part of their budgets. Of the 19 existing libraries, 11 are in Nunavut (two of them in your riding). It feels very much that the west is taking away from the east so that there will be little left to transfer to Nunavut.

If there were more community libraries in Nunavut it is because people wanted them, asked for them and worked to get them.

We have had an active library for nearly 25 years in Igloolik. Right now it is open 11 hours a week to the public. If the budget is cut according to plans, we will be left with just a few hours a week. You have often expressed concern about young people, suicide and the lack of activities. The library provides a good activity for Igloolikmiut.

We are also greatly concerned that the positions of Regional Librarian (in Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet) are being eliminated. Yvonne Earle in Iqaluit has been so important in training the community librarians, supporting them by phone and fax. The Regional Library also circulates books and videos to all the Baffin libraries and send books by mail to communities who do not have a library (Hall Beach for instance). That support is most important to the survival of our libraries.

If community libraries in Nunavut fall apart now, it will be years before we can get them going again. We, our children and grandchildren will suffer.



Mireille Mathieu

