

TABLED DOCUMENT NO. 51-13(5) TABLED ON FEB 18 1998

Alice Legat
4706 Anderson Thomson Blvd.
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 1J5



Roy Erasmus
MLA Yellowknife North
Government of the Northwest Territories
Yellowknife, NWT

Mr. Erasmus:

As my MLA I would like you to look into the terminations of the NWT Ski Coach. I understand from listening to the sessions that the termination was according to the Contract signed by both parties. However, as I have indicated in my 13 page letter to the NWT Ski Division Board, the termination was unfounded. I believe the Coach was doing what he had been hired to do both in Yellowknife and in the Communities.

There was a great deal of tension, confusion and misunderstandings between the Coach, and some members of the NWT Ski Division Board. A mediator would have been the responsible solution to these problems not a terminations.

Yesterday, I heard the Minister for Municipal and Community Affairs state that she believes that the NWT Ski Division Board is a responsible Board, and will continue to support the Communities with their ski program. As a member of the Yellowknife Club and an individual who works in Communities I do not have that faith. Community people knew the NWT Ski Coach, yet he has been terminated weeks prior to the Arctic Winter Games (AWG). Yes, the Board is thinking of bringing in another Coach for the AWG, but the new individual will not have time to work with the Communities.

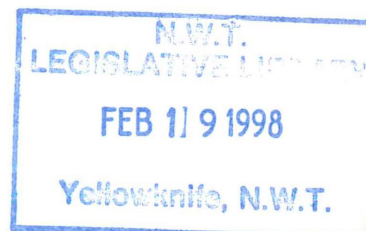
Furthermore, I was unable to determine who is on the Board and how Board members are selected. A responsible Board and Executive would make sure their membership was clear to the public and that the same members are listed in all places - Sports North office, the Societies office. This does not seem to be the case for the NWT Ski Division.

Please read, table and consider the 13 page letter I have written showing another perspective to this unfortunate incident.

Yours truly,


Alice Legat
Member, Yellowknife Ski Club

cc Jimmy Rabesca, MLA
M. Thomson, Minister Responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs
J. Graves, President, NWT Ski Division



Alice Legat
4706 Anderson Thomson Blvd.
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 1J5

The Board
NWT Ski Division:

I am writing to express my concern at the termination of Pavol Skvaridlo as NWT Ski Coach. I would like to have on it record that neither Jacob or I have ever been threatened or abused by Mr. Skvaridlo, nor felt that he would not give Jacob a training plan or waxing assistance. In fact he has always respected our wishes. For example, he knows that Chris Shank, Jacob's dad, and I think that school must be a priority over training. Mr. Skvaridlo supported our request for a space to study and helped set a daily schedule for studying (for all the skiers) while away at the clinic in Inuvik.

Based on what I have heard, both in a public NWT Ski Division Board meeting and meetings with the Yellowknife Ski Team parents, my understanding is that Mr. Skvaridlo was hired to assist community coaches to become more skilled, to initiate a skiing program in the small communities, and to coach, with the assistance of the community coaches, those skiers whose abilities have outgrown the skills of the community coaches. I believe that Mr. Skvaridlo has done these things.

I appreciate Mr. Skvaridlo because:

- he enjoys coaching, and it shows when he shares his knowledge of technique and style;
- he supports and encourages the members of the NWT Ski Team to train hard and be dedicated to the sport;
- he does not support lack of discipline or manipulation;
- he recognizes that cross country skiers peak between 27 and 30 years old, and that thoughtful training is important to maintaining strength and an healthy body;
- he challenges and supports the older "elite" skiers" or those who expect to travel to the national competitions, to make decisions about their priorities;
- he encourages younger competitors to do cross training, while he recognizes the more advanced older skiers must concentrate on training for a specific annual event such as national competitions;
- he believes that the NWT youth have the potential to be top ten national skiers;
- he believes that the NWT youth have the potential to be Olympic skiers;
- he recognizes the training necessary to accomplished a personal best at national and international events;
- he believes in the skiers and was the coach last year when the NWT Ski Team won team of the year;

- he provided tailored training plans for those skiers who were originally chosen for NWT Ski Team;
- he has focused on skiing at the community level and the people in these smaller communities seem to genuinely like and trust him.

Most importantly, for me as a taxpayer and a mother, I appreciated Mr. Skvaridlo because:

- he expects "elite skiers" or those who expect to travel to the national competitions to train and make a commitment if they are using NWT Ski Division money;
- he expects the "elite skiers" to be focused and disciplined, which I believe provides life skills as well as an appreciation of the money that goes toward their sport;
- he expects the "elite skiers" to have a sense of responsibility to themselves, their training and their sport; and,
- he expects the "elite skiers", who normally form the NWT Ski Team, to sign and follow a contract.

As I stated, to Jonny Graves on the phone, I see nothing in the Board's reasons for termination that is rational. (See memo to Mr. Skvaridlo dated February 5, 1998). All but one of the reasons is based on people's feelings and the logic for terminations was based on emotion. I do not believe that the termination of Mr. Skvaridlo has assisted to free the young people from confusion, rather it has compounded the problem because the real issues of frustrations and confusion were not discussed and clarified. I believe these could have been solved with the help of a professional mediator.

I will discuss a few of the points written in the "memo to Paul giving reasons for termination of contract", dated February 5, 1998, to demonstrate that based on first hand observations and experience I have a different perspective on Mr. Skvaridlo's behaviour. These differences cause me to be concerned about the termination of his contract.

POINTS FROM SKI DIVISION'S TERMINATIONS MEMO TO MR. SKVARIDLO

Point (i) from Ski Division Memo to Mr. Skvaridlo, dated February 5, 1998

- This point suggests that Harald Wulf wanted Mr. Skvaridlo terminated.

Based on my conversations with Harald Wulf that was not his intent. He had concerns about how the situation with the young skiers was handled but did not call for the termination of Mr. Skvaridlo's contract.

Point (ii) from Ski Division Memo to Mr. Skvaridlo, dated February 5, 1998

- The memo states: "We also asked you to conduct a small clinic for the visiting skiers and again you refused to take part. It should be noted that you were present at some times during the day."

I agree that Mr. Skvaridlo was present during the day. However based on my observations, Mr. Skvaridlo would not have had time to conduct a small clinic as he was either at the club waxing skies for the people from the small communities, or at Sport North putting bindings on what looked to be hundreds of skis that had been ordered for communities. He also tried to be on the trails at certain times to support the skiers. I speak from experience as I was also there. I assisted him by taking a skier to the airport and transporting a few community people from Akaitcho Hall to the Club. Furthermore, Jacob and Harald Wulf assisted him with putting bindings on the numerous skis at Sport North. Mr. Skvaridlo was busy all the time. He rarely lifted his head from the bottom of the skis.

Based on my observations he did not have time to hold a clinic. In fact he did not have time that weekend to have the discussion on vitamins and the importance of health that he had hoped to have. Instead Jacob and Harald Wulf helped him with the skis.

- The memo states: "It should be noted that you were present at some times during the day. Some of the coaches observed that you were on the trails skiing beside your daughter as she was taking part in the technical evaluation.....We regard such behaviour as unprofessional and unseemly in a coach of young athletes."

As the coaches may or may not have noticed, I was at the gate the whole time for both technical evaluations. I felt that if young skiers can be out skiing doing their best in -35 temperatures, so can I as an adult supporter. During my time at the gate, I saw Mr. Skvaridlo take off skiing from the gate at the same time as his daughter skied by. He skied beside her for a short time and then skied off. One young girl in the same category told me that Mr. Skvaridlo was beside the track, encouraging them as they went by.

Neither Jacob or I have ever felt that Jacob was being neglected because Mr. Skvaridlo coaches his daughter, nor has Jacob felt neglected because Linda Dunbar, John Argue and Wendy Stephenson coach their children.

In my opinion based on my years as a manager, Mr. Skvaridlo could have used some support from the Board during these competitions, rather than criticism.

Point (iii) from Ski Division Memo to Mr. Skvaridlo, dated February 5, 1998

- The memo states: "Patty Kay indicates that you [Mr. Skvaridlo] have consistently refused to listen to local advice..."

Given that Mr. Skvaridlo is busy with and responsible for several communities in various regions of the western Territories, it would be difficult to listen to local advice for organizing coaching clinics. Based on my experience as a facilitator and workshop organizer, it is impossible to set clinic/workshops/meeting to meet all participants needs. Too often in the NWT we think we can follow the needs and agendas of each participant and each community. Based on my experience working in communities, following the agenda of the community is fine if working in only one community or one region, however it does not work if you are responsible for organizing people in more than one region. Mr. Skvaridlo is responsible for training coaches throughout the western Territories, not just south of the lake.

Point (iv) from Ski Division Memo to Mr. Skvaridlo, dated February 5, 1998

- The memo states: "She [Ms. Anderson] told me that the reason her sons did not attend this camp was because you told them that the cost would be \$750 each. She recently learned from another parent that the airfare was subsidized and the total cost of the camp was considerably less than what you told her."

My perspective of this situation is a little different. I remember discussing the Inuvik camp at the meeting at Sport North with the Yellowknife parents. I knew that several people were misunderstanding Mr. Skvaridlo's explanation of the money. Some parents thought the amount Mr. Skvaridlo was quoting was the amount parents would pay rather than the total cost of the trip.

Since I thought the parents were misunderstanding I asked for clarification. I could see that some parents were not listening carefully, which is necessary given Mr. Skvaridlo's accent and the way he presents information. Also during this meeting Mike Freeland explained that as a group we should decide what percentage we would pay for trips as this would determine the number of trips the "elite skiers" or those who expect to travel to the National Competition, would be able to take. It was clear at that meeting that the cost for the clinic would depend on the number of skiers to attend the clinic as there was a specific amount available for that event, not a specific amount per skier.

I remember the Anderson family being represented at this meeting. Nevertheless it is clear from Ms. Anderson's letter to Ms. Graves, dated January 20, 1998, that they were misunderstanding. I quote from Ms. Anderson's letter.

"At the time of the trip to Inuvik in the fall, Paul refused to tell Kyle the

cost of that training trip. After numerous inquiries by Kyle, Kyle went on informations he received from Bob Swallow who was told directly by Paul that the training trip to Inuvik would cost in the area of \$750. Due to the indicated cost Kyle did not attend the camp."

I believe that this quote exemplifies a lot of the confusion. As stated above, it is my perspective that the Anderson family received the same information about cost as the other Yellowknife parents at the meeting at Sports North.

- The memo states, "One of them told me that she was 'afraid to let her son travel with you to races'. She was afraid of your irrational behaviour and she was also afraid that you would not wax her son's skies at the race."

I requested documentation of Mr. Skvaridlo's terminations, which I received from Ms. Graves. Neither of the letters from the two parents use the words afraid or irrational behaviours. Rather both these letter demonstrate the confusion around roles of the Club Coaches and the role of the NWI Ski Coach. They also demonstrate a concern for Mr. Skvaridlo's choice of words when he is trying to make a point on over training ("shit his pants" in Ms. Anderson's letter dated January 20, 1998), and his hard training approach (Ms. Roy's letter dated February 3, 1998).

Further to my above point in relation to this apparent "fear" and poor treatment, I find it interesting that since Karen Stinson and I have asked Mr. Skvaridlo to take the time to continue coaching our kids, two other skiers have asked Mr. Skvaridlo to coach them. These are children of parents who have expressed concern for his behaviour. Mr. Skvaridlo has said no to these skiers, not because he would not like to coach them, but because on paper he has been accused of abusive and irrational behaviour by the Board. He does not want to coach these young people without parental approval especially when the Board has stated these parents are "afraid" for their children. It is reasonable, given the circumstances, that he have written permission prior to coaching them.

Further to the issue of waxing the skiers skies, my son tells me that at the Canada Cup, Mr. Skvaridlo told the skiers what wax to use. I do not know if they took the advice but he did share it. Furthermore, I know the skiers in Yellowknife have training plans. I have seen, in the boys changing room, a tailor made plan for a skier, whose strength and ability demands a more specialized plan, and the junior boys training plan for those boys whose ability and strengths are similar. In other words, from our perspective Mr. Skvaridlo does want to help these skiers.

Point (v) from Ski Division Memo to Mr. Skvaridlo, dated February 5, 1998

The memo states: "...it has become apparent to me that none of the ski team members have received any information from you regarding this race ... You informed me that you only needed 5 minutes to plan to attend a race... However, parents and skiers need more than 5 minutes and I have had several calls from parents regarding this race."

- I was one of the parents concerned with not knowing what was happening with the Canada Cup. I knew this event was happening, the date of the event, and that Mr. Skvaridlo had a commitment from the airlines for travel, but I did not have the details. I like to be told several weeks in advance of a race so I can encourage Jacob to deal with school and I can deal with the finances.

However, I was in no way suggesting that Mr. Skvaridlo be reprimanded, and definitely not terminated. Mr. Skvaridlo has been so busy with community activities and travel that he had not been able to give full information to parents. I do think that Mr. Skvaridlo could learn to delegate some responsibility. For example the community coaches could have helped him to get the information out. This would have kept the communications lines open, recognizing the NWT Ski Team members as members of their local clubs as well. It would also have demonstrated the responsibility of local coaches when Mr. Skvaridlo wasn't present.

I was hoping that a mediator could be called in to deal with the tensions between the Yellowknife coaches and Mr. Skvaridlo.

Point (vi) from Ski Division Memo to Mr. Skvaridlo, dated February 5, 1998

- The memo states, "It should also be noted that you are very seldom at the ski club for the training session. This has caused some of the team members to look to the Yellowknife Club coaches for direction. ... They [referring to the NWT Ski Team members residing in Yellowknife] are not part of the Yellowknife Club group, and they do not have you there to ensure that they get out and follow a program."

Based on all the years of skiing Jacob, as have all the NWT Ski Team, have always looked to the Club coaches for direction and motivation if the NWT Ski Team Coach is not present. In our case this is the Yellowknife Coaches. From my perspective, Jacob is a member of the Yellowknife Ski Challenge Program and when he travels to races in the NWT he travels with the Yellowknife team and races as a member of that team. When outside the NWT he travels with the NWT Ski Coach and races for the NWT. (See attached letter to Paul Skvaridlo, Linda Dunbar and John Argue from me.)

The NWT Ski Coach is responsible for travelling to the communities and for carrying out other administrative duties related to skiing in the NWT, in addition to giving NWT Ski Team training plans. These duties are done at the Sport's North office. With Mr. Skvaridlo, as in the past, the NWT Ski Team members received a training plan from the NWT Ski Coach, and should receive encouragement and motivation from the ClubCoaches to follow that plan. If the NWT Ski Coach is present then s/he assists the Team. This was explained to me and other parents last fall.

To me, that has been part of the problem from the beginning, the confusion between Yellowknife Challenge Program and the NWT Ski Team. This confusion has been further compounded because there is no organized NWT Ski Team, because the skiers did not sign the contract (see below under item titled 'Contract with the members of the NWT Ski Team'). Mr. Skvaridlo considers the Arctic Winter Games skiers the NWT Ski Team as they are the skiers who will be competing against skiers from outside the NWT. He considers the skiers who have already been selected to go or who have the potential to go to the National Competitions as the "elite skiers".

In this situation, a mediator could have help Mr. Skvaridlo and the Yellowknife Coaches to work together. Mr. Skvaridlo could have put more effort into assisting the Yellowknife community coaches become more skilled. This cannot happen if they are not talking to each other.

Point (vii) from Ski Division Memo to Mr. Skvaridlo, dated February 5, 1998

- The memo states, "I have had to remind you several times not to make financial commitments without prior approval and yet you continue to do so."

I have no first hand knowledge of the situation of the finances or the skies for the aboriginal youth. However, based on a memo from Jonny Graves to Mr. Skvaridlo on January 4, 1998, it appears that someone had to make decisions about finances if the community program was to be successful and the NWT Ski Team was to travel. I quote from that memo,

"On a further note, I am including an E-mail from Lisa Vass. She is saying that financial commitments cannot be made until the financial position of the Board is made clear to all members. As you [are] aware Frances Hunter has not been able to help me much with the bookkeeping, but I have assured Ms. Vass that our records are in order and that she will have a full accounting of our finances by the week of January 5. I have not yet received answers from all board members regarding reimbursing Sarah Daitch for one half of her ticket from Fort Smith to Yellowknife for the Yellowknife Regional Trials...."

This quote shows there are financial problems. If the Board has to go to the membership in January to get approval for their position, it seems doubtful that they can complete the programs funded by the Federal and Territorial governments by March 31, 1998. Budgets control should be the responsibility of the Board after the AGM. It appears from this memo that the level of financial responsibility by the Board is non-existent.

As an individual who has worked for Boards, I am surprised that a volunteer Board would not give the Coach a budget and the responsibility and authority to purchase within that budget. I am also surprised that the Board does not know where the finances are, to the point of not being able to spend money or set a budget with which to guide daily decision (ie Sarah Daitch's travel from Fort Smith to Yellowknife for the Regional Trials). All Board members should not have to be called to make a decision on travel for a NWT Ski Team member to go to Regional. That type of decision should have been made based on an approved item within the budget. The decision should be clear. This type of decision making is inefficient for the Board and the Coach, and detrimental to the program as well as a hardship for clients they are supporting.

Point (viii) from Ski Division Memo to Mr. Skvaridlo, dated February 5, 1998

- The memo states, "You have been rude and abusive to me and other board members and you have shown very little respect for the coaches of certain ski clubs."

I have also seen Mr. Skvaridlo's emotional outbursts, especially when he thinks that skiing as a sport is being undermined, that "skiers" are not being trained or training properly, or that members of the NWT Ski Team are not making a commitment to train. I would like to see Mr. Skvaridlo not express all his emotional feelings at the drop of a hat. However, I also would like to see all persons involved show more professionalism and limit their emotional behaviour.

I saw and heard Roz Smith, the President of the Yellowknife Ski Club verbally attack and physically threaten Mr. Skvaridlo at a meeting last fall. Ms. Smith stood up, leaned across the table and screamed at Mr. Skvaridlo, "Drop it, drop it. I could just smash [it may have been hit or punch] you."

Patty Kay Hamilton, in her letter dated, January 16, 1996 was "surprised by..[Mr. Skvaridlo's] manner and attitude" and considered his anger "inappropriate and a concern". I was surprised when I heard Ms. Smith verbally attack Mr. Skvaridlo. I too considered this display of anger inappropriate and I became concerned.

Again I would like to point out that there are faults and emotional statements on

both sides of this situation - Board members and the Coach. This does not make the Board members, Ms. Smith or Mr. Skvaridlo "bad" - it means that mediation would have been a responsible way to solve these problems.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES RELATED TO THIS SITUATION

Boards and community coaches use of the terms "abuse" and "afraid" .

In Canada today, we are terrified that children and woman will be abused. Use of these words causes extreme emotion because they are so charged. In a memo dated February 5, the words "afraid", "irrational behaviour", and "abuse" were used seven (7) times. I would suggest, based on my examples above, that when using these types of words more documented evidence of "abuse" and "fear" be provided. Young people are asking Mr. Skvaridlo to coach them while their parents are stating their fear for themselves and their children, . This raises questions about whose fear it is, and fear for what.

The fear of our children not winning due to a poor waxing job is different than the fear of emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Also different are the fears of our children not receiving funding to travel to competitions and the fears of our children being ignored by a coach. The implications of these fears are very different than the fears associated with emotional, physical and sexual abuse but without clarity the words "afraid" and "abuse" cause most Canadians to think of the fear of "emotional", "physical" and "sexual abuse".

Given the emotion that is associated with the terms "abuse" and "afraid", the memo, which lists the reasons for termination makes some very serious allegations. I know of at least one board member whose opinion was influenced because s/he did not want to put young people in a situation of abuse. S/he did this in spite of the fact that s/he had only good experiences with Mr. Skvaridlo.

Contract with the members of the NWT Ski Team

My first observation of overreaction by parents and the undermining of Mr. Skvaridlo as a coach was when the Yellowknife parents called a meeting about the contract which the members of the NWT Ski Team was suppose to sign and adhere to. I personally have never agreed to all the rules the past Coaches have listed, nor did I agree with these rules. However, none of the rules listed would have hindered my son as an independent thinker or cause him to be an emotionally or physically damaged human being. Importantly, as a family we agreed with the principle of having a contract between coach and 'elite' athlete who represent their community and the NWT at sporting events, because these "elite" skiers are using tax payers' money to help sponsor them to events. Every year since Jacob has been skiing with

the NWT Ski Team, he has had a contract. Breaking of the contract means the Team member is off the team.

At the meeting last fall, I suggested that as parents we assist the skiers, who made the NWT Ski Team, and Mr. Skvaridlo to work out the contract together. Had this been done it is just possible there would be a strong team spirit now. Instead we parents complained that our children's feelings were not being considered and as a group we fought the process of securing a contract. The Board never stood behind Mr. Skvaridlo to make sure this important step was taken. The contract was never signed. It seems to me that this contract is basic to making sure both the skiers and Coach understand their responsibility and commitments to each other and the Team.

Commitment and Training

The commitment to train seems to have caused a lot of difficulty for the parents of the "elite skiers". If I remember correctly with the last NWT Ski Coach, unless a skier performed to a certain level, they could not travel to particular events. Furthermore, the past Yellowknife Ski Coach expected skier to train a certain number of days if they wanted to receive funding to attend skiing events. Mr. Skvaridlo expects a commitment to train, among the "elite skiers" because he knows that Canadian skiing times are not world class. Cross country skiing is difficult and he expects training if the "elite skiers" want to compete at national competitions. If they train properly and thoughtfully Mr. Skvaridlo believes they will not hurt themselves and will do their personal best.

Mr. Skvaridlo expected the "elite skiers", who wish to go to the nationals, to train in the summer as well as in the fall and winter. My understanding is that important training is accomplished in the summer. This is not unique to Mr. Skvaridlo, Jacob has been given a training plan every summer for the last three years, and even when travelling he was expected to take the time to train.

Mr. Skvaridlo did spend time with the Yellowknife members of the NWT Ski Team in the summer. However during the fall and winter he has been busy with the communities and has spent very little time with any of the Yellowknife skiers. None of the other NWT Team Coaches spent a lot of day to day time coaching. This responsibility, as well as the responsibility to motivate the skiers, is left to the club coaches.

Given that many of the NWT Ski Team members need more technical and race-orientated coaching that the club coaches can provide, these "elite skiers" must have the commitment and motivation to train with little guidance.

A Cross Cultural Problem

Much of what occurred is a cross cultural issue, which as northerners we should have learned to deal with. Generally speaking we accept that:

- most Canadians feel uncomfortable around public display of emotion, while for many Eastern Europeans emotional and verbal outbursts are not uncomfortable or uncommon.
- most Canadians feel it is 'more important' that all young people are acknowledge for whatever they achieve than recognizing those who are highly talented, while for most Eastern Europeans hard work, commitment, focus and achievement is more highly regarded than trying to make all people feel good for what they do.

Based on my experience as an anthropologist and from working in cross cultural situations most of my working life, I know that people do not change cultural traits readily. This takes commitment and patience as we learn to understand each other and learn to fit with the culture of the place. I think the Board could be more sensitive, and I also think that if Mr. Skvaridlo is going to share his talent as a coach he will need to come to terms with the Canadian personality, and adjust his emotional and passionate behaviour so he can do what he loves and what he excels at, which is coaching.

I am sure that if mediation had occurred and Mr. Skvaridlo had been given support to understand the differences, and to secure a contract with the NWT Ski Team most problems would have been non existent to begin with and others could have been eliminated with thoughtful and sensitive management.

Loud Discussions

Both Jacob and I have had passionate discussion about skiing with Mr. Skvaridlo. None of these have damaged either of us. Although Mr. Skvaridlo raised his voice and said some irrational statements, neither Jacob nor I felt "abused", "afraid" or "threatened". I do not think that Jacob will be emotionally damaged if an adult raises their voice to him. He will be damaged much more if I allow him to manipulate situations for his own personal gain.

I watch and listen to Mr. Skvaridlo. He is not abusive, he is a very caring person. He is verbally aggressive, which means he needs to do some work in this area if he is going to be comfortable in Canada as we Canadians are not comfortable with loud or aggressive voices. However, that does not make Mr. Skvaridlo threatening or abusive.

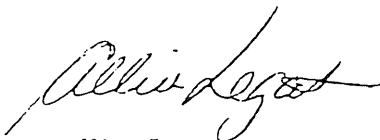
Solution

Given the confusion and different opinions and perspectives on this issue, I recommend, as a concerned member of the Yellowknife Ski Club, a manager in cross-cultural situations, a professional who trains individuals in communities, and a mother of a Yellowknife skier:

- the Board take responsible action to correct these matters. I suggest that a mediator who understand competitive skiing and the situation in the NWT be hired immediately.
- an public apology for the charges of "abuse" be given to Mr. Skvaridlo;
- Mr. Skvaridlo be reinstated to complete the community work initiated;
- Mr. Skvaridlo be reinstated as the AWG coach so the community people will know the coach who is responsible for them;
- Mr. Skvaridlo be reinstated as NWT Ski Division Coach;
- Mr. Skvaridlo, along with a mediator and club coaches, explain his job and work load to the "elite skiers" who felt ignored; and
- the Board and Mr. Skvaridlo discuss, with the assistance of a professional mediator, the tensions and lack of respect on both sides so that communication can be enhanced.

I hope that this letter puts another opinion on the table to keep discussion open and honest. I truly hope that a man who has been dedicated and passionate about skiing is not professionally damaged by lack of understanding on the part of the Board, by parental emotion about our children, and our confusion about what it means to be a coach in Canada, where various philosophies prevail.

Thank you for reading this long letter,



Alice Legat

cc: Ethel Blondin-Andrew, MP, Western Arctic
 M. Thomson, Minister of Community and Municipal Affairs
 Roy Erasmus, MLA Yellowknife North
 James Rabesca, MLA,
 Chris Bergman, Sports North
 Christain Boucher, Fort Simpson
 Lois Philipp, Fort Providence (649-4300) 647-3511.
 John Docherty, Kakisa Lake
 Arnold Gargan, Jean Marie River
 Ray Peltier, Snare Lake ✓
 Kate Sincom, Fort McPherson,
 Dean Hay, Rae Lakes, -- (97-3411 (97-3504)

Wayne Ingelfied, Nahanni Bute (602-2910)-
Paul Berer, Cape Dorset - ~~455~~
Doug Dean, Tsighetshic - (953-3302) - 953-3206
Dean McLeod, Aklavik - (978-2937) 947-2760
Ski Club, Norman Wells
Patty Kay Hamilton, Fort Smith
Bob Cook, Hay River
Roz Smith, Yellowknife Ski Club

Alice Legat
4706 Anderson Thomson Blvd
Yellowknife, NWT
873-5003

Dear Paul, John and Linda:

Given the circumstances surrounding the trip to Edmonton for the Canada Cup, I have had to find a way for Jacob not to feel like he is choosing one or two coaches over the one or other. All of the skiers he has skied with are his friends and people he has skied with since he was six.

All of you are important to him. John you have been travelling with Jacob to races since he was six. You have been the back bone behind large buses and charter planes to get young skiers to P-tub, Old Crow, etc ever since I moved to Yellowknife in 1986. Linda, Jacob was a Jackrabbit with you prior to your joining Dave in the Challenge Programme. As a mom and coach you have supported me when I have not understood competitive behaviour. Paul, I have only known you for a little over a year, but I appreciate the passion with which you believe the NWT skiers can be the best in Canada. You believe in hard work and training-two traits I used when working in the communities. I know they work. I appreciate how you have pushed Jacob and how you believe in Jacob.

Thank you all for what you give the young people.

Together, Jacob and I have decided that to show support for you all, he will spent time with all of you. He will travel down to Edmonton with John and Linda, the YK Team and those NWT Team skiers. He will stay with Paul and the NWT Team because as a member of the NWT Team Jacob is Paul's responsibility when he is outside the NWT at races. In this way we hope to show support for each of you and for all that you each have done. I am also hoping that in this way we can show that we support all philosophies. We hope that the various ways of thinking and doing can be brought together to create a whole that is vital and important for the outcome of healthy young people.

Please know that John and Linda do not have responsibility for Jacob once he arrives at Edmonton and goes to the Budget Rent a Car booth, where he will wait at the airport for Paul to fetch him at 9:30am. For your information Paul, Jacob arrives at 9:05am, CP Flight 591. Paul will be responsible for Jacob while in Edmonton but will not be responsible after they arrive at the airport to travel back to Yellowknife. Jacob will meet Linda and John at 7:00am at the Canadian ticket counter. He will catch the 8:00am CP Flight 444 Monday morning with John and Linda.

Thank you for all your work, and I wish you all a good time and good skiing.

Alice Legat
c.c. Jonny Graves