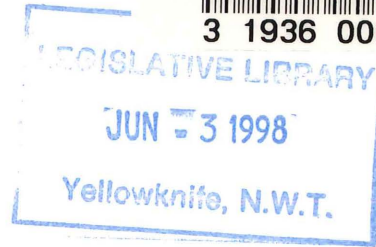


May 1998



Dear Mr. Oates

I am a constituent living in your riding. Over the past days I have become increasingly disturbed by your government's position at the collective bargaining table. As I understand it, the GNWT is refusing to continue to bargain with the Union of Northern Workers unless the Union agrees to a settlement of the long-standing pay equity complaint. As well, I understand that the actual settlement being offered may be questionable from a legal perspective. I believe it is grossly unfair to many women and men who have been suffering pay discrimination based on their gender.

I encourage you to take whatever action is necessary to cause the Government of the Northwest Territories to *de-link* from the current collective bargaining process the settlement of the outstanding pay equity complaint. That complaint has been properly launched and is currently in process in accordance with the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. That's the forum in which it is best resolved.

Secondly I am also concerned about the ongoing dispute concerning the fairness of the job evaluation system your government has tabled. From my perspective, the Union's offer to be bound by the decision of an impartial panel of experts is fair and reasonable. I ask you to take whatever action is necessary to cause the GNWT to refer - to such an impartial arbitration panel - the matter of the gender neutrality of the job evaluation system that is being proposed in the collective bargaining process. The "Yes it is, No it isn't" bickering that has been going on surely must be ended.

I think it's time for the GNWT to start to bargain in good faith with a view to achieving a collective agreement with its employees. At this point in time, it seems clear that the GNWT is trying to settle a number of largely unrelated problems by using the collective bargaining process improperly.

As my representative I am asking you to do what you can to ensure this dispute comes to a close. These last few years have been very difficult for the public service and have resulted in a downgrading of the services Northerners receive. I am asking you to urge the government to solve these problems in the proper order, and in the proper forum. Please stop the abuse of the collective bargaining process.

Thank for your assistance in settling this matter.

Sincerely,

B. Skaropad

UNW + USWA member

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