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Jan O'Brien  
BCGEU  
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Re: working towards creating a positive work environment

Hello Jan,

Could you please tell me the BCGEU's position on bullying in the work place. I have asked this many times and have yet to receive an answer. Also, could you please find out the Employer's position on bullying in the work place. I have asked this many times and have yet to receive an answer.

Could you please tell me why the BCGEU and the Employer did not support me in my requests for team effectiveness training, project planning, or mediation for the Population Section.

Could you please tell me why the BCGEU did not grieve the firing on February 15, 2006 when I was told to pack up and get out of the building after team effectiveness training was refused by the manager. Also, could you please tell me why the BCGEU did not grieve the suspensions as I was told would be done by the shop steward. Could you please tell me why the BCGEU did not respond to my letter disputing being fired for just cause and did not send a grievance form until after the thirty day limit.

Could you please tell me the BCGEU's position on discrimination on the grounds of Aboriginal ancestry. It was BC Stats who asked employees to declare our ancestry as part of a survey...I never thought that the information would be used against me. The steps are small between bullying, discrimination, and genocide.

I was the only person to admit being metis/mixed blood working for BC Stats (documented as part of the survey). The new manager (a 20 plus year employee who had been given the position of manager through a restricted posting) had stated that the reason more people claimed aboriginal ancestry in the 2001 census was because they had watched "Dances with Wolves" or are "looking for a hand out". He also stated that the problems of the Indians were a result of their enjoyment of [some cheap brand name] wine. Do you know of anyone who might be able to help me explain the role of discrimination on ancestral grounds to the arbitrator?

Oh yes, one other thing....the fellow who became manager (through a restricted process) had said that he had worked with an Aboriginal fellow at one time and found him to be impossible to work with, saying that he had a bad attitude. My feeling is that the manager had created a self fulfilling prophecy. Indeed, on several occasions the manager called me into his office, told me to close the door, pulled out a long metal ruler with a cork backing and would slap his hand with it like a strap, telling me to never ask my co-workers to ask me rather than tell me what to do. This was bizarre and astounding behavior which was acceptable to the BCGEU and Employer.

Fortunately for him and unfortunately for me, he had been a shop steward for many years and was well know at the local office. My feeling is that when I pointed out the possibility of discrimination, the BCGEU decided not to send me a grievance form. It was only after I found out that I could go to the LRB (also provincial government people) and cc'ed the president of the BCGEU that a form was sent to me.

Oh yes, my father has papers showing his Métis ancestry and my mother does not but is also mixed blood. I feel that because I was making improvements on the methods, improving efficiencies, and because of my ancestry I was wrongfully dismissed. I contend that it was the combination of both being mixed blooded and innovative that made the manager and my co-workers create a hostile work environment. My requests for team effectiveness training and project planning only made the antagonism increase. Am I to follow my mothers example and tell my children not to declare Aboriginal ancestry because they will then be subjected to authorized discrimination.

I found that the antagonism would rise whenever the projects that I initiated were successfully completed. One of software programs written to address the goal of improving efficiency later (after I was fired) went on to win an innovations award. The antagonism peaked and I was told to leave the building at the time I was trying to get recognition for the many people who had helped make that project a success.

No one told me why the yelling directed towards me was considered acceptable. Also, I was taken off of projects, yelled at at meetings, blamed for thing that others had done wrong, eventually excluded from meetings, given my co-workers menial tasks with less and less time to complete them with inadequate information and tools. I was put at the bottom of a hierarchy where I was to have no say in the methods and models used to generate population estimates and projections but where I would have to sign off on work that was done incorrectly by others.

Also, according to the agreement, the director was not suppose to call me at my home. And as a human and a mixed blood, I reserve the right to speak positively and advocate constructive resolutions to anyone. I am simply giving the BCGEU and the Employer the opportunity to address the bullying in-house without going public (which has cost me over a year in wages and hardship for my family); however, I am standing up to the bullying not only to protect myself and not only for my children but for all children, because bullying should not be considered acceptable in the school yard, on the street, nor in the work place.

Also, I will be inviting observers to the arbitration meeting. Please have room available for myself and two other people.

Sincerely,

Warren Munroe

cc. Labour Relations Board