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May 17, 2007

Jan O'Brien
BCGEU
4911 Canada Way,
Burnaby, BC, V5G 3W3

Re: working towards creating a positive work environment

Hello Jan,

In order to prepare for the arbitration hearing, could you please help me answer the following questions.

Could you please tell me the BCGEU's and the Employer'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 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.

Also, 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.

Also, could you please tell me the BCGEU's and the Employer's position on discrimination. I do not know why I was treated as less than a human, but this important issue must be addressed. I admitted being Métis/mixed blood when filling out a government survey regarding employment equity issues. It appears that this information may have been used against me.

The new manager, Dave O'Neil, (a 20 plus year employee who had been given the position of manager through a restricted posting) had stated that the reason there was an increase in the number of people of aboriginal ancestry estimated in the 2001 census was because they had watched "Dances with Wolves" or are "looking for a hand out". In fact, the increase came after Statistics Canada allowed people to identify themselves rather than having the enumerator determine whether a person was to be considered Aboriginal. I suggested that that previous censuses had under estimated their number and also that many Aboriginals and mixed bloods are independent and self reliant.

Also, the manager 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". He also stated that the problems Indians have were a result of their enjoyment of [some cheap brand name wine]. My feeling is that the manager creates self fulfilling prophecies. I contend, that his attitude was that Aboriginal people needed to learn their place in the social hierarchy. 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 (rather than yell at me). Fortunately for him and unfortunately for me, he had been a shop steward for many years and was well known at the local office (601). My feeling is that when I pointed out the possibility of discrimination (May 25, 2006), the BCGEU decided not to send me a grievance form. It was only after I found out that I could go to the LRB and wrote the president of the BCGEU that a form was sent to me.

My father has papers showing his Métis ancestry and my mother is also mixed blood. My Aboriginal ancestors come from all over North America and some of my European ancestors arrived in North America in the 1600's.

It appears that there were discussions between the Employer and the BCGEU regarding the status of mixed bloods in the hierarchy of employment equity. I contend that it was determined that I would not receive support from the union because I claimed Aboriginal ancestry in the government's survey. Subsequently, a constructive dismissal was put into action where the only outcome would be that I either quit because of the harassment (yelled at and later excluded from meetings and put at the bottom of a hierarchy) or I would be dismissed for just cause for standing up to the antagonism. My requests for team effectiveness training and project planning only made the antagonism increase.

I contend that an effort was made by the Employer, and by the BCGEU, to remove mixed blood employees who identified themselves as Aboriginal in the employment equity survey conducted by BCStats. Civil liberty organizations should be made aware of the potential of the Employer and the BCGEU using government's internal surveys regarding ancestry as a way of singling out people for firing. It is very important that this issue be addressed as soon as possible, just in case other people throughout the BC government are being subjected to constructive dismissals.

As mentioned, your offer to negotiate a settlement where I might have the "just cause" dropped from the dismissal is not acceptable. Recall that this was offered to me in October 2005 when I was told that if I quit, the union would be sure to make it look good. Do you know of anyone who might be able to help me explain the role of discrimination towards mixed bloods to the arbitrator? If not, an authority on the subject has offered to make an appearance.

Bullying should not be considered acceptable in the school yard, on the street, nor in the work place. Thank you for your continued interest in working towards creating positive work environments.

Sincerely,

Warren Munroe

cc. Labour Relations Board