

Ministre des Affaires indiennes et
du Nord canadien et interlocuteur fédéral
auprès des Métis et des Indiens non inscrits



Minister of Indian Affairs and
Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor
for Métis and Non-Status Indians

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H4

ANS 20 2008

Ms. Agnes Knudsen
Reeve
Northern Sunrise County
Bag 1300
PEACE RIVER AB T8S 1Y9

Dear Ms. Knudsen:

This is in response to your correspondence dated May 22, 2008, regarding the Lubicon land claim.

As my predecessor informed you last year, I too am concerned about the lack of discussions on the Lubicon land claim. Both my predecessor and I have exchanged correspondence on a regular basis with Chief Ominayak since taking office, regarding the possibility of returning to negotiations. Former Minister Prentice met with Chief Ominayak in February 2007, to discuss the possibility of breaking the current impasse, but with no success. We have also offered to hire a Special Representative, agreed to by all the parties, to meet individually with the parties to determine if there is room for flexibility in their respective mandates that would allow us to return to the table for productive negotiations. Unfortunately, Chief Ominayak does not consider this suggestion acceptable.

Regarding the Regional Water Treatment Project which has the potential to serve residents of Little Buffalo, I am delighted to hear this news, although I am confused as to why the settlement of the land claim would have any bearing on extending the water line to Little Buffalo. I am not aware of any issues, from Canada's perspective, that would prevent the Lubicon people from accessing water from the Regional line.

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Thank you for sharing your concerns with me on this matter and I look forward to hearing about progress on the Regional Water Treatment Project.

Sincerely,

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Chuck Strahl

c.c.: Chief Bernard Ominayak
Mr. Chris Warkentin, MP
The Honourable Gene Zwozdesky, MLA
Mr. Frank Oberle, MLA
Ms. Pearl Calahasen, MLA