

June 29, 2016

Chief Richard Shecapio
Deputy Chief Gerald Longchap
Director John Longchap

I am writing this letter concerning my son, Adriel Nigel John Bosum. My son has had an interest in the military ever since he was a young child. He used to tell us that he was going to be a soldier when he grew up. And he succeeded! Not very many youth in this community have realized their childhood dreams as he has. My partner, Lorraine Ann Beaton, has helped me raise him up as her own child since she came into our lives in 1985.

When Nigel found out in 2004/2005 that he could enter through the Aboriginal Entry Program for the Canadian Armed Forces, he jumped at the chance and prepared himself mentally, physically, and psychologically. As any normal parents would do, we encouraged him and helped him with whatever he needed in whatever challenges he would incur. When he finally graduated from the Aboriginal Program, he then decided to enter into the regular Canadian Forces army. He was stationed in different bases over the years such as in Borden, Ontario, Shiloh, Manitoba, Wainwright, Alberta, and finally at the Canadian Forces base in Edmonton, Alberta. From here is where he was deployed to a military base in Afghanistan where he saw action. He spent 6 months there. As parents, Lorraine and I spent a lot of sleepless nights during his time there. We went through a lot of stress during those years. I canceled my newspaper subscriptions, we did not enjoy watching the news, we were nervous whenever we would answer the phone. The scariest part of it all was when we would hear the doorbell ring. I'm sure that picture of a couple of people dressed in uniform will forever be etched in our minds. It's hard to say this but I am sure that Nigel has seen stuff that we will never see in our own lives.

Over these years since he has returned to civilian life, he has had to deal with a lot of deep issues in his personal life. Some of it has to do with past experiences that he had to deal with while he was preparing physically for the military. As a youth he always challenged himself. He often went out for overnight trips into the bush around the community. He often slept outdoors in the summer and also in the wintertime. We never stopped him from doing this because we knew how much he loved it. Military toys were his favorite as a child. His eyes would light up whenever he opened a present with an army tank, plane, or army figures. Most children in this community dream of playing in the National Hockey League. Nigel's dream was to join the military and help people fight oppression. He was deeply touched by the people in Afghanistan; especially the children and the elderly. But as he found out early in his training, people in this community seemed to have a great deal of fear whenever they saw him walking down the road on one of his 40 kilometer walks, a backpack weighing about a hundred pounds strapped to his back. He would also train during the night, because he knew that he would have to do it in the army! Some people realized what he was doing, but a majority could not. This included the local police force! Many times the police would stop him and tell him, not ask him, to empty the contents of his backpack on the road. Sometimes the police would take it upon themselves to do it for him! Dump out his backpack, confiscate his knife, which was inside the pack, and then just casually throw his bag into the ditch! A certain officer in the police force, Constable Stanley Neeposh, has been harassing Nigel for the past 20 years. This is the main reason why I am writing this letter. My son Nigel is doing

absolutely no harm to anyone. Confiscating his knife and having Mr. Neeposh tell him that he has to buy it back is something I find preposterous. Ridiculous, really! If the police are going to confiscate weapons from the general public, they might as well ask all the elderly gentlemen in this community to turn in the pocketknives that they all keep in their pockets!

This is harassment! My firearms have been confiscated in the past. The local police have done this whenever Nigel is under the influence of alcohol. I came home one day to find a police car in my driveway. My son had been drinking and his girlfriend had been afraid of him and called the police. Their response to my question as to why they were taking the firearms was, "It's for everyone's safety. It's because he's been in the military." He was arrested this past weekend and for what reason? He went to the lagoon to spend time alone. (He does go through depression and suffers from Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome). He wasn't out to hurt anyone. Harry Coon, a guy who was working an early morning shift driving heavy machinery, happened to drive over with a four-wheeler. Upon seeing Nigel with a machete (to build a shelter and fire), he called the police and told them that he felt threatened. Of course this made Constable Stanley Neeposh's day and promptly arrested Nigel on the spot. He was sent to jail in Amos and was released yesterday. According to reports from the lawyer, Nigel is no longer allowed to carry or have in his possession, any knives, firearms, axes, or anything that could cause harm to an individual. A nice way to practice his traditional activities as a Cree hunter! His lawyer was perplexed as to why he was arrested and put in jail.

This has to stop! Nigel has every right to do what he wants to do in this community. He is a part of it. Instead of the community being proud of his accomplishments, he is just shunned and turned away from whatever he does. He was working at the Sports Complex as the manager of the Fitness Center. They fired him from there. To this day he still has no idea why. He is a very diligent worker. But he is still waiting for a letter attesting to the reasons of his firing.

The circumstances of his firing and also of the incidents with the police over the years have put a tremendous strain on his relationships with his partner, his children, and his parents. One of the worst things that have happened to him was when he applied for a house last year. Mr. Matthew Wapachee and Mr. Jerry Coon, who were working at Miichwap, were in the process of handing him the keys to a house that he had applied for. They made it sound to Nigel that he was sure that he was getting the house. I believe it was a Rent-to-Own unit. Nigel went to the local bank and was told that there was no problem for him to get approved for a mortgage loan. As a matter of fact, the two gentlemen from Miichwap had made it sound like they were so sure that Nigel was getting the house that he was approved a 30,000 dollar loan to purchase all the furniture for the house. I don't know if it's Mr. Wapachee and Mr. Coon's idea of some sick joke on their part. But, Nigel is still paying for that loan! We later found out that they had given the house to Miss Darlene Wapachee, who just happens to be a relative of Mr. Wapachee.

These incidents have put a lot of stress on our lives. And I believe that it is about time that this situation, or these situations, is resolved. Nigel is a good person. He is a good man. We've tried our best, and also with the help of his late grandparents Philip and Sarah Bosum, to raise him up to be a respectable person in this community. His grandparents were very proud of his accomplishments. There is nothing to fear from him. Lorraine and I, and his partner Raven and their children –we just want Nigel to live in peace as a member of this community of Mistissini.

We want these problems resolved. We do not think that it was right how the Miichwap department treated him concerning the entrusted house and for him having to keep paying for a bank loan that we feel he was duped into. His firing from the Fitness Center is also another issue. And of course, it would be nice for him to enjoy the community area that we should all enjoy. He should be allowed to continue enjoy being out on the land hunting and fishing just like the rest of the community without harassment and prejudice.

I remain,

John Philip Bosum
Father of Adriel Nigel John Bosum.

CC: Matthew Wapachee-Director of Miichwap
Jerry Coon
Constable Stanley Neeposh
Mistissini Cree Police Force
Paul Matoush –Director of Public Safety and Fire Department
Matthew Gunner- Former Director of Public Safety and Fire Department