

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

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"for the record..."

STENOTRAN

1376 Kilborn Ave.

Ottawa 521-0703

I N D E X

JUNE 8, 1992.

NAME	PAGE
Presentation by Jobie Epoo Mayor of Inukjuak	12
Presentation by Johnny Epoo, Avataq Cultural Institute	29
Presentation by the Region of Nunavik Chairman Eli Weetaluktuk and Member Simeonie Nalukturak	40
Presentation by Arctic Exiles Markoosie Patsauq, Andrew Iquak, Anna Nungak, Patsauq Iqaluk, Samwillie Elijassialuk	53
Individual presentation made by Johnny Inukpuk	72
Individual presentation made by Mina Kingalik	90
Presentation by Anna Samisack Atiraq Women's Group	95
Presentation by Pauloosie Weetaluktuk Co-op and Grocers' Association	104
Individual presentation made by Peter Inukpuk	111
Individual presentation made by Lucassie Echalook	122
Individual presentation made by Lazarusie Epoo, Member of Maklavik	128

STENOTRAN

NAME	PAGE
Individual presentation made by Peter Naluktuk	133
Individual presentation made by Lizzie Palliser	134
Individual presentatino made by Mary Nowrakukluk	136
Individual presentation made by Martha Echalook	138
Individual presentation made by Daniel Oweetaluktuk	139
Individual presentation made by Minnie Nowkawalk	140

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 Inukjuak, Quebec

2 --- Upon commencing on June 8, 1992 at 8:45 a.m.

3 (Opening Prayer)

4 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Perhaps
5 the Commission can introduce themselves.

6 **MAYOR JOBIE EPOO:** (Speaking through a
7 translator) I would like to thank them for being able
8 to come to this community and I am sure you will be informed
9 by the people that will be making their presentations.

10 Yesterday there were a lot of people
11 present when we had entertainment last night. We should
12 have started the meeting last night but unfortunately there
13 are less people that show up this morning. First of all
14 I should introduce myself. I am Jobie Epoo.

15 Since this is called the Royal
16 Commission, we are very glad of course this public hearing
17 is held here. When I was twelve years old back in Churchill
18 when the Boy Scouts had a Jamboree and at that time when
19 Mike Gordon was still alive, we had a dinner with the Queen
20 and we are glad there are events that have been mandated
21 that are able to come to Inukjuak.

22 Further on when I make my presentation,

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 I will cooperate as Mayor of Inukjuak and I just hand this
2 over to the Commission.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you,
4 Mr. Epoo.

5 It is a great pleasure for the Royal
6 Commission on Aboriginal Peoples to open its hearings in
7 the province of Quebec starting by Northern Quebec and
8 particularly in Inukjuak.

9 I would like on behalf of all the
10 Commissioners to welcome everybody during this day of
11 hearings. Everybody should feel free to come and go, to
12 bring friends and to speak to us.

13 My name is Rene Dussault. I am Co-Chair
14 of the Royal Commission. I am a judge with the Court of
15 Appeal for the province of Quebec. I have with me this
16 morning two other Commissioners plus the Mayor Jobie Epoo,
17 who is working as commissioner of the day.

18 On my right Bertha Wilson, Madam Bertha
19 Wilson, who was a judge, well-known judge with the Supreme
20 Court of Canada until last spring.

21 Also of course we have the Commissioner
22 of the day, Jobie and Mary Sillett is well-known in this

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 part of Quebec as she is an Inuk from Labrador.

2 We are seven commissioners and the other
3 Co-Chair of the Commission is Georges Erasmus, the former
4 Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, a well-known chief
5 of the Assembly; Viola Robinson, who is a Micmac from Nova
6 Scotia. She used to be, formerly she was head or president
7 of the Native Council of Canada and Paul Chatrand, who
8 is a Metis from Manitoba; Alan Blakeney, who is a former
9 -- was former Premier of Saskatchewan for many years, more
10 than a decade. So there is a majority of aboriginal
11 peoples on the Commission, four commissioners out of seven.

12 The idea is really to try to put together
13 a new basis for a new partnership between aboriginal and
14 non-aboriginal people. We know that there is a lot of
15 public consultation that has to take place. It is a very
16 important component of our process and if we want to or
17 hope to have our proposals approved and implemented by
18 the various governments across the country, it is very
19 important that people across the country, the larger
20 society, follow what is going on in terms of policy
21 development that will be the result of this Commission.

22

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 We want to have a very extensive, we are
2 going to have a very extensive public participation
3 process. We started mid-April in Winnipeg, the launch
4 was in Winnipeg and we have been on the road for five or
5 six weeks now. We are going to be on the road visiting
6 the various communities for the coming three weeks. Round
7 one will be over at the end of June. We are splitting
8 the Commission in two or three panels to visit as many
9 communities as possible. We want to hear from people,
10 the people living in the community, living the conditions
11 on a day-to-day basis. Of course we will speak with the
12 leadership, the people who are the leaders of the various
13 aboriginal communities and organizations, but we want to
14 hear the people themselves and that is the reason why we
15 have planned to visit over one hundred communities over
16 the next year or fifteen months.

17 This is the first time a Commission is
18 doing such an extensive travelling into the northern
19 communities in particular. This Commission is different
20 from others because it has about everything coming under
21 its terms of reference. That means that you should feel
22 free to speak to us about almost anything from social

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 problems, education, justice, health, family violence,
2 abuses of all kinds, alcoholism. Also about your thoughts
3 on economic development, how the young people in this
4 community and in Northern Quebec can be afforded a future
5 in the life up north.

6 We also are very much interested in
7 culture, language. We know it is a very important issue
8 for Inuit people. I know Inuktitut is a living language
9 and how important it is for this community and the whole
10 of Northern Quebec and other Inuit communities across
11 Northern Canada, so we have to talk about that.

12 Self-government is a very important issue. It is a
13 cure-all device. It is not a panacea though, so we have
14 to see how self-government could help to better the life
15 conditions of as many people as possible in the community.

16 We would like again that you feel free to come to us.
17 We come to the communities, we try to speak with as many
18 people as possible. We have visited institutions. We
19 are going to visit other penitentiaries, jails, we want
20 to hear from the inmates, the hospital facilities, the
21 health services facilities, the schools. We feel that
22 one of the most important aspects of our mandate has to

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 deal with the education of young people and professional
2 training, post-secondary training. We think that many
3 solutions are in the society and community itself and they
4 are not necessarily big solutions, but they are important
5 and we want to hear from you about what you feel would
6 work and what you know would not work.

7 You are the ones who can tell us. Of course we are going
8 to have more academic research, but we feel that the basic
9 things for this Commission are really to listen to
10 everybody come, as many people as possible, and to hear
11 not only about your hope for the community, for your
12 children, for yourself, but also what could be done in
13 a short time to better the situation, to enhance the living
14 conditions.

15 We are going to visit many other
16 communities across the country. In all the provinces,
17 in all the territories, we want to establish a dialogue
18 so this is not the last time that you are going to hear
19 from us. We publish a newsletter every month. We want
20 to establish and maintain contacts with your community
21 and to test ideas as they will develop. This summer we
22 are going to publish a paper that will make a summing up

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of what we will have heard during the months of April,
2 May and June and it will raise some questions. It seems
3 to us important to get an answer, to be answered and we
4 hope that when we hit the road for the second round of
5 our hearings next fall, we are going to visit again all
6 the provinces and the territories. We hope that we will
7 be able to start really discussing about the solutions.

8 We know that there is pain to be heard. There are problems
9 to be told, but we hope that the community will be able
10 to turn its mind and people and the commission as soon
11 as possible on the solutions because people want action.

12 That is the reason why the Commission was appointed, less
13 to state what the problems are. This has been done by
14 many groups and commissions in the past, and task forces,
15 but more to develop policies that could be successful and
16 implemented.

17 We have met with most of the premiers
18 of all the provinces to tell them that we want their
19 collaboration. We know that even if we are a federal
20 commission, a Canadian commission, appointed by the
21 Government of Canada, that many of our recommendations
22 will be in the jurisdiction of the provinces. When we

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 speak about justice, health, education and so forth, social
2 services, it is quite clear and we hope to be able to come
3 with a global approach that will put together the social
4 policies, economic development, self-government and the
5 territories' land claims, both specific and outstanding.

6 We again are very happy to start our
7 hearings in the province of Quebec in Inukjuak and we hope
8 that we will hear from you as much as possible ideas about
9 the future and solutions and thank you very much again
10 for being with us this morning. Tell your friends over
11 lunch that they are welcome all day. Thank you very much.
12 Merci.

13 I would like now to ask Madam Wilson to
14 say a few words and then Commissioner Sillett.

15 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Thank you,
16 Mr. Co-Chair. I am one of the three non-aboriginal members
17 of the Royal Commission and I must say I feel very
18 privileged to have been appointed to the Commission. I
19 think there is a big job to be done in order to create
20 a better relationship between native and non-native people
21 in our country and this is really our overall goal.

22 When the Commission was set up, we were

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 told that a big part of our task was to educate, that public
2 education was to be very important. There is no doubt
3 in my mind that the people who need to be educated are
4 the non-aboriginal people. I know from my own personal
5 experience that my friends really know very little about
6 Canada's aboriginal people and I don't think that we can
7 really develop a better relationship unless we understand
8 each other. So I think this is why the emphasis was made
9 on public education.

10 I must say that last night I felt I was
11 back home in Scotland. I was born in Scotland and
12 emigrated to Canada in 1949 and when I heard the music
13 and saw the outfits, the tartan, plaids, I felt quite
14 emotional about the whole thing and particularly seeing
15 these beautiful young children doing the traditional
16 dances which are the same dances that children would be
17 doing in the north of Scotland, so it really took me back
18 home, and I had no idea that that sort of thing went on
19 here. That is just one aspect of the lack of knowledge
20 of non-native people about native people in Canada.

21 As I have been going around the native
22 communities two points of view have been expressed to us

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 about the Commission. Some have been very optimistic and
2 hopeful that we were going to be able to achieve real change
3 and improvement. In other communities there has been a
4 note of cynicism or scepticism, wondering whether this
5 is just another Royal Commission and will we really achieve
6 anything. I would just like to say that I am one of the
7 optimists. I think we can achieve real change, but we do
8 need to hear from you. We can't create the solutions.
9 They have got to come from you yourselves and that is why
10 we are putting so much emphasis on visiting the native
11 communities, so that we can hear your views. Thank you
12 very much.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I would like
14 to ask Mary Sillett to make some remarks.

15 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you,
16 Mr. Chairperson. Before I begin I would like to say that
17 I am from Labrador, but I doubt if I am well known in
18 Northern Quebec. I think there is a region of differences,
19 so I would like to correct that. Having said that, I am
20 extremely pleased to be in your community and before I
21 begin my statement I would like to introduce the Commission
22 staff, the people who work very, very hard to make this

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 hearing successful. I would like to introduce Marlene
2 Castellano. She works in the Research Department of the
3 Royal Commission; Roger Farley, he also works in the
4 Secretariat. Tim Compton, who is a Soto Indian from
5 Saskatchewan and works in communications; Nora Jarrett,
6 she is also from Hopedale, Labrador, my community, she
7 is an Inuk, she works in public participation; Michael
8 Lazore, he is a Mohawk Indian from Canada -- Akhasazni
9 and he works in public participation. I would also like
10 to thank Johnny Williams very, very much for the work he
11 has done and Martha Kauki for the translation service.

12 I would just like to say very briefly
13 that the work of the Royal Commission is very important.
14 We started off in Winnipeg in the month of April. At
15 that time we made sure that we asked our Inuit and Indian
16 elders from across Canada to help us decide what the future
17 of the Commission would be. At that time we had Jobie
18 Epoo and Lydia Tukai from Northern Quebec, and I am glad
19 to see we are in Jobie's community. There are three teams
20 of us and one of us are in Inukjuak, and we will be Waswanipi
21 and the other team is in Ontario. The other team is in
22 Alberta, so we plan to cover as many aboriginal communities

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 as possible. We will be coming back to Northern Quebec,
2 not necessarily Inukjuak, but we plan, we want to be a
3 Commission that sees more people than any other Commission
4 has been and I am looking forward to hearing from all
5 aboriginal peoples to determine what the solutions are.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you. I
7 think we would be ready now to ask the first presenter
8 to come to join us at the table.

9 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** The
10 speaker will be the Mayor of Inukjuak. He was just elected
11 last November.

12 **MAYOR JOBIE EPOO:** (Speaking through
13 a translator) Thank you. It is a hard job that you have
14 undertaken. I would personally like to thank Johnny
15 Williams, who has been preparing and everybody else who
16 has been assisting Johnny in getting this ready. I would
17 also like to thank the people from Nunavik, John Amagoalik,
18 Mary Simon, Charlie Watt and Mary Sillett, who have had
19 to face the Federal Government on behalf of the Inuit and
20 the late Mark R. Gordon, who has also made contributions
21 too, in lobbying the Federal Government for the Inuit
22 people and I am grateful that we are able to sit and make

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 presentations in front of you that you will be able to
2 take back home with you.

3 Inukjuak for a long time has had contact
4 with the government. There were three small communities
5 south of Inukjuak and three other small communities north
6 of Inukjuak which started to be combined into a community
7 in the sixties and that is when Inukjuak started to become
8 a community. That was when the government started
9 establishing health services, public services such as
10 housing and those services were used as bait to draw people
11 from different camps to this community. It is very hard
12 to coordinate the people here in Inukjuak because they
13 came from different camps. There is a lack of employment
14 and a problem where parents and children are not able to
15 communicate.

16 Although we haven't reached the state
17 of poverty in the community itself because they help out
18 each other, but you have to be informed that Inukjuak,
19 even before it became a community, the Inuit themselves
20 were able to look after themselves, continue their lives
21 and live off the land when they first started working and
22 started to look after themselves in making money and back

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 then they were even richer than most people down south
2 and they used to operate boats and they were able to
3 purchase the boats that were used for hunting and looking
4 back the settlers started coming back up north and started
5 taking some money out of the communities and bringing them
6 back home and up to date that is still the case. A lot
7 of times money is sent south. For example, there is the
8 northern store. People in the community buy or purchase
9 certain things, their food and then that money goes back
10 down south and the money that the people here in Inukjuak
11 then generate, it does not benefit the community itself
12 directly so there is a big thing here.

13 There are a lot of people living off
14 welfare in Inukjuak. Close to one million dollars are
15 spent in Inukjuak from the Government through welfare.
16 In some ways there are some good sides to it and there
17 are some bad sides to this, but in some ways it helps the
18 people themselves because they don't make money otherwise,
19 but on the other hand, to some people it makes people who
20 are well and able look like they don't do anything and
21 that is the bad side of it, because people who receive
22 it are well and able.

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 So in regard to if our economy is going
2 to get any better in Inukjuak, we would need a tremendous
3 amount of assistance in the beginning and we could become
4 economically viable only that way, because there is nobody
5 here in Inukjuak who has been able to collect funds.
6 Basically the income of an average person is not much
7 different from one down south, but the number of people
8 that have a regular income are a lot less and only through
9 financial assistance will we be able to start becoming
10 economically viable.

11 Looking into the future, it is very hard
12 to try to come up with the solutions and when you think
13 of the young people most of them don't see their future
14 too well. It is bleak for them and for that -- that is
15 the reason for a lot of the problems that we face because
16 the young people don't seem to have anything to look forward
17 to and when the James Bay in Northern Quebec was signed,
18 up to date, some Inuit think they were awarded too little
19 money through that agreement.

20 For example, education, health
21 services, municipal services, they would have gone ahead
22 anyway, even if there was no agreement. Some people think

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 that way. They feel that the compensation we receive is
2 too small because we were compensated \$90 million each
3 stage for a vast area of land and up to date that money
4 generates interest of \$2 million dollars annually and we
5 have to spend many years in order to collect enough money
6 on that interest, which would be able to benefit the Inuit
7 in general.

8 A great vast -- a great area of land that
9 was taken for that amount of money is very small.
10 \$180-\$200 million the government spent in regard for their
11 north. If we were able to be given that amount of money,
12 then we will be able to run our own lives with that amount
13 of money in our own way and the people would acknowledge
14 that and they will tell themselves, "Yes, we can do it"
15 without having second thoughts. Without any outside
16 assistance, if we were given a substantial amount, a
17 sufficient amount of money, we would be able to pay for
18 what has been spent and at the same time come up with jobs.
19 When we hire people with the amount of money that we have,
20 close to 7 per cent is spent in the experts from outside
21 of our communities and that way we get the assistance we
22 need and we assist the outside people by hiring them and

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 we would have been able to cover more if we were compensated
2 more, a lot more amount of money.

3 I am sure there is going to be a lot of
4 comments that you will be hearing, different comments,
5 and I am sorry that we were not ready to present you with
6 written presentations and I hope we will be able to do
7 that in the future, but right now we cannot present you
8 with written presentations at this time because we don't
9 have funds to do that, to prepare these reports, and I
10 am sure you, the Commission, will be contributing a lot
11 for the benefit of the Inuit and since you say this is
12 basically public education for Canadians that has to be
13 carried through and it will have to benefit everyone, you
14 and us at the same time. I am sure there will be other
15 people with shorter presentations and I will be adding
16 some more later on. I would like to also point out that
17 I was a member of the educational task force in Nunavik,
18 which was funded by the Makavik Corporation and the
19 Titervik School Board and I was a member of this task force.

20 We have completed our studies in Nunavik and we have been
21 able to produce a report and I would like to present you
22 with a copy of the report, not much different as what you

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 are doing now. We did the same thing in Nunavik. We
2 went to all the communities and we listened to what they
3 had to say and then we came up with a report and
4 recommendations and I would like to present it to you and
5 I am sure it will assist you in getting your information
6 on what the communities are like in regard to economics,
7 their social problems. What has yet to be done and
8 everything in regard to that is written here, so it will
9 be able to assist you tremendously, I am sure. So it will
10 be part of your studies that you will be conducting.

11 We do have a lot of things to say in
12 Inukjuak and last of all I am sure people will be
13 elaborating on this further, but in the 1950s, it seemed
14 like -- that was even before I was born -- but people got
15 something taken away from them that was doing the
16 relocation of certain people of Inukjuak up to the high
17 Arctic. When they tried to speak to the government
18 regarding that, in regard to receiving compensation for
19 the loss they had and for the effect it has had on their
20 lives, the government hasn't done anything in regard to
21 that and I am sure there are a lot of people who think
22 they have contributed a lot into Canadian sovereignty in

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the high Arctic and they believe they contributed a lot
2 to that, but I am sure they will be telling you this more,
3 but the government has not been able to recognize that
4 officially.

5 Now that certain people are starting to
6 come back to this community and are trying to readjust
7 to a normal community life again and although they are
8 really related to each other, it seems at times they are
9 not related to each other at all because they grew up in
10 a very different environment and there are people who were
11 born up in the high Arctic who don't know what it is like
12 here and now that they have tried to come back and live
13 in their original community, it has been really hard for
14 them and for the population of Inukjuak themselves. So
15 we go through a lot of hardship in trying to readjust with
16 each other again.

17 I don't have a lot more to say at this
18 time but at certain times I will elaborate on certain points
19 that the people will be making later on during the day
20 and thank you again very much. I know all of you and I
21 am very grateful that you have been able to come to
22 Inukjuak. Thank you.

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** Thank
2 you, Jobie.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I would like
4 to ask some questions. Thank you, Mr. Mayor, for
5 providing us with a verbal review of your community.

6 As far as the latter question of the
7 Arctic exiles is concerned, we are going to the
8 presentation later on this morning so we will wait for
9 this presentation to comment further, but maybe as a start
10 I would like know if you have the statistics on how many
11 people are employed on a full-time basis in this community.

12 The community is roughly a thousand people and we were
13 told maybe there was one hundred or a hundred and thirty
14 jobs available altogether. Is that the right figure?

15 **MAYOR JOBIE EPOO:** At present there is
16 about one thousand people without jobs of which over half
17 are less than seventeen years of age and over 160 of
18 kindergarten age. It is a pretty young population. About
19 130 permanent jobs, 40 of which are held by outside workers,
20 meaning teachers, nurses and so on. Normally every summer
21 there is 50 seasonal jobs, summer and fall, which is not
22 going to be the case this year because we don't have our

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 housing program approved this year. But like I said
2 earlier, a million dollars, almost a million dollars in
3 social welfare cheques are given out every year to about
4 135 social welfare recipients, 55 per cent of whom are
5 less than 30 years of age. That is about it.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I know the
7 future of the younger generation has great importance to
8 you and of course to the community and it struck us that
9 one of the problems is the pride to try to have young people
10 attend school and have post-secondary and graduate
11 training in the health professions and also in teaching
12 as well. You say half of the jobs of people coming from
13 the south are in the health field and also the teachers.
14 Because we kind of feel that this is a very, very important
15 issue that all the young people who are in the communities
16 and in particular in Inukjuak, you certainly have given
17 some thought to what should be done. We were told that
18 if there were programs to support the students when they
19 go south to get their training and follow them to make
20 sure that they are not left alone and give up after a few
21 months, that it could improve the situation. What is the
22 thinking about what should be done, because in ten years

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 from now, most of those young people we saw last night
2 will have to make a decision as to whether they will
3 continue their education. What can be done to make this
4 possible and put them in a situation where they could decide
5 to be worthwhile deciding they might come back, could come
6 back to be with their people? Do you have some more precise
7 comment as to how this could best be achieved?

8 **MAYOR JOBIE EPOO:** Well, school has
9 always been said that it starts from the home, it has to
10 start from the home. I agree a hundred per cent that it
11 has to start from the home. The parents have to instill
12 in the children's minds that education is important and
13 that it is one of the things you have to have in order
14 to be able to face the future and you have to have it and
15 there is no two ways about it. You have to get that person
16 in mind at home and then presently because of the fact
17 that we are normally on the average two, three, maybe even
18 four years behind as compared to a student in the south,
19 when we come out of school here, there has to be on the
20 school side an effort to come up with a catch-up program
21 because what happens is when a child goes down south, there
22 is a shock because of the fact that the child when he finds

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 out he is way behind in knowledge, he tends to be very
2 embarrassed about it and cannot take it and the only thing
3 he can do is go hide back home and there is not too many
4 people know about the fact that he hasn't learned too much.

5 Those are the kinds of things that have to take place.

6 The child cannot take it and he finds out he hasn't learned
7 very much in all these years.

8 Sometimes you have a case where the
9 parents are not in a position or don't have the ability
10 to help the child at a certain point, so the school has
11 to be extra sensitive in these cases.

12 Another element in the whole thing, I
13 guess if you are going to be very conscious about people
14 finishing school, you have to have ahead of them some jobs
15 and I think that is where the government and our Inuit
16 organizations do come in and to plan for a future for these
17 people that have finished school and all of these have
18 to take place and many things have to take place.

19 There are so many, but I am not saying
20 that nothing is being done. There are some things of
21 course that are being done to solve some of these problems,
22 but somebody has to look at it from overall and I don't

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 think anybody is doing that. It is segregated players,
2 I guess.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
4 much.

5 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Mr. Mayor,
6 you mentioned that what was needed was really an injection,
7 a major injection of funds in order to get people off
8 welfare, which was creating a dependency and not really
9 particularly helpful as a solution and that if you had
10 the funding, you could get people back to work and provide
11 jobs. Have you given any thought to the kinds of things
12 that you might do up here if you had the funds to get
13 started? What kind of business or industry or economic
14 activity that would provide jobs for the people living
15 in this community? Could you give us any ideas of what
16 kind of things you would do if you had the money?

17 **MAYOR JOBIE EPOO:** There is many things
18 that could be done. There is -- first of all I would like
19 to cover the area of community services that could be
20 provided by a lot of the local entrepreneurs if they had
21 money to start up with in a lot of little services that
22 are provided in small communities. You can see for

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 yourself when you go to small southern communities that
2 they have services that serve the population in the town.
3 Those kind of things that could be started are slowly,
4 slowly starting, but like I said, there is not enough money
5 to start up with. That is one. In Inukjuak we have well
6 known artists, carvers that I have felt many times are
7 not being marketed in the right way. There is too many
8 middle men selling the carvings of these people and that
9 is another area that has to be worked on and then there
10 is if we had some money we could commercialize wild life,
11 one species, is the caribou, there is a lot of caribou
12 in Northern Quebec and nothing has been done about it.
13 You see all over the world in Norway, Finland, Sweden,
14 Alaska, even parts of the Northwest Territories, you find
15 all of these people have benefits out of their herds.
16 They sell either the antlers, the meat, whatever byproducts
17 of all these things and here in Northern Quebec, it is
18 not allowed by the Quebec government. There was not too
19 long ago 800,000 heads of caribou and absolutely no money
20 coming out of them for the Inuit. Some sports hunters,
21 sports camps, yes, but still a lot of caribou not being
22 utilized.

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 There is another one, there is
2 fisheries, for instance, that we could look at. Like I
3 said, there is not a hell of a lot of people in Inukjuak,
4 so it wouldn't take a lot of money to get a few things
5 going and then there is people that could live off the
6 land with a little bit of social assistance, I believe.

7 There has to be an acceptable level of social assistance.
8 Right now it is not sensible because there are too many
9 recipients, people who don't need it, people who could
10 work, who are physically strong and who could do anything,
11 but they are not being utilized. I can go on.

12 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Thank you.
13 You mentioned that some of the money was going down south
14 and not being used for the benefit of the community. Could
15 you give me an example of what you have in mind? You
16 mentioned that a lot of the money that was being generated
17 in the community was going south and therefore wasn't being
18 used to benefit the people here. Would you give me an
19 example of how that happens?

20 **MAYOR JOBIE EPOO:** You have major
21 construction projects almost every summer here in Inukjuak
22 involving millions and millions of dollars. Because all

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of these companies are owned by southern companies, all
2 the profits go down south and these companies rent
3 equipment from the southern companies, other southern
4 companies, so the benefits don't go to this community
5 either.

6 Yes, there are a few little truck rentals
7 here and there. There is a few people hired, I would say
8 a maximum of, I don't know, 5 per cent of the labour force
9 is hired from this community, so not too much goes into
10 this community.

11 Then we have sales let's say for the
12 Hudson's Bay Company, who has been here for many, many
13 years, or who was the first one here in Inukjuak, who have
14 sales of up to, I don't know, I could easily say \$3 million
15 a year coming from the people of this town that goes right
16 out the window. That has been going on for many, many
17 years. We have no control over it because we don't have
18 anybody to buy out these companies. Because they have
19 a monopoly over these people, they can charge anything
20 they want. Of course, they pay some of the people that
21 are living in this town, but whatever they pay goes back
22 to them because they have to eat too. It is a never-ending

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 circle.

2 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Thank you
3 very much.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Well, again I
5 would like to say in your closing presentation, we will
6 bear in mind that we will come back to Northern Quebec.
7 If you could pursue your thinking in terms of what you
8 have already told us what should be done and what are the
9 solutions, we are always anxious to hear from you,
10 particularly you are certainly welcome to write to us or
11 we have an 800 line where you could communicate with us
12 and we will let you know what will be our schedule when
13 we come back to Northern Quebec and continue what we started
14 this morning. Thank you.

15 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** Thank
16 you very much. Avataq Cultural Institute, Johnny Epoo.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Good morning.

18

19 **JOHNNY EPOO, AVATAQ CULTURAL INSTITUTE:**

20 (Speaking through a translator) We are not only in
21 Inukjuak but all of Nunavik, but I will try to make my
22 presentation short. The Avataq Cultural Institute was

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 established in 1981 and up to now has struggled to survive.
2 Since it was created, it has had the opportunity to have
3 an elders conference every two years. Before when we first
4 started it used to be annually, but due to lack of funding,
5 we have only been able to have elders conferences every
6 two years.

7 I have been with Avatuq ever since it
8 was created. The elders' mandates which we have based
9 the cultural institute on have been successfully carried
10 out and we have only had at least two of their mandates
11 carried out. The majority of the mandates of the elders
12 have not been able to be carried out because of lack of
13 funding.

14 For example, archaeology in Nunavik is
15 very simple. Though we know that there are a lot of
16 archaeological sites that have to be looked into, we have
17 only been able to do minimum diggings because there is
18 a lack of funding. There is not much we can do in
19 archaeology. Besides lack of funding, we are not able
20 to dig in some of the islands in our surroundings.

21 A number of times we have approached the
22 Government of the Northwest Territories to get them to

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 authorize us to do some diggings in the islands and that
2 has not been possible and although we would like to train
3 Inuit to become archaeologists, we are able to carry this
4 out to training archaeologists, but not all the time; only
5 some years we are able to do it but other years we are
6 not able to carry it out.

7 Before Avataq was created,
8 archaeological findings that were found by non-Inuit
9 people were taken down south and were never returned.
10 This is the situation where some of our archaeological
11 projects are right now. It had been one of the elders'
12 mandates.

13 The other topic I would like to talk
14 about is the Inuit language. It was one of the elders'
15 mandates to make sure that we preserve our language, but
16 again there is nothing being done to preserve it because
17 it seems like the government doesn't want to recognise
18 our language, both the governments, both the federal and
19 provincial governments. We are not provided with any
20 funding for the promotion and preservation of the language,
21 but we don't want to lose our language, especially the
22 elders.

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 It is like the government wants the Inuit
2 people to forget about their language and to use English
3 and French. Although language is trying to be maintained
4 through the schools, and part of the adult population,
5 we are slowly losing our language because there is no one
6 to make sure that there is an understanding between the
7 elders and the children to make sure that one language
8 is being used. There are a lot of arts and handicrafts
9 that were taken by the government before Avataq was ever
10 established that have been taken down south and that have
11 never been returned to our community. There have also
12 been recordings done where Inuit tell the history, people
13 tell stories and those tapes have never been returned
14 either.

15 All these artifacts have been taken down
16 south and since the people that have taken them don't know
17 what to do with them because it is not their culture, they
18 just put them in filing cabinets, shelves and they are
19 just sitting there.

20 If we were given these things back to
21 us, plus a sufficient amount of funds, we could put good
22 use to it. A good example when in 1981 something that

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 was established has not yet been able to run up to date.

2 When southerners first started coming up to the north,
3 people were registered and their names were changed, the
4 same family members, their last names were changed and
5 that was one of the projects that we had to work on that
6 was mandated to us by the elders. We have not been able
7 to do that up to date and, for example, there is a lot
8 of young people who don't know who their relatives are
9 because their surnames are different, and they feel they
10 are not related and ever since their names were registered
11 back ten years ago, that has been carried on up to date.

12 They have still not changed their names back to their
13 original name. Like, for example, even if they have their
14 parents or their sisters, the brother and sister don't
15 have the same surname. They feel as a result our young
16 people that start seeing their cousins without realizing
17 it and it has come up to the point where they almost get
18 married to their cousins because they don't realize how
19 related they are to each other and that has happened
20 especially to the very young people in the communities
21 because we don't educate them well enough, I guess, and
22 the school does not educate them in that area either.

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 That was one project that we were mandated to work on but
2 up to date we have not been able to take that up.

3 There was another project regarding the
4 land place names and we have to teach our young people
5 who have been going to school for a number of years now
6 but are unable to learn from off the land, so the elders
7 have told us to work on a project by putting on the maps
8 the names of different places. Some work has been done
9 in regard to that, but not completed. Some years we have
10 been able to take that up and we are always informed that
11 the government doesn't have any funds we could use to work
12 on that project. So there is a lot of things we know we
13 can work on but are unable to do so because, due to lack
14 of funding.

15 Avataq is not like any organization, any
16 other organization, because we were always trying to look
17 for operational funds and project funds. Fortunately we
18 have had very dedicated staff who worked hard in trying
19 to keep things going. The elders have based our efforts
20 on our elders ever since they established Avataq, based
21 on the fact that Avataq was created under one of the
22 Inuit-owned organizations that was not recognized by the

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 government in the beginning.

2 Our Inuit organization, the only real
3 assistance that we have been able to obtain is from one
4 of the Inuit-owned organizations, where companies like
5 Air Inuit, by giving a discount on elders, 65 years and
6 over, and that has been a great benefit to us when we hold
7 our elders conferences.

8 There are a whole lot of things that we
9 have to work on and we have had to work on Inuit traditional
10 medicines and that project we have been able to start
11 working on but we would have loved to continue working
12 on it if we were given the right funds.

13 Since in our land, our region, the
14 climate is very cold, we were able to look after minor
15 ailments. They were able to look after themselves from
16 the land, but nowadays they have to depend on southern
17 institutes.

18 I am sure if we were able to work on this
19 traditional medicine program we would be able to help out
20 the southern people as well on education on medical things.

21 We cannot just give up on these mandates that were given
22 to us by our elders. So I stress the fact that they are

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 important, and I think things that we should work on.
2 It is very hard when one has to transport someone who is
3 sick or who has been hurt out on the camps and they have
4 to try and bring them back to the community in order to
5 treat it, but if the Inuit, the younger people were trained
6 and they had the education from their elders on how to
7 treat these people, then it wouldn't be necessary to
8 transport these people and treat them themselves.

9 We will be giving you a written
10 presentation from Avataq later on and since there are a
11 lot of people who want to speak, they have said to me that
12 will be it for now. Thank you.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
14 much for your succinct presentation. Cultural Institute,
15 if you could stay with us just a few minutes, we have been
16 very much interested by your presentation and would like
17 to thank you very much for your excellent presentation.

18 The Avataq Cultural Institute has
19 certainly a very important place. I would like to know
20 what kind of budget you have at the moment.

21 **JOHNNY EPOO:** Presently we have a bit
22 of money sitting aside and we try to work on the interest

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 and we have a budget of one million dollars and that is
2 all we have. We owe most of the time money to the bank.
3 We get contributions from the Nunavik corporation and
4 the provincial government and the federal government,
5 which have gone up to \$500,000 but it is nowhere near enough
6 of having to run Avataq in terms of paying employees to
7 run projects.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
9 much for this information. I would like just to ask you
10 what you feel would be the kind of money that would be
11 needed to perform all the various aspects of your programs
12 that you mentioned, the search for the surnames, for
13 example, and the work that would have to be done on
14 traditional medicine and your other programs. What part
15 of it can you achieve at the moment with the little money
16 you have?

17 **JOHNNY EPOO:** The only projects that we
18 have been able to cover are the map projects,
19 archaeological projects and those are the main projects
20 that we have been able to carry out and work on, but if
21 we were to work on all the projects that have been mandated
22 to us by the elders, I think an amount of \$5 million would

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 be sufficient to run all those projects, but with the
2 \$500,000 that we are doing our work with presently, it
3 is very inefficient.

4 The cost of airfare is very expensive
5 in the north, plus trying to buy goods from the local
6 community is also very expensive and even if we try to
7 buy goods from the south, then the transportation costs
8 would be high too, so we don't benefit from anything.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you.
10 Just a more precise question. Did you establish with the
11 school on the language questions? Can you tell me if your
12 institute is working with the teaching staff of the school
13 for the teaching of Inuktitut to children?

14 **JOHNNY EPOO:** This has been one of our
15 main goals to work with the educational institutions, but
16 we are not the ones who make the program development, nor
17 do we just provide the School Board with free materials.
18 Then the School Board doesn't have enough funding either
19 to buy all that material from Avataq Cultural Institute.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Do you have
21 enough written material? Is the problem money or the
22 existence of material for teaching?

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 **JOHNNY EPOO:** Yes, we have a lot of
2 documentation that could be used at the schools, and it
3 is available to the School Board if they were able to buy
4 it from us, but that is where it stands right now.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
6 much.

7 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I have
8 just one specific questions. You mention that you would
9 like to retrieve the artifacts that have left the
10 community. I am wondering, have you been able to do any
11 research as to where those artifacts are and if you had
12 the funding, you could try to get them back?

13 **JOHNNY EPOO:** Yes, we have an idea of
14 where these artifacts can be, especially the federal
15 government who had a lot to do with exporting these out
16 of the community and even these artifacts, there are some
17 overseas.

18 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Thank you.

19 **MAYOR JOBIE EPOO:** With regard to one
20 of the questions that was raised on how Avataq and the
21 School Board could start working together in terms of
22 teaching the language, the research that we did could get

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 a lot of that information from that book I have just given
2 to you as to what the problems are. Avataq and the School
3 Board could be connected in order to come up with programs.
4 Various organizations would like to get together and make
5 recommendations or funding requests. Since you are
6 concerned about the elders, the native elders, I guess
7 you will be provided information on how to go about
8 requesting funds. There are going to be more hearings
9 held in Northern Quebec and after this has gone through
10 all these processes, recommendations will be made.

11 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I just want
12 to thank you, John; I don't have any questions. Thank
13 you.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** We are going
15 to have a coffee break. Ten minutes.

16 --- Recess

17 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** Next
18 is Region Nunavik, Simeonie Nalukturak, Eli Weetaluktuk,
19 Chairman of Nunavik Regional Government, and a member of
20 council and land claim negotiator.

21 **ELI WEETALUKTUK:** (Speaking through a
22 translator) First of all I would like to thank the

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 members of the commission for giving us the opportunity
2 to allow us to welcome you in the name of the Nunavik
3 Constitutional Committee and the Deputy Regional
4 Government to our community. Yours will be a long journey,
5 taking you to many places. You will understand we
6 appreciate your visit as a first step in consulting the
7 Inuit of Quebec and with the wide mandate your task seems
8 daunting. Your willingness to listen to and question
9 natives and non-natives should provide unique insight into
10 aboriginal circumstances and aspirations. A perhaps
11 greater challenge will be to demonstrate to Canadians at
12 large how these aspirations can benefit the country as
13 a whole. We look forward to your efforts on this front.
14 Some say Royal Commissions are established to achieve
15 nothing, to make problems go away. Our problems won't go
16 away, nor, we trust, will your recommendations.

17 The Nunavik Constitutional Committee,
18 which I have the honour of chairing, was established in
19 1989 to achieve Inuit self-government in Northern Quebec.

20 The Inuit in Northern Quebec are like the Inuit in Nunavik,
21 we do not view self-government as an end in itself. It
22 is an essential tool to ensure prosperity, well being and

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 happiness in our vast region, which is the site of friends.
2 Hardly accidental is the fact that the Western Arctic
3 Regional Municipality Project and Inuit in Nunavik have
4 for already over a decade been defining workable models
5 of self-government with our modest experience in the field
6 of government building could be of some assistance to the
7 Commission.

8 As a delegate to ongoing constitutional
9 talks, I can bear witness to such substantial, even
10 unprecedented, progress in agreeing on the affirmation
11 of aboriginal rights within confederation. As of May last,
12 sixteen governments and aboriginal organizations have
13 agreed to be following the inherent aboriginal interests
14 in self-government within Canada, requested a court system
15 to incorporate such a right and even more important, the
16 incorporation of such a government. This is a much needed
17 revolutionary way of living together.

18 As a participant, I would make two
19 comments in this regard: first, representatives have
20 wisely opted not to include a second model of
21 self-government in the constitution. Such flexibility
22 reflects the diversity of aboriginal circumstances.

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Second Inuit delegates have up to today successfully
2 negotiated the constitutional recognition of public
3 institutions as opposed to ethnic bodies to sustain the
4 concept of self-government.

5 In order for you to grasp the
6 long-standing effects of self-government, you should be
7 entitled to a minimum of background information. I will
8 briefly go through the history and background of our
9 movement. In 1975 Quebec Inuit signed the James Bay
10 Northern Quebec Agreement, Canada's first comprehensive
11 land claim. As a result, the number of Nunavik regional
12 institutions, such as Katavik regional government, Katavik
13 school board, regional health and social services board,
14 CRCS and Matavik Corporation, an ethnic organization
15 designed to further, through wise investment, Inuit
16 interests created between 1978 and 1980.

17 As chairman of Katavik regional
18 government, let me first introduce to you my organization.

19 The Katavik regional government is a non-ethnic
20 organization. The regional council is composed of one
21 member representing each northern community. In addition
22 to the Naskapi band chief, each council member must first

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 be elected as a municipal councillor before being appointed
2 by the regional council as a regional councillor.
3 Therefore the Katavik regional government very effectively
4 represents the people of Katavik region. The K.R.D.G.
5 is guided by a board of directors composed of five executive
6 members appointed by regional council. The members are
7 the chairman, the vice-chairman and three executive
8 members.

9 In addition to representing their
10 respective communities, the regional councillors must
11 administer various regional programs, local affairs,
12 justice, police, employment and training and the
13 environment, economics and social development and many
14 more. The local affairs file is the most important one
15 administered by Katavik regional government. The
16 northern communities have given us the mandate to provide
17 assistance and training as well as manage capital projects.
18 We must also act in a capacity of a the municipality in
19 a territory that has not been established as a
20 municipality, like for example, mining development, the
21 hydro-electric projects, et cetera, in municipalities that
22 reflect us.

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Justice is a very important power for
2 the Inuit and we wish to organize and administer the entire
3 legal system from the police force to the courts. In order
4 to achieve this goal in collaboration with us, the Katavik
5 regional government and the corporation have set up a
6 committee with a mandate to consult the people to identify
7 the problems and find the solutions.

8 Employment and training, we have
9 negotiated a three-year agreement. which when we sign,
10 we will administer all related programs. Our
11 responsibilities in the area of the environment are very
12 limited. We are prepared to play a greater role but
13 subsidies from the Ministry of the Environment of Quebec
14 are insufficient and each year our deficit increases.
15 It is important for us to administer the provisions of
16 the Environment Act and regulations concerning the
17 environment.

18 We have always supported economic
19 development in the region through our support of the
20 Katavik regional development council. However, more is
21 required. We shall have to restore continuity in regional
22 economic development and collaboration among all parties

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 concerned. The K.R.D.G. is on the way to administrative
2 self-sufficiency. Our structure is strong and we are
3 increasingly gaining the expertise required to reach this
4 objective. We do, however, need additional financial
5 resources and must make all necessary efforts in our future
6 negotiations for the implementation of the James Bay and
7 Northern Quebec Agreement in order to obtain these
8 resources. The search for greater political powers for
9 the region is still our main objective. Elements of
10 self-government are already in place, but we need to go
11 further.

12 In 1983, then Premier Rene Levesque
13 agreed to enter into negotiations with Quebec Inuit on
14 self-government. In 1987, residents of Nunavik ordered
15 a referendum to elect the members of the Nunavik
16 constitutional committee, the regional body, to start
17 negotiations. Elections were held on April 10th, 1989
18 under the aegis of Mr. Pierre Cote, Quebec's independent
19 electoral officer. In April 1991, the mandate of the
20 elected Nunavik constitutional committee members was
21 reconfirmed through a referendum. On April 10, 1991,
22 orders also approved a draft constitution for Nunavik,

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 a copy of which my colleague will provide to you. In
2 setting out the functions of the different branches of
3 government in the various areas of jurisdiction, it is,
4 we would submit, quite comprehensive.

5 In June, 1991, we signed an agreement
6 with the Quebec Minister of Native Affairs to launch
7 negotiations and all of this progress was not beginning
8 to an end but the end of a long beginning during the
9 democratic process for all residents of our territory.

10 **SIMEONIE NALUKTURAK:** (Speaking
11 through a translator) The main objectives of Nunavik
12 self-government are fourfold. They reflect the specific
13 image and perspective of government in the north. First
14 the Nunavik government must be seen to be democratic and
15 we believe in democratic elections open to all residents
16 and public discussion and strict accountability and our
17 record to date is proof of this.

18 Second, Nunavik institutions will form
19 a public government in Northern Quebec. Non-Inuit will
20 have -- non-Inuit have much to bring and have much to learn
21 from us. An ethnic reserve system adjusted to southern
22 urban conditions would not operate here in Nunavik.

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Third, Nunavik bodies will constitute
2 a territorial government. The Inuit traditionally
3 managed all lands and waters above the 55th parallel,
4 whereas category 1 lands would provide an adequate economic
5 and social base for our survival and development and
6 finally the Nunavik government to function will require
7 new powers of taxation and new transfer systems such as
8 block funding which increases accountability. If
9 mistakes are to be made, we want to make them instead of
10 blaming Quebec and Ottawa for everything from television
11 to weather. It will be involved in resource management
12 and the income therefrom. We believe these objectives
13 can benefit Quebec and the rest of Canada and we will be
14 more reliant, our children will be happier, our lands and
15 waters better protected, a stronger Nunavik will
16 contribute to a stronger Canada.

17 Over the past year I have been conducting
18 negotiations with Quebec representatives on
19 self-government. Some progress has been achieved. With
20 respect to institutions, a broad measure of consensus has
21 emerged. The elected Nunavik Assembly will designate a
22 government leader who in turn will choose six colleagues

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to form an executive council, fully responsible to Nunavik
2 representatives. Members could number from twenty to
3 twenty-four to account for different community population
4 profiles. Moreover, the Assembly will establish three
5 committees to hold hearings and advise the members as a
6 group.

7 Talks with Quebec have begun on powers.
8 It has been agreed the Assembly would acquire jurisdiction
9 over education or municipal affairs as provided for in
10 1975, but it requires more. Let me give you two examples:
11 Inuit express frustration with the operation of the
12 justice system. This is why a regional task force on the
13 administration of justice has been created at our own
14 expense to suggest improvements.

15 In the field of economic development and
16 especially small business, the existing rules and
17 regulations were conceived for a southern business and
18 such existing rules cannot apply in our territory and we
19 need to find new ways to sustain smaller firms which will
20 provide the employment opportunities in the future.

21 We have also had exchanges on financial
22 issues. While Quebec has agreed block funding could be

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 made to work and whereas recognition of our role in resource
2 development has occurred, I perceive some complexity on
3 the other side of Nunavik taxation powers. Such
4 reticence, I would submit, goes much to Quebec's decision
5 not to participate in constitutional discussions on
6 aboriginal affairs since November, 1981. Quebec
7 representatives need to be educated as to the essence of
8 self-government, i.e. genuine political autonomy. We
9 also foresee transitional mechanisms. Phase 1 would
10 entail elections to the Assembly and the appointment of
11 executive council. During phase 2, existing urban issues
12 would integrate under the Assembly with protection of
13 existing budgets.

14 In the course of phase 3,
15 rationalization and new financial arrangements would be
16 implemented and I would add that we intend to engage in
17 talks with Canada in the near future to complete
18 self-government frameworks. We can't neglect such issues
19 as the off-shore areas.

20 I am convinced that recent
21 constitutional talks, whether crowned with immediate
22 success or not, should produce a breakthrough from which

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 there will be no turning back. In this context, Inuit,
2 including those from Quebec, can partly lay claim to a
3 simple how-to design for self-government, but our
4 non-ethnic model and our considerable experience in
5 shaping and conducting talks we believe could be of use
6 to others.

7 Indeed it has been a long road. That is
8 why I would modestly suggest that the Inuit Constitutional
9 Committee and the Royal Commission set up a working
10 relationship on concepts and mechanics of self-government.

11 Given the importance of your mandate, you would find us
12 very ready to cooperate with you.

13 In closing, I have a thought for the
14 Quebecois. I should state frankly that denying them
15 reasonable distinct society aspirations would have a very
16 detrimental effect on us. We have our disagreements and
17 we complain to each other. However, we share the same
18 territory. Quebecois will more easily accept our
19 self-government if theirs is affirmed. Thank you.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
21 much for providing us with a comprehensive written
22 submission on the progress that has been made toward a

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 again. We will have to move to the other presenters.

2 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** The
3 following people are the Arctic exiles: Markoosie Patsauq,
4 Andrew Iquak, Anna Nungak, Patsauq Iqaluk, Samwillie
5 Elijassialuk. Mr. Patsauq will be the first one to
6 speak.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** On behalf of
8 all of us, we are very happy that you are able to come
9 to give a presentation this morning.

10 **MARKOOSIE PATSAUQ:** (Speaking through
11 a translator) I will first introduce the speakers here.
12 On my left, is Anna Nungak who was taken to Grise Fjord
13 in 1953. My name is Markoosie Patsauq and I was
14 taken to Resolute in 1953. On my right is Samwillie
15 Elijassialuk, who was taken to Grise Fjord in 1953 and
16 on my far right Mary who was taken to Resolute in 1955.
17 We are very happy to have a chance to address this
18 long-standing problem we have been having for over ten
19 years and has been very unsuccessful with the federal
20 government up to today.

21 In my opening remarks I would like to
22 have Samwillie be the first person to speak on our behalf.

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 **SAMWILLIE ELIJASSIALUK:** (Speaking
2 through a translator) Thank you. Now I am given the
3 chance, I will try to be brief about the fact that we have
4 gone through a hardship in the past and the fact that they
5 told us a big lie, when the government told us the reason
6 for sending us to the high Arctic was they said there was
7 a lot of animals we could live off. They told us there
8 was a lot of caribou and a lot of other animals but when
9 we arrived there, there was hardly any caribou and they
10 told us, we were told that we are allowed to kill one caribou
11 in a year and they told us if we killed a muskox we would
12 be taken unless we paid \$500. They told us that they would
13 bring us back to our communities after two years, but when
14 we told them we wanted to go back home, the police told
15 us it is not possible any more. The transportation is
16 not possible. They told us that the land we were moving
17 to is going to be plentiful and that we would come back
18 home in the future, but once we were in the high Arctic
19 they didn't want to move us back home.

20 We have experienced and seen other Inuit
21 who have insisted on going back home, but the government
22 representatives kept telling us that we can't go home now

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 and they are going to build a school there for us, for
2 our children and that is what the government was telling
3 us. We were told there was caribou and muskox. One of
4 us was hoping that he was going back home again, but when
5 he learned he was not going home, he was highly touched.

6 Often I think back and wonder if they did not send us
7 to the high Arctic in the first place so we would have
8 a good -- maintain a good relation with our relatives.

9 The whole reason behind this was to
10 maintain sovereignty in the high Arctic and they had to
11 find people that would stay up there and not be able to
12 go back home. They used to try to bring Inuit from the
13 NWT to the high Arctic, but they knew how to return home
14 and they couldn't maintain them there, so they had to find
15 a group of people that didn't know the road back home and
16 that would stay up there. That is the result of the
17 relocation of the Inuit from Inukjuak to the high Arctic.

18 Up to date it has had a really negative impact on our
19 lives up to date.

20 We know that it was an experiment. It
21 is not human to do an experiment on human beings. Thank
22 you.

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 **MARKOOSIE PATSAUQ:** (Speaking through
2 a translator) As I was saying, me and my family were
3 victims of the experiment for relocation in 1953. I would
4 like to concentrate on the papers I have prepared and I
5 would like to read it for clarity, because as I understand
6 it we have a limited amount of time to make our
7 presentation, unfortunately.

8 I would like to start with just a few
9 words concerning the documents that we have been able to
10 learn from over the years. This experiment in relocation
11 was presented by the Canadian government along with the
12 RCMP to improve Inuit standards of living, but the Inuit
13 economic situation was not the only reason. The motives
14 behind this decision were moral conviction in Canadian
15 sovereignty. These are the wrongs, that we had been
16 arguing over the years. Also the federal government was
17 saying the area was a completely devoid way of life and
18 I would like to make it clear this is how I saw it.

19 That the Nunavik area could no longer
20 support its population was false. At this stage in the
21 1950s this area was a major nesting area for many of
22 varieties of marine birds which hundreds of islands along

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the coast are homes to, many wildlife and fishes of every
2 type are available from the sea and from the lakes that
3 cover the entire area. Things like Canada geese go to
4 that homeland each year. There are fifty or more varieties
5 of animals which we depend on for food. To us who call
6 this area our home, this land, this is the land of plenty
7 and to tear us away from our roots was uncalled for. The
8 suffering we have been forced to take over the years are
9 unacceptable. To use us as experimental objects is
10 illegal.

11 The fact is that in the 1950s the Inuit
12 economic situation was no worse than in the 1930s or the
13 1940s. In fact our economic situation at that time had
14 never been better and the government decision to provide
15 family allowance in the 1940s greatly improved our economic
16 conditions. The introduction of soap stone carvings
17 meant for the aged, sick, crippled and widows, quickly
18 improved our economic situation. These welcome reliefs
19 were to disappear from our lives by the time we arrived
20 on the high Arctic Islands and in the first week of
21 September, 1953 the family arrived in Resolute Bay, which
22 was to be our home, not for two years, as originally

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 informed by the government, but for the next thirty years.

2 On our arrival at the new home, we were shocked at the
3 bareness of the land and the coldness of the air and the
4 presence of icebergs and as far as we could see there was
5 nothing but gravel, ice and snow. At this time of year
6 in our original home of Inukjuak it would still be summer
7 and we would be catching thousands of fishes with our nets
8 for our food during the winter.

9 Most of the animals that we were used
10 to back in Inukjuak were not to exist in the high Arctic,
11 and although we were not aware of it at the time, we have
12 since learned that commanding officer of the Royal Canadian
13 Air Force in Resolute Bay strongly objected to this
14 experiment, since no adequate planning had been carried
15 out. There had been no concern on the government's part
16 that there would be no housing, no medical facilities or
17 schools. The commanding officer also said that he was
18 afraid there was not enough animals to support new
19 arrivals, but still thought the government had reason to
20 believe there was plenty of animals and besides they would
21 make sure that the Air Force would not be inconvenienced
22 and that Inuit families which was to arrive shortly would

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 not become a liability to the Air Force.

2 The first year in our new home in
3 Resolute was the hardest for us, mostly because we did
4 not know the land. We did not know where to hunt and the
5 fact was there was no daylight from November to February.
6 We survived mostly on the garbage of the white man. If
7 the dump had not provided us with these edible garbages,
8 we would have had faced serious hunger or maybe even
9 starvation and since we were not allowed to have any contact
10 with the white people, my father and the rest of the men
11 had to go to the dump under cover of darkness and sneak
12 into the dump. In the dark season which was preventing
13 us from hunting it allowed us to sneak into the dump without
14 being discovered by the RCMP.

15 When daylight returned to the land in
16 February, we no longer sneaked into the dump as we were
17 so desperate for food that the dump was providing for our
18 dogs and not for ourselves. Travelling to the dump for
19 a bit of bread became our daily labour. A certain
20 government official who played an important part in this
21 experiment of relocation had a dream that one day the Inuit
22 would once again become self-reliant instead of counting

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 on handouts from the government. With this dream the
2 government went out to prove the Inuit were the people
3 who could survive without any assistance from the
4 government, and certain government officials feel that
5 Inuit has lost a certain amount of interest in hunting
6 and fishing for a living. The government also felt it
7 was paying too much money, too much welfare for the Inuit
8 in the north. A certain government official felt that
9 a way of dealing with the Inuit problem had to be found.
10 At the same time they were very concerned about the Inuit
11 hunting and living freely in Canada's north and since
12 American people were outnumbering Canadians, they were
13 concerned that Canada's sovereignty question might be
14 challenged. In this situation the Canadian government
15 felt it would lead Canadian people to occupy the Islands.
16 At this stage in time Inuit people were the only people
17 who could survive in the harsh land without assistance
18 from the government. Unlike white people who had to be
19 directly paid for their services, this was an extensive
20 venture. The simplest solution to the problem would be
21 to use the Inuit people as the guardian of Canada's
22 interests.

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 When the government personnel came once
2 again to our home in the fall of 1954 one year after the
3 relocation, my father, along with the rest of the men,
4 made a request that they be returned home, having spent
5 one year in the high Arctic and having learned about the
6 land and its abysmal conditions, they were convinced that
7 they were not better off in the new land and no news from
8 the families, they knew this land had a lot less to offer.

9 Their request was turned down and instead the government
10 said they would bring their families, bring the rest of
11 our families up north next ship time, which would be 1955.

12 So the second relocation took place in 1955. My father's
13 brother, along with his brother-in-law and three more
14 families arrived, and this did not consist of all the family
15 that my father had. He was fated never to see the rest
16 of the family still living in Inukjuak.

17 I would like to talk about a few things
18 that we have discussed with the federal government. At
19 the famous relocation in 1953, I was also suffering badly
20 from tuberculosis. I was not sent south for treatment,
21 but instead went along with my family to the high Arctic.

22 The treatment subsequent was to have a very negative

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 impact on the people who went up to Resolute in 1953.
2 In a few years, all of us were suffering from TB. The
3 TB I had started a chain reaction which was to affect every
4 one of those who were relocated in '53. I would also like
5 to say a few words about the sickness. There was my
6 grandmother who was 73 years old at the time of relocation.
7 She was healthy when we left here. She was strong and
8 she was a very active worker on daily labours. She died
9 within two years after we were relocated to the high Arctic.
10 We knew she died because of lack of different varieties
11 of food and also because of violent change in the
12 environment greatly contributed to her death. Also among
13 the group we had two polio victims, my mother was one and
14 my mother died in March of this year and Anna Nungak to
15 my left is one of the people who are polio victims. Mother
16 also had a heart condition, although we did not know it
17 at the time, nobody knew that she had a heart condition.
18 She died within eight months after we arrived in the high
19 Arctic. It is also known she lost the will to live after
20 finding out the government had no intention to bring us
21 back to our home. She died a broken woman.

22 Lastly, right up to the present time,

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the government and the RCMP insisted that this experiment
2 was successful. They are partly right, because the
3 experiment proved that people could survive without
4 government handouts, without aid from the government and
5 it proved people could survive off the land in the harsh
6 environment and continue to occupy the land despite the
7 hardships, but the people who were used as an object had
8 to pay a heavy price which continues to this day. Many
9 graves of our relatives are grim proof of the suffering
10 we had to endure and the separation of the families
11 continues to this day. Thank you.

12 **ANNA NUNGAK:** (Speaking through a
13 translator) When we were relocated to Resolute Bay, we
14 should have been given a briefing before we were left.
15 They should have told us there was no housing. We learned
16 only when we arrived what conditions we were going to be
17 facing. When we arrived up north the whole town of
18 Inukjuak was still summer, I can never forget it to this
19 day when we landed on the shore and they put us on the
20 shore in Grise Fjord. They separated us into two groups
21 and we were informed that we would be relocated to a better
22 area which we never did and we were told that we would

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 be relocated by ship and I used to wonder where that ship
2 was, but all I could see was a little boat and it was very
3 hard for us in the beginning. There was no drinking water
4 in the area and all we could see was ice and we later learned
5 that the ice was going to be there all year long, all year
6 round and there was no water supply. If there was no ice,
7 we wouldn't have any drinking water at all.

8 We used to get this water from the ice
9 and we used it for drinking water, we used it for washing
10 and we didn't know exactly what to do and when we first
11 got there, I used to wonder when we would get snow good
12 enough to build a snow house, but since there are high
13 winds in that area, it was not going to be possible to
14 build a snow house, we later learned. Our parents used
15 to try to pick up, look for wood to burn, but there was
16 nothing in the area and we spent the whole winter in a
17 tent and we used to try to look for things in the surrounding
18 area. Since we were not used to the darkness all year
19 all those months, it was very hard for us the first year
20 and luckily we were able to make it. There was no nurses,
21 no teachers, there was nothing and we spent the whole winter
22 in a tent. We were able to survive because there were

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 ring seal, a few fowl and a few fish, but it took us a
2 long time to find out where to get some fish because we
3 didn't know where to look for food and all winter it used
4 to be very hard for me to get to sleep. I finally got
5 a little bit used to it. We used to miss our relatives
6 and I remember our parents used to cry. My mother became
7 a widow. She used to miss our relatives back home. Right
8 now I am grateful I am back in Inukjuak but two of my kids
9 are still up in the high Arctic because that is their
10 homeland. That is where they grew up and they don't want
11 to leave because that is where they were born. They don't
12 know Inukjuak, so that is -- I thank you to give me the
13 opportunity to speak. I have a lot of things to say and
14 at times I put these things on tape, what I think on tape.
15 Since there are other people who would like to be given
16 a chance to speak, I just thank you.

17 **A SPEAKER:** (Speaking through a
18 translator) My name is Mary. We were relocated in 1955.
19 I was aware that we would be moved to that area. I used
20 to have a best friend. Her name was Sarah and we used
21 to -- she used to spend a lot of time with me. I can never
22 forget Inuit were going to leave on a ship. I wasn't aware

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 that I would be one of them and I was one morning woken
2 up and told to get dressed because we were leaving. You
3 must remember this occasion because he was one of the people
4 who came to inform us about this and I was picked up and
5 that was when I left my friend and for a whole year I cried.

6 My friend's late husband lived there for a period of one
7 year. She said that to comfort me because I was crying
8 all the time. I tried to get over the hurt I was carrying.

9 On leaving Inukjuak, when the sight of Inukjuak started
10 to fade away, it was -- I was crying and it felt like I
11 was being sent to hell at leaving all my friends and my
12 family.

13 I also had a friend by the name of Janie.

14 I would stay there for days in the new area that we had
15 been relocated because I am crazy about berries, but she
16 said, "There is nothing, no berries, nothing but gravel."

17 It was for the next eight to ten years that I would not
18 be able to have any fish and we were in the high Arctic
19 for twenty-one years and it was only when we were to work
20 going to back to Inukjuak that we started to have fish
21 only.

22 One year I didn't get up for the whole

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 year because I was craving for fish. I used to dream that
2 I was eating fish. I was so weak although I wasn't sick,
3 I was so weak with craving for fish that I couldn't get
4 up.

5 The government who sent us to the high
6 Arctic made me lose my adoptive parents. Although I felt
7 that they were my own parents, I was never able to forget
8 them day and night and I dreamt about them. I also used
9 to dream about the streams in the area where there was
10 a lot of Arctic char in those streams. I would just take
11 however much Arctic char I need and eat it. Then I would
12 wake up and it was only a dream and I would start crying
13 again. After a few years of living in the high Arctic,
14 the non-Inuit people there started to give us a lot of
15 things to do like sewing, making clothes for them.

16 Although I had work to do at home myself in trying to keep
17 my house clean, I mean warm, trying to maintain water and
18 at the same time making all these clothes for the nuns.

19 I have also lost six children, stillborn
20 children because there was so much work to do, make me
21 to have these stillborn children. I am sorry. One of my
22 children died at the age of one because he had a disease.

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 All the rest of these children were stillborn because
2 I had so much work to do. I can't even complete the things
3 I would like to tell you about because it was very emotional
4 for me to talk about.

5 **ANDREW IQALUK:** (Speaking through a
6 translator) My name is Andrew Iqaluk. I had to be
7 relocated from here to go along with my friends. My mother
8 was 63 years of age at the time and I had recently lost
9 my father and it was a frightening experience to be left
10 behind. I learned that preparing to leave for this trip
11 had a symbol to it and in saying that there was a symbol
12 to it, I mean that we were taken and just sort of shoved
13 to this area and that it was very improper. I had an older
14 brother of fifty who upon leaving here, my sister and me
15 and my sister didn't get a chance to speak to each other
16 to say our goodbyes because we didn't agree upon parting.
17 We cried over it. In my mind it tells me that a wrong
18 had been done to us.

19 When you look at a brand new tent, you
20 can see that it is really white and when it is standing
21 up as all the tents were being taken and loaded on the
22 ship, when I was watching this tent it was empty.

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Everything inside was loaded on the ship and looking at
2 that tent, it changed colours. I guess it was dead, it
3 was no longer white. That was a sign.

4 I think that I saw, back then I couldn't
5 recognise that fact then. But today, Canada was really
6 proud to own this area. They were able to tell the world
7 that this part of the world is Canada. They didn't tell
8 me that and when I got back to Quebec, my homeland, I saw
9 that I had contributed to this and my children have grown
10 and my children started hating other children. This has
11 had a negative impact on our life, because that relocating
12 us was not right.

13 The head of the RCMP in Ottawa had caused
14 a move up north and there were a whole bunch of them that
15 were supposed to look after the land. They told us that
16 we as Inuit would continue our livelihood as Inuit and
17 since it is our nature to try to survive that, that would
18 be the same case up there. The head of the police in
19 Ottawa told us that we would have to live our own lives
20 and he had our dogs killed, which we depended on and that
21 was the case.

22 I was a very young man then and I used

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 to buy the hunting dogs up there, trying to maintain the
2 sovereignty of Canada in the high Arctic and I contributed
3 to the sovereignty in the high Arctic but no credit has
4 been given to me. When I came back here I became very
5 small, an old man and no credit shown to me, so I would
6 like to discuss this further with the government. Thank
7 you.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
9 much. I would like first to thank each and every one of
10 you for coming to speak with us this morning. There is
11 nothing like meeting with people who have lived through
12 an experiment like the one you did. To start at least
13 -- we are very humble on this -- but to start at least
14 on this we understand what has happened. we know that
15 these sad events have been documented. We know that we
16 could exchange with you and discuss with you every and
17 all aspects of these events at length and that would take
18 many hours, if not a few days. The Commission has
19 received in particular the report that was written by
20 Professor Daniel Soberman for the Human Rights, Canadian
21 Human Rights Commission. For one, I have heard that report
22 a couple of times, and I think it would be more useful

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 this morning to tell you and give you the assurance that
2 the Royal Commission will have a look at the situation
3 that occurred nearly forty years ago now. We will want
4 to meet with Professor Soberman to discuss because he was
5 an investigator who took a lot of his time and your time
6 to talk and visit and discuss the question. We will meet
7 with him. We will want also to meet with government
8 officials, probably the Minister of Indian Affairs also.

9 From what I have learned and from what
10 is the situation and the understanding of these events
11 and their interpretation, I can assure you that we will
12 have a look at it and we will, as soon as we can, come
13 back to you and let you know what we think of it and to
14 see if we can play a role in -- being of some help in making
15 of this situation -- these things can't be erased, but
16 certainly thinking about them, and also acknowledging
17 their occurrence is already part of the healing process.

18 Again, we are going to meet with all those concerned and
19 come back one way or another to you. So again, we have
20 many other presentations today and we would like to thank
21 you very much for telling us your story and we realize
22 it was done in a nutshell, very short and it is a much

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 longer story. I understand that you might have an original
2 presentation to submit to us, but again we are going to
3 have a look at the file and let you know that we are thinking
4 about it. Thank you very much.

5 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** This
6 is the lunch hour. We will come back after lunch later.
7 Sorry for the short time we have had this morning, so
8 we will break for lunch for an hour. Thank you.

9 --- Luncheon Adjournment (12:00 p.m.)

10 --- Upon resuming at 1:15 p.m.

11 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** We
12 will resume the session and we will start with Johnny
13 Inukpuk.

14 **JOHNNY INUKPUK:** (Speaking through a
15 translator) Good afternoon. I am pretty old and I have
16 seen a few things that you don't and I will try to be brief.

17 I will try to be brief in what I am going to be discussing,
18 presenting to you, the main experiences that I have had
19 that you have not experienced yourselves, as I am older
20 than most of you.

21 The picture of the ship that you can see
22 here that used to come here every year and the people were

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 unloading the ship to get paid \$2 by the Hudson's Bay
2 Company. That was the case when I was still a real young
3 man. Then in later years we used to live off foxes, a
4 lot of pelts from the foxes that we used to sell used to
5 make us economically viable back then, but now that --
6 since people like Greenpeace have put down a crisis that
7 there are -- pelts and skins is a crisis, it has bogged
8 down a lot of men, so many of us cannot be considered as
9 men any more, but in later years, we used to live off
10 carvings, but that too, the price of carving is still going
11 down. Unfortunately that is the case with the Inuit.

12

13 The Hudson's Bay Company used to assist
14 the Inuit when we were low on hunting foxes and then after
15 the Hudson's Bay Company, another group of people came
16 along, the police, and they used to assist us when the
17 community was still situated across the creek here. We
18 used to ask for assistance from these white people, but
19 unless you look very unhealthy, but by your looks you didn't
20 have dogs, you were eligible for welfare back then. That
21 is the way of life that we used to live that we don't live
22 today.

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Les Pollock was one of the prominent men
2 and he tried to inform the head of the Hudson's Bay Company
3 and told him there was starvation in Povungnituk. The
4 answer he got was that when a person does not work for
5 himself, he starves and that is just the same thing.

6 There was the mining company and the
7 Hudson's Bay Company that was here. I am trying to be
8 brief in the background story I am trying to tell you about
9 how it was like and then when the schools were built and
10 our children started going to school back in 1962 and after
11 that the federal day school was opened for our children
12 and then we started changing our culture and some of the
13 students that went to the federal day school are now able
14 to be interpreters today and they assist us in some way.

15
16 The first snowmobiles that came up north
17 were small and inexpensive. The first ones that I remember
18 cost \$550 and then later another kind of snowmobile came
19 up north that cost \$700 and then our culture kept changing
20 and the southern culture didn't like the idea of keeping
21 dogs up north any more and we were informed that the dogs
22 in the community are harmful to community life and to our

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 children and so a lot of dogs were killed by the RCMP and
2 from then on we started losing our culture without the
3 dogs.

4 But today with no dogs, we have to buy
5 snowmobiles, they cost six thousand, seven thousand, eight
6 thousand dollars apiece and these are the only dogs that
7 we have to depend on. A lot of people cannot afford these
8 machines because they don't have jobs, although they have
9 a family to support. We can see our changing way of life
10 and then within the school we started teaching our culture,
11 our culture to the students through the school and then
12 the federal day school was taken over by another school
13 system from Quebec and since they were not the first ones
14 to look after our affairs, we were not too happy for Quebec
15 taking over, but we had no choice. Now our life and our
16 heritage are taken care of by the Quebec government.

17 Then we decided some time after that,
18 we decided we have to keep teaching our culture to our
19 children because we do not want to lose our culture, the
20 elders especially. When we see that our children, even
21 though they go to school, they don't just speak English
22 or French, they still speak our language. That has helped

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 us a lot in preserving our language.

2 Since this is the day, in order to
3 preserve our culture, we strongly feel about that. I am
4 now sitting in front of you talking about the things that
5 have happened in the past. I became a man although I was
6 a young boy, in 1929 I started hunting and since then I
7 have tried to maintain being a man. I can say anything
8 I feel or want or what I want to say in my mind. These
9 are the main things that I wanted to bring up to you since
10 there are other people who have things to say. Thank you.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I would like
12 to thank you for your very well made presentation. You
13 have given us a glimpse of what has happened some decades
14 ago and we have taken note of your concern about the
15 importance of conserving the language and the culture.
16 We thank you very much for coming and sharing with us your
17 concerns and hope for the future. Thank you.

18 **JOHNNY INUKPUK:** Thank you.

19 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** The
20 next is Mr. Simeonie Weetaluktuk.

21 **SIMEONIE WEETALUKTUK:** (Speaking
22 through a translator) Although I am an elder, I remember

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 events that have happened in the past as Johnny was talking
2 about. Although I would like to say what I have in my
3 mind, sometimes it is hard for me to express myself, so
4 I will try my best, even though I may not make too much
5 sense.

6 What Johnny Inukpuk was saying is true
7 and I remember these events and I thank the people who
8 have come here to hold these meetings. I remember one of
9 the police was stationed here, although I didn't hear him
10 personally speaking it, I heard what he had said. He had
11 said that until they start eating dog meat, we can't help
12 them. So I remember twice in the winter when my father
13 was still able to work, he used to be able to get a box
14 of bullets and they used to be given all but two bullets
15 at one time and they couldn't be given a whole box. They
16 were not on welfare then, but that is all the assistance
17 they could receive.

18 Although the governments were already
19 in existence, that was all the assistance we got from our
20 government back then. As we are told back in 1912, we
21 were under the jurisdiction of the federal government and
22 only when they started providing schools in the north and

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 now there are certain people that are able to help us
2 communicate with the southern people. Although we are
3 formed in communities like these today for many years past,
4 we have not lived the way we live today and because we
5 are used to living off the land and off animals and since
6 I used to travel by kayak and by dog team, I consider myself
7 as an experienced Inuk.

8 Back then when the Hudson's Bay Company
9 and the other company that was owned by Quebec used to
10 be the trading post we used to get very little in return
11 for the hunting we did, and in the beginning the seal skins
12 were more valuable back then but now the price has gone
13 down so there is hardly any value to the seal skin these
14 days.

15 Although it used to be hard trying to
16 maintain our way of living, trying to keep our dogs alive,
17 we were able to continue our lives and we highly depended
18 on our dogs, because it is not good when you just have
19 to go on foot, although we did that occasionally and mainly
20 we did that when we were going on our fox traps, but then
21 we did not have very much outside assistance. We never
22 heard about governments back then and the only connection

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 we had to the outside world was the Hudson's Bay Company
2 and if it was still the case like where in June now we
3 wouldn't have too much things to trade. Although we did
4 not get a whole lot of things in return for our efforts,
5 we used to get a few bullets, a few ammunition and then
6 that was a lot to us, but back then the government had
7 already existed which we didn't know about. It has not
8 been that very long since the government has assisted us
9 tremendously. As John Inukpuk said, the snowmobiles are
10 expensive today. When a snowmobile is working well and
11 you have a good amount of gasoline, you can travel far
12 and go trapping at a great distance, but today it is really
13 hard to travel the same distance with the amount of money
14 we have to spend on snowmobiles and gasoline. Very often
15 we think that maybe it is better if we don't pay taxes
16 too much, especially on the machines that we use for hunting
17 like the outboard motors and snowmobiles. Although not
18 much may be done in regard to this, I just wanted to make
19 a point in that, but now if I try to support my family,
20 it would be very hard.

21 For example, the snowmobile parts, not
22 the whole ski-doo, but the parts you have to try to buy,

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 you can easily spend \$450 on just parts. That could be
2 used for food or we could spend that on food, but when
3 you have to try to spend money on all these things, you
4 have to be economical.

5 There are a lot of able young men who
6 can look after themselves and I just wanted to add those
7 things to what has been presented to you. People of
8 Inukjuak, when they first got those matchbox houses they
9 used to cost us \$15 a month on rent and when you were a
10 carver back then, that was -- you could afford it easily.

11 The reason why the community was formed because of the
12 schools that were being built and it was easier for us
13 rather than travelling a long distance and trying to get
14 food from the store, we were in a community and it was
15 easier for us. Back then we were agreeable to anything
16 the government told us. I am not trying to say the people
17 of Inukjuak were agreeable on everything, but I was trying
18 to make an example.

19 I often think that they are quite
20 agreeable to a lot of things. When we are told what to
21 do or there is a good reason behind it, we are agreeable
22 to it. That is how we used to conduct ourselves. There

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 are still a lot of able Inuit and I am very grateful for
2 that, although there is a difference between community
3 to community, they are able to cooperate among themselves
4 and back then when they didn't have enough food for their
5 dogs, they used to travel great distances and look after
6 themselves, but even back in 1970 I was still younger and
7 I was not able -- I was not as able as I was when I was
8 younger. So I just wanted to bring those up. Thank you.

9 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:**

10 Next is the Health Committee, Johnny Naktialuk.

11 **JOHNNY NAKTIALUK:** (Speaking through a
12 translator) I want to thank you people for giving me
13 this opportunity to speak to you on things that are
14 important to us, that we feel the Canadian society should
15 take to heart for us to start an age of understanding and
16 cooperation between the Kabloonak and the aboriginal
17 people.

18 As you might have heard in the
19 introduction, I am more involved in health and social
20 services in the community as well as in our region from
21 Sugluk to Kuchabi Lake. Back in our semi-nomadic days,
22 then semi-nomadic days, there was this ship, the C.D. Howe,

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 which was a hospital ship that first started coming to
2 our region and since then we as an Inuit nation have come
3 to be very dependent on what was referred to as miracle
4 medical abilities of the Kabloonak. My grandfather's
5 generation, my parents' generation as well as ours has
6 come to be very dependent actually on medical abilities
7 for the point where our traditional medical interventions
8 are gone and forgotten up to a point where we tend to consult
9 health professionals for our own individual annual health
10 care check-ups. Back then the federal government was
11 responsible for our health services before the provincial
12 government took over. Our society went through a very
13 dramatic change that had a very negative effect on our
14 lifestyle in the long run up to today.

15 As an example, our pregnant women were
16 sent out for delivery, which had a very devastating
17 consequence on a family unit that was used to being together
18 during the birth of a child. The separation left the
19 children at times neglected and the husband turning to
20 others for attention. There was no respect or
21 understanding of our traditional midwifery system that
22 has existed for thousands of years. Fortunately for us

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 today the hospital in Povungnituk has started a midwifery
2 program from scratch that has helped take back some of
3 the elements that are needed for a strong family unit.
4 I would like to add that since the hospital was established
5 back in the fall of 1986, when it first started, like all
6 northern hospital establishments, we started out having
7 Kabloonak general managers and they were always more or
8 less on top of the Inuit Board of Directors, which had
9 very innovative ideas that were more or less steered to
10 the southern way of running a hospital and their Kabloonak
11 general managers, but as later on the Board hired an Inuk
12 general manager, which I have had the privilege of taking
13 on the position on an interim basis for a couple of years
14 and it was then that their services and the understanding
15 of our population's needs for health and social services
16 were more or less realized.

17 For example, the midwifery program that
18 I just mentioned earlier, we also put in place a philosophy
19 where training to our Inuit employees, that they would
20 be trained by the Kabloonak workers, like the Kobloonak
21 bosses, that they would teach them their own particular
22 field for them to eventually take over. I have a couple

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 of examples whereby we now have one official midwife, a
2 community midwife, an Inuk who went through the hospital's
3 training program for midwifery. We now have just two Inuit
4 hearing and otitis specialists and in that area we have
5 noticed a very, very big improvement on the otitis problems
6 that our kids used to go through. It shows us that when
7 our own people are responsible for our own health and social
8 programs, we can see that there could be a lot of
9 improvement because they are working with in their own
10 language, they are working with their own people without
11 this high turnover that we all suffer from, from nurses
12 and other specialists that change many times within a year
13 for example. That has helped us a lot, but at the same
14 time we are still having problems with the hospital. For
15 example, because of lack of funds, for example, a patient
16 who suffers from a very bad toothache sometimes has to
17 pay from his own pocket to go to be seen by a dentist without
18 ever having the money back. There are problems like that
19 still existing.

20 The time -- I was jumping ahead on that
21 -- at the time when the provincial government started
22 taking over the health and social services, our communities

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 were suffering from lack of funding while the provincial
2 government said the Ungava Bay hospital be responsible
3 for our services, leaving us at times with no nurses in
4 the communities, putting the population at unnecessary
5 risk. Today we are more or less enjoying stable service
6 from the hospital from Povungnituk and still suffering
7 from, as I said before, lack of funding in all areas.

8 For example, transportation. People
9 have said earlier, transportation in our area, sometimes
10 we have to -- it is a big part of anybody's budget for
11 those people, for those organizations that are in the
12 business of servicing people. For example, for community
13 health programs that we feel is the most necessary
14 services, that could be used, but sometimes it seems just
15 the last thing on anybody's agenda because of the services
16 that are needed to cure and heal the existing problems.

17 As an example, we only have one doctor hired to look at
18 community health needs for prevention in the whole of
19 Nunavik. There is only one doctor assigned particularly
20 for that. This to anybody is unacceptable when to
21 anybody's logic prevention of community and social
22 problems should be a priority in order not to spend too

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 much time on curing and healing of the existing problems.

2 As anywhere else in most Indians and
3 Inuit communities we now know that the social problems
4 that we are facing today, for example, youth suicide,
5 community violence, spousal assault, substance abuse,
6 drugs and alcohol, teenage pregnancy, are due to years
7 of oppression, loss of dignity, hopelessness, loss of
8 identity that we are suffering from the hands of the
9 domineering societies that has shoved down our throats
10 their foreign values and beliefs that has not and cannot
11 work for us as we have tried with them over the years since
12 they were forcefully introduced to us by the priests,
13 government agents, teachers and others when assimilation
14 to the white society was attempted on us. We know now
15 that the only way we will finally take back our dignity,
16 pride, self-respect and control of our health and social
17 problems is to be given the opportunity to govern
18 ourselves. Therefore we are now in the process of
19 discussing, recognizing and finally acting on the need
20 for a community healing, which we feel is needed to prepare
21 our people to support our leaders at a national level for
22 when the colonials will finally free us from their

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 dominance on our society. I think I will end my
2 presentation on that note.

3 I have a couple of documents that will
4 give you more information on our health and social services
5 and as well this is the very latest statistics, document
6 as of '87. I don't have any later than that on the use
7 our medical services from our hospital which might give
8 you an idea how we use our health resource services. Thank
9 you for the opportunity to speak to you.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
11 much for your presentation and reflections on what should
12 be done. I would like to know a bit more about the status
13 of the Health Committee. Is it a committee of
14 municipalities or is it a committee of the Kativik
15 government?

16 **JOHNNY NAKTIALUK:** As far as I know the
17 Health Committees were established at the time of the
18 federal days when it was felt that there should be more
19 of an official link between the health workers and the
20 community whereby information to and from the population
21 would be more on a regular basis passed on. As of today
22 the local Health Committees are supposed to be the

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 responsibility of the community council, the municipal
2 council to be the watchdog over the health and social
3 services of the community as well as a link to and from
4 the regional hospital as well as the regional Board of
5 Health and Social Services.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
7 much. Before you leave I would like to say that we are
8 much aware and concerned by the fact that there is a lack
9 of health professionals among the Inuit. If you have
10 additional thoughts to share with us as to how to succeed
11 in getting more young people to get the training at all
12 levels of the health professions to take those jobs and
13 give good service in their language to the people, we are
14 really looking forward to get additional ideas because
15 we feel it is a major concern. We are quite happy you
16 raised it with us.

17 **JOHNNY NAKTIALUK:** As anyone might
18 know, education and going on to higher education, we all
19 feel is the key to eventually being self-sufficient on
20 health and social services, but until that time is here,
21 it is not established in any way that it will be very
22 effective to us at this time, so like I said earlier, for

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 our hospital has started, like I said, a philosophy where
2 newly-hired southern health and social workers are
3 mandated at the time of hiring to pass on their knowledge
4 to their Inuit fellow workers. In some areas that has
5 been very successful.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Do you meet
7 with students in the school to talk about the possibility
8 of them going into the health field?

9 **JOHNNY NAKTIALUK:** In some communities
10 that is going on very well, but here in the community for
11 example I have just been hired and I was supposed to start
12 working today as a community health representative,
13 responsible for the prevention programs and this is a first
14 in our region. We don't have any up to today and that
15 will be part, I feel, part of the responsibilities of this
16 position that has been just established by the Mayor's
17 office to give the information and prevention with the
18 help and assisting and coordinating of the local groups
19 in an effort to give their prevention programs to the
20 community.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
22 much. Any questions? Thank you.

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** The
2 next individual presentation will be Mina Kingalik.

3 **MINA KINGALIK:** (Speaking through a
4 translator) First of all I am going to start talking
5 about the beginning of the loss of our culture. When we
6 were still aboriginals of this land, we were very able
7 to conduct our lives, and although we lived in snow houses
8 and tents in the summer, we were able to feed ourselves
9 and our families. Then the governments came one time
10 during the summer and they told us that they came here
11 to assist us and then, when you are trying to survive and
12 you have to work constantly from morning to night, when
13 governments intervened in our lives that changed. We
14 started carving and we started making baskets.

15 Back in 1962 we were still full-fledged
16 Inuit living in snow houses. It seems that overnight our
17 lives changed, because 1962 is not too far away, and the
18 governments came and they provided us with houses, with
19 low rent. We used to be very happy back then. We used
20 to be very happy to see our fellow Inuit, but today we
21 don't even notice each other these days.

22 There are a lot of things that trouble

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 us today and when we were in a community we were told that
2 there was a measles epidemic. So we were told to stay
3 home. So we stayed in the community and there were
4 surrounding camps that had to stay out of the community
5 because of the measles epidemic. Then the school was built
6 and we had to keep our children in school and, in order
7 to do that, we had to come to Inukjuak and live here.

8 Since we were formed into a community
9 rather than scattered camps, alcohol came about and a lot
10 of social problems. We started to become a drug culture
11 and now we are older people we can look back and see all
12 the mistakes we have made. Today we try to live off earning
13 money and we have houses that are equipped with electricity
14 and life got so easy for us we had time for other things
15 so the social problems came up and when that was just
16 starting my mother wanted to move. She told me that since
17 our children are getting into trouble all the time now,
18 they wanted to move. So I told my husband who was working
19 for the government and then we figured we couldn't live
20 off the land as we used to any more because of the sicknesses
21 and various problems. We had to stay here in the
22 community. I was not doing the things I used to do, even

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to the point where I almost forgot how to make a pair of
2 Kamiks and our lifestyle changed a lot since we were
3 numerous in a community and had lots of things to do.

4 When my husband was working for the
5 government locally, the white people from the government
6 used to give him some booze and that started some problems
7 and the regional people that used to live here in Inukjuak
8 tried to warn these newcomers on the outside camps,
9 surrounding camps not to act the way we were acting. They
10 were doing the same thing anyway, so a lot of social
11 problems started to come up.

12 Back then we started having these
13 problems ourselves and our children are doing the same
14 thing today, although we tell them to stop drinking and
15 stop taking drugs. It is hard to do that because we started
16 that problem ourselves and we start to see how hard it
17 is to try to deal with these things on a daily basis.
18 You know very well when you see a drug addict or an
19 alcoholic, it is very hard to try to tell them to stop
20 taking it and we are just the same.

21 When my husband was working for the
22 government, he was told to shoot all the dogs and so he

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 did that and the other Inuit in the community were blaming
2 me and my husband for shooting their dogs, but it was the
3 government who did that. That is how all the social
4 problems started coming up. I remember that.

5 Today our young people don't want to
6 travel by dog team because who wants to travel by dog team
7 when it goes so slow and you know there is a snowmobile
8 that can travel a lot faster than that? When we first
9 got introduced to snowmobiles, they were inexpensive, but
10 today we can hardly afford them any more and the young
11 people, our children, they want to drive the snowmobiles
12 around in the community and their father wants to go out
13 hunting. The young people are not well informed about
14 how to live off the land on their own because we were formed
15 into a community because our children had to go to school
16 and we were provided family allowances and we were told
17 unless we send our children to school, we can't receive
18 these family allowances, so because we wanted them we had
19 to send our children to school and then after a number
20 of years, another school system came into our community,
21 which was run by the Quebec government and they had reasons
22 for kicking out students. They said my son would no longer

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 go to school because he is just driving around on a ski-doo
2 and my daughter couldn't go to school because she didn't
3 have a chair. When they had been doing to school for a
4 number of years and then were told to quit, it really went
5 to their minds.

6 My husband and I have been trying to
7 relocate to the camp that we used to have. We have been
8 putting plywood insulation and other things that we could
9 use to build a house in a camp because the children are
10 not educated. We feel that maybe only in camp will we
11 be able to survive and that is why we have been trying
12 to move. We have been trying to get assistance from the
13 corporation, but there is no one to help us. It is very
14 hard to get assistance when one wants to move to a camp,
15 to make our own camp.

16 There is a lot of unemployment in the
17 community and along with that comes the problem of social
18 problems. Gasoline is very expensive, but every summer
19 we go camping to the place where my father used to be based
20 in the camp. In this case we have been trying to get
21 assistance from anybody who would be willing to help us.

22 Although my grandchildren are going to school, we feel

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 that it would be better if we had a camp because then if
2 my grandchildren get educated, they wouldn't be able to
3 get a job anyway. We don't feel at home in Inukjuak,
4 although the people of Inukjuak are kind to us. I need
5 assistance from the government to make a camp, to build
6 a camp. When all the people from different places get
7 together to form a community, there is a lot of problems
8 that come in with it. I am involved in ADAC, which is
9 an addiction awareness facility. Thank you.

10 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:**

11 Atiraq Women's Group, Anna Samisack.

12 **ANNA SAMISACK:** (Speaking through a
13 translator) Thank you for giving me the opportunity to
14 speak. There are times when I feel that I have nobody
15 to speak to about my concerns, about women's concerns.
16 I have been the president of the women's group for nearly
17 ten years now and I have seen the hardship that the women
18 go through in trying to obtain funding, any kind of funding,
19 because we do not get any assistance at all from the
20 government and I often think that I won't be able to talk
21 to government representatives, but since I can, I often
22 turn to the idea that the only person I can turn to is

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 our maker from heaven.

2 First of all the women have made a
3 request here for a building that they can use for making
4 traditional clothing. Since a lot of women today do not
5 have the time to make the clothing for their family, a
6 lot of women have to try to look for jobs, try to maintain
7 their home, try to dress their children, since it gets
8 very cold up north. We have to have warm clothing and
9 we have been asking for funding from the government to
10 assist us in starting that, because of the fact that we
11 are from up north and it is cold and they understand the
12 fact that we have to try to maintain our culture and our
13 way of life.

14 A lot of women up north are going through
15 hardships and a lot of times we have tried to keep the
16 daycare centre open but, according to the law, it is
17 impossible to keep it going because it has to look nice
18 and it has to meet government standards and there are a
19 certain number of people or children that can be -- that
20 can validate for a daycare centre because we feel we can
21 maintain a daycare centre on our own, but since we have
22 to meet government standards, we cannot even get a daycare

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 for our community. There have been people who have gone
2 out to various meetings getting all this information on
3 how to maintain a daycare. We started one and the women's
4 group ended up losing money and that money we have raised
5 which never came from the government we spent on a daycare
6 centre. The KARG was able to provide us with a little
7 money which was \$700 and that was it. Today the women's
8 group hardly have any money here and everything is very
9 expensive. We tried to make a little money by selling
10 our baskets, our handicrafts, our baking and holding
11 bingos, but we can't keep up with expenses because it is
12 very costly to keep up a building. We tried to assist
13 the various groups in the community, those who are less
14 fortunate than the women's group. We gave the building
15 to those people and we don't charge them for it. There
16 are people that want to educate the younger people on how
17 to dance and they need a building and we provided a building
18 for those people.

19 I have seen over the years that it is
20 very hard being a native woman who does not get any kind
21 of assistance, no matter how hard we try to get all this
22 assistance we can, financial and otherwise. We, the Inuit

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 women, are trying to be -- it is the effort of the women
2 in the communities that maintain the livelihood of that
3 community and if it weren't for these women, a lot of things
4 wouldn't be running normally and there is a lot of family
5 violence if you don't agree with your family members all
6 the time. We try to hold meetings, community meetings,
7 information sessions to young people, but we are short
8 of funds. We have a lot of programs and projects in mind,
9 but it is impossible to carry those out without financial
10 assistance, especially in a province like Quebec. We try
11 to look for ways to maintain a peaceful life in a community,
12 but since there is no funding of any kind, it is impossible
13 and we have to depend on volunteer work and when you depend
14 on volunteer work, everything is not going the way we want
15 it to.

16 We often think of setting up a program
17 with school students that are taught how to sew in the
18 school. When they are finished their school, they should
19 have a place to go for further training in making clothing.

20 Although we have all these good ideas, we have come to
21 the point of giving up because there is no funds, no kind
22 of funding assistance we get, with no one to turn to, but

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 we maintain a building here by the money of the people
2 of Inukjuak and the only way we make money from the people
3 of Inukjuak is by selling baked goods, small arts or sewing
4 products and holding bingos.

5 We have a lot of problems that we women
6 have to go through by raising children. Although we have
7 heard about the women's rights in Canada, it doesn't have
8 any effect on us here up north. In a lot of cases there
9 have been people, women or young girls getting pregnant
10 and then that young woman is left to look after the kids.

11 There are a lot of problems that we have to face, and
12 the example I used in regard to a woman getting pregnant
13 and having to end up looking after that child and the man
14 has nothing to worry about. There is no way we can try
15 to get that man to try to assist at least financially in
16 raising the kids, but there is no assistance in that area
17 that we have. We have no jobs. There is always a shortage
18 of jobs for children who are well and able and we know
19 that we can teach these young people on how to sew clothing
20 but our resources are very limited. For that reason we
21 often have -- can't think of anyone we can turn to for
22 assistance for money.

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I would like
2 to ask about the question of daycare and my question is,
3 is there an Inuit-controlled daycare facility in Inukjuak?

4 **ANNA SAMISACK:** We started one, but....

5 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I think there
6 is one in Koudjouac. The Commissioner of the day, Mr.
7 Mayor, might have some comments to make on that situation.

8 **MAYOR JOBIE EPOO:** There is no daycare
9 centre here. It is true what Anna was saying, that she
10 would be better, she would know more about that. The
11 municipal council of Inukjuak cannot provide funding for
12 such services. We don't provide that kind of service for
13 the community. Our budget is very limited and, although
14 we would like to assist them in any way we can, it has
15 been impossible for us. It was the daycare food truck
16 was done on an experimental basis and there was one that
17 was started here, but since a daycare has to meet government
18 standards, maybe that was the case where they couldn't
19 continue or was it financially related and who provided
20 those funds?

21 Anna, elaborate on that.

22 **ANNA SAMISACK:** When we first started

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to take the daycare here, we were given \$700 from KARG.
2 The building we used did not meet the government standards
3 and we spent too much on heating. We ran out of funds
4 to keep it going. During the winters it is close to a
5 thousand dollars a month just to heat the building and
6 that was the main reason we had to pay electricity. We
7 had to pay the people working there and the building did
8 not meet the government standards. It was due to lack
9 of funding mainly, and although a lot of women were
10 interested in sending their kids to the daycare, they
11 couldn't afford the price. There was a number of reasons
12 behind that, but basically it was financial problems.

13 **MAYOR JOBIE EPOO:** The main problems
14 encountered by the women, not only in Inukjuak, is trying
15 to start up a project in a community. There is a lack
16 of funding. The KARG in Katavik invests funds, but that
17 is only based on a loan. So it is hard for anyone who
18 has a very good idea to start a project and it is often
19 hard for these people to start these projects; even when
20 they have a really good idea it is impossible to carry
21 out all the things that they have to do in regard to the
22 financial aspects of these projects. Sometimes

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 governments provide programs and funding but we are not
2 informed on all these programs and sometimes the programs
3 go by us because we don't know about them. We don't get
4 the information.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** On this latter
6 point, there is no reason why you shouldn't get all the
7 information available as far as the funding is concerned
8 from the government of Quebec and what we could do is first
9 of all to try to see if it is the case and, if it is the
10 case, make sure the full information will be communicated
11 to you. Of course the most difficult part to get programs
12 that would take into account particular situations like
13 the one in the north, where child care is a very important
14 issue for everybody in this community and in northern
15 communities and we are going to have a close look at it.
16 We hope to be able to come back with some proposals or
17 ideas as to what should be done in the later phase of our
18 hearings. Madam Wilson would like to ask something.

19 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Could I
20 ask whether there is any place for women and children to
21 go who are the victims of violence in the community? Is
22 there any place for them to escape that situation until

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 it is dealt with?

2 **ANNA SAMISACK:** There is no such
3 building like that. There was one home that is open to
4 everyone, who has said they are open to everyone.

5 **MAYOR JOBIE EPOO:** There are no women's
6 shelters in Nunavik, there is only one, a group home in
7 Koudjouac known as a group home in Koudjouac. I don't
8 know how it is running, but on the Hudson's Bay Coast we
9 are starting to consider providing a shelter in
10 collaboration with the Hudson's Bay Coast Hospital. We
11 would like to establish one, at least one for this coast,
12 but we would like to have prevention programs first and
13 foremost before coming to the last resort of having a
14 shelter for women.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Do you have
16 other questions?

17 **ANNA SAMISACK:** The daycare centre that
18 we want, because there is a lot of grandmothers who end
19 up looking after grandchildren because they have nowhere
20 else to go and these grandmothers are old, are getting
21 on in age and are unable to look properly after these
22 children, so it is hard on the grandmothers, because when

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 a women has to look for a job or has lost her job, she
2 has no choice but to leave her kids with her relatives
3 and that is one of the main reasons for why there is a
4 lot of welfare recipients because a lot of women who would
5 be able to work can't leave their kids because there is
6 no daycare. If there was, they would be looking for jobs.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
8 much.

9 **ANNA SAMISACK:** Thank you.

10 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** We are
11 next having the Co-op, Pauloosie Weetaluktuk, a member
12 of the local grocers' association.

13 **PAULOOSIE WEETALUKTUK:** (Speaking
14 through a translator) Thank you. I would like to talk
15 about the high cost of living and rental of housing, phone
16 bills, et cetera. It is very hard to try to make a living
17 here and the existing places where people get hired, for
18 example, the Co-op and/or small business are decreasing
19 in number because of the high cost. We have even had to
20 shut down two of the businesses that were being operated
21 under the Co-op, the local Co-op, although we are working
22 very hard to try to keep them running. Due to the high

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 cost of everything and the increase of taxes and things
2 that we were able to sell such as carvings, we do not make
3 much money out of them any more and furs, fox furs, seal
4 skins and handicrafts which we were able to sell before,
5 hardly -- there is hardly any value in them. Presently
6 the government for us who live in the far north, the value
7 of money up north is hardly worth anything when you take
8 into consideration all the expenses that we have to spend
9 it on. For example, when you purchase something by the
10 time you sell it up here, it is hardly worth it. I would
11 like you to consider various alternatives or solutions
12 even though you may say that it is impossible. At the end,
13 but at least cut down the taxes that we have to pay and
14 we have to pay taxes on services, on the fares. When we
15 have to purchase things that have to be flown up here,
16 we have to pay taxes on everything because we have to pay
17 taxes on the services for having those things flown up
18 here. So no matter how you look at it, we pay taxes for
19 everything, every little thing that comes up here and we
20 are the highest taxpayers in the country.

21 For the cost of living, that is the case
22 of us and although it was brought up earlier, the fact

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 that ski-doos, for example, that used to cost \$700 in the
2 beginning and I remember that too myself, I was a grown
3 man by then although I didn't purchase the first set of
4 ski-doos that came to. I remember how much they used to
5 cost and today the same kind of ski-doo that would have
6 cost \$700 back then, it is just like everything, costs
7 \$6,000 or more including tax, plus tax.

8 Our operating budget has to be very high
9 these days. There are people who have never been employed
10 in their lives, who have depended on carving and they were
11 able hunters, but now that the price of carving has gone
12 down, you just see them as men but they don't operate as
13 men any more. They don't have anything to base their lives
14 on or their manhood on.

15 Operating funds that we have to include
16 in our operating funds is the cost of gasoline. I remember
17 when a 45-gallon drum used to cost \$25 but today with the
18 same amount it is \$196.40 and when you pay for the oil
19 to go with the gasoline that costs \$6.88 for oil for the
20 fuel for a Coleman stove that used to cost \$1 a gallon
21 and everything, flour, for example, 24 lbs. of flour used
22 to cost \$3 but now it costs \$18.75. That is how much

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 affected we are by the cost of living and we have no choice
2 but to live with it. Back then we didn't depend too much
3 on these things when they didn't cost too much, but now
4 we have progress that when you consider the cost of living,
5 which keeps going higher we have no choice but to ask for
6 assistance and I periodically go down south and I see the
7 difference in prices. I know the southerners are
8 complaining about the high cost of living but when they
9 come up here, it is three or four times higher. Those
10 are the main things that I looked into.

11 Whenever a price goes up on anything,
12 everything else has to go up as well. There is housing,
13 telephones that we have to pay for and the price keeps
14 going up for these things too.

15 With regard to rent on housing, a
16 full-time employee's pay, the full rent, a person who is
17 hired on a full-time basis has to pay the full rent where
18 welfare recipients and others pay less. The older
19 pensioners get \$600 a cheque a month and they have to pay
20 for their rent. They can't buy clothing for themselves
21 because they have to pay for their rent because they want
22 to keep their house and when they are behind on their rent

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 for so long, they are told, "You have to move," but where
2 would he move? Because of the rental -- because we have
3 to rent these houses, it is getting really hard for us.
4 Before we started renting these houses, we were able to
5 maintain our houses. I built my own house one time for
6 my father and mother and we didn't have to pay rent. Those
7 things that we were able to do, I don't think that we would
8 be able to go back to the kind of lives that we used to
9 live but we have to try. It is hard to try to think of
10 solutions. Employees who are hired have to pay taxes to
11 the federal government, to the Quebec government and when
12 we go to the store we have to pay more taxes and when we
13 are behind in paying our income taxes we are told that
14 we have no choice but to pay for it and if we don't, our
15 children will have to pay for it.

16 I am not that old, but I can remember
17 the kind of life that we used to live before we entered
18 into this southern culture and now today when we are unable
19 to pay for our rents, our telephone bills, we are told
20 we can be taken to court for that and we are told, "Before
21 we send you to the court, you have to pay for this." Then
22 I looked further into that and I was told there was no

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 way that anybody can go to court because of their phone
2 bill and we are being told different things all the time
3 and just because we don't pay for the rental of it, they
4 tell us lies about taking us to court. These are the things
5 that I wanted to raise in regards to the high cost of living.

6 I looked into the figures and I have the
7 prices right here because I looked into that today. There
8 is no increase in jobs. There is a decrease in the price
9 of carving, and when we try to think of creating a small
10 business, when you think of how much you are going to be
11 spending on it, it is impossible. Our means of
12 transportation, ski-doo's for example, there have been
13 people who have tried to come out with ski-doo shops, but
14 due to a lack of funds and all the expenses they have to
15 spend, they just go out the window and since we can't afford
16 a ski shop, we have to build -- repair our ski-doo's outside
17 and we freeze our hands because there is no garage to do
18 it in. We have no choice but to fix our ski-doo's as we
19 have to go out hunting, so we fix our ski-doo's outside
20 in the freezing cold and we freeze our hands.

21 We have no more dogs because the RCMP
22 shot them all dead. I remember the police were waiting

StenoTran

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 for me and my dogs and if one got loose, he would shoot
2 it or if it got loose from the chain. These are the main
3 points I wanted to raise in regard to the high cost of
4 living which has affected us tremendously and I just
5 covered the whole thing basically.

6 I am just talking about the bad sides
7 of it and I hope you understand what I am saying and I
8 am trying to present to you the facts. I tried to keep
9 myself informed on what goes on although I don't read or
10 understand English and I am saying these things on behalf
11 of the Inuit in Inukjuak and on behalf of the Inuit in
12 Nunavik. It seems we are back against the wall these days.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
14 much for your presentation. To tell you that we have
15 visited so far many of the northern communities, we know
16 that it is a major problem, the cost of living in the north.
17 We are going to look at the north as a special situation
18 at the level of the Commission and we thank you very much
19 for raising those concerns with us again. We hope you
20 will come up with some ideas that would be helpful and
21 to exchange those ideas with you later on. Thank you.

22 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:**

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 Coffee break. After the coffee break we will hear from
2 an individual presentation of Lucassie Echalook.

3 --- Recess

4 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** The
5 next presentation now is Peter Inukpuk.

6 **PETER INUKPUK:** (Speaking through a
7 translator) I may not be speaking coherent, but
8 nevertheless I will try to communicate with you. The Inuit
9 people of the north for over five thousand years have lived
10 with each other in equality without suppressing others,
11 and whoever we meet, we feel that we deal with equally.
12 Mind you, once in a while a tyrant would spring among
13 us but we always went back to equality using the message
14 of delicate sight. We are used to this kind of life and
15 we wish to continue it. This so-called democracy of yours
16 is a setback to our way of life. There have been numerous
17 examples. I will give you one of them. We were considered
18 savages, we did not have to lock our doors, but now we
19 are getting civilized and we are beginning to lock our
20 doors. In the great civilization of Montreal, I think we
21 might be able to count the doors that don't have a lock
22 on them.

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Also looking at electoral districts for
2 Nunavik, which is divided in half with people looking on
3 Hudson's Bay belong to Kavativik and the one in Ungava
4 belongs to another beginning with M, I don't know what
5 it is. I think you can recall gerrymandering, which is
6 famous for distributing electoral districts to keep
7 certain people out. This is a bit more subtle. Nobody
8 can notice it, nobody will ever bring it up unless I do.
9 There is no way unless we find gold in Nunavik that we
10 will ever get a representative in Parliament, the
11 provincial parliament or federal parliament. Therefore
12 we will not be able to exercise our civic duty, trying
13 to represent the dilemmas of our society.

14 Every fifteen years you look at the
15 electoral districts, reassessing them or even before that
16 you can fix them but the way I look at this, this is not
17 equality and I want you to change that today, twenty years
18 from now, but it has to be changed. In all the years there
19 are different areas of life that we need a change and when
20 we don't want a change, we have recessions. That is
21 telling us, hey, change yourself; although we consider
22 ourselves to be modern, we are not so modern. There were

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 cavemen, bronze, medieval, and they always had to go
2 through changes. They changed themselves or they were
3 forced to change. Each change, each era for change was
4 important on its own merit. But this one is a crucial
5 one. If as Canadians, if we ere to participate as people
6 at the world's decisions, which are domestic issues, not
7 having primary impact in our way of life, here I am talking
8 about it took thousands and thousands of years for the
9 world populations to reach half a billion, and now it is
10 over billions. Each year the earth's population reaches
11 up by millions and for us to deal with social issues, how
12 you and I are going to live Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday,
13 we have to set rules for ourselves. It is a necessity
14 but it is non-producing activity. How you and I live
15 together, we are not going to eat from it -- we are not
16 going to be closed from it but as Canadians if we are dealing
17 with non-producing activities, trying to find the world
18 at our doorsteps. As Inuit, we will find out at our
19 doorsteps, but as Canadians we will find the world at our
20 doorsteps. Then whoever was controlling at that time does
21 not really matter, but if we can when we are in recession,
22 we refuse to change in that, recession also means that

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 we are behind inventions. Democracy is set up so the
2 people can have inventions; that means people are
3 free-thinking. This democracy is not free-thinking.
4 Someone is looking after us. We are being looked after.
5 Here it is the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern
6 Development. It is a non-producing department also.
7 Departments, those are for things that can't think for
8 themselves. Lambs can't think for themselves. The
9 Department of Lambs. Crops cannot think for themselves,
10 the Department of Agriculture. Money cannot think for
11 itself, the Department of Finance. But Indians and Inuit
12 can think for themselves. We don't need a Department of
13 Indian Affairs and Northern Development to tell me if there
14 is any one community you can't communicate with, they can
15 tell you what they need, how they need to live five or
16 ten years from now.

17 This Department of Indian Affairs and
18 Northern Development is a fine way to receive welfare.
19 I don't know what it is doing and if it was removed and
20 if we controlled our own life, we would be more productive.

21 We would not be dragging the rest of the country.

22 We are not philosophers, we are not

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 scholars, but I see philosophers and scholars are very
2 good to their society if they deal with reality. If their
3 bases are based on reality, but secondary and third
4 philosophers and scholars, it is like cloning, eh? Their
5 ideals may be based on Never, Never Land and that is when
6 we start having problems. I think that is what happened
7 in A Tale of Two Cities, they went a bit too far. Here
8 we can deal with the problems of cod, the same thing we
9 did to deal with the buffalo. Here there is too much.
10 I will leave it at that because I don't want to be too
11 cynical, eh? Ha, ha, ha.

12 Here I want to tell you also we are of
13 the land and if you study hard enough or if you can through
14 scientific research, you will find that we come from and
15 are made of the earth, and we are earth, but we see the
16 world, the earth being altered, mostly for the sake of
17 the economy so that certain persons may live well and we
18 can see the sun. There is an even faded ray around the
19 sun which means change. Dinosaurs altered the environment
20 inadvertently, probably, but here we do it willingly for
21 the sake of economy. You have been able to attract other
22 people with their atomic bomb, so many grand minds

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 combining to make this thing and we have problems here.
2 The way we are living is like we live
3 like moths. We will go to the light for a certain pleasure,
4 no matter how short it may be, but here us Inuit are saying
5 we have eked it out for over five thousand years, and I
6 think stating that we wish to live longer. I repeat it
7 myself, I can say to make two prototypes for industrial
8 smokeless chimneys, one with drops of water going down
9 the chimney slanted so it will be at the bottom. You clean
10 your water, you have a method for cleaning your water so
11 it is drinkable, doing that and you can also decaffeinate
12 coffee. That is fantastic, or you can pass it through
13 different layers of filter, but you might need a propeller
14 at the top because you might want so much suction. How
15 they actually work, I am sure it can be worked out, but
16 your society is not dealing with that but solutions. These
17 are simple apparatus. They are not great things, but we
18 are not dealing with them for the sake of economy. If
19 you have been saving a lot and people come here and hear
20 you have saved, how much have you saved today? It is
21 people's activity. It is not what we are -- money can't
22 think, it can't produce by itself. It is a byproduct of

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 what people do. If we start inventing and stop watching
2 over each other, maybe we can get to end this recession.
3 Oil spills too. I don't want to paint
4 myself too far-fetched, eh? But the thing is we have
5 changed the world. We have helped change the world. You
6 have shown us muskets that high, somewhere along there
7 and we sold fox furs up to that high in the 1800s, but
8 the Chinese people bought the fox fur one skin for a hundred
9 dollars at that time. Fantastic amounts. Probably New
10 Zealand, Australia, it was easier to go over there because
11 there was so much money around. We want to be equal, but
12 we need an equalizer because we need to catch up, as I
13 said. Money is going outside but not coming back. We
14 need an equalizer, eh? We have inventions, but also how
15 do we patent them? We want that at our doorsteps too.
16 If we can invent -- we are not an idiot, eh, how do we
17 do it? I think it should be given to us. I mean here
18 if you want to invent something this is how you patent
19 it. The same thing if you want a driver's licence, this
20 is how you can have it. People said we want doctors or
21 lawyers, you sponsor people. There is a message up there
22 sponsoring people to go to universities. There is a way.

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 The only thing is we are missing the will.

2 I want to make a notation on the exiled
3 people because they are my family. Our people that need
4 to move to the high Arctic under certain conditions which
5 have not been met to this day, no one, I mean no one under
6 a free society which we are. We are a free society. As
7 I said, we have been free for over thousands of years.
8 Nobody would agree to move an inch unless it is really
9 attractive. The government prefers -- the first time they
10 approached those people they didn't come to an agreement,
11 but on the second try, the new conditions were added and
12 it became attractive enough for those people to move one
13 of the conditions being that they would like to -- they
14 reserve the right to move back after two years. It is
15 reasonable for the government to move people for the good
16 of the public. Down south we can see highways going on
17 a straight line as if nobody had ever lived through it,
18 but I have met some people that say, "My house used to
19 be here." But the government moved people, they
20 compensated them. It is called protocol and they went
21 through certain steps, notification, compensation and
22 under democracy, if those are exercised, it is possible

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and nobody will ever go back to it.

2 Without going all through the details
3 which we can well do so and point out new ones personally,
4 there are more than several ways to solve this dilemma:
5 through negotiation, activating another commission,
6 although you cannot bring -- oh, well, going through the
7 courts. Although the subjects cannot bring the monarch
8 to the court, we are not the subject. We don't even belong
9 to the constitution. If this drags long enough, maybe
10 one day they will recommend for having a monarch having
11 incompetent people at that time. Nevertheless, the
12 government has endless records of all the good activities
13 they have done for the good of public. Here it is being
14 recorded. Anywhere on the map of Canada down south, I
15 can point anywhere and it will tell me who it belonged
16 to and how much has been paid and how many times it has
17 been transferred, but for the good of the public all the
18 records are kept and it is non-arguable, but here if certain
19 protocols were met, nobody would permit us to keep talking
20 like this that long because certain protocols were not
21 met. They were intended. They never got carried out.
22 We will talk, but certainly one day we will find a way

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 to make people move.

2 This is double attached to a lot of
3 things: our languages which is similar to the Northwest
4 Territories, even as far as Greenland because we
5 communicate. Last year I travelled to Resolute by ski-doo
6 and I found even the Indians during the 1960s, their dogs
7 were shot. We stopped communicating with each other in
8 the 60s, while in Nunavik in the 70s, we started
9 communicating again. We will communicate again with each
10 other. This is not the first time we are going to speak
11 with each other and it is not the last, so I leave it at
12 that. Somebody, although it is not my sentiments,
13 somebody wanted me to mention that people who receive
14 welfare say their house rents are too high for the people
15 that are on welfare. That is just for the notation. Thank
16 you.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I would like
18 to thank you very much for sharing with us some very
19 stimulating thoughts. I think the way you presented it
20 was very effective and we will think about what you have
21 told us and I hope it will find a way in our discourse
22 at the end of this hearing. Thank you very much.

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 **PETER UNUKPUK:** At this time I would
2 like to hear some small constructive, tangible thing that
3 comes out of this because the next time around, I might
4 be calling our politicians, lawless politicians. Thank
5 you.

6 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** The
7 next speaker will be Lucassie Echalook.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Before you
9 start, I would like to acknowledge the presence of Alethea
10 McKay, who is an Inuit editor who came at the launch of
11 the Commission about a month ago and we are very pleased
12 to see her back again with us.

13 **LUCASSIE ECHALOOK:** (Speaking through
14 a translator) Welcome to Inukjuak. This is the only
15 church in Inukjuak. It was one of the first ones, first
16 church that was established in this region. When the
17 community was first formed, it was one of the buildings
18 that was established here in the community. It is a big
19 part of our life in Inukjuak. Often we think that we would
20 be able to come in front of the government and speak to
21 them rather than through our various representatives and
22 a lot of times we feel that a lot of things that we talk

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 about that our representatives would take back to the
2 government are often left behind through lack of time and
3 very often our concerns that we talk about we never get
4 any response. That things that we tell our
5 representatives to tell the government, although they are
6 valid, we never get any real response, so I am very grateful
7 for the opportunity we have here though we don't have time
8 for all our concerns.

9 Now, since we have had this church in
10 Inukjuak, we have gone through three buildings. The first
11 one that was built was built in 1911 and 1912. The next
12 building was built in 1959, around 1959 and 1960 and the
13 last and present church that we all have was built in the
14 1984-85, which is now in operation today. The first two
15 buildings were built by the diocese of the Arctic, but
16 now the present church that we have was built by the
17 population of Inukjuak themselves because of the growing
18 population and the cost of living is getting higher. We
19 decided that we should build a church before it gets too
20 expensive to build a nice big one, although it is bigger
21 now. Sometimes when everybody in the community goes to
22 church, it gets very full. Now it is run by the community

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 itself and we pay for our preacher. We have to look after
2 the cost of operating the church ourselves and as was noted
3 earlier, the cost of living in Inukjuak is very high.
4 It is very hard for us at times financially to keep it
5 going for our church. The heating, electricity,
6 maintenance, all these costs related to the church are
7 covered only by the donations we get from the congregation.
8 Inuit, most although not all, give ten per cent of their
9 income to the church and it seems that this is the only
10 institution in Inukjuak that is fully run and operated
11 by the population of Inukjuak and it seems like it is the
12 only building that is owned by the people, that it is our
13 only hope for the future.

14 When we first started this meeting this
15 morning, we had a prayer and we have to keep in mind that
16 we have to depend on prayer on this earth. The people
17 that run the church are working really hard and although
18 the people of Inukjuak are not making a lot of money, we
19 depend on the people themselves, although we hear about
20 the governments that are supposed to be looking after us
21 and they don't exist to us.

22 We have had white cultures in the past

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and we have had seven white preachers, although they didn't
2 last for many years and there have been Inuit preachers
3 through the diocese of the Arctic who are recognized and
4 our Reverend -- there are two of them -- the last one and
5 the present one. So therefore we are grateful as Inuit
6 that we are able to operate such a thing, although progress
7 might be slow.

8 The last thing in regard to the church,
9 people regularly attend the church, from 100 to 500 people,
10 although they don't attend church all the time, so that
11 is in regard to the church, but now on my personal concern,
12 I feel that we should give assistance to the church as
13 much as possible because every time we get a certain amount
14 of money we can't just spend it on anything. We have to
15 think clearly on how we are going to spend it and if you
16 have heard in the beginning affairs of state were first
17 run by the police but today we have no police at all.
18 In the beginning they ruined our lives, but now that they
19 should be present they are gone. They killed all our dogs.
20 They sent our fellow Inuit to foreign lands, but now that
21 we ask for assistance and help and when there is crime
22 going on in the community and we keep requesting for police

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 officers, there is none. When we didn't ask for them they
2 were here, ran our lives, but now when we are asking for
3 them, they are gone. There are over a thousand people
4 now in Inukjuak. Is it right to have only one lady
5 constable to look after a population that size? We keep
6 asking for police officers, but there is none. The
7 government should be ashamed of how they ran our affairs
8 up to date.

9 Today you heard earlier about the Arctic
10 exiles. It was very emotional and I have been touched
11 highly by that even up to date and I think my father and
12 all my uncles would have still been alive today, but when
13 the police were running our lives and the government were
14 running our lives, a lot of people were killed. The
15 government doesn't think that they killed them, but because
16 of the actions that they took, they will see that it was
17 their fault and they have been saying our children are
18 going to be taught, we are going to have medical services,
19 so they put us together into one community but back then
20 we should have stopped and think about it before. We
21 should have discussed the whole issue amongst ourselves
22 and tried to see what problems are going to be caused by

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 all this, by putting all the various camps together into
2 one camp, one community. As we heard earlier, we heard
3 one person saying she wanted to go back to her old camp.

4 Me too, I would like to do that too, but now it is too
5 late and too hard to do that any more. I often envisage
6 having a dog team again, back to our old way of life, and
7 showing our children what life used to be like in the past.

8 Maybe that may not be possible at this time and hopefully
9 it would be in the future.

10 So, as I said, I think my uncles and my
11 father would still be alive if they weren't sent to the
12 high Arctic. That is why it has affected our lives
13 tremendously. The governments didn't give the Inuit a
14 chance to think about these things or consider these things
15 for themselves before imposing it on the Inuit. Those
16 are the main concerns that I have had.

17 Another thing I was told to raise was
18 already raised earlier, but since I don't want to repeat
19 the same thing one person says pertains to everybody else
20 and we have taken an example of the Arctic exiles. A number
21 of people who would still be alive are dead because of
22 that. Although we are very interested in technology, we

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 don't want to ruin our way of life. We never intended
2 to do that. We never created anything that would ruin
3 the lives of white people down south, but another thing
4 that is ahead of us and that is going to have an effect
5 on us and our lives is the Hydro project, because if one
6 community is affected, the rest of the communities are
7 affected, because Inuit only have one life and they share
8 it. If the government is going to work on something, they
9 have to consider first and foremost there are other --
10 what effect is it going to have on the lives of other people?
11 They should consider the fact that they should not create
12 something that will ruin the lives of other humans. Thank
13 you.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
15 much.

16 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** Next
17 is the individual presentation of Lazarusie Epoo, who is
18 the elected member of Makiavik.

19 **LAZARUSIE EPOO:** (Speaking through a
20 translator) I am Lazarusie Epoo. I am glad to be here
21 and what I will be talking about is not me. When I was
22 a little boy, I knew a lot of things at the age of 8 in

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 1938, but first I want you to know that I don't have that
2 -- I don't have good things to say about the government,
3 nor to the traders that first settled in our community,
4 who came into the community on foot and he didn't have
5 anything to trade. He came into the community to the
6 Dominion Fuller Company, the manager of that company went
7 out the door and the person who walked on foot asked for
8 bullets and the manager said, "No way." He slammed the
9 door on him. That person was told and twenty minutes later
10 that same person took three bullets and threw them out
11 the door.

12 To the present day this situation has
13 hurt me and I am trying to show you the difference between
14 an Inuit and a non-Inuit. I was sheltered in that -- one
15 of that manager's houses at the time so that is how I am
16 aware of the situation. That is how a non-Inuit treated
17 an Inuit. That Inuit was asking for bullets and the
18 manager said, "No way." Whether they were just traders
19 that is how they treated the Inuit.

20 There was also one instance of a person
21 who was a resident of Inukjuak who was being held captive
22 across the river here in a snow house. The person who

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 was being held captive in the snow house without any heating
2 or light and there was a couple of men who had come back
3 from hunting with seal meat and they had to sneak into
4 that snow house to provide him with some seal meat and
5 they had to drop the meat from on top of the snow house
6 in order not to leave any prints, footprints on the snow.

7 This is the reason why I don't have anything good to say
8 about the government. I have not known them to have saved
9 the Inuit, and the Kabloonak people, whoever came into
10 the community were frightening to us. The RCMP were
11 frightening, traders were frightening, all the non-Inuit
12 people who came into the settlement were frightening. They
13 just wanted to rule our lives.

14 One of the things that had a great effect
15 on my life is because the police were government
16 representatives at the time and they would not allow Inuit
17 people to live here in the community. It was their land.

18 They used to send out the Inuit people from the community
19 saying that there is no hunting sites, so it is better
20 off if the Inuit went off into the land and do their hunting
21 there. Some of those who went through this almost died
22 because they got lost and one of the people here today

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 has a handicap due to that and has lost parts of his foot
2 because the RCMP would not allow them to be in this
3 community. They would never admit they were the ones who
4 had caused this. They used to send people away from here.

5 Even myself, even when we wanted to
6 settle here, we were not allowed to settle by the RCMP.

7 For me, because I had a family, it was less of a struggle
8 for me, but for others it was very hard. I do not show
9 my appreciation to the government except who should
10 appreciate it. They have never said that they are here
11 to help us. When I was very much looking forward to
12 starting my dog team that is when they started shooting
13 the dogs. Because some men were able to keep their dogs
14 from getting shot they were able to maintain their dogs
15 for a period of time. The non-Inuit wish to have hatred
16 for the Inuit people, everybody except the priests. Even
17 some of the non-Inuit would fight with the Inuit and one
18 of the speakers that we had earlier said that they held
19 up their stores. This is how we would have been treated
20 if some of the Inuit men didn't start to stand up for
21 themselves.

22 Getting back to the year 1938, I had a

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 sister who starved in my house, in a house that I was
2 sleeping in just two miles outside the community, although
3 the companies here were selling food that would have
4 prevented her from starving. She starved. The two
5 trading companies that John Inukpuk was talking about
6 previously, although they had stocked a supply that could
7 be used to prevent starvation, there was starvation
8 actually happening. I am very grateful that the great
9 Inuit had at one point decided at a meeting to try to run
10 their own affairs. I don't remember when the non-Inuit
11 people stopped frightening people. This is the way they
12 treated us and that is why I don't like them. When they
13 started establishing offices here, the government started
14 establishing offices here, that is when we started to have
15 a bit of a say in what is happening in our community.
16 We started to get involved in elections. That is when
17 we stopped being so scared of the white people. This is
18 what I have to say because for those who came to listen
19 to our concerns, you can base your studies on what I have
20 to say. If the white people had chosen to work closely
21 with us instead of being so dominant, we wouldn't have
22 been so far apart in the beginning.

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June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 I would want to be appreciative, but not
2 without -- without having let you know what actually
3 happened it wouldn't have been complete. If you don't
4 have any questions, then that's all I have to say.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
6 much. It was nice to hear from you.

7 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** Next
8 is the individual presentation of Peter Naluktuk. Is
9 Peter Naluktuk present?

10 **PETER NALUKTUK:** (Speaking through a
11 translator) When I was a child, we used to live off seal
12 meat and there were times we used to go on for days without
13 food and when I had been growing and should have been
14 getting bigger, I was only getting smaller so that is why
15 you see a small person, because during the age when I should
16 have been getting bigger, I was always hungry. We used
17 to be really poor. We used to have a really small container
18 trying to catch a little gasoline and there were many times
19 when people used to starve to death. I used to hear stories
20 about starvation even before my time. I wonder if our
21 government or the Queen was suffering from starvation,
22 but not among the Inuit that they were responsible for.

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 I remember days when I used to go on without food and
2 with no heating.

3 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** I
4 know a lot of people would like to have all the time they
5 want, but we don't have much time. Please try to make your
6 presentations as brief as possible, because these people
7 have things to do as well. Who would like to speak first?

8 We will give ten minutes each and not more than ten
9 minutes.

10 **LIZZIE PALLISER:** (Speaking through a
11 translator) Sorry for butting in but I would like to talk
12 on behalf of the women and I am also on the board of a
13 national group for the women. It is really hard being
14 a woman, and although I attend various meetings, I get
15 paid and other than that, I have no income. My husband
16 died I think in 1962. I am not sure any more. That is
17 how many years he has been dead. I have adopted four
18 children. When you are a single mother raising kids,
19 it is really hard and when one of your children turns
20 eighteen, you no longer receive any assistance from the
21 government and they don;t get a job right away. When
22 you have to pay for rent and the rent goes higher, the

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 welfare that you receive does not get any higher and what
2 you have to pay for keeps rising and what you receive from
3 welfare doesn't. It is very hard being a single mother.

4 I want that to be addressed.

5 My husband died before we ever got any
6 kind of government assistance and I never received any
7 widow's compensation of any kind because my husband died
8 before we were eligible for those. I have been on welfare
9 ever since and it is really hard when you have to feed
10 your children, you have to pay for their rent and I always
11 think about what my mother used to tell me in the past
12 and I have no choice but to do that. The government thinks
13 that when a child turns eighteen they are able to go out
14 and find a job, but that is not the case. You don't get
15 any more help from the family allowance, you don't receive
16 any more family allowance for those children, but you still
17 have to feed them and look after them because they can't
18 find any job.

19 There are women, other women who
20 complain about going through hardships when their husbands
21 are still alive, but when you think of a woman who is trying
22 to raise her kids on her own with no husband, it is twice

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 as hard. We are always on the sidelines. The women are
2 always on the sidelines, but we would like to progress
3 as much as anybody else. We are never informed on who
4 to contact, where to go for help and one of the
5 recommendations I would like you to put forward is
6 assistance for single mothers. Thank you.

7 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** Next
8 will be Mary Nowrakudluk.

9 **MARY NOWRAKUDLUK:** (Speaking through a
10 tarnslator) Thank you. I would like to raise something
11 I don't think anybody has brought up. I am not sure.
12 I don't know what effect it is going to have. Since I
13 am on welfare and my husband gets old age pension, the
14 welfare I get I will try to talk about that. There is
15 never any changes. They are not under my name. My husband
16 now gets an old age pension and they inform us that he
17 cannot be on welfare and since I don't speak English and
18 I don't know how to answer them, I leave it like that.
19 Since he gets a pension, I am often told that I am not
20 eligible for welfare. I wrote my name down in English and
21 it took me a long time to write it because I wanted it
22 to be known for the fact that I should be eligible for

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 welfare. I said I don't want to be under Norm's name any
2 more because I have six children and the pension that Norm
3 receives is not nearly enough to cover the expenses that
4 we have every month.

5 Some of my children now live -- one lives
6 in Aklavik and one lives in somewhere else. Another thing,
7 one time in the fall, in the late fall when the ground
8 was covered with snow, we were moved to another region.
9 We had to part with them because we were told to move
10 to a different area where the police told us to move and
11 they moved us further up north and the ground was covered
12 with snow and we had to shovel all the snow and look for
13 wood because the police in the local community was running
14 everything. We had to listen to what he said and we had
15 no choice but to move. All these things are always in
16 my mind, but this is the first time I have a chance to
17 voice them. I am grateful that you have come up here to
18 give us a chance to voice our concerns and very often we
19 just think about it and there's no one to talk to and I
20 am grateful to the government for sending you here, for
21 giving us a chance to talk all about our concerns. I thank
22 you very much and even when there is a public meeting going

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 on, I just keep my mouth shut these days. In the beginning
2 I used to talk a lot, but as I get older, I don't say too
3 much any more. Now that I am given a chance to speak again,
4 I am grateful for that. I think my time is up, the ten
5 minutes I was given. Thank you.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
7 much.

8 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** I am
9 sorry, we haven't got all night. Almost everybody is
10 raising their hands to speak, but we are limiting them,
11 so the next will be Martha Echalook.

12 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** We have heard
13 from other people.

14 **MARTHA ECHALOOK:** (Speaking through a
15 translator) What I want to say is something that I can
16 never forget and every time I think of it I get tears in
17 my eyes. I got a different home like every other woman
18 does when you get married. I had to leave an old person
19 I was living with and we had at that time to build our
20 own house, a wooden house. We had to buy our own fuel
21 to heat the building and when I think back it is still
22 touching to me. When the old person that we were living

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 with was dying, my husband started offering to get some
2 gas to heat our house because the old person living with
3 us was dying but when we got to the community he was told
4 to work first before he got the gas, so we were expecting
5 him back the same day but it was not until the next day
6 that he came back and it was not too long after that the
7 old lady living with us died. Maybe she would have lived
8 a little bit longer if he had come back sooner.

9 Also I had a mother who is an old person
10 now and every time she gets her pension cheque, she pays
11 the rent for the house and that takes a big part of her
12 pension cheque and she has not much left to spend on other
13 things. I always wonder if there is a way to lower the
14 rent for the old people. There is no one to help her in
15 the house. Those are the things I wanted to say. Thank
16 you.

17 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** We
18 have other people who would like to speak to you guys and
19 the first one is Daniel Oweetaluktuk.

20 **DANIEL OWEETALUKTUK:** (Speaking
21 through a translator) We would be able to instruct our
22 youth about the last but we don't have the funding that

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 is necessary to do so. We would have a youth who got lost
2 out in the land so I would want to make a request for funding
3 for us to instruct the youth on how to go about in the
4 land or -- we pray for the Queen so that her work would
5 go smoothly and so she could assist us. I would also like
6 to see the fur trade become accepted. Thank you.

7 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:**

8 Excellent. We have another speaker whose name is Minnie
9 Nowkawalk.

10 **MINNIE NOWKAWALK:** (Speaking through a
11 translator) My aunt was in the high Arctic from 1953 and
12 I remember my mother talking about her older sister,
13 saying, "I wonder if my sister is still alive," because
14 we never used to hear from them. I remember one time I
15 got a piece of clothing and I remember my mother telling
16 me, "My sister must have been touching this," and she was
17 really grateful for that and after I had grown older, until
18 1973, my mother didn't see her sister. Then in 1973 we
19 heard she was in Montreal in the hospital. My mother didn't
20 have any money to travel to visit her. When I was old
21 enough to work I had a child and I was getting family
22 allowance cheques and then I started working at the store

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and I started saving money. After I had collected enough
2 money from working and from the family allowance, my mother
3 was able to visit her sister, who was in the hospital in
4 Montreal. Up to date, I am grateful that I did that, since
5 they hadn't seen each other for so many years. When we
6 heard that her sister died, my mother was not able to visit
7 her sister or go for the funeral because we didn't have
8 any money and now if there is going to be a hydro project
9 in the future that is going to have the same negative
10 impacts on our lives, it is going to have an impact on
11 the land and on animals as well and to our children in
12 the future. Thank you.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you.

14 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** We
15 don't have any more people to go.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Before asking
17 my friend to make the closing prayer, I would like to ask
18 the committee of Inukjuak for its welcome hospitality and
19 very good turnout to the hearing. I would also like to
20 extend the thanks of the Commission to the church committee
21 for allowing us to have the cultural event last night on
22 Sunday. I would like to extend thanks to Johnny Williams,

June 8, 1992

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the community co-ordinator, to the translators, Alicie
2 Nalatupkrak and Martha Kauki, our facilitator, Elizabeth
3 Williams, Charlie Adams from Nipingak -- that is difficult
4 --
5 for filming, the National Film Board crew is with us to
6 take a sample of the hearing. Jobie Epoo, who has been
7 working as the commissioner of the day and of course who
8 is mayor of the Inukjuak community deserves many thanks
9 from the Commission. Our thanks extends to the people
10 who cooked our meals and this is an opportunity to convey
11 to them our warmest thanks and we will do so, but we want
12 to acknowledge it. Also we would like to thank the school
13 for allowing us to use this library. It is a very nice
14 facility and I do hope that even if the day was spent in
15 maybe not reading books, as is usually done in this room,
16 that it has been a learning experience for people who
17 attended the hearing to listen to what was said to us.
18 Also I would like to thank those who came as observers
19 who decided to say a few words in the open forum. Also
20 I would like to thank Daniel Aupaluk for opening the meeting
21 and I will ask for now the closing prayer. We have been
22 very happy to have this opening hearing in the province

June 8, 1992

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1 of Quebec here in Inukjuak and certainly we will be back
2 in Northern Quebec, maybe not in this community. I am
3 told to thank again Alicie and I think she deserves it
4 twice, so again this is the beginning of a process and
5 we are going to keep in touch with you through the document
6 we are going to publish this summer and we hope that this
7 is only the beginning of a full year of discussion. Thank
8 you very much.

9 **FACILITATOR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS:** If
10 Reverend Daniel is not here, we will call upon Christine
11 for the prayer.

12 (Closing Prayer)

13

14 --- Whereupon the Commission adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

15