

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

LOCATION/ENDROIT: DAVIS INLET
 LABRADOR

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"for the record..."
STENOTRAN
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Ottawa 521-0703

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1 Davis Inlet, Labrador

2 --- Upon commencing on December 1, 1992, at 1028 hours

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

4 We're going to begin our hearings here. The Royal
5 Commission is on its second set of hearings. We held some
6 hearings from April to June last year. So now we started
7 our hearings in October, and we've gone through November,
8 and we will be holding one more week of hearings after
9 this before we're finished this set of hearings. We just
10 came from Nain, and after today we'll have a day in
11 Cartwright.

12 The Commission is
13 travelling in three panels. There are seven
14 Commissioners, and we've broken it up into three groups
15 and we're travelling in different parts of Canada at the
16 same time.

17 With me here is Mary
18 Sillett, my name is Georges Erasmus, and we have five other
19 Commissioners that are travelling on two other teams.
20 Out of the seven Commissioners overall, four of them are
21 Aboriginal peoples, three are non-Aboriginals.

22 We were appointed a year
23 ago, and we have a very large mandate. The mandate of
24 the Royal Commission is to report to the Government of
25 Canada in about two years' time. We can report on a whole

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1 their territories, and in places in Canada where there
2 are treaties with First Nations, we heard about how
3 governments did not respect those agreements that were
4 made with Aboriginal people.

5 We heard about people's
6 problems in trying to hunt according to the way that the
7 treaties outline, or to trap or to fish, and we heard a
8 lot about the problems people are having in the
9 comprehensive claim areas, like in the North and the Yukon,
10 the Northwest Territories, where people have been
11 negotiating claims for a long time. The kinds of
12 complaints they had were they didn't like the policy, the
13 government's policy, on comprehensive claims.
14 Particularly, they didn't like the fact that the government
15 policy on land claims was based on extinguishing Aboriginal
16 title.

17 In large cities,
18 Aboriginal people told us about how, if they're a treaty
19 Indian, they come to this city and they have no rights
20 any different from non-Native people. They felt that they
21 were being treated as if they were non-Aboriginal people
22 living in the city. They have housing problems, they have
23 problems with trying to find a job in a large city, they
24 found discrimination or racism amongst non-Native people,
25 and they, of course, had difficulty maintaining their

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1 hard to stop. If people receive violence then that's what
2 they do, and it's all tied into the residential school
3 system.

4 We heard from young people.
5 We heard from young people that wanted to find people
6 they could look up to. They wanted role models. They
7 wanted to be able to be proud of who they were, but they
8 were finding a lot of trouble finding somebody in their
9 community or even amongst their people who they could be
10 proud of. What they were seeing was people being violent
11 to their mothers, people involved in alcoholism, drug
12 abuse, and so the young people did the same thing. They
13 sniffed glue, if they could, gasoline, all kinds of
14 solvents. If they could get their hands on alcohol, then
15 they drank that. In places in the country where they could
16 get drugs then they did drugs.

17 But those young people all
18 were pleading for help. They talked about when people
19 are attempting to take their life, and we asked the young
20 people, what do you think the young people are saying,
21 what are they saying to their family, what are they saying
22 to the group? And the young people told us that they were
23 crying out for help to anybody that would listen. And
24 it was not because young people wanted to take their own
25 life, as they attempted many times and some succeeded,

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1 power and they would hurt their own people.

2 So over and over, we were
3 told, even when we went to prisons, we were told from people
4 that what was needed was healing, and the best way that
5 healing could take place was traditional healing, and that
6 elders and spirituality had to be part of the repair of
7 the trauma and the hurt and the pain that people have gone
8 through.

9 So after we finished our
10 first round of hearings, we developed some documents,
11 developed a video and some documents, and we have copies
12 of it here, which we hoped would help us in this round
13 of hearings. In this round of hearings, we were hoping
14 that we would hear more solutions from people, we would
15 hear from people what kind of future they wanted that would
16 be different. We know that people have gone through a
17 lot of pain, and they still are in many parts of Canada.

18
19 But for us, we cannot only
20 be hearing about the pain. We must find out what the way
21 out is, what is the route out of where people find
22 themselves, what are the solutions, what are the ways
23 problems are going to get solved once and for all, and
24 there will be a good life in the future.

25 So we're in a second round

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1 of hearings, and we're hoping that people will tell us
2 the beginnings of those solutions. We will take those
3 ideas, and we will use them in the next round. We will
4 come out with documents and probably a video, where we
5 will list out what people are saying and how we can solve
6 the problems together, and we hope that that will be a
7 tool that we can use in the next round where people will
8 say well, you know, that idea that came from British
9 Columbia is good for over there but maybe it's not very
10 good for the Northwest Territories, or that idea in Ontario
11 is good for Ontario but it doesn't really work for Quebec.

12 So we hope that from this set of hearings, we will come
13 up with a lot of ideas on where to go in the future.

14 We are also doing a fair
15 amount of research on our own. We are doing over 100 case
16 studies across Canada where we're going into the community,
17 and we're working with the community on a project.

18 Sometimes it's on self-government, sometimes it's on
19 economic development, other times it's on social healing
20 and social problems. We hope to be able to have these
21 different case studies from all parts of the country so
22 that every situation that Aboriginal people find
23 themselves in in the country can be covered one way or
24 another.

25 In addition, we have set

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1 up a fund, an intervenor funding program we call it. It's
2 for people or organizations that want to do some work and
3 send in their ideas to us. It's to help with their
4 research, it's to help with their travel if they want to
5 send people to our hearings if the hearings are a long
6 ways away. But primarily, it's for research for
7 Aboriginal organizations and some non-Aboriginal
8 organizations, to give them the resources necessary to
9 do the kind of work they think they need to do to finalize
10 some ideas that they've been working on, and that program
11 has been underway since last spring, and most of that money
12 has been circulated out across the country to organizations
13 that have intervenor funding.

14 So with that, I'll ask Mary
15 here to introduce some of the other people, introduce
16 herself, and we'll get started with our hearings.

17 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

18 Dun chikm dun (PH). For those who didn't understand what
19 I was trying to say, I was trying to say "thank you" in
20 Innu-eimun. I did go to the dorm in North West River,
21 and at that time I did hang around with some people across
22 the river, and they did teach me a few words of Innu-eimun,
23 and I may or may not have forgotten the words. It's been
24 a long, long time.

25 Before I make my comments,

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1 I would like to first recognize some of the other people
2 that have worked to prepare for this hearing in Davis Inlet.

3 I know that you call it another name, but I can't hardly
4 pronounce it so--yet.

5 I would like to introduce
6 some of the people that are working with us. We have Linda
7 Jordan, she's an Indian, she's from Ontario, and she's
8 working with the Secretariat in the Royal Commission.
9 We have Rhoda Kayakjuak, she's an Inuk, she's from Hall
10 Beach, Northwest Territories, she's in the back, and she
11 works with the Royal Commission as well. We have Joyce
12 Ford, she's from Makkovik, originally, she's an Inuk or
13 a Kablunangajuk from Makkovik. We also have David Hawkes,
14 he's a qallunak, a white person from Ontario. And I would
15 like to recognize the people who have helped at the
16 community level for this hearing. We have Damien Benuen,
17 who is a local community co-ordinator, and we've asked
18 David Nui to act as Commissioner of the Day.

19 When we first started
20 working on the Royal Commission, we said that we were going
21 to do things differently from other Royal Commissions.
22 We're going to hire, for the most part, Aboriginal peoples,
23 whether they're Indian, whether they're Métis, whether
24 their Inuit, as long as they can do the job. And right
25 now, we have over 90 staff, and most of them are Aboriginal

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1 people. And there's a reason for that. For those of us
2 who have lived in Labrador, we know most people always
3 say that Aboriginal people cannot succeed, and for the
4 most part we feel that we, as Aboriginal people, have got
5 to support ourselves, and we felt that there are many,
6 many qualified Aboriginal people in this country, and we
7 have many of them working for us. So when our work is
8 finally finished we will be able to say it was Aboriginal
9 people who did this.

10 We want to go to places
11 where hardly anyone ever goes to for some reason or another,
12 so we're going to small communities, we're going to remote
13 communities, we're going to even large communities because
14 we know that there's a lot of Aboriginal people in those
15 communities. We know that there's a lot of non-Aboriginal
16 people in those communities, and that we have to talk to
17 them, too, because we live in Canada after all, and if
18 we're to find any solutions it must be done with everybody's
19 help.

20 I want to say--Georges has
21 covered mostly everything, but I do want to say two or three
22 things in addition to what he said. One of them is that
23 for the most part, right across this country we have heard
24 Aboriginal people saying that they no longer know their
25 language, that they want to relearn their language, and

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1 they want to relearn their culture. But I think that the
2 Innu of Labrador deserve congratulations because, despite
3 all kinds of pressures, you've been able to maintain your
4 language very, very well, and that's different from other
5 Aboriginal groups in Labrador.

6 I think, clearly, there
7 have been a lot of issues that have brought the Innu of
8 Labrador to national attention. The Innu of Sheshatshiu
9 have fought low-level flying for a long, long time. That
10 has been seen by Canadians, and at least now some Canadians
11 know that there is a Labrador, because many Canadians do
12 not know where Labrador was or is.

13 I think that I still hear
14 a lot of confusion from Canadians about Innu or Inuit.
15 When you say you're an Inuk, they think you're an Innu,
16 and when you say you're an Inuk, they don't know what that
17 is. But we in Labrador know who the Innu are, we know
18 who the Inuit are, and we know that there's a culture of
19 difference between the two.

20 I think, as well, Davis
21 Inlet, because of the incident the year before last, when
22 there was a house fire in which six children perished,
23 that has reached national attention. I know that we'll
24 hear more about that today, but I do want to say that
25 although one of the good things that happened with that

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1 is that even though the Innu were asking the Minister of
2 Indian Affairs to do the inquiry, and the Minister said
3 no, the Innu took it upon themselves to do a people's
4 inquiry, and for that you deserve congratulations.

5 So I'm glad to be here in
6 Davis Inlet. I look forward to hearing from you, and I
7 hope that Etienne survives this experience. Thank you
8 very much.

9 **DAMIEN BENUEN:**

10 [Introduction of Mr. Cajetan Rich inaudible due to distance
11 from mic]

12 **CAJETAN RICH:** This is
13 just a short history of Davis Inlet. My name is Cajetan
14 Rich, and I'm working with the United Nation in Davis Inlet.

15 Davis Inlet was renamed
16 Utshimasits by the Mushuau Innu of Labrador. It is an
17 unincorporated community with a population of over 500
18 in September of 1992. It is located approximately 295
19 kilometres north of Goose Bay on the Labrador coast. Its
20 nearest neighbours are Nain, 85 kilometres north, and
21 Hopedale, 70 kilometres south.

22 The Mushuau Innuts of
23 Utshimasits, Davis Inlet, lived for generations in the
24 interior of Labrador, depending heavily on the large George
25 River and other caribou herds, and only in the summer months

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1 they travelled back to the coast to fish salmon and Arctic
2 char and to hunt other sea birds.

3 Between the 1950s and 1966,
4 Innu used to spend most of their time in Old Davis Inlet,
5 and then gradually the number of people increased to the
6 point where they outgrew the area. So in 1967, the old
7 village began to move to the present location of Lluikoyak
8 Island. The Old Davis Inlet was located on the mainland
9 just five kilometres south of New Davis Inlet.

10 Today, Davis Inlet
11 consists of a Roman Catholic Church, 72 Innu houses, a
12 school with over 188 students, a power plant, a nursing
13 clinic, two stores, a wharf for large ships to dock, an
14 air strip with terminal, band council office with garage,
15 as well as office buildings.

16 As early as in the
17 mid-1700s, a fur trading post had been established at North
18 West River in Labrador. The Innu, who live on hunting
19 and trapping life throughout the Ungava Bay, would trade
20 furs for supplies and materials for various trading posts
21 scattered throughout the Labrador interior and on the north
22 shore of St. Lawrence.

23 Some of the Innu would
24 travel up the North West River in the month of June and
25 then start the journey back into the interior in August.

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1 Others would make a brief visit there for supplies in
2 January. For the most part, however, the Innu would travel
3 overland to the port of St. Augustin, Sept-Iles and Mingan.

4 One of the reasons for the choice in this location over
5 the North West River was because, unlike the North West
6 River, these communities had permanent priests who lived
7 among the Innu and spoke their language.

8 Hudson's Bay Company in
9 North West River was anxious to have more Innu use their
10 post and arranged for police to visit the settlement in
11 1866. A mission was established there by Father
12 Barbaroimajen (PH) in 1866, and was operated until 1895
13 when the abbotage (PH) withdrew from the area.

14 Faced with the prospect of
15 a losing very good fur trade, the Hudson's Bay Company
16 appealed to the Newfoundland church authorities for a
17 priest. Between 1921 and 1946, the Innu were served by
18 Monseigneur Edward O'Brien from the Diocese of Harbour
19 Grace, Newfoundland. Each summer he would travel to
20 Labrador to spend several weeks with the Innu who travelled
21 to North West River. For the first years, he visited only
22 North West River, but in 1925 he received a letter from
23 the Hudson's Bay Company store manager in Davis Inlet
24 stating that the Innu trading in that area wanted Father
25 O'Brien to visit them as well. In the summer of 1927 he

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1 travelled to Davis Inlet, and he repeated this yearly
2 summer visit to Davis and North West River for 25 years.

3 The well-being of the Innu
4 of the time was dependent upon the success of the hunting
5 and trapping. A difficult year could bring hardship and
6 at times starvation. When he was back in Newfoundland,
7 Father O'Brien would keep informed of Labrador affairs
8 through the Hudson's Bay Company managers. Father O'Brien
9 made frequent appeals to the Newfoundland government on
10 behalf of the Innu. Most often this resulted in a telegram
11 to the post to issue relief on the government accounts.

12 For a period of years,
13 Father O'Brien was given the authority in all matters
14 related to Indian relief in Davis Inlet and North West
15 River. During his summer visits, he would assess the needs
16 of the people, and then authorize relief through the
17 Hudson's Bay Company.

18 In 1933, Ralph Parson, an
19 official with the Hudson's Bay Company on the Labrador
20 coast, wrote to Father O'Brien to inform him of his
21 aspiration [of Dr. Parson?], to the Director of
22 International Grenfell Association, to centralize
23 residents who were scattered along the Labrador coast into
24 depots which would be supplied by the Grenfell Mission
25 and the governments. It is the first indication of a

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1 in particular. By that time, the administration of public
2 health and welfare, including who live along the Labrador
3 coast, had been given over to the Newfoundland Rangers.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

5 I wonder if you could summarize that, rather than just
6 reading every sentence.

7 **CAJETAN RICH:** I only have
8 two more pages. These are the last two.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

10 Sure

11 **CAJETAN RICH:** Father
12 O'Brien has been highly critical of the Rangers over their
13 handling of the Innu. He angrily described the refusal
14 of Rangers to provide assistance unless the Innu agree
15 to go to [Boyce's?] Bay where there were given work. 1949
16 brought in the flu epidemic, which took a terrible toll
17 on the Mushuau Innu. Again, it was the children who
18 suffered the most. In August of 1948, Joe Rich (PH), a
19 Mushuau Innu who had a close friendship with Father
20 O'Brien, wrote to inform him that the Innu would be moved
21 to Nordak (PH). Rich did not speak or write English.
22 The letter was written by Max Bodgil (PH), who worked for
23 the provincial government at the time.

24 "We have left Davis Inlet and are going to live in Nordak
25 (PH). I don't know yet whether it

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1 will be better or not, but we are
2 going to try, and hope to get more
3 there than at Davis. Last year was
4 a hard winter. Three children
5 starved because we were far in the
6 country, and bad weather stopped
7 us before we moved to Davis Inlet."

8 And that's the end of it.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

10 Thank you.

11 **DAMIEN BENUEN:** Katie

12 Rich, Chief of Davis Inlet.

13 **CHIEF KATIE RICH, DAVIS**

14 **INLET:** Good morning. First of all, I would like to say--I
15 would like to thank you coming to our community and hear
16 some of the problems that we are facing, and hopefully
17 at the end of the day, you will hear some of the
18 recommendations made by the Innu.

19 As you heard from Cajetan
20 Rich, when we were first relocated here in the '60s, one
21 of the things that was promised by the government was better
22 housing. When the people were first moved here, the only
23 thing that was equipped was a wood stove. They were
24 promised water and sewer but none of that came about.

25 None of the Innu homes right now have water and sewer,

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1 except for three houses that were built three years ago,
2 and they only work in the summertime. Millions of dollars
3 has been spent on repairing homes year after year and people
4 became dependent on the government to do that every year.

5 Over the past 20 years, we
6 have seen studies done in our community to find suitable
7 drinking water, and all these five studies that were done
8 proved that there is simply no water in the community to
9 supply the whole village. When the federal government
10 announced that they would do another study, we asked them
11 to include the proposed new site, Shango Pond.

12 When we were first moved
13 here to Davis, none of our people had carpentry skills,
14 so when they were moving into their new homes, the houses
15 that were given to them, they thought that the houses were
16 just any other house across the country, but they were
17 not. They have no water or sewage systems, and they become
18 overcrowded.

19 We think that more input
20 is needed from the people about what kind of houses they
21 need. Usually people come in from outside, put the houses
22 together and then leave. It's pretty obvious that the
23 houses do not meet the people's needs. Just recently,
24 my father wanted to fix his skidoo. He had to bring it
25 into the living room in order to do that. Most of the

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1 houses are real small for our families.

2 Last spring, we had
3 measurements done on our houses and compared these to the
4 measurements of other government-built houses on the coast
5 and other places. Houses were twice as big.

6 I would recommend hiring
7 people from the village who have carpentry skills to build
8 their own houses. Fifteen people graduated from carpentry
9 assistant courses this fall. Four of them were women,
10 I'm proud to say. If more people start building their
11 houses themselves they would feel proud that they have
12 accomplished something, because the houses they're in now,
13 somebody else built them, so they have no pride in trying
14 to maintain those houses.

15 In the studies that were
16 done, each engineer had his own solutions to our problems.
17 For example, one suggested damming of the brook at the
18 end of the village to supply the village with water.
19 Millions of dollars have been spent and still the situation
20 remains the same. Last year, the federal government was
21 going to put two million dollars in hooking up water and
22 sewer in Davis. We think that's a waste of money because
23 studies have proven that there is not enough water to supply
24 the village.

25 Today, people are getting

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1 bathroom which used to be a room for one of the children.
2 Now those tubs and toilet just sit there, taking up space
3 in rooms that used to be bedrooms. The Innu had been
4 travelling inland all over the country. When they were
5 settled here, the less they travelled, and the more they
6 stayed in the community drinking cider.

7 We have seen so many
8 alcohol-related deaths over the past 15 years. People
9 neglect their children when they drink. As a result of
10 this, last year, last February, tragedy struck Davis Inlet.

11 A fire took six children while the parents were out.
12 That is when the people decided that we should look at
13 what's been happening to us for the past 25 years. We
14 approached the government to do an inquiry but they
15 refused, so the Innu decided to do the inquiry themselves.

16 As a result, a report was done called "Gathering Voices:
17 Finding the Strength to Help our Children," and in this
18 report there were recommendations made by the people how
19 to regain their lives and to start a healing process.

20 We have looked at all the
21 institutions that come to Davis and how they have become
22 a part of our--and how we lost control of our lives. In
23 the school, for example, they only teach the white man's
24 ways to our children. Nothing is provided, such as
25 curriculum, to teach our way of life in school. The

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1 these teacher's aids have families and they cannot travel
2 without their families to go outside to get this training.

3 We think the Innu teachers have more experience than any
4 other teacher but are not allowed to teach it to the
5 children by themselves. They always have to have a white
6 teacher there. And when you have a white teacher and an
7 Innu teacher, and the Innu teacher translates, and what
8 she gets is less pay because she is an Innu, but they do
9 the same kind of work.

10 We also had to approach the
11 government to get special funding to teach the life skills.

12 I think our schools should have life skills program like
13 any other subject, even though we don't have the books
14 to do it. The elders have it in their heads to teach it.

15 And why don't we have any books? Because there's no
16 funding.

17 I would like to ask the
18 Commission to recommend that things like life skills
19 programs be available in the school, just like any other
20 subject, for example, English or science or math.

21 It's hard for me to talk
22 about the traditional ways of justice because I'm not sure
23 what our elders used to do. Years ago, we didn't have
24 500 people in one place. They didn't have windows to break
25 in the country. They used to have bands all across in

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1 the country, travelling, but when the RCMP came here, we
2 have seen more and more people going to jail and going
3 to court, and the system is simply not working for us.
4 This is also talked about in the report of "Gathering
5 Voices," why the justice system has failed us.

6 Last year, we sent out two
7 Innu boys to go for training, and we see that as a part
8 of our solution to bridge the gap between the RCMP and
9 our people. These two men trained at the First Nations
10 Tribal Justice Institute. So when we approached the
11 government to recognize these officers, they simply
12 refused. The reasoning that they gave was that the
13 institute that the boys went does not meet the standards
14 of the Government of Newfoundland. So I'm sure that if
15 we had our police officers to patrol our community, and
16 one of the things that the government has been saying to
17 us is that we don't--they want to see the Native people
18 have a better police force than theirs. We have seen
19 corruption with the RCMP.

20 The band council employed
21 the two men that came, the two police officers, and when
22 we tried to ask our officers to patrol our community, for
23 example, it seems like the Department of Justice does not
24 want us to make our own laws in our community. For example,
25 we asked our two officers to shoot the dogs that are roaming

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1 around in the village. We received a call from the RCMP
2 and said you cannot shoot the dogs in the village. If
3 you start shooting the dogs in the village, the two Innu
4 police officers will be charged. The RCMP have been
5 shooting the dogs in the village by people's homes, so
6 they thought that the two Innu officers would do the same.
7 This is an example of how they want to control us from
8 their offices in St. John's or anywhere else.

9 Over the past month or so,
10 we have been talking to government officials, federal and
11 provincial, to help us to set up a mobile treatment facility
12 for our children that are sniffing gas. We have identified
13 42 children that have sniffed gas, and 17 of those are
14 chronic gas sniffers.

15 It seems like every time
16 we ask the government for help, we have to fight all the
17 way. We keep telling them that we know the solutions to
18 our own problems, and I think that is one way of saying
19 that--the one way of trying to control again over our lives,
20 to take matters into our own hands. Not only do they refuse
21 to send our children to treatment centres, we also wanted
22 to treat the whole family, because parents also have a
23 problem.

24 When I made the
25 presentation last spring, I gave the Commissioners of the

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1 people's inquiry, and, again, I won't do the same here.

2 So in one of the recommendations made by the people, and
3 we are strongly trying to fight for whatever the people
4 are saying, is that the only way to regain is that we must
5 relocate, to move away from this island, where we can have
6 better health and living conditions, a place where we can
7 deal with problems facing us. Relocation is the first
8 priority for us, and this time it's the Innu decision,
9 not the decision of government or the church.

10 So during the inquiry, we
11 have listened to our children, and all children need to
12 be happy, they need to be loved and cared for. In many
13 ways, this inquiry and our desire to change expresses the
14 hope that we will find the strength to help our children.

15 Thank you.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

17 Thank you, Chief. Could we ask you some questions? Two
18 Innu who received police training, have you hired them
19 and asked them to do police work here?

20 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes, I
21 have.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

23 What have you done about the dogs? Have you let them run
24 loose or--

25 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Our two

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1 officers have been trying to control the dog problem that
2 we have, and I believe it's under control.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

4 I'd like to get a better handle on the new site that you
5 want to move to. Why do you feel it's better than here
6 for you? Have you enough land to expand there, or what
7 are the characteristics of the new site?

8 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Well,
9 the desire to move away from this island was expressed
10 by the elders. When they were first relocated here, they
11 had no say whatsoever in the relocating of the community,
12 and the elders say that this is our decision, it's not
13 the decision of the government, the desire to move. We
14 have seen five studies done in the community to find
15 suitable drinking water, and they proved that there is
16 simply no water here to support a whole village, and like
17 I said before, there were no future plans made by the
18 government when they decided to move the people, because
19 we just can't find the land to place some of our homes,
20 the houses for the people.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

22 The government involved when you moved here, was that
23 the federal government or the provincial government?

24 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** The
25 provincial government.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

2 O.K. So the new site that you want to go to, does it
3 have all the water and all the land you need?

4 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes, it
5 does.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

7 How big a community can grow there? 5,000? 10,000?

8 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** We've
9 also--the band council have decided to bring in an engineer
10 from outside to put together a town plan, and we have done
11 it in so many phases, so we have seen--the site can
12 accommodate so many houses, so it should be able to expand
13 in the next 50 years. There's a big pond behind the site,
14 and there is plenty of water there, clean water, to supply
15 the whole village.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

17 Are you going to try and move any of the houses from here,
18 or just abandon them or--

19 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Well,
20 none of them are worth saving, so we might abandon all
21 of them, all of the Innu houses anyway.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

23 I was aware that there was some funding on an annual basis
24 that came to the community here. Are you planning on using
25 some of that funding to begin the relocation?

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1 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Last
2 spring, we took some of our building supplies over there,
3 and the provincial government doesn't like that very much
4 because they think we are twisting their arm in deciding
5 to move the community, but we are determined to move.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
7 So by saying that they feel you're twisting their arms,
8 the Province has not been convinced yet that it's a good
9 idea to move?

10 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** No.
11 Just a few weeks ago, a study has been finished to look
12 at the possibilities of relocating or staying here in the
13 community, but the report has not been released yet. It
14 won't be released until December 7th. So the report looks
15 promising.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
17 Who did the report?

18 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:**
19 Terpstra & Associates of Goose Bay.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
21 Could you make sure we get a copy of that?

22 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
24 What about the federal government? Are they convinced
25 of the change, are they open to being changed--of the

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1 relocation?

2 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** One of
3 the things that they told us was they would have to look
4 at the report first before they could make decisions on
5 it.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
7 So in the relocation over the next years, what kind of
8 assistance is it you're hoping will come from government?

9 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Well,
10 one of the things that we will strongly ask for is that
11 we would get the proper housing that the people need, the
12 proper water and sewer, just like any other people across
13 Canada, is simply what we want.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
15 So I presume you've been talking to Tom Siddon about that.

16 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** I
17 haven't spoken to him directly, but the previous council
18 have.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
20 And Siddon's department is waiting for the report?

21 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
23 Is this something that the government commissioned, this
24 study?

25 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** No.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

2 Could you tell us a little bit more about it?

3 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** O.K.

4 We approached the government to do a study on Davis, of
5 relocating Davis Inlet, so that is right when you say that.

6 We did ask--the previous council asked Tom Siddon to
7 include Shango as part of this study. So they agreed to
8 have Shango Pond as part of the study and also to do a
9 study on this site as well, what are the options of having
10 water and sewer in Davis.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

12 And that's the study that's going to be going on.

13 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes.

14 It won't be released until December 7th, as far as I know.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

16 What happens if the report says that this site here is
17 wonderful and it's right where the Innu should stay?

18 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** We've
19 already had some building materials over there, so if the
20 government says no, then we will be determined to move
21 ourselves. This is what I have been getting from the
22 elders, as well as the other community members as well,
23 that we will move no matter what.

24 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

25 What will you do?

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1 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Well,
2 we'll simply take some of the houses here in Davis and
3 just move them to the site.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
5 You cited social problems earlier, because of the despair
6 and the loss of control and the rest of it. What do you
7 see being done there? You talked about the need for
8 healing. How would you see that coming?

9 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Well,
10 one of the first steps we think we should take is that
11 we need to heal the parents, the whole family, because
12 they have the problem of alcoholism over the years, and
13 we think that's one way of taking the step in healing our
14 people and our children. Because we have seen children
15 from alcoholic families that start sniffing gas, and we've
16 been trying to tell that to government, that they need
17 treatment and we have to do it ourselves. And one of the
18 thing that we proposed was that we obtain a facility which
19 is in Border Beacon.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
21 Which is where?

22 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Border
23 Beacon. It's in the country, and it used to be an Armed
24 Forces base, and it was sold to someone in Goose Bay for
25 a dollar. But when we tried to ask them if we could

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1 purchase--

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

3 For two dollars?

4 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** His

5 price was one million dollars.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

7 What are they doing with it--

8 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** I could

9 tell you so many horror stories that you would not believe--

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

11 It would curl my hair even more, would it?

12 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes.

13 So that's one of the first things that we would like to

14 do, to obtain this Border Beacon facility and set it up

15 as a treatment centre for our people, because when Health

16 & Welfare came in--when we told them about the problems

17 that we had, of the 42 children that are sniffing gas,

18 they came in for a week, and they called across Canada

19 to find a treatment centre for our children, but there

20 was none across Canada. So this is one way, I think, to

21 help ourselves, is to set up this treatment for our people.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

23 Now what do you see in the long run that will employ people

24 as far as the rural-- Do you see continuing activity on

25 the land, do you see people becoming professionals and

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1 taking jobs--

2 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** That is
3 one of the things that I think we have to look at as well,
4 is that the people here are people who used to travel in
5 the country, they used to travel everywhere, and the only
6 thing that they are capable of doing is to hunt the animals
7 in the country. They do not see the animals that they
8 kill to--it's--all they know is to share, is to share the
9 things that they have killed in the country, so they have
10 no knowledge of making the animals that they kill to be
11 a part of--or sell them to other people.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
13 Do people still have their traditional skills of being
14 able to travel on the land?

15 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes,
16 they do, yeah.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
18 Is it being passed on to young people?

19 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes,
20 they are.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
22 How strong is the Indian--

23 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** I think
24 one of the things that it also said in the inquiry was
25 that these kinds of traditional things that the people

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1 have should be taught in the school as well, because there
2 are more non-Native teachers at the school than Natives,
3 and we don't have elders in the school, and we have to
4 have special funding in order to teach our life skills
5 in the school. We think that should be a part of a subject
6 that should be taught at school.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
8 How strong is the Innu language here? Is it being passed
9 on to young people?

10 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes, it
11 is. Practically every child in the community knows the
12 language.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
14 That's quite remarkable.

15 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yeah,
16 it is, and we are proud to say that we are trying to maintain
17 our language, keep it alive.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
19 The week before last, Mary and I went up to Old Crow in
20 the Yukon. It's the northernmost community in the Yukon,
21 and very, very isolated. The only way you can get in is
22 to fly in. It's a traditional community, and they're
23 losing their language. They feel that television and the
24 schools in English, and they see the end of the time when
25 people speak Lusha (PH), it's a [Wet'suwet'en?] language.

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1 So it's quite amazing that your language is still quite
2 strong, quite remarkable.

3 So the material that you
4 brought on site, to your new community site, did you begin
5 building your first house or just arrived before the snow
6 or--

7 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** No, we
8 took it over there last spring. So when the government
9 said that they'll be doing a study at Shango Pond, we
10 decided to wait until a decision had been made whether
11 to relocate the village or not, so we haven't done anything
12 with the material over there yet.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
14 Ideally, how many houses are you going to build in the
15 first year?

16 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** We are
17 looking at 50.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
19 50, five zero, in the first year?

20 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
22 You want to move in one year?

23 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Not
24 really, no, we don't. Well, the way we are looking at
25 it is that we will be building so many houses a year, and

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1 by 1996, no, 2001, the whole village will be relocated
2 at the site.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

4 That's 50 houses--

5 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** It will
6 be more than 50 houses. I don't know how many houses we
7 will be building a year, but we have calculated over a
8 specific period that we will be building so many every
9 year.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

11 What do you do when you start moving and some people are
12 living there and some are living here?

13 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** That's
14 one of the concerns we have to look at as well. One of
15 the things that we haven't done yet is that we have to
16 bring our town plan to the people here in the community.
17 That's one of the things that we have to do, once the
18 decision to move the village is done.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

20 Is there a better wood supply there?

21 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes,
22 there is.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

24 Is it closer to hunting and so on?

25 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes.

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1 One other reason why we are moving is that usually we are
2 on this island, and the hunters cannot travel on the
3 mainland until it's frozen over or when the ice is open,
4 so we are stuck here sometimes two or three months a year
5 that we cannot travel to the mainland.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
7 This site you're talking about, is it still on the coast?

8 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes, it
9 is. It's about 15 miles west of Davis.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
11 Is it reachable by large boats?

12 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes, it
13 should be.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
15 So you could still have it serviced by Marine Atlantic
16 or--

17 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yeah.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
19 And what made you choose that spot over other spots?
20 Is it in some kind of significant site or--

21 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** For the
22 past two years, we have been having gatherings at this
23 site, and one of the things that the elders were saying
24 is that the people have been living at this site, and they
25 have chosen this place, the elders have chosen that place

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1 to be the place for us to relocate because it has room
2 for houses, and it has water, lots of water. It has a
3 big pond behind it. There's no way for us to run out of
4 water.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

6 How many buildings in Davis Inlet outside of what the
7 Innu are living in are there?

8 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** There
9 are about 80 Innu homes.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

11 42, it says in our book, but--

12 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** I'm
13 sorry?

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

15 It says 42 in our book here, but it could be outdated.

16 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** I think
17 there are about 60 Innu homes, and the rest are non-Innu
18 or the school, and none of those houses are worth saving.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

20 You can use them as kindling to start your fires?

21 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** We
22 could use them when we relocate.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

24 Do you have any questions?

25 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

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1 See what happens when you're the chief? You get
2 questioned long, eh? I'm not going to be long, anyway.
3 Can you tell me, what's the difference between Innu and
4 Mushuau Innu, because I heard people say Innu and Mushuau
5 Innu, and I'm just wondering, in my own head, what the
6 difference is.

7 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Mushuau
8 Innu is what we call ourselves, and, for example, they
9 are Montagnais and Naskapi, and we are Mushuau Innu.

10 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
11 Mushuau Innu are the Davis Inlet people?

12 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** People
13 of the--

14 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
15 Of Davis Inlet, and then Sheshatshiu are Innu?

16 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Well,
17 yeah. It's all--all have the same name, but each tribe
18 has different--

19 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
20 So the Naskapi are one and the Montagnais are another.

21 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes.

22 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
23 O.K. We've often heard, and especially in this area,
24 that there are Indian communities, for example, and they
25 receive CORE funding from the Secretary of State. In this

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1 area, you receive provincial funding from Canada and
2 Newfoundland and Native peoples of--it's a long one, but
3 Innu--so is that your situation, that you receive funding
4 from both those sources?

5 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** That's
6 right, yes.

7 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
8 And are you in the position, like other bands, of wanting
9 recognition--

10 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** That's
11 what we've been asking for. I believe the Innu nation
12 has been asking the federal government to give direct
13 funding to the Innu rather than going through the
14 provincial government, and the provincial government gives
15 the funding to us. So one of the things that we did ask
16 for was to give us direct funding from Ottawa.

17 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
18 Yes, I find that very interesting, because some of the
19 groups that we hear is that they don't want the Indian
20 Act, they certainly don't want to come under it, and you
21 guys aren't into it and you want into it, and I'm just
22 wondering what you see as the benefits of being--

23 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** I'm
24 sorry, I can't hear you.

25 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

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1 What do you think is good about it? Why do you want to
2 go that way?

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

4 The Indian Act, she's talking about.

5 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** The

6 Indian Act?

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

8 She's saying that it seems like Innu want to go underneath
9 the Indian Act.

10 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** No, we
11 don't, no.

12 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

13 **You don't?** You just want recognition--

14 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** That's
15 right, yes.

16 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

17 I'm just wondering too--it's very clear that the Innu
18 have been able to maintain their own language, and I found
19 that really quite always interesting, and I'm wondering
20 what is it that you've been able to maintain your language
21 despite all kinds of pressures. I guess, in this area,
22 you're more of an island, eh? For the Innu in Sheshatshiu,
23 they're alongside of North West River, and they're only
24 30 miles from Goose Bay, and they've still been able to
25 maintain their language, and I'm just wondering if you

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1 can tell us what lessons everybody else can learn about
2 maintaining their language.

3 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Well,
4 it's only a few years ago that we have seen--for the past
5 couple of years we have seen TV into our living rooms.
6 It's only a few years ago that people started living in
7 the community, because they used to travel--they didn't
8 used to stay in Davis. They used to be up the Bay, or
9 anywhere else, they usually take their children with them,
10 so it's only a certain time of the year that they usually
11 come to Davis and stay.

12 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
13 Sheshatshiu, they've been able to maintain their
14 language, and they have a different history than the
15 history of Davis Inlet.

16 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Oh, I'm
17 not so sure.

18 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
19 Now one of the things that we heard very, very clearly
20 in Sheshatshiu, and the reason, and the reason I remember
21 is because I guess I've always been aware of it. I grew
22 up in North West River and lived in Happy Valley-Goose
23 Bay, but the amount of racism that is directed towards
24 the Innu, and I always remember Lionel Rich's presentation.
25 He was saying we're not dogs, we're human beings, and

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1 it occurred to me that it's pretty sad when you've been
2 treated so badly all of your life that you have to remind
3 others that you are a human being, that you are worthy
4 of respect.

5 I'm bothered by the amount
6 of racism that I see in my own homeland, and I know that
7 the Innu in Sheshatshiu live under different
8 circumstances. They're surrounded by--they're the
9 minority in the middle, and then there's the
10 [Kablunangajuk?] and then there's the qallunuk on that
11 side. But I was wondering, too, that it seems to me that
12 even though the Mushuau Innu are the majority in Davis
13 Inlet, it seems to me that there's still some kind of racism
14 that exists. I read excerpts from your report saying that
15 qallunuk teachers have come in, the storekeepers, the very
16 few qallunuk that you have here have made comments, and
17 they were derogatory comments, about the children and about
18 the community. So I'm wondering, does that racism exist,
19 why do you think it's there, and how do you think it can
20 be stopped?

21 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** In the
22 report, we have heard a lot of racist remarks made by the
23 people that come to Davis, and I guess the Innu have been
24 putting up with it, and they will have to put up with it,
25 because it exists everywhere else, racism exists

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1 everywhere else, and they, too, have made racist remarks
2 about the white people that come to our village, and I
3 think it works both ways. I do not blame the people who
4 are being racist, because of the way they have been treated
5 for the past 25 years since they moved to Davis. We have
6 seen, over the years, what the--as we become more educated,
7 we have seen some of the things that the government has
8 done to our people.

9 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

10 When you were saying that the schools have not done
11 anything to teach children about what it's like being Innu,
12 and then you say that yet parents obviously encourage
13 education. You were saying that parents say that if you
14 don't go to school, you won't get a job, you won't get
15 anything, and I'm wondering, if they do go to school, do
16 they get something?

17 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** I'm
18 sorry, I don't understand.

19 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

20 Like, for example, are there a lot of dropouts, are there
21 a lot of kids that finish school--

22 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes,
23 there are a lot of dropouts, yes.

24 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

25 And a lot more dropouts.

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1 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** We have
2 seen a lot of dropouts over the years, and one of the things
3 we see as a problem is that children are not encouraged
4 to go to school, and that's one of the problems that we
5 see is the alcoholism. There is no way that a parent who
6 has a problem with drinking will encourage his children
7 to go to school when he has seen so much despair in the
8 community. When there's a sense of hopelessness among
9 the Elders in our community, this sense of hopelessness
10 is passed on to the children.

11 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
12 And the people, for example, that finish school, what
13 do they do? Do they come back here, do they get good jobs?

14 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** We have
15 seen five graduates last year, and none of them went out
16 to further their education. They are here in the community
17 doing odd jobs here and there.

18 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
19 Do you know if there are some--I know, for example, you
20 went to university, you got a good position with the
21 community, and I know that two of your people went to the
22 first-- I saw that story on television sometime, they're
23 back here and they're employed by the bands. I'm wondering
24 people that go out and get educated, do they then come
25 back and assume the top positins in your community,

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1 usually?

2 **CHIEF KATIE RICH:** Yes,
3 that's right.

4 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

5 O.K. It's getting close to lunch time. I don't know
6 if I should ask any more questions.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

8 We're going to break for lunch now for about an hour,
9 I guess. We'll start again at around 1:30.

10 --- Hearing is recessed at 12:22 hr.

11 --- Hearing is resumed at 13:25 hr.

12 **GEORGE RICH,**

13 **VICE-PRESIDENT, INNU NATION:** My name is George Rich, and
14 I'm vice-president of the Innu nation. I want to begin
15 by saying that I had prepared a statement on behalf of
16 the Innu nation, and I also want to point out my own personal
17 experience in dealing with the community and my own
18 experience in dealing with the four levels of government.

19 (Native language--no translation available)

20 Davis Inlet is in a really bad
21 situation right now. It's got all kinds of problems that
22 never existed in other Native communities across Canada.

23 But I don't come here to talk about problems, because
24 I heard what you said there. People already mentioned
25 it a thousand times, a million times.

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1 The solution, I believe,
2 is to regain control of our lives in the community, to
3 regain control of the school, the white institutions, like
4 the store, the clinic and all other stuff that's
5 controlling us right now, mainly, I guess, the police
6 force, the RCMP agency. (Native language--no translation
7 available)

8 I want to talk about the
9 school. You'll have to pardon me. English is not my
10 mother tongue, and I dropped out when I was in grade eight,
11 so I'm one of the people who learn things in the hard way.
12 The school that we have used and when I went into is the
13 elementary school, name of Bouchois (PH) Innu school, and
14 it is in our language People of the Bare Lands School.
15 It was started by the missionaries, and I was taught by
16 the white society, by understanding the white people.
17 I was taught how great Joey Smallwood is, and how great
18 John MacDonald is. I was taught how to sing "O Canada"
19 and "Honour to Newfoundland."

20 One thing I was never
21 taught is the history, the rich history that we have, the
22 people here in Utshimasits. I wasn't taught how great
23 my people were, how great my ancestors were, how far the
24 distances were they travelled from the Quebec border to
25 everywhere in Nitassinan. I wasn't taught that there are

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1 not the only ones who depend on those monies. All kinds
2 of monies have been available to people in Newfoundland,
3 people in Canada, the subsidies, the jobs. There's a
4 40-million subsidy that is available to Canadian Airlines.
5 That's a government subsidy. And there's \$400 a week
6 of money that's available to Newfoundlanders. That's a
7 subsidy. And there's a family allowance, and that's a
8 subsidy, too. We are in no better shape than any other
9 people, even though we are given funding to look after
10 community projects and pick up garbage or look after
11 housing repairs and all that.

12 But in the community with
13 us it's very different than the other Native communities
14 across Canada. People are recognized. People existed,
15 whether it is in a treaty or whether it's in reserves.
16 And every time we ask for funding, a certain kind of
17 funding, there has always been a stumbling block. There's
18 a wall there that we couldn't go through. We were told
19 we're not recognized. We were told we're not registered.
20 We're not a card-carrying Indian. That's the kind of
21 things that have frustrated me and frustrated some other
22 people in Utshimasits.

23 Again, I would like to ask
24 a question. What do we have to do to make our point clear
25 to the governments? About five or six miles south of here,

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1 there's a radar site. I could easily know how to make
2 a bomb, and I could blow that place apart. I could easily
3 be filled with anger and tear that place apart. I could
4 easily do that. I could easily ask my people to do that.
5 And there are facilities all across the Disinow (PH).
6 There are facilities of fish camps, and I could easily
7 burn those fish camps. There's a facility that we're
8 talking about off and on near Border Beacon where they
9 have search and rescue gas tanks. I could easily burn
10 that gasoline. But I'll be regarded as a militant Indian,
11 a terrorist. I don't want to take that kind of approach,
12 because my people have always been a peace-loving people.
13 They're not violent people.

14 I have seen a lot of
15 militants across Newfoundland. The Newfoundlanders broke
16 into an office building. That's militant. I've seen much
17 more peaceable protests in Sheshatshiu. I don't call that
18 militant.

19 I want to begin by saying
20 the Innu Nation presentation to the Royal Commission on
21 Aboriginal Peoples. The public knows about this
22 commission, and asks for answers to the following
23 questions. How will Aboriginal self-government lead to
24 political and economic self-sufficiency? The Innu nation
25 has the answers to this question, but I want to make it

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1 clear from the beginning that the Innu are not waiting
2 for any government or Royal Commission to take action on
3 our rights. We have already waited too long. We are
4 implementing our rights now, but it is difficult to do
5 this because of Canada and Newfoundland policies. All
6 we ask of this Commission is that you take what we have
7 to say about Innu government seriously. All we can hope
8 for this is that your recommendations will result in
9 changes in provincial and federal policies, so that
10 implementation of Innu rights is less of a constant
11 struggle. We want to get on with the important issues
12 that face our nation. We want to be able to go to the
13 country without any fear that someone in a faraway city
14 is deposing on the very land upon which we rely.

15 I want to begin by saying
16 that I know Innu government is, and then I want to say
17 something about the obstructions to the Innu government
18 and how this Commission can help to remove these
19 obstructions.

20 Innu government--what is
21 it? Innu government means the recognition by provincial
22 and federal governments that the Innu nation has a
23 nation-to-nation relationship with Canada and a
24 nation-to-government relationship with Newfoundland. We
25 have never signed any treaty or any agreement giving up

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1 our land or any rights to Nitassinan. We never gave the
2 government or the people of Canada and Newfoundland any
3 rights to use our land or resources without our permission.

4 Legally, that means we retain Aboriginal title to our
5 land and the right to govern ourselves, which goes to
6 Aboriginal title.

7 Section 35.1 of Canada's
8 Constitution recognizes and should protect our rights.
9 We do not receive rights from Canada, nor have we given
10 the responsibility to Canada to define our rights. No
11 other people or government can give us our rights. Our
12 rights to Innu government, to be a nation of Nitassinan,
13 entitles us to the same rights as any other nation state
14 in the world, namely the right to control our land and
15 resources, and to decide how the land and resources should
16 used, and reap the benefits of the decided use. This means
17 the right to use our language, to practice our own
18 spirituality, to establish our own institutions, and to
19 live and preserve our culture.

20 Innu government means the
21 right of the Innu to be self-determining now and for many
22 generations of Innu to come. It means an adequate land
23 and resource base and the control of those lands and
24 resources. It means accurate jurisdiction to run our own
25 institutions, such as schools and other programs, programs

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1 for our people that includes the special needs of children,
2 elders and single parents. It means adequate financial
3 relief from our lands and resources and compensation for
4 the past and continued illegal use of our lands and
5 resources. It means that we'll make the decisions about
6 what other use can be made of our lands. If provincial
7 licenses for use of our lands are issued, we'll issue them
8 and decide on the royalties and terms and conditions
9 attached to the license.

10 Most importantly, the Innu
11 government will nurture and promote Innu use of our land.

12 To live on our land for periods of time throughout the
13 year continues to be of central importance to maintaining
14 our culture. We are a hunting people. Life in the
15 country, away from the villages, is not sufficient for
16 us. It is what is at the heart of who we are as a people.

17 In the country, we have the skills passed to us from our
18 mothers and fathers. In the country, we are the teachers,
19 passing on Innu skills to our children. It will be a major
20 role of the Innu government to do whatever is necessary
21 to ensure that our rights to use and occupy our lands are
22 protected.

23 All of these are examples
24 of what Innu government means. I think it is obvious how
25 recognition of the Innu government and the Innu rights

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1 Constitution finally recognized Aboriginal and treaty
2 rights in Section 35.1. This was a positive step, but
3 only a small step, as Canada and Newfoundland remain
4 reluctant to use Section 35 to implement the
5 nation-to-nation relationships with Aboriginal nations.

6 The comprehensive claims policy of the Federal government
7 is a good case in point. In 1985, the Cooligan report
8 on Canada's comprehensive claims policy made some very
9 positive recommendations which could have brought the
10 policy more in line with Section 35, but most of these
11 recommendations were ignored in a minor revision made to
12 the policy in 1987.

13 The Innu nation is
14 currently in the framework stage of comprehensive claims
15 negotiations with Canada and Newfoundland. We entered
16 those negotiations very reluctantly because of narrowness
17 of the claim policy of both Canada and Newfoundland, but
18 we entered in good faith, with the hope that the process
19 could be used to restore our nation-to-nation relationship
20 with Canada and our nation-to-government relationship with
21 Newfoundland. We also entered with hope that the
22 comprehensive claim policy would change to reflect the
23 growing awareness of the need to recognize every man,
24 rather than distinguish Innu rights.

25 Through our experience in

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1 governments negotiated with with a number of treaties
2 during the past 125 years.

3 Today, they still come with
4 the equivalent of a pre-written agreement and say take
5 it or leave it. We have no real access to the political
6 people behind the negotiations, and the process is most
7 often frustrating. What is needed is a formal political
8 table where Aboriginal, federal and provincial ministers
9 meet on a regular basis to consider issues referred to
10 them by the technical table of negotiators.

11 Under the present system,
12 the federal and provincial representatives are not really
13 negotiators. They have no power to negotiate anything.

14 All they do is present positions, and have no power to
15 divide from those positions. Your Commission should
16 recommend something like an Ontario round table which
17 brings Ontario cabinet ministers and Aboriginal leaders
18 together on a regular basis to discuss the implementation
19 of Aboriginal rights.

20 I should make it clear that
21 although we enter negotiations with Canada and
22 Newfoundland, we do not accept their negotiating policy.

23 As I have just discussed, our nation has its own policy
24 that allows us to see what can be achieved at negotiations,
25 while rejecting the parts of the Canada and Newfoundland

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1 policies that will compromise our nation. At the same
2 time, we continue to implement our rights in other ways,
3 and will take action when our lands and our rights and
4 our lives are threatened.

5 Conclusion. I began this
6 presentation by saying the Innu government means exerting
7 the right to self-determination and self-sufficiency.
8 However, I want to add that I believe it's important that
9 the Innu and non-Aboriginal nations not wait until all
10 these matters are settled legally and constitutionally
11 before beginning to exercise the rights of
12 self-government.

13 Today, the Innu nation
14 faces many serious and complicated issues. We have, over
15 the past five years, made efforts to address all the issues
16 in which ways to bring us to be more self-determining and
17 self-sufficient. For example, in 1991, using the \$20,000
18 Peace Foundation prize that was awarded to the Innu people
19 for the non-violent opposition to the militarization of
20 our land. We established our own health clinic at the
21 community of Sheshatshiu.

22 The next step, in the short
23 term, we hope that we'll be able to have federal funding
24 now provided to the province for health services in our
25 regard allocated--reallocated to us directly. Similarly,

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1 in regard to the education of our children, we have been
2 forced on several occasions over the past three years to
3 lock our school in Sheshatshiu in order to force
4 Newfoundland to acknowledge our right to jurisdiction over
5 education. We are gradually succeeding in this. A
6 greater challenge arises in trying to finance the education
7 of our children.

8 In the face of the
9 ever-increasing industrial expansion and seizure of our
10 lands and resources, we have been ready to resist. This
11 has meant blockading logging roads and marching on runways
12 at CFB Goose Bay. Many of us have spent weeks, or in some
13 cases, months, in jail. Today, Innu in the community of
14 Sheshatshiu are refusing to pay their Newfoundland and
15 Labrador hydro bills. They have removed the hydro meters
16 and replaced them with CSA-approved jumpers so that they
17 still have power. The community decided it was immoral
18 to pay for the power produced at the Innu expense. It
19 was immoral to help finance the company determined to flood
20 more Innu lands.

21 In the past few years, we
22 have also come to acknowledge the terrible impact that
23 alcohol and chemical dependency has on our people and on
24 the function of our society. We face a very complex and
25 costly challenge for providing the means of treatment and

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1 healing for our people in the Innu environment where we
2 are to build a healthy society for the future.

3 Another issue, my
4 community, Utshimasits, has shown a desperate need for
5 changes in the implementation of policing and justice
6 issues. This became a central element which we are
7 beginning to become self-determining once again. In a
8 step towards achieving this goal, the people of Utshimasits
9 have trained and mandated two men as their police officers.

10 Predictably, the government of Newfoundland has refused
11 to recognize these steps.

12 Utshimasits is a prison for
13 us. It's located on the island, whereas we are people
14 of the land. During the spring break-up and freeze-up,
15 we are trapped here, unable to get to the mainland where
16 you can hunt and fish for food. There's not enough here
17 to provide each family with the basic necessities. The
18 ground is not good for housing. In short, the only reason
19 we are on this island is because others decided this was
20 a good place. We were not consulted. We are trying to
21 relocate, but governments want studies and fear action.

22 When we decided to take matters into our own hands and
23 began building new homes on the new site we have selected,
24 we will try to build the new houses at the new site, the
25 government was very furious. So we once again showed good

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1 integrity of the Innu. We are attempting to prepare
2 ourselves for the future now, so that we have the experience
3 and capability to exercise fully the rights of the Innu
4 government once the governments of Canada and Newfoundland
5 have come to acknowledge that right.

6 Four, as Innu, we face a particular
7 difficulty concerning recognition by the federal and
8 provincial governments. In 1949, when Newfoundland
9 joined Confederation, the Innu were never consulted, and
10 by the decision, Newfoundland claimed jurisdiction over
11 every facet of our lives and laid claim to all our lands.

12

13 Still today, Newfoundland
14 defines us as ordinary citizens of the province of
15 Newfoundland. In doing so, the province neatly avoids
16 recognition of the Innu as a distinct people or nation.

17 This position has been accepted by the government of
18 Canada since 1949. The government of Canada argues that
19 it will bear responsibility only for health care in
20 relation to the Innu that has been undertaken to support
21 financially to the province for these programs. In recent
22 months, we have called upon the federal government to
23 recognize its failure to current responsibilities in
24 regard to the Innu. We are awaiting a response from them.

25

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1 In a separate action, we
2 launched an official complaint to the Canadian Human Rights
3 Commission concerning this matter, and have asked them
4 to examine the issue.

5 I have talked long enough.
6 These problems have built up over many, many years, and
7 I could talk for days and weeks. We have already talked
8 at many similar meetings. We have written and we have
9 meet with Newfoundland and Canada. We have been arrested
10 for defending what we knew to be true, but we have not
11 seen results. Sometimes I wonder why we are talking at
12 all. In the case of this Royal Commission, I hope that,
13 for a change, action will result.

14 I have this letter here,
15 and I am supposed to give it to you. Do you want me to
16 read it or--

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

18 Give it to us. Can we ask you a few questions?

19 **GEORGE RICH:** Sure.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

21 Thank you for your presentation. You said something
22 at the end there that I thought I better check on. You
23 said in 1949 when Newfoundland joined Canada, the Innu
24 were not consulted.

25 **GEORGE RICH:** No.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

2 What did you mean? They had two referendums, and the
3 first one was not successful, so they had another one,
4 and just slightly over 50 percent voted to join Canada.

5 There were fewer options in the second referendum. Does
6 that mean that the Innu were not provided an opportunity
7 to vote in the referendum, or if they were, that your people
8 boycotted, or that they participated and didn't know what
9 they were participating in? What is it you're telling
10 us?

11 **GEORGE RICH:** At the time,
12 the missionaries were really powerful in the community.

13 I think, at that time, they had a lot to do with it.
14 The missionary has always been a spokesperson at the time
15 for our communities. They say you go and vote for this,
16 and you're going to get a lot of support. You're going
17 to get new housing, you're going to get all the new stuff,
18 family allowance. So I think they were consulted on the
19 terms, but they were not consulted on the terms of what
20 was going to happen. They were not explained. There was
21 not much more information that was given to them.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

23 You still haven't answered what I asked, though. I wanted
24 to know if they actually took part in the referendum.
25 Did they actually go and vote in the ballot or--

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1 **GEORGE RICH:** I think they
2 voted, a few people voted, I think. The only remaining
3 people who now vote, I guess, are in the country. I think
4 they did vote, few people voted.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
6 So what you're saying is that because of the influence
7 of the church at the time, that you don't really consider
8 it a serious consultation.

9 **GEORGE RICH:** No, it
10 wasn't.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
12 How many of your people voted? What do you think? Half,
13 three-quarters, ten percent?

14 **GEORGE RICH:** I don't
15 know. It could be--

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
17 Were there some people on the land at the time?

18 **GEORGE RICH:** At the time,
19 there were people travelling all the time, and there were
20 people who hang around in the mission, in the trading post.

21 I think the people that remained would be maybe 30, 20
22 families, I think.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
24 O.K. The comprehensive claims policy that you talked
25 about that you want changes in, you're against

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1 extinguishment, you want it based on some kind of
2 recognition policy.

3 **GEORGE RICH:** Yeah, like
4 we're not recognized right now. Every time you ask for
5 funding or any kind of funding that could help us, we're
6 always told that you're not registered, you're not an
7 Indian reserve, and we're not recognized at all. But the
8 time is changing, and they start to recognize the health,
9 we've got the health agreement and we've got the education
10 agreement. It's very slow. But we're not saying that
11 we want to be registered as Indians. We want to be
12 recognized so we can get access to resources that the other
13 Aboriginal people are getting. We were told that the other
14 Aboriginal people across Canada want to get out of the
15 Indian Act, they want to abolish the Indian Affairs
16 Department. But it's going to be very foolish for us to
17 go into the Indian Act, when everybody wants to get out
18 of it.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
20 Right. I think those were my questions. Mary, do you
21 have any others?

22 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
23 Thanks, George and George, both Georges. When we were
24 coming to Labrador, and I was on the plane with Georges,
25 and I said Georges, you know, those Labrador people are

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1 that we don't have that kind of experience that the Elders
2 have, like implementing the way of life and the hunting
3 skills and the Aboriginal beliefs and the spirituality
4 But sometimes, they're very angry with us. There have
5 always been confrontations between Elders when I was
6 growing up. They've always been there. They are the
7 advisors. One time we had an Elder council here, and
8 that's when we realized that we cannot do this alone.
9 We, the young people, cannot do it alone. We need help
10 from the Elders. We had Elders advise us on the land claims
11 and negotiations, and we have Elders that we occasionally
12 go to to talk, and we always have Elders to open the
13 meetings. But it's also a very dangerous position to have
14 an Elder running the council. They could be easily
15 manipulated also by the outsiders. I have seen the Elders
16 be manipulated by the outsiders who came to work, and I
17 have seen the Elders sign cheques, to sign things like
18 that, to be manipulated by business persons, whether in
19 Goose Bay or St. John's, just to get the funding. I've
20 seen that, and that's dangerous.

21 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

22 Why? Is it because they can't speak English?

23 **GEORGE RICH:** Because they
24 cannot speak English, and because they don't know how to
25 write, and because they don't know the difference between

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1 a salesperson and--I don't know. It's difficult. I've
2 seen Elders like that in the community.

3 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

4 So what would your definition of a great leader be, like
5 what kind of skills would that person have to have?

6 **GEORGE RICH:** I'm a very
7 different person. A great leader, to me, is going to have
8 knowledge of the old traditional ways and a knowledge of
9 the English language, and must be a solid leader to
10 understand the problems that are affecting us here daily.

11 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

12 And so do you have many of those in your community, many
13 people that are like that, that young people can look up
14 to, that everybody can respect?

15 **GEORGE RICH:** There are
16 quite a few now. Years ago, I used to drink myself, and
17 I know a lot of people who are drinking right now and they're
18 recovering gradually. I think that's the kind of
19 leadership that's needed in the community.

20 I attend a lot of workshops
21 across Canada, and I want to learn what their system is
22 in community leadership. And they always say the healer,
23 the person who heals could heal the other person. If I'm
24 a drinking person and talk about drinking, that, to me,
25 is telling a lie, and if I'm not a drinker and talk about

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1 drinking, I just may as well speak to shoe, and that's
2 the kind of leadership that's needed in this community.

3 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

4 That's what we also heard from the young kids in Nain,
5 that they have now many adults who set a bad example, they
6 needed good role models.

7 The second question, the
8 last question. On this whole issue of civil disobedience,
9 we've known now for awhile that that's going on in Labrador,
10 that the Innu have occupied the runways, and when you get
11 around, you hear a lot of people saying, you know, call
12 the Innu down to the dirt because of that kind of action,
13 not really understanding why they do that, and saying that
14 the Innu have much more support internationally than
15 locally for these kinds of efforts, and you've more or
16 less said that you're really, really frustrated, there
17 must be a way to get governments to listen, you've tried
18 everything, everything hasn't worked. And you've
19 mentioned that as a peace-loving people, you've been so
20 frustrated for so long that you've even thought about doing
21 more serious things, and I'm wondering--I haven't heard
22 a lot about that in Labrador. For the most part, people
23 are very peace loving, and I'm wondering if you take that
24 kind of action, what impact will that have on your
25 relationship with the people in this region. Do you think

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1 that will either help you get what you want or not help
2 you get what you want, or do you think this kind of action
3 will get you what you want with the provincial and federal
4 governments and with the people of Labrador here, seeking
5 a relationship of equality and respect?

6 **GEORGE RICH:** To me, one
7 of the things that I know, while travelling back and forth
8 to Goose Bay all the time, is that people in Goose Bay
9 lack understanding of the Innu culture. They have the
10 Innu in their own backyard there, and they still don't
11 know what they're fighting for and what they want.

12 Looking back at
13 disobedience, when I hear the news now and see some people
14 occupied the CEIC office or Secretary of State, all that
15 kind of office that they occupy, and they get results right
16 away, and they are militant people. The break windows
17 or they break doors, and the government quickly responds
18 to that. I've been repeating the same things in my
19 meetings with bureaucrats over and over.

20 I had a meeting with a
21 bureaucrat about a week and a half ago. What I wanted
22 to do, what frustrates me is, yeah, yeah, we care and all
23 that. I wanted to bang on his head, hello, are you in
24 there, are you listening. Open your eyes. You're in
25 Utshimasits now. Open your eyes. But that's the kind

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1 **DAVID NUI:** I have one
2 question there. (Native language--no translation
3 available)

4 **PHILIP RICH:** Thank you
5 very much, George and Mary. My presentation is not more
6 than one page long. In 1967, the government of
7 Newfoundland had moved Innu to this island. Since that
8 time, the community has never improved. Poor housing,
9 and no water can be found anywhere on this island.

10 Our Elders and children are
11 suffering the most because of poor living conditions in
12 this community. Our children are feeling helpless and
13 they end up into gas sniffing. Both governments don't
14 seem to care what happens to our children and Elders.
15 In the last two years, we have talked about moving to a
16 better location, but who's going to listen, who will fund
17 the new location. When we look at how many millions of
18 dollars are spent on the military in Labrador, in Goose.
19 The low-level flying jets doesn't benefit us. Instead,
20 they are destroying our way of life.

21 Some of our children can
22 no longer watch our community falling backward, not getting
23 better, so they're committing suicide, and those who
24 survive end up drinking alcohol and gas sniffing, just
25 to forget how much they suffer.

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1 In the present Davis Inlet, living conditions are very
2 bad, and we all suffer from that. We are not getting
3 anywhere. It's like moving back to the future.

4 To conclude, I would like
5 to say thanks to the Royal Commission for listening to
6 our concerns in Davis Inlet. And this, I also have to
7 give to you, I guess.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

9 Thank you very much.

10 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH, YOUTH**

11 **COUNCIL AND TRIBAL POLICE:** I have two presentations to
12 make today. One is the youth council and one is tribal
13 police. My first presentation is the youth council.

14 I'm the president of the
15 youth council. We have been trying to get our strength
16 for our youth. We have been struggling against outside
17 culture, the government bureaucracy, both provincial and
18 federal. When we ask for funds to help achieve our own
19 vision, they usually say that we're not status Indians.

20 The Indian Act doesn't include us because we never signed
21 the treaty.

22 Sometimes we wonder who we
23 are. Are we human beings? We, the Innu of Utshimasits,
24 are looked at as lower-class citizens. We, the youth
25 council, simply do not have enough resources, human

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1 has a big recreation centre and an addition to the school
2 gym. We have been scheduled into a few hours and weekends
3 only to use the gym here. We have some parts for an ice
4 skating rink, but they never have been put together, and
5 are lying in the middle of our village. Maybe it's time
6 to put it up, so we don't have to skate on the sea ice
7 or shovel the crusty snow off the small pond.

8 Any youth facility should
9 have staff to maintain it and to play youth activities.

10 This would take some commitment and committed leader
11 interested in youth work. We recommend some youth work
12 training, especially youth leadership training, for these
13 youth workers, since they will be strong role models for
14 our youth. Any training should be balanced with our
15 traditional life on the land, which we would still enjoy
16 with non-Native youth work skills adapted to our situation.

17 Funds for ongoing support and training should be available
18 once we have our own youth workers, especially advice from
19 other more experienced Native youth leaders, since helping
20 youth is dynamic and challenging work, which we would be
21 glad to share our experience with our communities as well,
22 once we have gained strength in our journey towards
23 wholeness for the youth.

24 Thank you for coming to
25 Utshimasits to hear about our village, our values and our

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1 life here. It shows you care about our future, and it
2 inspires us to work on the next steps of the journey.
3 Our youth, our future. Thanks for your help in making
4 that future as healthy and bright as possible. Thank you.

5

6 I do have another
7 presentation. That was for the youth council, and I have
8 one for tribal police. I am a tribal police officer, First
9 Nations tribal police, Simeon Tshakapesh.

10

Let me introduce myself.
11 I am Simeon, and I was trained last year at the First Nations
12 Tribal Justice Institute to be a constable here. My band
13 sent me and my brother so we could solve problems in our
14 own way, instead of relying on the RCMP always. We
15 graduate in June and start working here in July.

16

As you may know, Provincial
17 Justice Minister Ed Roberts does not recognize our
18 authority as trained police officers. The training that
19 we received was the same training as the RCMP training
20 in Regina. In addition, we receive special training about
21 culture, language, drumming, singing in sweat lodges and
22 spirituality, which is the source of the power of all Native
23 peoples. We also had training on human relations, legal
24 studies and the Criminal Code of Canada. The training
25 has prepared us for work here, and I don't think other

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1 and the power of the support of our people. But these
2 are the most important things. I have been doing all the
3 work for the RCMP. They always come to me when they need
4 information. So what do we recommend for
5 the Native justice? Basically, give us the funding and
6 the authority to do things ourselves. We've proven
7 ourselves that we can do the job, since we have been doing
8 it without any equipment, that our culture ways are
9 stronger than laws enforced by the outside society. So
10 give us a chance. Let us run our own affairs.

11 Thank you for coming here.
12 Maybe you ought to give a hand to Mr. Ed Roberts. Thank
13 you.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
15 Do you mind if we ask you a few questions?

16 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** No.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
18 Thank you for your presentation. Mary, do you want to
19 start?

20 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
21 Thank you. In Ottawa last week, we had a round table
22 on justice, and at that time, we invited many people to
23 attend the conference to discuss justice issues, and one
24 of the persons that we did invite was Ed Roberts, because
25 we felt that the Ministers of Justice and other people

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1 like that would benefit from a discussion where there were
2 Aboriginal lawyers and Aboriginal judges, but his time
3 schedule wouldn't let him, so we are aware of the particular
4 situation in this province.

5 I just want to ask you, you
6 and your brother went to the First Nations School--was
7 it in B.C.?

8 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Yes,
9 B.C.

10 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

11 And why did you choose that school?

12 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** We
13 don't have any choice. We applied to the RCMP, and we
14 never got accepted, so we went to the First Nations Tribal
15 Justice Institute.

16 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

17 You applied for the regular RCMP school, but you didn't
18 have the grades, or you didn't have what?

19 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** I
20 don't know. They just said I was rejected. I had good
21 reports from the RCMP, and they said I was going to be
22 accepted, and I was excited, but Newfoundland turned me
23 down.

24 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

25 Were you applying for the regular RCMP or special

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1 constable?

2 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** I

3 applied for the regular RCMP.

4 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

5 And this school that you went to in B.C., you said that
6 was a year program?

7 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Yeah.

8 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

9 So you were in B.C. for a year. So you guys lived in
10 Davis Inlet all your life, mostly.

11 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Yeah,
12 that's correct.

13 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

14 And you went to B.C., and you stayed there for a year,
15 and you finished--

16 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:**

17 Almost a year. I was supposed to go on job training, so
18 they sent me back, because I was qualified already, so
19 I didn't have to go on the job training.

20 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

21 Now I find that very, very interesting, because for the
22 most part, what we've heard is that Native people who are
23 from very small communities, who are in what they call
24 "fly-in" communities, with no roads, they have a hard time
25 leaving and going to school and making it, and so I was

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1 wondering what made you succeed, what made you and your
2 brother, what are the kinds of things that happened in
3 that school to make you finish.

4 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Well,
5 it's really simple. When somebody is committed and
6 dedicated, and a person who has a heart that he wants to
7 help his people, he'll suffer. I suffered there for nine
8 months, so I had the same training, and I made it through,
9 because I always wanted to be involved in law enforcement.

10 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

11 Did it help that your brother was there?

12 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** It
13 helped a lot, yeah.

14 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

15 Did it help that the school that you went to was run--I'm
16 assuming it's run by Aboriginal people.

17 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Oh,
18 yes, definitely.

19 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

20 That helped?

21 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Yeah,
22 because you can do a lot of different things with different
23 people, different nations, because I met a lot of different
24 nations, I met Chicotin (PH), Statlin (PH) Nation, so it
25 brings me a lot of strength.

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1 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

2 So now you're back in the community, you and your brother,
3 and you're employed by the band, but you don't have real
4 authority to act like an RCMP, is that it?

5 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Well,
6 the province of Newfoundland doesn't recognize us as police
7 officers, because they don't want to lose the funding,
8 I guess, or the contract. I can work anywhere in Canada,
9 if I want to. I'm qualified, because I got my diploma
10 and my marks and everything, and I can work anywhere in
11 Canada, if I want to, on the reserve or off the reserve.

12 I can even work in downtown Vancouver, if I want to.
13 The B.C. Institute hired our training officers directly
14 from our office to their office.

15 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

16 So you can work anywhere in Canada except Newfoundland
17 and Labrador.

18 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:**

19 Uh-huh. I've been doing all the work for the RCMP here.

20 I haven't seen RCMP doing something in the community.
21 Just about two weeks ago, there was a break in at the post
22 office, and I recovered about \$4,000, and the RCMP said
23 that they recovered it themselves, which they never did.

24 I was the one, and my brother. They only came down here
25 to take some statements, and I gave them all the information

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1 that they needed, and they took off again.

2 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

3 So you're saying that you have a good relationship with
4 the RCMP in the community. For example, I've heard that
5 if you become the RCMP, they don't station you in your
6 community because sometimes it's very hard for a policeman
7 who's from there to charge people with crimes. Are you
8 having any of those kinds of problems, or is the community
9 accepting you really good?

10 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Well,
11 the community is accepting us, I guess. We've been
12 receiving a lot of calls, so they must be respecting us,
13 I guess. One time, the RCMP were down here, and something
14 happened and they called us, they didn't call the RCMP,
15 and we had to call the RCMP.

16 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

17 Well, I wish you well in your work, and congratulations.

18 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Thank
19 you very much.

20 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

21 George might want to ask you some questions.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

23 Because of the problems you're having with the Province
24 recognizing your status and so forth, whose laws are you
25 actually applying? Whose laws are you enforcing?

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1 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Well,
2 by-laws, provincial laws and federal laws, any other police
3 officers can enforce, but the provincial government
4 doesn't recognize us, so we cannot enforce or charge
5 anybody at the present time, so they have to prove that
6 first, in order for us to charge people here.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
8 So you're not actually charging anyone.

9 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** We're
10 not actually charging anyone. We just diffuse situations
11 and help out the RCMP. I'm doing a favour to the RCMP
12 right now.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
14 You're not exercising what they call the citizen's ability
15 to arrest?

16 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** No, I
17 don't need to exercise it, because I do have powers of
18 arrest under Section 295 of the Criminal Code of Canada,
19 police powers of arrest, and that's my powers. I don't
20 need the citizen's arrest.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
22 So you're enforcing by-laws, provincial and federal
23 regulations. What happens if a by-law and one of the other
24 regulations conflict? The by-law overrides?

25 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** I

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1 don't know.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

3 This training that you went and took, is it recognized
4 by any Canadian governments?

5 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Oh,
6 yes, the federal government recognize it.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

8 Some provinces?

9 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Yeah,
10 like I say--

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

12 You said you could work downtown Vancouver, does that
13 mean the province--

14 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Yeah,
15 they hire our officers directly from our institute to their
16 office justice institute in B.C. We got some guys working
17 in the Vancouver police right now, so--

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

19 You said you were given some of the same training that
20 the RCMP take. What part of their training was similar
21 to yours?

22 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Well,
23 public relations is one of them, investigation patrol,
24 legal studies, Criminal Code, and the Police Act, rifle,
25 driving, weapons, that's the same training as they got,

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1 but we got more training, because we include culture and
2 spirituality in our training.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

4 Right. How many days a week was this? Was this a
5 five-day week training?

6 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Five
7 days a week, yeah, sometimes seven days a week. That's
8 a lot of work. That's under the legal studies.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

10 Had you gone to Regina to take the RCMP training, how
11 long would that training have been?

12 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** About
13 six months.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

15 Six months?

16 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** Six
17 months.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

19 Interesting.

20 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** And I
21 scored about 84 percent overall average, and especially,
22 I don't use English when I talk to my brother, I use my
23 own language, and especially to my people, I use my own
24 language.

25 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

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1 And you have no understanding of why the RCMP didn't accept
2 your application.

3 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** No.
4 Maybe it's the language, I guess, I would say.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
6 Since you've taken your training, how have the RCMP
7 reacted to you in relation to the training that you've
8 taken? Do they recognize it?

9 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** They
10 don't mind, I guess. They're just afraid of the bosses,
11 because I'm doing a favour for them right now, like I said.
12 I'm doing all the work for them, and they always give
13 themselves the credit.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
15 Let me go back to this break-in you said that occurred
16 here. You found the people, you found the money?

17 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** I
18 found everything, yeah. I marked everything down that
19 I found, and I seized everything, and I marked it. I did
20 all the work.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
22 So you didn't catch them in the act, so you found
23 witnesses?

24 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** No, I
25 investigated, and I found them.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

2 Very good. Is there anything you want to add?

3 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** No.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

5 Thank you for coming forth. Oh, on the youth, I was going
6 to ask you something on that. You were saying that part
7 of what your purpose is here, I was just reading, is to
8 organize recreational events, and in your presentation
9 you mentioned that there's some material for, I guess,
10 an outside skating rink laying around, and I was wondering
11 if you were going to take matters into your hands, as young
12 people, and just put up your rink.

13 **SIMEON TSHAKAPESH:** We
14 always depend on the band council, that's what we've been
15 doing. We always depend on the band council, because
16 that's where the funds come from, because the band council
17 doesn't have any funds to set it up, so--

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

19 Thank you for coming forth. Good luck with the youth
20 council.

21 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE, DIRECTOR**

22 **OF EDUCATION, INNU NATION:** My name is Raphael Gregoire,
23 and I'm from Sheshatshiu. I have a written presentation
24 that I have to make.

25 I'm making this

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1 presentation on behalf of the Innu nation for both
2 Sheshatshiu and Utshimasits. These two communities share
3 common goals and aspirations, but they are, at the same
4 time, very much aware of the different approaches they
5 take when dealing with similar issues. These differing
6 approaches are necessary because we as Innu are very much
7 aware and are respectful of the fact that each individual
8 community has the basic right to deal with its own problems
9 in its own way, but wherever or whenever it is necessary,
10 they will stand with each other in solidarity.

11 I think that it is very
12 important and necessary to make this point clear at the
13 beginning, so that it will not appear that the Innu of
14 these two communities are divided on many issues and are
15 not supportive of each other on issues of common concerns,
16 education being one of those concerns. What is important
17 to keep in mind is that issues and concerns cannot always
18 be dealt with by one approach in the two communities, and
19 so therefore there will always be a compromise.

20 For the first time in its
21 long history, the Innu nation took the unprecedented step
22 of hiring an Innu person to work exclusively on educational
23 matters and concerns, last July, when they hired me as
24 director of education for the Innu nation. The fact that
25 it took a very long time for the Innu nation to hire a

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1 aspirations being fed into their heads.

2 I am sure administrators
3 of the Roman Catholic School Board for Labrador will argue
4 that the Innu have been given the opportunity to make
5 changes within the school system, and will point to the
6 Innu Curriculum Centre in Peenamini MacKenzie School as
7 an example that great strides in Innu curriculum
8 development are taking place. As the education director
9 for the Innu nation, I have made it my primary
10 responsibility to observe and scrutinize the flow of
11 materials that are coming out of that Innu Curriculum
12 Centre. Thus far, I have not been impressed at all. What
13 I've seen so far is the regurgitation of English learning
14 materials which have been translated into Innu-eimun to
15 pass for Innu learning material. There are no innovative
16 programs being developed now, nor are any likely to be
17 developed in the future, until there are real changes made
18 to the whole school system.

19 A few weeks ago, I attended
20 a conference in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, to listen to and
21 learn about curriculum development that has taken place
22 in that province. I attended that conference because it
23 had been nationally advertised as an opportunity to meet
24 with other educators and exchange information on
25 curriculum development. I was greatly surprised to learn

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1 that we, the Innu, can give you that would satisfy you.

2 We can only tell you this. We believe strongly that we
3 have the right to determine our own futures, and that right
4 includes the right to become educators of our own children.

5 We cannot relinquish that right, because if we do that,
6 the future of our children would be in jeopardy.

7 I have always believed that
8 achieving self-government is the only way that we, the
9 Innu, can run our own lives as we deem necessary in order
10 to bring stability back into our lives. It will be our
11 means of becoming strong politically, and thereby
12 achieving many of the aspirations that we now want to
13 achieve. Until that time comes, I think it would not be
14 logical to speculate upon other matters.

15 The context of my
16 presentation is this. We want to control our lives, in
17 terms of our own education and the education of our
18 children. We have that right, and we want to do it now,
19 before it is too late. We need the financial resources
20 to do this, and the willingness of the government of Canada
21 and Newfoundland to let us decide for ourselves how we
22 want to manage our affairs on educational issues. It is
23 also important that both federal and provincial
24 governments are able to support this process without
25 interfering.

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1 The Innu nation is now
2 attempting to gain control of its own local school. This
3 will allow for greater economic self-sufficiency in the
4 long run. Local school control will provide Innu students
5 with a stronger sense of ethnic identify, a solid
6 foundation in cultural skills, as well as exposure to
7 English and academic subjects. An education which is
8 designed to meet the academic as well as cultural needs
9 of Innu children will prepare them either for further
10 education in competition in the job market, as well as
11 the option to be trained in traditional hunting and
12 trapping skills. This will equip students graduating from
13 high school to survive either in the community or in the
14 country. More importantly, the school system which is
15 run by the community and has a strong base of Innu values,
16 will give Innu youth the confidence to choose. That's
17 the end.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

19 Do you mind if we ask you a few questions?

20 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** Go

21 ahead.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

23 You say your school system is going to provide optionally
24 an ability to learn how to live on the land? It's going
25 to be an option, rather than part of the program, so it

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1 means that if the children don't take that option they
2 won't learn how to live on the land?

3 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** I'm
4 saying that we should be given the option to teach our
5 children the way we want to teach them. If we want to
6 teach them English and other subjects, then we should have
7 the right to do that. The whole point is this. We don't
8 want to follow the Newfoundland school system entirely.

9 I think there should be room for some flexibility, where
10 we are able to teach our children the things we would like
11 them to learn, based on Innu skills and culture.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
13 The local school that you're trying to take over in
14 Sheshatshiu, how far does it go again? Does it include
15 high school?

16 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** Yes.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
18 And how are the efforts to take it over coming?

19 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** Well,
20 what's been happening so far is that there was a study
21 done on the process of the transition to take over the
22 school from the Roman Catholic School Board and ultimately
23 to be transferred to the Innu Education Authority. As
24 you know, the Newfoundland government has suspended talks
25 in the meantime, because of other issues, so the process

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1 is in a halting position now.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

3 Were you considering also taking over this school here?

4 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** Well,
5 the first part of my presentation dealt with that. Each
6 community has the right to decide what they want to do
7 in their own areas, and I think that should be understand,
8 and it has been said before by other Aboriginal groups,
9 that each community has the right to decide what kind of
10 self-government they want. If they choose not to do it
11 at this time, but they want to do it in the future, then
12 they have the option to do that. No, we're not interfering
13 in how they want to plan their own education system here
14 in Utshimasits, not at this point.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

16 Will you set up a school board?

17 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** We want
18 to set up an Innu education authority, which will
19 administer and develop policies which will be reflective
20 of Innu culture.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

22 And would it include some way in which parents would select
23 people that would represent them on some type of an
24 authority like a school board?

25 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** Oh,

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1 yes, that's very important. We envision setting up an
2 Innu education authority composed of seven members
3 selected from the community, and they decide how the school
4 should be run. Now again, this is Sheshatshiu I'm talking
5 about.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

7 Indeed, you are. So the Roman Catholic School Board,
8 you believe, has philosophies bordering on assimilation,
9 and the new curriculum centre they've created, or the Innu
10 Curriculum Centre they have, you feel is doing very little
11 more than just translating material from English or another
12 language into the Innu language and very little beyond
13 that.

14 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** Yes.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

16 There's nothing really--

17 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** You
18 see, the Innu Curriculum Centre was developed by the Roman
19 Catholic School Board. They decide what kind of materials
20 should be developed, and most of it is based on what they
21 get from English textbooks, which was just re-translated
22 and which passed for Innu learning materials. I think
23 it's important that the Innu develop their own educational
24 programs, and that means textbooks and learning materials,
25 and if they decide that they want to change the school

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1 calendar, for example, so that most of the Innu education
2 should take place in the country, then the Innu should
3 have that right, because what is important to us is that
4 the Innu have a lot of cultural values that have been taken
5 away by the present school system, and we certainly think
6 that the Innu children should go back to the country to
7 relearn many of the values that they have lost, and this
8 is the time to do it.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

10 Would you see, in your school system, besides spending
11 time on the land, when they were back in the community
12 and they were in a formal school setting, would it include
13 elders, would it include being taught in the Innu language?
14 What would be different?

15 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** The
16 most important difference is the concept that the elders
17 would be the driving force behind the education changes
18 that would take place. They would decide and they would
19 advise the younger people what should be taking place.
20 They know what has been lost.

21 The other important thing
22 is there are very few elder people, and they're getting
23 on in years, and if we don't do anything now, it will be
24 too late.

25 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

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1 Besides having elders with that kind of direct influence
2 over the system and possibly participating in the education
3 process, would the language of instruction be in the Innu
4 language?

5 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** Well,
6 that's taking place now. There is Innu language
7 instruction.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
9 From what to what?

10 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** Well,
11 I think it's from one to four. But beyond that, there's
12 very little of it taking place. We are fortunate, in a
13 way, that when we are home we speak our own language, kids
14 speak their own language. But what is alarming is the
15 fact that many of the younger people are starting to lose
16 the richness of the language, and when they start to do
17 that, you begin to wonder.

18 When I was in Saskatoon a
19 few weeks ago, one of the people that I talked to said
20 that in 30 years they lost 40 percent of their language
21 because they were schooled in the English school system,
22 and I certainly wouldn't want to see it happen here in
23 Labrador. I can see how easy it can be to lose one's
24 language if you don't practice it.

25 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

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1 The way that your language is written here, is it the
2 same way that the Innu write their language in Quebec?

3 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** It's
4 similar.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
6 So you can read the same materials?

7 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** We're
8 the same people, so we understand each other.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
10 No, no, I'm talking about the written form. I'm wondering
11 if the written form is the same.

12 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** Yes,
13 it's the same.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
15 Is it? Because amongst the Dene and the Inuit, they came
16 amongst us in different places and found different ways
17 of writing the same language.

18 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** No, not
19 with the Dene or the Cree. I think behind you you have
20 some syllabics, and that's the Cree system of writing.
21 But my experience is the further west you go, then you
22 start to not understand the language. But as long as you
23 are in Quebec, the north shore of Quebec, where most of
24 our relatives are, we understand them, and we write down
25 the same kind of language.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

2 So you only have one writing style, only one form of
3 writing.

4 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:**

5 Writing system, yes.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

7 How did that come about?

8 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** I

9 suppose originally ours is an oral language. The writing
10 system came from the missionaries.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

12 And you had the same missionaries both in Quebec and in
13 Labrador?

14 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** Of

15 course.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

17 Very interesting. Is it similar to any of the other ways
18 that Aboriginal languages have been written? If you are
19 literate in Innu, in the form of written versions, does
20 that allow you to read any other Aboriginal language?

21 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** Well,
22 there's a geographical area, or region, I guess, that this
23 language is spoken and written. I think when you talk
24 about northern Quebec, for example, and the language there
25 is known as the Cree, and since the dialect is different,

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1 it becomes difficult to understand. But I've looked at
2 the television programs produced by the Cree and I can
3 understand some parts of it. The difficulty is trying
4 to understand the dialect. So I suppose their writing
5 system is different, too, because they use the dialect
6 not the syllabic system of writing.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
8 When you were in Saskatchewan, did you understand any
9 of the language of any of the Cree?

10 **RAPHAEL GREGOIRE:** Well,
11 when I was there, my main purpose for being there was to
12 try to gather as much curriculum material that they have
13 over there, but my experience is that they don't have very
14 much. Their main concern was that since they were losing
15 their language so rapidly, their main concern was to revive
16 it, so whatever I gathered from there wasn't very useful
17 or beneficial to the Innu here. I thought it could have
18 been incorporated into our Curriculum Centre, but I think
19 it was a dream.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
21 While you still have money to travel, you might consider
22 going amongst the Navaho. They've been able to maintain
23 their language very, very strongly down there, and you
24 might be able to learn some things from them.

25 Do you have any questions,

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1 Mary?

2 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

3 No, thank you, Raphael.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

5 Thank you for travelling all this way to present to us.

6 Congratulations on being the first director.

7 I think we'll take a
8 three-minute break right now.

9 --- Hearing is recessed at 1533 hours

10 --- Hearing is resumed at 1540 hours

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

12 I think the next presenter is Peter Penushue. Peter
13 around?

14 **BEN ANDREWS:** I would like
15 to make some general comments about what I've read in the
16 Royal Commission papers and from what I've heard.

17 I think now is a good time
18 to discuss what has been talked about a few years ago within
19 the Dene organizations, which was colonization. I think
20 people are ready to discuss these kinds of issues. It
21 seems almost every way has been discussed and nothing has
22 ever worked, and it seems to me what people are describing
23 in all their presentations is a process of colonization,
24 and colonization, to me, means you strip people of all
25 their beliefs, their land, their children, everything,

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1 A lot of people, especially the leaders, seem to accept
2 that this is the way it is, and this is the way it's going
3 to be, without ever explaining to the people just why do
4 they accept it.

5 I have a lot of problems
6 with some leaders talking about the Innu people, and they
7 are the different peoples of Canada when they talk about
8 Indians. I don't think there's such a thing as an Indian,
9 and this is also a big problem amongst the different
10 Aboriginal peoples of Canada. I think this is a term
11 coined by the colonial powers to sort of put people below
12 them and dividing up people into races.

13 "Races" is also the other
14 term which was used by the colonial powers to sort of divide
15 people into lower classes, so the Europeans could divide
16 them up into lower classes of people, and it's still being
17 used very frequently by Aboriginal people, the leaders,
18 which is just sort playing into the hands of the colonial
19 powers.

20 All the process of
21 colonialism can be seen and heard in all the communities
22 of Labrador and Quebec and Canada. That has been going
23 on since the Europeans first came, when the people started
24 to turn towards their own people. This is the process
25 of colonialism; it's not something that just happens.

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1 It's been forced amongst the people to behave in such a
2 way as to be destructive towards themselves. And I find
3 it very distressing when I hear people talk about these
4 events as if they're causing all these events themselves,
5 when these forces have been at work, these colonial forces,
6 which sort of put them in an animal sort of way.

7 I find it very difficult
8 to listen to people sometimes when they talk about their
9 problems, personal problems, and then having to blame
10 themselves for what's going on, when it's really the
11 colonial powers and the system and the governments that
12 have forced this amongst them, to feel powerless. And
13 that's one of the things that I think people should stress,
14 that this is colonialism, and people have to understand
15 the effects of colonialism.

16 A lot of people tend to talk
17 about colonialism, and just think about Africa, because
18 for themselves it's a foreign thing. It didn't happen
19 to them, because they had been taught everything, the other
20 people's history, European history. But when you look
21 at the situation, at the whole situation in Canada, it's
22 all because of this system. I don't think it's just an
23 isolated event that's happening to people, because it's
24 the whole system: it's the school, it's the church, it's
25 everything.

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1 So what do people do about
2 this whole process? I find it difficult to say that the
3 colonization is the way, because I think that people are
4 in different stages of their own personal growth, about
5 how they view things in wider scope. So I think when people
6 talk about some of the things, they're missing some of
7 the things that they should be talking about. It's very
8 easy to blame yourselves for what goes on.

9 I think we should take our
10 own initiative. We should take over control of anything,
11 whether that requires forceful measures, non-violence,
12 or any other means. I think people should be prepared
13 to do whatever is necessary so that their rights are
14 protected. I don't think we should be worried about public
15 opinion at this point, because where the people are right
16 now, public opinion should be worried about these people,
17 not the other way around. We shouldn't be worried about
18 what others think of us. They've had 500 years to do what
19 they did, so why should we worry? I think it happened in
20 the Oka situation, where most people didn't support the
21 Oka Mohawks, and look what happened. They were brought
22 down again. What would the difference have been if they
23 had supported the Oka people? The situation came down
24 the same way.

25 I think at some point, once

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1 people start to believe in themselves, that they have these
2 rights and that nobody is taking them away, then they have
3 the right to be violent if they want to. They have every
4 right. Canadians were violent against the Americans.
5 Everybody is violent whenever their rights are threatened.

6 So why should the Innu people or any other peoples sort
7 of look around and be hesitant? They are a people, and
8 they have their rights as a nation, and every nation has
9 a right to protect itself from foreigners.

10 Thank you.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

12 Thank you.

13 **PETER PENASHUE, PRESIDENT,**

14 **INNU NATION:** I would like to thank the Commission for
15 taking the time to come and visit Davis Inlet. I was also
16 asked to thank the youth council for providing the meal
17 this afternoon.

18 I don't really have
19 anything in particular that I want to talk about. The
20 presentation made by George Rich was a joint presentation
21 by the Innu Nation for both communities. I just want to
22 talk about mostly, I guess, trying to set aside politics
23 and trying to set aside different national positions, but
24 to talk about the people themselves.

25 I've been involved with the

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1 Innu people in the different struggles since I was about
2 16 years old, and I have been president of the Innu Nation
3 for the last two years. I had set out to make some changes
4 in people's lives when I got involved as president of the
5 Innu Nation, but in the last two years, David was with
6 us then, and David was vice-president, and we found it
7 very difficult to make real changes on the community level
8 in people's lives, because we can talk about the politics
9 and the national rights and all the rights we have and
10 all the exploitation of our national rights and our
11 resources and all those things, but when it comes to the
12 basic employment and housing, other services that are being
13 provided to other Aboriginal groups, we are told--

14 I just came back, I guess,
15 two weeks ago with Katie and George, and met with Don
16 Ferguson, the director general with Health & Welfare
17 Canada. In Davis, we had a lot of problems with gas
18 sniffing and alcoholism. We had tried to talk with Don
19 Ferguson about establishing a long-term treatment centre
20 here in Border Beacon for both communities, and we also
21 talked to him about the gas sniffing problem of the kids.

22 We went there to talk about resources for us to bring
23 the program to the people rather than the people going
24 out to the program, be it in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan,
25 the United States or wherever, and we found out that there

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1 aren't that many programs for solvent abuse, so we decided
2 to ask Health & Welfare Canada for resources for us to
3 start up something for the kids and the people, only to
4 be told in Halifax that the Health & Welfare Canada didn't
5 have the mandate to talk about long-term treatment centre.

6 And, I guess, for all of us, for Katie and George, it
7 was very frustrating. We were told that because we didn't
8 fit neatly into this category of the Indian Act, and weren't
9 on a reservation, we couldn't apply for this. Don Ferguson
10 outright told us that he didn't have the mandate to deal
11 with us on this matter, and the only thing that he wanted
12 to discuss was the gas sniffing situation. And the reason
13 why he was willing to discuss that was because he was
14 dealing with this situation as if there was an outbreak
15 of some sort in Toronto and the federal government was
16 immediately showing support, so they were treating it in
17 that fashion.

18 And I argued with him about
19 the different programs they've already put forward to the
20 Innu people, such as non-insured health benefits,
21 post-secondary education, band council funding, and
22 without registration under the Indian Act nor a
23 reservation, he simply told me that what they were doing
24 was illegal. In my opinion, the message that we got from
25 him is that you have to hush up about these things, because

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1 otherwise they could be cut. I simply said that maybe
2 it's about time the Treasury Board knew, because he was
3 telling us that the Treasury Board didn't know what they
4 were doing about providing these programs, non-insured
5 health benefits--that's the CHR program.

6 There are many other cases
7 where, for example, education and other Aboriginal groups,
8 there's a federal programming and the Aboriginal groups
9 can deal directly with the federal government on those
10 programs and services and such things as education, social
11 services, and other programs that are available to other
12 Aboriginal groups. But we can't talk about those things.

13 We simply do not fall under that category of the Indian
14 Act and under reservations.

15 As George mentioned
16 earlier, we don't feel that we should be neatly categorized
17 into 91 (24) and the other sections that the Aboriginal
18 people come under. Our basic argument to that is that
19 we have national rights which have never been extinguished,
20 we have a land base that's never been extinguished, and
21 there's no treaties here in Labrador. And because of all
22 that, all the revenue and the royalties go out to the
23 provinces or the federal government or the companies.
24 Other people are making benefits from our resources.
25 There's a radar site here at Big Bay, I understand.

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1 There's no royalties paid to the Innu people in Davis Inlet.
2 There's been all kinds of forestry developments around
3 the area of Goose Bay, there's no royalties paid to the
4 Innu people. There's a hydro development that took place
5 in the 1960s, flooded the lands, flooded graveyards, no
6 apology was ever forthcoming, no compensation. As a
7 matter of fact, as you are aware, we took out the meters
8 and said we wouldn't pay.

9 The issue on that is that
10 we want an apology and compensation, and the Province
11 simply ignores our grievances and says that the land does
12 not belong to the Innu and that it belongs to the Province.

13 My argument is that why are they negotiating land rights
14 negotiations with the Innu if the Innu do not have any
15 title to the land? If they were absolutely sure that the
16 land belonged to the Province, they wouldn't be negotiating
17 with the Innu, but in this case they do, because they
18 realize that they're going to have to deal with it either
19 now or they're going to deal with it later. And they
20 realize, in my opinion, that they don't have a clear title
21 to the land.

22 So all these royalties that
23 come out of our land, for example, the Wabush Labrador
24 Mining, there's millions and millions and millions of
25 dollars that goes out of our lands, and we go talk to Don

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1 Ferguson, to put in place a treatment centre for the
2 community here in Sheshatshiu and put something for the
3 kids so that we can start dealing with the social problems,
4 and he tells us no, you don't fit in that category. And
5 it's very frustrating.

6 Last year, we put on a
7 conference here, talking about relocation and the
8 different social problems here associated with the housing
9 and water and sewer. We said to the Province and feds
10 that we need a new community for Davis Inlet. They said
11 O.K., let's have studies. People here have been saying,
12 you know, they've been saying we're studied to death.
13 And it was really something, in the report of the Royal
14 Commission--not Royal Commission, in the infrastructure
15 study to look into the relocation, the provincial
16 government very carefully crossed out the words "studied
17 to death," and they replaced it with "extensive studies
18 done," because they don't want to read about it in their
19 own studies. And this was a quote that was made by Terpstra
20 Engineering, who did the study.

21 So my point is that it's
22 very frustrating when you try to do something and you can't
23 have the resources because somebody else hold onto those
24 royalties that come out of your land. And we still don't
25 know if Davis Inlet is going to get funding for relocation.

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1 We're hoping the recommendation from the report is very
2 positive, but once they tear it up and look at the fine
3 print, I don't know what the report will say, whether it
4 will be still supportive of relocation. But as you can
5 see, in this community, this community needs new housing,
6 needs water and sewer, needs a new life. And, you know,
7 Katie and George and many others, Prody (PH), worked very
8 hard to make changes in this community, but it's very
9 difficult when you have government officials that are not
10 co-operating with you, are making it very difficult to
11 discuss any real changes.

12 On the issue, for example,
13 of education, which George mentioned earlier, I don't know,
14 it seems to me that somehow, we're expected to somehow
15 make the existing programs and services work, and in my
16 opinion, unless the policy development is in place for
17 the Innu to--so they can get their hands on policy
18 development, nothing really changes, because all you do
19 is accept the delegated authority from the federal or the
20 provincial governments and all you do is run their programs
21 and services. There's no real change.

22 I hope, in my own
23 lifetime--as Mary said, I'm very young, or maybe she's
24 old--I don't know which it is--but I hope, in my own
25 lifetime, and I know George and Katie and the rest feel

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1 this way, that we don't continue to fight. Nobody likes
2 fighting for the rest of their lives, because at some point
3 life is meant to be lived to the fullest extent possible.
4 And I hope that through the negotiations through federal
5 government and the provincial government, that we'll be
6 able to find a place for the Innu people to find a home,
7 a place where we can belong, where we can develop policies
8 and pass laws that affect our people rather than being
9 told what to do all the time.

10 We're not subordinates to
11 the federal and provincial governments, and I think that
12 the Royal Commission should make that very clear. The
13 Innu people are not subordinates to the federal and
14 provincial governments, that things need to change, that
15 the Innu people themselves need to make decisions affecting
16 everything in their lives, and that includes land, social
17 services, policy development. How to, for example, how
18 to apprehend kids, how to develop education programs.

19 I was telling Mary earlier
20 that there's so much pretending that happens in government,
21 because everything is segmented into the social services,
22 the education department and many other departments that
23 are available or that are present, and everybody is
24 supposed to kick in their own little systems when something
25 takes place, and that makes it very difficult for us.

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1 For example, we have cases in Sheshatshiu, for example,
2 there's sexual abuse, and what happens when a child
3 discloses of sexual abuse, the whole system takes off on
4 its own. By law, the councils are required to tell social
5 services, social services have to tell the RCMP, RCMP
6 involve the Crown, the judges, and then the jury, and then
7 whomever. And then you have a system where one party has
8 to win. It's either the victim or the perpetrator. The
9 system is not designed so that both parties win, and I
10 think that's the aim that we have to focus on. We have
11 to find a way where both parties can win, the perpetrator
12 and the victim, because we're all caught in the same system.

13 As Ben said earlier, we're just caught in this wave that's
14 happening, and all we can do is move forward with no past
15 and nothing to really change the future, because the
16 machinery that's happening is moving and it's very strong.

17 See, in my own way, I think
18 what needs to happen is that when a sexual abuse case is
19 put forward, what should be happening, for example, is
20 that the child should be fully aware of the difficulties
21 of the court process. He or she should be aware of the
22 cross-examination, the publicity, the possible shame that
23 he or she could feel in the community. That should be
24 all put forward. And we should say O.K., but maybe there's
25 another way. Maybe we can bring both parties into a system

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1 where we can bring them to treatment centres rather than
2 involving the authorities all the time. Maybe there's
3 a way of having both parties win, rather than having a
4 victim or the perpetrator win, depending on what the court
5 decides or feels that day. It's stuff like this that I
6 think makes it very difficult for us to make real change,
7 because everything from the federal and provincial
8 government is legislated, which affects us down the line.

9

10 Last year, we had a case
11 of a traditional adoption taking place in our community.

12 Social Services found out about it, and they said you
13 can't have that, we have to be involved in the adoption.

14 We were alerted to the situation and got involved.

15 Eventually the press was involved, the Premier was
16 involved, the Minister was involved, and then eventually
17 we had a meeting with the director of child welfare. He
18 sat across the table from us and essentially told us all
19 children in this province come under his jurisdiction.

20 People from the community that were at that meeting simply
21 said look, how is it possible that a Newfoundlander can
22 make decisions for an Innu child. How would you feel if
23 we made decisions for your child in St. John's, and we
24 don't know anything about your children?

25 This is, in my opinion,

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1 what self-government is about. We have to have some faith
2 and trust in ourselves, so that we can develop a system
3 where we can have--where we don't develop a system where
4 there's adversarial roles, but we develop a system where
5 everybody in the community wins.

6 I know George and Prody
7 (PH) and Katie have been talking about family treatment
8 centres at Border Beacon, but as far as I know there's
9 nowhere else in Canada that does that. But that should
10 be a right for us to develop something like that, because
11 we realize that it's not only the kids that are affected,
12 it's the parents, it's everybody in that family. So if
13 you take just the father, then you're still stuck with
14 the mother and child, so what you're doing is developing
15 a situation where ten years down the road the child is
16 in a similar situation.

17 So we have to look at things
18 in a holistic way and deal with it in that manner. Because
19 what's happening right now is that everything is segmented.

20 Social Services kicks in for this, the Department of
21 Education kicks in for that, or the RCMP takes care of
22 this, but none of them know what they're doing, because
23 they don't talk. It's not a co-ordinated effort, which
24 makes it very frustrating if you're on the other side of
25 the fence, because you see your life is being controlled

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1 by the Premier and by the Prime Minister and their
2 designates, and you have no control over that.

3 My parents were the first
4 ones that made the transition from the nomadic way of life
5 to a community way of life. My father, in the '50s, was
6 sent out to Mount Cashel. He doesn't talk about it, and
7 there's probably a lot of stuff that he experienced and
8 a lot of things that have come out later on from the Mount
9 Cashel case. But who's going to take--what do they call
10 it--accountability or responsibility for that?

11 Certainly, the church was involved, and were paid by the
12 government to send him out there. And of course, he became
13 an alcoholic, I became an alcoholic, the whole family
14 became alcoholics, and my parents now are in Windsor,
15 Ontario, trying to deal with their problems, and they're
16 coming home next week. And I'm very proud of that. See,
17 I'm not ashamed to say I'm an alcoholic, because I'm
18 grateful that I realize that I've got a problem, and that
19 it's a problem that I've got to deal with. And that's
20 the kind of reality that I'm talking about when I say that
21 we have to deal with that. We have to take the facts and
22 build upon what we've got. And in order for us to take
23 a holistic approach, we have to look at the church, we
24 have to look at education, we have to look at Social
25 Services, we have to look at the RCMP, we have to look

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1 at governments, we have to look at their policies,
2 everything. We can't pretend anymore and deal with
3 problems in a segmented approach.

4 I think I've covered quite
5 a lot of area, but I tend sometimes to cut myself in my
6 own thoughts and leave the other half half said, but I
7 hope I didn't at this round. That would be my
8 presentation. I hope you understand the kind of
9 self-government that I'm talking about, and I think that
10 for all the things that I've just talked about, for the
11 changes to happen, it has to be a holistic approach, and
12 that essentially involved self-government, and people,
13 as a nation, to make laws, rather than laws being made
14 in Ottawa or St. John's, which has no relevance to us.
15 They have to be made from the people. Thank you.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

17 Thank you.

18 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

19 I just want to thank you all for coming from Sheshatshiu.
20 I know it is not so far away, but it is further away than
21 being here locally, so we would like to thank you for coming
22 here to make your presentation.

23 When you were talking,
24 there's two questions that occurred to me. I think that
25 when we've come to Labrador generally, we've heard a lot

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1 about-- especially from the men, and they acknowledge,
2 for example, that there are alcohol problems, that there
3 are substance abuse problems, but one of the things that
4 we haven't heard a lot about is, for example, child sexual
5 abuse, incest, the spousal assault, and I'm wondering,
6 what is the extent of that problem in your communities?
7 What is being done about it? Is it being acknowledged?
8 Does it exist? And what are the male leaders doing about
9 those kinds of issues, or do they feel that they have a
10 responsibility to address those issues?

11 **PETER PENASHUE:** I think
12 all of us have a responsibility, be it leadership, be it
13 mothers, be it children, I think everybody has a
14 responsibility to be involved. But my philosophy is that
15 either it be sexual abuse, either it be family violence,
16 either it be family violence, either it be alcoholism,
17 either it be gas sniffing, it really doesn't matter. The
18 point is that you have a problem and to deal with that
19 problem, you have to go back to your childhood, and it's
20 a very painful process that one endeavours on that trip.
21 For me, when I went to a treatment centre, it's a very
22 painful process to have to look at your childhood and have
23 to deal with all those negative aspects of your life.

24 So I think the approach
25 that Katie and George and Prody and others--David was

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1 involved at that time--have taken, and that is to start
2 looking at a treatment centre here in the community, or
3 between here and Sheshatshiu, which is Border Beacon, and
4 to start developing a program for the families and deal
5 with it in a holistic approach. You start--see, it's very
6 difficult, again, if we start talking about sexual abuse,
7 family violence, wife battering, suicides, again, we're
8 doing the same thing as the government is doing. We're
9 segmenting everything else. Why not take a problem as
10 a problem and treat it as a problem?

11 For example, the way the
12 government approaches things, they say O.K., this will
13 be a family abuse program, this will be a wife-battering
14 program, this will be whatever, or solvent abuse program.

15 And that's not my philosophy. My philosophy is that a
16 problem, be it family, sexual abuse or what have you, is
17 a problem, and why not deal with it as a problem and deal
18 with it in that way. So what you do is you bring in the
19 families or individuals to start dealing with the history,
20 with the past, because all of us are born good, we just
21 become bad. We aren't born bad. And if we take the
22 approach that we're born good and started running into
23 problems, be it very oppressive families.

24 Like Ben mentioned earlier, which is
25 very true, what has happened in our communities, the

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1 oppression and the colonialism and the negative impacts
2 of that have turned inwards. Innu people have never fought
3 the government, but they turn that violence amongst
4 themselves. You know, they beat up their wives, they beat
5 up their children, because they're ashamed to beat up--or
6 to confront the governments that make the policies that
7 drives them crazy up here. Because it's everything: the
8 church, the education system, the government policies.
9 For example, you have independent people who make all the
10 decisions for life suddenly plunked into a community, and
11 everything else is designed and segmented in their lives.
12 For example, when you're hungry, you go to Social
13 Services. When you have problems with family issues, you
14 go to Social Services or the RCMP. People start changing
15 you up here, and that's what they refer to as colonialist
16 mentality, because people start changing in their minds
17 about how to approach things.

18 So I think we have to have
19 a holistic approach, and we can't segment everything the
20 way government does. The way government does, as I've
21 said, is they prefer to segment everything, to put
22 everything in these little pockets. You can't do that.

23 You have to take a problem as a problem. We have to move
24 away from this idea that one is wrong and the other one
25 is right. We have to deal with it as a problem and approach

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1 it from that, because otherwise we're continuing to fight
2 like governments, one is right and one is wrong. We have
3 to stop doing that. We have to start looking at the future,
4 and everybody to be dealt with fairly and honourably,
5 because we all have to come out of it.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

7 Recently, there was a referendum in the country, a vote
8 on the constitutional package, and I heard that the Innu
9 made some statements after there was a No vote in the
10 country on that. I was wondering, what was your position
11 on the package? Did you feel that it was an honourable
12 agreement? Were you in support of it?

13 **PETER PENASHUE:** Well, was
14 it honourable to accommodate everybody, in terms of
15 Aboriginal people in Canada? I don't think it was. But
16 for us, we saw an opportunity there for governments to
17 start treating the Innu people as a people, and that there
18 was a very strong possibility that there was going to be
19 a third order of government, and that's something that
20 I personally liked. And because we're not under treaties,
21 we're not under reservations, we're not under the Indian
22 Act, it left the door wide open for us. Because now the
23 Charlottetown Accord is dead and gone and buried, I'm not
24 sure what--I guess the most positive thing that came out
25 of the Charlottetown Accord is that we planted the seed

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1 in people's minds, in the Canadian minds, that they have
2 to start thinking in the manner of peoples, that Aboriginal
3 people are peoples. That they have to start looking in
4 the way of setting up a process where Aboriginal people
5 will be a third order of government, meaning that they
6 would have their own authority to set laws, regulations,
7 what have you, for their own people. We don't want to
8 make laws for people in St. John's, because we don't know
9 what their culture and lifestyle is. The same way should
10 apply. St. John's should not make laws for our people,
11 because they have no idea who we are.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

13 Good. Thank you.

14 **GORDON WARNER:** Mennonite
15 Central Committee has been invited to Davis Inlet for a
16 number of years now. I personally have been invited here
17 by the band as a construction consultant, and my reference
18 is to back up what Chief Katie was saying this morning
19 about relocation. You seemed interested, Georges, in
20 particular, on relocation.

21 The relocation isn't just
22 something these people have gone out and said we want to
23 move here. I've researched, we had a village architect
24 from MCC here this spring for two months, and we went over
25 the area extensively. I've been in construction for--from

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1 the colour of my beard, I've been in it for a little while.
2 There is not an engineer in this province or in Canada
3 that could have come here and chosen a better site for
4 relocation. We've gone through the site many times, and
5 I've been over there a lot, and it's just absolutely an
6 excellent spot for relocation. There was a lot of wisdom
7 by these people. It's not chosen by--these people chose
8 this place, and they chose it with a great deal of wisdom,
9 believe me. They don't only have an abundance of water,
10 they have their own power project, if they so desire to
11 pursue that. I've looked that area over, and they can
12 have their own power system. They don't have to rely on
13 diesel generators or anything like that, and there's enough
14 power there.

15 Getting back to Davis
16 Inlet, where we're situated here right now, we cannot build
17 a home here that would have anything below ground level,
18 because the ground is so saturated from this point to the
19 end of the village that I've had houses where half the
20 house has been going up, half of it has been sinking,
21 throughout this summer. I don't have to tell the people
22 here that. They know it. They're living in these
23 conditions.

24 Besides that, we say, in
25 Davis Inlet, that the water is bad. That's true. The

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1 the presenters that took the time to present to us, both
2 from this community and from others. We will finish our
3 second round of hearings by the end of next week, and then
4 the Commission will be working on a document which we've
5 already started, which we hope to use in the next round
6 of hearings. The kinds of solutions we've been hearing
7 from people in this round will be used in that document,
8 and we will be publishing a number of documents early in
9 the new year.

10 We had a meeting in
11 Edmonton last June on issues that are important to
12 Aboriginal people living in large cities. We will be
13 publishing something from that meeting soon. Last week,
14 we had a meeting in Ottawa. We brought together lawyers
15 and judges and Aboriginal people from across the country
16 that are involved in different kinds of justice projects.

17 A number of the people are going back to running their
18 own tribal justice in different parts of Canada. They
19 all presented to us. We had a number of projects explained
20 to us. We also had people from the United States, the
21 Dene from the United States, the Navaho, and the Supreme
22 Court judge explained their situation to us.

23 So we will be publishing
24 a report from that meeting, which will be very important,
25 we think, in helping us come up with some ideas on

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1 will be coming out with quite a few documents. This time
2 around we used the video, and it's likely that we will
3 come out with more videos, and certainly with our final
4 report, we will be coming out with a video, along with
5 the written version of it.

6 I hope that some of you have
7 been leaving your names with us, because we want to be
8 mailing out the material that we're publishing to people
9 as we're going along, and particularly people that have
10 been coming to our meetings, so that they follow what we're
11 doing.

12 The process that we're
13 taking in these hearings and our overall work is that the
14 answers are in the communities already, and we're trying
15 to pull them out through our hearings, and we're trying
16 to use the documents that we publish to help us in that.

17 At some point, we will be publishing models, probably,
18 of self-government, and maybe models of tribal justice.

19 Certainly, in the round table report, you will see already
20 some initiatives, some projects, that are being done in
21 different parts of the country. We would like responses
22 from people on those documents that we publish. We want
23 to know if people think those projects are in the right
24 direction and think those models are going in the right
25 direction. It's quite important for us to hear from both

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1 Native and non-Native people in Canada.

2 So with that, I just want
3 to thank everybody for participating, and thank the youth
4 committee for organizing lunch for us, and I'll have Mary
5 do the closing comments before we have our final prayer.

6 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

7 Well, first of all, it's an honour for me and a privilege
8 to be in Davis Inlet. Although I spent my earlier years
9 in Labrador, I can truly say that I've never known so much
10 about the Innu in Davis Inlet as I've learned today.

11 I would like to thank the
12 public, the Davis Inlet public, for being so patient, for
13 staying here, for listening, and particularly to the
14 unilingual Innu-eimun speakers, because I know it's really
15 a very long day to have the earphones stuck in your ear
16 all day.

17 I would like to thank
18 Damien Benuen, who was our local community co-ordinator,
19 for helping us to organize this meeting. I would like
20 to thank David Nui, the Commissioner of the Day and the
21 moderator, and Father Fred Maggee for allowing us to use
22 this meeting room, to use this church, and for preparing
23 coffee and tea and letting us use the photocopier, and
24 to Philip Rich for saying the opening prayer, and to you,
25 Etienne Pastiwet, the interpreter. I must be in Labrador

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1 where people laugh at anything, eh? And Conrad Lutes,
2 who is with CBC, the Okalakatiget Society staff, Margaret
3 Sagagiak, Boas Millie and Toby Pijogge, and to our staff
4 and the court reporter and the sound system person. Thank
5 you all very much. Nuc oh mik (PH)
6 --- Whereupon the hearing is adjourned at 1642 hours
7