

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

LOCATION/ENDROIT: **CARTWRIGHT,**
 LABRADOR

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1992**

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"for the record..."
STENOTRAN
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2 --- Upon commencing on December 2, 1992, at 13:25 hr.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

4 Okay, we're going to get started here. The Royal
5 Commission is in the middle of its--or very close to the
6 tail end of its second round of hearings. The Commission
7 started a little over a year ago with seven Commissioners;
8 four are Aboriginal, three are not. There's two of us
9 here, Mary Sillett and myself, and there are two other
10 teams of Commissioners travelling in other parts of Canada.

11 We are travelling in three teams so we can cover more
12 area and the first round of hearings we held last April,
13 May and June which provided us with a number of documents.

14 We have some of them sitting out there. It primarily
15 deals with the kind of issues we heard during the first
16 round. We heard a tremendous number of complaints and
17 problems and pains and terrible experiences that

18 Aboriginal people have gone through from one end of the
19 country to the other. We began to hear some of the ways
20 in which those issues could be dealt with. We developed
21 those documents so that we could encourage people to start
22 looking at solutions. We're fairly convinced that the
23 solutions will be found across the country in communities
24 so in this round of hearings we're trying to cover, again,
25 as much of Canada as possible and to build on the first

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1 round of the hearings. You'll probably, some of you
2 will--might remember that Mary and others did come to
3 Labrador in the first round. We also went to the Island
4 in the first round and, again, we went to the Island this
5 time and now we're doing another small trip of some of
6 the communities in Labrador. We will have two more rounds
7 of hearings more than likely. The mandate of the
8 Commission is very, very broad. It covers many, many
9 issues--everything from things like land claims,
10 self-government, the Constitution, The Indian Act, Indian
11 Affairs, youth issues, women's issues, elders' issues,
12 economic development, treaties, Metis questions,
13 education, culture, identity--it really covers a lot of
14 things.

15 In addition to holding
16 hearings which we are doing quite a bit of, we've got a
17 very major research program underway. We have also
18 created a fund, an intervenor funding program which, I
19 guess, people have been applying to since last April and
20 this fall funding started to be released to people. It
21 could have been released since July but what happened was
22 that a lot of people were involved in the constitutional
23 process so there were not a lot of applications very early
24 on. We apologize for being in such a small place. We
25 really didn't think there was going to be a need for a

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1 bigger spot apparently.

2 So the work of the
3 Commission then includes the results that we hope to get
4 from the intervenor funding. We've created a fund of
5 \$8,000,000. which organizations have been applying to from
6 all across the country and the work that we expected them
7 to do with that would be to research different kind of
8 subjects in their particular area and there was a heavy
9 emphasis on solutions, again, in that funding for a very
10 good reason.

11 The way that the Commission
12 is operating, we're not working on the basis that, you
13 know, all the answers to problems are going to be discovered
14 by us in Ottawa and it's going to have to be through dialogue
15 and work and trial and error and the developments of
16 possible solutions and more debate and more ideas being
17 circulated from the communities and regions of Canada.
18 So, we very much are trying to get a dialogue going.

19 In our travels we've gone
20 to every type of community in Canada. We're trying to
21 make sure that we go to every situation that Aboriginal
22 people find themselves in in the country, every type of
23 situation because we can't go to every community. If we
24 were going to try to go to every community, we'd be still
25 travelling ten years later and we still may not have gone

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1 to every community so we're trying to find every situation
2 that Aboriginal people find themselves in, including in
3 the urban area. In addition to having to try and make
4 sure that we cover all Aboriginal people, we also have
5 to make sure that we go to larger centers and to
6 non-Aboriginal communities in Canada so it's a big
7 challenge. We're trying to cover more ground than any
8 other Commission has ever had before. In our first round
9 of hearings, we went to about 36 communities and in this
10 round we're going to, I think, around 34. Most Royal
11 Commissions go to 31 communities overall and that's
12 it--that's "tout fini", they don't do any more than that
13 but it's our belief that we really need to seriously tackle
14 the issues that are coming forth so in the first set of
15 hearings we expected to hear nothing but really the
16 complaints and very little in the way of solutions so we're
17 trying to pull a little bit more out of the second round
18 and then we're hoping to develop a document from this which
19 will hopefully have possible solutions, models on how to
20 deal with land claims, models on how to deal with
21 self-government. It's just going to be things like
22 justice, how we're going to deal with that, ways of dealing
23 with social violence and violence in the home, youth
24 issues, and so forth.

25 And we wanted then to use

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1 that document as a tool so that people will be able to
2 tell us whether those ideas, while they might be relevant
3 in a part of Canada, they might not be relevant in another,
4 you know, they might build on it. Hopefully, that will
5 result in some dialogue.

6 Just a few things on the
7 Royal Commission. Interesting thing about Royal
8 Commissions is that when you're created, you have
9 absolutely no infrastructure. You don't have any staff,
10 any office to work out of, so we had to create an
11 organization from the ground up, like all Royal Commissions
12 do. We decided early on that part of what we would try
13 and do is make sure that there was a mixture of both
14 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people working together in
15 the Royal Commission and if it took us a little bit longer
16 to find Aboriginal people to do the job, if they were as
17 competent as the non-Native people, then we would try and
18 seek them out. We felt that was very, very important
19 because there has never been a situation in Canada where
20 you had a majority of the people working in a government
21 enterprise like this that has been totally Aboriginal.
22 You have, for instance, the Department of Indian Affairs,
23 which has been around for 125 years and a very small
24 percentage of the people working even in that department,
25 which was created exclusively to work for Aboriginal

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1 people. Very, very few of them are Aboriginal. So we
2 thought it would be very important for us if we could find
3 the people to do the research, to do the administration
4 work, the clerical work, to do the organizing of events
5 like this--as much as possible to have both Aboriginal
6 and non-Aboriginal and, if possible, to have a majority
7 Aboriginal. So far, we've been able to accomplish it and,
8 of course, we have to function bilingually in English and
9 French in addition to hiring Aboriginal people and we're
10 quite pleased with being able to at least do that. We've
11 also been trying to hire people from all different parts
12 of the country so that, as a Royal Commission, we're
13 relevant in all parts of the country. That's been
14 a--that's been a challenge, not everyone is interested
15 in moving to Ottawa or the area to work so it's--you might
16 be able to get good people to work for you if you're--let
17 them work at home but it's kind of hard if you want to
18 bring them to Ottawa.

19 Those are my opening
20 comments. I'm going to ask Mary to add to that and then
21 we'll have Jessie Bird moderating for us here as our
22 community representative that's helped organize this.
23 But before Jessie does that, I'll ask Mary to make some
24 comments. Mary.

25 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

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1 Thank you very much, Georges. First of all, it's an honor
2 for me to be in Cartwright. This is the second time I've
3 ever been here but it's early--always good to come back
4 home so I'm glad to be here and I'm glad that the Royal
5 Commission did take the suggestion of someone who presented
6 at our Goose Bay hearing who said, "You know, you're
7 spending some time in Davis Inlet hearing from the Innu,
8 you're spending some time in Nain hearing from the Inuit,
9 you should go to southern Labrador." Because we have to
10 make some very difficult decisions as to what communities
11 we go to, we decided to Cartwright because it was suggested
12 to us as being one of the better communities to come to
13 and before we came here it's our policy to hire people
14 from the community from four to six weeks. They're the
15 people who know the communities. They're the people who
16 know how to advertise. They're the people who can help
17 us to do our job right and we've done that in every single
18 community that we've gone to so far. Like Georges said,
19 in our first round, we went to close to 36 or 37 communities.
20 We heard from more than 850 people at our meetings. You
21 can imagine how much hearing that is. I mean we've heard
22 people, not only in hotels but we heard them in women's
23 shelters. We went to hockey rinks, almost froze to death
24 some days. It hasn't been easy on us. We went to Davis
25 Inlet yesterday, almost froze ourselves and here we are.

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1 But we have hired Jessie Bird for this community and I
2 think she's done an exceptional job. As well, Georges
3 said that we have hired many, many Aboriginal people,
4 mostly because I think we have--we, as Aboriginal people,
5 believe in our people. For the most part I've heard all
6 my life that, you know, "We can't", "We can't", "We can't
7 do this, we're not educated enough." "We can't speak
8 English good enough." "We can't do this" and I think that
9 has to change and we have, on our Commission, seven
10 Commissioners who are very, very--you know, very high--a
11 lot of them are very high profile but four of us are
12 Aboriginal people. In our staff, we've hired, as a
13 majority, Aboriginal people--majority Status Indian,
14 non-Status Indian, Metis and Inuit and we've hired very,
15 very qualified staff. We're very proud of them and with
16 this hearing, whenever we go anywhere, we bring our
17 staff--some of our staff, not all of them and I'd like
18 to introduce them because they've done a lot of work.
19 We get a lot of the publicity but they're the people who
20 work early in the mornings; they're the people who work
21 late in the nights, so I think we should give--always give
22 them recognition. With us we have Rhoda Kayakjuak.
23 Would you stand up, Rhoda? She's from--

24

CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:

25 She is standing.

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1 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

2 She's from Hall Beach in Northwest Territories. We have
3 Joyce Ford who is from Makkovik, Labrador. We have Bernie
4 Wood who is a Metis from Manitoba. We have David Hawkes
5 who is a Quallunak from--that's the Newfie word for white
6 person, I guess--from Ontario. And we have Linda Jordan
7 who is an Ojibway from Ontario. Having said that, I'm
8 going to leave the rest of the time for this community
9 to talk because this is what we came here for but thank
10 you very much and I look forward to a good day.

11 **JESSIE BIRD, MODERATOR:**

12 The first presenters we have for the afternoon are Dr.
13 Sparks and Winnie Montague. They're representing the
14 Labrador College and their main campus is based in Goose
15 Bay. Dr. Sparks?

16 **DR. RON SPARKS, LABRADOR**

17 **COMMUNITY COLLEGE:** Thank you, Jessie, Commissioners.
18 We're pleased to be here as well and to have this
19 opportunity to talk a bit about the college activities
20 in Labrador, some of our concerns, and with a particular
21 emphasis on Inuit, Innu, and our Metis--Metis clients.
22 I'm going to do a bit of an overview and then Winnie
23 Montague--Winnie is the Co-ordinator of Inuit Education
24 with the college--is going to pick up and I will finish
25 off. We're also going to submit this in written form at

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1 a later date. I'm not sure of the actual timeframe on
2 that--what our time limit is, but I am assuming we have
3 a few weeks to tidy it up and get it in and perhaps we
4 can address that matter later.

5 The Labrador College has
6 endeavored to respond to the educational and training needs
7 of Aboriginal people in Labrador and we've tried to do
8 that through a wide variety of forums. One of our thrusts
9 has been a continuing effort to assist Native students
10 from coastal Labrador in their adjustment to the
11 environment at the Happy Valley-Goose Bay Campus of the
12 college, that Jessie has mentioned, because we have had
13 a rather dismal record there in terms of attracting
14 students and perhaps moreso in terms of maintaining them.

15
16 In recent years the college
17 has made efforts to do workshops with staff in cultural
18 awareness, inter-cultural understanding. It's taken us
19 a while, but we finally have a counsellor at the college.

20 We have a Co-ordinator of Inuit Education now who works
21 to support students' efforts to come there to that more
22 centralized location, especially for Inuit students, and
23 this year we were delighted to be able to open, thanks
24 to federal-provincial funding, a family dormitory and
25 daycare center and it's been timely in meeting the needs

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1 of students who are participating in a nursing access
2 program which is happening for the first time.

3 We also have a campus in
4 Labrador West, which does first year university. I just
5 should mention that. To date we've had no Aboriginal
6 students that I--certainly, no Inuit and Innu students
7 at that campus.

8 But I guess another of our
9 ongoing efforts is in the delivery of community-based
10 training and if we've made any achievements since the
11 changeover from a vocational system to a college system,
12 I think it has been in getting some training out in the
13 field and I know a lot more needs to be done. In the adult
14 upgrading, adult basic education, literacy training,
15 whatever you want to call it, we've had an established
16 program at Nain, in North West River, Shishatshit, and
17 here in Cartwright as well as in West St. Madest in the
18 Labrador Straits and the program at North West River
19 includes a unit of English as a second language for Innu
20 persons. We've also delivered a wide variety of programs
21 in humane trapping techniques and pelt preparation
22 including instructor workshops with the help of Indian
23 and Northern Affairs Canada and these activities have
24 helped train local persons for teaching positions. We've
25 had quite an emphasis on training Native instructors for

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1 continuing these programs.

2 In response to an Innu
3 community identified need, the college has delivered an
4 Innu traditional skills program for young people in
5 Shishatshit using the village elders as instructors and
6 recording the lessons in the Innu language on video tape
7 for future use.

8 We've carried out
9 construction trades training, a nine-month program in
10 Shishatshit and in Davis Inlet on some very practical
11 housing projects and we've just designed and are now
12 delivering a joinery plumbing program--seems like an odd
13 combination but that's what the band council felt they
14 needed to move towards and that's underway in Shishatshit
15 for the Innu Nation and the two band councils.

16 And we've delivered
17 training program for human service workers in the field
18 of addictions. One program, we trained 40 workers for
19 the first time last year for the Inuit Labrador Alcohol
20 and Drug Abuse Program in North West River.

21 We've tried to do some
22 management training. I'm afraid we weren't awfully
23 successful with that and we're now talking with Atii--I
24 believe it is--Corporation, which is looking at training
25 for the Inuit, about the possibility of getting that into

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1 Nain with the cooperation with us and we've also made
2 reference to the Innu Nation, although that's an Inuit
3 type of program.

4 We've done some
5 secretarial training for social assistance recipients in
6 Nain, carpentry training, the full--we've taken the
7 carpentry program that's been campus-based and has
8 required people to come from their home communities.
9 We've been delivering that in coastal communities,
10 Hopedale being the one on the north coast and this year--and
11 we're delighted with this--we were able to move on the
12 nursing access program thanks to some help we got from
13 people in Saskatchewan and the advice and their experience
14 and some funding from the provincial government and I'd
15 like to note that because it's not often that we get funding
16 for--full funding for programs for Aboriginal people for
17 Labrador from the Provincial Department of Health who are
18 picking up the full cost. We're also doing traditional
19 crafts in Nain. So, I wanted to hit on a few of those.

20

21 I guess one of the areas
22 that we feel is vital is the adult basic education. I
23 mentioned we tried some management training. I suppose
24 we looked at that in terms of affirmative action--taking
25 people in and trying to give them some management skills

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1 and I guess we were unfair in terms of sometimes setting
2 people up for failure because they simply did not have
3 the kind of academic background preparation that was
4 required. And so, we're putting a major emphasis and a
5 lot of the discussion from here on in will be on this
6 particular topic, of the adult basic education and the
7 needs there that we feel are so fundamental, pre-requisite
8 to training, especially technical kinds of training that
9 people are asking for and needing now. Before I ask Winnie
10 to comment on some of the nuts and bolts issues that we're
11 encountering with the adult basic education effort, I'd
12 just like to mention--and these are Provincial Department
13 of Education--this is Provincial Department of Education
14 data--you folks were in the Torngat Mountains riding
15 yesterday--the provincial riding of what's called Torngat
16 Mountains. We understand that 57 percent of the adult
17 population over 17, have less than a grade nine education
18 in that part of the--in that particular riding and in the
19 region that we're in today, Eagle River, 43 percent of
20 the adult population have less than a grade nine education.

21 Now, you visited our learning center here this morning
22 and you saw something of what we were doing but you would
23 probably take the next hundred years going at that pace
24 to address the problems. The people who need it would
25 all be deceased. We are trying to move into some distance

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1 education--adult education for levels--level two, we call
2 it, grade seven to nine. So I'm going to ask Winnie now
3 if she might like to pick up and talk about some of the
4 more practical kinds of issues that we're confronting on
5 a day-to-day basis. Winnie has also been an instructor
6 in our adult basic education programs.

7 **WINNIE MONTAGUE, LABRADOR**

8 **COMMUNITY COLLEGE:** Thank you, Dr. Sparks. Having worked
9 initially with the Department of Education and then the
10 Labrador College with the changeover into the college
11 system for the past number of years, I have experienced
12 some of the obstacles and the hurdles that our Aboriginal
13 students encounter in regards to furthering their
14 education. My experience, as Dr. Sparks has referred to,
15 has been at the classroom level as an instructor in job
16 readiness training and later in adult basic education for
17 residence of Shishatshit. At the community level as well,
18 from the broader point of view, in my present position
19 as Inuit Education Co-ordinator for the north coast
20 communities of Labrador. The barriers have not changed
21 an awful lot over the years. What we, as a college, attempt
22 to do in addressing the needs of the Aboriginal population
23 has constantly met with the limitations that are imposed
24 upon us by restrictions usually placed upon us by the
25 funding agencies. While I realize that many of the

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1 concerns which I raise are of a global and a generic nature,
2 there is no doubt as to the increased impact of these
3 restrictions on Aboriginal people.

4 In my experience, many of
5 our students in the learning centers and in the
6 community-based programs have a low tested level of
7 education. Most are married men and women who have
8 families to raise but very little opportunity for
9 employment. I might add too that most students receive
10 a training allowance from Canada Employment and
11 Immigration which provides a means for them to support
12 their families while they attend training programs with
13 the college.

14 Though the concerns in the
15 learning centers and in the community-based programming
16 are similar, I would like to point out some specific
17 problems encountered by each to illustrate some of the
18 problems with which we are faced.

19 Adult basic education, or
20 ABE, is paramount to all of our learning centers. It is
21 our task to assist our adult students entering ABE in
22 reaching a grade 12 level of education. Many bring to
23 the program with them some of the same problems that's
24 hindered their learning in the past and in the first place.
25 What has changed is their attitude, having spent a period

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1 of time trying to find work and make a living without an
2 education. We must recognize that there are those who
3 are literally hungry and in need of money and come for
4 the short term advantage of the C.E.I.C. training allowance
5 and this is a part of the reality. However, in most cases,
6 many come with the real desire to better their situations.

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25
Whatever the reason for coming and whatever their background, we get them for a maximum of 58 weeks from a C.E.I.C. sponsored program. Many of these students have a grade nine diploma from the high school in their community and normally they would come into the ABE program to begin studies at level three.

However, what we're finding from testing with the Canadian Adult Achievement Test, their scores indicate to us that many simply do not have the necessary skills to begin level three work and level three in the ABE program would be at a grade nine level.

One-on-one instruction in the classroom is always used to verify the validity of the scores that we get from the testing. And just to use some of the statistics to illustrate this point, we've tested a number of grade nine students--students who have a grade nine diploma from the regular school system and the test scores that we got from that testing showed such

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1 things as a grade 2.4 grade equivalency in vocabulary,
2 a grade 3.8 in reading comprehension. In number
3 operations, they came up as low as 4.7. Problem solving,
4 3.8. And these were all students who held a grade nine
5 diploma from the regular system. We tested a grade 11
6 student who tested grade 5.6 in vocabulary, 3.8 in reading
7 comprehension and this is just to give you an idea of what
8 it is that we're working with.

9 These students coming in
10 have only one 58-week opportunity to get a high school
11 diploma. Without the training allowance, it is almost
12 impossible for most of them. Yet we know before they begin
13 that most will spend the majority of that time re-learning
14 the basic skills expected at a grade nine level. They
15 are doomed to disappointment in many cases before they
16 begin. They also have the added burden of learning in
17 a language other than their mother tongue in the case of
18 some of the Inuit and the Innu students, particularly in
19 the case of students from Shishatshit. Not only do these
20 students have to learn in a second language, most of them
21 have never learned to read and write in the Innu language
22 which has a strong oral tradition.

23 It's difficult for us to
24 imagine the awesome task that these students face. Here
25 is one short incident that might, again, help to show this.

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1 An ABE instructor was watching one of her students working
2 on a geometry unit and the question asked, "What is the
3 circumference of a circle whose diameter is 60
4 millimeters?" The student had studied the diagram, had
5 learned the formula and quite easily proceeded to work
6 out the solution to the problem with no difficulty.
7 However, the next question asked was, "Find the
8 circumference of a circle having a diameter of five
9 millimeters," instead of saying "whose diameter is five
10 millimeters." The student read the problem several times,
11 looked quite puzzled and then ignored the formula
12 completely in the process which she had already used
13 successfully and when she was questioned, she just said,
14 "This is different. It's not the same as the last one."

15 It is difficult for us to appreciate that such a slight
16 difference in the way a question is worded could cause
17 such confusion.

18 Most students enter the
19 program at or below grade nine and are expected to
20 successfully complete 19 courses at level two, 36 courses
21 at level three, to get their grade 12 equivalency. While
22 students may receive equivalency credits or maturity
23 credits, many are still faced with the prospect of
24 successfully completing as many as 43 courses in 52 weeks,
25 an obviously impossible task. It is also true that

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1 deserving students may be given an extra six weeks of
2 allowance but we maintain that this is still not long
3 enough.

4 Far too often we see
5 students enter the program, work hard at their courses,
6 begin to learn how to learn, become enthusiastic about
7 their successes, gain new confidence with their new skills,
8 only to find that their 52 weeks have run out, either before
9 they reach level three or just as they are about to begin
10 it. These students do not have the option of--I'm sorry,
11 these students do have the option of coming back to the
12 college to complete the program without a training
13 allowance but to be realistic, we must consider these
14 individuals and understand their circumstances. Many
15 simply cannot afford the tuition and the cost to pay someone
16 to care for their children while they are at school.

17 Another area of concern
18 that I would like to raise, and this is one which applies
19 to both training in the learning centers and also at the
20 community-based level, has to do with dependent care which
21 is paid to a trainee for babysitting purposes. It is my
22 experience that women in training programs whose husbands
23 are unemployed, do not qualify for the dependent care
24 allowance since it is maintained that the husband can stay
25 at home to babysit while the mother attends a training

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1 program. It is not at all logical to assume that the
2 husband will babysit for his wife to attend training.
3 Not only is it culturally inappropriate, but the lifestyle
4 demands that time be spent on basic survival in some cases.

5 For example, in Hopedale right now where we have a crafts
6 training program, the husbands are working at their winter
7 wood, they're winterizing their houses and they're hunting
8 for caribou. This makes it necessary for the women
9 attending this program to hire babysitters who many are
10 paying out of their training allowance. They are
11 considered ineligible for dependent care and yet they must
12 still pay it.

13 We ask you to please put
14 forward the situation of these Aboriginal students to the
15 decision-makers in the hopes of negotiating more realistic
16 and reasonable guidelines and policies. We ask that the
17 number of Native adults in our communities who do not have
18 a grade 12 level of education be considered as well as
19 the importance of attaining such a level in our present
20 society. We ask that consideration be given to the great
21 burden placed on Aboriginal students by expecting them
22 to achieve, in a second language, the same rate of learning
23 as students who are learning in their mother tongue. We
24 also ask that women who wish to get back into the work
25 force by taking training, be given the encouragement and

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1 every opportunity to do so. Barriers imposed upon them
2 by the restrictions placed on dependent care should be
3 eliminated. I'd like to suggest that Aboriginal peoples
4 have specific problems that need to be addressed, much
5 of which arise out of the neglect of the past. This could
6 be accomplished by separate funding of Aboriginal training
7 programs with a specific different set of rules, possibly
8 even administered by a different department. This would
9 get away from attempting to expand training programs for
10 unemployed people across the country to fit people in
11 Native communities. The lifestyle and values of these
12 people need to be considered in setting up the rules and
13 regulations concerning the Aboriginal training program.

14 As you work to attempt to
15 find ways to achieve equality, dignity and full
16 participation by Aboriginal peoples in Canada, I'd like
17 to ask that you consider and understand how a relatively
18 small change in policy would make a real tremendous
19 difference in the lives of the people that we, at the
20 college, attempt to serve. And on that note, I'd like
21 to pass it back to Dr. Sparks.

22 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Just to
23 pick up for a few more minutes on this general theme of
24 education and I do want to acknowledge the good work that
25 CEC--the Canada Employment Commission, Pathways Labrador,

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1 does with this college but sometimes the Canada Employment
2 regulations, as Winnie has pointed out, get in the way.
3 You think you're off and running and then you find you're
4 tripping over some of the issues. She's touched on some
5 of the short-term problems, particularly with adult
6 students, older people, and that's one of the areas that
7 we're wrestling with but I'd also like to talk for a few
8 minutes about the long term, the students who are now in
9 our schools and the ones that we hope will be at our college
10 and other institutions to pursue training.

11 We have some problems with
12 the education system in this country, as we know, in terms
13 of achievement--if we have an education system in this
14 country. We have several because, of course, it's a--it
15 is a provincial responsibility. But all of us, Aboriginal
16 peoples included, are now being moved out, they're pushed
17 out into that global marketplace where's there the Labrador
18 Inuit Development Corporation dealing with Italy or
19 whoever, and I can tell you, they're looking at us. And
20 what they're seeing is really not very flattering.
21 They're saying that here is a country that spends 14 percent
22 of its--all its public expenditures on education and
23 training and yet it has an educational record in terms
24 of achievement which is hardly stellar. And they see a
25 country such as Germany and Denmark which is spending nine

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1 percent--their total for public funds and they're seeing
2 a system that's being very effective and very productive.

3 Now, I know that education is a provincial responsibility
4 in this country in most places.

5 I also know that the
6 federal government has been making some efforts and I just
7 got this in the mail, "Inventing our Futures: The National
8 Prosperity Initiative" a couple of days ago actually.
9 One of the things that our federal government talks about
10 here is realizing opportunities for Aboriginal peoples.

11 "Severe economic and social obstacles have restricted
12 the ability of Aboriginal peoples to participate in
13 Canada's economy. The most severe of these obstacles are
14 illiteracy and the lack of quality education, inadequate
15 skills in mathematics, science and management." And it
16 goes on and I'm sure you've read it or will read it for
17 yourselves.

18 One of the challenges is
19 to increase the use of technology by Aboriginal peoples.

20 We're getting asked for that all the time and this is
21 why the basic education is so important. Who is going
22 to do this? The response here is that the Aboriginal
23 enterprises, the federal Department of Industry, Science
24 and Technology through Aboriginal economic programs by
25 the spring of 1993.

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1 The other challenge is to
2 increase literacy and numeracy and achieve higher levels
3 of educational attainment and that goes on. But who's
4 going to do it? The Aboriginal communities with
5 provincial and territorial education departments and
6 school boards and responsible federal departments. I'm
7 not so sure within the current economic environment--I'm
8 not sure how's that going to happen, given the limited
9 resources that are already there and, you know, when we
10 talk about literacy training, we get a little bit of help
11 from the federal government but at the basic level, the
12 real literacy that we might call grades one to nine--grades
13 one to seven, that's seen as a provincial responsibility
14 and the pot is pretty much--is pretty much dry.

15 We're concerned as a
16 training institution because the word is getting out on
17 our school system. For whatever reason, it's not
18 performing. It's not--and if it's not performing for
19 those who have English as a first language, we know, we've
20 seen the data on communities where English is a second
21 language, primarily Aboriginal communities.

22 I guess the other thing
23 that I'd like to touch on here and this comes out of the
24 international survey that I referred to. It was done in
25 The Economist in the latest edition that I received. I've

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1 heard Commissioner Erasmus focus on the fact of not just
2 looking to other people--other organizations to do things
3 for us but to try and come to grips with what we do as
4 ourselves and the international community is saying this
5 about Canada and the United States--western--the western
6 crowd. That in terms of education, family accounts for
7 educational success and failure far more than the schools
8 let alone college. The best way to ensure that a child
9 climbs the qualification ladder is to provide the child
10 with two parents who tolerate each other and value
11 education. This integration of the family in much of the
12 west--western world is likely to frustrate government
13 attempts to boost educational results through tinkering
14 with local schools and that's something that we're hearing
15 more and more about, that we have to, as a
16 civilization--western civilization deal with because I
17 think if you talk to most teachers and principals who work
18 in schools, that they'd back that up.

19 I guess the point I'd like
20 to end on--and this is always a little bit touchy for a
21 provincial civil servant who knows that education is a
22 provincial responsibility--but one of the other things
23 that I hear is that, you know, "Canada, with your
24 multicultural nation, you're one of the--you're the only
25 one of the G7 countries that doesn't have a national office

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1 of education and training." The success stories--and the
2 success stories have their problems too--Germany, Britain,
3 the United States, if that is a success story--have
4 national means to get at some of the issues. Now I'm not
5 denying that there has to be provincial differences in
6 the way programs are applied--this is--the application
7 of C.E.C. programs demonstrates that very well but I
8 honestly believe that your Commission should give some
9 thought to that matter, particularly as it relates to your
10 jurisdiction and more broadly, for the benefit of the
11 entire country.

12 We appreciate the
13 opportunity to be here and make the presentation and if
14 there are any questions that we can answer or clarify,
15 we'll be pleased to do it. We will submit to you a written
16 brief which is constructed around what we said here today.
17 Thank you very much.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

19 Thank you. Do you want to begin, Mary?

20 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

21 First of all, I'd like to thank you both for your
22 presentation. Mr. Sparks, now Dr. Sparks, I used to--you
23 were my principal a long time ago. You've been involved
24 in education for a long, long time and I guess as we've
25 talked about education, not only in Labrador but right

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1 across the country, we've heard, for example, that the
2 dropout rate for Aboriginal students is extremely high.
3 Education is a major concern. We've heard many people
4 talk about why that might be but in Labrador, why do you
5 think that, you know, that there aren't that many, you
6 know, what is wrong with the educational system, not only
7 in Labrador Community College but, you know, for example
8 in the grade school and what kinds of things have to be
9 done to address this issue so that kids aren't dropping
10 out of school so much?

11 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Well, I
12 think some of the things that need to be done are starting
13 to happen in terms of the schools. And I've been away
14 from the public school system, that side of it for four--for
15 five years now but I think there have been some focus on
16 intention.

17 I do believe, though, that
18 our curriculum is too broad and perhaps not as in depth
19 as it needs to be in the basic skill areas. It--let me
20 say this, it's too broad for the time that we have children
21 in school--the length of the school year, the length of
22 the school day. And if you look at Japan and Korea and
23 Hong Kong, and certainly we don't want to move to those
24 models where there--the children are getting bad backs
25 because they have to carry too many books home but somewhere

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1 in between those extremes, our--we've broadened our school
2 curriculum tremendously in the last number of years but
3 we have not increased the length of the school day or the
4 length of the school year. I think that's one of the
5 issues.

6 I guess I also have to say
7 I think our children spend too much time in front of the
8 television. I know mine did and I know I'm prone to unless
9 I give myself a boost and I'm not sure that that really
10 enhances the kind of things that we need to do in terms
11 of reading and talking to one another and sitting around
12 tables and sharing information that we need to do so I,
13 you know, in talking about education, I think we have to
14 come back to the role of the family, as well, and wouldn't
15 want to say that it's--that this will all be resolved
16 through the school or all resolved through the family.
17 I think it is a team kind of effort right into the college,
18 including the kind of support services that we provide.

19 But what we're finding is that in basic education, we
20 always both--usually have to back up and do a great deal
21 of remedial work especially now as every one of the--even
22 your trades are becoming more complex because of the
23 standards - computerization and so on, technology.

24 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

25 One of the things I found, though is, you know, you--I

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1 find that your comment on the role of family is very, very
2 interesting and I do agree that the family must be involved
3 in the education of the children and I think that research
4 has indicated that parents are involved with their kids.
5 If they are interested in their homework, they talk to
6 the teachers, they value education, that does help the
7 children--the child to complete school. One of the things
8 I found when I was going to school was that in our
9 community--of course, we grew up in Happy Valley-Goose
10 Bay and for the most part, the Inuit community was very,
11 very isolated from the other community, from what you call
12 mainstream Goose Bay community and the parents--the Inuit
13 parents never were usually involved because first of all,
14 they couldn't be involved. They spoke unilingual
15 Inuktitut. They couldn't talk to the teachers. The
16 school was an authority figure. People were sometimes
17 intimidated by it and many Labradorians are intimidated,
18 I think, by the whole structure of school and there was
19 never that involvement. I was really actually saddened
20 to hear when I went to Nain just recently that the parents,
21 even though the community is of a different composition
22 where the Inuit and the Kablunangajuk are the majority
23 there, that parents still, you know, there is still not
24 as much parent involvement. I'm wondering, you know, how
25 do you involve the--how do you make changes so that you

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1 see more and more of this involvement? You know, what
2 is the responsibility of the educators in this regard?
3 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Well, I
4 think the Williams Commission on Education which is before
5 the Province at the moment, the Williams Royal Commission,
6 is speaking to that issue in terms of parent councils.
7 That's probably not the right--not his terminology, but
8 he certainly has addressed in there the issue of more
9 parental involvement and, of course, everything you read
10 on the--generally on local control and this is--points
11 back to that direction as well in terms of schools. So
12 some of that may be coming and I think some educators will
13 argue that they--that the curriculum has been fixed, that
14 in mathematics and language and things are being done now
15 at the lower levels that's going to take a while to move
16 through--to move through the system. Well, I guess, you
17 know, what concerns me and I--I raise this for our whole
18 system and I guess you just--you just realize that with
19 the Aboriginal community and the language differences and
20 what we know there, it's going to be--it's that much more
21 of a challenge. But our whole country is being seen
22 internationally--and this is from the economic point of
23 view in terms of world trade and jobs--we're beginning
24 to gain a very weak reputation in terms of what we're doing
25 educationally--that we're just not up to it and that's--I

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1 guess that's my concern and I feel that there have to be,
2 you know, I--provincially, yes, it's a responsibility.
3 Nationally, I know the Federal Government is interested
4 in--but the question is if our provinces are unable to
5 remove--deal with issues like the trade barriers and so
6 on, are we really going to be able to develop this highly
7 skilled national work force including Aboriginal people
8 that can meet the needs of the global economy? I would
9 argue that if we don't--if we don't deal with the basic
10 education problems now, then it's the kiss of death for
11 all of us in terms of educational achievement compared
12 to what the--way we have to be to compete. We just can't
13 skate in the same arena.

14 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

15 One thing about--we've been hearing a lot about is the
16 need for a local--local control of schools and that means,
17 you know, like local people, Labradorians, Innu, Inuit,
18 Kablunangajuk, Labradorians should, for example, have more
19 people on the school boards, should have more people, for
20 example, designing the programs in the schools, in the
21 colleges, should have more instructors from the local
22 community who are familiar with the language, the culture.

23 Is that happening, to any degree, either in the secondary
24 or in the college level?

25 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Well, I

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1 think it's been happening in the secondary level and I
2 shouldn't be speaking for the school system but I was there
3 for a while.

4 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

5 You were there for a long time.

6 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Some of
7 the--if I'm not there now, I'll probably be reminded--the
8 TEPL pro--the Teacher Education Program in Labrador,
9 albeit it's taken 15 or 16 years but a substantial number
10 of people are now--Native people, Aboriginal people are
11 in classrooms as a result of that program including some
12 administrative positions, I believe. The local school
13 committees are there. I'm not sure, you know, I guess
14 function--how the function varies from community to
15 community from time to time and you probably know that
16 the--in the province, the Minister of Education has been
17 talking to the Inuit at Shishatshit on more local control
18 in terms of their school but, you know, we talked about
19 these things at the Inuit Education Conference in Nain
20 in 1977 and some of them had moved forward--some of the
21 initiatives have moved forward more than others. Others
22 are still frozen in time.

23 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

24 Now, more specifically with the Labrador Community
25 College, how many staff do you have--just can you given

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1 me idea of what it looks like in terms of, you know, how
2 many staff you have, how many people are where and stuff
3 like that?

4 **DR. RON SPARKS:** I'll have
5 to ask Winnie to help me out in terms of Native people.
6 I can--I thought we might touch on that first. We have
7 one of three in Shishatshit?

8 **WINNIE MONTAGUE:** Native
9 staff, you're talking about? Yeah.

10 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
11 How many staff do you have and, of all that staff, how
12 many are Native and are generally--I mean, what positions
13 do they occupy? Are they--

14 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Well,
15 depending on the time of the year and the flow of contracts
16 from C.E.C., we could have up to a couple of hundred people
17 on but generally in that 120 to 160 range. The percentage
18 of those who would be Aboriginal people in instruction,
19 I mean, would be minimal.

20 **WINNIE MONTAGUE:** It would
21 be--in full-time programs. Yeah. Yeah.

22 **DR. RON SPARKS:** You'd be
23 lucky to stretch it to a--to one percent in terms of the
24 post-secondary or secondary programs. Now I mentioned
25 in the trapping program, the guide was--you know, the

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1 effort was to train Aboriginal people to do that and there
2 are a number of instructors now, probably in the region
3 of 15 or 20 people, at least, who have been trained but
4 that was a very specific program initiative. We have a
5 few people in administration--Metis and Inuit in, you know,
6 administration offices--secretarial positions.

7 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

8 Well, that doesn't seem to me to be like a lot--one
9 percent.

10 **DR. RON SPARKS:** No. No,
11 it isn't. I don't think I said a lot. No.

12 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

13 I mean, I'm just thinking, you know, like one percent
14 of the whole staff, I--

15 **DR. RON SPARKS:** I'm
16 talking--yeah, the instructional staff. I suppose--yeah.

17 **WINNIE MONTAGUE:** But then
18 when you look at the number who are qualified to fill those
19 positions too, there aren't an awful lot of qualified
20 people to fill the positions but in programs like we
21 referred to in Hopedale, now for example, we have one
22 co-ordinator and four instructors and they're all people
23 from Hopedale, Aboriginal people. So in cases like that,
24 it would rise quite substantially.

25 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Yeah.

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1 See, the other thing on that is--I'll probably get shot
2 on this in front of my staff here because the--the
3 percentage of Metis staff, if I actually did a count, might
4 skew that substantially in terms of our Goose Bay operation
5 in particular because there are a lot of local Labrador
6 people employed by the college and whether or not they're
7 members of the Labrador Metis Association or not, I don't
8 know.

9 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

10 Just one other question--there's--you know, you mentioned
11 the TEPL program and I've always thought that, you know,
12 even if you've gone through that program, you're not
13 necessarily--do you have the same salary? Do you get the
14 paid as, for example, a teacher with a B.Ed. or do
15 you-- after a while, or what?

16 **DR. RON SPARKS:** After a
17 while is the --

18 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

19 After a while, they are--

20 **DR. RON SPARKS:** You can
21 go on--you go on the teachers' salary scale and you're
22 on the route to the B.Ed. but I think you come on--you
23 used to come on about the certificate two level. I think
24 there's four or five--there's two or three more steps there
25 to the degree level.

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1 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

2 And do--a lot of people who go to the TEPL program, reach
3 that end level?

4 **DR. RON SPARKS:** I think
5 you should ask the Labrador East Integrated School Board,
6 I--

7 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

8 Yeah, okay.

9 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Let me say
10 in the time--in the ten years that I spent there as
11 superintendent, I believe--which was from '77 to '87--I
12 think there was something like 14 people completed the
13 program in the 10-year period, working in the classroom
14 as teacher assistants, taking a course or two a semester
15 but I'm sure there would be more since then.

16 **WINNIE MONTAGUE:** And that
17 program has changed now to Northern and Native Teacher
18 Degree Program and there are people going into the regular
19 university system that are taking that same degree so,
20 you know, you can do it either way--by going to university
21 or by doing it through the distance project.

22 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

23 Yeah. Okay. Thanks a lot.

24 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

25 You were talking about dropouts earlier. Is there a

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1 dropout rate amongst other people living in Labrador
2 besides the Inuit and the Innu?

3 **DR. RON SPARKS:** In the
4 college system?

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
6 No, in the lower school.

7 **DR. RON SPARKS:** I'm
8 reluctant to make a guess because I've been away from
9 that--from the detail of that for the last five--

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
11 When you were there.

12 **DR. RON SPARKS:** When I was
13 there, was there a dropout rate? Yes. Yes, there was
14 a--there was a provincial problem with dropouts. Now,
15 I--I--you know, the school attendance--the school the
16 participation increased dramatically with the
17 establishment of the local schools which came in that
18 '70s--which actually began to happen in that late '70s
19 period when the boarding schools moved back to community
20 schools. Up to that point in time and I expect this is
21 why we're seeing that 57 percent in terms of the older
22 people, the people who left school, I suppose at the end
23 of grade eight, who just didn't go to North West River.

24 But the Province had a great problem with dropouts and
25 it made a real effort to try to come to terms with it

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1 including Labrador schools and the establishment of local
2 committees and screening kinds of interventions. At the
3 college, as I said in the beginning, we often found that
4 when people came to the Happy Valley-Goose Bay campus,
5 the same kinds of situations, I guess that occurred at
6 North West River at the boarding school--people would be
7 lonesome, they sometimes felt isolated, they felt
8 prejudice in terms of living in the dorm and people would
9 leave and--our resident man--I just thought our residence
10 man was out there--a Native person--counting here my one
11 percent. The--that has improved. That has improved in
12 terms of trying to hold people, provide support.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

14 This Teacher Education Program. Do you have a role in
15 that? I'm trying to figure out what role you have in that.

16 **DR. RON SPARKS:** I have
17 none. This is why I'm a little--at this point in
18 time--well, I guess we provide some facilities for them
19 on occasion in the summertime but the school board will
20 generally employ people as teacher assistants and get them
21 into the program. Since I've been with the college my
22 own involvement has been with, you know, arranging some
23 space for them if we've had it available here to run the
24 courses.

25 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

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1 That's the university program?

2 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Yes, it's
3 a Memorial University program but there is Labrador-based
4 advisory group for the program and it's modeled very much
5 after programs that exist out west and in the Northwest
6 Territories for teacher training. People who are mature
7 students who have an interest in teaching and were helping
8 out as aides or assistants and they're back in the classroom
9 now as role models and I believe one of the vice-principals
10 in Nain is from that program or was at one time.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
12 How are you trying to make the college relevant for
13 Aboriginal people?

14 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Well, I
15 guess, in terms of--if you take a specific community and
16 we tend to try and deal that way because communities are
17 there and they're isolated and Davis Inlet, for example,
18 if you sit and talk with the chief about what the pressing
19 needs are, what the number one and two priorities are and,
20 you know, last year it was getting some people trained
21 to work on the housing program and we find that we--from
22 there, you had the program but trying to identify the
23 funding, try to get the co-operation with the Housing
24 Corporation, which comes, but it takes times and you get
25 the program going. But that kind of thing comes from a

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1 dialogue with the chief. I guess in Shishatshit,
2 putting--moving some program--I mean, we had been
3 operating the construction trades at the Happy Valley
4 campus 30 miles up the road, 25 from Shishatshit. We went
5 to the band council and said, "Look, we realize we don't
6 think we've had a person complete a program, and maybe
7 one or two, in 17 years. This is a program--this is one
8 of the programs, we know that there's some interest in
9 from Shishatshit and that if you could help us out with
10 the space, we can put the program in the community and
11 the band council did. They say, well, we'll clean out
12 our rear office, our depot and you can have it and that's
13 been going there ever since and this year they said, "Well,
14 we've trained these people now for two or three years,
15 we want something else. "We want plumbing and joinery
16 because they can plop up the houses now but we want to
17 be able to do some plumbing and some carpentry--some finish
18 work inside." So that kind of program has been started.

19 But that's primarily been through dialogue with the band
20 council. Now, we have for the Inuit community--Winnie
21 is employed with the college and of course, the Labrador
22 Inuit Association has their--has an education officer as
23 well so there's a growing circle of people there to really
24 look at the needs. I don't know, maybe you'd like to speak
25 to that question in terms of what's happening with the

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1 Inuit communities. It's more haphazard with the
2 Innu--talks with the chief.

3 **WINNIE MONTAGUE:** I find
4 in the five communities on the north coast, it's quite
5 straightforward. I could take Hopedale as an example.
6 They came to us as a college--approached us and said, "Well,
7 you know, tourism has some potential in Hopedale and we'd
8 like to develop that industry in that area and we'd like
9 to have a crafts program." So I just worked with the people
10 in the community, the craft council, the town council,
11 in seeing what their needs were, what exactly did they
12 have in mind, what did they want in the program, worked
13 out those details and put in a proposal, got funding to
14 run the program, and that's in progress now. Next week
15 I'm going to Postville to address a similar need that has
16 been identified there for training programs so that's
17 pretty much the same practice that Dr. Sparks referred
18 to. We got a need identified and we attempt to address
19 that based on what it is they say that they want or what
20 they need. So it's very community based and I find that
21 in my particular position, that's very important to me
22 that I respond to that kind of a need.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
24 Yeah. Why do you have a co-ordinator for the Inuit and
25 not a co-ordinator for the other Aboriginal people?

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1 DR. RON SPARKS: Yes.

2 Well, the reason for that is that the Inuit Funding
3 Agreement has provided funding for years for an adult
4 education officer, a language specialist and when the
5 college was formed, we inherited that and that was funding
6 that was dumped into the college budget, so we went to
7 the L.I.A. and said, "Look, we think that this might be
8 better used through a broader co-ordinating approach, what
9 do you think?" And they said, "Let's try it for a year
10 and see what happens" and we're into our second year now.

11 And--but we don't have that with the Innu and I wanted
12 to mention, too, on the Innu--the trapping program came
13 from the Innu. They approached the college about doing--

14 CO-CHAIR, GEORGES ERASMUS:

15 Humane trapping?

16 DR. RON SPARKS: Yes,

17 humane trapping and pelt preparation in terms of modern
18 methods and that initiative has sort of gone on from there.

19 We had Innu staff who had been to an Ontario program and
20 helped in the preparation of that and then did delivery
21 and the instructor training--got into the guide training
22 as well--sort of grew out of that so we've got kind of
23 an outdoor programming and then we had a traditional skills
24 program last year which the band council asked for to try
25 and get--help them get some people back in touch with some

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1 of the traditional--some of the traditional skills.

2 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

3 You know, when this--I remember when they were talking
4 about introducing the humane trapping course into the
5 community college, you know, there was--created some stir
6 among people. They were saying, oh, we trapped all our
7 lives, you know, why do we go to college? I was just
8 wondering if that kind of--you met that kind of resistance
9 in--you know, had--were there any kind of criticisms about
10 that program and if so, how were they addressed?

11 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Well, you
12 know, the Innu--the Innu--in fact, when they approached
13 the college, the comment was made it may seem rather odd
14 talking to you folks about this but really what we want
15 to get at is pelt decoration. We're finding that some
16 of--you know, we're not getting the market value that we'd
17 like to get but I think generally there was some of that
18 kind of comment, you know, what next? But it really was
19 out of a lack of understanding of what was happening and
20 the Labrador Trappers Association was in there rather
21 quickly on the tail end of this saying, "Look, we'd like--we
22 want to get into this as well" and they brought in, oh,
23 the trapper--the trap replacement program, for example,
24 sort of got piggybacked on that initiative and--the INAC
25 folks called and said we got some money for some short

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1 courses and, you know, we--that has been kept alive since
2 1988 and by that kind--by that kind of interest. So
3 long--there had been some cynicism--there has been some
4 cynicism out there out there. It really hasn't been
5 from--from people who, you know, trap and focus on that.

6 Oh, we got a few, you know, when we went into the country,
7 we had to take tents and we needed VCRs and generators
8 because we had tapes and this kind of thing and some of
9 those things were questioned. About that--when I say
10 videos, I'm not talking--maybe there were some movies as
11 well, probably there were, but there were tapes that were
12 purchased from the Ontario Trappers Association so there
13 were two things--

14 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

15 All in the name of education, eh?

16 **DR. RON SPARKS:** --a few
17 things like that, yes. Some people call it a paid vacation
18 whether it's a guiding program and--but this is, you
19 know--The other side of training in Labrador is that our
20 population is so small and I keep saying to myself and
21 others on occasion, you know, we're serving a population
22 as a college about the size of the City of Cornerbrook
23 which is not exactly a huge city so you get geared up for
24 some training. You don't want to saturate the market.
25 We done that in some of the trades in some places but really,

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1 we haven't, you know, with the business management skills,
2 the land claims that will be coming and the preparation
3 that's needed there is a tremendous amount to be done and
4 we're still back a few years in terms of getting ready
5 for that kind of thing. You know, countries like Germany
6 and Denmark are having problems with academic--with what
7 they call academic drift--the fact that too many people
8 leaving high school are choosing university rather than
9 apprenticeship issues. We've got problems with academic
10 lag. I mean, in the sense that we don't have people ready
11 to go into very basic kinds of programs and not just
12 Aboriginal people but it's--it's a little worse there,
13 more accentuated and this is what concerns me about the--I
14 keep coming back to the country as a whole but I really
15 think we're losing some ground and probably the Aboriginal
16 people have the most to lose in the long run because they're
17 just on a different path.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

19 You're talking about land claims and the management
20 program you tried earlier. Are you going to make another
21 effort in that area?

22 **DR. RON SPARKS:** We
23 haven't--this was a very short program that we tried
24 initially and I guess shows that we shouldn't rush into
25 things and always say yes. We have nothing definitely

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1 planned right now other than contact with the group that's
2 trying to launch some training for Inuit and that's a
3 distance education issue and it's solely for the Inuit
4 and they wrote to us to see if we were interested. We
5 said, yes, we are interested and we raised the question
6 of the Innu, though, as well because I thought we could
7 piggyback that but that--there is still discussions going
8 on there. I know they've made a pre--a news release on
9 their intended activity here about a week ago. There are
10 some issues like using Television Northern Canada, getting
11 the time on that network and, by the way, we do have some
12 time on that network and we are doing some broadcasting
13 with tapes for basic education from Rigolet to Nain. 10:30
14 every weekday morning you can tune in and the Labrador
15 College and Yukon College, that's purchased together, to
16 support basic education initiatives and we've
17 supplied--we're supplying the tapes to community
18 co-ordinators in southern Labrador, as well, but we don't
19 have TVNC. So we are part of the TVNC initiative although
20 we're a poor partner but getting a little bit done.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

22 You don't have TVNC shown here. Why?

23 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

24 Not in Goose Bay, eh?

25 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Oh, at

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1 least on cable in Goose Bay, yeah. Goose Bay to Nain.
2 If you have the cable network in Goose Bay, you can get
3 it.

4 **WINNIE MONTAGUE:** Yeah,
5 even without the cable because you can hook it up and get
6 it on another channel. Yeah. That is, as far as Goose
7 Bay but not south of Goose Bay.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
9 What would have to occur to get it down here? Cable?

10 **DR. RON SPARKS:** No, I
11 don't--I think that decision--and, again, my sense was
12 that it was made on the basis of, at that time, considered
13 the old designated Aboriginal community concept
14 that--Rigolet and north.

15 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
16 Goose Bay is not a designated community.

17 **DR. RON SPARKS:** No, well
18 see, it may have something to do with the--see North West
19 River as well. Maybe something to do with the television
20 station. I don't know.

21 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
22 Yellowknife?

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
24 Um-hmm. Up higher than Yellowknife.

25 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Yeah,

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1 that--I know it was just said it's not going--not going
2 there because some of the Native people in Port Hope
3 Simpson, in particular, had expressed concern--they're
4 on our board of governors--when we said we were buying
5 these tapes. They wanted them as well.

6 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

7 I'm glad I'm not the only one who don't know how to answer
8 some of Georges' questions.

9 **DR. RON SPARKS:** And I will
10 get you some updated info--I'm going to--I want to check
11 the employment figures, Mary, because as I talk, more
12 people keep popping to mind in terms of--I could get that
13 broken out for you by Inuit, Innu and Metis and--

14 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

15 Well, do you have a board--I guess you have a board of
16 governors, eh?

17 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Um-hmm.

18 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

19 And how are they elected and--

20 **DR. RON SPARKS:** They're
21 not elected. They're appointed.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

23 From on high?

24 **DR. RON SPARKS:** They're
25 appointed by--yes, by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council

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1 which really, I guess, is the province in that sense.
2 I think you will find that there's been a--there's been
3 quite--considerable sensitivity to get--to making sure
4 that there is geographical and Aboriginal group
5 representation on the board of governors.

6 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

7 So what does it look like?

8 **DR. RON SPARKS:** What does
9 it look like? Well, there's generally 11 to 12 people
10 on the board. We've always had at least one--there's been
11 one Innu person appointed to the board each round of
12 appointments and there has been at least one Inuit and
13 sometimes two from the north coast because politicians,
14 I guess, you know, from their pool of constitutents, put
15 forth a number of names as well and I can't venture a guess
16 as to the number of Metis people because I'm--I don't always
17 know who is there but I know we have one Metis person right
18 now.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

20 So it ends up being about, maybe, between three to four
21 people being maybe Aboriginal out of fourteen?

22 **DR. RON SPARKS:** Out
23 of--no, out of 11 to 12 and it--sometimes the board isn't
24 completely filled up. It--they could leave a vacancy for
25 a period of months but, for example, Greg Andrew I know

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1 from Shishatshit. Ted Andersen is there from Nain and--or
2 from Makkovik and there's an appointment pending from Nain
3 or Hopedale. They have a number of names up before so
4 that would be three plus Alex Parr. It would be four when
5 they fill it out this time around. But that's done at
6 the will, you know, of our masters--I generally do it
7 reasonably well, I think--

8 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

9 That's all right. I'll apologize to the Lieutenant
10 Governor of Newfoundland.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

12 All right. I think those are my questions. Thank you
13 for coming forth.

14 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

15 Thank you. Thanks a lot for travelling all this way.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

17 Do we break now or later?

18 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

19 Break now.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

21 All right. We're going to take about a three-minute
22 break, I guess.

23 ---Hearing is recessed at 14:41 hr.

24 ---Hearing is resumed at 14:51 hr.

25 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

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1 We're now going to hear from the Henry Gordon Academy.
2 Do you want to introduce them?

3 **JESSIE BIRD:** The next
4 presenters are a group of students from the Henry Gordon
5 Academy and Janice Clark will be--oh, and Sharon Bird will
6 be doing the actual presentation and they will all be open
7 to questions following the presentation.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
9 Okay. Could you introduce some of the students first,
10 just for our records?

11 **JANICE CLARK:** I'm Janice
12 Clark.

13 **SHARON BIRD:** I'm Sharon
14 Bird.

15 **NORMAN FRIEDA:** I'm Norman
16 Frieda.

17 **FABIAN GREEN:** I'm Fabian
18 Green.

19 **JANET PAUL:** I'm Janet
20 Paul.

21 **BARBIE MESHER:** I'm Barbie
22 Mesher and Sheldon Morris, over there.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
24 You can start whenever you want.

25 **JANICE CLARK, THE HENRY**

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1 **GORDON ACADEMY:** The Metis people of Labrador coast share
2 many of the concerns of Canada's Aboriginal people. We
3 often feel forgotten, ignored or passed over by the
4 government, both federal and provincial. We are currently
5 not even recognized by our provincial government as having
6 any special status, therefore, we can feel sympathy and
7 support for many of the goals of Aboriginal people. Many
8 of the economic and social issues they are face--they face
9 are our concerns as well. Economic issues such as lack
10 of employment opportunities, cuts in funding for education
11 and health, lack of funding for recreation facilities,
12 inadequate funding for town services.

13 **SHARON BIRD, THE HENRY**

14 **GORDON ACADEMY:** Social issues such as alcohol abuse and
15 problems related to it, the lack of--the lack of positive
16 goals for young people, certainly cause--yeah, certainly
17 caused by a lack of sure and permanent employment. While
18 we do understand and sympathize with these concerns, we
19 have our own as well. We and our ancestors have lived,
20 hunted, trapped and fished in this area for two centuries.
21 We feel that our claim to this land is stronger than that
22 of any group in Canada.

23 **JANICE CLARK:** And it is
24 our right that must take precedence here and for the
25 protection and preservation of our land and our wildlife,

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1 we must have input into any laws or regulations or decisions
2 regarding it. Thank you.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

4 Anybody else want to say anything before we ask questions?

5 **VARIOUS STUDENTS:** No.

6 No. No.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

8 Do you mind if you ask you some questions? Could you
9 tell us a little bit more about the people that call
10 themselves Metis there because we're, as a Commission,
11 far more familiar with people that call themselves Metis
12 out West? We have some of them working for us and, or
13 course, there's been a lot written on them in comparison.

14 They would say that it's not enough written on them as
15 opposed to the so-called "Indians" but could you tell us
16 a bit more about the Metis in Labrador.

17 **SHARON BIRD:** Well, I
18 guess, in Labrador the people who have Native blood in
19 them, like as far back as ancestors go, they married with
20 the Natives so we have Native blood in our--in us so we
21 are considered Metis.

22 **FABIAN GREEN:** In the
23 proper definition of what Metis is, we are considered--

24 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

25 Would you move that mic over, please?

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1 **FABIAN GREEN:** Well the
2 proper definition of the Metis, you know, if you do have
3 Native blood, then you are considered a Metis and there
4 aren't very many people in this community who does not
5 have Native blood in them and I don't see how we can't
6 be considered as a Metis and have equal rights as, say,
7 people in Shishatshit. They have far more--I don't know
8 if you'd call it rights or not. They have special
9 privileges, you know, that we don't have and what we cannot
10 have, such as, L.I.A.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
12 There are parts of Canada where large portions of
13 provinces--people can trace their ancestry back, at some
14 point, to Aboriginal people but they don't regard
15 themselves as Aboriginal people but they know that
16 somewhere in their background there are Aboriginal people.
17 So you're making a distinction from that situation to
18 here. You people actually identify yourself as Aboriginal
19 people?

20 **FABIAN GREEN:** Well we all
21 have Native blood.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
23 Yeah, no question about that. I'm not having--I'm not
24 disputing that fact. I hear you very loud and clear.
25 You can go to some provinces and like here, the earlier

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1 settlers didn't bring their wives with them so they
2 inter-married hundreds of years ago. Now, though, when
3 you go amongst them, they always--some people that
4 actually--perceive themselves as being Aboriginal. A lot
5 of people in a number of provinces will say, well, somewhere
6 in my background there are--there is--you know, my great
7 grandfather was--or something like that but they will not
8 say that because of that I am an Aboriginal person. They
9 will acknowledge that they have a descendency of Aboriginal
10 people but they won't call themselves an Aboriginal person
11 so what you're saying here is that the distinction here
12 is that people here feel they are Aboriginal people?

13 **FABIAN GREEN:** Yeah,
14 basically.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
16 Anybody else have any comments on that? What are you
17 taught about the land here prior to the European people
18 coming here, marrying with the Native people?

19 **JANICE CLARK:** That the
20 Natives came over from--from Asia and other countries.
21 We thought they walked over from Bering Strait and that
22 they were also newcomers to this land.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
24 And what about in Labrador itself? What kind of story
25 are you told about--was this partly settled? All settled?

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1 Or was there so called "open land" that no one had ever
2 stepped on?

3 **NORMAN FRIEDA:** Well, to
4 our knowledge, or--I should say the knowledge that we've
5 been taught in school, we understand that there were Native
6 people before--before the settlers came and that the land
7 was occupied by Native people.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
9 Do you mind if we go into some other issues besides the
10 one that you brought up--maybe some of the issues we were
11 talking about in school. You were mentioning there that
12 there is not enough different classes in school.
13 Chemistry, for instance, I think was mentioned--a number
14 of other things. We were just told here earlier by people
15 that are instructors and teachers that the school system
16 is too broad. It seems that it was the other story we
17 were being told and that there's too much to choose from
18 so--and that there isn't enough focus on what they call
19 "core" programs and, presumably, he was talking about
20 English, Math, Science, so that competition could
21 occur--excellence could be generated with a more narrow
22 focus, that we could compete internationally. Are we
23 hearing two different things or are we both saying the
24 same thing or what? Do you want to respond to that in
25 any way?

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1 **FABIAN GREEN:** If the
2 system was too broad, then we would more choices in the
3 classroom than what we have now. I mean, in some classes
4 we had a choice in which was Science--it was Biology and
5 Physics. If you took Biology, you had to take another
6 certain course and if you took Physics, you had to take
7 two other courses. I mean, there's no other way around
8 it, right? If you wanted to take one course and not the
9 other, you couldn't do it, that's all I know.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
11 The concept of the pre-requisite, kind of sequential kind
12 of learning--you've got to learn one block before you can
13 go to the next block, that kind of thing.

14 **SHARON BIRD:** And every
15 second year, a certain course is offered. It's like one
16 year Canadian Law might be offered and it's not offered
17 the next year.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
19 Why?

20 **SHARON BIRD:** I don't
21 know. The same way with French and a few other subjects.
22 And computers, like, depends on--the grades ten and level
23 three class can do it, but it's not offered to the grade
24 11s this year.

25 **NORMAN FRIEDA:** No, they

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1 wouldn't offer it to us.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

3 Yeah, that's something I couldn't figure out why. I
4 forgot to ask your teachers why. Do you know why?

5 **VARIOUS STUDENTS:** No.

6 No. We don't have a clue.

7 **LEE PITTMAN, PRINCIPAL,**

8 **THE HENRY GORDON ACADEMY:** Do you mind if I interject here?

9 To answer Fabian's question. If he took Physics--

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

11 Could you use one of our mics, just so we--it goes into--I
12 never thought we needed a mic back there, sorry.

13 **LEE PITTMAN:** No, I didn't
14 think I would get in on this. No, if you took Physics,
15 I understand that you couldn't take Biology, that was
16 his--the question, right, the--

17 **FABIAN GREEN:** Well, it
18 seemed that if you took Physics, you had to take two other
19 courses and you wouldn't be--you know, you'd have to
20 continue on in Physics.

21 **LEE PITTMAN:** Now the
22 reason for that is that we had one Science teacher and,
23 of course, the two courses are offered in--you can't teach
24 the two courses in the one time slot. So when he is
25 teaching Physics, some of you are doing Physics, okay?

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1 Others students, he puts in another slot. And then when
2 that teacher teaches Biology then that group of Physics
3 teacher would go to the next slot. I am not sure you're
4 following me? For example, when you do Physics, right?

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

6 Is the problem that you don't have enough teachers?

7 **LEE PITTMAN:** That's

8 right. That's the problem, yeah--

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

10 To teach both at the same time so you--either one or the
11 other, so you alternate--go back and forth.

12 **LEE PITTMAN:** Exactly.

13 Exactly.

14 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

15 Is it possible, too, that when Mr. Sparks said that the
16 curriculum is too broad that he was talking more or less
17 that--is there a difference in what's being taught, for
18 example, in Goose Bay and on the Coast or--

19 **VARIOUS STUDENTS:** Yes.

20 Oh, yes. Yes.

21 **LEE PITTMAN:** Our senior
22 high program here is very restricted because of the units
23 of teachers that's available. We have one English
24 instructor, for example, one Science teacher and one Math
25 teacher so those teachers are teaching on a six-day cycle,

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1 for example, 42 periods, which would be--they get three
2 preparation periods in one six-day cycle. You could not
3 broaden the program in that respect. You couldn't offer,
4 say, Biology, Chemistry and Physics because it's just not
5 possible for that one teacher to cope with them. Now I
6 think this is where Dr. Sparks is probably coming from.

7 Maybe we should be cutting out some of the Social Studies
8 courses but I think we're pretty restricted on that as
9 well. Maybe--

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

11 He was talking about possibly changing the school year
12 so that there was more time for school and I was wondering
13 what students thought about that. Do you want to have
14 11 months of school?

15 **VARIOUS STUDENTS:** Uh-uh.

16 No. Not really.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

18 Twelve is what you're after, eh?

19 **SHARON BIRD:** I mean, if
20 they made anything longer, they should make like the day
21 a half hour longer if they would think of it--to do it
22 before, instead of the year.

23 **FABIAN GREEN:** Or perhaps
24 even starting earlier in the morning.

25 **SHARON BIRD:** No.

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1 **JANET PAUL:** Either way,
2 you to get somebody complaining about it.

3 **FABIAN GREEN:** That's
4 right and I mean, I don't think people realize how important
5 their education is. I mean getting up 15 or 20 minutes
6 earlier in the morning is not a lot to ask for considering
7 what your education is all about.

8 **JANICE CLARK:** Even if you
9 did make the school year longer, I know that there would
10 be a lot of people kicking up a fuss, not only students
11 but probably mostly teachers. too.

12 **NORMAN FRIEDA:** That's
13 only the truth. Teachers don't want to teach all the
14 while.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
16 Could you move around to the mic for me, please? I'm
17 sorry.

18 **NORMAN FRIEDA:** I'll have
19 to get one of my own I suppose. No, what Janice said,
20 you know, it wouldn't be just the students that would be
21 kicking up a fuss about days that are longer. I mean the
22 teachers work just--well, actually harder than what we
23 do and they're pressed for time already. I mean I hear
24 teachers talking about it all the time. Because of the
25 lack of teachers, you know, there is not enough teachers

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1 here. There's some teachers teaching about four subjects,
2 three or four subjects at one time and if the school day
3 got longer, they might have to teach another subject which,
4 you know--

5 **JANICE CLARK:** Sometimes
6 you'll find teachers at the school teaches a double course.
7 Our Math teacher teaches computers. Our Science teacher
8 teaches Social Studies. Our English teacher teaches World
9 Geography--

10 **FABIAN GREEN:** Business
11 Today.

12 **JANICE CLARK:** Yeah, and
13 Business Today. Some of them even doing three courses.

14 **SHARON BIRD:** And our
15 French teacher does--

16 **JANICE CLARK:** Yeah, the
17 French teacher does Economics, yeah.

18 **SHARON BIRD:**
19 Economics--he does three--our Gym teacher--

20 **MR. NORMAN FRIEDA:** And
21 the Phys-Ed teacher also teacher Religion. How you link
22 that, I don't know.

23 **LEE PITTMAN:** Your
24 principal teaches Math.

25 **SHARON BIRD:** And we've

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1 got a couple classes doubled up for a lack of teachers.

2

3 **JANICE CLARK:** Grades

4 three and four and five and six.

5 **SHARON BIRD:** Five and

6 six. Two and three.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

8 How big are those classes?

9 **JANICE CLARK:** There's

10 about, what? 26 altogether?

11 **LEE PITTMAN:** We don't

12 have large classes. The pupil-teacher ratio is pretty

13 reasonable, I'd say.

14 **BARBIE MESHER:** It's not

15 that high.

16 **LEE PITTMAN:** So I think

17 the problem is the programs. We have a K to 12 school

18 there, grades and, of course, there are quite a number

19 of programs to teach in that system, K to 12. It's

20 really--this is where we have the problem with restriction

21 where we have the--not enough teachers to do the programs,

22 computers--Computers, for example, we have a problem there

23 with not enough computers. We're having a fundraising

24 the last two--it started out last year, I believe, with

25 two computers which were given to the school board

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1 department for choices. We started from there. We're
2 now at a--I think we have, is it 11 or 12?

3 **VARIOUS STUDENTS:**

4 Twelve. Twelve. Twelve.

5 **LEE PITTMAN:** Twelve.

6 And most of that we got through fundraising ourself in
7 the community. We have 16 students in level one and I
8 guess the ideal thing would be have a computer per student
9 but--we're getting there. So we're accommodating our
10 level ones this year with the computer. Also Grade
11 12s--and the Grade 12s have not had a computer class yet
12 to enjoy. Next year, we'll let the Grade 11s go get a
13 computer class and one of the problems there too, again,
14 is the shortage of teaching time and the--

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

16 And the computers--is that regarded by the Education
17 Department as some kind of a--equipment that is not
18 necessary for education. Isn't that--why is it that it
19 is hard for the--is it just the level of funding or--

20 **LEE PITTMAN:** I think it's
21 the level of funding. I don't even know--we have the
22 option of offering a computer course in our school. It
23 should have been mandatory but it's not--it's an option.

24 We don't have that for any computer course if we don't
25 have the computers. Now we made it a priority ourself,

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1 this is at the school, you know, so--the thing is to get
2 the computers enough to do a course in here.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

4 Is there a way of getting the computers--maybe used
5 computers somewhere cheaper? I mean because I mean
6 they--they kind of change very, very quickly and I would
7 think--

8 **LEE PITTMAN:** That's true.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

10 --that a lot of places are going through--a lot of
11 businesses and government and so forth, I would think would
12 be changing over all of the time. Like in large cities
13 you can buy computers pretty cheap but for the basic
14 instructions, I mean, for basically understanding how a
15 computer is operated, there are still very, very relevant.

16 **LEE PITTMAN:** We have just
17 purchased two now this past month and they came in here
18 from a company--that company in Ontario. The price was
19 around--ranges around \$2400 per unit.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

21 Wow! That's pretty expensive. A couple of years ago
22 we organized purchases of computers for all of the staff
23 of this organization I was working for and we were getting
24 them for 8 and \$900. And this was state of the model--or
25 state of the art at the time.

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1 **LEE PITTMAN:** Yeah. We
2 paid 2000 per unit plus we had to, you know, there was
3 a few options with it, plus the transportation costs to
4 get them here. Perhaps it was \$400.

5 **JANET PAUL:** Couldn't you
6 have them donated to you from the Labrador Community
7 College? They donated quite a few.

8 **LEE PITTMAN:** When we
9 started last year, we went to two from Choices. We then
10 approached the Community College staff that there. We
11 got three that are--they're almost obsolete right now but
12 they were--they can be used for our present classes but--

13 **JANET PAUL:** We can use
14 them for a Typing Tutor but not for WordPerfect and that's
15 what we're doing now so now we're doubled up with somebody
16 else taking turns on one computer.

17 **BARBIE MESHER:** You might
18 get a lot done, like, doubled up with two people but you
19 don't learn no faster. I mean, if anything, it slows you
20 down like with two people on one computer.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
22 Some people have computers at home?

23 **BARBIE MESHER:** I mean,
24 yes, our teacher.

25 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

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1 The question of dropouts was mentioned. Apparently
2 Newfoundland has a big problem with that issue. I'm not
3 sure if it's apparent here or not but what would you young
4 people advise us on that issue? What would keep young
5 people in school longer rather than having them leave
6 before they're finished?

7 **JANICE CLARK:** If there
8 was more facilities like--or even like the computer--more
9 computers to use and our gym facilities are--the equipment
10 we have is old and worn out and our gym is small. And
11 things like Chemistry, we can't--like our school--we can't
12 afford like, things like Chemistry and things like that.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
14 That was presented to us in June already so there is no
15 need to repeat that. We have that already in our files.
16 There are places in Canada where the schools are fully
17 equipped and people are leaving. Can you think of any
18 reasons why they might?

19 **BARBIE MESHER:** Teachers
20 probably hassling them all the time and like too much
21 homework or something.

22 **JANET PAUL:** That's no
23 excuse.

24 **SHARON BIRD:** No, the
25 teachers we have here are good for homework. We don't

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1 have too much homework.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

3 The teachers here are good for homework.

4 **SHARON BIRD:** Well, last
5 year we only had two students that quit and they're back
6 again this year.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

8 Yeah, well that's good.

9 **JANICE CLARK:** You get
10 scared--a person that quits.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

12 It's very unusual, I think, if it's only a couple. It's
13 quite good.

14 **SHARON BIRD:** Nothing else
15 to do.

16 **FABIAN GREEN:** Nothing
17 else to do so they stay in school.

18 **NORMAN FRIEDA:** I think
19 living on the Labrador Coast--I'm not saying we're unique
20 but in a way we are but when I say unique, I mean people
21 around here, they're--we're sheltered from problems from
22 the outside world more than people who live, say, in larger
23 regions are. So generally speaking, I think most students
24 understand the importance of school and know that in order
25 to leave the sheltered walls of their community, they're

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1 going to need an education and I think that's why dropouts
2 on the Coast aren't so extreme than they are in larger
3 regions but that's just my personal opinion.

4 **SHARON BIRD:** But the
5 young people, they don't want to be stuck on the sled
6 forever so--

7 **JANICE CLARK:** I mean,
8 what's left here in Cartwright for anybody anyway?

9 **SHARON BIRD:** Yeah, I get
10 an education, I get something better.

11 **JANICE CLARK:** The fishery
12 is gone.

13 **SHARON BIRD:** I think that
14 in twenty years' time this town will be a ghost town.

15 **JANICE CLARK:** And who
16 knows what happened to the logging operation that was
17 supposed to take place here. There might have been a bit
18 of hope for Cartwright but--

19 **SHARON BIRD:** As things
20 are now, we won't ever see that.

21 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
22 But could logging have employed everybody in this
23 community, I mean--

24 **SHARON BIRD:** There could
25 have even been more people coming in to be employed here.

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1 **NORMAN FRIEDA:** I had a
2 sheet I was provided by the local Forestry station and
3 according to that there sheet, it was a summary of the
4 whole logging proposal and I believe it said that there
5 was something like 78 employees would have been employed
6 due to that logging proposal first year and as it expanded,
7 the rates would go up.

8 **FABIAN GREEN:** And that's
9 a lot of jobs gone right there. I mean 78 people having
10 jobs.

11 **SHARON BIRD:** And there's
12 only what, 170-odd people here, so--

13 **FABIAN GREEN:** Yeah, in
14 the work force. So--

15 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
16 Would all of those positions been able to be filled by
17 people in this community? Would there--

18 **FABIAN GREEN:** Yes. Oh,
19 yes, 78 of those would have been filled by people in the
20 town and there would have been more besides but they
21 specified that from the community they would have drafted
22 78--approximately 78 people to fulfill those
23 qualifications and plus two of those job opportunities
24 would have been management positions within 10 months of
25 operation.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

2 What kind of logging was it going to be?

3 **JANICE CLARK:** An

4 Australian company was looking for black spruce so it would
5 have been--everything would have been processed here and
6 been ready to ship to Australia and there might have been
7 another company that was branched off from that to re-plant
8 the trees so that would have been more jobs.

9 **FABIAN GREEN:** And just
10 because--all because of the land claim situation that the
11 Indian people was bringing on, right, you know, we have
12 just as much, if not more right to this land than they
13 do. I mean our ancestors have been fishing and trapping
14 and living on this land for at least two centuries and,
15 you know, they haven't actually set foot within the place.
16 You know, they haven't lived off it, they haven't fished
17 off it, you know, it's not theirs to take, in my opinion.

18 **BARBIE MESHER:** Or to
19 claim either.

20 **FABIAN GREEN:** Or to
21 claim, yeah.

22 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
23 Well, one thing the--you know, I sense about especially
24 about some of the smaller communities is that people feel
25 a real attachment to those communities. They feel such

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1 an attachment that, you know, if they had to go away to
2 school, they hardly make it in that school. They get
3 lonely, they get--and we heard much of, like, we heard
4 earlier from Dr. Sparks that, for example, sometimes their
5 experience has been that if people have to even go to Goose
6 Bay to go to school, some of them get lonely, they feel
7 isolated, they want to drop out and they probably go back
8 home and so they have a real strong attachment to the
9 land--sometime--to their communities and sometimes it
10 interferes with getting higher education and what I've
11 heard Norman say earlier is that, for example, you know,
12 you want to get away from this community. You know, you
13 want to--there is no future here. What is the difference.
14 Why is it different--there is a difference I'm hearing.
15 I'm just wondering why the difference, for example, in
16 Cartwright, from Nain or Hopedale or Davis Inlet?

17 **JANICE CLARK:** There's no
18 jobs here for us to look forward to so, I mean, we see
19 what it is doing to our parents so, I mean, why should
20 we stay here and make ourselves go through the same thing.
21 We want to get out and get our own future going. I mean,
22 yeah, sure, we'll come back but, like, not forever. We're
23 not going to stay here in a place with no future.

24 **FABIAN GREEN:** That's
25 true. I mean--

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1 **JANICE CLARK:** There's
2 sure people here now with education from Community College
3 and that are--They just keep--come back to live here
4 because they can't get jobs anywhere.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
6 If there were jobs, let's say the land claims is over
7 and forestry has gone ahead and somehow the fisheries has
8 survived and on and on--do you think people will want to
9 live here or--

10 **FABIAN GREEN:** Oh, yes.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
12 You do?

13 **JANICE CLARK:** I'd say if
14 the logging or whatever comes up, then there would be people
15 come in for work here, they would probably be bringing
16 their families and then it'll like raise the population
17 in Cartwright and maybe some people will start opening
18 little stores or something and just everything will be
19 better. More population means more money, more places
20 and all that.

21 **SHARON BIRD:** People are
22 going to go where the money is.

23 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
24 Has there been like, for example, in the past people
25 graduating from there, if they usually go out, do they

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1 usually stay out?

2 **SHARON BIRD:** If they get
3 good jobs.

4 **NORMAN FRIEDA:** Barbie's
5 sister, Tina, she finished Grade 12 here and then she went
6 up to Goose Bay and now she's a Registered Nurse and,
7 personally, I think that the cases of people graduating
8 and leaving Cartwright and wanting jobs, I think they
9 outweigh the number of people that came back.

10 **LEE PITTMAN:** By far. I
11 can give you stats since the senior high program came in,
12 that's for this school. We've graduated--we've had
13 approximately--I think, it's not right exact here about
14 100, 101 students gone through the Grade 12 program.
15 Eighty percent of them have been successful so we have
16 80 students that have graduated from the Grade 12 program.
17 Some of them are out there. I don't know, I guess a good
18 many of them are still here in Cartwright as well. I
19 haven't checked the stats on seeing where they are now
20 but that's what we've--that's our success rate since 15
21 years, I guess, yeah.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
23 Are they around here?

24 **LEE PITTMAN:** Some of them
25 are out there.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

2 The majority? Half?

3 **LEE PITTMAN:** I think the
4 majority of them are still around or Grade 12s, I'm not
5 quite--but I can't say for sure.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

7 Without having had a real survey you--

8 **LEE PITTMAN:** No, I
9 haven't done a real--I know some of them are out there,
10 it's just somebody mentioning--We have a girl that's
11 finished the nursing program or I actually know of a couple
12 of them. I think it's nine years since our senior high
13 program has been--has been graduating grade senior--Grade
14 12, Level 3.

15 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

16 You know, one thing that we also heard in Nain is, for
17 example, is the problems that they have, you know, keeping
18 teachers there and they say that the only kind of teachers
19 that go there are people that can't get jobs anywhere else,
20 people that haven't had experience and that probably
21 contributes to some of the dropout rate and I am wondering
22 what the situation here in Cartwright--who are the
23 teachers? Are they teachers that have been here for a
24 long time? Are they local people?

25 **LEE PITTMAN:** We have a

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1 turnover, not a large turnover--some years more than
2 others. Some local teachers are--well teachers that have
3 been born here, grew up here and are teaching here in the
4 school. Two, I know. There's a couple more that's been
5 here long term but the new teachers come in--they are just
6 out of university usually and they come here and they have
7 to fit into the-- like a Science teacher or Phys. Ed.
8 teacher or whatever. They're just out of university
9 usually. Usually I sometimes look at it as just being
10 a training ground for those teachers. They usually work
11 out pretty well and when their two years are up, some of
12 them move back, going to some other bigger center but,
13 yes, I don't think we have as much turnover as they do
14 north in, say, Hopedale or--but we get some. There's
15 all--I think it's good in a way. There's new blood coming
16 in all the time.

17 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

18 I have to agree with you. In Nain, because you know,
19 they agree with the philosophy that new blood is okay,
20 but My God, they said, there's too much--you're going
21 overboard, you know? Too much is no good.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

23 So I can't think of any other questions but if you people
24 have anything else you want to say to us--

25 **NORMAN FRIEDA:** Getting

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1 back to the Labrador Metis Association, someone just passed
2 us this back--background fact sheet and I was wondering
3 if you wanted me to read it to you so you can--

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

5 It was presented to us already and--in June.

6 **NORMAN FRIEDA:** Okay.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

8 And that letter there actually includes stuff that was
9 presented to us. We're familiar with it. So that's fine
10 but if there is anything else you want to tell us. We
11 didn't pursue some of the things we talked about earlier
12 because we already took notes on that. Like I mean we
13 had an extensive discussion on logging with both the
14 student classes we had there.

15 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

16 Well, we wish you all well.

17 **STUDENTS:** Thank you very
18 much.

19 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

20 Thank you very much for your time.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

22 Thank you.

23 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE, EAGLE**

24 **RIVER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION:** I'd like to make a few
25 brief comments if I could.

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1 COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:

2 Yes.

3 WOODY LETHBRIDGE:

4 They'll be very brief.

5 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:

6 Could you use one of our mics, please?

7 COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:

8 Woody, will you stand up?

9 WOODY LETHBRIDGE: I'd

10 like to change my mind. [Laughter]

11 CO-CHAIR, GEORGES ERASMUS:

12 No, you certainly can't. It's not that we wouldn't hear
13 you. It's just that we're trying to tape it, that's all.

14 WOODY LETHBRIDGE: Oh,

15 okay.

16 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:

17 Is that all right? If you could identify yourself for
18 the record also, please.

19 WOODY LETHBRIDGE: All

20 right. I'm Woody Lethbridge, Vice-President of the Eagle
21 River Development Association and a resident of this
22 community and area all my life. I'd just like to probably
23 emphasize a little bit on the serious concern that I think
24 this community has with relation to Innu-Metis relations
25 in Labrador. We have--it has--lack of relations, that's

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1 it. This relationship, it's not very good, let's say.
2 We have, for the past couple of years in particular, been
3 dealing with a couple of development issues in this part
4 of Labrador that are of very high interest to the
5 communities in the region and all the people of this region
6 whether they be Metis or whether they be, you know,
7 white--just white people or whatever. We wanted to
8 see--I'll just identify the two particular projects that
9 I have some concern about and one of them being the overland
10 snowmobile trail through Labrador and the second being
11 the--you already heard our favorite about our possible
12 pending woods operation for the Sandwich Bay and Port Hope
13 Simpson areas. It's my feeling, and the feeling of many,
14 I think, that if we're to support the Innu in their land
15 claims issues, dealings, that they must begin to consider
16 our lives and our future. Our community--communities and
17 the situation we have around us with regard to development
18 in this particular region. We're being very seriously
19 affected by their, I guess, the direction they've taken
20 to stop or hinder or interfere in all possible ways
21 development in eastern and southern Labrador and it's to
22 Cartwright and many other communities, a very serious
23 concern.

24 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

25 Thank you. We've heard that from just about everybody

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1 we've met with here now. It started this morning with
2 some of the students in the college and they were all adults
3 and after we had quite a lively discussion.

4 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** So
5 you've heard that very loud and clear.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**
7 Yeah.

8 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** You
9 know, we do see a very bright future for Cartwright and
10 for not only Cartwright, for much of eastern and
11 southeastern Labrador and all this--we're going to get
12 some support from the Innu. The Inuit are supporting
13 us--the L.I.A. We've talked briefly with them on
14 occasions and they--as long as it's not mega-projects in
15 the woods with very serious environmental possible
16 impacts, then they're satisfied, I think, to deal with
17 us and see some development from--local community
18 developments, at least, and any development to some degree
19 as long as it's benefitting everybody--everybody's seeing
20 some good from it, you know. But we are definitely being
21 very seriously hindered by the direction that the Innu
22 have taken on those particular two projects and almost
23 any other. They've come out directly and said that they
24 want to see no development in Labrador and it hurts when
25 you get people putting very serious efforts into

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1 development, you know, and what's--we do have some future
2 and we do have something in sight and what's going to be
3 there for our young people if we don't--don't see some
4 movement.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

6 I can see how the people here would really benefit from
7 it. We've really heard about that and particularly with
8 unemployment being the way it is and the fisheries now
9 have taken a nosedive. What benefit is there for the Innu
10 in this forestry project?

11 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** Oh, I
12 think there could be tremendous benefits for the Innu if
13 they want to take advantage of the benefit that could be
14 there. There's definitely a tremendous benefit in the
15 development of overland snowmobile trails through
16 Labrador. You know, as we see it now, most of Labrador
17 will not be linked by highways for many years to come and
18 the next best thing to it is at least we have four months
19 or five months of the year when we could have our
20 communities tied together by something other than
21 airplanes or boats, you know. That's been identified and
22 I just cannot understand why they won't--why they won't--I
23 guess the land claims issue is what's being used but, God
24 forbid, I mean there must be some development. As I see
25 it and as many others see it, there must be some

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1 development. Yes, there must be land claims settlement
2 too but, you know, we have to move on and see some progress
3 there.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

5 Could you tell me just--before you, Mary--could you just
6 tell me a little about the--I've heard about the forestry
7 thing and I heard about it before I got here but the
8 skidoo-mobile trail--how big a road are we talking about
9 and how would it actually be built?

10 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** We're
11 talking about tying all the communities from the Straits
12 of Labrador to Goose Bay together with this winter link-up.

13 It's only a 16-foot wide trail through mostly woodland
14 that we'd use skidoers and trail groomers to maintain in
15 the wintertime with the crews and make sure that you've
16 got a good, safe, well-marked and identified winter highway
17 through the area that I'm talking about and what I'm
18 suggesting is that we--what we suggest is that we tie all
19 the communities from L'Anse-au-Clair in the Straits of
20 Labrador to Goose Bay--Happy Valley-Goose Bay and North
21 West River, Shishatshit together with this link-up and
22 it's been very, very highly received and accepted by all
23 of the coastal communities of Labrador, and central
24 Labrador and even western Labrador. Our only major
25 stumbling block at the moment there is the land claims

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1 issue with the Innu and we just don't seem to be getting
2 anywhere with it and it's very frustrating when you work
3 so hard to find--get some movement on something that you
4 feel has got tremendous potential within the whole region,
5 not only just Cartwright or Mary's Harbour or Shishatshit
6 or Mud Lake or wherever, but it's got--it's got some
7 terrific potential. It's got the potential of tying those
8 communities, knitting them better together, giving us some
9 more time of the year when transportation is least a problem
10 than what it is right now.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

12 Have you tried meeting them?

13 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** We--I

14 haven't tried meeting with them. There has been a couple
15 of meetings. I had one--back at the time of the public
16 meetings in Shishatshit, I was not available to attend.

17 There's been a public meeting process through the
18 Environmental Preview Report progress. It took in all
19 the communities--not all of them but a selected number
20 of communities, Shishatshit, North West River, Mud Lake,
21 Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Paradise River, Cartwright and
22 two or three down the south coast. Like, a consultant
23 has gone in and, you know, sort of gotten public--

24 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

25 No, but outside of that, I mean, outside--

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1 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:**

2 Outside of that I have not tried to meet with them, no.

3 Well, the Development Association on a couple of occasions

4 I've asked them to come along to meetings if they wish

5 to discuss it and they just will not--they're willing to

6 bend at all or they don't seem to be willing to bend.

7 I don't know that, you know, where or how or government

8 or our people or maybe Ottawa or somebody could start trying

9 to convince some of them, you know, let's start looking

10 at a little bit of development while this process--this

11 land claim process is going--it's going--elsewhere it's

12 being done. I'm sure that other land claims deals have

13 been settled and there's been while the land claims deals

14 have been in process, there's been development movement.

15 You know, I mean, you can just look at the L.I.D.C. and

16 development in northern Labrador. Now when the land

17 claims are going on with the L.I.A.--

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

19 Not as I understand it, eh?

20 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** Well,

21 they're slow but, I mean, there's something happening now,

22 isn't there? No? Nothing happening?

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

24 No.

25 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** Oh, I

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1 thought there was something happening.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

3 No.

4 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** But

5 I--I--

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

7 The government has left the table from both the Inuit
8 and the band--and the--

9 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** Oh, I
10 thought the--oh, I'm sorry, a misunderstanding there.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

12 Yeah.

13 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** But
14 anyway, I just wanted to, you know, I guess you've heard
15 it already so maybe I didn't need to say anything but--

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

17 No, no. It's good to reinforce it. Mary, you have some
18 questions?

19 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

20 I guess you asked my question but I, you know, I guess
21 I--we've been hearing all morning about the, you know,
22 the kinds of concern, the extent of the concern that the
23 residents of this area have on this particular issue and
24 one of the things that surprised me that there have been
25 no communication and you know--

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1 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** Very
2 little there--

3 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
4 That's what surprised me because I feel that, you know,
5 there are some things that the federal and provincial
6 governments can't do and some things the community must
7 do. I'm just wondering what is it that prevents, for
8 example, the kind of true discussion between the Innu and
9 these residents on this issue?

10 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** I
11 couldn't answer that, Mary, I'm--you know, it's just--I've
12 seen the same thing you're talking about. I don't know
13 what it is, there just seems to be a--there's a dark spot
14 there somewhere that won't allow to--the two of us to sit
15 down and--I don't think maybe--maybe it's because they,
16 you know, the people who are leading the Innu, mainly
17 Shishatshit, because we're not hearing anything from Davis
18 Inlet. Is they don't want to consider development at all.
19 They've said--they've come out and said they don't want
20 to consider any development and it is development. I mean
21 we want to see some movement and to my knowledge and to
22 the knowledge of, I guess, a couple of the students who
23 spoke a few minutes ago, there's been--those people have
24 not used this land that we're talking about--most of it.
25 Now for the trail part, yes, they use some of the land

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1 but for the forestry operation or industry in this part
2 of Labrador, the Innu have not used any of this particular
3 land for many, many, many years. So, you know, I mean
4 it beats me to come up with a reasoning why not allow some
5 development in an area where you're not--you don't have,
6 at present--don't have any use for it, you know.
7 There's--it's sort of in a dead spot between where the
8 Innu of Shishatshit and the Innu of Quebec lower onshore
9 are using at the moment. You know, it's just--neither
10 one of them are using it and I know, I travel it year round
11 by snowmobile and fly it and they're just not using it.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

13 Well, I would encourage you people to start trying to
14 communicate. You're right that there is a problem and
15 I would strongly suggest that it be dealt with.

16 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** Well,
17 we want to continue to try and deal with it, you know,
18 it's--as best we can, that's--

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

20 Meanwhile, we've certainly heard--

21 **WOODY LETHBRIDGE:** Okay.

22 Okay.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:**

24 --your points. Thank you. Anybody else? If not, I will
25 thank everybody for coming out and I guess we could have

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1 had a little bit bigger room but it was cosy. I guess
2 it was hard to anticipate, you know, what kind of turnout
3 we were going to have so--it's been a very interesting
4 day. We started off the morning with some community
5 college students which was very, very interesting and we
6 had a very lively discussion there about some of the same
7 things that was just brought up here and the whole question
8 of who Aboriginal people are--who that term actually covers
9 here in this part of the world and then we spent the rest
10 of the morning at the high school with different classes.
11 That was also very interesting and consistent, again,
12 with what we heard earlier. And, of course, what we heard
13 this afternoon.

14 This round of hearings for
15 the Royal Commission will be ending the end of next week.
16 We have three more teams next week going to different
17 parts of Canada and then, as I was saying earlier when
18 I opened up the meeting, we will be coming out with a
19 document hopefully that will help us in the next round
20 of hearings. We also will be producing some documents
21 on other issues. In the spring we had a round table on
22 urban Aboriginal issues. We will be finally publishing
23 a document on that relatively soon and last week in Ottawa
24 we had a round table conference on legal and justice issues
25 and we will be coming out with a publication on that.

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1 We asked a number of people to come out with papers before
2 we had the conference and that was very, very interesting.
3 And then we had a very excellent three days so a document
4 will be developed from that. In addition, we will have
5 quite a few more round tables between now and the end of
6 our work which will be roughly two years from now or maybe
7 a little less than two years from now and our hearings
8 will continue. We probably will resume our hearings next
9 March. We're not 100 percent sure yet but over the next
10 month or so we will be finalizing that and publicizing
11 where we're going to be going and contacting communities
12 and so forth. Each time we do our tours, we try and cover
13 all parts of the country. We probably have two more rounds
14 and as we're going in our--closer and closer to the end
15 of our hearings, we're trying to get closer and closer
16 to solutions and models and--that will work in different
17 parts of the country. The documents we will be coming
18 out with for the third round and the fourth round are
19 documents which we hope people will respond to in many
20 ways. One will be to attend our hearings and another will
21 be to write us letters and so forth. So I hope that--some
22 people gave us names here because we'd like to keep in
23 contact with the people that have been contributing to
24 our process as we're going along and we'll be mailing
25 documents to you and videos if we development them, which

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1 I expect we will. We've been developing videos as we go
2 along to assist us in this work and in the end, we hope
3 that, with all the efforts we're making at getting people's
4 opinions on different possible solutions, that the
5 solutions in the end will be acceptable to everyone. Mary?

6 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

7 Thank you, George. I'd like to say that I'm personally
8 very sad at having to leave so soon. It was indeed an
9 honor and a privilege to be here. It's always great for
10 me to come back to Labrador. I must also say I think that
11 the lives of the Commission staff have been very enriched
12 by this experience. They'll never forget the skidoo trip
13 last night, almost freezing in Davis Inlet, being grateful
14 to come to Cartwright and being met by a group of people
15 who brought us to the warmth, so I think that's--you know,
16 the only thing that we talked about last night was the
17 skidoo trip that we got to the airport by Etienne Pastuet
18 (PH). Georges sat on the skidoo and let the women sit
19 on the sled. And those two people with the back problems,
20 they let me, with a back problem, sit on the--come and
21 take--so anyway--Georges--but I must say for every single
22 one of these people, they're great travellers, you know.
23 They never complained. Even Linda almost froze to death,
24 you know, but she never really complained. They're
25 excellent people to travel with all--but it was indeed

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1 a pleasure to come here.

2 I'd like to thank--and give
3 particular thanks to Jessie Bird. She did an excellent
4 job of organizing this meeting. Everything is so well
5 organized today, you know, I wish all of our hearings went
6 that well. I'd like to thank the community for coming
7 here and I'd like to give particular thanks to the staff.
8 Thank you very much.

9 **JESSIE BIRD:** Just because
10 the Commissioners are going now, it doesn't mean that you
11 still can't contribute to the process. There's a 1-800
12 number that you can call the Royal Commission and there's
13 a postal address if you want to send any further comments.
14 Please feel free to do so. I have the addresses if you
15 want and thank you both for coming. It was greatly
16 appreciated.

17 ---Whereupon the Hearing is concluded at 15:45 hr.

18