

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR  
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON  
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

LOCATION/ENDROIT: TRAVELODGE HOTEL  
SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

DATE: THURSDAY, MAY 13, 1993

VOLUME: 2

"for the record..."

**STENOTRAN**

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Ottawa 521-0703

**INDEX**

	<b>PAGE</b>
Opening Remarks	
by Co-Chair Rene Dussault	296
by Co-Chair Viola Robinson	302
Opening Prayer	307
Discussion Paper A	
by John Nickel	307
Discussion Paper B	
by Gay Caswell	324
Discussion Paper C	
by Robin Bellamy	364
Discussion Paper D	
br Don Junor	404
Discussion Paper E	
by Lisa McCallum and Gayle McMartin	427
Discussion Paper F	
by Lillian Sanderson and Nina Saxena	447
Discussion Paper G	
by Bob Lacoursiere	478
Discussion Paper H	
by Sandy Baumgartner	506
Discussion Paper I	
by Robert Doucette, Don Kossick, Marlene Larocque, and Emil Bell	537
Discussion Paper J	
by Christine Lwanga	593

1 **Saskatoon, Saskatchewan**

2 --- Upon resuming on Thursday, May 13, 1993 at 9:00 a.m.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** First of all,  
4 I'd like to introduce myself and also my colleague. My  
5 name is Rene Dussault. I am a judge with the Court of  
6 Appeal for the Province of Quebec. I am Co-Chair of the  
7 Royal Commission with George Erasmus. With me is Viola  
8 Robinson. She is a commissioner. Prior to being  
9 appointed to the Commission she was head of the Native  
10 Counsel of Canada. Ms Robinson is a Micmac from Nova  
11 Scotia and has been involved extensively working for her  
12 people in the last decade and years before.

13 We split the Commission into three (3)  
14 panels in order to be able to meet as many people as  
15 possible, to get as many presentations as possible. This  
16 Royal Commission was created in 1991 at the end of the  
17 summer, early fall, and we plan to table our final report  
18 before the end of 1994; so, roughly three (3) years after  
19 our creation.

20 The mandate of the Commission is very,  
21 very wide. It's written in 16 points and there are many  
22 subpoints in each area of our mandate. It covers subject  
23 matters like self-government, land base, process for land  
24 claims, economic development, languages and culture,  
25 social issues, health, justice, social services,

1 education, and of course all the social problems in  
2 existence from suicide to abuse of substance and alcohol,  
3 family violence, on and on. This is the first time that  
4 a Commission is given the whole mandate.

5 We are a Commission on Aboriginal  
6 Peoples. That means the Metis, the Inuit and the Indians  
7 come under the mandate of the Commission. Also the various  
8 situations where people live: off-reserve Indians as well  
9 as Indians living on reserve.

10 The urban situation of Metis and Indian  
11 living in a city like Saskatoon or Regina or a mid-size  
12 city is a major concern because there is a trend that will  
13 not go away, that brings young people -- very often women  
14 with families, raising children -- to the cities. And  
15 very often the support is not there in the cities to help  
16 them to make the transition. Also the question of the  
17 services in the cities is of great concern, not only to  
18 have culturally-based services but also to have as good  
19 an access as the general public.

20 The mandate of the Commission overall  
21 deals with the relationship. Everybody agrees in this  
22 country that a new social contract has to be developed  
23 between Aboriginal people and the public and the Canadian  
24 governments. This is not an easy task. Canada is a big  
25 country, there is a lot of diversity among the various

1 people but also within the various nations themselves.  
2 And the Commission has decided to start a very extensive  
3 public consultation process.

4 We were told at the outset, and we knew,  
5 that solutions coming from the top designed in offices  
6 in Ottawa are not going to fly. There is ample evidence  
7 and proof that these solutions are not proper because there  
8 is no sense of ownership, there is no sense of participation  
9 from Aboriginal people to the design of those solutions.  
10 So we have tried to benefit from the experience of others.

11 This Commission is made of four (4)  
12 Aboriginal commissioners and a Co-Chair that is an  
13 Aboriginal person, George Erasmus, and three (3)  
14 non-Aboriginal commissioners. This was made on purpose.

15 It's the first Royal Commission where there are Aboriginal  
16 peoples and a majority of Aboriginal people; to make sure  
17 that the reality, the living conditions of Aboriginal  
18 people, will be fully addressed. And, also, we have to  
19 succeed in convincing the public of the fact that our  
20 recommendations will be beneficial to everybody in this  
21 country.

22 We are -- in fact last week we started  
23 our third round of hearings. We were with the Mohawk  
24 communities in Akwasasne, Kanawake, Quebec and in the  
25 Montreal area with the mayors in charge of cities that

1 went through those very stressful and difficult events  
2 in 1990. Those events were one of the main reasons why  
3 this Commission was created, to try to give a direction  
4 that will be more satisfactory for the future.

5 We heard many, many presenters from the  
6 Aboriginal communities. In the first two (2) rounds of  
7 hearings we visited 72 communities; we had in most of them  
8 a day and a half, two (2) days of hearings. We've met  
9 a lot of people in this third round, and in the fourth  
10 round which will follow in the fall we are going to hear  
11 more and more some of the briefs that will have been written  
12 up with the help of the intervenor funding programs.

13 We have set up an eight (8) million fund  
14 that was chaired for the Commission by David Crombie, a  
15 former minister of Indian Affairs in order to give help  
16 to the organizations through really research and make a  
17 position and present it to the Commission. If there are  
18 to be solutions coming from Aboriginal peoples, certainly  
19 they will come, we already heard many of them -- but they  
20 will come largely from the briefs that will have been funded  
21 by this special fund: the intervenor funding program.

22 Also, we felt that we had to have a large  
23 consensus in the end, a consensus that will cover not only  
24 Aboriginal people but all walks of life in Canadian  
25 society, from trade unions to businesses, the cultural,

1 the universities, and on and on. And that's the reason  
2 why we've met with the heads of over 140 national  
3 organizations, non-Aboriginal organizations, and  
4 convinced them that it was the good thing to do to think  
5 about the new relationship that should take place in Canada  
6 between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and to  
7 present a written brief to the Commission.

8           So we are slowly shifting the emphasis  
9 to hear more non-Aboriginal people, because at the end  
10 we have to build our solutions, our recommendations, on  
11 elements that we see positive in both communities, because  
12 we are more likely to be successful in getting strategic  
13 recommendations if we have a fair grasp of the  
14 commonalities that are there. People have to see their  
15 interest. Very often it's good to move ahead and to spend  
16 some additional money if the public knows that at the end  
17 it's leading communities toward a greater self-sufficiency  
18 and less dependency on government and control that flows  
19 from the money that is spent by the federal government.

20  
21           So we are very happy to be here in  
22 Saskatoon. We were in Regina earlier this week. This  
23 is at least the third time that we have public hearings  
24 in Saskatchewan. We had a full week in northern  
25 Saskatchewan last November. We've already heard many

1 people here in Saskatoon the day after the referendum.

2 So we are back and we hope that everybody  
3 will have a good opportunity not only to describe the  
4 problems but to tell us what should be done and how it  
5 should be done because we are entering into the last leg  
6 of the trip for the Commission. In the fall we will have  
7 the results of the four (4) rounds of public hearings,  
8 the results of our research programs. Also, we will have  
9 the results of many of our national round tables. We had  
10 one on urban issues in June, on justice in November, health  
11 and social services in March in Vancouver. The last one  
12 was on economic development and the next one will be on  
13 education. It's quite clear, from what we heard, that  
14 education and economic developments are two (2) key factors  
15 for self-determination and self-government, and of course  
16 for a new relationship.

17 So, we would like to welcome everybody  
18 and we hope that we are going to have a very fruitful day  
19 of hearings. I would like at this point to ask Viola  
20 Robinson to make some introductory remarks.

21 Thank you.

22 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I thank  
23 you and I just want to welcome everybody here and tell  
24 you how happy I am to be here to hear the presentations  
25 today. We started our hearings on Monday in Regina, and



1 we've been for three (3) days now and they've been pretty  
2 extensive hearings and we've been hearing a lot of getting  
3 some real good information and some solutions as well.

4 And I just want to reiterate again what  
5 my Co-Chair has said, and that is it's so important, the  
6 massive mandate that we were given. And I don't think  
7 there was anything left out of that mandate with respect  
8 to Aboriginal people or the problems and issues that  
9 Aboriginals face today.

10 And the overview I guess reflects what  
11 we've heard. And the first round was a listening phase  
12 and it was a time of -- we didn't say too much, but listened  
13 to the people. We travelled around in remote areas, we  
14 tried to reach as many Aboriginal people in Canada as we  
15 could, that was physically possible in the time allowed.

16 We were told to go to people far north and to communities  
17 where people cannot get out to get access to hearings and  
18 to reach people who would not normally have the opportunity  
19 to present or to speak to the Commission.

20 We hear from the Aboriginal  
21 organizations, we hear from political organizations, but  
22 it was important and it is important as well to hear from  
23 the Aboriginal people as a person. We were told to  
24 concentrate on Elders -- Elders and youth, women, and of  
25 course in the north, and the urban situations, as well

1 as Metis. Those were I think the areas where there was  
2 a lack of work being done and the federal government knows  
3 that these issues do exist and this constituency of  
4 Aboriginal people does exist and there is no level of  
5 government that really has addressed this issue.

6 So we are told to look at that and it's  
7 very, very difficult. So, the last two (2) rounds we have  
8 heard a lot of very emotional testimony. We heard people  
9 who are suffering and hurting and sometimes we had to sit  
10 and listen to people in tears. So it's a difficult task  
11 for us but I feel very encouraged that we do have a capable  
12 staff. Sixty (60) or seventy (70) of our staff in Ottawa  
13 is of Aboriginal descent. They are either Indian, Inuit  
14 or Metis.

15 And we're going to have the most  
16 extensive research that has ever been produced in this  
17 country and we don't have any plans to do research that  
18 has already been done. There has been extensive amounts  
19 of research been done before we came along, either by some  
20 level of government or by the bands or by Indian  
21 organizations or other organizations, Aboriginal groups.

22  
23 So we are compiling all that research  
24 and we want to see what has been done, what is being done  
25 about it, and then we want to start where those have left

1 off. And hopefully, as Judge Dussault has said, by the  
2 time we get our hearings, what we've heard through public  
3 participation, the information from the hearings, the  
4 information from the research, the information from the  
5 round table, the information through briefs and other means  
6 of communicating, the message to us is all compiled, that  
7 we should be able to come up with something for the  
8 governments to consider.

9 At this time it's important to form  
10 touchstones, the new relationship. That's the one that's  
11 very, very important to this Commission; it's already been  
12 said and I don't think we can reiterate enough how important  
13 that is in Canada today. The relationship has not been  
14 that good between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people  
15 and I think it's time a correction is made. We've been  
16 told about histories, education is a priority I think  
17 everywhere that we've gone and I think we have gone and  
18 we have to really deal with that.

19 And one of the roles that we are trying  
20 to do as we go around this country is to educate the public  
21 as well. That's why everything is being recorded  
22 verbatim, that's why we have cameras and video, everything  
23 is put on video tape and there are some sessions where  
24 we also have the National Film Board.

25 So, there is no excuse, I don't think,

1 when this Commission is finished for anybody in Canada  
2 to say that they don't know anything about Aboriginal  
3 people. There just wouldn't be because there will just  
4 be too much information there. So, we hope and feel very  
5 optimistic and encouraged with all of that, that the  
6 attitudes and the perceptions of Canadians in Canada will  
7 change towards our people, Aboriginal people.

8 So, having said that, I'll just end on  
9 that note. And I am looking forward to hearing the kinds  
10 of issues you want to tell us today and hopefully we'll  
11 get some good information that will lead us to resolutions.

12 So, thank you very much.

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

14 Before calling the first presenter I  
15 would like to ask Nora Ritchie, a Metis Senator, to join  
16 us and say the opening prayer.

17 **--- Opening Prayer**

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

19 I would now like or ask Mr. John Nickel  
20 from the Saskatoon Kiwanis Club to come and join us at  
21 the table.

22 Good morning.

23 **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Good morning.

24 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** You may  
25 proceed when you are ready.

1                   **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** My name is John  
2 Nickel. I am a member of the Kiwanis Club of Saskatoon,  
3 which has been a service club since 1936. We meet at the  
4 Bessborough on Tuesdays. And I have outlined for you today  
5 some 23 different community programs of which 15 were of  
6 direct benefit to children, youth, adults of Aboriginal  
7 and Metis descent.

8                   As an introduction let me tell you that  
9 on June 26th a first New Nations Gallery at the Saskatchewan  
10 Museum of Natural History will open, displaying the history  
11 and traditions of our Saskatchewan Aboriginal peoples.

12 Miriam Thomas of Chitek Lake spent many weeks and months  
13 tanning buffalo hides to cover a genuine teepee, the very  
14 first of its kind ever to be made in the past 100 years.

15                  And this is a picture of this gallery with the original  
16 teepee that I described. It will open on June 26th.

17                  I make this little introduction because  
18 it symbolizes something that, as a member of Kiwanis and  
19 as a private Canadian citizen, I have longed to see happen  
20 for many years. And I hope that our club and our  
21 organization nation-wide will continue to assist in the  
22 development of the potential of our Aboriginal and Metis  
23 peoples.

24                  During 1991/92, as I said before, we were  
25 active in 15 programs in which our club volunteered over

1 4,000 hours to carry out activities. Just to mention a  
2 few, here are some: the Rhythm Band of Handicapped Adults  
3 put on over a dozen concerts in Kiwanis Park, Cosmopolitan  
4 Industries and other places last year in 1992. Secondly,  
5 Kiwanis has helped the Inner City Scouting Project  
6 involving some 2,000 youths from families with low incomes,  
7 broken homes, alcoholism and other social problems. Only  
8 one-third as many of these children were enroled in  
9 scouting programs compared to children city-wide.  
10 Therefore, there was a definite need to do something.

11 In January, 1989 a plan whereby the  
12 beaver and scout groups would start cooperating with  
13 schools and community associations was carried out. It  
14 started in the Pleasant Hill district with an inner city  
15 committee consisting of representatives of the Scouts of  
16 Canada, some of whom were our own club members as well  
17 as other Kiwanians. Our club made an initial grant of  
18 \$2,000.00 to start this organization going. It commenced  
19 with a group of eight (8) boys and three (3) leaders and  
20 was chartered on February 20th, 1990.

21 While that was a good start, another club  
22 started right after that in the Riversdale area, a small  
23 club. But we firmly agreed that if we help but one child,  
24 even in a small club, by giving him or her a hobby and  
25 a productive lifestyle through scouting then this is a

1 step in the right direction towards success.

2 Thirdly, there are four (4) woodworking  
3 programs producing handmade toys and other articles here  
4 in the city. Woodworking classes adapt themselves very  
5 well to the needs of the handicapped, as well as to the  
6 needs of our First Nations peoples and to seniors.

7 And we already have had for many years  
8 a group of men volunteers who manufacture these articles  
9 at several collegiates here in the city at Walter Murray  
10 and City Park. Then these articles, such as wooden toys,  
11 planters, and other objects, are then given to agencies  
12 like Cosmopolitan Industries at which I teach carpentry  
13 classes, spending close to 15 hours a week instructing  
14 handicapped adults. Just as an example, Pierre is one  
15 of my First Nations clients who shows great enthusiasm  
16 for doing this work and is a model to all the others.

17 Fourthly, another set of community  
18 programs we carried out was with the Salvation Army in  
19 many fields of which you are I am sure very familiar.  
20 The Wildlife Federation and the Brightwater Environmental  
21 Education and Beaver Creek Camp were involved. Our club  
22 spent almost 500 hours last year upgrading and improving  
23 the facilities at Beaver Creek which is located about 20  
24 kilometres south of Saskatoon, here on Lorne Avenue. And  
25 although it's run by the Salvation Army and is called a

1 bible camp it is also community-wide involving children,  
2 adults of all kinds and of all descriptions.

3           Hundreds of Saskatoon children and  
4 Salvation Army campers are enjoying these camp facilities  
5 which are now active all year round. Inner city First  
6 Nations children are definitely involved, giving many of  
7 them their very first opportunity to enjoy wholesome  
8 outdoor recreational activity which they would not  
9 otherwise be able to get.

10           As you all know of course Kiwanis also  
11 helps the Salvation Army kettles at Christmas time and  
12 the Red Shield Campaign. I personally was involved last  
13 Christmas for four (4) or five (5) days in preparing 2,000  
14 boxes or hampers of food that was both donated and purchased  
15 at one of the warehouses and distributing every single  
16 box to thousands of people, by far the majority of whom  
17 were First Nations peoples.

18           We've also helped with fund-raising  
19 appeals and delivering Meals on Wheels, portering services  
20 at the University Hospital.

21           Next, a swim program, especially for  
22 First Nations youths was held at the YMCA, handled by our  
23 club members, some of whom are accomplished swimming  
24 instructors.

25           Next, many man-hours were devoted to



1 staffing and organizing, administering and renovating the  
2 Boys and Girls Club facility in Saskatoon.

3 Next, funds and time by our Kiwanis Club  
4 was also given to Crimestoppers here in this city.

5 Number eight (8). Kiwanis strongly  
6 believes in helping students to achieve higher scholastic  
7 goals in a program which we call "BUG." That's short,  
8 B-U-G, for "Bringing Up Grades." In 1988-89 for example  
9 16 students from Sion High School and City Park Collegiate  
10 were selected by teachers as receiving awards for  
11 significant personal growth.

12 As a club we always make certain that  
13 everybody knows when an accomplishment has been achieved  
14 because we hold special public presentations letting  
15 everybody know that it is about time that needy people,  
16 and also people of our First Nations segment of society,  
17 are recognized for the contributions which they make.

18 And in this line a 4-H public speaking  
19 was recently sponsored. Just recently in the Bessborough  
20 four (4) finalists made their presentations at one of our  
21 club luncheons at the Bessborough. And present at this  
22 were also the parents and relatives. They came from  
23 various towns like Humboldt and Outlook. And as a  
24 toastmaster and a public speaking instructor myself for  
25 many years I see this 4-H club as an outlet to contribute

1 greatly to the development of the speaking and  
2 communications skills of our First Nations peoples.

3           Next, the success awards program has  
4 helped many high school students who are unable or  
5 unwilling to cope at regular high schools. So special  
6 help was offered at Sion High School, City Park Collegiate,  
7 the Joe Doucette School for Natives. Twenty (20) students  
8 were selected last year for receiving awards for achieving  
9 significant personal growth. They were honoured during  
10 a Kiwanis luncheon where they were presented with framed  
11 certificates and a financial bursary to help them further  
12 their studies.

13           In the line of sports, Kiwanis has helped  
14 the Inner City Basketball Program, involving inner city  
15 areas of Westmount, Princess Alexandra, King George,  
16 Pleasant Hill, and St. Mary's schools. About 120 youth  
17 from Grades four (4) to eight (8) were involved in the  
18 10-week program last fall. Each school had a coach  
19 coordinator paid by the Kiwanis Clubs of our city. This  
20 program was successful so another one was held this spring.

21       Many Kiwanians are active leaders and sports and scouting  
22 programs.

23           And, as I draw to a conclusion, our club  
24 has also contributed to a special segment of our club known  
25 as the Builders Club. The Builders Club involves Grade

1 seven (7) and eight (8) here in the city at the King George  
2 school. And in a week or so we will be presenting special  
3 awards.

4 We invite, as members of our club, Lorna  
5 Laplante and other First Nations leaders for their ideas.

6 My personal goal in this area is to see the expansion  
7 of inner city facilities for children and youth. Quite  
8 a bit has been done but more, much more, needs to be done  
9 in the future toward helping our First Nations people  
10 realizing their potential as great Canadian citizens.

11 Mr. Chairman.

12 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you.  
13 Thank you very much for sharing with us the experience  
14 of Kiwanis Club and its various programs and projects.

15 Maybe there would be some short  
16 questions.

17 **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Yes, I am open to any  
18 questions.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** You are  
20 working extensively. You have 50 programs ---

21 **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Fifty (50) programs,  
22 yes.

23 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** And you  
24 mentioned that 15 of them had a strong focus with Metis  
25 or First Nations people.

1                   **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Yes, that's correct.

2                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** My question  
3 is: do the actions of the club give an opportunity to both  
4 young non-Aboriginal people and young Aboriginal people,  
5 Indian or Metis, to meet and share together, or are these  
6 programs separate in the sense that ---

7                   **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Yes.

8                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- there is  
9 a paramountcy of Aboriginal children involved in them and  
10 then other programs are primary for non-Aboriginal?

11                   **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Yes, I understand.

12                   No. These programs are not segregated  
13 in any way whatever according to national or racial lines.  
14 They are community-wide. The key component of these  
15 programs is the need and the necessity for developing the  
16 potential of these people.

17                   And one of the greatest needs of course  
18 is poverty: poverty in our inner city area marked by  
19 alcoholism, broken homes and families, and children that  
20 just don't have the opportunity to interact as other  
21 children do from different homes.

22                   So, the goal of these programs is to give  
23 our Aboriginal and First Nations and Metis people the  
24 maximum opportunity to benefit and get involved.

25                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I understand

1 that they could do so with their peers, both Aboriginal  
2 and non-Aboriginal people?

3 **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** That's true. The  
4 peer program is something that has grown to a large extent  
5 in recent years and I think needs to be developed even  
6 more. As a teacher one time I did a lot of tutoring and  
7 soon I was replaced by peer tutoring. That is students  
8 with abilities tutoring those who are not as able. And  
9 as I said before, our club has a program that assists  
10 students who are not able to achieve as well as other  
11 students, giving them special assistance at the science  
12 school, the Joe Doucette school, and the City Park  
13 Collegiate.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Do you have  
15 Aboriginal people, Indian or Metis people, on the board  
16 of the club?

17 **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Meeting us? Yes, we  
18 do. Of course one of our members, Lorna Laplante, is a  
19 member of our club.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes, but -- we  
21 are aware of that but apart from that what is it made of,  
22 the board? How many members are there?

23 **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Oh. Our club is made  
24 up of about 60 members and, true, our members are you might  
25 say the upper middle class strata of Saskatoon society.

1       And I myself, personally, would certainly love to see  
2       the membership broaden but it's a question of time and  
3       effort to achieve that goal.

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

5                   **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** I am all finished?

6                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I have a  
7       couple of questions as well, if you don't mind.

8                   **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Oh, some more  
9       questions? Okay.

10                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I pick up  
11       where he leaves off. Sometimes he doesn't leave me much  
12       but I always manage to ask one (1) question.

13                   I want to first of all commend the  
14       Kiwanis Club for the work that it is doing here and I suppose  
15       you know it has a lot to do with personalities and people  
16       who are administering and who are guiding the work of the  
17       club. So I suppose you had something to do with that too,  
18       which is very encouraging.

19                   I just wonder do you communicate -- there  
20       are Kiwanis Clubs right across the country, all over the  
21       place -- and is there a communication or a networking  
22       amongst the Kiwanis Clubs that you could somehow  
23       communicate the work of your efforts towards Aboriginal  
24       people to other parts of Canada? There's not an awful  
25       lot going on for Aboriginal people with these clubs in

1 other parts of the country.

2 **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** That is a very good  
3 point. Unfortunately, there is not any direct line of  
4 communication between our service clubs and Aboriginal  
5 peoples as such. I would like to see this whole area  
6 expanded and see something done to get our First Nations  
7 people more involved directly, not just indirectly. And  
8 this is a personal goal of mine and also a goal of our  
9 club too.

10 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Do you  
11 think that something of that nature would contribute to  
12 renewing and rebuilding a relationship between Aboriginal  
13 people of the country and the non-Aboriginal people? Like  
14 for instance, is there a way of educating the public with  
15 the work that you do about Aboriginal issues?

16 **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Yes, there is, but not  
17 very much unfortunately. We publish a bulletin every week  
18 that outlines all our programs. We have a national  
19 magazine. We do sponsor every week a speaker  
20 community-wide from Saskatoon from every aspect of  
21 Saskatoon life, telling the work that they do: the works  
22 of doctors, specialists, developers, teachers and so  
23 forth. But, as yet we have not had too many speakers from  
24 the Aboriginal field. Something that is a need which has  
25 to be met.

1                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Yes. I  
2 think that's really important you know and I would like  
3 to think that something along these lines could be  
4 integrated into the work that you are doing that would  
5 help educate the public.

6                   For instance, do you think that the  
7 non-Aboriginal people has something to learn from  
8 Aboriginal culture and their belief towards the  
9 environment? Do you believe that the non-Aboriginal  
10 Canadian ---

11                   **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Yes.

12                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** --- has  
13 something to learn from the Aboriginal views?

14                   **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Well, of course they  
15 do. They have a lot to learn. But before they learn the  
16 truth of the matter is that the non-Aboriginal people have  
17 to change their attitudes.

18                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** How do  
19 you think the best way to do that?

20                   **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Having myself been an  
21 employee of the federal government for some close to 10  
22 years with our Aboriginal people, first of all working  
23 out of what was then the Fort Qu'Appelle Indian Hospital,  
24 then being transferred to Hay River, and then to the Arctic  
25 to Inuvik, I became very familiar with the needs and the



1 programs that were going on. But unfortunately they were  
2 very paternalistic, an attitude that galls me to no end.

3 And I would like to do everything I can to see that change,  
4 to put our Aboriginal people on an equal basis.

5 Okay. That's of course easier said than  
6 done. Everybody knows there is one (1) great impediment,  
7 one (1) great barrier that has to be dealt with, and that  
8 barrier is the Indian Act of Canada, a very old Act. As  
9 everyone knows it has relegated our Aboriginal people to  
10 being wards of Ottawa: put them in a separate category,  
11 and therefore, by its very nature, discriminating against  
12 them along racial lines; something that has to be changed.

13 And I think the change has to come from  
14 where it's coming now: right from the bottom, from the  
15 grass roots, up. And if enough input is put into this  
16 Commission then I think the changes will take place.

17 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Well,  
18 thank you very much for your remarks and I appreciate them.

19 **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Thank you very much.  
20 It's been my pleasure.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you and  
22 good luck in the pursuit of your various programs.

23 **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** May I leave?

24 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes.

25 Yes, if you have information -- sir?

1 If you have information documents you could leave them  
2 with some of our staff around the table?

3 **MR. JOHN NICKEL:** Yes.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Okay?

5 Thank you.

6 I would now like to ask Gay Caswell from  
7 the Victorious Women.

8 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Most of the  
9 people here are students at Kelsey Sion and we have taken  
10 our morning class to sit in on the proceedings and found  
11 it very, very interesting. However, some students have  
12 classes that they have to go to now and so do I, so some  
13 of us have to leave; not out of any objection. We object  
14 to having to go back to class.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** We are always  
16 very pleased to have students in our hearings because a  
17 lot of what is said here concerns them and their life in  
18 the future. And so we welcome you and feel free to come  
19 and go as needed.

20 Thank you.

21 Good morning.

22 **MS GAY CASWELL:** Bonjour, Monsieur  
23 Dussault.

24 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Bonjour.

25 **MS GAY CASWELL:** Hello, Commissioner

1 Robinson. Bienvenue a Saskatoon and welcome.

2 Hello, my name is Gay Caswell. Since  
3 1987 my husband and I have had a research business, Caswell  
4 Consultants. Our clients have included research and  
5 writing for various senior federal and provincial  
6 politicians, government departments, industries, lobby  
7 and charity groups. Since 1976 we have done research in  
8 the area of the family versus the state. I have lived  
9 and taught for four (4) years on various Indian reserves.

10 I was a member of the legislature from '82 to '86 when  
11 I held various positions, including Chairman of the Health  
12 and Social Service Caucus Committee. I am here at the  
13 request of Lorna Laplante of the Metis Association and  
14 at the request of the Victorious Women of Canada. My views  
15 on the subject of family versus state have been published  
16 in various magazines and newspapers, including a cover  
17 story in Western Report. I am married with seven (7)  
18 children.

19 The issue we are addressing today is I  
20 understand Aboriginal issues, including self-government.

21 I am here to argue that a very appropriate place for  
22 Aboriginal self-government is in the area of social  
23 services, in particular child welfare protection.

24 Native people, as well as the poor, have  
25 been the unwilling suppliers of the raw materials of the

1 growth industry, child welfare. The children of Natives  
2 and the poor are taken from them. They thus provide income  
3 justification for social workers, legal aid lawyers and  
4 administration. The children are given to foster parents.  
5 These foster parents, often single parents, are thus  
6 provided with an income for themselves, their children  
7 and the foster child. The child can also provide income  
8 for special education teachers, consultants,  
9 psychiatrists and eventually police, parole officers and  
10 prison guards. The parents can continue to contribute  
11 to the economy by justifying legal aid staff.

12 This somewhat cynical scenario is to  
13 establish the possibility that there really is a vested  
14 self-interest component of the actions of the many aspects  
15 of the child welfare industry. If a child stays with their  
16 parents with little state intervention the wheels of the  
17 industry stay still. Professional incomes are not  
18 justified, departments are not expanded, increased  
19 management positions are not made. In short, the power  
20 and wealth of many people is increased when a child is  
21 taken from his parents.

22 The power and wealth of these same people  
23 is not increased when a child is raised by his parents.

24 There is a direct economic correlation between increased  
25 intervention and apprehension and the expansion of the

1 child welfare industry. One can choose to believe there  
2 are other motives for actions but one is ignoring reality  
3 to deny there is not an economic effect, if not an economic  
4 cause, in child welfare decisions.

5 A few vignettes from my burgeoning files  
6 on abused families. These are quotes from phone  
7 conversations collected in just one (1) week.

8 "They took my cousin's baby away from her in the nursery  
9 at St. Paul's Hospital. The social  
10 worker told her they would not take her  
11 baby away but she had an argument with  
12 her boyfriend in the hospital so they  
13 took the baby away."

14 "They picked my daughter up at school. They said that  
15 we were too close. She comes to visit  
16 me. If the phone rings or there's  
17 someone at the door she's terrified.  
18 She runs and hides. In a few months she  
19 will be 16. They said they don't care  
20 what happens to her after that."

21 "A woman phoned. Social Services came last night at 10:00  
22 p.m. and picked up her five (5) children.  
23 They said her and her husband didn't  
24 have enough money to look after them.  
25 They work at two (2) jobs."

1                   A few reactions to this type of action.  
2           Summer '83, World Assembly of First Nations Conference,  
3 Regina as quoted in the Star Phoenix.  
4           "Melvin Isnana, a Saskatchewan Dakota Chief, reporting  
5                   of the social and community development  
6                   workshop held during the week-long  
7                   conference said the moving of children  
8                   from indigenous homes is a form of  
9                   genocide...Thomas said the apprehension  
10                  and placement in non-indigenous homes  
11                  denies children of the support of the  
12                  traditional extended family not to  
13                  mention their Indian heritage. As a  
14                  result, indigenous people must take  
15                  control of the lives of the children in  
16                  their communities `in all aspects,' he  
17                  said....Chief David Ahenakew of the  
18                  National Assembly of the First Nations  
19                  said the child grab has been going on  
20                  for some time....A resolution stressing  
21                  the need for indigenous people to  
22                  `assert their rightful role in  
23                  preventing removal of children from  
24                  indigenous homes' was endorsed at the  
25                  conference."



1                   **MS GAY CASWELL:** This is fine, yes.

2                   Now, where am I?

3                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Because I am  
4                   thinking for the translator also.

5                   **MS GAY CASWELL:** Right, right.

6                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** It could be  
7                   useful if you read a bit slower.

8                   **MS GAY CASWELL:** Yes, okay. Okay. I  
9                   can certainly speak slower.

10                   A world Native conference objected to  
11                   trafficking of Native blood to non-Native homes -- oh,  
12                   I want to start again. Sorry. This is kind of ---

13                   John Diefenbaker objected to the  
14                   trafficking Canadian blood of Canadian children to the  
15                   United States. I might also add to Germany.

16                   A world Native conference objected to  
17                   trafficking of Native blood to non-Native homes.

18                   However, there is a growing movement  
19                   that objects to the trafficking of the offspring of family  
20                   A to the home of family B or Institution C. If this  
21                   trafficking is controlled the Native and national concerns  
22                   will fall into place.

23                   An article by John Caswell, published  
24                   in the Star Phoenix February '85, was quoted extensively  
25                   by Mary Pride in The Child Abuse Industry. It deals with



1 changes in legislation in Saskatchewan but is relevant  
2 all over North America.

3 "The present legislation has such a vague description of  
4 a child in need of protection that  
5 virtually any parent could be in danger  
6 of losing his or her child to the  
7 state....If there is a probability that  
8 your child had a problem, has a problem  
9 or will have a problem, even though you  
10 are not responsible and cannot control  
11 it or are working on controlling it your  
12 child and family are in danger of state  
13 intervention....

14 There are two ways the state can get your children. One  
15 is by supervision. It can intervene in  
16 the home, emasculate the role of the  
17 parents, destroy the child's confidence  
18 in the parent's judgment and right to  
19 discipline, destroy the cohesion and  
20 privacy of the home.

21 It is as ethical as exploratory surgery without evidence  
22 a disease exists. The state can build  
23 a case and take your child. The other  
24 is it can pick them up, leave a note,  
25 and make a brief oral statement in

1                    passing. Hence you go to court and have  
2                    to prove that the scenario for the  
3                    child's future is better than one a  
4                    social worker can think up and implement  
5                    by services paid by you and other  
6                    taxpayers....This is all rationalized  
7                    by the phrase `the best interests of the  
8                    child.'

9                    It is based on the assumption that the best interests of  
10                    the child cannot be determined by the  
11                    parents...."

12                    Herein lies the issue: if all the  
13                    activities of state-run child welfare industry are  
14                    justified by the phrase "in the best interests of the child"  
15                    then it is assumed and stated that the state, not the  
16                    parents, has the power to define and to implement in the  
17                    best interests of the child. This may mean that the child  
18                    stays with his natural parents or his aunt or is shipped  
19                    to a foster home in Venezuela, but what is clear is the  
20                    state defines it. And who gets to define "the best  
21                    interests of the child" is in fact the real guardian.

22                    In short, present child welfare  
23                    legislation in general throughout North America IS a child  
24                    grab. It transfers power from one jurisdiction, the  
25                    family, to another jurisdiction, the state. This transfer

1 doesn't occur at the time it has been established that  
2 a crime or incompetence has occurred. The transfer of  
3 jurisdiction has occurred at the time the legislation is  
4 passed. It is similar to enabling legislation to create  
5 a crown corporation over a monopolized industry. The  
6 crown corporation may allow trickle down contractual  
7 businesses to exist but they exist at its discretion.  
8 The North American prototype child welfare legislation  
9 may allow families to raise their children but only at  
10 the state's discretion.

11 The task before the public is to  
12 understand (a) that the power shift from the family to  
13 the state has occurred, (b) to what extent it has occurred,  
14 and (c) if this power shift should be tolerated or reversed.

15 In dealing with the media on the issue  
16 I am confronted with reporters who wish to frame the debate  
17 "parents rights versus children's rights." I submit that  
18 this isn't dealing with the issue but it's conceding the  
19 debate to state power. It assumes that giving parents  
20 rights would have to be at the expense of children's rights.

21 It is not parents' rights versus children's rights but  
22 The Family versus The State.

23 The difficulty with the state raising  
24 children is it has difficulty making a profit on a utility  
25 monopoly. There is no indication it has better expertise

1 in tucking children in bed at night. It is very difficult  
2 to determine what is the best way to raise children.  
3 Matters of discipline vary with generations, trends,  
4 cultures, personalities, regions, religion. Thus, except  
5 for reasonable guidelines that differentiate corporal  
6 discipline from assault the law has generally left many  
7 things to the discretion of families. State uniformity  
8 on child rearing philosophy would compound error and reduce  
9 good sense to nonsense at best when unilaterally applied.

10 When the state becomes the de facto  
11 parent it creates guidelines as to who can be an acting  
12 parent. Eventually those guidelines are enforced. In  
13 1979 at a Future Conference in Saskatoon sponsored by the  
14 government of the day licensing parenting was proposed  
15 by Mary Van Stoke and others. One of the disqualifications  
16 for parenthood could be "Do you believe the children can  
17 be basically evil at birth?" That would eliminate anyone  
18 holding the traditional Jude-Christian view of original  
19 sin. Those who claim circumcision is sexual mutilation  
20 would of course eliminate all practising Jews, amongst  
21 others, as parents.

22 In 1981 a foster parent in Prince Albert  
23 told me she was shocked to hear that social workers often  
24 say that Indian people should be sterilized because there  
25 are not enough foster homes. A social worker told me:

1 "There's a lot to be said for sterilizing an Indian woman  
2 after one child. There's one woman  
3 we've apprehended four of her children,  
4 and now she's pregnant with a fifth.  
5 The chiefs won't agree to our demanding  
6 sterilization because they want more  
7 band money."

8 Obviously native people, among others,  
9 need to be protected from people in power who hold such  
10 fascist views. And I use the word responsibly.

11 There is no evidence that state  
12 intervention, particularly apprehension, is better than  
13 leaving children in their homes. One Californian  
14 psychiatrist stated that there is mounting evidence that  
15 the risk to the child increases the farther it is removed  
16 from the home. A Swedish study showed that children do  
17 better kept in their natural home, even in cases where  
18 parents are alcoholics.

19 A child can go from a less than ideal  
20 home to a series of abusive foster homes. Even if the  
21 foster homes are run by committed, caring people it is  
22 still not their home with their parents. The placement  
23 can be changed arbitrarily at a moment's notice. As soon  
24 as children are removed from the home they really arrive  
25 at a no-home, not another home situation.

1                   Now, obviously the issue that I have not  
2 addressed is what does one do when a child is sexually  
3 abused or the victim of assault with the intent or result  
4 of maiming or murder. What one does is what has always  
5 been done in a democracy where rule is by law and not by  
6 man: one uses the full force of the law to protect the  
7 victim and to punish the perpetrator, making sure the  
8 rights of the accused are protected as well.

9                   There are those who argue because child  
10 abuse is such a heinous crime and because the possible  
11 victims are so vulnerable that one cannot afford the usual  
12 legal safeguards. This argument is dangerous to children.

13                  It leaves them open to abuse by the state and its agencies,  
14 personal enemies of the parent or parents, their own  
15 rebellion, and to child abusers in institutions and foster  
16 homes. This argument is dangerous to parents. It leaves  
17 them open to persecution, blackmail, extreme mental and  
18 physical stress, loss of reputation, income and family.

19                  It is dangerous to everybody because once legal safeguards  
20 can be eliminated in one area they can be eliminated in  
21 any or every area. Then we no longer have a democracy;  
22 only brute, arbitrary state and judicial power.

23                  This presupposes one returns to criminal  
24 law rather than civil law, one returns to federal  
25 jurisdiction rather than provincial jurisdiction. This

1 move would be desirable because people are being accused  
2 of the very heinous crime of abusing children. The  
3 accusation is of a criminal nature. Therefore the  
4 procedure should be of a criminal nature. No justice can  
5 be done by acting as if a crime has been committed and  
6 then using the tools of the therapeutic state to deny victim  
7 and accused of any semblance of protection by the excuse  
8 that treatment, not punishment, is occurring.

9 What is now happening is the therapeutic  
10 model is destroying legal procedures in criminal law such  
11 as the changes that occurred under Bill C-54. What one  
12 does in civil law must be evaluated and made to conform  
13 with normal procedures in criminal law. The Charter of  
14 Rights and fundamental freedoms can help us evaluate social  
15 services violations.

16 Now I will be quoting a few phrases from  
17 the Charter. Under "Fundamental Freedoms:"  
18 "2. Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:  
19 (a) freedom of conscience and religion."

20 Many families are attacked because they  
21 send their children to Christian schools because the  
22 parents are Christians or have other views that a social  
23 worker does not like.

24 "(b) Freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression  
25 including freedom of the press and other

1 media communications."

2 People have been harassed by social  
3 workers because they have written and organized against  
4 the department's tactics, because their political views  
5 were different from theirs.

6 "(d) Freedom of association."

7 The first and most fundamental freedom  
8 of association must be the right of family members to  
9 associate with other family members. Many times social  
10 workers take children from their homes when there is not  
11 clear evidence of abuse, when it is very clear the children  
12 do not want to be removed. Sometimes the father or mother  
13 are told that they must leave the family or the children  
14 will be taken, although no abuse has been proven.  
15 Sometimes social workers insist on divorce or separation  
16 with the punishment of apprehension of children if  
17 compliance does not occur.

18 "Life, liberty and security of person.

19 7. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security  
20 of person and the right not to be  
21 deprived thereof except in accordance  
22 with the principles of fundamental  
23 justice."

24 Social workers constantly deprive  
25 children of liberty and security of person without



1 fundamental justice procedures. They order parents out  
2 of the home and sometimes out of a province or city without  
3 the principles of fundamental justice.

4 "Search or Seizure.

5 8. Everyone has the right to be secure against  
6 unreasonable search or seizure."

7 Social workers enter homes sometimes  
8 without knocking. They look into the fridge, cupboards,  
9 all the rooms of the house. Social workers enter schools,  
10 hospitals and public health facilities. They confiscate  
11 records, files and children. No clear evidence of  
12 wrongdoing is necessary. As soon as a parent is suspected  
13 of abuse they are assumed to be guilty and all normal  
14 safeguards against a person's right to privacy are  
15 violated.

16 "Detention or Imprisonment

17 9. Everyone has a right not be arbitrarily detained or  
18 imprisoned."

19 Children are arbitrarily detained or  
20 imprisoned in foster homes and group homes against their  
21 wishes and against the wishes of their parents when no  
22 wrongdoing is established on either side.

23 "Arrest or detention.

24 10. To be informed promptly of the reasons thereof."

25 Families go for months, even years,

1 without knowing what accusations are made against them  
2 and by whom. Yet their children are removed from them  
3 or they are forced to move away from their home.

4 "Proceedings in Criminal and Penal Matters.

5 11. Any person charged with an offence has the right  
6 (a) to be informed without unreasonable delay of the  
7 specific offence."

8 Parents are not informed without  
9 unreasonable delay of what they are charged.

10 "(b) to be tried within a reasonable time."

11 Parents can go from months to years  
12 without being given the opportunity to go to court. In  
13 the meantime the children are removed from them. A forced  
14 separation of a few hours or days can cause trauma in both  
15 parents and children with long-lasting damage. These  
16 separations often reduce the parents to a condition where  
17 it is more difficult for them to be effective parents.

18 "(c) not to be compelled to be a witness in proceedings  
19 against that person in respect to the  
20 offence."

21 Parents are told that they must  
22 "cooperate" -- that is, give evidence against themselves --  
23 admit guilt or they will be assumed to be guilty. Parents  
24 are told -- this is a very common procedure -- "One proof  
25 that you really did abuse your child is that you are denying

1 it."

2 "(d) to be presumed innocent until proven guilty  
3 according to law in a fair and public  
4 hearing by an independent and impartial  
5 tribunal."

6 Parents are assumed to be guilty upon  
7 the anonymous expression of possible guilt. They do not  
8 have a fair or public hearing. They are often limited  
9 by their choice to Legal Aid employees who appear to be  
10 at times plea bargaining or even collaborating with the  
11 social worker. Sometimes they have no lawyer at all.

12 One parent phoned me and told me that  
13 she didn't have a lawyer. She was a reformed prostitute.

14 Her child had been attacked when she was unable to protect  
15 her. I phoned Social Services to ask why this woman was  
16 not given a Legal Aid lawyer. The Saskatoon supervisor  
17 told me it was not in the child's best interest for the  
18 mother to have a lawyer. I told Social Services and the  
19 mother that I would go to court and act as her lawyer.  
20 They got her a lawyer.

21 The judge, lawyers, social workers and  
22 witnesses are involved in the process of deciding what  
23 is in the best interests of the child according to their  
24 understanding, rather than determining the guilt or  
25 innocence of the parents. If parents are innocent only

1 they should be involved in determining the best interests  
2 of the child.

3 "(e) not to be denied reasonable bail without just cause."

4 Usually the worst punishment for a  
5 parent is to be denied his or her children. They often  
6 cannot reach any form of agreement to have them back before  
7 lengthy court proceedings.

8 "Treatment or Punishment.

9 12. Everyone has the right not to be subjected to any  
10 cruel and unusual treatment or  
11 punishment."

12 Removing children from parents without  
13 just cause is cruel and unusual treatment or punishment.

14 Making parents undergo psychiatric counselling, long  
15 sessions with social workers and therapists, et cetera,  
16 to prove their innocence or fitness to be parents without  
17 any specific charges laid against them is cruel and unusual  
18 treatment or punishment, as is removing children from  
19 parents without proof that the parents have committed  
20 criminal acts against them. So is confining children to  
21 foster and group homes when it is against their wishes  
22 and against the wishes of their parents.

23 I will finish with some recommendations.

24 Now, obviously, we are talking today about Aboriginal  
25 issues. This issue transcends all Canadians but if we

1 get our laws right then all Canadians benefits.

2 Social services legislation and  
3 policies must be reviewed and changed according to the  
4 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

5 The principle that families have the  
6 jurisdiction to raise children must be re-established.  
7 Consistent with that is that when state intervention is  
8 necessary due to proven difficulty, i.e. a parent is absent  
9 for a long period or a dead parent, or to a proven criminal  
10 act, the jurisdiction closest to the family should have  
11 the right and responsibility to intervention, i.e. a parish  
12 or church community with a social service ministry, a  
13 Native or Metis community with a social services structure,  
14 for example.

15 Three (3): There must be a greatly  
16 decreased role for the Social Services department and  
17 that power must be decentralized to the community level.  
18 That's consistent with my second recommendation.

19 Four (4): Parents must have a right to  
20 a lawyer and to the lawyer of their choice. If they need  
21 public assistance Legal Aid should be in the form of a  
22 voucher so the parents can choose a lawyer that they trust.

23 Five (5): Lawyers should be encouraged  
24 to put the law on trial when parents are on trial.

25 Six (6): The provision that all staff

1 of the Minister of Social Services is presumed to be acting  
2 with good intention and thus cannot be sued must be struck  
3 down. Parents cannot have their actions excused by  
4 presumption of good intention so there is no reason why  
5 anyone or any institution or department should be allowed  
6 not to face the consequences of their actions.

7                   Seven (7): For the last few years  
8 Victorious Women of Canada has applied for funding to the  
9 Secretary of State to do research in this issue. Although  
10 millions of dollars have been given on constitutional  
11 issues, Native issues, child abuse issues and women issues,  
12 we have been consistently refused. There can be no  
13 justification for using taxpayer money to advance  
14 anti-family lobbying unless both sides are funded. There  
15 must be a funding policy of parity of both sides of an  
16 issue or no funding.

17                   That concludes my written presentation.

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

19                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I would  
20 like to thank you for your well thought-out presentation  
21 here. I want to begin by looking at -- the paper deals  
22 with the removal of children and I just assumed you were  
23 talking about Aboriginal children, but I guess you are  
24 talking about children in general?

25                   **MS GAY CASWELL:** Well, in

1 Saskatchewan -- and I talk about there, the province of  
2 which I know best of course, and also live in what I guess  
3 it's usually called the lower income of Saskatoon. We  
4 think it's a more interesting area but there are those  
5 who paint it differently. But I live in Castle Hill and  
6 are very familiar with Westmount, Riversdale. I don't  
7 know if you are from the city, so you may not know the  
8 area.

9 But we have consistently found that --  
10 I hate to quote figures and I have had figures -- but I  
11 only had a week to present this as well as I had some exams.

12 But I believe 80 per cent of the children apprehended  
13 and put in foster homes are Native or Metis. And probably  
14 I would say the other part, a small fraction, are poor  
15 whites who often are the least protected because they don't  
16 have a Natives association or an Indian and Metis  
17 friendship association and they are often isolated people.

18 So it is a law that is for everyone, or against everyone;  
19 however you wish to see it. But it is applied very heavily  
20 towards the poor and the Metis and Native.

21 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** And as  
22 you say there has been some work and resource transfer  
23 to a lot of the Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal  
24 people to look at social and welfare agencies. And there  
25 are some provinces in this country where the First Nations

1 have taken over control of child welfare and that type  
2 of an arrangement.

3 And I just wonder, when you talk you make  
4 it sound so easy that kids can be transferred so quickly  
5 and put it foster homes ---

6 **MS GAY CASWELL:** That's precisely -- if  
7 I made it sound easy and arbitrary and extreme, then I  
8 have pictured an accurate picture.

9 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Because  
10 I find throughout my experience in working with my people  
11 and a lot of the provinces, because laws do vary from  
12 province to province as far as legislation goes with  
13 respect to child welfare, that there are many, many  
14 Aboriginal families in this country and there are a lot  
15 of them who live -- there are some within the communities  
16 and some who are off the communities.

17 **MS GAY CASWELL:** M'hm, sure.

18 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** And there  
19 has been this whole concern about Aboriginal kids,  
20 children, being placed in foster homes who are not of their  
21 culture, and, as you say, they are just put into -- there  
22 is not an awful lot of screening it seems done or  
23 post-screening or post work done with the children to see.

24 Because it seems it's not working because they are moving  
25 from home to home to home to home to home.



1                   **MS GAY CASWELL:** Exactly, yes.

2                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** They  
3 don't stay very long.

4                   But there are still all these Aboriginal  
5 people, families, who are dying to have families. Some  
6 of them are childless and yet they may not be of a high  
7 calibre of income but they have love and they manage to  
8 live from day to day. And there are others who are willing  
9 to take foster children, they are looking for Aboriginal  
10 children to take into their homes.

11                   The system does not provide. It's not  
12 easy. It's not easy for them. As a matter of fact it's  
13 almost unaccessible for them to be able to take any of  
14 these children as foster children or for adoption even.

15                   So, because of the hoops and the barriers and the ---

16                   **MS GAY CASWELL:** Sure.

17                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** --- and  
18 the red tape and the bureaucracy, and as you say you know  
19 you are just checked out so thoroughly and you wait weeks  
20 and you wait months and sometimes you end up with nothing.

21                   But yet it sounds so easy that they can be taken and just  
22 put anywhere.

23                   Now, can you explain why that is  
24 happening?

25                   **MS GAY CASWELL:** I'm not here to explain

1 the Department of Social Services, or at least to justify  
2 it. I am here to explain it. But I have certainly noticed  
3 that -- and I work with foster parents. Many of them would  
4 agree with 100 per cent of what I am saying. They are  
5 not racist and many of them are good homes. But those  
6 foster parents who I respect are those who say "I don't  
7 want any child -- pink, purple or orange or otherwise --  
8 who is..." -- you know I am trying to be silly but just  
9 to make it general -- "...but who should not be in my home."  
10 In other words, I want to make sure that child should  
11 have been removed from the home. I want to make sure that  
12 the parents were protected because I don't want any child  
13 unless that child needs me.

14 And I know many crowded white foster  
15 homes and I certainly believe they are good homes and you  
16 know a part of the community who would be more understanding  
17 of these children, who are being overlooked.

18 It's certainly not necessary for you to  
19 follow the politics of Saskatchewan; most of us prefer  
20 not to. But one of the people who grew up in my area is  
21 the present Premier of Saskatchewan. I tend to think if  
22 the area is good enough for the premier, it should be good  
23 enough for the children to be raised in it.

24 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** You say  
25 there must be a greatly decreased role for the Social

1 Services Department and it should be decentralized to the  
2 community level. What do you mean by "community level?"

3 **MS GAY CASWELL:** Well, I think the  
4 community means obviously different things to different  
5 people. If you are talking about Metis it may mean a rural  
6 community; it may not mean that at all in an urban area.  
7 It may be a reserve. It may be a farming community.  
8 For many people that are actively involved in a church  
9 that has resources to help people; that would be their  
10 community.

11 And I think that there obviously is --  
12 we would need to see the services exit. But there has  
13 always been a need. Two (2) parents die in a car accident.  
14 They have five (5) children at home. I mean obviously  
15 no crime has been done except possibly the traffic  
16 violations. But these children need a place to go.

17 Now, in times past the church and the  
18 community looked after that. Sometimes church and  
19 community still does but they don't have the financial  
20 resources. They won't get a cheque. They won't get  
21 someone to be paid to do these kind of things like the  
22 Social Services should. And I think that when we are  
23 giving care to people, when the state intervenes it should  
24 always be at that level which is closest to the people.

25 One assumes that somebody, say in my church community,

1 I come from a large church community, very active one,  
2 would have a better understanding of what the Caswell  
3 children should have if for some reason something happened  
4 to my husband and I. Then comes a social worker who takes  
5 orders from Regina. And it's perfectly logical and I don't  
6 think it's radical at all to expect that.

7 And also we have a situation where people  
8 who are just trying to look after each other, like I say,  
9 are penalized. Often a grandmother has difficulty getting  
10 enough money to look after her grandchildren if the parents  
11 sometimes acting irresponsibly or are sick or in treatment.

12 But if they went to a foster home they'd get a big cheque.

13 And just as an example, last Christmas  
14 it was an interesting time financially for a lot of us  
15 and a lot of us didn't know how we were going to have a  
16 Christmas for our children, I mean a nice materialistic  
17 Christmas with presents. And we got a letter from the  
18 present Minister of Social Services to tell us that the  
19 cheques definitely would not come in before Christmas.  
20 And one lady in my community, Leona Detousis (PH), went  
21 on the news and said this is very hard because some people  
22 don't even have food for Christmas.

23 And she said -- the minister of the day --  
24 said that we must do this because if we'll give those  
25 cheques out the people will act irresponsibly and spend

1 the cheques on Christmas presents for their children.  
2 I thought those poor -- you know, we "irresponsible" people  
3 on the west side -- were spending all our money on bingos  
4 and booze. Now I find what we're really doing is spending  
5 it on presents for our children. Now I didn't think this  
6 was such a terrible way of spending a bit of welfare money  
7 and you know certainly for some of them presents was food.

8 But, okay, you say welfare cheques can't  
9 be very, very big because if they were it would destroy  
10 the economy. I mean you may not say that but that's the  
11 obvious financial logic. But the situation is: if those  
12 children had been in a foster home -- and a foster parent  
13 told me this; they said "What is going on that I have  
14 children..." -- and I know they are children and they are  
15 Native. Most of the foster children are Native children --  
16 they are white Mennonite family -- and they said "...we  
17 get very large cheques every month and at Christmas time  
18 we get an advance of at least \$50.00 for every child and  
19 it goes up as the child gets older for Christmas presents.

20 So we have a situation that if the child  
21 is in the parents' home the child will be lucky if they  
22 have a nice meal at Christmas. If the child was taken  
23 and put into a foster home there is plenty of money from  
24 state resources to make sure that that child has a wonderful  
25 home. And this is very stressful to a parent that their

1 child is taken away, all of a sudden the a child has nice  
2 clothes, a bike. You know it just seems very, very wealthy  
3 and they feel intimidated. You know sometimes they almost  
4 feel like they are doing something mean to the child --  
5 well, I hope too many of them don't -- but almost as if  
6 they are hurting the child by fighting to get the child  
7 back.

8 So they are bribing this child's loyalty  
9 and obviously if there is that kind of money for foster  
10 homes and foster parents to look after these children then  
11 there should be a bit of state charity at Christmas time.

12 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I just  
13 have one more question for you, and that is: do you believe  
14 that Aboriginal people in this country, as a part of their  
15 self-govermenting initiative, that they are handling their  
16 own social welfare and family, children, welfare as a part  
17 of their self-government authority and that would be a  
18 part of it and that they are entitled to that?

19 **MS GAY CASWELL:** Well, I most certainly  
20 do believe that. And some people have asked me because  
21 they know I'm very much for the idea of a united Canada,  
22 meaning united for everybody and I don't believe in a state  
23 within a state if that's what self-government means then  
24 I don't believe that.

25 But at the same time I think that

1       Saskatoon has a measure of self-government, royal  
2       municipalities have a measure of self-government, and I  
3       think that self-government is essentially decentralized  
4       power. And when I tell those people "Well, in the area  
5       of social services no matter what a community did it  
6       couldn't be worse than the situation now."

7                   And they have to live with -- a real  
8       estate agent was telling me that it's very interesting  
9       when they have a client who is a social worker. The social  
10      worker gives him a map, pinpointing all their clients,  
11      and the key criteria is to live as far as possible away  
12      from their clients or from the homes you know where they've  
13      intervened. Because they don't want to live around anyone  
14      which they have had action with. And I think people should  
15      live with the people whose lives they intervened. I think  
16      that Native people who have to live daily with the decisions  
17      they made will make better decisions than people who can  
18      hide in another area of the city or behind a desk in Regina  
19      or in Ottawa.

20                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank  
21      you.

22                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Just a brief  
23      follow-up on this.

24                   I understand that the thrust of what you  
25      presented to us was to say, well, decentralize that to

1 the parents and to the communities and less centralized  
2 state decisions ---

3 **MS GAY CASWELL:** M'hm.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- in this  
5 area.

6 And then you say, well, self-government  
7 should deal first with social services. And from very  
8 practical terms within a city like Saskatoon, there are  
9 many Aboriginal peoples, Indian or Metis.

10 **MS GAY CASWELL:** M'hm, yeah.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** So, would you  
12 see the authority that is within the department to be  
13 transferred, let's say, to the Metis Society of  
14 Saskatchewan or the FSIN, the Federation of Indian of  
15 Saskatchewan, to administer those programs for their  
16 people? Because when we are talking about self-government  
17 for Aboriginal people there has to be some structure.

18 **MS GAY CASWELL:** M'hm, yes.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** So, how do you  
20 see that?

21 **MS GAY CASWELL:** Well, I think that we  
22 have a parallel in our school system, particularly in  
23 Saskatchewan. We have a Catholic school system. We have  
24 a public school system. Our children go to a private  
25 school run by the church. There are other private schools.



1       There is a native survival school. And so their education  
2       is a need. Education is mandated by law; the children  
3       must have some kind of education. But we manage to provide  
4       choice in the system.

5                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes, but for  
6       the ---

7                   **MS GAY CASWELL:** Sorry. I just wanted  
8       to make a point but it might be a little long at first.

9                   So the same thing then with social  
10       services. We'd obviously have to have some uniformity  
11       but if we had a social services run the Catholic Service  
12       Bureau, Salvation Army, the FSIN for the Metis Association  
13       and perhaps other organizations. Then if someone had a  
14       need they could go or phone to that organization they chose.  
15       And it wouldn't be any more impossible than having a  
16       diversified school system.

17                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** So what you are  
18       saying is that on the social services there should be social  
19       agencies ---

20                   **MS GAY CASWELL:** M'hm.

21                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- set up  
22       under the control of the Indian Federation or the Metis  
23       Society ---

24                   **MS GAY CASWELL:** M'hm.

25                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- and of

1 course outside the Aboriginal world through the churches  
2 or ---

3 **MS GAY CASWELL:** Yes, or maybe the  
4 Jewish because like I don't just choose to speak for all  
5 kinds of groups that I really don't know. But what I am  
6 saying is the option should exist for a diversified school  
7 system and it can exist for social services.

8 No, obviously in criminal law we would  
9 have to have the same laws. And that would be good and  
10 that would be positive.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Okay, last  
12 question.

13 The Victorious Women. Could you tell  
14 us a bit more about the organization itself, the membership  
15 and ---

16 **MS GAY CASWELL:** Certainly, yes.

17 Victorious Women of Canada -- the name  
18 is a little Victorian but we don't mind that either --  
19 but we wanted an organization, a women's organization,  
20 that is positive, that is pro-family, that speaks for  
21 legislation that evaluates what this does to the family.

22 Sort of like we have an environmental control agency --  
23 and in Saskatchewan government I don't what the status  
24 of it is now -- but in the former government there was  
25 a family bureau that they evaluated legislation in light

1 of what it does to the family.

2 So, our organization is a lobby and  
3 ginger group and an educational group to evaluate changes  
4 in laws in light of what it does to the family because  
5 we think that many women's idea of liberation is to have  
6 the option of family.

7 And we have many Native people in our  
8 organization. Our president is Roberta Popin (PH) whose  
9 mother is a treaty Indian from Katepwa Reserve. And we  
10 say "of Canada." We do have members throughout Canada  
11 but our largest centre is here in Saskatchewan because  
12 this is where we organize.

13 And, like a lot of volunteer  
14 organizations, without funding we get very busy in some  
15 issue and then we have to you know -- all our executive  
16 members decide to get pregnant at the same time and then  
17 we -- but we continue to evaluate and we have a large  
18 resource educational facility and we of course have worked  
19 with other women's issues. We think that a lot of the  
20 issues directly impact on the Native people and we are  
21 very proud that our leadership consists of many people  
22 just like the province does.

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

24 Thank you very much for coming and  
25 sharing your experience and thoughts and also your strong

1 feelings as to what should be done. This is a very  
2 important area and we are going to consider your written  
3 brief in a more detailed fashion.

4 **MS GAY CASWELL:** Thank you.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you for  
6 being with us.

7 **MS GAY CASWELL:** I'd just like to say  
8 I just came from the hospital from losing Number eight  
9 (8) child, so we know about what it feels to lose a child.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Good luck.

11 **MS GAY CASWELL:** Thank you.

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

13 We will take a short break, ten (10)  
14 minutes, and we resume with the friendship inn.

15 --- Upon recessing at 10:31 a.m.

16 --- Upon resuming at 10:43 a.m.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Okay. If you  
18 could identify yourself for the sake of the record and  
19 proceed whenever you are ready.

20 Thank you.

21 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** My name is Robin  
22 Bellamy. Some of my background is I was a teacher  
23 previously on a Native reserve here in Saskatchewan. I've  
24 been a volunteer in the inner city since I was in Grade  
25 9 -- and I don't need to tell you how many years ago that

1 was. I'm also on the board of the Child Hunger and  
2 Education Program here in Saskatoon, a committee on  
3 homeless, EGAD Youth Centre, on the Board of Habitat for  
4 Humanity. I am also the executive director of the  
5 Saskatoon Friendship Inn, which, to put it in short terms  
6 is a large soup kitchen here in Saskatoon with quite a  
7 few programs as well.

8 I'd like to begin first of all by reading  
9 a little excerpt from a book that was put together. It's  
10 called Where Friends Meet and it's in regards to a lot  
11 of the people that we deal with in the inner city of  
12 Saskatoon. These stories were put together by the  
13 individual people and then put in print. I will be giving  
14 the book to the Commission when I am done this morning.

15 To begin with, this first one tells about  
16 the inner city. It's a little story.

17 "She only had a few blocks to go. For that short a distance  
18 it didn't make sense to hop a bus. It  
19 was a beautiful day, maybe the last of  
20 autumn days. She looked so proud, head  
21 held up, dignity intact. Being a Native  
22 did not deter her in any way.

23 Looking at the rundown buildings and storefronts, she  
24 thinks back to the stories she'd heard  
25 the old people tell. They talked of how

1                   this part of the city was once the place  
2                   they had looked forward to coming to,  
3                   to do their shopping and have a soda in  
4                   a cafe. How once the Barry Hotel was  
5                   an elegant place. How quaint it must  
6                   have been, horse buggies lining the  
7                   streets. How romantic!

8           How time makes a difference! Today as she walks down the  
9           street, men in cars circle the streets,  
10          honking, pointing to corners hoping to  
11          pick her up. She remembers that she's  
12          Native, and is suddenly sad that her  
13          identity is defined by her colour. She  
14          wonders whether the horse buggies were  
15          used in the same manner.

16         She thinks of her sacred stones in her pocket, and stroking  
17         them, she asks for protection as she sees  
18         one of her people getting thrown out of  
19         the Barry Hotel. Her heart aches as she  
20         sees children hanging around the  
21         streets. She thinks of her daughter in  
22         the next generation, walking down the  
23         same street. Will she have to go  
24         through the same degradation,  
25         humiliation, because of her colour?

1 Ah! She reaches her destination."

2 It's just a little story that was put  
3 together by one of the clients at the Friendship Inn.

4 I'm here, not to give you the truth with  
5 facts and figures. I'm here to give you my opinion to  
6 the years of what I've seen in the inner city of Saskatoon.

7 One of my biggest concerns is the amount of people that  
8 every single day we average about 350 people that come  
9 in daily into the Friendship Inn. And the people that  
10 are coming in there that are dying daily -- and I don't  
11 mean dying daily. As what I have tried to explain or say,  
12 is that these people are dying a little bit each and every  
13 day.

14 We have about one (1) or two (2) of the  
15 people that come there every single month that die in some  
16 horrible way: either through murder, through sniffing,  
17 through drinking. It's just a terrible way to have to  
18 live.

19 I want to tell you very quickly of a young  
20 lady who, two (2) weeks before Christmas time of the past  
21 Christmas -- two (2) weeks before decided that her life --  
22 she was only 25 years told -- that her life wasn't worth  
23 living any more and she hung herself. And she left two  
24 (2) children behind: one the age of seven (7) and one the  
25 age of two (2) years old.

1 More shocking than the death to us was  
2 the way things continued to happen in that household.  
3 Once this young lady was cut down from the rafters, there  
4 was five (5) other people in the household between the  
5 age of 17 and 26 years old. They just continued on their  
6 life that same day the way they had the day before and  
7 the day before that. In fact, when we went into the home  
8 the 17 year old fellow that was in the house at the time  
9 was sitting down eating dinner while they were moving the  
10 body from the basement. To me it just showed -- once again  
11 reminded me how difficult their life and how this  
12 difficulty has just been accepted by so many people as  
13 a way of life.

14 So, I am here to talk about the system  
15 that we live in in the inner city. We are not talking  
16 about the traditional way of Native people. We are not  
17 talking about a culture that was in the past and maybe  
18 is hoped for in the future. We are talking about an inner  
19 city culture for the Aboriginal people. We are talking  
20 about a culture of prostitution, substance abuse, physical  
21 abuse, verbal abuse, and poverty.

22 Within that we are talking about racism.

23 Again, a little bit of information here is when I do a  
24 lot of talks on poverty in Saskatoon and in Saskatchewan  
25 people are always surprised to find out when I talk to



1       them. I ask how many people are concerned about coming  
2       to the inner city of Saskatoon. I am talking about  
3       suburban areas of Saskatoon. Immediately the people say  
4       that they are concerned about coming down there on a  
5       Saturday night at midnight. I also like to tell them,  
6       though, that in the same regard many of the people that  
7       I deal with in the inner city are just as scared to come  
8       to the -- you could call it, or we like to maybe sometimes  
9       refer to it as the "better areas of Saskatoon." Many of  
10      the Aboriginal people that I work with and deal with are  
11      scared and concerned to go to those areas because of the  
12      racism that is dealt towards them.

13                   An example of this is the process of  
14      cashing cheques in Saskatoon. Hopefully when I'm done  
15      giving these examples, at the end I'll wrap up and it will  
16      give I hope a very good picture of what is for the Aboriginal  
17      people in Saskatoon. Cheque cashing policies. People  
18      on welfare. I would say -- we don't keep statistics but  
19      I would probably venture to guess that 98 per cent of the  
20      people that I deal with of Aboriginal background are on  
21      some kind of assistance, either welfare or through Northern  
22      Native Affairs. When it comes to something as simple as  
23      cashing a cheque (1) they don't have the skills to do it,  
24      (2) the banks and the institutions don't want them into  
25      the banking system because they are not making any money

1 from them.

2 So they turn to their means, to their  
3 system. And their system is comprised of Money Marts,  
4 the confectionary at the corner, as well as the pawn shops  
5 in downtown Saskatoon. These places charge anything  
6 between five (5) and seven (7) per cent and fifteen (15)  
7 per cent to these people to cash their cheques because  
8 they're not wanted in the banking system.

9 I want to turn once again to my book here.

10 I will read another little story here. I have four (4)  
11 stories in all to read. This one here is again from one  
12 of the people that comes to the Friendship Inn.

13 "I was born in Kamloops, British Columbia, in 1969. My

14 birthday is on March 31st. I grew in  
15 Vancouver, though. When I was nine  
16 years old, I started doing my own thing.

17 That's when I started bouncing around  
18 from foster home to foster home. Let's  
19 see...yeah, I was in about twelve foster  
20 homes. They were nothing but a roof  
21 over my head, until I could figure out  
22 my next move.

23 When I was nine years old my older brother took me to Toronto  
24 for a couple of weeks. Showed me the  
25 ropes -- you know, street living. Then

1 after two weeks he gave me \$600 and said,  
2 "See ya later, John." I've never seen  
3 him since.

4 When I was ten that's when I decided to try shooting dope  
5 in my arm. When I was eleven my sister  
6 gave me half a gram of cocaine for my  
7 present. When I was about fourteen  
8 years old I started to hit the jails.  
9 That's when you could say I hit a peak  
10 and then everything started going  
11 downhill. I did more and more drinking  
12 and drugs and getting into more and more  
13 trouble.

14 I did a lot of travelling. I've been to six provinces  
15 in Canada. I just may decide tomorrow  
16 that I want to go to Edmonton. Or maybe  
17 I'll go to Winnipeg. I don't know.  
18 Just whenever the urge hits me to leave,  
19 I leave. Wherever I lay my hat, that's  
20 where home is. Just like a rolling  
21 stone, I haven't gathered no moss yet!"

22 "If I decided to live the `average life' I think I would  
23 like to get into electronics repair or  
24 computer programming. If not that,  
25 well, I think I would like to become a

1 vet. But you know, when I was ten years  
2 old I was into drugs then. I would sit  
3 and wonder what I would want to become.

4 I decided I would like to become a drug  
5 dealer. Big time dealer. A million  
6 dollar a week dealer. I wouldn't want  
7 to be a hockey player making that much.

8 Because in hockey you get all bruised  
9 up and my hair would get messy.

10 I did get my Grade Eleven, though. I put myself through  
11 that. I don't have any desire right now  
12 to further my education. If I did live  
13 this 'average life' with the kids, wife,  
14 home, and cars I guess I would have to  
15 go back to school. Upgrading, that is.

16 Then I would have to take secondary  
17 schooling for electronics or computer  
18 software.

19 You never know, though. In five minutes I could decide  
20 to go to Edmonton. Poof! I'm gone on  
21 the bus. Or I could decide tomorrow to  
22 settle down. When there is a will there  
23 a way."

24 In the inner city of Saskatoon so many  
25 of the Aboriginal people that we work with, especially

1 the children, begin at a very early age to begin  
2 participating in sniff houses. There are a large number  
3 of adult sniff houses in the inner city, and when I say  
4 "inner city" I know that I'm not just referring to  
5 Saskatoon; I am referring to any major centre at all.  
6 People, children, were seen -- children I would say in  
7 droves -- leaving the school system and hanging around  
8 these houses.

9                   And we are talking about children at the  
10 age of four (4) and five (5) years old. We had four (4)  
11 children come to the Friendship Inn a short time ago with  
12 a circle of paint around their head. And some people may,  
13 by looking at the paint on their head, may assume that  
14 these children are some kind of a gang. The one thing  
15 is that the youngest child was four (4), the oldest one  
16 was seven (7), and the reason they had paint on their head  
17 and their chin is because they had their heads in the paint  
18 cans at a sniff house, sniffing paint, instead of being  
19 home or instead of being in school.

20                   There is a lot of lack of education and  
21 life skills for the Aboriginal people in Saskatoon and  
22 throughout Saskatchewan and Canada. To give you an  
23 example, we have a position open right now at the Friendship  
24 Inn where we are looking for a family worker. One of the  
25 prerequisites is that that person needs to have some type

1 of a degree in humanities. Out of 102 resumes we had 82  
2 people with double degrees at the University of  
3 Saskatchewan or through the Bachelor of Social Work or  
4 through FSIN, and/or Masters Degrees. Once again it just  
5 reminded me of the amount of Aboriginal people that have  
6 the lack of education to participate in areas where they  
7 would be the strongest.

8                   It's very difficult to receive funding  
9 from many of the organizations and committees that have  
10 been set up to work with Aboriginal people in Saskatoon  
11 and Saskatchewan. I want to give you an example. Our  
12 agency deals 86 per cent of our funding comes from the  
13 community, 14 per cent comes from the government. I can't  
14 help -- as I was saying at coffee time -- I can't help  
15 but look around at this beautiful room and wonder how much  
16 it cost to have a room such as this for a Commission.  
17 And I couldn't help but think of where that money could  
18 be used for the needs of the Aboriginal people in  
19 Saskatchewan to get some of the things done that need to  
20 be done.

21                   Let me explain as well that for the  
22 people that we work with in Saskatoon we had, not too long  
23 ago, during this winter, we had two (2) children come to  
24 our place at about 8:30 in the morning and I'm very thankful  
25 that these children knew to come to the Friendship Inn.

1           They lived 18 blocks away. Their parents weren't home.  
2           One was five (5) years old, one was seven (7) years old.  
3           They came to the Friendship Inn because they had no food  
4           in the house. They came and it was approximately minus  
5           22 degrees that day; one had a spring jacket on, one had  
6           a sweater on.

7                                To go on the same basis, there were two  
8           (2) women that were walking by SasPlace (PH) here in  
9           Saskatoon. When I drove by they were just walking along  
10          the shoulder. It was four (4) days before Christmas.  
11          I stopped to ask if they needed some help. They had no  
12          place to stay. They had very little clothes on themselves  
13          and they had no place to turn.

14                              Too many of the people are pushed out  
15          of institutions. In my perspective -- again, this is my  
16          opinion, not necessarily the truth -- but in my opinion  
17          we have moved away from community-based help to  
18          institutionalized poverty. What I mean by that is we have  
19          gone to agencies, whether it be the Friendship Inn or the  
20          food banks, whether it be the schools or whether it be  
21          Social Services, we have gone to institutionalized  
22          poverty. We seem to be leaving where the church on the  
23          corner or where the neighbour is willing to help and we  
24          put all that help and all that money and effort into the  
25          agencies rather than into the community. And I think that

1 this is seen in no less means within the Aboriginal  
2 community in Saskatoon as well.

3 I'd like to read one more, my last story  
4 here. It's in regards to a Native lady that has come to  
5 the Friendship Inn now for quite some time. It tells a  
6 little bit about her background and her life and it just  
7 continues to explain the situation that Aboriginal people  
8 are in.

9 "I was born, Doris, on Poor Man's Reserve near Quinton,  
10 Saskatchewan. I come from a family of  
11 five sisters and three brothers. I'm  
12 fifty-one years old now and have six sons  
13 and five daughters and thirty-four  
14 grandchildren. I was given away when  
15 I was fourteen years old. You see I was  
16 sold when I was just a toddler for two  
17 dollars and a team of horses. So when  
18 I turned fourteen I was told to go steady  
19 with this one man and to marry him. That  
20 was thirty-five years ago. We had a  
21 farm. Farming was very good back then.  
22 We had everything you could think of:  
23 buses, trucks, cars, you name it, it was  
24 there somewhere on the farm. My husband  
25 never did anything, though. I did all



1 the work on the farm but it did help me  
2 become a jack of all trades.

3 I stayed with that man for fourteen years. When we were  
4 getting divorced I got mad and told him  
5 'All I'm worth to you is two bucks.'  
6 It's funny when I think back to that.

7 The only thing that kept me beside that  
8 man for all those years was the fact that  
9 I had a little daughter who suffered  
10 sunstroke. She was handicapped and  
11 couldn't walk then, but I told her 'The  
12 day you walk, my little girl, I'm going  
13 to leave this place.' When I left I took  
14 my five boys and one daughter, I went  
15 to Regina, it was around 1974.

16 I came to Regina, I started working right away. Then one  
17 day I came back from work: no kids. My  
18 ex-husband came and took my kids while  
19 I was working.

20 I went looking for them on the reserve. Weren't there.

21 Couldn't find them anywhere. Then I  
22 found out they were in Alberta. I went  
23 to Alberta. But everything went  
24 screwy. I started drinking then.  
25 Before I never drank or smoked until

1                   then. I drank in 1974, '75 and '76.  
2                   But in 1976 I quit drinking. I said,  
3                   `Okay. Enough of this. It's time to  
4                   fight for my kids!'

5           I found my kids at Gordon's Reserve School with the help  
6           of my new boyfriend. I was starting to  
7           get a divorce when my ex-husband's  
8           girlfriend asked me to divorce him if  
9           she gave me \$700 so she could marry him.  
10           So I thought, `What the hell!' She had  
11           the money to give. So I took it. At  
12           least I got paid more for him than he  
13           paid for me!

14           In 1978 I went to work at the Eureka Club in Regina. It's  
15           a drop-in centre for alcoholics. One  
16           day my vision started getting narrower  
17           and narrower. Tunnel vision they call  
18           it. So I went and told my boss I got  
19           to go. So I just grabbed my stuff from  
20           work and ran home. My vision was  
21           getting worse and worse.

22           So I called the children that I had at the time and told  
23           them, `I don't think I'll be able to see  
24           you again.' So I gathered my kids in  
25           front of me and gave them a little kiss

1                   each. Then that was it. No more sight.  
2       The adjustment period was hard. First I went to Winnipeg  
3                   to see another doctor because the Regina  
4                   doctors didn't know what was wrong with  
5                   me. The Winnipeg doctors didn't know  
6                   either what was wrong.  
7       So I went back to the reserve and locked myself away from  
8                   everything for almost half a year.  
9                   While I was out on the reserve I found  
10                  out that I was pregnant. So I told  
11                  myself, 'Well, I got to do something.'  
12                  So I got off my rear end.  
13       So that summer my son came to me and said, 'Mom, let's  
14                  move to Saskatoon.'  
15       I asked him, 'Why?'  
16       He said, 'Well, if you help us, we'll help you. We'll  
17                  help each other.'  
18       So I've been here ever since. When I got here they found  
19                  me a little place on F North. The place  
20                  got condemned. So I had to move into  
21                  the Baldwin Hotel. I came to Friendship  
22                  Inn right away when I moved here. I had  
23                  to. It was winter time and I had no  
24                  clothes for the kids or food. This  
25                  place fed and clothed my kids and me.

1 I used the services here for the longest  
2 time until I became more  
3 self-sufficient. But even now I come  
4 here to have a meal once in a while.  
5 Or just to talk with different people.  
6 I see the biggest problem with the lack of communication  
7 amongst the families here. You see,  
8 kids see what their parents do, whether  
9 it's drinking or drugging, and then they  
10 look for that when they get older also.  
11 They see their mom and dad come here  
12 day after day to get something to eat  
13 and they do the same thing. It's a cycle  
14 that will go on and on. Unless it's  
15 broken.  
16 You know, none of my family has been in jail, which is  
17 pretty good. But I don't want to sound  
18 like I have a perfect family. We have  
19 our problems and fights. But we  
20 communicate with each other. And I used  
21 lots of tough love. Tough love is what  
22 a lot of families need nowadays.  
23 Ten million dollars won't help people here one bit.  
24 They've got to get back into their  
25 spiritual self. Then they will find

1                   their freedom."

2                   So many of the people that I know and  
3 I work with and I consider them my friends go through the  
4 same situations as this lady and the other people that  
5 I read their stories. We have a lady that comes and she  
6 volunteers at the Friendship Inn almost daily. She has  
7 got eight (8) children: four (4) of them live on the  
8 reserve, four (4) of them in Saskatoon, one (1) of them  
9 is in Kilborn Hall, two (2) of them are prostitutes, and  
10 thankfully, one (1) is still going to school. She has  
11 two (2) grandchildren that she looks after.

12                   I was speaking to her one day and I said  
13 to her, "How come your son's not going to school?" He  
14 is in Grade Eight. She said, "Robin, why would he go to  
15 school? I've got my Grade Eight and look how well I'm  
16 doing." And it just floored me because it reminded me  
17 again how other people look at the situation they are in.

18  
19                   Here is a lady who said "I don't have  
20 a perfect family." There was another gentleman here that  
21 said, after he was on drugs since he was 10 years old.  
22 He was given \$600 when he was 10 and left alone -- or 12  
23 years old, left alone on the streets of Toronto. After  
24 all of this he said at the age of 16 that was the best  
25 part of his life, things started getting worse.

1                   We're in a very desperate situation.  
2           The one thing, if nothing else, that I wanted to leave  
3           with the Royal Commission today is the needs of many of  
4           the people that we deal with in Saskatoon.  Though not  
5           all of them are Aboriginal people, 75 per cent of the people  
6           that we do work with are Aboriginal people living in  
7           poverty.  I appreciate many of the Aboriginal people who  
8           are speaking about traditional ways, the way things need  
9           to be done, how it would be good to get back to the ways  
10          of the past.  But in reality for the culture, for many  
11          of these people, as I said at the beginning, the culture  
12          for them is prostitution, is sexual and physical abuse.

13

14                   We are dealing with people that have a  
15          very major lack of skills.  These people cannot even cash  
16          a cheque.  These people cannot come to places like the  
17          Travellodge to come to Royal Commission.  First of all,  
18          they may not know about it, they may not be able to read  
19          the signs that give them the information.  It's a long  
20          distance to walk.  At the Friendship Inn our numbers jump  
21          from 350 people a day during the wintertime to over 500  
22          in the summertime because people can walk a lot further  
23          because they haven't got means of transportation.

24

25                   We're dealing with a situation here that  
                  is explosive to me.  Every single day we come in and we

1 deal with people who are so high either they can't even  
2 walk straight, they don't even know where they are. And  
3 the sad thing for us is that this is just perpetuating.  
4 We see their children. We saw, three (3) weekends ago,  
5 where a young girl of eight (8) years old brought her two  
6 (2) brothers of five (5) and six (6) into the Friendship  
7 Inn and all three (3) of them were high. They couldn't  
8 even walk. The reality of it was that if we turned to  
9 Social Services -- not to put them down -- but if we were  
10 to turn to them, within a very few days we know that these  
11 children would be back in the same household and we were  
12 concerned about the type of physical abuse that the  
13 daughter would go through by squealing. In other words  
14 coming to us for help. And so these continue to be some  
15 of the problems.

16 And so now I've thrown out a lot of  
17 concerns or a lot of problems here this morning without  
18 a lot of answers. I would like to read one (1) last --  
19 it's not a story, it's a poem. This is the positive end  
20 of it I guess. I would like to read a poem by a Grade  
21 Three girl, going to school in the inner city of Saskatoon.

22 And this is what I would like to leave with the Commission  
23 today, hoping that there will be some answers for this  
24 child and for her children in the future. It's called  
25 Whitefish Reserve.

1 "In my reserve, Whitefish, you can do lots of things, but  
2 my great-grandmother had to kill bears  
3 for my mom's clothes. She showed me her  
4 cloths that her mom made for her. So  
5 that's how she was born. But I was born  
6 in Saskatoon in St. Paul's Hospital.  
7 It's fun, but I wish I was born in my  
8 reserve. But I am glad I am born no  
9 matter where I was born, just as long  
10 as I was born."

11 Thank you.

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

13 The situations that you described I  
14 think it is important that this be communicated to us.  
15 It has been many times in various cities. And it always  
16 turns around the major problems of people coming to the  
17 cities with a lack of skills, with a lack of support to  
18 try to make a transition. And of course we have the same  
19 kind of feeling that you convey. We are desperately  
20 looking for -- we know there are some long-term solutions  
21 and they have to be at least -- we have to start toward  
22 that direction with much more education and on and on.

23 But on the very short-term basis, when  
24 you are saying that the situation is explosive, we know  
25 that is a reality. And the difficulty is to find the first



1 step and then the next and we have to build upon it. When  
2 you mention that -- well, in this country we have a welfare  
3 system where people receive cheques but I think it says  
4 it all when you say, "Well, they just can't change their  
5 cheque at the bank because they are not known," and so  
6 they have to go into a parallel network where they pay  
7 interest.

8 So, let's take just this point that is  
9 one of many. What could be done to avoid this, for example  
10 to make it possible for those people to go to the bank  
11 and change their cheque because it's coming from government  
12 and so I suspect it's a matter of identification? Could  
13 you expand on that?

14 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** We have contacted  
15 for example some of the banks here in Saskatoon and have  
16 requested that they allow us to set up a program where  
17 we can start bringing people to their bank and we can verify  
18 who they are. We spent about a year and a half with the  
19 previous government, convincing them they need to have  
20 signatureships on health cards because at least they have  
21 some identification, and that was finally done.

22 It's a long process. I would think that  
23 a lot of it is going to be the pressure that the community  
24 as well as the government puts on the banking system.

25 I, in no way, shape or form, wanted to

1 put across the idea that the banks are not kind people,  
2 the people in the banks. I'm just saying that this is  
3 the reality of it. If you have 2,000 people in the inner  
4 city going into, let's say, a specific bank two (2) or  
5 three (3) times a month to cash a cheque, they are not  
6 making any money on it. So what we need to do is we need  
7 to put a lot more pressure to the government, I would hope  
8 the government sources.

9 The money in the welfare system is in  
10 a bank account. It is someplace in a bank account. And  
11 I would hope that there would be more pressure put on that.

12 Or another idea is some of the states  
13 in the United States have a card. Not all of us but a  
14 lot of us have bank cards with which to withdraw money.

15 That might be another suggestion as something that could  
16 work out. And when people on welfare -- it doesn't matter  
17 if they are on welfare or if they have their own bank  
18 account -- you can put the money into the banking system  
19 and then a card, just like the one I have for my bank,  
20 could be given to the recipient of the money and they could  
21 go and draw out their own money. But it also comes into  
22 agencies like the one that I am involved with to be able  
23 to teach these life skills to the people that don't have  
24 them.

25 One thing I do want to explain, though,

1 too is the inside system. As an example is that when they  
2 give out every year -- and I appreciate the fact of what  
3 the hockey team in Saskatoon does and the police department  
4 do -- but they give out the hockey cards with autographs  
5 to the children on the streets and that's great. But it's  
6 very interesting to watch on Twentieth Street because the  
7 children, as fast as they can get them, they run in the  
8 pawn shops and they pawn them off for a penny a piece.  
9 Because they learn the pawn shop system or that system  
10 of banking for them at a very, very early age.

11 It's in some respects somewhat humorous  
12 but you also know where it's leading to. It's a system  
13 in which we have to try our best, not only at the Friendship  
14 Inn but we need to try our best to try and break -- it's  
15 a very small part but it is still a system that needs to  
16 be broken.

17 But if you are going to break that  
18 system, many of the pawn shops charge 30 per cent interest  
19 on every item that the people bring to them to pawn off,  
20 and then they lose their item because they can't pay that  
21 30 per cent back. I'm talking 30 per cent a month. So  
22 we are talking about 500 per cent a year approximately  
23 when you collect it up.

24 So that is a system that is ridiculous,  
25 but rather than just cancel that system there is another

1 system that needs to be in place and unless the people  
2 in poverty have another system to go to, to try and cancel  
3 that one out would be ridiculous as well. So it's  
4 something we have to create another system or make the  
5 system we have a better system.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** On the same  
7 issue of the banks, are you saying that there are branches  
8 that would refuse to change the cheque even if, for example,  
9 if somebody from the Friendship Inn goes with a person  
10 so that there is no identification problem and now that  
11 the medical care cards bear the signature? But are you  
12 saying that just because they know that they want to make  
13 money on them -- because people will come only to change  
14 their cheque -- that they will refuse changing the cheque?

15 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** Well, the banking  
16 system is a business and we realize that, yes. I am saying  
17 that the bottom line is in the banking system the  
18 restrictions are you have to have two (2) pieces of signed  
19 identification. Many of the people I work with do not  
20 have two (2) pieces of signed identification; they have  
21 one (1). And so, with me going with them doesn't give  
22 them two (2) pieces of signed identification. So the  
23 answer to your question is "yes." Many, many, many, many  
24 people cannot do that, even with my backing. I've tried  
25 it before and it just hasn't worked.

1                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Are you aware  
2 of discussions that have been conducted with the banks  
3 themselves, not only the branches but with the system,  
4 with the banking system? Because in some aspects they  
5 are getting more sensitive to Aboriginal peoples because  
6 they are money at the bank and so it seems so contradictory.

7                   **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** Well, this is  
8 probably -- actually I have informed the previous and the  
9 present government of this situation and I have contacted  
10 various banks myself through a letter writing campaign,  
11 and then following it up with a phone call and a  
12 conversation. But I have not -- now that you mention it,  
13 I have not contacted the Aboriginal people or any of their  
14 agencies to let them know of this. So, maybe with that  
15 happening now, maybe we could put enough pressure on them  
16 that that would be possible.

17                   That is just one problem of many of  
18 course.

19                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** It's one of  
20 many but it's one that I feel could be acted upon.

21                   **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** Right.

22                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** And soon.  
23 It's one of many and it's a small item but at least if --  
24 the solutions will be many and so it might be certainly  
25 a good idea to contact the Metis Society of Saskatchewan

1 or the FSIN and see what they could do with the banks to  
2 make sure that the situation could improve. Because the  
3 whole reality with financial institutions is very, very  
4 bad for Aboriginal peoples and all aspects of that and  
5 it's very important.

6 Okay. I would like to ask my colleague  
7 to continue. We could be at it for hours; there were so  
8 many things that you mentioned.

9 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I would  
10 like to thank you for sharing with us the work that you  
11 are involved in in helping people. It's something I guess  
12 that is happening in all the major cities and it's a very  
13 big social problem and we're having a very difficult time  
14 in trying to address that and to see how that can be best  
15 addressed.

16 I think with the banking, I know in some  
17 provinces I guess and where I come from, they won't cash  
18 anybody's cheque unless you have an account. It doesn't  
19 matter how much identification you have, if you don't have  
20 an account or how well you are known, they just won't cash  
21 your cheque. So I guess it's true that they are there  
22 for business and for money and that's unfortunate.

23 Your Friendship Inn -- is it the  
24 Friendship Inn? Yes. Do you interact with other social  
25 agencies, and particularly Aboriginal agencies? There

1 must be a number of them around. Is there a friendship  
2 centre in Saskatoon?

3 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** Yes, there is a  
4 friendship centre. We do have ---

5 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Any other  
6 groups?

7 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** We have quite a bit  
8 of contact with them. We have quite a bit of contact with  
9 all agencies, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.

10 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Right.

11 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** We do have a family  
12 worker and a program coordinator who does a lot of liaison  
13 with these agencies.

14 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I guess  
15 it's a voluntary organization that you operate and you  
16 don't get much funding or support. How do you get your  
17 support or do ---

18 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** Eighty-six (86) per  
19 cent of our support comes from the community at large and  
20 fourteen (14) per cent from the government.

21 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Right.

22 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** And I would like to  
23 add to that that we don't mind doing it that way. We  
24 appreciate the community backing us in most of our ventures  
25 rather than the government carrying the load. So we're

1 not unhappy with our funding. It's just sometimes, when  
2 there is specific programs -- and that's another thing  
3 too that I find is too many -- this is my viewpoint --  
4 is often programs are begun with no end to them and they  
5 just carry on and carry on and the funding is continuously  
6 given without a lot of follow up done to find out if this  
7 is still a necessary program or if it should be changed.

8 And so we find that there are many  
9 programs that we would like to do on let's say a six-month  
10 or a one-year or a two-year basis for a particular purpose,  
11 and then the funding becomes very difficult to find.

12 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:**

13 Obviously the service that is provided here came to being  
14 through a reactionary to the things that are happening.

15 And I've heard it said in some instances in different  
16 parts of the country that soup kitchens, as well as they  
17 have places where people can go and get groceries and ---

18 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** Food bank.

19 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Food  
20 banks.

21 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** Right.

22 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** That I  
23 have heard comments coming from some people that that is  
24 not the answer and it's perpetuating a system that  
25 shouldn't be there.



1                                   What are your views on that?

2                                   **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** Amen.

3                                   I continue to have major problems. I've  
4                                   been the executive director for almost five (5) years now  
5                                   and I continue to have major problems with soup kitchens  
6                                   and with food banks.

7                                   Again, as I've said before, I called it  
8                                   institutionalizing poverty because my concern is that it's  
9                                   too easy then not to deal with the problem. We can sit  
10                                  back in some comfort saying, "It's being looked after,"  
11                                  because people we know in Saskatoon can always go to "the  
12                                  Friendship Inn" or the "food bank" to get their food, and  
13                                  if they really need shelter they can go to the YMCA or  
14                                  the Salvation Army or so on and so forth. So a lot of  
15                                  people are missing out the point that needs to be dealt  
16                                  with. So are we helping to perpetuate it? My answer would  
17                                  be "yes."

18                                  **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** So what  
19                                  do you think should be done? What kind of a change should  
20                                  be made or what should be done to get to the root of the  
21                                  problem or at least to deal with the problem in a more  
22                                  effective, meaningful way?

23                                  **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** Okay. First of all  
24                                  what I think we need to do is put together a group of people  
25                                  who are well-respected, both Aboriginal and

1 non-Aboriginal, and then they have to have a government  
2 in place that is going to have the guts and audacity to  
3 do the things that need to be done.

4 I'll give you an example. One of the  
5 agencies that I am on the board of, Habitat for Humanity,  
6 and there is a few others throughout Canada who build houses  
7 for people living in poverty; they don't give them away.

8 It is something that you work for and you work towards.  
9 And I think we need to get back into that.

10 Let me give you an example. This is a  
11 very radical maybe way of thinking about or looking at  
12 things. I had a fellow come to see me a few years back  
13 and said, "Robin, when the time is right we are going to  
14 get you more money..." -- this is a government person --  
15 "...and we are going to put more money into welfare for  
16 people to get more welfare so they can live with more  
17 dignity." I said, "Let me put it this way: all the money  
18 in the world..." -- as this woman in the book said -- "...  
19 all the money in the world is not going to change that.

20 What my question to you is, why don't we have work?"  
21 This might be a swear word to many people or a swear phrase  
22 "Why don't we have work programs?"

23 That's not the answer. That's not the  
24 only answer. Don't get me wrong. There are many people  
25 I know who have never worked in their life in the context

1 of a job, who will never work in their life in the context  
2 of a specific job. We hired a fellow. Three (3) times  
3 I let him go and four (4) times I hired him back. He is  
4 a phenomenal employee now. It takes time.

5 What we need is we need to have the guts  
6 to go out there and say "These are the things that we are  
7 going to do." We are going to have to set up a system  
8 that people are collecting their welfare -- I hate saying  
9 "collecting their welfare" because, again, it's a hand-out  
10 and it's not solving the problem where there has to be  
11 some onus on them to respond in some way for themselves  
12 and for humanity and for the society.

13 I know, as this gentleman said, he said  
14 "You can't do that, it's against the human rights." I  
15 said "Look around here. These people know that they have  
16 human rights but they don't have the self-esteem that it  
17 takes to fight for those human rights."

18 So, we are going to have to have the guts  
19 in place and the people in place to make those changes.

20 There is no one answer. All I am suggesting here is that  
21 we are going to have the people in the right place that  
22 are going to go out there because the system we have in  
23 place now sucks. It doesn't work. And so something else  
24 needs to be done.

25 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** The way

1 the economy is, and as far as employment goes and employment  
2 opportunities in Canada, like we have -- like for instance  
3 Aboriginal people I heard yesterday and the day before  
4 that they have been graduating social workers, numerous ---

5 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** Hundreds of them,  
6 hundreds of them.

7 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** --- of  
8 social workers.

9 I just wonder -- and I don't know if you  
10 have this information or not -- how many of those social  
11 workers are working for the social agencies of Saskatchewan  
12 Aboriginals?

13 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** I don't have the  
14 faintest idea. I know I can say this, feeling very  
15 comfortable: many of the people, most of the people, that  
16 we deal with, even on Aboriginal issues, are not Aboriginal  
17 people ---

18 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Right.

19 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** --- in those  
20 positions.

21 But, I guess the positive part is: in  
22 comparison to five (5) years ago there is quite a few more  
23 than there was five (5) years ago. I guess the positive  
24 part is I'm finding more and more to my excitement and  
25 my enthusiasm is that in business we're finding more and

1 more Native people as role models who are now participating  
2 not only in law and social services but in the business  
3 world. I have a private business of my own and I'm really  
4 excited about the amount of that. So, there is some  
5 movement there. A lot more needs to be done but it's  
6 beginning to happen.

7 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** All  
8 right.

9 Well, I guess you know that's  
10 encouraging to know but I was glad to hear your thoughts  
11 too about the kinds of changes that needs to happen that  
12 will move people away from this poverty cycle -- not so  
13 much poverty cycle but where they have lost their  
14 self-esteem and they don't have the ambition and the  
15 courage to really come back with ---

16 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** One of the things  
17 I would like to add to what I had stated as well is that  
18 when I talked about jobs and that, we have a number of  
19 people for example at the Friendship Inn who are just  
20 absolutely phenomenal at arts and crafts. I mean some  
21 of these people I can't believe that they're not artists  
22 out there in the real world some place, who would be  
23 phenomenal at teaching and we do use their skills on a  
24 volunteer basis.

25 So, when I say "work," whatever that work

1 might mean I'm not necessarily meaning sweeping the  
2 streets. I'm saying that so many -- I believe -- I have  
3 a fantasy maybe but I have a belief system that tells me  
4 that everybody has a special something that they can offer  
5 within themselves.

6 Do you know -- I think it's very curious  
7 that in our society in Canada today that children are  
8 theoretically, on paper, they have to go to school till  
9 they are 16 years of age. That is not against the human  
10 rights. But today, in today's society, nobody ever has  
11 to work a day in their life because it's against their  
12 human rights to have them do that. And I just find that --  
13 I find that that is perpetuating or increasing the problem  
14 that we have. Obviously not only with Aboriginal people  
15 but Aboriginal people are definitely part of that that  
16 is happening.

17 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank  
18 you.

19 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** Okay.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
21 much for your presentation and if you have a copy of the  
22 book you can ---

23 **MR. ROBIN BELLAMY:** Thanks.

24 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Merci. Thank  
25 you.

1 I would now like to call Mr. Don Junor  
2 from the Riversdale Business Improvement District to come  
3 and join us.

4 Good morning, sir.

5 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Good morning to you,  
6 sir.

7 When I was invited to this meeting I  
8 didn't have a clue what it was all about, so I'm not coming  
9 prepared with any presentation one way or the other. I  
10 am the executive director of the Riversdale Business  
11 Improvement District. In other parts of Canada they are  
12 known as business improvement associations, so you are  
13 probably aware of what they do. But we were formed in  
14 March 1st, 1990 so we've been in operation a little better  
15 than three (3) years. And our main mandate is to improve  
16 the appearance of 20th Street, which is part of the  
17 Riversdale neighbourhood from Idylwild to Avenue P. It's  
18 15 blocks that are our boundaries.

19 Shall I go on along this way, sir? Is  
20 it quite in order or -- I'm going to touch upon items that  
21 you are interested in later on but I want to give you a  
22 background of what our organization is. Is that a fair  
23 route to go?

24 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes. Just as  
25 a matter of information, were you given the discussion

1 paper focusing the dialogue?

2 **MR. DON JUNOR:** I got it this morning.

3

4 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Not before?

5 **MR. DON JUNOR:** I didn't glance over it  
6 before.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Oh, you didn't  
8 have it before?

9 **MR. DON JUNOR:** As I say, so if I'm  
10 off-base ---

11 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** No problem.  
12 I'm sorry about that because you should have been given  
13 the discussion paper because we are talking there about  
14 four (4) touchstones that we brought from our two (2)  
15 previous rounds of hearings and one of them is  
16 self-sufficiency, economic self-sufficiency.

17 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Yes.

18 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** And the other  
19 is being the necessity of healing for social problems  
20 and ---

21 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Yes, well I'll touch  
22 upon that.

23 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Okay.

24 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Mainly we had a problem  
25 over there. It was a depressed area. It got more



1 depressed the last 10 or 15 years. And when I came back  
2 to the area -- I had a business in the area. I came back.

3 I could see what we as a business organization had to  
4 do. We had two (2) or three (3) liquor outlets over there  
5 that weren't being managed properly. We dealt with the  
6 Liquor Licence Commission on it and as a result of that  
7 we had their licence suspended on more than one occasion.

8 The problem was that the people who were  
9 frequents on the bars were primarily Aboriginal people  
10 and they were -- as a result of no proper management they  
11 were getting into problems -- not because of their own.

12 They were not disciplined by the management and there  
13 was a reaction and we had a number of knifings in the bars  
14 in that area. So we had to take the stand and as a result  
15 of our pressure on the Liquor Licence Commission, as I  
16 said, the bars were closed twice.

17 Now, since that last time the situation  
18 has changed and swung around and everything has been calm.

19 We are monitoring them right now and it's day and night  
20 as far as 1990 right now. That's so much for the liquor  
21 outlets.

22 Then, the next year, we brought in what  
23 is known as a special service in a business area or a  
24 residential area. We brought in the police storefront  
25 offices, one of them. We're the first one in Saskatoon.

1 I got the idea from Edmonton. And the new police chief  
2 was highly -- supported me in this. It's been operating  
3 for a year. It's to encourage people to respect and meet  
4 and consider what the responsibility is of the police.

5 Prior to that some elements, the police  
6 would question them, they would go around with their "I  
7 don't know, I didn't see anything" sort of attitude. They  
8 wouldn't confide or be a witness to a serious matter.  
9 Now that has changed, and I am talking about Aboriginal  
10 people in there too as well as the others that live in  
11 that area. They've changed their attitude and they greet  
12 the police as if they are their friends now.

13 The inner schools in that area, the  
14 principals encourage classes to go down to the police  
15 office and look around. In the police office there is  
16 work done by the Aboriginal students from these schools  
17 that are displayed on the walls. So there is a good working  
18 relationship arrangement between the police and it's  
19 building up better every day in the Aboriginal people as  
20 well as the others in the area. Now, when I say  
21 "Aboriginal" I'm trying to -- this is what this is all  
22 about I believe and I am trying to explain that. So you  
23 can see that that was done -- the police office was just  
24 a little over a year old and how it's well-liked in the  
25 area, the operation of it.

1                   We were served a notice that we had to  
2 vacate the spot where the office was because the building  
3 was sold and it was going to be put to other use. So we  
4 had about a month to find another location. And I was  
5 amazed at the reaction. They were losing their police  
6 office. Amazing. They were losing their police office.  
7       They were relying on it for guidance and help.

8                   And the police themselves, would you  
9 believe it, going out and doing jobs that a policeman is  
10 not expected to do, much beyond the call of duty: helping  
11 the community associations, getting active in them and  
12 carrying out the works of the community associations  
13 attached to the various schools. And this is a fact of  
14 life. It happens and is happening and is ever on the  
15 increase.

16                   Then we are starting a major project  
17 right now of improving the appearance of the streets there.

18       And in doing that we will make the residential area --  
19 upgrade the residents. The community association is doing  
20 a terrific job on their own, visiting the various homes  
21 to make sure that the people renting in there -- now I'm  
22 talking about -- and owning it are maintaining these homes  
23 at a certain standard, fire protection-wise, health-wise  
24 and otherwise.

25                   And this program is being carried on

1 right now. It's a very respectable program. The people  
2 that rent in there are appreciating. There has been times  
3 when people on low incomes and that have gone into the  
4 area and rented places much below a standard that anyone  
5 would accept and unfortunately Aboriginal people in that  
6 category do. They get their pay from their work or their  
7 welfare cheques and they're confronted with certain  
8 landlords that don't look after a house, let it run down  
9 and still expect rent for the premises. That is going  
10 to be overcome very shortly by the -- we've got the police  
11 and the health inspectors going out inspecting these homes  
12 to bring them up to a certain standard.

13 Now, I say "we." I am talking about City  
14 of Saskatoon there, but we are indirectly involved in it  
15 too. We are trying to get the whole area upgraded and  
16 we're doing the streets now. It's going to start next  
17 spring. We had a meeting last night, very enthusiastic  
18 meeting regarding this, and there was Aboriginal people  
19 at that meeting and they like it very much.

20 I don't know what more I could say, but  
21 I'll field any questions you want to approach me on.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
23 much.

24 So you said that you were formed or  
25 created in March '90?

1                   **MR. DON JUNOR:** Nineteen ninety (1990),  
2                   yes. We're a creature of the provincial government, an  
3                   act set in legislation in 1984 that allowed the creation  
4                   of BID's, Business Improvements Districts. And we are  
5                   a creature of city council. We have a member of city  
6                   council on our board. Our budgets have to be approved  
7                   by city council, our appointments to the board have to  
8                   be. So we are a Business Improvement District but we  
9                   receive funding from the city but not from the provincial  
10                  government. We also assess our own members through the  
11                  business tax, a fee, and that's how we operate. We have  
12                  a very small budget and we feel that we are moving in the  
13                  right direction and we're working quite closely with the  
14                  community associations.

15                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** So all your  
16                  money comes from the city?

17                  **MR. DON JUNOR:** No, no. I say we assess  
18                  our own members through the business tax. There is a  
19                  surcharge on the business tax which we collect and it's --  
20                  the city gets their business tax and then they collect  
21                  an additional surcharge that we set.

22                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes.

23                  **MR. DON JUNOR:** See? So there is funds  
24                  from our business and funds from the city.

25                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Do you have

1 Aboriginal people on your board? Do you have Metis or  
2 Indian people on your board?

3 **MR. DON JUNOR:** No. We are certainly --  
4 the unfortunate thing about it, to my knowledge, there  
5 might be if there are any -- at the present time there  
6 our board is made up of business operators, owners and  
7 one alderman. Now, we have Chinese, we have Ukrainians,  
8 we have various different others on the board from time  
9 to time but at the present time I am not aware of an  
10 Aboriginal person that is operating a business.

11 Now, I could be wrong there but we're  
12 certainly trying to be a cross-base because in our  
13 programming for the streetscape - and that's the street  
14 improvement program -- we are using a multicultural theme.

15 In other words, all people including the Aboriginal people  
16 have made paintings and works of folk art that we are going  
17 to utilize on the streetscape. And the Aboriginal people  
18 are one of them too at that level. They have presented  
19 theirs and they are going to be used, displayed on the  
20 various bus shelters, disposal receptacles, the bulletin  
21 boards, the bus shelters again, and on even the new light  
22 poles. There is going to be little identifications on --  
23 or it could be inserts on the sidewalk, a round insert,  
24 when you are walking and you will see different diagrams  
25 and different things there relating to ethnic people,

1 bearing in mind the multicultural theme; keep that in mind.

2 So, that's gonna be -- that is far away  
3 yet. But as far as members of Aboriginal people on the  
4 board, no, at the present time but if we know of somebody  
5 that is willing to take that responsibility on we'll accept  
6 them. There's no barriers or anything like that.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** You didn't  
8 contact -- maybe it would be useful to contact the Metis  
9 Society of Saskatchewan or the FSIN to ---

10 **MR. DON JUNOR:** We could. We are -- our  
11 board right now is full complement but we'll certainly  
12 keep it in mind and we'll carry out your advice.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Because we try  
14 to see every undertaking is important because, as you heard  
15 from the previous presenter, the social problems are great  
16 and it's difficult, there is no single solution.

17 **MR. DON JUNOR:** No.

18 I agree with the previous speaker on the  
19 aspects of there has to be a change in how people are --  
20 there shouldn't be this built-in, forever welfare system.

21 It's not working.

22 And my feeling has been -- I spoke to  
23 the director and I think they're able to get -- and I said,  
24 when we first formed I had two (2) or three (3) meetings  
25 with him and I was under the impression that with their

1 open door policy I was strictly opposed to that; I still  
2 am.

3 The food banks don't give us any problem  
4 but some people from there in the early years did give  
5 us problems because they have nothing to do. They have  
6 so much leisure time and they are young people and they  
7 haven't got proper education to enter the work field.  
8 And I said, "Look, Robin, why don't you get a counsellor  
9 there and try and counsel these people, feed them two (2)  
10 or three (3) meals a day, providing they go to school and  
11 stay in it." But that seems to be a tougher route than  
12 just talking about it.

13 And so we had our difference of opinion  
14 and we still have but it's much improved now because there's  
15 not -- there was gangs of people using the Friendship Inn  
16 in the early years and they'd go down the streets in three  
17 (3) or four (4) and the bars were open at 9:30. The ones  
18 that were old enough - and sometimes the ones that weren't  
19 old enough -- would slip in there for a while and then  
20 they'd go down to the Midtown Plaza to the eatery down  
21 there and stay around there, and then they get their lunch  
22 about 11:30 and wander back, they were wandering around.  
23 Leisure time. Nothing to do. And this just keeps on  
24 going and you go 10 years of that and then they have children  
25 and then this keeps rolling.



1                   So I think the only way is somehow they  
2 got to -- the education. Our own people right now are  
3 having difficulty with their children getting jobs. And  
4 the ones that don't have an education really suffer and  
5 the ones that have education they're not being fitted into  
6 the business world or to the professional world because  
7 of the climate. And everybody has to realize that  
8 education is one of the keys to the whole thing.

9                   Because when people have too much  
10 leisure time that's when there are problems. That's why  
11 I don't want to -- I don't like to say this to hurt, it's  
12 not a hurt -- that's why there's so many Aboriginal people  
13 in our prisons right now: because of the leisure time that  
14 young people have. They don't know what to do. They are  
15 up, around and they're -- it's so simple that I can't make  
16 it any clearer. They got to get educated somehow.  
17 Somebody has got to get the message to them.

18                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** On the other  
19 hand, as was said by the previous presenter, very often  
20 people don't see the purpose of getting an education  
21 because their parents got some of it at least, to no avail.

22                   So it's to break the circle because we are hearing over  
23 and over that -- because we spoke so far to many, many  
24 young Aboriginal peoples in the communities and in the  
25 schools and there is a difficulty to pass on the value

1 of education without a relationship with the possibility  
2 of employment. And as long as young people don't see some  
3 of their friends or older brothers or sisters getting jobs,  
4 it seems to be very theoretical.

5 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Yes, but it's very  
6 encouraging to see -- and this is the other side of the  
7 coin -- it's very encouraging to see the number of  
8 Aboriginal people that are going through for law, doctors  
9 right now and in the political field and doing a wonderful  
10 job. And I would think that this would encourage some  
11 of the younger people that are going to school to remain  
12 in school longer.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** In your  
14 district did you establish contact with the schools,  
15 because you talk about the police ---

16 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Oh, yes, oh, yes. We  
17 meet with the inner school principals twice a year and  
18 we're well informed of what is going on there, the  
19 drop-outs, how they come in in the fall with a full class  
20 and about Christmas time there's quite a drop in  
21 attendance. They start moving around. No, we're well  
22 informed. We're involved with the community  
23 associations, we're involved with the inner school  
24 principals.

25 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Being aware of

1 the drop-out what would be the single most important move  
2 to try to prevent people, who at least are at school, not  
3 to drop out? It's very difficult. It's a question of  
4 motivation and it's ---

5 **MR. DON JUNOR:** I can't -- I'm not that  
6 close to that situation but I know it's happening. It's  
7 happening and this isn't the only centre I imagine, either,  
8 that it's happening and it's one of those things.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I would ask my  
10 colleague to see if there is additional questions.

11 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** No. I  
12 guess I just would ask one (1) basic question, and that  
13 is one that -- do you think that after the Charlottetown  
14 Accord was defeated, and even while it was being proposed,  
15 and recognizing the right to self-determination for  
16 Aboriginal people, do you think that there has to be a  
17 fundamental recognition of the right of self-determination  
18 for Aboriginal people? And, if so, do you think that there  
19 could be models designed that would work in urban areas  
20 for Aboriginal peoples?

21 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Well, firstly, I was  
22 disappointed that -- I am all in favour of Aboriginal people  
23 having their own government. I've been that way for about  
24 four (4) years now. Because it's got to come sooner or  
25 later, and the sooner the better with the facts the way

1 I see it.

2 I don't know what's happening on the  
3 reserves right now but there seems to be, on the reserves,  
4 the people moving into the cities like that, the younger  
5 people -- well, they are young people just like our young  
6 people: television and all this sort of thing. It has  
7 a -- it's not the best influence on them either and we're  
8 experiencing it ourselves. And this is why I think in  
9 the last few years -- maybe I'm wrong. I haven't got --  
10 but is it a fact that there's more people moving in from  
11 the reserves into the cities in the last few years?

12 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I think  
13 it's been that way for a long time.

14 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Yes, well especially you  
15 know last 10.

16 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** So, I  
17 think it's true that the generation is quite young but  
18 I think there's also ---

19 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Well, if you had  
20 self-government ---

21 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Yes.

22 **MR. DON JUNOR:** --- would that retain  
23 more of your people on the reserves if you had your own  
24 government? I believe it will.

25 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** It would

1           what? Excuse me?

2                           **MR. DON JUNOR:** It would retain ---

3                           **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Retain?

4                           **MR. DON JUNOR:** Yeah, on the reserves.

5                           **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:**

6           Possibly, possibly.

7                           **MR. DON JUNOR:** Your school systems  
8           would be able to educate that if they want to get abroad  
9           from their reserves that they've got to have an education,  
10          period, you know sort of thing. They can get it elsewhere,  
11          they are free to come into the cities and get their  
12          education, but education is the key to it.

13                          **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I think  
14          the reality of the whole situation is that some would and  
15          some do, that the reserves now are short on land and short  
16          of services themselves to deliver to the people. And I  
17          suppose people leave reserves for one reason or another.

18                          But there is an awful lot more that have  
19          migrated into the urban centres than there are on reserves  
20          for one reason or another. And I'm just wondering if there  
21          was a form of urban -- if self-determination was accepted  
22          and models of self-government were designed in some way  
23          for urban centres or for outside the reserve would this  
24          be accepted by the public and you know how would that be  
25          viewed. Is it possible?

1                   **MR. DON JUNOR:** Well, firstly, I -- it's  
2 something new that I would have to think about. I think  
3 it was set up -- not hurriedly but all aspects were explored  
4 and why shouldn't it? If the Aboriginal people and  
5 standards of education, going back to education again,  
6 I can't get away from it. I think it's basically the  
7 problem. And if the standard of education for all  
8 Aboriginal people was higher I think it would be a wonderful  
9 thing.

10                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** What do  
11 you think overall is the relationship now between  
12 Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people in Saskatoon?

13                   **MR. DON JUNOR:** Well, in our area it's  
14 terrifically improved. You better believe it. You go  
15 down to the police office right now, there will be one  
16 (1) or two (2) Aboriginal people in there, just sitting  
17 around chatting. It's not a police station as such. We  
18 don't have no cells or anything, anything like that, that  
19 people are whisked away to the police. It's an office.

20                   It's a public relations office with the police being the  
21 front end of it and it's working out wonderful. And like  
22 when they are going down the street, the beat man, the  
23 people stop to talk to them and there's a lot of Aboriginal  
24 people. And, as I said earlier, the inner school  
25 principals encourage bringing the students down to take

1 a tour.

2 So, that's the feeling of the business  
3 group, the community associations and the police: get  
4 everybody participating, everybody, everybody, I mean  
5 everybody.

6 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** We heard  
7 yesterday or last evening that there are a number of  
8 Aboriginal businesses around. Are there? Are you aware  
9 of ---

10 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Well, yes, there is more  
11 but see we are only one (1) small area of Saskatoon. We  
12 only have 170 businesses. Now, in Saskatoon I can't tell  
13 you all the number of businesses but the downtown, the  
14 partnership, the large BID, we have three. We have, on  
15 Broadway, 130. The downtown one is 1,200 businesses now.  
16 They got lots of business blocks there where there is  
17 offices and that. But in our area it's with that police  
18 office. We're the only one that has a police office.  
19 It's working.

20 Now, in the community association work  
21 where they are going around to these homes there is Native  
22 people, Aboriginal people as part of the communities.

23 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Okay.

24 Thank you.

25 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Just a last

1 question.

2 Are there other organizations like yours  
3 in other districts ---

4 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Yes.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- in the  
6 city?

7 **MR. DON JUNOR:** There is two (2) more  
8 business improvements districts There is one on Broadway.  
9 Do you know Saskatoon very well?

10 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Well ---

11 **MR. DON JUNOR:** We have a street, just  
12 across the river ---

13 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes.

14 **MR. DON JUNOR:** --- Broadway.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes.

16 **MR. DON JUNOR:** There is, what, five (5)  
17 blocks. They were the first BID that was organized and  
18 they organized in 1987. So they've been six (6) years  
19 in operation.

20 Then the downtown -- that's the core of  
21 the business -- was formed in 1988 -- no, pardon me, '86.

22 Yeah, they were formed in '86 I believe. And they've  
23 done some streetscaping down there on 21st Street and  
24 Second Avenue. Last year Second Avenue was done. And  
25 Broadway did their streetscaping in 1988 I believe. And



1 this is what we are moving into next year. But we're the  
2 second largest. We are the new kids on the block as far  
3 as the kids are concerned.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Do you share  
5 with the two (2) others?

6 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Oh, we share ideas,  
7 sure. But some -- we have different problems than they  
8 have.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes. Varies  
10 from one area to the other.

11 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Yes.

12 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Are you aware  
13 as far as Indian and Metis are concerned, because I suppose  
14 there are many Metis and Indians in the other ---

15 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Oh, yes.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- districts  
17 too?

18 **MR. DON JUNOR:** In fact some of their  
19 offices are in the downtown.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** So, were they  
21 able to move on the attitude towards the police and bring  
22 the police station to the kind of public relation  
23 approach ---

24 **MR. DON JUNOR:** Well, the police have  
25 changed their attitudes towards everything, not only one

1           nationality. They are more or less more outgoing and they  
2           are letting the officers as a whole take a little more  
3           initiatives. They are not too much army regimented if  
4           you follow me.

5                           **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes.

6                           **MR. DON JUNOR:** They are letting them  
7           react like human beings with people, and moreso with the  
8           police office. We are the only police office. We got  
9           the only police office in town. There is going to be more.  
10          The police chief has indicated he is going to create more;  
11          he is so enthused about it.

12                           **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Okay. Thank  
13          you very much for sharing this with us.

14                           Thank you.

15                           **MR. DON JUNOR:** I just thought if you  
16          had the time do you want to see some of the streetscape?

17                           **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes.

18                           **MR. DON JUNOR:** Okay. I brought it  
19          along if you have the time.

20                           **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes, we do.

21                           (Presentation of Streetscape by Mr. Junor)

22          --- Upon recessing at 12:00 p.m.

23          --- Upon resuming at 1:32 p.m.

24                           **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Could everyone  
25          take a seat, please?

1                   Good afternoon. If you could identify  
2 yourself for the sake of the record and proceed whenever  
3 you are ready.

4                   Thank you.

5                   **MS LISA McCALLUM:** Lisa McCallum,  
6 Co-Chair of the Women's Reference Group on the Saskatchewan  
7 Labour Force Development Board.

8                   **MS GAYLE McMARTIN:** Gayle McMartin,  
9 Interim Co-Chair, Labour Force Development Board of  
10 Saskatchewan, representing women.

11                   **MS LISA McCALLUM:** We are here today to  
12 present to you, to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal  
13 People, to hear our voice on behalf of the women of this  
14 province. Maybe I will just give you a brief, our mandate  
15 and objectives of the Women's Reference Group.

16                   We advise the women's representatives  
17 on the Canadian Labour Force Development Board on policy  
18 recommendations on ways to work with the Canadian Labour  
19 Force Development Board, its committees and other  
20 equity-seeking groups, network with other women's  
21 organizations and programs offering training to women,  
22 provide the women representative with a direct link to  
23 learners and community-based trainers and programs, plan  
24 consultations including reference group meetings and  
25 annual national consultations with women's groups,

1 evaluate the work of the women's representative and provide  
2 her with feedback on her activities, identify, develop  
3 and direct special projects and research activities.

4 I don't know, Mr. Dussault and Ms  
5 Robinson, if you are familiar with the Canadian Labour  
6 Force Development Board. It's a federal initiative and  
7 it is now proposed that we bring it down to each province  
8 and from there propose on local boards within the  
9 provinces. And what we are concerned with is women as  
10 a high percentage of the population across our country  
11 is: how are we going to work with the business and labour  
12 sector as in partnership with pointing our views out as  
13 women of issues in regards of training and education within  
14 the systems.

15 In Saskatchewan myself as Interim  
16 Co-Chair, and Gayle McMartin as Interim Co-Chair, we're  
17 going around the province and doing consultations and  
18 educating our women, and also the interested people from  
19 the public. The process of how are we going to be involved  
20 as partnership walking hand in hand with the initiatives  
21 that the federal government is bringing down to our  
22 provinces.

23 And we go by five (5) principles within  
24 the equity part of that. One of our main ones are: access.

25 Access to training is a main issue for women across the

1 country, people with all disabilities, visible minority  
2 people, Aboriginal. Access in training and education.  
3 Access to information to what kind of training that is  
4 out there for our women and what kind of dollars are  
5 required and what dollars that they can access on the  
6 national level on the training allowances. And also be  
7 familiar with the bridging programs, such as the women's  
8 bridging programs in every university across the country.

9 Equity is our other principle. Women  
10 see equity as a central principle of transformed training  
11 systems. We see equity as ensuring that people receive  
12 fair treatment, equal rights and equal benefits regardless  
13 of race, gender, country of origin, class, religion, sexual  
14 orientation, and, within the rural areas, income, age and  
15 ability. Mechanisms must be emplaced so that we are  
16 represented adequately in decision-making. In addition  
17 within programs systematic barriers must be removed,  
18 equity targets established and a mechanism for modern  
19 agreed upon.

20 And the third one is: rights to basic  
21 education. As human beings we all have a right to a basic  
22 education within the system. But it's unfair and we want  
23 to make it clear that we are out here and we want to work  
24 with the government in that and let us be involved with  
25 the process so we will be equal partners.

1                   The fourth one is: recognition of  
2                   skills. Women's desire direction for change is a model  
3                   that would permit women with a need and an interest in  
4                   upgrading, training or developing skills to do so at  
5                   various points throughout their working lives.  
6                   Transferability between various training with credit given  
7                   for every step and career pathing are central to this.  
8                   Mechanisms are therefore needed to ensure that skills  
9                   acquired and accreditation received are portable and  
10                  transferrable from one level and type of learning and from  
11                  one location to another. Such as if I get my education  
12                  in Saskatchewan, then I should be allowed to take the same  
13                  education and my credits to B.C. or maybe to the Maritimes.

14                I think that's very -- we have to ensure that for our  
15                people and not only as women but for our children too.

16                       Linkage and lattern (PH) criterion all  
17                       publicity, funding programs and institutions is required  
18                       as well. Mechanisms are needed such as prior learning  
19                       assessment to assure that skills acquired and  
20                       accreditation are portable and transferrable.

21                       Quality is the fifth one. Women support  
22                       a view of training that places the learner at centre of  
23                       any decision and sees quality in broader terms than only  
24                       attaching an individual to the labour market. Components  
25                       of a quality training system include: (1) an integrated

1 system which is really important; (2) diversity of models;  
2 (3) learner-centred; (4) curriculum development; (5)  
3 counselling. Counselling for the women such as our single  
4 parents across our country. We have a really high  
5 population of single parents. We need that support system  
6 out there for them in order for them to stay in the institute  
7 that they are attending for their education.

8 Funding of programs. They have to be  
9 aware of what kind of dollars are out there, if it may  
10 be from CIS, may it be from the Social Services programs,  
11 various ones.

12 Accountability. Women see  
13 accountability as central to a quality and equitable  
14 training system that is accessible to all. There is a  
15 need for accountability in decision-making and  
16 representation where all boards and committees must be  
17 held accountable for their activities. There must be  
18 accountability and project evaluation and client  
19 participation in evaluation in modern should be a  
20 requirement.

21 There must also be accountability in  
22 funding mechanisms or the allocation of resources should  
23 be demonstrated. And that's, again, we speak on the  
24 dollars for training for our women. The government has  
25 to be accountable for the dollars because within all the

1 committees that they are developing, that could be training  
2 dollars for our women too and we got to look at this and  
3 how are we going to work together in partnership. That's  
4 how we see it.

5 Integrating training and community  
6 economic development. Our communities are facing the  
7 devastating effects of economic restructuring with mass  
8 layoffs and increase in unemployment. Women recognize  
9 that training alone will not lead to real jobs or  
10 economically viable communities. We see a need to  
11 integrate training into local economic development plans,  
12 creating economic options for women to do this effectively.

13 However, we must develop new approaches to community  
14 economic development and mechanisms for ensuring women's  
15 participation in them.

16 And when we speak of that, like within  
17 Saskatchewan, I think Saskatchewan is very unique because  
18 we can have that partnership and this is one of our main  
19 recommendations to the Commission and hopefully the  
20 commissioners will take it up to the federal and say  
21 "Saskatchewan is unique and we are ready to be partnerships  
22 with them." And we are ready because we deal with training  
23 connected in with economic development. It's obvious that  
24 we have to in order for -- we can educate our people if  
25 we want but if there's no jobs for them then they are just



1 going to end up going back on social assistance and however  
2 else they made their living prior to that.

3 But I'll let my Co-Chair, Gayle  
4 McMartin, come in at this point.

5 **MS GAYLE McMARTIN:** With respect to the  
6 Labour Force Development Board that are now the initiative  
7 of the federal government, one of the main issues I think  
8 is that the Canadian board initially has in fact excluded  
9 rural Canada and that is being now recognized at the  
10 national level. And as I understand it there is some  
11 movement to try to include an agriculture sector. In fact  
12 it's not just farmers, but rather, say, Maritime fishermen,  
13 B.C. loggers, and those types of rural folks have been  
14 excluded from this whole process. It's the desire of the  
15 Canadian board to have provincial boards mirror the  
16 national board. In our province that isn't realistic  
17 because of the very rural presence that Saskatchewan has  
18 with Saskatchewan people.

19 The structure of the board is a concern.

20 As one person said, it's a long way from the bottom to  
21 the top in terms of the structure of boards, where we have  
22 the Canadian board with our national board with various  
23 reference groups. Then there will be a provincial board  
24 with various reference groups, a business reference group,  
25 a labour reference group, and then the five (5) equity

1 reference groups. Then three (3) or four (4) local boards  
2 with more reference groups we suspect. And that  
3 supposedly is at that level where decision-making will  
4 take place with respect to training for our people.

5 The concern with that is that there will  
6 be a lot of money spent in administration and what about  
7 the money that's left for training? That will be a  
8 diminished fund I suspect.

9 Another structural issue I guess is  
10 equity participation where we're recognizing that business  
11 and labour are primary partners with the greater number  
12 of representatives. And equity has a voice at the table  
13 but we are outnumbered. Consensus decision-making is a  
14 good model but in most consensus decision-making  
15 environments all of the participant groups are entering  
16 on an equal basis. And in fact in this consensus-making  
17 arena we are not all equal just because of numbers.

18 The Canadian Labour Force Development  
19 Board has recently released statistics. One of the  
20 objectives that they have is to increase the participation  
21 and training of the equity groups, those people who have  
22 traditionally been excluded from the process. And in fact  
23 just recently the statistics have been released and in  
24 the first year -- well, actually the national board has  
25 been in operation for two (2) years -- but in the last

1 year women's training has been decreased by 30 per cent.

2 So, what is happening? Do we really  
3 have a voice?

4 The concept is good for a Labour Force  
5 Development Board in that there is to be some local  
6 decision-making. But recently it was compared with GRIP,  
7 the Gross Revenue Insurance Plan for farmers where it  
8 looked good on paper but those who needed the help the  
9 most received the least help. And I am wondering if the  
10 recent release of figures of 30 per cent decrease in  
11 training for women isn't doing about the same thing for  
12 our people.

13 I've talked about the -- I think one of  
14 the critical issues is rural versus urban representation.

15 And I guess for recommendations we have to recommend that  
16 we try to avoid as much bureaucratic administration as  
17 possible, and that those dollars for training in fact the  
18 decision-making will be done at local level because it's  
19 the local people that know their economic needs better  
20 than anyone and therefore they should have some say --  
21 or perhaps the bulk of the say -- in how the dollars are  
22 spent and for whom and for what.

23 In addition to that we obviously need  
24 a sincere voice for the equity group so that their interests  
25 can be met and at the moment it would appear that that

1 is lacking somewhat.

2 **MS LISA McCALLUM:** With that, we will  
3 continue on our journey of educating the public. We are  
4 doing our consultations across this province and other  
5 women across the country are doing it in their provinces  
6 also. And hopefully we'll get a lot of good feedback and  
7 that from the Canadian Labour Force Development Board of  
8 which way the women are really going to take a strong  
9 partnership in with the business and labour sector.

10 Thank you.

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

12 Could you, as a start, give us an idea  
13 for the Province of Saskatchewan? You have mentioned the  
14 overall structure with the national board and also the  
15 regional board. And when you were talking about regional  
16 boards, you are not talking about the provincial one; are  
17 you?

18 **MS LISA McCALLUM:** Yes.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Okay.

20 So there are no local boards?

21 **MS LISA McCALLUM:** No. Saskatchewan is  
22 proposing -- well, it's not Saskatchewan, it's a national  
23 driven process. The national body is proposing that the  
24 provinces set up their local boards. Saskatchewan is  
25 looking at three (3) to four (4) local boards throughout

1           our province. And it would be the similar structure to  
2           CEC's map of Saskatchewan -- boundaries in Saskatchewan.

3                       **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** And can you  
4           tell us what kind of budget there is for Saskatchewan?

5                       **MS LISA McCALLUM:** They won't give us  
6           those numbers from the national level.

7                       **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Okay.

8                               I was trying to see in terms of training  
9           and the kind of input that your board can have, how many  
10          women will benefit from the services of the board?

11                       **MS LISA McCALLUM:** I don't think we know  
12          that yet because in Saskatchewan we are at the steering  
13          committee stage where the national board has struck a  
14          steering committee. That steering committee is charged  
15          with the task of setting up the provincial board and then  
16          supposedly the local boards.

17                               So, at the moment CEC is still making  
18          the decisions for training and at our next meeting we have  
19          asked for this fiscal year's -- what monies have been  
20          allocated to this point and to whom and for whom. And  
21          I'm not sure if that will be detailed or not.

22                               Does that answer ---

23                       **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes, at this  
24          point.

25                               Another question would be the women's

1 sector, are there Aboriginal women or Metis women or  
2 Indians sitting? What is the participation of Metis or  
3 Indian women in this province?

4 **MS LISA McCALLUM:** On the board?

5 As you heard when you were with the --  
6 the Saskatchewan Metis Society round table yesterday they  
7 spoke on the Metis Pathways. The Metis women have a voice  
8 in that process. They will have a voice on the provincial  
9 women's reference group. We will only have a one (1)  
10 women's representative on the Saskatchewan Labour Force  
11 Development Board but we will have a reference group  
12 developed in Saskatchewan with like various women's  
13 organizations that are on a provincial level. And the  
14 Metis women do have a provincial body. I would imagine --  
15 I would guarantee that they are going to have a seat on  
16 this reference group for the women on the provincial.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Because I  
18 imagine that rural Saskatchewan might have a major impact  
19 with Metis and Aboriginal women.

20 **MS LISA McCALLUM:** It's the same with  
21 the farm women also and we make it very strong. Within  
22 the rural communities we are hoping we will have a seat  
23 for the farm women such as the National Farmers' Union,  
24 the women's sector of it, within the Metis society for  
25 the Metis women, within the Federation of Saskatchewan

1 Indian Nations, if they are ready to be involved with our  
2 process because I am not too familiar with the Indian sector  
3 of it. They will have involvement within the reference  
4 group.

5 All women of this province will have say  
6 on this reference group. We're open arms for letters and  
7 various recommendations from women because we are not  
8 speaking for ourselves on the provincial level; we speak  
9 for all women on the provincial level.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** What is the  
11 situation in the other provinces? Is everybody about the  
12 same? Are some more advanced in their undertaking?

13 **MS GAYLE McMARTIN:** There are three (3)  
14 boards already -- three (3) provincial boards have been  
15 established: Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.  
16 British Columbia is in the process of legislating. And  
17 Ontario is working with their Ontario Training Advisory  
18 Board as I understand. No one has local boards established  
19 in the country yet. Manitoba Provincial Government, as  
20 I understand, is doing its own consultations from alongside  
21 the national level. Alberta has done I think -- they've  
22 only spoken with their EIC offices and there is not a  
23 steering committee and there is very little organization  
24 there, if any. Prince Edward Island is trying to establish  
25 a steering committee. Saskatchewan has a steering

1 committee.

2 **MS LISA McCALLUM:** Mr. Dussault, were  
3 you asking the question on behalf of the -- how are the  
4 women involved on the national level? Are other  
5 provinces?

6 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** The provincial  
7 boards themselves.

8 **MS LISA McCALLUM:** In Nova Scotia  
9 they're really involved with the process. B.C. the women  
10 are really involved with the process, and also Ontario.  
11 But I believe that -- to my understanding -- we went to  
12 our national forum two (2) weeks ago out in Ottawa and  
13 we met with the women's reference group on the national  
14 level. Various provinces -- not naming them right  
15 off-hand -- but a few of them do not have well  
16 representation from the women's sector of it in their  
17 province. And not only with the women; with all of the  
18 five (5) equity groups in some of the provinces.

19 **MS GAYLE McMARTIN:** Gender equity in  
20 business and labour. Well, mainly business. Business  
21 does not follow the equity. It's really --

22 **MS LISA McCALLUM:** In our province it  
23 is at the steering committee level. It's all men. City  
24 men. No one from rural area. As a matter of fact on our  
25 steering committee in Saskatchewan my name is the only



1 one that does not have a Saskatoon or Regina address.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Well, there is  
3 still a long way to go.

4 **MS LISA McCALLUM:** Yes.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I will ask  
6 Viola Robinson to continue if there is questions because  
7 your -- I think we have a good idea of the structure.  
8 You are talking about really the five (5) principles were  
9 defined by the national committee. Was there an output  
10 by the provincial board?

11 **MS LISA McCALLUM:** The five (5)  
12 principles were implemented from women across the country.

13 It wasn't a national-driven process because women from  
14 each province brought their ideas and met together on a  
15 national level in a room. And they came up with the  
16 principles and that and those are the five (5) principles  
17 and we brought them down into our provinces. We've been  
18 meeting with various people and doing our consultations  
19 and they're the same five (5) principles.

20 And it's the same with Pathway. They  
21 have their five (5) principles that they follow, and their  
22 mainly the same as -- I believe all equity have the same  
23 five (5) principles.

24 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I just  
25 have one question here because I'm getting a little

1 confused.

2                                 Where does this evolve from? It's a  
3 federal initiative and it's a national board. It's a  
4 Labour Force Development Board. Where does it evolve  
5 from?

6                                 **MS GAYLE McMARTIN:** In 1988 the then  
7 Minister of Employment and Immigration had been I believe  
8 lobbied by business and labour, saying that they wanted  
9 more say in training because they contributed most to those  
10 training dollars. As the CRF, the Consolidated Revenue  
11 Fund, decreased for training then there was a move to have  
12 unemployment insurance fund training.

13                                 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** M'hm.

14                                 **MS GAYLE McMARTIN:** So then business and  
15 labour said "We want more say in how this training is to  
16 be, for whom, and what kind of training," so that it would  
17 be more relevant to workers and to the business community.

18                                 So at that point Barbara McDougall, the  
19 then Minister of Employment and Immigration, established  
20 a national board and said that business and labour would  
21 be -- or they established their principles, the business  
22 and labour. Because they were the primary contributors  
23 they would be the primary partners.

24                                 And then in addition to that it was felt  
25 that the equity group should be included. So at that point

1           there were four (4) equity groups and at -- one Aboriginal,  
2           one woman, one person with disability and one immigrant  
3           or racialized groups. At that point, in the Aboriginal  
4           sector, status and Metis were not separated. A Metis  
5           person is the national representative for Aboriginal  
6           group, Ernie Blais.

7                           At our provincial level we had  
8           initially -- on the steering committee -- had business,  
9           labour and five (5) equity groups because we split the  
10          Aboriginal group and said there should be a representative  
11          from Metis, and a representative from status. And now  
12          most recently -- we've been meeting since September of  
13          '92 in Saskatchewan and we now have a representative from  
14          the agriculture community in Saskatchewan.

15                           **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** This  
16          sounds almost like the Pathways, the initiative by Barbara  
17          McDougall. It's almost the same. You sound like you are  
18          describing the Pathway.

19                           **MS LISA McCALLUM:** Pathways came out of  
20          the initiative of the Canadian Labour Force Development  
21          Board but it was a different tunnel. The Canadian Labour  
22          Force is there and that's why the Aboriginal people have  
23          a seat on it. Ernie Blais is the national spokesperson  
24          for the Aboriginal people, which comes from the National  
25          Aboriginal Management Board.

1                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Okay.

2                   **MS LISA McCALLUM:** So the Pathways  
3 process is involved with the Canadian Labour Force  
4 Development Board but it's a different funnel because it  
5 has different -- it has its own parallel, structures, and  
6 that's what they've taken across the country and  
7 implemented within their provinces. And I believe you  
8 got a view of the Metis structure yesterday in the  
9 consultation.

10                  **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank  
11 you.

12                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
13 much for sharing this with us.

14                  I would now like to ask Lillian Sanderson  
15 and Nina Saxena from the Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's  
16 Council of Saskatchewan.

17                  Good afternoon.

18                  **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** Good afternoon.

19                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** You may  
20 proceed. If you could identify yourself for the sake of  
21 the record and proceed.

22                  **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** My name is  
23 Lillian Sanderson. I am from Laronge, Saskatchewan. And  
24 beside me here is Nina Saxena, who is a researcher on the  
25 project that we are doing for the intervenor funds or this

1 part of the Royal Commission. They thank you for putting  
2 us on the agenda.

3 We were asked to come -- from my  
4 understanding anyway -- to give you an update on where  
5 we are at with our research project. Our research project  
6 began in January and we're specifically looking at what  
7 role, if any, should Aboriginal women and Elders play in  
8 the development of information of self-government for  
9 Aboriginal people.

10 I would first like to say that the  
11 Aboriginal Women's Council does not distinguish between  
12 Metis, non-status or status women. We try to work  
13 collectively with those who have common issues as women,  
14 as Aboriginal women, which are many. And so we do not  
15 come here to present on behalf of status women, Metis women,  
16 or non-status women. We try to respond to the issues of  
17 Aboriginal women in general.

18 We have presented a paper for you. I'm  
19 not sure if you have it. I will ---

20 **MS NINA SAXENA:** We can offer you a copy.

21 **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** But I will do  
22 some reading from this and ---

23 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** If you have a  
24 copy, if you have a summing up.

25 **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** And if you would

1 like to ask questions at any time, please do.

2 We are here to present a brief update  
3 on the Royal Commission sponsored study on Aboriginal women  
4 and women Elders and self-government. As May is the last  
5 month of the study the project is in its final stages of  
6 writing and we are expecting an exciting and informative  
7 report to follow.

8 To date the two (2) researchers hired  
9 by the Aboriginal Women's Council, Violet Munroe and Nina  
10 Saxena, have conducted approximately 75 in-depth  
11 interviews with youth and Elders, Metis women, treaty women  
12 and so on in northern and southern Saskatchewan. The study  
13 has attempted to be non-discriminatory in its reach in  
14 order to gain as comprehensive views as possible. The  
15 researchers have also gained background information on  
16 the history of self-government and native traditions to  
17 be included in the final report which will enhance  
18 understanding of this complex topic.

19 And I must say at this point that the  
20 time that we have been allowed -- five (5) months -- to  
21 do this study is not nearly enough as to what we are finding  
22 with the women we are talking to. Our main focus of course  
23 is creating discussion on self-government and there are  
24 many women who would like to talk about specific issues  
25 such as education, family services, justice. So, we feel

1 somewhat limited to do -- well, I mean as we get further  
2 down into the presentation that we do see a need for further  
3 research or consultations.

4 In January researchers prepared a  
5 questionnaire and established contacts for interviews.  
6 In February, March and April we conducted interviews at  
7 home, conferences and meetings in places such as Maple  
8 Creek, Creighton, Regina and so on. Aboriginal Women's  
9 Council of Saskatchewan members were kept in touch through  
10 monthly reports and a provincial meeting in May.

11 At the May meeting discussion took place  
12 on the final report and its contents. It was determined  
13 that a description of the political reality facing  
14 Aboriginal women's organizations, the historical  
15 background of the Aboriginal Women's Council of  
16 Saskatchewan, and themes from interviews should all be  
17 included in the report. Through the background  
18 information and description of political reality we hope  
19 to provide a basis of understanding for the findings that  
20 follow in the report. For example, the fact that  
21 Aboriginal women's organizations are often purposely  
22 isolated in their struggle through lack of funding or  
23 consultation, highlights one of the barriers Aboriginal  
24 women confront every day.

25 The initial findings of the study

1 indicate a great distance between the leadership and the  
2 people. The following are some of those noted in  
3 interviews and the recommendations arising from them.

4 1) One, many women knew little about  
5 self-government, indicating a lack of communication and  
6 information distribution on both parts of the federal  
7 government and band councils. Note that the  
8 traditional and expensive forms of information  
9 dissemination such as television, ads or pamphlets are  
10 not called for to remedy the situation. Most women barely  
11 had time for interviews, let alone watching TV or reading  
12 long booklets. As one woman said:

13 "I'm not sure if I agree with self-government. What is  
14 self-government? There is virtually no  
15 information on it. How can I agree or  
16 disagree with something I know nothing  
17 about? If self-government means  
18 empowering the Indian people, then that  
19 is what I agree with.

20 Women should be as informed as possible, but individuals  
21 can't put responsibility on themselves  
22 to become informed. We don't have time  
23 to be researching and reading. I don't  
24 even have time to watch TV or listen to  
25 the radio. This is where Native women's



1                   associations come in. They can focus  
2                   on passing information. I understand,  
3                   though, that there is a funding problem.

4                   The federal government needs to listen  
5                   and not always be direction-givers.  
6                   They need surveys or something to gauge  
7                   how grass roots people think..."

8                   **Recommendation:** Following this issue  
9                   is using radio talk shows, posters, local workshops and  
10                  so on to help educate the people on self-government.

11                  2) Note a need for simple language,  
12                  not fancy words, when explaining self-government. One  
13                  woman stated: "They [the federal government] need to  
14                  listen instead of talking fancy talk..." Another argued:  
15                  "People are happy about it [self-government] because it  
16                  gives them hope for a brighter future,  
17                  but they don't understand what it  
18                  is...Even the Native leaders use fancy  
19                  words that no one understands; how can  
20                  the trapper, the hunter relate to that?"

21                  **Recommendation:** try to be direct and  
22                  concise in what is said about self-government. Don't  
23                  skirt the issues by using long words the general population  
24                  won't understand.

25                  3) Women feel powerless. All

1 decisions are made without them, programs happen to them,  
2 with little request for their involvement. In fact they  
3 are often thrown out of meetings or shunned for attempting  
4 to join in. As one woman said:

5 "Women on my reserve are not given the right to run for  
6 council. With self-government I would  
7 hope we would have more power and could  
8 get more involved, have more of a voice;  
9 if we could become Chiefs we would have  
10 more of a say in issues like health care,  
11 on how reserves are run. Right now we  
12 aren't involved in negotiations so our  
13 views and needs are ignored."

14 **Recommendation:** Encourage women's  
15 involvement and help women's organizations, through  
16 funding or support, to fight for a voice in  
17 decision-making.

18 4) Many fear repercussions for  
19 expressing their views and have chosen to be anonymous  
20 in the study. Some have said they were fired from their  
21 jobs as punishment for speaking out. "Self-government  
22 would make me more committed to my community. I would  
23 figure out how I could be more involved for the long-term  
24 picture rather than being afraid of losing my job. Right  
25 now it's too easy to lose my job if I speak out or get

1 involved," is what one woman said.

2 **Recommendation:** For self-government  
3 to succeed, all must have the freedom to express their  
4 views on self-government without fear. Government and  
5 councils must examine why women fear them and try to  
6 communicate more with the people.

7 5) Many women do not trust their  
8 leadership, indicating people like the idea of  
9 self-government but do not trust those who would run the  
10 government or dislike the present provisions on  
11 self-government as set out by the federal government.

12 As one woman said:

13 "I don't believe in the type of self-government that is  
14 being developed by the political  
15 leaders. Self-government comes from  
16 the people. It's up to us to go back  
17 to our traditional ways, no one can give  
18 us our power. We have to learn to live  
19 by our own hearts to govern ourselves  
20 and our communities regardless of what  
21 others say."

22 Another woman echoed similar thoughts:

23

24 "My concern lies with the people in power. They aren't  
25 concerned with the welfare of everyone.

1                   There is too much politics in  
2                   self-government and not enough  
3                   communication between the grass roots  
4                   and others."

5                   **Recommendation:** Consult with people  
6                   through studies such as this. Over and over again many  
7                   women indicated their happiness with finally being  
8                   consulted through our study.

9                   6) For many women self-government  
10                  seems far away from their real life concerns on poverty  
11                  and education. This was reflected by answers to one of  
12                  our questions which asked women what issues they were  
13                  concerned about and will be covered more in-depth in the  
14                  final report.

15                  **Recommendation:** Allow self-government  
16                  to deal with more than just systems accountability, but  
17                  rather deal with the elimination of poverty and other  
18                  issues.

19                  The above are a brief overview of just  
20                  a few of our findings so far. Our final report will be  
21                  much more detailed and explanatory than this presentation.

22                  May will continue to be a busy month as the draft report  
23                  and the final report are concluded.

24                  We would wish to note that the final  
25                  report will also include a section on areas of further

1 study due to lack of time and financial resources on the  
2 part of the Aboriginal Women's Council, and therefore a  
3 necessary neglect (PH) of some areas. These areas  
4 include a more in-depth look at differences in  
5 self-government mandates of Metis, treaty and other  
6 groups, an examination of why Native people distrust their  
7 leadership and how to remedy the situation, a look at how  
8 to involve Aboriginal women and Elders in the process of  
9 decision-making, and much more.

10 I will leave you with a simple wish  
11 expressed by one of our participants: "I hope the decision  
12 makers do right by the people. I hope they don't forget  
13 the little people."

14 And with that is the brief that we are  
15 presenting and we could have probably gone into detail  
16 with some of the findings but like we've indicated that  
17 this is our last month and we're in the process of compiling  
18 all the information and preparing for a final report.

19 So we are prepared to answer questions  
20 that you may have.

21 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Well, I  
22 want to say how impressed I am with the work that you have  
23 done. I think that is a very good overview of some of  
24 your findings and I look forward to getting the final  
25 report.

1 I am just wondering. Your organization  
2 here is the Aboriginal Women's Council of Saskatchewan.  
3 And are you affiliated with any of the national women's  
4 groups?

5 **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** We are  
6 affiliated with the Native Women's Association of Canada.

7 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Okay.

8 In the survey that you have been using  
9 and working with, was that one developed by yourselves  
10 or was that used from the national?

11 **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** We developed  
12 that on our own ---

13 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** On your  
14 own. I see.

15 **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** --- to be  
16 specific with our needs in Saskatchewan.

17 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Sure.

18 So I would suspect that you didn't have  
19 the resources to really cover the areas that you wanted  
20 to cover, and in terms of area I am talking about geographic  
21 area.

22 **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** No, we  
23 definitely don't have enough resources to do -- to complete  
24 the vision that we had for the study. I don't know if  
25 you're aware, but the proposal we had submitted to the

1 Royal Commission was cut in half, so we had to cut our  
2 activities in half as a result of that.

3 **MS NINA SAXENA:** I do feel that we did  
4 accomplish quite a bit, though. We did manage to reach  
5 quite a few women in a variety of areas in northern and  
6 southern Saskatchewan, so I do feel that with what we did  
7 receive we managed to get quite a ---

8 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** But your  
9 efforts were concentrated in northern Saskatchewan, or  
10 did you manage to ---

11 **MS NINA SAXENA:** Throughout the  
12 province.

13 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:**  
14 Throughout the province, in pockets or whatever?

15 **MS NINA SAXENA:** Yes. Actually we had  
16 one researcher located in northern Saskatchewan and one  
17 located in -- myself, located in southern Saskatchewan;  
18 so we managed to cover both.

19 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Okay.  
20 I guess that's about all I have for you.  
21 Thank you.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** First of all  
23 I would like to thank you for presenting us with this  
24 progress report. It is very timely for us. We would have  
25 liked to come later, in June, in order that you would have

1 completed your report; obviously it would have been better  
2 for you too. But in the circumstances I think it is very  
3 interesting to see what you have been doing.

4 And during the first two (2) rounds of  
5 hearings, as you know, we visited over 72 communities and  
6 in particular during the second round of hearings we have  
7 had over 40 per cent of the presenters who were women.  
8 And so we've heard many, many of the concerns that were  
9 expressed through the interviews to your researchers and  
10 so we know that there is quite a distance between what  
11 we can hear in the main cities in Ottawa with the leadership  
12 and concerns that are very, very immediate in the  
13 communities. And also that Aboriginal women are looking  
14 at self-government with a cautious approach to make sure  
15 that the system will enable real accountability because  
16 this is a major issue.

17 And so we really appreciate what you did  
18 so far and I think, as you know, in the intervenor funding  
19 program that was set up by the Royal Commission under the  
20 chairmanship of David Crombie, this was handled separately  
21 from us. There was 16 or 17 projects funded by two (2)  
22 Aboriginal women's -- presented by Aboriginal women's  
23 organizations like yours were accepted.

24 And of course we are pretty much aware  
25 that this was an \$8 million fund and the request, the



1 demands, were much greater than what could be done but  
2 we hope that through these various studies that would have  
3 been made, in addition to the one that was made by the  
4 national organization, that we are going to get quite a  
5 good and clear picture of what women think and want as  
6 far as the mandate of the Commission is concerned and the  
7 key areas and priorities.

8                   So this will certainly compliment what  
9 we've heard directly going to the communities and we  
10 understand that your brief will be ready some time in June  
11 or after -- you present it at the end of May to your assembly  
12 or to the council?

13                   **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** We will be taking  
14 the final report to the council and they will I guess give  
15 their approval for it, and we did discuss -- the first  
16 week in May we came together and looked at the initial  
17 findings and had discussions on what women were saying  
18 and what was important to include in the final report.

19                   So we are targeting for the end of May  
20 for the final report to be completed and approved. And  
21 then at that point I guess you know it's how, when, where,  
22 to report to the Royal Commission.

23                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes.

24                   **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** But I would like  
25 to just say that I've been involved with the Aboriginal

1 women's movement here in Saskatchewan since I guess I was  
2 17 and since that time it's been such a struggle for women  
3 to keep our activities going, with our council,  
4 provincially. We always have the problem of funding to  
5 carry out the work that women request of us to do, and  
6 also to respond to new initiatives.

7                   And provincially I know that that has  
8 been a struggle. At the local level, where women want  
9 to get organized, it's even more difficult for them because  
10 of you know lack of resources and not knowing where to  
11 go and get information. And then of course the whole paper  
12 work that you need to be incorporated and all that sort  
13 of stuff when women just want to start dealing and  
14 addressing with issues such as child care, housing or you  
15 know things that are important to us.

16                   And it's been very difficult for us here  
17 in the Province of Saskatchewan to be involved with the  
18 new developments that are happening. The presentation  
19 that was given just prior to us, with the whole Pathways  
20 thing, we've struggled with that and we basically had to  
21 fight for a voice in that whole process. And we were given  
22 consultation dollars to do that but then, when all the  
23 dust had settled over this whole transition, that we were  
24 left out of it anyway.

25                   So, it's not only a struggle to try and

1 be a voice for women, but also to respond and almost being  
2 a reactionary organization that a lot of our members and  
3 our council is volunteers. And we're right across the  
4 province and it's very difficult to keep ahead of what's  
5 going on and also having to fight our way into meetings  
6 to be involved. And we are not wanting to be agitators  
7 or not wanting to take over power. We want to be included  
8 and we want to be involved with different developments  
9 that are happening in our communities.

10 Our experience has been -- and you know  
11 just from my own community -- my own experience has been  
12 that we're not talked to. We're sort of -- once decisions  
13 are made or whatever then you know programs will come into  
14 effect and then we have to live by them. And that's coming  
15 out in the study as well.

16 So, it's not to say that you know we are  
17 here wanting the power. We're here to be part of it because  
18 we are an important part of our communities. And I think,  
19 as women, having a woman's perspective, it is different  
20 from men but we have to have that balance. And if we're  
21 looking at self-government then how are we going to develop  
22 that? Are we going to leave it in the hands of men? And  
23 I don't agree with that. I think that we need to include  
24 our communities, our Elders, our young people, the women  
25 and the men and we need to walk down that road together;

1 not, you know ten steps behind the men as usual.

2 So I guess you know what I would like  
3 to say is that we want to be involved. We want to cooperate  
4 and we want to get rid of the political violence that we  
5 have had to live with. And that's our reality.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Well, it is  
7 certainly a great plus to have access to the views of women  
8 through a research like the one you conducted because we  
9 are aware that in many instances in the communities that  
10 while women have been quite courageous to come and speak  
11 out and that a lot still prefer to abstain and not to come  
12 and meet and speak with the Commission. Everywhere we  
13 go we're available for in-camera meetings on more personal  
14 or delicate issues and I must say that in most communities  
15 where we were we conducted these kinds of in-camera  
16 meetings; not only for public education but for the sake  
17 of getting a real balanced view at the end to inform the  
18 Commission as to what should be done that would be correct  
19 and that would be the good direction for the future for  
20 the people. This is very important because we realize  
21 that there are political issues involved in our mandate,  
22 but also that we are there to help to enhance the living  
23 conditions on a day-to-day basis of people. And if we  
24 were failing to do that we would have failed a large part  
25 of our mandate.

1                   So, we will be looking forward certainly  
2                   to receiving your full-fledged brief and I hope we'll have  
3                   an opportunity to have it presented to us in a forum like  
4                   this. I don't know yet because, as you know, we are on  
5                   the last leg of our public consultation process and we're  
6                   going to have the fourth round of hearings early next fall  
7                   but I'm not sure we're going to come back in all the  
8                   provinces and the capitals again.

9                   But, in any case, you can be assured that  
10                  this will be of great interest to all the commissioners  
11                  and we will give you some feedback.

12                  **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** May I  
13                  just ask a supplementary here?

14                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes.

15                  **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I just  
16                  thought about something.

17                  After listening to you when you read  
18                  through there talking, some of the concerns that you have  
19                  raised about women's issues, do you feel -- and you don't  
20                  have to answer this now, maybe just a yes or a no -- but  
21                  all those things that you have raised which you feel are  
22                  important for women, do you think that when the final report  
23                  that you do that you will have some solution or some  
24                  recommendation on how to achieve more I guess equality  
25                  or equity or more involvement of women? You think you

1 are going to be able to come up with something?

2 **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** I believe we  
3 will. The questionnaire that we are doing, some of the  
4 recommendations -- those are just some of the  
5 recommendations that are coming out by the women. And  
6 I believe that we will have more recommendations as to  
7 how we see remedying the situation.

8 But I would also just you know like to  
9 say that the issues of family violence, of child care,  
10 of sexual abuse, those kinds of issues are largely seen  
11 as women's issues. I don't believe they are just women's  
12 issues. I think as women we have had to fight for the  
13 recognition or you know the response to those issues.  
14 But it's not a women's issue. It's a community issue and  
15 it's you know Aboriginal governments' issues and that we  
16 all need to be working towards that and not just women  
17 "Okay, here's your little issue, you go and deal with it  
18 and we'll deal with the men kind of stuff." I think that  
19 the move towards self-government, if that is the direction  
20 we are going in, then those are all our issues and that  
21 we have to be involved in finding the solutions to those  
22 problems. And I have a lot of hope and being optimistic  
23 that it will take time but that we can achieve that if  
24 we put our minds together.

25 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** One more.

1                   Is there a movement at all, say in the  
2 last decade, for more involvement of women in certain parts  
3 of Saskatchewan? Is there an improvement coming of that?

4                   I know in some parts of the country it is. You know where  
5 we do see in some communities there are women counsellors,  
6 there are women Chiefs and you see there are women involved  
7 in a lot of the political and decision-making of some  
8 communities and they feel that it's really not an issue  
9 with them.

10                   And I am just wondering, in Saskatchewan  
11 is a movement towards that in any ---

12                   **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** I think there is  
13 you know a strong movement. The empowering of women is  
14 happening because women I think realize that we can't just  
15 sit back and complain about these things, that we need  
16 to do something about it. And you know the work that I  
17 do and the women that I come into contact with -- I work  
18 in a safe shelter in Laronge which are the women who are  
19 in poverty, who are living with family violence -- our  
20 main objective there is to empower the women. And once  
21 we've empowered the women I mean it's like, wow, you know,  
22 "I can do whatever I want."

23                   And the concerns that they bring, you  
24 know it's like for a long time, for me, in the work that  
25 I've been doing it's like "I've got this problem, deal

1 with it for me." And I've quit dealing with it. I'm  
2 encouraging them now to say "How can you deal with it,"  
3 you know. "I'll help you but how can you deal with it?"

4 So I think there definitely is a move for women to be  
5 empowered and to be involved. And that's not only in  
6 Saskatchewan; I see that right across the country.

7 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Okay.

8 Thank you.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Very briefly  
10 I would like to get back to what you said about the fact  
11 that you realize that there would have been much more to  
12 do, had the resources and the time been available. I think  
13 this will be a very good start and coming out from your  
14 final report I think it's the good thing to do to lay out  
15 what should or could have been done and should be done  
16 in the future because it will be rooted on something, very  
17 precise that was done in the last few months, and it might  
18 certainly help maybe to get some funding from other sources  
19 to continue and to pursue because this will give you a  
20 base.

21 And the second point is in the wake of  
22 what Viola Robinson just said as far as solutions are  
23 concerned, if you could come up with elements of solutions  
24 as to how self-government should be designed at the  
25 community level in order to assure the democratic



1 principles, they include the involvement of women, not  
2 only between whatever kind of election but on a regular  
3 basis to enable women to have a say on what affects their  
4 life on a day-to-day basis. That would be very precious  
5 for the Commission because we are concerned that women  
6 are putting a lot of emphasis on this as a matter of  
7 principle. We are really looking at this stage to  
8 technical approaches, and when I am saying "technical"  
9 I am not saying highly technical, but more precise ideas  
10 as to how it could be achieved within the structure of  
11 Aboriginal government.

12 **MS NINA SAXENA:** Possibly the questions  
13 from our questionnaire include quite a few practical  
14 questions that ask, well, how should self-government be  
15 designed and that sort of thing. It also tried to gain  
16 solutions to problems. I think that will be very  
17 interesting when it comes out in the final report.

18 One thing I just wanted to reiterate:  
19 the woman that was quoted in the last section, she said  
20 that "We hope the decision-makers do right by the people."

21 And the women that I've interviewed have over and over  
22 asked me "What happens with the final results of the study?"

23 Is the Royal Commission going to do something? Is  
24 something going to happen?"

25 And I think there is a lot of hope out

1 there whenever something like this comes up and I also  
2 believe that a lot of the women that I have talked to have  
3 had a lot of their hopes dashed. And I guess for them  
4 I would like to express the idea, the thought, that I hope  
5 something does happen with the recommendations within the  
6 study. There is a lot of hard work put into it and I hope  
7 that the participants of this study have something solid  
8 come out of it.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** On this I would  
10 like to say that this Royal Commission benefitting from  
11 many other groups and commissions in the past and  
12 parliamentary committees, is really committed and was  
13 really committed from the beginning to establish a real  
14 dialogue because we know now and the proof has been done  
15 many, many times that solutions can't come from the top;  
16 but they have to come from the people living the solutions  
17 and that's the reason why we have started such an extensive  
18 public participation process in four (4) rounds,  
19 publishing a document between each of them, trying to give  
20 what is the state of what we heard and what is the state  
21 of the consensus.

22 And, also, that's the reason why we set  
23 up this public participation intervenor funding program.

24 This is the first of its kind and of its magnitude, even  
25 if it was limited, because we felt that to get solutions

1 many, many groups needed to get some money to go further  
2 than what is usually done without any money in preparing  
3 a brief. And obviously the building of a questionnaire  
4 like this and the administration of the questionnaire and  
5 on and on would not have been done without that kind of  
6 support.

7                   So we are really, in this round three  
8 (3) and early fall in round four (4), hoping to get a good  
9 grasp as to the solutions that will be recommended to us  
10 by the Aboriginal communities, and also non-Aboriginal  
11 communities. Because -- well, we hope that if solutions  
12 are to come they will come from this fund to a large extent  
13 and so we are putting a lot of faith and hope in the results  
14 of the briefs that will come from those projects and I  
15 can assure you, and you certainly can report back to the  
16 people you met, that the Commission will not only benefit  
17 but use those reports; that this will be very, very  
18 important for us.

19                   What we can't guarantee is what will be  
20 done at the end of our own recommendations. We feel that  
21 doing the kind of work we have been trying to do, to really  
22 do the utmost to get the solutions from the people and  
23 not from the top, and doing the same thing with  
24 non-Aboriginal people. We are going to put a lot of  
25 emphasis on the larger public because we know that we're

1 talking about a new relationship and understanding. We  
2 have to build on common ground and not on the differences  
3 that might be there.

4 So, we hope that this will enable us to  
5 come up with strategic recommendations, that we will have  
6 assessed the resistance to them, their opportunity, and  
7 we will know also more, much more, than if we had been  
8 talking only to the provincial organizations and the  
9 national organizations because we hope that we will get  
10 the real feeling of the grass roots and the people who  
11 are living on a day-to-day basis the problem.

12 So, we hope that this will give us the  
13 possibility to come up with solutions where people will  
14 say "Well, this is going to work," and we hope to be able  
15 to test with some of the groups the solutions in order  
16 that at the end there be a support within the Aboriginal  
17 communities and also in the larger public. But there is  
18 of course no absolute guarantee that our recommendations  
19 will all be implemented but we feel that if we have a clear  
20 direction, clear goals and a good path to attain them,  
21 the transition, an orderly transition, that they will get  
22 the support of as many people on both sides, both Aboriginal  
23 and non-Aboriginal people. It's not easy. We know that  
24 there are many, many conflicting views within Aboriginal  
25 communities and also in the larger public.

1                   **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** I just want to  
2 say that I got a call from CBC Radio yesterday, asking  
3 me you know a couple of questions and what I thought about  
4 the Royal Commission. And my initial thought was, when  
5 they first announced this Commission, "Well, here goes  
6 another study on Aboriginal people," and you know kind  
7 of pessimistic about the process. But I think that it  
8 has been valuable for the people that have come and given  
9 testimony to their lives and what they've had to go through.

10

11                   One of the questions that was asked of  
12 me yesterday was "What do you hope that -- you know what  
13 will come out of this." And my response was that I hope  
14 that not only will the federal government understand what  
15 the people are talking about, what the people are saying  
16 and what they want, but our own Aboriginal governments  
17 as well. That truly if we are to move forward that there  
18 has to be a cooperation and a partnership with all people  
19 in Canada and that we cannot -- and I don't believe we  
20 can continue to isolate ourselves with the poverty and  
21 the suffering that goes on in communities. That we must  
22 begin working together and quit putting up those boundaries  
23 that allow us to be separate.

24

25                   That's my wish and my optimism of the  
Royal Commission is that this is a process that will come

1 to that end, where we can look at all the complex issues  
2 that we have to deal with and to start working together  
3 in building our people and our communities.

4 So, I am feeling very positive that  
5 something is going to come out of this and I pray that  
6 it will be in the right direction.

7 So, with that I would just like to say  
8 thank you to the Royal Commission for allowing us to be  
9 part of this and for allowing us to talk to people and  
10 to share their ideas and we look forward to meeting with  
11 the Royal Commission again when our final report is  
12 completed and I wish you the best of luck in doing the  
13 work you are doing.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you. I  
15 hope it will be possible that you present this brief orally.

16 There is no absolute guarantee at this point because  
17 we don't know if we are going to come back to Saskatoon  
18 or Regina, but it might be possible somewhere else. But  
19 in any case we are going to give you some feedback on the  
20 report.

21 And in closing I would like to say that  
22 during those rounds of hearings we had in the communities  
23 we've heard a lot about not only the federal government  
24 but Aboriginal government themselves, as you could  
25 imagine. And so public education has to take place, not

1           only in the general public but also within the Aboriginal  
2           communities and organizations. It's a component of our  
3           work to enable this to take place and we know that it won't  
4           be finished when we are gone. But at least if we could  
5           start a real process of self-examination and on the right  
6           direction that it should be beneficial for many, many years  
7           ahead.

8                           **MS LILLIAN SANDERSON:** Thank you.

9                           **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
10          much.

11                           We're going to have a coffee break at  
12          this point. And I think our next presenter was a bit  
13          delayed so we might need a half an hour or so as a coffee  
14          break before resuming.

15                           Thank you.

16          --- Upon recessing at 2:48 p.m.

17          --- Upon resuming at 3:30 p.m.

18                           **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Okay. We are  
19          going to resume and I would like at this point to ask Bob  
20          Lacoursiere to come and join us at the table.

21                           Good afternoon.

22                           **MR. BOB LACOURSIERE:** Good afternoon.

23                           **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** You proceed  
24          whenever you are ready.

25                           **MR. BOB LACOURSIERE:** First of all I

1 want to say that I'm pleased to have the opportunity to  
2 participate in these hearings. And I commend the Royal  
3 Commission for the work and, more importantly, the process  
4 undertaken to gather information, ideas and  
5 recommendations which will help us make better decisions  
6 for the future. I welcome the opportunity to share some  
7 of my thoughts, my concerns and some suggestions.

8 First, a little bit about myself. I was  
9 born and raised in Saskatchewan, part of a large family  
10 living on a small farm; actually it was a half section  
11 and certainly from a financial point of view it was always  
12 a struggle. We learned very quickly how to do without  
13 and make the best of what we had.

14 Probably the thing that I am the most  
15 grateful for is the upbringing that I received from my  
16 parents, especially my mother. She emphasized the  
17 importance of getting a good education. After attending  
18 one year of university I got a full-time job and continued  
19 to work on my education. I am now a chartered accountant  
20 and a certified management consultant. I've had over 15  
21 years of work experience as an employee and 20 years as  
22 a business owner.

23 In the last 10 years most of my work has  
24 been in the consulting field and assisting and advising  
25 individuals and groups in business or trying to get into



1 business. I've had the opportunity to also work with some  
2 people in the Aboriginal community. And especially in  
3 the last couple of years I've really I think learned a  
4 lot more and gained a much better appreciation for the  
5 Aboriginal community. I ran for Mayor of Saskatoon two  
6 (2) years ago and I made it a point to get more familiar  
7 with the Aboriginal community and I'm really glad I did.

8 I have learned a lot about their culture. I have a lot  
9 of respect for the culture. And it's enabling me to look  
10 at things in a different manner than when I did say 10  
11 years ago.

12 We are at an important and crucial point  
13 in Canadian history. Never before have we had so many  
14 challenges and so many opportunities staring us in the  
15 face. I am pleased that after over 100 years it appears  
16 that we are making significant progress in resolving many  
17 outstanding issues with our Aboriginal community. Recent  
18 political and social events have illustrated that we now  
19 have the most significant opportunity in our history to  
20 guarantee that the Aboriginal community enjoys its full  
21 and rightful role in Canadian society.

22 It's my view that a fundamental and even  
23 paradigm shift is occurring among the population. The  
24 traditional view of the government as the paternalistic  
25 big brother is evaporating. To many of us it's still not

1           happening quick enough. This is occurring both in the  
2           Aboriginal and the non-Aboriginal communities.

3                           I also believe that, for a person or a  
4           group to feel a part of a society, it is imperative that  
5           the person or group both own and produce a part of the  
6           goods and services which are part of that society. There  
7           must be equal opportunity. This is not to say that we  
8           must do everything in exactly the same manner but we must  
9           all feel that the society in some way belongs to us, that  
10          we effectively participate and contribute to the  
11          maintenance and improvement of our quality of life.

12                          This common ownership will be essential  
13          in my opinion for successful integration of all parts of  
14          the Canadian community. And I say "integration" as  
15          opposed to "assimilation" will be essential for our future  
16          economic survival and well-being.

17                         Today's economic status. Where are we  
18          at? What do we have to do to work with it? There are  
19          many forces at work at the same time in the economic world  
20          of today. Some forces will ease the inclusion of the  
21          Aboriginal community into the economic mainstream, some  
22          will be obstacles, and some will create an absolute  
23          necessity that it be done regardless of the hurdles to  
24          be overcome.

25                         There are significant emerging trends

1       which I believe will impact our economy and the potential  
2       for full Aboriginal involvement in our employment and  
3       entrepreneurial community. And some of these are: in  
4       Saskatchewan and in Canada the size of the work force is  
5       expected to shrink in the next two (2) decades. This will  
6       of course necessitate the availability of all potential  
7       work force participants. The Aboriginal percentage of  
8       our population is increasing and is likely to continue  
9       increasing in the foreseeable future.

10                   The job market has placed increased  
11       emphasis on the ability of employees to manage technology  
12       and information. The business marketplace, as we all  
13       know, is becoming increasingly global, placing pressures  
14       on businesses which were previously unknown or unexpected.

15       Competition in business has reached an all-time high and  
16       we could actually say the same thing in the work place.

17                   Governments at all levels have fewer and  
18       fewer resources to assist in the transition to the new  
19       economy, today's reality. The marketplace is  
20       increasingly competitive, even without considering the  
21       effects of international trade, because the national,  
22       provincial and local economies are growing at a very slow  
23       pace.

24                   The number of employment opportunities  
25       from the traditional sources are also decreasing very

1 rapidly. Most new employment is now derived from the  
2 start-up of small business. And there is a resurgent  
3 interest in starting and operating small business, and  
4 that's probably because the number of job opportunities  
5 are decreasing.

6 So, what are the opportunities and the  
7 options? With all the forces at work in our economy the  
8 negative effect of taking no action is magnified greatly.

9 We as Canadians simply cannot afford to have a growing  
10 portion of our population sitting on the sidelines of a  
11 quickly changing employment marketplace. The cost, in  
12 terms of lack of qualified employees necessary for  
13 operating businesses, and in terms of excluding a  
14 significant element of our population, is just too high  
15 and unacceptable. And more importantly we must proceed  
16 as quickly as possible to correct and resolve the long  
17 outstanding debt and injustice imposed on our Aboriginal  
18 community.

19 Now, given these significant emerging  
20 trends that I've just outlined, I ask "Are we..." -- and  
21 I say "we," both the Aboriginal and the non-Aboriginal  
22 community -- "Are we ready, equipped and prepared to meet  
23 the challenges facing us?" Challenges provide  
24 opportunities. Can we achieve our goal to significantly  
25 improve the quality of life for everyone?

1 I believe we can, providing that we  
2 understand and accept the fact that things have changed  
3 and are continuing to change. We can't apply old solutions  
4 to new problems and expect positive results in all cases.

5 In fact, some of the so-called "old solutions" we know  
6 didn't work. In the past 25 years or more we expected  
7 and relied on governments of all levels to manage a lot  
8 of our money and solve our problems. The result in most  
9 cases was a lot of waste and today we are facing incredible  
10 deficits with no easy solutions in sight.

11 And governments were not the only  
12 culprits. Businesses, large and small, and we, as  
13 individuals, have also been guilty of financial  
14 mismanagement and unreasonable expectations. We have in  
15 most cases lived beyond our means. We have borrowed and  
16 borrowed and borrowed some more. We have taken, and in  
17 too many cases we are still taking, more than what we put  
18 in. The day of reckoning is here. We have to lower our  
19 expectations. We have to take out less and put more in.

20 And this applies to everyone.

21 Aboriginals are entitled to and deserve  
22 equal opportunities that the non-Aboriginal community has.

23 I fully support the concepts, goals of self-government,  
24 self-determination and self-sufficiency. And I am sure  
25 that I speak for a very large majority of the non-Aboriginal

1 community that is involved in the business world. To  
2 succeed and achieve Aboriginals must have equal  
3 opportunity to participate in employment and  
4 entrepreneurial activities. I believe that equal  
5 opportunity means equal access to land and resources.  
6 And I include in the resource area education.

7           When I ask the question "Are we ready,  
8 equipped and prepared to meet the challenges facing us,"  
9 I really feel that from an education point of view, much  
10 more improvement is necessary. Our education system must  
11 do a better job of preparing us for the work force and  
12 the business world. This is the case for the  
13 non-Aboriginal community, and it's even moreso for the  
14 Aboriginal.

15           The reality for much of the Aboriginal  
16 community is that they have traditionally had less access  
17 and less exposure to the work force and business  
18 environment. It's essential that the Aboriginal and  
19 non-Aboriginal community both recognize this and take it  
20 into consideration in determining the requirements of our  
21 education program.

22           For example, one of the ways that people  
23 learn how to start a business or be effective and succeed  
24 in the work force is through role models. These may be  
25 their own families, friends or mentors. For many people

1       who were brought up in a business household they learned  
2       how to operate a business in a way which many Aboriginals  
3       haven't had available to them. If you ask some people  
4       in business how they learned about operating their  
5       business, many of them will say that they learned a lot  
6       over the supper table, during discussions within the  
7       family. Many of today's entrepreneurs learned about the  
8       trials, the tribulations, the values and pride of running  
9       and owning a business.

10                   These role models and mentors have been  
11       very helpful and very important. And the same can be said  
12       about participating and succeeding in the work force.  
13       As I said earlier, the competition in the work force is  
14       much higher than it used to be. And being exposed to an  
15       environment where one or more of the parents are working  
16       in this work force and getting the opportunity to be in  
17       on these supper-time discussions and other discussions  
18       is helpful to the young people as they grow. They learn  
19       to appreciate more what needs to be done to be successful  
20       in both the work force and in business.

21                   To overcome the gap -- and I really  
22       believe that there is a gap between how prepared someone  
23       from the Aboriginal community is as compared to someone  
24       from the non-Aboriginal community -- we have to recognize  
25       that and we have to understand that. For the Aboriginal,

1 they're really starting from a disadvantage when competing  
2 in the non-Aboriginal community, whether it's in business  
3 or in the work force. And I believe that the  
4 non-Aboriginal community must understand that and also  
5 recognize it and take it into consideration when dealing  
6 with the Aboriginal community.

7 Getting back to our education system.

8 When we talk about our education system the programs  
9 designed for the non-Aboriginal community will not  
10 necessarily work for the Aboriginal community. In fact  
11 I look at the programs now for the non-Aboriginal community  
12 and really feel that in many cases young people are not  
13 well prepared for the work force or the business community.

14 It's even moreso in the Aboriginal community.

15 So, what does that mean? It means that  
16 we have to ensure that our programs are designed to meet  
17 the needs. Land and resources alone will not solve our  
18 problems. I can look back in my life and I look at some  
19 of my relatives or friends whose parents had land and money  
20 and that alone certainly didn't ensure success. In many  
21 cases they ended up being worse off because they didn't  
22 know how to handle or how to deal with the land and money  
23 and realized that sometimes there comes an end.

24 The call for self-government among the  
25 Aboriginal population must be accompanied by a recognition



1 that inherent in it is the need for economic  
2 self-sufficiency and I believe that that recognition  
3 exists.

4 But I guess I would like to leave one  
5 message, and that is: that we have to do a better job of  
6 preparing our young people for the work force and it also  
7 includes some of the older people because in some cases,  
8 especially in the Aboriginal community, those people have  
9 not had the opportunity to enter the work force. I think  
10 we must impress upon our leaders that we have to do  
11 something to make sure that these people get the training,  
12 the education, the assistance, for them to participate  
13 effectively whether it be in the work force or in the  
14 business world.

15 The process has got to be an interactive  
16 one. Given all the forces at work-- increasing  
17 competition, growth in knowledge-based industries, fewer  
18 government resources, and so on -- it's going to take a  
19 concerted effort on the part of all of us to arrive at  
20 a situation where inclusion is the operating guideline.  
21 We cannot afford less.

22 That concludes my remarks and I would  
23 be pleased to entertain questions or comments on my  
24 comments.

25 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you. I

1 would like to thank you for sharing those thoughts and  
2 concerns with us.

3 I think the problems are well  
4 identified. It's quite obvious that young Aboriginal  
5 people don't get the education and training that they  
6 should get in many instances, even if the attendance of  
7 a post-secondary institutions is improving year after  
8 year; the number of young people is, as you alluded to  
9 in your remarks, makes it not enough really. And the basic  
10 question is the motivation, and also reasonable means to  
11 forge ahead and do it.

12 I understand that you ran for mayorship  
13 two (2) years ago and we are here in Saskatoon -- we were  
14 in Regina earlier this week. Having in mind the situation  
15 of Metis and Indian people coming to live in the city maybe  
16 I would like to ask you if you could be a bit more specific  
17 on what is your assessment of the situation of Aboriginal  
18 people living in the city, both Indian and Metis, and in  
19 particular of the young people we know that are over 70  
20 per cent of those who are in the provincial penal  
21 institutions that are from either Metis or Indian groups.

22 And this is a major concern of course and most of them  
23 are young people. The same with the penitentiaries. We  
24 had a hearing in Prince Albert for example in the  
25 penitentiary and in many other provinces also and it's

1 a major concern.

2 So, I think everybody recognizes that  
3 individual and collective self-sufficiency is absolutely  
4 essential in a large measure at least. The question is  
5 how are we going to do it. And so could you tell us if  
6 you have a special or specific thoughts to share with us  
7 as to the situation of young people living in the city?

8 **MR. BOB LACOURSIERE:** Certainly I feel  
9 that it's extremely difficult for young Aboriginal people  
10 to come to the city, where in a lot of cases they don't  
11 have the immediate family support, something which is very  
12 important. They are also being exposed to a totally  
13 different environment, a different culture. They are  
14 exposed to too much racism and I think the racism that  
15 we have is due mainly to lack of education, lack of  
16 information, on the part of the non-Aboriginal community.

17 And I suppose some of that goes back to  
18 our education program, our school program. But I think  
19 the non-Aboriginal community and particularly the business  
20 community has to make a much bigger effort to learn more  
21 about the culture and the background of the Aboriginals.

22 And that applies also to government -- I am thinking of  
23 city governments. How do we do that? Cross-cultural  
24 workshops and I think programs that will provide  
25 information and there has -- and it has to be a desire

1 in the non-Aboriginal community to learn and to find out  
2 more.

3 These days it's difficult. Business is  
4 very competitive out there. Everybody is busy, busy, busy  
5 trying to survive in the business world. And consequently  
6 people don't have or don't take the time to think about  
7 what is needed to find out more about the Aboriginal  
8 community.

9 We have to do more in our education, and  
10 again I think a lot of our education programs are designed  
11 and influenced largely by what I would call academics or  
12 people in the education field. Not enough attention is  
13 paid to the needs of the work force and the business  
14 community.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Did you give  
16 thought to the notion of self-government within the city?

17 The discussion so far has been either towards the line  
18 of distinct scoreboards for Aboriginal people, even for  
19 Metis and Indians, health services, health facilities,  
20 hospitals. But we know also that the major organizations,  
21 like the FSIN and Metis Society, are thinking in terms  
22 of some more political structure alongside of the city  
23 council. And of course everybody is a bit in the dark  
24 about the applicability of the concept. It's much more  
25 easier when there is a land base on a reserve to think

1 about it.

2 But did you have an opportunity to think  
3 about how or what could be done and is it realistic? Would  
4 you have some thoughts to share with us on this particular  
5 aspect, because it is a crucial one? How will Aboriginal  
6 people succeed in getting the kind of services they deserve  
7 in accordance to their needs? Do you feel that it would  
8 be enough to sensitize the various branches of the  
9 municipal administration to the particular situations or  
10 is it necessary to go in the direction of separate agencies  
11 and organizations for the delivery of services, or even  
12 for more larger political body?

13 I know it is not an easy question but  
14 it is one that is being asked before the Commission and  
15 the public in general.

16 **MR. BOB LACOURSIERE:** I think that we  
17 have to move in that direction to preserve the culture  
18 of a very important part of our population.

19 When we talk about the education system  
20 we have examples out there where -- call it self-government  
21 or self-determination to a certain point -- is successful.

22 And I am thinking particularly of the French school  
23 system, French schools and they are working in some areas  
24 to have -- they are working towards their separate boards  
25 where they can manage and develop their own programs.

1           There is no question that it's not an easy thing to work  
2           ourselves into but I think it can be done.

3                           In the area of health services, again  
4           I'm confident that a system can be worked out whereby the  
5           Aboriginal community can have a lot more say in how they  
6           deliver the services and what kind of services they deliver  
7           in that area.

8                           I know there has been a lot of discussion  
9           in the area of justice and I'm certainly one that believes  
10          that there is potential there to develop and implement  
11          systems that will work. It's going to take 100 per cent  
12          cooperation between both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal  
13          communities.

14                          **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Coming back to  
15          education, you have mentioned that there is a huge gap  
16          between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in terms of  
17          the fact that there is the environment, the culture, there  
18          is no administrative culture role models. What would be  
19          the practical step to take to make sure that Aboriginal  
20          people will -- and young people in particular -- will want  
21          to forge ahead?

22                          We know that cultures and language are  
23          very important but there is still a huge rate of drop-outs.

24                          That's true for the whole society but -- even truer.  
25          But what is more difficult is that there is a lack of faith

1 that education will get a job, more chances to get a job  
2 at the end and because of what happens to parents and on  
3 and on. So, what could be done to break that circle?

4 Viola Robinson and I, we've visited  
5 many, many communities and we've met with many young people  
6 in Grade Ten, Eleven and Twelve and try to discuss with  
7 them what were the barriers for them moving to another  
8 step in their learning process and the education process.

9 And it's not easy in particular when people are living  
10 in the north, have to leave their community. Because we  
11 have to bring solutions that -- even if they are many,  
12 when added will enable a change to take place.

13 I think everybody agrees on the basic  
14 principle but it's to move from where we are to where it  
15 is felt that people should go with that. This is not easy.

16 So, do you have more precise ideas as to -- in education  
17 for example -- what could be done, generally, and in this  
18 city? The problem is different here. The institutions  
19 are here. People don't have to get out of their community.  
20 But on the other hand they are caught in all kinds of  
21 difficulties, family difficulties, poverty, and on and  
22 on.

23 **MR. BOB LACOURSIERE:** Assuming that  
24 there is a recognition on the part of the Aboriginal  
25 community, and I think there is in the non-Aboriginal

1 community. There is a gap there. I can't help but think  
2 that there are some changes that could and should be made  
3 in our education programs. And some of that might be more  
4 information, more discussion, on -- and maybe role playing  
5 of operating a small business or doing actual things in  
6 school, doing things in school which would sort of put  
7 the student in the position of being an employee or a  
8 business operator. And that has to start in public school,  
9 not wait until the person gets to university.

10 And we know that in university there are  
11 those kinds of classes or assignments in different courses  
12 which give the student that kind of an opportunity. And  
13 there may be a little bit of it in high schools. I believe  
14 that there's got to be a lot more of that and a lot more,  
15 especially in the education programs for Aboriginals.

16 Now, what can we in the city or as a city  
17 do for people who haven't had that opportunity? That's  
18 a tough question. I think doing things to increase the  
19 awareness amongst both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal  
20 community, that's important. When I said cross-cultural  
21 workshops, I think it's something that leaders from both  
22 communities have to get together and try and work out some  
23 solutions and they have to give that top priority. And  
24 especially I think -- and the top priority has to come  
25 more from the non-Aboriginal community because the



1 non-Aboriginal community that has the resources or most  
2 of the resources that are going to be needed to do that.

3 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Yes. I  
4 have a question here and I want to begin by saying that  
5 you have certainly talked about education as being a part  
6 of the solution, and training, and then you also alluded  
7 to racism I guess because of lack of information and lack  
8 of education.

9 I wonder, it seems to me, and you also  
10 said, that a lot of this has to begin at the elementary  
11 school level, at the public school level, elementary school  
12 level. Don't you think it might be a good beginning for  
13 starters if the school system would review their curriculum  
14 right from Grade One, Two, Three, up, and they should start  
15 concentrating on teaching all young children at a time  
16 when the children are in Grades One, Two, Three and Four.

17 I think that's the time that education has an impact on  
18 their lives and their thinking and their attitudes.  
19 That's where they get their life from. The impact on them  
20 there it will stay with them as they are moved that way.

21 And if they are taught the truth and if  
22 they are taught about Aboriginal people in the current  
23 history -- I know when I went to school I was taught about  
24 Jacques Cartier and Columbus and all this stuff you know,  
25 and really we shouldn't even be talking about that any

1 more. Let's start talking about the true history about  
2 Aboriginal people. There is a history in Saskatchewan.

3 There is a history here. There is a history here of the  
4 First Nations. There is a history here of the Metis.

5 And for starters what is it and why is  
6 it that the educational institutions and the governing  
7 bodies of our nation are so reluctant to do a simple thing  
8 like reviewing and collecting history?

9 **MR. BOB LACOURSIERE:** I certainly agree  
10 with your comments and I wish I knew the answer -- and  
11 you mentioned "educational institution."

12 Our educational delivering body is  
13 certainly an institution. And when I think of  
14 institutions I think of groups, bodies or something that  
15 doesn't change very quickly; that it's difficult to change,  
16 and that is certainly the case in our educational  
17 institutions.

18 The change has to come from the outside,  
19 and whether it be governments or business people probably  
20 have to be a lot more aggressive to get the people within  
21 the institutions to change. And that's not easy because  
22 quite frankly if you're part of the education institution  
23 now -- and let's say as a teacher -- and you start out  
24 as a teacher, you're really there -- it's like you're there  
25 permanently. And if someone is not performing at a level

1 that they should be in the education institution, can't  
2 get them out. And that's the frustration that people in  
3 business have with our education system, our education  
4 institutions.

5 People in business often say that,  
6 well -- and I say this with no disrespect to teachers --  
7 if a teacher is in -- once a teacher is in the system,  
8 can't fire them, you can't make -- it's difficult to  
9 initiate some changes. That's not the case in business.

10 I think business has, over the years, made quite a few  
11 changes in how they do things. It's a lot slower in the  
12 education system and we can look at the university for  
13 example. I mean once you're a prof at the university  
14 you're there for life and nobody else can get you out of  
15 there unless you decide yourself. Now that may be putting  
16 it in the extreme but it's ---

17 So, how do we get those changes made?

18 I think that this process that we are going through is  
19 certainly going to raise the awareness and I think that  
20 we have to place even more emphasis on that need to make  
21 some changes. And I fully agree with you that the  
22 curriculum has to be changed.

23 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Again, we  
24 talked about it has to be changed but we really don't know  
25 how to do it I guess and how do we influence people in

1 thinking.

2 Again, with this self-government,  
3 self-determination we talked about, which is important.

4 I mean that is what Aboriginal people are looking for  
5 and looking for support in the urban situation. And I  
6 guess within an urban situation -- and you also touched  
7 on this too -- I think they are looking for an integrated  
8 form of government because they live in an urban area.  
9 They do have to live within the laws of the city and town  
10 or whatever, provincial, because they are in an urban --  
11 and they do pay tax as well once you come into an urban  
12 situation. Because you pay tax then it's your tax money  
13 that's going into the system so you should be able to get  
14 something back.

15 And they are looking for an integrated  
16 form of self-government which means that they should be  
17 a part of the governing institutions, like for instance  
18 school boards or hospital boards or any management board  
19 that is running a community. And in normal cases I guess  
20 people usually do this through a democratic process,  
21 through election procedures. And we know that's the way  
22 the country is for an Aboriginal person to run for one  
23 of these seats or whatever it would be very difficult  
24 because they would have a hard time getting support.

25 How would we get around that? How would

1 we say, if we wanted -- "Yes, we think there's an integrated  
2 form of self-government has to be implemented in the City  
3 of Saskatoon for all those urban Aboriginal people and  
4 they should be a part of the governing and decision-making  
5 system for their own people and they have their own little  
6 institutions to do that," how do you think that should  
7 happen?

8 First of all, I would think the attitude  
9 of the non-Aboriginal people has to change and change  
10 drastically, to support it. How do we get the people to  
11 support it?

12 **MR. BOB LACOURSIERE:** Change.

13 How do we get the non-Aboriginal  
14 community to support change?

15 I think we've seen a lot of progress in  
16 that direction in the last two (2) to three (3) years,  
17 and moreso even in the last year and a half with all the  
18 discussion in the referendum and so on.

19 How do we accelerate that movement?

20 I think the non-Aboriginal community has  
21 definitely got to do things on their own, like I said doing  
22 things to find out more about the Aboriginal culture and  
23 so on. And I think that the leaders in the Aboriginal  
24 community also have to perhaps be a little bit more  
25 aggressive in trying to get involved, whether it would

1 be for example in the Chamber of Commerce, school boards  
2 and so on.

3 And I realize that the leaders in the  
4 Aboriginal community -- and I think of people, say, from  
5 FSIN or the Metis Society -- that are just a few people  
6 trying to get a lot done. And sometimes I think that  
7 getting involved, say, in the Chamber of Commerce or in  
8 a business organization, is not seen as as high a priority.

9 So I think the Aboriginal leaders have to concentrate  
10 perhaps a bit more on trying to get involved. At the same  
11 time, the non-Aboriginal community has to provide the  
12 opportunities and welcome them onto that team.

13 From the discussions that I've had in  
14 the business community, I think the business community  
15 is much more ready than it ever has been to sort of welcome  
16 the participation of the Aboriginal leaders.

17 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank  
18 you.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
20 much for sharing your thoughts and we hope that many of  
21 those issues will get additional clarification as we  
22 progress because some of them are not easy, and  
23 self-government within an urban setting is one of them.

24 Thank you.

25 **MR. BOB LACOURSIERE:** Thank you.

1                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I would now  
2 like to ask the representative for the Canadian Wildlife  
3 Federation, Sandy Baumgartner, to come up to the table  
4 and join us.

5                   Good afternoon.

6                   **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Good afternoon.

7                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I know you had  
8 to act as a substitute for Garry Blandel on the spur of  
9 the moment.

10                  **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Yes. Actually,  
11 Garry, unfortunately, has appendicitis and is waiting to  
12 be operated as we speak.

13                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** So you wish him  
14 well ---

15                  **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** I will. Thank  
16 you.

17                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- from us.  
18 So, if you could identify yourself for  
19 the sake of the record?

20                  **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Okay.

21                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** And you  
22 proceed whenever you are ready.

23                  **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Okay.

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

25                  **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Thank you.

1                   My name is Sandy Baumgartner. I am the  
2                   Manager of Communications and Programs for the Canadian  
3                   Wildlife Federation and I would like to thank the  
4                   Commission for allowing the Wildlife Federation an  
5                   opportunity to speak to you today.

6                   First, I would like to begin with just  
7                   describing the Wildlife Federation. The Canadian  
8                   Wildlife Federation is the largest non-profit,  
9                   non-government, conservation organization in the country.  
10                  We represent approximately 600,000 members and  
11                  supporters.

12                  Our main goal is to ensure the wise use  
13                  of Canada's natural resources and we do this through three  
14                  (3) main activities: one is advocacy; two is funding and  
15                  research of recovery efforts for various wildlife species;  
16                  and the third is education and information programs, both  
17                  for the public and for school children. I would just like  
18                  to stress that our number one concern is wildlife and  
19                  wildlife conservation.

20                  Now, having said that and having read  
21                  and reviewed the discussion papers from the previous two  
22                  (2) rounds of hearings, I think that there is a lot of  
23                  common ground that we can find and I think there has been  
24                  many efforts and many good news stories I think that maybe  
25                  have been overlooked.



1                   The first thing I would like to do this  
2                   afternoon is I would just to outline the Canadian Wildlife  
3                   Federation position paper which I believe that you were  
4                   handed out at the beginning of the presentation and I will  
5                   speak to that, as well as I will add to that as to some  
6                   of the initiatives that we have undertaken as an  
7                   organization.

8                   First of all, the Canadian Wildlife  
9                   Federation respects and recognizes the legal and  
10                  constitutional rights of Aboriginal people. We also  
11                  recognize that in many regions of the country the use of  
12                  wildlife by Aboriginal persons is crucial for their  
13                  economic, social and cultural well-being. Governments  
14                  must continue to be responsible, however, for ensuring  
15                  that the use of wildlife is sustainable.

16                  Having said that, however, we recognize  
17                  that Aboriginal peoples have traditionally been consulted  
18                  about management plans and that government should develop  
19                  cooperative wildlife and land use management plans with  
20                  all interest groups, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.

21                  As previously stated, the Canadian  
22                  Wildlife Federation recognizes that in many areas of the  
23                  country use of wildlife is crucial to the existence of  
24                  Aboriginal people. Therefore, we believe that the  
25                  allocation of resources should be given the following

1 priorities, and they are outlined in our position paper.

2 The number one priority being Aboriginal  
3 subsistence uses, number two non-Aboriginal subsistence  
4 use, number three recreational users, and, fourth,  
5 commercial users, recognizing, however, that conservation  
6 of wildlife is our main priority and the main priority  
7 of all Canadians. So, if a species is threatened or  
8 endangered all users should discontinue harvesting that  
9 resource.

10 Now, from that -- and that's just sort  
11 of a summary of our position paper -- there is common ground  
12 that we have found and there is practical solutions that  
13 exist to alleviate some of the conflicts that are happening  
14 today. And the Canadian Wildlife Federation is  
15 participating in several cooperative activities that I  
16 would like to outline today.

17 First of all, we've provided financial  
18 assistance to a unique project in the Northwest  
19 Territories. It's a Dene Community Band who is going to  
20 manage a bison herd with the goal to be TB-free in 10 years.

21  
22 Another initiative that we have  
23 supported is the development of an educational supplement  
24 to our education program "Project Wild" the Saskatchewan  
25 Indian Cultural Centre and they must be commended for

1 developing this supplement to Project Wild and I understand  
2 that it's being used in many schools in this province.

3 Thirdly, our recreational fisheries  
4 conference in September of last year brought together  
5 Native and non-Native interests to discuss the many  
6 problems facing Canada's fresh water fisheries. And I  
7 believe it was probably one of the first times that the  
8 two (2) groups actually sat around a table and discussed  
9 common areas of concern.

10 Another initiative is we are developing  
11 a program to raise awareness amongst the public about the  
12 problems of poaching of wildlife. And we are bringing  
13 together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups to help  
14 develop this educational component for the program.

15 And, finally, we are extremely pleased  
16 to be a signatory to a landmark agreement between the  
17 Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Saskatchewan  
18 Wildlife Federation and the provincial and the federal  
19 governments. This agreement is a record of the parties  
20 intentions and it will be the basis for joint wildlife  
21 conservation and development activities. The principles  
22 of this agreement I'll just outline and the agreement to  
23 my understanding will be signed on Monday at the Wildlife  
24 Conference in Saskatoon. And I would just like to outline  
25 some of the principles that I think is very unique in

1 wildlife conservation.

2 The first principle is conservation is  
3 integral to the survival of Indian and non-Indian people.

4 Indian people are entitled to define and exercise their  
5 culture and to blend their culture with contemporary  
6 wildlife management practices. Parity should be given  
7 to the protection and development and perpetuation of  
8 wildlife species and their supporting habitats.  
9 Management activities should promote wildlife population  
10 levels. Sharing of wildlife population data and  
11 information to result in common wildlife data bases.

12 Inter-cultural exchange and the sharing  
13 of information with respect to wildlife conservation and  
14 management should be fostered. Indian First Nations and  
15 Indian people should be involved in base line studies and  
16 research activities involving wildlife conservation.  
17 Native people should be employed in areas of wildlife  
18 management. Where wildlife population data indicates  
19 that harvesting of a species of wildlife would endanger  
20 that species Indian nations, where their interests are  
21 concerned, should be involved in planned policies or  
22 measures designed to protect that species.

23 Financial and technical resources to  
24 develop and maintain either Indian-specific or co-managed  
25 wildlife conservation activities should be undertaken.

1 And remembering that the primary purpose is to contribute  
2 to the better overall wildlife resource development and  
3 utilization.

4 I am happy to say that that announcement  
5 and that agreement will be signed by all the parties next  
6 Monday.

7 So, as you can see, there is some common  
8 ground out there. It's taken years to bring this agreement  
9 to a date for signing and I think that's significant.

10 In closing I would just like to point  
11 out that the Canadian Wildlife Federation does recognize  
12 Aboriginal rights. We do acknowledge that under the  
13 Constitution and legally Aboriginal people have certain  
14 rights. However, I must remind you that wildlife knows  
15 no boundaries and wildlife knows no jurisdiction.

16 No one owns wildlife. It is up to all  
17 Canadians, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, to work together  
18 to ensure healthy and abundant wildlife populations for  
19 the future of all Canadians.

20 Thank you and I will entertain any  
21 questions.

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

23 I understand that this brief is  
24 presented on behalf of the national organization ---

25 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Yes.

1                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- and not ---  
2                   Are there provincial chapters or could  
3                   you give us ---

4                   **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** We have, in every  
5                   province, a provincial affiliate. For example, the  
6                   Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation here is an affiliate of  
7                   the Canadian Wildlife Federation. And we do work  
8                   cooperatively on agreements, as the MOU, as I stated, but  
9                   we also work autonomously with different programs as well.

10                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** As you know  
11                  this is a very important topic for the work of this  
12                  Commission and that there are very often conflicting points  
13                  of view on what are the Aboriginal rights as far as wildlife  
14                  is concerned.

15                  I understand that the approach of the  
16                  Canadian Federation is to say that in remote areas and  
17                  in other areas where, by tradition, Aboriginal people have  
18                  been harvesting for their food, shelter and subsistence,  
19                  that you share the point of view that it's part of their  
20                  right to ---

21                  **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Yes, I do.

22                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- to do that.

23                  You stress also in your brief that many  
24                  non-Aboriginal peoples in remote areas have been doing  
25                  it also. Of course even that brings the whole question

1 of the provincial regulations and the federal regulations  
2 because very often we are told that those regulations do  
3 not take into account those factors as far as fishing  
4 season, hunting season is concerned and on and on. And  
5 this is a major point of friction somehow with many  
6 Aboriginal people in this country, even when it's done  
7 for their own subsistence. So this is one area where there  
8 is still some thought to be given as to how it should be  
9 adjusted.

10 And maybe I would like to ask -- and then  
11 the other field which is of course bigger, is the commercial  
12 use of the resource.

13 But if we stay only on the subsistence  
14 side of things, do you feel as a Federation that when you  
15 say that there should be government control over wildlife  
16 management, but do you have some ideas about the kind of  
17 adjustment that could be made to regulations in various  
18 parts of the country to help people without impairing the  
19 resource to pursue what they have been doing traditionally  
20 for generations and generations, if not centuries.

21 So has your organization, the  
22 Federation, given thought to this particular issue of the  
23 regulations, the period and on and on?

24 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Yes, actually,  
25 we have and one of the things is that we are very supportive

1 of co-management agreements so that all interested groups  
2 can be consulted. Traditionally governments have set  
3 regulations based on their data and their information and  
4 Aboriginal groups have not been consulted. Similarly,  
5 groups like ours -- conservation groups -- have not been  
6 consulted either. And we strongly believe that all  
7 parties should be a part of developing those management  
8 plans in order to better allocate the resources.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** I understand  
10 that but my question is are you -- not you personally,  
11 but the Federation -- do you see the possibility of coming  
12 back to the rights of harvesting the resource for food,  
13 shelter, subsistence, that there is a practical aspect  
14 to the exercise of these rights by Aboriginal people?  
15 What I mean is that if an area that the regulation is for  
16 hunting season or the fishing season covers everybody  
17 normally, that's the way it is. And then when an  
18 individual Indian or Metis person goes hunting or fishing  
19 during the season that is the off season then there is  
20 a prosecution.

21 So, do you see or recognize that there  
22 could be differences?

23 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Yes. Okay, I  
24 understand ---

25 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- depending



1 to the fact that you are an Indian or a Metis and you have  
2 special rights? I am not talking about the commercial  
3 at this point but ---

4 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Yes.

5 Generally our position is that as long  
6 as an Aboriginal person is hunting or fishing on their  
7 treaty land we believe that they can do that all year long  
8 without regulation.

9 However ---

10 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Which is that  
11 the case for non-Aboriginal people in the same area?

12 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** That's right,  
13 within treaty lands.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes.

15 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** And where there  
16 is other lands that are not covered by treaty we believe  
17 that all people, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, should  
18 be guided by the same regulations.

19 So if there is a hunting season in a  
20 particular area that is not covered by a treaty we believe  
21 that all people should be treated equally and should follow  
22 the regulations in that area. Those areas are dwindling  
23 as it is, so the wildlife is dwindling and we feel strongly  
24 that those areas should be still regulated by the  
25 regulations of that particular region.

1                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** What about  
2 areas like in Eastern Canada where there is no treaty land  
3 the same way that there is some pre-Confederation treaty  
4 but there is no numbered treaty as there are here, out  
5 West.

6                   So, being a Canadian federation, the  
7 ancestral territory, does your answer cover -- because  
8 you've answered from a treaty land point of view but in  
9 some provinces -- in Quebec and Eastern Canada -- there  
10 are no -- there are ancestral territory.

11                   So could you complete your ---

12                   **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** As far as those  
13 areas, quite frankly I'm not sure how our position would  
14 cover those areas. You know if there are areas that are  
15 recognized by that province then you know we would live  
16 by those arrangements, those ancestral arrangements.

17                   However, they would have to be I suppose  
18 worked out in that jurisdiction with the provinces and  
19 the other interests, to work out some kind of an agreement  
20 of what area does cover their ancestral -- I'm not sure  
21 if there is areas that are mapped out. I'm sorry.

22                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Viola Robinson  
23 is from Nova Scotia and there has been a debate for many  
24 years in this province. People have been prosecuted and  
25 there is no treaty land in the sense that we have here

1 in Saskatchewan.

2 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** I understand  
3 that, though, Nova Scotia -- and I could be wrong -- but  
4 I understand there is some kind of co-management  
5 arrangements.

6 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** In Nova  
7 Scotia the pre-Confederation treaties recognize or  
8 guarantee hunting and fishing rights and gathering for  
9 Micmac people as a Nation. And of course we had to go  
10 through the courts to accomplish this. However in doing  
11 that, after that was done, we were still being prosecuted.  
12 They were still applying provincial laws to the hunting  
13 regulations.

14 And that was pursued by the Micmac Nation  
15 that they didn't have jurisdiction to do that, that the  
16 treaty rights, pre-Confederation treaties, superseded  
17 Indian Act, superseded the provincial laws, and they didn't  
18 apply. And that was won in court. But, having said that,  
19 there was still some difficulty. However, the Micmac  
20 still exercised their right they assert and they exercise  
21 their right to hunt and now to fish under the  
22 pre-Confederation treaty.

23 And what has happened there, what's  
24 happened is I don't think the bands have -- I think back  
25 in maybe '86 or '87 there was an agreement signed,

1 conservation agreement, but Wildlife Federation wasn't  
2 a part of that.

3 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** No.

4 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** It's a  
5 strictly bi-lateral conservation agreement between the  
6 Province of Nova Scotia and the Micmac Nation, and that  
7 we regulate our own hunting -- we made our hunting  
8 regulations -- and we abide by them and we regulate our  
9 own people.

10 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** It's far better  
11 than other provinces.

12 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** And it's  
13 anywhere except -- I mean it's anywhere on -- we wouldn't  
14 go on private land and certainly we wouldn't hunt on Godigan  
15 Street in Halifax but certainly you know the people know  
16 how to -- and certainly they wouldn't hunt -- they have  
17 the right to hunt 12 months out of a year but they don't  
18 do that.

19 But initially we did have opposition  
20 down there from the Wildlife Federation who were really  
21 opposed to acknowledging that right -- as a right because  
22 of conservation. But I think what has been always stressed  
23 is that I think First Nations in Canada are very  
24 conservation-conscious and safety conscious. And I'm not  
25 sure if this is supported by the Wildlife Federation

1 because there was some problems down there, even with a  
2 meeting that it was being opposed to.

3 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Actually, just  
4 if I could clarify?

5 Even though the national -- like the  
6 Canadian Wildlife Federation has a policy. Some of the  
7 provincial affiliates may differ in theirs, given that  
8 we cover a much broader range of a constituency where the  
9 provincial organizations are primarily hunting and fishing  
10 organizations. We have a much broader audience. So I  
11 guess maybe our policy would be much broader than a  
12 provincial.

13 Also, I would like to just add that very  
14 much so our primary concern for the Canadian Wildlife  
15 Federation is conservation and you know that is our number  
16 one goal above all. Our main concern is for wildlife and  
17 so if that means nobody harvests a resource because it's  
18 threatened, we would feel strongly and we would push for  
19 that. However, you know, when there is enough resource  
20 and there is a need to harvest that resource we recognize,  
21 as we pointed out, the first is for subsistence and then  
22 for other users. So our primary concern is conservation.

23 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I think  
24 that's a primary concern as well of Aboriginal people,  
25 as I say. I don't know. Some of them now are not signing

1 agreements; they just go ahead but they are not being  
2 prosecuted. That is in Nova Scotia anyway.

3 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** M'hm.

4 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** It's not  
5 that easy in New Brunswick and other places but it's been  
6 quite a struggle.

7 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Actually, we  
8 recognize and we are very pleased that an agreement is  
9 going to be signed here in Saskatchewan and we've  
10 encouraged the other provinces to develop similar  
11 co-management agreements.

12 However, we do recognize that many of  
13 the provinces have much more difficult situations to deal  
14 with and even that -- though in Saskatchewan my  
15 understanding is that it took several years of negotiating  
16 and hard negotiations between the Saskatchewan Wildlife  
17 Federation and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian  
18 Nations. And they should be commended for that but it's --  
19 you know it wasn't easy for them to get that far and it  
20 won't be easy for other groups but I think in the best  
21 interest of the resource you know we certainly are  
22 encouraging provincial wildlife agencies to proceed in  
23 that direction.

24 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I guess  
25 I just -- I wonder if for instance a First Nations group



1                   However, there would have to be some  
2 mechanism to work with groups or jurisdictions outside  
3 that area because wildlife knows no boundaries. You know  
4 a deer is going to go from that jurisdiction to the next  
5 to the next. So my concern would be how you would manage  
6 that with your neighbours.

7                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Well,  
8 it's happening now.

9                   **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Yes.

10                  **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** It's  
11 happening now. Treaty areas and reserves, wildlife has  
12 no boundaries and they are doing that ---

13                  **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Yes. The  
14 problem is trying to -- the problem now is that provincial  
15 jurisdictions seem to have problems managing what they  
16 have because they don't know what's in the next  
17 jurisdiction, say, on a reserve. If there was an  
18 information-sharing process that would be acceptable to  
19 us.

20                  **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank  
21 you.

22                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** This agreement  
23 that you are going to sign on Monday is your Saskatchewan  
24 affiliated part of ---

25                  **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Yes, they are.



1       They are one of the signatories to that agreement.  
2       Actually, they were one of the key groups negotiating the  
3       process of the negotiations with the FSIN.

4                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Because I am  
5       still reading your brief and I still have some difficulty  
6       to read what you just said, that in treaty area let's say  
7       this situation that you recognize that there is a kind  
8       of special status in that case.

9                   If we move now, if we turn to the  
10       commercial fishing. So your point of view there is that  
11       the resource should be co-managed and quotas should be  
12       given to groups and that there should not be special rights  
13       recognized?

14                   **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Outside of  
15       treaty areas, yes.

16                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Outside of  
17       treaty.

18                   What if - for example we are going to  
19       Restigouche, Quebec, Viola Robinson and myself, mid-June.

20       And every month of June there is a difficulty there with  
21       the salmon and because very often -- what happens if on  
22       the land, on the reserve, or the treaty land, the resource  
23       is there and is cut off in a way where it has an impact  
24       on non-treaty land or non-reserve land? When you say that  
25       you recognize the use of the resource commercially, when

1 it is on treaty land and on the reserve ---

2 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Well,  
3 commercially if you notice on our paper we've had  
4 commercial as kind of "if there's enough left over" ---

5 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes.

6 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** --- for that use.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Okay. So  
8 that's what I'm reading.

9 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Yes.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** In your paper  
11 you don't say "Well, we recognize the special rights,"  
12 and "It has to be co-managed," and "If the resource is  
13 available the quotas should be allocated to everybody."

14 So you don't -- I just try to get right what you recognize  
15 and what you don't recognize.

16 I think it's quite clear for when the  
17 purpose of harvesting the resource is for subsistence,  
18 on treaty land.

19 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** M'hm.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** This is a  
21 special -- you recognize that this is a special right,  
22 different from the non-Aboriginal people?

23 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** M'hm.

24 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** On the  
25 commercial side there is a possibility of exploiting the

1 resource commercially on treaty land.

2 What is the Federation's point of view?

3 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** That's a tricky  
4 one because it tends to be controversial in that I suppose  
5 on treaty lands if it's not going to be harmful for the  
6 resource -- keeping in mind that our number one concern  
7 is conservation you know and recognizing that there are  
8 special rights -- I suppose you know we would consider  
9 that.

10 However when the resource is exploited  
11 or overused for commercial use we would not support that;  
12 we would have some concern if it meant harming the resource,  
13 if it meant reducing populations because of overuse. You  
14 know treaty lands or not we would still be concerned if  
15 a population was to an extinct level or to an endangered  
16 level. We would have some concerns and I suppose we would  
17 go -- say if it was on a treaty area, maybe we would perhaps  
18 speak to or go to that nation that had jurisdiction over  
19 that area with our concern in order to keep the conservation  
20 of that resource as our number one issue. So, how they  
21 use it I suppose isn't the main concern, as long as they  
22 maintain the populations.

23 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Taking this  
24 into account -- I tried to be as precise as possible --  
25 if for example the resource is used commercially by

1           Aboriginal people on the reserve in a way where it keeps  
2           the level of the resource at a point where it meets the  
3           standard of conservation but it does not give room for  
4           other. Like salmon for example in Restigouche. The  
5           problem is that it's possible that the resources vested  
6           commercially in a way that it does not hamper the  
7           conservation principle ---

8                           **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** M'hm.

9                           **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- but it does  
10           it does not allow others then to do some or to share in  
11           the resource without this time giving it ---

12                          **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** I guess in that  
13           case what we would like to see would be the ideal situation,  
14           is for all the parties, the interest groups, to negotiate  
15           some type of an allocation amongst themselves so that there  
16           could be some sharing rather than a single user, when there  
17           is conflict and there is you know many users in one area.

18                          **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Coming back to  
19           what you said: that your concern is wider than the  
20           provincial affiliate.

21                          **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** M'hm.

22                          **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Do you try  
23           to -- because I understand that some of your affiliates  
24           could have different points of view ---

25                          **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Yes.

1                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- in areas  
2 of the country?

3                   **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** M'hm.

4                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Some have.  
5                   So they're independent. Do you have a  
6 sharing clearinghouse with the affiliates where you  
7 discuss those issues?

8                   **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Yes, we discuss  
9 the issues and we share information, yes, as far as --  
10 if a provincial affiliate for example asks us to work with  
11 them in an advocacy role, you know if it's within the bounds  
12 of our mandate and our objectives we would work with them.

13                   However, if there is a jurisdictional  
14 problem in that it's beyond our mandate we would not.  
15 And there has been cases where, if there is conflict --  
16 I shouldn't say conflict -- but if there is different  
17 mandates we wouldn't, and there's many issues that -- for  
18 example many of our affiliates lobby the provincial  
19 governments for actual allocations of resources on the  
20 hunting seasons and that sort of thing. As a national  
21 organization we don't get involved in that. It's not our  
22 mandate to negotiate with governments for example on  
23 hunting seasons.

24                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Go ahead.

25                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I just

1 want to make reference to your conclusion here on this  
2 paper here of the Canadian Wildlife Federation position  
3 paper. And this is like the national paper?

4 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** That's right.

5 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** And what  
6 you are saying is not what it says here it seems to me  
7 you know and I think that's the problem I'm having. Like  
8 for instance it says "We respect the necessity of  
9 Aboriginal persons to harvest wildlife for subsistence  
10 in regions where this activity represents a traditional  
11 pursuit."

12 Then it says "The Federation does not  
13 support any other exclusive or priority users of wildlife  
14 resources by Aboriginal persons in Canada, nor do..." ---

15 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** Outside of  
16 treaty areas.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** It is not  
18 clear.

19 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** It is not clear,  
20 yes.

21 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** It's not  
22 clear.

23 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Like the  
24 discussion we had, what you are saying and what is written  
25 here ---

1                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** It  
2 doesn't say that. It says "...nor do we support situations  
3 whereby governments grant to Aboriginal persons  
4 jurisdiction over wildlife or exclusion from prosecution  
5 under laws designed to conserve wildlife." But that's  
6 not what you said, because this happens; like in Nova  
7 Scotia, they have.

8                   **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** But it's an  
9 agreement ---

10                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Well,  
11 even before the agreement with you know the -- because  
12 it was a court decision, a Supreme Court decision ---

13                   **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** M'hm.

14                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** --- that  
15 the provincial laws didn't apply. But just to save a lot  
16 of problems and stuff there was a conservation agreement  
17 eventually.

18                   **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** M'hm.

19                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** But even  
20 if it wasn't it would still be happening. And "We do not  
21 support the development of land use and wildlife management  
22 plans and agreements solely between Aboriginal groups and  
23 Canadian government;" and yet this happens too between  
24 like between Department of Fisheries and Aboriginal First  
25 Nations. You don't support that?

1                   **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** No.

2                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** You  
3 don't.

4                   **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** We think that all  
5 groups should be involved in conservation issues and so  
6 all people that have concerns about resources should be  
7 consulted.

8                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank  
9 you.

10                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
11 much. As this is a very important and sensitive issue  
12 it might be useful if the nuances or the addition you made  
13 on the first point -- harvesting for subsistence on treaty  
14 land ---

15                  **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:** M'hm.

16                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- because we  
17 don't find that in the written brief.

18                  **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:** Okay. I guess  
19 when the brief refers to regions of the country that are  
20 traditional native lands is what that is referring to.

21                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Well, we have  
22 your brief.

23                  **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:** Yes.

24                  **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** What I am  
25 saying is that it might be useful if you could convey that



1           there might be more precision in order that in this area  
2           we would like -- the Commission would like to know as  
3           precisely as possible what the position is of ---

4                       **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:**   Okay.

5                       **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**   --- of the  
6           Federation ---

7                       **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:**   Certainly I can  
8           clarify that ---

9                       **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**   --- in order  
10          to avoid any misunderstanding ---

11                      **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:**   Certainly.

12                      **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**   --- and us  
13          recommending things without really being sure of what is  
14          the position of your Federation.

15                      **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:**   Okay. I can  
16          certainly have that clarified and submitted to you.

17                      **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**   It would be  
18          useful.

19                      **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:**   Okay.

20                      **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**   And if there  
21          is additional thoughts to convey to us during the coming  
22          weeks and months we are very interested because it's  
23          certainly a burning issue, not only on the commercial side  
24          but also on the subsistence side.

25                      **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:**   Actually, I

1 think something that you said, ma'am, that we can all agree  
2 on and is sort of central to everything when I said we  
3 had common ground, is that we recognize that the concern  
4 of Aboriginal people is conservation and always has been  
5 conservation.

6 I guess maybe it's taken some of the rest  
7 of us a little bit longer to get around to that thought  
8 but you know I guess if I could leave you with one thought  
9 it is you know our main concern is wildlife and as long  
10 as wildlife is the number one concern we can agree on the  
11 conservation of that wildlife. Some of the details I  
12 suppose we can you know work out as you go through this  
13 process, but that's our main concern.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** We understand  
15 that but it's a domain where some precision ---

16 **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:** Yes.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- is  
18 important because if we stay at the level of ---

19 **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:** I recognize  
20 that.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** --- the  
22 general principles ---

23 **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:** Yes, no, and I  
24 apologize for not being able to clarify that.

25 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** No problem, no

1 problem.

2 But what we are conveying is that it  
3 would be useful if could have as precise a position as  
4 possible.

5 **MS SANDIE BAUMGARTNER:** Certainly.  
6 Yes, I will undertake to get that and have it presented  
7 to you.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
9 much and you wish Garry Blandel well.

10 **MS SANDY BAUMGARTNER:** I will do that.  
11 Thank you very much.

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

13 Okay. We are going to take a break  
14 until -- we still have two (2) presenters who could not  
15 come before quarter to six, so resuming at quarter to six  
16 up to 7:00 o'clock.

17 Thank you.

18 --- Upon recessing at 4:54 p.m.

19 --- Upon resuming at 5:33 p.m.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Good  
21 afternoon.

22 Well, first of all, I would like to  
23 welcome you to these hearings and you may proceed whenever  
24 you are ready.

25 **MR. ROBERT DOUCETTE:** Rene, Viola,

1 (Indian language). I am back again. I guess  
2 introductions are due but I will let each individual  
3 introduce themselves.

4 My name is Robert Doucette. Again, I  
5 am the Chair of Metis Local 126 but I wear other hats too.

6 I am a volunteer from CUSO and I also am affiliated with  
7 the Saskatchewan 500 Years Coalition which is a group that  
8 is comprised of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people  
9 working together in a community.

10 Before we throw off what we feel is key  
11 we'd like to give you some items that we put together if  
12 we may. One is a T-shirt.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you  
14 (referring to the T-shirt).

15 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank you  
16 very much.

17 **MR. ROBERT DOUCETTE:** Next is a tape.

18 The tape is called "Spirit Rise." It's by Voices of the  
19 Forest and it's a production just released last weekend  
20 by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal singers and musicians  
21 and it talks about issues related to indigenous rights  
22 and Aboriginal rights and environmental rights. And we  
23 thought you'd enjoy it as you travel across the country.

24 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes, that is  
25 great.

1                   **MR. ROBERT DOUCETTE:** And, thirdly, our  
2 group put together a bar patch around 500 years, 1992,  
3 the advent of Columbus. And last but not least -- I was  
4 going to give this to you last night -- but it is a poster  
5 of the Metis Nation and it explains what it means and I've  
6 got one for each of you.

7                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank  
8 you.

9                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you.  
10 So if you could identify yourself for  
11 the sake of the record?

12                   **MR. DON KOSSICK:** I am Don Kossick,  
13 Regional Director for CUSO in Saskatchewan, and CUSO of  
14 Saskatchewan is a member of the Indigenous Coalition and  
15 the 500 Years Coalition.

16                   **MS MARLENE LAROCQUE:** I am Marlene  
17 Larocque. I am a CUSO volunteer. I am also with the  
18 Indigenous Coalition, the 500 Years Coalition and I'm  
19 currently employed by the City of Saskatoon.

20                   **MR. EMIL BELL:** My name is Emil Bell.  
21 I am part of the Saskatoon Indigenous Coalition and also  
22 working very closely with Don Kossick and also the 500  
23 Year Coalition and also I'm one of the people that is  
24 strongly supporting the Protectors of Mother Earth or a  
25 group of people up in the northern communities protecting

1 for trying to preserve Mother Earth and also to prevent  
2 clearcutting that is happening up in the northern areas.

3 **MR. ROBERT DOUCETTE:** Okay. I would  
4 like to start off firstly, and I know last night was pretty  
5 hard. I said self-government won't work unless we get  
6 resources and I said some pretty harsh things. But I want  
7 to talk today about how things can work when communities  
8 get together. And I think the group of people here to  
9 present to you will give evidence of that.

10 Again, I am a volunteer with CUSO and  
11 with the Saskatchewan 500 Years and we put together  
12 alternative programming to deal with some of the issues  
13 that I had talked about. For example, education. There  
14 is a lack of information out there and last year was the  
15 year that Columbus bumped into America and we thought that  
16 because there wasn't enough information about Aboriginal  
17 people out there and the whole issue surrounding  
18 colonialism and its effects on Aboriginal people -- and  
19 non-Aboriginal people because we're both victims -- we  
20 felt that it was necessary to put together a coalition  
21 with CUSO to deal with these things.

22 Some of the things that we undertook are  
23 in front of you. We put together a magazine that revolves  
24 around issues that impact on Aboriginal people -- the  
25 colonial mentality, mining, environmental issues, women

1 -- and I think that you will enjoy some of the articles  
2 in there.

3 We put together an international  
4 conference in Prince Albert, an international youth  
5 conference, and brought together over 650 delegates from  
6 all parts of the world, from the Caribbean, Australia,  
7 Africa, South America and Central America and the United  
8 States and also a contingent of indigenous people from  
9 our country.

10 The conferences were three days and a  
11 lot of information was shared amongst the delegates and  
12 much was learned. I don't want to get into it because  
13 let's just say it was a well-attended event, although it  
14 was colder than usual for August.

15 Our group also does speaking and  
16 lecturing to the public. We go out to the church groups.  
17 We go to schools. We go to -- well, I was invited to  
18 the police commission to lecture about the Metis. So,  
19 we do speaking and lecturing and we don't charge anything;  
20 we do it on a volunteer basis.

21 As some of my colleagues here said also  
22 we do support and advocacy for Aboriginal groups across  
23 Saskatchewan. Protectors of Mother Earth is an example  
24 of that. And also any other group that wants to push  
25 information we serve as a network to push information from

1 all parts of the world, from one side of the country to  
2 the next.

3 And this alliance-building that we do  
4 I believe is key and it's from the community up. Yesterday  
5 we had a -- and you can correct me -- but for the most  
6 part we had elite people around a table that I sometimes  
7 wonder whether they think about the human element about  
8 development. I heard a lot of talk about money yesterday  
9 but I didn't hear a lot of talk about the human development  
10 and how alliance-building through links like CUSO can build  
11 up and strengthen the resolve regarding Aboriginal rights.

12 So, this is a key thing and I believe  
13 that, as you hear from my other colleagues here, you will  
14 hear how we are trying to build up and foster a positive  
15 environment in Saskatoon regarding Aboriginal rights and  
16 issues revolving around Aboriginal people.

17 So, with that, Don.

18 **MR. DON KOSSICK:** Yes. I am just going  
19 to take a little bit of a different tack but deal with  
20 what I think is a problem that we have to come to grips  
21 with if we are going to find solutions in Canada.

22 I think that we have to take on the whole  
23 concept of structural apartheid. CUSO, by the way, is  
24 an international development organization. We work all  
25 over the world. We've done that for the last 32 years.



1       We've worked a lot in areas such as Southern Africa where  
2       we've had to deal with communities in societies that have  
3       to rebuild themselves after years of colonialism. Now  
4       Mozambique is an example of that, and Zimbabwe. South  
5       Africa now is going through the throes of trying to become  
6       a society that is non-racialist and has equal rights for  
7       everybody.

8                       And I think the thing that concerns us  
9       the most is that you can have a constitution that lays  
10      out rights and you can have a legal system that is there  
11      to enforce it, but unless the community itself is prepared  
12      to deal with living in equality we are not going to get  
13      there. And we feel that there has to be a major  
14      consciousness within mainstream Canadian society to come  
15      to grips with structural apartheid.

16                      We think that whatever we do is only a  
17      small part of something but we feel that mainstream  
18      organizations -- in a sense CUSO is because we have been  
19      around a long time, we've had 13,000 people who've worked  
20      overseas and are now back in Canada doing various jobs  
21      and so on -- but we feel mainstream organizations, trade  
22      unions as well, churches, community associations, have  
23      to be prepared to commit themselves to transformations  
24      within themselves as well as in their community in terms  
25      of working with Aboriginal rights, Aboriginal communities

1 that are there.

2 And I don't think it's an overnight kind  
3 of transformation and I don't think it should be motivated  
4 by guilt because I don't think guilt takes us very far.

5 But I do think it could be motivated by people recognizing  
6 that all issues affect everybody equally.

7 And what we've found is that -- and as  
8 I think we are demonstrating here -- is that people can  
9 keep their organization or identity and integrity and the  
10 community integrity and identity, but you can still work  
11 together. And we've tried to do that within the coalitions  
12 and the alliances that Robert has spoken about, that there  
13 are ways of dealing with issues, finding solutions and  
14 getting strengths from them that will serve both the  
15 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community.

16 And the point is that you have to go and  
17 take that step of doing that and I think mainstream,  
18 non-Aboriginal Canada has to make a commitment in that  
19 direction. And it could be very small things to do that.

20 It could be working on a community association level,  
21 working in environmental programs in your community, it  
22 could be working with survival schools, it could be working  
23 with programs in your own schools about linking issues  
24 and linking communities. But the step by step process  
25 has to begin. If it doesn't happen I think we are going

1 to see a Canada that, even at the end of this decade, may  
2 have the rights on the books but it will be communities  
3 that are not working with each other, it will be structural  
4 apartheid, it will mean a separateness and inequality still  
5 continuing.

6 We also think, from our point of view,  
7 that communities, to begin this sort of onslaught on  
8 structural apartheid, should look at what they've got to  
9 offer. And I think that's part of what we went through  
10 in CUSO and are still going through: is that because we're  
11 an international organization that links communities and  
12 works in communities throughout the world we found that --  
13 when Robert talked about the activities of last year around  
14 the 500, and this year for example around this being the  
15 Year of the Indigenous People -- that we are connected  
16 to communities throughout the world. We are connected  
17 to the South Pacific, we are connected with the Masai people  
18 in Tanzania, we are connected in Central America.

19 And we saw our most important role as  
20 being able to facilitate the connections between  
21 indigenous communities and to put resources and energy  
22 so that communities can speak to each other.

23 We also found that if you want to be like  
24 that then you also have to open up your organization and  
25 who you are. And we've gone through I think a fairly

1 interesting and I think quite incredible process where  
2 within CUSO Aboriginal communities say "This is what we  
3 want and this is how we want to do it, and we want a say  
4 in both the decision-making process, allocation of  
5 resources, and the kind of program that goes on."

6 We have a publication which I will leave  
7 with you. It's called "CUSO Forum." It's completely  
8 devoted to indigenous rights throughout the world and what  
9 it does is it connects and shows how indigenous communities  
10 throughout the world are working on similar programs,  
11 similar programs in terms of how they deal with  
12 establishing their rights and how they deal with working  
13 with other communities.

14 I think it's caused a really interesting  
15 situation within CUSO as well because trying to work out  
16 policies is really interesting. Like we went through a  
17 debate in Canada where, with the help of people we worked  
18 with who are members of CUSO, they said "These are the  
19 kind of issues that Aboriginal people in Canada want in  
20 terms of self-determination and self-government." We  
21 took those issues forward to wider forums, whether  
22 indigenous communities coming in from Southern Africa and  
23 the Caribbean, and we ended up with a really interesting  
24 debate over how you transform, how rights are established,  
25 how communities can connect to each other. So I think

1       it's been like a learning space, but a very important one,  
2       putting CUSO in a position where it could be a conveyor  
3       and a facilitator and working that way.

4                   One thing we found, though, was that as  
5       we've moved more towards them -- and the reference to the  
6       Protectors of Mother Earth I think is quite important --  
7       is that I think community organizations in Canada have  
8       to understand that more than lip service is requested.  
9       That Oka I think shook us tremendously. And I think part  
10      of the reasons why it shook us so much was there was a  
11      powerlessness amongst communities in Canada who wanted  
12      to step in and intervene and do something in terms of trying  
13      to resolve that situation that for -- as you know -- for  
14      quite a few days was escalating to something that nobody  
15      wanted to see happen.

16                   But what we found out of that whole  
17      process was that you can't stand on the sidelines when  
18      these things go on, that as much as you may have a lot  
19      of concern and emotion that you cannot contain it to  
20      yourselves as individuals; you have to in a sense, as a  
21      community, take a stand. That if you are going to take  
22      stands in terms of the kind of -- it's a trade union,  
23      fighting for trade union rights, if it's an organization  
24      like CUSO, fighting for social and economic change in  
25      Mozambique -- then you have to take a stand in Canada as

1 well along the same lines. And I think your credibility  
2 or capacity to work with communities is based on that.

3 Through that kind of rationale we also  
4 got involved in support for Protectors of Mother Earth  
5 who are taking a stand against clearcutting in northern  
6 Saskatchewan. And in fact today is the anniversary of  
7 one (1) year that that blockade has been there.

8 But what we found out is that if you take  
9 a stand you also suffer the consequences to some degree.

10 And about two (2) or three (3) months after the arrest  
11 of people at the blockade when the RCMP moved in with about  
12 120 personnel, another part of the RCMP did surveillance  
13 and investigations of people who were supporting the  
14 Protectors of Mother Earth. And we, for example, were  
15 approached by the RCMP to explain what were the feelings  
16 of Mother Earth and why we were taking the kind of stand  
17 we were. We know that other groups, environmental groups  
18 and so on, were approached.

19 And we think that that kind of action  
20 by organizations representing the state in some capacity  
21 in fact creates divisions between communities rather than  
22 helps them come together. Because what we see happening  
23 is that if communities are approached about why they are  
24 against clearcutting and why they would support northern  
25 communities in their attempt to try and take over what

1 is happening to them economically and socially, then that  
2 drives a wedge between communities coming together. And  
3 we think that individuals do in fact get intimidated by  
4 that kind of process.

5 And I'm raising that because I think that  
6 the Royal Commission can create at least a space to say  
7 communities do have the right to talk to each other, do  
8 have the right to work together on rights that are  
9 important -- environmental rights and so on -- and should  
10 be able to do that without fearing the consequences of  
11 investigations and so on. And I think if we cannot move  
12 to that level that we in fact keep communities apart from  
13 each other by fear and intimidation.

14 The other side of it is that we feel that  
15 if people can work together and do that in a way that is  
16 respectful of each other and that has a capacity of a  
17 learning space, again, that the enrichment is incredible.

18 One of the things that we found out in the 500 was that  
19 even in the analysis of the 500 there was no doubt that  
20 there was an absolute destruction of the Aboriginal  
21 community throughout all the Americas. It raised the  
22 questions about what has happened to the non-Aboriginal  
23 community who in many cases are rootless, came from Europe,  
24 have forgotten who they are a part of what that meant.

25 And in the learning circles that we had

1 during the 500 and sharing circles that we had and healing  
2 circles, in a way there was a lot that came back to the  
3 non-Aboriginal community. And if we can try and work  
4 together and create that learning space I think that we  
5 as a whole in Canada can move forward. It's not a situation  
6 that is static. There is an incredible amount of transfer  
7 back and forth.

8 So, from our point of view -- and I think  
9 on behalf of CUSO specifically in Saskatchewan here --  
10 the more that can be done to work in solidarity in alliances  
11 and coalition the further we are going to go along trying  
12 to create a society that can get rid of this kind of  
13 structural apartheid that exists. But it has to be at  
14 that community level.

15 And I am going to close by just citing  
16 one incident that took place at a community level last  
17 summer. I live in a community here called Nutana which  
18 is on the other side of the river and we have a Nutana  
19 Community Association. And we ended up writing what may  
20 be viewed as a very, very small program that received some  
21 monies from the city council through the provincial  
22 government for and it was called "Exploring Nutana."

23 And what it was, was a week-long program  
24 in which Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children came  
25 together and looked at what Nutana was before white



1 settlement, and then looked at Nutana during white  
2 settlement, and looked at Nutana today. And it was quite  
3 an interesting time because people researched the area,  
4 they found out where the old Carleton Trail went through  
5 there up to PA and from Moose Jaw, they found out that  
6 there was a Metis community that existed near the  
7 fairgrounds that was quite active in agriculture  
8 production. They went through a whole series of learning  
9 about their own environment and a lot of the young people  
10 commented that you know for them they hadn't reached that  
11 far back to understand that.

12 And that kind of Exploring Nutana  
13 project -- very small thing. I think the total budget  
14 for it was about \$1,500.00. In itself though, I think  
15 it went a way forward with young people in terms of saying  
16 "We can all exist in this community here, all one people.  
17 And here's our common history, even though they're  
18 separate, but they are common in the sense that we are  
19 living here together."

20 So I think those kind of levels can deal  
21 with what we need to do to combat the structural apartheid  
22 that exists.

23 Thank you.

24 **MS MARLENE LAROCQUE:** As I said before,  
25 my name is Marlene Larocque. Can you hear me? No?

1                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes. Maybe  
2 you could bring your microphone a little bit closer.

3                   **MS MARLENE LAROCQUE:** My name is Marlene  
4 Larocque. I am a Cree Native, originally from Waterhen  
5 Lake Reserve, very close to where the Protectors of Mother  
6 Earth's blockade is going on. I've been living in this  
7 city for the past 10 years and I am here to speak about  
8 the role of women within the context of 500 Years, and  
9 as well of the importance of building alliances between  
10 Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people, and also  
11 bringing it to the international context.

12                                 First of all I would just like to bring  
13 my disappointment to one aspect of the Royal Commission.

14         When you were visited by -- I forget her name. She came  
15 to the CUSO office and spoke to us and she said that this  
16 would be a round table discussion and that it would not  
17 be like this, like people just making one presentation  
18 at a time. And Saskatoon is a city with a lot of Native  
19 Indians and you know ---

20                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes.

21                   **MS MARLENE LAROCQUE:** --- and I think  
22 it is really -- it would have been really a significant  
23 step for this city to have us sit in a round table discussion  
24 with Victorious Women or the BID, like these kind of people  
25 that dialogue has to start. I think that would have been

1 a good opportunity for the Royal Commission to have  
2 facilitated that dialogue.

3 In this publication here there is an  
4 article by Cheryl Walthous "Women and the 500 Years."  
5 Cheryl is an educator and she was part of our coalition.

6 She no longer lives in Saskatoon but she keeps in contact  
7 with us. Her central theme was the role of women and how  
8 sexism and racism have been two (2) major oppressive  
9 measures that came along with European settlement.

10 And another central theme to that is that  
11 we also have been oppressed and you know the sexist  
12 attitudes are within our own society and there is really  
13 very few things being done about that. And when you look  
14 at the FSIN structures here in Saskatchewan you see that  
15 they are so male -- very male dominated.

16 But when you go right down to the  
17 community level, on the reserve level or here in the city,  
18 you find that many of the community leaders are Aboriginal  
19 women. You know Aboriginal women have a lot to offer.  
20 They have a lot of alternative structures in place. And  
21 as Robert was saying before, we do a lot of alternative  
22 programming because the structures that are in place right  
23 now are not working, they are not helping us; so why should  
24 we have to work within that system if they are going to  
25 be of no use to us. So it's very important that we

1 recognize Aboriginal women, what they have given to our  
2 society.

3 And now I'll talk about my role in CUSO.

4 In December of this past year I travelled through Central  
5 America as a CUSO cooperant. I travelled to Costa Rica,  
6 Nicaragua and Guatemala. And as you know the first  
7 indigenous person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize was  
8 of course Rigoberta Menchu who is a strong leader from  
9 the community, from the grass roots community of Guatemala  
10 and all over the world, as well as spokesperson. And she  
11 has continuously spoken about alliances between the  
12 indigenous black and popular sectors and continuously has  
13 said that the structures are not helping us, we have to  
14 form our own. And that's a very important message.

15 And as well -- I don't know if you're  
16 at all familiar with the history of the Nicaraguan  
17 revolution -- but the indigenous people on the Atlantic  
18 coast, all of the male leaders, opted to be bought off  
19 by the CIA and went to war while all of the Mesquite  
20 indigenous women said "No, we have to work with the FSI  
21 and we have to educate them." So that was another  
22 important example of how women are more apt to cooperate  
23 with one another and with other people. And that was also  
24 evident in the Oka crisis. The role of women in the crisis  
25 was a major - and they gave a lot of themselves to avoid

1 a lot of the bloodshed that could have happened.

2 And it's extremely important to -- like  
3 here in Canada I think a lot of times we feel isolated,  
4 that we're the only ones who are suffering environmental  
5 degradation from uranium mining, from forestry. And it's  
6 really important to build those international linkages  
7 because this is going on as well in Costa Rica. I mean  
8 the French companies are going in to the Atlantic Costa  
9 Rica, they are doing mining, they are clearcutting, they  
10 are suffering the same effects that the people up North  
11 are you know. And to build those linkages and to create  
12 those alliances, to become united in our struggle: that's  
13 a basic need that CUSO is trying to facilitate.

14 And you know a really good thing about  
15 CUSO is that they won't come out in the forefront and say  
16 "CUSO is doing this." No. They say "The people are doing  
17 this," because after all it's a people-to-people  
18 initiative.

19 And I just want to end off with some  
20 examples of how we are building this. When I went to  
21 Central America I focused on the environmental as well --  
22 well, on indigenous issues but focusing on the environment  
23 and uses of natural resources and natural resource  
24 extraction, which is a big issue here for Aboriginal  
25 people, with uranium mining and with clearcutting up north.

1                   And when you look at the role of women  
2                   and the use of the resources I mean they have -- because  
3                   we call it Mother Earth, women use these resources and  
4                   they know the importance of resources and they're more  
5                   apt to protecting them rather than selling them off, you  
6                   know rather than destroying Mother Earth.

7                   We've had a lot of visitors from the  
8                   south, a lot of exchanges of ideas, and a lot of building  
9                   of alternatives through our visitors. Our next visitors  
10                  will be coming by at the beginning of June. They'll be  
11                  here for the NAC Conference -- actually Canadian Status  
12                  of Women are having their AGM here.

13                  We're going to be having a Chilean from  
14                  the Mapuche, a Mayan woman from Guatemala and two (2)  
15                  representatives from Columbia from the Orara (PH)  
16                  Organization. We're going to be bringing them up north,  
17                  to northern Saskatchewan, and focusing on the environment  
18                  and natural resources. So that's one way that CUSO is  
19                  helping to facilitate these exchanges and helping  
20                  indigenous people come together.

21                  Thank you.

22                  **MR. EMIL BELL:** Let me begin by sending  
23                  a welcome to my sister from the east to our part of the  
24                  country. I would also like to welcome my white brothers,  
25                  who I notice have benefitted greatly from the signing of

1 the treaties where you have been given the right to practice  
2 the freedom of choice of your religion and also towards  
3 a good education, to practice your value systems and a  
4 lot of those things that our country has got to offer.  
5 I notice that you have now become a judge and for that  
6 I am happy for you.

7 My people haven't been as fortunate as  
8 you. We still are at the stage where we have to fight  
9 for all of the things that were promised to us. I don't  
10 want to concentrate on negative things. I would like to  
11 just go right into the presentation that I want to make  
12 and it's directed towards a group of people. We are  
13 talking about prostitutes. I don't know how many briefs  
14 have been presented on their behalf, however I would like  
15 to be able to say a few things for these young people that  
16 work the streets.

17 Before that I would like to be able to  
18 maybe explain very briefly as to what I do. I work for  
19 the Saskatoon Community Health Unit. We're on an AIDS  
20 prevention program. And I work for the male prostitutes,  
21 female prostitutes, and also the youths, people who use  
22 needles to shoot up. These are the type of people that  
23 we work with and we generally do a lot of our work at nights  
24 when the young girls, the young males, and also the  
25 so-called junkies come out at night. And we try and fit

1 into their time slot rather than us trying to fit them  
2 into our time frame of a nine-to-five mentality. The  
3 nine-to-five mentality hasn't worked very good for us as  
4 Indian people, as you've probably noticed by now.

5 Many of the young girls that work the  
6 streets, contrary to a lot of the schools of thought of  
7 the past -- from sociologists, psychologists who have  
8 attempted to lead the people to believe that people go  
9 into prostitution because they have ben sexually abused --  
10 don't longer hold any water at all because we now know  
11 that many of the female population, whether they are  
12 Aboriginal or whites, have been sexually abused in their  
13 lifetime, a great percentage of the people in the Indian  
14 community as well as the white community. And yet there  
15 isn't a lot of people turning to prostitution. So that  
16 theory doesn't hold any water.

17 There are four (4) main reasons why  
18 people go into prostitution. Number one is because a lot  
19 of these people are looking for a roof over their head.

20 Number two is for food. Whether they are trying to get  
21 food for themselves, whether they're trying to provide  
22 food for their children. Number three is for clothing.

23 And unfortunately the fourth one is to try and support  
24 a drug habit. These are the main reasons why we have so  
25 many of our young people out on the streets. And as I



1 mentioned before, all of these young people that are  
2 working the streets have been sexually abused at one time  
3 or another.

4                   The people that we have working on 20th  
5 Street and Spadina Crescent which we refer to -- 20th Street  
6 is now referred to as the Promised Land, and Spadina  
7 Crescent is now referred to as the Holy Land. The reason  
8 why we refer to Spadina Crescent as the Holy Land is because  
9 there is so many churches in that area where a lot of the  
10 male prostitutes operate. And the reason why we refer  
11 to 20th Street as the Promised Land is because a lot of  
12 our people come into the cities looking for a better  
13 tomorrow and unfortunately they end up in the areas where  
14 there is a lot of booze, drugs and prostitution and a lot  
15 of other crimes as well. And unfortunately that is where  
16 a lot of them end up in.

17                   These young people -- I don't want to  
18 bore you to death with a lot of sad stories. I'm sure  
19 you've heard a lot of the sad stories that these young  
20 people go through right across Canada. However, I would  
21 like to mention that in order to deal with a lot of these  
22 problems we have to look at our Criminal Code. We have  
23 to begin to think in terms of decriminalizing prostitution.

24                   A lot of our young people end up with criminal records  
25 and a lot of these young people are very decent human beings

1 who unfortunately end up into prostitution in order to  
2 try and make a living for themselves.

3           Police departments all over the world  
4 have attempted everything within their power to get rid  
5 of prostitutes, whether male or female, and they haven't  
6 succeeded up till now. None of the things that they have  
7 done have worked. In Regina they have set up barricades  
8 to prevent prostitutes from working certain areas. The  
9 only thing that prostitutes do, or the female sex trade  
10 workers do, is they just simply move to another region  
11 or another area of the city.

12           In Saskatoon itself a lot of things have  
13 happened in the last few years. You've heard one person  
14 that made a presentation this morning, belongs to the  
15 Riversdale Business Association. These people have  
16 worked against these people from Day One by attempting  
17 to move these people out of that community. They have  
18 set up a force of people who patrol the streets to harass  
19 the johns by taking down their licence numbers and also  
20 the description of these people and have sat in courts  
21 to get the names of these people to try and embarrass the  
22 so-called johns into getting away from the 20th Street  
23 area or the Riversdale area. That hasn't worked.

24           The city police department has built up  
25 their manpower in the 20th Street area. I have never seen

1       so many police cruisers in my life whenever I go to work  
2       in the evenings on 20th Street. I don't know. The last  
3       time I seen such a large number of police departments is  
4       when they raided the people in the blockade up in northern  
5       Saskatchewan, and also in the Oka crisis. At any given  
6       time we are looking at anywhere from eight (8) to twelve  
7       (12) police cruisers cruising around 20th Street. And  
8       they're not out there to protect the prostitutes or  
9       anything like that. They are trying to prevent -- to  
10      eradicate prostitution completely.

11                               And hundreds -- I shouldn't say  
12      hundreds -- but thousands and thousands of dollars have  
13      been spent in this type of thinking to try and deal with  
14      prostitution and it hasn't worked and it will not work.

15      Prostitution has been with us for a long, long time.  
16      And rather than continuously fighting prostitution I think  
17      it's about time that we started thinking in terms of trying  
18      to work with the people that are involved in there, and  
19      that means working with the girls, working in terms of  
20      decriminalization of prostitution and legalization of  
21      prostitution. It will eradicate a lot of the violence  
22      that is associated with prostitution. You will do away  
23      with a lot of the abuses that these young girls have to  
24      go under when they are being controlled by pimps. And  
25      as I mentioned before, a lot of these young girls are in

1       there, not because they want to be in there, but because  
2       they are forced into that situation to try and feed their  
3       children.

4                        You will see that a lot of times, night  
5       after night, we will have mothers that go out and try and  
6       sell themselves. And when you ask them why they are doing  
7       it, they will tell you that their welfare monies have run  
8       out and they no longer have any Pampers, they no longer  
9       have any milk for their babies. And these are the reasons  
10      why they are standing out there trying to sell themselves,  
11      so that they can get a few bucks to feed their own children.

12                      And as I mentioned before, these are very  
13      decent human beings and because they have been stigmatized  
14      by the religious groups as social misfits, as a people  
15      that are down, not equal to that of the every-day society,  
16      they are looked down upon. People try and push them aside.

17      People will try and do every damn thing possible to not  
18      deal with these people out on the streets.

19                      And as I have mentioned time and time  
20      again to our own people as well as the white people, a  
21      lot of these young kids -- I shouldn't say a lot of these  
22      young kids -- all of these young kids are our own sons  
23      and daughters, our own relatives and I think it's about  
24      time that we stop treating these young people like trash  
25      or scums of the earth.

1                   These are decent human beings. They  
2                   have certain rights, in a lot of cases maybe more rights  
3                   than what we have. At least we're in a situation where  
4                   we can fight for ourselves but those people out there don't  
5                   have a voice. They don't have anybody to fight for them.

6                   Indian organizations have never taken  
7                   a stand to try and protect those young people out there  
8                   and I haven't seen too many white organizations trying  
9                   to protect the young people that are working the streets  
10                  either. I think it's about time that we started thinking  
11                  in terms of trying to help these young people out there  
12                  and start looking at them as human beings rather than  
13                  continuously looking at them as misfits of our society  
14                  or rejects of our society. They are not rejects. We are  
15                  to blame for why these young people are out there.

16                  And, with that, I hope you will seriously  
17                  consider my request to present the federal government with  
18                  some of these ideas to decriminalize prostitution, to make  
19                  prostitution legal. We are not going to do away with it;  
20                  we might as well work with it. And as I mentioned before  
21                  these young people are decent human beings and in a lot  
22                  of cases deserve more rights than we do. And I think it's  
23                  about time that we begin to speak up for them and they  
24                  are trying here, these young people, and what they have  
25                  to say for themselves and how they view the world and how

1 they can make a better world for themselves and also for  
2 ourselves as well.

3 And with that I would like to thank each  
4 and every one of you for being patient with me and I would  
5 like to thank everybody here, staff, for taking the time  
6 to come out here and listen to what we have to say on some  
7 of the issues that we have to deal with. With that, thank  
8 you very much.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you.  
10 Thank you, each and every one of you, for coming and sharing  
11 your concerns and thoughts and elements of solutions with  
12 us.

13 We would have liked to have the kind of  
14 round table that you mentioned; would have been very good  
15 and in line with what your colleague has just mentioned  
16 because we have to start somewhere in the discussion  
17 between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. And even  
18 with the Aboriginal people themselves there is a lot of  
19 discussion because the point of view varies and -- the  
20 women for example. I don't know what has happened really.

21 It was not possible to recognize it but we're going to  
22 check anyway what happened. But it is certainly better  
23 that you came than if you hadn't.

24 Yes?

25 **MR. DON KOSSICK:** I was going to suggest

1 that -- I know you are looking for recommendations.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Yes.

3 **MR. DON KOSSICK:** And I think, just off  
4 the words you are saying right now, "establishing a climate  
5 of coming together sometimes is as important as specifics."

6 And even if the Royal Commission could respond about what  
7 it takes to build a community and that communities have  
8 to make an effort to start to enjoin. They don't have  
9 to fall into each other but they have to start thinking.

10 As Marlene said, even in the process of sharing circles,  
11 healing circles, that actually start to address the kind  
12 of issues raised here, is the only we can go if we want  
13 to start to move a little bit deeper.

14 And we also wanted to -- we regret that  
15 some people couldn't make it here because some of our people  
16 have gone up to the blockade because today is, as they  
17 said, the anniversary. But if you listen to the tape we  
18 gave you called "Spirit Rise" there's a reason why we called  
19 it "Spirit Rise." We had an incredible weekend where --  
20 at the Unitarian Centre here. Singers and musicians came  
21 together for two (2) days and they made music together.

22 They came from Ile à la Crosse and Meadow Lake and Brandon,  
23 Manitoba. And when we were finally putting all the music  
24 together we could feel this emotion that came out of it  
25 from Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal performers. And we

1       decided to call the tape "Spirit Rise" because to us it  
2       brought the most positive side of what could happen if  
3       we wanted to take on the barriers that right now are  
4       dividing us.

5                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Well, you are  
6       certainly quite right in saying that music is a good  
7       starting point to bring people together. But the task  
8       is immense because we've met many -- of course many  
9       Aboriginal people in this country in the various  
10      communities but also many non-Aboriginal people and we  
11      are going to meet many more till we are finished with the  
12      public participation process next fall. We're putting  
13      a lot of emphasis on getting the views of non-Aboriginal  
14      people heard and known also because we know that if we  
15      don't get at least the beginning of a debate and discussion  
16      it will be very difficult to break the parallel and the  
17      solitudes that is happening there with the form of  
18      structural apartheid or whatever.

19                   So what I would like to say also is that  
20      the Royal Commission has from the start made the decision  
21      to visit the communities extensively. And in the first  
22      two (2) rounds we were in over 72 communities across the  
23      country; a large number of them northern communities and  
24      remote communities. And one of the reasons was that we  
25      wanted to hear the people who are struggling with living



1 conditions on a day-to-day basis.

2 And of course we had to deal with  
3 leadership of Aboriginal organizations and to keep a good  
4 relationship we felt that it was absolutely necessary to  
5 see the world not only through their eyes but to go into  
6 the communities. And in fact what we've heard and seen  
7 both in the public meetings and the in-camera meetings  
8 with the women is something that we wouldn't have had an  
9 opportunity to hear and see. And the conditions also.

10 So the task of reconciling Aboriginal  
11 peoples and non-Aboriginal people and building a new  
12 relationship is not an easy one, as you know, because there  
13 are some stumbling blocks along the road that act as  
14 psychological barriers. But we feel that there is reason  
15 for hope and there are common grounds on which -- what  
16 we try to do is to get as good a grasp as possible of what  
17 people think, not only on the problems but on the elements  
18 of solutions and we try to build on those common grounds  
19 more and to tone down the differences instead of putting  
20 them into the highlight.

21 It's not that they should be recognized  
22 but we feel it's very important to build on something that  
23 has an appeal for both sides. And when you said at the  
24 outset that the future should not be built on guilt  
25 feelings, I think it's difficult to build a partnership

1 on guilt feelings, you are quite right, and we share that  
2 totally.

3 So, an organization like yours is a very  
4 important one, not only to bring people internationally  
5 in contact, one with the other, but also certainly to try  
6 to bridge the gaps. And so my question is: we're caught  
7 between two (2) things. On one hand you say -- and I  
8 understand that -- that it's important to take stands and  
9 you mentioned clearcutting and many other things -- and  
10 on the other hand it is important to try to bring people  
11 together. And so I would like to ask you how -- because  
12 very often times we are resented by the public or not  
13 understood because the whole context is not known and  
14 suddenly something happens and the reaction is different  
15 than it would be if there had been some kind of education  
16 about the issue that is involved and on and on.

17 So, what I would like to -- if you could  
18 expand on that because it's the parallel word; it seems  
19 conflictual to a certain extent, or could waken up people,  
20 but on the other hand could put them off also for a couple  
21 of years more before bringing them together. So, could  
22 you tell us a bit more about your approach or philosophy  
23 on that?

24 **MR. DON KOSSICK:** I think -- when I say  
25 "taking stand" I think it's important in the sense that

1       you recognize the issues that people are dealing with and  
2       you are prepared to enjoin with them.

3                       And in the instance of the  
4       clearcutting -- I'll use that as an example -- that the  
5       issue of clearcutting is something that obviously, if it's  
6       analyzed and so on, it affects all of us. It affects our  
7       whole environment. If you look at the boreal forest system  
8       and so on, it's as important as the Amazon rain forest  
9       but it's here in our back yard; it's not in somebody else's.

10                      And taking a stand means mainly to me  
11       that, in the sense of this, that the Protectors of Mother  
12       Earth have already done something in terms of their attempt  
13       to try and look at local control and community control  
14       over issues like that. Then in a response to them talking  
15       about that we should be able to make a determination about  
16       where we stand on the issue.

17                      I think the question you are asking is  
18       that I don't think it should be something that's done  
19       without thought and a lot of discussion, which happens.

20       In fact I think in the instance of the Protectors of Mother  
21       Earth, that they don't want anybody to take a stand unless  
22       they understand what it means; right. That there is a  
23       request to sit down and work it through

24                      We find, though, that taking a position  
25       or a stand also means doing your work in the community,

1 as you say, to educate people about it. The reason I  
2 mention that tape is because that's a form of education  
3 and that actually came out of a Voices of the Forest  
4 production. We went to communities throughout the  
5 Prairies and people sang and discussed what was happening  
6 and we ended up in public meetings where people came out.

7 And in the south -- you may have noticed that the south  
8 of Saskatchewan is a very small part of all of Saskatchewan.

9 And so in a sense there was a major bridge being built  
10 from northern Saskatchewan into southern Saskatchewan,  
11 as I think has to happen in the case of Quebec and other  
12 parts.

13 So, I think what it means is that you  
14 have to look at my T-shirt, where you have people holding  
15 hands together, and that to me is taking the position that  
16 you are together, but you also do it on the basis of where  
17 you come from and why. And I think in the instance of  
18 CUSO that our position on clearcutting and the environment  
19 comes from seeing clearcutting in Tanzania and places like  
20 that where nothing is left you know. And so we work in  
21 a community where if it's important to defend the rain  
22 forest continuation continuing in Brazil and what that  
23 means for the environment, it's as equally important to  
24 understand that in Canada. So, it's from that kind of  
25 context and I think the education side, though, to us is

1 absolutely important.

2 And to bring it back to the first  
3 discussion about structural apartheid, I think if anything  
4 we could do is link the communities to do that education  
5 work, and that's the key. That's where I think CUSO can  
6 play a role, churches can play a role, community  
7 associations, popular sectors, women's organizations, to  
8 say that we can help carry the message of why this is  
9 important. So that's what I mean by that kind of "holding  
10 the hands" in a sense.

11 I don't know if that's adequate.

12 **MR. ROBERT DOUCETTE:** Well, not only  
13 that. We have, in Saskatchewan, set an example for other  
14 communities. Let me give you an example.

15 Leo Lachance was a trapper shot by an  
16 Arian supremacist. I lived in PA for 16 years. Our  
17 coalition rallied people in that city and we brought  
18 together women, Elders, men, and we held a silent vigil  
19 there and a march to remember Leo Lachance. I have never,  
20 ever seen it happen in my life but through this process  
21 we educated Prince Albert for the most part and brought  
22 the issue of racism to the forefront.

23 And I think Don is right. One of the  
24 main things that has helped I think a lot of people in  
25 Saskatchewan is to bring the international perspective

1 into the process. For example, the Tanzania Masai went  
2 through the same colonial process as indigenous people  
3 here. I'll give you an example. They had residential  
4 schools, they were dispossessed of their land, and this  
5 was done through what was called at one point "economic  
6 development." CIDA had gone in there and planted this  
7 wheat crop and dispossessed them of their land and had  
8 impoverished them. We've seen the parallels here and  
9 accordingly we drew conclusions from it.

10 Just to touch again on one final point  
11 that Don is saying in terms of education. I think in terms  
12 of a community -- I said this last night and I'll say  
13 it again -- the problem is economic. As my friend here,  
14 Emil, has said, Aboriginal people do not have enough access  
15 to resources. And this is the gauntlet I throw back to  
16 you. By 1995 Canada is going to be faced with a debt of  
17 \$565 billion. Now, Metis people haven't a process -- just  
18 as an example -- a process for land claim. And let me  
19 tell you there are Metis people such as myself that want  
20 land. Now, let's just say that there are 200 Metis land  
21 claims and there are 200 Indian land claims outstanding  
22 already, and each well, comes to an agreement like this  
23 last TLE was \$417 million. That's over \$40 billion.  
24 Where is Canada going to get that money?

25 And yet, we see the lunacy and hypocrisy

1 of this Canadian government. They are spending \$5 billion  
2 on 50 helicopters. For what? What are they going to  
3 protect? The beluga whales in the St. Lawrence? They are  
4 spending \$1 billion on a bridge to P.E.I. and they can't  
5 build a bridge to Cumberland House on the mainland in one  
6 of the oldest communities in Canada. It's ridiculous.

7 So, we have shown here that the élites  
8 don't have the answer. The answer is at a community level.

9 I think one of the things that -- and I'm not trying to  
10 pump up CUSO -- but I think the Canadian government should  
11 take a strong look at cutting back international aid money  
12 because it stymies the movement of the education process.

13 With our link with CUSO we have been able to educate  
14 ourselves about international indigenous problems.

15 I think that the Canadian government  
16 also has to pump more money into an education process to  
17 educate the Canadian people. And I don't mean feather  
18 dressing and beading moccasins. I mean some real money  
19 to help educate people about the differences between Indian  
20 and Metis people.

21 Another thing they could do is give  
22 Batoche back to the Metis people. This is just an  
23 instance. And we'll educate the thousands of people that  
24 come there about the Metis people. As it stands right  
25 now, they have this educational video out at Batoche that

1 makes it sound like the Metis have disappeared. René,  
2 I am here, I am right in front of you, and I am not going  
3 away because I've got three (3) or four (4) kids, and  
4 neither are the Metis or indigenous people.

5 So, unless we deal with this economic  
6 problem Aboriginal self-government is a pipe dream and  
7 this country is going to fall apart because Aboriginal  
8 people are not going to stand for the hypocrisy that is  
9 out there today. And we need more money to educate the  
10 masses. That's what we need.

11 **MR. DON KOSSICK:** One point that in the  
12 collaborations between communities where we've seen  
13 Columbian community representatives come together with  
14 representatives of northern Saskatchewan and other parts  
15 of Saskatchewan or the Masai or people from South Pacific,  
16 the key area of discussion is economic development, but  
17 economic development compatible with the environment.

18 **MR. ROBERT DOUCETTE:** Yes.

19 **MR. DON KOSSICK:** And it's an incredible  
20 richness and it talks about sustaining communities,  
21 keeping the young people in the communities, developing  
22 education systems that are reflective of the history of  
23 people, and there is a richness that is just way beyond  
24 what can be described. But it's something that if we can  
25 maintain a concept of international links and what they



1 mean I think that's absolutely -- you know that will help  
2 us find some of the solutions that those discussions are  
3 there and they are happening and they are pointing towards  
4 them.

5                   The other side that as well I think is  
6 quite key is that the enjoining of communities  
7 internationally and the links that are created there, that  
8 that in its own way does some education here.  
9 Psychologically I'm not quite sure how it works. I have  
10 been thinking about it. But you can have somebody come  
11 from an indigenous community in Central America and go  
12 to a public meeting here, right, and people will listen  
13 to him -- non-Aboriginal people, right, now in a lot of  
14 ways more openly than they do to their own people in their  
15 community here.

16                   So, you'll have somebody go to a public  
17 library, but in reality the same issues being raised are  
18 issues that are being dealt with in the Riversdale area.

19                   And maybe that's partly because people psychologically  
20 refuse to accept or deal with what I was talking about  
21 earlier about the structural apartheid because we are all  
22 part of it in one way or another. But the more we can  
23 do to get any kind of momentum that addresses that question  
24 and makes us look at here, I think that's really important.

25                   And my last comment is that we worked

1 a lot with people involved in South Africa trying to defeat  
2 the apartheid system there. And one of the things they  
3 say to us is "You have work at home." And it's through  
4 their activities that a lot of people said "Yep, if you  
5 are going to take..." -- as I said earlier -- "... the  
6 kind of stand that you should be taking, it's got to be  
7 taken at home as well as in an international sense." Both  
8 have to be done. So we have to be as reflective of  
9 ourselves in our own community as we are in terms of what  
10 we do internationally.

11 **MS MARLENE LAROCQUE:** I just wanted to  
12 add on to what Don said about the incredible riskiness  
13 of this dialogue that takes place between indigenous people  
14 here and from the South Pacific. A few weeks ago we went  
15 up north to the blockade and to a Metis community with  
16 a delegation from the South Pacific. And there was an  
17 indigenous person from Vanuatu and it was just an  
18 incredible dialogue that we had with all of these people.  
19 And it's much easier for us at the community level to  
20 speak to one another, to speak with other community  
21 organizers, all the way from Vanuatu, than it is for me  
22 to pick up the phone and say "Can I speak to Roland?"  
23 You know it's impossible.

24 And like these are the things, we have  
25 the ideas that are going to make it work and we're not

1 waiting for anybody to say "Well, you can do it now."  
2 And that is part of the dialogue that's been most rewarding.

3 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Well, I  
4 want to thank you for coming here and talking to us and  
5 sharing your thoughts with us. And I want to thank you  
6 for this nice gift that you have presented us with.

7 I think what you're doing here and the  
8 thoughts that you have are important and I think have a  
9 lot of merit. I think coalitions and alliances and working  
10 together and creating dialogue I think is really an answer,  
11 one of the solutions, to this whole mass of problems that  
12 we're dealing with and trying to change attitudes and  
13 trying to reach an understanding between our people, the  
14 Aboriginal people -- and Canada as a whole. And I think  
15 you know that is the right track but it would be -- you  
16 know something like that has to be promoted. It has to  
17 be promoted. And if we could just promote that more and  
18 get more people involved in doing it.

19 Like you know you don't have to wait for  
20 a Royal Commission or anything else to mend fences and  
21 to improve on a situation. And I know there are a lot  
22 of areas in Canada where things are starting to improve  
23 through different kinds of initiatives. And certainly  
24 I know about CUSO but I wasn't aware that this kind of  
25 activity was going on in our own country, involving our

1 own people, and I think you know that's just tremendous  
2 and it has a lot of -- like I said -- a lot of merit.  
3 And the kinds of support that you are talking about for  
4 Mother Earth and the clearcutting, you know, I think that's  
5 something that I guess all indigenous people would support.

6 I know have a deep sense of -- sensitive to all of that  
7 myself personally.

8 But what you are doing I think, in  
9 talking about learning, sharing and healing and the kinds  
10 of types of meetings like circles and stuff; we've been  
11 involved in a lot of that and we've gone to places where  
12 we try to set up our formats to suit the people that's  
13 going to come and talk to us, you know how they'll feel  
14 comfortable. We don't want anybody to feel intimidated but  
15 we're on our last round now.

16 But I think to promote what you're doing  
17 and to get more people involved in doing something of this  
18 nature it would be good to know how we could -- what the  
19 Royal Commission could do you know to promote that kind  
20 of a thing, even though I think a lot of the stuff that  
21 we are doing is being publicized. But maybe there's  
22 another way. Maybe there is something. You know we are  
23 only here for a short time. We are halfway through now  
24 and we have to really get busy and get down to really doing  
25 something, something to build alliances and build

1 understanding I think is very, very important.

2 But I guess -- and your idea too about  
3 work. That is a big problem you know with the prostitution  
4 and of our young people. I know I was in Winnipeg and  
5 there's groups there that are working with them and I was  
6 personally taken out on the street and just shown. I saw  
7 it with my own eyes, the kids and what's happening and  
8 it's a terrible -- you know there has to be a way to deal  
9 with that. And maybe what you're saying, you know, maybe  
10 you know you can't beat a system; you have to try to work  
11 with it.

12 I think in Winnipeg that's what they're  
13 doing. I think what I heard there was the older  
14 prostitutes were seeing the younger ones going out and  
15 then they were working with them, trying to encourage them  
16 not to -- it wasn't the right way and the right thing to  
17 do, there's another way for life instead of doing that.

18 You know there's a better way or another way. So I think  
19 those kinds of things have a lot of merit.

20 But it's economic development, yes, I  
21 think you are right. We've been told over and over that  
22 economic development is the way to self-sufficiency and  
23 to self-determination and whatever. But you know  
24 sometimes I think -- I think we just talked about  
25 clearcutting and the land, and even here in the Prairies

1       you know if you look at it -- I watched on the news you  
2       know people for centuries who have made a living in farming  
3       and it's all gone. People have lost their farm, they have  
4       lost their land, they have lost everything. I mean after  
5       a while land is not going to be worth anything to anybody  
6       because of -- and the environment is gone. Like we got  
7       our right to fish in the Atlantic provinces and they've  
8       closed the cod fish; there's no more fish. Then all of  
9       a sudden we lose our right to fish. You know it's just --  
10      that's the way I see it.

11                   So, we have to look at alternative ways  
12      of -- land and resource is really not the answer either.  
13      Maybe it's all used up and what's there is not -- it's  
14      like the fish. A lot of the fish you can't eat any more  
15      because of pollution. Environmental things have ruined  
16      the whole land. So we have to look at other things too  
17      as far as economic development goes. The world has changed  
18      even in the last 50 years. Where you could make a living  
19      50 years ago, you wouldn't never be able to do it today;  
20      everything has changed so bad.

21                   But certainly I think one of the things  
22      that impresses me is this: is your way of communicating  
23      and working with people. I think that's really  
24      commendable.

25                   But I don't think I really have any

1 questions for you. I guess all I can do is encourage you  
2 to keep working and keep doing what you've been doing and  
3 hope others will join you.

4 **MR. DON KOSSICK:** Well, just to respond,  
5 because I think you just touched something off when you  
6 asked about "Where does it go," and I think both Robert  
7 and I would like to respond to it.

8 One of the responses I have is I think  
9 there's a tremendous resource with young people and I guess  
10 I see it because I remove young people around the world.

11 They are the ones that come and say "We want to work with  
12 CUSO," in the sense of going and working in other countries.

13 And what I sometimes say to myself "We've got work at  
14 home here as well to match it." And I think that what  
15 we need to do is look at a program in this country that  
16 connects communities together. And I think the young  
17 people could be the major resource for that kind of program.

18 When we had the International Indigenous  
19 Youth gathering that Marlene talked about, it was an  
20 incredible gathering where young people came from all over  
21 the Prairies and they called themselves delegations. So,  
22 you had a delegation from Ile à la Crosse, a delegation  
23 from Laronge, and so on. And they got together and they  
24 talked a lot about how they wanted to see their communities  
25 organized. And they talked about things like economic

1 development, about what was their role in that and was  
2 there a future for them.

3           And I think that if we can convince, if  
4 the Royal Commission, in any of its activities, can  
5 influence the governments of this country, that we have  
6 to let the communities talk to each other and inform each  
7 other. And I see that kind of community link happening  
8 north and south as well. I explained that small program,  
9 Exploring Nutana, you know looking at your histories, but  
10 if young people can work together in a non-racialist way  
11 that has them both building, then to me that's the future  
12 you are trying to construct because it's a much cleaner  
13 kind of future; it doesn't have necessarily the kind of  
14 baggage that us older people do carry around that we have  
15 to contend with.

16           But I think that's one level of that kind  
17 of push towards linking communities, bringing people  
18 together, and doing it in a way that -- and I know what  
19 you mean about the attempts at the circles and so on --  
20 and I think that that's communications, but doing it right  
21 in the communities with people learning from each other.

22       So you end up with really interesting things happening;  
23 where people from Quebec, from James Bay, have not been  
24 in northern Saskatchewan and there's a lot to learn from  
25 both sides, or with B.C., or with the south in terms of



1 learning what dryland farming is all about and what's  
2 happening to the communities there.

3 So I think that's one area that we could  
4 make some you know pushes on I think that would help create  
5 a process that's going to take us forward.

6 Robert, you were going to ---

7 **MR. ROBERT DOUCETTE:** Yes.

8 You had asked me how the Commission could  
9 facilitate a movement and I think one of the things --  
10 I don't know how much of your budget is left or if you  
11 could come back here at some point, but what we have been  
12 doing here and what we have been saying is if we could  
13 bring together a delegation of international indigenous  
14 people with the indigenous people here to share our common  
15 experiences with the Royal Commission. As Don is saying,  
16 it's like a lot of people in Canada it's the Younger  
17 Brother/Big Brother syndrome or the parent/child syndrome,  
18 man. You won't listen to your parents but you sure listen  
19 to your next door neighbour. Your parents don't know  
20 nothing, but when your next door neighbour tells you  
21 something, holy snappers. "There's clearcutting in the  
22 rain forests. We can't have all that. But the  
23 clearcutting in Saskatchewan? Hey, no problem, it's  
24 economic development."

25 So I think one of the things that we could

1 do, if you could come if your budget will allow, we could  
2 facilitate this and we could help bring these people  
3 together and share with the Royal Commission.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Last year  
5 there was an international gathering of young Aboriginal  
6 people, last summer, and it happened to be in Quebec City  
7 and we contributed to that. And what we hope to be able  
8 to do is to organize -- well, maybe the word is not the  
9 proper one -- but kind of round table with you to bring  
10 Aboriginal youth and non-Aboriginal youth together across  
11 the country to discuss the future. And that we might be  
12 able to do that early this fall. We don't know exactly  
13 the kind of format but this is in the works.

14 So that's about what we will probably  
15 be able to do.

16 **MS MARLENE LAROCQUE:** Just that we would  
17 be able to facilitate this because we have a lot of contact  
18 with youth who are working directly in the community, who  
19 want to stay in the community, and people who still want  
20 to build a name like themselves, like "I'm so-and-so.  
21 I work with...." These people are in the community. And  
22 I think that in Saskatchewan and all over the place we're  
23 tired of hearing "You're the future leaders" because what  
24 we're doing now, we are leaders now. We have valid ideas  
25 now and good solutions.

1                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you. We  
2 will certainly get in touch with people in all the provinces  
3 and we -- you made your point very well.

4                   **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank  
5 you.

6                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Okay. Thank  
7 you for coming and sharing this with us and we wish you  
8 well and good luck in your undertaking and we hope to be  
9 able to be of some help at the end of the process, and  
10 maybe before.

11                   **MR. DON KOSSICK:** Thank you very much.

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

13                   Okay. Our next presenter will be  
14 Christine Lwanga from the Saskatoon Multicultural Council.  
15 If you could join us?

16                   Thank you.

17                   Good evening.

18                   **MS CHRISTINE LWANGA:** Good evening to  
19 you.

20                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** So if you could  
21 again identify yourself for the sake of the record and  
22 you may proceed when you are ready.

23                   **MS CHRISTINE LWANGA:** Okay.

24                   Good evening. My name is Christine  
25 Lwanga. I am speaking on behalf of the Saskatoon

1 Multicultural Council. I am actually a member of the  
2 Equity and Anti-Racism Committee of the Saskatoon  
3 Multicultural Council. And I would like to start by  
4 thanking you for giving us the opportunity to present to  
5 you tonight.

6 I will give a brief introduction of the  
7 Saskatoon Multicultural Council. The Saskatoon  
8 Multicultural Council was founded in 1954 and to date it  
9 brings together about 73 cultural member groups with a  
10 diverse representation ranging from large cultural groups  
11 like the German and the Ukrainian communities, to smaller  
12 groups which are mostly of recent immigrants like the  
13 Japanese, the Chinese, the Vietnamese and some of African  
14 cultural groups. And all together we bring together 73  
15 cultural groups or multicultural groups.

16 The Saskatoon Multicultural Council  
17 provides services and it has three (3) main program areas.

18 And one of the main programs is the equity and anti-racism  
19 program and much of my presentation will be based on that  
20 program. But some of the other programs that we provide  
21 are the multi-lingual school. The council co-ordinates  
22 about 30 community-run schools teaching different  
23 languages. About 26 different languages are being taught  
24 through the Council program. The other program is the  
25 performing arts program, mainly aimed at preserving and

1 promoting our diverse cultural heritages.

2 But to go back to the equity and  
3 anti-racism work, this is the central theme of all the  
4 Council's activities. The Council tries to work towards  
5 the development of a genuine respect for all people and  
6 promoting equal opportunity and full participation for  
7 all people of all backgrounds in Canadian society. You  
8 know this is a very big challenge in this society as we  
9 all know that there are so many barriers to equal  
10 participation and full participation for some Canadians.

11 We are all very much aware of the problem of racism in  
12 our society.

13 But before maybe again I talk about the  
14 program I would like to -- I think it should be important  
15 for us to talk a bit about what the Council has done in  
16 areas of trying to work with Aboriginal people, recognizing  
17 that the racialized communities or racialized immigrant  
18 communities are faced with racism, but even moreso the  
19 Aboriginal people are faced with racism. And if you are  
20 going to work towards the elimination of racism we have  
21 to be able to work hand in hand and support the struggles  
22 of the Aboriginal people.

23 We are aware that the board has been in  
24 other societies too: in the Saskatoon community and maybe  
25 even at the national level. For example, we know that

1 during the Constitutional talks the National Council of  
2 Canada gave a speech to the Canadian Ethno-Cultural Council  
3 to have a voice on the table. So we do appreciate every  
4 opportunity that is put in place to help people work across  
5 different cultural differences, to work on a common front  
6 or a common struggle.

7 In our work at the Saskatoon  
8 Multicultural Council we've been fortunate to work with  
9 Aboriginal people in the community. The equity and  
10 anti-racism program has an area which is specifically  
11 focused to providing consultancy work and workshops aimed  
12 at promoting equity and providing anti-racism education.

13 And one of the areas we cover is Aboriginal issues. And  
14 in this program -- the program is run by six (6) consultants  
15 but two (2) of the consultants are of Aboriginal ancestry.

16 We find this a very valuable resource and a very valuable  
17 opportunity.

18 The Council has also strongly supported  
19 Aboriginal issues in other areas. For example the Hughes  
20 Inquiry which was launched to look into the racism  
21 surrounding the death of Leo Lachance who was killed by  
22 a leader of a racist group. The Council wrote a letter  
23 to the Minister of Justice urging him that a broader inquiry  
24 into institutional racism ought to be undertaken because  
25 we did realize that the problem was not a single incident

1 but the problem was deeply entrenched in the institutional  
2 racism within our society.

3                   We've also worked with the Aboriginal  
4 community in other areas. For example the Labour Force  
5 Development, a program that as you know the Saskatoon  
6 Multicultural Council is coordinating a program for the  
7 racialized minorities to be able to participate in the  
8 Labour Force Development process. But, again, in this  
9 area we've been able to work with other equity groups and  
10 Aboriginal people because we do realize that it's not an  
11 isolated program. The problem cuts across the different  
12 groups who have been denied equal opportunities in society.

13                   And together with the other equity  
14 groups we do lobby for equity in training and employment.

15                   We do lobby together with Aboriginal women -- I mean with  
16 Aboriginal people, with women as a whole, with disabled  
17 people and any other groups that are marginalized in  
18 society while recognizing the historic nature and the  
19 complexity of the Aboriginal issues and problems that they  
20 are faced with.

21                   In our work we do recognize the common  
22 struggle against racism which is deeply rooted in our  
23 society, and we do share the agony of knowing that our  
24 future generations have to face various racist barriers  
25 in society. We also do share the dilemma that if society

1 continues to -- if society doesn't change our children  
2 will continue to be alienated and dehumanized and forced  
3 into crime and correctional centres, and if they are lucky  
4 to be accepted on the fringes of the society, though they  
5 will have to work probably 10 times as hard just to be  
6 able to survive in society.

7                   We know that the Aboriginal people in  
8 the Prairies for example share statistics with the people  
9 of African ancestry, in Nova Scotia, in respect to numbers  
10 who are forced into correctional centres. We feel that  
11 it's very, very important to recognize that the problem  
12 of racism is very deep-rooted and it's based on colonial  
13 and capitalistic systems and the patriarchy and these  
14 systems are global in nature.           And maybe on this  
15 point I very much share you know my view to the people  
16 who were presenting previously, that the problems we are  
17 faced with are global in nature and they cut across --  
18 we can't say you are dealing with the Aboriginal issues  
19 alone without dealing with the other issues. Neither can  
20 you say you are dealing with minority issues without  
21 dealing with Aboriginal issues. And, again, you can't  
22 talk about women's issues without the other issues. Yet,  
23 the paradox that the system as it is set today, it prefers  
24 to divide and conquer. It prefers to deal with one group  
25 and leave out the other groups, although the systems are



1 very much the same.

2 And we also recognize that the very  
3 systems that continue to operate these given groups  
4 continue to be funded by the tax dollars money in billions.

5 So whether the government does allocate funds and decide  
6 to eliminate racisms and the evils that are littered around  
7 it, it continues to fund systems that continue to interest  
8 these programs in billions and it opts to deal with these  
9 problems in isolation of others. It's sort of like a  
10 divide and rule.

11 And those of us who are involved in this  
12 struggle have to be prepared to go beyond that. We have  
13 to be prepared to see the connection in our issues and  
14 also understand their global nature, if we are going to  
15 be able to bring about real change.

16 We do also very much advocate for a  
17 holistic approach to the problem and are very much opposed  
18 to the band-aid solutions that are usually put in place  
19 you know basically because they are not dealing with a  
20 much larger problem, or the structural problem.

21 Now, with that brief presentation I will  
22 briefly give some proposed strategies or proposed  
23 solutions to this deep-rooted problem.

24 Now, we do recognize that racism is  
25 deep-rooted in society and the answers to each are complex.

1       They can be simplified maybe in a simple presentation  
2       like this but at the same time there are some things that  
3       we think are very important. We saw that those of us who  
4       are involved in the struggle for equity and fair play have  
5       to promote these principles for all but not for any specific  
6       or single group. We need to advocate for equity for all  
7       and claim for our share in economic and political power,  
8       as women, as Aboriginal people, as racialized groups, and  
9       other marginalized groups. And we cannot advocate for  
10      our rights while ignoring the rights of other groups, lest  
11      we also become oppressors or we play into the hands of  
12      other oppressors.

13                               And I do note the point that has been  
14      raised earlier that you know the issue is not basically  
15      economic because maybe the economic resources are limited.

16      But there is no doubt that the economic resources that  
17      are available in the world today can be shared among all  
18      people. Yet we know that there are so many systems that  
19      are put in place that continue to make the rich richer  
20      and the poor poorer. And this is not only limited to our  
21      country here in Canada but it's very much a global issue.  
22      The Third World countries are becoming poorer and poorer  
23      and the people who are poor in these countries are becoming  
24      poorer and poorer but the richer are becoming richer at  
25      the expense of the majority.

1                   We also feel that we need to challenge  
2                   the status quo, that unless we are prepared to challenge  
3                   the status quo, including the very language that we are  
4                   using, because for me I see that we are -- any society,  
5                   for example, any language that is developed in a society  
6                   that is racist, that language too is racist. And I find  
7                   the English language to be very, very racist. The English  
8                   language doesn't have the monopoly of racism but any  
9                   society that is racist is bound to develop a language that  
10                  is racist. We need to learn to challenge the language  
11                  that is racist lest we also play into the racist ideology.

12                   For example we do talk about people  
13                  having different races: "my race" and "your race." Yet  
14                  at the same time, by the same breath, we say we are all  
15                  human beings. And even in government documents, including  
16                  the Human Rights Commission, they talk about people of  
17                  different races; but which race?

18                   We are all made up of one human race and  
19                  the myth about race is the very same ideology that has  
20                  been used to dehumanize some people while making other  
21                  people superior while making other people gain at the  
22                  expense of others. So I think it's very, very important  
23                  to challenge and to be cautious in the language we use.

24                  Otherwise, those of us who are working towards change,  
25                  play into the very same ideology and end up creating a

1 vicious cycle.

2 And in my own community we've been able  
3 to challenge that through, for example, resisting the term  
4 "visible minorities." We don't believe we are visual  
5 minorities. That is a label that has been created by  
6 somebody else to keep us as "the other" or as the "oppressed  
7 people." We are racialized groups because society chooses  
8 to racialize us. By calling us visible minorities there  
9 is a deliberate effort to ignore the problem. The problem  
10 is racism. The problem is not the way I look. I am proud  
11 about the way I look. I am a human being and if somebody  
12 is ashamed about the way I look that is his problem.

13 So I am not a visible minority, I am only  
14 racialized. So we prefer to call ourselves racialized  
15 groups. And when racism disappears then we'll be equal  
16 to everybody else. But if you call me a visible minority  
17 I'll remain a visible minority and racism will remain  
18 intact.

19 The other thing we would like to  
20 promote -- to advocate for either those of us who are  
21 advocating for change have to start to educate the public  
22 and even the government about the social and economic cost  
23 of racism. We don't have a society as long as we have  
24 racism. But racism does not only cost us in our social  
25 skills but it also has economic costs.

1                   I think we just have to look at the  
2                   Aboriginal situation here in Saskatchewan to understand  
3                   the cost of racism. How many people are forced in  
4                   correctional centres? A human being is a most valuable  
5                   resource in a society, yet a society chooses to dehumanize  
6                   a certain portion of its population and to deny them the  
7                   opportunity to full participate in that society as you  
8                   know productive and valuable people.

9                   So we need to start advocating for the  
10                  socioeconomic -- to educate people about the socioeconomic  
11                  cost of racism. Racism hurts us as victims, but it hurts  
12                  society, the larger society. But it seems that people  
13                  don't seem to realize that.

14                  Then, lastly, I thought maybe it's also  
15                  very important for us to recognize that racism at one time  
16                  has been legislated by the government. Our own government  
17                  legislated unfair treatment and unequal treatment of  
18                  people on the basis of their ethnic origins. Yet so many  
19                  times when we are advocating for change we hear senior  
20                  government officers saying we can't legislate anti-racism,  
21                  we can't legislate attitude. But how come, at one time,  
22                  it was legislated that certain people are going to be  
23                  treated differently?

24                  I think that people have to be brave  
25                  enough and stand out and say "We are going to legislate

1 anti-racism. We are going to legislate education and  
2 employment equity so that we all have a fair opportunity  
3 and so that all the human resources in the society is fully  
4 utilized and recognized."

5 Thank you.

6 Maybe in closing I would like to mention  
7 that working in a non-profit organization -- again maybe  
8 arising out of the systemic unfair systems that are built  
9 in our system -- I work in a non-profit organization and  
10 we looked at this as a very big opportunity for us to be  
11 here, but because of the limited resources we do have I  
12 wasn't able to prepare for this presentation earlier.  
13 I only had a chance to prepare it this afternoon. So,  
14 it has some typos and I apologize for that but we thought  
15 it was more important to be here than maybe not be here.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
17 much. You are quite right in saying that is more important  
18 to be here and you could always, if you wish, complete  
19 your thoughts and forward that to us at a later date.  
20 We are very happy that you could come and share what you  
21 have to share with us while we were here in Saskatoon.

22 I would like to know a bit more about  
23 the Council. It was founded in '64. And is there a board?  
24 Could you ---

25 **MS CHRISTINE LWANGA:** Yes. The Council

1 is -- you know out of a membership of 73 groups, we have  
2 a board elected every year and as a policy that board has  
3 to be -- is made up of representatives from the diverse  
4 community, to the extent that at least we don't have more  
5 than one (1) representative -- it is made up of a board  
6 of 12 people but no more than one (1) person comes from  
7 one (1) culture group. So the board is very diverse.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** And how do you  
9 get your funding?

10 **MS CHRISTINE LWANGA:** We do get our  
11 funding from the federal government from the Department  
12 of Multiculturalism and Citizenship and that's where the  
13 bulk of our funding comes from, partly because it flows  
14 from the National Multicultural Policy.

15 But we've not been able to get a  
16 corresponding level of support from the provincial and  
17 the municipal governments because it very much depends  
18 on their level of sensitivity to these issues and to a  
19 great extent the level of sensitivity is not at the level  
20 we would like it to be. So we do get very little, very  
21 minimal, support from the local and the provincial  
22 government.

23 And yet you know it's very important to  
24 recognize that the issues we are dealing with are very  
25 broad issues. When you talk about multiculturalism you

1 are talking about -- we do get recommended (PH) for  
2 consultations from the education sector, from the health  
3 sector, from the correctional centres, name it, in any  
4 institution we are consulted on how to deal with you know  
5 issues of anti-racism and also issues of multicultural  
6 policy, sensitivity. But we are functioning on a very  
7 limited budget.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** What kind of  
9 relationship do you have with the Human Rights Commission,  
10 if any?

11 **MS CHRISTINE LWANGA:** We do have a  
12 relationship with the Human Rights Commission, partly  
13 because maybe for example we do work together around the  
14 March 25 and High Racism Day, and also there was an instance  
15 about two (2), three (3) years ago when there were racist  
16 stickers that originated from Alberta which had you know  
17 a face of maybe somebody of African ancestry with a "No"  
18 sign, like a "Not permitted" sign. Those stickers were  
19 being sold in the city here and we approached the  
20 Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission and launched a  
21 complaint. And the Commission supported our initiative  
22 and you know saw the ---

23 But, again, knowing that the problem of  
24 racism is very much institutional and very much still  
25 alive, when the case had -- only one (1) case was allowed.



1       In the case of actually two (2) other stickers, one of  
2       somebody of African ancestry and somebody of Japanese  
3       ancestry they say that it's okay to sell them but only  
4       one was not okay because somebody from that specific  
5       community was there to protect. In which case it was  
6       implied that it was okay to be racist as long as those  
7       people don't come out and complain. Not even the Human  
8       Rights Commission can protect us from that. So we still  
9       have a long ways to ---

10                   **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Being in  
11       existence since 1964, for how long have you got members,  
12       Aboriginal organizations that are members, of the Council?  
13       Were they there at the outset, at the creation?

14                   **MS CHRISTINE LWANGA:** No, and neither  
15       are they fully active as members to date, partly because  
16       I think it is partly a political kind of situation in that  
17       the Aboriginal people have never been able to -- have not  
18       been able to get -- they are not in a category of a  
19       multicultural community. They are the founding nations  
20       and they didn't want to see themselves on the fringes.  
21       And one way to make a political statement and say they  
22       are not outsiders, this is their land, was to keep away  
23       from the multicultural community.

24                   But we do work together on issues where  
25       we have a common understanding. For example, the issue

1 of anti-racism and equity issues.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Do you meet  
3 with them or is there any contact?

4 **MS CHRISTINE LWANGA:** Yeah, there is,  
5 and for example through the problem I was telling you that  
6 our equity and anti-racism program we do have two (2)  
7 consultants who work with us. And we do make presentations  
8 you know in some situations where, even with Aboriginal  
9 settings and, again, through our individual members and  
10 groups that we are associated with.

11 For example in February this year the  
12 Afro-Caribbean Association organized a provincial  
13 conference on racism and that conference was organized  
14 jointly with Aboriginal people. So there have been  
15 opportunities where we've worked jointly on common ground.

16 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I don't  
17 think I have any questions for you but I want to thank  
18 you for coming here and sharing with us your information  
19 and your thoughts on some of the proposed strategy to deal  
20 with racism. I think that's very, very important and I  
21 would like to again say that if you have any additional  
22 thoughts that you would like to put on paper and send them  
23 to us we'd be more than happy to receive them.

24 **MS CHRISTINE LWANGA:** Thank you.

25 Maybe also, before maybe we close, I just

1 wanted to mention that the last point I raised about the  
2 fact that racism and unfair treatment and discrimination  
3 was legislated in this country at one time and that we  
4 shouldn't accept any more that fair treatment has to be  
5 legislated, that we are going to wait for attitude change  
6 to bring about change. I think we do believe that  
7 legislation has to take place, undo the legislation that  
8 was there previously to bring about change, real change.

9 But that point wasn't part of my -- what I wrote down  
10 but I think it's very important.

11 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:**

12 Everything is being recorded here word for word, so we'll  
13 be sure to have that.

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

16 **MS CHRISTINE LWANGA:** Thank you.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:** Okay. This  
18 will close our hearing for today. I would like to thank  
19 our court reporter and the translator.

20 Merci.

21 --- Whereupon the Hearing was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.