

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

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1 **London, Ontario**

2 --- Upon commencing on Tuesday, May 11, 1993
3 at 1:00 p.m.

4 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** Good
5 afternoon. My name is Lucille Kewayosh. I am a misplaced
6 Cree from Saskatchewan, living in London. I am the
7 Moderator for the next day and a half for the Royal
8 Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

9 At this time I would like to welcome them
10 to the city of London and to the Aboriginal community in
11 London.

12 The Aboriginal community in London right
13 now has two housing co-ops that are Aboriginal-controlled.
14 We jointly own in the city of London close to \$8 million
15 in real estate. One of our co-ops started buying houses
16 and real estate in the east end of the city; the other
17 one started in the west end of the city. We always say
18 that we are not going to stop until we buy back the whole
19 city. That is our goal for the city of London.

20 At this time I would like to ask Jean
21 Pierre to do the opening ceremonies.

22 --- Opening Ceremony

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1 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** I would
2 like to thank Jean Pierre for those inspiring words and
3 for being a messenger for us today.

4 With that I will introduce the co-Chairs
5 of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, then I would
6 like to ask them to make a few comments to open these
7 hearings. I would like to introduce Georges Erasmus.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
9 I would like to thank Jean Pierre for
10 the opening.

11 The Royal Commission is now in the midst
12 of its third round of hearings. Yesterday we were in
13 Sarnia, and we heard from some of the leadership and
14 community members from surrounding communities. Today
15 and tomorrow we will be here, and then we will move on
16 to Brantford.

17 The Commission is travelling in three
18 separate groups, three teams of people. We are holding
19 hearings in three different places at the same time across
20 the country.

21 The reason for our hearings is to provide
22 people an opportunity to provide us with the solutions

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1 to the long-outstanding problems.

2 We are going around so that, when the
3 Commission is at its drafting of recommendations stage,
4 we will have a whole foundation of ideas and solutions
5 that have been provided to us from one end of the country
6 to the other. In these hearings we try to make sure that
7 we are hearing from as many people as possible, so we
8 encourage people to try to concentrate their thinking and
9 to maximize the time they have with us. We encourage them
10 to try to spend the majority of their time on solutions.

11

12 I know it is unusual for people to think
13 they have very little time to actually explain the context
14 of the situation, to give the background, and to give a
15 long list of problems that they will deal with. Sincerely,
16 the best way that you can be of use to us is to concentrate
17 and spend your time thinking about the ways in which
18 remedies should come about, the solutions that you feel
19 are needed to change things around.

20 We have a very, very broad mandate, so
21 our hearings can cover just about anything. We cover
22 self-government, youth issues, Elders' issues, women's

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1 concerns, economic issues, urban Aboriginal issues,
2 culture, language, education, health, your views on Indian
3 Affairs, your views on the Indian Act. Also we encourage
4 you to think in the long term. A lot of times people are
5 thinking about right around the corner to get a solution
6 for tomorrow. Really, this Commission is trying to look
7 as far ahead as possible and, to use a phrase that is very
8 common in Ontario, to look ahead for seven generations.

9 We also want people not only to look at
10 what they want done in the next year or so in turning the
11 corner of things, but where they want to go in the future.

12 From the previous hearings we have some
13 documents at the back of the room. They provide us with
14 some ideas we heard. You will see that there are some
15 document there which just provide a description of what
16 people told us, and then there are a couple of documents,
17 one from the first round and one from the second round,
18 which add some analysis on that. The analysis deals with
19 things like trying to make some sense of all the information
20 we are getting.

21 From each round of hearings we received
22 something like 10,000 pages of transcripts. That is

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1 before we count the pages of documents which people
2 actually handed us, sometimes very brief summaries of
3 thicker documents. So we have a lot of information.

4 In the second round we thought we heard
5 four major themes, and we would like to know if we are
6 right or wrong on them or if they work in your area. One
7 big theme regarding solutions seemed to be
8 self-determination. That has to be one extremely
9 important cornerstone of the future.

10 Aboriginal self-sufficiency seems to be
11 another very important cornerstone -- enough land and
12 enough resources to provide for oneself.

13 The third cornerstone seems to be that
14 there needs to be a very major improvement in the large
15 relationship between Aboriginal people, the First Nations
16 people, Canada and the state.

17 Finally, another big heading seems to
18 me, from all of the pain that Aboriginal people have
19 experienced, whether it was bad policies of one kind or
20 another -- residential schools, the loss of language, the
21 imposition of the Indian Act, forcing new styles of
22 government on all Aboriginal people that are affected by

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1 the Indian Act -- there needs to be healing from all of
2 those experiences.

3 Those seem to be the easiest way in which
4 we could summarize everything that we have heard up to
5 now. In each case, there were some examples of how we
6 could move ahead. One example is healing. There seems
7 to be a lot of healing going on already across the country,
8 whether it is in correctional institutes or in Friendship
9 Centres or on-reserve or off-reserve.

10 Likewise, people are moving ahead with
11 implementing what they believe are the beginnings of
12 self-government, and a lot of people have aspirations for
13 the future and are looking for a process to deal with that.

14 Some Aboriginal people have a land base
15 already; many do not and desire a more substantial land
16 base. Many have treaties and, as far as the relationship
17 with Canada goes, they believe they are not being
18 well-served by the way in which government deals with them
19 today, and so forth.

20 Those four big themes seem to be what
21 we have heard to date. In this round we are holding
22 hearings until the end of June. We will be hearing from

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1 both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. We would like
2 as much as possible for people to give us their best
3 thoughts on what kind of future they would like to see,
4 where things are better for everyone and where there is
5 justice for Aboriginal people.

6 We know that, in the end, the
7 recommendations are going to have to be something that is
8 acceptable to both. In the larger public it has to be
9 seen as fair as far as they are concerned, and we know
10 very, very well that amongst Aboriginal people there are
11 many different Aboriginal people around the country and,
12 yet, we need to find a solution that will be satisfactory
13 to everyone there, too.

14 We didn't think we could find out the
15 solutions ourselves, just sitting in Ottawa. We had to
16 hear from people, and this is what these hearings are about.

17 We will come out with interim
18 recommendations in some areas, and we will come out with
19 some interim reports. It is very likely that they will
20 be on a number of issues. The Arctic exiles, the Inuit
21 who were relocated from northern Quebec into the High
22 Arctic -- we will probably come out with a report on that.

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1 We may be doing one on suicide amongst Aboriginal people,
2 and there may be a number of other areas that we will be
3 dealing with through interim reports.

4 When the Commission started out, we had
5 seven Commissioners. At the moment we have six. We
6 believe we will probably have a replacement relatively
7 soon.

8 With me here is Paul Chartrand, to my
9 left. Paul is a Métis from the prairies. He grew up in
10 Manitoba. He is a lawyer. He spend eight or nine years
11 in Australia. He has taught law and Aboriginal Studies
12 particularly in the area of Métis issues, but on Aboriginal
13 concerns in general. He is a professor at the University
14 of Manitoba. He has been involved in things like the
15 constitutional round tables and the First Ministers
16 meetings which took place in the 1980s, and so on.

17 Also there is a number of other
18 Commissioners who are travelling in the other teams.

19 My former history is that I was, first,
20 leader of the Dene in the north and then became National
21 Leader. I was on the Executive of the Assembly of First
22 Nations as a Vice-Chief of the North and then eventually

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1 I was the National Chief for a couple of terms.

2 With that, I will see if Paul wants to
3 say a few opening remarks, and then we will open up the
4 hearings.

5 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank
6 you. I will be brief so that we can get on with our
7 hearings.

8 It has already been emphasized that we
9 are here to inquire about what we should tell the federal
10 government. The matters in our mandate are not simple
11 ones. They are matters concerning which different parties
12 have different interests.

13 There are those who favour the promotion
14 of the rights approach. They proclaim Aboriginal rights
15 and other rights. The courts have ideas of rights. Some
16 of those people who proclaim rights would focus on the
17 courts to resolve the difficult circumstances of
18 Aboriginal peoples in this country.

19 Others take a different view. Others
20 would prefer to have not the courts, because they are seen
21 as inherently unfair because they are other people's
22 courts, not Aboriginal peoples' courts. They would prefer

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1 to have their own representatives, politically legitimate
2 to themselves, to negotiate the proper place in the sun
3 in this country.

4 Those are matters upon which we solicit
5 your advice. If we are to make policy recommendations
6 to the federal government, whom is the government to deal
7 with?

8 In respect of each presentation, then,
9 I am concerned to inquire: What is it the federal
10 government can do? How can federal policy help with your
11 situation? In particular, what relationship do you see
12 between the federal government and yourself or your
13 particular organization? By what institutional relation
14 do you believe your issue can be dealt with by the federal
15 government? We cannot have problems in the air; we are
16 not going to get anywhere that way.

17 As the Co-Chair has already said, there
18 are difficult problems, some of which may appear to be
19 the kind that can be solved in the short term. We would
20 like those identified if you believe that certain matters
21 can be identified in the short term. If so, by whom and
22 by what process? Again, whom ought the government to deal

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1 with?

2 There are longer-term problems, issues
3 that perhaps cannot, in your view, be resolved in the short
4 term. If so, what kind of process ought to be put in place
5 to resolve that?

6 This Commission is not going to come up
7 and resolve problems for people, but it certainly could
8 recommend, perhaps in the case of certain issues such as
9 rights or claims adjudication, the establishment of some
10 permanent mediating or negotiating body. That is a
11 theoretical possibility that I mentioned. But we need
12 to know, in the case of longer-term solutions that you
13 contemplate, what institutions ought to be put in place
14 to deal with them.

15 That is what we are here for. We have
16 to look at recommendations which, whether in the short
17 term or long term, make sense, in the sense that they can
18 be expected to endure so that the interests of the different
19 parties involved are secure and are catered to. There
20 are Aboriginal people in the country and there are also
21 non-Aboriginal people in the country, so we want to hear
22 how the interests of all are going to be promoted.

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1 I think on today's agenda we have many
2 Aboriginal people. There are obviously going to be
3 relations with federal institutions and in a federal system
4 like Canada's, necessarily, provincial and municipal
5 institutions as well. We need to hear from those parties
6 what are the appropriate federal policies that ought to
7 be put into place.

8 Those are the general remarks which are
9 an attempt to focus the debate so that it is in a form
10 that we can use for our purpose of making policy
11 recommendations to the federal government. I am anxious
12 to hear what we ought to tell the federal government, so
13 I will not take up any more of your time.

14 Thank you very much.

15 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** At this
16 point I would like to call the representative of the
17 N'Amerind Elders' Group, Dorothy Day, if she is in the
18 audience.

19 The next one is Miles Morrisseau of the
20 Native News Network.

21 We have an individual presentation by
22 Arthur Honyust, an Oneida Elder. Would you come forward,

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1 please.

2 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** Good afternoon,
3 ladies and gentlemen. I hope I don't bore you too much
4 with what I have to say.

5 I just recently found out that this
6 Commission was coming to London, so I didn't really have
7 too much time to get anything put together.

8 My name is Arthur Honyust. I belong to
9 the Oneida Nation and the Turtle Clan. I am not here
10 representing anyone or any group. What I have to say is
11 strictly what I have observed.

12 My observations go quite a way back.
13 I think George probably remember some of the times we have
14 crossed paths here and there and all over. What I have
15 to say, I hope, will be a little bit out of the ordinary
16 and something else to talk about or think about, or
17 whatever. I am just going to hit the headings I saw in
18 the piece in the paper and try to respond to them.

19 First, a new relationship between
20 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people: There is not much
21 anyone can do to control or direct relationships between
22 people. There is legislation in place concerning

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1 discrimination, but for all the effect it might have, it
2 might as well not be there at all.

3 Anything that has to do with these
4 relationships must remain in the realm of rhetoric. The
5 only viable or positive thing that could come from a change
6 in the present relationship would be for the Government
7 of Canada to recognize and accept the sovereignty of each
8 of these Aboriginal Nations.

9 I have always had a positive and amicable
10 relationship with people with whom I have worked or came
11 in contact with in some way, strictly through my own
12 efforts.

13 I would suggest that this should not have
14 any bearing on the remainder of these discussions and could
15 be eliminated. I say that because of what I said about
16 the legislation. Legislation cannot change
17 relationships. It is we, ourselves, who have most direct
18 control of relationships, whether we are in a group or
19 whether we are individuals, just as I am standing here
20 talking to you. I have talked to people all across the
21 country, and they still maintain that they would like to
22 retain their own identities, so that is why I mentioned

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1 the sovereignty of the Nations.

2 The next topic is self-determination for
3 Aboriginal people. This topic I don't quite understand.

4 What you are offering has already been covered in the
5 Indian Act, section 81. That is the one which says we
6 can make by-laws and everything else, such as speeding
7 on the reserve or whatever, drinking and everything else.

8 I believe that, as long as the Canadian
9 government holds a veto on the actions of the Aboriginal
10 people, there cannot be self-government or
11 self-determination. As an example, should we decide that
12 we wish to revive our traditional government, the one that
13 the Canadian government declared redundant because the
14 Chiefs could not agree -- and, incidentally, how often
15 do the chiefs agree in Ottawa?

16 Self-sufficiency: If I understand this
17 right, it means we will be expected to survive much the
18 same as our grandfathers did, which means that we must
19 look inward for our existence, except now we cannot hunt
20 and fish as a means of living which leaves an alternative
21 -- taxes, which in turn will mean eventual termination
22 because of no resources from which to pay tax, or genocide,

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1 genocide being the ultimate result.

2 This was the original concept when
3 reservations were first created. It was to put all the
4 Native people in one place. If I remember right, they
5 gave them blankets that were infested with various kinds
6 of disease, and that kind of thing. The policy then, which
7 was not published or broadcast in any way, was: We want
8 to get rid of the Aboriginal peoples of the country, so
9 that we can take it over and they will be gone.

10 The conception was ill-founded.
11 Instead of diminishing, we increased, so much so that we
12 have now become a danger. Conversely, if we were to revive
13 our traditions, it would not be compatible with the white
14 man's sense of values or philosophies. While the accepted
15 sense of values is based on acquisitive values, the sense
16 of values of the Aboriginal person is based on utilitarian
17 values. The two are not compatible. Yet, if we are to
18 maintain our identities of individual Nations, this too
19 must receive consideration.

20 You have embarked on a very complex
21 voyage with your project. We can only hope that our
22 current leaders will be equal to the task. That we can

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1 talk about later if there is any interest in it.

2 Healing for Aboriginal peoples and
3 communities: I don't believe that you mean this in the
4 literal sense, for it would mean the return to too much
5 that the white man feels belongs to him. An example is
6 Oka where the sacred burial grounds were being used for
7 a golf course; the city of Vancouver which now covers the
8 hunting grounds of the Musqueam Nation; Newfoundland, the
9 home of the Beothuk Nation. I believe everyone probably
10 has an idea of what happened to the Beothuks.

11 How do you heal these wrongs? Are they
12 take away Vancouver and give the hunting grounds back to
13 the Musqueams, or gather up the remainder of the Beothuk
14 Nation on the mainland and take them back? That would
15 be a healing, in my view.

16 I have one more topic to add to your
17 dialogue, and that is something which is not very often
18 talked about. I remember they used to not like me coming
19 to their meetings up in Ottawa and Toronto because this
20 was one of my pet topics: funding and/or financing
21 proposals.

22 What does the government have to offer

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1 to the Aboriginal people? Is there going to be any
2 assurance of sufficient funding, or do we go back to what
3 I said a while ago, taxing our own people on reserves?

4 Finally, what is to become of section
5 91(24) of the Constitution of Canada? Will it be
6 rescinded? I am of the opinion that it must remain as
7 a base for communications between the Aboriginal peoples
8 and the government, as well as a source of power and
9 authority for communications. Aboriginal people might
10 want to use the power that is contained in that
11 Constitution.

12 There is a couple of other things that
13 I thought of later but didn't have time to write down.

14 It is in connection with our treaties that
15 were written years ago. Are these treaties going to be
16 on the table when this Commission finishes its project
17 and it is turned over to the people to form the proposals
18 you are talking about? Is the final documentation of
19 the project going to be compatible with treaties that have
20 been written, or will these treaties be breached?

21 The second part of that concerns the
22 trust that the Canadian government took on when it took

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1 over from the British government -- the trust to look after
2 the people. The Queen Mother or our Fathers in Ottawa,
3 or whatever, did not. They have created an abrogation
4 of trust which will lead directly back to treaties and
5 breach of these treaties.

6 That is all I have for the Commission.
7 Thank you.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Would you
9 mind if we asked you a few questions?

10 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** I will try to
11 answer as many as I can.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
13 I will ask Paul to start.

14 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
15 very much for your presentation.

16 My duty is to discern in your
17 presentation what can be translated into a policy
18 recommendation to the federal government. May I ask you
19 this question. It arises from an expression that I heard
20 you use, and I am going to use it to make sure I have it
21 right.

22 I understood you to say that the federal

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1 government ought to accept and recognize the sovereignty
2 of each Aboriginal Nation. If I have that right, I wonder
3 if you might want to explain further the significance of
4 that acceptance and recognition.

5 I know in the Constitution now the
6 Aboriginal treaty rights of Aboriginal peoples are
7 recognized and affirmed, but nobody knows what that means
8 until the courts decide it. I am concerned to know, as
9 a practical matter, what the federal government ought to
10 do when it accepts and recognizes the sovereignty of each
11 Nation. How does it show that acceptance and recognition?

12 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** It will be the
13 basis for the partnership that has been proposed over the
14 years.

15 I go back to the days of, I suppose, Mr.
16 Chrétien who is now the Leader of the Liberal Party, who
17 was here around 1969 as Minister of Indian Affairs. He
18 was going to make a full partner the Native people of
19 Canada.

20 If the federal government has that veto
21 over us and just takes all the Aboriginal people in Canada
22 and calls them Indians, that will never be. We will never

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1 be partners.

2 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Who is
3 "us" in this context? You are talking about a veto over
4 "us."

5 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** The Aboriginal
6 people of Canada, as opposed to the individual Nation.

7 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Can you
8 give me one or two examples of each individual Nation?

9 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** If the Oneida
10 Nation were recognized as a sovereign nation, then they
11 could make their by-laws and laws, and they could talk
12 to Ottawa on a partnership basis.

13 They are so busy reacting and responding
14 to what Ottawa puts out that they don't have time to put
15 forth their own.

16 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
17 very much.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Could I ask
19 you a question also, please.

20 You were saying that the
21 self-sufficiency is not going to work. What would work?

22 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** It wasn't

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1 self-sufficiency; it was the new relationship between
2 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

3 I think I would reverse the question.
4 What kind of relationship is being proposed as opposed
5 to the current relationship between Aboriginal people and
6 non-Aboriginal people?

7 We have areas where there is open
8 hostility to Native people, and we have areas -- I suppose
9 the area where they are hardly noticed is the ideal
10 situation.

11 As far as progress and dealing with the
12 big businesses of the country, we don't have too much of
13 a chance. We don't have anything on the settlement or
14 on the reserve to invite big business to come down.

15 It's a very negative proposition at the
16 very least right now. We have a long way to go before
17 we have a proper relationship or an ideal relationship,
18 or anything.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Could you
20 tell us what is. We have heard that the relationship is
21 not working right now, and we are trying to get people's
22 views on what they think would work.

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1 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** We have a great
2 number of different nationalities here in this country.
3 Even the nationalities other than Aboriginal can't get
4 along. I don't think anyone will ever be able to bring
5 this country to the point where everyone likes everyone
6 else and they are all neighbours and everything else.
7 I think you will always find that hostility -- I guess
8 that would be a good word -- between peoples.

9 That is why I say it is almost useless
10 to try to put anything together to present a good
11 relationship -- acceptable relationships maybe.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What do we
13 need for a minimum in the way of an acceptable relationship?

14 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** You are aware of
15 the Two Row Wampum treaties.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Yes.

17 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** If we follow
18 that. If they leave us alone, we will leave them alone.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What is the
20 first step to return to the Two Row Wampum?

21 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** That would be a
22 big step. Almost preach the whole law of the Creator's

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1 way of life.

2 Understanding the idea of the Two Row
3 Wampum Treaty would go a long way to what we are talking
4 about here now.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Say we were
6 now ready with our pen in hand to write a recommendation
7 to the federal government about what to do about the Two
8 Row Wampum. Whom should we tell the federal government
9 to deal with on the Two Row Wampum?

10 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** I am not sure
11 where it would start. It would have to be everybody.
12 You would have to offer the thing out, and those who wanted
13 it would accept it and those who didn't want it could have
14 their own.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is there
16 anything else you want to add?

17 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** Not really.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** If you think
19 of anything later, you might want to send us a letter and
20 we will gladly accept.

21 **ELDER ARTHUR HONYUST:** Thanks very
22 much.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
2 for presenting to us.

3 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** Thank you.
4 Next we have Miles Morrisseau from the Native News
5 Network.

6 Miles is a member of the Native News
7 Network. He is a Métis from Crane River, Manitoba and
8 the Editor of "Native Beat."

9 **MILES MORRISSEAU, Native News Network:**
10 Good afternoon.

11 I have been working in the media for
12 about the last six years, and through that time I came
13 to realize that one of the areas that had been somewhat
14 neglected in trying to understand the tools of oppression
15 that were used against Aboriginal people was in the area
16 of journalism. There has been much discussion and, I
17 think, a great understanding of things like residential
18 schools and the state and the church and the practices
19 and policies they had to oppress Aboriginal people.

20 Because journalism is what I do and it
21 is something that I believe in, I began to think about
22 it in terms of how it was used against us. I have come

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1 to the conclusion that, because its responsibility was
2 to tell the truth, because its responsibility was to make
3 people understand and aware of things that were going on,
4 it bore an incredible responsibility for what had happened
5 to Aboriginal people in the last century or so, as
6 journalism and the media became a real force -- not media
7 in terms of John Wayne movies and books like "Last of the
8 Mohicans" or that sort of thing, but in terms of providing
9 people with the information with which to make judgments
10 and also information in terms of how they would establish
11 stereotypes or racist attitudes.

12 As things went on, like what happened
13 with residential schools, the media in this country was
14 silent through it all. In fact, it was, I guess,
15 advocating in their silence what was going on, if not
16 advocating publicly what was happening. I think, in a
17 way, that continues on to this day.

18 The most recent example of how the media
19 wishes to present what Aboriginal people are all about
20 is a recent vignette that was produced by the National
21 Film Board and aired by the Canadian Broadcasting
22 Corporation on this past Sunday, in which they showed the

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1 shores of Newfoundland and these Viking ships arriving,
2 and then the words across the screen, "Natives attack
3 Viking village." Then you hear the sounds of massacre
4 and whatever else -- people screaming, and then the poor
5 Vikings are driven off. That is all that happens. This
6 is a part of Canadian history, and this is what they want
7 to present to us. I believe it was part of the Canada
8 125 celebrations where they were presenting parts of
9 Canadian history, and this was one of them.

10 It is shocking to me to see these same
11 old racist attitudes, lies, half-truths being recycled
12 over and over again, and this one in particular because
13 I really feel that this is the big lie, that this is the
14 central lie of colonialism. It is the central lie of North
15 America, which is: They were savages, so that sort of
16 explains everything. Everything is hitched to this
17 attitude that all these things happened because they were
18 savages.

19 To have that presented to people, not
20 subtly but blatantly, right out in the open, by two groups
21 with as much credibility as the National Film Board of
22 Canada and the CBC really makes you wonder how far they

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1 have actually gone or how far they haven't gone in trying
2 to understand what Aboriginal people are all about.

3 I recently wrote about that and said
4 that, if the National Film Board or the CBC feels that
5 bloodshed is a good way to get people interested in their
6 history, then certainly they could take their cameras back
7 to Newfoundland and tell the story of the Beothuk, who
8 were hunted like animals and wiped out completely. But
9 this is apparently not the kind of story they wish to tell
10 about their past. The kinds of story they obviously still
11 wish to tell are the Natives as savages.

12 Another thing that was recently brought
13 to my attention, in terms of how the media works and what
14 kind of information we are allowed to be exposed, is a
15 book which has been written by the main warrior of the
16 Oka crisis, Lasagna. It has been published in French and,
17 following its publication, it became the focus of a number
18 of radio talk shows in French Quebec. The people who were
19 hosting the shows didn't even read the book; they just
20 condemned it just for its publication. Listeners called
21 in and were outraged that such a thing would be printed
22 and that they would give this terrorist a chance to speak.

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1 Following this uproar, the English
2 publisher of the book backed down and decided not to publish
3 it. This is borderline censorship, one of the things that
4 so-called mainstream Canadians are morally opposed to,
5 supposedly.

6 The thing is that it doesn't matter
7 whether you agree with what he has to say or even want
8 to hear what he has to say or want to read what he has
9 to say, but I think it should be presented to people, and
10 they should have the opportunity to read it and be aware
11 of those ideas, if they are interested in doing so.

12 I really feel that, in order to achieve
13 the goals set forward by the Commission, we need to have
14 a real voice for Aboriginal people. We need to have a
15 place where Aboriginal people can have their say in
16 whatever manner they wish to express themselves. I really
17 feel you won't be able to achieve the four touchstones
18 of the Commission without having some sort of Native
19 communication vehicle in place.

20 You can't forge a new relationship
21 between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples when the
22 information that they are being presented with is like

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1 the one that I mentioned earlier, where they are saying
2 Natives are savages. That is not a new relationship;
3 that's the old one. That's the one that we have been trying
4 to overcome for the past few centuries.

5 Self-determination -- I really think
6 that without an independent Native media, we won't be able
7 to achieve self-determination in terms that will give
8 people a real voice. I think one of the roles of Native
9 media is of an independent Native media, and I think there
10 should be a very clear distinction about an independent
11 media. I think media controlled by Native political
12 organizations or Native band governments are not an
13 independent media. I think they still serve a purpose
14 and they are still important but, in terms of providing
15 a place where the decisions and the roles of the Native
16 government are questioned or put into different
17 perspectives, it won't be there.

18 I think the role of an independent Native
19 press should also provide some place to respond, some place
20 to question, some place to stand in opposition to Native
21 government. I think there is not enough accountability
22 amongst Native leadership, amongst Native governments,

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1 and I don't think the mainstream media is really going
2 to question that to a great extent.

3 We can look at a story in The Globe and
4 Mail of this past Friday talking about the Chartered Lands
5 Registration Act, I think it is called -- and I am not
6 sure about that. The story basically presented that this
7 is a historical situation where Native leadership has
8 really gotten involved in crafting Indian Affairs policy.

9 I don't think seven leaders from the whole country have
10 that responsibility. I don't think there is a lot of
11 Aboriginal people out there who know this is going on,
12 but The Globe and Mail certainly presents it to the rest
13 of Canada that this is a good thing. No questions asked;
14 we have a few Aboriginal people in there, so we are really
15 moving along here in getting the Native people involved.

16 They serve a purpose to allow that to
17 happen without question, and I think we should be
18 questioning those things. If there is a major Act being
19 drafted that is going to affect Aboriginal people across
20 the country, I don't think Aboriginal people should be
21 happy that there were seven Native leaders involved, unless
22 that is the way it works for them in their community and

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1 they are happy with it.

2 In terms of self-sufficiency, I really
3 believe that the Native media has a real role in terms
4 of providing economic development in communities and
5 providing jobs in places where people can learn skills
6 that they can then exploit in the larger job market, as
7 well as bringing attention to developments in those areas
8 in terms of economic development and in terms of sharing
9 those ideas with other communities.

10 Under the fourth one, the area of
11 healing, I really feel that we have provided a voice for
12 people who want to deal with these difficult issues. I
13 don't know sometimes, if people write us about a painful
14 experience, if it helps anybody more than themselves; I
15 don't know. I think it might help other people; I would
16 hope that it would. I certainly feel that it does help
17 the person who has written those things down and have shared
18 them with other people. It can serve to be a real medium
19 for people to share these things.

20 Again, the Native media will also serve
21 to share ideas and solutions and developments within those
22 areas for other people to be exposed to.

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1 I speak largely from my experience in
2 working with "Native Beat" which is our publication. I
3 also serve with the Native News Network of Canada. We
4 are looking at a number of different areas to try to
5 increase the number of Native people within the media.
6 One of the ideas we are currently looking at is establishing
7 Native internship programs within mainstream journalism
8 businesses or within the Native media itself.

9 I really feel that we need to have as
10 many people as we can get working in journalism. There
11 is no end to the stories that need to be told out there,
12 and they are not being told. If they are being told, I
13 think they are being told from a perspective that does
14 not reflect the Native reality. In order for Native people
15 to achieve those goals, they have to begin to share their
16 stories with one another and share their experiences and
17 achievements and successes and failures, and whatever
18 else, with one another. Along with everything else that
19 was undermined and destroyed or wiped out were our
20 communication methods, and our ways of speaking and telling
21 were undermined as well. I feel that the Native media
22 plays a role in rediscovering or re-inventing those things.

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1 Another idea in terms of providing a
2 solution for some of these problems is that I would really
3 like to see what they call electronic bulletin boards.
4 They are computer networks that you set up within
5 corporations so that they can send memos and stuff back
6 and forth to one another. I think it would be very helpful
7 to see if you could set up a system like that, even to
8 connect the social service agencies together so that they
9 can say, "We are dealing with this," or "Do you have any
10 ideas?" or "I am looking for a person; we have a position
11 available" -- whatever it is. Whatever it is, you put
12 it in the computer, and it is there and everybody else
13 across the country can tap into it. It's instant, and
14 it connects you to people who are working in similar areas.
15 I think the band governments across the country could
16 be hooked up into a system so that, when things happen,
17 they don't come as such a surprise.

18 Because of isolation being one of the
19 main problems that Aboriginal people have, I think you
20 have to try to provide ways for people to deal with that
21 isolation and get them connected into one another so that,
22 when something like Davis Inlet happens, if those people

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1 were hooked up to a system where they could say, "These
2 problems are ongoing; this is what is happening," perhaps
3 there might be a way that the response could come sooner.

4 I think that's about it, unless there
5 are any questions you would like to ask.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
7 We will start with questions from Paul.

8 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank
9 you, Mr. Morrissette, for your presentation. You recognize
10 the power to influence as possessed by the public media,
11 and I congratulate you. There are a number of other
12 Aboriginal people in this country who, through various
13 media and art forms, have access to the ways by which to
14 influence public opinion, other people in the arts like
15 Maria Campbell, Thomson Highway and Tom Jackson, and so
16 on. In the print media I am reminded of Richard
17 Waugamesu (PH), one speaker of whom I am a fan. I hope
18 you are not upset that you see this as a commercial for
19 newspaper competition.

20 I wonder if I might make a few comments
21 and intersperse them with some questions. I would invite
22 you to give me quick replies. I have a number of small

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1 points that I would like to raise with you. I say that
2 in advance so that I am not inviting a long discussion
3 on the first one. That happens sometimes, and then we
4 don't have to time to cover all the points. It is just
5 a matter of covering some little points, if you don't mind.

6 I understand the point you made about
7 history and its significance. That is a point that has
8 been conveyed to us, and it is a point that is of grave
9 concern to me. I will do my best to see that it is a
10 significant part of the work of this Commission, because
11 the history of this country has yet to be written and I
12 hope we can contribute in some meaningful ways to that.

13 A couple of short questions now.

14 I think you made some very important
15 points about the role of Aboriginal media. With regard
16 to government funding, my understanding is that the
17 newspapers at least, or many of them, are funded by the
18 federal government. A concern, of course, which has been
19 articulated by some people is that there is no independence
20 where someone is funded by an outsider. If you are funded
21 by your neighbour, you are dependent on your neighbour,
22 and so on.

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1 What are your views on that? You have
2 talked particularly about an opposition voice -- that is,
3 you perceive Aboriginal media as acting as sort of
4 opposition critic, which of course is a very important
5 function. I am not offering an opinion on it; I am saying
6 it is an important function. Whether or not it is the
7 only way of providing it or the best way I don't offer
8 an opinion on.

9 What is your view on the means by which
10 Aboriginal media ought to sustain themselves economically,
11 in light of the functions you see for it and in light of
12 the obvious danger of outside funding?

13 **MILES MORRISSEAU:** I think a lot of the
14 Native media, obviously in the last few years, has learned
15 to live without the amount of government funding that they
16 have relied on in the past. Some of them didn't survive
17 the budget cuts of 1990, and there were some additional
18 cuts earlier this year.

19 We don't have government funds for our
20 publication, and there is no easy way for us to survive
21 other than doing a variety of other different jobs on top
22 of what we do already with the publication.

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1 In terms of achieving an advertising
2 base, in my experience, when a publication comes out, there
3 is either a sense that it is government funded or Native
4 government funded, and it is just there and you pick it
5 up and read it. I don't know if there is the same
6 relationship with the Native press that non-Native people
7 have with their press. I think you have to build that
8 relationship. I think the Native media is still a
9 relatively new phenomenon and, because of that, it takes
10 a long time to establish a relationship with readers and
11 establish a relationship with businesses. In terms of
12 economic self-sufficiency, I guess it would be
13 establishing that relationship with advertisers.

14 I don't know if potential advertisers
15 within the Native market look at Native publications and
16 really see the benefits for them in terms of advertising.

17
18 I think it will take a number of years
19 before you can reach that point where you do establish
20 that relationship. The only way you do it is to keep
21 plugging along and keep believing that it will be that
22 some day, that you will be able to make a living from what

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1 you do. Until you have reached that point, you have to
2 survive on the belief that what you are doing is important
3 and right and you care about it. That doesn't always pay
4 the bills, but it does sustain you.

5 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
6 for that.

7 You referred to the CBC and a vignette,
8 and there is an area in which I think we could make policy
9 recommendations. Perhaps in time you might want to
10 reflect upon the role of the CBC and what recommendations
11 we might be able to make in that area to promote the goals
12 you see as being appropriate to pursue. I am seeking
13 advice on that, I hope we hear from the CBC and we hope
14 to hear from critics of the CBC, so that we can make some
15 concrete recommendations. I invite you to assist us in
16 any way you might be able.

17 I will just make a quick comment about
18 another comment of yours. You referred to a book which
19 was not published because of a reaction from people. One
20 of the things that I think we have to reflect upon is the
21 operation of what one might call public guilt or public
22 reaction to a description of certain sorts of events.

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1 We have had a number of inquiries, for
2 example, across the country, mandated to look into
3 circumstances of Aboriginal peoples in relation to their
4 contact with the criminal justice system, some of them
5 focusing on specific issues, and those have resulted in
6 some public turmoil reflected in newspaper editorials,
7 for example, indicating that a society can tolerate some
8 guilt but that there appears to come a point where a society
9 seems to have some difficulty in handling descriptions
10 that give rise to such feelings. One commentator said,
11 for example, in the context of one inquiry, that what the
12 inquiry is doing is holding up a mirror to society and
13 that people do not like what they see.

14 I think you have raised an issue which
15 is significant to us, and I think it has to form an element
16 of our work. If you have any further thoughts on that,
17 I would invite you to pass them on to us.

18 My final comment is in relation to your
19 suggestion regarding electronic bulletin boards. I saw
20 going across my desk some time ago, within the last two
21 years, something about an organization, and I think it
22 was based somewhere in Manitoba, making some links with

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1 American Aboriginal organizations, particularly one based
2 in California. It seems to me, if my recollection serves
3 me right, that the proposal was for some kind of computer
4 network of this sort. I am wonder if you are aware of
5 it.

6 I think there have been some initiatives
7 taken in this field already.

8 **MILES MORRISSEAU:** I know there is one
9 in Kahnawake. They have a small bulletin board network
10 called IGLU, I believe. I think there is a couple of others
11 out there, but I am not aware of the one in Manitoba.

12 I think it would be interesting to see
13 how these operate and what the expense is in establishing
14 these types of networks. I would guess that a majority
15 of band offices across this country and different agencies
16 are computerized and, if they spent \$200 on a modem and
17 there was a network there for them, they could tap into
18 it.

19 I think its expense would certainly be
20 minimal compared to its potential advantages.

21 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I think
22 it has a lot of potential and I thank you for raising the

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1 point.

2 I make these comments by way of alerting
3 our research people to the matter, and I certainly
4 encourage them to investigate its possibility. We will
5 be keeping our eyes and ears open for further suggestions
6 in that area.

7 Again, thank you for your presentation.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In relation
9 to the Native media, what would you want us to recommend
10 in this area? Is it funding you are talking about or
11 something else, outside of the fact that it is important
12 to have an independent Aboriginal media?

13 **MILES MORRISSEAU:** Funding is a
14 difficult one, of course, because you want to maintain
15 a certain independence. On the other hand, we certainly
16 perceive the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation as being
17 a relatively independent, objective medium, and it is
18 entirely financed by the government. I still have a
19 problem with that.

20 I don't know how the Commission could
21 do it, but I would hope that Native organizations across
22 the country would become more aware and more supportive

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1 of their Native media. I think of an organization the
2 size of the Assembly of First Nations, and they buy one
3 subscription a year from "Native Beat." We probably get
4 more in terms of paid advertising from a small social
5 service agency like Nokee Kwe here in London on a yearly
6 basis than we get from the AFN, the Union of Ontario
7 Indians, AIAI, and the Chiefs of Ontario combined. Do
8 they not have anything to say to their people? Are there
9 not events that they wish people to be aware of, or do
10 they just not think it is important to use this medium
11 to make people aware? I don't know.

12 I would think that, if these
13 organizations of much larger budgets would even match what
14 some of the smaller agencies are doing, that would be a
15 real benefit to an independent press.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You
17 commented in your opening comments on the colonizing
18 influence of the media, either by their just silently
19 standing on the side of issues or perceptions they help
20 create. Is this something you are thinking of writing
21 on or doing some research on?

22 **MILES MORRISSEAU:** For me, what

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1 happened with that historical vignette that I talked about,
2 it is equal to the CBC providing funding to Ernst Zundel
3 and letting him air a commercial that says the holocaust
4 didn't happen. That is the same lie, as far as I am
5 concerned. When these hate groups present ideas that the
6 holocaust of Nazi Germany didn't happen, it is equal to
7 the idea that the Natives savagely wiped out these settlers
8 whenever they tried to come in friendship and land on these
9 shores.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** The Vikings
11 came in friendship?

12 **MILES MORRISSEAU:** That's the idea.
13 They seemed to be pretty tame Vikings as far as this
14 vignette was concerned.

15 You can't get away with that when you
16 talk about another group of people. Specifically, I think
17 Jewish people would be the best example to make. You can't
18 get away with those ideas, and you certainly don't have
19 them produced by the National Film Board and aired by the
20 Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. It is considered hate
21 propaganda.

22 When the state presents hate propaganda

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1 to the rest of country, something has to be done. I would
2 really hope that the Commission would make some sort of
3 statement to demand an apology for this and ask for a
4 vignette from the Native point of view to be produced and
5 aired.

6 It is very wrong. In terms of looking
7 at things like that, we don't have to look back too far.
8 We don't have to do a lot of research on what happened
9 historically, because it is still going on. It is an
10 ongoing thing.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
12 for coming forward. If you can think of anything else
13 later that you want to remind us of, just drop us a note.

14 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** At this
15 time we will call Dorothy Day from the N'Amerind Elders
16 Group, please.

17 **ELDER DOROTHY DAY, N'Amerind Elders**
18 **Group:** I guess a few people might know me to see me.
19 I am 78 years old, and I have lived in Canada all my life,
20 I guess. I was only four when my mother brought us back.
21 My mother married a Native Indian person from the Onondaga
22 Reservation and, when we come back, we moved to a little

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1 place they call Centralia. That is where I went to public
2 school.

3 Of course, my mother was alone with the
4 kids, and she kept boarders. When it came time to write
5 my examination to go to high school, I had to give that
6 up and stay home to help her.

7 Our place was a meeting place for Indian
8 people. They used to come up there to pull flax and they
9 would stop at Mom's, at our place -- we had quite a bit
10 of room -- until they were ready to go and pull flax for
11 a living.

12 I think a lot of people are under the
13 assumption that Indian people are lazy and shiftless and
14 they don't want to work. It was not so in my time.
15 Everybody got out and worked, and there was never any
16 welfare on the reservation. That's why there were there.
17 They picked berries, grew flax, and did anything they
18 could to make ends meet. But then that is all past.

19 My mother was telling me, "Away back when
20 we had the Chiefs on the reserves," -- and Mother was one
21 of the ladies that had to go back and elect a Chief there
22 -- "if there was any trouble on the reserve, the Chief

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1 went down and had the two parties that were maybe
2 quarrelling and arguing about something and straightened
3 that out and, before they left, they shook hands as
4 brothers."

5 They didn't have policing at that time
6 on the reserve and, I'll tell you, there was not the crime
7 that we see today. But those things are past, and I guess
8 people just don't trust one another any more.

9 Anyhow, I think the younger generation
10 is much smarter than we old people were. They go to school
11 and they learn a lot, and I am happy to say that I did
12 the best I could to put my kids through school so that
13 they would amount to something and maybe be able to make
14 their own living. Then things went fine.

15 I think that nowadays our young people
16 need a lot of help. Temptations are so great that it's
17 hard for young people to get out and make the living that
18 we had. There were jobs in those days. They never paid
19 a great big lot of money, but then you went to the store
20 and a dollar would buy quite a bit. Nowadays you have
21 to have an awful lot of money before you can exist.

22 When I lived on reserve, there was no

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1 television and no radio. We used to go down to the next
2 house and have prayer meetings, and we used to have ball
3 games, lacrosse, and all that. We didn't need all this
4 stuff, and I think that is why there was a lot of
5 friendliness there. If you they would see you anywhere,
6 they would holler out the Indian word, sogoey(PH), to one
7 another. That's hello, and they would answer back wherever
8 they were going.

9 I knew my Indian language, and I still
10 know it, but I am very sad to say that my grandchildren
11 don't. It's not the fault of N'Amerind, I don't think,
12 because we did get a language class going, but the mothers
13 would never take those children. It's a terrible,
14 terrible thing to think they are going to grow up not
15 knowing how to speak their own language if we don't have
16 help to have it in the schools, maybe even an hour a day
17 for the small ones to learn their Indian language. That
18 is when they will learn along with their ABCs and everything
19 else they have to learn in education. I think it would
20 be just great if we could have that.

21 I will also say that there have been a
22 lot of changes made with the government for the Indian

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1 people. I am grateful for all that I have seen. When
2 I lived out there, there wasn't anything for the Indian
3 people, but nowadays there is. There are schools there,
4 water, hydro -- they are living out there just like we
5 live in the city. I would be out there, too, if my eyes
6 hadn't got so bad. I find I can't manage, so I live in
7 the city.

8 I would like to see again the Indian
9 people taught that white people are not all that bad.
10 They realize now at this time and age that the land belonged
11 to us, and we were willing to help them when they came
12 over and kept them here. I don't know of there being any
13 battles, that they wouldn't have a place to stay. They
14 treated them like their very own.

15 Now the time has come when I see they
16 are trying to pay back some of the wrongs that have been
17 done to the Indian people. It is not the fault of the
18 young generation, of what went on away back when. We are
19 supposed to forget that.

20 With my philosophy, I live for just
21 today. Never mind what happened back then. Look ahead
22 to the good things that can happen for your young people.

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1 I hope and pray that, if the
2 self-determination goes by and if they can go back to the
3 old ways of living -- I am not saying they go back in
4 progress, but to go back and be the friendly people they
5 were, where the next man was his brother and they treated
6 one another with respect and the children were respecting
7 their parents. They never wanted to leave home and go
8 and live somewhere else. And they respected the Elders.
9 When they were older, even the grandchildren were always
10 there, and they didn't put people in nursing homes like
11 they do now.

12 I just hope and pray that I am not going
13 to make it bad in any way or form for what they want.
14 To govern themselves is great, and I hope and pray that
15 they won't lose all the privileges like hospitalization
16 and education for the children. Through education they
17 learn to get jobs for themselves, and they don't have to
18 be dependent on anybody else.

19 Thank you.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
21 for coming forward and giving us your views.

22 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** We have

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1 two more presenters for the Native News Association, Lynda
2 Powless and Dan Smoke.

3 **DAN SMOKE, Native Journalists**

4 **Association:** I would just like to say welcome to London.

5 We are very glad that you came here to our community to
6 hear what we have to share with you, some of our concerns
7 about some of the things that are on our minds that we
8 wish to convey to you so that you can take them back, and
9 maybe some action will result from them.

10 I am with the Native News Network of
11 Canada. You have heard one of our Board members just two
12 speakers ago, Miles Morrisseau. This is Lynda Powless
13 with me, of the Native Journalists Association of Canada.

14 **LYNDA POWLESS, Native Journalists**

15 **Association:** Hello, gentlemen. Georges, I think I have
16 interviewed you a number of times over the years in hallways
17 and a few other places, so I feel quite comfortable actually
18 being here again.

19 The Native Journalists Association is
20 a newly-formed association. It's national in its basis
21 and made up of Native journalists across this country.
22 We are about to launch our first convention, so if you

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1 have been asked a question by Native journalists throughout
2 your tour, they are probably a member of our organization.

3 What I am here to talk about today is
4 the fact that there are over 200 Native newspapers, radio
5 and TV stations across Canada bringing the possible number
6 of Native communicators to more than 500 people. They
7 are a group that has been largely ignored or, if recognized
8 at all by federal programs, have received minimal funding
9 for a variety of small projects that have never really
10 amounted to any kind of Native communications system.

11 In many communities the local newspaper
12 or radio station may even be owned by the band council,
13 an individual band councillor or in control of the hands
14 of a small group of people, most of whom have absolutely
15 no training in communications. In many of our communities
16 that amounts to basically a radio station where DJs play
17 music and, if you are lucky, you might get some limited
18 current affairs programming.

19 Native peoples, as you are aware, are
20 facing some of the hottest issues of our times. We need
21 Native communicators to tell us about those issues, to
22 explain them, to analyze them and to question them and

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1 the people behind them. We need those communicators to
2 feel that they can do so without fear of intimidation,
3 retaliation or threats from the powers that be in our
4 communities.

5 Native communicators, whether they are
6 in radio, newspaper or TV, have all felt the sting of their
7 local politicians or power brokers.

8 The Native Journalists Association is
9 currently in the process of holding its first convention.

10 This convention, to be held at the Grand River Territory
11 of the Six Nations, will be the first in Canadian history.

12 It is bringing communicators together from across the
13 country, from the Yukon to Davis Inlet, to talk and to
14 relate their concerns, to attend professional development
15 workshops, to deal with the issues facing us, such as job
16 stress, a code of ethics and covering our communities and
17 keeping the channels of communication open between Native
18 men and women, even when the issues around us are trying
19 to segregate us by gender.

20 Let me share with you a little of the
21 tears, emotions and problems that have been put on my
22 shoulders from fellow Native journalists who called to

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1 talk about the pending convention and launching of our
2 organization and who just needed to know that there was
3 someone else suffering the same problems that they were.

4 In northern Manitoba a Native woman,
5 working for a small Native newspaper, was the first to
6 break the story of the abused child, Lester Desjardin,
7 and subsequent allegations of political interference by
8 Manitoba Chiefs.

9 That story was later picked up by the
10 mainstream media, and I might add that non-Native
11 journalists won awards for their coverage of the story
12 broken by this Native woman.

13 Let me tell you what happened to her.
14 She left home to go and buy groceries shortly after that
15 story appeared. Her band council banned her from
16 returning home to her house and children because she had
17 written the story -- not because it was inaccurate, but
18 because she dared to write it. She eventually had to get
19 a lawyer to get home and is now working elsewhere for a
20 mainstream media outlet.

21 In northern Ontario, on a small
22 newspaper, a journalist wrote stories questioning a policy

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1 of the local band council. That band council threatened
2 to shut down his newspaper if he didn't stop.

3 Across Canada Native journalists can
4 tell you stories of being banned from covering council
5 meetings, so-called public meetings, because the local
6 band council didn't like the story they wrote.

7 In another community a report asked for
8 a copy of the annual band budget to write a budget story.

9 The band refused to give it to him. When he appealed
10 to Indian Affairs, they said they could not intervene,
11 that it was up to the band council to release that
12 information.

13 What all these stories amount to is that
14 there is no such thing as freedom of the press in Indian
15 country. The Indian Act allows its local politicians to
16 hide behind it in order to keep meetings closed or
17 information private.

18 Unfortunately, in many of our
19 communities, our political leaders are not ready for Native
20 journalists. They have not reached even the same basic
21 level of sophistication that our Native press has reached.

22 Instead of seeing an article questioning a certain policy,

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1 they view that journalist's questioning as a personal
2 attack upon themselves.

3 In many communities the local leadership
4 won't even recognize their local press. They refuse to
5 be interviewed by them or even to acknowledge their
6 existence, often calling press conferences with the
7 mainstream media and not even alerting their local media.

8 Sometimes it is easier to bluff the mainstream media than
9 to face your own and a Native journalist who is just as
10 familiar with an issue as that band councillor is.

11 The local press also needs to open its
12 eyes. In our local communities, generally because of a
13 lack of money, reporters and broadcasters and columnists
14 have little or no training. Those who have spent time
15 in quickie Native journalism courses are thrown out on
16 to the market only to find those courses were inadequate
17 and did not provide them with the skills they needed to
18 secure a job in the mainstream media or to find a job in
19 the Native media only to perpetuate the continued need
20 for skills upgrading.

21 The mainstream media as well has a role
22 to play, one that they have not satisfactorily fulfilled.

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1 It is no longer acceptable for the mainstream media to
2 use the excuse that Native people don't apply for jobs
3 on their newspapers, radio stations or TV. The mainstream
4 media owes it to their communities to reflect their cities,
5 towns and rural areas by making their newsrooms as diverse
6 as their communities. They have to actively pursue Native
7 journalists to fill those voids in their newsrooms and
8 to better enhance and reflect the coverage of Native
9 issues. Non-Native reporters showed us through their
10 spotty and dismal understanding of the issues that led
11 to and provoked Oka and subsequent coverage that they are
12 not as well-versed in Native issues as they pretend to
13 be.

14 The only solution then is to hire a
15 Native journalist, and we know they are out there.

16 We owe it to our communities to provide
17 them with the best communicators we can train. We propose
18 the establishment of a Native Communications Centre for
19 the development of creative and professional skills for
20 both those already working and for Native students coming
21 out of journalism programs. Students can spend a term
22 in this Centre learning not only to refine the skills they

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1 have learned at college or university, but to learn from
2 Native professional journalists and broadcasters how to
3 intertwine their language and culture in their daily
4 programming and writing.

5 We need to teach our communicators not
6 just how to press a button or turn on a microphone; we
7 need to teach them how to be who they are and communicate
8 to their communities how a piece of legislation is going
9 to affect them in terms their community will understand.

10 We need to use our language more in daily
11 programming. Putting hundreds of thousands of dollars
12 into language programs isn't going to help retain the
13 language if the very people your teenager is tuning into
14 to hear the latest rock music isn't even speaking that
15 language or at least using it in their programming.

16 We need to bring our Elders on to the
17 airwaves and on to the pages of our newspapers, telling
18 us who we were so that we can better understand who we
19 are.

20 Our communities need to communicate.
21 We need to talk each other to understand what is happening
22 and how it is happening and why it is happening.

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1 Communication is the most important tool we can use to
2 promote our language, culture and history, and it is the
3 very tool we are allowing to be ignored.

4 The Native Journalists Association is
5 working actively toward the creation of a Centre for our
6 communicators. We would hope that the Royal Commission
7 would fully endorse our plan and help us to work toward
8 its establishment so that the next time -- if there is
9 a next time, and there probably will be -- the Royal
10 Commission comes around again, everybody will know you
11 are coming.

12 Ni'a:we'h.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do you mind
14 if we ask you some questions?

15 **LYNDA POWLESS:** Not at all.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Are you
17 going to present also, Mr. Smoke?

18 **DAN SMOKE:** No. Miles Morrisseau
19 covered the Native News Network's perspective on
20 communications very well.

21 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
22 for your presentation.

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1 You began, I think, with the proposition
2 that a free Aboriginal critical voice is very important.
3 That certainly appears to be a significant comment.

4 I listened to your description of the
5 difficulties that Aboriginal scholars have in writing.
6 I think you are talking about in Aboriginal newspapers.

7 I was wondering if you have given any
8 thought to the idea that there may -- or there may not
9 -- be some merit in considering whether it might be helpful
10 to look to other sorts of publications to assist in getting
11 the critical voice that you are talking about. I have
12 in mind, for example, the experience of other groups who
13 have been concerned to critically assess their society
14 and its workings and have been significant voices -- for
15 example, the university newspapers in Quebec in the early
16 1960s, like Cité Libre, of which both Pierre Trudeau and
17 Pierre Vallières were co-editors at different times. They
18 were very significant in changing opinion. They dared
19 to think out loud which is what I think you are talking
20 about here.

21 I am wondering if your organization has
22 given any thought to establishing some kind of relations

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1 or at least talking to Aboriginal people in the
2 universities to see if some of that critical voice can
3 be aired in other publications as well. As you may know,
4 there is a National Studies Association.

5 That is one question. If I can insert
6 a little humour here, one of the things that happens with
7 scholarly stuff is that nobody reads it anyway, so one
8 can feel quite safe with the reaction to what one writes
9 when nobody reads the stuff.

10 At a more serious level, I was wondering
11 if you have given any thought to that idea, whether that
12 might be a way of assisting to get a critical, independent
13 voice.

14 In a sense the difficulty with getting
15 a critical voice in the open is the same for scholars.
16 At least one Aboriginal scholar has characterized the
17 present literature as relatively uncritical. He has
18 called Aboriginal issues a taboo issue, for example. I
19 think the issue is one that probably transcends the field
20 of journalism.

21 I am wondering out loud whether you have
22 given any thought to this notion, whether the idea of a

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1 free and independent Aboriginal force extends beyond
2 journalism and whether you have given some thought to the
3 notion of associating yourself in some way or other with
4 scholars in universities to assist in getting such a voice.

5 **LYNDA POWLESS:** Actually, we have
6 talked to some of the universities as the Journalists
7 Association itself is concerned.

8 As far as a free and independent Native
9 journalist voice is concerned, that voice has to be heard
10 in the community because that is who they have to inform.

11 When you don't have an informed public, you have the kind
12 of chaos that exists in Native communities, the kind of
13 social rifting that is occurring and isn't being closed
14 because people don't know what is going on. They hear
15 the myths and the misunderstandings and the
16 misinterpretations that build, and they create problems
17 in the communities when you don't have a free press.

18 What would Canada do without Southam
19 newspapers? What would they do without the CBC? That
20 is what Canada has asked Native communities to do, to do
21 without communications.

22 The communications we have exist on

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1 shoestring budgets. Radio stations get on the air because
2 they have a radio bingo that keeps them alive, and that's
3 it. Weekly newspapers count on Band Council advertising
4 to get out every week, and if you tee off the Band Council
5 one week, you're risking your revenue and they let you
6 know it.

7 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Your
8 comments have opened up larger issues involving the
9 function of the media and a free society, so I am not going
10 to pursue the debate.

11 I would like to ask you a very brief
12 question to check my understanding of something else you
13 said.

14 With respect to the Native
15 Communications Centre proposal, did you contemplate the
16 training of Aboriginal journalists for the purpose of
17 getting them to work in mainstream newspapers so as to
18 avoid the kind of journalism that you talked about and
19 also to avoid the other problems you talked about? Is
20 that your idea or, rather, is the idea to have a Native
21 Communications Centre to train Aboriginal journalists to
22 work for Aboriginal newspapers? I am not sure.

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1 **LYNDA POWLESS:** For both. We cannot
2 ignore the mainstream media. Ignoring them creates the
3 situation we have already seen in the past.

4 We need our own people out there telling
5 them our stories through our eyes.

6 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I invite
7 you to fill out your proposal, if you wish, and to assist
8 us by providing us with fuller advice on these matters.
9 Thank you.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** The idea of
11 an organization sounds very timely. If you haven't given
12 us copies, I would encourage you to give us copies of your
13 proposal before you go.

14 There is just one thing that sent off
15 little warning bells in my mind. You made the statement
16 that there is no freedom of the press in Indian country.

17 I wonder what you would do if the CBC or the Edmonton
18 Journal said that. There are a lot of organizations out
19 there, 600 Chiefs and I don't know how many provincial
20 organizations. I don't doubt that we could find even more
21 examples of leaders clamping down on the Native press and
22 trying to control them, and all the rest of it.

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1 When you have a situation where they are
2 the primary funding source, I can see that that would
3 happen, but you made a pretty broad generalization. I
4 would think, if the non-Native media that said that, and
5 with one brush put all Aboriginal leaders and governments
6 in that one category, --

7 **LYNDA POWLESS:** I didn't mean you
8 personally, Georges.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** --wouldn't
10 you say they were creating a stereotype? There isn't a
11 single Aboriginal organization out there that has been
12 fighting for the Native press?

13 **LYNDA POWLESS:** I am not saying that the
14 Native leaders themselves are the only problem. They are
15 part of the problem in some circumstances.

16 The problem is the Indian Act.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You still
18 don't think you are overstating the fact?

19 **LYNDA POWLESS:** No, I am not overstating
20 the fact when Band Councils can rely on a piece of
21 antiquated legislation to kick their press out of a meeting
22 or to ban those very people from their own homes. It's

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1 not so much the Native leaders' problem as the fact that
2 they have become used to that Indian Act and are relying
3 on it. It's a question of dumping the Indian Act.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You don't
5 seem to be getting the point I am trying to make.

6 I will concede and I will agree that it
7 is done, but the way you are presenting this is that every
8 Chief in the country -- and there is a lot of them; there
9 are over 600 of them -- and all Aboriginal organizations
10 do this. Isn't the reality that some Chiefs will use the
11 Indian Act to do this, not every last one? Just in Ontario
12 here we have 135 to 140 Chiefs, and I am sure they don't
13 all do it. There are over 200 in British Columbia, and
14 I am sure they haven't all done it.

15 That's the only point I am making.

16 **LYNDA POWLESS:** I realize the point you
17 are making, and I don't want to paint all leaders and
18 say they all hate the press. What politician would hate
19 the press?

20 The point is that, as long as the Indian
21 Act exists, the possibility of doing that exists. Until
22 you do something about the Indian Act, there isn't going

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1 to be freedom of the press on Indian reserves in this
2 country.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I just
4 wanted to clarify that.

5 When you are dealing with small
6 communities -- the thing about the people who are actually
7 in control of the press, the writers, is that their
8 particular point of view can be presented. If you just
9 have a small paper somewhere, you might have a particular
10 viewpoint that is always presented, but it doesn't
11 necessarily cover two or three or four different
12 perspectives that might exist in any given community.

13 How do you see us getting around that,
14 where you have virtually a monopoly viewpoint being
15 presented all the time? It might be for or against a
16 particular way of doing things, but it is the only one
17 that is being aired all of the time.

18 **LYNDA POWLESS:** A lot of that has to do
19 with the fact that there is a lack of funding in the
20 communities in order to allow the radio stations or
21 newspapers to expand so that you will get that diversity
22 of points of view. Until that kind of money is made

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1 available in any form -- and right now it is not. In fact,
2 I can tell you that this morning I got a phone call from
3 Secretary of State who said that they will not fund our
4 convention in June. So we are going to be running around
5 looking for money. Native media is not a priority item
6 with anyone.

7 Because of that we have these kinds of
8 situation happening, and they are going to continue to
9 happen. In a lot of cases you have a person putting across
10 a particular point of view who may have absolutely no
11 training at all because they have never had to have any.
12 That is not justified. We have to do something about
13 that. It's not fair to our communities. They deserve
14 the best.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Your
16 document has a clear vision of this institution, this
17 Centre you are proposing?

18 **LYNDA POWLESS:** No, but I do. It does
19 outline it, yes, and I can provide you with more
20 information.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Please do.
22 It's a good idea.

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1 Thank you.

2 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** It is now
3 three o'clock, and we will take a 15-minute coffee break.

4 Before we do, I have a community
5 announcement here. N'Amerind Friendship Centre invites
6 presenters and observers to a fund-raising at the Centre
7 from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. tonight. They have Indian
8 tacos, corn soup and fried bread for sale.

9 --- Short Recess at 3:00 p.m.

10 --- Upon resuming at 3:15 p.m.

11 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** We are
12 ready to resume the hearings. Could we have Robert George
13 of Stony Point First Nation, please.

14 **ROBERT GEORGE, Stony Point First Nation:**
15 First of all, Georges, I am glad to see you on this
16 Commission. Now I know that we probably will get something
17 done.

18 I guess why I am here is more of a request
19 for help in some way that you could possibly give us, if
20 there is any way you could possibly do it. As you know,
21 I am one of the outcasts that was kicked off the reserve,
22 thrown out, not paid for it and had the land stolen from

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1 us. At this point in time, we have gone to work and done
2 some research, and we have used the government's own
3 information to prove that he stole the land. We proved
4 that it was a proud Nation on its own.

5 Yet, we get no help from nobody and no
6 favourable response from the federal government or the
7 provincial government. They say we didn't exist.

8 Yet, when I worked for the Department
9 of Indian Affairs and when I used any of the equipment
10 or anything they had, everything they had was numbered;
11 it had an individual number. The Nation I am from had
12 an individual number, and that was No. 43. The Stony Point
13 First Nation, in the beginning, was the Ausable Reserve.

14 As we tried to regain our lands, we got
15 opposition from the Kettle Point Council. They say they
16 were one reserve, but we deny that. We were a separate
17 Nation and a proud Nation, with a different cultural
18 background to it.

19 No matter what way we turned, there
20 seemed to be a blank wall. We can't get help from any
21 organizations because we are sitting outside the help area.

22 As I understand, they have mandates that they have to

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1 stick by. In other words, I am a Stony Point Indian and
2 I am an outcast type of person. I don't deserve the kind
3 of help that organizations give Indian people.

4 I am a little appalled at that because
5 I do believe that, if there are Native organizations that
6 are there to help a Native person, I think they should
7 be able to help a Native person no matter whether he is
8 from a different Nation and no matter whether he has been
9 disowned by the government, or a situation like that.
10 I think those types of people do need a hand; at least,
11 our Nation does.

12 In 1942 they came along and took that
13 land, and they didn't care whether our people wanted it
14 to be taken or whether they wanted to use it for themselves;
15 it didn't really matter. The government official that
16 people trusted so much was the one instrumental in taking
17 the land. He wasn't the type of person that would stop
18 in any position he was in. He went to a different position
19 and did it. I think you will find that in the letter I
20 have written there.

21 So many people say, "You don't have the
22 same status as other places." Hey, I'm an Indian and I

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1 have the same status as anybody. You can take me and plant
2 me somewhere or other in Canada, but I am still the same
3 person on the inside; I will never change. The blood in
4 my veins still tells me I am a Native person, and my heritage
5 still tells me that I am from Stony Point.

6 With the amount of research that has gone
7 into it and all the investigations we have done into it,
8 it is proven that we are a First Nation, No. 43.

9 That is why I am here today. I was very
10 glad that Mrs. Bressette had mentioned this to me. Once
11 again, I must emphasize that I was glad to see Georges
12 sitting on this panel.

13 I will read to you the letter that I have
14 had drafted. As you go, you can look through the bundle
15 that I gave you and the things in there are only part of
16 what we found in our research.

17 The thing that makes us more angry about
18 it is that they were breaking the laws that they made
19 themselves in a way that would hurt us.

20 On May 10, 1993, which was yesterday,
21 I went to the meeting that you had in Sarnia, but I had
22 to go home and so some other work.

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1 On Monday the 10th day of May, 1993, I
2 attended the Commission Meeting at Sarnia, Ontario and
3 in the course of the first submission, I had to change
4 my submission a little.

5 Our request was in regards to Stony Point
6 Reserve. When I heard that the Stony Point Reserve was
7 part of the Kettle Point Reserve and that the Kettle Point
8 Reserve owned it, I, at that point must state that we the
9 people of Stony Point First Nation #43 disagree with that
10 remark.

11 In all the research that we have laboured
12 to find, we have found numerous documents that prove that
13 it was in fact a separate Reserve. However, let's not
14 dwell on that for now.

15 I believe that there are at least four
16 different categories in this meeting today but only the
17 latter of all four is relevant to our Nation, which is
18 the healing part.

19 We have for years, so to speak, through
20 a labour of love continued tedious research and travelling
21 to bring our case before all areas to have someone hear
22 our case.

StenoTran

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1 The Assembly of First Nations won't do
2 anything. The Union of Ontario Indians refused to help
3 us every time we brought our needs to them. They would,
4 in turn, call the Band Office at Kettle Point to ask their
5 permission to respond, or other times there was no
6 response. The Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians
7 tried to help, but that soon dwindled out. We attended
8 the Spicer Commission, and we still haven't had anything
9 done. We have tried to meet with the Kettle Point Council,
10 but nothing has happened yet. On the other hand, the
11 Kettle Point Council is still trying to claim what isn't
12 theirs. So you people can see how frustrating it has been.

13 We have been told we are not recognized
14 as Stony Point people, but when Chief Shawkence made the
15 statement that it belonged to the Stony Point people, he
16 knew that it was, in fact, Stony Point, not Kettle Point.

17 I quote the "Ontario Native Examiner"
18 of June and July 1972, what Chief Shawkence said:
19 "The land now being occupied by the Department of National
20 Defense for the Camp Ipperwash
21 training centre clearly belongs to
22 the Stoney Point People now living

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1 there."

2 George W. Down, a trusted government
3 agent, said in a letter to high-ranking officers in the
4 Military District No. 1 in February 1942:

5 "Personally, I think this is a wonderful
6 opportunity to gather a few
7 stragglng Indians and locate them
8 permanently with the main body of
9 the Band at Kettle Point."

10 The vote was taken. At the time it was
11 13 for and 59 against, and at that time he urged the Armed
12 Forces to invoke the War Measures Act.

13 The Royal Proclamation of 1763 clearly
14 states that what George W. Down and the Department of
15 National Defence did was not supposed to be.

16 Robert Baldwin in November 1850 also
17 states:

18 "We are intituled to an act to keep us free from all trespass
19 and injury."

20 When we say that we are a separate
21 Nation, we are and we are proud.

22 When Frank Bressette always said he was

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1 the Grand Chief, he was right. When they held the
2 elections, they elected two Chief Councillors, one from
3 Kettle Point and the other one from Stony Point, and one
4 Grand Chief. If this means that the two reserves are one,
5 I hate to think of the situation all Native organizations
6 are in today.

7 What I am trying to say is: Our healing
8 process is to give us back what you stole from and admit
9 that you have violated not only our trust in the government
10 agents, but you stole from us what was never to be taken
11 or touched by anyone. You have injured us for life and
12 have hurt us deep into our hearts and souls forever.

13 In closing, I would like to say that
14 anything like what happened to us should never come about
15 to anyone, man or beast. We trust in this Royal Commission
16 that you will try your utmost to see that it will not happen
17 to anyone ever again.

18 Those are some of the frustrating
19 feelings that we have as we have travelled through trying
20 to bring to every area of agencies and departments and
21 government people, trying to show them that they did an
22 injustice.

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1 I don't think they really care. They
2 say they didn't, but all this is only part of what we have
3 come across, and it shows very strongly that they did breach
4 their trust to the Native people.

5 So, you see, I am not a very happy person
6 when it comes to Indian Affairs. I had a meeting with
7 Mr. Tom Siddon one day, and he tried to get out of it.
8 I am quite a persistent fellow when I get mad, and I told
9 him I wanted five minutes and I was going to get it one
10 way or the other, and I got it. He was getting sick of
11 us bothering him. He said he wasn't going to read any
12 more literature or letters coming from me.

13 What do you do in a situation like that?
14 It's all right for them to steal and lie and cheat but,
15 if I did the same thing, I would wind up in jail. So I
16 cannot call any one of those people who sit in Department
17 of Indian Affairs an honourable person, and I would never
18 ever address Tom Siddon that way. When I address him,
19 its "Tom Siddon", not "Honourable."

20 That is my request in asking for help,
21 in helping our Nation in the healing process. If you have
22 any questions, I would be glad to answer them.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
2 Perhaps you could refresh my memory. I am just trying
3 to recall the details of this from my previous awareness
4 of it.

5 Have you ever filed a specific claim in
6 relation to this particular land at Stony Point so that
7 it could be returned to you?

8 **ROBERT GEORGE:** We haven't taken that
9 area as of yet. The reason that we were urged not to do
10 it that way is because we never gave up anything. It was
11 taken. The status of the Indian Reserve and so forth was
12 taken; we didn't give that up. What we want is to have
13 it returned.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Who advised
15 you not to use the specific claim route?

16 **ROBERT GEORGE:** Our legal advisers.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** But you have
18 registered some kind of official letter with the government
19 at some point or other. You have done it numerous times,
20 in fact.

21 **ROBERT GEORGE:** Yes, it has been done
22 numerous times.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** The Stony
2 Point people are now part of the Kettle Point Band?

3 **ROBERT GEORGE:** That is the Band where
4 they put us.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** They kind of
6 put you together whether or not you wanted it.

7 **ROBERT GEORGE:** They didn't even ask us.
8 They just flipped us up there -- "You're going, and that's
9 it."

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** There is
11 some way that you know clearly that your people want to
12 be a separate community again.

13 **ROBERT GEORGE:** Yes, they do. We took
14 a count and we went back and researched the families that
15 were moved from there and their descendants. It took us
16 about a year to do it. We followed the lineage right down
17 to where intermarriages have taken place. We put the
18 question across to a lot of them: Would you be Stony Point
19 or Kettle Point? The majority of them said Stony Point.

20 We made small declarations for them to
21 sign, and we said, "This is the only way we will have a
22 little more clout, by you signing this declaration." We

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1 have about 450 to 500, if not more.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Perhaps you
3 could get that to us sometime. I remember seeing that
4 information at the Assembly of First Nations, but we
5 wouldn't have it at the Royal Commission. Maybe you could
6 get us the files on that.

7 What is happening in relation to the
8 federal government responding to your desire to be a
9 separate band again?

10 **ROBERT GEORGE:** The same old question
11 comes up: We are not going to deal with you because you
12 are not a recognized band. They don't want to recognize
13 us because, from the time the Stony Point people were
14 shifted to the other reserve, they took out No. 43. They
15 pulled that. They didn't want that ever to be again, but
16 we are bound and determined, by our cultural differences,
17 that we are going to hang on to that No. 43 and we are
18 going to prove to them that there was a No. 43.

19 It's the same old thing that pops back
20 up again: You're not a recognized band, and we don't want
21 to deal with you.

22 At one point they said, "Well, it doesn't

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1 exist." I said, "Hey, I am still here. I'm alive; I'm
2 breathing. There is blood running through my veins. It
3 has to exist because that is where I was from, and I remember
4 being pushed out of there."

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How much
6 land is involved at Stony Point?

7 **ROBERT GEORGE:** 24,000 acres, somewhere
8 in that area -- 22,000.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** So this work
10 you did to check out your people's interest in returning
11 to Stony Point and being a separate band on their own was
12 some kind of way of their signing their name. Was it a
13 kind of petition?

14 **ROBERT GEORGE:** No, it was almost like
15 a letter stating that they were a lineage from Stony Point
16 and that they would wish to be Stony Point again.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** This is a few
18 years ago?

19 **ROBERT GEORGE:** No, that was only done
20 a year and a half ago.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Perhaps you
22 can send us all that. It would be very useful for

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1 background in assisting us in deciding what we are going
2 to recommend.

3 Paul, do you have any questions?

4 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
5 for your presentation. Essentially, I am going to make
6 the same recommendation as has just been made.

7 I am looking at your letter and I see
8 that you say you hope that we will try our utmost to see
9 that it will not happen to anyone ever again, but then
10 do you not provide us with what we ought to do so that
11 this will never happen again. I take it that you want
12 us to do some work and come up with some ideas as to what
13 we should recommend to the federal government so that this
14 does not happen again.

15 Among the things we have to know is a
16 complete description of the situation, which I do not have.
17 You have told us that Stony Point is a different Nation
18 from Kettle Point, but I do not know in what way. I do
19 not know what that means and how it relates to this
20 particular case.

21 You are also saying that the issue has
22 not been filed as a specific claim. I am unable to

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1 understand the reason that would be so.

2 You have given us some documents,
3 including a letter in 1986 pertaining to some \$2 million
4 or more being transferred from the federal government to
5 someone in respect of some land in the area.

6 It's an incomplete story. If we are
7 going to be of assistance, we need the full story, just
8 to repeat what Georges Erasmus has said.

9 By way of making these comments, I am
10 alerting our staff to the existence of this circumstances,
11 and I wonder if you might also contact our research people
12 to determine if they are already examining these
13 circumstances, or at least bring them to their attention
14 so that they can conduct a full examination of the
15 circumstances.

16 The first thing is that we have to know
17 the facts before we can understand them and understand
18 what we might be able to do about them.

19 **ROBERT GEORGE:** The first one you will
20 notice there was to bring your attention to the fact that
21 the Chief at that time clearly stated that they were a
22 separate reserve, that it belonged to them, but they were

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1 moved to the other place.

2 In the second one there, the registered
3 mail that was sent to the same Chief, they were dealing
4 with the Kettle Point Band, not the Kettle and Stony Point
5 Band.

6 As to the third one, from George W. Down,
7 I brought it along so you would get an idea of how at that
8 particular time they had treated us in getting rid of us,
9 what they did and how they were going to go about doing
10 it. There is much more to this than that, but I thought
11 maybe this would help you to understand what they did.

12 I can supply you with all the information
13 you need; as I said, I can supply you with half a truckload,
14 but I don't think that would be of much use to you unless
15 you understand really what it is.

16 The thing we are trying to do -- I can't
17 understand why the federal government does this to people.

18 He knows it's ours; yet, we have to dig around and hunt
19 around and go back and prove that it's ours again, after
20 he has done what he has done. This is what we are trying
21 to do. What we are trying to get across to you is that
22 we are not trying to do anything illegal. We are trying

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1 to bring it to you fact by fact, that we were a separate
2 reserve and we want to be separate again. We want our
3 land back so that our Elders can then move back to the
4 land which they used to enjoy.

5 That was George W. Down's work. And the
6 Proclamation of 1763 tell us that they shouldn't have done
7 that. The Robert Baldwin tells the same thing, that they
8 shouldn't have done that to us. They should have left
9 it alone. It was there, but they were not supposed to
10 take it at all. But they didn't adhere to that; they just
11 went ahead and did what they felt like they wanted to do.

12 The other ones there show where there
13 were two Councils with a Grand Chief. The Grand Chief
14 was Frank Bressette. The other Councillors weren't called
15 exactly Councillors at that particular time; they were
16 Chief Councillors because there weren't enough people
17 there to warrant having a Chief and Councillors. They
18 had one from each reserve elected in that worked under
19 the Grand Chief. That is why I put in the letter that,
20 if this makes two reserves one, these Native organizations
21 they have today are going to be in a lot of trouble, if
22 that is the way it works.

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1 That is why I brought those along, so
2 that I could try to help you understand the predicament
3 we are in. Maybe you are not as familiar with it as a
4 lot of other people are, so I would be willing to give
5 you any kind of information you need so that you will
6 understand.

7 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** As I
8 suggested, it is not possible, at least not for me
9 personally, to delve into the intricacies of a complicated
10 situation like that, which includes some legal issues,
11 and to be able to understand it in this particular forum.
12 I will look forward to receiving full documentation in
13 good time, and I suggest it might be of assistance if you
14 contact the research people as well. They might be able
15 to be helpful.

16 I hope I don't have to read a truckful,
17 but I do look forward to reading about it. Thank you.

18 **ROBERT GEORGE:** I guess the best thing
19 I could do is send you the recommendation that was made
20 to the Standing Committee. That has all the numbers of
21 the files, all the documents in it. I finished it right
22 up to proving our situation, and the Standing Committee

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1 ruled that the land should be given back to us.

2 If you would like that, I could send you
3 that presentation.

4 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** You might
5 like to contact our leader at the back of the room and
6 obtain the name of the Director of Research and convey
7 those documents to the Director of Research. Thank you.

8 **ROBERT GEORGE:** I would be happy to do
9 that. Thank you.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
11 for coming forward.

12 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** Our next
13 presenter is Vydal Sands from the N'Amerind Youth Group.

14 **VYDAL SANDS, N'Amerind Youth Group:**
15 First of all, I will introduce myself. My name is Vydal
16 Sands, and I am an Ojibway-Cree. I am representing
17 N'Amerind Youth Group.

18 This presentation will mostly be from
19 me. I had this all on paper, but it got misplaced so I
20 have most of it in my head, what we were talking about
21 back at the N'Amerind Friendship Centre.

22 I am a part of the Alternative Education

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1 School there for Native youth. What we did one afternoon
2 is we sat down and we were talking about things that we
3 could share with non-Natives, like self-awareness of
4 ourselves and things like that and things we could share
5 with them.

6 Most of the things we were talking about
7 was things we could do to help non-Native people understand
8 Native people in the way of school and our culture, so
9 that they would have a better understanding of how our
10 lives are and the poorer aspects of Indian life for some
11 people, mostly young people.

12 The alternative schools are a good idea
13 for Native people because there is a strong drop-out rate
14 amongst our young people. The school I am at now brings
15 back a lot of the culture. A lot of people come in and
16 teach us the culture that has been lost throughout the
17 years. We are learning fast. We are picking it up again,
18 and slowly it is coming back to us and getting stronger.

19 We were talking about teaching
20 non-Natives what we do in that school, not only in the
21 school but the traditional ways we do things. There
22 is a lot of other things we covered, too. Mainly, it had

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1 a lot to do with expressing ourselves to non-Native people,
2 to do with how they look at us, how they could look at
3 themselves, how we could look at ourselves, and what is
4 hurting us and what is hurting them and how we could share
5 our ways. It was mainly about that, and how we could make
6 our community, not only this one but others -- for us to
7 get along more, I guess, and what problems there are.
8 We talked about other problems and things we could work
9 on.

10 We didn't really come up with
11 conclusions. We were talking about more funding for
12 alternative schools like that, and maybe getting all Native
13 schools so that more young Native people could stay in
14 school, if they were taught in a different way, by their
15 culture and people of their own kind, Native teachers and
16 whatnot.

17 I think there are two or three
18 alternative schools like that. When people drop out from
19 the high schools, they turn to those and they usually stay
20 with them. You get taught in a better way in those
21 alternative schools. We were talking about maybe more
22 funding for that, and maybe get a bigger school instead

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1 of just a little space in a building or a portable like
2 the one at N'Amerind, something bigger that we could share,
3 and to bring upon non-Native students as well to come and
4 share and have more understanding of what Native people
5 do and how hard education is for some Native people to
6 get.

7 These days there is a lot of pregnancy
8 among young girls, and maybe there are problems at the
9 home -- drinking and drugs.

10 Basically, that is mainly what we talked
11 about: sharing our culture with non-Native people and
12 to help our schools more amongst our people, and just to
13 do self-awareness on both sides, to look at yourself and
14 at others and what they want and how we can blend in things
15 together.

16 That is really the main part of what we
17 came here to present, what I am representing for the young
18 people here today.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
20 for your presentation. Would you mind if we asked you
21 a few questions, if we have any.

22 **VYDAL SANDS:** Go ahead.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** We will
2 start with Commissioner Chartrand.

3 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
4 very much for your presentation, Vydal. The goal of trying
5 to foster understanding between people is generally agreed
6 to be a very worthy goal.

7 I am wondering about the implications
8 of one statement that you make, and I would invite you
9 to offer your views on this. You said: I am Ojibway-Cree.
10 I take it that you are referring to your personal
11 background in the same way as some people say I am
12 Irish-Canadian or so on.

13 **VYDAL SANDS:** You mean referring to my
14 background?

15 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Yes.
16 Did I understand that correctly?

17 **VYDAL SANDS:** Yes. I am Ojibway from
18 Ontario and Plains Cree from out west. That is where my
19 father is from.

20 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** You see
21 yourself as an Aboriginal person, an individual, living
22 in a city. The reason I am asking this is that your

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1 situation, I think, represents the situation of a lot of
2 people in Canada, and it is important that we understand
3 the circumstances and how people view the circumstances
4 so that we can try to make the best policy recommendations
5 that we can in these situations.

6 Your parents are Cree and Ojibway. I
7 take it you have grown up in the city and live in the city,
8 or at least you now live in the city and you associate
9 your everyday life in the city.

10 **VYDAL SANDS:** I have been on both. I
11 have seen life from the aspect of being on a reserve and
12 city, both. I am not only presenting this on the part
13 of students I am representing now, but I have experienced
14 a lot of this stuff. I am still in high school right now.

15 I am 19 years of age, and I have experienced a lot of
16 the stuff on how hard it is to get an education, with having
17 family problems and things like that.

18 I have looked at it both ways, and those
19 are my views also, not only other people's.

20 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** There are
21 people in Canada who are concerned to think about the future
22 and the future of Aboriginal self-government. One of the

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1 questions they ask themselves is: How would Aboriginal
2 self-government work in urban areas? How would it work
3 in the cities and the towns?

4 One of the issues that arises when people
5 think about that is: How do people who live in the cities
6 think about themselves? How do they identify themselves?

7
8 One of the ideas being proposed is that
9 some people in the cities would want to associate with
10 the people back home, perhaps the Cree who live outside
11 that city or with Ojibway or Dene or other people who live
12 outside the cities. I am wondering, for you or perhaps
13 for your friends or for the people that you know, do you
14 think there is an identity that would favour something
15 like that, that would favour a situation where a person
16 like yourself would be asked: Do you want to associate
17 with the Cree or do you want to associate with the Ojibway?

18 Presumably, in your circumstance, it would be matter of
19 choice; you would have the choice to do that.

20 Or do you feel that people in the cities,
21 your friends, see themselves as something different --
22 that is, Aboriginal people in a general way? They have

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1 a Cree background or Ojibway background or other
2 background, but that particular background is not so
3 important as your identity as an Aboriginal person
4 generally.

5 I am wondering if you given any thought
6 to that or whether you have talked about that with your
7 friends.

8 **VYDAL SANDS:** I have given thought to
9 that before. I just think, no matter what Nation you are
10 from, everybody has to have an understanding of themselves
11 and what is happening with their government and what should
12 be done. That is what I talked about, blending our
13 cultures together and getting a better understanding.

14 That's about it -- just getting a better
15 understanding of yourselves and just blending cultures,
16 so there won't be any more racist remarks and stuff like
17 that toward Indian people, because there still is.

18 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I
19 understand your concerns, and I thank you for offering
20 us your views on this.

21 These issues that we are dealing with
22 are not simple issues that can be easily resolved. If

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1 we look to the United States, we see the same sort of thing
2 happening. We see many people who identify themselves
3 with different Nations, who live in the cities, and then
4 you see other people who, for other purposes, live on
5 reservations and identify themselves in a different way.
6 They are ancient, perplexing problems, and we are just
7 trying to understand them better.

8 You have come to us here and told us about
9 the things you are doing and your goals and your concerns.
10 Again, I thank you very much for that.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
12 for your presentation.

13 You are bringing up some really
14 excellent points. What is really interesting is that,
15 whenever young people have presented to us, they have
16 generally been thinking about the future, in some cases
17 much farther into the future than adults.

18 How important do you think Aboriginal
19 identity is to youth? Is it very important, do you think,
20 for Aboriginal people, regardless of where they live, in
21 an urban area or on reserve, to know their own history
22 and their background and their culture?

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1 **VYDAL SANDS:** To some youth it is. I
2 am very strong into my culture. I am a Native singer,
3 and I look back to the old traditions of mainly the Cree
4 lifestyle because that is how I was raised.

5 I think a lot of the young people right
6 now are lost in that way. Most of them just know what
7 clan or what Nation they are. Most of them don't look
8 at who they are or how they were raised or what happened
9 in their backgrounds, because a lot of them are lost.
10 Their culture has been lost. The ones who are lost are
11 usually the ones who are into drugs and drinking and stuff
12 like that.

13 Once you get into learning your culture
14 -- I was practically raised on it, but if you look back
15 into it, you will have a lot more fun and more understanding
16 of it and you will lead a better lifestyle. That's what
17 I think toward Native youth anyway.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Where do you
19 see the responsibility to pass on into the future education
20 on things like clan systems, history, the values of First
21 Nation people? Should that be done at home? Should that
22 be done by the parents and Elders? Should that be done

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1 in schools? Has the government some kind of
2 responsibility there? Or is this something that should
3 just be done by families?

4 **VYDAL SANDS:** I think it can be done by
5 all those things you said. If everybody who has the
6 knowledge about it, if the youth is interested in learning
7 about that, they could approach somebody, whether it be
8 governments, schools, teachers, families, Elders. There
9 are all sorts of people out there who have strong knowledge
10 on that.

11 A lot of people don't know how to go about
12 that. I think we would probably have a stronger nation
13 if more younger people got out there and learned what is
14 going on in the world today so we could have a better future
15 for Native youth at least.

16 I think that can be done by all those
17 people you said.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** If those
19 things were done and there was some sharing of
20 responsibility between the government and families, how
21 far can an Aboriginal person go in learning other things,
22 like computer networks and journeying into the business

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1 world and becoming a citizen of the world? Is that all
2 part and parcel of the future? Do you think that is still
3 within the realm of being an Aboriginal person of the 21st
4 century?

5 **VYDAL SANDS:** It could be done. I feel
6 it can be done. I have a lot of friends and I know a lot
7 of people who are going into fields such as computers.
8 A lot of them are Aboriginal.

9 I think you have to want to do it
10 yourself. If you are really serious about getting into
11 something like that, you should be backed up by the
12 government. As I understand, students get paid and get
13 their stuff looked after by their bands to go to college,
14 but if you really want to get into serious stuff like that,
15 the Aboriginal people should be backed up on that even
16 more, just so we can see them go farther and other people
17 can look at that and say, "Hey, I can do that, too," just
18 trying to influence younger people.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** We have
20 heard that young people want to be part of the
21 decision-making process. They want to be consulted, and
22 they want to be part of the political system. Somehow

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1 they want to be part of the decision-making.

2 What vehicles do you see that could be
3 used? What way could be recommended that in the future
4 young people would be part of decisions either at the
5 community level or in Aboriginal governments?

6 **VDAL SANDS:** I think that can be done
7 by coming to such gatherings as this or just sitting down
8 with your community members and going over what topics
9 they want taken care of or that they want done. It is
10 mainly just listening to what is going on and what is being
11 done these days, just listening in and seeing what they
12 want also. That's what I think, at least.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is there
14 anything else you want to tell us?

15 **VDAL SANDS:** No, that's about it.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
17 for your views.

18 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** Thank you,
19 Vydal.

20 Just an update on the remainder of
21 today's agenda. Our next presenter is Tom Dockstader, the
22 Executive Director of the N'Amerind Friendship Centre.

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1 This will conclude today's agenda. We will begin again
2 tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock.

3 After Mr. Dockstader's presentation, we
4 will call on Jean Pierre for the closing prayer.

5 **TOM DOCKSTADER, N'Amerind Friendship**
6 **Centre:** Good afternoon. I appreciate the opportunity
7 to speak with the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.
8 On behalf of the N'Amerind Friendship Centre staff and
9 board of directors, I would like to welcome you to the
10 London Native community.

11 I want to start out by talking about
12 N'Amerind, which is one of the oldest Friendship Centres
13 in the country. At 29 years old this year, we have been
14 dedicated for all of those 29 years to serving the London
15 Native community.

16 We are mandated by our community to the
17 promotion of the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual
18 well-being of all Native people and, in particular, urban
19 Native people. This commitment is realized through the
20 implementation of culturally-relevant programs aimed at
21 social, recreational and educational needs; at developing
22 leadership; at increasing awareness levels of Native

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1 heritage; and establishing resources for community
2 development. Those words were written and are in our
3 Constitution. They were written by our community members,
4 our Elders and our seniors, who are very proud of what
5 N'Amerind has become.

6 It is our understanding that the Royal
7 Commission is looking for solutions to social problems
8 and specifically wants to have four areas addressed. Our
9 understanding is that those areas are healing,
10 self-government, self-determination and relationships
11 between Native and non-Native people. We are pleased to
12 offer our comments on all four areas.

13 I have broken it down and tried to
14 combine so that we can have a more concise presentation.

15 Our first part is healing and self-determination

16 Just like many other communities, in
17 1991 there was a renaissance of sorts that took place at
18 the N'Amerind Friendship Centre. It arose out of a crisis
19 in the community. It doesn't really matter what the titles
20 of the people were, but the fact of the matter was that
21 our community was suffering. In that suffering we began
22 to have people strike out against each other, which is

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1 all too familiar to many communities.

2 Fortunately, a number of us got together
3 as community members and decided that we were going to
4 start to address the problem from the standpoint of where
5 we could begin, what was a good starting point. First
6 of all, we said that we had begun to lose sight of each
7 other as human beings. We also lost sight of the fact
8 that there is one thing that we all share in common, as
9 Native people, and that is battling oppression.

10 We were, in fact, in an ultimate state
11 of denial of this oppressive state we are all victims of,
12 and we internalized the oppression and began to oppress
13 ourselves.

14 We got together with community members
15 and didn't distinguish, as I said before, whether they
16 were staff members, board members, community members,
17 Elders, and we worked on solving the crisis by expanding
18 our vision -- seven generations into the future, seven
19 generations into the past.

20 We consulted with Elders. We consulted
21 with community members in pain, and we decided to confront
22 our own pain and to begin a process of communication within

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1 our community. Medicine was used to soothe our pain.
2 Prayers were used to seek guidance from the Creator, and
3 slowly but surely over the next couple of years we began
4 to operate and pull ourselves out of this crisis by
5 operating from the basic premise that the solution to not
6 just this crisis but to all crises lay within our ability
7 to solve as community members.

8 Early on we brought out the N'Amerind
9 Community eagle feather, not just as a symbol of ancient
10 traditions but as a tool to be used to help us communicate.

11 We sought the advice of a tough, fair and honest Elder
12 to help mediate a solution, by helping to bring ourselves
13 together and to listen to each other. We began to build
14 a family at the Friendship Centre, an extended family which
15 is based on many Native Nations' traditions.

16 Then we proceeded to put into place
17 processes. By the fall of 1991 the Board of Directors
18 and the staff were back together. We met at a retreat.

19 We re-established lines of communication, and we
20 clarified our roles and responsibilities to the community
21 and to each other. We began a process called consensus
22 building, which is different from the system that we

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1 operate under normally in this day and age.

2 Consensus building means that we look
3 for a way to compromise with each other, because no one
4 is absolutely right about everything.

5 Then the community came together at an
6 annual meeting, and they dedicated us to a community
7 Healing Circle process. I will be the first to admit that
8 I wasn't sure what that meant, so I had to learn.

9 Fortunately, we had Elders and we had
10 a lot of trained professional people to help us in our
11 community. The approach which we used is based on a theory
12 called "ethnostress" which fundamentally states that, as
13 Native people, we have been oppressed by pressures brought
14 to bear by European concepts, as exemplified by
15 institutions of government, education and religion.

16 Since these European concepts are in
17 conflict with traditional Native values, regardless of
18 which First Nation we derive from, we have learned to
19 internalize our oppression to the point where we are
20 ashamed of our own identity as Native people. Thus, we
21 are constantly being told and, further, we now tell
22 ourselves that our traditional values belong to a time

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1 which has now passed for Native people. The institutions
2 of the Europeans, by the way, reinforce our shame by
3 constantly telling us that our traditional values belong
4 only in places of show -- show and tell; cigar store Indians
5 -- never in places of everyday identity.

6 I have an excellent example. It is
7 schools -- and I don't mean any disrespect to the City
8 of London or its school board, but it does serve as an
9 excellent example.

10 In the city of London, even though the
11 local school board has had students from three First
12 Nations communities plus students from many Native Nations
13 who live in London, and have had them in their schools
14 for over 30 years, there is still no substantial effort
15 to address the high drop-out rate among our students, which
16 is estimated to be 80 per cent in this city. Eighty per
17 cent of our students are failing in secondary school.

18 Still, the officials from the school
19 board either resist or they go looking for our people,
20 who are easy to sway to the school board's way of thinking.

21 Self-determination? Sure, as long as Natives determine
22 to do their education the school board way or the Ministry

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1 of Education way.

2 Probably the saddest thing about such
3 thinking is that the school board officials really are
4 trying to help. It just never occurs to them that there
5 are alternative ways to educate.

6 One of the solutions -- and we believe
7 it is a significant solution -- lies in the Friendship
8 Centre's little high school that we have, of which my
9 colleague just spoke to you. It is called Wiingashk, or
10 Sweetgrass. The school operates with a Native teacher,
11 fully qualified as an intermediate and senior high school
12 teacher; yet, she fully identifies as a Native person
13 first. The students, who had previously dropped out or
14 were pushed out of the London system, are learning reading,
15 writing and math. But, more important, they are learning
16 that they can master these European teachings without
17 having to give up their identity as Native students.

18 They are also taught to have pride in
19 their roles, in their families, in their clans, and in
20 their community. We are very proud of youngsters such
21 as Vydal who exemplifies the best of our people and the
22 hope for our future.

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1 the argument that our identity as Native people should
2 always be subjugated by the will of the mainstream society.

3 But we view this subjugation of Native identity as
4 internalized oppression, and the Friendship Centre resists
5 this view.

6 Hopefully, we never misunderstand our
7 oppressed brothers and sisters. We must reach out to our
8 own people, even though they may choose to scorn us for
9 our efforts, and they do sometimes. Only through our own
10 healing can we assist our own people without striking out
11 against them -- in other words, not meeting kind with kind.

12 The other part of the presentation has
13 to do with self-government and relationships between
14 Natives and non-Natives.

15 Let's face it; urban Native
16 self-government is, for the most part, non-existent. Many
17 national Native groups -- for example, the Native Council
18 of Canada, Métis National Council, perhaps Inuit Tapirisat
19 -- claim that they represent the interests of various urban
20 Native constituencies. The question is begged, however:

21 Does any one group of Native organizations really
22 represent urban Native people?

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1 Friendship Centres, however, by
2 definition, do not represent the urban Native people.
3 Instead, Friendship Centres are in fact the largest service
4 providers for urban Native people in terms of both the
5 longest serving organizations -- we have been business
6 for 35 years -- and the broadest mandated service
7 organizations.

8 N'Amerind serves as an example of both
9 of the above, having been in existence for 29 years and
10 having served as a birthplace of each of the single service
11 agencies in the London Native community. It is perhaps
12 useful to name the Native agencies which have had their
13 start at the N'Amerind Friendship Centre:

14 Nokee Kwe; Native Intertribal Housing
15 Co-op; First Nations Housing Co-op; Atenlos Family
16 Violence Services; Ontario Native Women's Association,
17 London Chapter; Anishinabe Que, Native Women's
18 Organization.

19 Our own internal areas include:

20 Wiingashk Secondary School; Sweetgrass
21 Child Care Centre; Native Criminal Courtworker Program;
22 Native Family Courtworker Program; Native Community

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1 Development Program; Native Community Liaison Program;
2 and our newest, the Native Friendship Centre Treatment
3 Program.

4 For two years the N'Amerind Board of
5 Directors has striven to develop a model for ensuring the
6 broadest representation of the interests of the London
7 Native community, first and foremost by supporting the
8 services and organizations mentioned above.

9 Second, the N'Amerind Board of Directors
10 has recruited and striven to ensure that each of the
11 services and organizations mentioned above are represented
12 on the Board of Directors. Thus, hopefully, each area
13 gets a fair hearing in terms of support by members from
14 each of the above services and organizations.

15 In addition, an Elders and Traditional
16 People's Council exists to advise the Board of Directors
17 as necessary, to ensure that overall Native traditions
18 are followed. The Council consists of two Ojibway Elders
19 and two Oneida Elders, because those two Nations are the
20 main Nations that are in the London community.

21 Likewise, our Eagle Staff Carrier is a
22 Seneca Nation citizen who seeks counsel and advice from

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1 Ojibway and Cree Elders, again ensuring that there is as
2 broad a vision as possible that the Friendship Centre
3 represents.

4 Our Board of Directors is broadly based
5 also according to the Nations represented in the community,
6 so we have a United Nations of Aboriginal nations. Thus,
7 we have a Mississauga who is our President, an Oneida as
8 our First Vice-President, a Mohawk as our Second
9 Vice-President, a Pottowatami and Delaware as our
10 Treasurer, an Ojibway as our Secretary, plus we have an
11 Inuit on our Board, and several more Nations are
12 represented on the Board of Directors.

13 I want to be absolutely crystal clear,
14 especially for those of you who are here today, who are
15 from the community. We, the community members, did not
16 stumble around or accidentally build a broad-based Board
17 of Directors. We planned and built according to the
18 interest areas and skills and Nations by design, all for
19 the purpose of serving our community as fully as is humanly
20 possible.

21 We also, by design, sought to represent
22 the interests of the London Native community, diligently

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1 and thoughtfully working co-operatively with other
2 organizations and First Nations in common areas of interest
3 to other Native communities in southwestern Ontario. In
4 October 1992, just prior to the Charlottetown Accord
5 referendum, N'Amerind hosted an evening of information
6 whereby all national, provincial and local First Nation
7 leaders were given an opportunity to state their views
8 on political representation for urban Native
9 self-government.

10 At that same meeting we asked the 350
11 community members present -- and that about burst the seams
12 of our old building over there -- to fill out a straw ballot
13 indicating their preferences for urban Native
14 self-government at the local level, at the provincial level
15 and at the national level. Our understanding was that
16 we were one of the very few organizations in urban areas
17 anywhere in Canada which asked its own community members
18 to name their preferences for urban Native
19 self-government.

20 At the local level our community members
21 stated they wanted their political representation in this
22 way:

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1 1. Traditional Native government.

2 There are a lot of Iroquois people in this town.

3 2. Elected Native government.

4 3. The Friendship Centre.

5 At the provincial level our community
6 members stated they wanted their political representation
7 by:

8 1. The Chiefs of Ontario

9 2. The Association of Iroquois and
10 Allied Indians

11 3. The Ontario Federation of Indian
12 Friendship Centres.

13 At the national level our community
14 members stated they wanted their political representation
15 by:

16 1. The Assembly of First Nations

17 2. The National Association of
18 Friendship Centres.

19 In addition, our community members voted
20 either "No" to the proposed Charlottetown Accord or stated
21 that they would not participate in the Charlottetown Accord
22 referendum.

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1 It seems clear to the N'Amerind Board
2 of Directors and staff that, even though N'Amerind has
3 no mechanism for representing the political will of the
4 London Native community, we have a responsibility to
5 continue to insist that our community members have a voice
6 in their own future, as Native first citizens, as Native
7 First Nation citizens.

8 We intend to pursue this mandate by
9 advocating for community members their right to political
10 representation as Native First Nations citizens. We want
11 to be clear that we did not receive a mandate to set up
12 a Native Council of Canada citizenry nor an Ontario Métis
13 and Aboriginal Association citizenry.

14 We saw that Friendship Centres at all
15 three levels had a responsibility to impress upon the
16 Native and non-Native powers that be that the voices of
17 urban Native people are pressing for the same recognition
18 that any other Native community enjoys as First Nations
19 citizens.

20 No one is going to hear anything less,
21 now that our community has spoken. Clearly, First Nation
22 governments and provincial and national governments of

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1 non-Natives have been mandated by the London Native
2 community to ensure that our voices are heard and
3 recognized.

4 We are going to be zealous, but
5 co-operative and not subservient when it comes to
6 advocating on behalf of the London Native community.
7 Stridency should not be, however, mistaken for arrogance,
8 nor should advocacy be seen as a threat to anyone. One
9 should remember, however, that even in 1993, even as we
10 speak, urban Native people feel that they have no voice
11 except the voice of advocacy of the Friendship Centres.
12 Thus speak the voices of the London Native community
13 members.

14 In conclusion, you may have noticed that
15 at no time during this presentation did you hear urban
16 Native people referred to as urban Oneidas, urban Ojibways,
17 urban Crees or urban citizens. We are Anishinabe. We
18 are Onkwehonwe, with full inherent rights given to us by
19 the Creator.

20 Too many of our brothers and sisters
21 believe that inherency begins and ends at the borderlines
22 of First Nations reserves. More insidious is the struggle

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1 for money based on the premise that Native people who live
2 on-reserve are entitled to inherency based on their
3 residence there. Thus, many of our Native brothers and
4 sisters are denied opportunities to better their lives,
5 all in the guise that, if they live off-reserve, they have
6 surrendered their rights.

7 The roots of such an argument stem from
8 the oppressive and repressive Indian Act. The reality
9 is that, if our rights stem from the Creator and not a
10 non-Native government, those rights exist regardless of
11 where we reside on Turtle Island or anywhere in North
12 America.

13 Moreover, because we spend a great deal
14 of time arguing who is the real Indian, according to the
15 non-Native definitions, we become powerless to stop the
16 erosion of our inherency by the federal and provincial
17 governments of Canada.

18 There are two examples which spring to
19 mind. One is the inherent right to education,
20 particularly at the secondary and post-secondary levels.
21 The Canadian government grants, through Tuition
22 Agreements with local school boards at the secondary level

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1 and through the Post-Secondary Student Assistance Program
2 at the post-secondary level, assistance, as they say, to
3 Native students who have status and increasingly, or
4 exclusively, who live on reserve.

5 Likewise, the agency of the federal
6 Government of Canada, called National Revenue, dictates
7 who is -- or, better put I suppose, who is and who ain't
8 -- entitled to be exempt from paying income tax, according
9 to their artificial definitions which seem to be based
10 more on retribution than any acknowledgement of inherency
11 rights.

12 If we were not in the throes of
13 subjugation, disguised as political wheeling and dealing,
14 we could begin to advocate for all of our people whom we
15 are all supposed to be serving. Instead we, as Native
16 leaders, accept and even advocate on behalf of the Canadian
17 government of the day, believing that, if we make a
18 political deal, arguably to protect the rights of our
19 constituency, we are protecting the rights of inherency.

20 The contrasting and oppression-free
21 argument, which is fraught with risk and fear if not
22 outright terror, states that we have the inherent right

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1 granted from the Creator to make laws to ensure each of
2 our people is protected from the encroachment of non-Native
3 governments on those rights.

4 If we have truly healed, and if we accept
5 the Circle of Life as our guide for conducting our lives,
6 we can -- we most definitely can -- shuck off the yoke
7 of oppression. N'Amerind Friendship Centre is struggling
8 to represent the traditions of all Native nations and
9 provide a self-determining, self-governing haven for our
10 community, because our community has mandated us to do
11 so.

12 We believe we are succeeding.

13 Miigwetch. Yawheh.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.

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

16 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** Go right ahead.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Paul, do you
18 want to start?

19 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
20 very much for your presentation. It raises a number of
21 important issues, and gives us an opportunity to probe
22 them. I would like to do that by asking some questions.

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1 I want to begin that by noting that you
2 make some references to facts that are not explicitly
3 detailed in the paper. Therefore, you must be aware that
4 my questions are not directed to the facts as they are
5 to be found here but at the ideas being discussed in the
6 paper. I want to make that amply clear.

7 My first point relates to a point on page
8 4 where you discuss a local school board's involvement
9 in, I think, your Centre's school. You state there that
10 you have presented to them an argument in response to their
11 expressed concerns about the cost-efficiency factor.

12 It seems to me -- and I want you to
13 correct me if I am wrong -- that the school board is looking
14 at this way: Either we have the cost or we do not have
15 the cost. Your argument I don't think meets that, not
16 the one you refer to here. You refer to costs of prison
17 and so on.

18 The question is: For whom are those
19 alternate costs? The school board is not going to pay
20 for prisons or for other things, so for them it is not
21 an alternate cost. It seems to me it would be difficult
22 to persuade them on the merits of the alternate cost

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1 argument. You would, however, it seems to me, be able
2 to persuade perhaps someone for whom those are alternative
3 costs -- and I have in mind the federal government. It
4 seems to me that you can make nationally-based arguments
5 directed to the national argument on an alternate cost
6 basis.

7 I can understand why you are getting the
8 reaction you are getting from the local school board
9 because, for them, it is not an alternate cost.

10 At page 6 you state that the community
11 is determined to improve the community with or without
12 the reluctant European system as a partner. I think that
13 is an important statement. I wonder if you would be able
14 to fill it out, either now with a brief sketch or at some
15 other time, on how to get along without the reluctant
16 European system as a partner.

17 Our job is to make policy
18 recommendations to the federal government of the sort that
19 are going to be acceptable generally in Canada, and many
20 people will want to probe this question. What is it you
21 can do without the reluctant partner?

22 Would you like to offer a quick comment

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1 on that point?

2 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** Yes. It does relate
3 back to the school, by the way, and in terms of the
4 complicated system that has to do with education.

5 School boards operate, yes, on the very
6 basis of the local need. However, they are funded in some
7 cases, depending on where the students are coming from,
8 either by the federal government or by the Ministry of
9 Education, the Ontario government. So it is a complicated
10 factor, but the bottom line is that there are regulations
11 that can be used in terms of improving the way the school
12 board system responds to the Native community's needs.
13 That is on the first point.

14 On the second point, in terms of with
15 or without, we operate on a simple premise. For a while
16 there, when we were operating Wiingashk, we operated on
17 the basis that we didn't have a partner, but we did have
18 knowledge of how the system operates. So, in effect, we
19 ran a total community school. It was not funded by anyone,
20 and it was not supported by the London School Board. They
21 had withdrawn their support for a period of about five
22 months.

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1 We knew what we had to do. First of all,
2 we got a teacher. Second, we knew we had to qualify our
3 students and get them ready for Ministry of Education
4 specifications regarding testing and so on. We moved
5 ahead. We met every day. We still had students, and we
6 just knew that at some point we would have to go back to
7 a school board -- and there are three in London, actually.
8 There is not just one school board; there are three.
9 We would have to go to them in order to get our students
10 tested.

11 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** So you
12 used volunteer labour only as an interim measure because
13 ultimately, you say, you had to rely on the reluctant
14 European partner. Is that it?

15 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** Yes. We got them back
16 to the bargaining table, as it were, and we have operated
17 together since that point.

18 There is a school of thought in terms
19 of traditional schools. There is a way to do it. It would
20 require an awful lot of volunteer effort, a lot of community
21 pulling-together. We felt that in terms of operating on
22 an interim basis. In many cases it required my own staff

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1 at the Friendship Centre to double up their efforts and
2 to be in the school.

3 We also drew on the expertise of the
4 traditional school that exists at Onyata:ka which is
5 only about 15 minutes outside of town.

6 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
7 for that. I will urge, if you don't mind, fairly short
8 responses to fairly specific questions. I don't want to
9 take up too much time with my questioning; I have a
10 colleague who will also want to ask you questions.

11 I would say that you probably don't want
12 to suggest that school boards operate on the basis of
13 volunteer labour. You probably wouldn't find many people
14 in the country who would clasp that proposal warmly to
15 heart, particularly teachers' unions and others.

16 On page 4 -- and again this has to with
17 the school -- you are suggesting that there are
18 difficulties convincing the school board about the merits
19 of your school. Then on page 9 you say that, at least
20 as general proposition, your Centre diligently and
21 thoughtfully works co-operatively with other
22 organizations and First Nations in common areas of interest

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1 in southwestern Ontario.

2 Have you applied that diligence and
3 thoughtfulness to the school situation? That is, to what
4 extent are you involved with the other local communities,
5 the band organizations, in the pursuit of your educational
6 initiatives?

7 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** Very much so. That is
8 one of the things we had to learn.

9 When we first began this, I think we had
10 a lot of energy, and it took us a while to realize how
11 to work with Native and non-Native organizations and First
12 Nations. Now we have an excellent relationship with
13 Onyata:ka, with Chippewa of the Thames, which are the two
14 main First Nations who send their students in to the London
15 system. Very shortly we will have those parties and the
16 Munsee-Delaware Nation at that table to put a full effort
17 together.

18 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Are you
19 getting federal funding through the Department
20 of Indian Affairs funnelled through the bands for your
21 students in that way.

22 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** No, and that is part

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1 of the problem. The school system is operated on the basis
2 of Tuition Agreements students over here and the rest of
3 the system, and off-reserve students in the Friendship
4 Centre school.

5 What we are saying is that there is no
6 distinction.

7 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank
8 you. I have two more questions, and I will put them as
9 briefly as I can.

10 It has to do with the issue of
11 representation which, of course, is quite basic to the
12 resolution of our mandate, because it includes the idea
13 of Aboriginal self-government, including the duty to
14 provide recommendations with respect to its
15 implementation.

16 At page 7 you ask the question: Does
17 any one group really represent urban Native people? I
18 suppose you mean in a practical sense, so I will be asking
19 you what you mean by the expression "really represent,"
20 but first I want to fill out my question.

21 At pages 10 and 11 you list the results
22 of what you call a straw ballot respecting this question.

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1 You asked your community members to name their preferences
2 for urban Native self-government. Presumably, that would
3 include the question of who represents their interests
4 politically; I will presume that.

5 These are the three alternatives, and
6 the two alternatives in the last case, that were put on
7 the ballot for their consideration. Is that right? Or
8 were there five or six or ten alternatives?

9 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** There were as many
10 organizations as are in existence throughout Canada.

11 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** How many
12 did you have on your ballot?

13 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** All of them. Do you
14 want me to name them all? The Métis National Council was
15 on there, Inuit Tapirisat, every National Women's Native
16 organization -- what we did was take all the organizations
17 and put them on the straw ballot and people could check
18 off.

19 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** So you
20 had this huge list of 118 organizations, and each
21 individual was required to tick off one, two and three?
22 Is that it?

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1 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** The ones who have a
2 political mandate. There are not 118 organizations that
3 have a political mandate. But, yes, quite a few.

4 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** How come
5 you have Friendship Centres there? You say you included
6 the ones which have a political mandate, and you don't
7 have one.

8 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** That's a good point.
9 The point is that Friendship Centres do not represent
10 the political will, but we put them on the ballot along
11 with Ontario Native Women, Ontario Métis and Aboriginal
12 Association, and other organizations which seem to have
13 not an actual political mandate but a mandate of total
14 community service.

15 There are two parts of government. One
16 is governing in the sense of legislating laws. The other
17 part is service to the community. I think that is what
18 we get caught up in, and that is certainly our viewpoint.

19

20 A lot of people are talking about a
21 political representation without an infrastructure to
22 support that political representation, Native Council of

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1 Canada being an excellent example. That is not to pick
2 on them, but the idea that they have a political mandate
3 but no infrastructure to serve the people seems to me like
4 it is the opposite of Friendship Centres which have all
5 the service infrastructure but have no mandate to govern.

6 What we tried to do was to find out where
7 people in urban areas want to direct us in terms of where
8 we should go, in terms of representing not only their
9 interests but their political will.

10 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I don't
11 want to generate a debate on the point, but I will note
12 that some will argue that the provision of public services
13 is the essential task of government and that indeed the
14 task of government does not go beyond that, and that the
15 legislative apparatus is only a mechanism to legitimize
16 the delivery of public services.

17 I will pass on to my other points. I
18 will note that the issue of representation is a fundamental
19 one, and I am somewhat confused by the assertion in the
20 one part of the paper that the Friendship Centre is a
21 service delivery organization without a political mandate,
22 and I am trying to contrast that to the end part which

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1 asserts its undertaking of a role of political
2 representation, as it appears to me.

3 This is my final question. It has to
4 do with the characterization on page 14 of an inherent
5 right. You refer to two sorts of rights, one an inherent
6 right to education and an inherent right of tax-exemption.
7 Would you mind explaining what those are.

8 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** The inherent right to
9 education is something which springs from a holistic view
10 of education. In terms of trying to define it again, we
11 find ourselves getting caught up in government-mandated
12 programs which say: Okay, here is where one education
13 begins and here is where training picks up, and here is
14 where another kind of education begins, and so on.

15 What we are trying to say is that we
16 believe in education, as Native people, including
17 education in terms of understanding the European system.
18 We certainly see the value in terms of that; however,
19 not in the broadest sense of saying we have gained success
20 in a non-Native system and then all of a sudden we lose
21 our identity. A lot of our people are getting confused
22 between the two. They end up saying, "If I become a

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1 teacher, have I lost my identity as a Native person?"
2 Or "Who am I?" at its most base point. That is on
3 education.

4 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I am not
5 conveying the meaning of my question.

6 I am asking about your idea of the nature
7 of an inherent right to education. Some people, for
8 example, would say that a right means that someone has
9 an obligation. If you say to someone, "I have a right
10 to whatever," what you are saying is that someone has an
11 obligation to provide that for you.

12 Canadians will be concerned to ask:
13 Does that mean a right to a free education? If it does,
14 then it means someone has to pay. Who is going to pay?

15 I am asking for the full explanation of
16 what it means when you say we have an inherent right.
17 It inheres in whom? If it is inherent, it must inhere
18 in somebody. In whom does it inhere and why does it inhere,
19 and what does it mean? What is the substance and who is
20 going to provide it? That is what I mean.

21 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** Ideally, we are going
22 to provide it. In terms of money, again, when we start

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1 talking about money, you are talking about conflicting
2 values.

3 I don't know, in terms of what the final
4 argument will turn out to be. I suspect the Canadian
5 system or Ontario system which put us on to the idea that
6 we must be educated in order to be civilized, so to speak,
7 was put on to us throughout the end of the 19th century
8 and certainly throughout the 20th century.

9 Then we come back and we get this
10 education, and increasing numbers of Native students are
11 succeeding in the education system. Then it becomes a
12 question of its being too costly now.

13 That would be a question that I would
14 ask the Canadian government, that I would ask the
15 provincial government: What do you want? Do you want
16 educated Native people who understand the need for
17 education -- that is, to understand mainstream society
18 as well as maintaining our own knowledge of our own culture
19 and our own heritage and our own values and our own
20 languages -- which is what we have had to do all of our
21 lives, let alone this French-English debate. It is
22 basically the same argument, the only difference being

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1 that it becomes a point, because there are only 1.4 million
2 Native people in Canada as opposed to seven or eight million
3 French-speaking people. But it is the same basic
4 argument.

5 We have a right to be educated, and that
6 right sprang from the idea, again going back, that it is
7 something that begins from the time we are born until the
8 day we die. It springs from the Creator and, in terms
9 of the cost, that is something that is always going to
10 be an issue as long as there is a cost factor that is always
11 mentioned by a system that is basically not really fully
12 understood yet by Native people.

13 The cost of it, in terms of dollars and
14 cents -- who is going to bear the cost of it? Who always
15 bears the cost of it? The bottom line is that this is
16 our nation. Turtle Island belongs to Native people, as
17 well as to you people. Surely we ought to be able to find
18 a way to co-operate rather than to subjugate. If that
19 dollar sign is always going to be held over our heads,
20 so that when you run into deficits and you run into debt,
21 we are the first ones that have to suffer it, even though
22 it is well-documented that we have the social ills, the

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1 bottom line is that I don't know how to answer your
2 question.

3 I guess we end up going back into the
4 bush.

5 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I was
6 concerned to understand what you meant. I can tell you
7 what others would argue. For example, some will argue
8 that there are rights whose source is in section 35 of
9 the Constitution. The argument would be one similar to
10 that expressed by the Supreme Court in respect of the French
11 language rights issue, saying that people are entitled
12 to the establishment of their own school boards and that
13 special school boards are entitled to separate funding
14 from the public purse. That is but one example.

15 But I was not going to assume that you
16 meant that. That is why I asked you for your explanation
17 of what it meant.

18 We are required to make specific policy
19 recommendations to the federal government, so it is
20 important that we understand these ideas. We cannot
21 simply give the government a package of general ideas;
22 we are required to make some specific recommendations with

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1 respect to that.

2 I will leave it to my colleague, if he
3 has any questions. Thank you very much for your
4 assistance.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You say the
6 school board has attempted to shut down the school a couple
7 of times. What are the actual costs of running a program?

8 I would think it may not be that much. What is the
9 concern?

10 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** I think the concern is
11 expressed in terms that the school board feels under
12 pressure to cut costs in this day where basically they
13 are asking unions to possibly roll back salaries. They
14 are asking school boards to cut back on costs and look
15 at administration, and so on.

16 In trying to look at costs, one of the
17 things that was mentioned -- and this was just recently
18 in pre-budget hearings in Ontario. The Chairperson of
19 the London School Board said, "You have to stop foisting
20 these small special programs on to our system. Our system
21 cannot bear the burden of special programs and still
22 survive." That wasn't a direct reference only to the

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1 alternative school that we have, but it was a reference
2 to what is increasingly becoming a multicultural society
3 and increasingly on the part of Native people the pressure
4 on local school boards to help us to help our students
5 succeed.

6 I think what it is is basically a
7 reluctance to change. No one seems to know, on the part
8 of the local school board, what that will mean in terms
9 of: Once you give them a high school, what will they want
10 next? Will it be language programs? Will it be
11 culture-based programs? Will they change the curriculum?
12 Will we have to look at providing alternative delivery
13 mechanisms, alternative curricula. Will we have to set
14 up parallel systems?

15 Once you begin to open it up for them,
16 I can understand. Their whole thing is: Wow! We can't
17 even handle what we have, let alone what might come in
18 the future.

19 In the past Native people have been very
20 quiet, but increasingly, when we become successful in
21 school systems -- European-based I am talking now -- we
22 have had the ability to speak on behalf of our own

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1 community. In speaking on behalf of our own community,
2 we are not only requesting change; I suppose to them it
3 seems like we are demanding change.

4 Let me just say that you know as well
5 as I do that we need doctors, we need lawyers, we need
6 educated Indian Chiefs, we need teachers. We need them
7 first and foremost in our own communities to help us solve
8 our own problems.

9 In terms of asking for the help, that
10 is why there is such a sense of urgency. The bottom line
11 is that it is a complicated system to deal with. Here
12 you are dealing with a bureaucrat, here you are dealing
13 with a teacher, here you are dealing with an administrator,
14 and yet somebody else. It's terribly frustrating to try
15 to understand each other.

16 So the bottom line is that what we try
17 to do is provoke the idea of dialogue.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Somebody
19 earlier, I think, said there were 10,000 Aboriginal people
20 in London.

21 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** That is an estimate
22 based on our employment and trading needs assessment.

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1 It is borne out by the fact that the census which just
2 came out showed that we had 7,800, and we always know there
3 are people who do not report. So our estimate of 10,000
4 is probably pretty good.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** It could
6 even be low.

7 I am wondering what the long vision is
8 here. You mentioned seven generations in your
9 presentation.

10 In relation to the urban Aboriginal
11 situation, let's just deal with education for a minute.

12 Are the urban Aboriginal people going to be satisfied
13 for seven generations to be having a small alternative
14 school on the side and sending 99.9 per cent of their
15 children to the larger school system which they have very
16 little control over?

17 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** No, and that is a good
18 question.

19 In terms of the vision we have, I think
20 we have to begin to talk in terms of the reality of what
21 all of our collective vision is. Up to this point, we
22 have been just reacting. When I say there is no voice,

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1 it is because really, when it comes right down to it, it
2 is very difficult for people to speak when there is no
3 forum for them to speak at.

4 At First Nations there are Band Councils
5 or traditional councils which have a mandate somewhere,
6 either by Indian Act or by Constitution in the case of
7 the Iroquois people. There is some place that is organized
8 where they can express themselves. In urban areas there
9 really isn't anything, and that's the problem.

10 In terms of the future, no, urban Native
11 people are not going to be satisfied. This dialogue that
12 is going on here in London is going on in every big city
13 where there is a sizable Native population -- Winnipeg,
14 Vancouver, Victoria, Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Toronto,
15 Montreal. There are debates going on right now among
16 Aboriginal people, trying to answer this question, and
17 debates even in terms of trying to get national leaders
18 to understand that we are not considering ourselves to
19 be, first and foremost, Canadians or Ontarians. First
20 and foremost, we identify with the Nations that we belong
21 to, whether that be Ojibway, Cree, Sioux, Blood, Iroquois.
22 That is where we identify first, but we have no place

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1 to speak.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You have
3 done a good job of certainly telling us the problem in
4 that situation. If I were to try to pick your brain, what
5 kind of vision do you have of the future?

6 You have to appreciate where we are at.
7 Our work will probably be over in about a year and a half.
8 Somewhere in the next six months we have to start coming
9 up with some ideas as to what urban people are going to
10 have for the next ten or twenty years. Unfortunately,
11 even though people have not talked about it, haven't made
12 up their minds as to the kind of future they want, what
13 we have to work with is the best ideas we have been given
14 from wherever.

15 So, in your five minutes on the hot seat
16 -- and you have been working at this for quite some time.
17 If you were to try to continue the thought process that
18 seems to be generating here with the small alternative
19 school you have, what do you believe is the long-term?
20 If, in fact, you know for a fact what people don't want
21 -- and they don't want the situation they are in now, where
22 Aboriginal people are sending their children to a school

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1 over which they have very little influence, very little
2 influence over the curriculum, very little influence over
3 hiring the teachers, very little influence on the values
4 they are being taught there, the history they are being
5 taught there. Obviously, they want something else.

6 As a beginning point, what would that
7 be?

8 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** I think the first thing
9 is the recognition -- as I understand it, the recognition
10 by existing Aboriginal governments of our rights to be
11 citizens of those Nations. In other words, if there is
12 a traditional Council that exists, the acknowledgement
13 that community members, say, from London have a voice on
14 that traditional Council.

15 If it is an elected Council that exists,
16 the community members in London who are from that Nation
17 should have representation on that Council, or have the
18 right to vote on elected Councils, the right to be
19 recognized as a community member from London who is coming
20 in and saying, "Now I know who I should speak to at Chief's
21 Council," in a traditional Council, and to know that there
22 is some acknowledgement, not a disavowal of who we are,

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1 not saying, "You don't live at Onyata:ka so, therefore,
2 you have no representation there."

3 The co-operation effort, protocol
4 agreements as it were, between communities so that we
5 operate on the basis that we are acknowledging and building
6 each other up. It basically takes the same energy that
7 we take to knock each other to turn it around and build.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Could we get
9 back to education. You have actually answered my second
10 question I was going to ask about urban models of
11 self-government.

12 Could we get back to education. Let me
13 simplify it for you -- and I don't want to put words in
14 your mouth. I am trying to get you to tell me what your
15 views are.

16 There are a number of schools in London.
17 I understand there could be well over 100 schools in
18 London, 115 I think I read this morning. Would it be
19 satisfactory for Aboriginal people here to take over a
20 number of them and run them, and do it within the present
21 system and modify them? Or would you have to have a
22 complete alternative system which is under Aboriginal

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1 government, or whatever, to satisfy people? Or maybe an
2 alternative completely separate from this would be
3 sufficient.

4 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** I think the
5 understanding that I have is that what we are looking for
6 is basically a co-operative effort, in the sense of having
7 the acknowledgement by the mainstream community in which
8 we live that there are special, significant
9 characteristics of a school system that have to be
10 responsive to Native students' needs. That should be
11 articulated by our representatives.

12 It can be on the basis of equality.
13 Whatever it takes to become a chairperson of the Board
14 of Trustees of the London School Board, we can find a Native
15 counterpart to that, and these people would operate in
16 terms of working together, and right on down the line.

17 We are not talking barefoot and pregnant
18 and in the kitchen any more, as far as Indians are
19 concerned. We are talking Indian people who have mastered
20 the system and, yet, have not sold out in terms of their
21 identity. They still know who they are.

22 The system could be parallel in the sense

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1 of the acknowledgement that there is a significant Native
2 population and a significant non-Native population, and
3 that they can work in harmony and in co-operation rather
4 than on the basis of cost-efficiency in terms of always
5 coming down to, "The taxpayers pay for this."

6 The bottom line is, if you want to put
7 it that way, that every one of the 7,800 or 10,000 Native
8 people in this town pay taxes, too. If you want to accept
9 that as an argument, then there should be representation,
10 and there are even formulas for that.

11 For example, if our population is, in
12 fact, 10,000, according to Ontario guidelines we should
13 be eligible for two people on the Board of Trustees from
14 this town, representing the Native community. One per
15 5,000 can be appointed. Some goodwill, though, has to
16 be put forward by the non-Native system.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** At
18 page 4 you talk about traditional values. We now tell
19 ourselves traditional values belong to a time which has
20 now passed for Native people.

21 Were you implying in that that
22 traditional values have a place in the future?

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1 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** Absolutely. Again
2 going back to the concept of seven generations, it is not
3 just me sitting here as the physical person. As
4 non-Natives would say, "There is Tom Dockstader." I have
5 people who came before me. My vision is always somewhat
6 limited because I, too, am in that syndrome of not being
7 able to have clear vision. But I do have a grandson, so
8 I can certainly see two generations into the future. What
9 do they want in terms of what they tell me my responsibility
10 is to them?

11 The bottom line is that, in terms of the
12 four directions, in terms of the races, in terms of the
13 Circle of Life, there is a place for everyone, and it is
14 timeless. Past, present or future really is not a concept
15 that is that well-known to us as Native people
16 traditionally.

17 Therefore, I can feel what it is like
18 to have been a signatory, or what amounts to a signatory,
19 on the oldest of the Iroquois trees, which is the Two Row
20 Wampum, where it talked about parallel systems, side by
21 side, co-operating, living in harmony but, yet, not
22 intruding on each other's system. I was brought up on

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1 that.

2 I wasn't physically there in the 1600s
3 when that was first brought about, but the bottom line
4 is that I have enough vision to be able to learn from that.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I was going
6 to ask you about urban models of self-government, but I
7 had the impression that you dealt with it in your earlier
8 statements. Do you feel that is the case, or do you want
9 to say anything more on that?

10 **TOM DOCKSTADER:** If we are really
11 looking at a developmental model, I think, in terms of
12 trying to represent the broad-based interests of any urban
13 Native community, we should build on the basis of working
14 with First Nations communities. Everything we do here
15 is in consideration not only of our own community but where
16 the bulk of our community members come from, and that is
17 primarily the seven Nations in southwestern Ontario along
18 with Six Nations in New Credit to the east of us. That
19 is where the bulk of our population comes from.

20 So it behooves us, as an organization,
21 to try to work in harmony with those Nations and to impress
22 upon them that we are serving their people.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you,
2 and thank you for lunch today. It was excellent.

3 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** Jean
4 Pierre, could we have the closing prayer, please.

5 --- Closing Prayer

6 --- Whereupon the Hearing adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

7 to resume on Wednesday, May 12, 1993

8 at 9:00 a.m.