

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

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**Royal Commission on
May 12, 1993**

Aboriginal Peoples

1 **London, Ontario**

2 --- Upon resuming on Wednesday, May 12, 1993

3 at 9:00 a.m.

4 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** Good
5 morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the
6 second day of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
7 in London.

8 At this time, I am going to ask Jean
9 Pierre to do the opening ceremony.

10 --- Opening Ceremony

11 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** We would
12 like to call the first presenter, Marshall George from
13 the First Nations Post-Secondary Counselling Unit.

14 I would like to remind the presenters
15 this morning to keep their presentations to about 15
16 minutes, to give the Commissioners time to ask questions.

17 **MARSHALL GEORGE, FIRST NATIONS**

18 **POST-SECONDARY COUNSELLING UNIT:** First of all, I would
19 like to thank you for the opportunity to address this forum.
20 Thank you, Lucille.

21 My name is Marshall George. I am
22 Bonnie's brother. I work for the First Nations
23 Post-Secondary Counselling Services; I am the Executive

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1 Director.

2 We are mandated by the London District
3 Chiefs Council to provide financial assistance and
4 counselling services to First Nations post-secondary
5 student within the seven bands which encompass the London
6 District Chiefs Council.

7 I have been told that recommendations
8 are being welcomed in order that solutions can be
9 identified to problems which hinder the development and
10 enhancement of First Nations people.

11 My concern is that our people are not
12 enjoying as high a standard of living as do most other
13 Canadians. Our average family income is probably much
14 lower than that of other Canadians. Often our families
15 subsist far below the established level identified as being
16 the poverty line.

17 The level of poverty within our
18 institutions is quite similar to that of developing and
19 Third World countries. For years Canadian First Nations
20 people have been under-represented in practically all
21 walks of Canadian life, the most startling of which is
22 education and employment.

23 As a people, we have very large numbers

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1 of our people who are not employed. Unemployment, which
2 I think everybody can identify with, is the cause and
3 stimulant of alcohol and drug abuse, of family
4 disintegration and of mental health problems. Especially
5 in times of recession, unemployment will hinder our people
6 much more than it will ever have done in the past. Without
7 employment, the self-esteem of many of our individuals
8 is quite low.

9 Most people who are offered the
10 opportunity to work full-time at an interesting and
11 rewarding occupation usually do not need the aid, but
12 become respected, self-sufficient and content
13 individuals. Our problem is that, unfortunately, large
14 numbers of our people do not enjoy the opportunities which
15 are required to achieve the same success as other Canadians
16 when it comes to employment.

17 In order to alleviate this problem, we
18 must first of all be more successful in schools than we
19 have been in the past. Practically all across the country
20 the statisticians who look after the various different
21 programs where Indian students attend will tell you that
22 probably more than 80 per cent of our students will never
23 graduate from high school, compared to the non-Native

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1 population where 80 per cent will graduate. I think we
2 do have a serious problem within our education ranks.

3 In the past few years the statistics have
4 greatly improved, but it is still far lower than what we
5 are capable of producing. With the number of students
6 who are not graduating from high schools, they find it
7 very, very difficult when they do get into post-secondary
8 institutions.

9 Again, the number of people who are
10 taking advantage of post-secondary studies has increased,
11 but it is far below that of the national average.

12 My comrades from across the province,
13 as well as from other walks of life, tell me that
14 approximately 85 per cent of those individuals who
15 originally begin post-secondary studies will never
16 graduate, which means that probably between 10 and 15 per
17 cent will graduate.

18 I was looking at today's paper, and one
19 of the things that I did see was an article entitled:
20 "More Canadians are Earning Post-Secondary Degrees than
21 ever before." That is true. We in Indian land have been
22 producing more graduates, but not what we are capable of
23 doing.

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1 The article went on to compare the
2 education of non-Natives to those individuals from
3 previous years, and you will find that probably more than
4 40 per cent of the individuals who are 15 years of age
5 and over are graduates of either a community college or
6 a university.

7 Those are going to be the individuals
8 who will benefit from the fruits of Canadian society.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** So far you
10 have told us the same kind of facts that we have heard
11 everywhere in the country. What we were hoping you might
12 do, besides just telling the facts the way they are, was
13 tell us your ideas on how we can improve the situation.
14 That is what we were hoping you would share with us.
15 These are facts that our research has already found. It
16 is the solutions that we are having trouble with.

17 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** My solution, sir,
18 would be -- first of all, I think everybody probably does
19 realize that we do have problems within our own
20 institutions. First of all, we have to readdress our
21 education policies and procedures.

22 We are a post-secondary institution who
23 are receiving students from elementary and secondary

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1 school programs. I think probably what has to happen first
2 of all, before post-secondary programs will work, is that
3 we have to make our elementary and secondary school systems
4 work. Probably what is happening with those large numbers
5 that I mentioned before of individuals who are not
6 graduating from high schools -- what we have to do is set
7 a national policy, probably at the AFN level, which would
8 address counselling procedures and education programs that
9 would meet the needs of First Nations people.

10 Probably there are individuals who work
11 in the counselling field and have been instrumental in
12 providing services to our people, but they are not
13 effective. Before programs can be effective, they have
14 to be set up in such a way where they will incorporate
15 the thoughts, ideas and needs of our people.

16 That is one of the major concerns that
17 we do have. We have been working on it ourselves. First
18 of all, we think it is very important for our students
19 to get that head start in elementary school and, when they
20 do get to secondary school, to have the policies and
21 programs in place which will assist them and guide them
22 to graduate at a much higher level.

23 Across the country you will probably

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1 come to the understanding or have heard that post-secondary
2 programs, after the year 1995-96, will be discontinued
3 by the Department of Indian Affairs. Last week I attended
4 a conference which was sponsored by the Assembly of First
5 Nations, which was held at the Westin Hotel in Ottawa.
6 At that conference the AFN was looking for direction as
7 to how to meet the needs of the post-secondary program.

8 First of all, there were two major
9 findings that we discussed at that conference. Number
10 one was that the federal government must recognize
11 post-secondary education of Indian people as being an
12 inherent treaty right. Apparently, it is not. The first
13 and foremost thing the AFN wanted to do was to try to find
14 ways and means to get the government to recognize
15 post-secondary as being an inherent treaty right.

16 The second was to get the government to
17 come up with adequate dollars which would meet the needs
18 of all First Nations students who qualify to attend an
19 educational institution. At the present time there is
20 not adequate dollars to go around.

21 There are some Nations across Canada who
22 are suffering very badly because of the fact that their
23 programs are capped. We in southwestern Ontario have had,

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1 I guess you could say, an insight into the program and
2 haven't had too much of a problem realizing the dollars
3 that we do need to assist our students to attend
4 post-secondary institutions. However, that is not the
5 case across Canada where there has been a cap put on
6 post-secondary dollars.

7 My point is that, first of all, the
8 government should make that an inherent treaty right and
9 recognize it as being such, and they should provide
10 adequate dollars to those individuals who want to attend
11 a post-secondary institution.

12 Other than that, addressing the holistic
13 needs of an education for our people is basically all I
14 have to say. I do think that probably, before our
15 post-secondary program will work, which will greatly
16 affect our rate of unemployment, we have to have our
17 elementary and secondary schools and our institutions on
18 the reserves and in the cities in line with those that
19 provide and stimulate an education for our people.

20 My big point is that we have to develop
21 policies which will meet the needs of our people. I think
22 government can help by making available dollars that people
23 feel they do require in order to run such programs.

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1 There is a school in the city here, Nokee
2 Kwe, which is an adult institution. The school does
3 marvellous work. It helps people to help themselves.
4 Unfortunately, for one reason or another -- for quite a
5 few reasons -- that individual school will probably be
6 a thing of the past simply because of the fact that not
7 enough dollars have been identified to help them stay
8 afloat.

9 One of the things is that, from all
10 aspects of life, the government's responsibility is to
11 provide dollars where they are needed, and places like
12 Nokee Kwe really do need it.

13 That's all I have to say.

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

16 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** Sure.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I will start
18 with Commissioner Chartrand.

19 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank
20 you. I am looking through your presentation to discern
21 some recommendations regarding federal policy shifts.

22 Our mandate is to recommend changes in federal policy.

23 I do detect a reference to an inherent

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1 treaty right, but I don't discern that you have explained
2 the consequence of that. I wonder if you would mind
3 explaining what you mean when you refer to an inherent
4 treaty right. I have not heard the expression.

5 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** Actually, what I am
6 referring to is post-secondary as being a treaty right.
7 At the conference in Ottawa, what we were told is that
8 the government does not recognize post-secondary education
9 of Indian people as being such. They say it is a
10 discretionary object.

11 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** That is
12 not my question. I am asking you to explain what it is
13 you have in mind when you refer to this right.

14 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** First of all, there
15 are two different avenues from which you look at things.
16 Is it a privilege or is it a right? A privilege is
17 something that is provided to an individual to partake
18 in. A right is something that is theirs.

19 When you talk about a treaty right, I
20 feel that we do have particular rights, like hunting and
21 fishing for example. I feel that, if I want to hunt and
22 fish on my First Nation --

23 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I am

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1 sorry, I am asking about a treaty right to education, not
2 fishing.

3 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** But I am trying to a
4 comparative analysis for you.

5 A right is something that gives you that
6 provision to have access to have an education paid for
7 by someone else.

8 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I
9 understand that. What is the source of that right?

10 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** What is the source of
11 that right? I think my thought and idea on that would
12 be that we are status Indians and that the government has
13 an obligation, since they did take our lands and, to a
14 certain extent, our culture away from us in exchange for
15 particular rights, one of them being education.

16 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** What
17 treaty is that? Are you pointing to a treaty provision?

18 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** I don't know what
19 treaty we are talking about here. I am just looking at
20 the Indian Act where it says --

21 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** But you
22 refer to it as a treaty right.

23 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** It should be a treaty

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1 right. I am not saying that it is a treaty right right
2 now; I am saying that it should be made a treaty right.

3 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I see.
4 So you are not asserting that it is; you are asserting
5 that you would like it if it were.

6 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** I would like to see
7 it.

8 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** So what
9 you are suggesting is that the government negotiate
10 treaties --

11 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** No, my suggestion is
12 that -- I do know that in time the government probably
13 will identify particular things that they will do for
14 individuals. My thought is that what should happen is
15 that the right to an education for First Nations people
16 should be there, and it should spelled out in black and
17 white that it is a right.

18 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** In
19 treaties.

20 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** Yes.

21 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** And you
22 say you are not pointing to any particular existing
23 provision of a treaty. Therefore, I must conclude that

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1 you are suggesting to us that the government ought to enter
2 into negotiations so as to secure a treaty right to
3 education. Is that right?

4 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** Yes, it is.

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

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You made
8 reference to the 1995-96 school year being the last year
9 that post-secondary programs will be funded by the federal
10 government. What are you using as a source of information
11 for this?

12 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** Information received
13 from the Assembly of First Nations. They have told us
14 that in 1991 the Prime Minister of the country promised
15 that the post-secondary program would be in existence for
16 five years. At the end of 1995-96, post-secondary
17 education is viewed as being a discretionary object and
18 that beyond those particular years the government would
19 not have an obligation to provide the dollars that are
20 required for our people to attend colleges or universities.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** So they are
22 referring to a statement that was made in 1991.

23 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** Yes. This is coming

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1 from the AFN office itself. That is why they did have
2 the conference in Ottawa a couple of weeks ago, to try
3 to find ways and means to deal with that particular problem.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do they have
5 any recent evidence that the program will be discontinued?

6 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** I don't think so. I
7 think it is probably at a very high political level.

8 I, myself, called some of the people that
9 I used to work with at the Department of Indian Affairs,
10 and they themselves did not have any idea what the AFN
11 was talking about.

12 However, one of the things that they did
13 mention was the fact that their programs are funded for
14 five-year periods at a time. The guy at the local Indian
15 Affairs office would not give me any information as to
16 whether or not that is fact or fiction.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You talked
18 about how the present primary and secondary schools system
19 just doesn't work. The one way you suggested that we might
20 improve people being in post-secondary education is
21 counselling. You may have been referring to improving
22 high school counselling also, because there is such a big
23 drop-out rate.

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1 Is there any other way you can see the
2 education system being modified so that Aboriginal people
3 and First Nation citizen students can succeed in it?

4 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** My involvement in
5 secondary school education has been from the point of
6 assisting with the establishment of particular Native
7 Studies courses and with the language courses that were
8 developed by educational institutions, i.e. Lakehead
9 University. Those were transplanted into many area
10 secondary schools.

11 I think probably what happened after
12 that is that those particular subjects were identified
13 as being particular courses within the education school
14 systems.

15 Beyond that, what has happened in the
16 area of secondary and elementary schools is that the
17 classroom assistance and counselling programs have been
18 developed by many of the schools. I think probably those
19 programs within the boards of education themselves
20 complement the counselling services that are being done
21 at the reserve level.

22 My contention is that there is so much
23 work to do and so much paper that has to be done that most

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1 of the counsellors find themselves doing administrative
2 duties and don't have enough time to get into counselling
3 where the counselling is really required. Rather than
4 a reactive position, a proactive position would probably
5 be more beneficial to our people.

6 Out west, my friends in DOTC in Brandon,
7 Manitoba provide their counselling services from a home
8 and school co-ordinator type of thing. What they do is
9 the like to go in and work with the parents. I would
10 recommend very highly that what has to happen is that
11 counsellors have to spend as much time with the parents
12 as they would with the students. Probably that is one
13 of the most important things because a lot of the
14 institutions of higher learning do not offer that
15 particular type of service.

16 An ideal situation would be to have your
17 school committee develop a program whereby you would have
18 your counsellor working more as a home and school
19 co-ordinator who would help that individual family to
20 provide that stimulating, enriched atmosphere within the
21 home that would kind of pave the way for the student to
22 be a little more successful in the education systems.

23 The education boards really don't have

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1 to modify their programs a whole lot. I think we Indians
2 do have to develop our own systems whereby we will be
3 pushing ourselves to produce better results than we have
4 in the past.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** So you think
6 the system is actually a good system. It is just that
7 Aboriginal people have not found a way to actually adapt
8 themselves to the system.

9 **MARSHALL GEORGE:** Yes. We have to take
10 some of the blame for our demise ourselves. Before any
11 program will work, we have to make it work from within
12 before we go out and start dictating to boards of education
13 how to work school systems. I think we have to meet them
14 halfway and have to start improving our attendances. In
15 many cases we have to get our families to stand behind
16 our kids and to provide that atmosphere which is conducive
17 to being successful.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
19 for your presentation.

20 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** I will now
21 call Mark French, the Executive Director of Seven Bands
22 Community Futures Committee.

23 **MARK FRENCH, Executive Director, Seven**

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1 **Bands Community Futures Committee:** My Anishinabe
2 brothers and sisters and Members of the Commission, like
3 many of you, I am generally wrapped up in the day-to-day
4 challenges of living, of doing my work and taking care
5 of my family.

6 When I was asked to speak to this
7 assembly, at first I resisted. For me, this Commission
8 seemed just another tactic to stall our efforts to obtain
9 recognition of the fact that we are our own government.

10 It seemed another in a long list of ploys associated with
11 what has come to be called "devolution," which for those
12 of you who are unfamiliar with the term means "give the
13 Indians all the administrative work associated with their
14 programs but only one half or two thirds of the resources
15 which were available to Indian Affairs."

16 Then I read some of the documentation
17 that has been assembled to date by the Commission. I knew
18 that this testimony was perhaps one of the most important
19 things I could do to help my people.

20 Did I believe that my testimony would
21 move the government of the Queen? No, I did not.

22 Did I believe that any word issuing from
23 my mouth would be so earth-shattering that immediate

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1 enlightenment would follow? No, I did not.

2 Did I believe that my testimony would
3 raise me in the eyes of my peers? No.

4 I came here because, after reading the
5 testimony that has been assembled with such great effort,
6 I finally came to understand what it is my people are asking
7 for. They are asking for simple justice.

8 What is simple justice? It is said that
9 much of our history is oral. Then let me tell a story.

10 For a moment, I take you back 600 years.

11 You arrive at my home which you now call Canada. You
12 ask me to share Canada with you. I say yes.

13 You ask me to move from my home to another
14 part of it so that you can do something which will benefit
15 all. I say yes.

16 You tell me that your God is better than
17 my God. I do not wish to offend you, so I say yes.

18 You tell me that your language is the
19 language of prosperity. I have been perfectly happy with
20 my language but, if it makes you feel more welcome, I will
21 learn yours. I say yes.

22 You tell that my clothes, my way of life,
23 my habits are not in keeping with what you believe to be

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1 correct. Because by nature we are an accommodating
2 people, I try to become what you want me to be. I say
3 yes.

4 Then all of a sudden I realize I am no
5 longer who I am. I reach out to you and I say, "My European
6 brothers and sisters, I am lost. I do not know my way."

7 You respond by saying, "Obviously you
8 are children and incapable of looking after yourselves."

9 Indian Affairs and the Indian Act are
10 born. I say: Why?

11 But it is almost too late. Drugged and
12 beaten and abused, now by myself as well as others, I
13 stumble from one temporary shelter to another, always an
14 outside, always an outcast. One minute I think I am white
15 until the mother of one of my friends says, "Don't drag
16 that dirty Indian home." Then I think I am an Indian until
17 the father of one of my friends beats his mother senseless
18 in a drunken rage, and I know this cannot be what it means
19 to be an Indian.

20 I try and turn to my childhood and high
21 school friends. A quarter of them are dead. A quarter
22 of them are on drugs or alcohol. Many are in jail. The
23 rest are just like me, alone and lost.

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1 Then through the grace of the Creator
2 who guides us, I find a task that I can perform. I am
3 one of the lucky few. The fog leaves my mind. Daily I
4 grow stronger. I return to the last refuge left to my
5 people, the First Nations land, and become involved in
6 economic development. To me this means using the
7 resources available to us in land, labour, capital and
8 technology to sustain ourselves.

9 Then I begin to become involved in
10 constantly recurring situations.

11 I will be sitting with men and women,
12 who are not Aboriginal, having negotiated or completed
13 a simple or complex financial transaction which I believe
14 is mutually beneficial to all concerned. As they go to
15 leave, believing that I am out of earshot, they turn to
16 their colleagues and say, "Those undeserving Indians.
17 What a good deal for them. They don't have to work and
18 get everything handed to them on a silver platter. They
19 are just fortunate that there are enough guilty white
20 liberals around that they can get away with this. They
21 are lucky that we are around to feed and clothe and house
22 them." This is the 20th century. Can I believe what I
23 am hearing?

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1 But it happens, brazenly or subtly,
2 again and again from a bank manager who says we don't really
3 want the \$200,000 deposit if it comes from Indians -- yes,
4 this has really happened to me -- to civil servants who
5 always assume that my non-Native employees are my boss.

6 I begin to realize that only comfort levels have changed,
7 not the reality. I am still a stranger in my own land.

8 The other day a colleague of mine posed
9 a question I have heard before a hundred times in different
10 ways. It is a question you are constantly asking by your
11 surveys and studies and multi-million-dollar Commissions.

12 The question: What is your problem, and how can we solve
13 it for you?

14 Like many other answers, the answer to
15 this question is wholly contained in the question, in who
16 asks it and in the way it is phrased.

17 Our problem is that we are attempting
18 to come to terms with a civilization which has attempted
19 to assimilate us. "Assimilate" is one of those nice little
20 words that is used to make a nice sound out of a very ugly
21 event. To assimilate someone is to cause them to
22 completely and totally cease to exist as a separate entity.

23 The fact that your culture seeks to solve

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1 this problem by constantly asking what it is is, itself,
2 a never-ending source of grinding irritation.

3 The second part of the question, "How
4 can we solve it for you," is so belittling and demeaning
5 that, in itself, it says, "You are incapable of
6 establishing your own solutions and directions."

7 No. The question is one of will, for
8 everyone with ears to hear has heard our plea for justice
9 and our method for obtaining that justice.

10 On any given day there are enough
11 highly-trained men and women in this room to work out the
12 technical problems associated with the establishment and
13 maintenance of a cultural organizational government.

14 What is the will I refer to? It is the
15 will on your part to let us define our own problems, but
16 with the pre-knowledge that, having defined our problems,
17 we will have the resources to solve them -- not conditional
18 upon your agreement that they are problems, but at our
19 sole discretion.

20 "Why?" you ask.

21 Because by some estimates you spend \$6
22 billion a year on the "Indian question", and our people
23 still die in droves by suicide, are the most populous in

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1 your jails, are substance abusers. Terror stalks our
2 existence. It represents the extreme sadness a young girl
3 feels when she visits her brother or father in prison,
4 the terror that a mother feels when she finds her son or
5 daughter or husband with a bullet through their head or
6 hanging from a tree.

7 Does this not tell you finally, in the
8 most logical format that you understand, that this form
9 of intervention does not work, that you do not now and
10 will not understand who and what we are?

11 Many of you are well-meaning. Many of
12 you care deeply about us. Many of you love us. Let that
13 concern and care reach its logical conclusion. Through
14 no fault of those present here, your ancestors severed
15 us from the core of our existence. They removed our
16 dignity, our work, even our compassion for ourselves.

17 Let our people go! Unshackle them from
18 the fate to which they may be destined. If you in your
19 wisdom do not see and hear that the true strength of a
20 people is its respect for itself, a respect that may only
21 be gained when people know it has carved its place in
22 society by the sweat of its own brow; when its men know
23 that they may clothe and feed their families un beholden

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1 to anyone; when its women know that their children will
2 be reared in meaningful traditions, grow to majority and
3 be able to honour their Elders in the ways of the land
4 and the spirit. Only then will the carnage and the
5 destruction and the genocide cease.

6 The cost/benefit analysis equation here
7 is very straightforward. Honour your promises to us and
8 the treaties you have made with us. You will spend little
9 more than you are spending now, and you will get value
10 for your money.

11 Let us be the authors of how we are
12 governed. Most of us are like most of you. Given the
13 choice, we will set up law-abiding communities that will
14 co-exists side by side with yours. It is inconceivable
15 that more of our people could be in prison than there are
16 already are, and maybe there will be many less.

17 Allow us to educate our children in a
18 way that is appropriate to our culture. If we fail to
19 do this properly, the shame will be ours, and there could
20 not be any shame greater than that we now feel under the
21 present system when our children are not prepared for your
22 world or ours.

23 If you must think in terms of how we would

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1 support is required for the first critical two years in
2 order to compensate for the difficulties in business
3 development engendered by the reservation system and in
4 systemic segregation fostered by the Indian Act. This
5 program, Community Futures, has allowed most of the
6 latitude required to promote and encourage entrepreneurs
7 to make their own decisions and then have their peers gently
8 nudge them in the right direction when some of those
9 decisions stray from what experience has taught us may
10 be a rocky path.

11 This is the stuff of true culturally
12 appropriate economic development -- not the top-down,
13 superimposed, MBA ethic of the elite, but the grassroots
14 drive of families to be self-sufficient, assisted by other
15 families they can identify with who have been this way
16 before.

17 Yet, at every turn, it seems, new
18 programs which do not contain this element are thrust at
19 us. It is almost as if, knowing that the infrastructure
20 may not in some instances be in place to handle vast sums
21 of money, those are the exact areas where the money is
22 spent. These programs are designed to fail or to be
23 looted. It is we who are the losers, but the bureaucracy

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1 will say, "Those people are just incompetent."

2 Community Futures has demonstrated that
3 a properly designed program, implemented in stages, with
4 gradual control being given to the target group as it gains
5 the ability to manage its resources, can be a highly
6 successful vehicle for financial viability and stability.

7 Twenty-five years ago the Government of
8 South Africa stood where you stand today. It had a choice
9 to fully integrate its indigenous population into the
10 governing fabric of its life or segregating them even
11 further. They chose further segregation.

12 At this critical point in our cultural
13 evolution, the Canadian government, currently using the
14 muddled results of the failed constitutional accord, is
15 pursuing economic and social policies that segregate us
16 further. The results will be equally undesirable although
17 just as predictable.

18 If people of sound mind and hearts in
19 your culture and in ours waste opportunity after
20 opportunity with the few remaining resources that are left
21 to us, chaos and anarchy will surely follow.

22 I beseech you, raise your voices to turn
23 us from this path. Raise your voices so those who govern

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1 may hear. The cost, especially in these trying days, may
2 seem expensive. I say to you that it is nothing compared
3 to the cost that will be borne by your people and mine
4 if we cannot reach a just compromise and obtain "simple
5 justice."

6 Meegwetch.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
8 Do you mind if we ask you some questions?

9 **MARK FRENCH:** Be my guest.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** We will
11 start with Commissioner Chartrand.

12 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I have no
13 questions.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You said
15 that Aboriginal people need to define their own problems
16 and find their own solutions. What can be done by the
17 non-Aboriginal governments of Canada to let that occur?
18 You haven't really given us very much to actually
19 facilitate that.

20 You gave us one example, Community
21 Futures, of how a program can be developed so that there
22 is a lot of control at the community level, but, as much
23 as I wanted to see what you were leading up to, I couldn't

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1 get very much out of it.

2 **MARK FRENCH:** Maybe I could expand a
3 little further on that.

4 Community Futures is a program under
5 Employment and Immigration Canada.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I wasn't
7 asking you to tell me about Community Futures. We can
8 go to Manpower and get that very easily.

9 **MARK FRENCH:** Maybe I misunderstood.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Put
11 Community Futures aside. I understand how that operates.

12 In other areas, what else could be done?

13 **MARK FRENCH:** In the area of human
14 resource development, we need more training. Our skill
15 levels at the reserve levels need to be increased. There
16 needs to be more emphasis on the area of government,
17 specifically the administration of government. There
18 needs to be training in the management of government, not
19 specifically what has happened in the past where we have
20 occupational training and technical training. Those are
21 things that already exist at the community level. What
22 needs to happen is that there needs to be more training
23 in government, how to deal with our own issues and resolve

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1 them at the community level. We just don't have that
2 training or that understanding at the community level.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** If we are
4 going to do it in a way in which the community has control,
5 how does that come about?

6 **MARK FRENCH:** I believe there are
7 programs in place to assist us in developing the training
8 that we need, but the focus again is on occupational
9 training. These programs are designed for skill
10 development, not management training, not structural
11 development and organizational structures that are
12 required at the community level to carry out some of the
13 responsibilities such as day-to-day operations of ensuring
14 that the community has a road grader to maintain the roads,
15 that it just isn't a piece of equipment that breaks down
16 and then sits in the garage for six months until it can
17 be repaired. We have mechanics to repair them at the
18 community level, but there is no one planning the future
19 of our communities as far as government structure is
20 concerned.

21 Everyone is talking about this term
22 "devolution" and self-government, but no one is talking
23 about the structure of the government itself, what it is

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1 going to be. We are not proactive in our activities as
2 far as laying out the government at our community levels.
3 Not even our political groups are doing that; they are
4 just saying the words. They are not providing any answers
5 themselves.

6 You are asking the grassroots people
7 what the solution is. The solution is: Give us an
8 opportunity to set up our own government in the way we
9 see it, as I stated in my paper.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How do we do
11 that?

12 **MARK FRENCH:** Give us the freedom to do
13 it.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How?

15 **MARK FRENCH:** You now have, through
16 Department of Indian Affairs, Tribal Councils that are
17 establishing a form of regional government, again funded
18 by the Department of Indian Affairs, implementing
19 Department of Indian Affairs' devolution policies.
20 Basically, we will get into the municipality-type
21 government; we will get into taxation issues.

22 I think First Nations have to develop
23 their own revenue that will support part of their

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1 government -- and I don't mean through taxation because
2 our communities will not support being taxed. They have
3 no resources of their own. Some communities may be
4 fortunate enough to have that if they have a land claim,
5 but other communities that don't have land claims don't
6 have that economic base to work from.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** The only
8 thing I would be able to recommend to the government at the
9 moment is: Wait for the community to tell you what they
10 are going to do. Government shouldn't even come in to
11 define the problem.

12 This Commission hasn't defined any
13 problems for anybody. We went into the communities with
14 a blank sheet and asked people to tell us about anything
15 they wanted, because we have a large mandate. Yet, you
16 still come forth and tell us that we have defined all the
17 problems.

18 The documents you are reading are what
19 people have told us. It is a little beyond me what we
20 are going to recommend to the government except to wait.

21 **MARK FRENCH:** It has taken us 150 years
22 to get here. Do you expect me to give you the solution
23 right today? That's impossible. I think that has to come

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1 through the spiritual, and the social development has to
2 take place in our community first.

3 Once the people feel comfortable with
4 who they are and they can resolve their own problems at
5 the community level, then development and government
6 structures will form on their own. Until that happens,
7 I think you are asking for something that is impossible
8 at this point in time.

9 You must give us that flexibility to be
10 able to develop on our own. The government is expecting
11 a quick fix to this situation; it isn't going to happen.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Let's not
13 worry about what the government is expecting. I am trying
14 to ask you for your advice as to what is the most sensible
15 thing to suggest, to allow what it is you are talking about.

16 Obviously, to suggest to government that
17 the best thing to do is just to carry on the way they are
18 and do nothing until First Nations people or Aboriginal
19 people come to them and tell them something else I don't
20 think is going to be satisfactory to Aboriginal people
21 either. If we were to recommend to just wait, they would
22 say, "Why did you spend that kind of money that you have
23 spent to tell us this? Why did you go to 110 or 120

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1 communities out there to come and tell us that we should
2 just wait?"

3 **MARK FRENCH:** I guess that is the
4 question you have to answer yourself. The only comment
5 I would make is that we have a lot of political
6 organizations in this country that have been paid lots
7 of resources to provide the answer that we are looking
8 for.

9 I don't have the answers. You are
10 asking me something -- I work with a program that gives
11 me some flexibility. There are some guidelines there,
12 but it gives me some flexibility. Those flexibilities
13 allow us to do certain things at the community level that
14 haven't been done before.

15 As you are aware, the Indian Act is very
16 rigid and hasn't allowed for development in communities.
17 With Community Futures, it allows us the flexibility but,
18 at the same time, you have government programs interfering
19 with this program. It has changed. They have introduced
20 other programs so that a greater exposure can be made by
21 other Native groups across the country, and it affects
22 the ability of our group to continue to do the type of
23 development that we have.

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1 Basically, I can only state that the
2 amount of work that we have done in our community has
3 resulted in supporting one another. If a business person
4 gets into business and they get into trouble, they have
5 no one to turn to, nor do they have anybody to support
6 them financially. They may have invested all their equity
7 they have; they may have borrowed from other family
8 members, if possible; and their neighbours drive past their
9 place of business and say, "Gee, those people are doing
10 really well." In actual fact, they may be barely
11 struggling or just barely getting along in the community.

12 Basically, what we do with Community
13 Futures is support that. We give him a shoulder to cry
14 on. We may not have all the answers, but we try to support
15 them and advise them as far as what services they can access
16 from us or advise them what to do. We just support each
17 other.

18 There needs to be a dialogue at the First
19 Nations level on government structures. That is not
20 happening. All the dialogue we see is in the press and
21 at the international level and from politicians. You
22 don't hear this dialogue at the community level.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What you

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1 have told us so far is that there is no dialogue there
2 and that it needs to occur, and that the Community Futures
3 program is a relatively good model that should be followed.

4 Thank you for coming forward.

5 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** Our next
6 speaker is Curtis Hopkins from the Can-Am Friendship Centre
7 in Windsor.

8 **CURTIS HOPKINS, Can-Am Indian**

9 **Friendship Centre of Windsor:** (Native language - not
10 translated)_

11 What I just said was that I am one of
12 the original common people of the Turtle Clan and that
13 our Creator is here in this gathering place with us.

14 Some of the addresses that I need to make
15 are out of an assessment of about 14 years of study. I
16 have been involved with setting curriculum for the
17 education field for the past eight years and took on a
18 new challenge just recently with a program that was
19 developed as a treatment co-ordinator.

20 In my involvement with our issues, I have
21 come to a conclusion that illustrates a lack of identity;
22 that is the bottom line. We have spent years educating
23 ourselves to be able to adapt to a mainstream society that

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1 wants us to be a productive citizen within this framework
2 of what we call the Dominion of Canada.

3 The system will only work when we have
4 an identity. Without this identity, Aboriginal people
5 will walk in limbo.

6 With the position that I hold now, I am
7 seeing more and more of our people, Anishinabe people,
8 Anopay(PH) people, the Iroquois people, who have
9 absolutely no cultural foundation whatsoever. They don't
10 have their language, and they need those things to exist
11 productively.

12 The cultural foundation is what is
13 needed in every single cultural background foundation in
14 a people, where we exist as humans. Humans only identify
15 us as our genetic growth, as man, woman, male, female.
16 People identify us by a culture, by a community, by a
17 family, and that's an identity. Without that, how could
18 we have inspiration, aspirations, to move in a direction
19 to become a part of a society, a general society or of
20 Canada. It's impossible to exist, for us and our people,
21 without those identities.

22 In return for establishing an identity,
23 our people would be able to be productive. Our people

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1 would be able to create employment. Our people would be
2 able to have the pride to express ourselves in the way
3 we feel would be most beneficial to a society.

4 In addressing the areas, what we need
5 is allocated funding in our urban centres to be able to
6 develop these programs. These programs would be the
7 promotion of culturally-based materials specifically for
8 the development of Aboriginal people within urban centres.

9 The healing philosophy will be based on
10 the traditional cultural value system, a system that is
11 in limbo right now. It is not lost; it is lost to many
12 of our youth, and that shows in the welfare lines; it shows
13 in the detention centres; it shows in the correctional
14 centres; and it probably shows on the river banks.

15 We need dollars to draw those people back
16 in. We need dollars to establish a networking system that
17 would bring across our Elders and bring them out,
18 recognizing them as teachers of our culture and teachers
19 of our language.

20 We need a mechanism set up -- and a lot
21 of us in the treatment field right now are looking at these
22 as the Healing Circles. These Healing Circles are not
23 a religious sector. There is a fine line between religious

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1 and ceremonies, and they don't necessarily have the same
2 practice behind each one of them.

3 Our Aboriginal society, it appears to
4 me, is confused between ceremonies and values. Ceremonies
5 that were taught to me represent an appreciation and an
6 acknowledgement of the Creator. Culture represents a way
7 of life, a teaching of value systems. In our teachings
8 we talk of the seven grandfathers. In some of those areas
9 of the seven grandfathers, in each individual teaching
10 they taught us about respecting, loving, caring, sharing,
11 wisdom, honour and humility. These are taught to us in
12 our languages, a language that doesn't bypass a word; it
13 expresses every action. It teaches us about our
14 relationships, our relationships between Nations, our
15 relationships between nature, and our relationships
16 between the Creator, and it hasn't excluded our
17 relationships between the other guardians of the four
18 corners of the world, which are the yellow men, the black
19 men and the white men.

20 These are just a few of the areas that
21 need to be addressed, and the specific funding that we
22 need to address these things and to put them into a
23 framework are the things that can't go on unattended or

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1 unattached to our culture.

2 We have made recommendations in a lot
3 of areas. Our recommendations deal with the educational
4 boards, with every agency within the framework of the urban
5 setting, whether it be with the social structure, whether
6 it be with the criminal justice system, and we always come
7 up with one final analysis and that is that we do not have
8 the funding to proceed with developing anything solid that
9 would reflect the interests of the Aboriginal people of
10 Windsor.

11 These are the areas that need to be
12 addressed, and these also are the areas where we need to
13 have a framework established in determining the funding
14 arrangements that will assist us to accomplish these goals.

15 The time span that is spent on these
16 issues is new. Our leaders are new, and this walk of life
17 is new, but it is not undefeatable. We as a people will
18 exist; we must exist, and these teachings must go.

19 In our language, when we end we say
20 Inijik(PH); in Ojibway we say Meegwetch; the English say
21 thank you -- all the same balance, all the same
22 understanding. The only difference between the languages
23 is who is dominating whom and for what reasons.

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1 This is not a begging session that I
2 bring forth. I don't expect anything for nothing. What
3 I expect is exactly what the teachings have given to me
4 and to anybody who looks for those teachings and have it
5 available to them.

6 Thank you.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
8 Would you mind if we asked you some questions?

9 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** Yes.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I will start
11 with Commissioner Chartrand.

12 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I have no
13 questions.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You said you
15 have made many recommendations on education and other
16 areas. Do you have them with you?

17 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** The one I have with me
18 right here is the 11 points of recommendations for the
19 educational system. I can have a copy made for you and
20 have it submitted, unless you want to see it now.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** That is what
22 we are after. That is the whole purpose of the event.

23 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** I will read them out.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Please do.

2 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** Board of Education's
3 policy should be developed and common definition of racism,
4 and this definition should explicitly state the
5 anti-racism policy.

6 Pull in people from different minority
7 communities for more Board of Education employees to sit
8 on Boards of Education and Race Relationships committees.

9 Names, titles, contact addresses, phone
10 numbers of Race Relationships Committee should be posted
11 and readable for all students and staff in each school.

12 Establish a mandatory system for
13 students to access when they need to file complaints about
14 racism in the schools and have it dealt with appropriately
15 in a manner set up by the Anti-Racism Relations Committee.

16 Provide an internal seminar and
17 workshops for student teachers and school staff to combat
18 racism. For a guideline on anti-racism workshop you can
19 refer to the enclosed pamphlet.

20 A racism awareness questionnaire
21 developed by the areas. We have down here by the
22 Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians and also through
23 consultations with the southern Ontario representative

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1 on anti-racism.

2 A permanent place in the school to post
3 material gleaned from the Board of Education's Anti-Racism
4 policy after it has been translated for students at all
5 levels of understanding. This will ensure that students
6 will know their rights.

7 Offer native language and native culture
8 studies courses, providing full credit for each course.

9 Native language courses should be
10 accompanied with the Native Cultural Studies curriculum.

11 Teach Native language and culture as
12 developed and implemented with consultation with a
13 professional Native to pick topics to be taught within
14 the Native Culture course, appropriately designed for each
15 grade level.

16 Implement a clearing house to review and
17 remove literature with racist content.

18 Education has two documents which help
19 identify cultural and racial bias procedures in the
20 selections of the learning resources and dealing with the
21 bases on the learning material.

22 Include a section 10 quick way to analyze
23 books for racism.

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1 Select race relations officers from each
2 area.

3 Aboriginal students should receive
4 evaluations for educational placement which are based on
5 their cultural framework as they move through the
6 institutions, to remove the stumbling blocks in the school
7 system. Ensure most educational placement testing
8 procedures are culturally bound and culturally biased.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Where would
10 the clearing house be set up? Would that be for the
11 province of Ontario? Would it be a regional clearing house
12 in this part of the country?

13 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** I don't think putting
14 a geographical title on a clearing house is what we are
15 after. I think wherever there is a call and a need for
16 a clearing house there should be a policy in place to
17 implement such a procedure, whether it be in the south
18 or in the north. It should be available openly for that
19 to take place, with funding set aside so that it can be
20 implemented.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In your
22 earlier presentation the first point you made was in
23 relation to personal and collective identity of Aboriginal

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1 people. Then, in the end, you said that the critical
2 problem was the fact that the funding was not there.

3 Could we separate it into two parts.
4 Could we deal with the first part. What can be done without
5 funding?

6 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** We should draw that
7 same question maybe to the Federation of Teachers and ask
8 them how they can teach without funding. I am sure our
9 whole educational system would break down with a question
10 like that.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** But we are
12 talking about culture. If the only way culture is going
13 to be passed is to pay people for it, there wouldn't be
14 a lot of different nationalities in the world.

15 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** North America is based
16 on the identity of the Aboriginal people. If we want to
17 learn about other cultures, maybe we should go to Africa,
18 China or to the western European countries to learn of
19 their culture. Right now our culture is the question of
20 concern.

21 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** So you don't see any
22 responsibility for parents, for instance, to pass on
23 anything to their children. They should give their

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1 children to somebody else and pay them to pass on their
2 culture. Is that what you are saying?

3 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** I am saying that with
4 each Aboriginal First Nation we should be recognized as
5 a teaching body. Each recognized teacher in the culture
6 or in the language should be recognized as exactly that,
7 as teachers in that area, not paraprofessionals. The
8 funding should reflect that ability.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Going
10 secondarily to the area of funding, where is the most
11 productive place that money should go?

12 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** Probably culture and
13 language, the two most identifiable establishments that
14 would affect long-term the mental and moral standings of
15 each individual they come across.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How should
17 that money be handled? Who should get it and who should
18 be handing it out?

19 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** I think each
20 individual First Nation represented should be the
21 self-governing body to determine the exact allocation to
22 each.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In this

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1 case, when you talk First Nation, what are you referring
2 to? There is some confusion out there, where we go to
3 a community and there is another community like it with
4 the same language next door, and they are calling
5 themselves Nations. It is not like the United Nations,
6 but --

7 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** I think what we are
8 probably both referring to is the standardization of the
9 Aboriginal languages. Each geographical area has
10 different dialects, and those dialects need to be printed
11 differently. So in each area it is almost at an emergency
12 stage where those things need to be drafted up according
13 to each First Nation.

14 We could probably establish a master
15 text under the Ojibway language, but I think I would
16 probably have about 30 Ojibway speakers coming down on
17 me because of the dialect differences.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** If you were
19 to look at this issue from a national perspective -- and,
20 in this case, when we refer to national, we are talking
21 about the country -- in relation to language and culture,
22 what would you recommend? Is there anything that should
23 be done at that level? Are there institutes to support

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1 at that level? Are there programs to support at that
2 level? What would you look at?

3 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** In my view of being
4 involved with the educational system and watching the
5 dollar flow move per capita, per student, I think if we
6 do an inquiry as to those allocations, I am sure there
7 is going to be funds that maybe shouldn't be directed on
8 a per capita basis but rather on a service delivery. You
9 will probably find that out of the estimated \$6,000 per
10 student, \$2,000 probably could be used toward establishing
11 that identity and culture rather than for special services.

12 I would estimate that 90 per cent of the
13 students that ever enter into a provincial system don't
14 need the services they are being paid in advance for.
15 Correct me if I am wrong on that.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is there
17 anything that government can do in the way of changing
18 policies, legislation or whatever that would take away
19 barriers and that doesn't require money?

20 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** Do you want to repeat
21 some of that question for me? You have addressed me with
22 about three scenarios there.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I am trying

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1 to get back to what government can do without money. The
2 reality is that there is not a hell of a lot of new dollars
3 that are going to be coming forth out there. It's going
4 to be very tough to continually go back to the pot, with
5 the concerns people have now about the deficit.

6 Obviously, we are going to have to made
7 recommendations on money because this is an area where
8 there hasn't been a lot of spending overall for a long
9 time. But, in addition to that, some of our
10 recommendations are going to have to look at what can be
11 done to remove barriers that are in the way of Aboriginal
12 people, either in changing policy, in federal legislation,
13 constitutional change, recognitions perhaps of Nations
14 having the right to govern themselves -- just taking away
15 barriers.

16 I was asking what, in your mind, could
17 be done in the way of particular actions that are not
18 necessarily just creating another funding program. Put
19 that aside for a minute. What can be done in the way of
20 removing barriers that won't require money?

21 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** Probably open up a
22 section in each agency outside there that isn't totally
23 linked to Aboriginal peoples and find out exactly what

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1 policies are implementing a funding arrangement that is
2 affecting the Aboriginal people. For instance, in the
3 judicial system the first place they would place an
4 Aboriginal person is into the hands of the representatives
5 of the agencies involved that are aboriginally instituted.

6
7 The best one I can look at right now is
8 the criminal justice system. There are allocations in
9 there that allow for training of Aboriginal people. Where
10 are the dollars coming from in that system? Or why can't
11 they be generated back into the direct hands of the
12 Aboriginal people?

13 The other direction is these
14 multiculturalism grants that are passed out -- to what
15 extent I don't know. Why not break that down again and
16 say, "We allocated this for this ethnic group or visible
17 minority." If we are placed in that category as being
18 a visible minority and the papers and the press so identify
19 us, why not allocate those dollars that go into those back
20 into the direct hands of the Aboriginal people in their
21 communities?

22 The same with the educational system.
23 When they are establishing their curriculums and they

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1 are standardizing their Education Act or revamping their
2 Education Act, why not put those dollars back into the
3 hands of the Aboriginal people rather than into an
4 educational institution within the province, whether it
5 be federal or provincial?

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is there
7 anything else you can think of?

8 **CURTIS HOPKINS:** No, I am pretty tired.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** If you can
10 think of anything else later, or if anybody else out there
11 wants to send us something by mail, please do.

12 If you have any other recommendations
13 like you have there back in Windsor, on anything -- on
14 health or on other issues which we didn't cover today --
15 send them to us. If you could make a copy of that for
16 us, that would be excellent.

17 Thank you.

18 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** We now
19 call Deborah Herman, the Co-ordinator of the Kettle Point
20 Caregivers.

21 **DEBORAH HERMAN, Co-ordinator, Kettle**
22 **Point Caregivers:** Today I would like to talk on healing.

23 In 1992 a group of women from the Kettle

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1 and Stony Point First Nation began their own healing
2 journey. We wrote down the points of what we have
3 accomplished within the last 18 months.

4 What worked for us started with the
5 community healing project. This was designed by two women
6 in our community who saw the need for a specialized program
7 to treat the different abuses. We began with a women's
8 circle of about four people and, with time, it started
9 growing to about 20 people, and it is still growing.

10 The healing initiative began with the
11 women internally. We saw the need in our own community,
12 and we knew we were the only ones that could do it.

13 In the circle we began to learn how to
14 communicate with each other. Trust was built, and we
15 started to support one another. With caring for each
16 other, friendships were being built, and those friendships
17 cannot be torn down.

18 We ran across many barriers to healing.
19 We found we had to overcome mistrust by families, by
20 friends, community members and service providers. We had
21 a lot of obstacles to overcome. We were perceived as a
22 threat to existing relationships, friendships, jobs and
23 authority. We became ostracized by both the traditional

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1 and the Christian community members who perceived new
2 treatments or healing as a threat to their own belief
3 systems.

4 We found many community leaders who have
5 the Christian faith who were threatened by the traditional
6 healing practices -- for example, the sweetgrass, the sweat
7 lodge, burning sage, our feasts, our pipe ceremonies and
8 even natural medicines we use.

9 We have also come across many
10 self-proclaimed healers who have abused or exploited
11 traditional spirituality in their own Aboriginal people.

12 There is a lack of adequate resources
13 for developments such as community-based programs,
14 resources and services.

15 We don't have a safe place in our
16 community to work from. We face a lack of commitment by
17 leaders and professionals, both from Aboriginal and
18 non-Aboriginal governments.

19 Our concept of healing is holistic and
20 includes our families. It is not just for the women.
21 It must begin with each individual, first through women
22 and then, in turn, the women can help their families to
23 heal. The children come next, then the husband, and

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1 finally the extended family.

2 Families can begin to heal relationships
3 with one another within the community, and finally it will
4 drift into our Nation's healing.

5 We found that we cannot rely on
6 government programs for funding. The funding is
7 short-term, and the criteria are too narrow. We have to
8 build from the community level with an approach that
9 directly responds to the needs of the community it serves,
10 and it begins with communications.

11 We need to develop a gentle approach to
12 healing. Healing takes time, and you cannot impose
13 healing on someone who does not want it, even though someone
14 else may see the need for it. Healing is a continuous
15 process which requires ongoing support.

16 We have been many strengths as
17 Aboriginal people, especially the women who have helped
18 us survive as Anishnabek. It would be a great dishonour
19 to our forefathers and our foremothers if we do not
20 recognize their contributions. Their strengths and their
21 many gifts have helped us survive; otherwise, we wouldn't
22 be here today.

23 Our solutions are: Remove the barriers

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1 that prevent personal, collective or community healing.

2 The healing has to be put into the hands of the women
3 first. They are the natural healers. Women are the ones
4 who give life, raise the children and care for the Elders.

5 Recognize the role of Aboriginal women
6 in the healing of their families and their communities.

7 That is my presentation.

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

10 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** No, I don't mind.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I will start
12 with Commissioner Chartrand.

13 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I would
14 like to ask you about the relationship of the ideas in
15 this Healing Circle to Anishinabe values. I have read
16 elsewhere and have been told in some places about
17 Anishinabe values of non-interference and of not burdening
18 others with one's personal problems.

19 What is the relationship of this Healing
20 Circle with this concept of traditional Anishinabe values?

21 How did this come about? Do you know something about
22 the history of the development of this Healing Circle?

23 It is a modern thing, is it?

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1 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** Healing Circles, in
2 one way or another, have always been in every community,
3 whether it is with quilting or talking. Women have always
4 been in circles.

5 Finally, we came to the decision that
6 that was the only way we could start out, by starting to
7 talk together, finding out what is in our communities,
8 and start to do something about it.

9 As for the circles, they have always been
10 there.

11 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** So the
12 Anishinabe in southern Ontario have always had these
13 healing circles.

14 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** They have always had
15 circles. You might use the word "healing," but it has
16 always been talking, sharing and caring for each other.

17 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Is there
18 literature on this? I read the History of the Ojibway
19 by William Warren, as one book where the history of the
20 Ojibway is derived from the Elders. This was written in
21 about the mid-19th century.

22 Do you have some other recommended
23 reading?

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1 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** I don't believe there
2 is too much recommended reading. Most of it has to be
3 for someone to start talking to other people and to other
4 communities. We have always had our circles. It doesn't
5 come by book; it comes by communication.

6 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** So you
7 have no particular recommendation for us to suggest to
8 the federal government, do you?

9 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** As to reading
10 material?

11 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** No,
12 generally.

13 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** One thing that could
14 be done is through Medical Services. They have all these
15 medical plans for contemporary healing, if there is drug
16 or alcohol abuse, but there is nothing for traditional
17 healing. If we want to bring a healer in from somewhere
18 else, we have to raise the money ourselves. There is
19 nothing covered in the Medical Services Plan.

20 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** What is
21 the suggestion? I am not sure I understand it.

22 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** We are suggesting that
23 you change the legislation where Medical Services is

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1 concerned to bring in traditional healers, to have their
2 transportation and accommodation paid for. That is one
3 step that could be taken.

4 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** This
5 requires a legislative change, you say?

6 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** It would require
7 something because it is not covered right now. We have
8 tried to bring people in before, and it doesn't fall under
9 their criteria.

10 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I do not
11 know; I need your advice.

12 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** That is one thing you
13 could do, change the criteria in the Medical Services
14 Department where public health is concerned.

15 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank
16 you.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I am quite
18 interested in this. This is something that we have heard
19 about in many places.

20 You say initially there was suspicion,
21 and people perceived you as a threat. Did that ever
22 change?

23 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** It is only changing

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1 now, after 18 months. People are starting to talk to us
2 and starting to ask questions. Before it was more or less
3 like a communication between us, as we were learning and
4 growing, and more or less letting the community know who
5 we were. Now, as we are starting to communicate more,
6 we have more community members coming to us and asking
7 us to help them.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I am a little
9 interested when you say that on both sides, the Christians
10 on one side and the traditionals on the other side, look
11 to you in a way of suspicion. I can understand that in
12 relation to the Christians.

13 In relation to the traditional people,
14 in this case when you refer to the traditional people,
15 are you talking about people who still use herbal
16 medicines, have medicine people amongst them, are
17 non-Christian, are pipe-carriers, Elders with a full
18 cultural background? Who are we referring to when we say
19 traditionalists in this case?

20 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** When I talk about the
21 traditional people -- and this is due to lack of
22 communication on both sides also. They didn't know what
23 we were doing, and we didn't tell them what they were doing.

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1 They believed that in the circle we were
2 doing pipe ceremonies and feasts, and so on, and we had
3 to explain that that was not what we were doing. The pipe
4 ceremony is part of our traditional healing, but we go
5 to our spiritual people for that. But due to that lack
6 of communication, those are the problems we ran into.

7 Now we are starting to work that out.
8 Our circles and our healing process would also include
9 our spiritual and traditional people. I follow that way
10 myself, but they thought I was selling my knowledge, and
11 that is something we don't do. It was just that kind of
12 not understanding.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** So what you
14 mean is that at the beginning, because there had been no
15 communication as to what you were really doing, there was
16 misunderstanding.

17 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** Yes, and now that is
18 starting to work itself out. A lot of us have been around
19 talking to a lot of people, explaining who we are and that
20 we are not a threat to our community. We are just a group
21 of people who want to see things changed.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is there a
23 network you are tying into? When you were beginning, did

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1 you read something? Did you hear something from somebody
2 else that was going on somewhere else? What did you use
3 as a source of information to provide you with the
4 foundation of what you were going to do?

5 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** We started searching
6 through other reserves and finding out what they were
7 doing, if they were doing anything at all, and finding
8 out what ideas they had and how they began. Then we had
9 to start going to our own community members to find out
10 what they needed in our own community.

11 We did communicate with a lot of other
12 reserves, and a lot of us have visited other reserves to
13 talk to other people.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I am a little
15 curious as to what you think we should recommend in this
16 area. You say: Remove the barriers. I think that is
17 generally a good idea. What are the barriers to community
18 healing that you think should be removed?

19 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** One of the main ones
20 is lack of funding, but apparently there are no funds
21 available.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Let's hear
23 your ideas. What would the funds be used for?

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1 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** Our funds would be used
2 to let people know what is going on in our community.
3 We had a workshop and we had about 30 people come out in
4 the worst blizzard of the year. They weren't aware of
5 the different abuses -- drug, alcohol, sexual. They
6 weren't aware of what is in our own community.

7 What we have to do is develop the
8 literature to put out into our community and in other
9 communities so that people are aware that a lot of their
10 lifestyles are not normal and not natural and that they
11 don't have to live that way.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You said you
13 ran across, over time, a lot of people who were going around
14 calling themselves healers and abusing the traditional
15 medicine practices, and whatever. How would you try to
16 control that? Should there be training for healers?

17 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** No, it is a gift that
18 you are given. For controlling the spiritual malpractice,
19 I guess it would be through all the Elders in each
20 community. They would know the ones who are abusing the
21 sweat lodge and abusing the medicines. It would be up
22 to all the different Elders in all the different
23 communities and provinces, both in Canada and in the

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1 States, to have a list of qualified healers and
2 non-qualified healers, and that list could be distributed
3 throughout each reserve.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I understand
5 the concept of being born with a gift to be a healer.
6 You are saying that all healers are born with the gift,
7 that there is no training involved?

8 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** There is training
9 involved in other areas. It is more or less like
10 one-on-one counselling.

11 Spiritual leaders and our healers --
12 there is some training involved, but most of it is through
13 fasting, through vision quests. It's a hard struggle once
14 you decide to take that road, but it's not something that
15 you can just go in and start learning. You can learn about
16 the different medicines and teach other people about
17 medicines, but to run the sweat lodge is something that
18 is just given to you.

19 That is why we are very leery about
20 people who come into our communities and say they are a
21 healer, and we really don't know anything about them.
22 People who are just starting to look for their ways are
23 hurt by these spiritual leaders, or healers as some of

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1 them call themselves. That is when they are right back
2 where they started from.

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

5 **DEBORAH HERMAN:** No, that's it.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
7 That was very useful.

8 We will break for a few minutes.

9 --- Short Recess at 10:40 a.m.

10 --- Upon resuming at 10:55 a.m.

11 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** Our next
12 presenters are from the Nokee Kwe Adult Education Centre.

13 We have Bernice Ireland, the President of the Board of
14 Directors, and Roly Williams, an Nokee Kwe student.

15 **BERNICE IRELAND, President of the Board**
16 **of Directors, Nokee Kwe Adult Education Centre:** Sogoey.

17 Nokee Kwe's presentation today is to offer a partial
18 solution to the education and training needs of the
19 Aboriginal adult population.

20 The increasing number of people who are
21 of working age will necessitate the creation of 5,000 new
22 jobs a year just to maintain the unacceptably low
23 employment rates that now exist amongst Aboriginal people.

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1 A major investment in training and education is required
2 to ensure that Aboriginal people have the skills and
3 abilities not only to find jobs but to stay in them and
4 to advance their careers.

5 Training and education are critical to
6 the advancement of Aboriginal people in communities.
7 Nokee Kwe has already established a strong basis to
8 continue to build a responsive, vital training and
9 education centre.

10 Nokee Kwe offers ten years of
11 accumulated experience as an Aboriginally-controlled
12 training and education institute. The success rate of
13 over 70 per cent, determined as completion, has been
14 consistently higher than mainstream institutions.

15 The foundation for Nokee Kwe programs
16 lies within the students themselves. The range and
17 appropriateness of services are developed to support the
18 following:

19 - the reinforcement of Aboriginal
20 identity and distinctiveness;

21 - the affirmation of the importance of
22 control over direction and aspirations of the lives of
23 students and their families;

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1 - the responsiveness of Nokee Kwe to the
2 needs of the students and the broader community.

3 The overall purpose of the program is
4 to provide for adult Aboriginal people who lack life
5 management skills, practical work experience and whose
6 functional literacy and numeracy skills are less than Grade
7 12 level. Nokee Kwe provides within a culturally
8 appropriate and comfortable environment the necessary
9 basis for students to access further academic upgrading,
10 work related skills training and employment.

11 The long-term objective of the program
12 is to provide Aboriginal people with the skills to actively
13 compete in the labour market by providing training that
14 addresses the educational and personal development needs
15 of the students.

16 Nokee Kwe today is an
17 Aboriginally-determined adult education centre dedicated
18 to improving the quality of life of Aboriginal people by
19 offering a community-based, culturally-sensitive approach
20 to learning and ongoing personal development.

21 To fully understand the Nokee Kwe
22 presentation today, we have to give you a brief chronology
23 of our growth and development from a small training program

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1 specifically designed for native women to an adult
2 education centre.

3 In 1977 a group of Aboriginal women began
4 sharing information about education, employment, health
5 and women's issues in a series of workshops. The
6 organization that grew out of these meetings was known
7 as the Native Women's Workshop.

8 In 1983 the Native Women's Workshop
9 incorporated as Nokee Kwe Occupational Skill Development
10 Inc. to sponsor an employment readiness training program
11 for native women, with funding from Canada Employment and
12 Immigration. Nokee Kwe is Ojibway for "working woman."

13 The early program was designed to
14 provide life skills training with some basic academic
15 upgrading. The work experience component was set in a
16 binding and laminating business. This was to meet the
17 CEIC funding criteria of the day.

18 In 1987-88 Nokee Kwe closed its doors
19 to participants and completed a Training and Employment
20 Needs Assessment survey of the Aboriginal community. This
21 extensive and comprehensive survey highlighted the need
22 for new training initiatives.

23 In response, Nokee Kwe began building

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1 on its past training experiences and redesigned the
2 curriculum to accommodate the findings of the research.

3 In October 1988 this project known as Shki Maaajtaawind,
4 Ojibwa for New Beginnings, was implemented.

5 While the impact of Nokee Kwe programs
6 on the community was clearly positive, it was apparent
7 that there were still many and very significant unmet
8 needs.

9 In 1990 Nokee Kwe Board of Directors
10 responded to the community and expanded its mandate to
11 develop programs incorporating and recognizing the needs
12 of Aboriginal families. In 1991 the federal government
13 required a full evaluation of the Shki Maaajtaawind project
14 by external evaluators. Significant finds from the
15 evaluation were:

16 1. That Nokee Kwe was in a position to
17 begin to look beyond its current model of service;

18 2. That the duration of the training
19 period for the students should be expanded in order for
20 skills upgrading to reach a level where they can become
21 self-sufficient;

22 3. That the Aboriginal historical and
23 cultural identity be given a more prominent place in the

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1 curriculum of Nokee Kwe;

2 4. That Nokee Kwe seek to expand its
3 funding base to include other federal and provincial
4 jurisdictions.

5 In September 1991 Nokee Kwe began
6 implementing an expanded program, which we continue to
7 operate today, to address the recommendations. This meant
8 an expansion of staff, curriculum development, an
9 increased intake of Aboriginal women and, most important,
10 opening the doors to men for the first time.

11 When we canvassed the community for
12 potential applicants for the 30 seats available, 240 people
13 applied with over 180 people attending an information
14 session.

15 Although Nokee Kwe programs were
16 over-subscribed and popular, the constraints on developing
17 relevant and responsive programming for Aboriginal adults
18 lay with the eligibility criteria and program limits
19 imposed by funders.

20 For example, under the criteria imposed
21 by the program funded by CEIC, the following were found
22 to be major constraints:

23 First, the time limit of 26 weeks for

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1 completion of the program was inadequate to overcome
2 academic, social and cultural barriers to employment.

3 Second, the narrow scope of activities
4 supported by the funding severely compromised the
5 long-term impact on students. Important barriers such
6 as low literacy and numeracy rates were not supported.

7 It was decided that a pilot model of
8 service delivery be developed and implemented for one year
9 to test the findings of the evaluation, investigate
10 curriculum needs, seek out funding sources, and develop
11 and strengthen community linkages.

12 By piloting curriculum changes,
13 reflecting on staff experiences, critically examining
14 administration requirements, soliciting community support
15 and strengthening community linkages and requests for
16 programming, Nokee Kwe was ready to embark on the planning
17 necessary for a full implementation of what is termed the
18 Adult Education Centre.

19 Nokee Kwe Adult Education Centre's
20 expanded services was also based on the analysis of program
21 priorities identified in "Pathways to Success" policy,
22 specifically, Principle No. 2 which speaks to the building
23 and expansion of Aboriginal infrastructures.

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1 Aboriginal learners have fundamentally
2 different academic needs from mainstream learners.
3 Top-down teaching methods are inappropriate. Rather, a
4 "Learner Centred" approach creates an opportunity to focus
5 on the learner's immediate needs and specific
6 requirements. This Learner Centred approach enables
7 people to overcome the social, economic and educational
8 barriers in their lives.

9 The advantage of implementing this
10 method is that it extends beyond the immediate
11 instructional setting to embrace improvements at the
12 individual, community and societal levels.

13 Helping people learn to critically
14 analyze their environment also helps them gain the
15 decision-making capabilities that are needed to create
16 positive change in their lives and in their communities.

17 That is my presentation. I would like
18 to pass it on to Roly, a student at Nokee Kwe.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
20 Please go ahead.

21 **ROLY WILLIAMS, Student, Nokee Kwe Adult**
22 **Education Centre:** My name is Roly Williams, and I am
23 presenting this on behalf of the Nokee Kwe students.

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1 and young children as well.

2 A person can turn a blind eye and deaf
3 ear for so long before there is violence. This is what
4 happened to me after being taunted for so long, and the
5 teachers at the school I went to would blame me. The
6 teachers would not listen to my side of the story because
7 it was usually me who threw the first punch. The teachers
8 didn't want to hear about me getting called "dirty Indian",
9 "drunken Indian", "squaw lover" and whatever else the kids
10 could think of.

11 Sometimes I still wonder if the teachers
12 had something against me or if it was against me being
13 Native. I guess I will never know, but it was surprising
14 to see how ignorant teachers were toward Indians and their
15 ways, which is why I believe that teachers and anyone else
16 who work with children should take cultural sensitivity
17 workshops because of all the different ethnic groups they
18 work with. This would hopefully break down stereotypes
19 about us and help them relearn what they learned about
20 us in biased history books and John Wayne movies which
21 portrayed us as savages.

22 We are not savages like some have been
23 led to believe. Our land was taken, promises were broken,

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1 and our people were killed, and our children were stolen
2 from their homes to be taken to schools far away. At
3 these schools they were robbed of their heritage, they
4 were beaten for speaking their own language, their
5 innocence was stolen when they were sexually molested at
6 these schools, and they were made to learn a religion that
7 was not their own. We were even led to believe that it
8 was bad to be an Indian.

9 We have had to endure so much since
10 Columbus landed here 500 years ago; yet, we still have
11 to endure a lot, but still we survive and we will continue
12 to survive. Our language is still alive as well as our
13 culture, and we are very proud to be Indian.

14 I cannot begin to put down in words the
15 way I feel about the issues concerning Native people.
16 It makes me angry, hurt and sometimes resentful toward
17 non-Natives and Native people to see them abusing the
18 system and also how the system abuses them.

19 Before I can even suggest anything to
20 help our Native people in the future, I know I need to
21 know not just about me as a Native person but about the
22 history of my ancestors as well. My culture was stolen
23 from me and many other Native people. In the schools we

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1 attended we never had a chance to learn about the history
2 of our people.

3 We believe that for Native people to make
4 it in the world today they must learn about their ancestors
5 and about themselves.

6 In order for us to heal or to start
7 healing, be it mental, emotional, physical or spiritual,
8 we have to acknowledge that this can only be done if we
9 want it individually. We believe healing starts in the
10 inner core of a person and, as this healing is going on,
11 it grows throughout the whole being.

12 Once a person realizes a healing process
13 is needed, there are different methods of healing. There
14 is the sweetgrass burning and sweat lodges formed to help
15 with healing, in a way of cleansing and healing the soul.

16 Many Natives do not know much of these
17 ceremonies. We need to learn our traditional teachings,
18 whether it is for a Native person raised in the culture
19 or is adopted out, we feel it is important to know our
20 heritage in order to preserve and keep our culture intact.

21 We need to have these teachings in our education system
22 just as we have our Native language program.

23 Healthy individuals create healthy

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1 communities. Self-determination only begins in each of
2 us first and then out to the community.

3 Indian government should utilize
4 existing longstanding organizations as much as possible,
5 reorganizing and modifying them into accountable
6 government models.

7 Canada is not going to disappear. We
8 must find a realistic way of working within a larger
9 national framework. With our patience and determination
10 to follow a common goal, we can find a way to both attain
11 our dream of finding our own destiny and also work in a
12 productive way with the federal government.

13 All First Nations are considerably
14 fractionalized. We must all agree in principle and
15 develop a common goal. Local governments should be run
16 according to tradition, once we have all re-learned our
17 traditional systems. Care must be taken not to undermine
18 opponents, but to include the entire community in our
19 building. This grassroots level approach should satisfy
20 local governing needs.

21 As different Nations, we have all come
22 to need different things. But, as a whole, on the basis
23 of our history with the larger society, we have all shared

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1 the same experiences, felt the same pain and lost the same
2 things. We must agree to put away our internal quarrels
3 and show the country and the world a united front.

4 This process is going to take a long
5 time. Both the Government of Canada and the First Nations
6 of Canada must be patient. We particularly must be
7 patient. The Government of Canada has consistently and
8 historically put their power ahead of their patience.

9 It is ironic that they must try to fix
10 their mistakes caused by impatience and greed with patience
11 and goodwill, which is incidentally often preached but
12 rarely practised.

13 We have researched the following
14 criteria for Aboriginal self-government and support the
15 following:

16 - Mechanisms to ensure the inherent
17 right to self-government for all Aboriginal peoples,
18 including status, non-status and Métis peoples;

19 - Define what inherency means in a way
20 that will satisfy all levels of government. The federal
21 and provincial governments currently are reluctant to use
22 the term "inherent" without any parameters and are seeking
23 an amendment that ensures it will not be used for

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1 sovereignty or unilateral determination of powers;

2 - Design a model that will show how the
3 First Nations can govern themselves from a grassroots level
4 up to the national level while including Canada in the
5 formula by operating as an eleventh province;

6 - Identify what Aboriginal people
7 actually want in their future and their children's future
8 as far as the issue of self-government is concerned;

9 - Mechanisms to hand over jurisdictional
10 control of revenues from resources on land bases, thereby
11 freeing the government of massive expenditures by pooling
12 of resources and consolidations of communities;

13 - Make compensation to the Métis for
14 injustices done to them during their Red River days. This
15 settlement would allow them to restructure on their own
16 land base and realize their own destiny;

17 - We have dealt with the source of the
18 right and what shape it should take. The "scope" should
19 be treated with the same spirit of co-operation with the
20 Canadian government;

21 - "Uncircumscribed" insofar as having
22 Aboriginal people control their own day-to-day lives,
23 realize their own self-sufficiency, control of health and

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1 social programs, pursuit of land claims and historic
2 exploitation settlements, and a voice in the United
3 Nations;

4 - "Circumscribed" in the context that
5 we will be treated in an equal way by giving Native
6 government a provincial status, bound by the Criminal Code
7 and curtailed by the same constraints faced by the other
8 ten provincial governments, while maintaining a strong
9 national tie with the federal government;

10 - "Status" should be straightforward,
11 but is currently ambiguous. Certainly, by all ethical
12 and moral standards, we should be able to legislate within
13 a certain sphere of influence comparable to that held by
14 provincial legislatures face to face with Parliament. If
15 it is equality we truly desire, then these limits should
16 be logical;

17 - As much as possible, we must avoid the
18 federal courts while pursuing the issues of land claims.
19 The courts are a power-oriented arm of the Canadian
20 government and will deny justice in favour of the
21 consolidation and protection of First Nations Big Brother;

22 - If court action must be taken to avoid
23 Canada being "judge, jury, advocate, prosecutor and

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1 defendant," we must take our prepared cases to the World
2 Court in the Hague, nation to nation;

3 - Also establish international forums
4 or commissions to arbitrate land claim settlements. If
5 Canada is afraid of losing ground, this will only prove
6 that outside the sphere of their influence their position
7 is undefendable.

8 If we are to take control of our social
9 programs, will we build our own, and what shape will they
10 take, or are we just replacing white faces with brown faces?

11 We could not hope to cover all aspects,
12 responsibilities and facets of what final shape Aboriginal
13 self-government would take. What we are providing is a
14 logical, common-sense framework upon which to build the
15 dream which was once reality.

16 Thank you. Meegwetch.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
18 both for your presentations.

19 I will ask Commissioner Chartrand to
20 start the questions.

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

23 Mr. Williams, I must say I am surprised

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1 by this paper that you have just read to us. The ideas
2 in it generally, in my view, far exceed those that we
3 generally receive. It contains quite a number of
4 suggestions that, in my assessment, are very, very sound.

5 I want to begin by congratulating you on the work that
6 you have done. It is indeed a very impressive work.

7 I note particularly, among the many
8 concrete suggestions that you make, the recommendation
9 with respect to self-government. You have done your
10 homework, and you have been able to distinguish between
11 local community needs. You have been able to demonstrate
12 that you understand the reason for the establishment of
13 local governmental structures to look after local matters
14 and, at the same time, you demonstrate that you see the
15 need for a national voice for Aboriginal people as well.

16 Not only that, but you have made a
17 proposal, that of an Aboriginal province, which is one
18 that is consistent with the constitutional structures of
19 Canada. The idea does no violence either to the
20 constitutional theories of Canada or to the federal
21 structure of Canada. Indeed, it is a most impressive work.

22 With respect to your earlier comments
23 about racism, I take particular note of that as well.

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1 Aboriginal people across Canada can attest to the racism
2 of the sort that you have described to us today. Indeed,
3 it is behaviour of the sort that brings shame upon Canada.

4 I note your references to history and
5 the need for people to appreciate their history, the need
6 for the school systems to change so as to incorporate the
7 history of the Aboriginal people, and you demonstrate the
8 importance of that in cementing the identity, personal
9 and collective, of Aboriginal peoples. It is my hope that
10 this Commission can assist in some way in furthering
11 developments such as these.

12 I have no particular questions because
13 your points are made with great clarity. I only want to
14 congratulate you for this work, and I wish you well.

15 When we look at this Commission and the
16 sorts of thing that it can possibly do -- that is, to make
17 recommendations to the federal government about its
18 policies, I think we have to look toward the future. These
19 things take time.

20 With the help of suggestions such as
21 yours, I hope we can offer some recommendations that can
22 help to change things so that the younger people, like
23 yourself and younger still, can look forward to a better

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1 day in Canada where, with some enlightenment and with
2 institutional change of the sort you are recommending,
3 things can get on much better for the Aboriginal people
4 of this country.

5 Again, thank you very much. Meegwetch.

6 **ROLY WILLIAMS:** It was not only myself;
7 it was also other Nokee Kwe students that helped put this
8 together.

9 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** You had
10 some help from your other classmates to work on this.
11 Please convey to them as well my congratulations. This
12 paper will indeed receive serious consideration by this
13 Commission.

14 Thank you.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I want to
16 start by adding that I also found this a very, very
17 productive document. It spent a little time giving us
18 background and then went directly into the kinds of thing
19 that we are looking for.

20 We should have considered hiring you in
21 talking to the people that were going to present to us
22 across the country. This is very much the kind of thing
23 that we are actually trying to get from people. It is

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1 most, most useful.

2 I have a couple of questions.

3 Bernice, in your presentation you talk
4 about the time limit of 26 weeks for completion of the
5 programs not being adequate. We have heard this before
6 from other training centres. You also say that there is
7 equally a problem with the narrow scope of activities that
8 are funded.

9 Then you went on to say that you had a
10 pilot project with a pilot curriculum. Could you tell
11 us a bit more about, first, the problems with the 26 weeks
12 and the narrow scope of activity and then, once you have
13 done that, tell us a bit more about this pilot project
14 that you have. What is the difference in it?

15 Let's start with the problems of the 26
16 weeks.

17 **BERNICE IRELAND:** You have posed a
18 three-part question. I don't really feel I can answer
19 it as adequately as the Executive Director of Nokee Kwe
20 could.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do your
22 best.

23 **BERNICE IRELAND:** What is the first part

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1 of your question?

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Just tell us
3 what the problems are with the 26-week program.

4 **BERNICE IRELAND:** In the 26-week
5 program there isn't enough upgrading competency level with
6 skill development. There isn't enough self-esteem
7 building, and there isn't enough awareness of what they
8 need out in the community, both the Aboriginal community
9 plus the non-Native community to be self-sufficient with
10 26 weeks. A longer program makes them more fully qualified
11 to go out and pursue higher educational needs.

12 That is the major portion.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Maybe you
14 could answer it in a different way. Let's say I am one
15 of your students. I have come in and I have Grade 10,
16 and I would like to somehow, through your program, walk
17 away with Grade 12.

18 Do I have to do that within 26 weeks,
19 or can I do Grade 11 in 26 weeks and come back and do another
20 grade in another 26 weeks?

21 **BERNICE IRELAND:** It is not limited to
22 26 weeks. You can come in and complete the programs and
23 if, for some reason you have to drop out, you are allowed

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1 to come back in and raise your level of competency in any
2 of the programs that are offered by Nokee Kwe. If you
3 can't complete Grade 10, for whatever reason, you can come
4 in and complete it within another semester, or however
5 long it takes, so you can meet the requirements.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You have
7 just confused me.

8 **BERNICE IRELAND:** That's good.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** If I can keep
10 coming back, if the first 26 weeks didn't solve the problem
11 for me and I need another program and you will let me do
12 that, and then I have Grade 11 and now I want to move on
13 to Grade 12 and I can join your third program. If I can
14 keep coming back until I get what I want, what's the
15 problem?

16 **BERNICE IRELAND:** The problem is that,
17 to be able to do this, a lot of times we don't have an
18 economic base for the students to do that.

19 Some of the students that come in because
20 they want an education come in on social assistance and
21 they do the program, or sometimes they come in on some
22 grants from the government to be able to do the education,
23 or sometimes they are on unemployment. That is part of

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1 how they are able to stay in that.

2 As you know, you have to have bread and
3 butter on your table and to be thinking about the other
4 needs you have as well.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Perhaps your
6 Centre can send us any additional information you want
7 to add on that.

8 The second part is the narrow scope of
9 activities that are supported by the funding. What
10 exactly do you mean by that? Are there only certain
11 subjects you can teach?

12 **BERNICE IRELAND:** For the funding I
13 think there are certain criteria that have to be met.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** To get into
15 the program?

16 **BERNICE IRELAND:** No. We are
17 accredited through Fanshawe College, and they have certain
18 requirements for the programs that we are presenting.
19 We don't have some of the program requirements to be able
20 to obtain a Grade 12 level, where we are at now. We need
21 some programming in the area of possibly science so that
22 we can meet the criteria they have to give the students
23 a Grade 12 accreditation.

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1 We are lacking in the area of
2 programming.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What is
4 stopping you from adding that extra program?

5 **BERNICE IRELAND:** I think it is lack of
6 funding, the thing that everyone else is saying. There
7 are a lot of different programs that we are looking into,
8 or we have written proposals to Health and Welfare, CEIC,
9 the Ontario Job Training Skills Development, Literacy
10 Programs -- different things like that. We are trying
11 harder to meet the needs of the students as well as the
12 requirements to be able to accredit the students up to
13 Grade 12.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Maybe we can
15 go to your pilot curriculum changes. You brought in men.
16 You changed your curriculum.

17 Did you find it was more successful?

18 **BERNICE IRELAND:** Yes. It was limited
19 to women, and that was successful, but we were finding
20 that a lot of times women needed to bring their partners
21 along with them, or to bring the men in the community along
22 with the women. It wasn't good for families. Sometimes
23 things happen when a woman starts getting an education.

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1 There is a lot of arguments. The male feels she is leaving
2 him behind.

3 The dynamics in the home structure
4 change once someone starts getting an education. Because
5 of the problems the women were experiencing, we were trying
6 to open it up to men, too, so that they could also access
7 Nokee Kwe, because they weren't quite ready for college
8 and some of them didn't even have a high school education.

9 We were trying to bridge that gap in there for adults
10 to obtain the education they needed.

11 As well, we had looked at the communities
12 where we have a lot of traditional people. Traditional
13 people have been seasonal people who work crops whenever
14 they are in season, and those types of thing. We were
15 hoping that sometime in the future -- a vision we had was
16 that these people -- these couples like to work together
17 -- could somehow opt into the educational facilities that
18 are out there. We could bring them up to a Grade 12 level
19 and then help them to go on by helping them to obtain their
20 skills. They might want to be janitors in a building.
21 A couple might want to do that because they like to work
22 together.

23 We were trying to make it more feasible

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1 for them to be able to do activities where they could earn
2 an income and still be together the way they had been
3 traditionally, working side by side. It is not limited
4 to that, but we were trying to open it up a bit more.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** The pilot
6 curriculum and project, is that now going to be funded
7 on a continuing basis, or do you still have short-term
8 funding? In fact, you have experienced a cutback.

9 **BERNICE IRELAND:** Right.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Can you tell
11 us about the cutback? Were there certain places taken
12 away?

13 **BERNICE IRELAND:** I think I will let
14 Lucille answer this one, if you don't mind.

15 **LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** Presently Nokee Kwe
16 is caught in the devolution of what federal and provincial
17 governments are calling Indian government today. It is
18 not true Indian government because our communities have
19 no control over the policies, only the administrative
20 dollars.

21 All of the funding for adult education
22 and for training has been capped. The money has been cut
23 back. Adult education in particular, under Indian

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1 Affairs, is not a priority any more.

2 That is what we are caught in. We have
3 taken a 90 per cent cut in our operating budget this year
4 under the Pathways to Success program, under CEIC.

5 We have been negotiating with the
6 provincial government in Ontario, but there is no funding
7 available for Indian-controlled institutes. The only
8 money available for adult education in the province of
9 Ontario historically goes to Boards of Education and
10 community colleges. Because we are not recognized as
11 either of those, we cannot gain access to that funding.

12 The paper that Mr. Williams presented
13 this morning -- Mr. Williams has been a student at Nokee
14 Kwe since September. He has been in our Native Studies
15 course, in our Native Family course and in Cultural
16 Enrichment. In our Native Family course he has studied
17 the historical governing systems with the rest of our
18 students.

19 The paper that he presented this morning
20 is a combination of all the students working together.
21 That kind of work is going to be lost to our Aboriginal
22 community if Nokee Kwe shuts down.

23 Our only alternative at this point is

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1 to turn Nokee Kwe into a business or a private school where
2 Mr. Williams, for instance, before he could come to Nokee
3 Kwe, would have to identify his own funding. That is going
4 to close the door to a valuable training centre to a lot
5 of Aboriginal people in the community.

6 Our current program, by the way, Mr.
7 Erasmus, is 40 weeks long. It is done in three semesters.
8 We can take people from literacy level to a Grade 12 in
9 math and English.

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

11 When you say in your presentation,
12 Bernice, in your second point, that you need the creation
13 of 5,000 new jobs a year, were you referring to this part
14 of Ontario, to Ontario, or to Canada?

15 **BERNICE IRELAND:** I think that is on a
16 national level. I don't think we could create 5,000 jobs
17 just in Ontario, just for Aboriginal peoples.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What are you
19 using as a source of data?

20 **BERNICE IRELAND:** The Native population
21 statistics, Aboriginal population statistics.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What level
23 of employment are you trying to reach?

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1 **BERNICE IRELAND:** Level of employment?

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** We are told
3 that structurally there is 70 per cent of the Aboriginal
4 work force unemployed at the moment. Taking whatever
5 information you want, in the last census there were over
6 a million people who identified themselves as having
7 Aboriginal ancestry, and somewhere between 600,000 and
8 700,000 of those identified themselves as Aboriginal
9 people.

10 If you consider that half of them perhaps
11 are of work force age, you are talking 300,000 people.
12 If you say that 70 per cent of them are unemployed, you
13 have a very, very small work force that is actually
14 employed.

15 I am just wondering, out of that, you
16 are talking about a couple of hundred thousand people
17 unemployed that could be in the work force. The population
18 is very young, so I suspect that more than 5,000 a year
19 are reaching employable age.

20 Do you think that is national? I think
21 it would be more for Ontario, really -- maybe even less
22 than is necessary for Ontario.

23 **BERNICE IRELAND:** Did you want me to

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1 respond to that?

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I was just
3 wondering why 5,000, what point you were trying to make.
4 Were you just trying to make the point that there has
5 to be a lot of new jobs?

6 **BERNICE IRELAND:** No, just to maintain
7 the unacceptably low employment rates that now exist among
8 the Aboriginal peoples.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Okay. I
10 didn't see that second part. Just to keep the low level
11 of employment, you need 5,000 new jobs. That's an
12 interesting point. It's my fault; I didn't see the second
13 part.

14 I am sure you have more information back
15 at your Centre. If you could provide us with more detail
16 on things like what you call a Learner's Centred approach
17 and more information on what the Centre has done in the
18 past, the kinds of program and how long you have been in
19 existence and what your aspirations are for the future,
20 it would really assist us. Outside of that, I don't think
21 I have any more questions.

22 I would like to thank you both for coming
23 forward. They were both excellent presentations.

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1 Certainly the views from the students prove that you are
2 doing very good work. I hope you have a long future.

3 Thank you.

4 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** We would
5 like to call now Donna Sears from the Atenlos Women's Group.

6 **DONNA SEARS, Atenlos Women's Group:** My
7 name is Donna Sears, and I am here instead of Kim Gould
8 who was unable to be here today. So I am going to read
9 her presentation.

10 Violence and abuse in Aboriginal
11 communities has reached epidemic proportions. This
12 violence takes a number of forms. Sometimes it involves
13 physical assaults between adult males, but more often and,
14 more disturbing to me, it involves the victimization of
15 the least powerful members of the communities, women and
16 children.

17 Sexual and physical abuse is no less than
18 the absolute disrespect of a human being.

19 Lack of aftercare/outreach services for
20 First Nations youth and children in the area of family
21 violence and social issues -- this is aftercare staffed
22 and managed by First Nations people. Only non-Native
23 services are available now in our communities for the most

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1 part, and can they really serve First Nations people
2 effectively?

3 Severe lack of programming for First
4 Nations men and children in assisting them to deal
5 effectively with their issues. Prevention can only begin
6 with education and awareness.

7 A centre for First Nations youth where
8 they can go to experience and learn teachings of language
9 and culture. The lack of identifying and no sense of
10 belonging contributes to the intensity and high degree
11 of social problems for First Nations people. So much is
12 caused because of the initial lack of self-esteem.

13 A group home specifically for First
14 Nations youth involved in the court systems. High numbers
15 of our youth are incarcerated and then forgotten.

16 There is a severe need for an all- First
17 Nations health service for family counselling, birth
18 control, individual counselling. Every type of health
19 service available is a non-Native health unit.

20 First Nations women must share an equal
21 number of seats at decision-making tables. Also, youth
22 delegates must be appointed, female and male. The razing
23 of First Nations societies and our traditions is

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1 well-documented. Symptoms of this dislocation are
2 evident in high rates of unemployment, suicide,
3 alcoholism, domestic violence and other social problems.
4 This loss of tradition has seriously damaged the oral
5 means of preserving cultural norms, and the values which
6 prohibit deviant behaviours have been obscured and often
7 forgotten.

8 If we appear reluctant to adopt white
9 solutions to problems that stem from the latter's apparent
10 destruction of their own societies, then so be it.

11 Writing new history, destroying the
12 stereotypes which demean Aboriginal women. School
13 textbooks portray Aboriginal women as ill-treated at the
14 hands of Aboriginal men, almost as beasts of burden. These
15 images are more than symbolic; they have helped to
16 facilitate the physical and sexual abuse of Aboriginal
17 women in contemporary society.

18 The portrayal of the squaw is one of the
19 most degrading, most despised and most dehumanizing
20 anywhere in the world. The squaw is the female counterpart
21 of the Indian male savage and, as such, she has no human
22 face. She is lustful, immoral, unfeeling and dirty. It
23 is this grotesque dehumanization that has rendered all

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1 Native women and girls vulnerable to gross physical,
2 psychological and sexual violence.

3 I believe there is a direct relationship
4 between these horrible racist, sexist stereotypes and
5 violence against Native women and girls.

6 I believe, for example, that Helen Betty
7 Osborne was murdered in 1972 by four young men because
8 these youths grew up with twisted notions of Indian girls
9 as squaws. Racist and sexist stereotypes not only hurt
10 Aboriginal women and their sense of self-esteem, but
11 actually encourage abuse, both by Aboriginal men and
12 others. Our family violence programs attempt to help both
13 victims and offenders to see beyond the stereotypes.

14 We see a healing lodge to address the
15 multigenerational dysfunctions, staffed by Elders from
16 all Nations.

17 Second-stage housing for our women and
18 from the shelter.

19 Eight out of ten Native women experience
20 verbal, emotional, mental or spiritual abuse. After one
21 year in which the shelter has been open, we realize the
22 dire need for second-stage housing. There is not enough
23 time to obtain housing in a six-week stay. Women need

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1 to deal with anger management, self-esteem building,
2 parenting, lifeskills development, literacy programs and
3 education.

4 Accessibility to the above for a minimum
5 of one year so that women can deal with their issues.

6 We consider societal attitudes to be an
7 issue that this Commission must address. There is a
8 perception among women's groups, both Aboriginal and
9 non-Aboriginal, that abuse of Aboriginal women is more
10 acceptable to the courts than abuse of non-Aboriginal
11 women. While I do not subscribe to the view that there
12 is differential treatment, I am disturbed enough by the
13 perception to suggest that it needs to be addressed.

14 At the heart of the problem is the belief
15 that, fundamentally, justice authorities do not understand
16 and do not wish to understand the unique issues facing
17 Aboriginal women.

18 In order to address the underlying
19 problems that give rise to these perceptions, public
20 generally and those within the justice system specifically
21 need to be educated about all of these issues by First
22 Nations women.

23 It is clear that First Nations women must

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1 play central roles in the development and delivery of these
2 programs.

3 We would recommend that Aboriginal
4 leaders establish a local government portfolio for women
5 and children, with responsibility to develop educational
6 and support programs in the area of spousal and child abuse.

7 Thank you.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
9 for your presentation. Do you mind if we ask you some
10 questions? You are presenting this for someone else.

11 **DONNA SEARS:** Yes, I am.

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

14 **DONNA SEARS:** I will do the best I can.

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

16 We will start with Commissioner Chartrand.

17 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
18 for your presentation.

19 The name of the group, what does it mean?

20 **DONNA SEARS:** Atenlos is Oneida for
21 "friends."

22 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I have
23 two or three questions, if you don't mind.

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1 On page 2 you say that First Nations
2 women must share an equal number of seats at
3 decision-making tables. I suppose that includes any
4 proposals for self-government.

5 I wonder if you would like to explain
6 the reasoning behind that proposal. I note that this would
7 probably be a first -- at least, you can inform me if you
8 know where there is a model somewhere in the world where
9 there is equality between men and women in a parliament.
10 I know that in the Canadian Parliament there is no such
11 thing.

12 Many people are motivated by the idea
13 that there are other factors than sex which are essential
14 in determining who ought to make public policy decisions.
15 You are just throwing in one possibility with your
16 suggestion.

17 If it was thought that the most capable
18 people ought to be there and if it happened that all the
19 most capable people in one community were women, then,
20 by your suggestion, you would eliminate the possibility.

21 I wonder if you could explain the
22 reasoning for the suggestion of 50/50.

23 **DONNA SEARS:** You are right. I don't

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1 know of another model where that is in play. I think it
2 is important that women taken their place in society and
3 be side by side with the male, especially in formulating
4 self-government, that we be heard.

5 Bernice works with us at the same agency.

6 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Did you
7 wish to discuss the question?

8 **BERNICE IRELAND:** If you don't mind.

9 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Please
10 do.

11 **BERNICE IRELAND:** I think when she was
12 saying equal representation, she wasn't saying that there
13 should be an equal number of women in any governmental
14 meeting. What she is saying is that, according to some
15 Native societies, they are matrilineal. So within the
16 decision-making, the women make their decisions and they
17 send the decisions they want for their communities with
18 the men and, in that way, we are getting equal
19 representation. But we have to make sure that our
20 representatives are at the table.

21 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** You are
22 taking back this equal number of seats then? I am reading
23 from your paper at page 2.

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1 **BERNICE IRELAND:** I don't think that is
2 what they had intended.

3 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank
4 you. At page 3, can you assist me with some technical
5 language. About 40 per cent of the way down the page,
6 there is a statement there that I don't understand.

7 There is a reference to a healing
8 lodge to address multigenerational dysfunction. What
9 might that be?

10 **DONNA SEARS:** Because we are looking at
11 a healing lodge --

12 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** What is
13 that?

14 **DONNA SEARS:** What is the healing lodge?

15 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** No, no.

16 **DONNA SEARS:** The multigenerational --

17 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Yes.

18 What is that?

19 **DONNA SEARS:** My interpretation is that
20 the violence is certainly generational. We see that
21 because we deal with it on a regular basis. It carries
22 on to the next generation.

23 Our goal is to have a generation that

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1 will be free of the dysfunctions that have happened in
2 our societies.

3 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** What is
4 that? That is the word I don't understand, dysfunction.

5 **DONNA SEARS:** The dysfunction would be
6 violence.

7 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Why do
8 you not say "violence?" It must be a term of art, and
9 I am wondering what it means.

10 **BERNICE IRELAND:** Maybe I could
11 respond.

12 Multigenerational dysfunction means
13 that, from the time of contact of the European people with
14 Native peoples, there has been a destructive element in
15 the Native community that we are still dealing with today.

16 There has been a breakdown in our social organizations
17 and in the way we run our communities. There has been
18 a lot of oppression of our peoples; there has been a lot
19 of ethnostress; there has been a lot of alcoholism. There
20 are people recuperating from the residential school
21 syndrome. There is a lot of self-hate. There is a lot
22 of rebuilding that has to go on.

23 When we are talking about

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1 multigenerational dysfunction, we are talking about
2 families who don't operate in what is considered a healthy
3 way. Family violence is one of the dysfunctional ways
4 that families have learned to deal with the problems in
5 their homes.

6 It has become the norm. It has been
7 there so long that we almost don't realize what is normal.
8 We have women who put up with a lot of violence in their
9 lives simply because "My mother had it done to her, and
10 it's okay. I don't know that it's any different, and I
11 am not really expecting too much out of my life, either.
12 It's not too much different."

13 What we are saying is that this
14 dysfunction has to be stopped by providing healing lodges,
15 by providing places of safety for women and children, by
16 looking at programming for men so that they can deal with
17 the problems they have in their lives, anger management
18 being one of the primary programs that are needed for men,
19 and by looking at programming for children, to help them
20 to deal with the violence that is in their lives.

21 The statistics that we have generated
22 from Needs Assessment show that eight out of ten Native
23 families are suffering some form of abuse within their

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1 family. So we are talking a high rate of dysfunction
2 within the Native family.

3 These programs that we are talking about
4 are ways that we are trying to address the issue of violence
5 in the Native family. We know it is a learned behaviour;
6 therefore, we know that it can also be unlearned.

7 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
8 for the explanation of the word "dysfunction." My own
9 view is that it hides rather than exposes the meaning,
10 but you have done a good job of explaining it. I will
11 do my best to see that it doesn't appear in our final report.

12 One more question, if I may. On the last
13 page you refer to a belief, which is a very serious one.
14 You say that the justice authorities do not wish to
15 understand the unique issues facing Aboriginal women.
16 I wonder if you might explain that view. It's a rather
17 serious allegation.

18 May I ask a specific question as well.
19 Are you aware of the present programs that judges have
20 with respect to learning about Aboriginal people's issues,
21 and are you satisfied with them? Do you have specific
22 criticisms of these particular programs, or do you have
23 specific recommendations to make? It is a serious

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1 allegation, and it would be good if you would be able to
2 assist us by making some direct recommendations as to what
3 could be done to assist the problem. I wonder if you
4 might give us a fuller explanation of the problem.

5 **BERNICE IRELAND:** I am just trying to
6 think where the writer was coming from. Perhaps you could
7 give us a second.

8 I think it refers to the statement
9 farther down on page 3: "There is a perception among
10 women's groups, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, that
11 abuse of Aboriginal women is more acceptable to the courts
12 than abuse of non-Aboriginal women. While I do not
13 subscribe to the view that there is differential treatment,
14 I am disturbed enough by the perception to suggest that
15 it needs to be addressed."

16 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** The paper
17 is saying there is not a subscription to the view that
18 there is a differential treatment. There is no
19 difference.

20 **DONNA SEARS:** She suggested that she did
21 not see a differential treatment, but the fact that there
22 is that thought out in the community needs to be addressed.
23 If there are people saying that, then we need to look

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1 at it and see if there is truth based in it.

2 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** What do
3 we recommend to the federal government?

4 **DONNA SEARS:** Again, it comes back to
5 the education around the legal system and how it deals
6 with our Native people, specifically Native women in the
7 court systems.

8 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** You are
9 referring to the Law School curriculum now?

10 **DONNA SEARS:** Partly, yes. I am
11 looking as well at the division of property, property
12 settlements on reserves. How does that affect Native
13 women when a family separates? Those are the sorts of
14 issues that we have discussed, as well as the stalking
15 and the harassment of Native women and how that interprets
16 into the legal system. A lot of women do not feel
17 protection from the courts when that is happening because
18 it doesn't fit within the legal terminology.

19 You have to have proof. You can't just
20 call the police. If the man is sitting outside the
21 property and you call the police, they just say, "How is
22 he harassing you by sitting there?"

23 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** What

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1 recommendation do you have?

2 **DONNA SEARS:** To look at those laws, to
3 look at the laws around --

4 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** What
5 laws?

6 **DONNA SEARS:** Protection for women from
7 partners harassing.

8 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** It is
9 fine to look at them, but then what?

10 **DONNA SEARS:** And to change them with
11 input from the community.

12 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Which
13 community?

14 **DONNA SEARS:** From the community that
15 works with family violence, women's issues.

16 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** How
17 should this be done?

18 **DONNA SEARS:** I think it could be done
19 in a couple of different ways. We are always filling out
20 reports, so that could certainly be one way to have input
21 into it. As well, I don't see another committee being
22 set up to deal with it as much as the feedback that already
23 comes to the legal systems, to the police college, to the

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1 Attorney General's office. There is information out there
2 already.

3 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
4 for that. We have strayed some way from my original
5 question about your assertion that the justice authorities
6 do not wish to understand issues of Aboriginal women.
7 Perhaps you might consider sending us a fuller explanation
8 in due course.

9 Thank you very much.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** There was
11 one area that I wanted to ask a question on, if you don't
12 mind. It is the area dealing with a healing lodge -- and
13 I understand that. Then there was the argument for
14 second-stage housing.

15 You said that access to the above should
16 be for a minimum of one year. If women were in the Centre
17 for a minimum of one year, it means it would be at least
18 12 months.

19 It seems to me we are talking about a
20 lot of time. I don't know how many families would recover
21 from a separation of a year. I am just wondering if that
22 was what you wanted to say, a minimum of one year.

23 **DONNA SEARS:** Right.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How many
2 women do you think would need this? What percentage of
3 those who would go through the program -- half of them,
4 most of them?

5 **DONNA SEARS:** The majority of the women
6 who come through our shelter need second-stage housing.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** For a
8 minimum of a year?

9 **DONNA SEARS:** At least a minimum of a
10 year. It takes a long time. It gives them time as well
11 to decide how to get into counselling, whether they want
12 to get into counselling and do that healing, whether the
13 partner wants to be involved in counselling, and to take
14 the time to learn new ways. It is just giving them time
15 before they actually have to make the decision whether
16 or not they want to end the family, and we think they should
17 have that time, that lack of housing not be an issue to
18 send the women back into that situation, that there is
19 not time for it to change.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I understand
21 that point very well. It is just that the time kind of
22 floored me -- which brings up another question.

23 What kind of contact would there be

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1 between the spouses during this minimum of one year?

2 **DONNA SEARS:** That would certainly be
3 up to the woman as to how what contact there would be.
4 As I said, it is a way of supporting her to have time to
5 make her decisions, time to experience a bit of what she
6 wants to try to do and, as well, to give them space if
7 the thought is to work together to reorganize the family.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How much
9 housing do you think we need in this second-stage housing?
10 Let's just take London.

11 **DONNA SEARS:** We have never been
12 specifically asked how many units we would want.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You must
14 have some idea of how many women go through the Centre.

15 **DONNA SEARS:** Looking at the past year,
16 a minimum of 20 units would have been needed.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You only had
18 20 women go through your Centre last year?

19 **DONNA SEARS:** No, we had more than 20
20 women that went through, but some do not feel they need
21 the safety and the security of a second stage. They want
22 to get right back into the community.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** But you just

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1 told us that eight out of ten would need it.

2 **DONNA SEARS:** Yes.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Which is the
4 truth?

5 **DONNA SEARS:** Eight out of ten women are
6 abused either physically or sexually. I will go back to
7 where she said that, because I don't think she said eight
8 out of ten women would need housing.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I was asking
10 you what your thought was on how many needed housing that
11 went through, and you said the majority did.

12 **DONNA SEARS:** Yes, the majority of the
13 women. We refer to second stages, as well as some of the
14 women go into other communities into a second stage.

15 In London specifically we would need a
16 minimum of 20 units.

17 **BERNICE IRELAND:** The women who go back
18 to their partners -- there is a lot that go back to their
19 partners because there is no housing available. Even
20 though they might get priority housing from the London
21 Housing Authority or whatever, there still aren't enough
22 units to cover how many women are coming out. Eventually,
23 what they decide is to go back home.

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1 But they go back to an unchanged
2 situation. They go back to a partner who hasn't made any
3 attempt to change the lifestyle or to look at the anger
4 that he is experiencing and the way he is expressing it
5 to the family. There is a lot of reasons why the women
6 go back but, if they had an option, they would probably
7 opt not to go back.

8 When we opened up our shelter one year
9 ago, that is what we found. We were told that the women
10 didn't want to be taken from the communities, that they
11 wouldn't want to go to a shelter. Yet, we find they are,
12 and more and more are opting out of those relationships.
13 They are hoping for a lifestyle where abuse isn't present.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In other
15 places we have been told that, rather than taking the women
16 out of the home, the men should be taken out of the home.
17 What do you think of that idea?

18 **DONNA SEARS:** If you can get them to go
19 and stay away.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
21 for your ideas.

22 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** We are
23 going to break for lunch until 1 o'clock.

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1 I have an announcement that there is a
2 food sale at N'Amerind. Indian tacos are on sale.

3 --- Luncheon Recess at 12:05 p.m.

4 --- Upon resuming at 1:25 p.m.

5 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** We are
6 ready to begin the afternoon sessions. Our first speaker
7 this afternoon is Hugh Dickie, an Elder.

8 **HUGH DICKIE:** Boozhoo. (Native
9 language)

10 Freestanding is how I am called. The
11 Turtle is my clan. My English name is Hugh Dickie.

12 A correction here is that I am not an
13 Elder; I am a helper to Elders; I am a helper to the people;
14 I am a helper wherever anyone asks, wherever there is a
15 need.

16 The reason I am up here is not to eat
17 my lunch, but because yesterday the Elders -- and I cannot
18 speak for all Elders. I can only speak for a specific
19 group of Elders in this community who have asked me to
20 speak up for them because Anishinabe shagwanima(PH) --
21 the Indian, he is shy.

22 This format sort of intimidates the
23 majority of Elders to come up here and voice their concerns,

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1 to offer their opinions, and to give you the solutions
2 that you seem to be looking for and asking for. That,
3 I suppose, is really what we really should be dealing with
4 in this Commission -- that is, solutions. I have none
5 to offer at this point in time.

6 I have been listening to the media. I
7 have listened to presenters here. I have listened to the
8 Royal Commission and read all the material. The one
9 suggestion that seems to come through loud and clear from
10 all across Canada, from all across Turtle Island, Mother
11 Earth, as we understand it -- and I speak only of my own
12 understanding of these things -- is that many people are
13 talking about reinstating our Elders to their proper
14 position within Anishinabe Nations. When I say
15 "Anishinabe", that supersedes my being of the Ojibway
16 Nation. I am saying Native Indian people, original
17 people.

18 The proper place where Elders should
19 still be should have been kept all along since pre-contact
20 time. During this 500 years we always take that as the
21 starting point, the contact with the Europeans. We had
22 traditional, whatever that is, governments. I think
23 everything the Elders teach us and tell us is that we are

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1 survivors. We have always survived all these atrocities
2 that we hear of, that you seem to be inundated with, being
3 human, probably to the point of numbness. You get all
4 these horror stories, as they have been talked about.

5 The healing process must begin with
6 those people talking about their pain and looking at it
7 and understanding it and trying to work on it. Yesterday
8 it was stated -- of course, we all know that there are
9 those who state that the holocaust didn't really happen.
10 Our own history is based upon violence, suppression,
11 genocide manoeuvres by government, religion, individuals,
12 assimilation. So our history has evolved from a similar
13 holocaust, although it has taken 500 years and it is still
14 being perpetuated today, to a point.

15 What the Elders have requested, and from
16 my own understanding of what they are saying, is that in
17 these times now, when young people are seeking their
18 identity, as they call it -- I am also a teacher's assistant
19 at an alternative education class here for secondary
20 students, and I do not teach at the cost of losing my
21 identity. I heard something about that yesterday. We
22 do not teach or try to educate our students at the cost
23 of their identity. As far as education goes, we are in

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1 a time when we have so many social problems to deal with
2 that there is very little time to give to formal education.

3 What we try to do with our class is to
4 bring back an identification with these young people, as
5 to who they are, as to who Native people are. We
6 incorporate many things that seem to be missing within
7 communities of First Nations people, such as the sunrise
8 ceremony. We do that every morning. I do that on a
9 personal basis every morning. We have feathers; we have
10 drums; we have the teachings.

11 Our English is from stories that were
12 told to me by the Elders that I remember and I pass on.

13 We take some of the written material that has been
14 published lately, and we pass the good ones on to them.

15 We do find time to spend on math and
16 English and whatever else is needed. But when the students
17 come to us and they say, "Well, Hughie or John, we want
18 to become mechanics," or "I want to be a doctor," or "a
19 lawyer" or "a janitor," then we can educate them in that
20 direction that they want to go. Until then we try to focus
21 on bringing in Elders or teachings.

22 We find that this is what the Elders seem
23 to like. When we tell them what we are doing, they say

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1 very little. They just say, "Ah, that's good." When the
2 Elders speak, they speak very little.

3 Not to take anything away from any of
4 the presenters or the Royal Commission or anyone who is
5 concerned about Aboriginal issues, the Elders have a hard
6 time sometimes with the jargon that is used today --
7 implementation, self-government and all these things.

8 As I say, this format is not really
9 Elder-oriented, to get the Elders to come in. When they
10 talk of a gathering, the Elders have a different concept
11 of what a gathering is and how we come together. We come
12 together of one mind after we smudge with these medicines
13 to focus on finding solutions for the problems with the
14 family, the community and the Nations.

15 As I have been here for the past two days,
16 listening and watching -- which is a problem with the
17 education system. We are taught from birth that we are
18 to watch and listen. That is how we learn. We don't learn
19 in a classroom, so we of course have a problem with our
20 students, sitting them down and saying, "Here is the
21 lesson. You have 45 minutes. Do it and turn it in."
22 They don't learn that way.

23 From our own observation, I have seen

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1 that the students that we get are at the age where they
2 are -- I think I heard something about dysfunctional, and
3 where they are rebellious and where they just can't seem
4 to be controlled by that system out there.

5 From my observation, my learning, my
6 understanding of our ways, those young men and women are
7 at a stage in their lives where they should be out in the
8 bush and doing their first berry fast, doing their fasts
9 for their vision, for that direction for the rest of their
10 life. They should be out there, not in a school, not in
11 a classroom. I perceive quite a problem there.

12 Because they, themselves, are lacking
13 in cultural knowledge and in traditional ways, they don't
14 understand that either. When you talk to them about
15 fasting, they say, "How am I going to do without my
16 Cheeseburgs and my Coke?" They don't understand the
17 significance of these things.

18 So, once again, we have to be very
19 careful how we are teaching these young students. The
20 Elders have insisted that we bring this stuff to them
21 slowly, as they can understand it. They have a problem
22 with this visual stuff and with these microphones and
23 taking notes because, as I say, they learn by watching

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1 and listening. Sometimes even I have a hard time with
2 that.

3 There was a journalist here yesterday.
4 I am in a summer program, taking courses at Western in
5 journalism. I am enrolled in a three-year general B.A.
6 simply because my students said to me, "Hughie, you are
7 telling us to get educated so that we can get a good job
8 and everything, and you don't have your degree." You can't
9 fool these children. They are all very bright young
10 people.

11 I, in turn, had to tell them also that,
12 if you want to get things done and if you want to see change,
13 then you have to get off the chair and get out and speak
14 and take whatever opportunity is available to you in
15 whatever way you can to promote that change. Like other
16 people, if you don't take the initiative and don't have
17 the courage to go and speak out, then don't come to me
18 and complain and whine about the way things are, because
19 we all have to take a responsibility and not leave it to
20 others.

21 As I say, I don't mind speaking for the
22 Elders because I love and respect my Elders very much.
23 They have been a great influence in my life and in my

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1 family's life, and I understand how they are shy to get
2 up here and speak.

3 I did take notes. When I first came
4 across information on the Royal Commission, I knew that
5 this was a format that I could use to send in a presentation.

6 I had no idea that I would be sitting up here speaking
7 with you people.

8 Of course, I have a whole hodgepodge of
9 notes here, and probably none of them are going to do me
10 any good. As I say, even I at this late stage of the game
11 still have a problem trying to remember the things that
12 I was supposed to talk about.

13 I don't see the Elders here. I have seen
14 them on display when they are asked to come in to a gathering
15 such as this and do an opening ceremony or do a prayer
16 and then sit down and then do a closing prayer. I don't
17 believe in displaying our Elders like that, and the Elders
18 understand that, so they are reluctant to come here.

19 I think, if we are continuously talking
20 about creating Elders' quorums and Elders' Councils to
21 get direction from these Elders, it is the responsibility
22 of Native communities, urban and reserve, to make it
23 possible for these Elders to be here, regardless of whether

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1 they sit at the back and listen. They want to be here.
2 They want to hear what your concerns are, too, everybody's
3 concerns, and they want to hear these young people speaking
4 up for them, asking them, "Where is my name? Where is
5 my ceremony? Where is my language? Who am I?" If the
6 young are willing to ask, the old will remember. If we
7 can speak and understand our language, our Elders can tell
8 us who we are.

9 I think out of all this, perhaps after
10 you have compiled your material and you have made
11 recommendations, I would like to vision that the Royal
12 Commission would call for a Council of Elders from across
13 Turtle Island and say, "Here is what the people have said
14 to us. Here is what we are recommending. What do you
15 say?"

16 I think, no matter what format of
17 self-government comes in, whatever model you choose, there
18 has to be a place for these Elders, for direction, for
19 whatever decision-making policies this new
20 self-government comes up with. The old man from the west
21 was asked, "What about self-government?" We were all
22 concerned about it, and he just said, "We have always
23 governed ourselves." I firmly believe in that.

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1 I know that, because of the world we live
2 in today, there are many rules, regulations and government
3 levels -- all these things that have interfered with the
4 guidance of the Elders. It has taken away from the Elders'
5 guidance. I think the models that are presented and
6 finally derived from all this talk should empower the
7 Elders once again, as I say, to their original position.
8 Without them, we would not have survived as long as we
9 have.

10 The Elder who spoke yesterday, Elder
11 Dorothy Day, 78 years old, spoke of those times when things
12 were good -- there was no TV and no radio. People spent
13 more time with each other. They were happy, and why
14 shouldn't they be happy, because at that time they still
15 had their Elders. The majority of the Elders were still
16 in place teaching them how to survive. They were still
17 surviving. But they were happy. They didn't have to see
18 all these things that are out here now, the social services
19 stuff and all of the things that we are dependent upon
20 that are taking our children away from their own culture.
21 They get involved and take on this attitude and behaviour
22 that they deserve everything they can get. They want to
23 take, sometimes even at the point of a gun.

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1 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** Excuse me,
2 Mr. Dickie, I am going to have to ask you to summarize.
3 The Commissioners like to leave a few minutes at the end
4 to ask you some questions on your presentation.

5 **HUGH DICKIE:** I will summarize by just
6 saying thank you for having what time I did. There are
7 many, many things that need to be discussed, and I
8 understand this format doesn't leave much option
9 time-wise. You are busy; you are all across Canada, and
10 you have many issues that you wish to find out about.

11 As for myself, unfortunately I can't
12 allow questions because I am not allowed to finish
13 everything. The Elders tell me, and I know it myself,
14 that, when I leave this microphone, there should be no
15 confusion as to what I have said, as to how I have spoken
16 and tried to instill in people the importance of Elders,
17 when they talk about Healing Circles.

18 I am talking about how the Elders feel
19 about these things. You mentioned Healing Circles this
20 morning. You inquired about them.

21 The problem with the Healing Circles,
22 as the Elders perceive it, is that you have people who
23 give a smidgen of tradition, of teaching, under the guise

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1 of traditional healing. They have a Healing Circle. I
 2 have never gone into them; I don't understand them. I
 3 have seen them, and I have seen people take a course, if
 4 you like, and after a certain amount of time they are
 5 healers. They are sent out to heal their people, to heal
 6 their communities. It is all lifeskills.

7 So we have to be very careful, the Elders
 8 say, about these people who say traditional healing.

9 The word "healing" is over-used. It is
 10 completely taken out of context of the way the Elders talk.

11 Even right here, we are all medicine people right here
 12 practising healing by our words and by coming together.

13 That is healing. When I talked about these horror stories
 14 that you hear, that is healing, too.

15 It is up to the young people to listen
 16 to the Elders, to guard against these things ever happening
 17 again. That is why we have to hear those horror stories
 18 -- for how long I don't know; maybe forever -- because
 19 that is where we come from.

20 I thank you very much for your time, and
 21 I welcome you to this territory. Meegwetch.

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

23 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** We now

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1 call Marcia Simon, and students Christine Keechago and
2 Amanda Blackbird.

3 Marcia will be presenting on education.

4 **MARCIA SIMON:** Bonjour. My name is
5 Marcia Simon. I am originally from Kettle Point and Stony
6 Point. I work in the city of London here as an educator
7 with the Native language and with Native cultural project.

8 Right now I am on a leave from teaching to co-ordinate
9 this project.

10 It is a very nice experience to be
11 getting paid to do something that I usually always do
12 anyway; it's a nice feeling. However, the project is just
13 a temporary project, and we are attempting to compile
14 resources and build them into the education system here
15 in London.

16 There are two parts of what we really
17 are focusing on. One of them is the Native language.
18 Even though there have been policies in place for some
19 time now, it sometimes takes a while for those to be
20 implemented into the classrooms where the children of
21 Native ancestry are in attendance.

22 Last fall we had tried to give support
23 to a proposal to offer Native language courses at the

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1 University of Western Ontario and, of course, we
2 wholeheartedly support that. We heard about this on very
3 short notice, and we were up pretty well all night drafting
4 up letters of support.

5 One of the letters of support came from
6 my mother who also teaches Native language at Nokee Kwe
7 in the city here and in her home. I am going to ask her
8 to read the content of that letter which we wrote to the
9 Aboriginal Council of the University of Western Ontario
10 supporting this proposal to the Ministry of Colleges and
11 Universities.

12 **MELVA GEORGE:** I am Melva George, and
13 I come from Kettle Point First Nation. I wrote this letter
14 on November 24, 1992 to the Council Members, Aboriginal
15 Council of UWO here in London.

16 "Dear Council Members:

17 An MCU proposal for curriculum
18 development of university level Ojibway language courses.

19 Memories of my childhood never cease to
20 exist. I was born in 1924 and, where we lived at Kettle
21 Point, everyone spoke Ojibway. It was my first language.

22

23 In our neighbourhood were Georges,

StenoTran

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1 Greenbergs, Shaneaus, Wolfs, Millikens, Loonams and Kings.

2 We lived in harmony.

3 Then I joined my sister Hilda --"

4 Could she finish it for me?

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Certainly.

6 **MARCIA SIMON:** I will start again.

7 "Memories of my childhood can never
8 cease to exist. I was born in 1924, and where we lived
9 at Kettle Point everyone spoke Ojibway. It was my first
10 language.

11 In our neighbourhood were the Georges,
12 Greenbergs, Shaneaus, Wolfs, Millikens, Loonams and Kings,
13 and we lived in harmony.

14 Then I joined my sister Hilda and
15 brothers Melford and Calvin, residential students at Mount
16 Elgin School in Munsee, where it was something bad to speak
17 our God-given language, Ojibway. We were threatened with
18 the strap if we were caught speaking it.

19 By the time we completed Grade 8, we were
20 quite fluent in the borrowed English language, and what
21 a mistake it was in the community. Soon our Ojibway
22 speakers began dying off, and our language with them.

23 Because I was beaten for speaking my

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1 language, I never taught my children, all ten of them,
2 to speak Ojibway. I didn't want them to receive the same
3 punishment.

4 For two years now, I have been teaching
5 Ojibway at my home once a week. It is a struggle to find
6 materials to use, and I am also struggling to try to
7 understand how to write, but I thoroughly enjoy what I
8 am doing."

9 Then we go on to say:

10 "Any assistance that the university can
11 give to revitalizing our Ojibway language will be a
12 pleasure and a blessing."

13 This proposal wasn't passed; it was
14 rejected. But the desire is still there to have language
15 courses where we can train our young, where our young can
16 aspire to take these.

17 As our languages are becoming extinct
18 in this area and in southern Ontario, in the neighbouring
19 Chippewa of the Thames community where a residential school
20 was located, we have maybe three speakers in feeble health.

21 For the past three years I have taught
22 Ojibway at two of the high schools in London, at Saunders
23 Secondary School and at Beale. It is very, very difficult.

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1 I let everyone know that I am not fully
2 fluent in the language, so many times I am learning as
3 I go. In addition, I am creating materials as I go. I
4 don't have funds for resources, so I have purchased a
5 computer and a laser printer on my own as we go along,
6 so that we can attractive, good learning materials for
7 the students in the school system.

8 That is not good enough, though. These
9 are sort of piecemeal efforts. If that trend continues,
10 our languages are becoming extinct. It is not because
11 that is what we want. Many, many times we request Native
12 studies and Native languages, but there is always a reason
13 that they are not available, whether it be a belief that
14 that is not the right thing for us, to speak our language,
15 as has happened in the past or whether there is a lack
16 of funding, or whether there is a lack of qualified
17 teachers.

18 We recently had a Native Studies
19 curriculum guideline which Intermediate Division 1991
20 introduced in Ontario. For the second part of our
21 presentation I would like to introduce two young ladies
22 who are from one of the elementary schools in London, who
23 did a project trying to research about having Native

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1 Studies. They don't have the opportunity to take Native
2 Studies, and they were requesting that they have. Their
3 names are Amanda Blackbird and Christine Keechago.

4 I am going to ask to come and explain
5 what they did. They have brought their project along,
6 and I think it is an honour that they have agreed to share
7 that with you.

8 **CHRISTINE KEECHAGO:** I am Christine
9 Keechago from Chippewa Oneida Reserve.

10 Amanda and I are doing a project on why
11 we think a Native Studies program is important and what
12 we wanted to learn. What I have put down here is more
13 or less what would be important to learn is how it became
14 a tradition and why do we have clans and why can't we live
15 the way we used to before everything got taken away from
16 us.

17 We need to learn more about our Elders
18 before everything got taken away from us. Like Marcia
19 said, our language is becoming extinct, and it is not our
20 fault because we do want to learn it.

21 We have done a project on the values and
22 teaching, how our parents long ago wanted to teach us and
23 here we are sitting here and we don't know our language

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1 and we don't know about our culture. I think it is not
2 right that we don't know anything about ourselves.

3 Our project was called "When our ways
4 are Lost, our legends will die."

5 **AMANDA BLACKBIRD:** I am Amanda
6 Blackbird from Oneida Walpole Reserve.

7 How we did this was we did a survey on
8 how many people would like to have a Native Studies program
9 in the school. Almost everybody from Grade 5 to Grade
10 8 would like a program started in the school.

11 Finally, we got a program in our school,
12 and it lasted for about eight weeks. It was really a
13 success because a lot of people showed up for it. A lot
14 of my friends kept asking, "Can we go?" and I kept telling
15 them that there was only limited people who could go for
16 it.

17 **CHRISTINE KEECHAGO:** What she is trying
18 to say that the Native Studies program is really important
19 for next year and the years to come. If we don't learn
20 about our culture and we don't learn about our people,
21 then it's all going to be gone and everybody is going to
22 be saying, "Why couldn't we do this and why couldn't we
23 do that?" For years to come our children will be wondering

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1 why they don't have a Native Studies program. Everything
2 will be gone.

3 **MARCIA SIMON:** Out of the requests that
4 these girls were pursuing, I had been contacted with this
5 cultural program to bring a series of workshops into the
6 school, but that is not a full-fledged Native Studies
7 program. We were only able to offer something in a very
8 limited way. The workshops could only accommodate so many
9 students, and they had to have a cut-off point. There
10 were more students who wanted to take it.

11 They went from class to class and did
12 a survey and had, I guess, the majority, about 90 per cent,
13 of the students wanting it in the whole school that they
14 attend in London.

15 Meegwetch, ladies.

16 Those are the two parts of education that
17 we have really focused on -- the history and the language
18 or Native Studies and the Native languages.

19 As an educator, I am also sitting on a
20 curriculum writing team in the city here. Of concern to
21 me is the fact that a lot of the maps and things that we
22 have available to us are usually maps that are about 500
23 years old. If I pick up a brand new shiny text like this

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1 and I want to know what the cultural/linguistic groupings
2 are in this area, I am going to look into this map here
3 for southwestern Ontario -- and do you know who is here
4 right now? The neutrals. Then in fine print it tells
5 us:

6 "These are the native language families of Canada showing
7 approximate locations at the time
8 of European contact."

9 People are curious about what these cultural groupings
10 are now, not 500 years ago.

11 When that kind of material is what is
12 available to educators, I think that is part of the reason
13 why a lot of misinformation continues to be presented to
14 our children.

15 I went to the Public Library in the
16 spring, and there was a group of Native people doing
17 research for an entrepreneur training course. They were
18 all excited about this big, thick book, that has
19 information in there about our communities. When I went
20 to look at it, there was indeed, and that was a real shock
21 and a pleasant surprise to us. It is called "Akwasasne
22 to Wunnumin Lake", and it profiles 116 Aboriginal
23 communities in Ontario, where you can look up and find

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1 out the current address, the current name. For instance,
2 I just opened this up and it is the Chippewas of Nawash
3 First Nation. The historical name was the Cape Croker
4 Indian Reserve No. 27. It shows a map of the community
5 and the approximate location of that community in Ontario.

6 I immediately went back to my office and
7 got as many copies as I possibly could and began using
8 them within the system. The people are very thankful that
9 they have information like that, just as these Native
10 people were in that library that they found something that
11 was relevant to us.

12 We need more of those kinds of
13 publications with current information. Part of what we
14 are here today to look at is ways to improve the
15 relationships in this country. One way that I feel this
16 can be improved is to have this kind of information
17 available not only to our young children and to us
18 ourselves, to learn about each other, our fellow First
19 Nations peoples, but also for the non-Native people to
20 learn about us, to share that information with them so
21 that all this misinformation isn't continued on.

22 Also in London this year a new
23 organization has been formed which is called the Urban

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1 Native Parents Association. I have had the good fortune
2 to meet this people, and a number of them are here to tell
3 you a little bit about their organization and what they
4 are attempting to do.

5 We are very excited. Last night at the
6 Board of Education, there is a possibility that we may
7 have the Native language as a second language introduced
8 in the education system here at the elementary level.
9 That comes before the Board next week. It passed through
10 the Program Standing Committee last night. Every little
11 step along this process is a learning experience for us,
12 and it is an exciting experience and a wonderful experience
13 when we see the support that is there within the system
14 to help us get these in place.

15 I would like to introduce to you the
16 Urban Native Parents Association who are sitting here.
17 We have Jerome Kennedy, who will do the introduction, and
18 Tara Johnston and Valerie Antone.

19 **JEROME KENNEDY, Urban Native Parents**
20 **Association:** Sogoey. Jerome Kennedy.
21 Nee-yung-gyutss, Onyda, Aga naee. Hello. My name is
22 Jerome Kennedy, and I am Oneida.

23 I am a member of the Urban Native Parents

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1 Association. Urban Native Parents Association wishes,
2 first of all, to acknowledge the Royal Commission and all
3 people involved in the co-ordination of the hearings for
4 giving our association this opportunity to speak on our
5 endeavours.

6 It is also a pleasure to voice our
7 concerns to the former National Chief of the country, Mr.
8 Georges Erasmus.

9 Before discussing our association, I
10 wish to speak on the past historical relationship with
11 the First Nations peoples and the non-Aboriginal
12 societies.

13 Before Confederation, the First Nations
14 people lived in harmony on what our people call Turtle
15 Island. The relationship with the First Nation and
16 non-Aboriginal societies was one of respect and trust.
17 The educational practices of the First Nations peoples
18 has been taken away with respect to our social,
19 governmental and, most of all, our languages. There are
20 communities today who have lost their language.

21 The first peoples of this land educated
22 the non-Aboriginal people to survive. Since
23 Confederation the education system has been based upon

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1 and designed by the non-Aboriginal societies.

2 Our mothers and fathers, grandmothers
3 and grandfathers today speak on how they were strapped
4 for speaking their own language in the residential schools
5 they were forced to go to. For some of our peoples, this
6 made them not want to teach the language because they didn't
7 want their children to experience the same treatment.

8 More and more examples could be provided
9 on how educational practices of the First Nations peoples
10 have almost been vanquished. However, many Elders are
11 teaching the children their language. Ontario Regional
12 Elder, Fred Plain, once said in an Ontario-wide forum:
13 "It is time for the First Nations to start exercising their
14 rights as a people every day. Speak to the non-Aboriginals
15 who have concerns on how our lifestyles are maintained.
16 Learn your language. Many communities are beginning to
17 implement the language in the school systems. The
18 children are beginning to learn their language. There
19 will eventually be an awakening on Turtle Island to have
20 their children and the Elders bridge the gap between the
21 generations who have lost their culture, self-identity
22 and their language."

23 Today, many generations growing up in

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1 the Native communities have moved to the city of London
2 mainly because of shortage of housing, land, education
3 and employment. The Urban Native Parents Association's
4 present objective is to implement the Native language in
5 a public school within our vicinity.

6 Once the non-Aboriginal societies
7 acknowledge the First Nations people's ways again and give
8 us a chance to prove how important our language and culture
9 is, this will give our people self-identity which is
10 urgently required in the urban areas.

11 The knowledge and wisdom provided by our
12 Elders will be restored.

13 We reside in the city of London and are
14 presently attempting to implement the language in our local
15 public school within our area. Although we only became
16 established as of January 1, 1993, we, the Urban Native
17 Parents Association, have many things in common with other
18 First Nations parents in Canada. We want to preserve our
19 language for our children and for the future generations.

20 We have been established since January
21 1993. The process is moving very quickly. What we are
22 asking for from the Commission is your support and
23 acknowledgement of the present policies to implement First

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1 Nations language in the education system.

2 Thank you.

3 **TARA JOHNSTON, Urban Native Parents**

4 **Association:** Good afternoon. My name is Tara Johnston,
5 and I thank you for this opportunity to express some of
6 the concerns that I have, both as an Aboriginal person
7 and as an Aboriginal parent.

8 I have had the good fortune to strive
9 with Aboriginal people working to implement Aboriginal
10 language programs both in my home community of
11 Niyashingamming, formerly known as Cape Croker, and here
12 in London, our recently-adopted home.

13 I am of Ojibwe heritage and, as part of
14 the Urban Native Parents Association, I share in the
15 endeavour to implement a Native as a Second Language
16 program for the children of Manor and Highland Park Public
17 School. Through consensus, our group adopted the
18 objective of having an Oneida Language program in place
19 as our first project.

20 I believe that language is a basic
21 component of our respective societies that verifies our
22 unique cultural positions within this evolving mosaic of
23 Canada.

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1 Providing equal protection for the
2 Aboriginal languages of this country is one vital action
3 the present governments can take to undo the damage of
4 generations of active assault and indifference to our
5 languages and cultures.

6 At the community level, local school
7 boards should have a seat available for a Native trustee.

8 Degree programs at the university level
9 should be developed for the study of Aboriginal languages.

10 There is a need for the development of
11 accessible Language Learning Modules to enable isolated
12 individual students or even their parents to exercise their
13 right to learn their mother tongue.

14 During this International Year of
15 Indigenous Peoples, these are just a few of the
16 self-government initiatives that can be taken to ensure
17 the perpetuation, revitalization and growth of Aboriginal
18 languages.

19 Meegwitch.

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

21 Would you all mind if we asked some questions?

22 **TARA JOHNSTON:** No.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I will start

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1 with Commissioner Chartrand.

2 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Are we
3 going to ask the others to return to the table for
4 questioning, or should I direct the questions to where
5 they are?

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Maybe we
7 should start with these people.

8 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:**
9 Meegwetch for your presentation. I have two or three
10 questions, very short.

11 With respect to the first paper given
12 by Mr. Kennedy, in the third paragraph you make a statement
13 about the history of First Nations living with respect
14 and trust with non-Aboriginal societies. You must have
15 in mind a particular time or a particular local place.

16 **JEROME KENNEDY:** When it first all
17 started, when we all came together, and it was all trust
18 that we were basing everything on.

19 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Where was
20 that, and when?

21 **JEROME KENNEDY:** When the Europeans
22 first came over, it was all helping each other. They were
23 learning how to live off the land and they were learning

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1 how we were living, and we were getting along with them.

2 Then everything turned right around.

3 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Right
4 here locally?

5 **JEROME KENNEDY:** Just the whole
6 country. I am not saying right in London. It didn't all
7 start in London. I am just putting a little bit of history
8 in there.

9 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I know,
10 but it clashes with everything that I have read.

11 **JEROME KENNEDY:** The thing is, we are
12 not getting treated back the same way that we --

13 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I
14 understand that. But the point about the history is that
15 there have been a number of books written recently because
16 of the 500th anniversary of Columbus happening, and those
17 books tell of those horrible massacres by the Portuguese
18 and the Spaniards 500 years ago, and the books about the
19 British and the French experience in this part of the world
20 talk about some terrible ravages, including the burning
21 of Fort Detroit not far from here in the early 1760s, in
22 fact, which led to something very well-known across the
23 country, the Royal Proclamation of 1763 where the British

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1 government was attempting to secure peace to promote its
2 interests. Many people regard that Royal Proclamation
3 as a significant part of Canadian constitutional history.

4 What you are telling me here is something
5 quite novel to me, and I thought I would remark upon it.

6 **JEROME KENNEDY:** Let me put it this way.

7 When this land was taken over and everybody was getting
8 their chunk, the government was giving out land for people
9 that would come to this country and farm it. As long as
10 they were going to farm it, they could take their little
11 plot. Then the Natives were put on reserves, and they
12 were promised this and promised that.

13 Then a lot of tribes started dying out
14 on reservations, and they were held in forts. We survived,
15 and we are still here. We are just asking that -- you
16 know.

17 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank
18 you.

19 I wanted to ask about your interest in
20 the promotion of Aboriginal languages locally. Have you
21 considered a test case? Is this one of the options that
22 you are looking at? We know that separate school funding
23 is provided for French language schools in Ontario; this

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1 has been decided by the Supreme Court.

2 Given the existence of Aboriginal rights
3 in the Constitution, do you not think that perhaps
4 Aboriginal peoples are similarly entitled to separate
5 funding, at least for languages? Or is this a part of
6 your policy?

7 **TARA JOHNSTON:** When we started, we
8 discovered that there were policies in place. They just
9 weren't being utilized. There were outlines for a program
10 to be run in a school.

11 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I was
12 asking if you were considering going to court to try --

13 **TARA JOHNSTON:** No. There are these
14 policies that we are trying, and we are going to see if
15 they work. It seems to be going well. We do have a lot
16 of co-operation.

17 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** So you
18 are trying to work within the existing system.

19 **TARA JOHNSTON:** We haven't met up with
20 a real stone wall yet.

21 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** You want
22 a trustee on the local school board. You are not
23 interested in setting up your own school board.

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1 Thank you. I have questions for the
2 others, but that is all I have for this group. Meegwetch.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In relation
4 to the policies you found on the Aboriginal languages,
5 what did you find? Was it that, if you have 15 students
6 or something like that, you can --

7 **TARA JOHNSTON:** Yes, we found those.
8 There were some dating back to 1985, as far back as that.
9 I guess that's when we really started getting some talking
10 being done and things being put down on paper. That seems
11 to be as far as it went.

12 On-reserve it is going on, but there is
13 nothing off-reserve.

14 **JEROME KENNEDY:** It is in the two high
15 schools in London, but that is because their tuition is
16 coming from reserve. We urban Natives don't have anybody
17 representing us. We are not recognized on the reserve;
18 we can't go back there and ask for funding when we are
19 living in London, so we have to go through the educational
20 system that we have right here. That is what we are trying
21 to do.

22 We have been to two meetings and we have
23 one more to go. So we are at the last stage and we will

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1 see what the final decision is.

2 We feel that it is going to start in the
3 schools in that area.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Will there
5 be other schools that might follow the example? Are there
6 other schools among the 100-or-so schools in London where
7 Aboriginal are going?

8 **JEROME KENNEDY:** There are other
9 schools that are interested. The school in our community
10 only goes up to Grade 6, and then for Grades 7 and 8 they
11 go to another school. As soon as our kids leave there,
12 we would like to have it where they go next.

13 There are other parents in other schools
14 who are interested. I think they are just wondering how
15 far we are going to get. We probably won't get too far,
16 but we are getting some place. We are not giving up.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
18 Good luck.

19 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Some of
20 the earlier presenters were talking about changes in
21 language and difficulties with different terms. I notice
22 that what used to be teachers in the old days when I was
23 going to school have now been changed to educators.

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1 I wanted to say, with respect to your
2 Ojibway language -- you heard the point I made about the
3 possible pursuit of entitlements to funding for language.

4 I wanted to say, in response to your comment that it was
5 hard to find Ojibway materials, that at the University
6 of Manitoba there is a Department of Native Studies which
7 specializes in the teaching of languages, including
8 Ojibway and Cree, and that they have quite a bit of material
9 for the teaching of the Ojibway language, including a
10 number of audio tapes as well as a collection of books
11 in Ojibway, including one with the delightful title, "How
12 to be a Successful Ojibway Eavesdropper." I thought I
13 would tell you that.

14 What recommendations are you making?
15 It seems to me that you are concerned about getting a better
16 curriculum, but it is not at all clear to me the context
17 of your proposals. Who is going to be responsible for
18 the administration of these language programs? How are
19 they going to be funded? Where is the money going to come
20 from, and who is going to be responsible for designing
21 the curriculum?

22 I don't discern those details in your
23 proposal.

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1 **MARCIA SIMON:** I didn't spell them out.

2 I don't really know what the present status is.

3 What I would like to see are the Native
4 languages entrenched within the Constitution so that there
5 is funding spelled out that would enhance and revitalize
6 our languages. We need some sort of institute that will
7 help with the creation of materials. As it is, the nearest
8 place where our people in southern Ontario can get training
9 in Ojibway is up in Thunder Bay. Sometimes that creates
10 a hardship for our people to uproot their families in the
11 summer time to go up there for studying.

12 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I don't
13 want to discourage you, but the entrenchment of language
14 rights in the Constitution is not at all a guarantee that
15 anything is going to be done. In fact, if you look at
16 the history of this country, you will find that the
17 disregard of constitutionally-entrenched language rights
18 is a feature of that history.

19 **MARCIA SIMON:** One of the other things
20 that I feel, though, is that, when there is some sort of
21 acknowledgement and respect of our languages, that has
22 some effect on the general population as well.

23 As an example, as we are acquiring

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1 dictionaries and things for the professional library
2 within the education system here, that in itself is an
3 eye-opener to some people who are really fascinated with
4 the diversity, as we bring in a dictionary from the Delaware
5 Nation and another one from the Mohawk Nation. Included
6 in that are the Ojibway dictionaries and the ones that
7 have been created at the University of Western Ontario.

8 The comments that had been made were that
9 they didn't realize there was such a diversity of Native
10 cultural materials out there. We are still working on
11 acquiring them.

12 Having those available and having them
13 listed so that, as people want information and have it
14 available, that is helpful in undoing some of that general
15 stereotyping, we will call it, or the general idea that
16 there is just a general Indian culture.

17 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I know
18 that the AFN is quite active in the area of Aboriginal
19 languages. It seems to me that it might be helpful if
20 there were some initiative to provide us with some concrete
21 recommendations in the area. It seems to me that the issue
22 of Aboriginal languages is very important, and I would
23 very much like to see some concrete recommendations.

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1 If you can assist in that way, either
2 yourself or in association with other groups, that would
3 be helpful.

4 **MARCIA SIMON:** One of the things that
5 I have thought about -- and, again, I don't know what all
6 of the possibilities are. There should be some kind of
7 co-ordinating mechanism within the boards where there are
8 Aboriginal students, urban Native students, so that the
9 materials that are produced by organizations such as the
10 AFN can be directed to our attention and we will be aware
11 of what they are doing.

12 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I would
13 like to finish by saying Meegwetch to Christine and Amanda
14 for their little presentation.

15 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** We would
16 like to call Mayor Tom Lawson from the Municipality of
17 Grand Bend, Ontario, with Mr. Walter Kornas.

18 **MAYOR TOM LAWSON, Grand Bend, Ontario:**
19 Commissioners, ladies and gentlemen, first and foremost,
20 thank you for making time for Walter and myself to address
21 the Commission. Bonnie Bressette asked if we might put
22 forward some comments regarding economic
23 self-sufficiency.

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1 Commissioners, let me assure you that
2 I am here on a personal basis, not representing the
3 Municipality of Grand Bend, nor am I here as a Director
4 of the Eastern Board of the Aboriginal Business Development
5 Program. That is an honour and a distinction that I
6 thoroughly enjoy, and have enjoyed it for the last two
7 years.

8 I would like to share with you what I
9 think is something which is perhaps exciting, moving
10 forward and in the interests of all. Please bear with
11 me. When I say "we," I talk about the generic "we." I
12 am not talking about the white "we" nor the Aboriginal
13 "we": I am talking about the generic "we."

14 Several years ago, the Government of
15 Canada elected to cease a program called NEDP and replace
16 it with a new program called Aboriginal Business
17 Development Program. It is that program that I would like
18 to refer the results of, which have just been, of a
19 quasi-nature, released.

20 That program is indicating that ABDP,
21 after serving some 327 businesses, is working, and it is
22 working very, very well. The majority of those 327
23 businesses that have been funded through the program over

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1 the past two years, in excess of 70 per cent, are in the
2 profit area. The majority, over \$50,000, again are
3 working.

4 Let's talk about the ones that are not
5 working and see if we can find out why.

6 The micros, the small ones, are dropping
7 quickly, but that is consistent with our economic times.

8
9 Another item is that sufficient revenues
10 must be generated to make a business work. There are two
11 areas that perhaps might be identified that are working
12 well: one, in the construction field; and, two, in the
13 retail field. I will come back at the end and try to
14 identify what I think might be appropriate in this regard.

15 Partnerships appear not to be working.
16 Small sole proprietorships appear not to be working.
17 Businesses that are of a start-up category appear not to
18 be working. But let me share with you, Commissioners,
19 that that is consistent throughout North America.

20 On or off reserve, the program is
21 achieving about the same results, and that is a fascinating
22 and interesting piece.

23 Remote indications are perhaps the most

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1 profitable. Sometimes -- and I would like to share this
2 with you. Sometimes we lose sight in the Aboriginal
3 Business Development Program and we talk about
4 mega-projects, but I think, in reality, we have to bring
5 ourselves into focus to say that communities of 500 to
6 600 are the ones that can gain the most.

7 Previous business experience and
8 education are not really showing up as a major factor --
9 again fascinating. The area we may be able to work more
10 closely with is an area called joint ventures.

11 Let's keep in mind how the Aboriginal
12 Business Development Program works. One is by way of a
13 contribution, and that contribution in its current format
14 is typically forwarded by way of a grant. I suggest to
15 you today that that may be an error. Instead of a grant,
16 perhaps it should be a loan and perhaps that loan should
17 be administered by one of the 36 Aboriginal Capital
18 Corporations located across Canada.

19 Banking -- we know the security on
20 reserves, and we have a problem with the banking situation
21 by way of security. How do we modify it? How do we change
22 it? How do we make it work? How do we recycle, if you
23 like -- which happens to be the buzz word today. How do

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1 we recycle our resources?

2 I suggest that, if we tie in joint
3 ventures between banks, trust companies, Aboriginal
4 Capital Corporations, and the appropriate training, we
5 may have a winning combination.

6 The area that I would like to personally
7 see explored further is, again, that of joint ventures,
8 that, again, of improving the Aboriginal Capital
9 Corporations, using support management for capital,
10 management opportunities, technical skills -- again, back
11 into the joint venture with Aboriginal Capital
12 Corporations and banking institutions.

13 Let me digress for one moment and suggest
14 to you some of the good and bad situations we have had
15 through the Aboriginal Business Development Program. I
16 use two examples.

17 One was a very fine individual on Walpole
18 Island who came to me as a consultant, when I was doing
19 consulting work on the program, and asked if he could bring
20 cable TV to Walpole Island and could he be funded. Let
21 me suggest to you, ladies and gentlemen, that that
22 individual is a very fine, well-skilled carpenter who was
23 venturing out into an area to which he did not belong.

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1 That is a negative.

2 On a positive basis, the program funded
3 a community located on James Bay. That community was
4 inland some 50 miles from James Bay, and it was supported
5 by fuel tanks located on James Bay. The only time that
6 fuel could be transported was during the winter months,
7 across country, by barrels on sleighs, and so on. The
8 program funded new fuelling tanks that could be fuelled,
9 if you like, during the open season, where vessels could
10 come right in 50 miles, fill their tanks and, therefore,
11 bypass the frozen time.

12 I might also add at this point that the
13 Acting Assistant Deputy Minister of the Aboriginal
14 Business Development Program, who is well-known to some
15 here, Bob Dixon, is an Aboriginal, and we are proud of
16 him.

17 In summary, Commissioners, I would
18 suggest that the program will work effectively with the
19 ongoing co-operation, based on the philosophy that both
20 sectors, i.e. Aboriginal and government, want it to
21 continue and to excel and that we must pursue a Needs
22 Assessment to find out exactly what we want and, second,
23 we must improve our media relations in all overall

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1 programs.

2 Mr. Kornas may have something to add.

3 **WALTER KORNAS:** No, thank you.

4 **MAYOR TOM LAWSON:** That is our
5 presentation, gentlemen.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do you mind
7 we ask you some questions?

8 **MAYOR TOM LAWSON:** Absolutely.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I will start
10 with Commissioner Chartrand.

11 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
12 for your presentation. You are identified as a Mayor on
13 our program, and I was very much looking forward to hearing
14 from you in your capacity as a Mayor, which is what I had
15 anticipate we need to hear if we are going to be in a
16 position to make sound policy recommendations to the
17 federal government from municipal governmental
18 structures, because they are the nearest and closest
19 neighbours to Aboriginal communities.

20 With respect to your substantive
21 presentation, there is very little that I can offer by
22 way of critical comment. I am not at all familiar with
23 the program, and I am not asking for a detailed description

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1 of the program either. I have taken your point that you
2 have a view that it is working.

3 I wonder if you might, however, be able
4 to offer an opinion on a couple of questions that I think
5 are related to the work that you do.

6 What about the banking system? What
7 about banks? Do you believe that the establishment of
8 banks for Aboriginal people, Aboriginally-owned banks,
9 is an endeavour that would enhance the economic
10 self-sufficiency of Aboriginal peoples across Canada?
11 That is one question.

12 The other one I will throw out as a
13 general question that all of Canada faces. Do you have
14 any views regarding the future economic prospects of small
15 isolated communities?

16 You may not be in a position to answer
17 any of them, but I thought I would ask.

18 **MAYOR TOM LAWSON:** Commissioner, I
19 would be more than pleased to answer, and let me address
20 Item 1 as Mayor of the community.

21 The community I happen to represent is
22 about 45 miles northwest of here on Lake Huron. It is
23 a host community to a population of about 5,000, and it

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1 is totally tourism related. It bulges to about 50,000
2 in the summer time.

3 To the south of us we have Kettle Point
4 and Stony Point.

5 I am constantly concerned about -- and,
6 again, the last item raised in my presentation was media.

7 I am constantly concerned about the way that we
8 collectively put ourselves forward, and we have a situation
9 called a sit-in, or whatever, at Camp Ipperwash. That
10 has a negative impact on people who travel through our
11 community -- and, again, I say it is how the media portrays
12 it. Are we conveying the correct message?

13 I am trying to answer that as a Mayor.
14 I am concerned about our collective appearance.

15 Number two, you asked about banks and
16 self-sufficiency. When I was doing some consulting work
17 on the program, I was contacted by an individual from the
18 Royal Bank of Canada here in London. He said, "If you
19 ever have an application from somebody from the Saugeen
20 Reserve, in the Southampton/Kincardine area, please let
21 us know. It's a very fine reserve, and we would like to
22 work with them." There are a lot of positive things that
23 we can take from that.

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1 On the other side, we do know that the
2 closest Aboriginal Capital Corporation, called Arise, has
3 had some great difficulties.

4 My point is: Is there any way that we
5 can work with the Royal Bank of Canada as one of the
6 financial institutions and an Aboriginal Capital
7 Corporation and try to see if we can learn, whether it
8 be an advisory board, if you like, to try to assist the
9 group? Then I think we are on to the right area.

10 The final question, Commissioner, was
11 regarding the economic future of small communities. Is
12 there such a thing?

13 I think we are trying to take inventory
14 and take stock to see where our future is, where any
15 community might be, including our own. Where are we going
16 to be in 20 years or farther, and is there a future for
17 it? If there is a future, how do we work toward our
18 strengths rather than our weaknesses?

19 I think we have to keep the spirit alive.
20 There are some things that are working in the right
21 direction, and perhaps they require fine-tuning.

22 That is a roundabout answer,
23 Commissioner, to your final question.

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1 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank
2 you.

3 **WALTER KORNAS:** I would just like to add
4 one thing to that question that is on everybody's mind:
5 Is it possible to have economic development or
6 self-sufficiency, particularly in isolated communities?

7 I would like to say positively that I
8 think it is. What they are is your next question, and
9 I am going to say I am not sure. There are some industries
10 that can be attracted to certain communities, but I think
11 the key is that the leaders of the community need to assess
12 their strengths, their weaknesses, what they can attract
13 or what they can build themselves.

14 I can think of some specific examples,
15 but most of the ones I am familiar with are in the corridor
16 of business. The ones isolated away up north are
17 difficult. They have a tendency to rely on their natural
18 resources or tourism. It might be a start, but I think
19 the key has to assess its own strengths, its own weaknesses,
20 what it can attract and what it can't, and develop its
21 skill level, planning, training, et cetera, based on that.

22 Just an additional comment on the ACCs.
23 I think, in today's day and age, it is very difficult.

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1 The Royal Bank is somewhat of an isolated case. Generally
2 speaking, it is difficult for Native entrepreneurs to get
3 any kind of capital loans, particularly for businesses
4 on-reserve. ACCs are just a necessity of life at this
5 particular stage. It would be nice to think that somewhere
6 down the road they wouldn't be, but I can tell you that
7 right now that is not the case.

8 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank
9 you.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Let's look
11 at those ACCs, those Aboriginal Capital Corporations.

12 Should they be endowed with a bit more
13 equity?

14 **MAYOR TOM LAWSON:** Commissioner, until
15 we do a Needs Assessment -- it is great to say that the
16 program has been cut back. But until we do a Needs
17 Assessment, to say that there should be further funding
18 given to an ACC -- let me be more specific.

19 Currently, the way the program is
20 structured and utilized to a great degree is that, instead
21 of providing the Aboriginal entrepreneur a loan, he is
22 given an outright grant, non-repayable. The suggestion
23 that I would like to put forward is that, instead of that

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1 -- and, again, it's a paperwork issue. This doesn't make
2 good common sense.

3 Instead of doing an outright grant,
4 provide the loan structure through the ACC and, therefore,
5 recycle, and let the ACC follow the paper trail.

6 Currently, it is done by way of a grant rather than a loan.

7 If it's a loan, it goes back to Treasury and it is not
8 recycled into the program.

9 I suggest to you, Commissioner, that,
10 if the funding goes through the ACC, then we can keep it
11 moving.

12 **WALTER KORNAS:** I am in agreement with
13 that, Commissioner. I am not sure I understand your
14 question when you say give equity to the ACC. Are we
15 talking to the end client or to the actual ACC? If you
16 are talking about the actual ACC, I am in total agreement
17 that, yes, in fact they need more money to become
18 self-sufficient. They can't operate on small amounts of
19 \$2-\$3 million. If they put the money out and they lose
20 it, it's all over.

21 They need a working base or a capital
22 base that allows them some self-sufficiency.

23 If you are talking equity for the end

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1 client or grant for the end client --

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I am talking
3 about the institution.

4 **WALTER KORNAS:** That would be my
5 additional comment on that.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I thought a
7 number of years ago, close to two if not more, there was
8 already beginning to be an awareness within the department
9 that the smaller institution that had been created was
10 just not big enough to make it on their own. It seemed
11 that, if you received \$2-\$3 million, it didn't seem quite
12 enough, and that anything more than \$5 million created
13 an institution that started to be able to have some ability.
14 Even the ones that were lending, it seemed, were just
15 too small, and there was some serious re-thought going
16 into creating those.

17 **MAYOR TOM LAWSON:** Commissioner, could
18 I respond to that one.

19 I think we are back to quantifying rather
20 than qualifying. If we say we want to reduce the
21 unemployment level through the Aboriginal community by
22 5 per cent, then how many dollars will it take and through
23 what program? That is the issue that I am trying to raise.

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1 Can it be done, perhaps, through ACCs?

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I think you
3 have made a good point there.

4 You started out by talking about 327
5 businesses of which the overwhelming majority are showing
6 a profit. Were all of these businesses created through
7 grants, or were some grants and some loans?

8 **MAYOR TOM LAWSON:** It would be a
9 combination of both. It was a sample survey of the
10 start-up period of the program.

11 We, through the three boards --
12 national, eastern and western boards -- with which I am
13 sure you are familiar, want know whether we are making
14 headway. Is it working? I am delighted to say that here
15 is the initial report saying, "Guess what, guys, it is
16 working. We have something to be proud of."

17 Now how do we go from first base to second
18 base? That's my point.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What happens
20 if you actually remove the grant portion of this? It would
21 seem to me that the biggest problem that Aboriginal people
22 always had was the fact that they didn't have any equity
23 to start with to get a loan. So a normal lending

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1 institution would never lend because there was no equity
2 -- the old adage that the only person who is going to be
3 able to borrow money is the one who doesn't need because
4 he has so much he can pay it back with. If you really
5 need money, you can't borrow because you have no
6 collateral.

7 **MAYOR TOM LAWSON:** One of intriguing
8 components of the program, Commissioner, is that the
9 program does recognize sweat equity.

10 **WALTER KORNAS:** The only comment I
11 would make on top of that -- and my learned friend is right.
12 He is trying to stretch every dollar he can to get back
13 into the Native community.

14 I am a firm believer that there has to
15 be that equity, not only for a lending institution purpose
16 -- we could solve that through an ACC. The equity is needed
17 there because the interest rates that are charged by the
18 ACC for their own self-sufficiency are typically as high,
19 or higher, than a normal bank.

20 Because they have a tendency to take so
21 much of their capital as a loan, it gets very difficult
22 in the first couple of years when, in fact, they are
23 struggling to turn a profit and, in actual fact, they end

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1 up working for the ACC or the bank, whatever the case.
2 The greater the equity, the less loan, just by simple
3 formula.

4 If it not at least at some kind of
5 industrial standard that a normal successful business is
6 doing out there, it is asking too much of that entrepreneur
7 to make a go of it. You are putting roadblocks in front
8 of him as opposed to trying to help him out. That can
9 lead to a lot of other situations and problems.

10 I am in total agreement, if I am hearing
11 you right, Commissioner, that, yes, equity is an important
12 portion. There are ways of structuring that equity. It
13 could be a forgivable loan; it could be a loan that is
14 carried for 10 years at no interest, which would help the
15 balance sheet perhaps of an ACC. Perhaps if ACCs had more
16 funding themselves, or their operations were funded, they
17 wouldn't have to charge interest rates at those level that
18 they do now, which might help particularly the small
19 businessman.

20 Mr. Lawson has indicated some
21 statistical analysis that has been done on proprietors
22 and micro-businesses, that they are not very successful.
23 It is, in fact, true that in today's economy they are

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1 the first to go, but it is also because most of the time
2 they don't have the equity and they don't have the staying
3 power. A lot of them can't last that one year to go through
4 that learning curve or to build up a clientele, again
5 depending on the business.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** It would be
7 interesting to find out if those people come back, having
8 learned something from their initial experience, and try
9 another venture and actually use it as part of their
10 educational process.

11 **WALTER KORNAS:** I think that would be
12 the case. I don't know if anyone has ever done a study
13 of that nature. Typically, most studies that have been
14 done on entrepreneurs are not on- or off-res or by Natives.

15 It has been the other societies. There, in fact, most
16 entrepreneurs fail five times before they are successful.

17 I suspect that is some kind of ratio that
18 would apply to on-res or off.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** We had a
20 Round Table on Economic Development in Ottawa a couple
21 of weeks ago, and there was an Aboriginal entrepreneur
22 there who had never really finished high school. He had
23 dropped out quite early. His approach to all of the

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1 ventures he had been involved in at the beginning, where
2 he had failed, was that they were a learning experience.

3 It was just his attitude, his approach
4 to it: He had never failed; he had gone through a learning
5 experience each time. If you were to count them all and
6 say they were failures, it was a big failure. But, in
7 reality, because his approach was that it was just a
8 learning experience --

9 **WALTER KORNAS:** It's no different from
10 an investor. He doesn't get it right every time either.

11 **MAYOR TOM LAWSON:** Commissioner, one
12 last thing. Mr. Kornas is a business consultant and
13 assists various people with things like business plans
14 and so on.

15 The program calls for business plans,
16 and one area of activity we are trying to pursue is the
17 concept whereby the applicant, in fact, will do his own
18 business plan. We have spent some time with the folks
19 at Brock University to see if we can start a pilot program
20 whereby, if the individuals buy into the business plan
21 he is creating, he may not go through the five or six
22 failures or self-educating times. That is a real dream
23 and a desire, and there may be something there.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is there
2 anything else you want to add? If not, thank you for coming
3 forward.

4 We will take a short break now.

5 --- Short Recess at 2:45 p.m.

6 --- Upon resuming at 3:00 p.m.

7 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** We are
8 ready to proceed again. We will call on Jean Koning, a
9 member of the Anglican Diocese of Huron.

10 **JEAN KONING:** Boozhoo. Jean Koning
11 n'dizhnikaaz. London n'doonjibaa.

12 Thank you for the opportunity to speak
13 today as an individual, a non-Native Canadian citizen who
14 "discovered" you, the Aboriginal peoples of Canada, almost
15 by accident about 25 years ago when my husband was sent
16 as an Anglican priest to Manitoulin Island.

17 I fell into a job, again almost by
18 accident with the Manitoulin Children Aid's Society,
19 meeting for the first time the Odawa Anishnabek of
20 Wikwemikong Unceded Reserve and working intimately among
21 the people of that place whom I came to love as brothers
22 and sisters.

23 Essentially, I had no knowledge of these

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1 "Indians", as I called them, except for what I had seen
2 in cowboy and Indian movies and read in history books as
3 a school child in Ontario.

4 Those four and a half years introduced
5 me to the reality of Native people's lives on reserves
6 and, over the two decades since then, I have attempted
7 to stand in solidarity with Aboriginal brothers and sisters
8 across the country, on reserves and in urban areas, in
9 the struggle for land claims and treaty rights, for
10 self-government and economic independence, for the
11 strengthening of Native language teaching and Native
12 spiritual values.

13 I have stood side by side with the Chiefs
14 and their people who have barricaded roads to protect their
15 land and treaty rights; mobilized people to write letters
16 to governments protesting logging in Temagami and in
17 British Columbia, pollution of waters in the west, the
18 north and the St. Clair River; felt the anger and sadness
19 as ancient burial grounds were desecrated to make way for
20 white man's "development"; and fought against removal of
21 Native children from their homes to non-Native foster and
22 adoptive homes, sometimes into foreign countries.

23 I have watched the renaissance of

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1 Aboriginal leadership -- remembering, Georges, the first
2 time we met in Saskatoon in 1977 when you were Chief of
3 the Dene Nation and Hugh McCullum was Project North
4 Co-ordinator, and I and some 55 other people representing
5 Aboriginal organizations and churches from across the
6 country attended the first North-South Consultation.

7 As Project North Co-ordinator for the
8 Anglican Diocese of Huron, I have joined with many other
9 church and community people trying, over the past 20 years,
10 to educate our fellow Canadians about Aboriginal issues.

11 But, just when we thought we were making headway, I
12 realized that another generation of Canadians had grown
13 up with the same stereotypical picture of Indians, and
14 the educational effort had to start all over again.

15 Moreover, in trying to help people
16 understand that the history of Aboriginal peoples in Canada
17 was worth learning, we must not only present new facts
18 according to the teaching of your Elders who are your
19 "history books", but we must also try to help people unlearn
20 the racially-biased information about Native peoples which
21 has traditionally been found in school history texts.

22 Since I personally don't have another
23 20 years to offer to this work -- the years take their

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1 toll on individuals -- I have come to the conclusion that
2 what is needed is an extensive overhaul of our educational
3 systems to reflect Aboriginal people's history from their
4 perspective, not coloured by the views of early Christian
5 missionaries or Indian agents administering the oppressive
6 legislation known as the Indian Act.

7 Perhaps time was needed for Aboriginal
8 peoples to seek out and reclaim their own history, so
9 devastatingly lost through the era of Indian residential
10 schools and government attempts at assimilation over the
11 past five centuries.

12 I know that during the last
13 quarter-century, Canada's Aboriginal peoples have been
14 recapturing their history as their ancestors have known
15 it for thousands of years, handed down from Elders to
16 grandchildren, until the coming of the European settlers
17 who failed to recognize you as peoples with distinct and
18 valued cultures and languages.

19 In those intervening years, our history
20 books have recorded what we call Canadian history from
21 our perspective. We never thought to ask you about your
22 history books, which in fact are your Elders who carried
23 the stories of the people, passing them on to the younger

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1 generations.

2 Also during these years I have been
3 privileged to sit with your Elders and listen to the
4 stories, and I have begun to realize that we Canadians
5 live a kind of historical lie, or at least a historical
6 untruth. We have recorded the history of our life in this
7 part of the world, but we have not yet claimed for Canada
8 the history of the geographic location which we call North
9 America and you call Turtle Island.

10 I remember learning what was called
11 "ancient history" as opposed to "modern history," giving
12 us knowledge of ancient Greek, Roman and other European
13 civilizations. Today the books in our educational systems
14 should reflect all of Canadian history, including the
15 ancient or pre-recorded historical time of this land mass
16 which has nurtured the Aboriginal peoples for thousands
17 of years.

18 Some strides are being made as Native
19 educators work within the education system to prepare
20 curricula reflecting their people's contributions to
21 Canadian society. In Ontario Native language classes are
22 being offered. I am grateful for these signs of hope,
23 but I believe a massive effort is needed to reclaim the

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1 full history of our country.

2 Much remains to be done, and this work
3 cannot be undertaken lightly. I am not advocating book
4 burning nor political correctness nor reconstructionism.

5 I am simply reiterating an admonition to Canadians, which
6 I have repeated many times in the past: We must listen
7 to the Aboriginal peoples; they have some very important
8 things to say to us.

9 We need to hear the history of how you
10 have lived in your homeland for 30,000 years or so, within
11 our own distinctive Nations and tribal affiliations, with
12 your own languages, customs, social and economic
13 structures, and your own spiritual values which said that
14 you were the children of the Creator, called to live in
15 harmony with creation and with all living things.

16 Our world desperately needs an
17 understanding of how you were taught by the Elders to take
18 only what was necessary for survival and to protect and
19 nurture creation so that it would be capable of sustaining
20 the lives of future generations.

21 I know that attempting to share your
22 history with us is fraught with anxiety and frustration
23 since we are notoriously bad listeners, believing as we

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1 do that our civilization and technological knowledge
2 surpasses the knowledge of all other peoples.

3 But the "Wisdom of the Elders," about
4 which Peter Knudtson and David Suzuki wrote recently in
5 their book of the same name, has scientific validity which
6 we can only ignore at our peril.

7 Bruce Clark, in his book "Native
8 Liberty, Crown Sovereignty, The Existing Aboriginal Right
9 of Self-government in Canada," presents a compelling case
10 for recognition of Aboriginal First Nations' sovereignty,
11 giving us hope that judges will delve more deeply into
12 constitutional law, recognizing Canada's responsibility
13 to honour treaties stretching back to the earliest days
14 of Aboriginal people's contact with overseas sovereigns.

15 I know this can make a difference because
16 I know of people who, after studying Indian archaeology,
17 have gained a new awareness of Native peoples, the only
18 trouble being that they think that somehow you are stashed
19 away with your history in museums and pictographs.

20 I want them to know that you are in our
21 midst, very much alive and aware of your history, and
22 anxious to share it with us.

23 I respectfully request that you call

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1 forth your Elders, who are your history books, to share
2 your history with us. I call upon educators, both Native
3 and non-Native, to seek out the school texts which tell
4 only part of the truth or, worse, the untruths about
5 Aboriginal peoples and supplement them with the books now
6 being written by Native authors and historians and those
7 who have sought and then recorded the Aboriginal people's
8 history in all its diversity.

9 I call for the support and strengthening
10 of Native newspapers, radio and television stations where
11 Native journalists are offering not only opportunity for
12 us to hear, see and read the stories, but also for Native
13 people to communicate with one another, building the sense
14 of unity.

15 In recent years, all the major Christian
16 church denominations have allied themselves with you in
17 your struggle for justice, so I call on my fellow
18 churchpeople to commit time and energy and, yes, money
19 to the work of re-educating Canadians about the thousands
20 of years of living which has engaged Aboriginal peoples
21 in this place you call Turtle Island.

22 And I pledge my support for and
23 solidarity with the young student from the Sweetgrass

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1 Secondary School who told you yesterday that he wished
2 to let Canadian know about his people.

3 I encourage him and the young men and
4 women students of Native alternative schools not to be
5 afraid to present yourselves and the spiritual values which
6 you represent to us in the communities of the dominant
7 society.

8 Our world needs you and what you have
9 to offer as the "people of the land" -- Anishnabe, Lenni
10 Lenaape, Haudenaushonee, Ongwe, Onyata'a:Ka, Dene -- or
11 whatever word your language offers to describe you and
12 your people.

13 And may I say to Vydal Sands, in my
14 imperfect Ojibway: "Ni mino masen. Nishkooziwin ge."
15 Miigwetch.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Would you
17 mind if we asked you some questions?

18 **JEAN KONING:** No.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** It was a very
20 interesting presentation. We will start with Paul
21 Chartrand.

22 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
23 very much for your very interesting presentation. It

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1 touches upon a number of endeavours that I am personally
2 involved in, so I am bound to support much of what you
3 say about the writing of history, for example.

4 I will also resist the temptation to
5 indulge in a critique of Bruce Clark's book.

6 I note that there is some progress
7 starting, where mainstream writers are acknowledging the
8 ancient history in this part of the world. I would cite,
9 by way of example, Gerald Friesen's fairly recent regional
10 history of western Canada. I agree with you that things
11 should change and that the reclaiming of history, as you
12 put it, is a very important component of reclaiming
13 identity and reclaiming power, which I think is the future
14 of Canada that we look at.

15 I certainly agree with you that we need
16 a new vision of Canada that is informed by the values of
17 Aboriginal peoples.

18 Thank you again for your very helpful
19 suggestions. Meegwetch.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I would like
21 to thank you for your presentation. It was well-received
22 and had very good points.

23 There was one area where I was wondering

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1 what you thought might be done. One of the residues of
2 the Christian church's effects on Aboriginal people is
3 that we now have communities that are divided. We have
4 both Christians and those people in the community who are
5 revitalizing their traditions and are involved in
6 ceremonies such as we have witnessed here.

7 What is happening in some communities
8 is that those who have accepted the Christian ideologies
9 believe now that some of their brothers and sisters are
10 going back to the black arts and paganism, that these are
11 the work of the Devil, and on and on and on. I am sure
12 you can think of the wordings just as well as I can.

13 I am wondering what can be done by the
14 Christian churches to clear up the effects of what
15 occurred. Most of the churches have at one time or another
16 made apologies for what has occurred. They have taken
17 very clear stands in support of land claims and
18 self-government. The Pope has come to North America a
19 couple of times, making it very clear that the drum can
20 be used again in ceremonies, and so forth.

21 It seems the message is still not getting
22 to the people still in the pews. I am wondering what can
23 be done there. It is really keeping the normal unity and

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1 the rebirth that seems to be needed.

2 **JEAN KONING:** I can tell you that in the
3 Diocese of Huron, which is the Anglican Church, we minister
4 among three different tribal affiliations. We have 10
5 parishes in about six different reserves in this
6 southwestern part of Ontario.

7 There are many of us, including our
8 Bishop, who are very open to the idea of Native people
9 expressing themselves spiritually through their own
10 culture and their own symbols. But the Native people,
11 especially in this part of the country, have been so
12 well-indoctrinated with the Christian message and with
13 that concept of anything pre-Christian being pagan that
14 you are sometimes sort of touching people at the very roots
15 of their being when you try to suggest that something should
16 be different.

17 My own feeling -- and I think our Bishop
18 is pretty good about this. In fact, I think most of the
19 major Christian denominations now are aware of the fact
20 that what we really need to do is somehow back off, hold
21 Native people in love but let them find their own way.
22 Obviously, the mistakes that have been made in the past
23 have been that we have interfered too much.

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1 We recognize that that will take a lot
2 of support, but we are terribly keen to encourage Native
3 people to bring their own spirituality into the Christian
4 faith, if that is their desire. And that is happening
5 in some places.

6 Personally, I recognize that as one of
7 the terrible tragic legacies of the Christian incursion
8 into Native people's lives. I just hope and pray that
9 we will be able to back off.

10 Even on this matter of the bingos --
11 again, the church is saying it doesn't approve of bingos,
12 at least the Anglican Church doesn't, and I don't either.
13 But Native people, church or unchurch, must be allowed
14 to make their own decisions. We must stand back, and they
15 must work that out for themselves, and they must know that
16 we love and care for all of them. They will work that
17 out.

18 Is that helpful at all?

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I think it
20 is. The only thing that came to mind in my thinking is
21 that somehow the message of the openness is not getting
22 through.

23 **JEAN KONING:** You mean that the Native

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1 people do not feel that the church is open? Really!

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I think
3 where the message doesn't seem to be getting through is
4 to those people who are still the most traditional in the
5 Christian faith.

6 **JEAN KONING:** You mean non-Native
7 people, non-Native church people?

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** No, I am
9 talking about Aboriginal.

10 **JEAN KONING:** The Aboriginal people.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I think that
12 young people have heard the message probably, and probably
13 don't care in some ways, but I don't really think they
14 have heard it enough.

15 **JEAN KONING:** Are you saying that the
16 churches could give more support to the older Aboriginal
17 Christian people, to say it's okay to recapture your own
18 history and your own spirituality?

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** It seems it
20 has to be said.

21 **JEAN KONING:** Really! They need that
22 kind of support. They need to be allowed, somehow.

23 That is good for me to know. I will

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1 definitely take that back to our Bishop, and I will
2 propagate that information among other channels of
3 communication through the wider church.

4 Would that be helpful?

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** It would be
6 very helpful. There were places that were more severely
7 hit than others. If you go to James Bay, for instance,
8 the Cree in the James Bay area for some reason had very
9 zealous missionaries who burned every drum they could get
10 hold of. If somebody used a drum there, it was considered
11 the work of the Devil.

12 I don't know if anybody has ever come
13 back to them and said, "Look, we're sorry. We had a few
14 very zealous missionaries here. There is no reason why
15 a person can't pray and communicate with the Great Spirit
16 in more than one way."

17 The debate is still going on there; there
18 is no question about it.

19 **JEAN KONING:** Is this something that you
20 take to something like the Aboriginal Resources -- what
21 do they call that?

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** The
23 Replacement and Project -- yes, certainly. I think they

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1 are in fact wrestling with that right now.

2 I am just saying that some of the
3 Christians have heard it; there is no question about it.
4 But some still have not heard it.

5 **JEAN KONING:** I am glad to know that.
6 I will certainly be glad to take that message back to
7 churches, to church people and church leaders, wherever
8 it is possible.

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

11 It seems that we are finished with the
12 presenters on our agenda. If anyone else was going to
13 present, they haven't shown up.

14 Is there anybody in the room who wishes
15 to make a presentation to us? Please come forward.
16 Please identify yourself and whether you are with an
17 organization.

18 **PAUL HOGAN:** Boozhoo. My name is Paul
19 Hogan and, yes, I am affiliated with an organization.
20 I am President of the N'Amerind Friendship Centre.

21 I have to tell you that I am a little
22 bit annoyed that we were scheduled yesterday for 7:00 p.m.
23 I was busy in Kettle Point and came home that not only

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1 had it been updated to 6:30 but then to 4:00 p.m., so I
2 was unable to attend. I understand these things happen
3 and people don't appear. In the interests of Native
4 people, I don't think things should be changed that
5 quickly. I was at home until 11 o'clock, so I don't know
6 what time the changes were made.

7 In any case, I know that Tom Dockstader
8 spoke here yesterday. We have real concerns, as
9 Aboriginal people in urban areas, about the whole idea
10 of representation and our rights as Aboriginal people.
11 It seems that these imagined communities that the federal
12 government has instituted since as far as back as the 1840s,
13 when they first started building reserves, these European
14 constructs that we now live under -- we know now that at
15 least 60 per cent of our people are in the urban areas.

16 I have to say for myself -- and I think there are many
17 more like me -- that we don't feel we have abrogated our
18 rights because we crossed the imagined boundaries. We
19 want to know what you are going to do to help us rectify
20 this situation.

21 We don't need a Red Indian Act imposed
22 on top of a White one. We are real tired of being left
23 out in the cold. I am glad the last constitutional agenda

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1 went down to defeat, and I think a whole lot of other
2 Aboriginal people are, too, and non-Natives as well.

3 We are struggling; we are really
4 struggling in the urban areas. Our funds are being cut.

5 I think we get more bang for our buck than anybody, but
6 we need more services and we need more help. We are not
7 getting it.

8 I will tell you, if the French-Canadian
9 people of this country are entitled to education and
10 entitled to run their own education, I think the original
11 peoples of these lands are entitled to have that. I am
12 a student at Western, in my fourth year in anthropology
13 and I am minoring in history, and I have gone over this
14 quite extensively. It is time to rectify the past. You
15 can't just wipe it away and say it didn't happen and we
16 will just proceed from here, which is what a lot of
17 non-Native people seem to want to do, because they are
18 worried it is going to cost them something.

19 They want a real fast solution to the
20 whole political process, when we know that as late as 1924
21 they imposed elected governments on the longhouse. They
22 locked the Chiefs out. In fact, it was either Akwesasne
23 or Six Nations where one of the Chiefs was shot dead because

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1 he tried to go back in.

2 I don't know how you expect us to give
3 you all these solutions in 90 days or less, or whatever
4 it is you are working on here. We have a real big problem
5 with governments that are foreign to us imposed on our
6 people, and we still have traditional people who aren't
7 buying into that system.

8 A lot of us want that stuff back. We
9 are learning to walk in both worlds. We are getting the
10 education; we have the educators now. We have the people
11 with degrees, and we want to build our own education system.
12 We have to have legislative powers. We are no longer
13 interested in administrative powers only, and having a
14 branch of the government dictate to us what we will do
15 with our money and have it told to us somehow that this
16 is a gift when, in fact, these are treaty moneys. These
17 are negotiated deals with the government.

18 Now it has come to this whole idea that
19 somehow the Canadian people gave us something. It was
20 never a gift. It was a treaty; it was a bargain; it was
21 a deal.

22 It is really hard out here in the urban
23 area. I am from Rice Lake, Mississaugas/Hiawatha, the

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1 Ojibway Nation, Anishnabe. Who takes care of my interests
2 down here? I am not from Onyata:ka and I am not from
3 Chippewas of the Thames or Munsees. Who takes care of
4 my children and who has the right to tell my children then
5 don't belong because their mother was white and because
6 I am labelled as C-31? When is all this garbage going
7 to change about who is dictating who we are as people?
8 When is the government going to get off our throat, and
9 when are the terms of reference going to be set down and
10 determined Nation to Nation, rather than the federal
11 government dictating what the terms of reference will be,
12 along with their provincial counterparts?

13 I don't how you expect to ever get an
14 answer because you are never going to get the
15 Haudenoshonee, from my understanding of where that
16 confederacy is at, to ever sit down with you if you are
17 going to dictate terms of reference. It just isn't going
18 to happen. If you want answers, you are going to have
19 to become flexible.

20 I am worried about my children. My
21 children have a real problem with this. Dad gets this
22 little red and white card, and they don't understand why
23 they don't get one. I have to explain to them that that

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1 card doesn't mean anything, that that is a construct of
2 the Canadian government to regulate us and control us and
3 to tell us who we are. It has nothing to do with who you
4 are as Anishnabe; if you walk with me, then you are
5 Anishnabe.

6 I don't know what else I have to say.
7 It's a real problem for people in urban areas. Who is
8 taking care of them? Who is going to take care of their
9 interests? There are more and more of us coming here.
10 I don't know if I should say it, but I heard just in talking
11 that a woman with the Ministry of Citizenship said she
12 has information indicating that maybe there is 80 per cent
13 of the Aboriginal people in urban areas.

14 I will tell you, once I get my degrees,
15 what am I going to do back at Hiawatha? It is probably
16 two kilometres square and maybe two square miles. What
17 am I going to do down there with my degrees? What kind
18 of job am I going to get and where is the land base going
19 to come from?

20 It's great for Bob Rae to stand up and
21 say Native people should pay their own way and have their
22 own taxes. We would be glad to. Maybe the federal
23 government should appropriate some land and give it back

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1 on. Everything in this room is made from that.

2 You can have title to the land, but we
3 always recognize that our ancestry comes from here. Yours
4 -- and I am sorry, Georges, I don't mean you. Non-Native
5 ancestry always goes back across the water.

6 We make that tie to the land. It is
7 fundamental to our heritage and our whole ideology of
8 inherent right.

9 My children go to French immersion, and
10 I am proud that they are learning another language. They
11 can understand that culture from its own perspective, from
12 its own writings, its own literature. I get tired of
13 hearing people knocking us and saying we are just another
14 ethnic group, because we are not. We are not just another
15 ethnic group to be stuck in the corner of the mosaic or
16 blended in with it. We are the original people, and we
17 do have rights.

18 Because we are half a per cent of the
19 population, we can be sloughed off in the corner. Well,
20 it's not going to happen. We all know that are women are
21 reproducing at a much higher rate than the national
22 average. I guess I can tell you: You can deal with us
23 now or you can deal with us later.

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1 I just finished a Caribbean course in
2 anthropology. One of the things remarked was that the
3 native-born black population in the United States is 10.5
4 per cent. That means we have 10 per cent to go before
5 we can have the clout the black people have there. You
6 can see by the way things go there that they do have it.
7 You see what happened in L.A. when there is blatant racism
8 and blatant misjudgment, or whatever you want to call it,
9 in the courts. Those people lashed out and said they were
10 unhappy.

11 I see the same thing happening in
12 Toronto.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Excuse me,
14 I don't want to interrupt you, but could you try to tell
15 us what you think the Royal Commission could recommend
16 to the Canadian government that would be of some use.
17 We can all just go on and on about the problems. What
18 do you think are the solutions?

19 **PAUL HOGAN:** I think the solution is
20 going to take time. As I expressed to you, you cannot
21 expect the traditional people sit down and come to an answer
22 in a very short time, after 75 years of imposed rule on
23 how it is going to be, and using assimilation, education,

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1 and missionization to try to turn red people into white
2 people. It hasn't worked, and it has caused a lot of
3 confusion.

4 It is going to take what I said. We need
5 education. We need it in our urban areas. We need our
6 own school boards. We need our own post-secondary,
7 primary and secondary education so we can teach our
8 children from when they are small, from their own cultural
9 base and their own cultural perspective who they are as
10 people.

11 We have too many people running around
12 who are ashamed of who they are and denying it or being
13 angry about it or being told for so long that there was
14 something evil in it that they reject it. On one hand,
15 they are proud of it and, on the other, they are cowed
16 by it and in so much fear because they don't know about
17 it.

18 I think there has to be a lot of dialogue
19 and there has to be a dialogue between those so-called
20 First Nations and the urban people as well. We can't go
21 forward just because the Chiefs say they want certain
22 things and they speak for other people. They don't speak
23 for me. I am a member of that polity at Hiawatha, but

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1 I don't have the right to vote, and that has to be changed.
2 If those guys are going to say they speak for me, then
3 I should have the right to select who the leadership will
4 be.

5 I believe, fundamentally, there needs
6 to be some big changes in these Grand Chiefs, and the Grand
7 Chief of the AFN. The people should have more voice in
8 that. The people don't vote, I don't believe, for a Chief
9 to go off and vote for a federal leader or a national leader.
10 When they vote, they expect him to take care of the regions
11 and local areas. I think the people want a greater voice
12 in things. They want to have more say in their future.

13 We have seen that in the poll we did.
14 I know Tom addressed that yesterday to you. The people
15 are concerned in the urban areas about whether they are
16 going to get representation.

17 I saw one speaker the other today who
18 was trying to form a new group of only treaty Chiefs.
19 I think it was Sykes Powderface that was talking about
20 it. It seems a lot of people want to have some kind of
21 deal of their own.

22 There has to be a united front and, until
23 that happens, I don't see how we can go forward.

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1 My pitch is that we, the urban people,
2 have to have representation. We have to be invited to
3 the table wherever this political scenario is being held.
4 You cannot rule us out and omit us. We are growing and
5 we are getting bigger than those back on the reserves.

6 If you really want to have a solution,
7 you have to include everybody. You have to get rid of
8 this stuff, too, about who has the little red and white
9 card.

10 That's about all I have to say. I
11 appreciate your giving me the time to speak. I am not
12 trying to be offensive; I am trying to tell you where I
13 and some others like me are coming from. We are getting
14 very tired and very frustrated with the situation as it
15 has been.

16 Thank you. Meegwetch.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do you mind
18 if we ask you a question or two?

19 **PAUL HOGAN:** Sure.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** We will
21 start with Paul Chartrand.

22 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** My first
23 question relates to your statement that we want to build

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1 our own education system. Earlier on in the day we heard
2 from another organization of Aboriginal people who were
3 taking a different path. They were advocating having an
4 Aboriginal trustee on the existing school board, and they
5 are working with the present system to establish language
6 classes. They thought that was the best way to go right
7 now.

8 You take a different view. I wonder if
9 you might outline for us your policy -- that is, how you
10 proceed to establish your own education system. Are you
11 contemplating a test case in the courts, or what strategy
12 do you have in mind?

13 **PAUL HOGAN:** I don't have a specific
14 strategy of my own. I know I have been working very closely
15 with Tom, and we have been talking with others like Nick
16 Deleery and Brian Lukes and others involved in
17 post-secondary education, about the ideas they have on
18 how to proceed.

19 We are trying to proceed with the school
20 board. We do see that as an immediate concern, but that
21 is a stopgap. That is only the beginning. We are really
22 interested in forming our own schools.

23 We know we have the educators. We have

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1 the people with the background now to do it. It is just
2 a matter of getting the different Nations together -- the
3 Onyata:ka, Chippewas of the Thames, the Munsee, the
4 Moravian, all the ones around here. We have to get the
5 dialogue going and see how we are going to build that.

6 I spoke at a Native Studies class in
7 Sarnia. It was mostly women in that class, and they were
8 talking about building a club for a project for a high
9 school. Everybody is looking at this, but how it is going
10 to evolve I can't say. Everybody has different ideas.

11 I can tell you, from working with the
12 Aboriginal Council at University of Western Ontario and
13 the last time I spoke with Gord Smalley there, in a forum
14 attended by Gord Peters, an original Chief, he basically
15 said, "Maybe you guys should go for a freestanding
16 structure because I don't know if we can accommodate what
17 you want here."

18 To me, that is basically the bottom line.
19 It always comes down to: We have the right to decide,
20 and we have the final say. We are saying, as Aboriginal
21 people, that that is not good enough any more. We want
22 to have a real say and real input into the direction our
23 education is going to be taking.

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1 We have people who can build curricula.
2 It is just a matter of working. We would like it if we
3 could work with the politicians and they would make it
4 easy for us rather than having to push and elbow our way
5 forward.

6 We are not prepared to ask any more.
7 We are telling you this is what we want, and we are going
8 to just keep coming. We are just going to keep coming
9 and bugging and bugging and bugging you until we can
10 convince you to make this process work.

11 All we are saying is that we have the
12 people, we have the curriculum, we have the people to
13 develop the curriculum, we have the educators. Why don't
14 you just allow us to do this? Why is it so difficult to
15 understand and so difficult to sell to politicians?

16 Native people want to teach from a
17 cultural base, the same as the Roman Catholics do. I was
18 raised Roman Catholic, so I understand what their school
19 system is about. I understand what we want now, too, and
20 it is not so very different. We want to teach our people
21 from our own heritage, using our own cultural stuff. We
22 don't particularly want to teach European history. We
23 would like to put more of our own stuff in.

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1 We are still going to keep the academic
2 stuff, the mathematics and sciences.

3 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Should I
4 ask another question?

5 **PAUL HOGAN:** Go ahead.

6 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I
7 understand better now your view that things will take time.

8 I want to point out in relation to
9 something you said about the Indian Act. The Indian Act
10 provides a definition of who is an Indian for purposes
11 of the Indian Act. The Indian Act does not, and cannot,
12 say who is Anishnabe or who is Micmac or who is Innu.
13 It does not do that. It has a very limited function.

14 You talk about Nation-to-Nation
15 discussions, and you have explained very well that this
16 is something that will take place in the future. Could
17 you enlighten us on your perception of a Nation in this
18 context. It is unclear to me, if I may just explain what
19 I don't understand.

20 You talked about a Nation and you talked
21 about the Anishnabe people. The Anishnabe people might
22 well be a good illustration of an idea of a nation. But
23 you were also talking about urban representation.

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1 How do you mesh those two concepts
2 together? Do you have the idea that, say, the Anishnabe
3 people would comprise one people and would have Anishnabe
4 representatives to establish whatever form of Aboriginal
5 self-government you might contemplate? How does that not
6 conflict with your idea of having urban representation?
7 In urban areas, in the cities and towns, there are people
8 from many different nations.

9 I wonder if you might explain that.

10 **PAUL HOGAN:** Again, I can't say
11 specifically how that would be resolved.

12 My hope, and I believe the hope of many
13 Aboriginal people is that their home nations, these First
14 Nations, would build in themselves back into the Anishnabek
15 people -- all the people at Rice Lake, all the people at
16 Scugog, all the people up the Garden River and Serpent
17 River would come together and rebuild the three-fires
18 confederacy and decide on how it is going to work, and
19 to represent their people in the urban community.

20 Many of these people here are from
21 Onyata:ka, who have come forward here. They selected
22 their traditional Council first and foremost in our survey,
23 that they wanted them to speak for them. Many people want

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1 the traditional government back.

2 If we did that, we don't have to get into
3 all this other stuff. But I think there is going to have
4 to be an accommodation somewhere with elected
5 representation.

6 I would hope that my people would
7 represent me. My own opinion would be that I would like
8 to see the agencies in the urban areas get the nod from
9 the traditional and territorial governments to be the
10 service deliverers, whatever it is we need. This whole
11 thing of unity, of harmony, is the only way the Anishnabek
12 people can go forward -- Onkwehonwe or whatever you want
13 to call us. It's the only way we are going to arrive at
14 a solution.

15 We have to get away from these imagined
16 communities, of who belongs and who doesn't, us and them.
17 We need our people out there in their territories to be
18 interested and care about us and to be willing to stand
19 for us.

20 You say the Indian Act doesn't determine
21 it, but the first thing many of them will say is, "The
22 Indian Act prohibits us from taking care of you. We have
23 no choice. They cut our funding. What do we do? We are

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1 caught between a rock and a hard place."

2 I don't buy that the Indian doesn't
3 determine it. Tell me why, if it doesn't determine it,
4 my mother was given two hundred bucks and told she didn't
5 belong any more.

6 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Let me
7 clarify that. I said it defines who is an Indian for its
8 purposes, period.

9 **PAUL HOGAN:** It needs to be abolished
10 because it is discriminatory. Even now, after the
11 amendments made to it, it is still discriminatory -- this
12 whole idea of what is a C-31.

13 My own personal opinion is that I would
14 like to see it go back to traditional governments, have
15 our traditional people speak for us, and get rid of this
16 elected system. It seems to me it becomes very much like
17 the non-Native system where people do whatever in order
18 to get re-elected. In our system, you had to take care
19 of everybody. Things moved forward by consensus.
20 Everybody had to be in agreement. There was no majority
21 rule. We know majority rule isn't working in Canada, so
22 maybe we should reconsider that, too.

23 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Mr.

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1 Hogan, thank you for telling us about your hopes.

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

3 I don't have any questions.

4 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** We call
5 Paul Doxtator, whose topic is Aboriginal people in Canadian
6 prisons, and Shirley Honyust.

7 **PAUL DOXTATOR:** Basically, what I am
8 going to do is read from something that I had presented
9 before. As I go along, I will expand on it. This is a
10 spur-of-the-moment thing for me, so I had to just slap
11 it together last night.

12 The alarming statistics and percentages
13 of Native people who are presently housed in Canadian
14 federal and provincial prisons is a deplorable situation
15 about which all First Nations communities should be
16 outraged.

17 The following information stems
18 primarily from the Final Report: Task Force on Aboriginal
19 Peoples in Federal Corrections (Solicitor General 1988).

20 Native and non-Native prisoner
21 population distribution by security level of prison:
22 Native prisoners are warehoused in the higher-level
23 security prisons because they are not receiving the proper

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1 consideration for timely security reductions by their
2 Euro-Canadian Classification Officers and Parole
3 Officers.

4 Nearly twice as many Native prisoners
5 are placed in multi-level (medium-maximum) security
6 prisons, 24 per cent as compared to 12 per cent of
7 Euro-Canadian prisoners. Only 17 per cent of Native
8 prisoners, compared to 28 per cent of Euro-Canadian
9 prisoners, were in S4 medium-level security prisons.

10 Also, 7.8 per cent of Native prisoners,
11 compared to 15.6, twice as many, per cent of Euro-Canadian
12 prisoners were in minimum security prisons.

13 Basically, what it boils down to is that
14 Native prisoners are definitely being warehoused in the
15 higher-level security prisons. That has been my stand
16 for the longest time. I served five years in prison, and
17 over the past 20 years I have spent a lot of time in
18 institutions, from the Children's Aid Society right up
19 to the federal penitentiary. My experience in that is
20 vast.

21 This warehousing of Native prisoners --
22 they have a maximum security, which is Millhaven, and they
23 have a medium-maximum security which is Collins Bay.

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1 Collins Bay has a 30-foot wall around it. You don't see
2 anything while you are there. You don't see any cars;
3 you don't see any outside activity. At Millhaven you can
4 see it, because all they have is double wired fences, and
5 you can see right through the fences.

6 What they have recently done is target
7 Collins Bay as the target institution for Native prisoners.
8 So what they are doing is warehousing Native prisoners
9 behind that wall, and they are legalizing the warehousing
10 of them behind one of their highest-level security prisons
11 in the region. That is one of CSC's initiatives.

12 Percentage of sentences served prior to
13 granting of full parole for prisoners granted full parole:
14 Native prisoners are more likely than Euro-Canadian
15 prisoners to be released on mandatory supervision,
16 two-thirds of sentence, rather than day parole, one-sixth
17 of their sentence, or full parole, one-third of their
18 sentence.

19 Mandatory supervision is basically when
20 you have served two-thirds of your sentence and you get
21 kicked out. It is not a matter of earning that release.

22 It is just that you are thrown out the door. You have
23 finished your time and that's it; you serve the rest, your

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1 one-third, on parole. There is no going in front of the
2 Parole Board and being granted it for good behaviour, or
3 whatever; you just get kicked out.

4 Day parole comes at one-sixth of your
5 sentence. Day parole entitles you to a halfway house,
6 a community release. On full parole you can return to
7 your home community or back to the reserve, to your place
8 of residence. You don't have to be at a halfway house.

9 What is happening is that Native
10 prisoners are being held until their mandatory supervision
11 date. A lot of times, what else is going on is that the
12 mandatory supervision date of a Native prisoner will be
13 about six months away and then the Classification Officer,
14 who is supposed to be helping you get out on parole, will
15 come to you and ask you if you are willing to accept a
16 day parole at this time, like three years after you were
17 entitled to it. They want to give you a day parole just
18 before you are kicked out on mandatory supervision, so
19 it makes them look good. They say, "There's another one
20 we released on day parole," but they don't tell you that
21 mandatory supervision was coming up in 90 days. He didn't
22 need that supervision; he didn't need a halfway house.
23 If he had waited another 90 days, he would have been

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1 released with no conditions, other than reporting to his
2 Parole Officer.

3 Native prisoners who are paroled serve
4 a greater portion of their sentence prior to being paroled.

5 Native prisoners granted full parole had served 51.3 per
6 cent of their sentences prior to being paroled, as compared
7 to an average of 45.7 per cent of sentences served by
8 Euro-Canadian prisoners.

9 The fact that Native prisoners serve a
10 greater portion of their sentence in prison is borne out
11 in a study of all prisoners eligible for parole in the
12 period 1980-81 to 1982-83. This study found that, while
13 16 per cent of Caucasian prisoners were released after
14 having served 36 per cent or less of their sentence in
15 prison, this was true for only 4 per cent of Native
16 prisoners.

17 In the fiscal years 1984-85 through
18 1986-87, there were more negative decisions for Native
19 prisoners seeking full parole than Euro-Canadian
20 prisoners. We just got denied more often than white
21 prisoners. For 1986-87, 20 per cent of decisions in
22 respect of Native prisoners resulted in the granting of
23 parole, in comparison to 38 per cent of the decisions made

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1 regarding Euro-Canadian prisoners.

2 The proportion of decisions resulting
3 in the granting of full parole to Native prisoners has
4 shown a consistent decline from 25.6 per cent in 1984-85
5 to 20.5 per cent in 1986-87 -- and I don't doubt that it
6 is getting worse.

7 A study of all prisoners becoming
8 eligible for release in the fiscal year 1980-81 through
9 1982-83 found substantial differences in the proportions
10 of Native and Euro-Canadian prisoners being released on
11 parole, regardless of the general category of offence
12 considered, e.g. robbery with violence, break and enter.

13 However, another study of all prisoners released in 1979,
14 1980 and 1981 found that Native prisoners were more likely
15 to have their parole revoked than were Euro-Canadian
16 prisoners -- again, regardless of general category of
17 offence under consideration. Overall, 44.1 per cent of
18 Native prisoners had their parole revoked, while only 33.8
19 per cent of Caucasian prisoners suffered a revocation of
20 their parole.

21 I had a lot of difficulty when I was out
22 on parole. I had to demand that my Parole Officer be
23 changed. The John Howard Society was supposed to be

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1 helping me, and they were supposed to be my friends and
2 assisting me in my re-integration, rather than have me
3 report to CSC parole staff. They felt I would be a little
4 more open to the John Howard Society. It turned out that
5 these people were stabbing me in the back also. They were
6 lying to me. When they lied to me, or when anybody lies
7 to me, I will turn on them real quick and I will put them
8 straight and tell them, "We can no longer deal with each
9 other."

10 I made every possible plea with CSC
11 Parole to take me back, to report to the Parole Officer
12 of Correctional Services Canada. I said, "At least I know
13 where I stand with you. You're on this side of the fence,
14 and I am on this side of the fence." With the John Howard
15 Society, they make believe that they are your friend and
16 that they are doing something for you, so you don't know
17 where you stand with them. When they mislead you, it
18 really confuses you, so you just don't want to deal with
19 them any more. You are afraid of flipping out.

20 That is what happens a lot of times with
21 Native prisoners and non-Native parole staff. There is
22 a lack of understanding, and it gets blown out of
23 proportion. What happens is that somebody loses their

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1 temper and, as soon as you get up and walk out, they say,
2 "This guy's got a bad attitude; let's revoke him."

3 Parole Waiver Notification submitted by
4 Native Prisoners: The Parole Act allows for prisoners
5 to waive their right to a parole hearing and/or to a parole
6 review. However, it should be noted that ill-advised
7 encouragement to waive, particularly in cases where a
8 prisoner waives a right to a review of the case, carries
9 the serious consequence of limiting the discretionary
10 powers of the National Parole Board.

11 During the consultation process, the
12 Working Committee on Aboriginal Peoples and Federal
13 Corrections heard concerns that waivers by Native
14 prisoners occurred at a higher rate than that of
15 Euro-Canadian prisoners. Many Aboriginal prisoners
16 interviewed by the Working Committee have asserted that
17 Classification Officers are encouraging them to waive
18 their parole hearings. Often, Native Liaison Officers
19 are at the same time encouraging the Native prisoner to
20 present themselves at their hearings.

21 I have seen this happen a lot of times.
22 We had a talk with the Native Brotherhood group inside
23 the prison. What happens is that the Classification

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1 Officer will tell you that he is not prepared or he is
2 not ready to support you at this time, even though you
3 are eligible for consideration right now. On that day
4 you are eligible for consideration, but the Classification
5 Officer says, "I have been under-staffed; I have been
6 working with other people, and I am just not prepared.
7 Let's waive your hearing. Don't worry about it. We're
8 just waiving it temporarily."

9 In one instance that actually did
10 happen, the guy came back to me. He got a letter from
11 the Parole Board saying, "Thank you for your waiver
12 notification. Good luck on your efforts on mandatory
13 supervision." He had waived his parole completely, right
14 up to mandatory. It wasn't just a temporary waiver, and
15 he didn't realize that. That has happened to a lot of
16 guys because they don't understand the process and they
17 are being misled by the Classification Officers.

18 Furthermore, communications are
19 inevitably difficult because of the social and cultural
20 differences between Native prisoners and non-Native prison
21 officials. Most Native prisoners the Working Committee
22 interviewed said that they felt misunderstood by staff
23 and, consequently, have tended to refuse all but necessary

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1 interaction.

2 Now we come to recommendations.

3 Presently there is a double standard of
4 treatment for Native prisoners housed in provincial and
5 federal prisons in Canada. This double standard, by which
6 consideration for earned entitlement is more readily given
7 to Euro-Canadian prisoners over Native prisoners,
8 continues to nurture an acceptance of racist manipulation
9 of the correctional system.

10 In order to improve conditions for
11 Native prisoners in federal and provincial prisons in
12 Canada, the Native-specific directives cannot be left to
13 the interpretation and discretion of prison
14 administrators. Steps to stop this from happening are
15 as follows:

16 1. To word the directives more
17 specifically so as not to allow for misinterpretation by
18 administrators to the point that any programs put forward
19 have no real substantial benefit to Native prisoners.

20 2. To change both federal and
21 provincial Native-specific directives to include the
22 recognition of sweat lodge ceremonies to take place on
23 a weekly basis, equal to that of weekly Christian services.

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1 3. To recognize Native Brotherhood and
2 Sisterhoods as a viable organization that can make a
3 difference in Native-specific programming within the
4 institutions and that Native Brotherhood and Sisterhoods
5 be consulted in all areas of Native prisoner programming
6 which will affect their very lives.

7 4. To support Native prisoner advocacy
8 organizations, philosophically and financially, so they
9 can work diligently at changing the present correctional
10 structure which continues to fail in addressing the needs
11 of Native prisoners. This would not be a duplication of
12 the present Native Inmate Liaison Services because these
13 services are not mandated or contracted by the Correctional
14 Service of Canada to advocate for structural changes to
15 the correctional system.

16 5. To have both federal and Ontario
17 provincial corrections allocate sufficient funds to
18 establish a Native-specific halfway house in the Seven
19 Bands area (southwestern Ontario). This would
20 substantially increase the number of Native prisoners from
21 this region being released on day parole rather than
22 mandatory supervision.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you

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1 for your excellent presentation. It is well-organized
2 and the recommendations are very clear.

3 Do you mind if we ask you some questions?

4 **PAUL DOXTATOR:** I don't mind at all.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** We will
6 start with Paul Chartrand.

7 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
8 for your presentation.

9 The issue of Aboriginal people in the
10 prisons, I think, is a very important part of our mandate.
11 We have been in a number of prisons in the country and
12 have concerned ourselves to hear from people incarcerated
13 there. It is good that you have come to give us your views
14 on this important topic, which is an issue that seems
15 particularly difficult to get governments to react to.
16 There have been many reports on reform of the prison system
17 and, from my knowledge of it, there is not much success
18 in getting those reforms. We have to work at it, to do
19 our best anyway.

20 I did have one question on something you
21 said which I didn't quite get. It has to do with Collins
22 Bay and something about a plan having to do with Aboriginal
23 prisoners. Would you mind repeating that part, because

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1 I didn't get that.

2 **PAUL DOXTATOR:** What was happening, the
3 initiative they were putting forward was that they were
4 targeting Collins Bay as the prison for Native-specific
5 programming. It really struck me as being racist.

6 I saw a memo while I was in Joyceville,
7 which is a medium security prison. The memo stated that
8 there were undesirables coming into that prison, which
9 were protective custody and child molesters and sex
10 offenders They were going to be integrated into the
11 population of Joyceville. The memo stated that these
12 undesirables were coming in and that, if anybody tried
13 to stop it or did anything to interfere with that smooth
14 operation of them flowing in, they would be immediately
15 transferred to Collins Bay or Millhaven.

16 Obviously, Collins Bay and Millhaven are
17 still punitive measures toward somebody who doesn't toe
18 the line at Joyceville, our medium security. So Collins
19 Bay is definitely a higher-level security prison.

20 It also stated that Joyceville was the
21 second-highest releasing institution in the Kingston
22 region or in the federal penitentiaries.

23 When they targeted Collins Bay as their

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1 initiative to warehouse Native prisoners, it was sort of
2 like if you come into the system, as soon as you walk in,
3 they say, "Oh, you're Indian. You're going to Collins
4 Bay." You're going behind the wall, and you're never going
5 to see anything until the day you get out, unless you
6 finally make a transfer to a minimum security.

7 I just imagine if they did that to
8 anybody else, if they did it to blacks, if they did it
9 to Asians, if they did it to the Sikhs, I am sure they
10 would be up in arms, and they would say, "No, you're not
11 going to warehouse our people behind that wall."

12 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank
13 you. On your second recommendation, we have been in places
14 where we were shown a sweat lodge or told that sweat lodge
15 ceremonies were taking place on a regular basis. You are
16 saying that this is not a general practice across Canada
17 in federal penitentiaries, and you are asking us to
18 recommend that there be a general instruction given so
19 that this be done in all the penitentiaries. Is that what
20 you are recommending?

21 **PAUL DOXTATOR:** That is exactly what I
22 am recommending. What happens is that the Commissioner's
23 Directive -- it is called Commissioner's Directive 702

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1 from the federal system. It is Native offenders'
2 programming. That directive is vaguely worded. It is
3 left to the interpretation and the discretion of the warden
4 or the institutional head, whatever they want to call them.

5 My experience with that directive was
6 that every time the Homelands Native Brotherhood Society
7 in Joyceville had requested certain programs and certain
8 initiatives and put our proposals forward and quoted from
9 that directive, they would say, "Oh, no, that's not what
10 it means. This is what it means. It doesn't mean that
11 much."

12 So it is left open to our interpretation
13 and their interpretation. We would be fighting over that
14 constantly. It was too vaguely worded and it was left
15 open for interpretation and to the discretion of the
16 wardens or the administrators. That made it very hard
17 on us.

18 What we have been trying to do is lobby
19 for more stringent wording on it.

20 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** That
21 strikes me as something that we might be able to do right
22 away. We don't necessarily have to wait for the final
23 report to do something like that. You have brought the

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1 matter before us, and we will see what we can do about
2 it.

3 **PAUL DOXTATOR:** If that actually
4 happens, it will no longer be left to the wardens'
5 discretion. It will be a directive; it will be a mandate
6 by the Commissioner that states: Yes, every operational
7 unit shall allow sweat lodge ceremonies on a weekly basis.

8 All the Brotherhood has to do is grab that directive and
9 show it to the warden, and he will just have to take his
10 medicine because it's a directive.

11 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
12 very much.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I don't have
14 any questions right now. I just want to thank you for
15 presenting this. It is very, very useful.

16 If there is any other information you
17 want to provide to us on this, please do. We will track
18 down these studies that you mentioned here.

19 **PAUL DOXTATOR:** I can get a list of the
20 different studies and give it to you.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
22 coming forward.

23 **MODERATOR LUCILLE KEWAYOSH:** We will

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1 call Marvin Conner at this time, please.

2 **MARVIN CONNER:** Before I start, I would
3 like to make it very clear that I am not here speaking
4 on behalf of any one Nation. I am not here speaking on
5 behalf of an organization. I am speaking because I have
6 the responsibility as a father and a grandfather to speak
7 what I know and what I have been taught by our Elders.

8 I didn't prepare anything in writing
9 because I am not good at doing that and I am not a very
10 eloquent speaker. But I spoke with my son last night,
11 who is seven years old, and he told me that I had to say
12 things on his behalf.

13 I would like to talk first of all about
14 the relationship that you are asking us, as Aboriginal
15 people, to help find solutions to.

16 I believe that the Elders, when they
17 spoke with me, starting eight years ago when I went back
18 and wanted to learn our teachings and learn our ways again,
19 which I had lost when I left our reserve when I was 12,
20 told me that that relationship started 4,000 years ago.

21 The beginning of that relationship with the non-Native
22 people, the planning started 4,000 years ago, 3,500 years
23 before Columbus hit these shores, when he was found lost

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1 and floundering.

2 The reason that the Elders tell us that
3 this is true is because the pictographs on the rocks told
4 them so. Some of the paintings on the rocks have been
5 carbon-dated by the non-Native scientists. They dated
6 back 4,000 years ago, and one of those pictures depict
7 a large boat with a man standing in the front with a cross.

8 We, as Aboriginal people, people had
9 that vision. They saw it coming, and they started planning
10 that relationship of how we were to deal with the people
11 who were coming.

12 The Elders tell us that our ancestors
13 told us that, because we were magnificent and honourable
14 people, we were to greet those foreigners, those people
15 that were coming, with those gifts that were given us --
16 kindness, sharing, caring and honesty, to share what we
17 had with those people. That was 3,500 years ago.

18 Five hundred years ago, when the
19 Europeans hits the shores of North America, that is what
20 our people did. We shared. We shared our land; we shared
21 our culture. We shared what we had with them because that
22 is the type of people we were.

23 That relationship started out as a

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1 trust, a spiritual relationship, when our Elders signed
2 those treaties, when our Elders agreed to share the land.
3 That relationships over this 500 years has deteriorated,
4 not through the fault of our people. Five hundreds years
5 from that day, today, we are still sharing. That is what
6 we are doing here today -- sharing our feelings; sharing
7 our dreams; sharing our hopes.

8 I don't believe that that relationship
9 has just gone away all at once. I believe that we, as
10 Aboriginal people, are still sharing those dreams, still
11 sharing our land, and now all we have left after being
12 pushed on to reserves in North America, is swamp and rock,
13 and they still want that.

14 I speak to my son, and my son knows this
15 story at seven. My wife, who is non-Native, is a Christian
16 woman, but he also knows that way, too, because we are
17 taught to do that with our children.

18 That relationship that we have we want
19 to extend. We want to continue on because we still are
20 honourable and we still are magnificent. We still have
21 that heart and we still care.

22 To gets things back the way they should
23 be, the Elders have told us -- and I spoke with one last

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1 night from northern Ontario on the phone. He said, "We
2 have no solution. We have a suggestion." They suggest
3 that this relationship that we have, because we didn't
4 cause it to deteriorate, we didn't cause it to become what
5 it is now, a one-sided relationship -- he said, "The only
6 suggestion that we, the Elders, could suggest that you
7 give at that hearing tomorrow is to go back, have the
8 government people go back with our leaders. Have them
9 go back with the old people and sit down and read the old
10 treaties."

11 When those treaties were signed, a lot
12 of our Elders didn't speak English. The Elder said, "If
13 we knew what it was going to cause this day, we still would
14 have signed it." What they were told then they signed
15 from their heart. They signed from their head and their
16 heart, and the old men told us, "Before we did those things,
17 we had to double understand." The old man explained that
18 the double understanding was understanding what you are
19 doing with your head and also understanding what you are
20 doing with your heart.

21 He said no matter what becomes of this
22 Royal Commission, we should never give up our treaties.

23 "Ensure to the day you die, because you have that

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1 responsibility to your children and your grandchildren
2 and to those seven generations that we talk about, and
3 for those unborn who are watching us now today, to see
4 whether we, the ones that are still here, are going to
5 stand up and demand that our treaties be honoured. The
6 ones who signed them signed them with a kind heart, with
7 understanding."

8 That was the suggestion and the
9 recommendation that he suggested I give to this Commission.
10 Go back and read those treaties. Read them with the old
11 people who are around. Read them with the Chiefs. Read
12 them with your leaders. Once they honour those treaties,
13 then our relationship can once again start.

14 We did not create the relationship the
15 way it is today. We don't have a final solution, but we
16 care and we hope that a solution is found.

17 Then he spoke to me about
18 self-government, and one of the teachings he spoke about.
19 They can legislate and they can talk about self-government
20 all they want to, but self-government begins within
21 oneself. I, myself, personally -- and I am speaking for
22 myself. I have self-government.

23 The Creator put me on this earth with

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1 rights. He told me those rights, and he also told me my
2 responsibilities. We as Aboriginal people sometimes fail
3 to understand that we do have responsibilities along with
4 rights.

5 I feel that I am self-governing because
6 I make up my own mind. I speak what I feel. My spirit
7 is there. Nobody has taken that from me. The old man
8 told us that that is one thing that the Government of Canada
9 can never take, your feelings, because they are yours.
10 They can't tell you how you feel as an Aboriginal person.
11 They can't feel how you feel as an Aboriginal person.

12 He said that self-government is already
13 there. It has been there, but our own leaders and the
14 leaders of the non-Native society have to look at
15 themselves very carefully to see if they have
16 self-government within themselves. If they can't govern
17 their own selves, they can definitely not govern a people.

18 Then we spoke about healing. Healing
19 is something that has to take place. We have to do that
20 on an individual basis, and it all ties in with
21 self-government. I have to be clean and I have to be whole
22 within myself, so I can take care of my family. Then,
23 when I can take care of my family, I can honestly and

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1 truthfully work for my people.

2 The old man said, "There are two things
3 that you can be in life. You can be a singer or you can
4 be a dancer." I am not much of a talker, so I have to
5 work for the rest of my life for my people because my people
6 gave me another chance.

7 He said, "Always remember those ones
8 that aren't born yet, those ones that are to come. Is
9 it worth it for them to come here?"

10 We don't need self-government from the
11 government. Before we can re-establish a true, honourable
12 relationship with the non-Native society, we must
13 re-establish relationships with our own people. The
14 Indian Act and the influence that we have been under has
15 caused us to now look at one another as not Aboriginal
16 people, not as human beings, but as status and non-status,
17 on-reserve, off-reserve.

18 When the Creator placed us here in North
19 America, he didn't place us with numbers. He placed us
20 here as human beings. I have a number. My son has a
21 number. But that doesn't make me Aboriginal.

22 My grandfather told me that anybody can
23 look Aboriginal. Anybody can look like an Indian. It's

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1 not the colour of your skin, but try to walk like one.
2 Try to walk that good red road. Try to live those gifts
3 of kindness, sharing, caring and honesty. When you can
4 do that, then you are a true Aboriginal person.

5 I am here on behalf of my family. I am
6 here on behalf of those yet to be born, and they have a
7 reason to come here. I have that responsibility to speak.

8 A story was told a long time ago, and
9 I noticed it was told once to the Commission. An old man
10 told us that, when we look at the future, what we would
11 like to see. Four children came from those four
12 directions: a white child from the north, a red child
13 from the east, a yellow child from the south, and a black
14 child from the west. They walked together and they peered
15 into the mirror of life. They joined hands and, when they
16 looked in there, all they saw was the Creator. That's
17 all they saw. They saw no animosity; they saw no colour;
18 they saw the Creator.

19 The Great Mystery put us all here as
20 human beings first. So I say to you that the only
21 recommendation, the only suggestion, that I can bring to
22 you is to go back and read those treaties with our people
23 and our leaders, and a new beginning can come by honouring

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1 those treaties.

2 Meegwitch.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** That seems
4 to be it for our presentations.

5 I would like to thank everyone that has
6 presented to us yesterday and today. We have had a whole
7 variety of presenters.

8 I would like to thank the people who have
9 organized this for us, who went out and knocked on doors
10 and encouraged people to present to us. I would like to
11 thank Lucille for moderating for us and Jean Pierre for
12 opening and closing the events.

13 What we will be doing now is going to
14 the Brantford area to hear from people in that area. The
15 people on the Six Nations Reserve will present to us, and
16 people from the surrounding communities.

17 We are in the midst of our third round
18 of hearings. If there are people out there who have
19 something they want to send to us later, we are more than
20 prepared to hear from you. You probably watched us ask
21 questions and so forth and, if you didn't understand what
22 we were trying to do, we were trying to get the views of
23 the presenters on the solutions in the different mandate

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1 areas.

2 If you read our mandate, you will see
3 that it is extremely broad. It is very, very large, and
4 covers virtually anything and everything you can imagine
5 that would be important to Aboriginal people. Don't feel
6 that, since you haven't had a chance to present here, this
7 ends it by any means. We are continuing to collect
8 information for a while.

9 We will come out with a number of interim
10 reports in addition to our final report. As we are working
11 our way to the final report, we will try to test out our
12 ideas on a number of people. One of the suggestions that
13 was made earlier here was to bring together Elders from
14 Turtle Island in a circle and check out our recommendations
15 with them. We are, in fact, going to be doing those types
16 of thing with our draft solutions that have been coming
17 forth.

18 With that, I want to thank everybody for
19 coming and sitting and listening.

20 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I only
21 want to say thank you, merci, meegwetch.

22 --- Closing Prayer

23 --- Whereupon the Hearing concluded at 4:30 p.m.