

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

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"for the record..."

STENOTRAN

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ROYAL COMMISSION
ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

Commissioner Voila Robinson

Co-Chair René Dussault

Moderator Darrell Paul

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1 Moncton, New Brunswick

2 --- Upon commencing on Monday, June 14, 1992 at 2:00 p.m.

3 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Ladies and
4 gentlemen, I wonder if we could get under way.

5 At this time I would like to call on Mrs.
6 Margaret LaBillois. If you would, Margaret, say the
7 opening prayer please.

8 --- **Opening Prayer**

9 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Ladies and
10 gentlemen, I am your moderator for these hearings for the
11 next two days. I am Darrell Paul. I am with the Union
12 of New Brunswick Indians.

13 To get under way, I wonder if Stan
14 McGrath, Deputy Mayor, is present.

15 **STAN McGRATH, DEPUTY MAYOR:** I would
16 like to thank you for the invitation to be with you on
17 this very special occasion, Royal Commission for
18 Aboriginal People.

19 I do bring you greetings on behalf of
20 the Tri (PH) community, and for those visiting our city,
21 I welcome you. We hope that your stay here will always
22 be a very happy and enjoyable one and when you return home

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1 you will bring back with you some very fond memories of
2 our Tri (PH) Community, of our hospitality and especially
3 of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Conference.

4 I would like to take this opportunity,
5 also, to say that we all have a vision and it is my wish
6 that this vision will some day become a reality and we
7 will all work together as a team for the betterment of
8 all communities and for the betterment of our country.

9 So once again, on behalf of the Mayors
10 and the citizens of the Tri (PH) community, I wish you
11 all the very best of luck and success and may God bless
12 you on all your deliberations.

13 Thank you.

14 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** I thank you,
15 Mr. McGrath.

16 Mr. Jim Lockyer, MLA for Moncton West.

17 **JIM LOCKYER, MLA FOR MONCTON WEST:** Mr.
18 Moderator, members of the Commission, it has been a
19 pleasure for me today to wish you welcome to the greater
20 Moncton area and to bring greetings on behalf of Premier
21 McKennen and the Government of New Brunswick.

22 The work that you have is extremely

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1 important and comes at a very crucial time in our history.

2 The issues that you have to deal with have significant
3 consequence and significant impact on our society.

4 I would like to wish you well, on behalf
5 of the people in the greater Moncton area, in your
6 deliberations and trust that the work that you will be
7 doing will be of enormous benefit and help as we set about
8 to deal with these very complex issues.

9 As a former Attorney General, and as one
10 involved in constitutional discussions at one point, I
11 can tell you that the issues of self-government and Native
12 justice are two that are very, very important to me and
13 I look upon your report to provide some insight as to how
14 to deal with these very important issues.

15 J'aimerais vous souhaiter une cordiale
16 bienvenue à Grand Moncton lors de vos audiences publiques.

17 Votre Commission est chargée avec des responsabilités
18 énormes qui vont certainement avoir un impact
19 extraordinaire dans l'avenir de notre pays ainsi que
20 l'avenir des peuples autochtones.

21 Nous espérons que vos délibérations ici
22 à Moncton et à travers le pays pourraient résulter dans

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1 un rapport qui va bien nous servir en ce qui concerne les
2 aspects importants que vous êtes en train d'étudier.

3 Encore une fois, bienvenue et c'est un
4 grand plaisir de vous souhaiter bienvenue à Moncton.

5 Merci.

6 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Thank you.

7 Now, at this time, I would like to
8 introduce to you the commissions at this table. On my
9 far right is Viola Robinson, she is from Nova Scotia, and
10 René Dussault. He is a Co-Chair.

11 At this time, I will ask Mr. Dussault
12 to say a few opening remarks. René.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Merci. Thank
14 you.

15 Alors je voudrais d'abord dire que nous
16 sommes très heureux d'être ici à Moncton. C'est la
17 première occasion que nous avons de tenir une audience
18 publique dans la ville de Moncton.

19 We were in New Brunswick a few times
20 before. We had hearings a year ago in Bay Cove and also
21 in Kings Clear. Another panel was in Fredericton. Later
22 this week we are moving to Fredericton. We are going to

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1 have public hearings there, and to meet with a government
2 committee that includes four Ministers, to discuss the
3 situation of Aboriginal people in New Brunswick.

4 The mandate of this Commission is very
5 wide. It is written into 16 points. It was given to us
6 by the Government of Canada through the offices of the
7 former Chief Justice of Canada, Brian Dickson, who was
8 asked in the summer of 1991 to consult extensively with
9 both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and come up with
10 a mandate for our Royal Commission.

11 This Royal Commission came to life in
12 the aftermath of the Oka Conasitaki (PH) event of the summer
13 1990, and also of the demise of the Meach Lake Accord,
14 and also following the four Constitutional Conferences
15 that were held after the proclamation of the Constitution
16 in 1982. That failed to come to an agreement as to what
17 should be done constitutionally to set a direction for
18 Aboriginal people as partners in this country.

19 The mandate deals with issues like
20 self-government, land claim process, the treaty, the
21 situation of the signatories of treaties, both
22 pre-confederation and post-confederation treaties. It

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1 deals with the Métis, the Inuit, status Indians, Indians
2 living off-reserve, whether status or non-status.

3 So it encompasses all Aboriginal peoples
4 in situations in this country. Economic development is
5 central to the work of this commission because everybody
6 knows and agrees that talking about self-government
7 without talking about an economic base for those
8 governments would not be very helpful. Education is
9 central to the work of this Commission. The demographic
10 situation is such that there are many, many young
11 Aboriginal people in secondary schools or unemployed in
12 the communities and also in the cities.

13 These young people have to be given hope,
14 a future and a choice to compete within the larger society
15 to fulfil the jobs that are there in their communities
16 in the education, health and social services, but also
17 what will be there, and require management skills and
18 financial skills to manage self-government.

19 Our mandate deals with social issues
20 like justice. That is a very important issue and an issue
21 that relates to self-government. Also, issues like
22 health, social services, problems like the high level of

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1 suicide, abuse of substance, alcohol, drugs, family
2 violence, the situation of women, of elderly people,
3 language and cultures are central to the work and the
4 mandate of this Commission.

5 I could go on and on. It only shows that
6 this mandate is quite a challenge, not only for the
7 Commission but for the groups that are presenting views
8 to us.

9 Very early we had a preliminary tour of
10 all of the provinces. We met with most of the Premiers.
11 We didn't meet with the Premier of New Brunswick at the
12 time because he was at the Francophone Summit in Paris,
13 but we have met with other Ministers.

14 We wanted to establish a good
15 relationship with the Provincial Governments because we
16 know that even if we are a federally appointed Royal
17 Commission, the mandate is so wide that our recommendations
18 are going to have a strong impact on provincial
19 jurisdictions and we wanted to be sure, first of all, that
20 we would not be used as an excuse for inaction, that the
21 land claim processes that were already on, that the various
22 discussions that were taking place, could come to a

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1 conclusion without the recommendations of our Commission.

2 Very often Royal Commissions are used as an excuse for
3 delaying solutions.

4 We saw and we still see our role as
5 adjusting along the road and making sure that at the end
6 we are going to take into account all of the elements that
7 took place, even during our mandate. So the collaboration
8 of Provincial Governments is there. We want to test our
9 recommendations with both Aboriginal and also the
10 governments before coming up with our final reports.

11 We plan to produce some interim reports
12 before the end of this year. One will be on suicide.
13 There is an epidemic situation that requires urgent action
14 from both Aboriginal peoples' communities and also support
15 from governments. We plan to come up with interim
16 recommendations on justice. It is an area where a lot
17 has been said by various groups or committees or
18 commissions, but not much has been achieved following these
19 reports.

20 We benefit from the opportunity of
21 having those reports and groups that have worked before
22 us. We hope to be able to come up and avoid some of the

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1 pitfalls and come up with recommendations to test the
2 waters, with both governments and Aboriginal peoples,
3 before our findings on justice in our final report in the
4 fall 1994.

5 We plan to do our work within three years
6 of our creation, roughly. We feel that what is most
7 important is to come up with the big picture, to set out
8 a direction for the future with values and principles that
9 will be accepted by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal
10 people. Reconciliation and the building of a new
11 relationship is really central to the performance of our
12 mandate.

13 We hope to be able to build our
14 recommendations on common grounds and to tone down the
15 differences. They have to be recognized, those
16 differences but, obviously, if we are to build strong
17 recommendations that will be appealing to Aboriginal
18 peoples, but also to the various governments in this
19 country, we have to try to build those recommendations
20 on commonalities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal
21 people.

22 There is a strong desire in this country

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1 that the money that is spent for Aboriginal peoples and
2 on Aboriginal issues be more productive. Aboriginal
3 people also tell us that they want to get out of this
4 situation of dependency. So it brings us straight to the
5 old question of economic development and an economic base
6 for future Aboriginal governments.

7 We know that this is a central issue,
8 not easy to tackle. In some instances it might mean new
9 territories through the settlement of land claims. We
10 just had the Newnavoute (PH) two weeks ago that came to
11 the ford. There is still a lot of work to be done before
12 it becomes a reality. In other instances it might mean
13 royalty on the resources, certainly, a major portion on
14 education to enable young Aboriginal peoples to get the
15 skills that are needed.

16 We hope that through the process of this
17 Commission a greater public awareness and education will
18 take place. We know that it is only a start. It will
19 have to be an ongoing process, but the whole idea behind
20 the creation of this Commission is a new social contract
21 between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in this
22 country in order that Aboriginal peoples be seen and be,

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1 in fact, what they are, and they should have always been
2 an asset and not a liability.

3 It is very important for the future of
4 this country that Aboriginal peoples be made partner in
5 confederation, and participate into the development of
6 the country, and benefit from also the richness, not only
7 economic but social richness of the whole of Canada.

8 I would like, at this point, to say that
9 we are completing, this week, the third round of hearings.
10 We will have a fourth one, more focused or centred in
11 the main cities, in the fall in order to hear the briefs
12 that have been prepared through the intervenor of funding
13 programs that were set up by the Commission. The
14 Commission has set up eight million in funds to fund
15 projects that will be presented to the Commission.

16 As you are aware, the problems are known,
17 the solutions are less known, and the solutions have to
18 come from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

19 During this week in New Brunswick, we
20 are going to be presented with progress reports of many
21 groups that were funded through the intervenor funding
22 programs. Their final brief will be available in

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1 September. Also, we will try to put a much greater
2 emphasis, in the fall, to get non-Aboriginal people and
3 organizations to speak about the relationship, their
4 vision of how to include Aboriginal peoples within this
5 country without making them lose their identity. This
6 brings us back to cultural security to cultures and
7 languages. From our hearings, we know that this will be
8 central in the recommendations of the Commission.

9 We started very important research
10 programs that are going to shed a lot of light on many
11 technical issues. So our challenge from next fall to the
12 fall of 1994 will be to put that together and come up with
13 strong recommendations that will be understood by both
14 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to set out a clear
15 direction with a transition. There will have to be an
16 orderly transition.

17 There will be a phasing out of the Indian
18 Act and a phasing in of self-government. Flexibility has
19 to be given because the various Aboriginal peoples and
20 communities are not at the same stage in their development
21 and it will be a process that will take maybe 20 to 25
22 years. As long as the objectives are clear, the path to

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1 get there is clear and the transition is done in an orderly
2 fashion, it should be much easier to get the push for
3 implementation by the public and also to have governments
4 acting upon the recommendations of the Commission.

5 Alors c'est en quelques mots ce que e
6 voulais dire comme remarques d'introduction. Je voudrais
7 à ce moment-ci demander à ma collègue, Viola Robinson,
8 d'adresser quelques mots. Je voudrais souligner que la
9 Commission siège simultanément cette semaine ici au
10 Nouveau-Brunswick mais également en Alberta et en
11 Colombie-Britannique. Nous partageons le travail en
12 trois panels, en trois formations, de façon à rencontrer
13 le plus grand nombre de gens possible et de pouvoir avoir
14 vraiment le poulx de l'ensemble des communautés
15 autochtones mais également de l'ensemble du grand public
16 canadien.

17 I would like to thank you very much.
18 I would like to ask my colleague Viola Robinson, who is
19 from Eastern Canada, Nova Scotia, and quite at home in
20 a province like this one, to say a few words. Viola.

21 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank you
22 very much. I am going to be very, very brief. I am just

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1 going to say that I am glad to be here and that I am looking
2 forward to hearing from the participants here, in the next
3 two days, in Moncton.

4 Really, I don't think that there is an
5 awful lot that I could add to what has already been said
6 by my Co-Chair. So with that, I am glad to be here, and
7 I welcome you all here, and I think we should get on with
8 it.

9 Thank you.

10 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Thank you very
11 much. The first presenter for the day is Professor Penny
12 Ericson. She is the Dean of the Faculty of Nursing of
13 the Canadian Association of University Schools of Nursing.

14 At this time, I would like to try to ask
15 the presenters to try to summarize, if they could, because
16 some of these briefs, this one, are fairly thick and we
17 don't have a whole lot of time and that way we can encourage
18 a little dialogue going between all of us and amongst the
19 audience as well. This is the type of atmosphere that
20 we would like to create in a forum of this kind.

21 So with that, Professor Ericson please.

22 **PENNY ERICSON, DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF**

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1 **NURSING OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS**
2 **OF NURSING:** Thank you very much.

3 It is a pleasure to be and, I think, in
4 order to meet your time frames, I should ask you what sort
5 of time you would like me to condense my brief to, two
6 minutes, three minutes, five minutes, ten minutes. It
7 is not as onerous as it looks because most of it is
8 appendices.

9 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Well, if you
10 could maybe spend 20 minutes, half an hour.

11 **PENNY ERICSON:** I will be much briefer
12 than that. This is a brief brief.

13 I was introduced as Professor Ericson
14 and I am the Dean of the Faculty of Nursing at UNB, but
15 that is not the hat that I am wearing today.

16 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** I was going by
17 the agenda.

18 **PENNY ERICSON:** That is right. The hat
19 that I am wearing today is Vice-President of the Canadian
20 Association of the University Schools of Nursing, known
21 by its acronym of CAUSN, and we certainly welcome the
22 opportunity to meet today with the members of the Royal

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1 Commission on Aboriginal Peoples to discuss the variety
2 of ways in which university and college nursing programs
3 currently are working with Aboriginal people to educate
4 nurses for their roles in the Aboriginal communities, as
5 well as to suggest ways to improve access for Aboriginal
6 individuals into nursing education.

7 CAUSN is a voluntary, non-profit
8 association representing 30 universities and colleges
9 offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs in
10 nursing. CAUSN concerns itself with critical issues,
11 problems and needs of university programs and is the
12 official accrediting agency for such programs in Canada.

13 The brief will outline three things
14 primarily. I will provide a short statement on the need
15 for additional recruitment and retention of Aboriginal
16 nurses into the health care system, a comment on the
17 introduction of Aboriginal values on health into the
18 education of all nurses, and provide a concise review of
19 some current programs being run by member of universities,
20 both to attract Aboriginal students into baccalaureate
21 degree programs and to put greater emphasis on nursing
22 education programs that prepare nurses to work with

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1 Aboriginal peoples in either northern and rural areas or
2 in the southern urban communities.

3 The first topic is "Attracting
4 Aboriginal Students". All CAUSN members recognize the
5 need for additional recruitment and retention efforts to
6 meet the need for Aboriginal nurses in the community health
7 care system, as well as the acute care system. The
8 objectives of the Indian and Inuit Nurses of Canada include
9 working to encourage more Aboriginal individuals to enter
10 nursing and other health professionals. Jean Goodwill's
11 chapter in Baumgart & Larsen's Textbook on "Canadian
12 Nursing Faces the Future" is an excellent summary of the
13 accomplishments and goals of this Native nursing interest
14 group. Current structures, however, are not viewed as
15 ideal. "Bridging Year" programs and "Access" programs
16 have been introduced to enable Aboriginal students to gain
17 acceptance into nursing programs and to be successful in
18 them. These will be described later.

19 A better solution, however, is to ensure
20 that secondary education systems available for Aboriginal
21 students are more receptive to their needs and deliver
22 an array of courses that enable students to succeed at

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1 university without additional special preparation. This
2 has been highlighted to us over and over again by the
3 students who come to us. They would not like to have the
4 special programs, although they know that they are now
5 needed, but they would like to not have them necessary.

6 There is a high level of congruity
7 between CAUSN's objectives for nursing education and
8 Aboriginal beliefs about health. The increasing number
9 of transcultural health courses within CAUSN programs
10 mirrors the importance of cultural traditions in health
11 care. The current paradigm shift in health care also
12 confirms what Aboriginal people have always believed about
13 health and healing. For example, Primary Health Care is
14 the World Health Organization's framework for health care
15 in today's society. Former Health Minister Jake Epp
16 expanded on this philosophy for care in the document
17 "Achieving Health for All", which since 1986 has served
18 as a framework for health care promotion in Canada. The
19 principles of Primary Health Care are similar to those
20 of the Circle of Life or the Medicine Wheel, which have
21 served as a guide for health care for generations of some
22 of Canada's Aboriginal people.

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1 It is powerful for Aboriginal people to
2 realize that one of their traditional approaches to health
3 is now viewed as progressive and crucial by health care
4 educators and policy planners within the United Nations
5 and in Canada. The partnership between consumer and
6 health care worker that underlies the teachings of Primary
7 Health Care ensures a powerful bridge between traditional
8 values and health care initiatives. The interplay of the
9 physical, emotional, social and spiritual for achieving
10 well-being has long been inherent in the Aboriginal health
11 paradigm and is now appearing as a stated value in health
12 care teaching in Canada.

13 Partnerships between the Aboriginal
14 people and nurse educators at the university will foster
15 the development of nursing programs more sensitive to the
16 strengths and diversity of all students. CAUSN members
17 have not met since the invitation to speak to this forum
18 was received. However, I want you to know that individual
19 responses from CAUSN members are enthusiastic about
20 improved dialogue that will banish the "missionary zeal"
21 and the paternalistic patterns of the past and move toward
22 effective partnerships in delivering appropriate

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1 professional education for nurses.

2 Dr. Rebecca Hagey from the University
3 of Toronto Faculty of Nursing has written a position
4 statement on Aboriginal self-government and CAUSN's need
5 to be responsive to the health needs of Aboriginal
6 communities in Canada. This position statement will be
7 presented to the CAUSN council in December of this year
8 for action. Because there may be changes in the wording
9 or additions for members, the draft document has not been
10 attached. It is mentioned now so that the Royal Commission
11 will be aware that CAUSN is serious in its deliberations
12 on improving access to nursing education, creating
13 programs sensitive to Aboriginal needs and facilitating
14 the mobility of Aboriginal nursing graduates throughout
15 the health care system.

16 "Current Initiatives by CAUSN Members".

17 Several of the CAUSN member university and college
18 programs have launched specific initiatives to provide
19 nursing education for Aboriginal nurses and to prepare
20 a core of nurses attuned to the needs of Aboriginal patients
21 and clients. In anticipation of today's meeting, CAUSN
22 asked members to provide a summary of their programs.

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1 The responses were as varied as the membership. All
2 indicate an increase awareness of the needs. A summary
3 of the responses from the university programs is provided.

4 The newest baccalaureate program in the
5 country is at the University of Prince Edward Island.
6 They have only completed one year of their four year
7 program. They will be working with representatives from
8 the Native Council on Health Reform Task Force to develop
9 appropriate learning structures and content for the
10 Aboriginal nursing students on Prince Edward Island. Dr.
11 Margaret Munro, Dean of the School of Nursing, looks
12 forward to developing appropriate strategies with the
13 assistance of members of the Native Council.

14 Dalhousie University has the longest
15 tradition of developing nursing programs for Aboriginal
16 nurses and other nurses who wish to work with Aboriginal
17 peoples in the north. Professor Ruth Martin-Misener,
18 Coordinator of the Outpost Nursing Program and the Northern
19 Clinical Program, describes her two programs. I will not
20 go into the details of those programs because they are
21 fairly lengthy.

22 Professor Dana Edge, a faculty member

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1 at Memorial University of Newfoundland with experience
2 in outpost and community health programs, emphasizes three
3 points which are important to be considered in designing
4 equitable programs. The first point is that northern
5 communities must support the programs, that the impetus
6 should arise initially from the community itself and that
7 once the desire for an educational program is expressed,
8 Aboriginal people are involved in the design of that
9 program, the implementation and the evaluation of the
10 curriculum.

11 The Director of the Nursing Faculty at
12 Memorial, Dr. Marianne Lamb, raised the issue of
13 baccalaureate education becoming the new entry level
14 preparation for the nursing profession. This expanded
15 program will still need to be augmented for nurses who
16 wish to work in coastal Labrador areas. She believes it
17 is imperative that the quality of the programs be
18 maintained, particularly if the programs are offered in
19 smaller communities in an era of diminished resources.
20 It is important to the School of Nursing and to the Labrador
21 Inuit Heal Commission that students are on a par with those
22 in more urban areas and are able to compete with the nursing

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1 job market.

2 This issue has been repeated over and
3 over again from the schools across the country, as dollars
4 for education that shrivel, that it is incredibly important
5 that the quality of all of the programs be maintained so
6 that nurses will have mobility across the country to work.

7 The University of New Brunswick has
8 admitted Aboriginal students directly from high school
9 or as mature students. In 1989, the University instituted
10 a Bridging Year program designed to promote the success
11 of Aboriginal students in the faculty of their choice.
12 Students in this program take courses to improve their
13 reading and writing and study skills. They also take a
14 minimum of two courses that are directly transferable to
15 the first year of study within the discipline of their
16 choice. Successful students from this one year program
17 are guaranteed places within their preferred faculty.
18 Students admitted from both streams have been successful
19 at UNB. The first Aboriginal nursing student graduated
20 in 1990 and works as a primary health care nurse in the
21 clinic on the St. Mary's Reserve in Fredericton. Students
22 admitted to the program without identification as

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1 Aboriginal students have developed sufficient comfort
2 within the program to declare their status and develop
3 links with their home communities for both support and
4 job opportunities.

5 We have had some students who have not
6 been comfortable or have felt that they would be
7 discriminated against if they announced their status when
8 they applied. It was only after they had been in the
9 program for a year or two that they were able to declare
10 their status and establish links.

11 The other thing that I will add on the
12 side is that our students and the students in the other
13 programs across this country are victims of their own
14 success. They do well in the programs and because they
15 do well, more are coming in and the dollars that are set
16 aside to fund the nurses in these programs are shrinking.

17 It is more and more difficult for these students to pursue
18 the programs because they don't have the funding to help
19 them that they require.

20 The Indian Management and Health
21 Administration Program at UNB completed a two year pilot
22 course to assist Aboriginal leaders from Reserves within

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1 New Brunswick to develop strategies appropriate for the
2 transfer of health dollars from the federal level to the
3 local level. Although this was not a nursing program,
4 one of the students was a nurse, and the focus was certainly
5 primary health care.

6 The University of Manitoba has responded
7 to the need for nursing education in northern communities
8 by developing a program in conjunction with the Manitoba
9 Education and Training Ministry, the Swampy Cree Tribal
10 Council, Heal and Welfare Canada, and the Keewatin
11 Community College. This program is also described in
12 great length so I won't take the time to review it in total.

13 The College of Nursing at the University
14 of Saskatchewan initiated a program in 1985 to introduce
15 Aboriginal students to nursing through a nine week program
16 of study and participation designed to simulate nursing
17 school and to stimulate commitment to nursing careers.
18 Students from across the country are encouraged to attend
19 and once they have successfully completed this program,
20 they are then guaranteed an admission to their home
21 university. Details of this program are attached in the
22 appendix.

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1 Lakehead University's Native Nurses
2 Entry Program is another example of an active recruitment
3 strategy designed to attract Aboriginal candidates for
4 its nursing programs. All of these initiatives to recruit
5 and attract Native students into our nursing programs are
6 successful, but all those involved and all graduates again
7 repeat the need for having secondary education meaningful
8 and successful for them at the local level so that they
9 can directly enter into university programs.

10 The success of programs at the
11 University of British Columbia, the University of Victoria
12 and Laurential University are real but still very small
13 compared to the need. The format of programs has followed
14 the successful programs designed for social work,
15 education and law students.

16 In conclusion, the Canadian Association
17 of the University Schools of Nursing welcomes the
18 opportunity to benefit from the information gathered from
19 the hearings of this Royal Commission. We look forward
20 to receiving materials from you which will assist us in
21 our continued efforts to improve nursing education
22 programs for Aboriginal students across this country.

StenoTran

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1 Thank you for your invitation to
2 participate in this round of hearings and I would be pleased
3 to answer any questions you might have at this time.

4 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Thank you very
5 much.

6 Is there any questions from the
7 Commissioners? Mrs. Robinson.

8 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I would
9 like to thank you for your presentation here. It is quite
10 thorough.

11 We have heard, in our travels around the
12 country, the importance of health care in the communities.
13 There is a lot of major problems, in particular in the
14 north, and I am just wondering, for instance, you mentioned
15 here about some of the programs that come under CAUSN,
16 and I know that there have been some initiatives, for
17 instance, taken by Dalhousie University that addresses
18 the north, but one of the problems that were identified
19 to us, for instance, when we went to Ecalowate (PH) and
20 we visited the hospital there, there doesn't appear to
21 be any Aboriginal staff there. It is very, very minimal
22 and there seems to be a shortage of Aboriginal doctors

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1 right across the country.

2 There has been this complaint, as well,
3 about education. It is mentioned here in your brief about
4 not getting the proper sciences in the post secondary
5 education to be able to meet the entrance requirements.

6 Having said all of that, and going back to the north,
7 the programs that were available were usually in the south
8 and there seems to be this problem that some of those that
9 might be interested in taking training or pursuing a career
10 in the health service, when they go to the south and
11 sometimes that is what they have to do, is very difficult
12 for them. I guess that would apply in the north and
13 possibly in the remote areas, as well, of Canada and other
14 provinces.

15 They have to leave their community,
16 sometimes for the first time, and they are not familiar
17 with the life style of the south and when they come out
18 into the universities and they take these courses, they
19 either get homesick or they run into all kinds of situations
20 where it makes it very difficult for them to complete,
21 and sometimes they have a high drop-out rate, some of them
22 can't handle the situation, they have to go back to their

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1 communities. Is this something that you are aware of?

2 **PENNY ERICSON:** Yes. I am glad you
3 brought that up. I think that is a problem that is real,
4 it is acute and it is general across nursing once, in the
5 south, even a basic nursing preparation is achieved. I
6 think one of the initiatives that we will be pursuing, and
7 hopefully with the same degree of success that we have
8 pursued it "in the south", is the use of distance education
9 technology to a much greater extent. Certainly, at
10 the University of New Brunswick we have found that -- well
11 one statistic that is impressive -- for nurses, not just
12 Aboriginal nurses, although some as well were included
13 in the statistic, who wanted to get their baccalaureate
14 degree are charged with the same responsibilities that
15 non-nurses, who want to be nursing students, have in the
16 north. They have family commitments, they have children,
17 they can't leave home for protracted periods of time.
18 If they do, they don't have the support that they require.

19 So we developed our baccalaureate
20 program to be delivered by distance education so that
21 people don't have to leave their home communities to
22 receive that education. We had ten programs in our post

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1 or end program when we did not offer that program by
2 distance. We now use distance technology and we have 350
3 students in the program.

4 I think, as the university programs have
5 developed comfort with this method of teaching, we will
6 be utilizing it more and more in the areas where the nurses
7 are in remote locations to university centres. Certainly
8 with video conferences, video links, as well as
9 teleconference links. Those things are much more possible
10 now than they were in the past. It is easier to move a
11 professor to the north for a short period of time than
12 it is a group of students south.

13 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I guess
14 the other question I would ask, I think it is a question
15 that, for us anyway, we have to try to come to grips with
16 or try to resolve, and that is the one that is mentioned
17 here about funding. It is easy enough to design programs
18 and it is easy enough to plan, but the problems come when
19 you try to resource.

20 Again, I will refer back to where I know
21 best. In Halifax with Delhousie University I did a lot
22 of work with them on a lot of these things. We have had

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1 programs, but it is the funding because there are different
2 streams of funding. It is not easy, and I think Aboriginal
3 people are getting tired of that.

4 We have to try to make recommendations
5 here that are going to put something in place that is going
6 to be permanent. There is no permanency or longevity to
7 any of the funding of any of the programs that are being
8 initiated. All too often we get programs that are working
9 very well and then all of a sudden -- they are funded on
10 a year by year base, or a term by term -- there is some
11 excuse coming from somewhere that the funds have run out,
12 we can't fund it anymore, and then it is gone. I think
13 Aboriginal people and communities are getting very tired
14 of that.

15 I think that is a question that we have
16 to try to come to grips with and try to resolve. For
17 instance, there were programs there that were funded
18 partially by Indian Affairs because of their guidelines,
19 and then part of it was funded by CEIC, and part was funded
20 by Health and Welfare, and different sources.

21 I am wondering if you would have any idea
22 as to how to resolve that situation, to make it more

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1 practical, to give it more longevity and that people can
2 really plan for something?

3 **PENNY ERICSON:** I think one of the ways
4 that might be helpful is, in all of the dialogue that is
5 taking place now on the transfer of funding and the
6 establishment of health services within each of the local
7 areas, for the areas to decide themselves how many nurses
8 they really feel they need in their community, and to set
9 aside the funding where there are secondary education
10 people on their reserves to make sure that they have those
11 nurses educated and available for that community.

12 It is a leaky bucket in a way though
13 because I know that all nurses who finish their graduation
14 and preparation at the baccalaureate level want to go back
15 home initially. Many of them as new practitioners of
16 nursing get caught up in the high-tech acute care stuff
17 and they want to get some experience in that before they
18 go back home.

19 I think that is a fact of life for young
20 people but, I think, they go back eventually and they go
21 back with added expertise that they can take home. I think
22 initial setting aside of the funding is something that

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1 really should be negotiated between the Aboriginal
2 communities and the Provincial Governments who are funding
3 the education for nursing at that level.

4 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** As well
5 as in the larger urban cities where we have gone into.
6 There seems to be an awful lot of people, who are in the
7 larger cities, say, Winnipeg, or Edmonton, or Vancouver,
8 or Toronto, who are suffering from lack of health care.

9 A lot of times these people do have to move into the larger
10 urban hospitals so it is important for them, as well, to
11 be staffed.

12 **PENNY ERICSON:** That is right.

13 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** We need
14 Aboriginal people in those hospitals as well, not only
15 in the communities. I am just wondering what progress
16 you are making and where the input is coming from in
17 designing health curriculum, if I may call it that, that
18 does take into account the Aboriginal values because that,
19 again, is another important aspect?

20 I know you mentioned here about the
21 Medicine Wheel and the healing that people are talking
22 about. I am wondering what kind of input you are getting

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1 and what progress is being made to incorporate that into
2 these kinds of courses?

3 **PENNY ERICSON:** Again, I think we are
4 reaching out to the resources that are available, and they
5 are not always nursing resources. I can speak personally
6 from New Brunswick because that is home base for me.

7 We feel very fortunate in Fredericton
8 to have Aboriginal nurses available who work with us in
9 curriculum design, and participate in teaching so that
10 we have curriculum that we feel is important for our
11 students. We feel it is appropriate that all cultures
12 are considered in the education of our students.

13 In the most recent program that --
14 actually Margaret's daughter was in, that I worked with
15 -- again, with our students in the nursing program, there
16 are many times in which the students are rediscovering
17 themselves, what their traditional values are. They are
18 going back home and talking with their grandmothers about
19 what kind of healing was done and what kind of health care
20 was offered before they became so addicted to the high-tech
21 western medicine that was offered from a medical
22 perspective rather than a health promotion perspective.

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1 So I think there is a lot of increasing
2 use of people who are available in a searching-out of people
3 who are willing to help and participate.

4 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank
5 you.

6 Before I move on, I just want to mention
7 that the Commission is very, very interested in hearing
8 and getting information on any further thoughts that might
9 develop as to the best ways to approach this whole dilemma
10 of health services for Aboriginal people. We are always
11 open to suggestions, to briefs and to any further
12 information.

13 Thank you.

14 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Mr. Dussault.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Merci. Thank
16 you. I would like to get some clarification on a few
17 points.

18 In your brief you mentioned that you
19 represent university and college nursing programs. I
20 realize, reading the appendices, that it is mostly
21 universities. I just want to be sure I understand. For
22 example, here in New Brunswick the entry level to become

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1 a registered nurse is not the baccalaureate, as it is the
2 same situation across the country.

3 Do you represent the first level of the
4 colleges, where a person could become a registered nurse,
5 or do you represent only the baccalaureate level? It is
6 not clear in my mind.

7 **PENNY ERICSON:** The term "college" is
8 confusing because there are colleges that are not
9 universities. CAUSN is strictly universities. It is a
10 baccalaureate program, and college refers to the college
11 within a health science faculty.

12 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So we are
13 talking here about students who decide to do a bachelor
14 degree in nursing?

15 **PENNY ERICSON:** And students who are
16 registered nurses who elect to come back and complete their
17 baccalaureate degree.

18 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Can you tell
19 us how many Aboriginal students there are, either in New
20 Brunswick, at the baccalaureate level, or across the
21 country?

22 **PENNY ERICSON:** I do not have the

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1 numbers of Aboriginal students in the CAUSN schools as
2 a whole number. I know it is small. I am using our program
3 as an example. We have seven and three more coming in
4 the fall. That is seven out of 200.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Out of 200?

6 **PENNY ERICSON:** Yes.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Here in New
8 Brunswick?

9 **PENNY ERICSON:** Right.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do you have a
11 relationship with the School of Nursing at the first level,
12 and what kind of relationship, or is it quite separate
13 as universities?

14 **PENNY ERICSON:** No, we meet all of the
15 time, and share dialogue. However, we have, I think, more
16 actively recruited to get Aboriginal students into our
17 program. We work with the secondary counsellors on the
18 reserves and in the large high schools in the cities to
19 try to attract the students beginning at the junior high
20 level because if we don't get out there at junior high
21 then they fall behind on getting the right sciences and
22 maths done, and they find it difficult, and they have to

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1 take an extra year, the Bridging Year usually, to get in.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do you feel
3 that the best route to get Aboriginal people to come to
4 the university for a baccalaureate is to get, first, a
5 degree in nursing or a diploma, or do you have to be
6 registered for a baccalaureate? You have to become a
7 registered nurse first, or is there two streams?

8 **PENNY ERICSON:** You can do your RN first
9 in a diploma school here. You can go to a baccalaureate
10 program as your first entrance as well. We are very much
11 in favour of trying to recruit the Aboriginal students
12 into the baccalaureate programs because they offer two
13 things that are not offered in great strength in the diploma
14 programs, and one is community health and the other one
15 is mental health.

16 These are the two areas that the
17 Aboriginal nursing students really want to take home and
18 practice in those areas when they complete their education.

19 So for the one extra year it is beneficial that they come
20 to a baccalaureate program.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You say on the
22 second page of your brief that you stress the fact that

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1 secondary education systems available to Aboriginal
2 students are not as receptive to their needs as they should
3 be. Do you speak about the general public school or do
4 you include the schools that are on the reserves?

5 **PENNY ERICSON:** I include the schools
6 that the students say, to me, they feel are deficit and
7 that includes both. There are strengths in some and there
8 are weaknesses in some. So it isn't just one or the other.
9 It is a mishmash across the country. Some feel that they
10 have ample opportunity in a regular funded high school,
11 others feel that they have opportunities to succeed on
12 a local band high school, but it varies from community
13 to community.

14 There is a general feeling overall that
15 the sciences and maths available are not sufficient, or
16 that the guidance they get, to get into those programs
17 is not there.

18 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** One of the
19 things we were told while travelling across the country
20 was that the science and the standards, very often of
21 northern schools or schools on reserve, and it is true
22 also of mainstream schools, that there is a gap to fill

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1 when people move to a university or move to post-secondary
2 training. So that seems to be one of the barriers that
3 are there.

4 **PENNY ERICSON:** That is a barrier and
5 also it is a barrier that the counsellors don't advise
6 these students to strive high. They don't encourage them
7 to do the best that they are capable of.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Last March we
9 had a national round table in Vancouver on health and social
10 issues. One of the things that we were told, and also
11 with what we heard during our public hearings, is the
12 difficulty to get young Aboriginal people into the
13 scientific areas and fields of studies. It is much easier
14 to get them into social services and nursing, for example.

15 What Viola Robinson was telling about the Baffin Island
16 is quite striking. There is not a single Inuit nurse.

17 So what, from your point of view, can
18 be done to change that? Did your organization's
19 association look at that situation and try to address or
20 come up with recommendations as to what should be done
21 to make this happen? Obviously young people have to be
22 encouraged, but it doesn't seem to do the job, at this

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1 point, because there is a kind of blockage?

2 **PENNY ERICSON:** I think that they would
3 feel more encouraged if they thought the programs were
4 accessible. Accessibility is certainly a large part of
5 the brief that we will be taking to our organization in
6 December for voting, and putting through as a
7 recommendation to this Commission, as well as just for
8 ourselves as nurse educators.

9 I think people have to know that a goal
10 is achievable in order to think that they want to strive
11 for it. I think it is very beneficial when our graduates
12 from the Aboriginal communities go out and recruit at the
13 grade school and junior high school level because they
14 are excellent role models. But, again, it is not realistic
15 for those students to think that they can achieve at the
16 baccalaureate level if the programs aren't accessible and
17 if the finances aren't there to help them.

18 I think we, as a nursing group, can
19 certainly make the programs more accessible, and we, in
20 conjunction with other groups working together, can
21 hopefully finance them to make them available.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So you are

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1 mainly talking about financial accessibility. So what
2 do you have in mind as the cap that has been brought on
3 post-secondary education because the Department of Indian
4 Affairs has, in the last few years, come up with a cap
5 on the money available for Indians, at least status
6 Indians, for post-secondary education? Is it this that
7 you have in mind or is it larger than that?

8 **PENNY ERICSON:** No, it is larger than
9 that. I think a lot of the costs that are currently
10 incurred could be changed or refocused if we had the
11 accessibility issue addressed more carefully. A lot of
12 the funding that our students need, for example, are for
13 child care, living far away from home, they need finances
14 for support systems, for tutoring, that kind of thing.

15 If the program was delivered more
16 locally, they would have a lot more family support and
17 they wouldn't need, necessarily, as much day care money
18 or that type of thing that makes it very difficult for
19 them. They could live at home and they wouldn't have to
20 rent an apartment.

21 So if we could even redeploy some of the
22 money that is already there, we could probably education

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1 two students for the price of one. But, again, it is an
2 accessibility issue to get the programs out to the
3 students.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Is there a
5 support program within the university when the students
6 come to help them to make the transition, and go through
7 the situation they knew in their community, and where they
8 have to live when they come to one of the universities,
9 say, New Brunswick? Is there some kind of support program
10 existing within the university for Aboriginal people?

11 **PENNY ERICSON:** That varies
12 tremendously from university to university. Some have
13 fairly sophisticated programs and others, it is the luck
14 of the draw. It is not a formalized program at all. There
15 is wide diversity, but certainly the schools that don't
16 have appropriate programs know that they don't, and they
17 recognize that it is an area that they need to improve
18 upon. They not only don't have them for the Aboriginal
19 students, they don't have them for the mainstream students
20 either. They realize that, that is a real retention issue.

21 If students are helped initially with
22 study skills, with close identification with one or two

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1 other students and a faculty person, their chances for
2 success go way up. They have to be known.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Last question
4 is about the Aboriginal values on health into education
5 of all nurses. I know this question came up earlier, but
6 in your university, could you give is an example of what
7 is done? Is it only a goal or is there something specific
8 that is done to incorporate Aboriginal values, not on the
9 fact that stress is put on prevention, not on a curative
10 aspect of health care, but more specifically? Is there
11 something specific that is done at your university to,
12 first of all, write down or to come up with a set of
13 Aboriginal values and compare them with the mainstream
14 values, and also to incorporate them practically into the
15 curriculum. Could you expand on that?

16 **PENNY ERICSON:** Yes. In our new
17 curriculum that we have started this last year, in our
18 very first nursing program, the students are divided up
19 into four groups of twenty and they meet in those groups
20 of twenty for the whole first semester. The format for
21 those meetings start off with a talking circle and we have
22 borrowed from the Aboriginal tradition in our local area

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1 to use that. So right away the students are presented
2 with that.

3 We also discuss culture in that first
4 course and have the students understand what their
5 individual culture is because most students think that
6 culture is somebody else's, not their own, and they need
7 to take ownership into what their thoughts and behaviours
8 are that represent their own culture so that they can
9 readily identify what is different about someone else if
10 it is different, in both physical, phycological,
11 sociological, spiritual aspects.

12 We have very formal lecture content, as
13 well, in the community health and the mental health areas,
14 and we borrow nurses from the community and social workers
15 from the community who work on the reserves to come in
16 and work with our students. A lot of our clinical
17 experiences are with these people on the reserves. There
18 are a variety of programs that are offered according to
19 what the needs are that are presented to us.

20 Certainly, having some of our graduates
21 out there now working has facilitated those links
22 tremendously. It has been a big help. So it is everything

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1 from the informal to the very formalized reading and
2 writing and participating in hands-on kind of things.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** A very last
4 question. There are Métis here or off-reserve, non-status
5 Indians in New Brunswick as there are elsewhere in Canada.

6 Do you have some of your students coming from these groups
7 or are they all coming from status Indians on reserve?

8 **PENNY ERICSON:** Our New Brunswick
9 Indians are status, but we have an Ontario student who
10 is not who shows income UNB.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** But those from
12 New Brunswick are status? I am asking the question because
13 I know that even if there is a gap on the money, at least
14 there is money available that is not available for other
15 groups of Aboriginal people, apart from the mainstream
16 provincial money for public education in the province?

17 **PENNY ERICSON:** I think a lot of us who
18 are in administration and education are money grubbers
19 and we are for ever looking for money to help our students.

20 Certainly most people in New Brunswick know who I am,
21 if they have money in their pocket, because I am always
22 out there looking for people to fund a student. Certainly,

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1 the students who are Native students really need that extra
2 help because there just isn't enough money there.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you.

4 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Thank you,
5 René. Any questions from the audience? None. Okay.

6 I have one question, Professor. You
7 mentioned a while ago that the Aboriginal nurses, when
8 they graduate from the course, often become victims of
9 their own success, and you mentioned funding is cut off.
10 Does that mean that funding is cut off when they want
11 to further their career in the field of nursing, or did
12 you mean that funding was cut for others that wanted to
13 enter that field?

14 **PENNY ERICSON:** Excuse me. Thank you
15 for bringing that up because I would like to make that
16 clear. There is a fixed amount of money, that is my
17 understanding, that is available for post-secondary
18 education, I know within my province.

19 As more and more students are able to
20 come to university, because they are successful at the
21 high school level and they want to achieve at a university
22 level, that pot of money doesn't grow bigger and bigger

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1 with every student that is interested. So that pot of
2 money has to cover a greater number of students, so they
3 are not funded for as much money as they necessarily need.

4 The other problem that we have is that
5 our program is a four year program, but we allow students
6 to take six years to complete the four years, and this
7 is used by all students in our program. The majority of
8 nurses are woman, and a lot of our students are married,
9 and it is not uncommon at all for someone to take a year
10 off to have a baby or to stay home because one of their
11 children is ill. Sometimes, because the child is ill and
12 they don't quite, they take a half a load instead of a
13 full load so it stretches it.

14 Most of the funding is for four years.
15 If a program is listed as a four year program, that is
16 the money that student is allocated. So we have to make
17 a special case in order for that student to get additional
18 funding to complete the program.

19 If the student completes the program and
20 wants to go on and get graduate work, there is additional
21 funding available. There is also some scholarship funding
22 available, but there is never enough of that. That doesn't

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1 cover enough.

2 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** You also
3 mentioned a while ago that in the beginning or somewhere
4 near the beginning, when this program was beginning to
5 get under way, that they were afraid to even mention their
6 status. Why was that? What are the reasons behind that,
7 for example?

8 **PENNY ERICSON:** These were students who
9 had come from big high schools in the province and I guess
10 -- for people who aren't from the Maritime, a big high
11 school should probably be qualified but some of our high
12 schools are large -- in order to be successful at the high
13 school level, or junior high and high school, they felt
14 that they had to hide their routes, that they weren't proud
15 of where they had come from, and they tried to keep it
16 a secret.

17 When they got into the program and they
18 were successful, I guess the valuing that we have within
19 our program of all peoples enabled them to be comfortable
20 enough to realize not only as an individual they were
21 valued, but that their traditions of health were the ones
22 that we were recommending as the ideal for maintaining

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1 health. So they became very comfortable and very
2 proud of their traditions, rediscovered them, became very
3 comfortable with their status, who they were and what they
4 had to contribute both on and off a reserve.

5 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Do you have any
6 students that have completed the four year program and
7 wants to go on? Is there any that is at that level right
8 now?

9 **PENNY ERICSON:** Well, I am not sure.
10 I thought we were going to have one this year, but I think
11 she is having a baby instead of her degree, at this point.

12 All of the students who have graduated
13 from our program are certainly capable of graduate work
14 but I think, because of their age, they are also in that
15 time period in their lives when they are finishing having
16 a family or it is now their husband's turn to get his
17 education, and they have to wait until he finishes his
18 degree before they go back and get theirs. So it is very
19 much a moveable feast.

20 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Okay. Thank
21 you very much.

22 We have a question from the audience.

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1 Would you please state your name because this is being
2 recorded and your name will be required for recording
3 purposes.

4 **LLOYD AUGUSTINE, WABANAKI CULTURAL**
5 **RESOURCE CENTRE:** My name is Lloyd Augustine and I am with
6 the Wabanaki Cultural Resource Centre.

7 I just want to clarify two things. One
8 of them is, as you said, our New Brunswick Indians. The
9 thing is, we as Native people belong to no one but to
10 ourselves.

11 The second thing is the clarification
12 and misconception the Canadians have toward the Native
13 people, thinking that we are Canadian citizens. We are
14 not, we are a sovereign nation.

15 With that in mind, I am hoping that we
16 will be able to work together knowing that you will be
17 dealing with a separate nation, the way our fathers dealt
18 with each other.

19 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Thank you.

20 Could you state your name?

21 **RHONDA ALAIN:** I wanted to ask how many
22 Aboriginal nurses are working presently in the province

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1 at this time?

2 **PENNY ERICSON:** To the best of my
3 ability, I think there are seven that I either know
4 personally, or I have been told.

5 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Okay. Well, that is
6 good to hear.

7 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Yes, we have
8 two of them working for the Union of New Brunswick Indian
9 Trade Mill in the health field.

10 Are there anymore questions as a result
11 of what was just said?

12 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Just as a
13 follow-up on this one. How many registered nurses are
14 there, within the Province of New Brunswick, that are
15 Aboriginal, whether Indian or Métis? Do you know the
16 figure?

17 **PENNY ERICSON:** I think it is just the
18 seven.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Just the
20 seven?

21 **PENNY ERICSON:** Yes.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Registered

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1 nurses?

2 **PENNY ERICSON:** Right. Some of those
3 have a baccalaureate as well. Some are in our BNR program,
4 but it is a very low number.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Well, I think
6 it shows that there is still a lot of work to be done.

7 **PENNY ERICSON:** Absolutely, yes.
8 May I respond to Mr. Augustine's point
9 that he made at the microphone?

10 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Sure, go
11 ahead.

12 **PENNY ERICSON:** Okay. Thank you.
13 I just wanted to let him know that our
14 concerns about funding really are a concern because of
15 the sovereign status. When conversations revolve around
16 this, one of my real concerns is that money will disappear
17 like water through a sieve. We have to be very clear in
18 our deliberations with universities that have provincial
19 funding, that the funding for Aboriginal nurses be somehow
20 guaranteed or in place, and that it doesn't get lost between
21 those two governing groups. That is a real concern.

22 We have the positions there, we will take

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1 the number of students who want to come, but obviously
2 someone has to pay the bill and I want to make sure that
3 the money is there to pay.

4 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Thank you. If
5 there are no further questions, we will take a ten minute
6 coffee break. Thank you very much.

7 **PENNY ERICSON:** Thank you very much.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you for
9 coming.

10 --- A short break at 3:37 p.m.

11 --- Resume at 3:52 p.m.

12 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Ladies and
13 gentlemen, please take your seats.

14 The next presenter we have this
15 afternoon is Rhonda Alain, and she is with the Fredericton
16 Native Friendship Centre. Her topic is education and
17 youth. Rhonda.

18 **RHONDA ALAIN, FREDERICTON NATIVE**
19 **FRIENDSHIP CENTRE, PROJECT COORDINATOR FOR INTERVENOR**
20 **PARTICIPATION PROGRAM:** Thank you.

21 My name is Rhonda Alain. I am a Maliseet
22 from the Woodstock Reserve. I have been hired by the

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1 Fredericton Native Friendship Centre as the Project
2 Coordinator for the Intervenor Participation Program.
3 Our focus has been towards Aboriginal youth.

4 The Fredericton Native Friendship
5 Centre is a non-profit, non-sectarian and non-political
6 organization and is mandated to serve all Urban Aboriginal
7 and Inuit People. We provide assistance by implementing
8 community orientated programs and services that will
9 provide opportunities for Aboriginal people to improve
10 their social and cultural needs. We are geared to promote
11 positive relations between Native and non-Native peoples.

12 The Fredericton Native Friendship
13 Centre is the only centre here in New Brunswick, and one
14 of our operating in the Atlantic Region. Together we have
15 agreed to do a research project for the Royal Commission
16 representing the Atlantic Region. The purpose of this
17 research, "the Circle of Concern", is to identify the
18 concerns and issues which impact on the lives of Aboriginal
19 youth, and finding solutions to the concerns brought
20 forward through these discussions. We want to hear from
21 Aboriginal communities, both on and off-reserve, and
22 non-Aboriginal communities on how we can begin to establish

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1 new and lasting relationships that we can all live with.

2 Throughout the second round of hearings
3 many recommendations have been made to the Royal Commission
4 on Aboriginal Peoples. Here are some of the issues and
5 recommendations that have been made in the second round
6 of hearings, and require the same amount of attention and
7 value as any new ones that may be brought forward throughout
8 these hearings. So often we continue to look for answers
9 and/or solutions when, in fact, we have been presented
10 with a number of recommendations already.

11 Some of the issues of concern in the
12 recommendations begin with racism. Many youth are
13 concerned with the growing amount of racism or are becoming
14 more aware of the racism that they face in the schools
15 and in many non-Native communities. The recommendations
16 have been that youth groups be formed across Canada to
17 combat racism, and cross-cultural training to be mandatory
18 for everyone involved in the education system.

19 For education, education is seen as a
20 key to solving many of the problems faced by Aboriginal
21 youth, along with cultural awareness. The
22 recommendations have been that a revision of school

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1 curricula to include an accurate history of Aboriginal
2 peoples, more Aboriginal teachers, especially in schools
3 where there is a large Aboriginal population, a school
4 Elder for students to have access to during school hours
5 for guidance and moral support, options for traditional
6 teaching, which would mean credited courses that are of
7 the same credit value as other academic course work, i.e.,
8 Aboriginal language, history, culture and/or music and
9 dance, and resource libraries to be set up in Aboriginal
10 communities that allow students, schools and other, to
11 provide teaching and learning materials on Aboriginal
12 culture and history.

13 For suicide, this issue is seen as a
14 threat to the well-being of many youth. The
15 recommendations have been for prevention workshops to be
16 held in schools and Aboriginal communities that are at
17 risk, a 24 hour crisis line, again, in areas of high risk,
18 healing circles which would include the role of an Elder,
19 along with that of non-Native social workers, and youth
20 circles for peer support.

21 For identity, many Aboriginal students
22 feel that they are viewed negatively by the dominant

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1 culture whose values effects the pride they have in
2 themselves and their culture. The recommendations are
3 recreation programs for youth that promote positive
4 self-image, youth survival camps which promote the values
5 of the Medicine Wheel teachings and self-sufficiency. This
6 should include traditional teachings and environmental
7 teachings, job training which promotes ones' own community
8 and trains them for jobs for the future in their
9 communities. Many job training courses teach the youth
10 to leave the community and not many of these courses are
11 geared for them to be successful in their own communities,
12 and mentor programs that recognize successful Aboriginal
13 community people.

14 For self-government, self-government is
15 seen as a threat to many Aboriginal youth. They fear that
16 any existing rights and freedoms will be gone before they
17 have had the opportunity to exercise them. They are
18 concerned with the present political arrangements due to
19 future endeavours of Native people. The recommendations
20 are to make self-government accountable to the people,
21 not just other governments, community meetings so all can
22 have input as to decisions and solutions that affect the

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1 community, and youth should be given the chance to get
2 involved in decisions which affect them.

3 Our work here at the Fredericton Native
4 Friendship Centre is still in the process of seeking
5 solutions that will only strengthen the recommendations
6 that have already been made to you, the Royal Commission.

7 I want to thank you for your time and allowing us time
8 here at this hearing. I will take any questions.

9 Waliwon. Thank you.

10 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Thank you.

11 Any questions from the Commissioners?

12 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I would like
13 to start with your last point dealing with self-government.

14 We heard many, many times by women groups
15 and women across the country, during our hearings, that
16 self-government is a concern if it is not accompanied by
17 accountability measures that will make sure that

18 Aboriginal leaders will have to be accountable to the
19 people within the community. We didn't hear that very

20 often from young people. We did, but it struck me that,
21 from your studies and in your recommendations you

22 mentioned, it is seen as a threat for many Aboriginal

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1 youths.

2 I would like you to expand on that. What
3 do you mean by that? What is involved there? I think
4 it would be important if you could give us a bit more of
5 the background.

6 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Okay. Through some of
7 the talking circles and youth meetings that we have had,
8 that has been one of the major concerns for them, the
9 self-government. Nobody understands it, I don't think,
10 especially the youth.

11 They are saying, right now, that they
12 had heard that there is not going to be anymore secondary
13 education funding in 1995, then fishing rights, they talked
14 about the different rights that they see that they have
15 now, and are not currently exercising them, and feel that
16 when it does come time for them to either enter into
17 secondary education or to be fishing -- I guess it was
18 mostly personal.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I understand
20 it was more a financial concern, that there is some security
21 as far as money under the Indian Act, and it is something
22 that is known. So I understand it was more a concern of

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1 insecurity, moving from the Indian Act to something else,
2 like self-government and being on their own. It was more
3 a concern for the availability of money for financing such
4 things as post-secondary education, and then concern about
5 the accountability.

6 We heard from some young people in our
7 hearings that they also had concerns similar to women.
8 Saying, well, if you are not well acquainted with the Chief
9 it is difficult to get a job.

10 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Exactly.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So we have
12 heard about that. I wanted to know, was this part of the
13 concern or is it more a concern of the financial insecurity
14 that might flow? People are afraid that they would be
15 vacuum from the Indian Act to self-government. Is it both?

16 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Yes, it is kind of both.

17 I mean, because even when you are talking about jobs and
18 stuff like that, in some of the communities, I can't say
19 all of them, it is who you are related to. You know,
20 whether you are going to get that job. If it comes down
21 to education, fishing rights, or whatever, economic
22 development, is this all going to be the same thing with

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1 self-government.

2 I guess that is what they are saying is
3 their concern. You know, do you have to be related to
4 be able to have access to any of those programs.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** This is
6 something we have heard of often on both aspects, that
7 people are afraid that they would be a vacuum between the
8 Indian Act moving toward greater self-government, and that
9 the Federal Government would overload this responsibility
10 without the money. This is, of course, quite a valid
11 concern, and that is why I said at the outset that the
12 transition will have to be made very clear between the
13 fading out of the Indian Act and the fading in of
14 self-government.

15 The other concern is a question of
16 accountability and making sure that the leadership is
17 accountable to the people between the elections. This
18 was mentioned very often by women, but also by some young
19 people.

20 So that is your assessment, at this
21 point, coming from this study that you undertook for the
22 Royal Commission?

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1 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Yes, and our research
2 project will be completed in September.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes. Okay.
4 I would like to now move onto suicide.

5 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Okay.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Well, as you
7 know, it is a very difficult issue to tackle or address.
8 The Commission had a special joint consultation with the
9 AFN at the end of April on the whole issue of suicide.
10 Last week we had a special consultation with the Inuit
11 representative and representatives also from Métis and
12 off-reserve Aboriginal people.

13 You came up with three recommendations;
14 prevention workshops to be held in school and Aboriginal
15 communities that are at risk, the crisis line in many areas,
16 the healing circles and youth circles for peer support.

17 One of the things that we have been told
18 is that it might be very important that young people talk
19 to each other to try to prevent this to occur. We are
20 very much interested in it because there have been so many
21 instances of suicide. Last year we were in Bay Cove, Viola
22 Robinson and myself, at the end of May and from June.

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1 For many months there were these sad events that occurred.

2 Up to three young people took their lives.

3 So could you tell us a bit more about
4 what you see that could be done because very often the
5 communities start recognizing the problems and acting on
6 it when there is a crisis.

7 **RHONDA ALAIN:** The healing circles that
8 we had mentioned, a lot of the time what they are finding
9 too is that if a student is at risk or a youth is at risk
10 they are often referred to social workers that they don't
11 identify with, they can't talk with, and it is like they
12 are just not connecting.

13 I mean, the recommendation is for an
14 Elder there so that they have that sense of security with
15 someone that they know and can talk to and trust and, I
16 mean, to work along with social workers that go into the
17 communities.

18 The youth circles are really needed and
19 that is up to the communities to help the youths set them
20 up, and to provide them with the facilities, whether it
21 be a community hall, speakers that could come in for them,
22 they can get together and sit down and start identifying

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1 the needs that they have too.

2 That is the youth, right, they need to
3 identify some of their own needs, you know. You can't
4 just be running around thinking what they might be
5 thinking. We need to know what they need too.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Can you tell
7 us, from your research, if there are preventive measures
8 taken in most communities, at this point? Are you aware?
9 Did you go to or did you have young people from many
10 communities in New Brunswick participating in your --

11 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Yes, and we are still
12 doing the research. This has been mostly in the
13 Fredericton area right now, Armocto (PH), and they have
14 just started their youth circles. I think a lot of it
15 has been because of the crisis at Bay Cove that they have
16 faced with their youth. I mean, the youth are
17 scared themselves, you know. You can hear it when they
18 are talking, especially about suicide. Is there friends
19 that are thinking of it, maybe they are thinking of it
20 themselves at times, and who do you go to and how do you
21 get support.

22 So I think they are starting to really

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1 look at it as their responsibility too, from the youths
2 that I have talked with anyways, you know.

3 I have tried to point that out to them
4 because we can't, as adults, be responsible always for
5 our youth, you know, what they think, and how they feel
6 unless we know.

7 So I say identify what you need and then
8 we can go from there and work from that point.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** One of the
10 things that we were told is that governments and
11 professionals should come from the outside as support for
12 programs that are community programs designed by the
13 people, and the young people themselves.

14 When you stress that very often the
15 cross-cultural relationship makes it difficult for young
16 Aboriginal people to talk to professionals coming from
17 the outside, there is a link with the previous presentation
18 where there is a lack of health professionals in the mental
19 health areas in particular.

20 So in your discussions, or those
21 circles, or discussion with young people, where you able
22 to discuss the education issue, the importance to get an

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1 education?

2 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Oh, yes.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** What is the
4 others?

5 **RHONDA ALAIN:** When we are talking with
6 high school students, they are more reserved because they
7 feel that they aren't clearly represented in the system,
8 and that if they tried to find out about Aboriginal history
9 or culture, I mean, it is something that they should do
10 at home because there is not any place in the schools for
11 this. They are upset with that.

12 I mean, they want to continue no matter
13 what, you know, because identity is part of your home.
14 It come from your home, and part of your teaching and
15 learning too has to come from home. But, I think, they
16 are really looking for those links within the school system
17 too. You know, where do they fit in.

18 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Viola.

19 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank
20 you. You started out here in the first paragraph. At
21 the end of the first paragraph you said that you are geared
22 to promote positive relations between Native and

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1 non-Native peoples. How are you doing this, and how
2 successful are you in your promotion?

3 **RHONDA ALAIN:** At the centre, we do
4 potluck dinners, cultural, multi-cultural dinners, and
5 we invite other organizations, whether it be immigrant
6 women. A lot of it is women usually. You know, they come
7 in the centre, we put together our dinners, we mix with
8 our own traditions and theirs. It is a time for sharing.

9 We also have other kinds of workshops
10 that happen at the centre that are open to all. They are
11 cultural and sometimes there are Native arts and crafts,
12 as well.

13 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Are you
14 getting good attendance at these functions? Is there a
15 lot of non-Aboriginal people coming in and good
16 cross-cultural exercises going on from this?

17 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Well, at the centre here,
18 we started up probably -- I think it was in the 70's.
19 Then we had a few problems or whatever and we kind of went
20 under for a while. We have just got back on our feet within
21 the last year. So, really, it is establishing new ties
22 all over the place again, within the community, let them

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1 know that we are back. With non-Native communities, let
2 them know that we are there as well.

3 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Have you
4 had a lot of youth around the Friendship Centre?

5 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Yes. We have got two
6 youth programs. We have got two youth workers working.
7 One is cultural and tradition. It is more drumming,
8 chanting and dancing, and the other one is more towards,
9 like I said, arts and craft workshops.

10 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Okay.

11 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Again, they are open to
12 all.

13 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** You said
14 that, some of the recommendations that you have here, more
15 Aboriginal teachers, especially in schools where there
16 is a large Aboriginal population, would be one of the
17 recommendations, I guess, to combat racism and to help
18 the education system. How many Aboriginal teachers do
19 you have in the province? Do you know how many would be
20 in the system?

21 **RHONDA ALAIN:** I don't have any idea.
22 I myself have just recently graduated from the University

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1 of New Brunswick with a BD. I don't know. I found there
2 is a few teachers in the Fredericton area that are working
3 as classroom teachers but, even in the communities in New
4 Brunswick, I haven't found very many Native teachers
5 working at all.

6 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I am
7 going to ask you another question. I guess it is just
8 a follow-up question or extended question, I guess, from
9 my Co-Chair's question on self-government and youth and
10 their concern here about their fear for self-government
11 or whatnot.

12 Your research is not complete yet. Are
13 you going to further your thinking? Are the youth going
14 to think more about this? Because I would be interested
15 in knowing how they see self-government evolving in their
16 communities, and what kind of transition do they see, and
17 what kind of a model would they see.

18 It appears they are not happy with the
19 existing model of self-government or the way the governing
20 structure is now. If that is the case, what do they
21 envision for the future that is going to erase the kinds
22 of concerns that they raised now? If you can't answer

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1 that, I think it is something that you might want to pursue.

2 **RHONDA ALAIN:** We have talked about that
3 at the centre with the board. Going through the
4 recommendations and concerns, I mean, I agree there should
5 be some kind of a follow-up process with this, where you
6 are putting it in their hands and saying, okay, you are
7 Chief now. What do you see your community looking like?
8 What kind of programs are there available? How are you
9 receiving money? I mean, kind of putting them in the
10 position, whether it is role playing or whatever, to just
11 try to brainstorm and get some new ideas.

12 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:**
13 Obviously they have identified the problems and they see
14 them, but --

15 **RHONDA ALAIN:** What to do and how to
16 combat them.

17 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** What are
18 we going to do about them? Because that is something that
19 we are trying to deal with now, and it is becoming difficult
20 if nobody is going to come forward and really give us some
21 clear answers or responses to those kinds of questions.
22 Your youth circles. You say that youth

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1 circles is a recommendation here, that you should have
2 more youth circles. You do have your circles. Youth
3 circles for peer support, that is the recommendation, but
4 you don't need a recommendation for that. Can't you just
5 do that?

6 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Oh, yes. That is what
7 we do. We do have one at the centre presently and, like
8 I said, in the two communities that I have visited -- now
9 I can't speak for Kings Clear and there are few other
10 communities right there -- in the St. Mary's community
11 and the Armocto (PH), they both have youth groups now.

12 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** There are
13 a number of things that are going on in a lot of problem
14 areas, and there are a lot of initiatives that are being
15 undertaken now by a lot of Aboriginal communities, by
16 groups, and whatnot, that are addressing them, and some
17 quite successfully, that we would like to use for role
18 models ourselves to be recommending to someone else.

19 So some of these things you don't have
20 to wait for the report of the Royal Commission. If anybody
21 can resolve their problems they should be doing that now.

22 The more the people resolve themselves, it is going to

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1 be easier for us.

2 What about recreation? Is recreation
3 a part of a solution or is recreation something that is
4 accessible for the Aboriginal youth? Are they interested
5 in it? Is there any promotion of that recreation?

6 **RHONDA ALAIN:** There is some promotion
7 to it. The youth, they see it as a way of -- well, from
8 the youth that I have talked with, what they were saying
9 is, yes, we need more recreation programs that aren't just
10 sports oriented. Most often there might be a softball
11 team or something, but that is about it for recreation
12 in the communities.

13 They like to see more activities coming
14 in, whether it's through their youth groups -- and like,
15 when we talked about that, I said they could be bringing
16 these people in. You know what I mean.

17 With the help, go to your Chief and
18 counsellors and let them know that this is what we like
19 on our community, whether they can afford it or not. Start
20 fund raising. I mean, it is as much their responsibility
21 for themselves. If they see something that they would
22 really like to do, or that would be good for their community

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1 or their group, you know, find out how they can access
2 it.

3 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I was
4 just wondering if the youth facilities, usually high
5 schools, most high schools, at least, have youth
6 facilities, gyms and different sports activities, are
7 being promoted to the youth and are they actively
8 participating, are they being encouraged, or are they not
9 comfortable in participating? We have heard all kinds
10 of different stories going across, and I am just wondering
11 if you heard if there are any problems there?

12 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Okay. Yes, they do have
13 a swim program, now that you mentioning that. That is
14 once a week, I think, at the university and they take groups
15 of kids there to go for a swim. I really think it is working
16 out all right. None of the youths even mentioned that.
17 I had forgot all about it until you starting talking about
18 the different facilities.

19 Where we are in the city, and central,
20 we have access to quite a few facilities. We are really
21 lucky that way. I think in the Fredericton area youth,
22 and the youths that are within the city, find that there

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1 are more activities for them, even if they are community
2 orientated. There are things for the youth to do and to
3 get involved in as well. If they want to, right, and part
4 of it is their own initiative.

5 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** This is
6 my last question.

7 **RHONDA ALAIN:** That is all right.

8 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** It is not
9 really a question. I think I want a clarification. I
10 was reading and writing when you were answering another
11 questions here, something about cultural and tradition.
12 Did I hear you say that the culture and tradition should
13 come from the home? Is that what you said?

14 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Part of it, yes.

15 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Yes, I
16 wasn't sure if you meant that.

17 **RHONDA ALAIN:** I just meant that I don't
18 think all of the teaching and all of the responsibility
19 is on the school system. You know, I mean, it has to come
20 from home too.

21 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Both.

22 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Yes, the communities are

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1 as much as responsible for that.

2 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Okay.

3 Thank you. That is all of the questions that I have for
4 you.

5 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Thank you.

6 René.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Very briefly,
8 I would like to get back on racism.

9 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Okay.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** One of your
11 recommendations is that youth groups be formed across
12 Canada to combat racism.

13 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Yes.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Of course, it
15 is one of the most difficult things to address and to fight.

16 At the Friendship Centre in Fredericton, are you able
17 to bring together young Aboriginal people and young
18 non-Aboriginal people in social events or whatever? Is
19 there parallel social life all of the time?

20 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Yes, we are just getting
21 that started up again. We kind of started last year a
22 little bit. We found though that, within the centre

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1 anyways I would like to say, there was a bit of conflict
2 at first, like who is who, but a lot of these people who
3 come to the centre are open and they either live within
4 the communities or have Aboriginal friends, so they felt
5 very much a part of the centre. We did have a few problems.

6 Is that what you mean?

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** In fact, what
8 I am leading to is talking about recommending youth groups
9 to be formed across Canada. Do you have in mind Aboriginal
10 youths only? It seems to me that if there was a group
11 of young people, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, who
12 were formed to fight racism that it would have a stronger
13 impact.

14 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Oh, for sure. I mean we
15 need all of the people of colour, for sure, together.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes, but it
17 might be difficult to do that unless a centre like the
18 Friendship Centre start trying to bring together young
19 people from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal spectrums.

20 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Yes.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Is your
22 recommendation concerned with mainly Aboriginal youth?

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1 **RHONDA ALAIN:** No, racism.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes, I know,
3 but when you talk about youth groups, do you have in mind
4 groups formed of young Aboriginal people or do you have
5 in mind including, if possible, non-Aboriginal youth also?

6 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Yes, non-Aboriginal
7 youth because it is needed. You need to hear both sides.

8 I mean, Aboriginal youth, if they have their circle, which
9 they should have, they can't combat racism by themselves.

10 It comes from other communities too. So it is a matter
11 of trying to work together, and that is part of establishing
12 those ties and working together.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So that is why
14 I kind of feel that a Friendship Centre has a role to play,
15 to bring young people together, Aboriginal and
16 non-Aboriginal.

17 **RHONDA ALAIN:** A lot of the research
18 that we are getting, it is really nice to see as the centre.

19 So we know, you know, what kind of programs and what kind
20 of needs that our community in Fredericton is looking for,
21 and towards, so that we can start facilitating them and
22 try to see if this is what they would like to do. I mean,

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1 they have mentioned it here. Like I said, we are centrally
2 located and it would be a great value to have some of these
3 recommendations come to life and be working.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** From your
5 assessment, is the majority of young Aboriginal people
6 at secondary level going to the main school, the public
7 school, or are they attending school on reserves with other
8 Aboriginal people? What is the situation?

9 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Oh, we were talking
10 public schooling.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So there is a
12 mix already?

13 **RHONDA ALAIN:** There is already a mix,
14 yes.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** How do they
16 mix? Are they living apart?

17 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Well, it just depends,
18 you know, I guess, on what is in the air at the time.
19 Recently there was this taxation issue that came into New
20 Brunswick and I think that is where the racism issue really
21 came into play.

22 Many of the youths that I talked with,

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1 Aboriginal youth, felt that since this issue it seemed
2 like racism went up really high. They could just walk
3 into classrooms, or into people that they knew well, and
4 had been going to school with, and were hearing comments,
5 and it just made them really feel out of place. So, yes.

6 I think that they do have their own
7 group, but it mixes in. It has to, right. I mean, we
8 have to still survive and communicate.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do you know if
10 there is some structure within the secondary schools, the
11 school boards or authorities, trying to bring young
12 Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people together to
13 discuss those issues and to share them? Are you aware?

14 **RHONDA ALAIN:** I don't know that there
15 is.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You don't
17 know.

18 **RHONDA ALAIN:** No, I am not aware. That
19 would be something to look into though.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes, because
21 it goes to the routes.

22 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Exactly, yes.

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1 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Okay. What has been
2 happening is that we have been given many job training
3 courses in the communities that train the youth or the
4 young people to go out and be successful out there, whether
5 it is being a cashier, an accountant, whatever, but very
6 few of these programs are geared toward the community,
7 and what the community needs, and how to be successful
8 within your own community.

9 A lot of the youth don't want to leave
10 the community. A lot of the people would like to be working
11 back in their own communities, but there is nothing there
12 for them, you know, because they are not trained for their
13 community. They are trained for outside of it, and that
14 was a concern.

15 What I was hearing was that it is just
16 creating a cycle. They go from job training to either
17 unemployment or welfare, which ever they qualify for, and
18 it is back to another training program. One young girl
19 that I had talked to said she had been in three training
20 programs within the past two years. Computer training
21 was one of them. I think cashier was another one. She
22 couldn't find any work in either of these. They do some

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1 kind of follow-up on the job training, on the job training
2 she didn't get hired on. So, again, she was back on welfare
3 until the next job training came up.

4 I don't know. It just seems like it has
5 created some kind of a cycle in the communities. I don't
6 know what is going on with it. They are trained, you know.

7 We are trained. Some have three or four, seven training
8 certificates or programs that they have been through but
9 they are still not working.

10 I guess that is what they are concerned
11 with. They want to be working, they want to be productive
12 in their communities, but if they don't have the training
13 then they can't work within the community.

14 Did that answer your question? No, eh.

15 I can tell by the look.

16 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Well, not
17 really. Just one more on self-government.

18 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Okay.

19 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** On
20 self-government, you say in your research that the
21 Aboriginal youth fear that they would lose any existing
22 rights and freedoms before they have had the opportunity

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1 to exercise them. How would those rights be lost, for
2 example? Could you give us an example, for instance,
3 treaty rights, Aboriginal rights, how would they be lost
4 through self-government?

5 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Okay. Now this really
6 came out when we were talking to a few Kings Clear youth,
7 like with the fishing down there. They were saying that
8 because they have commercial fishing now in their community
9 they have to fish down river or whatever. Not that that
10 is a problem, but they feel that there are other problems
11 when you are entering other communities in fishing. They
12 see it as a right to be fishing. That was the only example
13 that I really had for the fishing.

14 It is the same with hunting, I think.
15 You know, they are saying the same thing. Most of the
16 communities don't even have enough land to hunt. We don't
17 have access in your community to fish. That means you
18 have got to leave the community. If your Aboriginal rights
19 are only within a community, what happens when you don't
20 have those resources. Does that mean that those rights
21 aren't available to you. I mean, they are asking those
22 kinds of questions.

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1 I don't even know. I mean, I have to
2 say that I don't know.

3 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** I think this
4 is probably where part of the education has to be impressed
5 upon, not only the youth but general Aboriginal population
6 and the general non-Aboriginal public as well, that
7 Aboriginal rights are not confined only to the reserve
8 but they are off the reserve as well, and the same thing
9 with hunting, treaty rights. These are not confined only
10 to the reserve. They extend beyond the boundaries of the
11 reserve.

12 I just thought maybe I would throw that
13 out to you to hopefully try to make some of them aware
14 that those rights are not confined only to the reserve
15 area, they go beyond the reserve boundaries.

16 **RHONDA ALAIN:** I guess really what was
17 bringing that into play was the taxation issue too. I
18 mean, because they were saying that if you live in the
19 community you are tax exempt, if you are buying within
20 that community, if you live off the reserve you are not
21 exempt. So, I mean, they started comparing this to other
22 treaty rights that they knew of. What happens when?

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1 Again, I don't even have the answers and they have more
2 questions.

3 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Yes, again, I
4 think this is where the education part has to play a role
5 and, I guess, to inform everyone of these many issues.
6 Hopefully they will be able to see why things happened
7 the way they did and what are the ways to correct them.

8 So that is a recommendation, I think, that should be put
9 forward in your research as well.

10 **RHONDA ALAIN:** Okay.

11 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Anymore
12 questions, Commissioners?

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

14 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Okay.

15 Rhonda, thank you for your presentation.

16 **MARGARET LABILLOIS, ELDER:** Could I
17 mention something. She was talking something about the
18 home, that the teachings should be at home. I know in
19 our community there has been deculturalization for 150
20 years of Indian People, you know, not only in their religion
21 but their language and their way of life.

22 Even today in the schools, you know, we

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1 have a language program in our school, in the provincial
2 school, but up to this day there has never been a time
3 given to the students to get that kind of instruction
4 because they either have to give up their art, or their
5 social studies, or their noon period, just to get maybe
6 ten minutes or so of the day, where any other subject they
7 have a whole hour.

8 The Provincial Government has never seen
9 fit for us to have cultural instructions even though we
10 have the majority of our children go to those schools.

11 Thank you.

12 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Thank you,
13 Margaret.

14 The next presenter is Lloyd Augustine.

15 I understand, Lloyd, you don't have a written one but
16 you will making an oral presentation. Is that correct?

17 **LLOYD AUGUSTINE:** No, I am going to
18 read.

19 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Okay. Go
20 ahead.

21 **LLOYD AUGUSTINE:** The First Peoples of
22 the Wabanaki Confederacy, which consists of Abenaki,

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1 Maliseet, Mi'gmaq, Passamoquoddy, and Penobscot, along
2 with other neighbouring confederacy, have stated and
3 claimed to our people of Turtle Island that we are a
4 sovereign nation with an inherent right to govern
5 ourselves.

6 The Canadian and Provincial Governments
7 use flattering words such as inherent right,
8 self-government, self-determination and distinct society
9 in attempt to assimilate us into a government foreign to
10 our people.

11 The courts also have stated that our
12 treaties with the Crown, the British North American Act
13 and the Royal Proclamation of 1763 are still valid in
14 today's society and should be upheld by the existing
15 governments.

16 With all this said, why do we, as
17 citizens of Turtle Island and Members of the Wabanaki
18 Confederacy, continue to run to a foreign government to
19 ask if we could run our lives in accordance to the
20 traditional values our ancestors passed down to us.

21 To me this is ludicrous. The idea of
22 having to ask of a foreign government, a government that

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1 is bent on annihilating the Aboriginals of Turtle Island,
2 is not my idea of acting as a sovereign nation.

3 I ask the leaders, why continue to butt
4 your heads against a brick wall by going to foreign
5 governments to run our affairs?

6 Why insist on complete genocide on our
7 people and on ourselves by proceeding to go ahead with
8 negotiations with Federal and Provincial Governments in
9 regards to our treaty and land rights?

10 Why do you claim to represent the people
11 in your community when you keep them in the dark or never
12 hold a consensus concerning the affairs of our nations?

13 Why talk about land claims when the land
14 you are talking about does not belong to you, but to our
15 seventh generation yet unborn?

16 If we are a sovereign nation we have to
17 start behaving like one. We must start recalling the
18 values our grandmothers upheld. The First People must
19 come together and start looking into a longhouse way of
20 life, a way of life based on give and service to our brothers
21 and sisters.

22 For us to achieve this, we must sit down

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1 and start listening to one another the way our Elders do.

2 It is not how loud you talk, and it is not how well versed
3 you are in any language that makes people listen, but what
4 comes from the heart.

5 We have to come to one another in talking
6 circles in a traditional manner. This way we learn to
7 hear each other out without interruption, first to our
8 families, then to our clans, to our communities and,
9 finally, to our nation.

10 In the process, we must recall our
11 identity. Are we going to insist on the brainwashing we
12 receive by the Euro-cultural system and claim citizenship
13 to a government that is out to destroy us, or hold our
14 heads up and show the citizens of Canada that we are the
15 First Peoples of this fine country our Elders call Turtle
16 Island, and that we as First People still insist on sharing
17 the land with our Canadian brothers and sisters.

18 We have to educate them away from the
19 fallacy that the beast has instilled in them, a thinking
20 that we are a constant burden always looking for hand-outs,
21 and that we are the cause of high taxation. Giving the
22 impression to the Canadians that we live the life of wryly,

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1 tax free and everything paid for. But in truth, the ones
2 that are pointing the finger at us are the very ones who
3 are the burden and the cause of this high taxation. A
4 system that continues to make up new positions for its
5 patrons and continues to spend frivolously without getting
6 anything in return is a country that goes ever deeper into
7 a deficit.

8 If a new relationship with Canada is to
9 exist then there must be some way that will obligate Canada
10 to honour and respect our people and our original
11 institutions, our agreements and our treaties, our rights
12 as nations and to honour that status fully.

13 There are presently every indication
14 that Canada is not moving in such a direction, and has
15 no intention of honouring past and present agreements with
16 us, unless if they are to Canada's self-interest. There
17 has to be something coming from Canada that will
18 demonstrate that the past 125 years are not going to be
19 repeated.

20 It has always been the reality that it
21 is our peoples and our lands that must accommodate Canada.
22 We are the ones expected to change. There has never been

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1 a meeting half way between our respective peoples.

2 Is this Commission seeking to do the same
3 and repeat the 125 year process of seeking from us what
4 Canada wants, rather than coming to us with the return
5 of our stolen lands, recognition of our nation status and
6 honour our treaties and territories without interference.

7 We as a people, Native people, must
8 remove this veil of ignorance the Canadian Government has
9 placed on our Canadian brothers and show that we are a
10 peaceful nation, not savages we have been made out to be,
11 but people with heart, love, concern and service for its
12 people and its neighbours.

13 Please do not mistake our meekness for
14 weakness or our silence for consent to do as you please
15 with us. Meekness and silence are traits of our ancestors
16 that we accept as blessings, but your government has tired
17 to turn into a curse.

18 We are the same people our Elders were,
19 who always thought peaceful solutions, this is why we have
20 treaties with your government and at no time did we impose
21 anything on you or declare war against your people. We
22 still long to solve things in a peaceful manner and will

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1 proceed to do so.

2 My brothers and sisters we have to hold
3 tight to our traditional values. We must rid ourselves
4 of this western Euro-cultural thinking which is causing
5 genocide among our people.

6 We must hang on to our culture. Our
7 culture is the only thing that has sustained us, and will
8 sustain us, for it points us back to the creator and to
9 our spirituality.

10 We as a people must start talking to one
11 another and promoting, instead of destroying each other.

12 We must look to one another as brothers
13 and sisters, with the realization that no one else will
14 help us.

15 We have to take back our self-respect,
16 we must be proud of who we are, we have to break this
17 dependency that has been created in us to a foreign
18 government.

19 We are a proud nation, a strong people,
20 people who have heart, a people with a need to heal each
21 other.

22 We have to move away from the government

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1 the western culture has placed in our communities, a
2 patriarchal system consisting of Chief and Council, a male
3 dominating system where harshness, unfairness and
4 injustice are the norm, a dog eat dog world, where only
5 the fittest and strongest survive.

6 Indeed, we have strayed far from our
7 traditional way. Away from maternal system where love,
8 concern, fairness and justice prevailed. Where the clan
9 mothers were shown proper respect since they are the life
10 carriers and teachers to our children. Clan mothers who
11 always knew who constituted a good sagamow. Sagamow is
12 the mistranslation by the Europeans to mean Chief.

13 To the Aboriginals, Sagamow was a person
14 who conducted and carried him or herself in an attitude
15 of service, physical labour providing for the community,
16 for the elderly, the widow and the fatherless.

17 Sagamow was a tool to be used by the
18 people as a representative or a spokesperson. Sagamow
19 was one who was kind and hospitable to all who he or she
20 came in contact with, especially to its own people.

21 My brothers, I ask you not to be
22 frightened by the word maternal for it denotes motherhood,

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1 the very being that raised us with love, kindness and
2 protection, who held us with warmth and comfort, and taught
3 us fairness and justice.

4 A system, where we instead of being the
5 problem, will be the solution, where no one is excluded
6 from the process of creating a strong nation, for every
7 man, woman and child is an important participant, where
8 everyone has a voice, and where no one is intimidated.

9 The process as a whole is equality,
10 consensus is the force, a place where we come back together
11 as families, a system where healing begins.

12 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Thank you,
13 Lloyd. Viola, do you have any questions?

14 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I don't
15 know if I have any questions, it may lead to a question,
16 but certainly I think you have made some points that we
17 have heard many, many times before in a lot of communities.

18 I think what I would like to say here
19 is that you raise an issue here that we as a Commission
20 are trying to come to grips with, and that is the whole
21 system of the traditional style of self-governing,
22 cultural, going back to what you have described here

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1 versus, I guess, the Indian Act system.

2 You talk about the patriarchal system.

3 We know where that comes from. We are all victims of
4 it. The Chief and Council, that is a system that has been
5 imposed on people ever since the Indian Act came into being,
6 and we hear this over, and over, and over, again. There
7 are people that strongly believe in what you are saying
8 here about the clan mothers, and about we needing equality,
9 we need consensus, we need to go back to the way our people
10 were before.

11 The question I have is this: You have
12 a system now that is a government system that is Indian
13 Act governs the communities and it provides resourcing.

14 You mention here, as well, that we have to get our
15 self-respect back, we have to break the dependency, we
16 have to start listening to each other, talk to one another,
17 and we have to get into talking circles, and we have to
18 respect one another, and we are sovereign. We don't need
19 permission from the government to run our affairs, but
20 the government has been running the affairs for so long
21 and it has created a dependency.

22 People have changed and things have

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1 changed now. People have got used to driving cars, people
2 have got used to watching t.v., people are getting used
3 to a life style that is totally different and it take
4 dollars to do that, or it takes self-sustenance.

5 If you look at focusing the dialogue,
6 they are identified here, the four pillars here that we
7 talk about which are renewing the relationship, and
8 economic self-sufficiency, and healing. These are the
9 things that you are saying, and these are the things that
10 we have heard, and this is the things that we identify
11 as making Aboriginal communities and people back to
12 wholeness again, and we understand that.

13 What I would like to know, I guess, based
14 on what you have said, how do we do that? How do we change
15 that, and how is the transition going to be?

16 People have said get rid of Indian
17 Affairs, get rid of the Department, get rid of all of that,
18 we don't want any of that. How are you going to do that?

19 What is it going to take to make that change, and how
20 are we going to sell it to those bands and communities
21 who don't want that?

22 They want their Indian Act, they want

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1 their funding, they want the AFA agreements. They have
2 got to go through Indian Affairs to settle land claims,
3 comprehensive claims, even treaties.

4 So you give us some ideas on how we would
5 do that. You sound fine and a lot of people sound find
6 to us, but we want to make sure that, if this is one of
7 the things, it is put down in writing. We want the people
8 to know this is the way people feel and this is how it
9 is going to be done. Could you help us out on that?

10 **LLOYD AUGUSTINE:** The community.

11 (Native Language) What we have done is we have established
12 a small group called the Wabanaki Cultural Resource Centre.

13 The basis for this centre is to educate people in bringing
14 back who they are, their culture, and what they are, and
15 telling them that this process, this system that we talk
16 about, has to start with the family and, finally, it goes
17 to the clans and it splits.

18 When this system was first brought to
19 Canada, this patriarchal system, it did not dominate the
20 Native people right away. It was a process. Again, this
21 is something that is another form of process that has to
22 be taken. Yes, we are going to run into brick walls because

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1 people don't want to give it up.

2 That Indian Act is the most
3 discriminatory piece of laws put together that I have ever
4 seen. They have brought this to our community without
5 being ratified by the Native people and placed it to us.
6 They turned around and say: The Canadian people are the
7 ones that did this. Well, it wasn't. The Canadian people
8 even had no part in it at all. It was the so called "high
9 and mighty" guys that are sitting up there in government
10 dictating to us on how we should live, what colour our
11 hearts should be and our minds.

12 This resentment that I have towards the
13 Canadian Government is not towards the Canadian people.
14 The Commission, I assumed, was to bring the grass root
15 Canadians back with the grass root Natives, for us to talk
16 to one another, for us to educate each other on who we
17 are.

18 When you see us, you see us as a burden.
19 When I see you, I see you as a greedy people, out to take
20 every piece of land, every sole that lives, to dictate
21 and to rule. But I know that is not true because I have
22 talked with my people, and my people want to share the

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1 land, they want to be with the people. It is our leaders
2 that are going around trying to negotiate land settlements.

3 We look at the land and we see that it
4 belongs to our seventh generation yet unborn. I look at
5 you, the non-Natives, and I know that your desire here
6 is to educate one another on who we are, and to see on
7 how we might get back together as people.

8 This is a process that is going to take
9 a while, but this process has to start in our homes and
10 we have to break away from this dependency. We have this
11 fear that if we let go of Canada, the Government of Canada,
12 then it will turn on us, and true it will because it is
13 based on a dictatorial way, where if it cannot dominate those
14 people then it will try to kill them, and it has tried
15 to kill us.

16 The 125 years that Canada has been here,
17 the only thing that it has spent on doing is to rid of
18 the Native problem. What we are here proposing is that
19 we work together as people.

20 One of the greatest things I heard from
21 one of my ancestors is that our people, in our society,
22 in our race, was that the distinction of colour and race

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1 was to be looked upon as something to be admired and loved,
2 and not to be hated, not to dominate anyone, but to put
3 them in a circle and let them be part of that circle, to
4 be part of that growing up as a nation.

5 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Well, I
6 think you have certainly given us a form of a solution
7 or the way it could be done, but how that will materialize
8 and the way it will be done, it would be nice, and it would
9 be good, and maybe it will happen. I would like to say
10 that your work sounds really, really interesting and I
11 hope it does come to that.

12 But, in the meantime, I think the
13 question that I was trying to get to here is -- and it
14 is true, the Commission is to try to develop a new
15 relationship between non-Aboriginal people and Aboriginal
16 people and to talk to one another. And, as you say, that
17 is an ideal situation. That is an ideal vision, but it
18 is the mechanism on how it is going to get there. If we
19 can get the consensus, as you say, to get people thinking
20 that way and to work that way. It starts very small.

21 I can see this being a very long
22 procedure, almost as long as it took us to get us the other

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1 way. We hear people, like today, about education, and
2 even though this is going on, we still have to educate
3 our people, our generations to come. I think we want them
4 educated because, as you say, we want to share this big
5 country so we all have to educate each other, and education
6 is not free. That is just one example.

7 How would we resource our education?

8 **LLOYD AUGUSTINE:** We have, again, in our
9 community formed a school based on traditional way of life,
10 where our children are learning Mi'gmaq and writing
11 Mi'gmaq. Where we have learnt by our Elders that by doing
12 something like this our traditional way has evolved around
13 maths because everything has to do with numbers. The
14 environment itself is signs.

15 So the only thing that we have to go back
16 to is our language and our way of thinking, that we have
17 to start proposing our own loss, and our own way of life
18 to our children, showing them the culture that our
19 grandmothers held dearly. This is something that we must
20 continue doing.

21 I was asked by one of the people: Is
22 that going to make your children illiterate because they

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1 weren't able to understand english or write english? But
2 when you think about it, if a French person cannot write
3 or speak English, is that person illiterate, or Japanese,
4 or German. These three groups are used because they have
5 hung onto their culture, and they have hung onto their
6 language, and they have excelled in what they do. They
7 are on top because they are proud of who they are.

8 The Canadian Government, the American
9 Government have learnt to start speaking in their language,
10 instead of vice versa, because they have to know, they
11 have to deal and they have to negotiate with these people.

12 We as a people have something here that
13 is there, but it is something that we are not going to
14 impose on the non-Natives. This is something that
15 everyone, if they want to part of, has to start educating
16 and teaching their children, that it is important to talk
17 and to communicate once again, and for us to stop being
18 dictorial and dominant, even to our children.

19 We have to become humans again with
20 heart. It might be long process, and hopefully it won't
21 be as long as how long it took to form Canada in where
22 it is today, in a recession. Hopefully it will be the

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1 other way around. Hopefully by the time we get out of
2 this we will come out a mighty nation once again who are
3 proud of each people. Each one of us will be able to look
4 at one another and call each other citizens because we
5 have grown together.

6 Financial you mentioned. We run a
7 little school that is based on parental involvement.
8 There is no longer, you drop your children and take off.
9 As a parent you have to put at least one day out of your
10 time into this group and help maybe with the teaching of
11 the children or help with the resource centre. It is
12 totally dedicated to the people who are involved in their
13 children.

14 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I just
15 have one last question. You mentioned that Canada has
16 an obligation to respect its agreements, and perhaps a
17 way for the Wabanaki Confederacy to excel and to move
18 forward is to get Canada to do that. That would mean
19 honouring the treaties and giving back some of the land,
20 I guess that is what you said. Yes, returning some of
21 the land and honouring the treaties.

22 Well, honouring the treaties would mean,

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1 I guess, a form of negotiations. Yet, I think you said
2 somewhere up here that we should not be negotiating. Yes,
3 negotiation regarding treaty and Aboriginal rights. Do
4 you see that maybe a solution could evolve out of a process
5 of negotiation between the Federal Government and the
6 Wabanaki Confederacy on the treaty rights?

7 **LLOYD AUGUSTINE:** For the Native people
8 to go to the government and try to negotiation treaty and
9 land rights when they exist already, to me, is kind of
10 -- why? These rights exist, these rights are there.

11 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Well,
12 what does Canada have to do to honour them, then?

13 **LLOYD AUGUSTINE:** What Canada has to do
14 to honour them is to step aside and let the people work
15 together, Native and non-Native. The people seem to think
16 that they are being taxed for us existing, but that is
17 not true. They are being taxed for the police, for the
18 roads, for the fire department, and for whatever is there
19 that exists that the government has made up. That is why
20 they are being taxed.

21 The reason why the Canadian Government
22 does not want to let go of the land is that, if it does,

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1 they would have to reimburse its Canadian citizens for
2 a land tax it has charged its people illegally. So that
3 is why it can't do it.

4 Do we negotiate with the Canadian
5 Government. We sit down first, and we bring up what the
6 Canadian Government should do, and we tell them. We cannot
7 sit back anymore and continue letting them dictate to us.
8 Look what the Indian Act has done to us. Look at the
9 monsters it has kind of created in our own communities.
10 They are sitting so dictorial in their offices deciding
11 your fate, if you are going to work tomorrow or not. That
12 is one of the scariest things we wake up to everyday.

13 The Federal and Provincial Governments
14 have cutely called our communities "reservations". In
15 Europe they would be called concentration camps, and yet
16 they continue to do all of this to us. And to me, it is
17 hard to sit down with a government that has no intention
18 of keeping its past or present agreements. It continues
19 to blind its people on who we are.

20 So we, as a people, have to sit down
21 together and start talking to one another. Do I see the
22 idea of the people sitting down with the government and

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1 talking? No, especially when the government won't listen.

2 The idea of this Commission was cause
3 so we could say it spent so much thousands of dollars on
4 Native people once again. You are probably going to have
5 to pick up the tab and pay more taxes, and we are probably
6 going to have to too because we started paying taxes.
7 We have been doing it already in hidden forms, but it still
8 accuses us of not paying them fully.

9 I don't know what we have to do. I look
10 around the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, and
11 look at the number here. I mean this is kind of ridiculous.

12 How many people is this going to hit. My love for the
13 Canadian people is great, the love for my people is greater.

14 What I plan on doing, and hopefully with
15 the help of others and the people that are here, is to
16 educate one another and treat each other as human beings.

17 In the long run we are the ones that are either going
18 to have to live with each other, or one society is going
19 to wipe out another. We are the minority here. We are
20 outcasts in our own country.

21 Even the Japanese were offered an
22 apology and compensated for the little land that they lost.

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1 No form of apology has been given to the Native people,
2 and yet they are sitting there trying to justify themselves
3 on how good they are to us when they are the ones that
4 practically opened up the noose for us to commit genocide.

5 At times it is quite frustrating.

6 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank
7 you. Do you have some questions René?

8 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you.
9 First of all, I would like to apologize. I had to go
10 outside the room for a few minutes.

11 I was struck by the way you coined the
12 issue. When you said, talking about Aboriginal and
13 non-Aboriginal people, they see you as a burden, and you
14 see us as greedy people, I think you were right on. That
15 is exactly the difficulty at this point as far as public
16 awareness, and also the difficulty to bring together both
17 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

18 We are aware that a process like this
19 one is only a start and that it will have to be an ongoing
20 process because the misunderstanding is deep. People have
21 been living apart and this was done through the Indian
22 Act, and the setting up of reserves.

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1 As my colleague just said, what we have
2 to find is a way to bring both people together. Obviously,
3 when you say it should not be done through governments,
4 and to the people that is true to a large extent, and a
5 process like this one, we hope, will help to do that.

6 What is happening in a room like this is reported back
7 more largely through the media, or printed, or otherwise.

8 But that being said, we are caught with
9 some very practical issues. Many, many people during our
10 hearings are saying to get rid of the Indian Act, but on
11 the other hand we want to be sure that we retain whatever
12 security is there financially because the Indian Act has
13 been the way the Federal Government chose to fulfil its
14 fiduciary duty.

15 So we have to find the transition from
16 the Indian Act to something else that would be
17 self-government in many instances. Economic development
18 on an economic base is central, as we said, in focusing
19 the dialogue. It is one of the touchstones. If we don't
20 find a way to get an economic base, that is changing four
21 quarters for a dollar, talking about self-government, we
22 won't change much. Then it brings us to some quite

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1 fundamental issues like land, like royalty on resources,
2 like the whole issue of starting businesses, and the whole
3 issue of the property of the land that belongs to the
4 community, and the difficulty then to get mortgages, for
5 loans, not only for personal purposes, but for commercial
6 purposes.

7 It brings us to a host of technical
8 issues that a Commission like ours has to address with
9 the help of everybody. We understand that culture,
10 self-identity and language is central to any solution.
11 There is nothing to do without that. So we know that at
12 this point. What we don't know yet is the way to move
13 from the present situation to the one that we see developing
14 quite clearly.

15 I am not only talking about government,
16 but the public is expecting, at least, to see a path and
17 an orderly transition toward new objectives for a much
18 more mature and respectful relationship.

19 So I am returning back to you to say:
20 Well, if we need absolutely to get down a couple of levels
21 to the specific, from the high principles and values,
22 because I think we could have an agreement quite easily

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1 with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples on fundamental
2 principles and values. It is when we come to the specifics
3 and the solutions, then resistance could come, and fear,
4 and all kinds of things get under way.

5 Maybe I missed some part of your
6 presentation, but we are very much interested in trying
7 to find a way to move from the present situation to the
8 other.

9 I also want to raise here that the fact
10 that very often with the women, for example, in 1985 the
11 Indian Act was amended by Bill C-31 to at least erase part
12 of the discrimination that was there. There is still some
13 discrimination following those amendments but very often,
14 as you know, these amendments were brought that far, and
15 not further, because there was resistance by Aboriginal
16 people themselves and by Indian leaders, and this has to
17 be acknowledged. It is not just the Federal Government.

18 So how do we move out of that into
19 something that will be much more healthy?

20 **LLOYD AUGUSTINE:** One of the things that
21 I asked was that would things be done without interference.

22 In the process in our communities right now, what we are

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1 doing is on the healing process. We are educating our
2 people and trying to bring them back to the culture and
3 to the way of life our grandmothers talked so highly of.

4 With this, we hope that we will be able
5 to move to removing the Indian Act all together. The
6 treaties themselves should keep us, in a sense, what the
7 Indian Act promised us, which failed to give. As to the
8 people, it is something that we are going to have to look
9 forward to doing without interference from the Canadian
10 Government. Right now we have got the people in the
11 fisheries coming in and pressuring our Indian Act Chiefs
12 to put up a draft on their fishing rights, and all that.

13 With all of this going on, no one ever puts into
14 consideration the poachers that exists in non-Native
15 communities, that the fisheries, the big trolleys they
16 are hauling in -- every time we just wait in the water,
17 it seems we have depleted the resource of salmon, we have
18 depleted cod, and we never even put our net down yet.

19 When we take a walk in the forest, they
20 sound as if we clear cut into the forest and that we all
21 killed the moose and deer. This is what the media sends
22 out to the people. One of the other things is that media

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1 decides on what the public says and what it doesn't.

2 So what you want to hear is something
3 that I cannot tell you because you would like to hear
4 something that is nice and beautiful, and impressing
5 Canada, and I can't do that. What I am going to tell you
6 is that the Indian Act has hurt the Native people pretty
7 bad, and it has to be got rid of.

8 The thing is, it has to be done by the
9 Native people without interference from the Canadian
10 Government. Let us heal ourselves. If we need a doctor
11 we will ask of our own. We are not going to call on someone
12 who does not want us to excel.

13 It is not shown any disrespect to the
14 Canadian people, but it is always that hope that maybe
15 we could form an alliance to protect ourselves from your
16 government, to work with one another. We have to somehow
17 start, again, hearing each. Stop trying to through our
18 wrench into something that is moving good. Why make things
19 difficult when the answers to the solutions are so easy.

20 All we have to do is just start implementing and start
21 talking.

22 One of the beautiful things about a

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1 consensus is that if a person disagrees then we have to
2 look at things, sort of like walking in their shoes for
3 a while, to see why they think like this. Have a feel
4 of it, and once we know maybe we will be able to have a
5 compromise.

6 We have a system where the majority
7 rules. The 51 per cent dominates everyone, even if you
8 don't like it, and that is a system that is killing everyone
9 of us.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Well, again,
11 the Royal Commission provides one kind of forum and we
12 are pretty much aware that there have to be many others.

13 We are certainly happy to share this with
14 you this afternoon. I see that you have some written
15 notes. If you could make them available to us, in this
16 forum or an extended forum, in the coming weeks we would
17 be very happy to receive them.

18 Thank you very much, again, for taking
19 your time and effort to come and speak to us. We hope
20 that we will be able to achieve something that will be
21 durable.

22 Thank you.

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1 **MODERATOR DARRELL PAUL:** Thank you.

2 Well, I guess that concludes this day
3 session. Tomorrow promises to be a busy one. So we are
4 going to be starting on time, exactly 8:30, and we have
5 a lot of presentations to hear.

6 So with that, tomorrow morning at 8:30.
7 We are going to begin on time, and we will have to stick
8 to the time that is allotted for each presentation.

9 With that we are going to close and I
10 am going to ask our Elder, Margaret LaBillois, to say the
11 closing prayer. Margaret.

12 **--- Closing Prayer**

13 --- Whereupon the hearing adjourned at 5:20 p.m. to resume
14 at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, June 15, 1993 in Moncton.