

May 21, 1992

1

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 Esquimalt, B.C.

2 --- Upon commencing May 21, 1992 at 10:15 a.m.

3

4

**CO-COMMISSIONER FOR THE DAY, CHIEF**

5 **ANDREW THOMAS:** I guess we are ready to start the day  
6 off with the Royal Commission here and I would like to  
7 ask my cousin George to do the opening prayer.

8 (Opening prayer in native language)

9

**CO-COMMISSIONER FOR THE DAY, CHIEF**

10 **ANDREW THOMAS:** I guess, first of all, I would like to  
11 say good morning to everyone.

12 I would like to welcome the Royal  
13 Commission into our home. I know there is a lot of work  
14 ahead of you over the next couple of years and I am glad  
15 that our community was chosen as one of the locations to  
16 hold your hearings, because I believe from within our own  
17 traditional territory our people will be expressing a lot  
18 of concerns as to how they see a new relationship developing  
19 with Canada.

20 I know, Georges, as the former National  
21 Chief, I have a lot of confidence in you that you are going  
22 be able to take the message that our people are going to  
23 give you, and Viola, too, because there has to be a change  
24 in how Canada deals with us as people. And I hope that

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1 the job ahead of you is not going to bring you down and  
2 that you always walk straight with your head held high,  
3 because you are doing a good job for our people. You are  
4 always there helping us.

5 I would like to welcome all my relations  
6 from the South Island area here, welcome you into our home  
7 here, because there is a lot of concerns that I know we  
8 have out there. And I hope you all get up and express  
9 them and let the Commission know what you feel in here  
10 that is needed to be said, so that our way can be paved  
11 and that we walk that Indian road that we have been chosen  
12 to walk.

13 So, with that, I would like to -- I do  
14 not want to take up too much time -- maybe I have a few  
15 issues I want to speak to later on, but I just wanted to  
16 open the meeting and welcome the Royal Commission into  
17 our home here.

18 Today is going to be just wide open for  
19 presentations and I would like to call on Sam to say a  
20 few words before we start.

21 **CHIEF SAMUEL SAM:** (Opening in native  
22 language)

23 I thank my nephew this morning for  
24 welcoming Georges and Viola into this home of ours. I

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1 can remember when our elder then, at that time, the Chief  
2 of this band, hereditary chief, he opened this building  
3 that we are in today. He said to keep it open to all people.

4 And my nephew has done that, so I thanked him this morning  
5 for it.

6 You may wonder why we have a fire when  
7 it is warm outside. It is very sacred to us, this home.

8 We spend six months of the year in this home and we always  
9 have a fire, we always build a fire, especially on such  
10 a special occasion, Georges, that we do this.

11 When we come into our homes like this  
12 we address ourselves in our own names, Indian names. We  
13 speak our language when we speak and you have several  
14 speakers here of this home. And we speak in our language.

15 And I thank (native language) for explaining to us the  
16 Royal Commission. There has always been a bad note in  
17 my mind about the Royal Commissions of the past -- not  
18 this one.

19 But I guess I have many things in my mind  
20 because I have experienced many things up to this time  
21 of my life of how we have become divided. And that is  
22 one issue that I am always very concerned about. And I  
23 see one word in the little pamphlet there. It says  
24 "reconciliation." It is very important to me because I

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1 see our people drifting far apart because of the elective  
2 system that is in the Indian Act.

3 When that elective system came about and  
4 we started to use the white man's way of getting people  
5 in office that divided us right down the middle. And not  
6 only divided us as communities, but as a whole, in the  
7 Province of British Columbia.

8 I have seen relationships deteriorate  
9 because of it and it does not do our people any good.  
10 And from the time I was able to remember and able to speak  
11 I used to listen to my grandparents and my grandfather.  
12 (native language), he used to say that. (native  
13 language).

14 They said "This is our land. I have  
15 hunted all over this place. And now the white man is  
16 chasing me out of my land." I heard that ever since I  
17 was a little kid. And it has worsened. You cannot even  
18 go and hunt without a permit. They want you to get a  
19 permit. But we have never taken one out. They want you  
20 to take a permit out when you go fishing, but we have never  
21 taken one out, because I believe that we have a law that  
22 governs that and there was no written piece of paper that  
23 was there for us to do those things.

24 We are called the (native language) of

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1 people. We are the first people here, that is (native  
2 language), is the word we use. And from the time I remember  
3 any of the stories that have been told through the past  
4 in our history I still believe I have not changed. But  
5 I think my biggest concern today, if we are going to come  
6 together and use that word "reconciliation," our young  
7 people have to start learning the language.

8                   Only then can you listen and you can tell  
9 the same stories that I have been telling, not the stories  
10 that I know, but what I have heard the old people talk  
11 about in the past, the meaning of this home that we are  
12 sitting in today, where our names and our ceremonies are  
13 performed. We still hold that very sacred today. Even  
14 with all the modern things that we see around us, we still  
15 hang onto it, but there is something that we have put into  
16 these places, these electric lights.

17                   These homes used to be only lit by fires  
18 at night and you used to be able to sit back and you really  
19 feel the power in this home when you are trying to resolve  
20 something. And our elders were good at it. They never  
21 argued or they never used the swear words that I hear now  
22 when we were trying to resolve something, or the  
23 undermining that is happening sometimes.

24                   When our elders spoke and they spoke

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1 about an issue, it was resolved as a whole. And young  
2 people said, "Our elders have spoken, we shall go by what  
3 they have said."

4 Today they say I am too old, I do not  
5 belong anywheres any more. That is how much we have  
6 changed, because of that Act that is there. That is how  
7 I feel about it. I will never change the way I feel.  
8 I will never change the belief that I have in this  
9 longhouse. And that means (native language), you help  
10 one another. (native language), you talk to one another  
11 and decide what you want to do. And I guess this is what  
12 the Royal Commission is going to do.

13 (native language), you speak whatever  
14 is on your mind.

15 I can remember a lot of things, the  
16 changes that have been made throughout the years and the  
17 leadership that has changed. There is a very few that  
18 stick to the old ways. I am glad to say I thank my nephew  
19 because he is hanging onto those beliefs and those values  
20 that made the native people strong and they are still strong  
21 today, that we will never give in to anything that we do  
22 not believe in.

23 And I commend one of our leaders, Tom  
24 Sampson, for what he has done for the people. Not all

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1 people appreciate it, but I always say to him "Just keep  
2 going because that is that is the teaching.

3 (native language), they are going to be  
4 condemning you and telling you that you are no good, but  
5 you still walk that path of Indian values. And you hear  
6 him speak in our language this morning. I appreciate that.

7 And I hope many more leaders start to do that because  
8 we need the leaders to be able to speak our language and  
9 understand our language. When we get into a big conference  
10 we can speak our language to one another. And we can  
11 resolve things so much more easier. It is hard for me  
12 to speak this language that I am speaking now. I think  
13 of some things, but I do not know how to put it in words.

14 (native language)

15 **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** I want  
16 to thank everybody for inviting us here. This is a real  
17 honour for the Royal Commission to be holding one of our  
18 hearings in this longhouse. It is the first time that  
19 a Royal Commission has held a hearing in one of these  
20 longhouses.

21 So, we are very grateful that to do our  
22 work we were allowed to conduct our hearing here.

23 The Royal Commission was announced in  
24 August of last year. Seven commissioners were appointed.

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1 Four of them are aboriginal people. Three are  
2 non-native.

3 I am one of the co-chairs. My name is  
4 Georges Erasmus. I am a Dene. I am from the part of the  
5 world we call Denedeh. You probably know it better as  
6 the Northwest Territories, the mainland of the Northwest  
7 Territories. And previously to this I was the national  
8 chief of the Assembly of First Nations.

9 The Commissioner that is with me here  
10 today is Viola Robinson. She is a Micmac. She stepped  
11 down from the leadership position of the Native Council  
12 of Canada to this particular job.

13 We have two other aboriginal people.  
14 One is an Inuit person. Her name is Mary Sillett. She  
15 stepped down from the leadership position of the Inuit  
16 Women's organization to this particular Commission.

17 We have a Metis lawyer by the name of  
18 Paul Chartrand, who is a professor at the University of  
19 Manitoba who is the fourth aboriginal person on this  
20 Commission.

21 The other co-chair is a judge in the  
22 appeal court in Quebec. His name is Rene Dussault. The  
23 other two Commissioners, non-native, are Bertha Wilson,  
24 who was formerly with the Supreme Court of Canada and,



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1 finally, we have Allan Blakeney, who is the former Premier  
2 of Saskatchewan.

3 At the moment we are conducting hearings  
4 in three different parts of the country. We have one group  
5 in Manitoba and we have another in the Atlantic. And this  
6 particular part of the Commission has been travelling here  
7 on Vancouver Island for this particular week.

8 We intend on holding hearings for the  
9 next year-and-a-half, or so. We will have approximately  
10 five phases to our hearings. We hope that we will be able  
11 to get good responses from both aboriginal people and  
12 non-native people and that people will tell us the kind  
13 of things they have in mind for the future.

14 We have a very, very broad mandate and  
15 presenters -- anyone that presents to us can deal with  
16 any one of the subjects. We can deal with political  
17 questions, the question of governance, the question of  
18 self-government for aboriginal people. People can talk  
19 to us about what has happened to their governmental  
20 institutions and what they would like for the future,  
21 whether or not they want to continue to use the institutions  
22 of our government, like the longhouse, the potlatch system,  
23 or any of the other systems of government that were in  
24 place anywhere on Turtle Island before contact with

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1 European people.

2 We can deal with economic issues.

3 Presenters can deal with anything dealing with economics  
4 in relation to either the way the economy used to work  
5 in the past, how it does not work today, how to deal with  
6 unemployment, what kind of solutions are going to work,  
7 so that we can turn around the very dismal unemployment  
8 figures we have among aboriginal people.

9 We can deal with land issues. We can  
10 deal with aboriginal title. We can deal with peoples'  
11 aspirations for a fair settlement of their rightful place  
12 in this country in relation to land.

13 We can deal with treaty issues. This  
14 is very relevant in many parts of the country and it is  
15 probably irrelevant here because in British Columbia we  
16 have the Douglas Treaties and also people are now entering  
17 into a treaty process with Canada, one that has been long  
18 awaited. But we can deal with any of the issues in relation  
19 to treaties, either past treaties or future treaties.

20 We can deal with issues of importance  
21 to young people. This Commission must make sure that it  
22 hears from the young amongst aboriginal people. The  
23 majority of the aboriginal people are under 25 and, of  
24 that group, the majority of them are under 16 years old.

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1                   So, the aboriginal population is very  
2 young. It is the future of First Nations. There is a  
3 lot of problems amongst the young people because of the  
4 history of the relationship with the newcomers to Turtle  
5 Island, the lack of recognition, the colonization, the  
6 oppression, the taking away of land and culture and  
7 language, residential schools, on and on and on.

8                   Many young people do not know who they  
9 are. They do not know their culture, they do not know their  
10 language and do not see much of a future, so do not live  
11 very far past a few years into their teenage, if they get  
12 that old.

13                  So, we must hear from young people. We  
14 must know their vision of the future. We must know what  
15 it is that they are dealing with in a more precise way,  
16 so that we can actually work with them toward some  
17 solutions.

18                  This Commission wants to hear from  
19 women. Aboriginal women, like the other parts of the  
20 aboriginal population, have had their own very specific,  
21 peculiar problems. They have suffered abuse from both,  
22 without the aboriginal community and from within the  
23 aboriginal community. They have faced, unfortunately,  
24 a lot of internal violence. We have a lot of aboriginal

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1 now that are single parents, for many reasons.

2 We must hear from women so we can walk  
3 away from our work with a very clear idea of what it is  
4 that they are facing and how we can resolve those issues.

5 So, in our hearings, we try to make sure  
6 that women feel comfortable enough to tell us those things.

7 We will also find other ways to get the views from women.

8 We will hold round tables on many issues and women's issues  
9 will be one of them.

10 Another very important part of the  
11 aboriginal population we want to hear from are the elders.

12 We know that in the past, in the traditional societies,  
13 that all parts of the community played an important role.

14 And none played a more important role than elders. They  
15 passed on the wisdom that they had collected through their  
16 years on earth. They were the storehouses of the culture  
17 and the language, and the history. They maintained the  
18 laws and in every aboriginal culture they played slightly  
19 different roles, but it was very important. It was always  
20 an upfront role. And we know that that role has changed  
21 since contact -- since Canada has grown up around the First  
22 Nations.

23 So we want to know from elders and from  
24 others the kind of society that aboriginal people in the

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1 future, and the role that elders will play.

2 Many aboriginal people now live in an  
3 urban situation. In some cases more than half of a people  
4 from a community are living out of that community and they  
5 are living in an urban situation. We must hear from those  
6 people. Are they living in an urban situation for  
7 temporary reasons? Are they there just for a formal  
8 education, work experience, employment reasons but they  
9 are going home again? Will they go home if there is  
10 employment there, if there is enough land, if there is  
11 enough housing?

12 If they are going to stay in an urban  
13 setting what is it they would like to see there that could  
14 assist them? What kind of institutions do they want?  
15 Will they be happy with a city developing the kind of  
16 services that they need? Will they be happy with the  
17 province and the federal governments recognizing some kind  
18 of special concerns for them?

19 We need to hear from urban aboriginal  
20 people.

21 We have, amongst aboriginal people,  
22 people that have been classified differently, status,  
23 non-status, treaty, non-treaty, Metis. We need to hear  
24 from all of those people. The Metis are without a land

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1 base in most parts of the country. We must get hold of  
2 that issue and figure out with them what their future really  
3 is.

4                   The language, the culture of First  
5 Nations and aboriginal people has been dramatically  
6 affected. As the elder was just saying, it is very  
7 important for leaders and young people to learn their  
8 language again. We want to hear from people how they  
9 believe that language should come back. What should be  
10 done so that the language becomes strong again? Are we  
11 talking about schools that are run in the aboriginal  
12 language? Are we talking about immersion into a situation  
13 where the language is what is the main tongue of  
14 instruction? What is it that we are talking about?

15                   The culture. The culture that we had  
16 500 years ago when Columbus sailed across is different  
17 from what we see today. Everywhere in North America, on  
18 Turtle Island, we see the aboriginal culture has survived,  
19 but it has been changed. We need to, together, figure  
20 out what kind of culture aboriginal people want for the  
21 future. We know that because of the dominance of a much  
22 larger group of people through television, through radio,  
23 through just sheer numbers, and through things like the  
24 residential school, through racism, that aboriginal people

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1 have felt a shame, have felt inferior, have felt that their  
2 language and culture is not relevant.

3 And it is obvious that there are changes  
4 going on everywhere in North America. But we need to  
5 really get a clear idea from people what they would like  
6 to do in relation to their culture. If they want to  
7 preserve something, if they want to bring something back,  
8 if they want to enhance something in relation to their  
9 culture, how do they want to do it?

10 What tools do they need to make that  
11 work?

12 For a long time Canada has had the  
13 Department of Indian Affairs, has had federal legislation,  
14 the Indian Act, that empowered one ministry in Ottawa the  
15 legal authority to control the lives of First Nations.  
16 It controlled people from birth to after death. It  
17 controlled our wills. It controlled everything in our  
18 lives. To administer that they had an army of civil  
19 servants make sure that the Bill was enforced.

20 We need to get the clear opinions of  
21 people over the next couple of years. If self-government  
22 is going to happen, what should happen to the Department?  
23 What kind of modifications, if any, should occur? What  
24 about that legislation?

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1                   We have a mandate that includes the  
2   ability to work on the Constitution, but we do not see  
3   that as a primary issue for us. We are well aware there  
4   is another process that includes the provinces, the  
5   premiers, the Prime Minister, the national aboriginal  
6   organizations that are working on the Constitution. We  
7   came up with one document, a small commentary, and we think  
8   that that is our major role in that.

9                   We are working on the premise that it  
10   is very likely that the inherent right, the right that  
11   aboriginal people have always had to govern themselves  
12   is going to be recognized in the Constitution. But we  
13   are working on the basis that that is just the beginning,  
14   that is just step one.

15                  What it is actually going to mean on the  
16   ground, here or anywhere else, is where the hard work is.  
17   And so we are prepared to work with First Nations and  
18   aboriginal people all across this country as to the  
19   specifics of what it is going to mean.

20                  We are prepared to work on the models  
21   of self-government that people want for the future. So  
22   we are prepared to look at community-level government.  
23   We are prepared to look at regional-level government.  
24   We are prepared to look at the government of a whole nation



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1 of people.

2 That gives you a general idea of the  
3 mandate of the Royal Commission.

4 I may have missed one or two things --  
5 I suspect I probably did -- justice, for instance, is one  
6 of the topics that we can work on. The point I am trying  
7 to make is that the mandate of the Royal Commission covers  
8 everything.

9 If you think I have missed anything and  
10 you think it is an important issue that you want to talk  
11 about, please go ahead. It probably falls within a mandate  
12 somewhere that we have.

13 I am going to stop talking very, very  
14 soon and I just wanted to let you know that what we hope  
15 to do is have a dialogue between aboriginal people and  
16 everyone else living in this country. We think a large  
17 part of what we are here to do is public education.

18 So, there is no media here today, but  
19 everywhere else we are going we are encouraging the media  
20 to follow us. We want the media to hear the story. We  
21 want the media to hear the pain of what has happened to  
22 aboriginal people. We want Canadians to become aware of  
23 what aboriginal people have gone through. And then we  
24 want the solutions to be debated in public. We want the

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1 work of the Royal Commission, as we move toward the solution  
2 in each area, to be very public.

3 Part of what we will be doing will be  
4 to release, once in a while, some discussion documents  
5 to stimulate debate. We might have some idea on some  
6 solution for either economics or land, and we will  
7 circulate that to get views back. And so this is not the  
8 only time that we will want your views.

9 That is my opening statement.

10 I really look forward to the views from  
11 some people here. So, please, feel free to be very frank  
12 with us. Give us your views of what has occurred and what  
13 you want in the future.

14 The presentation that was done by the  
15 elder here was a very, very good beginning. And just carry  
16 on here like you would if you were having your own event,  
17 as you traditionally would. It is perfectly in tune, and  
18 correct, with what we would like to see happen.

19 **CHIEF TOM SAMPSON:** (native  
20 language-not using a microphone)

21 I wish to thank my cousin, Andy, for  
22 opening his house this morning because of the remarks  
23 George made opens this meeting we can speak in a traditional  
24 way, without those things that stand there which are not

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1 really used in this house. But that is okay because  
2 sometimes those with a smaller voice can use that and would  
3 be better heard.

4                   What I was saying, what this house is  
5 about, I was telling about an old man that comes from --  
6 my cousin's relative -- one time he was talking in this  
7 house, years ago -- he has now passed on. And there was  
8 a lot of our young people sitting here. The place was  
9 full.

10                   The old man was walking back and forth  
11 like this and he was talking to the children in our  
12 language. And he was saying to the children, "My dear  
13 children, I am talking to you and you do not even hear  
14 a thing I am saying. You do not understand me. And the  
15 old man was crying, really crying.

16                   And he said, "My children, I am talking  
17 to you. You do not understand me. And probably in your  
18 minds you think this old man is telling you a story about  
19 a long time ago that is not real any more, it is not real,  
20 just a story."

21                   He was talking about the way he would  
22 teach in this house and this is what the young people  
23 thought.

24                   It is not the young people's fault, it

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1 is all of our faults. We cannot blame the white people  
2 for everything because we have opted into this system.  
3 We have opted in, as Sam pointed out earlier -- that is  
4 my uncle here -- pointed out earlier in his opening remarks  
5 we have accepted that way of life.

6 But this old man that I am talking about  
7 walked back and forth like this in front of the children.  
8 He said, "The tears that fall on this floor, tears that  
9 are here during wintertime, are the tears of our ancestors.  
10 They are here on this floor."

11 That is why we say this story is  
12 important to us and sacred to us, for those of us that  
13 use this building in the wintertime.

14 It is all part of what is called  
15 "self-government." That is what it is about. You have  
16 seen in our own time, you have seen white people do this.  
17 You have seen men cry. We have seen them become victims  
18 of their own system. And we opted into that. How long  
19 are we going to stay there?

20 The last few weeks, few months, many,  
21 many of our children have committed suicide -- at least  
22 two more. The week before that there was some more. All  
23 year round it is a full-time event in our villages. Day  
24 after day our families cry because their children are

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1 committing suicide.

2                               Why is it like that? Because we have  
3 done something wrong. And we have to, as people and  
4 speakers, speakers of the culture have to remember the  
5 voices of our ancestors and remember the voices of the  
6 past, because it is the voices of the past that is  
7 important.

8                               (native language)

9                               Those are the voices of the past have  
10 preserved our language and we have not done that.

11                              This fire may seem like just a fire, but  
12 that is where the words come from. (native language)  
13 This fire is strong. (native language)

14                              This is where the goods deeds will be  
15 warmed up, and our people use the fire in the wintertime,  
16 not only for warmth, but to keep our spirits high. That  
17 is why it is lit. It is not just because it is a thing  
18 that Indians do, that aboriginal people do. It is a way  
19 of life.

20                              It is a way of life, and our young people  
21 today -- our young people today, many of our young children  
22 are taking us to court because it violates their rights.  
23 This is what they call a violation of their rights.

24                              Why are they like that? We opted into

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1 the white man's system.

2 I am not condemning white people, by the  
3 way. I do not want the media to take that as a condemnation  
4 of the white way -- that is wrong. I am just saying it  
5 does not suit us, it does not suit us. It does not fit  
6 into the holistic approach to life that we understand.

7 You look at their institutions. Every  
8 one of their institutions are separate from one another.  
9 Ours are all together, not separate from one another.  
10 Their schools are separate from their homes. Even their  
11 justice system is so fragmented and separated they do not  
12 know who is responsible for anything in there, because  
13 they are separate, they are fragmented in their own way.

14 So when we come to them and we say to  
15 them "We have a justice system," they say, "Where is it?  
16 Show me."

17 Well, after a hundred, or four hundred  
18 years of observation, and they are going to try and  
19 understand our system? It is not likely they can change  
20 that overnight.

21 But I wanted to say this to our  
22 Commissioners who are here, because the things that we  
23 say, George and Viola, are the things that we have learned  
24 from the past. And it has brought us to this moment.

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1                   Those are the things I am telling you  
2 about, the story about the old man and how his audience  
3 does not understand what he is saying and how the people  
4 that are going to go into the future will not understand,  
5 because we are convinced that we must have a university  
6 degree, we must all have computers. To do what?

7                   First, we need our own children and our  
8 culture and again, I am not saying that those are wrong,  
9 but we have our priorities. Because it is in this room,  
10 it is in this building where the laws are written down  
11 and spoken about, this here is called a (native language).  
12 That used to be used to keep the spirit world cleared  
13 away from us so that our children, when they performed  
14 here, they were safe. That is why they call it a house.

15                  The seating arrangements are clear who  
16 sits where in this house. You do not come here and sit  
17 wherever you want. Each place has a place for each one  
18 of us, heads of the families and the families are  
19 responsible for the young. It is not unorganized in this  
20 place. It is not unorganized at all.

21                  The laws are written here -- and I use  
22 the word "written" -- because it is written in the hearts  
23 and the minds of the aboriginal people.

24                  (native language)

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1                   It is the teaching and the heritage that  
2 is written in the hearts and the minds of our people.  
3 That is what "written" means in our language. And our  
4 language is called (native language) or where you are going  
5 from. It is the way the teaching that goes with that,  
6 where you are born from.

7                   And, George, this is what we talked about  
8 -- and Viola -- this is the things that we still believe  
9 in. It is very much alive. And it is in conflict with  
10 the white man's culture. It is in conflict with it.

11                  The white man's laws are busy trying shut  
12 this building down because they say we are breaking their  
13 law. And we have our own children now saying the same  
14 thing as the white man, because they do not speak the  
15 language and they do not understand traditionally, nor  
16 the heritage, let alone the culture. That is why we have  
17 our own children fighting against us. We insisted that  
18 they go to school. We insisted that they graduate from  
19 high school, so they could sit on the other side. That  
20 is what we did, now, and for the future.

21                  To the Commissioners, we want to take  
22 this culture into the future. We want to share it with  
23 the rest of Canada in a way in which we can maintain  
24 ourselves as a people that are the owners of this land.



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1 We want to go into the future saying that we come with  
2 our culture and we want to maintain it and live the way  
3 we lived before, because for many that is the only way  
4 we can live. We cannot live like white men, because we  
5 are not white people. We are not of European extraction.  
6 We are born from this land. We have no choice.

7 Now, Commissioners, you have to say  
8 that. You have to let us live according to the rules of  
9 the land, not by some geologist or hydrologist who wants  
10 the control of water and electricity in this world -- this  
11 country -- not that way.

12 We have learned to live. We have  
13 learned to live in harmony and with some compatibility  
14 with the land. And that has to be respected because many  
15 of the things we believe in are still in the mountains,  
16 and are being destroyed.

17 So, I just want the Commissioners to --  
18 I know that these feelings that I have expressed this  
19 morning are really not mine. They are really only the  
20 voices that came out of our past and brought us up to this  
21 moment, all I have been talking about.

22 I have no claim on intelligence  
23 whatsoever. I only claim to say this is what I remember  
24 our ancestors talking about. And that is all I am bringing

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1 forward.

2 (native language)

3 Thank you very much.

4 **CHAIRMAN RAY HARRIS, MID-ISLAND TRIBE:**

5 (native language)-(no microphone)

6 I would like to thank the Commissioners.

7 Georges, our relationship -- I guess I have known George  
8 a little bit from the political days. I wanted to let  
9 everybody know that in the political days we were in the  
10 Erasmus camp -- and with confidence. And it is that same  
11 confidence that we have, that we know that your honoured  
12 self will carry our message to the Government of Canada  
13 that we are serious about our participation in the  
14 constitution talks in the words we lay from all our people  
15 and put our trust in your hands, Georges Erasmus.

16 As Chief of the AFN I wanted to let you  
17 know that.

18 I would like to thank (native language)

19 I pray too -- the same as you people -- I pray that what  
20 I do and what we do for our people is going to be for the  
21 betterment of our people. And we need to be reminded of  
22 the prayers.

23 I thank you very much, respected elders,  
24 for the prayers that you shared with us this morning.

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1                   I wanted to respond a little bit to  
2 Georges' remarks about the average of the Indian people  
3 in this country is under 25. Well, I wanted to tell you  
4 I had a lot to do with that, I have nine kids -- and a  
5 multitude of grandchildren, so I have a lot to do with  
6 that average age.

7                   I am too young to be an elder and I am  
8 too old to be a youth, and I am not a woman.

9                   So, Mr. Erasmus, I am speaking to you  
10 on behalf of Mid-Island tribe. I am chairman. My name  
11 is Ray Harris, Chairman of the Mid-Island Tribal Council.

12                  I would like to thank the people of  
13 Esquimalt for allowing us in their house to have a chance  
14 to talk to the Royal Commission and we thank Gerald for  
15 the invitation to have a chance to speak.

16                  Thank you, Andy, for letting us in your  
17 home today.

18                  We did not know if we were going to have  
19 a chance to make our presentation so we prepared something  
20 and I will use it as I go here. And we will give you a  
21 copy.

22                  We, at the Mid-Island Tribal Council  
23 know that our constitution is solid, our own constitution.  
24 Our laws for our people have always existed, that is why

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1 we continue to survive as First Nations people in this  
2 country.

3                   We have seen and heard the history of  
4 our nation. We were a great people and our numbers just  
5 dwindled since the contact with non-aboriginal people.  
6 And we are just now starting to regain our population.

7                   My tribe in particular, we are 800 people  
8 today. We are just now half way again to our numbers of  
9 the past. It is only within our lifetime that we have  
10 seen the TB hospitals close. We saw that. Our people  
11 saw that, my kids, and that is not very long ago.

12                   The governance of our people has always  
13 been with the family way. It is the family that sets the  
14 discipline and decides the penalty, if there is anything  
15 needed.

16                   We, as a tribe, are now limited in our  
17 territory. But our ancestors utilized the land and the  
18 seas beyond our present reserve boundaries. We were  
19 settled on small reserves that are now -- that were the  
20 center of our vast empires. We are not treaty nations.  
21 We still have our rights.

22                   The governments have no contract with  
23 us. That is what we are trying to do, so we can find a  
24 way to live in harmony with the Government of Canada.

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1                   Your constitution in its present  
2 situation gives the English and the French the right to  
3 occupy our lands. We see the token programs set out in  
4 our language programs and this leads to the question --  
5 to the distinctiveness of our society -- when the only  
6 language and cultures that are protected by law are the  
7 English and the French, as we, too, are distinct societies.

8

9                   We have trouble with the arguments for  
10 Quebec when the same recognition does not apply to the  
11 aboriginal people.

12                   We have serious problems with the  
13 entrenchment of property rights in the constitution. It  
14 is a real threat to our B.C. claims -- negotiations --  
15 and will hinder section 35 of the Constitution giving us  
16 our rights.

17                   We question -- not only today we question  
18 -- but we have always questioned the expansion of  
19 provincial jurisdiction to empower them in relation to  
20 our culture, wildlife, conservation, forestry, mining --  
21 and many other areas -- will have serious impact on the  
22 First Nation.

23                   We hope that this Royal Commission  
24 report is not going to be another dust collector dropped

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1 in somebody's draw on a floppy disc. We hope that this  
2 exercise is not just for appearance and empty rhetoric  
3 on the part of the Canadian government.

4 We are serious in this matter and want  
5 to see real, solid change.

6 I guess that is why, Chief Erasmus, that  
7 we wanted to mention that we know you from the past and  
8 trust you to carry our words as this Commission carries  
9 on.

10 We feel it now crucial that aboriginal  
11 people in Canada be treated as equal partners, consenting  
12 freely to the fundamental principles of making up the  
13 constitution. The constitution must reflect accurately  
14 the position of aboriginal nations and the historical  
15 relationship with the Crown.

16 The Royal Proclamation of 1763  
17 acknowledged the retained sovereignty of aboriginal people  
18 under the Crown's protection and adopted measures to secure  
19 and protect our rights. The (native language) tribe, my  
20 tribe, is different from the Cowichan tribe. The Cowichan  
21 tribe is different from the Nuw-Chah-Nulth nations. We  
22 are all individual nations, and that is how we want to  
23 be dealt with.

24 When one tribe is imposed upon because

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1 of another tribe it is not right, or fair. There is no  
2 one solution or formula that is right for all nations,  
3 because of our historical differences.

4 Our languages are different. Our  
5 environments are different. And our governments were  
6 different. It all has to be respected.

7 We would like to establish a new  
8 relationship with the Canadian government based on trust,  
9 respect and on a government-to-government basis. We  
10 cannot begin to put into words all of the wrongs that have  
11 been done to us, but we must find the words to put into  
12 the constitution that will protect our rights, be liveable  
13 and just. We must make sure that the outcome of this round  
14 is positive.

15 We need to see provisions for the First  
16 Nations in the capacity of managing economics because we,  
17 too, need those resources to maintain our society.

18 We, as Indian people, need to be assured  
19 of our preservation. We need to see positive recognition  
20 as the first people of Canada. This is why we need our  
21 Indian constitution entrenched, as I mentioned. We know  
22 our constitution is strong and alive and that is what we  
23 need to entrench.

24 We cannot be present in this society in

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1 the past tense any more. We are still here, and we are  
2 still Indian people -- aboriginal people -- firstly. Our  
3 self-government is alive and well and living in each  
4 community.

5 We know all the history or our past and  
6 the wrongs done to us. We are trying to deal with the  
7 future. We want to follow a good and safe path and we  
8 want our government to stop superseding our society. We  
9 want protection for our future, as well as our children's  
10 future, and our grandchildren's future.

11 We want a constitution that allows  
12 people to live their lives in respect of each other. That  
13 is all we want from the constitution.

14 Well, that concludes, Mr. Commissioner,  
15 our prepared document that we will pass on to you. I guess  
16 that it remains that -- I do not know how we are going  
17 to hear from you in the end, where our words lie in the  
18 end. But we would like to say that we again reinforce  
19 that we have confidence in yourself to bring our story  
20 to the Government of Canada.

21 (native language)

22 To try to get a better offer for our  
23 people, we have to do this. And I just wanted to say thank  
24 you very much for your time and the invitation.



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1                                   **WILLIE SEYMOUR NATIVE ADVISOR TO THE**  
2   **COAST SALISH NATION:**   (native language) I would like to  
3   thank the Commission for coming into our territory (native  
4   language) territory Coast Salish Nation. My name is  
5   (native language), Willie Seymour. I act as native  
6   advisor to the Coast Salish Nations. I also, as my cousin  
7   (native language) Ray Harris, stated the concerns of my  
8   people -- my uncle, (native language) Samuel Sam, his  
9   opening remarks. (native language) Tom Sampson -- the  
10   concerns that we have when we look at the ways of our people,  
11   the ancestral ways, we look at issues like people-affected  
12   issues. We look at resource-affected issues. We look  
13   at spiritual-affected issues. We look at  
14   future-affected, as was mentioned in your opening  
15   statement, of our youth and our future.

16                               And all these issues, land base is a high  
17   priority. The previous speaker mentioned our villages  
18   were just the center of our empires where we went to  
19   practice our spirituality.

20                               This home that we are in is the echoes  
21   of our ancestors. The walls carrying the echoes of our  
22   forefathers and their forefathers before them. The  
23   teaching that, in this home never changes. The ultimate  
24   respect that we must have and all the resources that the

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1 Creator left for us.

2                   We look at the resources today -- our  
3 forefathers used to go down to this beach and gather their  
4 food. Today, that is not possible. Go up to the fields  
5 up in the hills here and get the deer, to get the roots,  
6 the foods for our people, that is no longer possible, all  
7 of these necessary for our survival.

8                   We look at the resource-affected -- our  
9 people were the first loggers, but they were very  
10 selective. You see the posts within this home. The  
11 sacred ceremonies that went with our people to prepare  
12 a home like this -- that was to be our shelter, that was  
13 to be our government, our parliament, that was to be our  
14 home for education, that was to be our home for discipline  
15 and justice -- so, our elders, our forefathers, selected  
16 the trees that were going to carry the echoes of our people  
17 and our history.

18                   Our people were the first fishermen.  
19 Again, the only took what they needed. Today, we cannot  
20 use some of the foods in this harbour, the home of my  
21 grandfather, because of the pollution.

22                   When the first Europeans come they  
23 learned to use what our people used. Our people were the  
24 only users of the vast resources of this nation, our nation.

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1     When they saw the benefits of our resources they began  
2     to use it as a commodity of exchange.

3                     Not only were we the users, but the new  
4     people became users and then the world became users. The  
5     Europeans and Asians abused the logs, the timbers, the  
6     salmon.

7                     I think before, in my mind, I feel that  
8     if they are going to continue to use our resources they  
9     must contribute to the enhancement. If they are going  
10    to guarantee and further use of our foods, they must  
11    contribute to the enhancement.

12                    To assure that our spirit will value or  
13    retain, we need the land base beyond what is present, so  
14    that our future generations will know what a salmon is.

15                    I thank the Commission for coming into  
16    our home, which you will experience will be just a scratch  
17    of the surface of the hearts of our people.

18                    The Coast Salish Nation is 27,000  
19    strong. We all carry the same beliefs in our hearts.  
20    Sometimes our elders have tears in their hearts watching  
21    the young people today struggle. They watch us struggle  
22    in politics. It is a painful memory for them to witness  
23    what they are witnessing today.

24                    And one of my uncles (native language)

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1 had to say, "Today I feel a glimmer of hope," is what he  
2 said earlier. Maybe there is a glimmer of hope for the  
3 Commission to come into our home, into our government,  
4 into our structure, into our healing home and listen to  
5 our concerns, that there is a government that is stable  
6 here.

7                               This government existed beyond the Royal  
8 Proclamation. This government existed before the British  
9 colonies. This government existed since the beginning  
10 of time. And the acceptance of this government will assure  
11 the future of First Nations people, that our leaders can  
12 and will take care of their own children, that they will  
13 be housed properly, get proper education that is relevant  
14 to our nation and health being the priority for our  
15 children.

16                              There are so many issues to be brought  
17 forward. It was mentioned earlier, the language. I was  
18 very fortunate to be raised by my grandparents and could  
19 only speak my language at the beginning of my life.

20                              Some of my people lost their language  
21 to the residential system. We lost much to the residential  
22 system. I do not know of any compensation that will right  
23 that wrong.

24                              For many the scars will be forever and

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1 it is reflected on the generations that have followed our  
2 poor ancestors that had to endure that type of education  
3 from the black robe who represented God to put our people  
4 through the pain, just for trying to be ourselves, just  
5 trying to live the way the Creator put us on this earth  
6 to live.

7 Just a few issues that I feel very  
8 strongly about.

9 I just want to thank the Commission that  
10 you will take the heartbeat of my ancestors with you, their  
11 echoes, in your travels because this home is not only a  
12 home of learning, but also a home of strength and courage,  
13 a home of healing.

14 With this I think George, the  
15 Commission. I thank my cousin, Andy, my uncle, George,  
16 for opening his home.

17 Again, that was the wish of our  
18 grandfathers, that this home is open for all issues. This  
19 home is not only for the winter ceremony. It is our  
20 government.

21 With this, I want to thank you and I thank  
22 all the people.

23 (native language)

24 **(UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN SPEAKER:** I would

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1 like to thank Andy Thomas and the Royal Commission to be  
2 here to address my concerns. I am not into labels. I  
3 am what you consider an urban Indian. I have lived in  
4 the United States. I have lived in Canada many years.  
5 And I have managed to have the best of both worlds, of  
6 both cultures and it has worked well for me.

7 But I have one child where the  
8 educational system has failed her. And I called them up  
9 and told them that I would not have them waste her time,  
10 that if she would want to come home and quit school and  
11 say -- "I am not happy here," she said.

12 If I did not address her concerns to  
13 them, then they would not have been met. She had problems  
14 with -- I would not say an exact learning disability --  
15 but she was a slow learner.

16 If I did not bring it to their attention,  
17 it was not brought to mine. I excelled well in school.  
18 Thank God I was very fortunate to do so. But I did  
19 recognize there was a problem.

20 When a child comes home with nothing but  
21 straight "C's" down the report card that tells me there  
22 is something definitely wrong, because somebody has to  
23 excel in one area -- at least one area.

24 I would like to see more of our culture

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1 brought into the educational system so we could enrich  
2 their lives and they will have less fear of us. People  
3 have tried to assimilate me in the United States, as well  
4 as here. I know who I am. When I introduced myself I  
5 introduced myself I introduced myself as I am a North  
6 American Indian -- I should not say "Indian," because I  
7 do not like labels -- aboriginal person.

8 I have never lost touch with who I am.

9 I know who I am. But I have had to adapt myself to a  
10 lifestyle so I would be able to earn a living, and earn  
11 a good living in this society.

12 But I wish they would change the  
13 educational system and make people more proud of who they  
14 are. And perhaps they will have less fear of who we are.

15 I, myself, today, work as a mental health worker with  
16 mentally handicapped young adults and they enrich my life.

17 One of them is a native person.

18 And my concerns -- and this wonderful  
19 lady that I work with up here has this group home and has  
20 moved this person out of an institutional setting so we  
21 can give him a -- quote/unquote -- "He's not locked in  
22 some cage somewhere and being studied or looked at." That  
23 he should be out there in the community, because he is  
24 part of the community.

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1                   And no matter how well we all seem in  
2 this house, we will all have some affliction in our life  
3 before we leave this earth. And I do not believe they  
4 should all be locked away and hidden from society -- because  
5 they are part of society.

6                   And the people like this lady here, she  
7 has taken that person and removed him from being stared  
8 at, or drugged or pillled to death.

9                   And I just feel that -- what happens to  
10 his concerns? Where does he fit into the mainstream of  
11 society? What will become of him?

12                   I do not know if he is under the blanket  
13 of social services and housing. What is his future? What  
14 lays in store for him some day? Is he protected under  
15 the federal? Or is he protected under provincial?

16                   I am concerned about what happens to  
17 these people that do not have a voice. That is my concern,  
18 is that you will address the people who cannot speak for  
19 themselves.

20                   Thank you very much, Andy Thomas and the  
21 Esquimalt Nation, for allowing me to have this opportunity.

22                   And thank you, I hope you address my  
23 concerns.

24                   **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Good



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1 morning. I would like to thank all th

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18 COMMISSION ROYALE SUR

ROYAL COMMISSION ON

19 LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

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**LOCATION/ENDROIT: FORT GARRY PLACE**

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**WINNIPEG,**

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**MANITOBA**

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**DATE: TUESDAY, APRIL 21,**

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**1992**

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**VOLUME: 1**

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"for the record..."

4

**STENOTRAN**

5

1376 Kilborn Ave.

6 Ottawa 521-0703e people that are here today. And I would

7 like to thank the Commission and the people

8 here that are travelling with the Commission for being

9 here and being so attentive, because I know that the amount

10 of time that you spend on the road, that you are away from

11 your families.

12 I think George has put in six years with

13 the AFN now. I really think that those people should be

14 commended for the time that they spend away from home.

15 And I would like to commend you all, you know, for the

16 time that you do spend away from your family, because I

17 know it is a tough thing to do and I think that not enough

18 recognition is given to those people that travel all the

19 time that have to be doing this for the betterment of our

20 people.

21 I would like to thank the past speakers

22 on the words that they have brought to the Commission.

23 I also would like to thank the elders that were here

24 talking, giving us their words of wisdom before.

StenoTran

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1                   What I want to talk about is the housing  
2 conditions that we have.

3                   Over the past two decades Canada's  
4 aboriginal people have emerged from under the  
5 paternalistic umbrella imposed by the Indian Act and other  
6 discriminatory legislation and politics, to a place of  
7 recognition as Canada's first people.

8                   While the struggle is far from over,  
9 there is a growing recognition that aboriginal people must  
10 have more power to determine their own future.

11                  First Nations lands are non-negotiable  
12 nor otherwise subject to seizure or alienation.

13                  The key element in addressing the  
14 current housing problems of the First Nations citizens  
15 -- sufficient resources under the control of the First  
16 Nations.

17                  The current basic level of funding,  
18 established in 1984 has been reduced substantially by  
19 inflation and other matters that deal with it. On rough  
20 calculation, based on the rate of four-and-a-quarter per  
21 cent per year, indicates that the purchasing power of 1992  
22 is equal to only sixty-three million in 1984 dollars.

23                  Although the record of division  
24 indicates that funds to offset inflation were to be

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1 provided annually, this never happened.

2 With regard to self-determination,  
3 there is no support for administrative structures to  
4 deliver the First Nation housing programs at the local  
5 tribal council level. What funds are available are  
6 derived primarily from other programs and these funds are  
7 not very adequate.

8 As one of the directors of the B.C.  
9 Indian Housing Council, we, the directors of the B.C.  
10 Indian Housing Council, recommend an immediate increase  
11 in the subsidy level to bring the purchasing power back  
12 to the original \$92.9 million, provide funding  
13 specifically to support First Nation, to delivery, or for  
14 the administrative structures at the local tribal council  
15 or regional level.

16 On this other part I have the stats that  
17 we have gathered through British Columbia, but I do not  
18 think you want to hear all that. I will just give this  
19 to the Commission.

20 But I think the immediate need that we  
21 need is \$579.9 million. That was the approximate 5,596  
22 new housing needs are needed in B.C. region alone.

23 I guess one of the things that I wanted  
24 to talk about is -- the thing that has happened to us in

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1 the past I guess, is the denial of the Government of Canada  
2 to fulfil our shelter needs.

3                   Instead, they have pushed in another  
4 direction that does not have the responsibility and housing  
5 and that is through Canada Mortgage and Housing.

6                   And today, if you get a house with your  
7 subsidy between \$20-30,000 -- depending on what part of  
8 B.C. you are from -- and you go through Canada Mortgage  
9 and you end up paying \$149,000. So, I do not think that  
10 the people that are being forced into accepting the Canada  
11 Mortgage and Housing have never, ever been shown the true  
12 picture of what your subsidy is increased to, from  
13 \$20,000-150,000 that you pay by the time that you are  
14 finished paying for your house, between 15 and 25 years.

15                   With that, I would like to leave this  
16 package with the Royal Commission and I hope that they  
17 would immediately talk. I hope this delay in the Royal  
18 Commission does not mean that we are going to have to wait  
19 until two years after the report is done -- that hopefully  
20 they could make some recommendation -- even in the 1992-93  
21 budget that they increase the level up to the buying rate  
22 that was established in 1984.

23                   And I would like to thank all you people  
24 for listening and thank the Royal Commission for their

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1 part in helping our people out in Indian country.

2 Thank you very much.

3 **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** I guess  
4 the recorders would like everybody to use the mike if you  
5 are going to speak low, because he cannot hear and he cannot  
6 record if he cannot hear you.

7 So, please, if you would come up and use  
8 the mike when you come up to speak, it makes it better  
9 for him to be recording.

10 Thank you.

11 Also, if people could identify  
12 themselves, for the record. Some people have spoken  
13 without telling us who they are. It would be useful for  
14 our records if we knew who the actual speakers were.

15 Anybody that wishes to speak, please  
16 feel free.

17 **GEORGE JIMMY:** I would just like to take  
18 this opportunity to thank the Royal Commission and the  
19 people that are here today.

20 From what I have been reading -- I have  
21 been out of circulation -- I have not been attending any  
22 meetings. I have been feeling quite backwards about  
23 speaking out.

24 But from what I see from this Royal

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1 Commission it is acting for each and everyone of us to  
2 get up and have our own words to say what your feelings  
3 are today, what is going on in your life. This is what  
4 the Royal Commission wants to hear.

5 Then they will have an understanding of  
6 where we all stand as Indian people.

7 I think for a long time now we have mostly  
8 done -- just like the previous speaker said -- that we  
9 have been doing studies. And now we have a time to speak.  
10 This is our time. And, you know, we all have concerns.  
11 We all bring them up. Wherever we go we talk to one  
12 another.

13 And now we have a foundation to start  
14 talking to someone where it can become reality, our  
15 complaining that we have in our hearts, our headaches for  
16 our children that are in school, for our brothers who are  
17 in the justice institutions, for the ones that come out  
18 and then they are forgotten.

19 Like the previous lady spoke earlier,  
20 we have no voice to speak with. I feel like our identity  
21 is taken away from us. I know, because I have been through  
22 the justice system and I am not proud of it. But this  
23 is why I have not got up to speak.

24 And I really believe that -- I think if



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1 the Commission is going to go through these areas we have  
2 to look into the education system. Where are our children  
3 going? What is happening, really, in school? Are the  
4 things that we lay down for our children, are they really  
5 being taken into consideration, or is it just a pastime  
6 for our children to go there, you know, just to be in that  
7 space in time for a while?

8 I have a few children in school and that  
9 is my concern also. I try very hard to encourage them  
10 that the way is in education.

11 But, if we do not get up and speak to  
12 our Commission and voice ourselves and then it is -- their  
13 work is going to be hard for them, just like it says on  
14 here, their work is going to be laid out for them, it is  
15 going to be a difficult task. But if each and everyone  
16 of us present our feelings and our thoughts and our  
17 encouragement to this new foundation -- or this final  
18 foundation that is taking place, then we will all be heard  
19 in all of our communities.

20 I would just like to than Willie Seymour  
21 for all his words (native language) I did not hear the  
22 previous speaker, but I know that from listening to them  
23 many times in this home that their concerns that they voiced  
24 to you in the Indian language, about the fire, about the

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1 wood, about the fishing -- in fact, about our Indian  
2 language.

3                   We cannot translate our feelings into  
4 the English language, what we have to say, because when  
5 we start to talk about our feelings we want to cry, because  
6 we look at our people -- and in here there few, but out  
7 there there are many -- out there, they are not here.

8                   And I have seen some studies, I have seen  
9 some exercises done. The Chinese people, the different  
10 kind of people -- society -- different societies -- they  
11 go to school and then they come home and they practice  
12 again. And this is where our school is. This is what  
13 Willie Seymour was relating to each of you in our language  
14 was, this is our school.

15                   And it is like Tom Sampson related  
16 earlier, it is not just a pastime in here. But we are  
17 losing ground with our young ones. And they need to  
18 realize that the outside world of alcohol, the outside  
19 world in the city is not really the place to be. We have  
20 lost that many times through education, many times --  
21 educated through alcohol, we want to be in the cities,  
22 rather than in our communities.

23                   But now, this place should be packed.

24                   Maybe a lot of people are not informed.

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1 And then, when they are, they do not care because -- it  
2 is just like I am finding it hard words to say -- and maybe  
3 they feel the same way, our people.

4 I found it very hard to come up here to  
5 speak. And that is the way we are because I think for  
6 many, many years that is how it has been. We have spoken  
7 and nothing has been done.

8 And our people in here need  
9 encouragement to get up and speak what their concerns are,  
10 what they are feeling inside.

11 I thank you once again.

12 I thought the man over there with the  
13 mouthpiece had a health problem. I was worried about him.  
14 That is what brought me up here.

15 My name is George Jimmy, and I am from  
16 Cowichan. Thank you very much.

17 **CO-COMMISSIONER FOR THE DAY ANDREW**

18 **THOMAS:** My name is (native language) one of my  
19 names. It is where I get my title from, hereditary chief  
20 of the Esquimalt Nation. My other name is (native  
21 language). I get that from my father's side. That comes  
22 from another part of our culture.

23 I am the hereditary Chief of the  
24 Esquimalt Nation.

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1                   Once again I want to thank the Royal  
2 Commission for coming here.

3                   And I guess I have been involved since  
4 the late '60s, became the chief in '72, and I never, ever  
5 thought that I would be standing up on front of a  
6 microphone. But you learn to do that when you want to  
7 say something, when you want somebody to hear what you  
8 are saying.

9                   Right here, we have a small community  
10 here. And I want to address some of the environmental  
11 issues that we have within our own community. Some of  
12 the decisions that were made in the early '50s, when the  
13 Department of Indian Affairs were setting up leases, very  
14 weak leases, that had no clauses in there for companies  
15 to come in and clean up and leave the land in good order.

16                  I say that way because the laws of this  
17 land do not really protect people. They protect large  
18 companies -- or just companies in general.

19                  Right behind the building here we have  
20 one-quarter of our reserve land that is contaminated from  
21 wood preservatives that was used by a sawmill.

22                  The laws did not move to protect the  
23 land, or to restore it. The company that got charged for  
24 PCBs was only slapped on the hand with a \$20,000 fine.

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1 And there was nothing in the lease that obligated the  
2 company to clean up the land.

3 So now we are stuck with some special  
4 waste that is stored in containers back here.

5 Last weekend I was addressing an  
6 environmental conference with the province at U. Vic.,  
7 last weekend. And I addressed this concern because, in  
8 British Columbia, there is no facility in this province  
9 to take care of special waste, the disposal of special  
10 waste.

11 We tried to look at where to bring it.  
12 People that work for us explored the Arlington Landfill  
13 in Oregon. But they do not take special waste with dioxins  
14 in there. They have explored Swan Hills, Alberta, for  
15 disposal of waste to burn it. But they do not take anything  
16 out of the province.

17 Sarnia, Ontario, will not take anything,  
18 unless it is liquid waste.

19 And I guess the environmental laws of  
20 this land have to be really looked at, because we are stuck  
21 now. We are saddled with land back here that is poisoned.

22 Our land is hurting. And we do not know yet, today, how  
23 badly it is contaminated. We are still going through the  
24 testing of the ground. We are into the subsurface, phase

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1 2 of the cleanup stages.

2 But I think the environmental concerns  
3 that I have, you know, with my own community here, the  
4 decision-making part -- I guess when we get into  
5 self-government we have to be able to be at the table with  
6 the rest of Canada to decide how we are to heal mother  
7 earth, because she has gone through so much.

8 But I wanted to address just our own  
9 sawmill here. And I wanted to talk about this house, what  
10 we have been talking about, the fire, how sacred it is  
11 to us, the education system and what it has done to me.

12 Because I do not know my own language  
13 the education system does not accommodate our way of life,  
14 especially when it comes to this house. When we pull out  
15 children out of the school to come in here and learn their  
16 ways, they fall behind in the regular education system.

17 When they fall behind in that system,  
18 then we are put into special education programs. And our  
19 children will not be able to go on into university or  
20 college with these modified programs.

21 I cannot teach my children our language.  
22 We need to have something in place. One time I was  
23 speaking at one of our meetings and I blamed the education  
24 system for the way I am. I said to the people, "When it

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1 comes time for me to pass on into the other world I wonder  
2 if I will be able to speak to my own grandmother?"

3 What has this system done to me as a  
4 (native language) person? Because it bothers me and I  
5 imagine it bothers other younger people who cannot speak  
6 the language.

7 When we talk about the sacredness of that  
8 fire, that is one of our connections to the other side.  
9 And when the other side talks to us, they talk to us in  
10 our language. And I cannot understand.

11 So, I believe our people have to talk  
12 about what has happened to us, because we have a long  
13 healing process to go through. Because the education  
14 system that has been forced on to us, the residential  
15 schools, the public school system, has done a lot of damage  
16 to this person right here.

17 Somehow, we have got to turn that around  
18 so our children can face us, start to understand how this  
19 place works. Because this house is where our teaching  
20 is. We have people in place here who know how to work  
21 in this house.

22 I cannot talk too much about that,  
23 because I might go too far. But I know that you want to  
24 understand our fight a little bit more, but we have opened

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1 our hands so many times and we have lost so much. But  
2 I think Canada has to realize that we have our own way.  
3 We have a rightful place in this land.

4 We know what we have to do in our  
5 lifetime, the road that we have to walk. Canada has to  
6 realize that they cannot try to change us into something  
7 that we are not, because they are only hurting us, because  
8 our children do not know how to use the mountains, the  
9 water, the land, here, this house.

10 Because our children are walking on the  
11 other side of the road and it is hard for them to come  
12 back over to this other side, our road.

13 You know in the wintertime, when we are  
14 in here, it bothers me because sometimes those fires are  
15 lit with wood that we have to scrounge off the beaches,  
16 or they are boom sticks chopped up. And it gets so smoky  
17 in here that some of our people end up in the hospitals.

18 We are being hurt because we cannot  
19 access the forest, we cannot get the trees to keep our  
20 fires going because, if we go up there and take a tree,  
21 the big companies charge us for stealing. If we go to  
22 try and shoot animals for our own use, we are charged.  
23 We are called poachers. If we go down to the beaches to  
24 dig clams, gather our traditional foods, we are charged



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1 under the fisheries laws.

2 Our people have our own laws in place.

3 They are natural laws, laws that are connected to the  
4 land, the resources, because there is times in our lives  
5 when we cannot even take those resources. We have be  
6 worked on, we have to be fixed, before we can take them.

7 So, what I am saying is that Canada has  
8 to realize that we do not want to be beggars. We do not  
9 want to be called poachers any more. We have a rightful  
10 place in this land. We have our own natural laws, laws  
11 that govern us. They have to recognize that if we do not  
12 follow our own laws, then we will be hurting ourselves.

13 We do not want to be begging all the time.

14 We do not want to have to move to the courts for the courts  
15 to make a decision on our rights, whether they are  
16 aboriginal rights, or treaty rights, because the courts  
17 have a way of chopping away at them, regulating our rights.

18 And I believe that one day our people will stand on our  
19 own feet, because there has been decisions made in the  
20 past that we are still living with the results of those  
21 decisions -- decisions that we were not involved in.

22 We have a right to make our own  
23 decisions.

24 And I believe that with the Royal

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1 Commission this is a way of educating people to say it  
2 is time to stop studying the Indians.

3 We do not need to be studied. We already  
4 know who we are. We already know what we have to do.  
5 It is time for Canada to move over and say, "There is room  
6 at this table for you, for you to make your own decisions."

7 Because, for too long, the governments  
8 of this land have made bad decisions on our behalf. They  
9 have suppressed us, and they continue to do so today.

10 Besides being the Chief of the Esquimalt  
11 Nation -- I call us a nation because we have a treaty --  
12 I am also the Chairman of the Land Claims Committee for  
13 the First Nations of South Island.

14 And we have a brief report here to read  
15 to the Commission and I want to read this in. It will  
16 be typed up a little bit better and it has to deal with  
17 our treaties. And it reads:

18 "We are here before this Royal Commission to admonish the  
19 Government of Canada and file this  
20 grievance with respect to the  
21 breach of the Douglas Treaties."

22

23 James Douglas, as the Governor of the  
24 Crown Colony of Vancouver Island made 14 treaties with

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1   aboriginal people on Vancouver Island between 1850 and  
2   1854.

3                   It was written in those treaties that  
4   the aboriginal people with whom they were made to be allowed  
5   to hunt over unoccupied lands and to fish as formerly,  
6   as if they were the sole occupants of the land.

7                   It is to be noted that the Hudsons Bay  
8   Company, before and during this period, was heavily engaged  
9   in the fisheries trade, obtaining its supplies from the  
10  local aboriginals for the use as a trade commodity locally  
11  and for shipment abroad.

12                  This fact has been well documented in  
13  historical record.

14                  Subsequent to the signing of the Douglas  
15  treaties and various acts of government resulting in the  
16  Crown Colony of Vancouver Island first becoming part of  
17  British Columbia, and finally part of Canada, the fishing  
18  rights of aboriginal peoples in the Douglas treaties were  
19  forgotten, so far as the government was concerned. All  
20  were made subservient to the Fisheries Act.

21                  There never has been a Act of Parliament  
22  of Canada which has specifically abrogated the Douglas  
23  treaties, instead, to maintain the ascendancy over  
24  aboriginals in matters related to the fishery.

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1                   The Government of Canada has  
2 consistently used the courts to legislate against  
3 aboriginals of the Douglas treaties. In 1989 and 1992  
4 that came to and end, at least partially, with the Saanich  
5 Bay Marina and the John Sampson cases. The judgments which  
6 plainly stated that the rights of the aboriginals  
7 established in the 1850s had to be interpreted in the modern  
8 context. And that second to conservation aboriginal  
9 rights to salmon were paramount.

10                   Unfortunately, both judgments stopped  
11 short of putting a modern interpretation on treaty rights  
12 to sell fish.

13                   I guess to expand a little bit more, you  
14 know, with the recognition of our right to self -- you  
15 know, there was some treaties drafted up between the United  
16 States and the nations in the U.S., where it outlawed them  
17 to -- they were forbidden to trade with the tribes on  
18 southern Vancouver Island. Those treaties were written  
19 that I heard of were drawn up between the Piolops (phonetic)  
20 and the Nesqualis (phonetic) who are part of the Puget  
21 Sound.

22                   When it comes to the proof of the  
23 fisheries we can gather all that proof. But, while we  
24 are doing that, the fisheries out there are taking a

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1   beating.

2                   I was to a fishery meeting, the Northwest  
3   Fishery meeting in Ocean Shores, Washington. In there  
4   I found out that Canada and the U.S. are going to be going  
5   into a fish war this coming summer. And I believe that  
6   the resource that we are talking about, the fishery  
7   resource, is going to take a bad beating because, four  
8   years from now, there probably will not be a stock running  
9   up the Fraser. And the Adams run will be decimated.

10                  And I believe that, as Indian people,  
11   (native language) we have a right -- not only an aboriginal  
12   right, but a treaty right -- to be at these talks when  
13   it comes to the fishery. We should not be rolled up into  
14   the domestic allocation system that DFO is trying to push  
15   down on us, because we have a rightful place to be out  
16   on those waters.

17                  And I think, through this Royal  
18   Commission, I hope that you recommend that the treaties  
19   get addressed soon, before your job is done, because if  
20   we are not addressed in treaty implementation, or addressed  
21   in the constitution, then we are not going to have any  
22   resources to be talking about a few years down the road,  
23   because we have to move away from what is happening today  
24   because Fisheries is not managing the fish -- they are

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1 managing people. They are managing licenses out there.  
2 They are not putting anything back into the streams, into  
3 the rivers.

4 This is what we are talking about when  
5 we talk about management. We have to start rebuilding  
6 those stocks out there and we have to do something about  
7 that fish war that is going to destroy those stocks this  
8 summer.

9 There is not too much more I have to say.  
10 But I just wanted to thank the Commission for hearing  
11 me out. I hope I was not too confusing, because I started  
12 to talk about many issues. But I think there is a lot  
13 healing that has to be done with our people so that we  
14 can start to heal. And the healing has to start pretty  
15 soon.

16 Thank you.

17 I guess lunch is going to be ready. We  
18 could break for lunch right now -- oh, one more?

19 Willie Seymour.

20 **WILLIE SEYMOUR:** I would just like to  
21 reinforce what Chief Andy Thomas had to say on our culture,  
22 the sacred values that we carry as Coast Salish Nation.

23 It is mentioned by our elders that we  
24 have our own laws that govern us. You will find a lot

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1 of the values of our people are very mysterious. You will  
2 find very little information in the provincial museum  
3 concerning our culture, in books. Some of the books that  
4 have been written have been far from the truth of the Coast  
5 Salish Nations.

6 We were cautioned and we are cautioned  
7 today by our elders who govern us and guide us never to  
8 reveal our holistic approach to life, some of the issues  
9 Chief Andy Thomas mentioned that he could not reveal.

10 But it is there. It does exist. And  
11 we just want the government to know the Coast Salish has  
12 existed and has remained united for over -- since the first  
13 white man came. Our ancestors told us that what becomes  
14 common knowledge becomes meaningless.

15 So, I just wanted to reinforce that, that  
16 our cultures, our government, is based on the holistic  
17 approach of everything that the Creator gave us and that  
18 we do have a government. We do have a system. But those  
19 are the secrets -- or, if you want to call it secrets --  
20 but those are the mysteries that have kept the Coast Salish  
21 together.

22 I just wanted to reinforce that and I  
23 will not be here much longer, but I just wanted to reinforce  
24 what Andy had to say.

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1 Thank you.

2 **CO-COMMISSIONER FOR THE DAY ANDREW**

3 **THOMAS:** I hope everyone stays for lunch. Lunch  
4 is prepared and they said it was going to be ready for  
5 12:30. We will stretch our legs for a little while and  
6 break for about 45 minutes.

7 --- Lunch recess 12:27 p.m.

8

9 --- Whereupon the hearing resumed 1:45 p.m.

10 **CO-COMMISSIONER FOR THE DAY, CHIEF DAVID**

11 **PAUL:** If everybody would come in and take a  
12 chair, please, we would like to get started.

13 I guess the floor is open now for anybody  
14 who wants to speak.

15 **CALVIN CLAXTON, BAND ADMINISTRATOR,**

16 **SACHEM BAND:** Hello. I am taking this opportunity to  
17 speak right now. I do have to leave. I am here basically  
18 representing Sachem Band as the band administrator.

19 So, I guess just to voice some of the  
20 concerns on behalf of the band is that I was asked to attend  
21 here, just to find out what it is about.

22 I understand a little bit more what is  
23 happening. I will take it back and let the people know  
24 -- encourage them to come and speak their minds and their



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1 concerns and collectively, I think, put in input, so this  
2 Commission can really be successful.

3 I guess one concern I would have, just  
4 on behalf of a small band, is the structure that we have  
5 had to endure in regards to funding. Because, working  
6 as a band administrator, I can speak on that behalf that  
7 small bands often have a very limited budget to work from  
8 because of the per capita formula that is utilized by Indian  
9 Affairs. And sometimes our own people actually look at  
10 as a guide.

11 And I would just sort of like to voice  
12 the concern that sometimes a band is ready to develop.  
13 Their population may not be as great as the larger bands.  
14 And at times they do need consideration in that area.  
15 And I am not trying to be selfish in that regard, but I  
16 just wanted to make a point about that in regard to funding  
17 and, you know, the areas that really have to be looked  
18 at.

19 And I know there is land issues that each  
20 individual has. And that is basically -- at this point  
21 I do not have too much to say.

22 I would just like to thank Esquimalt for  
23 opening their longhouse to the people here. And I  
24 appreciate the hospitality that has been extended. It

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1 was a fine dinner. I thank everybody for preparing it.

2 And I like what is happening with the  
3 Royal Commission. They put high-profile people in there  
4 that the native people can relate to. Georges Erasmus  
5 is somebody that is known nationally and has fought hard  
6 for his people and has gained respect for it.

7 So, you can see positive direction  
8 heading in that area there for taking the concerns back  
9 to the government on where people stand.

10 I would just like to excuse myself at  
11 this time and thank everybody involved here for having  
12 this take place.

13 Thank you.

14 **MAVIS HENRY, SOCIAL WORKER:** I would  
15 like to share with you some of the concerns that I have  
16 for our community.

17 But, first, I would like to pay my  
18 respects to the Commissioners who are travelling and hope  
19 that your hearts and minds are open to what we are saying.  
20 To my dear relations, my elders, relatives, friends, I  
21 hope that my words do not hurt anyone.

22 I am trying my best to be a helper in  
23 my community and I try to share the gifts that I have,  
24 the gifts that come to me from the teachings that I have

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1 had for a long time.

2 I find that the more and more educated  
3 that I become in the non-native way, the things that serve  
4 me best are those things that I have learned from my elders,  
5 from my grandparents, from my family. And the things that  
6 I need to know are -- that keep me the strongest -- are  
7 that I never lose touch with those little things that I  
8 know how to do.

9 I know how to make a fire and I know how  
10 to be proud of the dirt under my hands, and those types  
11 of things. And I hope that I will never lose touch with  
12 that because, if I lose touch with those little things,  
13 I will never be able to achieve any big things. And I  
14 think that that is really important.

15 But I have a lot of concerns, along with  
16 the rest of our people.

17 I have a real concern for the quality  
18 of housing that a lot our people must live with. I go  
19 door-to-door, often, in the work that I do and I see the  
20 houses. I see people who are prisoners in their basements  
21 in the wintertime, because they have no door to get to  
22 the upstairs. They have to go outside and upstairs.

23 I see people with no closets, no  
24 cupboards. But they have a roof over their head and they

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1 are supposed to be grateful for that. And I have seen  
2 people living around open sewers because they are supposed  
3 to be glad that they finally got a house, and people who  
4 walk across the floor upstairs and short circuit the lights  
5 downstairs.

6 And I just do not understand it, and I  
7 do not want to be a crybaby like people say, or a whiner  
8 or a complainer, but I certainly do not think that that  
9 does anything for anyone's self-esteem, or their dignity.  
10 And I would really like to see those kinds of things  
11 change.

12 I have many concerns. I have written  
13 a lot of things down and I hope you do not mind if I do  
14 read a little bit, because I will get emotional and I will  
15 forget what I am trying to say.

16 One of my concerns is education. I  
17 started out in my work as a teacher. I have struggled  
18 with trying to help my people develop a vision for the  
19 future, something that will work, something that will not  
20 change what they are but will enhance what they are.

21 One of the major weaknesses of what I  
22 see in the programs that are supposed to help us is that  
23 they do not help with the real problems. And if we continue  
24 to address symptoms, without addressing cause and

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1 prevention, we will continue to have weak foundations under  
2 our people.

3                   Meaningful, useful education must be  
4 restored and be easily accessible to all people.  
5 Education, it has evolved to become a device. It sorts  
6 our people. It classifies our people. It alienates us  
7 and tries to assimilate us. And for far too many it is  
8 an ordeal.

9                   It is not a useful tool for enrichment  
10 or personal satisfaction. And I want more and more people  
11 to enjoy the freedom and independence that comes from a  
12 good education.

13                   Families need genuine support and  
14 facilitation to help develop readiness in their young  
15 children and they need guidance in finding ways to support  
16 their young ones as they go through the educational paths.

17                   And adult learners that are returning,  
18 they need strong support, personally and academically for  
19 what the challenges are ahead of them. They need to feel  
20 secure and free that they are going to have the funding  
21 to support whatever goals they might have in mind.

22                   They need to feel secure that whatever  
23 happens to them in the education system is not going to  
24 alienate them from their loved ones, from their family

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1 and the community. And I think that safe and responsible  
2 day care needs to be included as part of those packages,  
3 because those are the things that keep our people from  
4 moving ahead.

5 I find that there is so many changes that  
6 or people have undergone, so many adaptations that we have  
7 had to make to survive, there many deep-rooted emotional  
8 problems that do not get addressed. The problems we see  
9 day to day in the high number of suicides, death by  
10 misadventure, violent deaths, high jail populations,  
11 alcohol and drug abuse and just so many throw-away people  
12 that we have.

13 I feel that mental health needs to be  
14 funded as a priority, with funding accessible to those  
15 who really need it.

16 Right now I am discouraged by the  
17 policies that do not preserve the delicate relationship  
18 that needs to be there between the therapist and the client,  
19 that the confidentiality is destroyed as you have to go  
20 through an accountability process with the funding  
21 agencies that fund mental health programs.

22 I think people need to feel basic  
23 security in their own homes. There needs to be freedom  
24 to sleep peacefully throughout the night, without fear

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1 of intrusion from abusers, from alcoholics, or hungry  
2 people. Basic respect in communities needs to be  
3 restored.

4 I think those are some of the things that  
5 are missing that are really at the core of what people  
6 are struggling with because, if you do not have basic  
7 security in your own home, you cannot expect to go through  
8 day-to-day life as a very strong person.

9 Far too many of our communities, single  
10 women, elderly and children, and other disempowered people  
11 are victimized without any support from the local community  
12 or from the legal system for the difficulties.

13 This basic insecurity only maintains the  
14 distrust that disables many of our people and prevents  
15 them from reaching out to anyone.

16 Communities need help with developing  
17 meaningful lifelong activities to offset the needs met  
18 by alcohol use. Presently, for far too many people,  
19 alcohol is a tool for social interaction and emotional  
20 expression. Far too often we see people celebrate with  
21 alcohol. They grieve with alcohol and they express their  
22 anger through alcohol. The alcohol must be removed and  
23 the void filled with activities that will promote physical,  
24 mental, emotional and spiritual health.

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1 Foster care for me, too, has also been  
2 a major concern. Foster care for native families must  
3 re-examine its mandate and reshape its policies.

4 For too many generations of native  
5 children the foster care experience has served to alienate  
6 them from their own people and their communities so that  
7 they have no real sense of belonging anywhere. Their  
8 experiences in foster care usually result their production  
9 of children who also become foster children.

10 Priorities should be given to  
11 maintaining ties with families and communities or, in some  
12 cases, reuniting families and communities. There should  
13 be strong support for parents and real efforts to  
14 strengthen their role with the children. The emphasis  
15 should be on reunification and reconciliation, not on  
16 throwing away incompetent parents and on breaking up  
17 families.

18 I also feel that in the area of domestic  
19 disputes, whether there is violence or the family is  
20 breaking down through divorce or separation, the needs  
21 of minor children needs to be protected and their rights  
22 need to be maintained.

23 Too often I see the children become a  
24 vehicle for parents to express their own emotions and they



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1 are at risk for exploitation and abuse.

2                   When there has been a violent episode  
3 between a couple and there is charges pending, I think  
4 custodial visitations should be suspended. I think too  
5 many of us are familiar with the manipulation of children  
6 by angry or jealous parents and it is an extreme. Most  
7 recently, many of us were aware of the death of a young  
8 boy at the hands of his father, because the visitation  
9 was in force, even though there were risks that had been  
10 stated. But that boy was killed as a way to get back at  
11 the mother.

12                   And, finally, I would just like to say  
13 that I would really like to see our people become very  
14 powerful, healthy and strong again. But, before there  
15 can be self-government, communities need to assess for  
16 themselves the levels of administrative skill that they  
17 need to handle the multitude of responsibilities that go  
18 with governing everyday life.

19                   Communities need to feel confident that  
20 self-government would not be more stressful or problematic  
21 than systems presently in existence.

22                   I think I have said enough and I hope  
23 that I did not offend anyone.

24                   And I forgot to introduce myself. My

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1 name is Mavis Henry. I am a social worker for Poquicin  
2 (phonetic) Band. But I am also a mother and before that  
3 I was an educator in the public school system. And I  
4 feel a great deal of responsibility for the lives of my  
5 community and I hope I can use whatever skills I have to  
6 enrich the life there. And I thank you for all your time.

7 **ROBERT SAM, COUNCILLOR FROM THE SONGHEES**

8 **BAND:** Good afternoon.

9 I would like to express my appreciation  
10 to Chief Andy Thomas and his band for opening this house  
11 today to host this meeting.

12 I would like to thank the two  
13 Commissioners who have come here to listen to our concerns.

14 I thank the elders who opened this meeting with their  
15 words of wisdom and offered their guidance, because I think  
16 it is true that we have been offered a new lifestyle that  
17 has somehow gotten us off the track of who we are -- really  
18 are.

19 I have six items that I would like to  
20 address to the Commission. There are a lot more that could  
21 be put forward but I know in the days coming that other  
22 people will be also addressing this Commission.

23 The first one deals with employment and  
24 the employment equality program. This is a program that

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1 is supposed to be designed to enhance the disabled,  
2 minorities and the aboriginal people.

3 In this area we have the Department of  
4 National Defence and many other federal government,  
5 provincial government agencies. And, in order to satisfy  
6 the requirement of compliance, they hire our people on  
7 contract, short-term contracts, so that they can go back  
8 and say to their ministers, "Yes, we hired a native person."

9  
10 But, when they are talking to that  
11 minister, they do not tell him that that person is no longer  
12 employed with that department.

13 In our communities the unemployment rate  
14 can run anywhere from 50-90 per cent. If that was allowed  
15 to happen Canada-wide you would see a lot of flurry and  
16 activity with programs to address those types of things.

17 But the fact that they are happening in  
18 the native communities, they are sort of glossed over with  
19 short-term programs.

20 And I would like to recommend in the  
21 employment equity program that a native person be hired  
22 to monitor that program in terms of ensuring that native  
23 people are employed full time.

24 The second one deals with child

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1 protection.

2 As you know, the federal government  
3 turned that responsibility over to our provincial  
4 government. And they make lump sum payments, transfer  
5 payments, on behalf of child protection services. And  
6 the offer that they make and the program that they offer  
7 has not served our people well.

8 Over the years the children that have  
9 been apprehended have often been cut adrift after they  
10 become age of majority. They do not know who they are,  
11 where their band is, who their people are.

12 So, I think the federal government has  
13 to start taking a look at that area and developing a program  
14 federally, because the one that is in place now is not  
15 working. It is not serving our people. There is a  
16 process presently under way in this province of legislative  
17 review at the provincial level. And there are two tracks.  
18 One is for non-native and the other one is for the native  
19 people. But, unless the federal government gets involved,  
20 it will go nowhere.

21 The third one deals with our treaty  
22 rights. The Songhees Band is one of the treaty bands in  
23 this area. And we want the governments to start  
24 recognizing, respecting and honouring those treaties.

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1                   They are not contracts that can be broken  
2   and rewritten at the whim of government. The rights in  
3   those treaties are not subject to numbers.

4                   I recently heard that some of the bands  
5   were being asked to put numbers forward. When that treaty  
6   was signed, we never agreed to any numbers. And also the  
7   same with the hunting rights. Those are the two strong  
8   points in that treaty.

9                   Again, under treaty, I do not think our  
10   people signed away all the resources that were on the lands.  
11   And I think government has to recognize that.

12                  And when you talk with the legal people  
13   they use words like "cede," "extinguish." I am sure our  
14   great grandfathers did not understand those words when  
15   they were sitting down with governments to sign those  
16   treaties.

17                  So, I am hoping that we can have a  
18   revisiting of the existing treaties to address some of  
19   these issues.

20                  The third one has to do with justice  
21   reform in regard to the native inmates, once they are in  
22   the system.

23                  There is very little, culturally, in the  
24   system to support them. And I am recommending that native

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1 people be hired as prison liaison officers, or cultural  
2 workers that can deal with our people who are put into  
3 institutions.

4 Under education, our post secondary  
5 people are being -- some of them are being put aside because  
6 the post secondary education has been capped and we are  
7 being told by government that is all there is. I think  
8 those budgets are determined in Ottawa. There is no  
9 negotiations. There is no consultations with the bands  
10 as to what the needs are. And I think that process has  
11 to take place.

12 I am just going to check my list to make  
13 sure I did not miss anything.

14 **CO-COMMISSIONER FOR THE DAY, CHIEF DAVID**

15 **PAUL:** Could I ask you a question, Bob?

16 When you talked about the native -- or  
17 the child care, could you recommend in there that the  
18 provincial jurisdiction not be in there, that the program  
19 return to a federal jurisdiction?

20 I do not know if that is what you were  
21 recommending when you were talking.

22 **ROBERT SAM:** I make that recommendation  
23 that the federal government look at setting up and turning  
24 over the child protection to bands, because that is what

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1 we want. We feel that we can do a lot better job in terms  
2 of dealing with our children in providing the child  
3 protection.

4 **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** Could  
5 you identify yourself, for the record, please?

6 **ROBERT SAM:** Robert Sam, from the  
7 Songhees Band, Councillor for the Songhees Band.

8 **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** Sam,  
9 Robert Sam?

10 **ROBERT SAM:** Yes. And I do not think  
11 I could leave the floor without talking about the Indian  
12 Act.

13 It has been around for a long time, but  
14 it has been designed to hold our people back. And the  
15 section I want to really address, if we are going to be  
16 talking about self-government, is the right to determine  
17 who will vote in band elections. Because every time there  
18 is an election people come in from the Department of Indian  
19 Affairs with their lists and they are saying: "This person  
20 here is not eligible because they do not live on reserve."

21 We want that right to determine  
22 ourselves who will vote in band elections. And I guess,  
23 long term, we would like to see that Indian Act abolished.

24 That is all I have to say and I thank

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1 you for your time.

2 **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** Could  
3 I ask a question?

4 In our hearings up to now we have heard  
5 from people complaining, urban aboriginal people,  
6 complaining that their bands do not let them vote. This  
7 is the first time I have ever heard anybody say that the  
8 Department of Indian Affairs comes in and actually states  
9 who is living on the reserve and who is not living on the  
10 reserve, and who can participate in the elections.

11 This is going on in your community only?  
12 This is widespread?

13 **ROBERT SAM:** Well, I know it has  
14 happened in our community and if that is the policy I  
15 imagine it is fairly widespread. And these are people  
16 from the Department.

17 So, what we are saying is, that we want  
18 that right to determine who votes, and not the Department.  
19 Whether they live on reserve or in the urban area, or  
20 whatever, we feel that if they are band members they should  
21 be entitled to vote.

22 **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** Very  
23 interesting.

24 **LOUISE UNDERWOOD:** That is for the



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1 bands, under section 74, and the Department sends out the  
2 Indian Act regulations and they state who can vote and  
3 who cannot unless the band went under the old membership  
4 code --

5 **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** Okay --

6 **LOUISE UNDERWOOD:** -- as established by  
7 the Department that tribes can go under that -- the  
8 membership code from 1985 to 1987 -- they decided that  
9 any of the bands that did not apply to that would have  
10 to follow section 74 of the Indian Act -- the bands that  
11 are under Customs can decide who can vote and who cannot  
12 vote.

13 **DANNY HENRY:** Good afternoon.

14 I feel happy to be here to say I guess  
15 our choice of words that we want to say -- from what I  
16 understand we are allowed to talk about just about anything  
17 we want to talk about.

18 I guess the presentation I have is a  
19 little different from what I have been hearing. And I  
20 would like to welcome Mr. Erasmus and his staff to the  
21 Salish territory.

22 I am here to talk a little bit about our  
23 Indian people in a sense, and to look at the excitement  
24 of our people, of our first peoples. And it says here

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1 they wanted to talk about our experiences.

2 Well, I want to tell you just a little  
3 bit of some of my experiences and some of the experience  
4 that happened through life.

5 One is -- I have got a -- well, he is  
6 not a little guy any more -- he is up to this high. My  
7 son is -- but he is about this high. And I tell you right  
8 now that I am working with the Victoria Commonwealth Games  
9 -- and I am going to come back to that in a little bit  
10 -- and I am working with the Native Participation  
11 Committee.

12 And what I want to talk about is, there  
13 is my son, when I went to watch him in a school play one  
14 time. And many of you must have been at school plays at  
15 one time or another, with your nieces, nephews, son,  
16 granddaughters or sons. And did you ever watch people  
17 in a school play, when you are the parent, or you are the  
18 uncle or the aunt, and all the kids are doing their little  
19 Christmas play on the top and they are all dressed up in  
20 their little costumes and they are all sort of feeling  
21 good about what they are and you sort of see them smiling.  
22 And you see the little kids looking out in the audience  
23 to see if they can see their parents and the parents are  
24 looking up to see if they can see them.

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1                   And what they will do is, as the kids  
2 are doing their play, the minute their child stands up,  
3 immediately the parent runs up and starts snapping a whole  
4 pile of pictures because they look at that and they --  
5 well, I am trying to cut this a little short -- I watched  
6 my little -- my little son at the time, when he was doing  
7 his little play -- all he did is march like this -- that  
8 is all he did, was walk across the stage. And here I was,  
9 standing up there snapping pictures.

10                   I guess the point I am trying to make  
11 there is that it was a memory that I can never forget.  
12 And I will never forget it. I still have that picture  
13 and I still look at it today and I still look out at my  
14 son now that he is 21-years old and will say, "Gee, I  
15 remember this." And he will say, "I remember that too."

16                   We begin talking about somewhat of a  
17 memory, a fond memory that both of us can sort of live  
18 with.

19                   I could tell you a little bit about my  
20 experience as a soccer player. I have had a lot of  
21 experiences -- and I do not think my dad is in here now  
22 -- but he has taught me a lot through sports. And I went  
23 through that sporting career that I played and I have  
24 travelled all over the world because of it. I have been

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1 to Brazil, I have been to Ireland, I have been to Scotland.

2 I have done all those things because of  
3 sport, because of soccer, because I loved it -- because  
4 I did it because I loved it. But I did it because I had  
5 support, too, from my dad, from my mom, my family, my  
6 brothers, my uncles. I had all that sort of support.

7 I will never, ever forget the very first  
8 time I ever owned a uniform. The very first one, it had  
9 four squares like this and four different colours on it,  
10 different coloured shorts and different socks. But I will  
11 never forget it because it was mine, my very first one.

12 And when I looked at that uniform I wore  
13 it -- it was a Thursday night and we got it a practice  
14 -- I remember this. I had my ironing board ready, that  
15 thing there. I had my uniform all ironed, ready to go  
16 Friday night. My game was early the next morning on  
17 Saturday.

18 And, as I ironed it I made sure all the  
19 creases were nice. It was all laid up -- and I think many  
20 of you might know this experience -- you get so high on  
21 emotion that you cannot sleep, that you end up staying  
22 awake late nights or thinking about work, or whatever it  
23 is that we would go through now.

24 But, as a young child, I remember that

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1 game. I could not go to sleep. I had my boots all  
2 polished. I had everything all ready to go.

3                   You know what happened that night is,  
4 I fell asleep in my uniform. I woke up and there was a  
5 car tooting outside there. And you know what it is like  
6 to sleep in a uniform, you sleep in your clothes, what  
7 happens to it. It gets all wrinkly.

8                   I was embarrassed. I did not want to  
9 go out. I said, "Mom, my stuff is all wrinkled. I don't  
10 want to go." "Get out there, you gotta go."

11                   I would go running out there and my  
12 uniform is -- I was so proud of myself the night before  
13 -- and I am putting my coat on, I did not want to take  
14 it off because I was embarrassed.

15                   But that was an experience. It was a  
16 memory that I had that I still reflect on, a way back.  
17 I often think about the one that all of us can relate to.

18                   Did you ever watch your niece or nephew  
19 get their first pair of running shoes? Did you ever see  
20 what they do when they put them on? The first thing they  
21 do is, when they put their first pair of running shoes  
22 on is they put it on -- and it is amazing how they always  
23 think they can run faster. And they go, "Watch this, watch  
24 this," and they go tearing down the other side and go

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1 running as fast as they can. But they feel good. And  
2 you feel good buying it for them, because it is another  
3 reflection of a memory.

4 I guess the other thing that I -- I will  
5 stop right there and I will get into this -- the second  
6 part is what I wanted to talk about -- and then we look  
7 at our negative side of life, the negative view that (native  
8 language), white people have of our first peoples.

9 You know, the kind of sayings -- I had  
10 a talk with my brother about this one day and I sort of  
11 asked him when he was living in Vancouver, "What are the  
12 sort of things that go through your mind that bother you  
13 the most?" He says, "Oh, there's certain things,  
14 especially when Oka happened last year."

15 You know, he worked as a landscaper.  
16 And, for course, they are all white people that he had  
17 to work with. "Ah, Christ," they say, "why don't you go  
18 set up a roadblock, which you guys are good for?" You  
19 know, this is the kind of thing he got out of that.

20 They said, "Why don't you guys go clean  
21 up your yards, take your cars out?" You know, clean up  
22 your yard. Or the other things about, you know, the kind  
23 of things that we hear about constantly and the kind of  
24 feel I have for the politicians that have to go up front

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1 all the time.

2 But the kind of things that happens out  
3 of that, and there are little things that happen -- I am  
4 not saying there is a way out of this, but I am just trying  
5 to use examples, okay? -- our politicians always being  
6 at the forefront, which is great for us as Indian people.

7 But I do not know if anybody knows the  
8 impact that has of being able to read land claims, Indian  
9 people setting roadblocks. It is always in the papers.  
10 White people grab that and they share that with you very  
11 quickly. And they will jump all over you for that. It  
12 is a negative impact for our people. Our kids have to  
13 learn to live with that.

14 Our social assistance stats that people  
15 talk about, that we even sometimes talk about, how much  
16 welfare that we pay to our own people. You know, I did  
17 a little -- I phoned David here and I sort of said, "Give  
18 me an idea what we are paying for welfare." And he said  
19 well over a million dollars, just for the thousand and  
20 some odd people that are here.

21 It is depressing.

22 We talked about the drug and alcohol  
23 stats, another one that is very high. And I do not like  
24 those stats. I really do not like listening to them, but

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1 they are there and there are a lot of people who think  
2 they are going to help us Indian people out by going out  
3 there and working for us and doing all these great things  
4 for us.

5                   And it is like I heard Bobby say -- or  
6 he is saying, give us the money and let us do it from here  
7 on, and let us make the mistakes and we will learn how  
8 to do it. And, you know, I was listening to that.

9                   And I wanted to say this. None of this  
10 has a great impact for our youth to hear and see. I guess  
11 the thing that I am trying to get -- and all the positive  
12 things that happens amongst ourselves is this big house.  
13 And for the ones of you that are not from here, I hope  
14 you might have heard about it from the elders earlier,  
15 the sacredness of the floor, the sacredness of this  
16 feeling, the elders that are still right here listening  
17 to us right now, that are above us, that they do not leave  
18 us. I have a man that is gone (native language) who is  
19 gone now, but I know he is here. I know he still overlooks  
20 and watches us.

21                   There are a lot of elders that have gone,  
22 but they are still here. They have given those memories  
23 of themselves that I can carry and know they will always  
24 be around.



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1                   I guess the point I really want to make,  
2 everyone, is that there is not enough education about our  
3 own selves, about who we are. I talked about some very  
4 negative things that are reality, it is fact, it is the  
5 way things are. And you are saying, "Well, gee, we don't  
6 like to hear that either."

7                   But I guess the thing is, you know, when  
8 I was growing up -- and I talked about those memories --  
9 and I talked about those special moments in each one of  
10 our lives and each one of our special moments that we have  
11 shared. And there is a card that we bought for my mom  
12 on her birthday and it says, "Don't count the years, count  
13 the memories."

14                  And I think if we have a lot more happy  
15 memories to reflect on and to hear about, and to talk about,  
16 all of this stuff that I mentioned, we will not even notice.  
17 It is called "self-esteem." It is called high  
18 self-esteem. It is called feeling really, really good  
19 (native language), as the elders would tell us here. It  
20 is feeling really good inside.

21                  And I think what we need to do -- and  
22 I have gone to different elders and talked about ways to  
23 do this -- and, as I was saying, I work for the 1994  
24 Commonwealth Games, which is coming to Victoria. And I

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1 do not mind telling you that some people have come to me  
2 personally and said they do not support the Commonwealth  
3 Games. They do not support the whole thing because of  
4 what the Commonwealth nations have done to us.

5                   And I listen to that and I take that to  
6 heart. And I say, "Yes, I understand where you are coming  
7 from." But I guess the fact is that I have learned  
8 something from them, watching them. And I want you to  
9 keep thinking about your memories and your reflections  
10 of happy moments in your life when I say this.

11                   They do something that is kind of  
12 special. Think about your son or your niece, like I was  
13 telling you that story about my son on stage. They do  
14 a thing called -- it is the opening ceremonies -- where  
15 they bring 35,000 or 40,000 people and they have a  
16 celebration. They have a great big celebration. There  
17 is music. There is people singing. There is people  
18 dancing. There is pictures, a lot of special moments,  
19 special feelings that go on.

20                   And I think, oh, man, this is what we  
21 need. We need a lot more of this. We need to educate  
22 the general public, Victorians, British Columbians,  
23 Canadians, the world, more about the celebration side of  
24 ourselves. I have heard this when I go to chief's

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1 conferences. We have got to start educating the public  
2 a little more now.

3 Well, being an ex-athlete -- I say  
4 "ex-athlete," because I do not compete competitively any  
5 more -- but I still try and participate -- I hope that  
6 we could start to look at more ways to try and find out  
7 ways to get the celebration side to ourselves going, to  
8 start seeing things happen.

9 We have a function going on called the  
10 "Salish Summer Games" this coming summer -- that is August  
11 the 8th to the 16th -- that is going to happen this coming  
12 summer. What we are trying to do is gather nations  
13 together, gather nations together and bring them together,  
14 and let's celebrate.

15 Sammy Sam is the one who told me that  
16 term, "celebrate." He said that is the English term.  
17 He said it is celebrate, let's celebrate. He said, "When  
18 we come into this big house," he said, "think about it.  
19 What do we do here? We do whatever works necessary.  
20 If it is the passing of a name we sit in the middle and  
21 we pass. And we have all of you here sitting witnessing  
22 what is going on." He said, "Once we finishing witnessing  
23 what is going on," he said, "then we pass out gifts."  
24 We feed the people, like you had in the other room, and

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1 then we pass out gifts to thank people for coming. That  
2 is a celebration.

3 But only us, as Indian people, see that  
4 in here. We need to start doing that out in the public,  
5 I guess is the idea that we are trying to get at. Educate  
6 them about something that we are very familiar with.

7 So, my point is, I guess, to everyone  
8 that is here is to -- in 1990 they had the North American  
9 Indigenous Games. And do you realize they had over 3,000  
10 youth participate in those games? Three thousand kids  
11 from all over North America went to participate in those  
12 events. For those youth, that was a success. To the eyes  
13 of many it was a failure, because it was not run properly.  
14 But if people knew -- because I went to those meetings  
15 -- Charles Wood and Willie Little Child, all those guys,  
16 they volunteered their services to it. They did not get  
17 paid to do it. They did it because they had a commitment  
18 and they felt good about the North American Indigenous  
19 Games.

20 Do you realize that that North American  
21 Indigenous Games is in a \$50,000 deficit because no monies  
22 from governments and agencies were given? Yet they will  
23 support the Commonwealth Games that has got \$160 million  
24 budget. That is being supported.

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1                   They are supporting athletes to go all  
2 the way across Canada -- or, to Barcelona this summer --  
3 millions of dollars are being spent on those athletes.  
4 But we do not have enough money being spent on our own  
5 youth about our own youth for sport development. We do  
6 not have anybody participating in the Olympic Games. We  
7 do not have anybody participating in the Commonwealth  
8 Games. We do not have anybody participating -- we have  
9 a few people participating in the B.C. Summer and Winter  
10 Games.

11                   So, something is wrong. Sport  
12 development is not high priority amongst our people. It  
13 is amongst ourselves. We compete against one another  
14 every once in a while. But we have a B.C. Aboriginal Sports  
15 Association now that is formed. It is barely getting off  
16 the ground.

17                   So I guess the point I would like to make  
18 is that we consider -- I know Alwyn Morris is working on  
19 a sports secretariat for Canada at this moment and I hope  
20 that gets full support from wherever it can get support  
21 from. Because it is that mother agency, that voice up  
22 at that level to start saying that Alwyn Morris achieved  
23 something in the 1984 Olympics. He is a proud person,  
24 a proud Indian that our kids look up to right now.

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1                   Well, we want more Alwyn Morrisises all  
2 across Canada so we can have more role models. Our kids  
3 look up to role models. And we do not have enough of them  
4 at this point.

5                   I just want to quickly read over some  
6 of the things that we have talked about -- is to create  
7 a structure and a program that will see the games occur  
8 on an ongoing basis -- that was taken right from the North  
9 American Indigenous Games. It is dead. It is not there  
10 any more. Assist to develop our young athletes and sport  
11 to open up doors of competition and make aware the avenue  
12 available for each youth as an opportunity -- to be able  
13 to start seeing youth participate in functions, in sports.

14                  I have competed in national finals, in  
15 championships and have scored. And if all of you watch  
16 hockey you will know what Wayne Gretzky is like, what he  
17 does when he scores. He just has so much emotion, his  
18 hands are flying so high, he feels so good about that  
19 particular moment, that emotion.

20                  Well, it is those particular emotions  
21 we would like to see our kids start to develop. We want  
22 to see them going through -- I tell you I was an athlete  
23 once -- I know what it is like to be frustrated. I know  
24 what it is like to be disciplined to be able to run those

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1 five or six mile training sessions. I know what it is  
2 like to go through all those emotions. I have cried  
3 because I have lost a game.

4 But I have been happy and gone through  
5 all the jubilant kind of emotions too. It teaches you  
6 emotions. It teaches you to handle those emotions.

7 We would like to enhance self-esteem,  
8 confidence and self-worth. I think that is part of the  
9 purpose with sports. We want to encourage participation  
10 of physical, recreational and amateur sport in culture.

11 All of these kinds of things -- I will just leave this  
12 with you -- these are just things that we wrote up --  
13 developing positive attitudes toward involvement and  
14 participation in sport, but also in culture.

15 Not everybody is a sports enthusiast.

16 There are some very good dancers that take it very  
17 seriously and like to train and like go up in the morning  
18 baths and like to come back and listen to the elders, to  
19 find out more about that dance, more about the language.

20 That is building a positive self-esteem within a person.

21 And I hope that, through this process,  
22 that you can start to look at a process that will educate  
23 the non-Indian people of the province, of Canada and the  
24 world, to show the celebration side of our people.

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1                   And I guess the last thing is to be able  
2 to start obtaining support of government officials and  
3 agencies and the private sector, to assist in the  
4 development and training of participants so that we can  
5 compete at the national level, that we can compete at the  
6 international levels.

7                   And I guess the last little plug for you  
8 is that we want to personally invite all of you to come  
9 to this summer gathering. The Salish people would like  
10 to open their arms to you and to come share a bit of your  
11 culture. We have a youth conference that youth are going  
12 to come and share their songs, dances and language. And  
13 other youth of other nations are going to watch and see.

14                  We have three nations on Vancouver  
15 Island, the Salish, the Quagluth (phonetic) and the  
16 Nuu-Chah-Nulth. If three of those Indian guys walked in  
17 to this room people would not really know -- just know  
18 that they are Indian -- but they would not know where they  
19 come from. But the minute we put on our regalia they start  
20 to establish where we come from.

21                  The contest last for moments, though the  
22 training has taken years. It was not the winning alone  
23 that was worth the work and the tears. The applause will  
24 be forgotten, the prize will be misplaced but the long



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1 hard hours of practice will never be a waste. For, in  
2 trying to win, you build a skill. You learn that winning  
3 depends on will. You never grow by how much you win, you  
4 have only grown by how much you have put in. So, any new  
5 challenge you have just begun, put forth your best and  
6 you have already won.

7 (native language)

8 Thank you very much.

9 **ANGEL SAMPSON:** My name is Angel  
10 Sampson. I come from the (native language) area. I, too,  
11 like Mavis Henry, have a list because I tend to get  
12 emotional about things that I have deep feelings for.

13 And, like Mavis, I went through the  
14 public education system and got my E.C.E. certificate --  
15 that is Early Childhood Education -- and I am presently  
16 employed by the Songhees Band as a pre-school director.

17 And I have a really strong feeling for  
18 kids and education. There is a lot of memories, like Danny  
19 says you have, that you grow up with. And I grew up being  
20 taught by the nuns and it was a really difficult time for  
21 me. It was not very easy. And I have a lot of bad  
22 memories.

23 When I went through the program at the  
24 college the instructors got everybody to stand up in the

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1 front of the class and say why they wanted to become and  
2 Early Childhood Educator.

3 I did not share the terrible experiences  
4 I had in my early education. I just told them that my  
5 reason for taking the course was to have a child grow up  
6 with one good memory, that he started off with a good  
7 education with somebody that cared and had fun with them.

8 Anyway, I have got a number of things  
9 here that people had asked me to talk about. And a lot  
10 of them I have the same feelings for.

11 Because there is so many cutbacks it  
12 seems in education that there is no hope for a lot of the  
13 kids that are coming up now, and you wonder how much more  
14 the Department is going to cut back on the funding for  
15 post secondary education.

16 Because right now I am working on the  
17 second-year part of the program at college and I am going  
18 to get my diploma, hopefully next year, for special needs  
19 education.

20 I applied for a job at the tribal school  
21 out in Saanich area. And, unfortunately, I did not get  
22 the position. But the reason why I had applied at that  
23 job at the time was because there was children being turned  
24 away from the school because they did not have a special

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1 needs educator. And there was one little boy in  
2 particular, you know, he wanted so badly to go to that  
3 school and his mom wanted him to go, but they did not have  
4 a qualified staff person to learn how to deal with things  
5 that he had to go through.

6 He was a very special needs person. He  
7 had difficulty walking. His speech was delayed. He was  
8 functioning at a very low age level as compared to his  
9 age.

10 So, I really cared a lot about that, and  
11 I have always cared about education because of my  
12 experiences growing up and people that taught me -- or  
13 tried to teach me their education system.

14 But there are so many kids out there that  
15 have behaviour problems. And I think a lot of it is because  
16 of lack of understanding, that the (native language)  
17 educators do not understand our lifestyle and what it is  
18 like, the kind of things that we deal with every day.  
19 It may seem like nothing to them, but just the way that  
20 you talk to a native child is a lot different -- it is  
21 just a different feeling, a way of communicating and being  
22 with them.

23 I have worked in day care for about five  
24 or six years now and I find that I tend to get along better

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1 with children than I do adults, that I really can connect  
2 with them. They are never heard, it seems. And I would  
3 like to be a voice for the kids, for the future and give  
4 them a strong feeling that they need to have inside to  
5 develop to be the kind of confident person that they should  
6 turn out to be.

7                   Number two on my list there is a lot of  
8 young adults right now who want to further their education.  
9 But a lot of times they get turned down -- for whatever  
10 reason I do not know.

11                   I remember back in -- it must have been  
12 about three years ago now -- I was trying to complete my  
13 education and I was denied funding. I was told by the  
14 school board that was dealing with my education money at  
15 the time -- and I do not know why it happened, you know  
16 -- I remember turning in my application for the education  
17 funding money in March of that year, which they said was  
18 the deadline and I did that. But, come August, I received  
19 a letter in the mail saying that the Department had turned  
20 down my money -- or my application -- and said that I was  
21 not entitled to any more money because they felt that I  
22 was in school long enough.

23                   And it was my last year, it was my final  
24 year for the ECE part of the program and they were not

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1 going to fund me. So I said, "Fine, I want to see it in  
2 writing from the school board then, that I am no longer  
3 going to be funded, why I am not going to be funded, and  
4 the reason behind the whole thing happening."

5                   And I do not know what it was but, by  
6 noon that day I had a cheque in the mail. You know, they  
7 said, "Your cheque is here now. They changed their mind  
8 and you got the money." I do not know if it was something  
9 political, or they just did not like me, or what, but I  
10 thought it kind of odd. So I had checked into it and had  
11 phoned the head guy over in Vancouver and asked him, you  
12 know, did I get any money allocated for my education this  
13 year. And he said, "Well, I really can't give you that  
14 information. You have to go your school board." And I  
15 said, "Well, if I go to my school board I will definitely  
16 not get it."

17                   There was a lot of conflict, difference  
18 of opinion, about one thing or another at the time, I guess,  
19 and they just did not want to fund me.

20                   But the guy said, "Well, give me your  
21 name and I will check to see in our records if the money  
22 had been sent to you." And he was gone for like maybe  
23 30 seconds -- it must have been on a computer -- I don't  
24 know -- but he said, "Yes, your funds have been sent."

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1 And I said, "Well, then, I want to know why I am being  
2 told at the school board that my money is not here and  
3 that you guys are not going to fund me any more. How come  
4 I am being told one thing and something else is happening?"

5

6 What was going to happen to my money if  
7 I had not called that man and found out, you know? I think  
8 we need to have some reliable, responsible people in charge  
9 of our education funding monies that are coming in.

10 I know a lot of times people tend to get  
11 a little on the political side and it is hard to avoid,  
12 you know, because everyone has strong convictions about  
13 one thing or another. But education, to me, is the most  
14 important thing for me right now, for the kids of our  
15 future. I do not want to have to worry years down the  
16 road when my son wants to go to college and university.

17 I know with the kind of income that I get as an early  
18 childhood educator I would not be able to fund him for  
19 five years.

20 And I want to be able to know from our  
21 leaders that that money is going to be there for our kids  
22 of the future.

23 Also, another concern I have is the  
24 people that go through the -- what is it called? -- MIDA

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1 (phonetic) program -- they become teachers' assistants.  
2 I would like them to be able to go further and become  
3 teachers themselves and not to be relied on just to be  
4 an assistant to the teacher in charge at the schools.

5 I think that our people are intelligent  
6 and smart enough and that they can do the job as equal  
7 as anyone else. And I think that maybe we should push  
8 for our kids -- or our students that are coming up and  
9 want to go into teaching -- so that we can have our own  
10 people working for our people in the future.

11 And like Mavis brought up earlier, day  
12 care services has always been a very important subject  
13 to me. I, myself, am working towards getting my own day  
14 care set up. But I think that with the number of students  
15 that are going in for education, adults that are being  
16 educated right now, need to have someone care for their  
17 children.

18 I know at lot of times our extended  
19 family cannot be there for us, like it used to be in the  
20 past, and it is difficult because everybody has to get  
21 out and make a living and do what they can to help their  
22 family survive.

23 So, I think that our school systems need  
24 to have day care services implemented into the programs.

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1                   And I was very interested in what Bob  
2   had to say about the right to vote. I find that every  
3   year, or every time it comes up for an election that a  
4   lot of people are left out. And it is not fair and it  
5   is not right. Everyone has the right to vote because,  
6   when it comes down to dollars and cents, all those heads  
7   are counted anyway. Why can they not have the right to  
8   vote? I find that part of the section in the Indian Act  
9   has created a lot of division and a lot of bad feelings  
10   in our communities. And it is something that needs to  
11   stop, and stop now.

12                  And I think if we can let our voices be  
13   heard -- I mean, there has got to be something that has  
14   got to change here and I know that is one of them that  
15   I feel very strongly about, too, is everyone having the  
16   right to vote, whether they are on the reserve or off the  
17   reserve, because their heads are counted anyway.

18                  I think that is about all I have to say  
19   on education.

20                  I have some concerns here in regards to  
21   the medical services.

22                  I know in the past couple of years I have  
23   had some medical problems and I have had to go to a doctor's  
24   office. And they said, "Okay, well we have to x-ray you."



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1     So he gave me the x-ray and then he said, "You have to  
2     give \$25 for it." And I never used to have to pay for  
3     an x-ray, but now I have to and I did not know why.

4                     And my niece ran into a problem a couple  
5     of years back as well, with -- she needed to see a  
6     specialist, an orthodontist for her teeth, because they  
7     were all crooked and misshapen. And she had to pay for  
8     that herself, as well. But I do not know, I just did not  
9     think that it was right that a lot of these things that  
10    we have been entitled to are slowly being taken away.  
11    And I do not feel that that is right.

12                    There was a time when our family went  
13    through a really difficult time with our mother. She died  
14    of cancer back in '79. And the doctor that was taking  
15    care of her at the time, she was going to see him, and  
16    he just kept saying, "Oh, Mrs. Sampson, all you need to  
17    do is lose weight. Lose weight, Mrs. Sampson. Control  
18    your appetite, Mrs. Sampson." Meanwhile, she had a  
19    25-pound tumour inside of her that he did not, you know,  
20    know about.

21                    I do not know if he just did not know,  
22    or he just did not care. But I think that we need to have  
23    somebody talk about these concerns in order for the doctors  
24    to take more care with our people, because she found out

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1 a month before she died. And it was really hard. I mean,  
2 you find out that you have cancer and all this time the  
3 doctor is telling you, you just need to lose weight. And  
4 it is just not right and I think something has got to be  
5 done about the medical services for our people, that the  
6 doctors have to take better care.

7 I know we have, right now, people going  
8 in as helpers in the hospitals, but I think it needs to  
9 go further than that. It definitely needs to go further  
10 than that because I know when some of our people have died  
11 in the hospital that the nurses there tend to be very  
12 insensitive, very uncaring about what has just happened.

13 I remember this family that I went to  
14 see at the hospital once to be with them when their mother  
15 died and they were waiting for a brother could show up,  
16 so that he could be with his mother before they took her  
17 away. And the doctors and the nurses just kept coming  
18 in and saying, "Come on, come one, we need to get her out  
19 of here. We need the space."

20 And I just could not believe it. I mean,  
21 here was this family sitting in the hospital room with  
22 their mother who had just died and they were trying to  
23 rush her out so that they could wheel somebody else in.

24 I mean, these kind of things need to be looked at and

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1 tended to.

2 It is just a bunch of things that I have  
3 had on my mind for a long time and I was phoned by my sister  
4 and she said, "Come down here. I know you have a lot to  
5 say."

6 But I have to get going and I just thought  
7 I better say something before I leave. I could not just  
8 leave without saying anything because there is a lot that  
9 I have had on my mind. But I have to go and help my son  
10 with his homework.

11 Thanks a lot.

12 **JIM CAMPBELL:** My name is Jim Campbell  
13 and I live on Saturna Island, where I have run a farm for  
14 the last 46 years. I spent most of my time there. But  
15 for 24 of those years I represented my community on the  
16 regional board the Island's trust and school board.

17 I cannot talk about the kind of serious,  
18 immediate problems that you are talking about. I do not  
19 know them, except by reputation.

20 And so I wanted to talk about what things  
21 might be in the future, not the future just a little ways  
22 away, but the future quite a ways away. The last  
23 half of my life started 38 years ago and a whole lot of  
24 things I have seen and experienced in that period of time

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1 have made me think it might be worthwhile to say them here.

2

3 I thought I was going to say them in the  
4 Conference Centre and I suspect that, had I not been given  
5 the opportunity to come here, I might have had quite a  
6 different audience -- I do not know -- there might have  
7 been a different bunch of speakers. I do not know about  
8 that.

9 But it might not be unfair of me to  
10 prejudge that question.

11 At any rate, what I really want to talk  
12 about is what is in the distant future which would for  
13 me be probably not something I would see, but something  
14 that would be started.

15 The changes in attitude as well as in  
16 law in Canada have been sweeping in recent years, but not  
17 fast enough. There is still an article of faith in many,  
18 if not most parts of the earth, that race is an appropriate  
19 basis for the assignment or withholding of rights and  
20 freedoms -- for assignment or withholding.

21 I think that is a false premise and I  
22 think it is not only wrong, but harmful.

23 My parents, my education and my  
24 experience all tell me that, as a matter of practical

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1 reality, there are no measurable differences of value  
2 between the inherent mental and moral potential of any  
3 of the so-called racial groups on this earth.

4                   From the purely scientific point of view  
5 the proof of such a proposition either way is impossible,  
6 since there are no unconditioned minds to measure against.

7     And, if you are going to be scientific, you have to measure  
8 against something that is true and constant. And there  
9 is no way that we can do that.

10                   So that race as a measure of value is  
11 a futile and retrograde concept. And the sooner race  
12 departs from the scene as that kind of a measure of value,  
13 the better off we will be.

14                   In Canada attitudes have changed greatly  
15 and on the basis of public record -- but on the basis of  
16 public record and the conflicts of people of differing  
17 racial, religious, cultural and nationalistic  
18 characteristics throughout the rest of the world the change  
19 has not been as great as here.

20                   Laws are made by governments to defend  
21 the position which best secures for them the means of  
22 preserving what they see as their most important  
23 characteristics. Many times in the past the individual  
24 has been disregarded in this purpose.

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1                   In addressing the grievances caused by  
2 the injustice and errors of the colonial system and the  
3 Canadian government solutions tend to be directed to the  
4 treatment of the symptoms at the time. We see that here  
5 today. We see it -- everywhere we hear about it we see  
6 that there has to be an improvement, on this or that part  
7 of the system to correct something that is wrong and bad,  
8 and we have heard it today. And I do not dispute that.

9                   But I say that we have to, at the same  
10 time, be looking towards a longer range solutions, because  
11 the symptoms may create -- if they are not something with  
12 them -- may create a dependency which can postpone the  
13 best results.

14                  I believe that every action we take to  
15 reach that result -- which we all have to be looking for  
16 -- has to have an outcome which does not divert us from  
17 it but takes us straight towards it.

18                  The first question to agree on is what  
19 the result should be. I want to be around when we get  
20 that question solved, but I hope to see an agreement as  
21 to what it is before we set a path that may lead us away  
22 from it.

23                  The best result has to be based on a human  
24 value system, not one that is tied exclusively to any race

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1 or culture.

2 Rights and freedoms are the essential  
3 elements of the value system which the Charter holds up  
4 for us, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Freedom of  
5 the individual in a civil society -- regardless of what  
6 civil society -- to realize his or her full potential is  
7 a worthy object for all of us. And that should be the  
8 result that we are seeking.

9 The tools for this are a system of  
10 equality of rights and opportunities that will take us  
11 all there together. I say together because, no matter  
12 how different we may appear to be, we all want the same  
13 freedom to choose. I say together again because,  
14 regardless of whether we are born here involuntarily, as  
15 I was -- I had no choice in the matter -- or came by choice,  
16 as many immigrants have come -- we have to live together  
17 in a civil society.

18 It is the intellectual power to decide  
19 and to choose and the reasonable economic power to aspire  
20 to any choice within this society which will give us that  
21 best result.

22 When I was very young a Spanish  
23 philosopher by the name of Gasset described Liberalism  
24 as:

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1 "That principle of political rights according to which  
2 the public authority, in spite of  
3 being all powerful, limits itself  
4 and attempts even at its own  
5 expense, to leave room in the State  
6 over which it rules to those who  
7 neither think nor feel as it does."

8 That, I think, is part of what the  
9 Charter is achieving, if not all of it.

10 The labels we use to identify that  
11 philosophy, wherever we have self-government in Canada,  
12 it must not exclude that principle.

13 We live in a racist and Canada for most  
14 of its history has been a racist nation. Such has been  
15 the general acceptance of racism as a necessary protection  
16 for culture that it did not seem to many Canadians to  
17 represent an immoral or unjust doctrine at home, even while  
18 we fought a war against Hitler, one of the most overtly  
19 racist leaders in recent history.

20 Nevertheless, in post war Canada the  
21 barriers on prejudice have been coming down and the social  
22 attitudes are becoming every day more open and generous.  
23 The speed of this change may not be so obvious to those  
24 under 40 as to me. I think that the principal piece of



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1 racist legislation that keeps Canada racist is the Indian  
2 Act. And I do not have any solution as to how quickly  
3 that can be disposed of. And it is certainly out of my  
4 hands anyhow.

5                   The worst of the abuses of the native  
6 people came about as a result of a notion that aboriginal  
7 people, being primitive in technology and without the  
8 enlightenment of the Christian faith were somehow  
9 intrinsically inferior. That was a standard racist  
10 conclusion common to most north European colonial powers  
11 as they expanded into the western and southern hemispheres.

12  
13                   It was, therefore, an accepted basis  
14 of behaviour for many of the otherwise enlightened leaders  
15 -- some may not think there were many enlightened at all  
16 -- who colonized this nation. It followed, then, that  
17 the best duty towards the natives was to correct their  
18 ignorance and convert them to Christianity.

19                   I do not fault Christ's teachings as I  
20 understand them for the wretched result that occurred in  
21 many places but, rather, the excessive zeal and bigotry  
22 of some of the clergy and some of the political masters.  
23 They made the assumption that native culture had nothing  
24 of value.

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1                   I do not discount greed as a factor in  
2 all of this but, on the other hand, many of the settlers  
3 in Canada were displaced by circumstances in their homeland  
4 -- my great grandfather was -- and came here to survive.  
5 Canada, today, is different.

6                   In Canada today with the Charter of  
7 Rights and Freedoms in place, and a concept of  
8 multicultural society developing -- even if haltingly --  
9 we do have a chance to reach that best result of true freedom  
10 of the individual to reach his or her potential.

11                  The energy of the well-founded  
12 bitterness of a great part of the aboriginal population  
13 and the rise of a very well educated and articulate  
14 leadership have combined to convince Canadians that the  
15 aboriginal dilemma must resolved and soon. My feeling  
16 is that most of the energy has so far gone to proving and  
17 restating the justness of the grievance. All the energy  
18 and a whole lot of patience as well will be needed to define  
19 and reach the means which will take us to a place in history  
20 where debts are paid and we are free and equal.

21                  What I look for is a resolution of those  
22 grievances in a way which lead to that place, without that  
23 segregation by race, which has been a dominant part of  
24 native history for so long. To achieve this we must be

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1 sure that race as a criteria for either advantage or  
2 disadvantage cannot be a permanent part of the solution.

3 The kind of system which is needed is one that recognizes  
4 that freedom is the most important value and with freedom  
5 an individual cannot realize his or her full potential.

6 As Gasset said, we have to require that  
7 government in spite of its power, limits its power and  
8 leaves room in the State for those to live who neither  
9 think nor feel as it does.

10 Self-government as a concept discussed  
11 and demanded as a right, but without definition, seems  
12 close to being recognized as an inherent right for  
13 aboriginal people.

14 Just as an aside, I negotiated a great  
15 many contracts with school teachers and with labour unions  
16 which had a one-year duration. There was a feature of  
17 many of these contracts which I had to use to get a  
18 resolution, which I called "constructive ambiguity."  
19 That was a clause that nobody understood what it meant  
20 for sure, but we could hope and pray that before the end  
21 of the year nobody attempted to apply it. And then we  
22 would get a signing and we could go on with our lives.

23 You cannot do that with the  
24 constitution. You cannot do it.

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1                   Government, as I know it -- and this is  
2   from the government I have seen and worked in -- requires  
3   a defined territory, a defined set of duties and  
4   obligations and a body of citizens, and a source of revenue  
5   derived from its citizens and the assets of the territory  
6   over which the governing comes.

7                   Now, there are shared levels of  
8   government in which there are shared sources or revenue.

9   But a totally independent government, of course, has to  
10  be totally independent in its source of funding. And  
11  highly dependent governments, such as school boards, which  
12  has about 10 per cent jurisdiction, get about 90 per cent  
13  of the money from the provincial authorities.

14                  So this is a very important thing to  
15  remember. It is a fundamental issue and I do not think  
16  any culture has been able to resolve it in any other way.

17                  Self-government is an inherent right for  
18  everyone, as far as I am concerned. And if it is deemed  
19  to be an inherent right -- and it gets into the constitution  
20  that way -- I hope it will include me, as well as some  
21  of you because I think that is what self-government is  
22  all about.

23                  There are no territorial, revenue or  
24  jurisdiction problems which are not easily resolvable to

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1 give self-government to native units. They may seem, but  
2 they are technically and legally -- and that kind of thing  
3 -- there is no great problem to that. It is really a  
4 quantity question, not a principle issue.

5                   There are, however, two really difficult  
6 proposals which seem to be implicit in much of the public  
7 discussion so far. And I, unfortunately, do not get too  
8 much directly, but I do listen to the radio and read  
9 newspapers, and that kind of thing.

10                   The first of these is that at least for  
11 the most part the intention is that the citizens in these  
12 territories would be racial exclusive. It may not be so  
13 in all cases, but it certainly sounds like it from what  
14 I hear.

15                   The second is that the Charter of Rights  
16 and Freedoms might be suspended to assure the survival  
17 or enhancement of aboriginal culture. Both these  
18 proposals fly in the face of a solution intended to build  
19 a country in which race, as a qualification ceased to exist,  
20 and in which the freedom of the individual is of paramount  
21 value.

22                   Now, I think I want to make sure that  
23 you understand that to suspend the Charter of Rights and  
24 Freedoms is a fairly negative step. I see culture as

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1 something that any government has the right and duty to  
2 support. I question whether culture is something that  
3 any government ever should have the power to impose. So  
4 that cultural things which are not of the choice of someone  
5 in a community ought not to be imposed on them.

6                   This model which involves a state or a  
7 semi-state, or a substate based on purely racial grounds  
8 and with the objective of sustaining culture is the one  
9 that has been the source of the great conflicts all over  
10 the old world. And it is the at the heart of much of the  
11 strife that is going on there.

12                   The attempt to secure and impose culture  
13 by government decree is exactly what our ancestors tried  
14 to do to the aboriginal people by withholding their right  
15 to learn their language, by cancelling their cultural  
16 activities. That was an imposition, and attempted and  
17 disastrous imposition of culture on individuals in this  
18 society, which I deplore.

19                   The withholding of citizenship from  
20 Chinese, East Indians and others on racial grounds is a  
21 chapter in our history, as a Canadian, that has no merit.  
22 Nevertheless, in later years we began to welcome the  
23 victims of discrimination and have been steadily  
24 developing a society with a greater and greater sense of

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1 justice. We are a long way from the ideal, but 10 years  
2 ago we got on track with the Charter. It has compromises  
3 and flaws, but it sets an expectation which we ought not  
4 to deny in the resolution of the aboriginal issue.

5                   Having attacked what I see to be  
6 expectations of many native people and their leaders I  
7 should offer a better way. I do it with humility and with  
8 the certainty that nobody has paid me for anything for  
9 quite a long while I am not doing this on anybody else's  
10 behalf but my own beliefs.

11                   There are two obligations we have to meet  
12 to justly settle the dispute.

13                   We have an obligation to compensate for  
14 the failure of Canada to treat them at least as equals  
15 in every respect and for the effect that this has had on  
16 their economic and psychological ability to make their  
17 own choices with reasonable expectation of success.

18                   When the young man spoke over there it  
19 struck a chord with me, the great need is to have that  
20 feeling of pride and self-confidence. It helps.

21                   At any rate, we have an obligation as  
22 well to return to them a legacy of land and resources that  
23 can be used to help create a standard of living and a sense  
24 of self-respect. And that is a significant amount, in

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1 reality. And I consider that it should be -- not  
2 necessarily what everybody perceives to be generous --  
3 but it should be extremely generous, in my view because,  
4 in fact, what is left of Canada to give away there has  
5 to be a hell of a lot to make it even.

6                   As to treaties, I do not think we can  
7 realistically assume that we can turn the clock back.  
8 We really cannot turn the clock back. We are stuck in  
9 this place with 29 million people on this continent,  
10 whether we are not anything like that many, all utilizing  
11 the resources that have been here for some time and all  
12 setting up huge infrastructures. And we cannot do  
13 anything about that.

14                   I suggest that a treaty between Canada  
15 any self-defined grouping of descendant people will not  
16 have any meaning with the accepted definition of a treaty,  
17 really. It may be something that they will applaud, or  
18 be pleased with, but unless it does something about  
19 citizenship in both directions, I do not think it will  
20 be useful.

21                   Otherwise, we will have the potential  
22 of further conflict on the basis of this discredited notion  
23 of the value of race. And that I think is -- we have to  
24 see it as a discredited notion. We have to find a way



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1 to get around it.

2 Self-governing enclaves within Canada,  
3 if Canada is to be their shelter -- and there is not any  
4 other way -- it cannot be otherwise -- those enclaves must  
5 provide for that same free movement guaranteed in section  
6 6 of the Charter.

7 Furthermore, unless the benefit of  
8 compensation and the ownership of land in some manner and  
9 to a significant degree, are to be the equity of the  
10 individual and capable of being called and used to  
11 advantage in his or her own way, there will continue to  
12 be a closed society with the real potential for denial  
13 of rights and freedoms to the individuals.

14 More importantly, I think we owe the  
15 native people the legacy that will be held away from them  
16 if segregation by race and imposed culture is the outcome  
17 of self-government. That legacy is really the right to  
18 free choice, the right to choose and hold their culture  
19 and their way or not, and to live anywhere in this land  
20 as free and independent individuals fully sharing with  
21 other peoples here the benefits, opportunities and duties  
22 of all of us.

23 Thank you.

24 Any questions?

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1                   **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** Maybe I  
2 could ask one.

3                   If you do not see units of  
4 self-government where aboriginal people could govern  
5 themselves without anyone becoming a part of that unit,  
6 how do you see the fact that the numerical disadvantage  
7 that aboriginal people find themselves in, the small  
8 numbers that they are, would mean any different than the  
9 aboriginal people living in Victoria or any of the other  
10 cities in this country?

11                  Since Canada has started I think there  
12 have been something like 10 members of the House of Commons  
13 of aboriginal people. There has never been a city in this  
14 country that has been run by aboriginal people. There  
15 has never been a province, except for the few moments in  
16 the history of Manitoba.

17                  And the whole country was developed in  
18 such a way that, until 1960, we could not vote.

19                  When this province was created the  
20 majority of the people here were aboriginal, but they could  
21 not participate in the provincial government.

22                  Finally, when the numbers changed, that  
23 is when -- I mean, it seems a little overly righteous at  
24 this time when there are 27 million people in this country

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1 and only a million or so are aboriginal, to say the only  
2 way to create a system of government is one where everyone  
3 is equal.

4 Had that been the premise from day one,  
5 we would have a completely different country.

6 So, I do not understand how you see  
7 justice for aboriginal people. Where will we find in this  
8 country where aboriginal people will be able to have any  
9 kind of real self-determination, if you are saying the  
10 only thing that we can suggest for the future is one where  
11 it is one man one vote, and nothing else is right, and  
12 for some reason that particular system -- which has not  
13 been around in humanity's history very long -- is some  
14 kind of sacred solution to all society's -- all of man's  
15 problems around the world.

16 **JIM CAMPBELL:** Thank you.

17 I have a little difficulty dealing with  
18 that, because it covers quite a large amount of ground  
19 and I did not take notes on everything you said.

20 But I would start this way in saying that  
21 I do not think for a moment that this would do what you  
22 said at the outset it would do.

23 I look at Canada from the point of view  
24 of the territory that is there and the way it has been

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1 developed. I notice that unfortunately the most  
2 developable portions of it have been developed and are  
3 fully populated. And I think that the people who developed  
4 those places are not necessarily all to carry the guilt  
5 for what some other people did.

6                   As I say, I am 74. I have lived in Canada  
7 for longer than a great many people in this room. I did  
8 not choose to come here. My great grandparents came here  
9 to escape something in Europe, in Scotland, the loss of  
10 their land. And I am a descendant of that group. That  
11 is the kind of a Canadian I am.

12                   What I see is that the permanently closed  
13 society will produce extremely bad results. But that  
14 does not mean that the initial establishment of very  
15 significant self-governing units in Canada would  
16 immediately be overrun with somebody wanting to vote them  
17 out of office. There are a great many examples of units  
18 here and in Canada where, in fact, that is not the case.

19                   I think, in reading for this, I read  
20 Trudeau's discussions of the early work that went on in  
21 1982 and, in his view -- and he is no master or authority  
22 and probably does not have any influence really on anything  
23 than I do now, except more people listen to him -- the  
24 fact of the matter is they did not consider

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1 non-heterogenous units to be an appropriate form of  
2 self-government at that time.

3                   And I say that this is something that  
4 we have to start in a certain way with the possibility  
5 that we will end up where race has no meaning. And once  
6 we end up in a place where race has no meaning it is not  
7 going to make any difference. And I think in the process  
8 of getting there we may have to make compromises.

9                   I do not suggest that we should not make  
10 compromises, but I do not think that we can afford to assume  
11 that a process which initially requires, which initially  
12 may be racially exclusive, is not a problem with me if  
13 it is clear that that is not going to continue on and on  
14 through generation and generation, because I think  
15 everybody is a loser in that.

16                   And that is the point I am trying to make.

17       And I think also that -- and I do not know very much about  
18 this -- and perhaps one of the reasons I do not know very  
19 much about it is because hardly anybody knows very much  
20 about how the very, very large number of different citizens  
21 of the aboriginal people in Canada, how they feel in the  
22 different circumstances.

23                   I would be amazed if they all felt the  
24 same because their circumstances are all different. I

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1 heard Mr. George from (native language) talking about his  
2 circumstances last Sunday. And he was moving and  
3 powerful, and I was impressed with him. And he has a  
4 poverty problem there, nothing to do. But I drive in from  
5 the Island here and I see an Indian band there who is in  
6 the real estate business in what is obviously a very, very  
7 successful way, with a huge number of dwellings built,  
8 not for native people, but for customers, and I do not  
9 deplore that.

10 But I think it points out the fact that  
11 every situation is going to be a little different. There  
12 are vast ranges of differences in these circumstances.  
13 But we have to start with a principle.

14 We say, "Are we going to end up with a  
15 society in which there is a particular group of people,  
16 by heredity and forever, are going to be treated  
17 differently, who choose to be treated differently? And  
18 my thesis is that to choose to be treated differently --  
19 to choose to be different is one thing -- I choose to be  
20 different or I would not be here -- other people choose  
21 to be different in different ways -- that is our right  
22 -- and some of us are denied that right because of economics  
23 and because of our failure of education systems -- but  
24 it has to be a choice, it has to be a choice that each

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1 individual native person, each individual Canadian, has  
2 to make about what his culture is to be like.

3 And when we get to that choice, and when  
4 we do not look at religion or race, or what have you, as  
5 a factor that is essential in the determination of our  
6 cause, then we will be there.

7 You know, I have experienced rather  
8 abusive remarks from persons who had blue eyes and hair  
9 the same colour of mine, and his name was MacDonald.  
10 Twenty years ago if I spoke to MacDonald he might hit me  
11 because of what my ancestors in Scotland did to his  
12 ancestors. That is the kind of thing.

13 When I went to school in Montreal, every  
14 St. Patrick's day most of the children wore either an orange  
15 or a green ribbon that day. And when they met somebody  
16 with a different colour, they punched him. That comes  
17 back from the religious prejudice between the Irish  
18 Catholics and the Irish Protestants. That war is still  
19 going on.

20 That was in Montreal I went through that  
21 process. And I lived in South Africa and our black  
22 houseboy thought the British were the most wonderful people  
23 in the world and hated the Boers. I was taught that I  
24 had to respect him just the same as I did an engineer that

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1 worked for my father. That was the way I was brought up.

2 But, we cannot win this battle of the  
3 resolution of this problem, unless we are prepared to say  
4 that race will decline steadily until it is of no  
5 consequence to anybody. And that has to be our program  
6 or otherwise race will always be the problem.

7 Thank you.

8 **CO-COMMISSIONER FOR THE DAY, CHIEF DAVID**

9 **PAUL:** I guess I would like to make some  
10 statements to you I do not know if you are aware of on  
11 the conspiracy in legislation in British Columbia that  
12 has happened since contact.

13 One of the things you heard was that we  
14 were never allowed to vote. The other thing that you  
15 should be aware of, we were not allowed to go to public  
16 school until 1954.

17 The other things that we were not allowed  
18 to do was to own land. There were people that were around  
19 us that were allowed to take land from us, that were called  
20 -- anyhow, they had something that here you could apply  
21 to the Government of British Columbia before -- Indians  
22 were not given the right to take land for themselves.

23 They were given these little portions of land by the ocean.

24 And they said because we lived off the ocean that we were



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1 entitled to the whole of the ocean, because that is where  
2 we made our livelihood.

3 But I guess when you talk about racist,  
4 I do not think you would be here today if we were racist,  
5 because our people helped your people, or they would have  
6 all died here.

7 We never, ever went around calling  
8 ourselves racist, because we were never, ever taught to  
9 do that. Our people were always taught to help other  
10 people, as human beings, not as something else, and not  
11 to be termed an uncivil society or whatever other labels  
12 that they give to them.

13 But I think that what we are trying to  
14 do here and hopefully that you will understand this, is  
15 that we are trying to educate the non-Indian into our  
16 society, into our way of life. But every time we get to  
17 do something, are headed in a direction to do something  
18 -- like I tell you, there is a conspiracy of legislation  
19 to stop that kind of a thing.

20 I am not condemning you for coming here  
21 to do anything like that, because I do not have that  
22 authority to do that, because I think you live in a free  
23 world -- and we want to get into that free world -- because  
24 we are governed by other laws that you do not even know

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1 that exist around us, that we cannot do.

2 One thing is that you talk about a school  
3 board. We are not allowed to say anything to the school  
4 board. We are not allowed to go to the school boards and  
5 participate in that kind of action, in order for us to  
6 improve the education of our children. They tell you,  
7 "Well, get your own. Do your own thing."

8 I do not know if you are aware of how  
9 much each individual Indian person in this building alone  
10 paid to your school board for each Indian children that  
11 goes to a public school. It is in the neighbourhood of  
12 \$5,000 per Indian student.

13 Now, that comes off the top of our  
14 budgeting that is done, the same way it is done to the  
15 Province of British Columbia. But, what do we have to  
16 say about that? We do not have any say about it.

17 But, like I say, I really do not want  
18 to get into a debate about what you are talking about,  
19 but I think the part that I might consider not a very good  
20 remark in there is the word "racist," because I do not  
21 think we are. If we were, like I said, you would not be  
22 here today.

23 **JIM CAMPBELL:** I would just like to say  
24 that I do not consider that I used the term "racist" to

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1   apply to the native people.

2                   What I did consider is that one of the  
3   solutions that I thought was there has racist implications.

4   And I thought that perhaps, since I do not consider the  
5   native people to be racist, that they might understand  
6   me when I said that that is a risk that they take in going  
7   into that thing.

8                   There is a couple of things, though, I  
9   would like to say.

10                  I did act for the school board of Niska  
11   in an arbitration there and was appointed to that board  
12   and the board there is entirely made up of native people  
13   in that situation. So there are boards like that, although  
14   I believe -- and it is one of the provincial school  
15   districts in the province.

16                  So, those kind of things are not  
17   impossible right now.

18                  The other thing that I did in my reading  
19   of history is learn that, at the outset, the native people  
20   of British Columbia were free to take Crown grant lands,  
21   as were the -- at the outset, sir -- as were the colonial  
22   people. But they withdrew that, I think regrettably, very  
23   soon after it was started.

24                  At any rate I did not really -- I really

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1 want to point to the difficulties that I think will occur  
2 20 years from now and hope that in the process of getting  
3 to what you already said you want -- the same thing that  
4 I want -- we do not put barriers in the way to an ultimate  
5 solution of that, that would please us all.

6                   That is my message and it is not one that  
7 I take lightly and I came into this place instead of the  
8 Victoria Conference Centre with full knowledge by looking  
9 around here this morning when I came in, to find out if  
10 I had time here, with the full knowledge that my audience  
11 would be not one that I am used to.

12                   And I appreciate very much the fact that  
13 you have asked good questions and given me this chance.

14   And I regret that there are many people, I think, might  
15 feel more comfortable in the Conference Centre and maybe  
16 should have been here, as well as me.

17                   Thank you.

18                   **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** I would  
19 like to make just a small comment to what you said.

20                   You based your presentation on the idea  
21 that rights for a particular people based on race is not  
22 a positive thing and that in the long run there can be  
23 a lot of problems because of it.

24                   I think it is a misconception that

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1 aboriginal people are basing their rights on the base  
2 solely that they are a different race. That is not the  
3 main premise at all that aboriginal people are approaching  
4 their rights.

5 **JIM CAMPBELL:** I accept that. I am  
6 perhaps a victim of the media, because from the media's  
7 point of view and from everything that I learned from my  
8 meeting in the Conference Centre with a number of native  
9 people last Sunday, I did not find that that is a general  
10 thing.

11 I will say I was pleased when I made  
12 similar remarks at the convention last Sunday to quite  
13 a large number of people, including Chief George of (native  
14 language) and a number of others from the Yukon, and what  
15 have you, that I struck a chord with some of them.

16 But I know that others have a very, very  
17 strong view that whatever you call the classification that  
18 you put yourself into, whether you call it a "race of Indian  
19 people," "aboriginals," "natives," or members of a nation,  
20 whatever term you use, the classification is one in which  
21 the criteria are essentially hereditary. And the  
22 hereditary aspect of it -- you see, you have a lot of  
23 difficulty with race because I do not believe there are  
24 any differences of value, since it comes from the people

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1 that you descended from and so, for convenience that is  
2 a racist category. But it is a nasty word. And you can  
3 call it anything you like, but the result is going to be  
4 the same.

5                   If people distinguish themselves in what  
6 I think is a relatively narrow classification, rather upon  
7 their capabilities and their aspirations, they distinguish  
8 themselves by their source. My sources is  
9 England/Scotland/Ireland. Long ago I got over  
10 distinguishing myself by that because it means nothing  
11 to most people nowadays.

12                   **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** The only  
13 point I wanted to make was that the aboriginal people are  
14 basing most of their rights on the fact that they consider  
15 themselves a people. And part of the people are basing  
16 their rights on agreements that were made early on,  
17 treaties that have not been lived up to until recently  
18 -- they have been taken to the Supreme Court and so forth.  
19 And then, in other cases, the nations of people that have  
20 not yet signed agreements, that are still hoping that their  
21 original rights can be organized through modern day  
22 treaties.

23                   Each of these peoples generally have a  
24 way in which people can become part of their nation. It

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1 is not based on colour or race. People can be adopted  
2 in. People can be married in. People can become members  
3 of these particular nations.

4 It is not based on race at all. And so  
5 I just wanted to make that particular point because that  
6 is not the primary reason that aboriginal people are  
7 suggesting that they have a special place in Canada that  
8 is different from those people that are the descendants  
9 of immigrants, or are immigrants themselves.

10 Thank you for your presentation anyway.  
11 It certainly is an interesting point of view.

12 **ROBERT SAM:** I would just like to thank  
13 Dave and George for their comments on Mr. Campbell's  
14 presentation. His presentation is enlightening.

15 I just want to go back to the portion  
16 he mentioned on treaties, about how they have become  
17 meaningless and they should be discarded. I want to tell  
18 him that we do not take that view and that recently had  
19 the opportunity to attend a national treaty conference.

20 And I believe if he made that comment at that conference  
21 he would have been in serious trouble, because the prairie  
22 bands are very serious about how they view their treaties  
23 and how they are upheld. And they would never accept the  
24 statement that they should be discarded and being

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1   meaningless, because they are not.

2                   If they are meaningless, it is only  
3   because governments have not lived up to their word and  
4   they have never been honoured. And now they are being  
5   dragged back to the table, kicking and screaming sometimes,  
6   through the courts, to live up to their obligations under  
7   those treaties.

8                   So, when he says they are meaningless  
9   and should be discarded, we do not agree.

10                  **JIM CAMPBELL:** I have to say that I did  
11   not say the treaties are meaningless. I do not believe  
12   treaties are meaningless. I think they are important.  
13   They are well established documents.

14                  I hope for the day when voluntarily,  
15   maybe, the people who benefit by those treaties will want  
16   to wash them out. But I do not promote that. That is  
17   not what I said at all.

18                  I did say that I think negotiating  
19   treaties at this stage may very well not be a very  
20   productive thing to do, new treaties where there have never  
21   been treaties before. And maybe I do not know what I am  
22   talking about, but I think that it is a step that is trying  
23   to go back to the past and bring the past forward. And  
24   that is why I felt it was that way.



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1                   But, please, I do not believe, I do not  
2 think that treaties should be abrogated. I think that  
3 treaties made by choice and mutual agreement may be  
4 changed, be withdrawn, be cancelled, be replaced with  
5 something better. But I do not believe that any treaty  
6 should be abrogated and I never felt that way about any  
7 treaty.

8                   **CO-COMMISSIONER FOR THE DAY, CHIEF DAVID**

9   **PAUL:**               I would like to thank Mr. Campbell for  
10 his presentation. And the word I guess I was trying to  
11 find for you with treaties and other things was the word  
12 "preemption." I do not know if you are familiar with the  
13 word "preemption" -- and there were other things that were  
14 called "land grants." And when you talk about us being  
15 allowed to have Crown land, I do not know if you understand  
16 what you are saying because, if is Crown land, then they  
17 are saying that we are trying to get back something that  
18 we already owned.

19                   I do not understand that.

20                   I heard a chief, I read it that Chief  
21 Joseph, from Idaho, he said that he wanted to sell his  
22 horse. And he said he did not want to sell it. So this  
23 guy walked over to see another guy and asked him if he  
24 could buy that horse. And the guy sold him the horse,

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1 but it was not his.

2 I think there is something there that  
3 I think you should understand that Crown land, there is  
4 not such a thing, because Crown land belongs to the Indians  
5 of that territory that are there.

6 I hope you can see that type of a thing  
7 that Crown land really belongs to the aboriginal people  
8 of that territory. There should not be a word "Crown  
9 land."

10 Thank you.

11

12 **GORDON CARTER, MEMBER OF THE METIS**

13 **NATION:** Hi, my name is Gordon Carter and I am  
14 a member of the Metis Nation. And I would like to thank  
15 our Coast Salish hosts for having us and having the  
16 aboriginal Commission on their property and in their house  
17 here.

18 I would like to say (native language)  
19 in Cree. I am a Cree Metis. And salut, I am part French  
20 as well.

21 I would like to say that I am glad that  
22 I am glad that Chief Thomas, Chief Andy Thomas, had  
23 mentioned the environmental impact of very poor  
24 arrangements in the past on basically real estate

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1 agreements, or the idea that the lease of land for a sawmill  
2 and treatment place for wood -- the PCBs that were put  
3 on them for preservatives and so forth -- that that was  
4 a major point that I was going to make.

5 I would like to acknowledge that and I  
6 would also like to encourage the Commission in the future  
7 to consider that any lands that are given to native people,  
8 any agreements at all, should consider these environmental  
9 impacts because all of us -- we can do whatever we like  
10 with the pieces of paper that make up treaties -- but you  
11 can never remove, you know, the toxins, minimata disease,  
12 alzheimer;s, the rest of these things that may be  
13 influenced by toxins -- cancers.

14 I think I would ask the Commission to  
15 consider that as a recommendation for any agreements on  
16 land issues in the future.

17 Also, I feel that there are toxins in  
18 a number of places. Many conditions of acceptance, of  
19 education, perhaps, have allowed social effects in the  
20 direction of assimilation of non-native attitudes in  
21 native communities and native organizations at times.

22 I have to say at times that is the toxin  
23 as well. Native people have to be consulted every step  
24 of the way. Elders should be present in every native

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1 organization, genuine, bona fide elders, approved by the  
2 Elders' Confederacy or other organizations which do hold  
3 themselves accountable.

4 Our own nature must be honoured  
5 helpfully, and those elders will help us do that in these  
6 organizations.

7 Another issue on lands is the fact that  
8 I have been approached by people from south of the American  
9 border -- let's call it the Canada/American border -- that  
10 the Coast Salish elders from the United States reserves  
11 say that the amount of lands that their Canadian relatives  
12 have is ridiculous. And I am under the impression that  
13 basically the United States has not been significantly  
14 generous in awarding them lands.

15 But particularly the south island area,  
16 the size of the reserves, I consider basically large  
17 subdivisions.

18 I would also like to say that the Metis  
19 people in Victoria have perhaps not been acknowledged over  
20 the years and that the Metis people are very active and  
21 helpful. In this community and across the country we are  
22 more and more able to realize the -- there are forms of  
23 Metis welcome which have not been shared. Very often Metis  
24 people working in organizations in this area have been

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1 treated very well by the native people who originally came  
2 from this place.

3 We appreciate that completely.

4 I understand that somebody at the  
5 archives -- the British Columbia Museum -- had recently  
6 stated that, not only had Governor Douglas taken a native  
7 wife which would, according to the 1982 Constitution make  
8 all of his descendants Metis people, but also in the  
9 archives it was itemized that a lot of the original builders  
10 who had been recruited toward the first major buildings  
11 in Victoria and Vancouver had been of Metis and Hawaiian  
12 extraction.

13 I am sure that they should have made note  
14 of the local Coast Salish and Interior Salish and others  
15 who travelled through this area. But I would say that  
16 this goes back to whenever some of those larger buildings  
17 were built -- if that was 1750, or so, I would say that  
18 that would be reasonable.

19 So, I would like to say that nationally  
20 I know there are structures in other provinces for those  
21 Metis and posterity of native people here who marry outside  
22 and so forth, who eventually become Metis people. Some  
23 of our posterity will be Metis people indeed.

24 Other structures for their voice have

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1 been put together in other provinces, as well as  
2 consideration of small land settlements.

3 But there is a great deal of helpfulness  
4 for the future that I feel Metis people will be continuing  
5 to acknowledge because I believe there are a lot more Metis  
6 in Victoria and Vancouver than is easy to initially  
7 recognize.

8 So, I want to leave you on that note,  
9 that I want to encourage structure for community welcome  
10 and support for the whole community.

11 (native language)

12 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You have to  
13 pardon me, I do not write my speeches. And I have a lot  
14 of things to say from here, and it is hard.

15 There is a lot of things that need to  
16 change. I hear a lot of talk about self-government. I  
17 hear a lot of talk about how we can go and do these different  
18 things and that is what we need to do.

19 We need to take care of the people at  
20 home first. People at home have to be able to come up  
21 and do these things that we are asking for them to do and  
22 to be able to make the decisions and to be able to live  
23 in a healthy way and be happy with themselves inside, to  
24 be proud of themselves, who they are, to be able to go

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1 into their culture and be okay with acting that out, without  
2 all this hurt that is left inside.

3 The other steps are wonderful, but we  
4 have to take the first step first.

5 I heard a lot of things here today and  
6 I agree with them, but how are we going to come to that  
7 first step? How am I going to sit in a room with the man  
8 who raped me and feel that I can listen to what he has  
9 to say? And I know that comes from a lot of people. How  
10 can you do that? How can you hear what that man or woman  
11 has to say to you?

12 How can I feel good about going to school  
13 when I have all this pain inside? I know I do not just  
14 speak for me. I speak for a lot of people.

15 How can I trust that I can bring my  
16 daughter who is only seven to these different places and  
17 feel that I can trust that things are going to be okay  
18 for her when she grows up?

19 I cannot even go back to my own reserve.  
20 I cannot trust that that place is going to be safe for  
21 my daughter. I have been waiting for four years for a  
22 house.

23 So I hear a lot of wonderful things here,  
24 but what are we going to do first? How are we going to

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1    come to being in that place of being strong and being out  
2    there and not listening to some of those things that are  
3    said in such a negative way and they still hurt. And here  
4    we sat here for such a long time.           Although we are  
5    very patient people we did not have the assertiveness to  
6    stand up to some people who monopolized our time.

7                   But thank you very much for your opinion,  
8    but we are going to get on with our thing.

9                   How can I look at my sister's kids when  
10   they grow up and I who have called social services because  
11   that is the only place I have to go to deal with it? I  
12   see my nephews getting beat up. I know that they have  
13   been hurt sexually. They act out. But I have not seen  
14   it with my own eyes. I am not valid in that provincial  
15   system's eyes to tell them that there is something going  
16   on with my nephews.

17                   I see it happening all over.

18                   Who do I have to go to, to tell them those  
19   things? And who is going to make sure that those kids  
20   are safe?

21                   I see my great aunt (native language)  
22   in Sooke, and she lives in this house and it is cold and  
23   they will not put money into that house, because she does  
24   not live there all the time and she is not part of the



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1 Sooke Reserve.

2 So she cannot have those kind of things.

3

4 Where do I go to be able to say something  
5 to those people? We have an elected band council, but  
6 they will not listen. They will not listen because they  
7 are scared. And they have got their own hurts inside  
8 because they cannot hear what is being said and what needs  
9 to happen. And people are fighting about money. And  
10 people are fighting about power. But nothing is happening  
11 to those people.

12 Who is going to stand up and be for those  
13 people? I understand, and I really appreciate the role  
14 of people who are politicians. And there is a place for  
15 them, I agree.

16 But where are the people who are  
17 modelling how to live in a healthy way? They are not out  
18 there as much because there are still kids that are killing  
19 themselves. I went through that. And there was  
20 absolutely no one there for me, when I went through that.

21 People say, you know, "Come to my house.  
22 You are welcome to come." But, when you get there, it  
23 is really not that. And it is not because they do not  
24 want you, it is maybe because they cannot see, because

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1 they have got so much in here that they have not dealt  
2 with and they cannot be here.

3 I am afraid to trust even being in a  
4 relationship with another man. How do I trust that that  
5 man has sufficiently dealt with his stuff in here that  
6 he is safe to be with my daughter?

7 I know there was a little bit of talk  
8 about racism this morning and I need to tell you about  
9 a pain that I grew up with.

10 My skin is very white. And I have two  
11 cultures and I come to look at it as an honour that I have  
12 these two cultures inside me. But it is a real struggle  
13 to find out where I belong. And I know that when I go  
14 out some place and somebody gets angry, I know they are  
15 not just angry at me. They might be angry because my skin  
16 colour is lighter than theirs and I bring that out in them.  
17 And I have that understanding now.

18 But I did not have that understanding  
19 as a little girl, and that hurt so much. And then I sit  
20 there and I listen to people because my skin is white and  
21 they do not know who I am, they do not know what is inside  
22 me. And they tell all these things and they say these  
23 things that are not very nice. And they say them about  
24 my dad and all my cousins and my grandpa.

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1                   It is a real pain to be in that place.  
2    And if I go and I talk to someone about this pain that  
3    is inside here, I cannot talk to someone as maybe I would  
4    like to, because I do not know that that is not going to  
5    be repeated out to other places and I was not okay in here  
6    with that being said to other people yet.

7                   I am okay with it now but, when I was  
8    there and I was trying to get myself healed inside, there  
9    was not that there. Where are we going to have -- how  
10   are we going to help those people who have this inside?  
11   You know, I hear about somebody looking like they are  
12   being successful on the outside, especially the white  
13   people -- especially the white people in my family. They  
14   think a job is important. They think that your house,  
15   how it looks is important. They think that how your kids  
16   look and behave on the outside is what is important.

17                  But what happens to the person inside?  
18   They just cover it up.

19                  I lost so much because I never got to  
20   learn any of the language. I can understand some of it  
21   now. But when I was little, people were so ashamed to  
22   be who they were they would not talk, they would not tell  
23   you those things.

24                  The issues really have not changed. I

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1 hear people talking and I understand that that is how they  
2 are going to come and that is what they want to do, and  
3 they are working towards that. But I need to hear that  
4 we are going to do something to start the people from here  
5 because, if you do not bring up all your people, you are  
6 not going to have anyone to have self-government for.

7 I understand now that a lot of the pain  
8 I went through as a child was to help me so I could  
9 understand and forgive other people and help other people  
10 maybe to work through theirs. But there is people who  
11 are still in that, and they have -- the young have very  
12 many places to go.

13 I am really sorry if I have offended any  
14 of you. I am really sorry if my words have hurt you.  
15 But these are my feelings.

16 Please make it safe for our kids to grow  
17 up. Please have a way to make them feel good about  
18 themselves. I do not want those people who did all of  
19 these things to us as kids, I do not want them hurt, I  
20 do not need them to go to the justice -- to that court  
21 system.

22 But let's have some other way that we  
23 can help them to work through their thing because I know  
24 they only acted out their hurts on me because they were

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1 hurt.

2 I thank you. I do not have any more to  
3 say.

4 **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank  
5 you for your very important contribution.

6 If it is possible, I wonder if I could  
7 ask you to tell us what you think needs to be done to make  
8 sure that we can create a climate where people are healing  
9 quicker than they are now?

10 (no response)

11 **BRIAN THORNE:** My name is Brian Thorne  
12 --

13 **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** Could  
14 you just let here --

15 **BRIAN THORNE:** Sorry.

16 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think what we  
17 need to do is, all of us acknowledge that there is something  
18 that is not okay in here. It does not mean that we are  
19 any less on the outside. Actually, it would mean we are  
20 very much stronger inside.

21 I think we need to have a lot more role  
22 models in our community. I think that those people who  
23 wish to be the leaders in our community need to model how  
24 to go through that.

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1                   I think that there also needs to be  
2 sufficient funding -- not just a bandaid -- but to do a  
3 whole program. Where do I go now that I am at this stage?  
4 I do not have anywhere to go. And I have done a lot of  
5 work. I have been working to try to heal this inside for  
6 over 10 years. And there is very few -- and I collect  
7 them as friends -- and that is who I can talk to. Where  
8 can I go now?

9                   And when you are dealing with the sexual  
10 abuse it has only come up after 10 years of working --  
11 this has just come up now? I was raped by three men when  
12 I was a little girl -- for seven years.

13                  Where could I go? I have been trying  
14 to go through medical services -- I need to go to a  
15 counsellor. They sent me to this person. This person  
16 laughed me out of her office.

17                  There is no other native person that I  
18 could go to that has sufficient funding, that in the place  
19 of working on their own that could help me through this.

20                  If I was not as strong as I am, I might  
21 have given up, but I am strong. That is just one thing.

22                  Where are the people who are going to  
23 support me through this? I have been at home all this  
24 time. And when I do not feel safe enough to come out in

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1 public, I hide at home. What is going to happen to those  
2 people who are still hiding at home?

3 I do not want to push this down inside.

4 I am sorry, I cannot think really much clearer to tell  
5 you your answer. I do know lots of -- but we need to make  
6 a statement from our community and everybody needs to be  
7 working on it.

8 That was one or two.

9 **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank  
10 you.

11 **BRIAN THORNE, FIRST NATIONS SOUTH ISLAND**

12 **TRIBAL COUNCIL:** My name is Brian Thorne and I work with  
13 the First Nations of South Island Tribal Council, and I  
14 am a Cowichan.

15 Now knowing what has been said here  
16 previous to myself -- I have been busy with the elders  
17 all day -- and I wanted to apologize for not being here  
18 to listen to the words that were spoken today. And I also  
19 wish to apologize to my elders for speaking in a foreign  
20 language. But, unfortunately, it has become my main  
21 language.

22 One of the probably most important  
23 concepts, I believe, that has to be considered by First  
24 Nations has to be considered in terms of relationship with

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1 Canada. But I believe it has to be the most important  
2 issue, even in terms of this Commission, and that is that  
3 our nations have to heal.

4                   It does not matter what subject you are  
5 talking about. It does not matter whether you are talking  
6 aboriginal government. It does not matter whether you  
7 are talking the education of our children, or their future.  
8 And it does not matter whether you are talking about the  
9 extended family that was nearly destroyed by the  
10 intervention of non-Indian law.

11                   In the simple terms of our nations we  
12 are originally a holistic people, a people that have been  
13 divided by money, a people that have been divided by the  
14 actions and interventions of dominant governments. The  
15 single greatest effect that it has had upon our people  
16 and upon our nations is that it has attacked our pride,  
17 it has attacked our respect, it has attacked our trust,  
18 not only of ourselves, but of the people we live with and  
19 of our families.

20                   If we are going to succeed as an  
21 aboriginal people the resource has to be made available,  
22 in particular to the children it has to be made available,  
23 and to the families of First Nations.

24                   We have to come up with some sort of



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1 program, some sort of counselling, whether it is a  
2 reintroduction of traditional counselling, but we have  
3 to restore pride in family and we have to restore pride  
4 in the children.

5                   They have to heal, because 80-90 per cent  
6 of First Nations families are suffering from dysfunction  
7 -- whether it originates from alcohol -- but the true origin  
8 of that alcohol problem or the drug problem, physical abuse  
9 or sexual abuse, all centers around the issues of loss  
10 of pride, all centers around the issues of influence of  
11 non-Indian culture and the divisive effect it has had upon  
12 our families.

13                   If we cannot introduce some sort of  
14 counselling that is going to have a positive effect upon  
15 our children, we are not going to see a dramatic increase  
16 in the number of children that graduate from high school,  
17 we are not going to see an increase in the number of them  
18 that go on to university.

19                   If we cannot answer to some degree,  
20 through education and counselling, the issue of identity  
21 crises that they suffer from, many of them stand and say  
22 I am proud to be an aboriginal person, but they do not  
23 know what it means to be an aboriginal person.

24                   We have to restore culture, values and

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1 beliefs, to our families and to our communities if we hope  
2 to succeed in reestablishing aboriginal government.  
3 Through education and through counselling we have to  
4 restore the traditional values of community, of family  
5 and of individual, in terms of culture. If we cannot  
6 restore those values, then we will never have aboriginal  
7 government.

8                               If we cannot restore culture and  
9 language to each individual person and, most importantly  
10 to the children, then we will not have an aboriginal nation.

11 If we cannot restore the beliefs and the values of the  
12 aboriginal system to our own leadership, then we will have  
13 difficulties in standing together because we will not have  
14 the beliefs or the values that are necessary to stand  
15 together in true unity.

16                           Regardless of the concepts of whether  
17 it is aboriginal government, whether it is a working  
18 relationship, or the type of services that have to go into  
19 community, if we do not address the issue of reconciliation  
20 and healing within our own nations, then we will never  
21 again stand as a strong people.

22                           There are other words that I can say but  
23 I do not know if I would only just be repeating myself,  
24 and I am quite certain that the elders and the chiefs that

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1 are present probably would have addressed them. So I will  
2 cut my remarks short at that.

3 Healing and reconciliation amongst our  
4 children and our families is the most important issue that  
5 has to be addressed. But, most importantly, the resource  
6 has to be made available for counselling and an education  
7 process in our communities to deal with those issues.  
8 And if we do not deal with those issues, then we will never  
9 stand strong as a people.

10 Thank you.

11 **DANNY WHETUNG:** (native language)

12 For those that would not understand my  
13 native language I will apologize to the elders here and  
14 speak in English.

15 (native language) is translated into "I  
16 am of the people." (native language) My name is Water  
17 Dog.

18 I stand here before you simply because  
19 you asked a question of the lady that just spoke before  
20 me and you said, "Where do we start. What can we do" --  
21 or something to that effect -- "to change this problem?  
22 Where do we start?"

23 My understanding in something that has  
24 been kept very sacred -- or at least secret for a long

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1 time. There is a document called "The Hundred Year White  
2 Paper." It is a systematic description -- and has been  
3 implemented by the federal government -- for the cultural  
4 and racial genocide of the First Nations people of this  
5 country.

6 And I say if you can get hold of that  
7 document -- that still has not come to its fruition --  
8 but I have listened to the stories of the heartbreak --  
9 they are the overwhelming stats that say that the native  
10 people are seven times more this than the national average,  
11 or 50 per cent unemployed, or the whole social fabric of  
12 our nation, the nations of all people of Turtle Island.

13

14 These stats were predicted over a  
15 hundred years ago, when that paper was drawn up by a Jesuit  
16 priest. It was given to the country. To eliminate --  
17 in its opening paragraphs of it was -- "For the purpose"  
18 -- in its mission statement -- "to eliminate the problem."

19 They defined the problem as being the  
20 native people of this land.

21 If we can get hold of that paper and find  
22 out how the systematic problems were -- or how these things  
23 were systematically introduced to rob us of our dignity  
24 -- give us the impression that everything we were getting

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1 was a gift from the great white buffalo, or the great white  
2 man, that stole our dignity from us, then we can see that  
3 paper, look at it, take it to our healers, our elders,  
4 our spiritual people, and look at it in its entirety, see  
5 the very steps that this thing has taken to bring us to  
6 where we are now and then we can undo those steps in a  
7 healthy way.

8                   And I hope that in your position -- I  
9 know that the people trust you because, in the past, you  
10 have taken the words of the people and listened to them  
11 very sincerely. You have not walked out on your own across  
12 the thin ice with -- the permission or the blessing of  
13 the people, the people have made you strong. And today  
14 you are out listening to the people again. And you will  
15 listen for a long time.

16                   And I think that the people will stand  
17 behind you because you listen. You do as we ask. You  
18 have not made up your mind before you come and ask us what  
19 should be done. You have come with an open heart.

20                   Now, there is no telling that the white  
21 government at the other end is going to pay any attention  
22 to it after it is all written up. There is no guarantee  
23 that they will. They may fire it all out.

24                   But I know that there have been some

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1 people that have lost their lives, just simply by  
2 mentioning that document that I have. It is a very touchy  
3 subject.

4 But I sure hope that you can get hold  
5 of it for us and define how all our problems came to be  
6 Thank you very much.

7 **GORDON F.D. WILSON, LEADER OF THE**  
8 **OFFICIAL OPPOSITION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA:** Good afternoon.

9 It is with great respect that I am here  
10 today to speak to this Royal Commission and to address  
11 to this Royal Commission the position of myself, as leader  
12 of the Official Opposition in the Province of British  
13 Columbia, to provide you with the views of myself and my  
14 caucus and to put forward some positions that we would  
15 like you to consider by way of formal recommendation.

16 I think that those of you present today  
17 will have a copy of the written text of this submission.

18 And, rather than spend the time to read that text, which  
19 I think speaks for itself, what I would like to do is to  
20 speak to some areas where I think we need to highlight  
21 and perhaps embellish a little about what is written here.

22 On the first two pages of that submission  
23 there is a -- albeit a very brief -- synopsis of the history  
24 of what has generally been considered to be a growing,

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1 an urgent problem between aboriginal people and  
2 governments in Canada, both federal and provincial.

3 And I think that it would be less than  
4 prudent for me, a white Canadian, to stand in this longhouse  
5 and try to tell the aboriginal people of this country what  
6 their history has been like. They know it better than  
7 I. And I can only say that there is much that has been  
8 done to aboriginal people in the name of government that  
9 we cannot be proud of.

10 But let me say that on the second  
11 portion, or the second part of page two on the topic of  
12 First Nations need for control over their lives -- and  
13 for the proposition of settling the land claims currently  
14 that are on the table and to come up with the representation  
15 that will effectively allow for the management of the  
16 resources within the claims of their territorial lands  
17 -- that we recognize that there is no reason why there  
18 cannot be settlement of these problems, save the political  
19 will to do so.

20 It is widely recognized that the legal  
21 and political structures which currently govern every  
22 aspect of the lives of aboriginal people have been complete  
23 failure. And the attempt at eradication of First Nations  
24 culture has left a legacy of poverty and injustice to

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1   aboriginal people across Canada.

2                   Accordingly, we believe that it is time  
3   to acknowledge the principle that aboriginal people have  
4   with respect to their inherent right to govern themselves,  
5   a right which flows from their long term occupation and  
6   use of the land, and a right which also flows from their  
7   long history of self-government, prior to European  
8   colonization.

9                   We believe also that this right should  
10  be entrenched with the Constitution of Canada.

11                  It is important -- and we wish to  
12  emphasize -- that negotiation and not litigation is the  
13  preferred way, in order for successful development and  
14  implementation of the right to self-government to take  
15  place in the country of Canada.

16                  The process of negotiation we believe  
17  through constructive dialogue at the bargaining table,  
18  rather than through the adversarial contest that is  
19  provided by litigation, will enable -- or should enable  
20  -- all parties to explore all available options in a  
21  co-operative manner.

22                  But it seems that the provincial and  
23  federal governments must be prepared to expeditiously  
24  negotiate in good faith with First Nations.



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1                   No one, not those members of federal  
2 government or provincial government, can afford to wait  
3 another hundred years and certainly the aboriginal people  
4 must be made to wait another hundred years for justice  
5 in Canada.

6                   The creation of the Treaty Commission  
7 to facilitate negotiations of land claim settlements in  
8 British Columbia is a healthy step toward the practical  
9 resolution of these issues. At their most basic,  
10 self-government arrangements must restore to aboriginal  
11 people their right to define their own future. First  
12 Nations are only asking for the tools to chart their own  
13 future independently and to respond to their needs within  
14 their communities.

15                  And we recognize that there is indeed  
16 a need -- and we would welcome to see -- a desire for an  
17 increased control over health, education, justice and  
18 resource management in order to provide First Nations with  
19 the tools that they need, in order to fashion  
20 self-government.

21                  Self-empowerment, in our view, is  
22 essential in the plight of First Nations to recover the  
23 losses that they have endured.

24                  We also believe that it is important that

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1   there be a practical and positive step taken by both  
2   provincial and federal governments to do more than simply  
3   pay lip service to the proposition of the resolution of  
4   these outstanding claims. And, where we have a concern  
5   with respect to the Task Force and the 19-point  
6   recommendation of that Task Force, is in the question of  
7   establishing a list that will prioritize settlements among  
8   aboriginal people that might in fact negate a successful  
9   resolution or conclusion of one or more claims, while  
10   waiting for those that may be ahead of them on the list  
11   to be able to successfully negotiate their claim.

12                   Let me say that we would draw to your  
13   attention the bands such as the Sechelt and Okanagan.  
14   The Sechelt, for example, preferred not to wait for the  
15   entrenchment of right, but rather to negotiate their own  
16   form of self-government, like the Okanagan Band.

17                   Now, we recognize that the Sechelt claim  
18   and the Sechelt model of self-government is not necessarily  
19   -- and in fact is perhaps not the preferred system by many  
20   other groups. However, one has to recognize also that  
21   when there is indeed a proposition within the nature of  
22   the claim that is being put forward that there can be no  
23   reason for non-negotiation and non-settlement.

24                   Clearly, the move toward establishing

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1 a position, as the provincial government has done where,  
2 on the one hand in the courts -- as in the appeal against  
3 the McEachern ruling the Gitksan case -- that there is  
4 one argument being advanced with respect to extinguishment  
5 -- quite clearly, that has to be seen to be a complete  
6 contradiction when in fact the government stands publicly  
7 saying they recognize the inherent right to  
8 self-government and in fact the political legitimacy of  
9 title.

10 It is that kind of inherent  
11 contradiction that must create ever increasing frustration  
12 among aboriginal people when they see essentially two  
13 positions by government, no one, one that is argued legally  
14 and the other which is argued politically. And we would  
15 suggest that that is an unacceptable way to proceed.

16 With respect to the matter on the  
17 Sechelts -- and let me say again that I recognize the  
18 Sechelt model of self-government is not necessarily the  
19 model which all bands will subscribe to -- and neither  
20 do I advocate that the direction that they have taken is  
21 the one that all bands should take -- but on their specific  
22 case I think it is quite clear that here we have a band  
23 where self-government is in place, where the specific claim  
24 is settled.

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1                   Here we have a band where the  
2   comprehensive claim is acknowledged. The final dollar  
3   value is all but agreed to. The only thing stopping the  
4   successful resolution to the comprehensive claim that  
5   would have as a component part of it the joint stewardship  
6   of resources -- something that this government has said  
7   that they would be anxious to entertain -- the only thing  
8   stopping a successful resolution to this particular claim  
9   is the political will to do it.

10                  There is no reason whatsoever that this  
11   particular case should not go forward and that in fact  
12   the government should not commence tomorrow on the  
13   negotiations, in order to resolve this case.

14                  And I raise this issue, not so much  
15   because I wish to become an advocate specifically for the  
16   Sechelt people, but because I believe that where you have  
17   all of the criteria that is required for successful  
18   resolution and negotiation of land claim, even then,  
19   governments are unwilling to act. Even when in fact the  
20   criteria that the Task Force requires to be in place, is  
21   in place, governments refuse to act.

22                  And I suggest that part of the problems  
23   that are going to be faced in the final resolution on the  
24   question of aboriginal land claim must be around the

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1 question of how we are going to establish the share, the  
2 proportional share between federal and provincial  
3 governments. And, in the review of this, I suggest that  
4 there would be clearly different models required,  
5 different solutions, different propositions required in  
6 the settlements of each, individual claim.

7                   For example, on the question of a final  
8 resolution, if we were to look at the Musqueam in British  
9 Columbia, what we must acknowledge among the Musqueam  
10 people is that the large percentage of land that has been  
11 alienated by third-party interests. That would  
12 necessitate quite a different set of resolutions coming  
13 forward in a final settlement package on the land question  
14 for the Musqueam. Then, perhaps, if we looked at the  
15 Carrier-Sekani or if we looked at the Nisga'a, or other  
16 rural bands -- or tribal council that is advancing claims  
17 in the interior of the Province of British Columbia.

18                   It is our view to that end that we need  
19 to overcome what I think is a stalling tactic -- and I  
20 say this without attempting to simply say what maybe is  
21 desired to be heard, but I say it because I believe it  
22 to be true -- I believe that either consciously or  
23 subconsciously, either deliberately or not, by both  
24 provincial and federal governments, that the position on

1 resolution of land claim is being stalled because they  
2 have not come to the conclusive recognition on who will  
3 pay what amount.

4                   And that essentially becomes a recipe  
5 for an action because we can -- despite the fact that there  
6 is currently a task force working in the Province of British  
7 Columbia with respect to the cost sharing negotiation --  
8 and we applaud the fact that they are at least looking  
9 at that question -- despite that fact, if we were to return  
10 to a fundamental principle -- and I suggest this on page  
11 6 and I would suggest it as a recommendation to the  
12 Committee -- that we must return to a fundamental principle  
13 which recognizes the fiduciary responsibility -- indeed,  
14 I would argue, obligation -- of the federal government  
15 with respect to the payment of past claims and recognizes  
16 the obligation of the province in terms of a joint  
17 stewardship of resources.

18                   By practising joint stewardship, the  
19 province will not only be a benefactor in terms of long-term  
20 economy that will be generated out of resource development  
21 and extraction, but will also be the principle partner  
22 in any new partnership developed between aboriginal people  
23 and the people of British Columbia.

24                   If I could digress for one moment from

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1 this text and provide an example of what I am speaking  
2 of -- and it has to do with the proposition of the fishery  
3 in British Columbia -- the proposition of the fishery that  
4 has caused a great deal of unrest, a great deal of concern,  
5 because there are classifications of the fishery that are  
6 determined in the Province of British Columbia that becomes  
7 confusing and becomes a source of considerable conflict.

8                   Recognizing the Sparrow case,  
9 recognizing the rulings and recognizing the inherent right  
10 to the fishery -- and we must do, because I think few would  
11 argue against it -- we must understand, if conservation  
12 is to be a primary measure and understanding that it was  
13 not the aboriginal people who industrialized this industry  
14 and who pushed the fish stocks to near extinction -- that  
15 if we argue now on the basis of a food fishery separate  
16 from, independent from a commercial fishery, which is  
17 separate and different from a sports fishery, that what  
18 we are doing as we are developing a complex model of  
19 management that does not have as an underlying and  
20 fundamental principle something that I think we should  
21 understand and that is, fundamentally, there is one fishery  
22 and that we need to enter into a joint management agreement  
23 with aboriginal people and other users of that fishery  
24 and understand it to be managed as a single fishery,

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1 recognizing that we in fact are in a partnership on that  
2 question, and that recognizing that there will be some  
3 boundaries with respect to the legality of who is entitled  
4 to that fish, as outlined by the Sparrow ruling and  
5 recognizing that there has to be, as a first consideration,  
6 conservation, if we are to protect, maintain and enhance  
7 the stock.

8                   It seems to me that we need to come  
9 forward with a recommendation with respect to the west  
10 coast fishery that enters into that first and fundamental  
11 principle of joint stewardship, which is essentially an  
12 active partnership over the management of the resource  
13 and, until such time as we do that, we will not remove  
14 the federal officers who will come down and who will make  
15 decisions on the basis of laws that are generated in Ottawa  
16 as to what fish aboriginal people, who have a long  
17 entitlement to the fish, are entitled to in the Province  
18 of British Columbia.

19                   And that can only continue to serve as  
20 a source of a great deal of tension and a great deal of  
21 conflict -- and a conflict, I would argue, not only among  
22 aboriginal people, but also among non-aboriginal  
23 commercial fishermen and, ultimately, a very strong and  
24 active sports lobby which is active in the Province of



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1 British Columbia.

2                   So, I come to this question, then, on  
3 how we are going to enter into this proposition of joint  
4 stewardship of the resources. And it is intrinsically  
5 tied to the proposition of self-government. And we are  
6 hearing, even today -- and certainly last week in Vancouver  
7 in the constitutional round -- something that I have been  
8 actively involved in and participated in since 1987 --  
9 that there is a recognition now of an inherent right to  
10 self-government of aboriginal people. And on page 6 you  
11 will see that I raise a question in where I have a cautious  
12 concern.

13                   And I do this, not because I wish to try  
14 and in any way signal that there is something that is wrong  
15 in the proposition of self-government -- I am an advocate  
16 of it. I said so earlier and I believe that to be so --  
17 but I think it is important that we take an honest and  
18 serious look at the questions that we are going to start  
19 to find are coming before -- not only politicians, but  
20 Canadians with respect to the concept of a third order  
21 of government. And I flag this because I deeply, deeply  
22 want the question of aboriginal self-government and the  
23 restitution of land question to be dealt with  
24 expeditiously, fairly and in a manner that all Canadians

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1 can endorse and can adopt and support.

2                   The difficulty is that I think we are  
3 racing toward artificial deadlines that are deadlines that  
4 are primarily put in place by politicians -- white  
5 politicians -- in the Province of Quebec and in Ottawa.

6                   And this is a question that is going to  
7 take a great deal of study and a great deal of work if  
8 we are to recognize this concept of third order of  
9 government, because it is arguable that there exists  
10 already, in the entrenchment of government systems,  
11 already a third order -- and possibly a fourth order of  
12 government, through municipal and regional district  
13 authority.

14                  And I would suggest that if we are going  
15 to be serious about the resolution of the question of  
16 aboriginal land title, if we are going to get really serious  
17 about the provision of self-government that will provide  
18 jurisdiction over resources, the economy and the people,  
19 which is being asked for -- and I understand from Minister  
20 Clark is being offered -- then it seems to me that we have  
21 to be fully cognizant as a society as a whole of how this  
22 new order of third government is going to interact and  
23 relate -- not only with the provinces and the federal  
24 government -- but also with respect to existing powers

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1 of taxation, powers for social services, health care,  
2 policing, and so on, and that that exist already now within  
3 the level of third government, which is municipal  
4 government, and they already have a jurisdiction and a  
5 responsibility over land and people that live within the  
6 boundaries of each of these registered municipalities or  
7 registered regional districts.

8                   And so, if we are really serious about  
9 this question -- and I hope we are -- then it seems to  
10 me that we cannot avoid that part of the debate, that we  
11 have to get active in dealing with those questions so that  
12 those questions can be advanced now, so that we do not  
13 allow for the continued alienation of land through  
14 third-party interests, or through by-laws, or through  
15 regulation, or through various systems and infrastructure  
16 development which ultimately will not do service to the  
17 people to whom the land will ultimately fall under  
18 jurisdiction to, and that is the aboriginal people.

19                   And so I ask this Commission to give  
20 serious consideration to this question before it becomes  
21 a conflict, before it becomes a stopping point, before  
22 it becomes yet one more reason not to move forward with  
23 the resolution of this question. See it as a potential  
24 problem and let us deal with it before it in fact impedes

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1 our ability to come up with meaningful solution and  
2 settlement to this question.

3                   On the last portion of what I have in  
4 my comments with respect today let me say that I really  
5 welcome the fact that the Royal Commission is doing its  
6 work. I have, on three separate occasions now, requested  
7 in the Province of British Columbia, that we establish  
8 a commission to look at aspects that govern aboriginal  
9 people with respect to the Province of British Columbia  
10 and, in particular, I am most anxious that we have a  
11 commission of inquiry into aboriginal people and the law  
12 in British Columbia, because there is a great deal of work  
13 to be done there. It is not a legacy that we are  
14 particularly proud of in the opposition ranks in this  
15 province.

16                   We also need a commission that will  
17 examine aboriginal people with respect to health care  
18 provisions and we need a commission in this province that  
19 will look at the question of aboriginal people with respect  
20 to social justice, because they are sorely lacking in the  
21 Province of British Columbia and, indeed, I would argue  
22 that there are many tragic situations that exist that are  
23 rarely ever reported, that are rarely ever acted on. And  
24 we need to move very quickly toward resolving those issues.

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1                   And we therefore recommend to this  
2 Commission, to you and to your Commission, to endeavour  
3 to find ways in which we can come to the root causes of  
4 matters of substance abuse, in order that we may focus  
5 on a treatment that goes to the causes and not simply tries  
6 to bandaid symptoms on the question.

7                   We also recognize with respect to  
8 aboriginal people and the law that it is estimated by the  
9 Province of British Columbia that 5 per cent of British  
10 Columbians are aboriginal, and yet it is further estimated  
11 that 15-17 per cent of incarcerated British Columbians  
12 are represented by aboriginal people. And that gives me  
13 great cause for concern.

14                  Again, the source of higher native  
15 representation among inmates is not often understood, in  
16 order to develop the treatment programs that I think should  
17 be in place, in order to assist and to help those people  
18 that require our help, rather than simply to relegate into  
19 the background the issue that creates, that in fact  
20 engenders this problem and this difficulty.

21                  A second matter with respect to  
22 aboriginal justice relates to aboriginal women. And this  
23 concern is twofold.

24                  The proportion of women who are victims

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1 of crime is the first, and the facilities to deal with  
2 aboriginal women that are involved in criminal activities.

3                   In both areas this province is sorely  
4 lacking, sorely lacking and needs to put its attention  
5 immediately, because statistics tell us that aboriginal  
6 women represent 24 per cent of sentenced females, whereas  
7 aboriginal men represent 16 per cent of the sentenced  
8 males. And there is a problem here. Because we do not  
9 -- I do not believe -- that 24 per cent in fact is an accurate  
10 representation of crimes committed and, therefore, it  
11 seems to me that we need to sit down and seriously address  
12 this question to find out exactly what it is that is going  
13 on in the Province of British Columbia with respect to  
14 aboriginal women and the law.

15                   A third matter that the Liberal caucus  
16 in British Columbia feels requires attention concerns  
17 youth who are born aboriginal, adopted off-reserve and  
18 then reintegrated into native culture later in life.

19                   It is our concern that no provisions are  
20 made to help these youths who, upon returning to their  
21 native families, may have lost their legal rights. It  
22 is important that there is a great deal of consideration  
23 and concern given to the rights of the individual because  
24 it is a fundamental principle of this party and of myself

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1 that rights run with people and that the individual rights  
2 must be enshrined, not only constitutionally in the  
3 language, but in fact and in practice, because the language  
4 of the constitution and the Charter of provisions may sound  
5 great, but unless it is realized in reality, it means  
6 nothing at all.

7                   So, it is in our view imperative, and  
8 we would again make a recommendation to you that there  
9 would be corrective programs targeted to the needs of youth  
10 and that those programs should be provided in the  
11 geographic proximity of where the young people live today.

12                   We would recommend also that, with  
13 respect to education and training, that federal dollars  
14 that are coming forward for native education in British  
15 Columbia, that they be provided directly to the bands so  
16 that bands may directly administer these dollars, rather  
17 than have them filter through general revenues and be  
18 assigned to school districts and administered through  
19 school districts. Only through direct application will  
20 more of the money that is required find its way to the  
21 people and less money go to the program administration,  
22 as is currently the case.

23                   We believe this is something that could  
24 be done relatively easily. We believe it is something

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1 that is long overdue, because there are many instances  
2 in which dollars that are earmarked for education in fact  
3 never get to those that require it but, rather, get lost  
4 in a myriad of expenses that occur within the general  
5 revenue regions.

6                               Lastly is the question of native health  
7 -- and this is an area that I could spend more time than  
8 I am sure would be allotted to me today -- because it seems  
9 to me that there has to be a recognition that aboriginals  
10 that live on average eight years less than non-aboriginals,  
11 that infant mortality rates of aboriginal which is much  
12 higher than non-aboriginals, and that the spread of HIV  
13 is growing at an alarming rate in the native community  
14 and in the general poor housing and lack of adequate  
15 nutrition as a result of the plight of many aboriginal  
16 people on reserve needs our urgent attention.

17                               This is not an issue that we can simply  
18 say, "We will wait for yet another Royal Commission on  
19 health, or the implementation of one in the Province of  
20 British Columbia" but, rather, "We had as Royal Commission  
21 on health and we hope that this government, the government  
22 of the day, will implement its recommendations quickly,"  
23 so that those recommendations can address those questions  
24 I just brought forward.



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1                   One final area that I would like to bring  
2 to the attention of this Commission, because it is one  
3 that receives a great deal of interest in our caucus and  
4 it is one that receives a great deal of attention, with  
5 respect to the policies that we develop and with respect  
6 to the programs we would like to see enacted, and that  
7 is the plight and status of those aboriginal people who  
8 live off-reserve.

9                   These aboriginal people have distinct  
10 interests and concerns. Only part of the problem they  
11 face is the fact that they have a great deal of difficulty  
12 in pursuing their interests with respect to the various  
13 orders of governments and other organizations, given that  
14 they have no provision of core funding.

15                  Without a guaranteed level of income,  
16 organizations such as the United Native Nations have a  
17 very difficult time in representing the thousands of the  
18 urban and non-status aboriginals. A similar problem is  
19 faced by Metis natives who have their own vision of  
20 self-determination which they desire to pursue.

21                  The Liberal caucus sees their efforts  
22 as being something that needs to be supported. We argued  
23 strongly in the budget estimates of the minister in this  
24 government and we would push as a recommendation through

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1 this Commission that there be the provision of ongoing  
2 core funding for urban native people, in order to maintain  
3 their ability to budget and to properly develop their  
4 programs, so that aboriginals who live in the urban centers  
5 of Canada and in British Columbia in particular, as I  
6 represent British Columbia in my comments today, can live  
7 their lives with greater dignity, with a greater degree  
8 of hope and security and will be able to access the programs  
9 that are vital to their ability.

10 The views that I have presented today  
11 are views of my own and the Liberal caucus and the Official  
12 Opposition of the Province of British Columbia.

13 If I have offended any by what I have  
14 said, I hope that they will forgive me.

15 Thank you.

16 **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank  
17 you for coming here and presenting that to us.

18 **LINDA VANDENBURG, COWICHAN BAND:** I am  
19 Linda Vandenburg. I am speaking for the Cowichan Band  
20 today. Chief Philomena Alphonse has funeral arrangements  
21 to make and could not attend.

22 The issue we were going to address had  
23 to do with non-enforcement of the Indian Act regulations  
24 pertaining to waste management. And I am sorry I missed

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1 Andy's speech this morning on it.

2                               There are three dumping issues on  
3 reserve of contaminated waste and the Department of Indian  
4 Affairs has refused to move on it.

5                               I am going to give you a letter that we  
6 wrote to Minister Siddon, that the chiefs sent off,  
7 complaining about the inaction on the part of the -- what  
8 would you call them? -- Lands Revenues and Trusts  
9 Environment people -- in the region.

10                              Okay? If you would like those questions  
11 I could outline the issues, but it is getting late right  
12 now.

13                              **CO-COMMISSIONER FOR THE DAY, CHIEF DAVID**

14 **PAUL:**                    I think somebody wanted to ask a question  
15 of Gordon Wilson before he left -- there was no question?

16                              **LINDA VANDENBURG:** Okay, I will just  
17 give this to Georges, then.

18                              **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do we  
19 have any other speakers?

20                              **WILSON BOB:** Mr. Chairman, first of all,  
21 let me thank Chief Thomas for the use of his home and the  
22 Esquimalt First Nation.

23                              My name is Wilson Bob. I am from the  
24 (native language) First Nation an affiliate to the South

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1 Island Tribal Council.

2 I just wish to say -- and probably just  
3 to emphasize some of the reports that our tribal council  
4 -- I understand members made presentations this morning.

5 I just want to speak generally.

6 I have been involved in our native  
7 politics for many years and some of the things that I have  
8 heard this afternoon I have heard throughout the  
9 conferences over the years. And it seems we still have  
10 to come before Royal Commissions to be heard.

11 I would expect that our Assembly of First  
12 Nations would be our first power of representation in  
13 regard to all matters pertaining to our aboriginal people.

14 I am just hoping -- and I just want to  
15 state -- that I am hoping that his Royal Commission is  
16 more meaningful than past commissions that have gone before  
17 us over the years.

18 As you have heard, many of the issues  
19 in regard to our social problems, our housing, our land  
20 issues, our education issues, have been brought before  
21 the governments over the years with very sophisticated  
22 resolutions demanding change, demanding programs be set  
23 so that our Indian people could make the proper  
24 advancements and take us away from the social problems

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1 that we have still today -- unfortunately.

2 I was very moved by the young lady that  
3 spoke earlier in regard to her social problem. It is just  
4 recently now that our people are finally finding the means  
5 through education to start making the proper demands in  
6 regard to changes, making demands on the federal  
7 government's finances in order to make these changes,  
8 however slow they are coming. But each time we are faced  
9 with the fact that there is financial cutbacks at the  
10 federal level, through all levels -- through all facets  
11 of our issues, social problems, housing, education,  
12 health, and we are still demanding those changes and we  
13 are still being shortchanged.

14 This is why I say that I am hoping that  
15 the Royal Commission, Georges, that you are heading --  
16 and I give you credit for it in whatever I say -- it has  
17 no reflection on you -- I am very proud yourself as a leader  
18 and past leader of our Assembly of First Nations -- from  
19 where I stood in front of those conferences demanding  
20 changes that are still evident today that have not changed  
21 for us.

22 So, I guess we have to accept that it  
23 takes years -- because I have been in this thing for so  
24 many years, now, and we are still demanding changes in

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1 the same areas. However, it is through our education,  
2 our own education, that we are finally seeing people who  
3 are assisting us in this change in regard to our educated  
4 people who are now -- there are more lawyers -- more  
5 educated people that can fight for our rights.

6                   The injustice has been long outstanding  
7 and they are severe, as far as I am concerned. And we  
8 need to get across the table from the government in regard  
9 to negotiations and the Indian government and probably  
10 though those results of negotiations that we can finally  
11 see finances come down to support the changes that we are  
12 demanding.

13                   Because, at the present time, under the  
14 Indian Act situation, we are not able to get the changes  
15 that we are asking for. We have seen many faces of  
16 government before us making many promises and it seemed  
17 always just before an election period, where they promised  
18 us and then we were put on a lower priority.

19                   Therefore, our problems are still here  
20 with us today.

21                   And I just want to emphasize to the  
22 younger people that are in here that are taking their  
23 education now, it still remains for us, regardless of what  
24 we think of our community leadership, our provincial

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1 organizations and our national organizations, it still  
2 remains for the young people to take their education and  
3 to realize that organization within our people, aboriginal  
4 people, is the only way that we are going to make the  
5 substantial progress that we want for our people and the  
6 type of settlements that we want in regard to land claims  
7 and all the social problems that we have.

8                   And it always will remain that we are  
9 going to need strong organization from the community level  
10 up.

11                   The young lady that spoke her mind in  
12 regard to her problem needed to clear that up within her  
13 own community so that that community can be strong. And  
14 that applies, not only to that community, but to all of  
15 our communities where we are dealing and where we are going  
16 to get stronger, there is evidence.

17                   I get excited today, just knowing that  
18 there is such a thing that perhaps this Royal Commission  
19 will bring us results but, regardless -- I might say that  
20 I never had faith in Royal Commissions -- they always seem  
21 to be a stalling tactic for the next move of the government  
22 in which direction they want to take for us and it never  
23 seemed to work out.

24                   However, like I said, that I am looking

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1 forward for some results and that any of those results  
2 be passed on to our Assembly of First Nations, the chiefs,  
3 so that they can deal directly with the government, because  
4 that is where our power is today.

5 And it should be up to us at our community  
6 levels to demand that our chiefs make the proper  
7 representations at these provincial and national  
8 conferences.

9 I know they are, because I have read some  
10 of the minutes from those meetings and some of the  
11 resolutions that are placed before them. However, our  
12 governments have seen fit not to respond accordingly, and  
13 it is regrettable. But it still remains that we must be  
14 strong at the community level.

15 I thank you for listening to me. I did  
16 not really have anything to suggest for the Royal  
17 Commission but I just wanted to say -- and I felt that  
18 it was necessary -- that it is very important for our people  
19 to be organized and to be willing to come and make the  
20 presentations to people like Georges who I am sure is  
21 sincere and doing his job, and will be looking for the  
22 alternatives to present to the federal government.

23 Thank you.

24 **CO-CHAIRMAN, GEORGES ERASMUS:** Since



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1 there does not seem to be any other speakers, I am going  
2 to make a few closing remarks and I presume Chief Andy  
3 Thomas here will do the same.

4 I would like to thank everybody that has  
5 had the patience to sit through this all day long with  
6 us. We have been treated really well here and it has been  
7 an honour for the Commission to be in this longhouse.

8 We have heard very powerful statements  
9 from people that have experienced a lot of personal pain  
10 in their lives. We heard from elders that started us off  
11 this morning. We have been told about the importance of  
12 this institution, how it has survived the passage of time  
13 and with the buildup of Canada and the colonization that  
14 has taken place.

15 But we have also been told about the  
16 suffering that people have had, the pain, the loss of  
17 culture, the alienation amongst the youth, and the real  
18 serious need for healing and how, to some extent, that  
19 has begun, but there needs to be a lot more done yet.

20 We have been told by many people how,  
21 in the past, they have never really had faith in the  
22 government, certainly no faith in Royal Commissions, but  
23 perhaps this one might be different.

24 And we were told by someone that

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1 represents the views of some non-native people that perhaps  
2 looking for separate government for aboriginal people is  
3 really not the route in the long run, that in the end it  
4 will create just more harm, racism, a closed society does  
5 not work.

6                   It told me that the kind of work we were  
7 hoping of doing, of educating the public, is going to be  
8 very necessary and that I hope that through our process  
9 of the next couple of years that there will be many  
10 exchanges between Canadians at large and aboriginal  
11 people, so that those kinds of misconceptions are cleared  
12 up and that the basic kind of positions that aboriginal  
13 people are taking clearly are known by people that it is  
14 not based on race, it has nothing to do with race.

15                   So, I found the day educational in many  
16 ways. It has been very useful.

17                   As I said this morning, this is not going  
18 to be the last time we will be coming to the Island. We  
19 may not necessarily come to this longhouse but we will  
20 be, over the next couple of years, coming back numerous  
21 times to British Columbia and a number of times more to  
22 the Island to continue the work that we are doing.

23                   And, over time, we will release  
24 documents and hopefully, as we are moving closer and closer

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1 to our resolutions and recommendations we will be making,  
2 we will be getting responses back from all communities  
3 in British Columbia.

4 We hope that the different tribal  
5 councils will seek intervenor funding and assist us in  
6 our work and take one or two pieces of the burden that  
7 we have and elaborate for us some solutions.

8 We heard pretty strongly today that the  
9 longhouse system is still alive. It is well. It is going  
10 to continue to survive. What people like myself, what  
11 the Commission will need, will be really strong arguments  
12 to use in our recommendations.

13 We need to have enough information to  
14 come up with the arguments that will win the day as to  
15 why there should be formal, clear recognition of the  
16 traditional governmental systems.

17 We also have to look at how -- for  
18 instance, one part of Gordon Wilson's presentation today  
19 that I might have asked him questions on, was the part  
20 where he said, "We need to know all of the details, how  
21 is the inherent right going to be implemented, what will  
22 be the jurisdiction, how will they interface with existing  
23 Canadian governments," and on and on and on.

24 That information is what we will be

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1 seeking as time goes on.

2                   We need to know, for instance, is each  
3 community going to stand on its own as a nation of people  
4 with their own governments, completely separate from other  
5 communities within the same nation? Or, for instance,  
6 will the Salish people come together again as a nation?  
7 Will the Coast Salish people come together as a nation?  
8 Will they again have some kind of system of government  
9 that goes beyond each tribal level -- not that necessarily  
10 one is better than the other -- but we need to know what  
11 it is that people want for the future.

12                   And we expect that, as was told to us  
13 here and in other places, that no single solution will  
14 work for everyone. There has to be different recognition  
15 for different people. Obviously, the manner in which  
16 self-government will be implemented will be different.

17                   But we need to have enough information  
18 of enough situations in this country to paint a picture  
19 that is clear, precise, understandable, supportable --  
20 and defensible.

21                   So, it is our hope that people will  
22 accept this responsibility with us and work with us for  
23 the next couple of years on this. We certainly will be  
24 listening, but we will be doing more than that. We will

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1 be, from time to time, challenging people to give us the  
2 answers we need. And people already are doing that, but  
3 over time we need yet more information.

4 So, with that, again for the Commission,  
5 I want to thank you for being such wonderful hosts, for  
6 allowing us in your home here, for feeding us very well.

7 We have felt very comfortable. We have felt part of your  
8 people for the day and it has been very nice.

9 Thank you.

10 **CO-COMMISSIONER FOR THE DAY, CHIEF**

11 **ANDREW THOMAS:** I would just like to thank the Royal  
12 Commission again today, Georges, Viola, the staff, that  
13 all came -- that travelled to our community here.

14 I know your work is long and it takes  
15 you away from your homes quite a bit, away from your  
16 families.

17 I guess I get concerned with some of the  
18 statements that are made in presentations where people,  
19 presenters, seem to have the opinion that, as Indian  
20 people, we are considered Canadian citizens.

21 And I do not believe in my own heart,  
22 in my own mind, that I am a Canadian citizen because I  
23 have a card called a "status card," and it says I am a  
24 status Indian under a part of an Indian Act, and it does

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1 not say I am a Canadian citizen.

2 We have not been approached yet, or asked  
3 if we want to become part of Canada, and I think that is  
4 why the Commission here has to -- Canada has to be brought  
5 to the table so that we can straighten this out, our  
6 rightful place in Canada.

7 Because, when I cross that border they  
8 ask me my citizenship, and I tell them I am a status Indian.

9 It gets me into trouble sometimes, but Customs officers  
10 are sticklers for the right answers. Until I show them  
11 my status card, then they are satisfied.

12 And I think that has to be addressed to  
13 Canada because, when they gave us the right to vote in  
14 Canada, when they gave us the right to vote in British  
15 Columbia, that did not make me a citizen.

16 They called us "citizens plus," because  
17 we had the vote. But we still had an Act in place that  
18 suppressed us from advancing. And I think with the Royal  
19 Commission like today that is happening we can start to  
20 see a glimmer of hope anyway that will help our people  
21 in the long run and into the future.

22 And I really hope the statements I made  
23 earlier in regard to the fishery that something has to  
24 be done with this Canada/U.S. fish war that is going to

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1 be happening this summer in the fishing grounds, because  
2 we will all lose in the end if they do not start talking  
3 again.

4 I would like to stop myself before I go  
5 on any more.

6 But I would like to thank you once again  
7 and I wish you all a safe journey back home to your homes,  
8 to your families, and I hope they are all safe, on behalf  
9 of the Esquimalt Nation.

10 George is going to be doing a performance  
11 here to the Commission and maybe we could turn the floor  
12 over to George now and we will close it.

13 Maybe after that we will have a closing  
14 prayer, after your performance.

15

16 (native dance performance)

17 **CO-COMMISSIONER FOR THE DAY, CHIEF**

18 **ANDREW THOMAS:** I guess before we have our closing prayer  
19 I would like to maybe pick something up here.

20 As the role of a Commissioner I did not  
21 know what I was supposed to do and I wanted to apologize  
22 for Dave, our other Commissioner, and I wanted to ask him  
23 to say a few closing words.

24 **CO-COMMISSIONER FOR THE DAY, CHIEF DAVID**

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1     **PAUL:**                   Thank you, Andy.

2                               I would like to thank Georges and Viola  
3     for their participation, not only today, but I guess for  
4     the longest time, they have both been dedicated people  
5     in the Indian cause for all the numbers of times that they  
6     have helped other people do things and all the other staff  
7     that are here are some of the staff here that I have worked  
8     with over the last -- I do not think I should say how many  
9     years because some of them, I think, would probably not  
10    agree -- but it has been quite a long time.

11                           Some of those people down there -- and  
12    I think that I appreciated working with all of them and  
13    I see them moving on to do other things that are still  
14    within the Indian cause and the Indian fight that we have  
15    been in for years.

16                           And I really do appreciate and like the  
17    dances that have been put on by George and his group.  
18    The other people that have stayed here all day, I want  
19    to thank them and the participation they had in this process  
20    today.

21                           And I hope that in the near future that  
22    we would receive minutes from the Commission, sent to our  
23    tribal council and we would distribute it out to the people  
24    that have participated, because we do have a list. And



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1 I hope that we would get those in the near future, because  
2 I do not think they leave until tomorrow.

3 And I really do appreciate the things  
4 that everybody did today and I would really, really want  
5 to thank the Commission and the staff for the things that  
6 they are doing.

7 And good luck on the rest of your trip  
8 and I hope to hear from you in the next little while of  
9 when you will be back on the Island again, so we can get  
10 other people to participate, because a lot of our chiefs  
11 are away today doing another conference. And the other  
12 chiefs, I think, would have the same kind of participation  
13 that we had today and I hope that we can get a date from  
14 the Commission when they will be back on the Island again.

15 Thank you very much.

16 (native prayer)

17 **LOUISE UNDERWOOD:** Before everybody  
18 leaves I, too, would like to thank everybody. I have  
19 really felt good today.

20 I just hope that we can set up another  
21 meeting in the near future to hear the other concerns of  
22 our delegates. I truly appreciate the warm welcome that  
23 we have received in our home (native language).

24 And Chief Andy Thomas, our elders,

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1 George and Marg Thomas, have always been with us and we  
2 appreciate their guidance, the spiritual uplift they give  
3 us. So, I just hope everybody has a good trip and we will  
4 see you real soon. (native language)

5

6 --- Whereupon the Commission adjourned at 5:26 p.m. to  
7 resume in Victoria, B.C. at 9:00, May 22nd, 1992.

8