

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

LOCATION/ENDROIT: Iqaluit,
Northwest Territories

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"for the record..."

STENOTRAN

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1 Iqaluit, Northwest Territories

2 --- Upon Commencing on Monday, May 25, 1992

3

4 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

5 We are about to start. Just before, I would like to say
6 that the translation device works in English on number
7 one and Inuktitut on number two.

8 I would like to ask Simonie
9 Alainga to make the opening prayers.

10 **[Opening prayer]**

11 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

12 Thank you very much. Just before I ask Mr. Abraham Okpik
13 to pronounce the opening remarks, I just would like to
14 introduce the Commissioners of the Royal Commission of
15 Aboriginal Peoples and the Commissioners of the day. At
16 my far right, Mary Sillett, who is certainly well known
17 in this part of the country. She is an Inuit from Labrador
18 and has many friends around. I am René Dussault. I am
19 Co-Chair of the Royal Commission. I am a Judge with the
20 Court of Appeal in Quebec, in the Provincial Court. We
21 have with us two Commissioners for the two days. Naki
22 Ecko, who is a Inuit living in the community, and Mr.
23 Abraham Okpik, who is going to pronounce the opening

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1 remarks. I would like to ask Mr. Okpik to do so. Thank
2 you.

3 **ABRAHAM OKPIK:** Thank you,
4 Mr. Commissioner Dussault. Certainly we welcome you here
5 to this community of Iqaluit, which used to be a fairly
6 small town when I first came here in 1959 but it's going
7 to be like a fairly large town. And I welcome you
8 both--Mary Sillett from Labrador. I was very surprised
9 when I asked to be a Commissioner for the day, not
10 knowing--I thought I would come here to listen to someone
11 talk. But nevertheless, the Commission here was given
12 the powers to listen to the people, aboriginal people,
13 and all the people that live in this land, to give us an
14 inside picture of what we need or what they've been doing
15 and so on. So I would like to introduce my colleagues
16 here. We've got Naki Ecko who lived here longer than I
17 have. She came here long before I came. Knowing this
18 part of the country and knowing that part of the country
19 you come from, Labrador, I'd like to extend my welcoming
20 remarks to your Commission and I'd like to give you some
21 information. I don't know if you were around at that time
22 when I was one of the native reporters of--one of the
23 proponents of the Pipeline hearing in MacKenzie Valley

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1 for two years and I'm not really new to this type of
2 thinking. But to sit in this chair makes me feel nervous.
3 I think that's the type of thing that we have to listen
4 to.

5 Now Naki, she's been here
6 a long time and she raised her family, came out of
7 Pangnirtung, and I'm sure glad that she was able to come
8 along with me. I was very alarmed and surprised when I
9 came through that door that, again I say, I didn't think
10 that I was going to be in this position. So, therefore,
11 I will leave it to you to speak your own mind and your
12 own thoughts and we're all willing to listen to your
13 concerns and your problems, your deliberation today will
14 give both Commissioners who will be reporting at the end
15 of the session about this remarks, whoever makes it. The
16 old saying when I used to listen Judge Berger, he used
17 to say, "Speak your mind and talk no more." Peace be with
18 you. Thank you.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

20 Thank you very much for those comments that reminded us
21 that the process of looking about the situation concerning
22 aboriginal peoples in Canada have been in progress for
23 many years. I would like, as an opening, to say a few

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1 words about the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
2 that was created late August last year, '91. So we have
3 been working for and working together for eight months
4 now.

5 This Commission was
6 created under the recommendation of the former Chief
7 Justice of Canada, Brian Dickson, who had been asked by
8 the Prime Minister to act as his official representative
9 and to consult extensively with aboriginal peoples to
10 propose the terms of reference of the Commission and also
11 the membership of the Commission. Mr. Dickson's report
12 to the Prime Minister was approved in its entirety and
13 the Order-in-Council has given us a 16-point mandate, the
14 widest that has ever been given to a Royal Commission.

15 The reason for setting up
16 the Commission is that the movement toward the recognition
17 of aboriginal rights in this country have started many
18 years ago. There have been many task forces or reports
19 on specific aspects: education, health or justice, or the
20 social services or family violence. But there has never
21 been a Commission who was given the mandate to see the
22 whole picture, to propose solutions both in the areas of
23 social services, the delivery of the services, but also

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1 in the area of economic development, establish the links
2 that those social also cultural issues and economic issues
3 have with the notion of self-government, with the notion
4 of a land base of the land claims both outstanding and
5 specifics. For the first time a Royal Commission has been
6 given the mandate to look at all the issues and to try
7 to establish the links to see and show how they relate
8 to each other. In that sense what is different from other
9 Commissions is that we are here to try to develop a
10 synthesis, to have a synthetic approach to the various
11 issues and see how they could fit together and bring
12 solutions that would not self-contradict themselves but
13 contradict each other, but that would reinforce themselves.
14 What is the link between the justice area and
15 self-government, between education and self-government,
16 the delivery of health services and self-government. We
17 hope to be able to deal not only with bigger political
18 issues like the issues involving the land and involving
19 self-government but also on the grassroot level to hear
20 from the people who knows what's going on, what could be
21 done to improve the situation and the delivery of the
22 services that would change the life conditions of the
23 majority of people. We feel that self-government is

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1 certainly not the panacea. It could be something that
2 would be very helpful, but we have to take into account
3 and into consideration concerns, day-to-day concerns, also
4 in the delivery of services. Our role is both a role of
5 public education and a role of trying to translate what
6 we hear into practical solutions, solutions that would
7 be seen as fit and relevant and acceptable by aboriginal
8 peoples but also solutions that would be understood and
9 seen acceptable to the larger Canadian society. So we
10 are talking about a public education, a better
11 understanding of aboriginal people and non-aboriginal
12 people, the life conditions, the situations, the
13 historical conditions. History has not been widely taught
14 and properly understood in this country for many reasons.

15 We have to try to bring together aboriginal and
16 non-aboriginal people working toward the future, building
17 a new future. Young people--and it's quite proper that
18 we sit in this school today--the young people have to be
19 given a hope for a future in part of the country while
20 retaining their identity. That's the reason the cultural
21 aspect, the language aspects are very, very important in
22 our mandate. It goes alongside with economic development
23 issues, the social issues.

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1 We plan to have four rounds
2 of public hearings. This is the first one, that will end
3 at the end of June. Each time we're going to visit the
4 ten provinces and all the territories including
5 communities in the Nunavut, or the future Nunavut.

6 We want to, as we go on to
7 become more focused on solutions--we understand that
8 problems, definitions come first--but the sooner we could
9 shift our minds toward finding solutions the better it
10 will be because people, aboriginal people in the country,
11 like non-aboriginal, feel that it's time for action, it's
12 time for solution. And not only stating the problems.
13 And the solutions could be bigger solution than just
14 suggestive solution. You've got constitutional
15 solutions. We hope that the present constitutional
16 discussion will end up with an agreement that will give
17 us a framework under which we will be able to make our
18 propositions as to how the system will work. But also
19 solutions are humble solutions, day-to-day solutions in
20 the communities, and that's the reason why we want to visit
21 over 100 communities apart from the larger city in the
22 south, cities in the south. We want to visit the
23 communities in all the provinces, Inuit communities, Innu

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1 communities, Indian communities, Metis. We want to hear
2 from as many people as possible, not only the political
3 leadership but people who live their life in the community
4 and have ideas as to what should be done.

5 We plan to visit
6 institutions like schools, like hospital boards, like
7 penitentiary or provincial jails or territorial jails.
8 We plan to visit some of the many success story experiment
9 on the economic side of things.

10 I think it is important
11 that the public be aware about what is working, and not
12 only what are the problems but there are many success story
13 in progress. It is important that this be shown and this
14 be heard of.

15 We want also to visit
16 people in their house. People who can't come to us, we
17 go where they are. We feel this is fundamental to come
18 up with solutions that will be adapted solutions to the
19 problems and the realities.

20 This summer we will publish
21 a document that will give an overview of what we will have
22 heard during those two months and a half. We started the
23 first round of hearings in Winnipeg, mid-April. We're

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1 going to publish a document that will give a summary of
2 what we've heard, raise some of the basic questions that
3 flow from what we've heard and start focusing on some
4 priorities, in order that when we embark upon the second
5 round of our hearings in the fall we get a bit more focus.

6
7 Also we are going to have
8 funds available for preparing briefs for various
9 organizations. There is an intervenor funding program
10 and obviously written brief will be more numerous in the
11 second phase of our hearing.

12 We plan to have a third
13 phase early in '93 and a fourth phase where we will consult
14 very precisely on some specific proposals late spring in
15 '93 and early fall '93. We have in mind to have a report
16 ready for the government at the beginning of the year in
17 '94, the first half of '94, within three years of our
18 creation.

19 A Commission like ours is
20 nothing unless people put their best effort in it. We
21 can only give what people give us. Our role is to translate
22 in feasible, practical solutions the concerns, the ideas
23 that have been around sometimes for many years but has

13 We've met with the territorial government. We know that
14 Nunavut is at the edge of a new area. There is a lot of
15 hope. And we, in particular, we're very happy to have
16 with us today the students from the school. A lot of what
17 will be said and what will have to be done during the work
18 of this Commission will bear on your future life and
19 opportunities. And it is very important that you get the
20 education you will want to get, that you could fulfil your
21 dream, work in any professions, in any trade, but also
22 retain yourself, what you are, retain your language.

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1 we, as I said at the outset, we have translation in
2 Inuktitut, so you should feel free to express in your own
3 language. I welcome you again. I would like that you
4 feel as at ease as possible. These hearings are informal,
5 speak your mind as Abraham told us in his opening remarks.
6 Speak your minds, tell us what you feel, and do not
7 hesitate to come to us after the meeting to continue the
8 discussion.

9 Thank you very much, merci
10 beaucoup, et je déclare cette première séance de la
11 Commission Royale sur les peuples autochtones ouverte.
12 J'aimerais, I would like to ask Mary Sillett now to say
13 a few words. Mary.

14 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

15 [Native tongue spoken] Thank you very much, Mr.
16 Chairperson. Before I begin my remarks, I'd like to
17 introduce the Commission staff and I always believe that
18 you have to give the workers real credit for the work that
19 they've done. The people who are on staff with us, when
20 I say your name please stand up. Tyler Woods, he works
21 with Public Participation, and he's also from Fort Francis
22 in Ontario. He's an aboriginal person. We have Rhoda
23 Kayakjuak. She's an Inuk from Whole Beach and she also

21 First of all I'd like to
22 make a clarification. I'm not the president of Pauktuutit
23 anymore. I resigned that position in November. I am now

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1 a Commissioner with the Royal Commissioner on Aboriginal
2 Peoples which was appointment by the Prime Minister in
3 August of 1991, and I am the Inuk representative.

4 We came here in January,
5 1991. At that time we met with some aboriginal
6 organizations and we wanted to ask them how could we best
7 do our hearings, how could we do our hearings and do our
8 work so that we were a success at the end of it. At that
9 time they told us many, many things. And one of the things
10 that they said was, you know, before you have hearings
11 in our communities hire local community coordinators for
12 at least two to three weeks. These are the people who
13 know the communities the best. These are the people who
14 can make sure that if you have a hearing there will be
15 people here. So for this community of Iqaluit we have
16 hired Kilapik Barns and I'd like to recognize her for the
17 work that she has done. Kilapik, I'm sure everybody knows
18 you. Would you please stand up? Thank you very much for
19 the work that you have done.

20 In the first phase, Mr.
21 Dussault said that in our public hearings there will be
22 four phases. Now we're planning on being in public
23 hearings up until the end of June of next year. So far

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1 we've travelled to many, many communities. There are
2 seven Commissioners. Mr. Dussault and I are going to
3 Iqaluit and Pangnirtung, but there are other
4 Commissioners. George Erasmus, Madame Justice Bertha
5 Wilson and Viola Robinson, who today are in Fort Simpson,
6 NWT, and they'll be going to Teslin in the Yukon, doing
7 the same kind of things we are. And in Saskatchewan, Mr.
8 Blakeney and Mr. Paul Chartrand are there doing the same
9 kinds of things. We're trying to travel across this
10 country to meet with as many people as possible, not only
11 aboriginal people but non-aboriginal people as well
12 because we live in Canada and if solutions are to be found
13 to the problems that face us it must be found together.
14 We must involve the provinces because some of the issues
15 that we're dealing with are provincial jurisdiction. Some
16 of the issues that we're dealing with are of territorial
17 jurisdiction and certainly some of the other issues that
18 we're dealing with are federal jurisdiction and all these
19 people have a say in what the solutions are.

20 Having said that, I just
21 want to open--not say too much because I always remember
22 when I was at the legion one time, Abe Okpik was there
23 and he first heard that the Royal Commission on Aboriginal

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1 Peoples was being set up and he said to me, "I don't know
2 if I really like you being on the Commission." He said,
3 "But let me tell you something, girl," he said, "When you're
4 on that Commission," he said, "You're there to listen,"
5 he sad, "Remember that." So I think that's the purpose
6 of this, it's not for us to talk but for us to hear the
7 concerns of the people. So thank you very much.

8 **KILAPIK BARNES:** The next
9 person is Simonie Alainga, he's going to be talking about
10 he history of Iqaluit.

11 **SIMONIE ALAINGA:**
12 [Translator] Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I'm one of the
13 few people who is from Iqaluit and I will tell you about
14 the history and what has happened in Iqaluit.

15 First of all, there used
16 to be camps along the [Equaluit?] before Iqaluit was
17 established and there are no maps of the time when we first
18 remember. I used to live down the bay from here when I
19 was a young boy and that's when I started becoming aware
20 of the surroundings. In 1938 that's the year that I can
21 start remembering from, from what I saw. In 1939 it was
22 the first time I saw things like airplanes and when I first
23 saw them I thought they were big birds which made a lot

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1 of noise because I wasn't aware of the white man's world
2 at the time. I really wondered how they would make such
3 loud noise and be able to fly when I first saw them. From
4 that time on after I first saw qallunaags I was really
5 scared of qallunaags. I was even scared to get close to
6 them because I was really scared and afraid of them.

7 In 1940 I saw a lot of
8 people who were Americans who came up just outside of
9 Iqaluit. I was really surprised when I saw them because
10 they had big boats and big vehicles, and at that time,
11 that's when I wasn't so afraid of qallunaags anymore.

12 In 1941 before a
13 representative of Canadian government came up to this area
14 the only people that we associated with were military from
15 USA. I first heard that there was a war from the military
16 from USA and I wasn't scared at the time because effects
17 of war wouldn't touch us. Soon after that the people
18 started centralizing in Iqaluit and Americans started
19 building houses. I remember Iqaluit as not having any
20 houses at all, but later on it became a central area for
21 the camps that surrounded it because the Canadian
22 Government representatives, workers were coming up.

23 In 1945 the people, the

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1 Inuit people, started moving, moved to Iqaluit, and they
2 were telling us to move to a centralized community. But
3 the reason that they were moving closer was because there
4 was TV and other amenities that they have contacted. So
5 in 1946 a Canadian medical staff started arriving up here,
6 especially by ship called C.D. Howe, and that's when they
7 started treating Inuit children in Iqaluit. I remember
8 staff that used to work on C.D. Howe but when they started
9 taking x-rays on C.D. Howe and when they told people that
10 they had to go away down south we used to cry because we
11 were afraid that they wouldn't be able to come back up
12 here. If we had to move ourselves we would cry because
13 we weren't sure that we would be able to come back up here
14 again because we weren't aware of too much outside our
15 camps. So starting from those years they started asking
16 or telling people to start moving to a central area such
17 as Iqaluit. The Canadian Government started doing it so
18 they could try and help people and when they were
19 centralized that they would be able to educate the
20 children. I would have wanted to go to school but I had
21 a paying job, and because I went to work instead, to date
22 I still don't know how to speak English like I would have
23 been able to.

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1 There were also more
2 missionaries at the time in those years, but they used
3 to be Inuit who were travelling from community to community
4 doing missionaries' work and they would talk about the
5 north in God's--the Bible. Our parents used to also tell
6 us or preach to us on how to be a good citizen, good
7 community person. There were people arriving from other
8 communities such as Pangnirtung, Northern Quebec, and
9 other communities there around because of what the Canadian
10 Government was trying to do. We noticed that the Inuit
11 from the others areas that were moving in had had qallunaag
12 working in their communities, working before there was
13 anybody here in Iqaluit, such as Pangnirtung.

14 In those early days my
15 grandmother and my grandfather used to preach even when
16 there were no missionaries at the time. There's a lot
17 more I can talk about on the history of Iqaluit but I'm
18 just going to briefly tell you a little more.

19 When they progressed they
20 formed an ladies' auxiliary group which helped the
21 community a lot. They tried to teach us how to live
22 together, how we can make our lives much better. Although
23 we had some kind of a group organized by the church the

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1 ladies auxiliary was formed. I have a lot of stories to
2 tell you as to how Iqaluit progressed. I'm sure that there
3 are a lot of other people who would have to talk to you
4 today so therefore I'm going to summarize my speech and
5 stop for now.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**
7 Thank you very much for a very interesting and enlightening
8 presentation.

9 **KILAPICK BARNES:** First of
10 all, let's hear from Baffin Region Inuit Association.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**
12 Good afternoon.

13 **RUTH KADLUTSIK, BAFFIN**
14 **REGION INUIT ASSOCIATION:** [Translator] First of all,
15 I would like to inform you the president Baffin Region
16 Inuit Association is unable to come. He apologizes for
17 not being able to come because he is out in the land.
18 The Baffin Regional Inuit Association was formed in 1975
19 in Iqaluit. The Baffin Regional Inuit Association was
20 formed to develop the Inuit culture and the language and
21 to progress in this way. I will deal with Inuit language,
22 culture and trying to obtain them. We try to help and
23 teach the young people how to further their education and

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1 how to get a better job. We try to maintain our culture
2 and our language and we communicate with the communities
3 and we have a staff, a full staff, and we work with hunters
4 and trappers and some other issues that we have to deal
5 with in the Baffin region. We support the Inuit in Baffin
6 region in developing economically and other things. We
7 also deal with other issues. We also write letters to
8 federal agencies like the Royal Commission on National
9 Passenger Transportation and we have written letters to
10 them, to these organizations, stating that Inuktitut
11 language is part of our culture. In Baffin Region we all
12 speak Inuktitut and our children learn how to speak their
13 language, Inuktitut, at home, and then they are taught
14 the first primary grades in the schools in Inuktitut.

15 The Inuit language and the
16 culture is not lost in this region but it's forever changing
17 slowly as the Inuit as life changes, but we use Inuktitut
18 language as part of us, as part of our everyday language.

19 We try to protect also the language, Inuktitut language,
20 but how we view ourselves or the view of the government
21 of trying to maintain our language, which is Inuktitut,
22 when they have to communicate with the Inuit people in
23 Inuktitut so that they may understand everything.

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1 Also we prefer to work with
2 the hamlet communities and try to work with them and ask
3 them--in some hamlet offices they have a lot of work to
4 do when they are given documents which are just in English.

5 So, therefore, they have to be translated in the
6 communities and there are not too many translators in
7 Inuktitut in all the communities. You have all these
8 issues.

9 We requested for funding
10 to be used for translator documents.

11 In regards to land claims
12 in Iqaluit, I feel that Inuktitut should be a recognized,
13 the Inuktitut language should be recognized because
14 Inuktitut language is not recognized like English and
15 French, although it should be recognized. We're not
16 trying to say that the Inuktitut language should be
17 recognized in all Canada. We feel that it should be
18 recognized in the Northwest Territories.

19 Thank you very much for
20 giving me the opportunity to speak.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

22 I would like to thank you for coming to share your talk
23 with us. I understand from your presentation that your

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1 association has a wide mandate, that your concern has a
2 lot to do at this point with the language, the cultural
3 aspect, and we would be pleased if you want to send us
4 a written brief or put it in a written form for the
5 Commission. Thank you.

6 **RUTH KADLUTSIK:** Okay.
7 As soon as I leave here I will be doing up my a written
8 report of this and submitting it.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**
10 Okay. Mary.

11 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
12 [Translator] I have no further questions, thank you.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**
14 I would like now to ask Mr. Bill Riddell to come to the
15 microphone.

16 **OVILU GOO-DOYLE:** I'm
17 sorry, unfortunately the next speaker is not here. So
18 we're going to ask Mrs. Marge Lalonde to speak on behalf
19 of the elders of the Iqaluit.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**
21 Good afternoon.

22 **MARGE LALONDE:** This has
23 caught me by surprise. I have been in Iqaluit since 1967

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1 I guess makes me a northern. I didn't expect that anything
2 I would have to say to the Commission would be of such
3 importance. I would like to see Inuktitut as a priority
4 language in the schools here, along with French and
5 English. But I think there should be a priority for
6 Inuktitut because I wouldn't want the young Inuit to lose
7 their language like they have lost other languages. Not
8 only in Canada but throughout the world languages have
9 been lost.

10 One thing personally for
11 each and every community in this area we would like to
12 see, with the upcoming Nunavut and with the present
13 government, with territory and federal as they stand today,
14 to think a little more closely on some way of helping the
15 retailer give us a better price on food. They have a very
16 high freight rate, they have a very high spoilage, and
17 sometimes if you have three to four children and there
18 is mum and dad it's very difficult to get the proper
19 nutrition, especially during the long winter months where
20 you don't get so much vitamins from the land and the sun.

21 I think that would be one of the things that everyone
22 should be looking and, hopefully, not just in 1994. Maybe
23 we could get someone working on it now. So there's a lot

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1 comes up on sea lift but, fresh meat and fresh fowl and
2 fresh fish, fresh vegetables and fresh fruit I think should
3 be the one that say the northern stores or the co-op stores
4 in the settlements or whoever, they should be given an
5 opportunity to give us a better price. Thank you very
6 much.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**
8 Thank you for your presentation and sharing your concerns
9 with us. Thank you.

10 **NORA JARRETT:**
11 Unfortunately our next speakers haven't arrived yet. We
12 would like to take a break at this time, and if there are
13 other people here who wish to make a presentation, please
14 bring forward your request right now. Thank you.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**
16 We will take a small break and the floor is open to anybody
17 who would like to tell us something. Anything.
18 [Break 1515 - 1525 hours]

19 **SIMON MACDERMOTT:** Next
20 we'll have Lucassie Nutaraluk. He is the chairman of
21 Kalugiak.

22 **LUCASSIE NUTARALUK:**
23 [Translator] Thank you for inviting me. I am over the

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1 age of 70. I'm not too sure as to how old I am because
2 I do not know what year I was born. I just came to Iqaluit
3 for a visit. When my father died I could not go back to
4 the community I came from. I just came to Iqaluit for
5 a visit at first because my father-in-law and my
6 mother-in-law were living here in town. When I went to
7 visit them I ended up staying here ever since. I was
8 in Pangnirtung for a while there too. Then I just came
9 back to Iqaluit. I have a lot of relatives living in Cape
10 Dorset, but I live here in Iqaluit now and I have been
11 living here since the time I came here. When I first moved
12 here I got a job. I ended up staying in this community
13 when the government first moved to Iqaluit. When the
14 military was here in town before the government officially
15 moved to Iqaluit I have been here since then. I have lived
16 in different communities around Iqaluit area and around
17 Northern Quebec or in Ivujivik, although I originally came
18 from Cape Dorset. I was born beside Cape Dorset called
19 [Itiluit?]. Then when I started actually remembering
20 things it was out in the land.

21 I was too old to work and
22 I was not employed anymore due to lack of education. When
23 I was working they thought I was a good worker and nowadays

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1 I'm just living on pension and that's the only income I
2 have, which is old age pension.

3 Through Inuit culture I was
4 elected as the chairman for the elders group, Kalugiak,
5 because of my extensive experience in Inuit culture and
6 that's why I could not do anything I want last year. I
7 was working with Kalugiak hunters and trappers because
8 I feel for the Inuit people and culture. I tried to help
9 my fellow Inuit people, I tried to help them by not
10 overkilling. I don't want them to get into trouble with
11 Department of Fisheries and Oceans because I don't want
12 them ending up in jail by breaking the quota system because
13 I feel for all the Inuit. I did not wish to see any Inuit
14 people to be charged.

15 When we had a dispute over
16 beluga quotas we had an argument with Department of
17 Fisheries and Oceans because they tried to reduce the
18 quota, the amount of quota we had. Although I did not
19 hate the Department, at that time I was not set totally
20 set against them. In one year they were given five quotas
21 per year to hunt beluga whales. Last summer I hear that
22 they're not going to be changing the numbers of the quotas
23 and they had increased their numbers in Arctic Bay and

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1 the Inuit people were much happier. Because Inuit, we are
2 conservative people and we do not overkill animals. Like,
3 we only hunt for what we need and just nowadays the animals
4 are not going to be depleted today. But in the future,
5 according to the elders' forecast, predictions, everything
6 happens. Like they used to say in the future that the
7 numbers of the animals will be depleted and everything
8 they say comes true. Although they were not written,
9 although everything was not in paper, they preserved
10 everything orally and they would go to the other areas
11 without maps. As long as they've heard of some area having
12 fields they would go out hunting there although they've
13 never been there. They've never even used maps or
14 compasses.

15 So that's how I grew up and
16 that's how we were in them days because we learned from
17 our elders. For those of us who are--we know of what is
18 going to happen in the future. I, myself, have forgotten
19 some of the languages I used to use and we lose bits and
20 pieces of our language as town progresses and we try to
21 talk in the language where Inuktitut can be understood.
22 If Inuit people can be totally bilingual I would be very
23 happy. At times when you try to help them out and when

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1 they cannot understand the language that you're talking,
2 it's quite hard to communicate with one another because
3 some younger people do not fully speak Inuktitut language,
4 and some of them like younger people nowadays are caught
5 in the middle because they're not fully taught in Inuktitut
6 and they don't know the white man's culture and they're
7 caught in between two cultures. I would be very
8 appreciative if they can learn either one. I just wanted
9 to point that out to you and I want to thank you for giving
10 me the opportunity to speak.

11

CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:

12 Thank you very much. Could you stay with us a minute?
13 Thank you very much for your excellent presentation. I
14 would like to know concerning the young people, you
15 mentioned that they're caught in the middle, that sometimes
16 they don't speak English and they don't speak Inuktitut
17 well either. I would like to know what do you think about
18 the possibility of learning the two languages? And you've
19 mentioned that you would like people to be bilingual.
20 Do you feel that the teaching of the language outside the
21 house in the schools should be improved?

22

LUCASSIE NUTARALLUK:

23 [Translator] I feel that it really should be improved.

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1 I feel that it would be much better for the younger people
2 if they know both languages. That way they can get a better
3 paying jobs, if they learn how to speak Inuktitut and
4 English, if they're totally bilingual. And sometimes due
5 to lack of education they do not get a good job. The only
6 job opportunities, good job opportunities, require a fully
7 educated person. So, therefore, I would be much happier
8 if Inuktitut and English are taught or improved.

9

CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:

10 Do you know what should be done or could be done to convince
11 more young people to pursue their schooling, their studies,
12 not only in high school but in professional training, in
13 post-secondary after the high school? What is lacking
14 at the moment? Why many of the young people do not go
15 further than the high school?

16

LUCASSIE NUTARALUK: More

17 than once I have approached younger people and I have gone
18 out hunting with younger people by teaching them, like
19 sometimes they really don't know how to go out hunting.

20 But I've gone out hunting with them. That way they learn
21 the language and the culture more by going out hunting
22 with them. I feel that they should be taken out in the
23 land in order to teach them both worlds. Like, they have

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1 to know the ice conditions and snow conditions because
2 this area, the place--the Arctic is so cold in wintertime.
3 So that way we can teach them how to build shelters for
4 them. And they are like--by going out hunting with them
5 that way they can have better of the both worlds, especially
6 when they're around younger ages that way we can help them.

7 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

8 [Comments made in native tongue. Not translated]

9 **SIMON MACDERMOTT:** The
10 next speaker will be Bill Riddell from Tuvvik. He will
11 be talking on social issues.

12 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

13 Good afternoon.

14 **BILL RIDDELL:** Good
15 afternoon, I would like to introduce to you Leah Inutip
16 who is also a member of the Tuvvik organization. Leah
17 and I have shared some thoughts together and she will jump
18 in when she feels as if the time is appropriate.

19 First of all, I'd like to
20 thank you for allowing me to speak to you. Tuvvik is a
21 committee of the Baffin Regional Council and has, up until
22 recently, delivered the alcohol and drug counselling
23 programs in Iqaluit. But at this present time is not

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1 functioning in that way and is attempting to develop an
2 approach to social planning and research in social issues
3 in the region. And we're at the very beginning stages
4 of attempting to do that.

5 There is a real need for
6 social planning and a coordinated approach to planning
7 our research and programs for social problems. I think
8 if there is anything that comes out of our discussions
9 this afternoon that is probably the one important theme
10 that we would like to put across. It's particularly true
11 as we move to the creation of Nunavut and the settling
12 of the land claims. To have them place a planning body
13 prior to the full implementation of Nunavut would place
14 the new Nunavut government in a position which would allow
15 wise choices as to the development of social issues and
16 social programs. If this is not started prior to the
17 beginning of the government of Nunavut then there is a
18 danger of transplanting into the region programs and
19 agencies which may not be appropriate to the eastern
20 Arctic.

21 Government funding systems
22 are presently administered by specialized departments
23 with civil servants whose performance is valued based on

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1 their ability to fund local and regional programs which
2 address very narrowly defined social problems. Examples
3 of this would be programs for violence against women as
4 opposed to family violence. Or alcohol and drug abuse
5 programs as opposed to a more overall program designed
6 to address all of the related problems that accompany
7 alcohol and drug abuse. The fault with this is is that
8 the communities of the eastern Arctic are not big enough
9 to be able to support specialized services. They are very
10 small. In addition to this, it means that the government
11 response to social problems is a result of political
12 decisions that are popular and are likely to result in
13 re-election. One year it was popular to promote programs
14 for AIDs prevention for instance. And the year before
15 that it was suicide prevention that was popular. After
16 each of these programs got their start they suffered
17 because another issue became popular and politically
18 convenient to promote. This means that there is no
19 longevity in solving the social problems and they are
20 vulnerable to political bandwagons. It's our
21 recommendation that the Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
22 recommend programs and program funding sources that are
23 more generic and can deal with the social problems in a

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1 more holistic way rather than specialized way. This would
2 eliminate the bandwagons and would provide better and more
3 permanent services to people who need them. It would also
4 make it possible to deal with problems as they come up
5 by using presently existing agencies rather than having
6 to find new funding, establish special budgets, create
7 special government departments to deal with these new
8 emerging problems. An example of that, by the way, is
9 the problem of homeless. Iqaluit established a--or
10 decided that there were a number of homeless people in
11 Iqaluit and there are no government funds available
12 specifically for shelters. There is no government
13 bureaucracy that's specifically set up to deal with that,
14 so it's like having to create something right from the
15 very beginning.

16 Another strategy which
17 should be used is the proper management of professional
18 resources in the human services field. Programs that are
19 set up to deal with a particular problem area may not
20 necessarily be needed for a long period of time. If there
21 is a change in the need then the people who are working
22 could be retained to deal with the new emerging issues
23 and moved into the new area of work. At the present time

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1 people who work for agencies are in constant fear of having
2 their agency shut down as a result of a shift in funding
3 policies. An example of this is an agency which is to
4 set up to deal with, let's say, solvent abuse and it's
5 not necessary to deal with issues of solvent abuse forever.

6 Solvent abuse could be managed with a concentrated effort
7 for a short period of time, example, a year, and then a
8 maintenance program which would ensure that the solvent
9 abuse strategies continue. Staff could be deployed to
10 deal with the problem when they are needed during the
11 initial stage and then shifted to use their skills and
12 knowledge in other areas as the maintenance phase takes
13 over.

14 Another example of this
15 would be at one point it may become necessary to develop
16 programs for young people and at another time programs
17 for the elderly may be necessary. Professionals in the
18 field of human services could be shifted from one type
19 of program to another and it would not be necessary to
20 recruit new people for each issue area.

21 Leah, I don't know if you
22 had anything that you wanted to add to that?

23 **LEAH INUTIQ:** Yes, I have

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1 supplementary comments to that. I have so much to say
2 and so little time. I'm a aboriginal woman or I call myself
3 a professional Inuk bum. I'm unemployed. Pretty well
4 highly educated, self-educated, travelled extensively in
5 Canada and United States, and I'm aware of social problems
6 as part of our society that lacks of our knowledge to our
7 needs. It's--I don't know, it's even kind of sad to say
8 that I'm aboriginal person in a way because I don't really
9 know how to describe that because I'm a human being too.

10 I hate to use the terms of aboriginal and I'm supposed
11 to have a job waiting for me, doors are supposed to open
12 for me to get the job, to land it for me and it's not there.

13 I see that as a part of social problem is that people
14 coding people saying you're a woman, you're supposed to
15 have job. That creates the social problems too because
16 it puts a lot of pressure there and it's like living in
17 a dream world. It's not even there and it's a big social
18 problem.

19 As myself, I was born and
20 grew up on the land, and it's like the life that I went
21 through is from fire to a microwave world and it's not
22 easy. It's about time that people, we say, slow down and
23 we look back and see what mistakes have been done and we

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1 correct it and let's eliminate the social problems. I
2 have so many things to say but I let Bill to say more and
3 I hope it's understandable what I'm saying. Thanks.

4 **BILL RIDDELL:** We both
5 stand before you as bums, I suppose. We're unemployed
6 and that's because of a lack of good resource management.
7 Aboriginal people should be careful to design research
8 that is to establish knowledge as to the real nature and
9 the extent of the social problems rather than research
10 which is designed to gather information which results in
11 being able to sell a particular approach to a social
12 problem. Initially the women's groups played an essential
13 role in convincing governments and the public that violence
14 against women is a serious social problem that should be
15 dealt with. At the moment, however, the original leaders
16 of this movement are now in highly respected positions
17 which recommend policies to governments. The problem is
18 is that their influence eliminates access to funding and
19 research potential which might deal with other aspects
20 of family violence. In the Northwest

21 Territories there is no funding for men who are victims,
22 there is no funding for programs for women who are violent.

23 And if you want to write up a research proposal to the

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1 Canadian Government to study family violence you must use
2 the word "survivor" of family violence rather than victim
3 of family violence in your proposal. The influence of
4 these powerful advisors even dictates the words that we
5 have to use to describe what kind of research we want to
6 do.

7 Tuvvik, our organization,
8 lost its contribution in funding to continue its work in
9 the field of addictions because of a political decision
10 to fund programs who would hire only people who were
11 abstinence from the use of alcohol. The programs at Tuvvik
12 had been going on successfully for seven to eight years
13 without complaint, yet the government of the Northwest
14 Territories was able to be influenced by a small group
15 of people who wanted to take one approach to the problem.

16 This was done in spite of a well- expressed objection
17 to this policy by every mayor of the Baffin Region and
18 many MLAs of the Eastern Arctic. This debate is continuing
19 in the Legislative Assembly but it does not belong there.

20 It belongs at the local level and the professional level,
21 not the political level. This is particularly important
22 in the design and execution of programs in the field of
23 human problems where values, beliefs, religious views,

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1 et cetera, can vary from one area to another and can be
2 influenced by small but well-organized special interest
3 groups.

4 Cultural issues. Hum?
5 Go ahead.

6 **LEAH INUTIQ:** Excuse me,
7 I'd like to say something. Excuse me, the family violence
8 problem. The only other problem that's lack--from the
9 understanding, from the Inuit point of view is, yes, we
10 knew that we could call the police and perhaps the criminals
11 could be charged and put away. But it doesn't work that
12 way. The justice system doesn't work for aboriginal
13 people the way we've been told or the way it was working.
14 So even if a woman has been abused by her husband or
15 anybody, any person, there is no justice system that could
16 support them. So from there there is more social problems
17 arise within families or within the people or racial
18 tension because of misunderstanding. I just wanted to point
19 that out.

20 **BILL RIDDELL:** With that
21 I'll go on to some comments on the justice system because
22 it's quite appropriate. What Leah was talking about is
23 that in the qallunaags justice system is based on a

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1 adversary system where one person fights another person.

2 Whereas in the Eastern Arctic, in the Inuit tradition,
3 it favours more of a mediation and negotiation as opposed
4 to arbitration. And we see this all the time when we see
5 family violence, where people are trying to resolve their
6 problems of family violence as opposed to fighting about
7 it in courts. By the way, our present justice system isn't
8 adequate even for the white culture citizens of our region.

9 To create a new and more humane justice system for Inuit
10 would also benefit our white neighbours, such as myself,
11 who see the justice system as insensitive, inflexible and
12 sometimes inadequate.

13 Inuit need to have their
14 own justice system. Many of the laws are the same as those
15 of the white culture and those of the world; however, some
16 of the priorities may be different. Inuit may see
17 infractions as a result of bad hunting practices as being
18 very important but may not view break and enters in quite
19 the same way as the white Criminal Code does. Young people
20 are not defined in the same way between the two cultures.

21 Inuit youth are always answerable to their parents even
22 when they're 30 years old. Parents want to know if their
23 young person is in trouble with the law, yet the white

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1 system doesn't honour this as well as what the Inuit would
2 like it to. Prison sentences are not viewed by Inuit as
3 adequate. Inuit feel that many people are placed in jail
4 should not be there, yet they also feel that there are
5 some serious crimes where a person should be punished and
6 punished severely. Now people get sentences and are let
7 go prior to finishing their time. So they do not take
8 their sentences seriously. A person is now released after
9 five-ninths of his or her sentence. What's the sense of
10 telling someone that they are going to jail for ten months
11 when he knows that he's going to get out after three or
12 four months. The sentencing becomes a bad joke.

13 Inuit feel serious
14 criminals should be sent to jail and should not be let
15 out until their time is up. At the same time, they feel
16 that there is a need to develop other ways to deal with
17 what would be considered lesser crimes. Elders should
18 be involved in making the decisions as to how to deal with
19 the offender, as should the victim, the offender's family,
20 and sometimes the whole family should be involved. And,
21 in fact, two people sitting on your panel today have been
22 involved in an elder's court here in Iqaluit.

23 We heard a few minutes ago

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1 a discussion about educational concerns. First of all,
2 I'd like to make a comment about your question concerning
3 the development of two languages. Unfortunately, there
4 are people in the Eastern Arctic who have suffered as a
5 result of a hearing infection called otitis media.
6 Somewhere between 35 to 45 percent of all children suffer
7 from this. A portion of those children when they are
8 growing up cannot hear properly to develop the language
9 unless special emphasis is put on it to help them to learn
10 this language. As a result of that, a child sometimes
11 grows up and his parents think--his parents who are
12 unilingual Inuktitut speaking--think that the child is
13 learning how to speak English quite well. The English
14 speaking people think that the child is learning how to
15 speak English quite well but do not realize that the child
16 has not learned how to speak Inuktitut. As a result the
17 child grows up with no language. And these are very often
18 the people that get into trouble with the law through
19 violent crimes and also are the people who are prone to
20 sniffing solvents.

21 The Baffin Regional
22 Council has had discussions about the fact that it is
23 important for education to be done in Inuktitut. There

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1 are some things, however, that should be mentioned. The
2 curriculum which we used in transplanted from Alberta and
3 it's not appropriate. We have our own--the Inuit have
4 their names for anatomy, for physics, history, geography,
5 social studies, human behaviour and Leah, for instance,
6 is writing a book on the Inuit psychology. These must
7 be put into the school system. In order to do this we
8 need to encourage people like Leah to write out the
9 knowledge of a subject so that they can be used in the
10 school system. In the eastern Arctic there are no
11 professional social workers that's university trained who
12 are Inuit. Nor are there any Inuit doctors, nurses,
13 architects, dentists, lawyers. There are some
14 professional teachers and everybody is very grateful for
15 this; however, there needs to be developed programs to
16 encourage professionals in professional training and
17 development and higher education. We need to develop
18 support systems necessary to send these people. I was
19 very interested in the last speaker who talked about when
20 he wants to take somebody on the land to teach that person
21 land skills, he goes with them and supports them. There
22 are many people here who going to the south. To go to
23 the south to the universities it's extremely lonely.

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1 Special support systems need to be set up for those people.
2 When I went through university I had a support system.
3 I didn't just go to university. I had a support system.
4 I had an academic advisor at the university, I had my
5 parents who were encouraging me, I had people in the
6 professional field in which I intended to go sitting with
7 me, encouraging me, giving me jobs during the summertime
8 and coaching me in my field. After I finished university
9 I had four or five years of coaching from psychiatrists
10 and social workers who were working in my field. That's
11 coaching on a day-by-day basis. I was not left alone.
12 Inuit should not be left alone if they're going down into
13 the south to learn how to be--to develop their professional
14 standing.

15 Leah, was there a comment
16 that you wanted to make on that one at all, on the school,
17 because you've done that, eh? You've had--you've gone
18 south without a support system.

19 **LEAH INUTIQ:** Yeah, it's
20 like you heard, for those of you who are English-speaking
21 people and doesn't understand Inuktitut, it takes a lot.
22 If you don't understand the language you don't know the
23 culture. It's that simple. But if I struggle in two

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1 worlds during my life and I still struggle we, us aboriginal
2 people, need support to be recognized and be recognized
3 as human beings that we are allowed to be different. It's
4 okay to be different from my western culture. Like, I
5 live in a cross-cultural relationship having children,
6 tried to teach them in two worlds.

7 One of the most complicated things was that I teach my
8 children talk to strangers. Like I tell them--I
9 encouraged them to talk to strangers and welcome strangers
10 but my husband would tell them, do not talk to strangers.
11 I mean that's--there's a lot of conflict in there.

12 Both of them work perfectly
13 in other ways but could not work together as two. So
14 there's a lot of conflicts there that we use in our own
15 society, in our own culture, that we don't use when we
16 leave.

17 We are very capable of
18 learning a lot of things but we need encouragement and
19 support systems and recognition that we are different and
20 perhaps that way there'll be less social problems.

21 Even the language is
22 different. Like if I say in English, "Can I please have
23 a glass of water?" it's appropriate to say that. In

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1 Inuktitut it's insult because you're not allowed to ask
2 something from the nature and beg for it. So these things
3 that--but there's a way to translate it. There's a way
4 to live with it. So those things should be recognized
5 and have a support system.

6 **BILL RIDDELL:** Along those
7 lines, in terms of the cultural differences, Inuit are
8 very democratic and the decisions which are made by Inuit
9 bodies are painfully arrived at through consultation and
10 through consensus.

11 As a result of this, a
12 political process is not always as fast or as aggressive
13 as the processes of other cultures. Inuit do not like
14 to fight battles. It's against the culture to impose
15 themselves on other people. It makes Inuit vulnerable
16 to other cultures that play the lobby and power games.
17 Inuit don't like this and often feel overpowered or out
18 manipulated, yet to play the same game would erode their
19 fundamental way of living.

20 That's all that I had to
21 say today and--

22 **LEAH INUTIQ:** I just
23 wanted to put an addition. I go to conferences and

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1 workshops often, nationally. I was in a finance post
2 conference for aboriginal people and I was really excited
3 to be as a part of the aboriginal people to go down there
4 but I had this problem quite a few times getting to these
5 aboriginal--so-called aboriginal conferences or
6 workshops. But mainly for people who are in treaties or
7 tribal or people who live in reserves. I mean those things
8 doesn't apply to us even if we are aboriginal people.
9 It should be recognized, as well at that, when you talk
10 about aboriginal people you talk about Inuit as well.
11 So sometimes I feel uncomfortable to go to aboriginal
12 conferences because it's mainly for Indians because
13 Indians are more visible than Inuit because they live in
14 a--more like southern--they're more southernized
15 than--more highly educated in a southern education system.
16 So that should be looked up as well. And I thank you
17 very much for listening to my people and people who are
18 concerned and being up north, is like totally different
19 from the rest of Canada and sometimes it seems like being
20 a stranger and, like, in every way, life and the landscape.
21 [Translator] Thank you
22 for inviting me here. I wasn't going to come but I decided
23 to come here at the last minute, so thank you.

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1 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

2 Well I would like to--you stay with us I would like to
3 thank you for giving us--providing us with a good overview
4 of social issues. Maybe on a technical basis I would like
5 to know the Tuvvik organization, when was it created?
6 When was the organization created? Has it been
7 functioning for many years?

8 **BILL RIDDELL:** The Tuvvik
9 itself has been functioning since about 1983 and it
10 amalgamated with another organization that had been
11 functioning since the late seventies. Sorry, it closed
12 down a couple of months ago.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

14 So was it an organization responsible for the delivery
15 of services at one point, or is it just for the planning
16 and coordination?

17 **BILL RIDDELL:** Tuvvik was
18 originally designed to deliver a service, but the Tuvvik
19 board, which is made up of the chairman of each of the
20 alcohol committees from each of the settlements began to
21 recognize the need for social planning and for research
22 and so they established themselves a new constitution as
23 of two years ago which indicated their interest in moving

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1 in the direction of social planning and research.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

3 Just a couple of additional questions. One of the main
4 thrusts of your speech was that programs are too much
5 earmarked and separate from each other and it doesn't allow
6 flexibility to move from one problem to another depending
7 to needs, situation, time and so forth. Do you think that
8 the new--that the notion of self-government, if there was
9 self-government-- Of course, being in the Territories
10 and we know that Nuavut is coming, but what is the reason
11 why--do you think this should be improved, could be
12 improved through a better control of the policies involved
13 at the government level? Because, for example, we were
14 in the western Arctic two weeks ago and people in the
15 communities were telling us, for us the territorial
16 government is like the government of a province. We feel
17 that we're not represented as we should and, of course,
18 the situation is different than in eastern Arctic. But
19 still, the notion of self-government was with each
20 community and the Federal Government.

21 How do you see the
22 situation here in eastern Arctic as far as the development
23 of services is concerned? Should it be done centrally

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1 for the whole of Nunavut? Should it be decentralized for
2 various communities. How do you see that?

3 **BILL RIDDELL:** I have some
4 opinions about it but I don't think it's my place to express
5 those. I feel as if that will have to be developed by
6 the wisdom of the Inuit government themselves. The only
7 thing that I can do is to warn people not to buy into formula
8 thinking. That is, when there are issues which must be
9 dealt with to not necessarily buy into the answers or the
10 structures or the decision-making or the delivery systems
11 that have been done in other places but to take a look
12 at the issue and attempt to create something that's
13 meaningful. It may end up to be the same but meaningful.

14

15 An example of the
16 difficulty that we've had is that Tuvvik was funded almost
17 solely as an alcohol and drug counseling centre and yet
18 we had something like about 18 to 20 different programs--
19 witness support programs, programs for family violence,
20 a number of other programs and none of those could be
21 funded. It just seemed awkward to have to go to 18 or
22 20 different funding sources when it wasn't necessary
23 because the amount of resources that were necessary to

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1 deal with the problems were not that much different than
2 to deal with the alcohol and drug problem. So it's--you
3 know, it was very awkward. Funding is very awkward when
4 it's pigeon-holed.

5 **LEAH INUTIQ:** I could not
6 answer all the questions but my other concern, things that
7 I've seen through my people, especially through the
8 leaders, is that they don't have enough support. And those
9 are people who are recognized as the Inuit leaders, are
10 more highly educated in the western world culture that
11 are not relevant to Inuit. So sometimes they are
12 recognized as the best leaders from the western world side
13 of it but the worst from the Inuit side of it. So you
14 could--through that you need, like, these people, a lot
15 of time get into drugs or alcohol not knowing or--like
16 lost their identity, who they are and there's no support
17 system.

18 And we did--yes, we did
19 support some people who are in that situation and our
20 grandfathers didn't allow the support with a lot of Inuit
21 leaders and other leaders to-- and gallunaag leaders as
22 who have tried to make them understand about our culture.
23 Yes, we need that kind--we need that kind of support to

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1 make that Nunavut work. Thanks.

2 **BILL RIDDELL:** Yes, I
3 would like to echo that Mr. Okpik has been my grandfather
4 for quite a few years and has given me a great deal of
5 support.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**
7 Commissioner Sillett? Mary?

8 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**
9 Well I'd like to thank Bill and Leah for their
10 presentation. I have--in the interests of time I just
11 have two questions.

12 One of them is the Canadian
13 panel on Violence Against Women, I guess, is a fairly
14 significant panel in terms of its dealing with family
15 violence and the kinds of issues that Tuvvik is familiar
16 with. Did you have an opportunity to somehow make a
17 presentation, either a written presentation or someone
18 have some communication with that particular group?

19 **BILL RIDDELL:** Yes, I did,
20 and I did make both a written and a verbal presentation
21 and, unfortunately, I wasn't very popular. That will come
22 out as time goes.

23 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

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1 But I think, you know, it's very important, you know.
2 Someone has to raise these whole issues that, for example,
3 in the area of family violence there has to be equal
4 consideration given to men and I can understand. But I
5 think that the Commission will be traveling right across
6 this country. It will be hearing different kinds of
7 opinions and it has, I guess, a mandate to listen to the
8 kinds of things that you were saying. So I was interested
9 in that.

10 Secondly, you know, your
11 recommendation for program funding--to get program funding
12 in a more generic way to deal with social issues in a
13 holistic way. I can really appreciate that having come
14 from Pauktuutit but I'm wondering, you know, because I'm
15 wondering how possible, how realistic this is considering
16 that, for example, Health and Welfare has responsibility
17 for alcohol and drug abuse. Justice has responsibility
18 for victims' assistance and, you know, I'm wondering how
19 it's possible for all these government departments all
20 of a sudden to give up their territorial responsibilities
21 to somehow fund one generic program. I'm just wondering,
22 have you thought about that?

23 **BILL RIDDELL:** There's two

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1 or three things. First of all, that's why we're mentioning
2 it now, so that as Nunavut comes into being perhaps it
3 can create structures that are different than the ones
4 that presently exist that would allow that to happen.

5 Under the present
6 structure, realistically speaking, if you have an accident
7 on the highway in the south and let's say there's 15 or
8 20 cars involved in it the insurance companies don't make
9 an assessment based on each individual car. What they
10 do is they take the total cost of the accident and divide
11 it up according to percentages of the numbers of cars that
12 are involved in the accident that they're insuring. And
13 there's no reason why the family violence funding and the
14 alcohol funding and the suicide funding and all of these
15 things can't take a look at a program and assess percentages
16 and fund it by putting it together like that. I've made
17 that proposal.

18 The thing that stands in
19 the way, of course, is the fact that the structures right
20 now are so rigid they don't even want to think about that
21 but that's one way it can be presently done.

22 **ABRAHAM OKPIK:** My
23 question was covered partly by the Commissioner and

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1 yourself, but knowing a little bit about administration
2 is that once you work in administration that you follow
3 the policy according to your direction. And I think that
4 when you're talking between administration and politics,
5 politics get elected every four years so they can change
6 anything as long as they agree to it. But I think when
7 they make a mandate to do work with like people who need
8 help, it should stay on forever and not change it every
9 four years or put a new board in and say do it my way.
10 I think that's what's happened to our system and I think
11 that's what we have to get away from there.

12 The other one about--it's
13 about the aboriginal people of Canada. I was just telling
14 my friend here during coffee break I saw a sign over there
15 saying aboriginal claims here and I told him, I said years
16 ago I took a correspondence course in Grade 8 and 9 when
17 I was in the hospital. But in my term of "aborigines,"
18 I was taught the only Australian native people were
19 Aborigines. I forgot about myself. Thank you.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

21 Just as a follow-up I just would like to tell you that
22 the Commission is pretty much aware that registered Indians
23 is one thing and Innu in Labrador are another and Inuit

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1 are different than the Metis or different and we have to
2 be careful to design solutions adopted to the reality of
3 the different peoples and that's the reason why there won't
4 be that many across-the-board solutions that would apply
5 to everybody.

6 **LEAH INUTIQ:** I just
7 wanted to point that out as being in a helping profession,
8 yes, there is some good programs for social services but
9 the policies are too aggressive for Inuit to follow because
10 English language is aggressive compared to Inuit language,
11 so there's a lot of things that you could not really follow
12 or we don't like to break the law or rules. So that's
13 another problem that we face because we didn't want to
14 face the red tapes and like we hear that often. It works
15 really well on the radio, too. Like they say you're not
16 allowed to say those things in English but they say it
17 in Inuktitut anyways but, you know, these kind of problems.
18 That's a problem that we faced, too, so--to get funding
19 from social services when we don't want to follow their
20 rules because if you translate them into Inuktitut you
21 get frightened. You just want to do it back up and never
22 see that place again and that should be understood as well.
23 Thanks.

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1 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

2 Thank you very much.

3 **SIMON MacDERMOTT:** Our
4 next speaker will be Meeka Kilabuk. She is the executive
5 director of the Baffin Regional Council.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

7 Welcome. Good afternoon.

8 **MEEKA KILABUK, BAFFIN**

9 **REGIONAL COUNCIL:** I would like to welcome you to Baffin
10 Region. [Inuktitut spoken.] I'm going to be very brief
11 just to give you an overview of what Baffin Regional Council
12 does in our region.

13 Baffin Region is the
14 largest region in North America, I guess, when you think
15 of provinces, territories and states; however, the
16 population is very small compared to populated areas in
17 southern Canada.

18 Baffin Regional Council
19 was legislated through Legislative Assembly for the mayors
20 to have a council, regional council, on behalf of the
21 interests of the Baffin people.

22 Baffin Regional Council is
23 made up of elected mayors, up to 13 municipalities. It

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1 has independent speaker and deputy speaker. Five Baffin
2 MLAs are non-voting members. The president of Baffin
3 Region Inuit Association and chairpersons of three
4 committees of BRC, that is, Baffin Regional
5 Hunters/Trappers Committee, Baffin Tourism Association,
6 Tuvvik Alcohol/Drug Program. There are enacted in
7 regional council fact.

8 Baffin Regional Council
9 was formed on the initiative of communities in the Baffin
10 during 1977. Now you have to remember that as early or
11 at 1968 these communities were just beginning to get
12 populated from the members of the outpost camps whether
13 is in Iqaluit, whether is in Pangnirtung. So in the 70s
14 the councils slowly became hamlet councils from ordinary
15 settlement councils.

16 So in 1980, three years
17 after Baffin Regional Council was formed, the Legislative
18 Assembly passed a Baffin Regional Council ordinance. Two
19 years later, Keewatin Regional Council was formed by
20 Keewatin mayors, and other regional and tribal councils
21 and territories were formed as well. So I guess you could
22 say Baffin Regional Council was the first regional council
23 that existed in the territories.

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1 In 1983 the Regional
2 Council and Tribal Council Act was passed by Legislative
3 Assembly and more recently the Regional Councils Act have
4 been separated from Tribal Council Act for the purposes
5 of regional councils more in the Inuit territory, tribal
6 councils in Dene-Metis area and we are funded differently
7 territorially and federally.

8 On January 15, 1987,
9 Iqaluit Agreement was signed between Nunavut
10 constitutional forum and Western constitutional forum,
11 which gave qualified recognition to places of regional
12 governments after the division of the territories and I
13 quote at that time that, "It was to design workable forums
14 of regional governments within the overall system of
15 government which reflects the community-based nature of
16 northern society and provides for a strong territorial
17 or provincial governments."

18 That I use as an example
19 because that is reality today. The end of January this
20 year there was a joint Nunavut leaders' summit that took
21 place here in Iqaluit. I'm talking about people from 250
22 regions of Nunavut; ITC, Inuit of Canada; regional
23 councils; MLAs, working jointly together on the question

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1 of Nunavut and the possible regional councils.

2 The Baffin Regional
3 Council holds two sessions a year, one in the spring, one
4 in the fall. The session is not held during the summer
5 months when the majority of the Inuit of the 13 communities
6 are away on the land, a break from the community--it means
7 a way to maintain and practice their traditional living
8 and traditional hunting.

9 BRC does not hold sessions
10 either when Legislative Assembly holds their sessions.
11 Just to give you an example of what happened at our last
12 Legislative Assembly which was held the beginning of
13 December. Baffin Regional Council for the first time
14 passed a motion in recognition of the founding members
15 of ITC, Inuit of Canada. And I can remember I think that's
16 the first council or any organization that would give all
17 founding members of the ITC. This was done in appreciation
18 of Inuit getting organized for the very first time.

19 Baffin Regional Council
20 being the area that only deals with mostly two languages,
21 so BRC sessions are executive committee meetings, until
22 I join them, and our office works bilingual, that is,
23 Inuktitut and English. Of course all our paperwork is

Interpreters are used at our sessions, agenda between various departments, representatives of boards, airlines, other agencies that affect the communities, 13 communities report to this session and then the questions are asked of them. This is how it's formally done when the 13 mayors get together to talk about the problems which have too many topics which I will not cover. But it's mostly for the better development, better communication of the Baffin, as a whole, that's what Baffin Regional Council does.

20 We want to--Baffin
21 Regional Council, in their last year have experienced many
22 different interesting proposals. We've been listening
23 to Nunavut proposals. We've been listening to land claims

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1 ratification, and the only thing that has a most
2 detrimental impact on the people of the Baffin has been
3 the GST. GST, we have the highest cost of living in this
4 country as if we needed GST to make the life harder. That,
5 I would say, has the most detrimental effect.

6 Just to give you an
7 example, our high cost of living, I have to bring two
8 mayors, one from [Semikeole?], which is our most southern
9 community of Baffin Region, to Iqaluit. Return fare is
10 \$2585. And to bring our mayor in from our most northerly
11 community, from Grise Fiord, it costs \$1722. That is just
12 for the airfare. That doesn't include hotel and meal
13 expenses.

14 I want to just give you an
15 example to one of the incidents that took place a couple
16 of years ago that touches on aboriginal rights to hunt.
17 The elder that was speaking before me was talking about
18 the very things that I will just talk about very quickly.

19 A year and a half ago, just
20 about two years ago, a recommendation was made to reduce
21 the Beluga harvest to five per community of Pangnirtung,
22 Iqaluit and Lake Harbour. That recommendation was
23 accepted by the Minister of DFO, Fisheries and Oceans,

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They went ahead anyway and we got organized--Baffin Regional Council was directly involved, still is--and the Minister of DFO assigned us as a committee to find solutions to the problem. We worked extremely hard for about four or five months, on and off, with a community representative of Pangnirtung, Lake Harbour and Iqaluit to try and come up with a report to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to convince them why the harvest level of five would not be acceptable to Inuit.

20 Right now the former
21 members of that committee announced a planning committee
22 for co-management which was another recommendation we made
23 to the Minister and that's where we're at right now. So

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1 that I can say from my own experience that it had an effect
2 on the people, not only in those communities but we were
3 very successful in finding a solution in working together
4 with DFO, and because we want to make an end to the
5 confrontation. So I guess I can say that everything is
6 possible if everybody wants to work together on any issue
7 but it would have to take two sides to want to do that.

8 I want to thank you for
9 coming up to the Baffin Region and thank you very much
10 for making time for me. Thank you.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

12 Thank you very much for sharing your concerns with us.
13 Just to make sure that I would like to get clear as to
14 the role of the Baffin Regional Council. Does it have
15 a role in the delivery of services or these are separate
16 agencies? For example, the hospital is related to the
17 health board. And what is exactly the role of the regional
18 council, the Baffin Regional Council?

19 **MEEKA KILABUK:** Baffin
20 Regional Council is a board for the mayors. That's how
21 it was recently formed. It is separate from Baffin
22 Regional Health Board. It is separate from Baffin
23 Regional Board of Education. However, Baffin Regional

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1 Council was instrumental in getting the Baffin Regional
2 Health Board on its own, when the former executive director
3 was a member of that board. And Baffin Regional Council
4 is a lobby group, you might say, for delivery of government
5 services and programs to the communities.

6 Our communities vary in sizes. We have
7 a multitude of different dialects but we work very closely.

8 We're not a separated group, we're a very united group
9 through the mayors and, of course, the MLAs, and we will
10 continue to work with GNWT and the land claim process in
11 the interests of the mayors. That's what it was organized
12 for. I hope I answered your question.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

14 Mary?

15 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

16 Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I don't have any questions
17 I just want to say thank you very much for taking the time
18 to make the presentation. As I said during the last time
19 I saw you in Iqaluit we would be back probably a second
20 time. We will be back in the Baffin Region probably at
21 later times in the second, third and fourth phases of our
22 hearings. We do plan to have funding available to groups
23 if they want, for example, to look at the possibility of

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1 finding solutions to the problems so I just wanted to
2 provide that information to you. [Inuktitut spoken.]

3 **MEEKA KILABUK:** Our
4 speaker had wanted to make a presentation on Baffin
5 Regional Council, but he lives in Igloolik and I was told
6 that your intervenors' funding was not ready or something
7 but if there would be any time that he should be invited,
8 certainly please do let me know. [Inuktitut spoken.]

9 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**
10 Thank you very much.

11 **SIMON MacDERMOTT:** The
12 next speaker will be Don Couch. He is the vice-president
13 of Arctic College, Nunatta Campus.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**
15 Good afternoon.

16 **DON COUCH, ARCTIC COLLEGE:**
17 Thank you. And thank you for this opportunity to make
18 a presentation to you today.

19 I expect that during your
20 various meetings this year and next you will be hearing
21 much about various problems and difficulties encountered
22 by aboriginal peoples. And this will also be true
23 regarding the topic which I wish to address, education.

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1 I hope you will also hear
2 positive things and perhaps solutions as well. And in
3 my remarks I would like to follow this positive approach
4 and speak very briefly about progress, gains and
5 opportunities, especially as they relate to just one vital
6 aspect of post-secondary education in the eastern Arctic.

7 And there is only one
8 post-secondary education institution in the Northwest
9 Territories, Arctic College. It has two major campuses:
10 in the west, Tabacha, in Fort Smith, and here in the east,
11 in Nunavut, Nunatta Campus, based in Iqaluit but which
12 delivers courses and programs in each of the 13 Baffin
13 communities as well as in our neighbouring regions of
14 Keewatin and Kitkikmeot.

15 Last year we registered
16 about 500 full-time and 2000 part-time students. 80
17 percent of our students are Inuit.

18 I'd like to focus my
19 comments on number 15, educational issues of concern to
20 aboriginal peoples, in your terms of reference and perhaps
21 to a lesser extent, number 14, and that is the situation
22 of aboriginal youth.

23 Although we are

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1 increasingly getting young people coming to us directly
2 from high school, most of our students are older; their
3 average age is 29 to 30 years.

4 For the past several years
5 the general pattern of Baffin Grade 12 graduates, both
6 Inuit and non-Inuit, post-high school activities has been
7 fairly consistent. One-third goes south for further
8 education, mostly universities. One-third go to work and
9 the remainder to a variety of other things, including
10 Arctic College.

11 Recently, however, there's
12 been a growing trend to come to the College rather than
13 to go south for further education. Part of the reason
14 for this, I hope, is our demonstrated commitment and
15 interest in what your terms of reference describe as, and
16 I quote, "the promotion and protection of aboriginal
17 cultural identity in education institutions."

18 When one looks at the
19 expression "aboriginal," and of course to us that means
20 Inuit, cultural identity, at least a dozen different
21 features could be identified. I have time to raise only
22 one, language.

23 We at the College are

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1 involved with a number of these others and I'd like to
2 discuss at least one of them, art, which is of major
3 interest to this campus, perhaps at another time.

4 The first language of the
5 great majority of our students, then, is Inuktitut. Two
6 of our programs, Eastern Arctic Teacher Education Program
7 and Interpreter/Translator, require demonstrated
8 bilingual literacy for admission. Both programs contain
9 courses taught in Inuktitut by Inuit instructors, most
10 of whom have university degrees.

11 Now these programs have
12 courses transferable to McGill University, which is, of
13 course, concerned about the formal academic qualifications
14 of our faculty teaching such courses.

15 Like all community
16 colleges we have a major responsibility to provide skill
17 training and especially to prepare people for employment.
18 There is, however, an extra dimension to this task and
19 that is the promotion and protection of Inuit cultural
20 identity, through the use of Inuktitut as the language
21 of instruction for courses in addition to those which study
22 Inuktitut language itself. Why and how are we doing this.

23 First, experience in

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1 considerable research has clearly demonstrated that use
2 of aboriginal people's first language does much to "enhance
3 and promote their positive self-image." The quote from
4 your number 14 terms of reference.

5 The Baffin and Keewatin
6 divisional boards of education, through their language,
7 policies and programs, have moved rapidly to increase the
8 use of Inuktitut as the principal language in the
9 classroom. A major program for us is the training of
10 Inuktitut-speaking teachers for the schools of Nunavut.

11 Unfortunately we'll not
12 receive the direct benefits of this at the college until
13 Nunavut is established in 1999. It will take that long
14 to work through all 12 grades in the schools.

15 Virtually all of our Inuit
16 students are fluent--fully fluent in Inuktitut, but the
17 vast majority are not fully literate in Inuktitut. Last
18 fall our Inuit instructors set a short Inuktitut
19 comprehension test for incoming Inuit students. About
20 ten percent could read and write syllabics adequately.
21 Another 20 percent could read but not write in syllabics.

22 A disappointingly large majority could do neither.

23 This fall all Inuit

5 Now there's nothing new in this. Many Canadian
6 universities and colleges have similar requirements for
7 English competency. For us it will be in Inuktitut, and
8 I must confess I don't know what the situation is French
9 universities and certain universities and colleges.

Let me be specific to our particular situation. Central to the future well-being of Nunavut and Inuit people is a good understanding and competent management of their financial and economic enterprises, systems and sector. We currently have--I'm not sure whether you're aware of TVNC, Television Northern Canada. Okay. We currently have running on TVNC a six-part

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1 series on board of directors' training. It was produced
2 here by IBC and is available in both Inuktitut and English.
3 It's on Wednesday night, 8 o'clock.

4 At the present time,
5 although we have tried to do so through a tea, and I'm
6 sure Mary knows about the tea, we've not been able to teach
7 effectively a bookkeeping or accounting course in
8 Inuktitut. We have been able to find quite competent Inuit
9 instructors, but there are serious shortcomings in the
10 necessary conceptual terms and vocabulary.

11 Let me demonstrate with
12 some of this I have here. The Inuit Cultural Institute
13 has produced a glossary, word lists. This was published
14 in 1978. There is a section on finance. There are
15 financial terms, 26 words there. We also, for our courses,
16 have produced word lists; we do this annually. And in
17 this area we've produced a list of 108 words on financial
18 areas.

19 I want to make four
20 comments about this general area which is of particular
21 concern to us. First, we at the college have been very
22 careful not to be seen as interfering in the area rightly
23 the responsibility of the Inuit people as manifested in

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1 the Inuit Cultural Institute. The Institute focuses
2 almost exclusively, not entirely so, but their principal
3 interest is in traditional culture and language and neither
4 is it involved as a training institution.

5 In technical areas we've
6 had to exercise some initiative. For example, four of
7 our major areas of instruction are in medical and legal
8 interpretation and translation and it may be the numbers
9 illustrate that. In this word list, for instance, there
10 are in the legal section there are 348 words. In the
11 medical section, 787. But we're a teaching institution,
12 we are not a research institute.

13 Third, there is an
14 immediate need for a student dictionary. Last fall I was
15 fortunate enough to spend some time in Siberia and in Russia
16 studying the teaching of native languages there. Most
17 of those 27 languages do have dictionaries. For instance,
18 this is one for [Hunti?]. I just brought a couple. One
19 of [Ninits?], 4000 words. This is standard that they have
20 developed in that area.

21 There do exist some
22 specialist Inuktitut dictionaries. For example, Louis
23 Jacques [Derais?] here has one with 1000 words in 14

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1 dialects and sub-dialects. Timothy [Kumik?] has produced
2 this dictionary, 50,000 words, Quebec. But these are not
3 designed for Inuktitut first language teaching in Nunavut.

4 We have discussed producing it ourselves but frankly,
5 as I said earlier, we are a teaching institution and not
6 a research institute. There is a need for this.

7 My fourth point is
8 virtually all traditional cultures are oral. I suggest
9 that modern, indigenous languages wanting to move beyond
10 the traditional function, and certainly they must retain
11 that area of strong interest, but they must be written.

12 We have in our campus library perhaps one of the best
13 collections, if not the best, of written Inuktitut
14 materials in the country, certainly in the north, and we've
15 published materials from the College ourselves. I think
16 this is probably the only publication in [Insunkilliwack?]
17 dialect, was produced by the College. We've produced works
18 from--the work has been written up in Pond Inlet, a
19 collection of stories only in Inuktitut, and just in the
20 last month or so produced a glossary. The College has
21 published those. These are essential tools for our work
22 but we are not in the business, really, to produce them.

23 My time is limited,

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1 priority to the standard North American preference for
2 individual personal and economic advancement which means
3 virtually in English or French, where should we end
4 universal first language education for indigenous peoples?
5 Should it be in Grade 4? Grade 9? Grade 12 or Grade
6 14 or the equivalent of the second year of college? This
7 is really critical to where we're going because a major
8 concern we have is the potential for major disappointments
9 which would result from an unrealistic rising level of
10 expectation in regards to language.

11 Thank you for your
12 attention. I look forward to the results of your inquiries
13 and hope that your Commission will consider and give
14 guidance on this critical matter of language planning and
15 implementation for the aboriginal peoples of Canada.
16 Thank you.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**
18 Thank you very much for your comprehensive and informative
19 statement on this particular aspect of languages in
20 education. But I think you certainly have had a lot of
21 experience in the past and that you've raised, as you know,
22 two very difficult questions, and I must say that these
23 questions have to be raised and discussed and the forum--we

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1 are happy that the Commission give a forum to raise those
2 questions. The answers, though, are not as easy and maybe
3 you're raising the question that it's already certainly
4 worth doing it because everybody will have to have a hard
5 look at the question--difficult questions like these.

6 But on the other hand, the
7 answer has to come from those concerned mostly. And how
8 would you see us to embark upon a discussion like this,
9 because it's one thing to acknowledge a situation and
10 that's quite clear. I think every language in the world
11 are in a difficult situation in comparison with English
12 somehow in the scientific world. So what would you suggest
13 for a Commission like ours to do in a way of addressing
14 an issue like that and of having a thorough discussion
15 with all those involved?

16 The discussion that will
17 take place in the building of the Nunavut, for example,
18 is certainly a good opportunity to bring and to discuss
19 a question like that. It's quite fundamental. But did
20 you have some advice to give us in terms of the way to
21 embark upon the process where a rational discussion might
22 be done in a way where all concerns will be poured in?
23 Because the danger in an issue like this is either to give

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1 country, has as good as a chance as any to be able to do
2 that. And I think there's a willingness and I've tried
3 to indicate that we are certainly very interested in doing
4 what we can to assist.

5 I have had the opportunity
6 from time to time to meet with representatives of other
7 language groups in Canada and I don't have a good reading
8 of what their intentions are. I suppose I'm looking to
9 the Commission because that is part of your mandate for
10 all the indigenous groups, cultures and languages across
11 the country, and I thought there might be something
12 especially relating to--I think there's about five larger
13 groups of languages that have the potential to do this
14 and perhaps setting some guidelines.

15 My major concern is raised
16 expectations that this will happen. There's a possibility
17 that it would happen but some things need to be put in
18 place for it to happen. And I sense that the issue has
19 been avoided in a number of areas and perhaps your
20 Commission is an opportunity to come to grips with that.

21 Whether it should be done through--I sense you're
22 suggesting a getting together of representatives of these
23 groups, I think to some extent those things happen anyway

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1 but maybe a specific gathering specifically to deal with
2 this issue would be appropriate. There are so many other
3 items on the agenda--constitutional issues and so on.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

5 Obviously it seems to me that some kind of central
6 organization would have to be established to work on
7 building the materials from a practical basis in the
8 technical professions and aspects and--because you can't
9 be left with each individual institution or association.
10 There is a push that would be needed, and a very important
11 one, and--but I understand that you're--at the moment that
12 the Arctic College what you have is rather limited if you
13 were to embark upon accountancy, for example, or
14 engineering for more specific training.

15 Okay, thank you. Mary.

16 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

17 I thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. I feel like this
18 one woman who was at our meeting one time, she said, "I've
19 waited so long to speak and it was so long ago since I
20 wanted to speak I almost forgot what I was going to ask."

21 But having said that, I just want to make a comment that
22 I think of the 53 languages, or aboriginal languages that
23 are in Canada, there are three that are very much

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1 alive--that's Cree, Inuktitut and Ojibway. And Inuktitut
2 is way up there so I think clearly that is a fact of Canada.

3 And all across this country I've heard that, you know,
4 there has been many things done in order to protect and
5 preserve a language from one generation to another.

6 It's not only good enough,
7 for example, that the laws of this country recognize
8 Inuktitut as an official language. It's not only good
9 enough that the parents speak Inuktitut in the homes, and
10 it's not only good enough that it's taught in the schools.

11 If the language is to survive there are many things that
12 have to happen all at once. And in the eastern Arctic,
13 which is very different from the area that I come up, I
14 think that something right has been done here because
15 Inuktitut has been preserved. It has been preserved to
16 the point where the majority of the people that speak--the
17 majority of the people that live here are either unilingual
18 or bilingual, and I think that is something that is very
19 proud for me to see. And I don't think that--I think that
20 the history of the language in Labrador is very, very sad
21 and I don't think that's an example of what should happen.

22 But I think as Nunavut
23 comes closer and closer people look at Nunavut as

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1 self-government. Look at Nunavut and self-government as
2 hope that somehow things will be better with respect to
3 the language and culture. And I think that wherever I've
4 heard, I've never, ever heard Inuit organizations asking
5 the question, for example, "Should it be taught in the
6 schools? Should we expand Inuktitut so that it's taught
7 in the schools?"

8 I think there is a basic
9 assumption that, yes, it should be taught. It should be
10 taught in every institution. And certainly there's no
11 excuse for it not to be taught in eastern Arctic. The
12 Inuit are the majority. The Arctic College in a potential
13 Nunavut. It's, you know, it's a institution based here
14 and I think it was more responsibilities than some other
15 post-secondary institutions to look at the challenges of
16 how to preserve that language, of how to teach education
17 in that language, and I think you have a particularly
18 interesting challenge and maybe you can provide the
19 leadership on the question that you're asking. Maybe you
20 can provide us with some of the answers that you've been
21 asking.

22 You know, we've just got
23 back, for example, it's a Micmac reserve. Reserve is a

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1 Canadian term, reservation's an American term. But it's
2 a Micmac reserve and they've been--many individuals there
3 have been trying to preserve Micmac, and they are always
4 running against one big problem and that's even though
5 they want to teach it in the schools there's nothing to
6 teach it with because there's no money put into a
7 curriculum. And they wanted to find, for example, more
8 money for language retention so that they could produce
9 a book so that they can teach their children in school
10 and hopefully by teaching it in the school then they'll
11 have a better chance of keeping the languages.

12 So I think, you know, I
13 leave those kinds of questions to you and maybe in the
14 second or third or fourth round when we come around, not
15 necessarily the Iqaluit, but in the eastern Arctic, maybe
16 organizations like the Arctic College would be able to
17 come back to us with what they think the solutions are
18 to this challenge.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

20 Yes, well I just would like to, before you leave, to say
21 that I think we've understood the question well. I don't
22 think what is at stake here is the existence of the language
23 as such. The question is to whether we--how could be reach

9 And certainly as Mary just
10 mentioned we are going to give some hard thinking about
11 it, and you're certainly well situated at the Arctic
12 College also. And I realize that you have already given
13 it some thought but if you could help us in trying to see
14 how it could be done and by what mechanism. Because I
15 think we would want to start certainly on a positive fashion
16 to push it to the greatest extent and it's the only
17 way--there is no reason to give up too early, it has never
18 been tried. And on the other hand what is lacking is how
19 could we move from here to there, from one point to another,
20 and it's certainly a big question. I understand it is
21 a major concern for an institution likes your but you're
22 certainly well situated to give additional thinking on
23 it. We would certainly appreciate that and we will

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1 be--when we come back maybe we'll get in touch with you.

2 Thank you.

3 **SIMON MacDERMOTT:** Our
4 final presenters for the day are a group of students from
5 Nanook School in Apex. They have walked here today which
6 is--Apex is three miles away, to give this presentation.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**
8 Maybe you could bring some chairs to sit.

9 **ALETHEA BARIL:** Members of
10 the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, we are the
11 Grade 7 and 8 students of Nanook School in Apex. We are
12 here to express ourselves on the position and role of
13 aboriginal elders, the situation of aboriginal youth and
14 educational issues of concern to aboriginal peoples.

15 **ADAM KILUKISHAK:** When we
16 were preparing this presentation we realized we hadn't
17 asked ourselves the question, "What is education?" Many
18 think of education as a mental development. We believe
19 so, too; however, when we say mental development what goes
20 our mind is more than those two words.

21 **TARA LINDSAY:** Education
22 is challenging your mind. For this to happen we need
23 confidence and cooperation. This makes school

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1 stimulating and we need this at a young age. We believe
2 that the more talented teachers should be teaching at the
3 elementary level so as students reach the higher levels
4 of education, they are prepared to face the emotional,
5 social, physical and academic challenges.

6 **STUDENT:** [Translator] A
7 lot of parents dislike saying negative things to their
8 children. So therefore --

9 **STUDENT:** The young people
10 and the children should be taught either younger age so
11 that they could become teachers or professional people.
12 We should be educated so that we can become school
13 principals.

14 **ALTHEA BARIL:** There are
15 many elders in our community who are very good teachers.
16 Elders should be a part of our educational system.
17 Whether it is sewing, hunting, singing, math or language
18 arts, they teach well. They taught our people before the
19 arrival of southern teachers. They did an excellent job.
20 They helped us to maintain our identity as Inuit. Our
21 elders are needed. They should be accepted as qualified
22 teachers. Amend the Education Act. Recognize our elders
23 as qualified teachers. If we do not gain knowledge from

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1 our elders our culture will die. Elders should be an
2 important part of teacher training colleges in the
3 Northwest Territories.

4 **STUDENT:** [Translator]

5 The teachers who teach students should be aware that should
6 be bilingual in Inuktitut and English. The children are
7 taught how to read and write so that they may be able to
8 get a good job after being educated.

9 **TALAYA LINDSAY:** We
10 believe the community should have a greater say of
11 educational planning and also in the programming of what
12 is taught in the community school. Right now Ottawa gives
13 money to Yellowknife to build schools. Yellowknife plops
14 down a school building in a settlement. The community
15 does not have a say in the design of the building. Forget
16 the students who will be at the school. Don't we matter?
17 After all, we shall be using the building. Is it any
18 wonder why the schools are vandalized. Students and
19 parents should have consults when building schools and
20 in planning classes. A free daycare program should be
21 set up for those students who are denied education because
22 of babysitting siblings during the day.

23 **ADAM KILUKISHAK:** I've

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1 heard many young children speak of being doctors, lawyers
2 and astronauts. Right now we are not sure that a young
3 aboriginal child will be able to qualify for these jobs
4 because of our educational system. The system does not
5 challenge students. Of course there are a few exceptions.
6 Don't lower academic standards, raise them. Expect the
7 best and we will do our best.

8 **STUDENT:** [Translator]

9 Inuit younger people should start listening to their
10 teachers and remain in school. That way when they are
11 fully educated they will know what kind of a job they
12 prefer to have. Teachers should know how to teach the
13 students. We have Inuit teachers teaching us the oral
14 history of the Inuit. That way, we can learn more. And
15 we should start listening to our parents and teachers more.

16 **TARA LINDSAY:** Many of my
17 Inuit friends have little chance of becoming doctors as
18 they have wished in kindergarten. When we had relay races
19 in school one day I saw a young girl named [Inuktitut
20 spoken] running across the gymnasium. Back and forth she
21 ran steadily and fast. Her running showed her
22 determination. I know that if [Inuktitut spoken] is given
23 the chance she will become what she dreams of being someday.

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1 If only she is given the chance.

2 **STUDENT:** If the children
3 don't attend school regularly they would not get a better
4 education and they wouldn't know how to raise their
5 children. No wonder we have schools now, now that the
6 kids can go to school and that they can get a good job.

7 I'm so glad to have my school. If we didn't have schools,
8 we wouldn't know what we know now. We wouldn't know how
9 to work, and we wouldn't know how to try and obtain our
10 dreams, like becoming managers.

11 **TARA LINDSAY:** Children
12 have dreams. We dream of a world where our parents have
13 opportunities to earn a decent living by working at
14 traditional or non-traditional jobs. Our survival as a
15 distinct people should not be dependent on a welfare
16 cheque. The welfare cheque destroys our dignity as a
17 people. It encourages dependency.

18 Many of our parents think
19 they are worthless. Many of them do not have the heart
20 to serve as a stable source of love and discipline. We
21 are experiencing a breakdown in traditional family values.

22 We are not making human beings human. Educate us to be
23 a guide, a friend, a companion, to our parents, our people

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1 and to all Canadians. Children have dreams. Children
2 trust grown-ups. Please, don't let us down. Thank you.
3 [Inuktitut spoken.] Merci beaucoup.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

5 Well, thank you very much for this very, very important
6 presentation. You've given us certainly good ideas as
7 to how the system should be improved, but most of it, what
8 you did is to express your hope that the system would enable
9 you to live up to your dreams. And what I would like to
10 say is that certainly this Commission, and as most people
11 now feel that education is the key for the future of young
12 people, young aboriginal people in particular. And what
13 we are looking for is ideas to convince both parents and
14 children of the importance of getting a good education
15 and of daring to follow up their dream, even if it means
16 to go out of the community for a year or two.

17 Of course what is lacking
18 and what we are told is that a support program to follow
19 you when you go down south for training is lacking and
20 we are--we've been told to look at the setting up of those
21 kind of programs.

22 But again, thank you very
23 much for taking of your time to walk and come to meet us

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1 and we certainly will be giving a lot of thought to what
2 you told us today. Thank you. Mary.

3 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

4 Thank you very much, Mr. Dussault. I, too, would like
5 to thank you all for making your presentation. I just
6 have one question. How did you know--I mean what did do
7 you? How did you decide what you were going to do in order
8 to present it to us?

9 **ALTHEA BARIL:** Our
10 teacher, Hilary, told us about this--I don't know what
11 to call it. He told us about this and we agreed that we
12 would like to do this presentation.

13 First of all, we started
14 talking about what education was and one idea led to the
15 other. And we talked about what was wrong with our education
16 system and how we would like to change it and what was
17 good about the system and how we'd like to keep it that
18 way.

19 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**

20 Thank you very much for a job well done.

21 **SIMON MacDERMOTT:** Thank
22 you very students from Apex. We'll be adjourning for the
23 day. We will convene tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock here.

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1 **CO-CHAIR RENE DUSSAULT:**

2 Before we go I'll ask for a closing prayer if that's
3 possible.

4 **[CLOSING PRAYER]**

5 --- Whereupon the Commission adjourned at 5:25
6 p.m. on Monday, May 25, 1992, to resume at
7 9:00 a.m. on May 26, 1992.

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