

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

LOCATION/ENDROIT: BIG TROUT LAKE COMMUNITY HALL
BIG TROUT LAKE, ONTARIO

DATE: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1992

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"for the record..."

STENOTRAN

1376 Kilborn Ave.

Ottawa 521-0703

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1 Big Trout Lake, Ontario

2 --- Whereupon the hearing commenced at 9:20 a.m.

3 Thursday, December 4, 1992.

4

5 **ENO CHAPMAN:** I think we are going to
6 be starting this gathering.

7 I would like to extend another welcome
8 to our guests Commissioner Paul Chartrand and Commissioner
9 Bertha Wilson. I know you have had an opportunity to be
10 welcomed by the community leadership yesterday and on
11 behalf of the people of Big Trout Lake, again today, we
12 extend our welcome. We are very glad that you are here
13 today with us on this very important occasion to discuss
14 and to listen to our concerns in the area of Aboriginal
15 people.

16 With that we will proceed with the
17 agenda.

18 The meeting here says that it will start
19 at 9:00 a.m., but usually when we have meetings here a
20 lot of people in this community have a lot of things that
21 they do in providing for themselves and for their children,
22 and in our environment it is sometimes very difficult to
23 try and do things in the present time frames that are given

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1 for those things that we have to do in our community to
2 survive. Many people will be coming as the morning
3 progresses, but it is not out of disrespect it is just
4 part of our way of life for survival in this community.

5 Also, it is our tradition at every event
6 whether it is a gathering, whether it is a feast or whether
7 it is anything that involves people, we always carry on
8 our traditional custom of asking the Creator to assist
9 us and also, to give thanks to the Creator.

10 I am going to ask Jemima Morris to come
11 up and carry on that tradition.

12 Mrs. Jemima Morris, elder of this
13 community.

14

15 **(Opening Prayers)**

16

17 **ENO CHAPMAN:** I am going to make
18 introductions first for Commissioner Wilson and
19 Commissioner Chartrand. I apologize I was busy last night
20 dancing until about 11:00, I was supposed to do my homework,
21 but I never had a chance to do it. I apologize on that
22 behalf.

23 I would like to ask Commissioner Wilson

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1 to make a few remarks.

2 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Thank you
3 very much.

4 Good morning and welcome to the public
5 hearings of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal people.
6 We are delighted to be here in Big Trout Lake and we had
7 a wonderful welcome from the Chief and we are very honoured
8 to have been invited as guests at the feast last night.
9 We appreciate your hospitality very much.

10 I would like to say a word or two about
11 the Commission and who the members are. There are seven
12 Commissioners, four of them are Native people and three
13 are non-Native people.

14 The four Native people represent the
15 four different groups of Native people in Canada. We have
16 Georges Erasmus, whom you probably all know. He is the
17 Former Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations. We
18 have Mrs. Viola Robinson a Micmac from Nova Scotia and
19 former head of the Native Council of Canada. We have Mary
20 Sillett an Inuk from Labrador who has been very involved
21 in the concerns of Native women and, of course, my colleague
22 Professor Paul Chartrand, a Métis and a Law Professor at
23 the University of Manitoba.

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1 The three non-Native Commissioners are
2 Judge René Dussault who sits on the Court of Appeal of
3 Quebec. Allan Blakeney, the former Premier of the
4 Province of Saskatchewan and myself, a lawyer and retired
5 judge from the Supreme Court of Canada.

6 Those are the seven Commissioners on
7 this Royal Commission.

8 Our terms of reference or mandate is
9 extremely broad. It covers almost anything that you can
10 think of that affects the lives of Native people across
11 the country. We have to address the issue of Native
12 self-government, the issue of justice, education, health,
13 land claims, Native culture, Native languages, just about
14 anything that you can think of we have to deal with in
15 our mandate.

16 We were not given any deadline for our
17 final report, but we, ourselves, decided that we ought
18 to be able to report in three years. That would mean having
19 our final report ready in the spring or fall of 1994.
20 That is our goal. I don't know whether we will accomplish
21 it or not, but we are going to try very hard to do so.

22 I should tell you that this is our second
23 round of public hearings. Our first round of public

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1 hearings started in April and went to the end of June.
2 During that period we visited 36 Native communities across
3 the country and heard presentations from 850 different
4 Native groups and Native individuals. They covered just
5 about anything on our terms of reference and they were
6 very very helpful to us.

7 They mostly dealt with the problems.
8 They told us all about the difficulties that Native people
9 were facing in the communities across the country. That
10 was the first round.

11 Now we are in the second round and this
12 time we would like to concentrate on the solutions. How
13 do we address those problems? What kind of
14 recommendations should this Royal Commission be making
15 that would bring about changes, improvements in the lives
16 of Native people? This is what we are after during this
17 round of public hearings.

18 We are all well aware that those
19 solutions have to come from the Native people themselves.
20 This is not something that people can sit in offices in
21 Ottawa and dream up. We have to get the ideas and the
22 suggestions from you.

23 I think we are now generally aware of

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1 the injustices that have occurred in the past. I think
2 we are familiar with those. We have heard a lot about
3 them as we have gone across the country and we know that
4 we have to do something to right the wrongs of the past.
5 This is what we are after now. We want to look to the
6 future. We want to hear you on how a better life can come
7 about for your children and grandchildren.

8 I should mention -- because the Chief
9 mentioned it yesterday when he was talking to us that a
10 lot of Native people are very doubtful about whether we
11 are going to accomplish anything. They say to us, "We
12 have had Commissions and inquiries and studies done in
13 the past. We have participated and cooperated with the
14 people who have been conducting these. Nothing has
15 happened. There has been no action."

16 So they asked us, "What makes you think
17 this is going to be any different? Are we going to put
18 all this effort into helping you people and telling you
19 our problems and giving you ideas for solutions and your
20 report is going to sit on some shelf up in Ottawa and nothing
21 is going to happen?"

22 Well, I think what I would say in reply
23 to that is people like Paul Chartrand, myself and the other

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1 members of the Commission wouldn't be on the Commission,
2 we wouldn't have accepted the job if we didn't think that
3 we were going to be able to achieve something.

4 We think that the public wants change.

5 I think we were confirmed in that view when after the
6 failure of the Charlottetown Accord a lot of the government
7 leaders were very quick to say, "The fact that the
8 Charlottetown Accord was rejected does not mean that we
9 don't favour Native self-government. We do." They said,
10 "We do. We want Native self-government to come about,
11 but there were so many other things in that agreement that
12 people didn't like."

13 They had many different reasons for
14 voting against or for not voting or for spoiling their
15 ballots. We know what was said by the politicians
16 afterwards that it wasn't Native self-government that was
17 rejected and they have all affirmed that they still want
18 to see that happen. Of course, that gives us great
19 encouragement.

20 We are also encouraged by the fact that
21 the people out there -- the white society are saying,
22 "Look, there has been so much injustice done to our Native
23 people it simply has to change." It has to be quite basic

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1 and fundamental not just as some Native people have said
2 to us, "No tinkering with things and saying look, we solved
3 that, we solved this. It has to be quite fundamental and
4 really go to the roots of what is wrong."

5 In order to come up with sensible
6 recommendations for change, practical recommendations for
7 change, things that we know will work, things that are
8 already going on in the communities and are working, this
9 is what we want to get and, of course, we need you for
10 that. We cannot do it alone. We have to have your
11 assistance and your cooperation.

12 I just want to say that we are delighted
13 to be here and we are looking forward to hearing what you
14 have to tell us.

15 I will hand over to Paul Chartrand for
16 him to make a comment.

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

19 Elders, Chief and also, our colleague
20 and Commissioner for the Day, honoured guests, brothers
21 and sisters. It is indeed an honour and a privilege for
22 me to be a member of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal
23 peoples.

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1 I can say that it is a particular
2 privilege and honour to be here in Big Trout Lake for this
3 particular hearing. I can sincerely say that this is one
4 of the places I was really looking forward to attending.

5 In fact, I was telling that to a friend of mine recently
6 that I happened to meet on a plane from Winnipeg to Ottawa.

7 I said, "I am going to Big Trout Lake." I thought I
8 was telling him about some place far away that he would
9 have never heard of. He said, "Oh, yes. My wife is from
10 Big Trout Lake." It is indeed a small world.

11 I never anticipated when I was growing
12 up that I would do the things that I am doing now. To
13 visit places like this. Coming to Big Trout Lake reminded
14 me a lot about the place where I grew up which is in the
15 Inner Lake of Manitoba. The population was about the same.

16 It seems like a very very long time ago. Many of the
17 things around here remind me of that.

18 We lived near a lake for one thing. My
19 dad was a fisherman. Also, a fur trapper. We came from
20 a family where the people spoke basically four languages:
21 English; French; Cree; and Ojibway. I know that my
22 grandfather, at least, could write in that syllabic Cree
23 which I think is what I have seen around here. I can't

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1 do that. I lost a lot of that. It is good to be reminded
2 of these things.

3 I really look forward to the hearings
4 here today and the other events in Big Trout Lake. We
5 are here until tomorrow. I am sure that there are many
6 presentation to be made and I know that I will be learning
7 a lot. I look forward to listening to you and to discuss
8 the issues that you want to place before us.

9 With no more than that I will say
10 Meegwetch.

11 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Meegwetch. Thank you
12 very much for the comments made by our two guests.

13 I would like to take this opportunity
14 also because we hold in a very high esteem those people
15 which the Creator has given us to be our spokespersons.

16 I would like to give this opportunity for Chief Sainnawap
17 to address this meeting before we begin with the
18 presentations.

19 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY CHIEF STANLEY**

20 **SAINNAWAP:** For the benefit of my people I will not use
21 my English and use my own language. I guess there have
22 been statements made that we have to maintain our language
23 and culture. I am going to use my own language to address

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1 my people.

2 **(Translated)** This is concerning you
3 people, my elders and my young people, visitors, I want
4 to wish you good morning and welcome.

5 When I got up this morning I thanked the
6 Creator for the beautiful day that he has given us this
7 morning. We have nothing to disturb the peace and
8 tranquillity of this community, not like the other
9 communities here in Canada and elsewhere. I want to thank
10 you people for showing our guests how much you appreciate
11 them in coming to our reserve.

12 I want to thank you people for standing
13 beside me in the decisions that I have to make everyday.
14 I am thankful every day for how the people show their
15 support in my work and in our community so that our
16 community can benefit from that.

17 The way I see it is a lot of people really
18 consider me as their leader. They show it by doing what
19 I ask them to do. That is how I know that you understand
20 what the term "Chief" means. I do not lie when I say this,
21 you can see it from the pictures here inside the building.

22 You people show that you stand beside me in my daily
23 decisions. By standing beside me in the things that I

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1 strive for every day your children will benefit in the
2 future, and our community will benefit because we will
3 be working together. We will be working together for a
4 better future and for our friends and for our people.

5 There have been a lot of inquiries in
6 the past regarding our concerns, like this summer the
7 government sent an inquiry team here in this reserve
8 regarding elders and elder care in our community. I didn't
9 invite them personally to come here.

10 There was another group from Ottawa who
11 came here to find out the things that we really needed
12 every day -- things like housing. There was a group that
13 came in from Ottawa to try and find out what our problems
14 were.

15 I think there was another group who came
16 into our community regarding women's concerns and women's
17 needs, how women could be helped. How women felt they
18 could be helped. There was a group that came in here and
19 talked and wanted to know more about that.

20 Those are just some of the inquiries that
21 have come into our community. Today there is another team
22 coming in to hear about our needs and how we feel that
23 we can be better helped in our community. They want to

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1 hear about our concerns and what our hopes are for our
2 community. I have never personally invited anybody to
3 come into our community, but I am pleased when people do
4 that, to come and hear our concerns and our needs. That
5 can only mean a better future for our community.

6 The Creator sees us in our daily strives
7 and we strive for things. The Creator sees our shortfalls
8 and maybe that is why he sends those teams in here -- the
9 inquiry teams and this Royal Commission.

10 We cannot only rely on just inside our
11 reserve. We have to rely on other land outside our
12 reserve, our traditional land. We have to show that we
13 can still use the land the way that our ancestors used
14 it. For instance, when people are overcome with stress
15 and other mental disorders most people just stay in the
16 reserves. We do not take advantage of our traditional
17 land, our trees, our water, our rivers. We do not take
18 advantage of those which the Creator gave us to us.

19 Thank you for listening.

20 **ENO CHAPMAN:** I would like to thank
21 Stanley Sainnawap for the speech.

22 We have concluded the opening remarks
23 and we are going to be moving on to the presentations,

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1 but before we do I just want to say that, as I mentioned
2 before, this meeting here is a meeting of the people.
3 I commend those people, the staff and the others that work
4 so hard to carry this project, this undertaking and also,
5 the Commissioners.

6 But the people here have stated that they
7 would like to take this opportunity while today is granted
8 to take time and carry this process as the community would
9 want to see it and not to constrict too much on the time
10 frames. Without meaning to disrespect the obligations
11 that are on the other parties. We respect them. We would
12 also request that the communities wish be respected and
13 that is that these presentations be carried and be
14 accommodated to as great an extent as possible.

15 The other thing I want to mention is that
16 the others that are sitting here -- there are probably
17 about six Elders. On a warm July afternoon, July 4, 1929,
18 a plane came in and brought two Commissioners into this
19 community. This was very important day for the people.
20 There are six people here that were present at that time
21 on July 4, 1929.

22 These people witnessed these two
23 Commissioners coming into the community and offering to

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1 the people the benefits of sharing this land and the
2 benefits that their government would provide for the
3 people. The people here held that in very high esteem
4 in a spiritual and cultural context at that time.

5 Today, again, we have a very spiritual
6 and important cultural undertaking after all these years
7 since July 4, 1929 and it is with very great thanks to
8 the Creator that we have the same six Elders who were
9 present that day when those two Commissioners came in.
10 We are standing on the very soil in which this very
11 important undertaking took place. It took place just a
12 few yards from here where those buildings are over on that
13 side. That is right beside the band office that is where
14 the event took place.

15 I think indeed it is a very important
16 occasion here today that we are celebrating and also that
17 we are looking forward to. We are very thankful that we
18 have again two Commissioners here that will be listening
19 to the concerns of the people.

20 I think given that statement I just
21 wanted to say that the community wishes to present these
22 things in a way that they feel is appropriate to represent
23 it.

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1 Also, again just to reiterate, we do
2 respect the hard work that is being undertaken because
3 this is indeed a very hard task to do for the people involved
4 and we commend them for that commitment that they have
5 both for the Commissioners and for the staff that are doing
6 this.

7 Thank you very much.

8 I would like to ask now Steven Chapman,
9 Band Councillor; Tonena McKay, Elder; and Bruce Sakakeep,
10 of the band staff, to come up to the tables please.

11 I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I am not perfect
12 after all. I went to 10:00, it is supposed to be 9:20.

13 I would like to ask the Independent First
14 Nations Alliance, Mr. Garnet Angecone, to come to either
15 of these tables.

16 Garnet Angecone is a coordinator of the
17 Independent First Nations Alliance which consists of
18 communities of Big Trout Lake, Lac Seul and Pikangikum.

19 **GARNET ANGECONEB, INDEPENDENT FIRST**
20 **NATIONS ALLIANCE:** Commissioner Wilson and Commissioner
21 Chartrand.

22 **(Translated):** I am going to be doing
23 my presentation first in Cree and then in English.

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1 (Native language -- no translation
2 available).

3 Commissioners Wilson and Chartrand. It
4 is an honour for me to be here in Big Trout Lake along
5 with you. To be able to sit down with the people who I
6 work for and who I work with. The people from this
7 community of Big Trout Lake. The people from the community
8 of Muskrat Dam. The people of the community of Pikangikum.
9 As well, the people from Lac Seul where I so proudly come
10 from.

11 Our people have been meeting in the last
12 two days deliberating about ourselves and where we are
13 going as a people. We had workshops with our elders.
14 We had workshops with our women. We had workshops with
15 our young people. We had workshops with our leaders.

16 We know that this is not a perfect world
17 that we live in and we realize that we wanted to come
18 together to share and to be able to make our lives stronger
19 as individuals, as a people, that are working towards new
20 horizons, a new and better tomorrow.

21 We talked about some issues. We talked
22 about how we are going to get from here to there. One
23 of the things that I learned in our two day meetings and

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1 it is yet to be continued -- one of the greatest satisfying
2 feelings and experiences that I gained from this two day
3 meetings of the Independent First Nations Alliance was
4 to be honest and to trust one another.

5 What we are seeing as a people, what we
6 are experiencing today is a lot of pain. A lot of pain
7 that we have endured and suffered because of certain
8 situations that have happened in our lives. I don't think
9 I need to tell you what those pains are and what the causes
10 of those pains are. I am sure that throughout your travels
11 in this country that our people's stories are the same.
12 Residential schools, family violence, alcoholism and the
13 list goes on.

14 I think one of the things that I
15 experienced from the last two days in our internal
16 discussions was to be able to start dealing with them.
17 To start being honest with each other. I think what we
18 started here in the last couple of days was a beginning
19 of a very truthful and a very meaningful healing process.
20 Because what I experienced I have never ever experienced
21 before -- to be able to come out and be able to share
22 with my fellow brothers and sisters about some of the pains
23 and some of the true feelings that I have as an Aboriginal

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1 person. From there we can begin to heal and begin to shape
2 what our future is.

3 I was very happy and very moved by the
4 participation of all the members of our communities whether
5 it was the women, the youth, the elders, the leaders.
6 One of the things that I also reinstated in my feelings
7 was the fact that I was very proud to be Anishnawbe from
8 this area and to be able to be as fortunate to be able
9 to work with the people that I do work with. To be able
10 to express myself in my own language.

11 For me language is very important. The
12 Aboriginal languages belong in this country. The very
13 soil that we stand on is the mother land, the mother home,
14 of our languages. From there we flourish as Aboriginal
15 people, as a proud people, as a very cultured people, as
16 a very caring people which I experienced in the last two
17 days.

18 I feel very strongly about the language.
19 I feel it in my heart when I say that we must do everything
20 within our power to keep our language alive because as
21 I said this is the homeland of our language. There is
22 no other country in this world that we can go to as
23 Aboriginal people to regain our language if we lose it.

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1 It is not like our brothers and sisters from other
2 continents.

3 For example, the Italian people can go
4 back to Italy if they lose their culture and their language.

5 The Greeks and so on. But for us, Aboriginal people,
6 this is the mother land, this is the homeland of our
7 language and our cultures and we have no other places to
8 go should we ever lose it. I, for one, am determined that
9 we will not lose what the Creator has given us.

10 I just wanted to make some of those
11 opening comments before I read from a prepared text. I
12 feel very strongly about that. I feel very strongly about
13 the identity, the culture and the languages of our people
14 across this country.

15 I used to work in communications. I
16 have sat before many panels such as this. I particularly
17 remember sitting before a panel of Commissioners at the
18 CRTC and trying to articulate a policy for Aboriginal
19 communications in this country. We were arguing based
20 on language. We were looking at such things as revising
21 the Broadcast Act of Canada.

22 In the Broadcast Act of Canada and in
23 other Acts within this country there is one thing that

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1 I always read and that is the two founding languages of
2 this country. The two formal, official languages of this
3 country. I take real exception to that when I hear that.
4 What about the Anishnawbe language? It was here long
5 before any other language that I know of that was spoken
6 in this country even what they call the two official
7 languages of this country.

8 I have to honesty say that I really take
9 exception when I hear that. This is the homeland of my
10 language. There is no other place.

11 I would like to turn to some prepared
12 text. This is on behalf of the Independent First Nations
13 Alliance, I would like to say a few words about another
14 topic that is very important to the lives of the people
15 who live in these communities. That is the topic of
16 justice.

17 I do this in recognition of the expertise
18 that both of you have in the area of justice. The First
19 Nations which make up the Independent First Nations
20 Alliance have been working on justice issues for many
21 years. The Independent First Nations Alliance has, since
22 its inception, been working towards a resolution of issues
23 raised by the imposition of the Canadian Justice System

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1 on First Nations.

2 We have submitted a number of proposals
3 to provincial and federal justice officials during the
4 last four years. In 1990 and again in 1991, we were in
5 Geneva to address the United Nations Working Group on
6 indigenous populations on justice matters.

7 Early this year when the Standing
8 Committee on Aboriginal Affairs visited this community
9 along with Sioux Lookout we took the opportunity to bring
10 our concerns about the justice system to the Canadian
11 Parliament. We strongly believe that we must retain
12 self-government in matters of justice within our
13 communities. And it is a fact that this matter is vital
14 at this time.

15 The treaty was signed in this community
16 only 60 years ago. As recently as 25 years ago there was
17 little contact with the Canadian justice system. We
18 policed ourselves. We maintained peace in our own
19 communities. Less and less is that true. If we do not
20 act swiftly and effectively to preserve and retain our
21 traditional mechanisms of social control, we may succumb
22 completely to the imposition of the Canadian justice
23 system. We don't want that. Neither would it be good

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1 for our people.

2 We shall not make a complete argument
3 about justice at this time. During this visit we want
4 you to hear from our people. In these opening comments
5 we wish only to make some preliminary comments in relation
6 to justice.

7 The four communities which make up the
8 Independent First Nations Alliance are very different from
9 each other. In size and degree of contact they vary
10 greatly. In economy they vary. While they are all
11 Anishnawbe, there are significant differences amongst
12 them. For example, depending on how close they are to
13 the white society and how much they are able to rely on
14 traditional economic activities, their needs in relation
15 to justice vary from one another. Such differences impact
16 upon the needs in relation to justice.

17 The Anglo-Canadian justice system is not
18 ours, that hardly needs to be said. What must be said
19 is that our needs can only be met by our own justice systems.
20 When Canadian law attempts to deal with First Nations
21 issues, the results are usually bad for the First Nations.
22 This is because it is simply not designed for our
23 realities.

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1 At present, it is the criminal law and
2 natural resources law which impacts most severely on our
3 First Nations. We speak here of both federal and
4 provincial laws. In respect to this body of law, the
5 Canadian justice system assumes a world where there is
6 a state populated by individuals. This is most clear in
7 the area of criminal justice. A crime is an offence
8 against the state. When an individual contravenes one
9 of the provisions of the Criminal Code, the Canadian state
10 sends in its police and processes the offender through
11 its courts and hands down whatever punishment it deems
12 appropriate.

13 In natural resource law, the state
14 assumes that it owns the resources and that only it can
15 effectively regulate the exploitation by individuals and
16 corporations of the natural resources. The purpose of
17 the state in the area of natural resources law is to balance
18 competing uses between the individuals who live in the
19 state. As in criminal law, those who offend are charged,
20 tried and punished.

21 Where are we in this scheme of things?
22 We are not the Canadian state. Neither are we simply
23 Canadian individuals. Our communities are not made up

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1 of a state and individuals. We are communities in the
2 fullest sense of the word. We operate almost as a family
3 where we all have obligations and rights. We do not have
4 crimes so much as we have inappropriate behaviour. We
5 do not punish; rather we seek to heal. Sharing is the
6 basis of our land and resource use.

7 Our participation in the Canadian state
8 is not as individuals. Our participation in the Canadian
9 state is mediated through our own First Nations
10 governments. We have never given up our right to
11 self-government and we retain our institutions of
12 government, including justice. All too often, Canadian
13 criminal law and Canadian natural resources law ignores
14 our unique constitutional status, and it ignores our law.

15 I repeat, where are we in this scheme of things?

16 Our status as nations has frequently
17 been recognized in Canada. It has been stated explicitly
18 in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, and in the treaties
19 we signed in 1873, 1875 and 1929. It was recognized
20 implicitly in 1982 when our treaty and Aboriginal rights
21 were written into the Constitution. More recently, in
22 1991 in Ontario and this year in the Charlottetown Accord,
23 all Canadian governments recognized our inherent right

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1 to self-government. Where is our nationhood in Canadian
2 criminal and natural resources law?

3 We exist in Canada as First Nations.
4 Our relations with Canada and with Canadians are made
5 through our own First Nations governments. Each First
6 Nation retains its right to self-government in justice
7 and justice in each community must respond to local needs
8 and local culture. That inevitably means diversity in
9 justice mechanisms. It means diversity in First Nations
10 laws. That is what self-government in justice means.

11 By contrast, the Canadian justice system
12 assumes homogeneity. That cannot work for us. Our
13 communities are not the same as other Canadian communities
14 and neither are our communities the same as each other.

15 The justice systems of each of our communities naturally
16 varies according to its own geography, economy and culture.

17 Canadian society must recognize and indeed must embrace
18 that fact. We must have the right to the diversity which
19 exists amongst First Nations across this land.

20 This is our message to you today. We
21 ask you to explain to the Canadian governments and to the
22 Canadian people that First Nations vary from one to
23 another, and ask them to recognize that we need a similar

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1 diversity in our governmental institutions. Such
2 diversity only recognizes the diversity which already
3 exists.

4 If we are to have healthy and viable
5 First Nations, we must have governance institutions which
6 respond to the unique needs of each community. And that
7 must include justice systems which respond to the unique
8 needs of each community. That in turn inevitably means
9 diversity amongst the justice mechanisms used by the First
10 Nations. There is no threat in this to Canada or to the
11 Canadian justice system.

12 We urge you to ask the Canadian
13 government and the Canadian people to allow each First
14 Nation to develop its own effective, responsive and
15 appropriate self-government institutions, especially in
16 the area of justice. It is in the best interests of the
17 First Nations, and of all Canadians, that we be given the
18 space to do so. It is our right.

19 We shall, in the future, address the
20 Commission in more detail on justice matters. For the
21 present, we ask you to keep these thoughts in mind while
22 you listen to our people and again, we thank you for coming
23 into our midst today.

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1 Meegwetch.

2 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you very much,
3 Garnet.

4 I forgot to mention that we will be
5 giving Commissioner Chartrand and Commissioner Wilson the
6 opportunity to ask questions or make comments that they
7 may have on your presentation. So, we will provide that
8 opportunity.

9 We will go to that opportunity now and
10 if there are any questions from the Commissioners and also,
11 Stanley Sainnawap.

12 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I will ask
13 my colleague, Paul Chartrand, if he has any questions or
14 comments.

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

17 Before I thank you and comment on your
18 presentation, Mr. Angecone, I would like to acknowledge
19 the presence of the six Elders that our moderator was
20 telling us about. I want to say that we are highly honoured
21 by your presence. For me it certainly heightens the
22 significance of the treaties.

23 Meegwetch.

StenoTran

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1 I thank you for your presentation on
2 behalf of the Independent First Nations Alliance. We do
3 appreciate the terrible and unjust results of the
4 imposition, not only of the criminal law system, but of
5 the system generally for the Anishnawbe -- that I can assure
6 you.

7 We certainly recognize also the
8 importance of language. It is a point that has been made
9 many times and it is a point that certainly deserves to
10 be made many times and to be emphasized. I can assure
11 you that we will fight with you to promote the development
12 and maintenance of identity through languages.

13 Sometimes it seems to me that in the
14 context of discussion of Aboriginal self-government other
15 Canadians seem to think that those who are asking for
16 self-government are wide-eyed radicals who want strange
17 things. But a big part of our job, I think, is to tell
18 Canadians that what the Anishnawbe want is to keep their
19 identity by means such as keeping their languages that
20 you have told us, and to keep the integrity of their
21 communities.

22 We have here ancient societies in their
23 ancient homelands who are fighting against becoming

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1 strangers in a strange land. As you have said you are
2 fighting for a rightful place. We will fight with you
3 to get a rightful place in Canada.

4 I want to thank you in particular for
5 your remarks about the Anishnawbe ideas about the Canadian
6 state and pointing the distinctions between that and the
7 nature of the Anishnawbe communities. That is very
8 important for people in Canada to understand because it
9 seems to me that they do not now understand these matters.

10 In order to make the kind of
11 recommendations that will work, it seems to me that it
12 would be good to hear more. You may wish to make some
13 brief comments now, but you may not. You are going to
14 submit more details in time and we are going to continue
15 to hear from the Anishnawbe in various ways.

16 One of the points that occurs to me to
17 be important is to try to understand the reasons for these
18 communities that you have described so well to come
19 together. If we are to have working Aboriginal
20 self-government the kind that matters to people; the kind
21 that makes sense; and the kind that works, it seems to
22 me it would be useful to have an idea about what kind of
23 institutions -- why do people want to get together? For

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1 what purposes do you want to get together? How big are
2 you going to get the communities together? How many
3 communities will you want to get together and for what
4 purposes?

5 There are some things that you have
6 pointed out that are best handled at the community level.

7 Yet, there are other things that perhaps require the
8 development of strategies rather than only local reactions
9 -- strategies to plan in advance. There are some
10 activities that are of such a scale that they require
11 cooperation between communities. I think this is
12 unavoidable. That is something, in my view, that we are
13 looking for.

14 How big are the institutions to get
15 together to be? By institutions I just mean ways of doing
16 things. For what purposes are you going to get together?
17 What are they to be based on? What are they going to
18 based upon? Upon treaties. Upon the identity of the
19 peoples or all Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

20 For example, one idea developed by a
21 number of commentators has been an Aboriginal province
22 for Canada where all people get together for some purposes
23 -- for some wide purposes.

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1 I wanted to comment on that to show my
2 appreciation for the points that you have made and to
3 perhaps indicate that there is a need for dialogue in some
4 other areas as well. As you have said that dialogue is
5 forthcoming, perhaps you might wish to comment on it at
6 this time. I don't know.

7 Meegwetch.

8 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you very much,
9 Commissioner Chartrand.

10 Are there any other comments from the
11 other two Commissioners?

12 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Yes.
13 Thank you.

14 I too would like to acknowledge the
15 presence of the Elders here today. We are deeply honoured
16 that they would come out to attend our public hearings
17 and we appreciate that very much indeed.

18 I would like to respond to one or two
19 things that have been said about the justice system because
20 I have spent most of my working life in the justice system,
21 first as a lawyer and then as judge on two different courts.
22 I have learned quite a bit about how it works.

23 One thing that I know for sure, and I

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1 think my fellow Commissioners also know for sure, is that
2 it does not work for Native people. We have heard this
3 right across the country. We have, ourselves, visited
4 several penitentiaries and correctional institutions and
5 we have heard from the Native inmates. Believe me, we
6 have a very uncomfortable, unhappy feeling as a result
7 of what we have heard.

8 We have been trying to find out just what
9 the elements are that are wrong in the justice system.
10 I think we have concluded that they are pretty fundamental.
11 They go beyond just problems of sentencing. There are
12 problems with the process itself and with the trial process
13 itself. The Native people we know are not comfortable
14 with the trial process because it is based on an adversarial
15 system. It is based on conflict between the prosecution
16 and the defence.

17 It is really confrontation that is the
18 essence of the trial process. This does not fit well with
19 Native people and Native people's values. We know that.
20 We are persuaded that that is so. We have seen the
21 disproportionate number of Native people in our prisons.

22 We have talked to the inmates and we have
23 heard that 90 per cent of them plead guilty whether they

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1 had done the thing that they have been charged with or
2 not. They plead guilty just to get it over with and because
3 they didn't think that they were going to receive a fair
4 hearing in our courts. Of course, this is a very serious
5 matter for the Commissioners.

6 Also, as we have gone into these
7 institutions we have asked the Native inmates about their
8 background. We have heard, of course, all about the
9 residential school system, about the foster homes and about
10 the physical violence and abuse and sexual abuse that many
11 were subjected to -- who, in fact, have ended up in the
12 penitentiaries. So, this is a matter of great concern
13 to us as it is to you, also.

14 We have been thinking about whether the
15 existing justice system can be changed and adapted in a
16 way that would make it more appropriate for Native people
17 and would reflect Native values or whether that is an
18 impossible task because the things that are wrong with
19 it are so fundamental and that therefore the only solution
20 is a separate system of justice for Native people.

21 We are struggling with that and we held
22 a round table in Ottawa a couple of weeks ago to which
23 we invited Native judges, Native lawyers, crown

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1 prosecutors, defence counsel, academic scholars with
2 expertise in justice issues and we had 80 to 100 people
3 there struggling with this problem. What do we do about
4 the justice system?

5 Now, we also heard -- and you may be
6 interested in this -- that in a number of Native communities
7 they have just gone ahead and done it. A number of people
8 came and they told us about the diversion programs that
9 they had instituted in their communities to divert the
10 Native offenders out of the regular system.

11 We heard that in the Northwest
12 Territories they have established a community justice
13 program where they divert the offenders out of the system
14 into their own methods which really involve the
15 participation of their elders, the process of healing and
16 reconciliation in the community. They tell us that that
17 program is working extremely well.

18 We also heard about the South Vancouver
19 Island Justice Education Pilot Project -- the same sort
20 of thing. Taking the Native offenders out of the existing
21 system and dealing with them in their own way in the
22 community. They tell us it works. It works.

23 We heard about the Kahnawake Mohawk

1 Court trying to do the same thing. A pilot project there
2 to divert people out of the existing system.

3 They have just started in Toronto -- a
4 young man came and spoke to us about the Aboriginal Legal
5 Services Project in Toronto. Again, trying to do the same
6 thing and involving the elders and the people respected
7 in the community in dealing with those people.

8 What I am saying is do it. These groups
9 have just done it. They have created their own mechanisms
10 and they have told us that it works. They see this as
11 one aspect of self-government. Taking over this part of
12 the justice process is one way of expressing
13 self-government. This is what is happening in various
14 communities right across the country.

15 When you were telling us about meeting
16 and talking about these things and talking about
17 self-government and the problems with the justice system,
18 I think that you might want to consider some of those ideas
19 as to how you can maybe divert your people out of the
20 ordinary court system and put them into a system that is
21 more sympathetic to their kinds of values.

22 The punishment aspect of the existing
23 system is obviously not a value that Native people adhere

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1 to. We have been told that over and over again. Punishing
2 people isn't the answer. That it has to be done through
3 a process of healing and reconciliation.

4 I think that this is something that you
5 might want to think about for your own communities either
6 in each individual community or in the communities as a
7 group.

8 I just mention that to you in response
9 to what you have said because we are fully sympathetic
10 to what you have said about the justice system. I know
11 the justice system inside out and I am completely persuaded
12 that it does not work for Native people and that either
13 it has to be changed quite radically or there has to be
14 another way of dealing with Native offenders.

15 I just wanted to tell you what we have
16 learned about that as we crossed the country.

17 I want to thank you very much for coming
18 and making your presentation.

19 Thank you.

20 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Commissioner
21 Wilson.

22 Would the Commissioner of the Day have
23 any questions?

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1 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY CHIEF STANLEY**

2 **SAINNAWAP:** As usual I am going to say a few words in my
3 own language for the benefit of the various populations
4 here.

5 **(Translated):** I am going to say a few
6 words on the justice matter. The way I understand it is
7 when we, the Aboriginal people, think about something we
8 should try and show something in terms of managing our
9 affairs in the future and taking advantage of all the wisdom
10 and traditional teachings that are here in this community.

11 We try to help people who break the law.
12 There are all kinds of people here in this community.
13 There are elders and there are spiritual leaders. There
14 are young people, youth. We all know that every one of
15 us Native people have been given the knowledge. When we
16 were sent here into this world we were given a duty to
17 do in this world, not to just exist in this world.

18 Sometimes it may happen that all we do
19 is think about things and we say something is wrong. We
20 are not using the gifts we were given when we started out
21 on our journey of life. We have not made it work. That
22 is why we agonize over matters that matter to us.

23 Sometimes we say the government is going to give us money,

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1 but when the government gives us a grant, or money, we
2 have to go by their rules.

3 We go into the circle and from there
4 sometimes we go in the wrong directions because we put
5 money in front of us. The elders have had a lot of sessions
6 with me during the meetings and they say that if we are
7 going to start something that the Native people should
8 show something to show their effort first, not just to
9 ask for a grant from the government. They should show
10 something that they believe will help the community out.

11 This is not to say that we exclude the
12 government in everything we do, but it is to say that we
13 make the proper arrangements first. We should put
14 ourselves first. We arrange the things that will begin
15 the process that is going to be used and how we are going
16 to achieve it through a lawyer or a consultant.

17 We, the Native people, were given the
18 power to rule over ourselves as First Nations, as the first
19 people of Canada. This is what I am talking about.

20 Sometimes a person may think somebody
21 who has a lot of education when he looks at Native people
22 he says, "Those people are poor." That is not true.
23 I hear a lot of highly educated people who have gone through

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1 university and they think that they know everything, but
2 when they go back and think about their traditional life,
3 their Native way of life, and how their people live back
4 in their community, then all of a sudden they don't know
5 anything.

6 That is what I think about -- I don't
7 go through things in a rush. When young people get into
8 trouble -- my councillors have advised me that whoever
9 breaks the law or vandalizes community property that person
10 should try and be found. We, the people of this community,
11 should try and help him, to show him what he has done wrong.

12 This is what some of my young people say
13 too. I don't rush into things to waste what I have been
14 given. I take my time and I look at the issue very
15 carefully. That is what I say, that we should continue
16 to work on those matters together. We shouldn't point
17 fingers at each other. We shouldn't look away from our
18 brothers and our sisters who have fallen along the way.

19 We should try and help each other out through our actions
20 and the things that we think about that will benefit us.

21 When we think about justice and
22 policing, the things that have come into our reserve in
23 the past, maybe those things will become obsolete. I have

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1 already talked to these Commissioners about this.

2 When I first became Chief in 1990 we
3 hired a non-Native. We were informed by the young people
4 that when that non-Native went out -- he was to be a cook
5 at our hotel and those young people informed us that when
6 that non-Native went out of this reserve he was going to
7 go and pick up drugs to sell back here in this reserve.

8 The youth were concerned about this and informed us about
9 this.

10 When we were told about this matter we
11 waited for that individual to come back. We asked the
12 police, the OPP in Sioux Lookout to help us -- the
13 detachment that works in the North -- and they said, "We
14 don't have enough manpower to help you." The OPP here
15 in this reserve were not here at that time. All of them
16 were out of the reserve at that time.

17 We used our band constables and those
18 were the only ones that were there. Then they were the
19 councillors and the young people of this reserve -- those
20 were the three main working bodies working together to
21 prevent those drugs from coming into this reserve. We
22 confiscated those drugs.

23 He would have made \$30,000. We all know

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1 that many of our people exist on welfare. This is what
2 happened. This non-Native took us to court. He took us
3 to court on the basis -- this hearing took place in Kenora.
4 This is what happened. I was called up to the stand for
5 at least two hours to explain my position on why this
6 happened and why we had to do what we did. My band
7 constable and my councillor were put through the same
8 process.

9 That non-Native used the Charter of
10 Rights on us. That was based on individual needs. But
11 I went over there with a piece of paper that was proof
12 that this community through collective rights decided to
13 take action against liquor and drugs at our airport, to
14 stop the flow of drugs coming in. I stood firm. I tried
15 to defend my community. I spoke for my community. The
16 way I look at it I put my community first and my people's
17 lives and that is the way I stand.

18 I know that the elders stood with me
19 through all this and a lot of young people. It happened
20 that we won that case and now this non-Native is in jail
21 right now. He did write us a letter a while back --
22 probably a letter about five pages long. He was sorry
23 for what he did and what he tried to do to our people.

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1 He has been working on his life and he doesn't want to
2 live his life like that any more. He said that if permitted
3 he would come back to this reserve and help this reserve.
4 He said he would like to do that. This is why I am saying
5 that we have the power to do something -- to fight for
6 something.

7 Thank you very much.

8 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you very much,
9 Garnet, for your presentation.

10 I am going to ask at this time -- I will
11 say a few things first.

12 The moderator gets moderated sometimes
13 so I just got moderated so I guess I had better say this.
14 I forgot some of the things that I am supposed to say,
15 but I already have admitted that I am not perfect anyways.

16 For those of you from Lac Seul the
17 translation channels in English is on channel one and
18 Ojibway is on channel two, which would be your language.
19 Oji-Cree is on channel three, for those of you Elders
20 from Lac Seul, if you are wearing earphones.

21 We will be taking a short break after
22 the next presentation. Again, we would like to do most
23 of these things in the community context, and also as open

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1 as possible because I think that is the importance of our
2 presentations here, that we present them from the heart
3 and we present them to the best of what abilities we can.

4 We don't have magnificent words to be able to put in detail
5 the things that are our concern, but I think the importance
6 is what comes from the heart, even if it is meant in a
7 very common statement. Those are the very important
8 things that need to be said and need to be understood.

9 With that, Big Trout Lake will be doing
10 their presentation entirely in the language of this First
11 Nation. I guess you people may use the earphones for the
12 next presentation.

13 I will ask Big Trout Lake First Nations,
14 Elder Tonena McKay, Councillor Steven Chapman and Bruce
15 Sakakeep to come to this right-hand table.

16 I guess one of the elders has stepped
17 out for a second, but I will ask a couple of the elders
18 to come, too.

19 I just want to mention that Jemima Morris
20 who did the prayer this morning is one of the Elders that
21 I talked about who was present at the treaty signing here
22 in July, 1929, as well as Mary-Ann Anderson who is an Elder
23 of this community. Also, there will be other Elders which

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1 Chief Frank Beardy from Muskrat Dam will be bringing also
2 to the table. Those also were the Elders that were present
3 here at the gathering.

4 There were many people here who are now
5 residing in the other communities of Muskrat Dam,
6 Kasabonika, Island Lake, Wobica, Muskrat Dam Bearskin that
7 all gathered here for that event in 1929. We have some
8 of those people here with us and it is a great honour to
9 have them with us here today.

10 Big Trout Lake First Nation will do their
11 presentation.

12 **STEVEN CHAPMAN, BIG TROUT LAKE FIRST**
13 **NATION (Translated):** I guess I will be the first one to
14 start this session. When I was asked to do this I didn't
15 want to refuse this opportunity. I have a few things to
16 say.

17 When the Chief was talking about the
18 Charter of Rights which is entrenched in the Constitution
19 of Canada that is one thing that I wanted to talk about.

20 This is what happened to us this summer.
21 We confiscated somebody's parcel -- a non-Native -- and
22 in the parcel there was something that shouldn't have been
23 in there. Again, we were almost taken to court over this.

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1 I was preparing myself for this because I feel it was
2 my duty to do it. I let them know when they were talking
3 to me that this is what the people wanted. If I was going
4 to be thrown in jail because of this then that is the way
5 it has to be because the people elected me to this position
6 and I have to carry out the people's wishes.

7 If I had to do it all over again I would
8 go with people's collective decision even if it means going
9 to jail. That is one issue.

10 Non-Native -- that is one thing that I
11 wanted to talk about non-Native and Native laws conflicting
12 with each other. That is one thing that I wanted to talk
13 about. I will just talk about each subject briefly.

14 The other one that I wanted to talk about
15 is household responsibility -- individual. The Creator
16 gave us guidelines to follow in our own households and
17 all we have to do is follow them. All we have to do is
18 follow the Creator's rules.

19 Everything that a person needs to run
20 his family effectively, the woman, the man and the children
21 is all there. If we had followed those guidelines all
22 the time we wouldn't have any problems, but we chose not
23 to follow those guidelines. It is each individual's

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1 choice. Those guidelines that I am talking about are the
2 words of the Creator. All the rules are written down
3 there.

4 When a person sets down rules they know
5 that the rule they set is for the benefit of the people.
6 I feel that is the way the Creator looked at things too
7 and he set down the rules. For he made us and he should
8 know what is right for us.

9 We have started to leave this behind
10 especially when we start getting involved in politics.
11 They don't want to include those teachings in their
12 politics. The Creator, the one who created all the people,
13 knows what is going on in each person's mind and in each
14 person's life. He knows. Instead they created and
15 started making their own laws. Then those laws start
16 contradicting each other. This is what happens when we
17 mix politics.

18 The other thing that I want to talk about
19 is each person should try to know what is going on in their
20 own lives. When we look at each other we cannot tell what
21 is going on with each individual inside, what is happening
22 and what kind of feelings they are harbouring inside.
23 This is something that we have been working on for people

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1 to try and understand each other. If we cannot love
2 ourselves how can we love another person. We have to try
3 and understand ourselves first before we can start to help
4 each other out.

5 We need more of this teaching where it
6 is going to do us good -- emotionally. We need a lot of
7 spiritual guidance, too. The one that comes from the
8 Bible. For our spirits to grow spiritually, we need that.

9 We still need the other things that are
10 going to make our lives healthy on the outside. But we
11 still need the teachings to help us understand how the
12 mind works. That is what we need, too. I wanted to just
13 touch on that briefly, too.

14 The other one that I want to talk about
15 is land and how I hear the elders talk about what they
16 believe. We were put here in this world to guard this
17 land as guardians. For us to give to each other without
18 putting cost or money to it. In the old days when somebody
19 had an excess of food they gave without asking for anything.

20 The knowledge -- this thing called
21 knowledge, I know we can learn some things in school, but
22 the real knowledge comes from the Creator. The knowledge
23 that grows in the mind comes from the Creator. The one

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1 who created all the people. He created all the people
2 here in this road and he knows how to look after each,
3 but when we go to school -- the reason why we go to school
4 today is we are taught to be individuals -- for individual
5 gain.

6 This is the way things are right now.
7 Education comes first. The things that we know now in
8 our lives, in our mind, it comes from the Creator not from
9 our fellow human beings. We should try and thank the
10 Creator everyday for what he has given us.

11 I will be talking about language now.
12 We want our children to hold on to their first language,
13 to know it. When I look at my own children I try and teach
14 them a little of the Native language, but they would rather
15 speak the english language first. This should only prompt
16 us to try harder.

17 Just like Garnet said this is the only
18 place in this world where are language flourishes. If
19 somebody who came from across the sea lost their language
20 they can always go back to their place of origin and learn
21 their language there. We cannot do that. This is the
22 origin of our language and if we lose it here, we lose
23 it forever.

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1 We have to try and hang on to our language
2 because once we lose it we cannot find it somewhere else
3 again. Most of us, we still know how to speak our language
4 so we have to try harder, work harder to try and hang on
5 to our language.

6 I am just touching briefly on the
7 subjects. There are people still to make presentations.

8 The other one that I want to talk about
9 is trapping, hunting and fishing. I will talk from what
10 I have learned from the elders. The way it is in the Native
11 way of life is hunting is essential. Trapping is
12 essential. So is fishing. That is the way our elders
13 were raised by their parents. This is the way our elders
14 look at food today. The only food that they know comes
15 from the land. Not like us young people that is what we
16 call food. They don't consider that food.

17 Our elders, the only food they know comes
18 from the land. We do not want foreign laws to obstruct
19 us in our trapping, hunting and fishing. We do not need
20 laws like that. That is what is starting to happen today
21 laws are starting to come up which are going to affect
22 our way of life. The way we understand it is that the
23 Creator gave us those animals to subsist on. When it is

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1 said that the Native people are doing away with all the
2 wildlife and that is why we have to make those laws, that
3 is not the way it is.

4 The Creator looks after us. If he sees
5 the animals being utilized he will make more, but if he
6 sees them not being utilized then what is the use.

7 I am touching on each subject briefly
8 and I am almost finished.

9 I want to touch on residential schools.
10 I have heard a lot of talk about this subject -- being
11 talked about when people were taken to residential schools.
12 When it was a rule to speak our own language -- yes, it
13 is a bad thing for somebody to make us not speak our own
14 language.

15 Then there is another side to this
16 because of this Native people do not want to believe in
17 God. It wasn't God who made those mistakes, it was the
18 people running the residential schools who made those
19 mistakes. We should not blame him and we should not take
20 away our belief in him because of those people.

21 It was those people who ran that
22 residential school who made those mistakes and that has
23 to be talked about. That is something that I want to make

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1 understood.

2 The last thing that I want to talk about
3 is the justice system. Justice and the white law. The
4 way it happens down south when somebody is being
5 investigated whether he actually did the crime or not,
6 the lawyer can take anybody, even a murderer, somebody
7 who killed somebody else, and make him not guilty. This
8 is justice.

9 I, for one, do not like this. It is
10 based on each lawyer's expertise whether somebody is
11 innocent or not -- it seems. That is the way I look at
12 it. We, the Native people, we tend to look at other people
13 who have done wrong and we know there is something going
14 on in their lives that makes them do this. There is a
15 misunderstanding between him and the community and he
16 thinks that he is not wanted in the community. He feels
17 alienated from the other people.

18 When it comes to pass that he will go
19 and do things that are wrong then we have to try and make
20 them understand, make them feel wanted, make them feel
21 needed and try to make them understand their actions.

22 Thank you. Meegwetch.

23 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Steven

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1 Chapman.

2 With that we will have an opportunity
3 to hear from this table after the presentations are over.

4 I want to acknowledge at this time that we have the
5 students -- the young people from this community who also
6 our at this school. It is a very great honour to have
7 them with us at this table. They will be doing a
8 presentation also, later on this morning.

9 I will ask Elder Tonena McKay to make
10 a few comments.

11 **TONENA MCKAY:** I am not the type of
12 person who can talk for a long time for I am ill and cannot
13 talk that long.

14 First of all I want to say that I am
15 thankful to see all the people here together in this room.
16 The white people, I am thankful to see them here even
17 though I don't know where they come from.

18 In my younger days during my upbringing
19 I never say a white person. In 1929 it was the first time
20 I actually saw a white person and this was a priest. He
21 was going by canoe on his way to Big Trout Lake. When
22 he came to see Big Trout Lake that was the first time that
23 I saw a white person and I was really scared for that was

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1 the first time that I saw a white person.

2 Now when I think about it when I see white
3 people -- what I think now is there must have been a lot
4 of white people while I was growing up and yet, I didn't
5 even see them. I don't even know how to speak their
6 language. That is what I have to say here this morning.

7 Now they come to us in our communities
8 in many numbers. It seems like every month a white person
9 comes into our community. And he says, "I come from
10 Ottawa. I have come to make sure or to investigate how
11 your lifestyle is and how they can help you." Then they
12 go back and we never hear from them again. So what was
13 he talking about in the first place.

14 We have our leaders here. We have our
15 councillors. We have our chief. Our chief is very young.
16 He is like a child, but he is very wise. I have watched
17 him grow and I can tell you that he puts the Creator first
18 when he speaks. That is where he gets his strength from.
19 That is where he comes from. He seeks the elders advice
20 on the past.

21 You people that come from the white
22 world, Ottawa and south and we are up here in the north
23 -- way in the far north. If you, the white person, were

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1 put way up north all by yourself -- if you were put in
2 a remote location up north to try and understand what it
3 means to survive and how to live off the land. Would you
4 learn? Would you know the first thing to do if you were
5 left in a remote location up north?

6 Look at me today. If I was to be taken
7 out of here and put in a location down south and to survive
8 down south where you white people come from and I, by
9 myself, were put in a southern location all by myself --
10 I wouldn't even know the first thing to do. It is most
11 certainly be my demise. Maybe the same thing that would
12 happen to you white people. You wouldn't know the first
13 thing to do and I wouldn't know the first thing to do.

14 But, if I was put in a remote location
15 up north I would know what to do. I would know the first
16 thing to do. I would know how to hunt. I would know how
17 to provide for myself. In a remote location far north
18 with nothing to start off with I would know how to start
19 surviving. I would know the first step.

20 This is where the confusion is between
21 our two cultures. We can't seem to understand each other
22 and the differences in our cultures. This is what those
23 white people have come here to learn. I don't think that

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1 they would be able to understand our way of life if they
2 just come in here and sit in this room. I don't think
3 they will be able to understand the harshness and the
4 complexness of our survival in this land.

5 Look at our young people today. They
6 don't even know how or when to get water. Look at us now.
7 Survival is a very hard thing. One thing is for sure
8 they won't be able to understand our way of life by sitting
9 in this room -- such is our way of life.

10 As an elder I am unable to do things that
11 I used to do before, but still I still try. When somebody
12 asks me to do something I still go out of my way to do
13 it.

14 We were promised during the first treaty
15 that we would be taken care of -- everything that we needed.
16 Everything. You tell me your needs and I will provide
17 for you. Now all he has given us is shells just shells
18 as houses. The way modern society is those houses are
19 not compatible.

20 Everything that is needed in this modern
21 age we do not have it. We still have to provide for
22 ourselves manually. The cost of things keep rising up
23 north. One hundred dollars worth of groceries you can

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1 hardly see what you bought. Maybe just one sitting at
2 the table that is the way it is up north. Things are
3 expensive up north.

4 It is still getting harder and harder.

5 Our young people they are starting to find life more and
6 more difficult and even as we talk to them -- as the Chief
7 talks to them -- their way of life is different. When
8 we try to show them what is right they don't want to listen.

9 But when somebody does not follow the advice that would
10 do him good, it is like he is going down the road of despair.

11 Just like us, even us, if we do not follow
12 the teachings of the Creator, we will be going down the
13 same road. He has provided a way for us people to find
14 our peace. In the old days a young person listened and
15 respected his parents and listened to their teachings.
16 Teachings of survival. When a person didn't want to listen
17 he was disciplined harshly. That child didn't look at
18 it as abuse. There was a difference between right and
19 wrong.

20 Look at me I was raised harshly, too.

21 My parents hit me when they were raising me. They did
22 it so that I could learn and survive and that is why I
23 am still here today. Now I try to pass those on to my

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1 grandchildren and I hope that they can pass it on to their
2 children -- the teachings that their elders tell them.

3 I think I have pretty well said
4 everything. Maybe it is what the Commission wanted to
5 hear, too.

6 We can't seem to understand each other.
7 Our way of life is so different. The two lives -- the
8 Native life and the white life -- is different. Now they
9 have come to find out what it is that is not doing this
10 right and what it is that we think is right. Maybe if
11 we showed them our grievances maybe they will be able to
12 help us.

13 Another thing I want to talk about --
14 before they came here to find things out -- is medical
15 care. They have said that people who do not understand
16 english will not have an escort out to the southern
17 hospitals, but that can't happen for somebody who doesn't
18 understand english. For somebody who doesn't understand
19 english not to have an escort that can't happen.

20 Going back to maybe four years ago when
21 somebody just got dropped off in Sioux Lookout airport
22 and was left there and didn't know any english at all and
23 that was where he met his end at the airport. Me, how

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1 would I be able to survive there if I was to go there without
2 an escort?

3 Somebody already died of thirst,
4 starvation or just froze to death. He was from Fort
5 Severn. That was where he met his end at the Sioux Lookout
6 airport. It is just going to happen again to somebody
7 who doesn't understand english. Somebody who doesn't
8 understand the white way of life, the white language, has
9 to have an escort to survive out there. This is important.

10 This is what the people working in the
11 airport in Sioux Lookout hears. They have to teach the
12 Native people who don't know how to speak english. They
13 have to teach them what to do. This cannot be. Everybody
14 who doesn't understand english has to have an escort.
15 It is being debated right now.

16 During a survey I was asked this
17 question, too. Somebody who doesn't understand english
18 not to have an escort because of the money involved. I
19 asked her: "Where do you come from? Where are you from
20 -- asking me those questions?" She said, "I come from
21 Thunder Bay and I have been asked to do this survey".
22 I told her, "I won't ever go out without an escort."

23 If I have to meet my end here then so

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1 be it, but to go out there and meet my end -- I will not
2 let that happen. That is what I told her. If I was to
3 go out there with an escort then I would go willingly.
4 That is what I told her. That is an important issue, too.

5 We have to keep going with the present
6 system -- for someone who doesn't understand english to
7 be escorted by somebody who knows english.

8 Now I will come to traditional lands.
9 It is not right for us to give up our traditional way
10 of life. We cannot live off the store all the time. What
11 happens one day if we cannot go to the store any more.
12 It is going to happen that you are going to have to live
13 off the land once more. That day is going to come again.

14 One day we are going to see a day when
15 everything that we see inside the store is going to seize
16 to be. Maybe our grandchildren are going to see this or
17 maybe the next generation after that. It is important
18 that we hang on to our traditional way of life -- hunting
19 for survival.

20 In the old days I never saw anything that
21 we call white food today. That is what I try to tell my
22 grandchildren that one day they are going to have to go
23 back to the land and I have to coach them to eat natural

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1 food. They have to get used to it -- that is what I tell
2 them. They don't listen. They don't listen to what I
3 tell them. I have experience with the things that I am
4 telling you. That is what I tell them.

5 I never saw a store when I was growing
6 up. I heard about the store far away. My father when
7 he went to the store and he brought back tea -- I couldn't
8 drink tea. I didn't like tea.

9 I am just going to touch on some issues
10 briefly.

11 I am speaking my mind today because this
12 group has come in from Ottawa to hear what we have to say.

13 There is only one leader in this
14 community and that is the chief. What his decision is
15 that is the decision that has to be followed.

16 I guess I will be finishing up because
17 the lunch hour is getting close. There are still people
18 who have to talk behind me.

19 I want to talk not about the young
20 people, but the middle aged people. They really like
21 hunting. That is what they do in the fall and in the
22 spring. They want to go hunting. They want to go fishing.
23 They hunt for fowl, for moose. They like doing this.

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1 But this woman at home when the man brings home the food
2 that he has killed, they don't even know how to look after
3 it. This is what is happening to some of the ladies that
4 I know.

5 When the husbands provide natural food,
6 the ladies at home don't know how to look after the food.
7 That is what happens to some of the ladies. Some of the
8 ladies still like doing that. But for those who don't
9 -- natural food just ends up getting spoiled.

10 Anything that is killed is meant to be
11 consumed. That is what I teach my relatives. If they
12 don't want to utilize the wild food then if I see it I
13 go over there and I cook it and consume it myself. This
14 is how I find some women to be. Even my close relations.

15 I think I am pretty well finished. I
16 still have a lot of things that I could say. But I am
17 satisfied and I am thankful that this hearing is being
18 held here. It is the time of season and we have reached
19 that time of season for all mankind to come together as
20 one.

21 So now I shake everybody's hands out of
22 respect. Those people that I know and those people that
23 I don't know.

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1 That is all.

2 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Meegwetch.

3 The students will have to leave for lunch
4 at 12:00 so they will be doing their presentation this
5 afternoon first thing, but we want to do Dorothy McKay's
6 presentation before we break for lunch and that is after
7 the Big Trout Lake presentation is done.

8 I think if anybody needs any coffee I
9 think we can forego that process for 15 minutes and then
10 just continue and try and do Dorothy McKay's presentation
11 before we break for lunch.

12 I will ask for brief comments from the
13 Commissioner's table after the Big Trout Lake
14 presentation.

15 Again, as I said before, the people of
16 Big Trout Lake would like to carry this as slowly as
17 possible and to listen to the common concerns of the people
18 and concentrate on them.

19 I think with that I think we will proceed
20 as God will allow us to proceed on this day that he has
21 given us this opportunity.

22 Meegwetch.

23 **BRUCE SAKAKEEP:** Bonjour. First of

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1 all, I would like to thank the Commission for allowing
2 me this time to express my concerns, my thoughts and
3 feelings around a certain topic that I will be touching
4 on. My name is Bruce Sakakeep. I work for the band on
5 one of their departments.

6 I am doing this presentation as a
7 concerned citizen of a First Nation. I am here for myself.

8 I do not represent an organization or any specific
9 interest group.

10 What I would like to touch base on is
11 self-government, but first of all I would like to say that
12 I think this presentation would have been more appropriate
13 in the first rounds of discussions that you had. This
14 presentation certainly touches base on how we as First
15 Nations people can pursue self-government. I have touched
16 on certain issues that we can pursue in order for us to
17 have true Native Indian self-government.

18 I want to point out that this
19 presentation is not intended to show any disrespect or
20 downgrade the leadership capabilities of any elected First
21 Nation Chief or councillor, both at the community level
22 or tribal level, nor am I questioning any motives or
23 actions. I would suggest that everybody keep an open mind

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1 during the course of this presentation.

2 First Nations and both levels of the
3 Canadian government have had many discussions on the issue
4 of Indian self-government. The subject of Indian
5 self-government is a very broad issue and I am certain
6 that everyone present has his or her own interpretation
7 of self-government.

8 As a First Nation citizen I want to voice
9 a few concerns with regards to self-government:

10 a) Are we as First Nations ready for
11 such an enormous undertaking?

12 b) Have we as First Nation people
13 healed ourselves and our communities enough after years
14 of abuse and oppression from the dominant society -- mainly
15 the Canadian government -- to pursue and implement Indian
16 self-government?

17 The pursuit of Indian self-government
18 is an enormous undertaking that requires the involvement
19 by all First Nations people and leaders with high
20 integrity. The issue of power and control comes to mind.

21 Are we as First Nations truly ready to assert and exercise
22 our power and control over our own lives and destinies?

23 With this issue of power and control, is it not possible

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1 that elected First Nations representatives will abuse
2 their positions when self-government becomes a reality?

3 When a person has not dealt with him or
4 herself, and not gone through any healing process, and
5 is living with the unresolved issues, there exists the
6 danger of acting or making decisions from that hurt inner
7 child. Remember that the decisions that we make as
8 Aboriginal people today will affect our people seven
9 generations from now including the earth, wildlife and
10 our environment.

11 There are cases where an elected
12 representative has taken total control of the community
13 and its residents with a vested interest in personal
14 financial gain and totalitarianism. This, in the eyes
15 of the representative, enhances his or her own self
16 interest and personal gain by this power and control.

17 There are also allegations where there
18 is conflict of interest, embezzlement of band funds, abuse
19 of power and nepotism.

20 Presently, there are many instances
21 where First Nations leadership are involved in these
22 practices. Nepotism and favouritism is running rampant
23 in many First Nation governments.

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1 Too many times we have the tendency to
2 favour some people over others, this should not be the
3 case. I do not think it was the intention of the Creator
4 when he granted mankind the breath of life, for mankind
5 to rule and dominate over others. Every humankind should
6 be looked at and treated equally as it was intended, as
7 we are all aware nobody is better than anybody else. We
8 were all created as equals by the Great Spirit.

9 We must also remember that some people
10 will favour a certain type of administration only because
11 they themselves will benefit from it personally. And,
12 as previously stated, every citizen of a First Nation
13 should or has to be looked at on an equal basis.

14 Too many times elected representatives
15 have the tendency to forget who put them in the capacity
16 of a community leader. In some instances they become
17 political whores or political animals. The sexy and
18 glamorous part of the job of an elected leader in either
19 Native or non-Native government is the jet-setting
20 lifestyle, going to meetings and getting all the media
21 exposure. We must understand that events like these
22 should not get to our heads. We must maintain the humility
23 within our lives and not to forget our people and where

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1 we come from.

2 In order for the true self-government
3 to become a reality we must address these issues. We
4 cannot pursue self-government by choosing to sweep the
5 issues under the rug or ignoring them and hoping they will
6 go away by themselves. We must first acknowledge that
7 these negative issues exist and deal with them
8 realistically through a healing process.

9 Although the program that is presently
10 in existence is entitled: "Community Based Indian
11 Self-Government" it should be community driven. Is it
12 really community based Indian self-government with all
13 the external government regulations and policies attached
14 to the package? My understanding or either lack of
15 understanding is that it does not even recognize or accept
16 our traditional forms of governance and its hereditary
17 Chiefs.

18 In my opinion, the Canadian government
19 is still trying to assimilate First Nation people within
20 the Canadian Federation by imposing the European
21 structures on First Nations and this has been happening
22 since the Indian Act of 1869. Their intention was to
23 disrupt the traditional Aboriginal political structure

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1 by replacing them with their European model.

2 The government has stated -- time and
3 time again -- that they want to give us self-government.
4 How can they give us something that we as First Nations
5 people were born with, that of our inherent right to
6 self-government? The ridiculous part of the deal is that
7 the government wants us to have this self-government
8 package within a certain time frame. Get real. How can
9 we possibly fix something within a five to ten year period
10 which took the government hundreds of years to screw up
11 and literally destroyed our own form of traditional
12 governance.

13 As we are all aware, we are an oppressed
14 people and usually this means that our future is dictated
15 by the people who have continually oppressed and suppressed
16 us. This does not necessarily mean that we will remain
17 suppressed or oppressed. We as Firsts and its people have
18 the right to choose who we want to be and how we want to
19 govern ourselves. Justice and fairness have to be done
20 and also must be seen by the people to be done.

21 In closing, I would like to reiterate
22 the fact that I am not pointing fingers at anyone and I
23 apologize if I have offended anybody. This was not the

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1 intent. These are some issues of concern to me personally
2 as a citizen of a First Nation community.

3 Again, I thank the Commission for
4 granting me this opportunity to make this presentation.

5 May the Great Spirit guide you in the undertaking of this
6 enormous and worthwhile task.

7 Meegwetch.

8 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Meegwetch.

9 I will give the Commission a brief time
10 to address some of the concerns. They told me as the
11 moderator I can do that so I am taking that initiative.

12 I will ask the Commissioner's table to
13 address this.

14 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank
15 you, Mr. Moderator.

16 I want to thank the presenters for their
17 presentations. There is not time to offer many comments
18 and there is not yet time to reflect upon them in the way
19 we will have to do, but we have heard you and we appreciate
20 very much you sharing your experiences and your views with
21 us. I can say that I am particularly honoured and pleased
22 to hear from the Elder this morning.

23 Mr. Sakakeep, in the latest presentation

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1 has indicated some concerns where, as I understand it,
2 the traditional methods of control have been taken by the
3 outside governments and they are concerned that new power
4 is put in without the traditional methods of control.
5 Many people have these concerns.

6 Many people have the concerns that he
7 said about the Department of Indian Affairs program that
8 it has chosen to call self-government -- for the reasons
9 that you have mentioned. Others have talked about the
10 vulnerability of small communities in dealing with the
11 power of the government to impose their regulations and
12 policies that you have talked about. It certainly is an
13 issue that is before us.

14 We have to take the time to weigh with
15 great care all the issues that are involved.

16 We thank you very much for having brought
17 them before us today.

18 Meegwetch.

19 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I have
20 taken under advisement what our moderator has said about
21 being brief, but I did want to make just one or two comments.

22 Councillor Chapman spoke about the
23 problem of understanding each other and how we can't see

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1 into each others minds and hearts. Of course, that is
2 perfectly correct. That is just as true of non-Native
3 people as it is of Native people.

4 I would just like to say in that
5 connection that if it is difficult for Native people living
6 in a community to understand each other and each others
7 thinking, how much harder is it for white people and Native
8 people to understand each other. This is one of the things
9 that the Commission is charged with the responsibility
10 of trying to get non-Native people to understand Native
11 people and the Native way of life through public education.

12 We have been given that responsibility in our mandate.

13 We have to, in some way, as hard as it
14 may be, get non-Native people to understand the people
15 that it is sharing this country with and to understand
16 their aspirations and their goals for the future.

17 I wanted to say also that I was very
18 interested in what the Elder had to say and particularly,
19 what she had to say about young people because we have
20 been hearing this in a great many of the communities we
21 have visited. We have heard a great deal about the kind
22 of stress and tension that young people in Native
23 communities are experiencing.

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1 We have been told that to some extent
2 it is because they have a foot in two different worlds.
3 They have a foot in their traditional world and they have
4 another foot in today's modern world through radio,
5 television, leaving the community to go to school, and
6 mixing with white children. This is very hard and very
7 confusing for young people. I think we have that message
8 and we can understand that.

9 We don't know what the answers are, but
10 we certainly have heard about the problem from the young
11 people. We are aware of that.

12 I would just like to say in response to
13 the last presenter that over and over again in the
14 communities we have visited the concern has been expressed
15 that if Native self-government becomes a reality there
16 must be some way of making the Native leaders accountable
17 to the people that they are governing. This has been told
18 to us many many times in communities right across the
19 country.

20 Again, we don't have the answers. We
21 are interested in hearing what the Native people have to
22 say on the subject because it is obviously an important
23 one if Native self-government is going to work.

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1 I just wanted to say that we have heard
2 this in communities all across the country. We have taken
3 note of it and we are anxious to hear what the Native people
4 have to say about how this is to take place. How Native
5 leaders under self-government should be accountable to
6 the people that they are governing. We are aware of all
7 these issues. We have heard them everywhere we have gone.
8 We are listening very carefully to what the Native people
9 have to say on that.

10 Thank you very much.

11 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY CHIEF STANLEY**

12 **SAINNAWAP:** I don't feel comfortable being a Commissioner
13 of the Day because I am not wearing a moose hide jacket.
14 Maybe that is an oversight on my membership.

15 **(Translated):** I just want to say that
16 I enjoyed listening to the presenters this morning. Being
17 a Commissioner of the Day and not having a moose hide jacket
18 to wear -- but those issues that are being talked about,
19 they are interesting.

20 They come from two perspectives, from
21 an elders perspective and from a middle-age perspective.
22 That is what I try to keep in mind in my leadership in
23 this community, not to just look at one side. I try to

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1 lead the young people to speak for themselves for they
2 were treated like their concerns weren't being listened
3 to in the past. They thought that the young people didn't
4 know anything, but that is not happening today. We know
5 that everybody has something to share.

6 I think about self-government a lot,
7 too. I governed myself, too, all my life. I governed
8 myself in the bush. I didn't have a lot of money. The
9 elders showed me how to govern myself to survive on the
10 land. At least three different elders went with me. I
11 wasn't that good at first in trapping or hunting. I never
12 even thought about swiping the elders' furs from them even
13 though I knew I would need a lot of furs in order to live
14 comfortably when I came back home.

15 I have learned a lot. The elders have
16 shown me a lot. The young people, the old people, they
17 all have their roots. I try to listen to all of them.
18 I never thought that I would become leader, that I would
19 become chief of this band. It never crossed my mind.

20 When I was a child I was taught many
21 things, things that people wanted me to do. I was taught
22 those things -- to work in the band office. Maybe that
23 is where my blessing came from in listening to the elders

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1 and being part of their lives. I am not bragging in saying
2 this. I am just sharing my experience. I know that I
3 stumble my way around sometimes too, but I always get back
4 up and I accept that. I have to persevere and walk on
5 and stand strong. Stand firm.

6 On self-government that is why I said
7 during this latest referendum on October 26 -- that is
8 why I decided to abstain from that. Part of the package
9 was the self-government and yet we still don't have a clear
10 definition of what self-government is. When those First
11 Ministers had a meeting we weren't even informed. The
12 First Ministers were the only ones that knew what was going
13 on, and also the Prime Minister. They did it secretly.
14 Things that are done secretly are always found out in
15 the end.

16 We all know that on October 26th the
17 people of Canada said no to that package. We abstained
18 from that. We didn't want anything to do with that one.
19 I decided not to lead my people down that path of something
20 that was constructed secretly, for we already have an
21 agreement with the Government of Canada. We cannot go
22 into another agreement. We have to go with the original
23 one.

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1 If we move from one agreement to another
2 it is not going to do us any good. That is what I looked
3 at. Things were unclear. It really looks good on paper
4 when you read it, but how can you make it work for you
5 if it is just good on paper. We have to make it go, that
6 is the only way we are going to find whether it is going
7 to work.

8 It is up to us people to start showing
9 each other what we are going to do in the future. Just
10 like this elder said, that we are going to start working
11 on those kinds of things too -- the escorting of patients.
12 We will move on it too. We have done the studying on
13 this.

14 Everything is welfare. The government
15 has been pressuring me to take over the welfare
16 administration, but I can't. I would like to negotiate,
17 but I can't. I would like proper negotiations between
18 Indian Affairs and my band, not at the bureaucratic level
19 -- the highest authority I can go.

20 The reason I say this is the Minister
21 of Health and Welfare is trying to hide behind that. He
22 was trying to shift his responsibilities to this area.
23 Last year he said that the Native people will pay through

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1 their welfare benefits. That is all those necessary
2 trips. That is how the escorts and the patients will be
3 paid out to southern hospitals. But that didn't happen
4 because I didn't accept that package. That is why I always
5 look at each package carefully before I accept it. I
6 always try to make sure that I get the input of the people
7 first.

8 I sympathize with the Elder when she
9 talked about that other elder who met his end in Sioux
10 Lookout. When he was finally found he wasn't a pretty
11 sight. We were going to do something about this.

12 I am glad that I have two of my people
13 coming back. Now I have Eno Chapman and Grace coming back
14 to this community. I am glad.

15 Your first time as moderator, for the
16 Commission's purpose -- as I mentioned, I was just kidding
17 when I said that. I never demand anything from my band
18 members. As the Commissioner of the Day you can call me
19 that, but whatever is said in the presentations, whatever
20 the presentations entail, I guess that is my responsibility
21 to see that those presentations get follow-up action.

22 Many times people are coming here to get
23 information. They are doing all kinds of surveys and

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1 studies and usually those studies, inquiries and surveys
2 don't come back with the positive results and meaningful
3 solutions to our First Nations.

4 I think some people somewhere are just
5 using that information for their own good, for their own
6 personal advantages. Maybe to upgrade their professional
7 education, just to get more degrees.

8 For instance, I can give you a classic
9 example. We had a person here who spent a number of months
10 here. His name is Martin Greenwood. He spent many months
11 here. He studied Native people and their environment.
12 He did that study in a very comprehensive manner. For
13 instance, he promised one elder and told him he gave him
14 lots of information about his life and his experience in
15 the past, and also the kind of things that that person
16 did.

17 After the old man gave all that
18 information, his personal experience of the land and other
19 areas -- that Mr. Greenwood promised that man to give him
20 a canoe because he asked him what do you need because he
21 thought that he had information that he needed to make
22 his study look good and look fancy and descriptive.

23 Today, this man died. He never received

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1 a canoe. I heard Mr. Greenwood went to England to get
2 his doctorate degree using information of what he got from
3 Native people. Those Native people were victimized to
4 accomplish what he learned. His victimization of their
5 struggle -- this particular man must be happy making a
6 lot of knowledge and making a lot of money. This is the
7 thing that I don't want to see happen to this Commission.

8 Thank you very much.

9 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you very much,
10 Commissioner Sainnawap.

11 I would like to ask that when we bring
12 people to come up here -- it is an honour for them just
13 to say thank you for being up here.

14 I would like to have these two people
15 maybe say a word or two. Elder Mary-Ann Anderson will
16 be first and then Councillor Alice Beardy.

17 **MARY-ANN ANDERSON:** I guess I will speak
18 a few words to say hello. The way that the moderator has
19 instructed us to say hello, but that is not what we heard
20 this morning. We were told that they came here to find
21 things out.

22 I think it is important for the elders
23 to have their say in this, too. That is what I feel.

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1 So here I am sitting and talking, but I wanted you to know
2 that I act as an advisor for the chiefs in the north.

3 I am sorry that I missed the teachers and the students.

4 I feel that I should have been given the opportunity to
5 speak to them for it is my job to speak to the Native people.

6 I was delegated responsibility to talk
7 about education up north and I just returned from a
8 community called Bearskin Lake and I conducted some
9 interviews regarding education over there.

10 I sit on the board as well with an
11 organization called NNEC and they are striving for Native
12 education in the North. In this way we are going around
13 asking for Native parents input so that we can change the
14 curriculum more to a Native format.

15 I like the way it was in the past so that
16 we can change the curriculum to be more Native oriented
17 which is more suitable to our Native needs and our Native
18 lifestyle as well as spiritual teachings. I am pretty
19 sure Eno knows a lot about this too because he was at the
20 meetings, too.

21 Anyway, I just wanted to let you know
22 that this is what I have already started and I have already
23 submitted one letter -- a report on my trip to Bearskin

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1 Lake and the chief and the band council and the spiritual
2 leaders over there agreed with the proposed changes.

3 I haven't started here yet. I have
4 already been called from the office and they have asked
5 me when I am going to start conducting my interviews here.

6 I told them I would wait until after the Royal Commission
7 before I start.

8 I just wanted you to know that is my job.

9 I am an elder advisor for the chief in promoting our
10 culture. I try to show that I have a lot of respect for
11 traditional lands and for the traditional way of life.
12 I try to show it.

13 I promoted in my family -- I know the
14 non-Native way of life too because I have travelled all
15 over the non-Native cities. I prefer to live the Native
16 way of life because I know I have learned it and I am
17 comfortable with it.

18 That is all. I shake your hand out of
19 respect.

20 In closing, you probably will never
21 understand us Native people as we will never understand
22 you white people for the Creator meant for us to live our
23 lives separately.

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1 I am glad to see all the young people
2 here today and I am glad that they are still trying to
3 pursue their traditional way of life.

4 I want to thank everybody, all the people
5 here in this community and the steps they have taken in
6 improving this community and I say thank you and I shake
7 your hand out of respect.

8 **JEMIMA MORRIS:** I want to say a few
9 words, too. I can remember back to when I was three years
10 old. I saw that traditional upbringing. I never tasted
11 all the foods that are available at the stores now and
12 I didn't mind. I used to have a younger brother and that
13 57 years ago.

14 I am very regretful that we have lost
15 a lot of the traditional teachings and the traditional
16 way of life that the Creator meant for us to live by.
17 Now the MNR is taking over the land and even trying to
18 control how many animals we should take. Yet, he is not
19 the one with the power over the land because the Creator
20 has the power.

21 Native people are different from
22 non-Native. I have been down to the white cities. I have
23 been down over to the United States and I see land that

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1 has been totally decimated, the rivers, the beautiful land,
2 the timber -- it is all gone. Why? Why do they destroy
3 it? That is the way I see it.

4 Then there are Native people in the
5 United States, too. They are just crowded on lots of
6 lands. Small pieces of land. They are all crowded in
7 there. The Creator gave us this land to begin with. Look
8 at us now. The children do not know the old days. All
9 they can do is look at what the white man Native society
10 is doing. They cannot be taught by their parents for the
11 influence of the non-Native society. It is too great and
12 it stems from the school, too.

13 I have looked at what government
14 benefits have done. My grandmother was 70 years old when
15 she first started getting her benefits. One chief at that
16 time said, "Her benefits came in a little late. She should
17 have received her benefits long before." Then it happened
18 that anybody who was 65 received their old age pension.

19 I am in a rush right now to get this
20 speech over with and I just wanted people to know that
21 I lived a traditional way of life. I grew up outside in
22 the middle of the winter. I lived in a teepee, too. In
23 order for us to survive no matter how cold it was our parents

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1 would still go out and check their nets and their traps,
2 go hunting. That was survival.

3 Now my younger brothers and sisters they
4 didn't really experience this way of life. The store had
5 pretty well been established here and that was where they
6 started getting their food from.

7 I just want to thank all the people here
8 in this community. I shake everybody's hand. My friends,
9 strangers, white people. I thank you.

10 Meegwetch.

11 **ENO CHAPMAN:** I would ask that since we
12 have concluded Big Trout Lake presentation and I wanted
13 to do that with the first ones that maybe the presenters
14 can shake the Commissioners hands. Now. My last words.

15 Can I get everybody's attention. I
16 would like to reiterate the point that we are going to
17 take our time during the course of these hearings so I
18 would ask that everybody be patient and we will take our
19 time and go through all the presentations and we will take
20 all the necessary time that we have.

21 Since we didn't have a break this morning
22 they are serving meals in the basement of the church.
23 Everybody that is present can go over there for lunch.

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1 So we are going to take maybe about 45
2 minutes -- if we can have that short a lunch and we will
3 resume again at 1:30.

4 Thank you.

5

6 --- Upon recessing at 12:45 p.m.

7 --- Upon resuming at 1:40 p.m.

8

9 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Good afternoon. Guests,
10 visitors and the members of Big Trout Lake and residents
11 of Big Trout Lake and also, the communities of Kasabonika,
12 Lac Seul, Wapekeka and Muskrat Dam.

13 Welcome to our afternoon session of this
14 Royal Commission.

15 This afternoon we will carry on with an
16 individual presentation left out from this morning. We
17 will also have a presentation after that from the student
18 youth group here at the school.

19 We will have a brief intermission in the
20 middle of the afternoon. There will be presentations made
21 to the Commissioners and I believe there will be a few
22 other presentations, but given some time we will try and
23 do that during the brief intermission that we have this

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1 afternoon.

2 I will ask Dorothy McKay to first make
3 her presentation.

4 **DOROTHY MCKAY:** Hello. My name is
5 Dorothy McKay. I am a citizen of Big Trout Lake First
6 Nation. I want to begin my presentation by extending a
7 hand of welcome to the Commissioners of the Royal
8 Commission on Aboriginal people. Welcome.

9 I also extend the same greeting to all
10 the staff and the media people who are associated with
11 the Commissioners. Welcome.

12 The subject of my presentation today is
13 a sensitive issue -- single parenthood. Sensitive in that
14 there are many citizens of this First Nation who are living
15 with the reality of raising children single-handedly.
16 Sensitive in that single parenthood is often looked upon
17 as a state of immorality no matter the circumstances that
18 give rise to this situation.

19 Sensitive in that the needs and concerns
20 of single parents are often not addressed nor adhered to
21 by those who are in the position to assist a struggling
22 mother or father. Sensitive in that single parents
23 struggle daily for equal opportunity for adequate housing,

1 employment, education and proper child care services.

2 I am a single parent. I live with the
3 reality of single parenthood. The thoughts and emotions
4 I express about single parenthood are those of many single
5 parents in this community. In that regard, I speak on
6 behalf of all single parents in this community.

7 As you have heard my opening statements
8 on single parenthood was to inform you that my topic is
9 sensitive and is to be treated with respect. I am not
10 here to point fingers at any particular person or group
11 of people because it is not my way to be so disrespectful.

12 Rather I will allow the truth of my statements to seek
13 out a listener or listeners that will take heed based on
14 the plight of single parents.

15 The body of my presentation will
16 highlight the sensitive issues surrounding single
17 parenthood. In my concluding remarks I will summarize
18 my thoughts on single parenthood and offer a recommendation
19 for positive changes. As a mother of this generation of
20 children and a grandmother of future generations, I have
21 the right to speak.

22 My statements may be susceptible to
23 criticism and oppression, but how can self-government

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1 based upon the inherent right to be self-determining be
2 a reality if the voice of mothers and single parents cannot
3 be heard and treated with respect? I ask all people
4 present to listen with an open heart and mind.

5 There are 1000 First Nation members
6 residing in Big Trout Lake. Eighty of these people are
7 single parents. Most of the single parents are women.
8 There is no housing provided to a single parent. Priority
9 is given to households that have two residing parents.
10 Single parents do not have the benefit of raising their
11 children with proper and adequate housing. Most single
12 parents live in overcrowded conditions. Often times, they
13 reside with their immediate families or with extended
14 families.

15 Many single parents live on social
16 welfare as unemployment is high, but even when employment
17 is available equal opportunity is often times denied to
18 a single parent. Social welfare benefits received by
19 single parents are not sufficient to meet the daily needs
20 of feeding and clothing children when the cost of living
21 in remote communities is high. Many children living with
22 a mother or father on social welfare are ridiculed and
23 made to feel ashamed of their humble existence. The

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1 present income program only reimburses this situation.

2 Due to their source of income, single
3 parents and children suffer from low self-esteem. Often
4 times, this leads to alcohol and drug abuse, suicide,
5 family violence and other social disorders.

6 For those few single parents that are
7 fortunate to have employment most of their earnings are
8 spent paying for babysitting services. There is a lack
9 of child care services and facilities in this community.
10 Single parents struggling to raise a family do not receive
11 the support they require.

12 There are many reasons why a parent is
13 single. For some of us, we have had children outside the
14 marriage institution. For some, we are divorced or
15 separated. For some, we have had to leave the marriage
16 institution to salvage our physical, mental and spiritual
17 well being. For some, we are fostering or have adopted
18 children.

19 For whatever reasons why we become
20 single parents, we still have the right to be respected
21 as nurturers and guardians of a valuable resource for
22 Aboriginal people; the children of today, the leaders of
23 tomorrow, the keepers of Aboriginal tradition and culture,

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1 brothers and sisters to the visitors to this land.

2 There are those people anywhere that
3 will pass judgement on a single parent. They stereo-type
4 us as unworthy of employment, housing, education, child
5 care services to mention but a few benefits enjoyed by
6 others. In their judgement, they prohibit the potential
7 of a single parent to be a worthwhile member in any given
8 community. In their own state of oppression these people
9 have locked up their minds and hearts, they fail to extend
10 a helping hand to those less fortunate or to those
11 struggling to make ends meet.

12 I am not stating that the existing norms
13 and laws that govern family structures be dismantled,
14 rather let those laws and norms that are indigenous and
15 right for the people of this community prevail. I believe
16 it is time to examine those foreign teachings that cause
17 further disintegration of Aboriginal families.

18 I am not stating that the Aboriginal laws
19 and norms passed down since time immemorial condoned
20 irregular behaviour, rather they were laws that promoted
21 healing rather than punishment. It was our way to assist
22 those who needed direction and support. We shared what
23 we could with the less fortunate no matter what and how

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1 their circumstances for need was brought on. It is the
2 foreign teachings that promote punishment for those people
3 who have suffered the mistakes of their own doings.

4 As single parents, we love and care for
5 our children. Often times, the weight of responsibility
6 and the burden of shame inflicted on us is overwhelming
7 and we may fall to the enticements of drugs, alcohol and
8 other means of escape to relieve our pain. Some of us
9 do have the support of our families, but there are some
10 of us that suffer alone. Yet this does not mean we love
11 our children any less. Yet this does not mean we are any
12 less or any greater than anyone else. We are single
13 parents and should be respected and regarded as such.

14 In conclusion, I advocate for
15 understanding and compassion for the single parent. I
16 advocate for proper housing, support services such as child
17 care services, and most importantly, equal opportunity
18 for single parents.

19 Finally, as previously stated, I firmly
20 believe that self-government based upon the inherent right
21 to be self-determining must hear the weaker voices as well
22 as the stronger voices. Self-government must be built
23 upon the foundation of all Aboriginal people; single

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1 parents or not. Self-government must provide for those
2 people in need. Self-government must be built upon
3 fairness and equality.

4 My recommendation to the Royal
5 Commission is this: Be a strong voice for single parents.
6 Address our needs and concerns to those who are in power
7 to make positive changes for us. As parents we will do
8 our best to provide you with the leaders of tomorrow.
9 Our Aboriginal children will nurture the seeds that you
10 will plant for a better tomorrow. In your final report
11 to the Government of Canada, remember the single parents.

12 Last but not least, a closing remark for
13 the single parents here and everywhere; we have to continue
14 our struggle for the health and well being of our children,
15 and for a better community in which to raise them in.
16 We have to recognize that our children are the inherent
17 right to all our tomorrows.

18 Thank you and God bless.

19 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Meegwetch, Dorothy McKay
20 and Mary-Ann Anderson.

21 I will let the Commission address a few
22 words to Miss McKay.

23 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I want to

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1 briefly thank you for your presentation and I will not
2 seek to put my own gloss on what you have said, but I can
3 borrow from your paper that you will allow the truth of
4 your statement to seek out the listeners and you can be
5 sure -- speaking for my part -- that his Commission is
6 prepared to hear all sides, weak voices, strong voices,
7 those of all people.

8 Thank you for the presentation that you
9 have made. You have made it very clearly.

10 Thank you very much. Meegwetch.

11 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I would
12 like to thank for a very eloquent presentation on behalf
13 of single parents.

14 In fact, I think the statement that you
15 make at the top of page 7 of your presentation about the
16 nature of self-government is something that the Commission
17 could well adopt -- that Native self-government, those
18 who are governing must hear the weaker voices as well as
19 the stronger voices. That self-government must be built
20 on the foundation of all Aboriginal people, single parents
21 or not. It must provide for those in need and be built
22 on fairness and equality. I think that is a wonderful
23 statement about what self-government should be.

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1 I would like to thank you very much in
2 coming and speaking to us.

3 Thank you.

4 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY CHIEF STANLEY**

5 **SAINNAWAP:** Good afternoon. I would like to welcome
6 everybody that is present here. When I was informed that
7 the Commission was coming to our community I stated in
8 the beginning that everybody be given an opportunity to
9 speak, elders, young people, youth, students, women and
10 from what has been presented today we have known that there
11 are a lot of issues.

12 Like I said this morning, I am the chief
13 of this community. This is my job to try to identify what
14 needs to be worked on. Although I am only a Commissioner
15 for the Day, in other words, I am the chief Commissioner.

16 We are all aware that there are a lot
17 of things that need to be addressed within our own
18 community. You know we can't do everything overnight.

19 That is all I am going to say for now.

20 I would like to thank everyone that has made a presentation
21 so far. They are very educational and well presented.

22 Thank you.

23 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Commissioners,

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1 for your comments.

2 We have another presentation from the
3 students of the youth of the Big Trout Lake First Nation.

4 We have 12 students from the Aglace Chapman Education
5 Centre. I will ask them to sit on both sides of the tables.

6 Mr. Morris, an Education Director of the
7 Aglace Chapman School will make preceding comments before
8 the presentation.

9 **RICHARD MORRIS:** Good afternoon.

10 These students didn't know until yesterday that they were
11 supposed to have made a presentation. We had some problems
12 with our principle last week because he was informed about
13 two weeks ago that the students were requested to make
14 a presentation.

15 Unfortunately, he didn't inform the
16 teachers or the students. Yesterday, we briefed them on
17 what the purpose of the Commission was. Still they will
18 make their presentations understood. We tried to
19 concentrate on what they envision for their future. I
20 think regardless of how short their presentations may be
21 it will still be eloquent with respect to their vision
22 of their own futures.

23 Thank you.

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1 **ANNE-MARIE McKAY:** My name is
2 Anne-Marie McKay.

3 What I want for the future of Aboriginal
4 people is for them to live in peace with others. I want
5 us to be treated right, we are at the bottom of the barrel.
6 I want us to get better education. A better education
7 comes with a brighter future. A future that is full of
8 dreams and those dreams deserve to be realistic.

9 For our sake and other generations to
10 follow I want, and I am sure everyone wants, respect.
11 I want others to see that we, the Aboriginal people, can
12 and will fight for what we believe is right for us. I
13 want to be able to live in a place that is alive and not
14 in surroundings that are old and falling apart. That is
15 all I want for Aboriginal people is something better.

16 I strongly believe that we should govern
17 ourselves and not as non-Native does in some big city.
18 Who knows us better than we do? No-one. We know what
19 we need and want. A person that governs us other than
20 a Native who doesn't live on a reserve is taking on a
21 responsibility that he or she knows nothing about.

22 Of course, I believe that Aboriginal
23 people have the right to govern themselves. No-one should

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1 be deprived of what they believe is right for them and
2 others after them. The treaties or the Indian Act
3 shouldn't be the basis of our future. After all, there
4 are no new ideas for what is better for us in the long
5 run.

6 **OLIVIA NECAN:** My name is Olivia Necan.

7 What I want for myself and my people in
8 the future is to keep our traditional ways. I know that
9 I am losing my tradition by following the white man's way.
10 I want the Aboriginal people to govern me in the future.
11 Yes, I think we do have a right to have an Aboriginal
12 government.

13 **MICHELLE BARKMAN:** My name is Michelle
14 Barkman.

15 I really don't want anything for the
16 future. I am proud to be who I am. I would like to keep
17 the Native traditional beliefs. I don't want anyone else
18 to govern us Aboriginal people. If they try to govern
19 themselves they wouldn't know where to get the money.
20 At least I wouldn't. I think that Aboriginal people have
21 the right to govern themselves. I don't think there should
22 be any changes in this Indian Act because Indians who live
23 like Indians act like Indians. I think that is it.

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1 **DAVID MORRIS:** Hi. My name is David
2 Morris.

3 What I want to see for Aboriginal people
4 is self-government, economic self-sufficiency and
5 self-determination. Also, in the future, I want to see
6 good education and good health care.

7 **ENO CHAPMAN:** I would like to say that
8 I am very proud of these young people here. Even if you
9 don't have to say anything, the fact that you are here
10 shows that you are concerned. I think we hear that
11 sometimes even silence itself has a meaning and is
12 powerful.

13 I think that these young people here --
14 I am confident that probably one day if I live to be an
15 elder, I am confident that these young people will be those
16 people that I will rely heavily on. I know for that for
17 sure because I know most of these children here -- young
18 people -- that they have the capacity of that confidence
19 that I have in them.

20 I would like to thank each and every one
21 of them. We also have some students at the back that are
22 here. It is really good that they have taken this time
23 to participate.

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1 It touches me. I almost can't say
2 because I feel like crying, but to see you people here
3 that your presence is what is important to show the people
4 here that you are concerned as Aboriginal people and you
5 are the future of this Aboriginal nation. I thank you
6 for that very much.

7 Meegwetch.

8 Richard wants to say something first and
9 then I will hand it over to the Commissioner's table for
10 comments and then I will ask the students to shake your
11 hands after.

12 Thank you.

13 **RICHARD MORRIS:** What I would like to
14 say first is that I am disappointed that the children
15 weren't properly prepared because the principle didn't
16 properly inform the students that they were supposed to
17 do a presentation. We didn't find out until yesterday
18 that they were supposed to do a presentation. We didn't
19 properly prepare ourselves when we came here this
20 afternoon. Basically, what we did was just give them the
21 basic information of what the purpose of the Royal
22 Commission is and what they should discuss and present
23 and what they should say at this presentation.

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1 I regret this very much. I know if they
2 were informed two weeks ago, as we had planned then they
3 would have probably properly done a better presentation,
4 because it would have given us sufficient time to properly
5 inform them of what the purpose of the Commission is.
6 We also would have notified them that the purpose of this
7 hearing is because of them as young people and youth of
8 this community.

9 We didn't have enough time to inform
10 them. I am really glad and thankful that they are here
11 to present their opinions, thoughts and feelings about
12 what they had talked about and what they would like to
13 see in the future for themselves.

14 I am happy and thankful for the students
15 that are present here. I am confident that these students
16 are our leaders in the future. They will be the ones that
17 will meet self-government head on in the near future and
18 they will be the ones that will be heavily involved in
19 it. I am confident that they will do a much better and
20 effective job in dealing with this issue of
21 self-government. I have total confidence in them.

22 Even though right now it looks like they
23 can't really express their feelings on this issue.

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1 These students didn't know until
2 yesterday that this Commission was coming. We had
3 informed the principle about two or three weeks ago and
4 I didn't find out until yesterday myself that they hadn't
5 been informed at all. So in that short time that we had
6 yesterday we tried to tell them the purpose of the
7 Commission. We didn't have a chance to discuss all the
8 issues that they should have been aware of to make them
9 understand. You probably gathered that from some of the
10 comments that they made.

11 I have to apologize for that because we
12 weren't prepared sufficiently to make better
13 presentations, but still I have a lot of trust and
14 confidence that as our future leaders -- and I mentioned
15 that to them quite a few times already. They know they
16 are the futures of tomorrow. They are going to be our
17 leaders. They are the ones that are going to eventually
18 apply self-government when we finally achieve
19 self-government in the formal sense. That can be started
20 right now.

21 I do have confidence in their abilities
22 with the skills that they will acquire, they will provide
23 the leadership that we will need in our communities.

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1 Again, I apologize and I want to thank
2 all the students who came here and for participating in
3 this Commission and these hearings and for being able to
4 express some of the desires for the future.

5 Thank you very much.

6 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Meegwetch, Richard
7 Morris.

8 I would like to honour these students
9 with an applause if we can for their efforts. Meegwetch.

10 I will hand it over to the Commissioner's
11 table before this one is finished.

12 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I would
13 just like to say that no apology is necessary for these
14 students. We are absolutely delighted that they came
15 here. Just their presence here in front of the Royal
16 Commission makes us very happy because it shows that they
17 are interested and we have the written comments in front
18 of us.

19 I think that we can all remember our
20 first fumbling efforts at public speaking and the agony
21 that we went through in trying to do it. I think probably
22 everyone in this room was sympathizing with them and
23 feeling for them and certainly the Commissioners were.

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1 As I said, there is no need to apologize. We are just
2 delighted that they came and their presence is good enough
3 for us.

4 I would like to thank them very much for
5 taking the trouble to come.

6 I would like to say if they ever do want
7 to get in touch with us and as a group tell us a bit more
8 of what they are thinking we would certainly be delighted
9 to hear from them. If they wanted to write to the
10 Commission and tell us a bit more about their thinking
11 we would be very very happy to have this.

12 I want to thank those that came up to
13 the tables and those who are sitting in the room. Thank
14 you very much for coming.

15 Paul, please.

16 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** As
17 Commissioner Wilson has already said we certainly
18 understand your circumstances because we have all been
19 in similar situations.

20 It takes not only courage to get to do
21 things, but it also takes time. It takes time to get used
22 to things. Sometimes it takes a long time to get used
23 to some particular things like speaking in public.

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1 Sometimes if you try to do something that you haven't done
2 before or something that is very hard to do, you need to
3 sit there and psych yourself up to do it.

4 You watch an olympic high-jumper, for
5 example. You can't just walk up there and do it. It takes
6 very difficult concentration and quiet time to get yourself
7 steeled to do that. So there are lots of things like that
8 that you have to do and you have to do them in that way.
9 When you are starting out this is the way it has to happen.

10 I want to congratulate all of you,
11 particularly the one that started speaking, the first one
12 in the group. Also, Mr. Morris. Is it Jake Morris?
13 David Morris. He is the one that came up here to help
14 his friends and I noted that.

15 I want to say that you gave us some
16 answers. Some of them are written here. Some of you
17 expressed them. I was looking quickly at what you did
18 and it was said that in the short time that was available
19 to you and I can say from what I have seen already in some
20 cases you gave better answers then I think the questions
21 deserved. That is not to say anything about the question.

22 I think some of them might have come from the Commission.

23 You said, for example, I do not want

1 anything. I am proud the way I am. Think about that.
2 That says a lot to me. I will do my best, as the Commission
3 will do, to carry your voices in the small ways that I
4 can. I will use this. I am for example speaking at a
5 conference at the University of Winnipeg in February and
6 I assure you I will be able to use some of your own words.
7 Why use mine if I can use yours.

8 You are the young people. There are
9 more of you than anybody else in the Aboriginal community.
10 Those here who speak and make a commitment to the future
11 are really making a commitment to you. I think if we are
12 to think about how we are to measure our own work, the
13 work of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal peoples, maybe
14 we can measure it by asking ourselves how it effects you
15 because you are the future.

16 Meegwetch.

17 Maybe some of you if you want to reply
18 and have a stab at that microphone, you might want to take
19 a minute or two to tell us about your school if you have
20 any sports activities there? Do you have any teams that
21 you play on? Or if there is something like that that you
22 might want to add before Eno just takes the broom and tries
23 to sweep you away here.

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1 **ENO CHAPMAN:** What type of sports do you
2 play at school?

3 **OLIVIA NECAN:** The kind of sports we
4 play in gym are volleyball, basketball, soccer, floor
5 hockey, broomball. My favourite sports are volleyball
6 and soccer.

7 I am kind of nervous and shy right now.

8 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you. Boys, what
9 kind of sports do you play?

10 **DAVID MORRIS:** Those are the sports that
11 we play in the gym, but the school also has a rink outside
12 behind the gym and a track. Also, two baseball fields.
13 We play out there during the summer. We have a volleyball
14 team and a hockey team. Junior and senior. There are
15 floor hockey tournaments occasionally.

16 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Is that
17 baseball or fastball, that you play?

18 **DAVID MORRIS:** Baseball.

19 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:**
20 Baseball. The real stuff.

21 **DAVID MORRIS:** Yes.

22 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** All
23 right.

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1 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you very much. It
2 is good. This presentation has been very enjoyable.

3 You will get a chance to put the
4 Commissioners on the spot tonight. There is a square
5 dance. Maybe that is something that we can put them on
6 the spot for tonight. There are some young people here
7 who are pretty good square dancers. Maybe we will turn
8 the table around here this evening I would think.

9 I will have Commissioner Sainnawap say
10 a few words before we close this.

11 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY CHIEF STANLEY**

12 **SAINNAWAP:** First of all I would like to thank you for
13 coming here and joining us with this undertaking. I must,
14 however, state that I am really disappointed that you were
15 not well informed with this proceeding. I cannot blame
16 you. I think I have to blame the administration of the
17 school. I guess we were told already what happened.

18 You know when you had the
19 self-government workshop just over a year ago, we had a
20 very good and very active participation from the school
21 children at that time. They were well prepared at that
22 time with their presentation. They presented themselves
23 as professionals, activists -- very eloquently at that

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1 time. They worked as a group. Team effort, that is what
2 I witnessed at that time.

3 I think I know what you people went
4 through. The kind of handicaps that you went through at
5 the beginning of the school year. I don't blame you for
6 your shortcomings here. I think the main source or cause
7 of your handicap this afternoon came from a person from
8 outside. I know I dealt with this. I am involved with
9 this situation with this man. Now he is gone. I hope
10 he doesn't come back again.

11 However, just to let you know, that
12 communication is one of the important tools that you have
13 to protect the community, to protect the needs of the
14 people. It is one of the most important tools we must
15 be equipped with if we are seriously concerned about what
16 is happening in our community.

17 I know it is hard to speak in a public
18 place. It is not easy. Like Frank was just telling us
19 yesterday, he went to one of the conferences in Edmonton
20 called Treaty Conference. Frank is the Chief of Muskrat
21 Dam.

22 When he went to that conference he took
23 an elder to speak on treaty issues because he thought,

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1 I guess, an elder can do better job in a more eloquent
2 way to express the intent of the treaty. I guess he ended
3 up he couldn't go anywhere with the elder. He was too
4 scared to speak. I guess there was about 2,000 people
5 in that room. He was too shy to speak.

6 Just to let you know it is not only young
7 people who are shy. It is old people too, when they meet
8 different tribes of people from different sections of this
9 country. Don't be afraid and I know you guys were put
10 in an embarrassing situation, maybe, but that was not your
11 fault. Keep trying. Just remember that communication
12 is one of the special tools that we can have to help each
13 other.

14 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you very much,
15 Commissioners.

16 I just want to make one quick last note
17 that you will always remember this very moment in your
18 life ahead because at time when you come into these
19 situations and when you are at a point where you stand
20 up in 20, 30 or less years, you will find very clearly
21 this thing and this is going to help you go ahead and that
22 is the very important thing of this thing. It is a growing
23 process each day in whatever we go through during that

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1 day.

2 Before they leave I would like them to
3 shake their hands.

4 Meegwetch.

5 We are going to have another
6 presentation. We have representatives and also members
7 from the community of Muskrat Dam First Nations. I would
8 like to ask Chief Frank Beardy, Juliette Duncan, Elder
9 and Sarah Beardy, Elder. Juliette and Sarah were also
10 the ones I was talking about who were present in 1929 at
11 the treaty meeting here. Victoria Beardy, Elder.
12 Mary-Ann Morris, Muskrat Dam Women's Group. Lucy Beardy,
13 Muskrat Dam Women's Group. Shirley Morris, Muskrat Dam
14 Women's Group. If they could come up to the tables here
15 and make their presentation.

16 Thank you.

17 The Women's Group will not be doing their
18 presentation now, but will also be invited to sit at the
19 front. Shirley, Mary-Ann and Lucy.

20 **CHIEF FRANK BEARDY:** Thank you, Mr.
21 Moderator. The buckskin clad moderator.

22 First of all I am going to say that I
23 am glad that we have been given this opportunity to voice

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1 our concerns here at this Royal Commission.

2 It has always been a tradition in the
3 past -- the past leaders like our great-grandfather Chief
4 Sampson Beardy as my Elders have taught me. The Elders
5 that are here beside me now. Every time he held a meeting
6 there was a Bible beside him. That is a tradition that
7 we try to follow in Muskrat Dam. We always have a Bible
8 in front of us to remind us whose work it is that we are
9 doing as we the leaders of the people.

10 I am always sorry that I didn't have
11 enough time to bring a Bible to this hearing and if anybody
12 has a Bible here inside the community hall, I would like
13 to have one brought up front if possible.

14 I instructed my elders to be the first
15 ones to voice their concerns, to voice their viewpoints.
16 After they have their say then we will have our turn in
17 addressing our concerns to the Commissioners.

18 **VICTORIA BEARDY (Translated):** I will
19 be the first person to speak. For those that are visiting
20 us meaning the Royal Commission, I am very thankful for
21 that.

22 It is my understanding that they want
23 to know about our plight as Native people. As I sit here

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1 listening and I am thinking about the time in 1929 when
2 white man and Native met together for the first time.
3 I can't help think but that we are still meeting together
4 to discuss all the issues that face us as Native people.

5 Although there could be a lot of things
6 that I could discuss that was taught to me as a Native
7 person growing up -- I will start by talking about my
8 childhood and I will try to keep it short.

9 My parents, my mom and dad, taught me
10 a lot of things. I stayed with my parents for 18 years.

11 I was originally born here in Big Trout Lake, but my
12 parents raised me out in the bush. They taught me how
13 the Creator taught us to live off the land. It seems like
14 I knew at that time how to survive.

15 As soon as I left them that is what helped
16 me throughout my lifetime were the things that they taught
17 me while I was growing up and living with them. During
18 the time when I was living with my parents for 18 years
19 we never received any welfare. We survived. We sold fur
20 and our handicrafts and we trapped. As soon as my parents
21 let me live my own life I tried to maintain that kind of
22 lifestyle. We trapped, we fished, we commercial fished.
23 We were never on welfare while I was still married.

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1 I was married for 30 years. My children
2 never received any government subsidies or welfare.
3 Presently, the majority of my children have left my
4 household and right now I am a widower. Presently, I am
5 still living under welfare just like the way that was
6 promised way back in 1929 when they signed the treaty that
7 they would take care of us.

8 There is an issue that elders and young
9 people do not understand each other. That can be true
10 to some extent because we practically handed our children
11 over to white society to educate them in their own way.

12 In the past I used to think that in the
13 south commercial fishing was much easier because they have
14 all different types of transportation and they had a lot
15 of income. When I was commercial fishing for 13 years
16 transportation was very high because of airplanes. We
17 had to ship everything out by plane. Gas was very
18 expensive. By the time after all our expenses we had very
19 minimum income.

20 White people never understood that.
21 Now, today, since people don't fish gill-net fish or
22 commercial fish any more, the same thing applies with the
23 fur industry. Just recently I went and put my furs in

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1 and the price of the furs has declined. I am still
2 trapping. I usually send my furs down to North Bay. The
3 price I got was very low.

4 Even now today here up north I am
5 supporting myself. The winters are long and cold. I
6 still work for myself and fend for myself. I cut wood.
7 I get water. Everyday I heat my house by wood.

8 I would like to put in a formal request.
9 My children go to school down south. I lost one child
10 because of that. Even though it was an accident she got
11 into an automobile accident while she was in high school.
12 The other one returned home mentally incompetent and I
13 have looked after her for the last 20 years because she
14 is just staying in bed.

15 My request is even when I phone medical
16 services to phone and ask for assistance the longest time
17 that they can take care of her is two weeks maximum. I
18 think it is time that we should develop an institution
19 for those people that are mentally incompetent. We should
20 make our own institution like that up north where we can
21 accommodate and look after them.

22 Like us people up north don't have any
23 indoor plumbing or running water within our households.

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1 The reason why my daughter is like that presently is that
2 happened while she was in high school.

3 I am only talking about these things that
4 I know about and how I see them and perceive them to be.
5 This is one thing I am really stressing. There should
6 be an institution or accommodation being built here in
7 Northern Ontario for a place where we can look after our
8 own people that are mentally incompetent or mentally
9 disabled or physically handicapped. That is my formal
10 request.

11 That is about all I have to say. I don't
12 want to take up too much time. I want to give these other
13 elderly ladies that I am with an opportunity to speak.

14 I am glad that everything has worked out
15 so well and I am glad that they brought me here to this
16 gathering and I know how hard it is with regards to
17 everything.

18 Most of the time we discuss the issue
19 of our land. We should all share equally in the land and
20 its resources because we know that we did not create this
21 land and its resources, it was granted to us by the Creator.

22 Also, the water, the land, the animals that are living
23 on it and everything that grows out of the land. We didn't

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1 create ourselves. It was the Creator that granted us the
2 gift of life and that created us.

3 I keep hearing that in 1929 our elders
4 agreed with that Commission that we will live together
5 in harmony and we will share our land for the benefit of
6 all peoples. That was the way the treaty was interpreted.

7 That is all I will say.

8 May the Great Spirit and God bless us
9 all today.

10 **SARAH BEARDY (Translated):** I am
11 thankful to be here today. I would like to thank the
12 non-Native people that we are meeting here today.

13 I know all the things that I have heard
14 here today talked about, discussed. This is the first
15 time I have ever gone to a meeting like this. I have never
16 really participated in meetings at all.

17 I really enjoy this meeting. The
18 stories, the questions and the answers. I like hearing
19 those kinds of things.

20 I will tell you a story. A story of how
21 I was raised by my parents. I never attended school.
22 But still education is very important -- the kind that
23 a mother can administer. Every morning my mother would

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1 say her prayers. This is where her strength came from
2 and how she raised her kids. This is how I am, too. When
3 you see me sitting here today I say my prayers every morning
4 before I start my work for the day.

5 That is how my parents taught me -- to
6 say a prayer before I undertake a task. Now I cannot do
7 any physical work. I am around 75 years old. I have
8 raised 12 children. I have never asked the government
9 for assistance during that time. I raised them through
10 my work, through my labours. As for my husband he had
11 a job to do too, and rarely did I see him. I did most
12 of the upbringing of the children. He had his own work
13 to do.

14 I was never tired and I never ached from
15 my labours. I never considered myself poor. I never even
16 considered the word poor. I was just happy to be working,
17 happy to be healthy and to be able to help myself. Today
18 I am still happy because I can still see all my children.

19 As I was raising them I never got
20 anything from the store. When you eat something from a
21 can it can't do you any good. It can't. When I was raising
22 my children I used all the natural foods, fish, rabbits,
23 moose, partridges. I had a gun, too. I trapped. I did

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1 all that kind of things that a male person in the household
2 would do. I did all of those. I want you to know that
3 all my relations, my sisters in Muskrat Dam, all our
4 children are well.

5 They have not been hospitalized for long
6 periods of time and it is because they used natural food
7 while they were growing up and that is what traditional
8 lifestyle can do for you. Now, today, now the children
9 are getting sick because they eat food from a can and they
10 eat all those strange foods. Even us, we are not strong
11 any more. It is slowly destroying us. Those were the
12 benefits of living the traditional way of life. We were
13 healthy and look at us, even though we are elders we are
14 still pretty lively.

15 Right now I am getting old and it is true
16 that I can't do any labour work any more. I don't have
17 any running water and I don't have any oil for fuel, I
18 still use wood. I pay for everything that I get these
19 days, propane, electricity, telephone, gasoline and I even
20 buy wood. Now, when I ask somebody to get water for me
21 I pay for those services, too.

22 Now today I am thankful that all my
23 relations are still whole. My children, my grandchildren

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1 and for my own health I am thankful. I am thankful that
2 the Creator has shown mercy to me today to be able to see
3 all my friends here today and those, the Commissioners,
4 I am thankful to be able to meet them here today.

5 Those other things that are being told
6 it is my wish that we could somehow work together and work
7 on our wishes together.

8 We worry about our young people a lot
9 that they may -- we ache in our lives and hearts when we
10 lose our young people through suicide. It hurts us very
11 much. That is where our weakness comes from when we see
12 our young people taking their own lives.

13 I shake your hands in respect.

14 Thank you.

15 **JULIETTE DUNCAN (Translated):** I will
16 say a few words. I don't know how to write so I will just
17 be talking. It is the only thing that I know how to do
18 is talk. I don't have anything written down in front of
19 me.

20 The first thing I would like to say is
21 I am very thankful that I am able to see my neighbours
22 and even these people, the Commission, that I don't know
23 that are here. I am very thankful to them that I have

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1 this opportunity to see them. I thank the Creator for
2 working this thing out. That is the first comment I would
3 like to make.

4 I see these things written down, but like
5 I don't have anything written down because I don't know
6 how to write. The only thing I am going to do is talk
7 and I will be talking about what I have seen in my lifetime.

8 In the past my grandparents, my parents
9 -- as far back as I can remember I have always lived the
10 kind of life that I was taught. That is the same kind
11 of lifestyle that I am living today.

12 I have known these people in the past
13 that lived they had a lot of wisdom and knowledge and I
14 am referring to my grandmothers, grandfathers and parents.
15 I know as far back as I can remember those people knew
16 the Bible very well.

17 The things I am going to talk about are
18 the things that I remember from my childhood from the time
19 when I was five years old. From the time I was five years
20 old I was aware of what was happening inside our household
21 and the things that were happening between my grandparents.

22 These are the things that are carrying me, the teachings
23 that they taught me, our ancestors what they taught me

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1 and what is carrying me today.

2 I would also tell you what my age is.

3 I am presently 88 years old. My husband is 89 years old.

4 We are still married even today. We are still married.

5 It has been a long time from the time that I can remember
6 when I was five years old from what our elders taught me
7 at that time. What they taught me is what has carried
8 me this far.

9 This is what my grandparents said.

10 There is something like government in this land. There
11 exists a government in this land who is supposed to look
12 after the people under the sun. There are also Native
13 people in existence plus elders that are self-determining
14 and they have their own form of government and how they
15 look at their people and how they lead their people.

16 We have the same authority that was
17 granted to non-Native governments, the same thing applies
18 to Aboriginal governments. The Aboriginal people have
19 a right to determine how they want to lead their people
20 and their lives in their own government. This is what
21 I was taught from the time I was five years old right up
22 until I was ten years old. This is what I heard and what
23 I was taught.

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1 What was called formal education, the
2 only education I received was from my ancestors, my
3 grandparents, and parents and how to live off the land
4 and how to trap and hunt and how to kill rabbits for food.
5 Also, how to prepare ourselves for the winter. How to
6 prepare our wood, our rabbits. How to survive and catch
7 food for our own sustenance.

8 Our great-grandfathers were not carried
9 or looked after by any outside government. The power came
10 from within. That is how we survived. This is what was
11 taught to us and this is what we know from what we learn
12 from the past for those of us that still exist. Like I
13 said to you when you look at me I still remember everything
14 that my grandfathers and grandmothers taught me. I still
15 know how to trap even today. I can still kill rabbit for
16 my own food. I still have a gun. I still carry my gun
17 around everyday. I go hunting occasionally to at least
18 get a partridge for a meal.

19 I came here with this delegation and
20 travelled with 10 people and I still go out skidooing,
21 go into the bush and make a campfire for myself and do
22 a little bit of trapping and hunting. I had trapped a
23 few fur-bearing animals, but I had to come here and I didn't

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1 skin it yet. From what I learned I still practice
2 everything that I learned back then. I still practice
3 and I live by it.

4 I still call everything how to prepare
5 for the night. How to cut wood. Sometimes I get wood
6 for free. I am very appreciative that I still know those
7 things. Even before freeze up I cut a lot of wood because
8 the wood that I get comes from the Creator and I am thankful
9 for that. I prepare myself for the winter. I cut a lot
10 of wood in the fall just to prepare myself for the winter.

11 This is what I was taught as a child
12 growing up. I still practice those teachings. There are
13 still some elders in existence and here today that know
14 about these teachings. I guess this is what our young
15 people are looking for, the traditional lifestyles and
16 what was good for us as Native people.

17 The young people are trying to learn
18 these teachings. Our youth and young people do a lot of
19 trapping in the community of Muskrat Dam. When they come
20 home with a lot of traditional foods they give it to the
21 community and elders. They bring moose home and all sorts
22 of animals for our sustenance. They share with the
23 community.

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1 This is how we carry on the teachings
2 and occasionally we give them ammunition just to show our
3 support and appreciation for what they are trying to do
4 in maintaining their traditional way of life which will
5 help them as Native people. This is what I am sharing
6 this afternoon from what I learned and what has carried
7 me through from then right up until now.

8 What we hear today are a lot of issues.
9 Back then there was no doctor or nurse -- way back then.
10 Like this other lady stated that she raised 12 children.
11 I also raised 12 children and I still see them everyday.
12 All of them are in Muskrat Dam. I have seven girls that
13 are married and five sons. I lost one son, but I still
14 have four sons.

15 I never saw a doctor while I was
16 delivering all these children. I had to use a midwife
17 while I was delivering these children. Although there
18 was one time that I saw a doctor down in Bearskin Lake
19 and he had asked me to come and see him and then he told
20 me that he wanted to give me some medication and he advised
21 me that this is for being pregnant.

22 He gave me three different types of
23 medication. Use these until you deliver. The only thing

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1 is I can't observe you. This is all I can do for you is
2 just give you medication. Then what I did is after I
3 received the medication I just left there and I threw them
4 away because I didn't know what effects they would have
5 on me. Then after that I didn't use any medication because
6 as soon as it was time for me to deliver I had a safe
7 delivery.

8 We had our own traditional doctors. I
9 guess they were termed medicine men back then, but they
10 assisted, they helped us, they healed ourselves using
11 traditional herbs and medicines. We never encountered
12 any problems when we, as women, were delivering our own
13 children because we had experienced people who deliver
14 children who had a lot of experience being midwives. Even
15 today even with all the modern technology there is a lot
16 of mishaps when a woman wants to deliver even if it is
17 a top quality hospital. Things still happen.

18 Back then nothing like that happened.
19 How a Native person carried himself back then did a lot
20 of good things because everything came from the Creator.
21 It was a gift from the Creator. As we know there is never
22 any shortfalls or shortcomings when things come from the
23 Creator. When it comes from mankind there are a lot of

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1 shortfalls and shortcomings. This is how they carried
2 themselves and governed themselves -- everything came from
3 the Creator.

4 That is why we are here to discuss and
5 express our opinions and concerns that we would like to
6 maintain that even our self-government comes from the
7 Creator.

8 That is about all I have to say, but I
9 would like to point out one thing, also. As far as I can
10 remember there was never a policeman around. Our
11 policemen then were our own Native people. There was
12 nobody from any government patrolling us. We had our own
13 people patrolling us and governing us. It came from
14 within.

15 When we see somebody come into conflict
16 with the law today right off the bat we hear that he is
17 going to jail. Back then they never said anything like
18 that. They never went outside for help when they had
19 internal problems. They looked at it and dealt with it
20 and resolved it themselves. They healed their
21 communities. This is what we have to try and find -- what
22 we have lost.

23 Let us ask the Great Spirit, the Creator

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1 for help and guidance for some of the things that we don't
2 know and don't understand. Let God be our leader and guide
3 today, now and beyond.

4 **CHIEF FRANK BEARDY, MUSKRAT DAM FIRST**
5 **NATION:** I would like to thank our Elders for their
6 presentation and for their words of wisdom.

7 Whenever I get a chance to speak at the
8 meeting I really want to do my talking in the Native
9 language, but this panel has come a long ways away to hear
10 what we have to say so I am going to be jumping from one
11 language to the other. I have been told that I am a
12 translators nightmare when I do that.

13 So I am going to speak in the english
14 language so that the panel will be able to understand me
15 clearly. It is not that I don't like to speak in Missanabie
16 Cree. I know it is a God given gift -- our languages.
17 It is true that we should use our language for all it is
18 worth. Sometimes it is not possible to do that.

19 I would first of all like to explain a
20 little bit about what I had said in my opening statement
21 with reference to the Bible that is sitting up here so
22 that you will understand as to why I had requested that
23 the Bible be brought up here.

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1 It is a tradition among the leadership
2 in my family and in my clan and in my community that has
3 been put into place by elders, by the leaders that are
4 not with us any more. I am encouraged by my elders to
5 follow that tradition and I respect that tradition and
6 when we have community meetings in Muskrat Dam or when
7 we have important dignitaries that come from the outside
8 to meet with us, we always make sure that there is a Bible
9 in the front of the room where I am sitting -- where the
10 chief sits.

11 That tradition is steep in my community
12 because the Bible is up here to remind us that we are doing
13 God's work and that it is only through the Creator that
14 all things are possible. That is why I had requested that
15 the Bible be brought up here.

16 Before I go into my written presentation
17 I would like to take you back in time. I would like to
18 take you back to the days and years before 1929. You have
19 already heard references made to the year 1929. You have
20 already heard of references that were made of the two
21 Commissioners Ari and Cain that came into our traditional
22 territories with a prepared text of the treaty that was
23 signed by my grandfather Chief Sampson Beardy a few hundred

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1 yards from where we are now.

2 It is important I think to note that at
3 times I feel like a broken record that keeps repeating
4 itself all the time. I find it healthy for myself and
5 for those people that are listening to me that they know
6 the historical background of our people. That they know
7 that what it is that happened back in 1929 and in the years
8 before 1929 so that you can have a bit of a glimpse at
9 the historical background of our relationship between us
10 as a First Nation government and the settler society that
11 came into our midst.

12 I have talked with numerous elders that
13 are alive and that have since departed about those days
14 and about those years. What they tell me is that they
15 did not fully understand all things that were said in 1929.

16 What happened in the years before 1929
17 and in the early 1900's is something that I always think
18 about because I look at it in terms of my people were coerced
19 into signing the treaty. They were forced into signing
20 the treaty. What happened in the 1800's and early 1900's
21 I am told by the elders is that certain diseases swept
22 across our lands and the lands of the Big Trout Lake people.

23 Small pox, Chicken pox, tuberculosis,

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1 mumps, measles. Diseases that they didn't know how to
2 heal or how to counter with their herbal medicines. It
3 totally decimated villages. It totally decimated the clan
4 structure that we knew, the clan system that governed our
5 lives.

6 What happened was that at the same time
7 as these diseases were sweeping across the north the
8 Province of Ontario conservation officers, even before
9 1929, were already implementing game laws that were made
10 up in the halls of Queen's Park and in Parliament Hill.
11 Even before the signing of the treaty these conservation
12 officers were confiscating fishnets, they were
13 confiscating guns, they were confiscating the animals that
14 were killed by our people for food because they were saying
15 that the Indian people were breaking certain conservation
16 laws.

17 I am told by a number of elders that they
18 were always afraid and were always on the alert to listen
19 for planes to come into their fish camps and their trap
20 lines because once a plane was heard then the children
21 would run to the teepees and tents where animal furs were
22 prepared and grab what they could and run into the bush
23 with them to hide them and keep them away from the

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1 conservation officers that would come in and raid our
2 fishing camps and trap lines. This is what was told to
3 me.

4 My grandfather who was a headsman in
5 Bearskin Lake at that time heard about the treaties that
6 had happened in Northern Manitoba in the Island Lake area.
7 Through the missionaries in the Hudson Bay managers that
8 were already in the area he wrote a letter to the Queen
9 requesting that they be allowed to sign treaty with the
10 Queen of England or the King of England.

11 It was only because of these illnesses
12 that plagued our people and it is only because the
13 conservation officers were really hard on our people and
14 confiscated their livelihood that I at times feel that
15 my grandfather was, in a way, forced to request for treaty
16 to be signed in Big Trout Lake. The King and his
17 representatives made preparations and made a number of
18 journeys into our territories to prepare for the
19 Commissioners that came in here in 1929.

20 One of our Elders spoke that it was only
21 four years before 1929 that she saw the first white man
22 in her life. This was a common thing. I am told that
23 for many Elders that are here today that 1929 the first

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1 week in July was the first time that for most of them they
2 had ever seen a white man. I am told that for the first
3 time that most of them saw an airplane.

4 When the Commissioners came in our
5 people welcomed them with open arms. They greeted them
6 in a friendly, hospitable manner. They brought with them
7 a document which is now referred to as the treaty adhesion,
8 the James Bay Treaty Adhesion of 1905. The 1929 Adhesion.

9 Our people did not know that there had already been a
10 treaty that was signed in 1905 and that the document that
11 was brought here was an adhesion to that.

12 That document that was brought into our
13 territories was prepared in Ottawa. The two Commissioners
14 that came in -- one represented the federal government
15 and the other represented the Province of Ontario. It
16 is our feeling that the Province of Ontario wanted to send
17 a Commissioner to oversee the so called treaty negotiations
18 that occurred here so that Ontario would be guaranteed
19 all the lands that supposedly had been given up by my
20 people. They wanted assurance that the land would fall
21 under their authority and jurisdiction.

22 When the treaties left Ottawa they were
23 told that the package that they were to take to the people

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1 of Big Trout Lake was not to be changed in any shape or
2 form. That what was written there and what they were to
3 offer to the Native people is what that documented stated.

4 Now when you put all that together the
5 government says that they came in here to negotiate with
6 us -- the treaty that was signed. I don't think any nation
7 in the world would call that negotiations. We took that
8 issue to the World Port back about 15 or 20 years ago and
9 they agreed with us. In Amsterdam they agreed with us
10 that the land that the Province of Ontario and the
11 Government of Canada say is theirs is received by coercion.

12 That they coerced the people into turning that land over
13 to them.

14 Our people say that we did not give up
15 the land. Our people say that they want to work on and
16 honour the spirit and intent of the treaty as our people
17 believed them to be.

18 There is a very important case here that
19 I think you, the Commissioners, should understand. When
20 the Commissioners came here they did not bring with them
21 translators. What they had was two translators from this
22 community.

23 One, a Hudson's Bay worker by the name

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1 of William Cromarty and he has ancestors here. As a matter
2 of fact to reward him in the work that he did during the
3 translations during the treaty days he was a Scotsman and
4 he was given a band number and he became a band member
5 of Big Trout Lake Band. That showed the willingness of
6 our people to accept the people that were coming into their
7 territories.

8 Not only that, there was also a
9 missionary by the name of Leslie Garrett that was here
10 and he was an Anglican missionary. They were both white
11 people that could speak, barely, the language of the Big
12 Trout Lake people.

13 What they did was they got together and
14 assisted each other in the translation that they did so
15 that they could tell Chief Sampson Beardy who was standing
16 beside them and he yelled out what was said by the
17 Commissioners through these two white people who were
18 translating for them. That is the story that was told
19 to me.

20 The Commissioners made a lot of verbal
21 agreements -- made a lot of verbal statements and it is
22 these verbal statements that our people took -- the verbal
23 statements that were made by the Commissioners because

1 the document that was brought down -- even today if you
2 ask Eno Chapman who is one of the foremost translators,
3 even he wouldn't be able to translate the full text of
4 that document. So how can you say that these two white
5 people that barely spoke the language were able to
6 translate the contents of that document. It is pretty
7 well impossible.

8 Even myself, I have looked at that
9 document a number of times and I say to myself how do you
10 say this word -- every second or third word. I don't know
11 how to translate it.

12 It is because of all that that I say that
13 the people heard the Commissioners make certain promises
14 to them and those promises sounded really good. The clause
15 of: "As long as the sun shines, the river flows and the
16 grass grows" was the clause that our people homed in on
17 and they said our mother the Queen, our father the King
18 will look after us.

19 They didn't say anything about the land
20 being taken. They agreed to share the land. How Native
21 people look at the land is that no one person owns that
22 land. The Creator owns that land. How can our
23 forefathers, our grandfathers, give away something that

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1 they didn't own in the first place?

2 The spirit and intent of the treaty from
3 which we want to work with the two levels of government
4 is based on how our elders wanted to base that treaty to
5 be. That is to live in peaceful co-existence with the
6 white man and to share the bountiful gifts of the Creator.

7 In this day and age it also means to go into shared
8 arrangements on how these resources are to be utilized.

9 I wanted to talk to you about that first
10 before I go into my written presentation. There are some
11 things that we may say to you today that may deem to be
12 critical. I want to assure you that any criticisms are
13 not of personal nature. We hope you will understand the
14 frustration we have felt over the years and in our
15 appearances before so many Commissions, task forces and
16 other federal and provincial bodies established to examine
17 our plight.

18 I looked at the posters that are hung
19 up all around here and it says a time to talk, a time to
20 listen. For 15 to 20 years now we have been doing that
21 with the various Commissions, inquiries, hearings that
22 have come into our territories. We have been talking and
23 we have been listening to each other. I think there is

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1 one important item that is missing there and it should
2 also read: A time to act.

3 Over the past 15 years or so
4 Anishnawbe-Aski people in full or in part have been the
5 subject of numerous bodies such as yours. Indeed, they
6 continue to this very day. Little has changed and we have
7 been saddled with the blame of their expense in so many
8 instances.

9 I would like to list a few for you:

10 1. The Royal Commission on the
11 Northern Environment commonly referred to as the Hartt
12 Falgren Commission. The cost to government approximately
13 \$12 million;

14 2. The Citizens Forum on Canadas'
15 Future commonly referred to as the Spicer Commission.
16 The cost approximately \$24 million;

17 3. Royal Commission on Electric Power
18 Planning, the Porter Commission. The cost to government
19 approximately \$5 million;

20 4. Special Committee on Indian
21 Self-Government commonly referred to as the Penner Report.
22 The cost to government approximately \$5 million;

23 5. Scott, McKay, Bain Health Panel

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1 Report. The cost to government approximately \$1 million;

2 6. Timber Class Assessment, The
3 Environmental Assessment Board Hearings that just wrapped
4 up about a month ago. Cost the government approximately
5 \$20 million; and

6 7. The Hydro Demand Supply Plan
7 Hearings cost the government approximately \$26 million
8 to date. The work is not finished yet and the projected
9 cost is around \$30 million.

10 Just these seven alone although not all
11 of them are geared towards Indian self-government or Native
12 issues cost \$96 million.

13 As you can see from this partial list,
14 and when including task forces, round tables, other studies
15 and committees of the legislature the costs of studying
16 us over the past 15 years is many millions of dollars.
17 It is clear to us that forums dealing with self-government
18 issues on a bi-lateral and multi-lateral basis are big
19 business, especially for lawyers and consultants and I
20 say that with all due respect.

21 Over the past 15 or more years, there
22 have been many discussions that have taken place. When
23 these discussions are completed we never hear about how

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1 the recommendations are going to be acted upon or if they
2 will be acted upon at all. In some instances, governments
3 have changed and they want nothing to do with the results
4 of another government's forum. It is sad to say that party
5 politics have, in many instances, undermined our efforts.

6 A classic example of this was the Royal Commission on
7 the Northern Environment.

8 There is one thing that is becoming very,
9 very clear to our people, and that is while these
10 discussions are taking place we lose more and more of the
11 lands and resources that are our rightful gifts from the
12 Creator. More timber is taken from our customary lands,
13 more water is being polluted and exploited, more minerals
14 are taken from our territories daily and exploration moves
15 onward, and tourism sites are taken from our people. Even
16 as we sit here today to talk to you about our plight and
17 our grievances, we are losing more and more of our lands
18 and resources to outside extractors.

19 But we continue to participate in forums
20 such as yours because we are a trusting people. It is
21 our nature. We do not look at this as a character flaw
22 or weakness, but rather as a positive element in the make-up
23 of our character given to us by the Creator. There are

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1 times when this gets us into trouble, but for the most
2 part it has carried us through many troubled and turbulent
3 times. There are times when we feel like reacting
4 violently, but we have always managed to restrain ourselves
5 because that is not the lifestyle we want to teach and
6 burden our youth with.

7 Perhaps, your Commission will be the
8 last test of our patience. I know we can no longer sit
9 back and see our children with so little to hope for in
10 their futures, and to see their suicides grow in numbers.
11 We hope you do well in your work and that Canadians take
12 you seriously.

13 I would like to refer back to the work
14 of the past commissions and other forums for a moment.
15 There has been much information and knowledge gathered
16 on the plight of First Nations and the issue of
17 self-government. We are at a loss as to how all of this
18 has benefited our communities. In far too many instances
19 they have not borne the fruit from the labour of so many
20 well intentioned people.

21 I would like to recommend to this
22 Commission, as an integral part of your evaluation, as
23 to how the process of Commissions and other forums have

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1 failed First Nations. There is a need to put this matter
2 into a clear perspective, to illustrate what has happened
3 to these reports, and to what results the governments have
4 acted on the recommendations that flowed from these
5 reports.

6 From this might come some concrete
7 recommendations regarding a process to deal with your
8 recommendations to help ensure that this Commission does
9 not become subject to the same fate as past commissions.

10 Other Commissions and forums have all
11 too often put all their eggs in one basket and only tabled
12 a final report. At best, some have tabled interim reports,
13 but with no clear method of evaluating the actions taken
14 on their recommendations in subsequent reports.

15 I respectfully recommend to you that you
16 produce an interim report, making a number of
17 recommendations, at the end of each year. And, in
18 subsequent reports that you evaluate the actions taken
19 by the government on your recommendations.

20 I would further recommend that you place
21 sunset clauses in your recommendations that would demand
22 that governments act on recommendations within a certain
23 period of time.

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1 As I have already noted to you, a great
2 deal of money has been expended dissecting the issues that
3 affect our First Nation communities. We have seen so very
4 little in terms of fundamental results. Often we have
5 heard the arguments and concerns about the costs of dealing
6 with these issues. Your Commission, in the reports tabled
7 to date, raise those same concerns. You will undoubtedly
8 wonder how another order of government can be afforded.

9 Indeed, this was one of the major
10 weaknesses of the Charlottetown Accord. Finance was to
11 be left until some future forums and we were to, once again,
12 be trusting. We, the First Nation leaders, have come to
13 a belief that a fundamental finance and structural change
14 must occur in this country in order for us to take our
15 rightful place in society.

16 Canada cannot afford another layer of
17 government; therefore, it is imperative that all federal
18 departments and provincial agencies with mandates,
19 programs and services, applicable to our people, must
20 transfer all appropriate financial, human and associated
21 resources to First Nation government. This transfer must
22 also include those mandates that will enable us to
23 effectively operate our governments. These resources

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1 will be used to establish our governments in areas such
2 as conservation methods, justice, policing, land regimes,
3 environmental institutions and so forth.

4 We do not, and will not, continue to rely
5 on social payments and government hand-outs. What we want
6 is a more equitable financing arrangement between the Crown
7 and First Nations. One that respects the spirit and intent
8 of the treaty that was signed by my grandfather a few
9 hundred yards from here in July of 1929.

10 Our elders who witnessed the signing of
11 the treaty have always said that they did not give up the
12 land and only agreed to share the Creator's bountiful gifts
13 with the new comers. It is on those terms that we want
14 to develop our jurisdictional and financial arrangements
15 with the Crown. We must have a share of the money that
16 is made from the resources that are extracted from our
17 territories. This can occur by the simple use of such
18 instruments as royalty payments, taxation, licensing
19 permits, et cetera on all resource activities that occur
20 on our lands.

21 Those monies must flow directly to First
22 Nations, and they must determine their own priorities in
23 the true spirit of self-government. We must have the

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1 flexibility of adapting and using those resources to
2 establish our own appropriate governments and best
3 determine our own future. Others must stop assuming that
4 it is their role to do these things for us. They must
5 break out of that mould and give us back our freedom.

6 In your reports tabled to date you make
7 some statements and ask a number of questions that cause
8 us some concern. Primarily, we have a concern that you
9 have yet to break the mould of thinking that others must
10 do most things for us. While it is reassuring that you
11 support the recognition by others of our inherent rights
12 you often talk about control and access such as in the
13 sections on education.

14 Well, we do not simply want control or
15 access. We have an inherent right to govern which should
16 imply that we own these things that are truly ours. You
17 cannot give us control of the education of our children,
18 you can only give us the resources that prevent us from
19 assuring a proper education of our children. If you focus
20 on such elements as control and access, you may end up
21 simply tinkering with existing programs and services and
22 miss the boat on the fundamental changes required.

23 At this time, I will only touch upon a

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1 few questions posed in your "Framing the Issues" Report.

2 There are some very pertinent questions contained in this
3 report, and we will respond to those in the near future.

4 As an example, we are concerned about questions such as
5 the one in 1c in fundamental questions.

6 The question that is given is: To whom
7 should Aboriginal governments be accountable and for what?

8 You must come to understand that we are
9 accountable to our people for everything and that is not
10 going to change. What is missing is jurisdictional
11 respect and financial arrangements.

12 In 2d the question reads: Do Canadians
13 feel that preservation of Aboriginal languages is
14 important to Canadian identity?

15 It does not matter what Canadians think
16 on this matter. The languages are a part of us and the
17 preservation of those languages are our right.

18 Perhaps, we should reverse the question
19 to read: Do Aboriginal people think that the preservation
20 of english or french is important to the Aboriginal
21 identity? If we came to Ottawa or Toronto and asked you
22 that question I wonder how you would feel. I wonder how
23 the majority of those people living in Ottawa and Toronto

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1 would feel.

2 I have a hard time framing this question
3 2f asks: To what extent must social problems be resolved
4 before economic development can proceed?

5 Social problems will not be resolved
6 until economic development and economic justice become
7 a reality. They must be addressed simultaneously and from
8 a jurisdictional perspective.

9 If Toronto had 80 per cent unemployment
10 as is the case in most of our reserves, would you address
11 the social or economic problems first? I think if you
12 had 80 per cent unemployment in Toronto you would have
13 rioting in the streets.

14 Your report lists a number of very
15 specific questions, and we will address them in due time
16 and as our resources permit. However, I would like to
17 recommend that you first focus on the fundamental issues
18 related to jurisdiction, authority and finance. And, once
19 again, I would stress that you first table interim reports
20 on those matters to test the sincerity of the federal and
21 provincial governments.

22 I do not think it would be productive
23 to get bogged down in the administrative and management

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1 details of governance without first addressing those
2 fundamental issues. Further, many of us have a great fear
3 that if you focus on those details first that you will
4 miss the mark on the fundamentals and we will end up with
5 a result that simply tinkers with existing programs,
6 services and very limited control over what someone else
7 owns. It must be our own to own.

8 Our Treaty Territories: At this time
9 I would like to speak to you about our treaty and
10 territories. I wanted to present to you a map that I
11 scribbled on last night called: "First Nations Map". It
12 was put out by the government.

13 On it I have drawn a line right across
14 northwestern to northeastern Ontario that will show you
15 the Treaty 9 area of which the government says that we
16 are an adhesion to. There is a shaded in area of the
17 traditional territories of the one time Big Trout Lake
18 First Nation territories which composed of Wapekeka,
19 Kasabonika, Wunnumin Lake, Wawakapewin, King Fisher Lake,
20 Muskrat Dam, Sachigo and Bearskin Lake.

21 That whole territory was at one time
22 occupied by our people. Occupied in the true sense of
23 occupation that utilize every inch of that territory.

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1 We used to congregate in Big Trout Lake -- our ancestors
2 used to come here from all over to come and have
3 Thanksgiving celebrations here in this community. We
4 recognized the headsmen and the community leaders of Big
5 Trout Lake as our leaders.

6 It was in the early 70's under the
7 leadership of Adelaide Chapman and at the request of
8 outlying communities that we start negotiating with the
9 government and separating into separate reserves.
10 Shortly after that the Government of Canada came in with
11 another program called Tribal Council Funding which
12 further divided the Big Trout Lake First Nations. The
13 Big Trout Lake First Nations as we knew them back in 1929.

14 Right now along with Lac Seul and
15 Pikangikum, Big Trout Lake and Muskrat Dam belong to what
16 is called the Independent First Nations Alliance. There
17 are other communities that formally belong to Big Trout
18 Lake that are in other tribal councils.

19 You can see the divisionary tactics that
20 were employed by the government to prevent us from speaking
21 with one voice. I would like to give you this map as part
22 of my presentation so that you will see the approximate
23 land area that I talked about when I referred to the Big

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1 Trout Lake traditional territories.

2 In closing, I would sincerely like to
3 thank you for the opportunity to address the Royal
4 Commission on Aboriginal peoples. We will be responding
5 to your mandate further in the very near future. We hope
6 you will take our recommendations seriously, and
7 especially those related to your tabling of interim reports
8 and monitoring of those report recommendations. Also,
9 we hope you will, above all, start to address the
10 jurisdictional issues.

11 Many of your other mandate issues and
12 questions will be addressed over time as governance
13 negotiations occur. We hope you will respect that we
14 cannot all be served by one system for Aboriginal people
15 -- whether it be areas such as education or justice. But
16 you can make some very important recommendations about
17 the process of achieving results in those areas, and of
18 ensuring an on-going mechanism to ensure that parties
19 honour their commitments.

20 We commit to work with you and hope your
21 Commission will remain accessible to the grass roots people
22 such as our First Nations. We know that you will be
23 commissioning a number of studies and conducting further

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1 rounds of hearings and we hope you will find the ways and
2 means to allow us the grass roots people to fully
3 participate, to hear and to be heard on all issues.

4 We hope that you have had an enjoyable,
5 hospitable and worthwhile visit. May the Great Spirit
6 be with you in a safe journey to your homes and loved ones.

7 Meegwetch.

8 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you very much, Chief
9 Frank Beardy and the Elders of Muskrat Dam. Meegwetch.

10 I am going to give the Commissioners,
11 again, a brief opportunity to say a few words and after
12 that I think this task master should call for a break for
13 at least 10 minutes anyway. So that is what we are going
14 to do after this -- we will have a 10 minute break. Our
15 existence physically is more important to us as well as
16 combat the issues of the day and for the future. With
17 that in mind I will call for a 10 minute break and give
18 our guests a time to stretch.

19 There are four more presentations to be
20 done. I hope that we will go through the schedule as it
21 has been presented. I don't think there needs to be any
22 apologies for the efforts, but one of the things that we
23 seem to think that the last several Commissions never

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1 worked is because we were given 15 minutes to tell actually
2 what we were saying.

3 Maybe they didn't understand too well
4 in 15 minutes. We are hoping that maybe with the time
5 on our hands we may be able to turn things around and maybe
6 get some more things across the table a little more clear
7 given the time and provided the opportunity. That is why
8 we hoped that a community setting would be used in terms
9 of the time frames.

10 In that sense we still respect the fact
11 that two of our guests have criss-crossed the country in
12 the work they have done and that is the commitment that
13 is very hard to do and the people of Big Trout Lake and
14 Muskrat Dam, Island Lake, Wapekeka, Kasabonika appreciate.

15 I thank the Creator for providing you two people with
16 that opportunity and also, being with us here today.

17 I will give the Commissioners a brief
18 time to talk to Muskrat Dam and then we will break for
19 10 minutes.

20 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank
21 you, Mr. Moderator. I want to thank all the people from
22 Muskrat Dam for their excellent presentations.

23 I will only take a few brief moments to

1 make a few brief comments.

2 First I want to say how much I
3 appreciated the presentations wherein the elders share
4 their wisdom with us. I enjoyed everything they said to
5 us. It was interesting that two of them said that they
6 had 12 children. Pure coincidence that there are also
7 12 children in my family.

8 I would like to make a few comments about
9 Chief Frank Beardy's presentation more particularly
10 because it is in writing and it is a little easier to follow
11 and to hang on to it. I want to say that I think this
12 was a very important presentation that we must pay
13 attention to.

14 I am glad you emphasized that we are not
15 Commissioners like the first treaty Commissioners.
16 Somewhere else a long way way from here at one time in
17 our first round of hearings someone accused us by saying,
18 "The last time you Commissioners were here". At that point
19 it was Allan Blakeney and I on that particular panel and
20 my colleague defended me. He said, "Well, I wasn't there
21 and I can assure you that Paul wasn't there either."

22 In fact, I was thinking about that when
23 you were making your presentation. Some of those things

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1 you said about trapping -- if there is some time later
2 I can share some stories about my Moshum (PH) and his
3 trapping too are sort of like the ones you were telling
4 me. I can assure you that I had nothing to do with those
5 treaty Commissioners. In fact, I wasn't born.

6 Also, I am not government. I have never
7 been a part of government. I expect I never will be.
8 It is one of the reasons that this Commission has been
9 established is to have people other than government make
10 recommendations to the government.

11 I want to say that personally I think
12 your suggestion about in our report writing down the
13 history of the failures of the past task forces and past
14 Commissions. Why did they fail? What must be done to
15 see that the recommendations of this one doesn't fail?
16 That impresses me. It is a very worthwhile
17 recommendation.

18 Of course, we are careful not to make
19 promises, but I assure you that it is a worthwhile
20 recommendation that I will be very happy to support. It
21 has every merit so someone will have to talk me out of
22 it and I don't see how they can do that. It makes a lot
23 of sense.

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1 Also, the recommendation about interim
2 reports to see how government responds to that. It
3 certainly has a lot of merit as far as I am concerned.

4 You make a number of comments on pages
5 7, 8 and 9. Let me just make a very few brief comments
6 about that. I agree with pretty well many of the points
7 that you make here. I want to make it as clear as I can
8 that the documents that we have published so far were never
9 -- and are not so far as I understand it -- ever intended
10 to reflect the views of the Commission on particular
11 issues.

12 That discussion paper was an attempt,
13 as I understand it, to reflect what people said to us.
14 I agree wholeheartedly, for example, with 2f and your
15 interpretation of it. That this does not make sense.
16 I agree entirely with you. I couldn't agree more. The
17 same thought occurred to me when I saw this.

18 The answer is, of course, we are not
19 putting our views in this document. That is what was said
20 to me when we were working on this document. The point
21 the others make is that this was said to us by somebody
22 and then the questions are derived from what others have
23 put to us and then that is where the questions come from.

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1 This may not be the best way to do things,
2 but I wanted to make that clear that I hope that these
3 questions and the way they are framed should not be taken
4 to reflect any particular views because I can tell you
5 right now I certainly do not agree with the perception.
6 Not one bit. Not for one second.

7 That would go with respect to the other
8 points about control and access, too. There is no way
9 that I would ever be a part of any body that would pretend
10 that it can give control or access to anybody. I do not
11 have these things so certainly it would never be possible
12 for me to pretend to give them to anybody. I wanted to
13 say that.

14 In the first round of hearings about
15 10,000 pages of transcripts were produced and if the people
16 are saying that somebody said this it is difficult as a
17 humble member of the Commission to be able to plough through
18 all of that and show that it was never said and there is
19 no basis for saying these things.

20 So, again, the idea was to try to reflect
21 what was said to us and not our views. I wanted to say
22 that.

23 As I said, again, I will repeat it is

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1 a most important presentation. Very worthwhile
2 recommendations. Practical kinds of recommendations.
3 The kind that we need -- the one about royalties, too,
4 appears to be a practical eminently reasonable workable
5 recommendation. It has been very very important to me
6 to hear from the Elders earlier this morning, now and from
7 you about Treaty 9 and its importance. I don't think that
8 could have happened without being here and hearing it from
9 you and from the others.

10 I agree that it is a very difficult task
11 that we have and we can only commit to do our best. At
12 least, I will do my best to fight to have the kind of report
13 that makes sense and I hope, as you have said here, and
14 as it says in the paper Elijah Harper said, "I hope this
15 is the last Commission".

16 I want to thank you again for your
17 presentations.

18 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I would
19 just like to make one or two brief comments. The first
20 one is I would like to defend our poster that you referred
21 to because that is supposed to be aimed at us, the
22 Commission, and not at you. We are being told in the poster
23 and this is why it is put up on the walls everywhere we

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1 hold hearings is that we should not be talking, we should
2 be listening.

3 The poster, I assure you, is aimed at
4 us when we go to these hearings. We are told that we must
5 listen and not talk.

6 I would like also to make one or two
7 comments about the document: "Framing the Issues" because
8 I think there may be a bit of a misunderstanding about
9 that document. The intention of the document was to
10 reflect what we had heard on the first round. It was an
11 attempt to sum up what the people in the communities were
12 saying to us and the questions they were asking.

13 For example, because one of the main
14 issues that people were talking about at the time was
15 self-government, the question was being raised in many
16 communities about accountability. I mentioned this
17 earlier today, many Native people were saying, "Well, how
18 would Native government be accountable? Who would they
19 be accountable to?" There was a real concern by those
20 who were nervous about self-government as to whether the
21 people were going to be able to exercise some control over
22 the kind of government they were receiving.

23 This was a question that those who were

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1 a little apprehensive about self-government were asking
2 us. To whom should Aboriginal governments be accountable?
3 Obviously, there answer was the one you give -- to the
4 people that they are governing, to their own people. This
5 was one of the concerns that was expressed and that is
6 why it is there.

7 The one about the Canadians feel that
8 the preservation of Aboriginal language is important to
9 Canadian identity. That is a question that was aimed at
10 non-Native people. The Native people as we went into the
11 communities were asking us: "Do other Canadians really
12 care whether the Native languages are preserved or not?
13 We wonder if they really care because governments haven't
14 shown much indication that they are interested in this
15 subject and concern about it". That is why the question
16 was put in there because of non-Native people.

17 Some of these questions are aimed at
18 non-Native people and some are aimed at Native people.
19 That was one that Native people were really worried about
20 because they had the feeling that other Canadians didn't
21 really care whether Native languages survived. They only
22 cared about, as somebody said, the two official languages,
23 english and french. That is why that question was there.

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1 I agree with you that it is a strange
2 question. This question about: Do social problems have
3 to be resolved before economic justice becomes a reality?
4 This was a question that came out of some very poor
5 disadvantaged Native communities. Native communities
6 where they had virtually nothing going for them and where
7 the living conditions were very very low.

8 They said to us, "You come in here and
9 you talk about self-government and you talk about having
10 an economic base in the community and you talk about being
11 economically self-sufficient. We don't want to talk about
12 these things. We want you to do something about the
13 conditions in which we are having to live. We will worry
14 about self-government once we have a roof above our head."

15 This is what prompted this question.
16 This is a question that really comes out and means a great
17 deal to those communities where the people were really
18 living in worse than Third World conditions. That is why
19 that is there. It is an understandable question and it
20 is an understandable position for people to take whose
21 traditional way of life is gone because there have been
22 developments in the community that they can't go out.
23 They are having difficulty feeding themselves. They don't

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1 have homes to live in and so on.

2 So, these people tended to say to us
3 don't talk to us about these sophisticated things like
4 self-government and a different justice system, give us
5 bread to put on the table and a roof above our heads.
6 That is what that came out of.

7 I agree completely that it is an odd
8 question that probably really doesn't explain what the
9 concern was.

10 I would like to say just a word about
11 interim reports because this is something that the
12 Commission has really struggled with. You will recall
13 that quite early on when governments were having great
14 difficulty with the concept of the inherent right to
15 self-government, they said they didn't know what it meant.
16 They were nervous about it.

17 The Commission thought, well we will
18 produce an interim report that will indicate that we
19 certainly support the concept of the inherent right to
20 self-government and we are really aiming this at the
21 provincial and federal governments so they will know that
22 our Commission believes in the inherent right of Native
23 people to govern themselves. That interim report was not

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1 well received by the Native people.

2 In fact, the four major political
3 organizations all expressed serious annoyance with the
4 Commission for producing that document. I think that some
5 of the Commissioners, as a result, are very nervous of
6 producing interim reports. Some of us are not. We think
7 we should be going ahead and producing interim reports
8 on all kinds of subjects where we see that there is
9 something that needs to be addressed.

10 I think that part of the hesitancy about
11 doing it is the amount of criticism that we received from
12 the Native political organizations for issuing that
13 document. They weren't at all happy with us.

14 I just wanted to make these comments.
15 I agree completely with my colleague that this is a very
16 valuable presentation that you have made. We are
17 delighted to have it. You have raised a lot of things
18 that we want to give a lot more thought to.

19 I want to thank you very much for that.

20 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY CHIEF STANLEY**
21 **SAINNAWAP (Translated):** I just want to say that what the
22 people of Muskrat Dam have to say -- I think we local people
23 have learned a lot from them in terms of how they think.

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1 I am sure all you people understand that this panel here
2 is here to listen to the concerns and they cannot make
3 solutions right away.

4 It is true that in the past hearings that
5 the panels that came here always said that it is true what
6 you say. They always look at each other and at their own
7 strengths and then they say that this is not right. I
8 think this is where they make their mistake. We should
9 learn from this.

10 At the referendum in the fall you watched
11 our Grand Chief going to Ottawa. He was really pushing
12 for the yes vote. He wanted us to vote yes. He treated
13 us as if we were children, us Native people. We were the
14 ones the power of that position. We are the reason that
15 that position is available.

16 That is what happens sometimes.
17 Sometimes we are not given the mandate to talk about certain
18 things before they are shoved aside. That is the way that
19 it happened during the referendum in the fall. The Grand
20 Chief that works for all the Native people in Canada --
21 you saw him spend all that money pushing for the yes vote.
22 Yet, we didn't even know what was in that package and
23 how it was going to effect us.

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1 Just like what one person said when one
2 person from Big Trout made a presentation the description
3 of the jet-setting lifestyle, the media coverage that is
4 all he had. He didn't walk in humility. He placed himself
5 above his people. He forgot about his grass roots and
6 that is why it didn't work. We saw it and he saw it, too.
7 He saw what his leadership was like.

8 If that ever happened to me and I was
9 in that position, I would have retired that following
10 morning. If I had spent all that money meant for Native
11 benefits and being on television all that time I don't
12 think I would be able to stay in the office another day.

13 I am not going to comment on what Frank
14 had to say because I work with him and we all talk the
15 same when we talk about issues, when we talk about our
16 communities and our people.

17 I have no comments on the presentation
18 just made by Chief Frank Beardy because we are fighting
19 for the same cause. We are fighting the same goals and
20 aspirations for our people. The only thing that I can
21 say is that the document is a very constructive document.

22 I guess if Frank wants them to take action what he
23 submitted he has to find a place for me in the House of

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1 Commons in the future.

2 Thank you.

3 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Frank, you wanted to say
4 something.

5 **CHIEF FRANK BEARDY:** I will be going
6 back to Muskrat Dam with my people in about an hour. I
7 wanted to tell you that I greatly appreciate the
8 opportunity to meet with both of you and that with the
9 comments that I have heard both of you speak on the issues
10 effecting First Nations people in Canada and the vision
11 that you have developed over the years in your work in
12 the judicial area. I wanted to say to you that I greatly
13 admire the things that I have heard you say -- the both
14 of you -- and that I am honoured to have made this
15 presentation to you.

16 Sometime in the near future we will
17 probably catch up with the Commission again to make further
18 presentations especially in the area of justice. That
19 is an issue that is close and dear to my heart and I would
20 like to have the opportunity to be able to talk to you
21 about that.

22 Again, on behalf of the people in the
23 delegation from Muskrat Dam we welcome you to the

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1 traditional territories of our people and that you have
2 a safe journey home.

3 Meegwetch.

4 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you very much,
5 Frank.

6 We can't take a 15 minute break because
7 the Lac Seul people will be leaving at 6 o'clock and they
8 have to get ready so I am going to let the women's group
9 do their presentation. But we should stand up for five
10 minutes and take a stretch and get a coffee.

11 The women's group will be making the
12 first presentation after.

13

14 --- Upon recessing at 4:32 p.m.

15 --- Upon resuming at 4:40 p.m.

16

17 **ENO CHAPMAN:** We are going to be
18 starting momentarily.

19 We are going to proceed with the
20 presentation. First I will introduce Miss Anna McKay and
21 Miss Sadie McKay representing the Women's Group of the
22 Big Trout Lake First Nation. They will be doing the next
23 presentation. Also, Alice Beardy, band councillor who

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1 has the Women's Group portfolio will be with the people
2 and Anna will be doing the presentation.

3 **ANNA MCKAY, BIG TROUT LAKE WOMEN'S**

4 **GROUP:** Native language -- no translation available.

5 I would like to welcome the
6 Commissioners and the delegates to this Royal Commission
7 on Aboriginal people.

8 My name is Anna McKay. I am just going
9 to get to my presentation right away.

10 The situation in the Native communities
11 throughout Canada has been voiced time and time again.
12 In Ontario, many of the issues currently facing our First
13 Nation communities have been documented many times in a
14 variety of studies and task forces.

15 In 1985, the report of the Royal
16 Commission on the Northern Environment made several
17 recommendations to improve the conditions in our
18 communities. And still, many if not most of these
19 recommendations remain relevant to this day.

20 Collectively speaking on behalf of the
21 Women's Group of Big Trout Lake, we again voice our needs
22 and concerns, but, this time we would hope that you will
23 hear and understand. We anticipate that this renewed

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1 understanding would form a basis for new and
2 community-defined initiatives, designed to allow Native
3 people to formulate their own policies and programs which
4 would provide the opportunity to shape our own future.

5 There are several issues which we would
6 like to address:

7 The plight in society in general, and
8 in our community in particular, enforces the needs to
9 address the problems that families are facing today;

10 The growing number of suicides and
11 attempted suicides in our communities is of serious
12 concern;

13 The inadequate relevant personnel to
14 deal with the causes and treatment of these serious
15 problems;

16 We are also no strangers to the issue
17 of family violence, rape, sexual assault, mental and
18 physical abuse and child abuse;

19 We are also in need of support services
20 for victims, survivors and even the perpetrators of abuse;
21 and

22 Inadequate care-giving programs and
23 facilities for the elderly, the chronic and the disabled.

1 The only way to resolve these profound
2 problems is from within the community. Support networks
3 must be created in the community and must include a range
4 of counselling from elders, from religions, from peer group
5 members, even from within the family and from all age groups
6 in the community.

7 We feel that a holistic approach is
8 needed to heal and rebuild our families and therefore,
9 our communities.

10 We realize that the only way to cope with
11 these difficulties and find ways to resolve them is by
12 reviving our traditional methods of healing within our
13 community. These issues cannot be resolved by external
14 agencies from the outside.

15 What we need are the tools to provide
16 the necessary support systems. The need for our own people
17 to administer their own form of solutions necessitates
18 the need of training as being one such tool.

19

20 Our elderly and our disabled people need
21 access not only to adequate income maintenance, but more
22 importantly, the necessary care giving. All of which,
23 the regular Canadian citizen is now presently accessing.

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1 Part of the concrete physical solutions
2 that will require necessary monetary assistance includes:

3 An emergency and/or crisis shelter for
4 women and children in need of a safe environment;

5 An alcohol and drug abuse treatment
6 centre;

7 A women's centre which will respond to
8 ensuing needs as well as development of effective supports
9 and networks; and

10 Feasibility of potential daycare would
11 enhance family planning, child rearing, nurturing,
12 teachings, et cetera.

13 The need to rebuild our communities is
14 obvious. What is often misunderstood is the process of
15 healing. What we need is the opportunity to define these
16 healing processes which would incorporate the spiritual,
17 the emotional, the mental and the physical aspects of our
18 being.

19 That is the presentation that I am
20 presenting to you here today from the Women's Group.

21 In closing, I would like to thank the
22 women of Big Trout Lake Woman's Group who took the time
23 to share ideas and concerns and most importantly their

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1 dreams of a better tomorrow.

2 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you very much, Anna.

3 Would either of you ladies like to make
4 any additional comments?

5 **ALICE BEARDY (Translated):** You have
6 heard our wishes as women we hold meetings and we try to
7 start something to help our children, our grandchildren
8 especially their future. Times are getting hard for them.
9 It is in our community that is going to undertake all
10 those suggestions and ideas that you have heard.

11 I want to thank you non-Native people
12 for coming all this way to hear our ideas and our solutions.

13 **SADIE MCKAY (Translated):** I would also
14 like to thank to express my thanks for the Commissioners
15 and the panel that is present here to listen to our concerns
16 and our needs for us women here in Big Trout Lake.

17 It is not like in the past. Today it
18 is harder for our young Native women to face the problems
19 that were non-existent back then. This is one of the
20 reasons why we presented our paper and our position.
21 Hopefully, through our presentation, we hope to accomplish
22 what we presented. I hope you people will take it to heart
23 to try and assist us in any way possible.

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1 Thank you.

2 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Commissioners, if you
3 have a few comments.

4 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
5 very much for your presentation.

6 I well understand your reluctance to
7 believe that any Commission is going to understand and
8 to carry through relevant recommendations. I was saying
9 elsewhere recently that there have been Commissions on
10 Aboriginal issues for about 300 years in the British
11 governments and since then Canadian governments.

12 I am also very cautious, but I was
13 invited to sit on the Commission and I accepted to do so
14 because I thought that rather than hoping it can do some
15 good I can be a part of it to try and do what I can to
16 try to see that it does.

17 I wanted to comment and emphasize a point
18 that I think that is consistent with the holistic view
19 that you referred to that women's concerns are not only
20 the concerns of women, but men and women and vice versa.

21 Having said that I will turn it over to
22 my colleague, Commissioner Bertha Wilson, who is much
23 better qualified than I am to ask the right questions and

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1 to offer comments.

2 I want to say thank you very much.

3 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I would
4 like to thank you for coming and raising this issue before
5 the Commission. It is a very sensitive one, but it is
6 one that has been raised by individual women and women's
7 groups all across the country.

8 The issue of suicide amongst young
9 people, of course, is an urgent one to be addressed. That
10 is one that I think if we were ever going to do another
11 interim report -- and I think we should -- that that might
12 be the subject of an interim report from the Commission
13 and we will certainly be suggesting that to our colleagues
14 when we go back home.

15 Family violence is a very very serious
16 social problem right across the country. It is not
17 confined to native communities, it is also a problem in
18 white society, but apparently from the statistics that
19 we have been given it is an even greater problem for Native
20 women and Native children. I agree completely that what
21 is needed is a lot of services to deal with the victims
22 and also services to deal with the perpetrators of these
23 violent acts.

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1 One of the things, of course, is
2 absolutely essential and I think everyone agrees on this
3 whether they are Native or non-Native and that is that
4 there must be shelters to which abused women and abused
5 children can be taken immediately. There have to be places
6 of safety when women and children are in an abusive
7 situation. They have to be able to be taken out of that
8 or we are going to have more serious problems.

9 I don't know whether you have those sorts
10 of facilities in this community, but they are clearly and
11 absolutely essential. I would think that if funding was
12 to be available for anything it surely should be to protect
13 the women and children in the community.

14 The Commission is very well aware of this
15 problem because we have heard it from women and women's
16 groups in almost every community that we have visited.
17 I can assure you that the Commission will be making
18 recommendations as to how this should be addressed. We
19 appreciate having your suggestions and your ideas for
20 solutions to this problem.

21 I would just like to thank all three of
22 you for coming and speaking to us about such a sensitive
23 issue.

StenoTran

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1 Thank you.

2 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY CHIEF STANLEY**

3 **SAINNAWAP:** I think all those presentations made today
4 -- I think my agenda will be very heavy for next year.
5 I take those presentations seriously. It is not the first
6 time I know. The reason I asked my people to speak and
7 voice their concerns is I wanted to hear directly what
8 they had to say to ensure that I have the details of their
9 concern.

10 As a leader of this community I don't
11 know everything. I cannot comprehend everything without
12 details. There are a lot of things in my agenda right
13 now that I must represent the most constructive way
14 possible. That is why I have been encouraging my people
15 to speak up, to work together to come up with their goals
16 and objectives of their needs.

17 The only thing that I have to caution
18 myself is not to promise anything. The only thing I can
19 say is I will do everything in my power as a chief to make
20 those problems known to the appropriate government labels
21 because I have no choice.

22 I have to move because people are moving.

23 People of this community are the cross section -- are

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1 beginning to work together to understand each other and
2 to work co-operatively. At the same time I have to convey
3 the teaching of my elders. When you want to do something
4 don't go to the government right away. Demonstrate that
5 you are serious and you believe in what you want to do.

6 I have to convey that at the same time. With the immediate
7 problems where the financial needs are great I have to
8 take action right away.

9 I have the responsibility to get the
10 facilities for old people that are very old. I have the
11 responsibility to get the facilities for the chronic,
12 disabled and handicapped people. I have the
13 responsibility to protect people who have crisis such as
14 women. I have the responsibility to look at the housing
15 for other people who are in need such as the women who
16 have no manpower support.

17 I have the responsibility to provide
18 assistance and find assistance for the people who want
19 to get educated, who wants to be an athlete. I have the
20 responsibility and my whole responsibility is to get the
21 healing process for the whole community before I can
22 achieve my self-government determination.

23 Thank you.

StenoTran

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1 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Meegwetch,
2 Commissioners.

3 I would like to ask Deputy Chief Roger
4 Bull from Lac Seul and the consultant Jack Brightnose and
5 an elder from Lac Seul to come and make their presentation.

6 Again, I just want to convey my respects
7 to the other First Nations who partook in this gathering
8 that the process of the day has been lengthy, but it is
9 not an apology because in our cultural custom I don't think
10 we have to apologize, but we do share respects of things
11 that we do and at that time I convey that to the other
12 First Nations for this day.

13 The Lac Seul First Nations.

14 **DEPUTY CHIEF ROGER BULL:** Thank you very
15 much, Eno.

16 On behalf of my chief, Chief Roger
17 Southwind, on behalf of the Obijikwan First Nation, Lac
18 Seul First Nation I am very honoured to be here.

19 We have a presentation that we would like
20 to make before the Commissioners. As you yourselves are
21 here as guests, we also our guests here in this community.

22 We must acknowledge the warm hospitality that our brothers
23 have given us in the last two to three days -- the sharing

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1 of information and the sharing of our communities. I would
2 like to acknowledge that to Chief Stanley Sainnawap and
3 his council and his community.

4 I have with me Elder Harry Ignace and
5 also, Elder Jack Brightnose. I don't have a prepared text
6 to present to the Commission, but Jack would like, on our
7 behalf, to speak to the Commission.

8 So with that I would like to turn it over
9 to Jack.

10 Thank you. Jack Brightnose.

11 **JACK BRIGHTNOSE:** Thank you very much.

12 Just before I present -- I have a rough
13 draft of what Chief Southwind wanted me to convey to this
14 Commission. I also feel a great privilege to have met
15 the Commission as well as witness some of the really dynamic
16 activity that I have seen in the last few days here in
17 Big Trout Lake.

18 Sometimes I am referred to as an elder.

19 I forget that I really am getting old. I have been around
20 these things since the Hawthorn era when I first got into
21 actively presenting my views on the way that I saw the
22 world.

23 Last night as I was sitting here and

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1 there was this dance -- my spirit is still young. My spirit
2 says let's dance. So, I ended up dancing the night away.
3 I also had an opportunity to play the fiddle. I felt
4 very young until this morning when I woke up. My body
5 reminded me that I am an old man. Thank you very much
6 for your hospitality.

7 Honourable members of the Royal
8 Commission, Chief Sainnawap and other members of the
9 Independent First Nations Chiefs and members of the First
10 Nations Councils and honourable elders and ladies and
11 gentlemen.

12 I am privileged with the duty and honour
13 to be commissioned by Chief Southwind of Lac Seul First
14 Nation to make a presentation on his behalf on this historic
15 occasion of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal people.
16 He personally extends his welcome and best wishes to the
17 members of the Royal Commission and expects that these
18 discussions and hearings will be very productive.

19 In the last two evenings I have spent
20 some time engaged in discussions with Chief Southwind as
21 he conveys some of the most critical concerns that he has
22 that he would like to have the Royal Commission to hear.

23 He began to speak of matters that were

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1 not at all joyous and happy. His mood was focused on a
2 multi-million dollar media advertising industry that is
3 brutally moulding its band members into middle class
4 consumers only to face the harsh reality that the Christmas
5 stockings of many band members and their families will
6 be empty again this year because the job and economic
7 opportunities are scarce.

8 Honourable members of the Commission,
9 you have probably heard this kind of story before and I
10 know that you are going to hear it again and again as you
11 tour on the First Nations communities. You must all agree
12 that the tragic human conditions on-reserve communities
13 is one of the most persistent pictures in Canadian history
14 and the Canadian social and economic landscape.

15 Recent government reports have
16 indicated statistics showing increasing numbers of
17 Aboriginal communities with water and sewer systems,
18 improved housing, increased high school enrolments, higher
19 income levels and the increased administration of programs
20 under band control. That's definite signs of significant
21 improvement.

22 On the other hand, the poor quality of
23 life is very evident in most First Nation reserve

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1 communities. We continue to live in a serious state of
2 underdevelopment in relation to our physical, natural or
3 human resources. Furthermore, there is very little
4 improvement in the living conditions of our people in terms
5 of what meaning we have with respect to the idea of
6 improvements.

7 Canadian government studies and
8 statistics continue to indicate greater quantities of
9 physical assets and available services that create a
10 picture that we are an increasing burden to Canadian
11 taxpayers and that we are incapable of providing our own
12 needs. However, here in the real world, that picture may
13 be somewhat true because large numbers of our families
14 continue to rely on social assistance. Large numbers of
15 our neglected children continue to require care outside
16 reserve communities.

17 Our people continue to suffer and
18 acceptable high rates of injury and illness, the police,
19 the courts and the jails continue to process a very high
20 rate of our people. Alcoholism and drug abuse remains
21 a major problem in many First Nation reserves contributing
22 directly to all of these volatile difficulties.

23 The fact that nearly 40 per cent of all

1 on-reserve Aboriginal people migrate to cities and other
2 major commercial centres in search of a better life
3 reflects the seriousness of First Nations reserve
4 community conditions.

5 For Lac Seul First Nations chief and
6 council and in particular, reverence given to Chief
7 Southwind's sense of urgency, he has raised a question
8 and he wants to raise the question in political forum that
9 he hopes may be taken seriously. He raises this question:
10 Why do have to live under these intolerable conditions
11 when our traditionally economic territories are so rich
12 with natural resources?

13 The root of these problems can be traced
14 to the Indian Act. It is the Indian Act that legitimizes
15 the public notion that our people are incompetent and are
16 incapable of helping themselves. It also legitimizes
17 racism. It supports the public notion that traditional
18 Aboriginal cultures, their institutions, forms of
19 government and religions are marginally inferior with the
20 dominant Euro-Canadian society.

21 The undercurrents and underlying
22 destructive effects of the Indian Act in our lives lies
23 the important issue of control. The evidence in regard

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1 to our human conditions and the social casualties
2 statistics confirms the fact that our people have lost
3 control of their lives.

4 The Indian Act has effectively separated
5 us from our traditional capacities for healing, caring,
6 learning and providing our food and shelter. Instead,
7 we have become increasingly dependent on government and
8 especially critical is the nature of funding available.
9 From our perspective, current funding is seen as tools
10 and resources intended to help us reverse the adverse
11 conditions on our reserve communities.

12 When one thinks of resources in relation
13 to culture on one hand and travel autonomy and self-worth
14 on the other hand, resources under our control has a
15 tremendous meaning because it expresses the physical
16 extension of the ingenuity and creativity of our
17 communities and in society. It also includes our means
18 of production -- our political, social and economic
19 institutions. Control of resources in a broad general
20 term of our vision of autonomy arer intrinsic to social,
21 cultural and political relationships.

22 Honourable Commissioners, here we have
23 a very important common ground of understanding with Canada

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1 because we, as Aboriginal people, express our ideals very
2 much like you do, like Canada does. We relate ourselves
3 actively to our communities through the use of resources
4 directly under our control.

5 To the degree of resources that we have
6 under our control as a community the greater opportunity
7 we have to invest the world with our meaning. This formula
8 for human development and its advocacy is precisely what
9 provided you the right and opportunity to be here as
10 Commissioners on this monumental and historic occasion.

11 However, what separates us from the
12 family of the Canadian humanity is the legislative doctrine
13 of the Indian Act. It has effectively disinherited us
14 from our valuable resources and alienated us from our
15 traditional homelands. In essence, Commissioners, we
16 have become legislative hostages and economic refugees
17 in our own homelands.

18 When a nation is totally at the mercy
19 of resources controlled by others the opportunity to enrich
20 their lives with the fruits of their vision of self-defined
21 labour is denied for autonomy. We, as Aboriginal people,
22 have had to live and survive for over 100 years to the
23 denial of our fundamental right to this kind of autonomy.

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1 When this denial of fundamental rights
2 is imposed on any race or nation it is always followed
3 by a rapid loss of self-esteem. I am sorry I am unable
4 to find the proper words to describe this devastating
5 experience.

6 But if you can imagine being in a
7 hopeless state of mind and body fermented by a persistent
8 state of emotional advocacy, you may perhaps have a small
9 idea of what it is like. Those of us who have been there
10 and back simply call it the jumping off place.

11 There is no mystery on the phenomena of
12 high suicide rates among our youth. Despair and
13 hopelessness is intolerable in the lives of any human
14 being. This situation is especially critical when the
15 loss of individual self-worth occurs simultaneously with
16 the rapid disintegration of our supporting culture.

17 Since the Hawthorn Report era the
18 destructive impacts of the Indian Act on Aboriginal life
19 has been widely recognized. Today Canada is still looking
20 for practical and sensible solutions to the seemingly
21 formidable problem.

22 What is practical and sensible? How do
23 you apply practical and sensible solutions to such

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1 impractical and insensible practices of political
2 oppression in Canada? What about justice? Aboriginal
3 nations across Canada have extended billions of dollars
4 litigating their treaty rights and entitlements in a
5 jurisprudence that was primarily designed to protect
6 Euro-Canadian interests.

7 Long ago in history a greek philosopher
8 name Socrates expressed a simple meaning to the concept
9 of justice. He remarked in describing justice, "To have
10 what is one's own". This is a simple and practical concept
11 of justice. Rights and entitlements being recognized as
12 controlled by the owner, but in Canada it is much different.

13 Apparently Socrates had never heard of
14 use of fractured laws in his time. For example, bingos
15 and casinos are a rising commodity in continental markets
16 of the United States and Canada. Use of fractured laws
17 have denied First Nations the right to establish an
18 economic development enterprise. The use of fractured
19 laws are exclusive to colonial powers.

20 These one-sided laws are essential
21 elements for oppression. They constitute the core of
22 control, for example the South African Apartheid. They
23 are essentially the same laws that are legally confiscating

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1 the indigenous lands in Nicaragua belonging to the Shamos,
2 Ramos and Miskitas tribes. The patterns of oppression
3 of Croatia are essentially the same as with other parts
4 of the world.

5 Yet Canada in the face of all this
6 continues to assume the role of a broker between the weak
7 and strong nations in the international-political forums.
8 The Canadian International Development Agency under
9 international development research centre are considered
10 the best models for Third World development in the
11 international community.

12 Here in Canada we have the Department
13 of Indian Affairs which is understood to have similar
14 responsibilities for development of Third World
15 conditions. However, it is preoccupied with accounting
16 expenditures to the Treasury Board with very little regard
17 to the real results obtained from these expenditures.

18 Lac Seul First Nation recognizes the
19 essential requirements of accountability and management
20 and has an excellent working relationship with the Indian
21 Affairs Canada District Office in Sioux Lookout, however
22 the frustrations arises when both the District Office of
23 Indian Affairs Canada and the Lac Seul First Nations

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1 working together are obligated to work with federal
2 policies that are designed to support entirely different
3 objectives.

4 For example, the Indian Affairs specific
5 claims process is designed to expedite the administration
6 of the federal bureaucracy whereby Lac Seul First Nation
7 are outsiders. Flood impact issues, forestry industry
8 impacts another industrial encroachments on Aboriginal
9 lands are constitution matters that have national
10 ramifications.

11 Canada, through Indian Affairs, has been
12 posturing a deal for a discount on its obligations by
13 forcing technical solutions to constitutional issues.
14 More recently, a new Indian Claims Commission was
15 established. Its mandate was to help overcome the
16 overwhelming federal bureaucratic red tape. Lately,
17 rumour has it that it has been reduced to a public relations
18 agency for interpreting the meaning of federal policies
19 for First Nations.

20 First Nations are experts of the highest
21 category in understanding federal policies. They have
22 gone as far as correctly predicting their content before
23 policies are published. Lac Seul First Nations has been

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1 struggling to resolve a 50 year outstanding flood claim
2 in their traditional economic territories and homelands.

3 The new high water regimes resulting
4 from the Hydro Electric Four Bank Control Structure has
5 separated their community by creating new islands. Of
6 far more critical concern is the new water regimes has
7 destroyed spawning grounds for fisheries and has created
8 major disturbances in wildlife mobility patterns and
9 habitats.

10 The primary focus of treaties was the
11 protection of the way of life for First Nations. To fulfil
12 this treaty obligation traditional resources must be
13 ensured that their viability is the primary source for
14 shelter, food and income. Compensations for claim
15 disclosures are only the exceptional relief. They should
16 not be treated as civil matters that can be satisfied with
17 piecemeal damage settlements.

18 Canada, through the Department of Indian
19 Affairs, has legal obligations as fiduciary trustee to
20 protect us and our lands and our resources. Indian Affairs
21 Canada must cease in aiding and abetting to our effective
22 disappearance and destruction of our lands.

23 The fiduciary relationships between

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1 Canada and the Aboriginal people is very fragile with
2 respect to the principles of social justice. For example,
3 the appointment of Indian Affairs Minister Tom Sidden was
4 done without our input or any considerations to the
5 desperation of our living conditions.

6 Here we are this afternoon trying to make
7 sensible and practical recommendations to these insensible
8 and impractical solutions from the Canadian government.
9 Would it be more sensible to have a fiduciary
10 representative who can feel the whip when it is laid on
11 our backs? In essence this is what has happened to this
12 day. We are still being blamed for being poor and for
13 the living environment which we could never have created.

14 We want you as members of the Royal
15 Commission to remind Canada that when your ancestors
16 arrived here they, too, were poor, hungry and displaced.
17 They were treated with respect. We taught them how to
18 navigate in our rivers and lakes, how to walk on deep snow
19 and how to fashion warm clothing. The spirit of that
20 hospitality is still present today here in this community.
21 It has never changed.

22 Our kindness which is the hallmark of
23 our identity and our generosity has never changed, but

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1 when our people die from violence and when our children
2 are taken away, we cry with real tears and feel a real
3 pain.

4 We need a federal representative inside
5 of Parliament with duly recognized statute -- statutory
6 recognition who will cry with us, who is able to cry with
7 us, who is able to feel the pain with us. A federal
8 representative like that can assure a measure of justice
9 without first having to study us.

10 On behalf of the chief and council of
11 Lac Seul they are making one formal recommendation. They
12 are recommending that we have a federal representative
13 that would have the same statutory powers as other federal
14 representatives in Parliament. Chief Southwind has
15 expressed a desperate need to pierce the veil of
16 insensitivity that has shielded us from the rest of the
17 world. It is essentially relegated us to the far fringes
18 of the political conscience.

19 On behalf of the chief and council I am
20 also going to say to you that the chief and council will
21 be reporting to some of the questions that are in the
22 documents and you will be assured that you will be receiving
23 some remarks as well as statements as to some of the issues

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1 that have already been covered by the chief from Muskrat
2 Dam.

3 I thank you for listening. We look with
4 great anticipation and confidence that our concerns and
5 recommendations will be heard in the highest supreme halls
6 of government so that we will be a part of the opportunities
7 that are offered to other Canadians.

8 Meegwetch.

9 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you very much, Jack
10 and Deputy Chief Roger Bull and Elder Harry Ignace.
11 Meegwetch.

12 I will ask the Commissioners to make a
13 few comments.

14 We have two more presentations and we
15 are doing really well. I have looked at my watch and it
16 is only 5:30 and it says at 6:00 we will be finished so
17 that sort of brings relief to my heart that I am still
18 on time here. That is good. Maybe I am perfect after
19 all, I don't know. We will have to see.

20 We are going to have supper at the church
21 basement after 6:30. They are preparing a supper of
22 traditional foods there. That will be worth looking
23 forward to after this day.

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1 I will hand it over to the Commission
2 to say a few words to Lac Seul First Nation.

3 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
4 very much for your presentation. I appreciate your
5 remarks.

6 Elder Brightnose -- those about you
7 having been around for a long time since the Hawthorn days.
8 I have never had the honour of meeting you until last
9 night, but I certainly had heard about you a long time
10 before that. I understand your references to the dance
11 as well. I heard there is another one tonight and I
12 understand the kind of challenge that you are talking
13 about. I know it is even a great challenge as far as I
14 am concerned.

15 I would like to make a few brief remarks
16 to emphasize some of the points that you have made and
17 to try to show that we understand and appreciate them.

18 You talked to us about the tragic
19 conditions on First Nations reserves. I think it is
20 instructive to tell Canadians that we have seen people
21 come and give us examples of positive developments
22 conditions of First Nations where there was only 40 per
23 cent unemployment. Can you imagine what non-Aboriginal

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1 community in Canada would accept 40 per cent unemployment.

2 I think that certainly underscores the point that you
3 made.

4 Also you point that Aboriginal peoples
5 First Nations are viewed as a burden notwithstanding the
6 richness of their traditional territories. I think that
7 when you are referring to this richness you are referring
8 also to the cultures of the people and to the people
9 themselves who are such a part of the richness that you
10 talked about.

11 I appreciated your remarks and I
12 understand them concerning the Department of Indian
13 Affairs and the Indian Act issues that you have raised
14 and the relationship with treaties. The Indian Act, for
15 example, does not and has never recognized the distinct
16 treaty statuses and I wonder how many Canadians know that
17 the Indian Act has done away with the basis for the
18 treaties. That is a part of the things that you have
19 explained to us.

20 The way that the Indian Act has dealt
21 with First Nations is a very long way, as you have
22 emphasized, from the treaty vision of partners sharing
23 in the land. I think that is a point that is worth

1 emphasizing. That is why I comment on it by way of
2 emphasizing it.

3 You have talked also about the
4 devastation that is worked by the loss of self-esteem and
5 you hope that we can have a small idea of what it means.

6 I can assure you that I have a small idea and more of
7 what it means because I have experienced some of the things
8 that you have talked about.

9 You have asked us to remind Canada that
10 when the ancestors of the non-Aboriginal people came here
11 they were treated with respect. Yes, we can do that and
12 that is important.

13 In the case of my people, the Métis,
14 their was so much respect there that new families grew
15 up and eventually we developed a new nation.

16 About your recommendation regarding a
17 federal representative with powers in the Parliament.
18 That strikes me as an essential requirement for the future,
19 not only of the Anishnawbe, but of Canada. I think it
20 is important that Aboriginal people have a voice in the
21 national institutions of this land.

22 I would hope that Canadians would agree
23 that the days of no vote are long gone. I would hope that

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1 they would agree that it is past history and that they
2 would agree to look forward to a better day when the vision
3 of a better Canada includes the kinds of institutions that
4 you have talked about where the people have a real voice
5 and that there is a real place in the institutions of this
6 land for the Anishnawbe.

7 I thank you very much and I thank you
8 particularly for the confidence that you have expressed.

9 I can assure you that we will treat your confidence with
10 the greatest respect by doing our utmost in our work for
11 this Commission.

12 Thank you very much.

13 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I would
14 just like to say as I listened to you I become very conscious
15 of what a heavy responsibility those of us understood when
16 we agreed to become Commissioners.

17 Speaking for myself as a non-Native
18 person I had a general concept of what the problems were
19 and the way that Canada's Native people had been treated
20 by non-Natives. Of course, that is a very heavy burden
21 that I and others must carry.

22 I listened with great interest to what
23 you had to say on the various issues. I have become very

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1 aware, of course, of the living conditions that many Native
2 people live under in communities.

3 As I have said before, I marvel when our
4 political leaders say to other countries who are appealing
5 to them for aid, "We won't give you aid because your human
6 rights record is so bad. You must clean up your human
7 rights record and then Canada will provide you with the
8 aid you ask for." I say to myself how can we possibly
9 say that to other countries when our own record of human
10 rights, as far as our Native people are concerned, is so
11 appalling.

12 So you have certainly given us food for
13 a lot of thought. I hope that you will be giving us your
14 presentation in writing because you have raised so many
15 things that I, for one, at the end of a long day am not
16 able fully to absorb, but we would certainly like to have
17 your presentation in writing so that we have an opportunity
18 to think about the things that you have told us and to
19 share them with our fellow Commissioners who are visiting
20 in other communities so that we can decide what kinds of
21 recommendations we should be making to governments.

22 I want to say thank you very much and
23 if you have done nothing else you have certainly convinced

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1 us that we have a huge task ahead of us and that we need
2 all the help that we can get from you and others.

3 Thank you.

4 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY CHIEF STANLEY**

5 **SAINNAWAP:** I will just make some comments, not really
6 to respond to what the Lac Seul First Nation presentation
7 is.

8 As you all know we work with the Lac Seul
9 First Nations in utilization of their needs and goals and
10 objectives as acting -- the principle of this organization
11 is to work together and appreciate the problems.

12 I like their presentations. I think the
13 Lac Seul is trying to build a chair for me for the House
14 of Commons. We are talking about the special
15 representative.

16 I don't understand that some time ago
17 the Prime Minister made a statement regarding the
18 allocation of funds to Native people. He made a statement
19 that he was giving every First Nation the amount of \$23,000.
20 Now. I think it was quite a bit. It will be quite
21 substantial if money was directly given to the Indian
22 people.

23 I don't think any band, at least in the

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1 Sioux Lookout district ever get \$10 million dollars to
2 meet the needs of the people each year. I doubt it very
3 much -- from Indian Affairs.

4 Now, I think those political leaders in
5 our government, it is about time that they should be
6 accountable about how they spend that money, where they
7 use it, did they use it to pay the bureaucracy to make
8 things difficult for First Nations? Where are they
9 paying? We will only get a fraction of that money to trying
10 to meet the needs of the people in needed services.

11 Every time when a band is in a deficit
12 position Indian Affairs says you have to do this you have
13 to do that. Things like that. You have to come up with
14 a plan to meet our needs. Deficit means we need more money.
15 We need housing. We need roads. We need water and
16 sewage. We want better homes. That is what deficit
17 translates to. We need essential services. That is what
18 it means. It is not the mismanaging of funds. It is not
19 misappropriating of funds. That is my translation with
20 this.

21 I think you know that I wear another hat
22 here. I think it is about time to show this Commission
23 to find out exactly how Indian Affairs is spending our

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1 money because since 1985 we never had any increase in
2 funding for housing or other capital infrastructures which
3 are much needed here on my reserve or for the First Nations
4 across the country.

5 I think it is about time First Nation
6 audit the Indian Affairs. How do they expend their
7 financial resources? Because we represent the people.
8 We fight for the people. I would like to see how much
9 the Department is spending of my money to create monstrous
10 bureaucracy.

11 Every time we have an arrangement with
12 Indian Affairs we have to put ourselves in the position
13 to attach with their conditions no matter how small the
14 amount of money given to us they say this is what you have
15 to do. This is when you have to finish and this is how
16 you have to account for the money.

17 Right now I am in an embarrassing
18 situation with Indian Affairs. I have been dealing with
19 the Hydro ever since last year. What I have found so far
20 is that Hydro has been doing the work for their
21 installation. They are getting 100 per cent of capital
22 expenditures from Indian Affairs. Whatever money they
23 want -- those guys from Hydro, they get it without a

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1 problem. Without hesitation from the Department of Indian
2 Affairs.

3 Now when I cornered Hydro they told me
4 everything about what they have been doing. I know other
5 sources of information about what they have been doing.
6 Right now I am having a good discussion with Hydro and
7 Indian Affairs. What has been happening is that what
8 Indian Affairs -- what Hydro has been doing there has been
9 inspection done by Indian Affairs to make sure that Hydro
10 is doing a good job and making sure they use the money
11 wisely.

12 For instance, one example, there was a
13 diesel generation unit here in Big Trout. Indian Affairs
14 provided an appropriation of funds to upgrade that
15 generation unit. In this year also Indian Affairs gave
16 me capital funds to further upgrade that generation unit.

17 Before I accepted that money I tracked
18 back for one year what has been happening. I found out
19 through the tender documents, agreements, that the
20 generation unit is a rebuilt one. It was taken out of
21 one of the reserves somewhere in the east coast. The
22 tender documents stipulate that we were supposed to get
23 a new generation unit.

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1 I am dealing with that right now. Now
2 if Indian Affairs was -- why this group of work was not
3 subjected to inspection to make sure the Indian bands were
4 getting a new unit rather than a second hand unit?

5 This is the kind of stuff Indian Affairs
6 has been playing. They are playing in favour with outside
7 agencies. They are not playing in favour of Native people.
8 They are playing with our money. This is why I don't
9 like Indian Affairs. Every time they give us money, this
10 is what you have to do. This is how you have to spend
11 it.

12 I think it is about time nation to nation
13 stand up together collectively. We want an independent
14 audit of our money because we are sick and tired of shouting
15 all the time. We need services. We need money, but we
16 don't even get what we deserve.

17 Thank you.

18 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you very much,
19 Commissioners, for your response.

20 Meegwetch.

21 The Lac Seul First Nation will be leaving
22 in three minutes. Roger is going to make a comment, but
23 they have asked also if all the members could shake your

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1 hands. There is a whole tribe back there this is just
2 a remnant of it, but they will be coming to shake your
3 hand after.

4 We have one more presentation. Our
5 brothers from Wapekeka, our brothers and sisters cannot
6 make it to this presentation. So we have one more
7 presentation left from the Kasabonika First Nation after
8 this.

9 Roger, please.

10 **DEPUTY CHIEF ROGER BULL:** I am just
11 going to say the words that Jesus said, Eno, that I would
12 like the Lac Seul delegation to come up to the front and
13 shake hands with the Commissioners.

14 Commissioners, I would like to thank you
15 for allowing us the opportunity to share our concerns.

16 Thank you very much.

17 (Native language -- no translation
18 available).

19 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Ladies and gentlemen. We
20 are going to resume our procedures of the afternoon. We
21 have the First Nation delegates from Kasabonika Lake who
22 will be presenting their concerns. Ms Theresa Brown is
23 a councillor from the First Nation community of Kasabonika

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1 and with him is Elder Jimmy Anderson.

2

3 **THERESA BROWN, KASABONIKA FIRST**

4 **NATIONS:** This is going to be a short presentation from
5 Kasabonika Lake First Nation. This is going to be a short
6 one because I am going to give him a chance to say whatever
7 he wants.

8 May God continue to bless all of our
9 people and over time, may we understand His will for our
10 people.

11 We feel very fortunate to have this time
12 to make this presentation to the Royal Commission on behalf
13 of the people of the Kasabonika Lake First Nation.

14 Our community is located 55 miles east
15 of Big Trout Lake and at the present time, there are
16 approximately 600 people that reside at Kasabonika Lake.
17 For more information, we are attaching our Community
18 Profile to our presentation.

19 In March of 1989, we initiated our
20 self-government process to determine, for and by
21 ourselves, the fundamental and specific questions that
22 this Royal Commission was established to attempt to answer.

23 It is fitting that after 500 years since Christopher

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1 Columbus made his so-called discovery that this Royal
2 Commission would come to our traditional territory and
3 be the vehicle for our people to right some long-standing
4 historical wrongs.

5 It is wrong for the non-Native
6 governments to keep the myth alive that our people do not
7 have the inherent right to self-government that was given
8 to us by our Creator. It is wrong to continue to deny
9 to our people the lands and resources that were illegally
10 taken through the treaty process. We could make many other
11 statements, but we can sum it all by saying: Cultural
12 genocide has happened, is happening and will continue to
13 happen.

14 The saddest truth is that some of our
15 own people involve themselves in the perpetuation of these
16 long-standing historical wrongs. It should be one of the
17 mandates of this Royal Commission to collect how the
18 non-Native governments have utilized our own people and
19 organizations to implement their own agenda in terms of
20 how they keep our people from taking their rightful place
21 in this country that is now called Canada.

22 At this time, all we can offer is what
23 we have been able to develop thus far. The package will

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1 include: the Discussion Paper; Preliminary Financial
2 model; Land Use Report; and also the Community Profile.

3 As you can see, we have a long way to
4 go. However, the seed has been planted and it will be
5 very difficult for the movement to be terminated. Our
6 people are beginning to ask questions and they will
7 continue to demand answers. For those of us that have
8 been part of this self-government process, these are very
9 encouraging times. After 500 years, we feel we are on
10 the road back home.

11 To paraphrase Genesis, Chapter 1, Verse
12 29: God made his creation and created man; He then
13 commanded man to have dominion over his creation. This
14 is what our people believe in and it is this belief that
15 we want to go home to.

16 What I am going to do first is I am going
17 to do another presentation from what my father has written.
18 He is also one of the band councillors for Kasabonika
19 Lake First Nation.

20 He wrote:

21 Life is very valuable. This is what the
22 people want for as long as they will live. We all know
23 where our life and protection comes from and that is our

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1 Saviour. However, it is known that all things, living
2 and things that grow from earth, were put there to grow
3 in different directions. This is what our people want,
4 to be recognized that they are utilizing what God gave
5 them and for the government to continue to assist them.

6 Our people will also have to respect
7 their rights, religion and their work. The people have
8 to recognize their abilities to be able to maintain there
9 land and culture. Our people realize that its very
10 important not to lose sight of their God-given rights.
11 They believe what the Bible says about God giving them
12 all things that grow and move for their use on this earth.

13 It is understood that even today, the
14 people are still maintaining their work and their everyday
15 lives. It is very important that these two treaties that
16 were given to our people be implemented. It was God who
17 first showed his people the way of his governance and
18 protection of their lives. Then the government promised
19 us our treaty and this is the direction that our people
20 are taking and what they are trying to maintain.

21 We should also take into consideration
22 those things which are brought into our community which
23 do not benefit our people, preferably those which destroy

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1 the lives of our people. What our people want is for their
2 concerns and beliefs never to be altered or changed in
3 any way.

4 The most primary concern of our people
5 is that these two treaties I mentioned before be always
6 available to assist us as they were given to us for our
7 protection and use on this earth.

8 In closing, may God go with you in your
9 travels and may the fruits of your labours be plentiful
10 and be beneficial to all of our peoples.

11 Thank you.

12 **JIMMY ANDERSON (Translated):** I am
13 going to say a few words and I want to say thank you to
14 the people here who have talked to the Commissioners before
15 us. It has been like this already before. It has been
16 done like this before where white people come into our
17 community and ask us a lot of questions about our concerns,
18 about things that are not going well for us. This time
19 I would really like to see something done.

20 There is one thing that is on my mind.

21 I will tell you a little of it. A lot of times I have
22 gone to meetings, the chief's meetings, and they know.
23 I don't think that the white people are doing this wrong.

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1 I think it is us. This is what I hear all the time even
2 at the meetings down south this is what I hear. The Native
3 people have to hang on to their traditions, but they don't
4 want to describe what their God given traditions are.
5 They don't want to describe it.

6 That is why we think that the white
7 person is doing this wrong and the government is not doing
8 this right. We are not acting on our God given rights.
9 We are not taking them. We do not really believe that
10 the Creator is the one with the power and that his word
11 is there, too. We tend to believe that the white society
12 rules over everything here in the land.

13 Let's look at today. If there was no
14 God given rights we wouldn't see anything outside.
15 Everything that grows would not exist if there were no
16 God given rights. That is why we have to take some
17 responsibility for the position that we are in presently.
18 We are told time and time again to take over our land
19 and we don't do anything about it. Then we have been told
20 to stake out our lands which God has granted us. This
21 is what we were told.

22 The reason I am talking about this is
23 many -- I have seen a lot of inquiries, commissions and

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1 panels and they haven't been able to assist us in any way
2 as grass roots people. Even white society can't even give
3 it a name.

4 There was a lawyer that we met one time
5 sometime ago and first he didn't comprehend what we were
6 talking about when we were talking about God given rights,
7 but now he is beginning to clearly understand what we mean
8 by our God given right. That is the law that we are still
9 following today. The law that came from the Great Creator.

10 I am just sharing a little bit. I
11 couldn't really say what I say if I didn't really
12 concentrate on this thing. We would have had this and
13 maintained our God given right if we had implemented it.
14 We have approached the previous Bishop and there was one
15 question that he couldn't answer. He just told us to do
16 it and implement the knowledge and wisdom that you get
17 from the Bible and don't give up on it.

18 We could have been self-sufficient,
19 self-determining if we had implemented our God given right.

20 That does not necessarily mean that we would have
21 completely broke away from the government. We would have
22 co-existed with them and worked with them side by side.

23 He would have had a little say into what we wanted to

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1 do.

2 We, as Native people, have to take a bit
3 of responsibility because we have the tendency to neglect
4 what has been promised to us although everyday you hear
5 Native people say that is my God given right. But he
6 doesn't go into detail what that means.

7 That is about all of what I wanted to
8 say. That is what I have always talked about. I don't
9 really speak at conferences and meetings although I
10 participate in a lot of meetings. That is the most common
11 thing I hear at meetings is that my God given right, but
12 nobody explains exactly what it is.

13 That will be all.

14 I am very grateful to be here and also
15 very thankful for the Commission being here listening to
16 the concerns, needs and aspirations of Native people.

17 That will be all. Thank you.

18 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Meegwetch Councillor
19 Theresa Brown and Jimmy Anderson.

20 I would like to extend my thanks to the
21 delegates of Kasabonika First Nation.

22 Again as we know travel costs are pretty
23 high here and most of these people that have come here

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1 have expended quite a bit of fiscal -- to come down here
2 and we appreciate the efforts.

3 I will have the Commissioners make their
4 responses.

5 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** I just
6 want to thank both of you for your presentation. You have
7 made your view quite clearly.

8 I can say with respect to the point that
9 you make that it should be one of our mandate to determine
10 how Canadian governments are utilizing our own people and
11 organizations to implement their own agenda. That is
12 within our mandate so we certainly will carry your point
13 forward and ensure that it is a part of the work that the
14 Commission does so we don't lose sight of that. It is
15 within our mandate and it is an issue that we have to
16 examine.

17 I want to thank you both. I understand
18 the scepticism that has been voiced and we share it in
19 the context that I have mentioned before and we thank you
20 especially for your good wishes and wish you, as well,
21 the very best.

22 Meegwetch.

23 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I would

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1 just like to say that you talk in your presentation about
2 cultural genocide. I think the thing that amazes me is
3 the tremendous will to survive and the way in which the
4 Native people have come through all the hardship that they
5 have come through and yet have survived. I think that
6 this is the most convincing evidence that anyone could
7 have that you were put here by the Creator and you were
8 intended to have this land for yourselves. I think that
9 this, in my mind, is a miracle that this has happened.

10 I would like also to say that when I am
11 asked about what impresses me most about the Native people
12 as I travel around and visit the communities and I answer
13 that by saying it is the strength of the Native spirituality
14 -- this is what has impressed me deeply on my visits to
15 the various communities.

16 I think that to a large extent white
17 society has lost this and that this is one very important
18 thing that you can contribute to us.

19 I would like to thank you for staying
20 late and waiting patiently to make your presentation.

21 Thank you both. We appreciate it very
22 much. Thank you.

23 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY CHIEF STANLEY**

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1 **SAINNAWAP:** I don't have very many comments to make because
2 my Commission capacity has been terminated at 6:00.

3 (Native language -- no translation
4 available).

5 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Meegwetch,
6 Commissioners, for your responses. Thank you.

7 We have come to the conclusion of the
8 presentations and we now have an opportunity at this time
9 to hear concluding remarks from the three Commissioners.

10 The people of this community would like
11 to express their gratitude to Commissioner Chartrand and
12 Commissioner Wilson by presenting you with a couple of
13 gifts. We will do that at the end of the feast this
14 evening.

15 The Commissioners will now make their
16 final remarks.

17 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** We have
18 had a truly wonderful day here. We have a great many
19 presentations. We have heard a great many issues that
20 have been raised and we are very appreciative of all the
21 people that have come here that have taken the time and
22 trouble to meet with us and speak to us about their
23 concerns.

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1 We have learned a great deal and we will
2 pass on what we have learned to our fellow Commissioners.

3 There are a number of people that I would
4 especially like to say thank you to. To the Elders, to
5 Jemima Morris who opened our session today with prayer
6 and to Abel McKay who is going to close our session.

7 I would also like to thank especially
8 those elders who stayed here throughout the day and
9 participated in the public hearings. We are very honoured
10 by their presence and their participation.

11 I would like to thank our Commissioner
12 for the day, Chief Stanley Sainnawap. We appreciate his
13 sitting up here at the table with us and helping us.

14 We are also grateful to our moderator,
15 Eno Chapman, and to our community representative Jacob
16 Ostaman.

17 We thank our Aboriginal translators for
18 the excellent job they did, Rudy Nothing and Bruce
19 Sakakeep.

20 Of course, we are indebted to our host
21 group Big Trout Lake First Nation.

22 I would like to give a special thanks
23 to the Anglican Church Junior Choir Women's Group who

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1 provided the meals for us throughout our stay here and
2 the community of Big Trout Lake for the hospitality they
3 have extended in making us feel welcome and very much a
4 part of your community for the time that we spent here.

5 I would like to thank Tommy Kromerty for
6 providing us with transportation to get us to the various
7 places that we visited and to the fiddlers who provided
8 the music at the square dance, Luke Sanawap and Jack
9 Brightnose.

10 Of course, our technician, Joe
11 Andreachio. To our court reporter, Linda Gauthier. To
12 those doing the camera filming from the National Film Board
13 and Wawatay Communications Society.

14 Of course, last but by no means least,
15 to our own RCAP staff. Les Clayton, our policy analyst
16 and case worker. To Hugh McCullum, our media relations
17 officer. To Delores Comegan, our team assistant and to
18 that very important person on our travels, the team leader,
19 Tammy Saulis.

20 We are deeply indebted to all of the
21 people I have named for their help and cooperation to us
22 in conducting these hearings.

23 Thank you very much indeed.

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1 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** Thank you
2 very much.

3 Every time that we sit in a community
4 and have these hearings things are new and things are
5 different. Things never happen the same way twice.

6 One thing I noticed a little while ago
7 was that my co-Commissioner said something which indicated
8 that it was getting near the supper hour as I heard her
9 replying to presentation with the expression, "You are
10 giving us food for thought."

11 I want to tell you that this hearing was
12 indeed very different from all the others, that each one
13 has been different. This one, in particular, emphasized
14 to me again what a difficult task we on the Royal Commission
15 for Aboriginal peoples have. It emphasized for me two
16 things which appear to be opposites and make our work very
17 difficult.

18 It certainly emphasized to me the need
19 for great humility. I see this need for humility in a
20 number of ways. I saw it today and I heard it particularly
21 when we heard from the elders talking to us about the
22 treaties. I had read for quite a number of years about
23 treaties and I had read the text of many many treaties

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1 and I listened to many people talk about the treaties from
2 the Anishnawbe perspective, but it was for the first time
3 for me that I had seen and heard from people who had been
4 at treaties.

5 I can assure you it is a very much a
6 leering experience that shows I have so much to learn.
7 It certainly gave me new insights into the significance
8 of treaties.

9 It is the first time, too, that I have
10 been in a public place at hearings where people have made
11 us welcome by putting posters around the walls like this.

12 I noticed that when I came in this morning -- with our
13 names on it.

14 I was so humbled by seeing my name there
15 along with a distinguished Canadian like my
16 co-Commissioner Bertha Wilson and seeing my name there
17 in the context of a Royal Commission doing the work that
18 it is doing. That indeed gave me a great feeling of
19 humility and at the same time indicated how important our
20 work is and that led to the other feeling that is emphasized
21 today that of the need to fight and to fight hard.
22 Notwithstanding the need for humility and that is where
23 I see that bit of a dilemma.

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1 These issues that are brought before us
2 are serious issues. They demand serious attention. They
3 are urgent issues. That requires a lot of energy. It
4 requires one to fight for what one believes is the best
5 that can be done regarding such serious issues. That is
6 the situation that was emphasized.

7 I want to finish by expressing my own
8 thanks to the people for having us and giving us so much
9 hospitality in your homelands, to the Elders, to the chief,
10 to everyone here and especially to the Anishnawbe and the
11 people of this place.

12 Thank you very much. Meegwetch.

13 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY CHIEF STANLEY**

14 **SAINNAWAP:** I will speak english so that I can better
15 relate to the visitors here.

16 First of all I am glad that the Big Trout
17 Lake First Nation was chosen as the sight to have a Royal
18 Commission of the First Nation people because I think this
19 hearing is the best forum to have the First Nation people
20 speak with open minds and I hope the listeners have open
21 ears.

22 It is also a very comfortable feeling,
23 me sitting here in this very room because this hall was

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1 built by a great majority of the free labour of our young
2 people. Even though the band provided materials. The
3 same thing with where we have been having feasts, meals,
4 again the great majority of free labour was used to build
5 that special place of ours.

6 I think in this Royal Commission even
7 though young people are not in presence throughout the
8 hearing we still use their contribution. We still use
9 their hard work to accommodate this hearing which hopefully
10 will cause some benefits, long-term needs, as we go along.

11 I also wish to thank all the people who
12 have been working hard to make this hearing a successful
13 one. I think at the present time I am in a good position
14 to do something in the community because of the respect
15 and cooperation and support I get from my people and from
16 our section. It compels me to try and lead my people the
17 way they should be.

18 Commissioners and associates of this
19 Commission, it is an honour and privilege to have you here
20 on our reserve and I hope wherever you go for the next
21 few months I hope the Great Spirit will guide you to reach
22 your destination safely and to return to your loved ones
23 after you have finished your job.

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1 On behalf of my band membership I wish
2 you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

3 Meegwetch.

4 **ENO CHAPMAN:** I am going to ask Bob Nault
5 to come up and say a word or two.

6 **ROBERT NAULT:** Thank you, Eno.

7 Elders, Chief Stanley Sainnawap,
8 Commissioners. It has been a long day and a rule of thumb
9 that I have learned is that after a long day you never
10 stand up and speak too long if you know what is good for
11 you.

12 I want to take this opportunity to thank
13 you very much for coming to our part of the country. As
14 a representative in the Federal House of Parliament for
15 the people of Big Trout it is always has been impressed
16 upon me by the people of Big Trout and the area to endeavour
17 to welcome our guests, make them feel at home so they will
18 always return. Also, at the same time to give us the
19 opportunity to enlighten you as to the uniqueness of the
20 are and the uniqueness of the people that we represent.

21 I am sure, and I speak for myself, that
22 it was an excellent day with some very good presentations.

23 I felt, as an individual who was sitting and listening,

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1 as I am sure you were, that we learned a lot. What has
2 to be done now is, of course, is to articulate that in
3 the kind of recommendations that the people of the area
4 so much deserve and have been waiting so long for.

5 I guess I can only say to you that I
6 understand the frustration of the people when they seem
7 very sceptical what can be done from here. If you could
8 do me a favour as a politician, be as hard as you can on
9 the politicians in your recommendations about the lack
10 of movement on recommendations of important work like your
11 Royal Commission and the ones that came before you.

12 If you send that message I think that
13 will be a good start for people who are in political life
14 who are serving the people to realize just how much it
15 means to those who come to these Commissions to listen
16 to you and to bear their soles and their lives to you in
17 order that you can get your work done.

18 To, Eno, his style of course has been
19 a little different from the one we saw a few days back.

20 I kind of like Eno's style a little better. It is much
21 more relaxing. Harder on the Commissioners, Eno, but much
22 more enjoyable for the people who are making the
23 presentations.

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1 To the people of Big Trout thank you very
2 much for your hospitality. It is always a pleasure to
3 be here and we hope to conclude our time in the community,
4 Stanley, by enjoying ourselves tonight and again, I would
5 like to extend my warm appreciation to all those -- and
6 especially the staff, who seemed to be on the background,
7 but who as we all know as people in public life we wouldn't
8 get the job done if it wasn't for them. A very big thank
9 you to them as well.

10 I know that this is the end of our meeting
11 here today as peoples, but of course, we are not suggesting
12 that the invitation isn't open for you to come again.
13 If you would like to come to Big Trout and I say that because
14 I know Stanley would want me to, please come again. Maybe
15 not in an official capacity, but to come and visit this
16 great part of the country because we would love to share
17 it with as many people as we can.

18 Thank you.

19 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Thank you very much, Bob,
20 especially for your kind comments on my work here today.

21 I have been asked by an Elder if she could
22 personally say thank you to the Commissioners here, so
23 I will ask her to come down here before I ask Abel to close

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1 with the prayer.

2 I guess you should maybe put your
3 headphones on and translators will convey the thanks
4 through them.

5 **JEMIMA MORRIS (Translated):** I am very
6 thankful today. I am glad that I came here and
7 participated. I regret that I was unable to do a
8 presentation. There was one issue I wanted to hear and
9 I waited for that to come up and I wanted to discuss about
10 health care and health care delivery. That is one of my
11 major concerns. Nobody hardly discussed that today.

12 It seems like when I go to Sioux Lookout
13 -- I kind of feel sorry for the zone hospital because in
14 the condition that the hospital is pretty bad. As you
15 heard one elder say this morning when she commented that
16 they are kind of slacking off on their health care delivery
17 for Native people. One of the things that they are
18 seriously thinking is that they are eliminating the escort
19 program that they have in existence since not everybody
20 speaks and understands the english language.

21 Same thing all over the place. That was
22 what I was going to touch base on. I regret that nobody
23 went into detail about that. When they were talking about

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1 treaties they didn't touch base on the health care that
2 was promised back then, but I can't really get into it
3 because of the time constraints that we have this evening.

4 I just wanted to briefly touch base on
5 that because every life is sacred and even Aboriginal life
6 is sacred, too.

7 I would like to thank everybody that has
8 assisted in this whole process during the course of the
9 day. Every job is important. Every role that every
10 individual plays be it voluntary is good. Whatever your
11 role and function was throughout the day is very important.
12 You showed that you respect what was happening today.

13 That is what I wanted to thank everybody
14 for and especially those people that came, the Commission,
15 to listen to our grievances and concerns. I understand
16 how heavy and hard their work and responsibility is in
17 undertaking this task. It shows their dedication that
18 they are serious about their work.

19 We should ask God to give them guidance
20 and give them strength and give them the wisdom to properly
21 conduct their work.

22 I would like to say thank you to
23 everybody. May the Great Spirit be with you.

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1 **ENO CHAPMAN:** Meegwetch, Elder Jemima
2 Morris.

3 I guess we can all stand. Abel is going
4 to close this meeting with a prayer.

5 **ABEL MCKAY:** It is an honour to be asked
6 to close this meeting with a prayer. They said they wanted
7 an Elder to close with the prayer and they called me, but
8 I consider myself to be a young adult, but I will do the
9 honours anyway.

10 Back in the 1930's the people, the
11 Elders, used to tell us the things that would happen in
12 the future and many of these things we see them happening
13 today. One of the things that they told us is that in
14 the future there would be a lot of discussions taking place
15 about concerns of land and concerns of welfare of people
16 and of this country.

17 At that time I said to myself when I
18 listened to these Elders I probably will not see that in
19 my time, but to show how that has changed because I
20 witnessed that here today at this very meeting.

21 Things have changed since 1930 and we
22 have seen a lot of hardships and a lot of desperation in
23 the peoples and these are the changes that we have seen

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1 since that time.

2 So I am going to close with a prayer,
3 but I would just like to say that a gathering is always
4 a time of sharing and always a time of joy and that is
5 the way we see it here today.

6

7 **(Closing Prayer)**

8

9 --- Upon adjourning at 6:50 p.m.