

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

LOCATION/ENDROIT: ILE-A-LA-CROSSE, SASKATCHEWAN
L.A.C. COMMUNITY HALL

DATE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1992

VOLUME: 1

"for the record..."

STENOTRAN

1376 Kilborn Ave.

Ottawa 521-0703

I N D E X

DECEMBER 8, 1992

NAME	PAGE
Opening Prayer by Jim Favel	1
Presentation on Historical Perspective Mr. Max Morin	1
Opening remarks by Co-Chair René Dussault	14
Opening remarks by Commissioner Mary Sillett	26
Presentation by Village of Ile-à-La-Crosse Mayor Buckley Belanger	33
Presentation by Village of Green Lake Mayor Rod Bishop	59
Presentation by Northwest Drug and Alcohol Abuse Centre Mr. Donald Favel	82
Presentation by Métis Society of Saskatchewan Senator Vital Morin	110
Presentation by Northern Disabled People Mr. Gary Tinker	125
Presentation by Protectors of Mother Earth Mr. Frank Morin	146
Presentation on Métis Women's Issues Ms Edna Daigneault Ms Sharon Yole	159 165
Presentation by Métis Society of Saskatchewan Ms Bernice Hammersmith	173
Presentation by Darren Deschambeault	199
Presentation by Jim Favel	205
Presentation by Métis Society, Local 21 Mr. Brian Favel, Secretary-Treasurer	218

I N D E X

DECEMBER 8, 1992

NAME	PAGE
Presentation by Northern Teacher Education Program/Northern Professional Access College	
Mr. Rick Laliberte	237
Mr. Harold Schultz	249
Presentation by Brian Ratt	261
Presentation on Métis Youth	
Mr. Ron Caisse	292
Presentation by Pinehouse Métis Society Local	
Ms Marie Symes Grehan	295
Presentation by Bill Curry	308
Closing Prayer	319

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Ile-à-La-Crosse, Sask.

2 --- Upon commencing on Tuesday, December 8, 1992

3 at 9:30 a.m.

4 COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:

5 We will get underway now. For the opening prayer can
6 we get Elder Jim Favel up.

7 OPENING PRAYER - JIM FAVEL

8 COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:

9 Could we get max to come and do the historical perspective.
10

11 MR. MAX MORIN, (Historical

12 Perspective): First of all, I would like to welcome the
13 Commissioners and all the staff people and assistants that
14 are assisting them. I would like to welcome them to our
15 community Ile-à-La-Crosse.

16 Ile-à-La-Crosse is one of the oldest
17 communities in the Province of Saskatchewan. In 1776
18 Frobisher came to Ile-à-La-Crosse and in 1976 we celebrated
19 our bicentennial. We were here prior to the Province of
20 Saskatchewan being found in 1905. In 1846 the Catholic
21 Church established the first church in Ile-à-La-Crosse.

22 In 1946 they celebrated 100 years since the Catholic
23 Church was established in our community.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Louis Riel's father, Louis Riel, Sr.,
2 was born in Ile-à-La-Crosse. Louis Riel's sister,
3 Marguerite Riel, is buried in our cemetery. She was a
4 Grey Nun in Ile-à-La-Crosse. There is a lot of history
5 in our community.

6 Our people were the voyageurs for the
7 Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company. They
8 paddled to Churchill, Manitoba to take furs for the
9 Hudson's Bay and the North West Company.

10 In 1906 Treaty 6 was signed in
11 Ile-à-La-Crosse for the Indians and the Métis. IN 1930
12 the federal government transferred the resources to the
13 provincial government without consulting the people of
14 northern Saskatchewan. It was called the Resource
15 Transfer Act. We were living here since 1776 and yet we
16 weren't consulted.

17 In 1950 a prime hunting and trapping and
18 fishing area, known today as the Primrose Bombing Range,
19 was taken from our people by the federal government and
20 the provincial governments, promising the people that they
21 would allocate them land somewhere else and allocate them
22 access to the bombing range for hunting and fishing. We
23 still haven't seen that today. We see mining companies

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 and we see oil companies having access to that bombing
2 range, but our people cannot have access.

3 In northern Saskatchewan, and
4 particularly in our community, the Indian and Métis people
5 have lived together. We have hunted, fished and trapped
6 together. We didn't define each other of that's an Indian
7 and that's a Métis until the federal government came and
8 decided to put a number on some of our people and said,
9 "You are treaty now," and the ones that are not treaty
10 are now Métis.

11 We cannot hunt with our treaty brothers
12 and sisters as Métis people or else we will get charged
13 if we hunt with them. When our people were living off
14 the land, the head of the household, that was our
15 self-government. Everybody had a role to play, fishermen,
16 trappers, hunters, they all went out and the head of the
17 household was the boss. We didn't have people, a chief
18 and council or mayors and councillors to run our lives
19 for us. We ran our lives as we seen fit. We moved our
20 families as the game became scarce closer to our
21 communities. We lived on the outskirts of our
22 communities, around the lakes, around our traditional
23 hunting and fishing areas. It wasn't until the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 government decided to have communities and they allocated
2 our people to our communities, you couldn't get a house
3 from Saskatchewan Housing or Canada Mortgage and Housing
4 unless you lived in a community and it was on a surveyed
5 lot. You couldn't get a house where you traditionally
6 made your living from. This was all done without our
7 consultation.

8 Today you see our community of
9 approximately 1,400 people in Ile-à-La-Crosse. We have
10 a municipal style of local government and yet we have high
11 unemployment. I was listening to the radio,
12 Commissioners, last night as I was coming home from
13 Saskatoon. The high suicide rates in the eastern part
14 of our country, 65 attempts with a matter of two weeks,
15 six people committed suicide because of the high
16 unemployment. People are unemployed not because they want
17 to be unemployed. They are unemployed because there are
18 no opportunities, they don't have the proper education
19 and our resources are continually being taken away from
20 us.

21 Mr. Justice Bayda came to our
22 communities prior to the uranium mining industry opening
23 up in northern Saskatchewan and promised us revenue

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 sharing. They promised us a Northern Economic Development
2 Board where people would have jurisdiction and say over
3 what is happening in northern Saskatchewan. We still
4 haven't seen the revenue sharing. We still haven't seen
5 the Northern Economic Development Board and that was about
6 15 years or maybe more ago. The forestry companies, as
7 you are well aware, have access to all our forests. In
8 1776 Ile-à-La-Crosse was here and yet we don't have a say
9 on which people can get access to the forests, our people
10 who made their living from that land and yet they don't
11 have any say.

12 The question I have to the Commission
13 is: What are you willing to do particularly for the Métis
14 people? As Métis people we have always had problems in
15 regards to jurisdiction. The federal government and
16 provincial governments don't want to take responsibility
17 for us. We are the forgotten people.

18 Under section 91(24), the recognition
19 of the Inuit and the Indians; it's clear we are not included
20 under 91(24). Under section 35 we are included, but only
21 in namesake. We don't have any rights attached to it and
22 we continue struggling for rights that our sisters and
23 brothers have which we don't.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 In northern Saskatchewan today there are
2 still quite a few people that make their living from the
3 traditional resources. But this is where it is at right
4 now, traditional resources versus multinational
5 corporations. In our area we have a major big pulp mill
6 that just opened in Meadow Lake, Miller Western, and the
7 government gave them a \$200 million loan guarantee and
8 a \$50 million grant. My little trappers in my community
9 want to buy a ski-do and some nets and wanted to borrow
10 \$6,000. They can't get access to \$6,000 so he can make
11 his living.

12 Fishermen, the traditional resource
13 users, that just started fishing last week, Friday, but
14 again we want to have more say in the fishing industry.
15 We want to have the same rights like the Atlantic
16 fishermen. If our resources are scarce like theirs, we
17 should have the same access to the same programs that the
18 Atlantic fishermen have, so our people can continue
19 surviving, instead of depending on welfare.

20 I want to talk a little bit on health
21 issues. One thing I want to make clear is we represent
22 half of the province in northern Saskatchewan. Yet, on
23 this side of northern Saskatchewan we don't have no special

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 care homes, we don't have no long term care facilities.
2 The provincial government has put a freeze on capital
3 construction. The La Ronge hospital, for example, is so
4 old that it is just about falling down. The Catholic
5 Health Council made an effort to put something in La Loche
6 for the people of La Loche and when you go there you will
7 see it. They still operate out of trailers, Atco trailers
8 for their hospital. They have been operating like that
9 for years. Our hospital in Ile-à-La-Crosse is just about
10 as old as the Catholic Church when it came here. Our bricks
11 are falling down. I told the Deputy Minister that you
12 have to wear a hard hat to come into our hospital.

13 These are the realities that our people
14 face today. We have communities that don't have any
15 clinics, St. George's and Michel Village, Jans Bay and
16 Cole Bay. We have community health workers in those
17 communities and they are only paid half-time positions,
18 but yet they work 24 hours a day. I don't think it is
19 fair that our people should get only half-time positions
20 and everybody else that comes up north gets a full-time
21 position.

22 Transportation. There are different
23 ways of transporting people. There is one way for the

StenoTran

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 status Indians. I will give you an example. We still
2 continue to deal with this. I am not trying to
3 discriminate against anybody, but this is reality. For
4 a status Indian that has a treaty card they get transported
5 and they get so much a day for meals, approximately \$30
6 a day. For provincial government responsibilities, such
7 as the Métis on welfare, they have a white card. Their
8 transportation is taken care of, but they get \$10 a day
9 for meals while they go to Saskatoon and \$24 a day for
10 rooms.

11 For the working people there is yet
12 another way. They have to pay all their travel expenses
13 and the hotel and meals all the way to Saskatoon and back
14 because we don't have the proper facilities and the
15 necessary medical expertise in our area to carry on a lot
16 of the work, so our people are referred to a larger centre.

17 When we get to the larger centres we
18 don't have interpreter services. I recall talking to an
19 individual at the Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon
20 from one of our communities in northern Saskatchewan.
21 He is an elderly fellow. He was there for 10 days and
22 they gave him three operations and he still didn't know
23 what it was for because nobody communicated with him.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 There was an elderly couple from
2 northern Saskatchewan that stayed in a room for three days
3 and didn't order food or anything. They didn't know how
4 to go about it because nobody was there to assist them.

5
6 You hear news in northern Saskatchewan
7 of the high TB rates amongst our community, the high suicide
8 rates, the high unemployment. It all comes down to one
9 thing, everybody else controls our life except us. We
10 want to become independent. We don't want to be dependent
11 on governments, on other people to do things for us. We
12 want to be able to do and resolve our issues for ourselves,
13 but we haven't been given that opportunity.

14 Resource officers continue to dictate
15 where we can cut our logs, where we can cut our wood, where
16 we can fish. Governments continue to tell us what's good
17 for us. We know what's good for us. Give us the
18 opportunity to make our own decisions and our own future.
19 For too long people outside of our community, particularly
20 Ile-à-La-Crosse and in northern Saskatchewan made
21 decisions for us.

22 If we have a problem of alcohol and drugs
23 in our community, we don't expect somebody from Ottawa

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 or somebody from Regina to come and solve the problem for
2 us. We will solve it ourselves. Just give us the little
3 extra push and give us the support that is required.

4 When the Murray Commission report was
5 done in Saskatchewan about health, northern Saskatchewan
6 was referred to as a third world country. We are treated
7 as third world people because of the lack of health
8 facilities, the lack of health services, the lack of proper
9 services for our people. We will not continue to be
10 treated that way. We want our rightful place in society.

11 But who controls the dollars, who
12 controls the government? That's where they decide where
13 they can cut the ribbons. They can cut the ribbons in
14 southern Saskatchewan. Every little community I go to
15 of 200 people they have a long-term care facility or a
16 special care home or an acute care centre. In northern
17 Saskatchewan we haven't been given that opportunity.
18 People have looked at us. We don't mean too much
19 election-wise anyways, so we don't have to go and cut any
20 ribbons in the north.

21 These are things that I have to tell you
22 people. This is the way we are in northern Saskatchewan.
23 Ile-à-La-Crosse is predominantly a Métis community. We

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 have some Bill C-31s, off reserve Indians that live in
2 our community and I am sure they will be speaking for
3 themselves today when they are making their presentations.

4

5 We have some non-Aboriginal people, very
6 dedicated people that work for us in our hospitals and
7 our institutions. We are trying to train our people to
8 eventually get some of those jobs, but we have a hard time
9 even getting access to training dollars so we can properly
10 train our people, so we can send a clear message to our
11 children that are in the education system right now to
12 pursue education, so they can continue and come back and
13 work for their people. Sometimes we have a hard time.

14 I will give you an example. When I was
15 growing up, all we seen was RCMP and social workers, so
16 everybody wanted to be a social worker or an RCMP. Today
17 we have more opportunity, but again the drop-out rate is
18 an issue. When we get a few dollars, we end up spending
19 our dollars on adult basic education. Why? Because our
20 people drop out at a younger age and we have to educate
21 them so they can get access to the technical or university.

22

23 With that, I would like to thank the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 Commissioners for coming to our community. I gave you
2 a little bit of the history of what has been happening
3 in northern Saskatchewan. I hope that what you hear and
4 what you do here, that you will listen to us and make strong
5 recommendations in regards to the Métis because, as I said
6 before, are the forgotten people. Nobody wants to take
7 responsibility for us. We get kicked from one end to the
8 other end, federal and provincial governments, and
9 sometimes we get a little bit of access, like under Social
10 Services because they get reimbursed half of the money
11 anyway from the federal government.

12 That's reality and these are the things
13 I feel I have a responsibility to tell you. Thank you
14 for listening to me. I hope you have a good day and I
15 hope that everybody here who makes a presentation will
16 get a more clear picture of what we are talking about when
17 we refer to the north. Merci.

18 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**

19 Thanks, Max. I am sure that the Commissioners will
20 respond to the questions. However, first, elders,
21 Commissioners, Co-Chair, the staff, ladies and gentlemen,
22 I would like to welcome you to the public hearings here
23 in Ile-à-La-Crosse that will focus on the rest of today

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 and the presenters.

2 We also have two interpreters in the
3 back, Brian Ratt and Harry Laliberte. If anybody makes
4 presentations in their own language, they will be the
5 people to get a hold of.

6 The Friendship Centre is open for meals
7 at noon, I was told, for \$3 a plate.

8 With that, I will turn it over to my
9 colleagues.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Merci. Thank
11 you, Mr. Durocher.

12 First of all, I would like to say how
13 happy we are to have this opportunity to be here this
14 morning in Ile-à-La-Crosse for a full day of public
15 hearings with the community.

16 As you know, we have been on the road
17 quite a bit in the last six or seven months. In fact,
18 the Commission was created 14 or 15 months ago, at the
19 end of the summer of 1991, after the report made by former
20 Chief Justice Brian Dickson to the Government of Canada.

21 Mr. Dickson had been asked to come up with the mandate
22 of this Royal Commission and also the membership of the
23 Commission.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 It was the first time that a federal
2 Royal Commission was created through the impetus of
3 somebody outside the public service. It was felt that
4 the mandate of this Commission and its composition should
5 be recommended after a thorough consultation, both with
6 the public and, of course, the various Aboriginal peoples.

7
8 The mandate of the Commission is very
9 wide. It is written in 16 points. Each of these points
10 has maybe 10 or 12 subpoints, so everybody will understand
11 that it covers really everything, from land claims, to
12 self-government, to economic development, the various
13 social issues in sectors like health, justice, social
14 services, education. Language and culture are very
15 fundamental issue areas under our mandate. Social
16 problems like alcohol, drug abuse, the high level or rate
17 of suicide, family violence and so everything comes under
18 the mandate of this Commission.

19 There have been many commissions or work
20 groups, committees, parliamentary committees that have
21 looked at some aspects of Aboriginal issues or at some
22 of the peoples involved, whether they are Indians, status
23 or non-status, the Inuit and the Métis, though I hasten

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 to say that the Métis, as was said by Mr. Morin, have been
2 pretty much forgotten by the various governments.

3 While Indian people keep saying they
4 have been studied to death, we know it has not been the
5 case with the Métis.

6 The Commission is made up of seven
7 Commissioners. Four of them are Aboriginal persons, the
8 three others are non-Aboriginal people. The four
9 Aboriginal Commissioners are Georges Erasmus who co-Chairs
10 the Commission with myself, René Dussault. Georges
11 Erasmus is the former Chief of the Assembly of First
12 Nations. There is also Viola Robinson who is a Micmac
13 from Nova Scotia who, prior to her appointment to the
14 Commission, was head of the Native Council of Canada.
15 Also Paul Chartrand who is teaching at the University of
16 Manitoba. He is teaching Native Studies at the University
17 of Manitoba. He is a Métis. And Mary Sillett who is an
18 Inuk from Labrador.

19 The three non-Aboriginal Commissioners
20 are Bertha Wilson. She is a retired judge from the Supreme
21 Court of Canada. She was the first woman appointed to
22 the Supreme Court of Canada in the early 1980s. She is
23 well known for her thoughtful opinions and judgments, legal

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 opinions on Aboriginal rights. Allan Blakeney who was
2 Premier of this province for more than a decade and myself,
3 René Dussault. I am a judge with the Court of Appeal for
4 the Province of Quebec. I am co-Chair of the Royal
5 Commission.

6 We decided to break the Commission into
7 three panels for most of the public Hearings, in order
8 to visit as many communities as possible. So, this morning
9 while we are sitting here, Mary Sillett on my right and
10 myself, with the Commissioner of the Day Martin Durocher,
11 there are two other teams that are sitting elsewhere in
12 Canada. One is in Yellowknife and the other one is in
13 Manitoba.

14 I want to stress at this point that the
15 idea of a Commissioner of the Day in each of the communities
16 we sit has proven to be a very successful one during the
17 first round of Hearings. First of all, we feel it is
18 important to have with us somebody from the community to
19 chat, to discuss, to debrief at the end of the day, but
20 also to make sure that we get the most out of the
21 presentations. Martin Durocher is acting as a
22 full-fledged Commissioner and will ask questions of the
23 presenters, make sure that we understand the context of

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 the presentations and that we get the most out of the
2 presentations.

3 The thrust of the Commission, the reason
4 why it was created is really to come up with a new basis
5 for the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and this
6 country and the larger public and also, of course, the
7 Government of Canada and the various provincial
8 governments.

9 We hope that working on a new vision of
10 this relationship will enable government to avoid bad
11 policies, as has often been the case in the past, policies
12 like the residential schools, relocation policies where
13 people were moved from their ancestral land and regrouped
14 with no concerns for the human hardship that was occurring
15 and on and on and on.

16 We know that there is no piecemeal
17 solution. It has to be much more fundamental. It is not
18 just a matter of getting a bit more money for health
19 services or a different kind of an approach to education.

20 It is larger than that. We understand that the principles
21 under which the relationship is based have to be changed.

22 The relationship has to be based on notions like
23 self-sufficiency. It is respect, autonomy. It is nice

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 to talk about self-government, but if practical measures
2 are not taken to make sure that it will mean something,
3 then it will be useless. It will be a new buzz word, but
4 an empty shell.

5 Of course, this brings us to put to the
6 public some tough questions and also to Aboriginal peoples,
7 because it is challenging for both sides of the
8 relationship.

9 We have started a large consultative
10 process. Soon after our creation we visited all the
11 provinces and territories. We met with most of the
12 Premiers, Ministers responsible for Aboriginal affairs.
13 We also met with provincial Aboriginal organizations.
14 We wanted to make sure, first of all, that the Commission
15 would not be used as an excuse for inaction by the various
16 provincial governments and also that they would work with
17 us, because we are pretty much aware that with the kind
18 of mandate we have, we are going to have recommendations
19 that will impact on provincial jurisdiction, as well as
20 federal jurisdiction.

21 So, we wanted to be sure that we would
22 not be seen as outsiders, competitors for provincial task
23 forces or groups. The response we had from the Premiers

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 was very good. In fact, they told us that the problems,
2 the issues were so difficult that they would take the help
3 from whomever would provide that help and advice, and that
4 they would not raise the flag of jurisdictional issues
5 between the feds and the provinces, as far as the
6 recommendation of the Commission is concerned.

7 The Aboriginal people told us, "Well,
8 you are a Commission on Aboriginal people. It's not a
9 Commission on transportation," like the one that just
10 reported three weeks ago. So that means that being a
11 Commission working on people, with peoples, it was made
12 quite clear to us and we knew that from the outset that
13 we had to establish a good dialogue.

14 How do you do that? That's easier said
15 than done. What we decided to do is to have many rounds
16 of public Hearings. Of course it is demanding. We
17 decided to come to all the provinces four times and to
18 the two territories two times.

19 The first round of Hearings began in
20 mid-April and ran for ten weeks until the end of June.
21 It was pretty much a listening round of Hearings, where
22 we heard from all quarters, both Aboriginal and
23 non-Aboriginal peoples, the concerns, the problems.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 We came out of this round with the
2 publication of this document that is on the table, "Framing
3 the Issues". In this document we tried to boil down 10,000
4 pages of transcript into maybe 75 pages. So, of course,
5 it does not give a fair account of all the riches that
6 are in those transcripts, but I think it gives a good idea
7 of what was said to us across the country, the trends,
8 common denominators, differences.

9 We have asked questions that flow from
10 what we heard and, of course, we are in the process of
11 trying to get the answers to those questions and to get
12 other questions. We do not want to do that alone as a
13 Commission in our office. It has to be done with you the
14 presenters. So, we started this second round of Hearings
15 the day after the Referendum. We know there are all kinds
16 of interpretations given to the vote that was made on
17 October 26th and we are aware that there have been
18 differences among Métis communities, but we felt that it
19 was important to be at work the day after because whatever
20 was the result of the vote, a lot of work had to be done
21 because of discussion at the level of the Constitution
22 is necessarily a discussion about key words, major
23 principles, high principles and not about the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 practicalities of how it is going to be done and how it
2 is going to work. This was the reason for the creation
3 of this Commission, to try to paint the big picture. To
4 really try to establish the links, the interconnectedness
5 between all the areas.

6 Justice has to be seen as such, but also
7 as part of self-government. The delivery of educational
8 health services is the same. So, that's an opportunity
9 that no other Commission has had before, to try to pain
10 that picture to really show how all areas relate to each
11 other.

12 We are going to publish another document
13 after round two. This is in fact the last week of round
14 two. We will come back in March, not to this community,
15 but somewhere else in Saskatchewan for round three and
16 then we will move to round four. We hope to be more and
17 more focused on the priorities.

18 Alongside that process, we have started
19 a process of national round tables. We had one on urban
20 issues in June. We had a second round table on justice
21 issues in Ottawa the last week of November. We plan to
22 have one on health issues in March, afterwards education
23 and probably at one point, but we are in the process of

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 discussing it, we are going to have a round table on Métis
2 issues.

3 We are pretty much aware that the Métis
4 issues have been overlooked in the past. We are aware
5 that there was the Métis accord under the Charlottetown
6 Agreement. We hope we will be able to come up with
7 alternatives of actions after Charlottetown. We feel that
8 there can't be a vacuum and there will have to be a process.

9 A lot of those things could be achieved through a mechanism
10 under the present Constitution, either through delegation,
11 administration, with an aim of enshrining it into the
12 Constitution at a later stage.

13 The way we are going to work is from the
14 bottom up and not the reverse. That's the reason why we
15 have started a major research program that is based largely
16 on community case studies. We are going to have between
17 80 and 100 case studies in all kinds of communities to
18 look at Aboriginal economies, to look at the justice
19 systems, to look at self-government and at some pilot
20 project models.

21 We are aware that the reality of urban
22 Aboriginal people living in an urban setting is increasing
23 in numbers. There are more and more Aboriginal people

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 living in larger cities and mid-cities or smaller cities
2 with non-Aboriginal people. Our research program is going
3 to merge at the end with the information that we will get
4 from this public consultation process, but we hope that
5 it will enable us to come up with solutions that will be
6 both acceptable by all Aboriginal peoples, including the
7 Métis people, and the larger public because the Commission
8 is solution oriented. We know that time is for action.

9

10 There are major political issues like
11 self-government and the territories, but there are also
12 immediate social concerns. As we travelled across the
13 country, we are told to work on both aspects, not to put
14 all the hope for solutions into self-government. In many
15 communities, economic development and the cure of social
16 problems are the first priorities and then
17 self-government.

18 We hope that with the effort that will
19 be put into the Constitution by people like you, in days
20 of Hearings like this one, that we will be able to come
21 up with solutions that will be irresistible for
22 governments. There is no guarantee what the Commission
23 is going to recommend to governments. There is no

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 guarantee that they are going to be implemented, but we
2 feel we were created at a time-- that it's timely. There
3 is a will. It is not back to square one after the
4 Charlottetown Accord. We feel there is a will to really
5 do something that is not a patchwork, that it is much
6 deeper. We hope to be able to set the directions.

7 We won't be able to tie everything, all
8 the details, but we are going to look at all the aspects
9 of our mandate.

10 In closing, I would like to say that the
11 Commission, even a Royal Commission, can give back only
12 what people put into it. The success of this undertaking
13 relies pretty much on you as presenters, on the
14 contribution of the communities to the research and also
15 on the building of constituencies because what will be
16 important is that when we publish our final report and
17 we hope to be able to do so three years after our creation
18 and that means at the end of the summer, September 1994,
19 we hope there will be people on the land that will push
20 government for implementation of this Commission's report.

21 We are going to publish discussion
22 papers. We will do so through the public participation
23 process, but also on the research side. We hope that when

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 our recommendations are published that there will be no
2 big surprise, that our recommendations will have pretty
3 much been discussed with those concerned, those involved
4 and that should make it easier for getting implementation.

5

6 Again, thank you very much for being
7 here, accepting our invitation to present briefs, to listen
8 to what is said. At the end of the day we will have an
9 open forum and there are always a few people who make up
10 their mind during the day to come and join us at the table
11 and make a presentation. You will have an opportunity
12 to do so. Merci beaucoup. Thank you very much for being
13 here. We wish all of us a good day of work.

14 Before coming back to what was said by
15 Max Morin in his first presentation of the day, I would
16 like to ask Mary Sillett to make initial comments.

17 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you
18 very much and I won't be long. I think what we were
19 supposed to do was we were supposed to make our comments
20 first and then the presenter would have gotten up and we
21 would have asked questions.

22 I would like to begin by saying I am
23 really glad to be here. It has been a very long series

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 of public Hearings, but it is great to be here and I'd
2 like to thank some people who have done a lot of work in
3 preparation for this public Hearing. I would like to begin
4 by thanking our drivers and our guides who took us to Meadow
5 Lake yesterday, stayed with us at the Inn on the Lake and
6 drove us here this morning, Guy Bouvier and Dwayne Docken.

7 I would also like to recognize our community
8 representative Jim Favel. Jim gave me a very quick history
9 of Ile-à-La-Crosse in about ten minutes.

10 I would like to recognize also the
11 Commissioner of the Day Martin Durocher and our Regional
12 Co-ordinator Lorna Laplante, our interpreters Brian Ratt
13 and Harry Laliberte. I would also like to introduce the
14 Commission staff because they work very, very long and
15 hard for these Hearings. For the most part the
16 Commissioners get all the publicity. They get rarely the
17 publicity, but they do a lot of the work. On the Royal
18 Commission staff we have Tammy Saulis, Michael Lazore,
19 Brad Michael, Fred Wien and we also have two people on
20 contract with us, one is from ISTS Bernie Liesk and the
21 court reporter is Bill Publow.

22 I am going to be very brief in my
23 comments. One of them is that wherever we have gone we

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 have heard the concerns that were raised by Max Morin with
2 respect to the Métis people and clearly there are very
3 many concerns on this particular issue, but I think we
4 have to give many people in our public Hearings credit
5 for raising this issue and making the Commission very
6 conscious of our responsibility to make sure that the Métis
7 do not continue to be forgotten.

8 We have a Métis Commissioner, as Mr.
9 Dussault already said. We have made efforts to hire Métis
10 people on our staff and we also are giving consideration
11 to having a round table on Métis issues. That is usually
12 a very high profile meeting. It's usually in a major city
13 and we have major players involved in this issue that come
14 to this meeting to discuss not only what the problems are,
15 but what the solutions are.

16 Secondly, I would like to comment on
17 something I heard all throughout the Hearings and that's
18 what is this Commission going to do that is any different
19 from any other study that has ever been done? Even when
20 Mr. Dickson who was hired by the Prime Minister to look
21 at this Royal Commission, when he went across the country
22 and talked to people, he said almost every single person
23 he met said, "Another study, what's that going to do?"

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Your recommendations will probably end up on the shelf.
2 Life will be no better tomorrow than it was yesterday.
3 It will be no better the day after than it was the day
4 before." So, there is a lot of that.

5 I think what we are saying is that
6 hopefully for the time that people have given to us --
7 they have given us a lot of themselves. A lot of
8 communities have given us their hospitality. They have
9 given us their time. They have spent a lot of time
10 developing presentations and for that we owe something
11 to the communities. We owe them something. We have to
12 give them our best.

13 I think there are no guarantees. There
14 are no guarantees in this business but, hopefully, we have
15 thought a lot about what we should do differently that
16 will make sure that we do the best work that we can. With
17 the process we've said that one thing we have to do is
18 to make sure that everybody knows what we are doing all
19 the time. When we are thinking about recommendations we
20 will test them out with the public, with the Canadian
21 public, with the non-Aboriginal Canadian public, with the
22 Aboriginal Canadian public, with the provinces, with the
23 territories and with the federal government. We have to

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 always keep them on side and we have ben trying to do that.

2 Also, we have always been bragging all
3 across this country that this Commission is different than
4 other commissions. We have said, for example, that never
5 in the history of commissions has there been seven
6 Commissions and with the majority Aboriginal. I think
7 that makes a difference in the way we do things.

8 We have three women out of seven and I
9 think that is really, really important. I think women
10 are much more sensitive to, for example, child care than
11 men and social issues. We have seen a lot of difference
12 with that, but we also have an extremely broad mandate.

13 We have the largest mandate of any commission in the
14 history of Canada and we have mostly native staff. We
15 have about 90 permanent staff and most of those people
16 are native people. They are Indian, they are status
17 Indian, they are non-status Indian, they are Inuit, they
18 are Métis. What we have been trying to do is trying to
19 show that wherever we've gone we've people say, you know,
20 we're not educated, we can't do this, we can't do that.

21 What we have proven is that there are a lot of talented
22 Aboriginal people in Canada, many, many people who are
23 educated, many, many people who have a great contribution

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 to give; many, many people who are committed to the kinds
2 of things that we are going to be hearing today that we've
3 heard yesterday.

4 I think one thing that's really
5 important when we leave the Commission is to show the work
6 that has been done, not only by extremely competent
7 Aboriginal people, but also by extremely competent
8 non-Aboriginal people because we have to recognize that
9 we have to work together in order to achieve our goals.

10 But we are very proud of the fact that most of our staff
11 are native and that most of them -- we are not saying we
12 can't any more. We are saying we can, we can and we will.

13 Much of the work that has been produced has been by the
14 native staff.

15 Also, when we go to the communities we
16 say -- when we go to those communities what do we need
17 to make sure these public Hearings are the best that we've
18 ever had? So, we hire people like, for example, Lorna
19 Laplante for our regional co-ordinator because we trust
20 that these people who have lived all of their lives here
21 have much more knowledge than we do about how we should
22 be organizing our meetings to have as many people come
23 out.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 We have had people like Jim Favel who
2 is a community representative and who is working at the
3 community level who knows the people, who knows how to
4 get people out, who knows what interpreters we should have,
5 what interpreters we shouldn't have, where we should be
6 meeting, where we should be staying, so we've done a lot
7 of that. Hopefully, with all that we have done, at the
8 end of the day we'll be able to say we've done a lot better
9 than past commissions.

10 I thank you very, very much for being
11 here and I look forward to listening to you today and maybe
12 tomorrow. Thank you very much.

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

14 Mr. Morin.

15 **MR. MAX MORIN:** I will be acting as the
16 moderator for the day. What that is, I wanted to explain
17 to the people that I will be calling different presenters
18 to come up. If you want to make a presentation, let me
19 know because we have some on a list, but maybe like Mr.
20 Dussault said, maybe some people would want to make a
21 presentation and they are not on the list. We can put
22 them on the list.

23 Also, if you are taking too long to make

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 your presentation or whatever, then I will have to give
2 you a little notice saying that your presentation is too
3 long or you have so much time. I want to make this clear
4 to you people. You have approximately 20 minutes I
5 believe. I believe also you should give time to the
6 Commissioners to ask questions.

7 With that, the first presentation we
8 have is from His Worship Buckley Belanger from
9 Ile-à-La-Crosse. I will call Buckley to come to the table
10 to make his presentation.

11 **MR. BUCKLEY BELANGER (Mayor,**
12 **Ile-à-La-Crosse):** Good morning, Commission members and
13 guests to the community of Ile-à-La-Crosse. To begin with
14 and before I get into my presentation, I wanted to point
15 out that the snow out there is starting to come down quite
16 heavily and I want to thank the big guy upstairs for
17 accepting our motion last night to hold the weather until
18 you guys got here. He has done that, so we certainly thank
19 him for his co-ordination of the weather.

20 Before I begin, I would like to welcome
21 you all to the community of Ile-à-La-Crosse. Before my
22 presentation, Max gave you a brief history of
23 Ile-à-La-Crosse. While we are certainly proud of our

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 community and its accomplishments over 220 years of
2 existence, we look forward to the challenges of 21st
3 century and we base those challenges on the hopes and
4 aspirations of our local native and non-native community.

5
6 When one speaks of self-government,
7 there are all kinds of challenges to the word
8 "self-government". I would like to first of all point
9 out that I am an avid supporter of self-government and
10 I believe that the challenges that must be met in order
11 to accomplish self-government must be met by the native
12 people themselves.

13 In saying that self-government is going
14 to happen, a lot of people resist change, as you are
15 probably aware throughout time. Unlike any other ethnic
16 group, the native people of Canada face those same
17 challenges. They are afraid of change. In my opinion,
18 self-government is going to happen and it is always best
19 to prepare. It is always best to consult and it is always
20 best to respect people's opinions at the grassroots level.

21 Several months ago I made a
22 presentation. Another hat that I wear is Chairman of the
23 North West Saskatchewan Municipalities Association. This

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 association has 14 member communities in this region, the
2 North West Region. We sit together on a monthly basis
3 and discuss issues of common concern. It is primarily
4 a municipal association and of course in the municipalities
5 there are treaty people, there are Métis people and there
6 are non-Aboriginal people. We all get together as one
7 and we talk about the common concerns.

8 One of the concerns on self-government
9 is people feel there isn't enough consultation going on.

10 As a result, I issued a press release calling for heavier
11 consultation on native self-government. I will read part
12 of the press release:

13 "The Chairman of the North West Saskatchewan
14 Municipalities Association, Mayor
15 Buckley Belanger of Ile-à-La-Crosse,
16 called for heavier consultation on the
17 issue of native self-government as it
18 relates to the operations of the current
19 municipal structure. All of the 14
20 member communities of the N.W.S.M.A.
21 currently operate under the Northern
22 Municipalities Act, empowered and
23 designed by the Government of

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Saskatchewan.

2 'In calling for heavier consultations for organizations
3 such as ours, we are seeking to find
4 answers as to the potential changes to
5 the current system. As well, we are
6 hoping that our members can assist and
7 help design a system that is comparable
8 to that of the current municipalities
9 act.' ... 'It is very important to note
10 that the municipal structure consist of
11 metis, consist of treaty people, consist
12 of white people, consist of all races.
13 It is a community of people, (first)
14 and we would like to know how the lines
15 were drawn between our people, and the
16 effect that it will have on --'"
17 the municipal structure.

18 "Of the 14 member communities, there are approximately
19 15,000 people that live in the area.
20 The communities are funded through
21 government operating grants and are
22 governed by a mayor and council that is
23 elected by all of the residents (of that

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 particular community) regardless of
2 race, color, or creed. 'While I
3 certainly recognize that there can be
4 a lot of improvements to the Northern
5 Municipalities Act, I still see a great
6 value in the municipal structure as it
7 relates to the north. About 85 to 90%
8 of the mayors and councillors in
9 northern Saskatchewan, are of native
10 ancestry. In a sense that constitutes
11 self government, --'"

12 in so,me form:

13 "'-- and all of these communities have shown that they
14 can run their own affairs. The current
15 municipal system that is in place now,
16 is a good solid example of self
17 government and should be protected and
18 enhanced in any negotiations.'

19 'When we talk about change, there is a lot of confusion
20 out there, as to what these changes may
21 be. I certainly want to see change in
22 the north, because of the economic
23 situation that we face. However, the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 NWSMA will be certainly involved in any
2 negotiations that affect our
3 communities. We would be remiss in our
4 responsibilities, if we did not protect
5 the interest of our communities and
6 people. The profound effect of
7 dividing people and therefore dividing
8 communities, will provide a challenge
9 for all of us.'

10 'The other critical area that needs to be addressed,
11 is the obvious legal differences between
12 the Metis and Treaties. If the recent
13 example of the Pathways to Success
14 initiative, sets a precedence, (when it
15 comes to self-government and) in the
16 allocation of funding and
17 responsibilities between the Metis and
18 the Treaty's, then I strongly believe
19 that it would result in a lot less
20 (power) for the Metis. It is not
21 through the fault of the treaty people
22 that this would occur, but we can
23 certainly look at the example of the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Pathway to Success initiative, and
2 consider the potential allocation
3 problems when it comes to justice,
4 health, housing, economic development,
5 social programs, et cetera. I think
6 that the community structure as we know
7 it now, would be at a greater loss than
8 they --"

9 will be if self-government were to happen without their
10 consultation.

11 "In summary, if self government is to truly happen,
12 then the municipal structure in northern
13 Saskatchewan is a good example of how
14 it should begin. Certainly, changes
15 and improvements can and will be done,
16 but nonetheless, we all have a stake in
17 this matter, and therefore, we all have
18 to design that system. Secondly, the
19 issue of recognizing the different
20 groups of people within the constitution
21 --"

22 if not monitored properly, will:

23 "'-- will promote the breakup of communities and provides

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 an uneven funding and service problem
2 between the native groups. This
3 situation will occur., unless and until
4 we begin dialogue, begin to take the time
5 to understand, and work together to
6 achieve self government. The municipal
7 structure is here to stay, we're here
8 with our metis people, we are here with
9 our treaty people, we are here with our
10 non Aboriginal people, and we will
11 protected all our rights.'"

12 That's where I ended the press release.

13

14 What I was trying to get at in the press
15 release is any time we talk about self-government and if
16 you want to empower a people, then the responsibility and
17 decision making should be made at the grassroots level.
18 Self-government is of no value whatsoever if you simply
19 replace a white bureaucracy with a brown bureaucracy.
20 Our people will continue to struggle at the grassroots
21 level and this is not what you want. This is exactly what
22 you want to change.

23 Self-government is exactly what it is,

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 self-government. We decide. We designed that system and
2 if our system that we agree upon -- and it may take us
3 years to agree because there are growing pains in any
4 changes -- that system, if we include as a community or
5 as a region, if we include the treaty people to sit
6 alongside the Métis people, alongside the non-Aboriginal
7 community, then that is our system. That is our design.
8 That is our self-government.

9 It is important to note that the
10 self-government concept that I see ensures that all rights
11 are protected and that each group has its strengths and
12 we have to focus on those strengths, as opposed to each
13 group's rights or obligations.

14 Many people at the grassroots level are
15 disillusioned by the concept of self-government and the
16 simple reason is they don't understand it and they are
17 afraid of it. This is the reason why we have to make sure
18 that we spend as much time as we can to educate our own
19 people. If you want them to be responsible for
20 self-government, then they have to become involved.

21 This is why I go back to my point that
22 it is of no use if you are going to empower people, it
23 is of no use to replace a white bureaucratic system with

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 that of a brown bureaucratic system because you are losing
2 the whole purpose and the whole meaning of self-government.

3

4 The second point that I want to raise
5 a bit on is the issue of economic development. In northern
6 Saskatchewan several years ago, I think it was 1988, the
7 Premier of Saskatchewan who was then Grant Devine, made
8 a statement that it cost the Saskatchewan taxpayer
9 approximately \$1 million a day to run social programs for
10 northern Saskatchewan. That's \$365 million a year that
11 the northern part of Saskatchewan costs the taxpayer.

12 While I certainly don't agree with what
13 it costs, there is a lot of issue of what it took out.
14 Nonetheless, what I see happening as well is given the
15 current population growth, given inflation, given the fact
16 that people aren't moving out of the north, given the fact
17 that there are all kinds of challenges in moving from the
18 north to the south, I believe that the north will only
19 increase its population. Given current government
20 practices, given current government policies, by the year
21 2000 and given all of these factors, that social cost to
22 the Province of Saskatchewan could be very well \$1 billion
23 per year.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 What we as northern people have been
2 saying is we mustn't continue to build our economy of
3 northern Saskatchewan or any province on a non-renewable
4 resource. In this instance it would be mining. We have
5 to not only begin to develop our resources, but we have
6 to begin to develop our people as well. The proposal we
7 had brought forth to stop that train of dependence is a
8 proposal presented by a number of municipalities and I
9 am sure you will hear it as you continue on in your travels.

10

11 The big thing that we see is that as long
12 as we continue to focus our economic plan on a non-renewable
13 resource, 30 or 40 years from now we will begin to have
14 major, major problems, not only as a people, but as a
15 province and as a country.

16 So the proposal that we brought forth
17 quite some time ago is to begin to develop a fund, using
18 revenues or taxation derived from the mining industry to
19 establish a northern development fund that will fund local
20 and regional development corporations that will be focused
21 on the renewable resource and which could include human
22 resources, number one. It could include forestry. It
23 could include tourism. It could include agriculture, it

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 could include wild rice. It could include professional
2 personal services. It could include a wide range of
3 services, transportation, communication and the list goes
4 on and on.

5 It is very important for people to
6 realize as long as we are funding the illness then nothing
7 will change. We will continue having the problems. Maybe
8 it's time to talk and it's especially time to listen to
9 the fact that we should begin to focus on the cure.

10 With that, I again thank you for visiting
11 our community. We certainly hope that your visit will
12 be both informative and we certainly wish you would come
13 back here nine more times, but we know that's not possible
14 because there are a heck of a lot of ideas out there.

15 Thank you very much. If you have any
16 questions I can be here for a few more minutes.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you, Mr.
18 Mayor. Of course, we appreciate the high symbolism for
19 the Commission to sit in Ile-à-La-Crosse. I would like
20 to say again that we are very happy to be here this morning.

21 What you told us about self-government
22 is very interesting and the kind of concerns that you raised
23 and the principle that should be applied, that is to make

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 sure that Aboriginal people decide themselves the form
2 of self-government they want to have. We totally share
3 that point of view.

4 We know that there would be different
5 situations and different models applicable, that some
6 communities will choose to develop self-government at the
7 community level and others will choose to be part of a
8 kind of a nation model or treaty area model or other kinds
9 of models. So, we are thoroughly convinced that there
10 can't be one solution. Also, that the solution will have
11 to be decided by those concerned.

12 From your brief I understand that at this
13 point, and it's probably of course as a mayor in that
14 situation you see self-government in this area, in this
15 community, as including treaty people and non-Aboriginal
16 people. I must say that I fully agree that this is a
17 decision that will have to be taken by those concerned.

18

19 It is at the other end of the spectrum
20 in some areas here that that should be more of an ethnic
21 government and not a public government to safeguard
22 cultures and whatever. This brings a host of questions
23 of course of what happens to non-Aboriginal people living

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 in the territory of that kind of government, a right to
2 vote if they are to be taxed and on and on and on. So,
3 what I would like to ask you is, if I understood well what
4 you said and what is in the communique that you read, it
5 is that at this point you would see self-government as
6 including everybody, so a kind of structure power that
7 would include everybody.

8 What I am not clear on is how do you see
9 that functioning with the municipalities or is it the
10 municipalities that would have an enhanced status? Could
11 you expand on that?

12 **MAYOR BUCKLEY BELANGER:** It wasn't
13 necessarily meant to really compare the non-Aboriginal
14 community to the Aboriginal community. I made a reference
15 to the difference between Métis and treaties in the press
16 release.

17 Why it was intentionally put in there
18 was to provide a thought in one's mind that in these
19 communities like Ile-à-La-Crosse, it's primarily Métis,
20 and we have about maybe 1,000 Métis people in the community,
21 maybe 300 treaties and Bill C-31s and maybe 198
22 non-Aboriginal people. We did have two Greeks a couple
23 of years ago.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 What the situation is is that many of
2 the treaty people within our community don't enjoy the
3 same rights as a treaty person on reserve. That kind of
4 creates a problem not necessarily for the community because
5 we are a community first, but it creates a problem and
6 a hardship for the treaty people that are trying to do
7 something in terms of determining their own future. They
8 have lived in Ile-à-La-Crosse all their lives. Before
9 they can enjoy the same rights as a person on a reserve,
10 they have to relocate their family. Many of them aren't
11 prepared to do that.

12 So, the answer to the question is, yes,
13 the focus would be more on servicing all Aboriginal people
14 in these communities, but certainly enhancing and
15 promoting the role of the municipality structure. It
16 doesn't have to be a municipal government. It could be
17 a council of peoples. It could be any kind of name. Given
18 the diversity of Canada, I agree with you whole-heartedly
19 that it could be completely different in the Maritimes
20 as opposed to the Province of B.C.

21 Nonetheless, the country is huge,
22 people's ideas are different, but the main thing is you
23 respect the right to establish your self-government as

StenoTran

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 you see it. That's a fundamental point. Certainly the
2 municipal structure is one that we could look at because
3 I always say it's easier to be a Premier, it's easier to
4 be an M.L.A., it's much easier to be a Prime Minister as
5 opposed to being a mayor, because instead of policy, you
6 bump into the people you affect every day of your life.

7 Sometimes it's a nice day and sometimes it's a bad day.

8 That is the point, you are directly responsible to the
9 grassroots people being a grassroots government.

10 If you are in there and you are
11 accountable and you are responsible and you can be
12 approached on a daily basis, then that, in my opinion,
13 is probably the best form of government that anybody could
14 have.

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

16 One last question on economic
17 development. The fund that you have talked about, do you
18 have a design or a project, a more detailed project that
19 you could share with us?

20 **MAYOR BUCKLEY BELANGER:** Yes. I
21 understand you will be heading north after this to La Loche.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes.

23 **MAYOR BUCKLEY BELANGER:** A colleague of

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 mine up there, Mr. Roy Cheechum, will be making a similar
2 -- I just briefly pointed out to you so that there is
3 consistency amongst all the communities, but Mr. Cheechum
4 would have a copy of the document that was prepared by
5 all the municipal governments and other people in this
6 area, to explain to the government, "Listen, you've got
7 this deficit problem, but the proposal that we have in
8 front of you doesn't require any more money than what you've
9 got already." It may cost the mining companies a bit more.
10 It may cost tourism a bit more in terms of recreational
11 leases, but there are things that we have to do now to
12 solve the problems that are going to occur 40 or 50 years
13 from now.

14 This is the reason I talk about
15 empowering the people because they make the decisions that
16 affect their lives and they should be able to find the
17 solutions and get support for those solutions.

18 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We will be
19 looking forward to receiving that brief in La Loche.

20 I would like to ask Commissioner Sillett
21 to ask questions.

22 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you
23 very much. You talked about membership in the context

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 of self-government. There are usually three issues that
2 we talk about when we talk about membership; one is who
3 should decide membership. You are essentially saying that
4 you should decide membership or the group should decide
5 membership.

6 In your mind what would the criteria for
7 membership be? Also, what do you think membership would
8 mean? Some people are saying that, for example, would
9 this membership just be a membership to say that you are
10 a member of a certain group? Would it entitle you to
11 certain rights and privileges or financial benefits?

12 **MAYOR BUCKLEY BELANGER:** In terms of
13 membership, I am not too clear on it when you talk about
14 membership. The way I simply perceive self-government
15 is in terms of my own little world here in Ile-à-La-Crosse.
16 Whoever chooses to make Ile-à-La-Crosse their home should
17 certainly have a right to determine what happens in the
18 community and the majority wins, point blank. But we must
19 certainly recognize that we all have differences, but we
20 shouldn't let those differences be decided by other people.
21 We decide how we are going to handle them.

22 When you talk about membership, I am
23 really quite confused as to membership in what; into the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 voting process?

2 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** That's what
3 I'm asking you.

4 **MAYOR BUCKLEY BELANGER:** The membership
5 of Ile-à-La-Crosse will be open to everybody that lives
6 and chooses to make Ile-à-La-Crosse their home.

7 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** The reason
8 I ask that is I have a fair idea that, for example, because
9 of the history of this particular area there has been a
10 lot of good relationships between different people. There
11 are Métis and treaty Indians and the white people and they
12 have gotten along for most of the time. Then there have
13 been these divisions created by, for example, the
14 government definition of membership, which has created
15 divisions. I've heard earlier, for example, if you are
16 a treaty Indian I guess you are covered under non-insured
17 health services. You get greater benefits than the Métis
18 and I also heard you say for example that a treaty Indian
19 can't live on the reserve and they are not entitled to
20 the same benefits.

21 I wanted a clarification in your
22 thinking as to what would the membership mean? Would it
23 entitle certain people to certain benefits? Would it make

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 what?

2 **MAYOR BUCKLEY BELANGER:** This is the
3 point I make when I say in my opinion there is no animosity
4 between the Métis and the treaty people. You build a
5 community on the strengths of its people, not on the
6 weaknesses and not on the differences.

7 If there is some way, shape or form that
8 myself as a Métis mayor can assist the treaty people in
9 this community getting the services that they are duly
10 authorized to get under the treaties, then I am doing my
11 job in assisting the whole effort of self-government.

12 So, if they have particular rights and
13 if they have particular freedoms and if they have
14 particular privileges, so be it. What has got to happen
15 though, you have got to educate our people to say, "Listen,
16 these guys are entitled to those rights and yourself and
17 myself as Métis people we are still not entitled to those
18 rights under the Constitution." This is where the whole
19 issue becomes an awareness issue. It becomes a support
20 issue. It becomes a pressure issue all of a sudden.

21 When you start telling people that the
22 responsibility is yours, and not just the government's,
23 then they start realizing that they want to enjoy the same

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 rights and freedoms as other people and they will fight
2 for that. This is the reason why a lot of people are just
3 staying back and saying, "No, we are not getting too
4 involved in the Métis Society," or "We are not really aware
5 of the FSI" and those types of things.

6 That is the reason why I point out when
7 you talk about self-government, it's a learning process
8 and we have a long ways to go, a long, long ways to go,
9 but we have to start somewhere. That's the only way we
10 can do it is public consultation.

11 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**

12 Buckley, in reference to self-government, as you are
13 talking about, the status people, the C-31s, when
14 Commissioner Sillett was asking the question she was
15 referring to -- these people wouldn't lose their rights.

16 They would still continue having their rights because
17 they are part, their number is still used in Ottawa and
18 in Regina as well. So, you are saying that they would
19 have rights to vote, that you would speak for them, that
20 they don't have to go wherever their band is, Canoe Lake
21 or Tachinat or wherever?

22 **MAYOR BUCKLEY BELANGER:** All the people
23 and the community now votes in municipal elections.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Everyone who is a registered Ile-à-La-Crosse resident
2 votes and the issue is yes. All we are trying to do is
3 protect and enhance their rights and their services in
4 the community of Ile-à-La-Crosse. They wouldn't be
5 treated any differently.

6 At this point in time, up to five or six
7 years ago, before I became involved in municipal politics,
8 I didn't really know there was a difference between Indian
9 and Métis and Bill
10 C-31 and non-status, but now I know.

11 When I see someone on the street today
12 and someone asks me "Who is that guy? You say he's from
13 Ile-à-La-Crosse?" That's all you say.

14 That is my point, that if they have
15 rights and privileges that they shouldn't join the
16 community, even if it is off reserve, and that's a huge
17 battle to get services off reserves. That's what I mean,
18 the people are losing.

19 We have some people that come from
20 various reserves in the region. They have lived in
21 Ile-à-La-Crosse all their life and they have no intention
22 of leaving, but the reserve counts their numbers and I
23 think the reserves get a lot of their funding sources right

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 at the reserve level. Nothing filters to them except maybe
2 a handful of services.

3 So, in reference to that, I strongly
4 believe that the municipal structure as we know it now
5 would be a good form of self-government because it has
6 proven that it could work. It needs a lot of help and
7 a lot of money, but it will work.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** A last short
9 question and you might have already answered this. You
10 said the municipal structure is what we know and should
11 start from there, but you said it could be different.
12 The council, or you didn't think about a different
13 structure than the municipal structure at this point?

14 **MAYOR BUCKLEY BELANGER:** No. I just
15 thought on how the municipal structure, the success that
16 it has and while it certainly has restrictions and
17 guidelines and regulations, that's the area that needs
18 to be addressed.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** All right.

20 **MAYOR BUCKLEY BELANGER:** When you talk
21 about superstructures, any time you have a superstructure
22 in front of you, it's a big, large target and people can
23 pick on that. People can pick it apart. It's so big a

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 target that if you have ten smaller targets, when it comes
2 to self-government it's much difficult to attack ten
3 smaller targets and that's where the power lies is with
4 the grassroots and that's where the support and all the
5 direction should go.

6 Certainly things like education could
7 be handled under a bureaucratic system designed by the
8 native people, maybe even justice. When it comes to
9 community services and community power, it should be
10 decided at the community level.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
12 much for a very interesting presentation.

13 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Thank you.

14 I would now like to call on His Worship
15 the Mayor of Green Lake to make a presentation, Mr. Rod
16 Bishop. I think he has some maps or whatever that he would
17 like to put up on the wall for us.

18 (Native language. No translation).

19 I was just telling the people who don't
20 understand English or Cree, whoever is making a
21 presentation might speak their native language, or some
22 of the people who don't understand the English language,
23 there are interpreters in the back and they can get a

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 headset and they will interpret whatever language. If
2 they are speaking in English, they will interpret in Cree
3 and if they are speaking in Cree they will interpret into
4 English.

5 Right after Mr. Bishop will be Donald
6 Favel. After Donald will be Vital and then I'd like to
7 get Ambrose Maurice before lunch.

8 **MR. ROD BISHOP, (Mayor, Village of Green**
9 **Lake) :** First of all, I would like to take this opportunity
10 to say thank you to the Commissioners in advance and also
11 I am glad to be here at Ile-à-La-Crosse and see such a
12 fairly good turnout, a lot of interest with respect to
13 the question of land and self-government.

14 Basically, I came here without any real
15 notes, but I did come with a map and so you can call it
16 a shopping list, if you like. First of all, I would like
17 to clarify that this map is not the Province of
18 Saskatchewan. It is part of Saskatchewan. It is 12
19 townships of land that we are looking at there and this
20 is the interest and the claim that the Métis people of
21 Green Lake have, so that is what I want to speak on here
22 this morning.

23 I guess I can basically say that I think

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 we've got a fairly good case here and perhaps if we were
2 forced to put up a map of Saskatchewan there we'd also
3 have a fairly good case for the whole entire province,
4 but this is not the case.

5 First of all, I think this is a very
6 unique situation. It's relationship is not really with
7 the federal government. It has not been a constitutional
8 matter per se, but one that has a unique relationship with
9 the province, dating back to 1944 where land was set aside
10 for the Métis in the Province of Saskatchewan.

11 The purpose of land being set aside for
12 the Métis at that point in time and to the best of my
13 knowledge and the research that we have gotten through
14 press releases and what not of the time, we found that
15 the Métis at that time back in 1944 in the southern part
16 of this province they were living actually on road
17 allowances and, as a result of that, the Métis had to move
18 because the farmers wanted the access to their land and
19 they wanted roadways built and that type of thing, so a
20 relocation plan was in the making. They had chosen the
21 community of Green Lake.

22 Green Lake is a Métis community of
23 approximately 712 people and about 95 per cent of the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 community is comprised of Métis people. At one point in
2 time in the history of this here claim we had as high as
3 2,000 people who lived in that community when they were
4 relocated from the south into Green Lake.

5 What spurred us on to perhaps identify
6 this land was a few years ago the province at the time
7 wanted to privatize or sell some land. As a result of
8 that, we felt that of course we were not being treated
9 fairly and we started doing our research. In the process
10 of doing our research we found some documents, documents
11 that were later handed to our solicitor. We said to our
12 solicitor, "What kind of a case do we have here? Do we
13 have a legal case here? Can we do something about it in
14 court?" That's when we proceeded to put a caveat on the
15 parcel of land known as Silver Lake here.

16 This area is what is Silver Lake. This
17 is an area here that is comprised of approximately 6,000
18 acres of land. Prior to 1988 all of these lands around
19 here were farmed by the Government of Saskatchewan. These
20 were Crown corporation operations in here. Here you see
21 Central Farm which is also another parcel of agricultural
22 land. As a result of that, what we did was in the process
23 of when this thing was advertised we came together as a

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 community, put a package together and we said we were
2 interested in all of these lands because we had enough
3 Métis people there.

4 Although we were the second-highest
5 bidders in the process, we were still not looked at in
6 terms of being successful bidders for this parcel of land.

7 So, we went to the courts and the Saskatchewan Appeal
8 Court, finally, the fourth time we went to court, a ruling
9 was made that the caveat -- I notice we have a lawyer here,
10 that the caveat would remain and stay intact. That is
11 basically where it is at now.

12 The other point I wanted to make is this.

13 We have also made some attempts to try and negotiate this
14 out of court. We have done that by trying to create a
15 smooth passage, so that we could negotiate. We came up
16 with a Memorandum of Understanding approximately a year
17 ago and which was presented to them, the Premier of
18 Saskatchewan Roy Romanow. We said, look, we think it is
19 important that some guy be commissioned to take a look
20 at the historical documents, the legal documents
21 pertaining to this land here and that such, after the
22 findings and examinations of this person appointed to this
23 area, would then make recommendations to the government.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Of course, this has not been the case. Nothing was done
2 in that particular area.

3 Since then, we have went to examination
4 for discovery and now we are ready to move into the pretrial
5 stages. The examination for discovery, after all the
6 documents were examined, our lawyers reported back to us
7 saying that he felt we had a 99 per cent chance of winning
8 this case in court. Basically, the legal interpretation
9 that we are getting is that this has been a contractual
10 agreement between the government, the Province of
11 Saskatchewan and the Métis people of Green Lake and that
12 this land that we see here, we would never be able to have
13 title to this land, but that this land was in fact set
14 aside as a reserve for the people and that the government
15 could sell these lands if they wanted to, but that the
16 beneficiary here in this case would be the target group
17 which is the Métis people. Anything that is sold here,
18 the target group, the beneficiaries for that would have
19 to be the Métis people. As a result, we have launched
20 a \$22 million lawsuit for compensation and whatnot.

21 My concern, at this point in time to the
22 Commissioners and the people that are present here, is
23 that this is a situation which is very clear and we feel

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 very strong about, this whole entire case. But we are
2 running into some difficulty and problems. Those problems
3 are problems that are created beyond the scope of the Métis
4 people in my community. They are responsibilities that
5 are directly or indirectly related to the province with
6 their economic policies with respect to third party
7 interests on this land, such as the multi-national
8 corporations that are now in existence here in
9 Saskatchewan.

10 When you take a look at these diagonal
11 lines here, these are the Forest Management Lease
12 Agreements of two large companies in Saskatchewan. One
13 is Weyerhaeuser and one is NorSask. To the south here we
14 see the Weyerhaeuser Forest Management Lease Agreement and
15 to the north we see NorSask and Miller Western pulp mills,
16 who have a Forest Management Licence Agreement.

17 This Forest Management Licence
18 Agreement was signed in 1988 in June. This one was signed
19 I believe in 1983 in June with Weyerhaeuser. After
20 reviewing some of the documents and some of the corporate
21 documents, I know that it is very complicated, a legally
22 complicated text that is involved in there. I feel the
23 reason why we are running into some difficulties is simply

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 because the government is afraid at this point in time,
2 the province is afraid to take a look at the third party
3 interests here on this land because in fear that they may
4 lose ground or afraid that they are going to be able to
5 rock, what do you call it, the status quo, or that these
6 big corporations will be disturbed or will not like looking
7 or reviewing what is actually in place here.

8 In this Commission, the way I look at
9 it is this, it will become useless just as long as the
10 corporate agenda of our society comes first, the
11 multi-national corporations come first in the north and
12 that they take the first of everything in the north and
13 leave the last for our people, then it will become useless.
14

15 I say that this Commission has to stand
16 up, it has to make recommendations where it is needed,
17 to say that there should be a moratorium put on any big
18 megaprojects in the north until such time that land claims
19 and self-government can be put in process, because that
20 is the problem right now. What they are doing is trying
21 to divide communities up, pit communities against each
22 other and they are doing it by funding a few native
23 organizations.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 When you take a look at the kind of money
2 that has been filtered, when you talk about economic
3 development, filtered into Miller Western, a \$361 million
4 project there and you take a look at the Weyerhaeuser deal
5 and all of these big corporations, then they turn around
6 and give our organization \$1 million. To do what, our
7 organizations to do what? Divide us up so that we don't
8 fight for those resources, so that we don't have an interest
9 in those resources? It appears to me that is the direction
10 that the government is going at this point in time as well.

11

12 So, I say this because it is important
13 not only to me as a Métis, but I think it is also important
14 to the Métis people throughout the north. Here we had
15 a sawmill in Green Lake, and we still have that mill.
16 When the government moved to start privatizing parts of
17 these 12 townships, they also sold a sawmill that didn't
18 belong to them. If you and I did that, sell something
19 that didn't belong to us, we would have been in jail today.

20 So, there is a double standard here, the super rich can
21 do it, but the poor cannot do it. The law will become
22 applicable to do you if you do it, but not to the rich.

23 At the present time, we cannot get timber

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 anywhere to be able to supply our sawmill so we could create
2 employment in our community, to get people off the welfare
3 roll, although in the Forest Management Licence Agreement
4 that now exists with NorSask it clearly identifies that
5 there is supposed to be 30,000 cubic metres of wood there.

6 I got the documentation in my car. That translates to
7 about 6 million board feet of lumber, of logs that is
8 supposed to go to our mill. Yet, the Government of
9 Saskatchewan at the present has not had the guts to be
10 able to stand up and say, "Okay, Green Lake, we will allow
11 you to go out there and harvest those forests and take
12 your share," which is the 30,000 cubic metres of wood to
13 create employment in our community.

14 So when I see these kinds of problems
15 taking place and those kinds of barriers being put on us,
16 what kind of future do your children have and what kind
17 of future do all of us have? Those are very real problems
18 that are existing today. It is a war against our own people
19 and we are sitting back and we are not doing a God damn
20 thing.

21 Take a look at the blockade. The
22 communities of the north should be standing up and saying
23 to the Minister, "Look, we will decide what communities

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 we want to recognize, what communities we will recognize,"
2 not the Minister saying that they will evict these guys
3 from the bush. It should be the people of the north
4 standing up, the municipalities saying, "We will be the
5 ones to recognize what communities should be recognized
6 in the north." That's what we should be doing.

7 It's nice to come to these little
8 meetings and whatnot and to say that, hey, there may be
9 a better tomorrow, but the real war is on and the war is
10 against our people and we don't even know it.

11 Some of us don't even know it because
12 they have poisoned us with welfare. The only thing they
13 are prepared to give us is a blank cheque which is welfare,
14 rather than spending \$15 million or \$10 million in each
15 community to create an industry.

16 That is my presentation at this point
17 in time.

18 **MR. MAX MORIN:** There might be some
19 questions here, Mr. Bishop. The Commissioners might have
20 some questions.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I would like
22 to thank you for your forceful presentation. As you know,
23 we are interested in the process of land claims. It is

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 not our mandate to act as mediator into all the land claims
2 disputes across the country, but it is in our mandate to
3 come up with recommendations as to the process. We feel
4 it does include the reality or the situation of third
5 parties.

6 To be more specific on what you told us,
7 we were in Meadow Lake yesterday. We stopped over on our
8 way here and just to make sure I understand, we saw the
9 pulp mill and people told us that there were many people
10 from the communities that were employed in the bush. Do
11 I understand you well when you say that people in your
12 community should be allowed to work also in the bush to
13 get the timber for this pulp mill? Could you explain?

14 **MR. ROD BISHOP:** Let me see if I can
15 explain that a little more. Basically, the community of
16 Green Lake has had a mill for many, many years, before
17 many of the mills were spurred in other communities, like
18 Meadow Lake and Big River. Logging and forestry has been
19 a traditional economic part of our community.

20 Basically, what I am saying is this:
21 When you talk about economic development, there has been
22 an attempt, a great attempt and it is quite evident, to
23 destroy the independence of any community that wants to

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 try and do things on their own without the blessing or
2 the sanctions of a corporate agenda, which in this case
3 happens to be the third party interests I am referring
4 to like Miller Western and NorSask.

5 First of all, our mill, the mill that
6 we have in Green Lake, that mill was transferred to my
7 community back in 1976, all the title, all the improvements
8 and the buildings on it was transferred to my community
9 in 1976.

10 If the government at the time, when they
11 were in the process of privatizing these lands and these
12 assets, if they had done their research like they were
13 supposed to have done, when they have had some of the
14 biggest law firms in Saskatchewan working for them, they
15 would have found that that mill did not belong to them.

16 It did not belong to them. How it was an oversight on
17 their part I don't know, if one wants to excuse a big
18 corporate firm of overlooking those particular areas, I
19 don't know, but they turned around and they sold it. They
20 sold that mill.

21 When they couldn't transfer what you
22 call the title of that mill, then on June 28th, 1990 they
23 came up with a settlement agreement. The government gave

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 a settlement agreement to NorSask of \$455 million -- sorry,
2 \$445,000 was reimbursed to this company that was supposed
3 to have bought it. Two years to the date that mill had
4 been valued at \$84,000. To me, I look at it as a sweetheart
5 deal.

6 Aside from that, they also took the
7 timber. When they privatized those two miles, there was
8 one in Meadow Lake and one in Green Lake, it was privatized
9 under the company called NorSask and from there they took
10 all of the timber in there. After they took the timber,
11 they came with the Forest Management Licence Agreement
12 and then came the pulp mill in there and made a deal with
13 these people.

14 What I am saying is this, our community
15 has the right to survive and be part of those resources.

16 Those renewable resources should be part of our community
17 to sustain an economic way of life for our people in there.

18 It has for years and years and years done that. People
19 are saying no to welfare. We have been denied that
20 process, although in the local document called the Forest
21 Management Licence Agreement they were supposed to cut
22 280,000 cubic metres of softwood, of which 30,000 of that
23 is supposed to come to our community within that Forest

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Management Licence Agreement.

2 We have not been allowed, at this point
3 in time, to have access to our timber. It almost looks
4 like this company is saying, yes, you've got 30,000 cubic
5 metres of wood, but we will do the cutting and we will
6 also price it if you want it. Right at the present time,
7 we are logging with horses at \$69 a thousand. We are able
8 to get our logs from the bush into our mill in the little
9 place around Green Lake where we are logging. If we were
10 to buy from the people, it would cost us \$127 a thousand,
11 which would put us out of business, so that is what I am
12 saying.

13 Also, we have a claim there, that 12
14 township claim, where you see a third party interest in
15 there, those Forest Management Licence Agreements within
16 that claim. What I am saying is this: That the reason
17 why we feel that this thing is not being dealt with by
18 the province is because of the powerful interests that
19 the big corporations have on that land, because otherwise
20 I think it is clear enough from the examination for
21 discovery that their lawyer would have reported to them
22 what kind of a case we have and that some recommendations
23 could have been made to settle these matters.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 That's the point I am getting at, as long
2 as these great big multinational corporations come into
3 the north, forget about land claims for Aboriginal people.
4 There are never going to be any. That's my honest feeling
5 about that whole area because they have more money and
6 more power to be able to lobby and be able to control
7 government, as opposed to the Aboriginal people.

8 Unless they are looked at very seriously
9 and the government is prepared to look at that very
10 seriously, in order to accommodate claims and look at
11 claims very seriously and do something about it, only then
12 will I be able to see a green light or some movement, some
13 positive movement in that area.

14 As long as they are prepared to turn a
15 blind eye into the north in terms of third party interests
16 moving in, then to me I think it becomes a useless exercise.

17 I am not here to try and insult anybody for the sake of
18 insulting them, but we have lived through these types of
19 situations before and we are still living through them
20 today. That's the reason why we are here today, to be
21 able to express these concerns as to how we see them.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
23 much. As you know, everything that is said today is on

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 the transcript and on the public record. That is the
2 purpose of these public Hearings.

3 I think you made your point pretty clear.
4 You came up with a recommendation for the Commission to
5 recommend a moratorium on development projects, mega
6 projects, until land claims be dealt with. The way it
7 goes you say otherwise it will never happen, so that's
8 the thrust of your message?

9 MR. ROD BISHOP: Yes, that's how I feel.

10 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: When you said
11 that the land was set aside for the Métis in 1944 --

12 MR. ROD BISHOP: In 1944, yes.

13 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: This was this
14 measure that was ruled by the Court of Appeal as being
15 a kind of a contract?

16 MR. ROD BISHOP: Yes, that we do have
17 a caveat of interest on that land, yes.

18 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: My last point,
19 as far as the various communities are concerned because
20 we know there has been a blockade of roads and to keep
21 people doing it, instead of having it processed
22 mechanically, but my last point is do you work with Meadow
23 Lake people? Is there a difference that exists? Are

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 there differences that exist between your community and
2 the Meadow Lake people as far as this dossier is concerned?

3 **MR. ROD BISHOP:** I think the difference
4 we have to take a look at is the one that is very real
5 and that is that we are being put of existence. It's a
6 movement of extinction, as far as I am concerned. In other
7 words, we don't have the product. They took the product
8 away from us, so we cannot economically survive without
9 their input, their corporate input, and when we live in
10 a business world you don't look for sympathy. You look
11 at the hard facts in terms of where you stand economically
12 and in terms of if your project can survive economically
13 or not and whether you've got the goods to go along with
14 your project or not for that project to survive.

15 Those products have been taken away from
16 my community. Those are very real. This is not a
17 personality thing. This is an issue of principle and that
18 is what concerns us. We cannot be part of any development
19 that is less than what was there before.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Is this
21 concern shared by Métis people in Meadow Lake? I
22 understand the timber on what you feel is your land --

23 **MR. ROD BISHOP:** I think we have to

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 understand that Meadow Lake is a different community and
2 you have also Métis people living in that community. As
3 to what the numbers are of Métis people working in that
4 mill in Meadow Lake, I don't have those actual statistics
5 at this point in time, but there are definitely some people
6 who are working there from that particular project. I
7 am talking about a community surviving. That's what I
8 am talking about is a community surviving with a certain
9 population within that community.

10 What we are saying is this, that if --
11 and we are not asking for anything for nothing. We are
12 not asking for a grant. We are not asking for dollars.
13 What we are asking for is our timber., so that our people
14 can get to work and we can make our own economic plans.
15 We will be able to proceed and create employment and work
16 independently.

17 We have the skills to do it. We produce
18 some of the best product that there is there, but you can't
19 produce it as long as that raw material is taken away from
20 you. That's a competing interest, an outside competing
21 interest that is taking those resources away from our
22 community. That's the point I want to say. They are going
23 to do the same damn thing no matter what community it is.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 They will come first and they will say, "I'm creating
2 a few jobs," so we cannot have economic independence as
3 long as that happens.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** My last
5 question as far as I'm concerned, your mill in your
6 community that was transferred somehow in 1976, is it in
7 operation at the moment?

8 **MR. ROD BISHOP:** At the moment, no, it
9 is not in operation. We've been operating sporadically
10 and that's the word I use, two weeks, three weeks, whenever
11 we can get some timber in there, that's how we have been
12 able to operate.

13 When we do operate, we are able to carry
14 enough money to be able to finance our operations.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** But it is not
16 in operation because you don't have access to the timber?

17 **MR. ROD BISHOP:** Right now it is not in
18 operation. It might not be in operation this summer
19 either. If it is, it might be operational only for about
20 three weeks because of the fact that we've only got a little
21 bit of timber in the bush now. Unless something happens
22 and we get our 6 million, then we will have maybe five
23 months of employment this summer.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

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

2 Are you aware of many other land claims by Métis in
3 Saskatchewan?

4 **MR. ROD BISHOP:** I think Green Lake is
5 the only one that has a claim going now that I'm aware
6 of in Saskatchewan. It is perhaps the only one on the
7 municipal level that is supporting a claim for the Métis
8 as well.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** It's a bit
10 unusual situation and it flows from the land that was set
11 aside in 1944.

12 **MR. ROD BISHOP:** The way I look at it
13 is if we hadn't done anything about it we wouldn't have
14 a claim today. Someone had to do something about it,
15 working through our Métis Society Local or whatever.
16 Whoever had information we proceeded from there and that
17 was it. There wouldn't be a claim today if we hadn't jumped
18 in and took the bull by the horns.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Are there
20 questions?

21 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**
22 Rod, the provincial government is supposed to be making
23 a 20-year plan? Are you going to be involved in it? Have

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 they contacted you that your community is going to be
2 involved?

3 **MR. ROD BISHOP:** The government? I
4 think there is a conflict with that 20-year plan right
5 now. I think they are talking about co-management in each
6 community. My position is this, they can become the
7 co-managers, we should become the manager. I think that
8 has to be worked out.

9 I feel that this co-management board has
10 to have some legal legislation or it should be an amendment
11 to the M.L.A. to give some legal meaning to the people
12 in each community that it will be involved in those
13 committees. Otherwise, it is just pure tokenism again.
14 That's all it is is rubberstamping. It will be advisory
15 boards and that's it. It will have no say. That's what
16 the companies will want. So that has been my position
17 and my concern right from the beginning.

18 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**

19 Thank you.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
21 much for coming and meeting with us and sharing your
22 concerns.

23 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Thank you, Mayor Bishop.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Maybe we
2 should have a short break for stretching and coffee.

3 **MR. MAX MORIN:** We will have a 10-minute
4 coffee break.

5 **--- Short Recess at 11:30 a.m.**

6 **--- Upon Resuming at 11:43 a.m.**

7 **MR. MAX MORIN:** We will resume our
8 meeting. There are quite a few presentations and I would
9 like to get to as many before lunch. We will be breaking
10 at about 12:15 or 12:30. They are serving lunch at the
11 Friendship Centre. I think it is \$3 a plate, so anybody
12 that wants to go there they can go to the Friendship Centre
13 for lunch, especially the out-of-town people.

14 At this time I would like to call on the
15 next presenter, Mr. Donald Favel. He is with the Métis
16 Addictions Council and he also does a lot of work with
17 alcohol and drugs in the north-west part.

18 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Good morning.

19 **MR. DONALD FAVEL, (Northwest Drug and**
20 **Alcohol Abuse Centre):** Good morning. My name is Don
21 Favel. I work for the Provincial Métis Addiction Council.
22 I am also a representative of the Northwest Treatment
23 Centre, the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Centre as the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Chairperson.

2 My presentation is going to be more on
3 the social development issue and just to briefly thank
4 the speakers who were ahead of me for speaking on economic
5 development and for the fine presentations they made.
6 Just to add a comment as to what Max was saying about being
7 kicked around from one political organization to another,
8 as you notice, most of us Métis people who are in some
9 level of government or politics all started off quite thin
10 and eventually have put on quite a bit of weight, but that's
11 for the protection from all the different organizations
12 ahead of us that have been recognized and all have the
13 go ahead to be able to kick us around some more.

14 We have submitted several proposals as
15 the Northwest Treatment Centre to deal with the social
16 issues within our area, mainly the northwest side, although
17 we do get a lot of involvement from the east side also.

18 SADAC, the Saskatchewan Alcohol and Drug Commission has
19 been involved in northern Saskatchewan now for 15 years
20 or so and doesn't really have anything to show for it,
21 except as being a mediator between us and the government,
22 the funding agency. This is basically all they are there
23 for, that's how I see them personally.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 We have programs that we have created
2 ourselves that we feel would benefit our people and would
3 work for them. We base them on our own lives and with
4 the contacts of the people that we have on an everyday
5 basis, people that we grew up with and lived through all
6 the same different hardships that you hear about every
7 day on the news.

8 We feel that the services, a proposal
9 calling for the expansion of alcohol and drug abuse
10 services and funded by the Ile-à-La-Crosse Treatment
11 Centre, if it could be all funded under the umbrella of
12 the Alcohol Treatment Centre which is established here
13 in Ile-à-La-Crosse, so that we could have programming that
14 would be understood by all the surrounding areas, that
15 would be all going in the same direction. As it is right
16 now, we have three or four different parties that are
17 working in the same field with different outlooks as to
18 how treatment should be presented to the people in our
19 area.

20 We figure there are enough dollars being
21 spent as it is right now, but what we strongly look at
22 is that the dollars could be better spent if we could be
23 heard, if our proposals could be looked at more seriously

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 and if government officials could sit down with us and
2 listen to us as to how we would like to see these dollars
3 spent and how we can service the people in our area. We
4 figure we have all the knowledge. We figure we have the
5 expertise. We have the people that can deliver these
6 programs because it is known that the only person that
7 can help a native person is another native person in the
8 field of alcoholism. That's our understanding and that's
9 the understanding of the majority of the people that are
10 out there suffering from this disease.

11 I don't want to go too much into the
12 detail of the whole proposal. I am going to be leaving
13 a copy that could be looked at and hopefully it will be
14 looked at. We also have put in similar proposals for a
15 detox unit and this was a joint proposal with St. Joseph's
16 Hospital here in Ile-à-La-Crosse. There again, there are
17 not very many dollars that have to be spent on that, but
18 the closest detox unit that we have right now is in
19 Saskatoon. If you are going through a crisis and you need
20 detoxing, we have to search if you have a white card or
21 otherwise we can't ship you out.

22 We have a lot of different problems with
23 transportation, medical issues that we have to deal with.

StenoTran

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 We, as people working in the field, know what is happening,
2 but we don't have the go ahead to say, yes, this person
3 has to be out there and we don't have the means of
4 transportation to get him out there. If we had the
5 facilities here within our own community and closer to
6 the people of northern Saskatchewan, northwest
7 Saskatchewan, the costs would surely come down as to the
8 expenditures of detoxing.

9 The hospital themselves are willing to
10 put up space, the beds, the food. The only requirement
11 we are asking for from government is to be able to finance
12 four workers that we need to run this facility. It is
13 something that has been put off for the past three years
14 now. We keep resubmitting, but it has always been pushed
15 aside.

16 Another proposal that was put forward
17 and this one has been kicking around now for five or six
18 years is the crisis line, an 800 number, which we have
19 a facility of where we can house this program is right
20 in the treatment centre because we have 24 hour staff
21 working there. An 800 number is surely needed because
22 of the high rate of suicide attempts that happen on a daily
23 basis.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 We met with the Sakitawak Health
2 Development Board last night and we were talking about
3 the suicide attempts that have been in the surrounding
4 area that was presented to us by one of the doctors here
5 in our community and all the calls that they get from right
6 within the community itself. We don't have a number where
7 we can have a contact so that someone could lend a listening
8 ear to the people who are in need at that time. Most of
9 this is happening anywhere between the hours of 6:00 until
10 6:00 in the morning when it is very hard to get a hold
11 of people.

12 This is something that is really needed.
13 It is not only for the youth, but it is for all people
14 in need of crisis.

15 One area that has been overlooked in
16 northwest Saskatchewan or in northern Saskatchewan is also
17 services for youth. The government has built and spent
18 anywhere from \$15 million to \$20 million in building a
19 facility in White Spruce just out of Yorkton that is not
20 really meeting the needs of the youth in northern
21 Saskatchewan because of the guidelines that they have to
22 go under, that they have to have a parent there to be with
23 them for a week. I don't think the youth would be in that

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 situation if the parent could afford to be with them for
2 a week. So, a lot of the demands that they have and the
3 criteria that you have to meet cannot be met, so that our
4 youth cannot use the facility there.

5 They have a good program. I was there
6 myself. I was there two or three times to look at their
7 program. It is a good program, but still it does not meet
8 the needs of the northern youth.

9 Looking at a smaller scale model as a
10 youth healing lodge in northern Saskatchewan, where you
11 could spend under \$1 million to facilitate a place like
12 that and work with a smaller group of people, you could
13 have more facilities throughout the north and probably
14 throughout Saskatchewan and you'd be able to do more
15 programming and more servicing to the youth.

16 The way it is right now, if you want to
17 work with youth, the youth have to commit a crime in order
18 to be recognized and then they will be recommended that
19 they go for some treatment or some counselling. This is
20 the only way that help is being paid for them.

21 Our target is to try and work with youth
22 before they get into the problems of addictions, whether
23 it be alcoholism, drug addiction or any other form of

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 addiction that is happening within communities.

2 Another very serious concern that we
3 have as workers in a caregiver field is the wage parity
4 within the north and the south. We very strongly believe
5 that the wages in the north should be double as to what
6 it is in the south because the cost of living is double
7 what it is in the south. You look at the price of gas
8 or the price of food and also the road conditions and the
9 type of vehicles you need to get around do cost a lot of
10 money and a lot of money to maintain.

11 A lot of these things are never
12 recognized. Being a native organization, working for
13 Métis Addictions and also having SADAC representatives
14 in the same area, we are just like night and day. You
15 can see the difference, where they have access to vehicles,
16 credit cards, extra dollars for a northern allowance,
17 houses being paid for, whereas we have to use our own
18 vehicles. In order for us to hang on to a job we have got
19 to be able to purchase our own vehicles and nobody looks
20 at the wear and tear on that, but that's not only my concern,
21 but it has a lot of concern to do with a lot of different
22 agencies in northern Saskatchewan, native agencies.

23 I guess one of the major things we looked

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 at in the form of social development is a larger treatment
2 centre. We don't believe that more treatment centres are
3 needed, but we need to update what we have. We need more
4 outpatient services. We need one probably in every
5 community, but we need one major inpatient treatment
6 centre. This is what we have been targeting for here
7 ourselves in the community of Ile-à-La-Crosse where we
8 will have an elders' component, adult, youth and one that
9 is always overlooked is we have no component for the
10 disabled.

11 We have tried to get another component
12 which was another woman's crisis centre, but it seems like
13 it is always being put on the back burner, that it has
14 to be tried somewhere else and if it works there and maybe
15 if there are leftovers then you guys can pick up the pieces
16 and put it together and see what you can make of it. This
17 is the attitude we have been getting from governments and
18 funding agencies.

19 Dealing with youth, education and the
20 schools, as you know, our youth have to be up on all these
21 different diseases that they have inherited over the years
22 of alcoholism and all the different forms of abuse that
23 have been happening for generations. We have no people

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 that have been working closely enough with them on a daily
2 basis to be able to understand the differences and why
3 they go through all these different crises that they go
4 through every day, and yet they have to battle to be able
5 to maintain and strive towards getting a better education.

6

7 It is not to knock down the teachers that
8 we do have, but apparently they are not being educated
9 to be able to understand the type and to meet the needs
10 of the kids that are going to school here in our community
11 and in surrounding communities.

12 When you talk about self-government,
13 when you talk about economic development, if you don't
14 have social development first, none of these will ever
15 work, because if you don't develop people socially first,
16 there is no way you can have economic development or
17 self-government. You will have a very dysfunctional
18 government self-government, if you don't have social
19 development first. That's my understanding of it.

20 When you look at youth facilities in
21 surrounding communities and as an example I could give
22 you one. I was talking with a youth worker and did a
23 presentation in Beauval where they have a large number

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 of youths and yet they have a very small building to work
2 with, a building that was of no use to anyone any more.

3 It was more or less thrown at them, saying you make you
4 can out of it and, of course, with no dollars. See if
5 you can get any donations from here and there.

6 Yet, they have come up with something.

7 They have a program going, but yet when they look at
8 funding agencies within government to be able to enhance
9 their programming, they are not being recognized. They
10 are not being taken seriously, saying that the people that
11 are heading these, organizing these youths are not capable
12 and don't have enough understanding and enough education
13 to be able to steer the youth in the right direction.
14 There again I say to the funding agency, who are you to
15 dictate to us what the needs of our youth are?

16 We know what they are. We know what the
17 needs are in our communities that deal with all the social
18 issues that are happening. If only we could be heard and
19 if we could be funded as to not only to be able to have
20 statistics as to how many sexual abuse issues there are
21 happening out there or family violence issues or
22 alcoholism. If we could be recognized and heard as people
23 and as people that could help our own people, I think the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 process of healing within our communities would be that
2 much greater and that much faster and you'd be able to
3 start seeing the dreams of our leadership when our
4 leadership talks about economic development and stability
5 within our communities, you would be able to see this.
6 All of it would be a reality. That's my understanding
7 of social development.

8 When they talk about self-government,
9 we have a perfect model here within our community of
10 Ile-à-La-Crosse. I am very proud to say to the mayor and
11 council and all the other supporting agencies within our
12 community that we have provided a model, but yet for a
13 lot of our other people to understand, the people who are
14 in all of these crises that we talked about earlier, to
15 be able to understand and be part of it, there has to be
16 a lot of social development taking place within the
17 community.

18 It has been slowly happening over the
19 years, but yet we always come to dollars. How can we get
20 dollars to be able to maintain this? Volunteers are great,
21 but volunteers have burnouts and they also have other
22 commitments to their families and to meet their own needs.
23 We can't build the community on volunteers. We can build

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 a future for our youth on volunteers only. We need to
2 be recognized for what we know and what we can deliver
3 and we, as people, strongly believe we have that capability
4 to be able to help our own people.

5 With that, I thank you for listening.

6 Have a nice day.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Merci. Thank
8 you.

9 Some technical information, your
10 organization, the Northwest Drug and Alcohol Abuse Centre,
11 is it a local organization? Does it deal only with this
12 community?

13 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** No. It is owned and
14 operated by 13 communities on the northwest side, but it
15 is established here in Ile-à-La-Crosse.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** And it
17 delivers services for the 13 communities?

18 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** But it services the
19 far north, the east side and a lot of times we have people
20 from the south who come into our programming here because
21 our programming now is quite unique to meet the needs of
22 the people, especially the native people.

23 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Can you tell

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 us a bit of the kind of personnel, full time or part time
2 or voluntary, that you have? How many people do you
3 employ?

4 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** We have a work-force
5 of nine people right now that are employed. We have two
6 counsellors, a director, a secretary/bookkeeper, a cook,
7 three night counsellors. We have a part-time worker and
8 a part-time chambermaid.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I understand
10 you have beds?

11 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** We have 15 beds.
12 It's an in-patient facility. It has been here for the
13 past 15 years.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** How long can
15 a person stay?

16 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** We have tried several
17 different forms of programming. We had a six-week
18 program. Now we have reduced it back to a four-week
19 program.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** This is for the
21 detoxification?

22 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** No. This is for
23 treatment. We don't have any detox.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You have to go
2 to Saskatoon, as you said.

3 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** You have to go to
4 Saskatoon. We have detox beds within our hospital right
5 now, but it is not detox treatment. It is just getting
6 injected so that you can have a rest for a few days and
7 hopefully you will look for treatment after that. There
8 is no preparation or treatment at all.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You started
10 your presentation by saying there are enough dollars spent,
11 but they could be better spent if they were listening to
12 us.

13 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** Yes.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Then you added
15 a list of things that you could do. Could you, very
16 briefly, tell us how the money that is available could
17 be turned in a way to be more productive, without adding
18 major additional dollars?

19 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** As to the workforce,
20 there are enough dollars there within SADAC that could
21 be better spent to deal with issues. If a good portion
22 of that money was spent -- it's allocated for the northwest
23 side -- and if it was all funnelled through the umbrella

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 of the Northwest Treatment Centre so that our programming
2 could all be all one continuous and all understanding that
3 the follow-up program and the in-treatment program could
4 be all the same, that we don't have to have different
5 agencies within our area.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So your point
7 is the money allocated to the northwest side is broken
8 into many agencies?

9 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** Yes. It is broken
10 in that SADAC itself has workers within the community.
11 We have NADAP, but NADAP is funded by the federal.

12 We have SADAC and they have out-patients
13 services, they have employees. Then we have Métis
14 Addictions which is me and that covers the northwest side.

15 If that money could be all put under one umbrella, we
16 feel that if these out-patient services that SADAC has
17 right now would rather be known as Northwest Out-Patients
18 Services, so that all of our programming could be the same,
19 that we don't have to have programming that has been bought
20 in the United States where SADAC gets all their programs
21 from that is supposed to suit the people of northwest
22 Saskatchewan.

23 We don't have an input yet. We have to

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 meet their standards and collect statistics for them to
2 justify for the dollars that they spend in buying a program
3 from some foreign country that we don't understand and
4 that doesn't apply to us. That's what I mean, we can better
5 spend these dollars.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do you
7 represent the views of the 13 communities that fund you,
8 or is it the view of the centre alone that there should
9 be a great centralization to one organization?

10 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** I could say that to
11 a great extent it is the views of all peoples within all
12 the northwest side. There again, because we can't say,
13 yes, this is the direction we are going to go and we can't
14 have the go ahead because we have all of these different
15 imaginary boundaries or stumbling blocks, whatever you
16 want to call them on the way, there are still some people
17 sitting back and saying, "Well, we can't fully support
18 you because it can't be a reality because we still have
19 SADAC here and you here and we have a different party here."

20

21 If we had a go ahead and to say that we
22 will fund this the way that the people want it and then
23 we would have the full force of everybody behind it. I

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 believe very strongly that it would happen.

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

3 Commission Sillett.

4 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** You can
5 call me Mary.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Mary.

7 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you
8 very much for your presentation.

9 The program, the treatment centre you
10 said has been in operation for 15 years.

11 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** Yes.

12 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** And there
13 have been evaluations done of the program I imagine, has
14 there?

15 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** Yes, there have been
16 evaluations done.

17 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** What are
18 these evaluations saying? Is it a good program? Does
19 it keep people, I don't know what the proper word is, but
20 off the booze?

21 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** I would say for the
22 first ten years of the program has stayed much the same.
23 In order to be able to house a 15 unit in-treatment centre

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 here at Ile-à-La-Crosse, the way it was operated before
2 was they had to do a head count for every person that you
3 had in there this is how much money you would get. Mr.
4 Durocher here was the Director there at one time and the
5 only way they could account for dollars and to be able
6 to justify for dollars is they had to put 30 people in
7 there, double up on the beds, so that they would be able
8 to pay for the wages of the two councillors that we had
9 there.

10 This happened for quite some years, I
11 think the first ten years of the programming.

12 I have been involved with the treatment
13 centre now for the past six years, the first two years
14 as a board member and the last four years as a chairperson.

15 We have changed the programming considerably. We are
16 now more or less dealing not with the addiction part of
17 it because the addiction part of it could be handled by
18 out-patient services and with some community workers, the
19 few community workers that we have. Now we are working
20 more on the healing process of the person as to why these
21 addictions are in place, why did it happen? What issues
22 is it you can't deal with? Is it a sexual abuse issue?
23 Is it a family violence issue? What issue is it and how

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 can we best deal with it?

2 So, we have a very intense program now
3 that we have. We have a four-week program. We have one
4 week that is very intense that we go through where we deal
5 with the release, a lot of anger and rage, in a very safe
6 -- so that people don't get hurt. You don't hurt anyone
7 and you come out feeling quite positive, but that's also
8 just a start of the healing process. We need more
9 programming within communities for follow-up and it has
10 to be continuous.

11 The way it was before, it was more or
12 less just a pitstop where you dried out for 30 days and,
13 hopefully, you can do it on your own after you get out.

14 Slowly these things are starting to come
15 into place where we have follow-up programs, but it's still
16 not enough. Not enough communities have workers within
17 their areas to be able to carry out and mainly not all
18 programming is the same. We don't have the same follow-up
19 program. These people just went through a 30-day program,
20 but the follow-up program that is presented to them in
21 their own community is totally different from what they
22 have done here.

23 This is what I mean, if it could all come

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 under one umbrella, the whole programming be all the same
2 for the whole area, the process of healing within our
3 community would be that much greater and quicker.

4 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Do these
5 people that go into that program, do a lot of them stay
6 out or do you have a lot of repeaters?

7 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** A lot of people --
8 I would say about a 60/40, 60 per cent maintain sobriety
9 because now of some of the new programming that has come
10 into play. I would say 75 per cent of the single people
11 that come there are repeaters and that is mainly to do
12 with meeting their sexual needs because how they learned
13 was at a party and now that they are straight they don't
14 know how to get it on. We need people with expertise on
15 the outside to be able to talk about these issues.

16 So, they go back to the places where they
17 left and they fall back into the same trap and they up
18 in the same place.

19 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**
20 Don, regarding the detox unit, what was the response of
21 the Catholic Board or whoever owns the hospital?

22 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** The response was that
23 the hospital itself is willing to give up space. They

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 have space. They have four beds they are willing to give
2 us.

3 The program we have set up is that it
4 would be a seven to ten-day program, a pre-treatment
5 program, getting people ready to go into a treatment
6 centre. We have had 100 per cent co-operation from the
7 hospital itself. They are going to provide the meals,
8 they are going to provide the beds, the laundry and
9 everything else, but we would have to provide the staff.
10 It would be administrated from the treatment centre.
11 The treatment centre is just 100 yards from the hospital,
12 so we would work hand in hand.

13 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**

14 So your major stumbling block is the provincial
15 government?

16 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** Yes, to be recognized
17 to be able to say that for all the funding, we have to
18 taxi these people out. We have to taxi them out and a
19 lot of times because we don't have all these needs right
20 at our fingertips, a lot of these people just simply refuse
21 treatment because the waiting period is too great. The
22 need is right now. We need a walk-in detox centre, not
23 a place where you are going to get a third-degree treatment

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 and get a whole bunch of questions asked as to why you
2 drink and what's wrong with you, what kind of illnesses
3 you have.

4 First. you want to look at the situation
5 you are in and afterwards talk about all of these different
6 issues.

7 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**

8 My next question, when you talk about umbrella, that would
9 include NADAP, SADAC and the other third party funding
10 agencies?

11 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** We would like to
12 include SADAC, but include SADAC as the funding agency.
13 We believe that SADAC should be phased out as a working
14 force in northern Saskatchewan. They should be phased
15 out because we do get out funding through SADAC. This
16 is the only input that they should have, but it should
17 be our own programming.

18 NADAP, we are trying to get some sort
19 of an understanding and commitment from them, saying that,
20 yes, we could work together because there is no treatment
21 facility for NADAP within the area either. The treatment
22 facility that they are using is the northwest. Mind you,
23 we don't hold no -- like, any person can come in there.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 You don't have to be a native person. You can be a
2 non-native to come there.

3 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**

4 The reason why I asked you that, Don, was because you
5 mentioned within your program there are two different
6 programs and when the follow-up is there, you and I know
7 that there is a lot of NADAP co-ordinators on the reserves.
8 So that if both parties would work together, then the
9 programs would be -- so that similar programs would be
10 in place at the reserve level.

11 **MR. DONALD FAVEL:** Right now we are
12 planning a caregivers healing conference within our
13 community, but there again because of the funding that
14 NADAP has they don't have the funding to go out of their
15 reserve. A lot of the workers themselves are stuck within
16 a very small area and they can't travel. We are trying
17 to get some funding together where we can host the
18 conference here, so that we can put all of these ideas
19 on the table, get input from everybody and take it from
20 there. So that everybody has a clear understanding.

21 Right now, the only way I have been
22 passing this message is because I have been travelling
23 to a lot of communities and I have been talking to mostly

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 self-help groups that are involved in a lot of volunteer
2 services. I have been passing the message on to them.
3 They are in support of it 100 per cent because they are
4 right in the midst of it every day. They know what the
5 problem areas are and they know that something has to be
6 done and it has to be done by the people themselves, the
7 people from within the community.

8 I think when you talk about
9 co-dependency, the co-dependency issue is that it has been
10 there for so long, like it is always a handout. We have
11 been on our hands and knees for so long, waiting for
12 handouts, waiting for somebody else to come and clean up
13 our act, to fix or heal our hurts, that now we are saying,
14 "Hey, we can do it. We can do it."

15 We thank the people who have been there
16 for the amount of years they have been there, but now loosen
17 the collar, let go of the leash and turn us loose and we
18 can do it. Give us some breathing space.

19 I was just passed a message here saying
20 why can't every community have a healing lodge? This has
21 been brought up over and over again. We had a talk show
22 on Missinipi a couple of weeks ago. We talked about this
23 and forming a native network, because one of the greatest

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 things when you talk about social development is having
2 a native network. So that all of us have a good
3 understanding and so that we prepare a lot of our youths
4 and a lot of our adults for economic development.

5 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**

6 Thanks, Don.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
8 much for your presentation.

9 **MR. MAX MORIN:** It is now close to 12:30.
10 I guess we should break until 1:30.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I wouldn't
12 like to keep people who might not be available this
13 afternoon. Maybe we could hear the Senator before lunch.
14 Are you with us for the day?

15 **SENATOR VITAL MORIN:** It would be all
16 right to break for lunch.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I understand
18 there were two other people.

19 **SENATOR VITAL MORIN:** There will be Mr.
20 Maurice here who will be speaking and myself. He said
21 he has got time after lunch.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Let's break
23 for lunch then. Thank you.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 --- Lunch Recess at 12:30 p.m.

2 --- Upon Resuming at 1:30 p.m.

3 MR. MAX MORIN: Senator Vital Morin has
4 a presentation and then Ambrose Maurice will make a
5 presentation.

6 Before we start, there were a few
7 questions that were asked of me, maybe a reintroduction
8 of some of the people that are here, some people don't
9 know who is here and they want an introduction of who they
10 are and who they represent. Also, if we could try and
11 keep our presentations not too lengthy, that way we can
12 go through more presentations today.

13 The Commission is saying they are
14 willing to stay a half a day tomorrow, if required, but
15 part of the game plan that we have is if we can finish
16 most of the presentations today and maybe we can continue
17 and finish them off today because they have been travelling
18 quite a bit and we want to make sure that they have maybe
19 a rest before they go to La Loche for their presentations.
20 That's what we have in mind, just to let you people know.

21 With that, I will turn it over to the
22 Commissioners.

23 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: Thank you, Mr.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Morin.

2 Again, the Commissioners are here with
3 a staff of the Commission and local reps. Also, there
4 are people from the Department of Indian Affairs who follow
5 the Commission's trail in all the Hearings for reporting
6 to their department.

7 That being said, these people are all
8 Commission staff and there are others that acting, like
9 Lorna Laplante, working as the regional co-ordinator and
10 regional rep.

11 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Thank you. We have some
12 people from Indian Affairs?

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes.

14 **MR. MAX MORIN:** I guess that is clear.
15 We have a CBC reporter in the back, Missinipi
16 Broadcasting, and so with that I will call on Senator Vital
17 Morin to make a presentation.

18 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**
19 You may start, Senator Morin.

20 **SENATOR VITAL MORIN, (Métis Society of**
21 **Saskatchewan):** I will start off by welcoming you people
22 here to our community. It is very nice to see that you
23 people are interested in us and in trying to find ways

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 and means of supporting or trying to find some solutions
2 to some of our problems.

3 As I say, I am fairly old and have lived
4 here all my life. I have been in all kinds of trades.
5 My main goal since I came back from World War II as a veteran
6 and from defending our country, I worked for the Métis
7 Society all my life and tried to help the people. That
8 was my goal, helping people. Today I am still at it.

9 I would like to see that we have come
10 fairly close to setting up probably a self-government,
11 but it didn't work out in the Referendum, but I guess we
12 will still continue to approach that place.

13 The question was asked when the mayor
14 was saying that we should all be in harmony and live as
15 one people. My thinking is that it's the government that
16 is causing the problems for us. He is deciding that he
17 is treating all the Aboriginal people different, the Métis
18 different, the Inuit and Métis are treated differently.

19 If he is going to call us Aboriginals, I think he should
20 be treating us all the same. That way we can live in
21 harmony all together and we don't have to fight one another.

22 The government is making us fight is I think where the
23 problem is. He is treating different Aboriginal people

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 in a different way.

2 Anyway, that is just a little part of
3 what I had in mind here because there was a question that
4 came up as to how will the treaty and the Métis people
5 live together under self-government. Well, if we are
6 treated differently, we won't be able to live together,
7 but if we are treated the same, I think we can live in
8 harmony very well. In our community right now, and the
9 mayor was saying we have about 300 treaty people in this
10 community, and those people have lived here all of their
11 life. We seem to be living in harmony because we recognize
12 those people as the same kind of people as we are.

13 I want to speak a little bit on the
14 justice system that we have here. I have been here in
15 this world for a long time and I've worked for the RCMP,
16 I've worked for the government, I've worked for a lot of
17 people in different kinds of jobs. The justice system
18 that we have here is not justice. It is not justice for
19 our people.

20 The only kind of justice they have is
21 people are being charged with different kinds of charges.
22 They go to court and all they know is guilty. There is
23 no such thing as guilty. You are innocent unless proven

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 guilty. I don't think the people even know that in this
2 part of the country because nobody here advises them.
3 Even though we have legal aid, defence counsel they are
4 supposed to be, those people don't even defend them.

5 When you go and talk to them to try and
6 get some defence, all they do is they say, "Plead guilty
7 and we'll try and talk the judge into sentencing you a
8 small fine or a small jail term," and that's all they get.

9 There is no defence at all and people don't know their
10 rights. They cannot speak for themselves. All the rights
11 that they know is that they are guilty of a charge. I
12 don't think people should be pleading guilty. I think
13 it is a problem with governments. They are being told
14 to try and get rid of all of these cases as quickly as
15 possible, so that money cannot be spent. They don't want
16 to spend too much money on going through all of these cases.

17 I think that is where the biggest problem lies, that the
18 government is instructed even though legal aid is hired
19 to defend people, they can't defend them because they want
20 to get rid of them as fast as they can. The only way they
21 can do that is get them to plead guilty and get rid of
22 them, get rid of these charges. I don't think that is
23 right.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 I think people should have a right to
2 defend themselves or at least to speak for themselves or
3 have somebody defend them. As you all know, the majority,
4 about 80 per cent to 90 per cent of the people in the
5 northern communities here are living away below the poverty
6 line. They don't have money to go out and hire good lawyers
7 to defend themselves. There is no such way because we
8 are all away below the poverty line, about 90 per cent
9 of the people in the north. They don't have extra money
10 to be able to defend themselves.

11 Even though the government puts out some
12 money for a defence, that defence is just no damn good
13 at all, as far as I am concerned. It is just a waste of
14 taxpayer's money.

15 Laws are okay. They brought us a lot
16 of bloody -- when I was bringing up my family we lived
17 in harmony. Everybody was happy. We lived off the land.
18 Nobody came and bothered us. Nobody put us in jail
19 because we went out to try to find something to eat for
20 our family. We'd shoot moose, ducks, everything else and
21 nobody bothered us. We were just living and then, all
22 of a sudden, they came out with new housing, new roads,
23 new airfields, new power and all this kind of stuff. Sure,

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 it's nice to have those, they are goodies, but they also
2 brought all of their laws with them. They are enforcing
3 all of these laws and a lot of these laws are made down
4 south.

5 They were made in urban communities or
6 in stuff like that. A lot of them don't go along with
7 the northern laws. An example here, the snowmobile law.
8 The snowmobiles in this part of the country are not
9 recreation vehicles. It's a vehicle that we use to make
10 ourselves a few dollars, that try and make a living out
11 of them. We use them to go hunting, we use them to go
12 fishing, we use them in trapping and yet they are enforcing
13 laws here that we have to have a licence to be able to
14 drive them anywhere. Those things don't apply to us.
15 I don't think they should be applying to us.

16 Those kinds of laws are made in urban
17 communities where you can't drive a ski-do on the street
18 and I can understand that. Over here I can't see that.
19 They are only recreation vehicles as far as they are
20 concerned down south. Here it is not a recreation vehicle.

21

22 Those kinds of things, laws are made and
23 a lot of these laws don't work for us. If we break them

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 then back again we go to court because we break these laws
2 that are made down south and they are not suited for this
3 part of the country. Those are the things that I often
4 think that a lot of these things shouldn't even apply
5 because I don't think anybody is breaking any law for
6 driving around.

7 Sure, a lot of the people that can afford
8 it, they let their kids drive around for recreation. Sure
9 they drive around, but isn't it better to have them doing
10 that instead of going into alcohol and drugs and everything
11 else. It's better for them to be amused or to use those
12 vehicles and run around, instead of going out there with
13 nothing else to do. Recreation is a very small part of
14 the community here. We are very limited in the amount
15 of recreation that we can get in these communities. A
16 little bit of recreation, especially when the first snow
17 comes down, they like driving around. Now they are not
18 on the streets or anywhere. They are out on the lakes
19 when they are strong enough for them, and everywhere else,
20 but before when the first fall of snow comes they are all
21 over the town. That's when the laws are being enforced
22 on them. I don't know if there is anything you people
23 can do about it.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Another thing is you people have been
2 out and you are going to be out for quite awhile yet,
3 doing this study or whatever you guys are doing. I have
4 been in my time seeing all kinds of bloody studies, all
5 kinds of bloody hearings, all these God-damn things. Good
6 bloody recommendations -- I am not accusing you guys, but
7 good recommendations. You guys are doing a perfect, good
8 bloody job and what you do you try to help us. But all
9 of these good bloody recommendations that came out for
10 Aboriginal people, for northern people, not one damn thing
11 has ever been followed by government.

12 That's what I don't like. I don't know
13 if you people are going to succeed into getting anything
14 done on your report, whether they will follow your report.
15 I don't know, but I hope that they do because I am God-damn
16 sure you guys are going to be coming out with bloody good
17 recommendations, very good recommendations.

18 I hope that the government is not going
19 out there and throwing this money away for nothing and
20 not listening to you people. I hope they do.

21 There are a lot of other people who want
22 to talk and I'll give them a chance. I'll give you a chance
23 if you want to question me a little bit.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
2 much, Senator. First of all, I would like to tell you
3 that we are happy to see you back with us. I remember
4 you were in Winnipeg at the launch of these public Hearings.
5 That was the start of a long journey. We are very happy
6 to be able to meet you here in your community.

7 On the question of justice that you
8 raised, I have a short question. When you say that the
9 people are told to plead guilty by legal aid lawyers because
10 they want to process them quickly, do you imply that many
11 of them do plead guilty while they feel they should plead
12 not guilty and defend themselves? Is your statement to
13 the effect that there are people pleading guilty while
14 they haven't done it?

15 **SENATOR VITAL MORIN:** My feeling is that
16 a person, as I say, has to be proven guilty.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** That's
18 correct.

19 **SENATOR VITAL MORIN:** I think everybody
20 should play an innocent role until proven guilty. That
21 thing has never been brought up. Nobody knows about that
22 in this part of the country. Nobody has got any advice.
23 I'd like to see some of our own people here, even the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 court workers, advise some of these people on the direction
2 that they should be going.

3 There are a lot of people who just say
4 they want to get it over with and plead guilty. They get
5 a fine or they get a jail term, but I don't think that's
6 right. I think the justice system should change and I
7 think people should be aware of what the circumstances
8 are at least, be aware and think of what they could do.
9

10 If they feel they are right, that the
11 police are right, that there is no way that they could
12 defend themselves, sure I can go along with that. They
13 can plead guilty to that. It's up to them, but a lot of
14 these people don't know any better. All they know is
15 guilty.

16 I think there should be some kind of a
17 system set in here, especially for northern people, so
18 they could be advised on a lot of these things.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** This is not the
20 first time we've heard this. There is obviously a lack
21 of information as to how the system works, what are their
22 options.

23 **SENATOR VITAL MORIN:** They don't know

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 of any options. They are not told that there are options.

2

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Are you aware
4 if the community was in touch with the legal aid people
5 to try to get better information out of the legal aid
6 system?

7 **SENATOR VITAL MORIN:** We tried and I'm
8 not the only one that is criticizing that part. I've heard
9 a lot of people, we've even had a CBC program here where
10 those things were brought up about legal aid, yet nothing
11 seems to be done about it.

12 My feeling is I go back to government
13 again, the provincial government. They are only giving
14 them a small wage of some kind and told them they don't
15 want to spend a lot of money on courts and get rid of it
16 as fast as you can. That's the way it is set up.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Where is the
18 closest legal aid branch?

19 **SENATOR VITAL MORIN:** La Ronge. I
20 think there are only two of them out of there to cover
21 the whole north.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** In fact, my
23 question is do you know if collectively the Métis Society

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 has been discussing with the lawyers at La Ronge at this
2 branch to make sure that they are not rushing people through
3 the system, that they are giving the proper information?

4 **SENATOR VITAL MORIN:** We are working
5 presently on a program, on a project here of the legal
6 system, the justice system in the north. Presently, we
7 have had one meeting and people were aware of the direction
8 they were going to go. I hope it will continue just won't
9 die out now. There are quite a few changes that are being
10 made for the northern people and also there are proposals
11 in there for advisors or court workers or whatever you
12 want to call them. People are at least being talked to
13 and any options that they can find that they can go to.
14 I hope that gets off the ground and gets going.

15 The only way it will get going is we will
16 have to have the support of the government. Right now
17 this proposal is out there. I hope that -- we've consulted
18 the people. We told the people the direction we intend
19 to go. I hope it gets off the ground. I think it will
20 be a big help.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you. We
22 will try to be helpful on this aspect. Justice is a major
23 component of our work and mandate. We had a round table

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 last week in Ottawa. We are certainly going to come up
2 with recommendations at all levels of the system. Your
3 representation is useful.

4 **SENATOR VITAL MORIN:** Another topic
5 which I thought I should bring up is the treatment of the
6 Métis veterans, not only Métis , but Aboriginal veterans.
7 We had a program at one time when we first came out of
8 the war and none of us were able to get into that program
9 at all because there was no communication. When I came
10 out of the war in 1945 the only communication we had in
11 the north here was a little telegraph line. We had nothing
12 else, no way to communicate. Our mail was only maybe once
13 a week or maybe two or three times a month is all the mail
14 we used to get in here. Our roads were no roads or a very
15 limited amount of roads and maybe that is why no
16 communication came to us.

17 I often feel that we have been mistreated
18 as Métis or Aboriginal veterans. I think you guys should
19 put in a little bit of an issue on this. I don't know,
20 I am probably the only one who has spoken about the Métis
21 veterans and trying to convince the government that at
22 least we should be compensated a little bit for our role
23 in World War II. I don't think we should be left out

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 completely.

2 We have tried and they keep saying the
3 program has been out for over 20 years and they say they
4 don't want to bring it back. That's not an excuse. I
5 don't think I would call that an excuse. They can
6 compensate Japanese and they can't compensate their own
7 people. I think they should be doing a little bit more
8 for us. Thank you very much.

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

10 **SENATOR VITAL MORIN:** Do you have any
11 questions, Mary?

12 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** No. Thank
13 you very, very much.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We have had
15 many representations by veterans, from all Aboriginal
16 peoples. We are going to have a look at it.

17 **SENATOR VITAL MORIN:** Perhaps you can
18 come up with some kind of a recommendation for us. Thank
19 you very much.

20 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Thank you.

21 I will now call on Gary Tinker,
22 representing the disabled. A little bit of history on
23 Mr. Tinker. He is originally from Pinehouse. He walked

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 from La Ronge to Regina to get the people aware that there
2 are disabled people in northern Saskatchewan who need
3 services and programs also. He did a feat that a lot of
4 people who are not disabled couldn't do. He brought a
5 lot of awareness to the north. He has now started the
6 Gary Tinker Foundation and he is currently going to an
7 educational program here in Ile-à-La-Crosse for disabled
8 people. He is the spokesperson for the disabled.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Good
10 afternoon.

11 **MR. GARY TINKER, (Northern Disabled**
12 **People):** Good afternoon, sir.

13 Thank you very much, ladies and
14 gentlemen. This is my first time to do this for the
15 disabled of Ile-à-La-Crosse and all over northern
16 Saskatchewan. I am kind of nervous sometimes when I do
17 these things.

18 The major problem or impact we've got
19 right now with disabled people is education. We need to
20 promote education very, very carefully in the north, to
21 network with other disabled agencies in the south. The
22 only problem we have is we don't have enough information
23 from the south because we only started about two years

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 ago, when I first started that awareness round across the
2 province.

3 The thing is I experienced on it a lack
4 of services in the north, a lack of education, a lack of
5 information from the government. An example is disability
6 pensions. Nobody knows how to get them because nobody
7 ever raised that kind of awareness before. Why I did it
8 is because I was originally born almost in the south, in
9 foster homes and stuff, to go and get educated. Back in
10 those days there were no services in the north. That is
11 how I found out my information, but the thing is when I
12 came back to the north it was so different, there were
13 no services. There was no physiotherapy whatsoever.

14 It is so hard and it is so difficult for
15 a disabled person to get around in the north. It's not
16 a laughing matter. It's a really serious thing. We have
17 to deal with it. We have to sit down and negotiate, come
18 up with better plans for disabled people in the north.

19 The thing is a lot of people are asking
20 me now what about disability pensions, how can we get them?

21 I don't know if we are going to be eligible because they
22 never worked in their lives. Yet, I don't think disabled
23 people are able to work another ten years to five years.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 We have to educate the disabled first before we can put
2 them in job placement. That's the way I see it and that's
3 the way it's going to be because this is the first time
4 ever a program was set up in the north.

5 We should have a permanent program for
6 disabled people in the north, the federal and provincial
7 to get involved with us and talk to us about these problems
8 that we are facing in the north. I know it was difficult
9 for me to make that big task in the north, to make that
10 awareness to become a big issue. It was a real difficult
11 time for me because we didn't know who to contact, who
12 to talk to. Nobody gives us any information, things like
13 this.

14 Sometimes I feel like the government
15 people are playing around with me sometimes. Sometimes
16 I feel kind of -- I am always on the back burner, especially
17 when I want to talk about disability issues. It's time
18 for us to get involved. It's time for us to start helping
19 each other because some day you might be in that position
20 yourselves. People have to start realizing about society.
21 Even the Premier could be in this position maybe tomorrow.
22 Nobody knows. People have to be aware, as yourselves,
23 as government people. You have to be aware, especially

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 when you are living in the north like this. It's so
2 difficult for us. It's not -- like I said, it's sad to
3 see because I left my hometown years ago. In 1968 I left
4 Pinehouse. I had to leave my parents when I was growing
5 up. It wasn't at happy moment. Day to day I didn't know
6 who to blame, who was responsible. I guess nobody was,
7 but that's the way I felt.

8 People have to be aware, like I said so
9 many times. Education has to come into play. That's when
10 the government should be involved because this is our first
11 time to start speaking out on issues like this. I know
12 there are a lot of disabled people who are being abused
13 in the province. The government people have to be aware
14 of it. When are you going to take this opportunity and
15 study this problem? These things we have to tell these
16 people.

17 There are a lot of things I would like
18 to bring out, but I don't want to take too much time.
19 I will tell you one story. We are talking about alcoholism
20 and drug problems. Yes, my father had a drinking problem
21 himself. You see, in those days there were no services,
22 no help. Today, well he took his own life. That was not
23 a happy ending for me. Like I said, I had rough years

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 in my time.

2 Those are the things, we need
3 professional help from the south, counselling for these
4 people sometimes because we don't know where to go. Who
5 can we depend on? Those kinds of issues we've got to bring
6 out. Even disabled people have to start coming out and
7 start working together as a team and I know we can get
8 somewhere. Maybe they will be one of the government
9 agencies one of these days -- nobody knows -- if we have
10 the proper education in the north.

11 The thing that I wanted to say or bring
12 out is there is going to be another program set up in La
13 Ronge sometime in January, after New Year's, there is going
14 to be another program like this one in Ile-à-La-Crosse,
15 for six months. There are about 12 students who are going
16 to take that I think. The thing that I would like to say
17 to these people is women have a right to speak, disabled
18 people have a right to speak, anybody has a right in this
19 country.

20 Sometimes we leave everybody alone.
21 Sometimes when we are talking about one issue we forget
22 somebody else. We have to really start looking at it very
23 carefully on these things because I am sure there are about

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 1,000 disabled people out there in the north, but they
2 are scared to come out because they've never been trained.
3 They don't want to come out because everybody will laugh
4 at them they figure. It's not the case, but they've never
5 experienced that. Those things we have to work on together
6 because one of these days, like I said, and I'll stress
7 that again, maybe one of these days somebody is going to
8 be maybe in that chair and nobody knows. That's a
9 difficult time I tell you, especially in the north.

10 I would like to say thanks to every one
11 of you for inviting us here today and I am representing
12 Pinehouse here this afternoon. I wish some people could
13 have been here from Pinehouse, but George Smith is here
14 for his own community. I would like to say to the disabled
15 I hope we get somewhere soon because it's going to be one
16 hell of a ride in the future.

17 We should have been starting a long time
18 ago. Now the government is going to be spending millions
19 and millions of dollars on programs. They should have
20 been looking at it in the north a long time ago, than sending
21 us to the south. They should have been looking at it very
22 carefully. Now today we are going to be spending millions
23 and millions of dollars, tax money. We have to come up

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 with a better plan and a better education, like I said
2 again.

3 Thank you very much, ladies and
4 gentlemen.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I would like
6 to thank you very much for coming and sharing with us and
7 with the public your concern for disabled people.

8 **MR. GARY TINKER:** Thank you.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I would like
10 to tell you that the situation of disabled people and
11 Aboriginal people who are disabled, and in particular in
12 the north, is of great concern. It is part of the health
13 and social services area of the Commission. We will
14 certainly do our best to come up with recommendations that
15 could be implemented and to help the living conditions
16 that you are in.

17 **MR. GARY TINKER:** Thank you very much.

18 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Mary.

19 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I too would
20 like to join Mr. Dussault in thanking you for coming to
21 talk to us today. I guess when we first started out
22 Hearings we were told by many, many people that we shouldn't
23 forget -- we should try to ensure that Aboriginal people

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 who are handicapped did appear before our Hearings. We
2 have heard from some of those groups and, in fact, funding
3 has been given to one particular group to prepare
4 presentations I guess in the later phases of our Hearings.

5

6 We were just in the Yukon and we heard
7 from a representative of a handicapped group and I was
8 very, very touched by what she had to say. She was talking
9 about, for example, the kinds of abuse that Aboriginal
10 handicapped women in particular have to suffer. She was
11 also talking about the lack of services that handicapped
12 Aboriginal people have. For example, if you are from the
13 north and you are handicapped, you have no choice but to
14 go to the south to get service.

15 But when you are talking about, for
16 example, the Aboriginal handicapped people in the north
17 and I am wondering how many handicapped people actually
18 stay in the north? If there are no services, I hear that
19 for the most people that people from the north move to
20 the south.

21 **MR. GARY TINKER:** Yes.

22 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** There is
23 almost a perception that they are not home any more?

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **MR. GARY TINKER:** Yes.

2 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** That if
3 they are home, then they are not that handicapped because
4 no one can take care of them, there are no services in
5 that community?

6 **MR. GARY TINKER:** Yes. The public
7 people are never educated on how to handle a disabled
8 person. Therefore, the south was able to do those things,
9 but now if you put somebody in a foster home in the north,
10 probably about 95 per cent doesn't want to take a disabled
11 person because they don't know how to handle them. Maybe
12 I'm putting them down, but that's the way I see it. They
13 are kind of afraid to get involved with a disabled person
14 because they never experienced a person like that, not
15 like the south.

16 I know in fact that a lot of disabled
17 people, I know they don't have their self-esteem out there.
18 I know, but maybe I am wrong again, but a lot of disabled
19 person, one or two tried suicide themselves. I heard that
20 around just from people and stuff because they lost that
21 self-esteem because there is nothing for them here. Yet,
22 they don't want to move to the south because that's where
23 our people are, here in the north, and we don't want to

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 leave our own communities. We want to be as equal as
2 anybody else in this country. That's the way they'd like
3 to see it.

4 I believe we can come up with something.

5 I know that in fact it is not going to take months and
6 months to prepare these kinds of issues, but it will come
7 eventually. I know disabled people have to be a little
8 patient and I know there is no housing for the disabled.

9 This is the first time that housing will ever be brought
10 up, housing stuff, and legislated or whatever.

11 I just think that there are a lot of
12 disabled who ask me, "We should have a representative in
13 the Legislative Assembly to represent only disabled
14 people." The only thing is again there are no funds for
15 me to meet with disabled people or government agencies
16 because there are no funds at all. Like I said, I can't
17 travel that far because of that. That's the major problem
18 for me to go out there and talk to southerners and stuff
19 and talk to them about disabled issues in the north, like
20 a native person like myself and stuff like that. Thank
21 you very much.

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

23 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Thank you, Gary.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 We have added a few additions here. I
2 want to reassure people that we will try to get to them
3 and put them on the written agenda. There are some people
4 who weren't on it and we will try to add them on.

5 The next speaker I would like to call
6 on is Ambrose Maurice.

7 (Native language, no translation).

8 He gave me some papers and I will read
9 those after, but he will probably speak first.

10 **MR. AMBROSE MAURICE:** (Translation: I
11 would like to welcome the people who have come here to
12 hear me speak. I am a little lost for words here, but
13 I will be getting on track soon.

14 The first thing I would like to talk
15 about here is the Primrose Weapons Range. I have been
16 trapping there all my life. We had houses at Snow Lake
17 and Makuska River. My brother had land there also.

18 We had ten children. My brother had his
19 family separate from my family and they also want the land
20 back. Across the Keno Narrows is the place where I lived.

21 We never did leave that place. The only reason we left
22 that place was for schooling for our children. We didn't
23 leave that place. It was only for educational purposes

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 that we left it.

2 My dad staked -- over 70 years ago my
3 dad had taken land there. Now that I've been over there,
4 I am 65 years old, I can also not leave this place. I
5 had asked for a road to be built to our community. I have
6 many papers stating this from the Minister in Regina, but
7 what portfolio I am not aware.

8 I raise cattle. Ever since I can
9 remember, my father had cattle. 1937 is when my father
10 passed away. He had cattle. He had over 50 cattle and
11 horses He had over 28 horses. He had pigs, chickens.
12 He also ran a grocery store. We were never poor and that's
13 the only way I could relate to my father's way of living
14 because that is the way I copied him. I pay for all
15 licences and have leases for what I do and I also fish.
16 I have always paid for my fishing licences. It has been
17 now over 50 years since I have been doing these things.
18 I am 65 in September, I turned 65 in September and so
19 I will be 66.

20 That is where I come from. In 1953 the
21 Primrose Weapons Range was taken over by the Department
22 of National Defence. I have always wondered why -- we
23 have always wondered why we have never had any compensation

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 for the Primrose Weapons Range. Some have been paid the
2 traditional resource user's licence. Some person from
3 a different community had received \$10,000 for
4 compensation, but that person was never seen to be a
5 traditional resource in that area. We live right next
6 door to the Primrose Weapons Range. It is time for us
7 to be involved in that compensation package, Jans Bay,
8 Cole Bay, all of the communities that are junked in with
9 the Primeau Lake Reserve and nothing is working right.

10 There are nice houses in Jans Bay, but
11 people just live and dwell within those existing homes.

12

13 Myself, I used to snare squirrels, four
14 or five cents a piece or ten cents. I had fish for one
15 cent a pound, jackfish. Nothing was really that expensive
16 in the old days, but we still lived. Even today now when
17 it snows a little bit, nowadays when it snows a little
18 bit you have a hard time finding prints in the snow because
19 people are too comfortable back home in their houses to
20 make a living for themselves.

21 People never had a hard time a long time
22 ago to live. At least they should at least help us out
23 a little bit and I don't mean government handouts. We

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 are talking about land. Land is what we need, not so much
2 for myself, but for my children and my children's children.

3 I am 65 now. There is not much that I want, but at least
4 the basics of land should be put inside for me, not for
5 myself, but for my children. But today we don't even look
6 at that. Today we are not looking at that.

7 I have never lived on welfare in my life.

8 I never saw welfare when I was young. I trapped and fished
9 all my life. My uncle, George Maurice, I used to fish
10 for him and every day I talked with the old man. When
11 I was 13 years old I was already out in the middle of the
12 lake pulling nets out with my uncle. I don't have a hard
13 time to talk about these things. Forty-below zero I slept
14 and ate outside, so today life is nothing. I am not lying.

15 I don't tell no fibs. It is just a way of life a long
16 time ago.

17 I come here today to tell you what I want.

18 Some people have accused me of finding these things as
19 an individual choice of myself, but this is not the case.

20 The case is I want something left behind when I leave
21 this world, that something should be left behind for my
22 children and my children's sake.

23 I would still like to see a road built

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 to my community. The Mayor of Jans Bay said we will not
2 be helping these people out in any way who are trying to
3 separate themselves from the Jans Bay community. We have
4 never asked for anything from the mayor and council of
5 Jans Bay and we have no intention of asking for anything
6 from these people. We want to become self-sufficient.

7 Today I showed you a bunch of papers.
8 The Minister and what portfolio it is I don't know,
9 highways I guess it would be.

10 The forests that surround our community,
11 we had an understanding in good faith to say that we would
12 be the one to do the free harvesting of forests and the
13 rice that was in our communities, but that was stopped
14 and we are not allowed to do that any more. We also had
15 big gardens over there. I plant potatoes. Today it's
16 not so much potatoes, but it still a livelihood. That
17 is the way I have always done my life is to farm and now
18 I give all of that to my children for themselves to try
19 to get something out of the land.

20 Even when I do trap, I had over 300 traps.

21 When I was fishing I had over 100 nets out at one time.

22 I would like to know why they don't continue to help us
23 out on the little basic necessities. It has been 20 years

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 now that I've been asking for this land. I've asked the
2 same questions over and over to our M.L.A. Fred Thompson.
3 We have asked him to speak on our behalf. It wouldn't
4 be hard for them. It is not so much that we are asking
5 for money. We are asking for land and it shouldn't be
6 so hard to ask that simple question. It is just that I
7 feel very strongly for the young people, that the young
8 people should also be living off the land. We are trying
9 to set a good example to the younger people.

10 If welfare was cut off today, a lot of
11 young people do not understand the way of life of the bush
12 now. Many people would starve, but my children would be
13 the first ones to live and survive off the bush because
14 I've shown them that to the best of my ability. Even though
15 some of my children are women, they also know how to fish.
16 Today people are at a loss as to how to make themselves
17 survive. It shouldn't be us that should be rejected.

18 This road that I continue to talk about,
19 we had asked that from George MacLeod, the ex-Deputy
20 Premier of Saskatchewan to look at this. I said that it
21 would have been better and I thought that maybe the NDP
22 -- I thought the NDP would have made a difference, but
23 now it just seems as if it is the same thing. They are

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 not doing anything better or worse than the previous
2 government. They say people must be crazy to fight
3 something like this. People should be thought about.
4 People should come first and not to fight people for what
5 they want and for people to always fight one another they
6 will never get anything done.

7 Any person that is self-sufficient and
8 stands up for what he believes in, that's the people I
9 am very proud of.

10 I will ask Max to read the letter.

11 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Mr. Maurice asked me to
12 read some letters for him. The first one is regarding
13 the Air Weapons Range:

14 "I, Ambrose Maurice of the new Métis settlement of
15 Sapawagamik, Saskatchewan would like to
16 know why I received only \$900.00 in full
17 payment for the Primrose Air Weapons
18 Range in 1953. This land was my
19 livelihood. I depended on this land to
20 put food on the table. I was a fisherman
21 on those lakes. I also did a lot of
22 trapping and hunting. I would have made
23 a lot more money than I got. It is my

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 belief that the government owes me a lot
2 more money or other means of
3 compensation."

4 He also mentions that he has lived there
5 for 70 years. His father had made his livelihood from
6 that land and they were reallocated. He is asking for
7 some land where they started a new settlement as a means
8 of compensation for the land that was taken away for the
9 Primrose Bombing Range.

10 This one is from "The New Generation,
11 Sapawaganik".

12 "For the younger generation in the new settlement of
13 Sapawaganik, Saskatchewan, fishermen
14 and trappers alike want to receive some
15 sort of compensation. It is our belief
16 that the government should give us land
17 somewhere else since we have nothing to
18 live on. We want to get off the welfare
19 system that we're on. We believe that
20 if we at least had land on which we could
21 trap, fish and farm on we can provide
22 a better life for our kids, instead of
23 waiting for government hand outs. We

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 want a better life for our children.
2 We don't want to pass down what was given
3 to us which was nothing but a line at
4 the welfare office.

5 At this moment the only land we can claim is our own
6 backyards. Does the government expect
7 us to trap there or farm there? It's
8 even impossible for us to do that since
9 it's not even our backyards. It's our
10 parents, they were the ones who sold the
11 Primrose Air Weapons Range and they
12 didn't get nearly enough for it. Now
13 we want our fair share, also for our
14 children, our future."

15 It's from "The New Generation,
16 Sapawagamik people."

17 We will leave these two letters to you
18 people, but basically Mr. Maurice is concerned about two
19 issues. One is the Primrose Bombing Range and the other
20 is land should be given somewhere else in lieu of the land
21 being taken away from them to set up the bombing range.

22

23 As I said in my opening remarks this

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 morning, mining companies and oil companies have asked
2 to have access to the Primrose Bombing Range and these
3 people have to sneak in there to try and get a moose or
4 some fur from that land, or they can't even fish on that
5 land. It's a concern that he raised and he wants the
6 Commission to look into it for him.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I would like
8 to thank you for coming to meet with us and sharing what
9 you have had in mind for, in many cases, many years. As
10 a Commission, we are not in a position to intervene in
11 specific instances, though from a discussion we had earlier
12 on the road to access your cattle, I hope that the process
13 that has been -- the discussion with the department
14 officials will lead to a satisfactory conclusion. Again,
15 what is important is I think the fact that these things
16 happened and that the situation you have been put in.

17 I take your message as one to say that
18 young people should not be put into that situation, the
19 same situation you have been through all your life. It
20 is difficult for us really to go further than that, but
21 it is on the public record. I appreciate that you came
22 and spoke out this afternoon.

23 We might want to see if we could be

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 helpful in terms of if there is information that is missing,
2 to understand exactly what is happening. Maybe we could
3 be useful there, but again it is not our role to intervene
4 in all claims and disputes that exist. We can channel
5 people through the proper department to make sure that
6 information would be given to them, but I understand as
7 far as this road is concerned there is something that is
8 being done. I hope it will give you satisfaction.

9 **MR. AMBROSE MAURICE:** Thank you.

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

11 **MR. MAX MORIN:** (Native language, no
12 translation).

13 Next, I will be calling on Frank Morin
14 from the Protectors of Mother Earth to make a presentation.
15 Right after that I will be calling on Edna Daigneault
16 and then Bernice Hammersmith.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Good
18 afternoon.

19 **MR. FRANK MORIN, (Protectors of Mother**
20 **Earth):** Good afternoon and welcome to our territory.

21 I would like to start off by putting into
22 perspective the current position that the Métis and Indian
23 people of the north here are in. I shouldn't dwell on

DECEMBER 8, 1992**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 it because you do know the position, but I would like to
2 point out that the governments deal with us in a fashion
3 that they so designed. This reflects through the Métis
4 Society in our case and in the Indian communities they
5 have their way which is basically the same system

6 When a leader asks to be voted into
7 office, he usually does so with good intent. So, he goes
8 off, sits in the office and his good intentions are there,
9 but what happens is the system that has been set up by
10 governments takes hold. You see, these people that we
11 elect come back to us. They ask us, how would you like
12 to see this done? We tell them, whether it's nuclear
13 power, pulp mills, we tell them that we oppose. It's
14 usually unanimously opposed, usually.

15 This group of people who are supposed
16 to represent us, they go back, go sit in with the circle
17 of people from Regina and Ottawa and they sign documents
18 that we opposed. Do you know what I mean? They go ahead
19 and endorse whether it is nuclear power and stuff like
20 this, they do it and because if they don't, the government
21 would cut all funding off that goes into their office.
22 It is quite a dilemma to be in really. This is the way
23 governments deal with us. Governments feel they can

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 deal with us grassroots people through them, the very same
2 people that don't listen to us. They go ahead and endorse
3 all these things so their office can run. That's the
4 position we are in.

5 In this past summer I have taken part,
6 and still am, in a roadblock. This roadblock we feel is
7 legitimate. We have grievances. We are very worried
8 about what industry is trying to do to us, the mess they
9 are proposing. At the moment, all I can see our fighting
10 chance to be is in things such as roadblocks and stuff
11 like that because then governments seem to listen and they
12 come back at us. They sign different things, whether it
13 is mayors or the Métis Society. Of course, the mayors
14 and the Métis Society they come to us and say, "No, we
15 don't support your roadblock, but they in turn will take
16 all kinds of powers, whether it is co-management," and
17 because of the roadblock they are getting more power type
18 of thing.

19 My position and the position of the
20 people at the roadblock, and in particular POME, Protectors
21 of Mother Earth, our position is that we do want
22 self-government. We feel we can make it and our
23 self-government is a border, to draw a border. I don't

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 know where you draw that, but we are proposing that all
2 wilderness that is left should be turned over to the Indian
3 and Métis people to govern as they so choose.

4 They are proposing to us that in 13
5 years' time, by the year 2005, they are proposing to us,
6 their experts tell us that in fact there will be no more
7 wilderness left in this neck of the woods, that's 13 years,
8 12 years. That is startling.

9 What position are we going to be in here?
10 Another thing they are proposing is that our water, and
11 that doesn't sound like a very good future for our people.

12

13 We are proposing to government that all
14 wilderness be left alone to us and we will govern it as
15 we so choose. It's easy to say that. Say, for instance,
16 we are able to negotiate with the government for such a
17 package and they agreed. They say, "Okay, we will give
18 you five years for the transition." Give us five years
19 for everything to be turned over. Now, how do we govern
20 ourselves and that is the question you ask us anyway?

21 First of all, the most important thing
22 that we would have to consider, of course, is a university,
23 a big one, as big as the ones you people have in the south

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 and certainly as big as the one Saskatoon has. Because
2 only then can we in the future hope to compete with the
3 rest of the world that we won't be able to hide from,
4 regardless if we sit in the wilderness. We have to live
5 with the rest of the world, that is evident. We cannot
6 any more take our families and canoe across the river and
7 go hide out like we used to 50 years or so ago. That isn't
8 there for us and we have to recognize that.

9 For us to compete with the rest of the
10 world is we need that university. How do we get a
11 university? How are we able to maintain it? Through
12 economic development we are able to do that. There is
13 no reason that the people in the north here don't have
14 -- don't go into food production, for instance. There
15 is all kinds of clean environment right now. It is
16 proposed not to be. Right now we've got a clean
17 environment and for us to produce food so we can trade
18 with the rest of the world, so our economy can be stable.
19 That is just one area.

20 Another area is, yes, I do help the
21 blockade against logging, but I do agree again that, yes,
22 you can build an economy on forests. It's a renewable
23 resource. You can ask people in this community that you

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 staked wood here 30 years ago, you go back there now and
2 you'll see it's still wilderness. Yes, if it is managed
3 right we can use our forests to keep our economy going.

4

5 In other things, tourism maybe and to
6 a certain scale we can do that. I would like to add, if
7 I may, that if we were to agree with tourism now, which
8 they are trying to push on us, if we were to agree on tourism
9 now what happens is all you have to do is go to La Range
10 to take a good example of what happened in La Ronge. If
11 you allow tourism in, investors from the south come there.
12 They live there. It's not the Indian people. They've
13 got money and they benefit. We become weaker because these
14 people are coming in. We can't allow tourism under
15 those terms, but we can allow tourism if in fact they
16 realize they are crossing a certain border into another
17 country and deal with us that way.

18 We are small in numbers, but if we were
19 to have this kind of country, why couldn't we put in
20 immigration laws. We'd be killing two birds with one
21 stone. We would be getting numbers we would be desperately
22 needing to keep our economy going, a country that size.
23 We would also be ridding of a cancer that Canada is

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 experiencing in the south, the urban Indian in the cities.

2

3 We don't want the skid row derelict to
4 come up here. We don't want him. That's your problem.

5 We want that guy with three or four kids and is living
6 in the city on welfare, because that's where he's at, we
7 want him to come up here and help with stabilizing the
8 country. We want their kids most of all because we can
9 push them through the universities and become a very
10 important part of the community.

11 Certainly there would have to be some
12 sort of a deficit, but you have to have capital to farm,
13 fish farming. Why not have 100 fish farmers in the north
14 here, all producing good fish. Then have a cannery, taking
15 the product right to the consumer because of your marketing
16 boards that would be sent in by your political people.
17 Then you would have something to do.

18 Right now the political people that we
19 elect don't have nothing to do, except squabble over what
20 they can get from governments. I regret to say that
21 this is a dream a lot of us share. I regret to say that
22 we will, if we have to, realize such a dream, that in fact
23 roadblocks which may lead to violence, certainly

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 revolutions of some sort may happen. Can we deal with
2 it? I don't know. But we know what we want. You cannot
3 expect us to assimilate into your society and become a
4 part of it. We know it doesn't work. We cannot go to
5 your universities. We are discouraged. We cannot be a
6 part of your economy, we are discouraged.

7 Instead, you come up here and give the
8 people what they want in terms of food and televisions
9 and cars and let them live as comfortably as they can,
10 but behind all of that you come here and rape our lands,
11 the very thing that would make our economy stable.

12 We realize that, we know that, we see
13 that. I suppose I could go on for hours about how such
14 a government might work. It would be all theory anyway,
15 but I would like to spend a few moments here, realizing
16 that if such a thing does come through, like a border
17 actually drawn and we are going to get an economy happening,
18 if you might, if you are interested that is, ask me a few
19 questions on that. I've pretty well said what I want to
20 say.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you for
22 your presentation. Just a technical question first, you
23 are part of the Protectors of Mother Earth.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **MR. FRANK MORIN:** That was the name we
2 adopted when because of the roadblock we -- you know, the
3 importance of the roadblock, that in fact it is
4 environmentally related, but more so because we also want
5 because if we were able to stop the pulpmill we know what
6 we can do with that wood. We know that we can put our
7 people to work making doors, windowframes and stuff like
8 that, so that's all added in there.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So that was a
10 group that was formed for the sake of the pulpmill. It's
11 not a permanent organization or -- **MR. FRANK MORIN:**

12 I guess the Indian always was the protector of Mother
13 Earth, yes, without question. It was just a name we
14 adopted for communications sake.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I under-stand
16 you are saying that we, meaning you, we can deal in an
17 economy on forestry? That message --

18 **MR. FRANK MORIN:** Excuse me, forestry,
19 yes, we can. Forestry would be maybe 10 per cent of what
20 makes up your whole economic system.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I understand.
22 But your main message is that things should be done
23 differently?

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **MR. FRANK MORIN:** Yes. I speak for that
2 group, that we cannot accept assimilation into the Canadian
3 system.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I under-stand
5 that has always been a fear and in many instances a fear
6 that was founded on policies. I think you know now that
7 the thinking is different. The difficulty of this
8 Commission and the thinking of the public also, but the
9 difficulty is to see how the transition could be operated.
10 I think we are far from the situation, for example, let's
11 say for the Indians when the White Paper was tabled in
12 1969 and really the purpose was to open up Indian societies
13 and there were little guarantees for your culture. It
14 was seen as meaning assimilation on a short to mid-term
15 basis.

16 We realized -- I think the mood of the
17 country is quite different now. In this area we have been
18 told that people have worked well together, treaty people
19 with Métis people.

20 **MR. FRANK MORIN:** We consider each other
21 brothers. In case if there was ever such a transition,
22 that our least problem would be in fact to get the Métis
23 people in a treaty, people to work out a system. That

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 would be our least worry.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Even with
3 non-Aboriginal people, the relationship in many areas is
4 quite good. What brings problems, or it seems to be quite
5 good is the mayor, for example, told us we are ready to
6 include non-Aboriginal people also in our self-government,
7 but the problem comes when economic development takes place
8 and then the way to do it is completely different and
9 forestry, the land uses are not taken into account, the
10 different land uses.

11 **MR. FRANK MORIN:** It seems economic
12 development is discouraged at this period in history.
13 I could suggest if this were ever so, I would suggest a
14 five-year transition period in which time in the five
15 years, of course, you would have put into effect a plan
16 which would involve hundreds of people to produce, start
17 an economic wheel happening.

18 You can't expect us to be talking
19 self-government and we are all on welfare. It will never
20 work.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I think this
22 is the other very important message you are telling us.
23 We can't build self-government on welfare.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **MR. FRANK MORIN:** No.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** That's
3 obvious, so we have to have economic development first.

4

5 **MR. FRANK MORIN:** Yes.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Also, the
7 solution to some of the social problems.

8 **MR. FRANK MORIN:** Of course, what people
9 a lot of times argue about is whether should your system
10 go like the Conservatives or should it go to the extreme
11 left like the Communists. Where do you begin? Do you
12 want, if you are on the extreme right, do you expect a
13 half a dozen millionaires after their workers are paid
14 off and with all the profits they are going to make, to
15 come into the rest of the people and say, okay, we are
16 going to build you a big university without profits. Of
17 course not, they will not do that, will they? They will
18 take their money and go to Hawaii and places like that
19 and spend it.

20 But, if we were to do it collectively,
21 the government put in placing knowing that they have to
22 build themselves a university, they would have the means
23 to, so which would you encourage.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
2 much.

3 **MR. FRANK MORIN:** Thank you.

4 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**
5 Frank, before you leave, regarding the university, if
6 that ever was the dream, what communities were you thinking
7 of?

8 **MR. FRANK MORIN:** Your university would
9 cater to the whole nation. If you are a whole nation,
10 the Métis nation and the Indian nation, if you put a
11 boundary, borders and you built a big university, then
12 that would include everybody. In fact, you would have
13 to encourage the child, the children, the kids, to go to
14 that university. You would encourage them. You would
15 not discourage them like with what is happening now.

16 Even when they bring in these little
17 programs into Ile-à-La-Crosse or in the north, you have
18 to really suck ass to get in there. You really have to.
19 It shouldn't be. Education should be given to the child
20 and made sure that he got it.

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

22 **MR. FRANK MORIN:** Thank you.

23 **MR. BRIAN FAVEL:** I would like to thank

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 Frank for his presentation.

2 I would like to call on Edna Daigneault
3 and Sharon Yole to make a presentation on behalf of the
4 Métis women.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Good
6 afternoon.

7 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** I'm ready to call
8 bingo!

9 Thank you. My name is Edna and this is
10 Sharon. I was called to speak on women's issues. I sat
11 up last night and I thought there are so many different
12 plays that come into here that I couldn't stick with one
13 particular issue. I had to look at my people here in the
14 community and the north, which is 80 per cent unemployed,
15 which means we are 80 per cent welfare recipients.

16 I asked people, I go to school. I am
17 a student, so I asked the students in my classroom, by
18 the way who are not here. I expected them to be here,
19 but they are not and it's because of frustrations that
20 they are not here. They are frustrated. They asked me,
21 "Well, why do I have to go to that Commission?" They have
22 come before and nothing happened, so they didn't want to
23 come. But I felt I had to be here and take it back to

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 my fellow students of what I see here at this meeting.

2 I tried to explain self-government to
3 the students, dealing with Métis and non-Aboriginal. The
4 only way I could see it was if we deal with our own affairs.

5 If the northern people deal with just the north. I've
6 gone to meetings, I've gone to Métis Society meetings in
7 the south, but whatever they talked about at those meetings
8 pertained to the south and not to the north. I felt why
9 am I going to these meetings, when I am not taking anything
10 back home. It should be back home, held at home. In that
11 way monies would channel better if we had a sub-office
12 I guess in the north that would pertain to housing.

13 We don't have to go all the way to P.A.,
14 which is pretty far. Child care, we'd do it at home, our
15 health.

16 Being 80 per cent unemployed, it changes
17 our family values and beliefs, which we once had. Here
18 Don Morin spoke of health and where the southerners write
19 the curriculum of health. They write these things up in
20 Regina and we have to follow them to a "T". That doesn't
21 make sense. We understand ourselves here and, therefore,
22 it makes sense that we revise and have input in our own
23 treatment centres, in our own child care, in our own

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 housing.

2 Economic development; there should be
3 other alternatives. We have a lot of non-renewable
4 resources. Again, we are the last wild forest stands,
5 the boreal forest. In the year 2000 we won't have much
6 of a stand.

7 If you look around here, there's a lot
8 of muskeg and small little twig-size trees. If you look
9 at the rainforest, there are a lot of backing up the
10 rainforest. It's like save the rainforest, save the
11 oxygen. I don't see very much difference in saving the
12 last of our little wild forest stands, our muskeg. If
13 it were up to me, I'd ask for a moratorium on forestry.
14

15 Recently, uranium mining they are
16 starting to talk about. If you open up your newspaper
17 and look on the T.V., there is uranium mining coming up.
18 It is guaranteed there are going to be people down here
19 pushing uranium mining, but also guaranteed there won't
20 be no counter education in saying, well, this is what
21 uranium mining would do. They naturally just come in and
22 push it.

23 Buckley talked about a Northern

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Development Fund. In that way I see social services,
2 northern uranium mining coming up to the north and,
3 therefore, we expect our social services cheques to be
4 bigger because the uranium mining is going to be coming
5 up. Instead of giving us that money, they should like
6 put it aside, put it in the Northern Development Fund and
7 maybe we will benefit. Give us more workshops on uranium.
8 Fill us up with workshops and education, a university.
9 We are a very good social services workforce in the north.
10 The only thing that comes through is a mining class.
11 There is mining coming up and so, therefore, they are going
12 to put in a mining class.

13 There are more people on social
14 services, so we have to put more social services workers
15 out in the force. It is kind of frustrating if your goal,
16 any myself in particular, if my goal was to be a lawyer
17 or a judge, it's frustrating because there is only a social
18 services course held, there is only a mining course held.
19 You can't go to different avenues. I guess you could,
20 but it's hard.

21 Yes, I believe in the restructuring of
22 relationships with non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people.
23 What Buckley had to say this morning was nice. If they

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 have input, if they live here, let them put in their two
2 cents or whatever they have. I am sure they will listen.

3 I am sure what they have to say we can listen too and
4 what we have to say they listen. We can both help each
5 other.

6 I had quite a bit of things to say, but
7 -- another thing was self-sufficiency. I saw a lot of
8 people come up here and ask for money. We don't have this
9 money. We want this money from the government. I kind
10 of find it wrong in always asking for money and then you
11 ask for self-sufficiency. How are you going to be
12 self-sufficient if you are going to keep on asking other
13 people to feed you?

14 I tried to find a way. I tried to figure
15 it out and the only way I could understand was, okay, if
16 you want to see us self-sufficient then help us for awhile,
17 lend us for awhile or bank it. Then, when we put ourselves
18 back on our feet again, we can pay you back. We can pay
19 Canada back, you know. It has a huge deficit and that
20 just made sense to me.

21 Like you said this morning, it's not just
22 getting money. It's more than that. Métis round speaks
23 would be nice, like you were talking about this morning,

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 that you might possibly have Métis round talks. It would
2 be nice if you came into the communities. I heard you
3 say it might be one central big city, but it's hard to
4 get our grandmothers and our grandfathers and our youth
5 to go. The city is too big, it's too scary and stuff like
6 that. If you came back here that would make sense. That's
7 about all I have to say. **MS SHARON YOLE:** I would
8 like to add something. You were talking about going south
9 for training. It's the same thing as putting someone from
10 the south into the bush and saying, "Where do I go?" That's
11 the same way we feel if we have to go out for training,
12 university training or whatever we want to go for.

13 I'd like to stress that the government
14 give more money to our organizations so that we could have
15 university facilities, more training for the youth. I
16 am trying to get educated myself, so I could show my six
17 little kids that mommy's going to make it.

18 If the government wants the people to
19 get off social services, what they will have to give to
20 us is lend us money so that we could educate ourselves.

21 Also, we don't have any facilities for infants in our
22 community. Maybe the government should recognize a
23 proposal, maybe the Métis women could put in a proposal

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 to get so much money, so that they could make a feasible
2 building, a feasible proposal so that the organization
3 could take over, instead of someone going privatized
4 because maybe they are scared of bankruptcy or whatever.

5

6 Maybe -- I don't know what it may be.

7 I don't even know what is stopping them.

8 Another concern is I took ten months of
9 my time away from my family and I went and got educated.

10 I took a young entrepreneur's course. Me and my husband
11 fought for ten months because I wanted it routed this way
12 and he wanted it this way, but anyway we took it to the
13 agency. They liked the proposal. It went through.

14 Everything went well. Out of 16 students, three of our
15 proposals went through and one of them was mine. I was
16 happy. I was proud. I had gained something. Then they
17 turned around and told me "Are you on social services?"

18 I said no. "Are you on UIC?" No. "Well, you can't get
19 this money we are supposed to lend you," because I wasn't
20 on social services. It blew me away.

21 I had just worked ten months, so I think
22 maybe you guys could put a recommendation in just so they
23 don't only recognize social services people.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 If the government wants to give monies
2 to the Métis people, don't give it to one organization
3 that is going to say, "Well, you have a little bit of this
4 and you have a little bit of this and the women are not
5 getting recognized." They want to look at themselves,
6 take care of themselves. "Oh, there's women here.
7 There's \$5,000 left. Let's give them that." We can't
8 go anywhere with \$5,000. We can't do anything with \$5,000.
9

10 So, if an organization comes in with a
11 set proposal or whatever of what they want, give it to
12 the women. Don't give it to some organizations to say
13 this is how much you are going to have and maybe we will
14 give you a little bit more when you guys need a little
15 bit more of something. No, it doesn't work that way
16 because somewhere along the line they wanted to keep it
17 for themselves or what, I don't know.

18 That's all I have to say.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** That's a lot.
20 Thank you very much.

21 Maybe you could stay with us a couple
22 of minutes. I understand you are adult students, are you?

23 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** Yes.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You are a
2 student here in Ile-à-La-Crosse?

3 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** Yes.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** How many of you
5 are in the program?

6 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** Sixteen.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Are you in
8 social services?

9 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** No, just
10 upgrading.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Upgrading at
12 the moment. You said at the outset that the others didn't
13 want to come with you?

14 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** Yes.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** That they felt
16 it was useless. We are told the same in many areas and
17 from many quarters because there have been a few
18 commissions. I don't know how many came to
19 Ile-à-La-Crosse, there might have been some, but again
20 I think we would like you to try to give back a message
21 of hope, that this time might be a time when something
22 will flow.

23 We thank you very much for raising the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 various issues you raised with us. I want to be sure that
2 I understood properly. You had to be under social
3 assistance to get that money?

4 **MS SHARON YOLE:** To get that money out,
5 so I could start with my business. I wanted to be
6 self-sufficient.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes.

8 **MS SHARON YOLE:** Which never happened.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** What was the
10 name of the program?

11 **MS SHARON YOLE:** It was young
12 entrepreneurs. Earton, Engle and Cook were the sponsors
13 out of Saskatoon.

14 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** Most things are run
15 that way anyway. You have to be on social services to
16 get a job in these communities. It's not that you are
17 kicking it. It's good to have a job. I mean, who wouldn't
18 want to have a job.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes. These
20 are provincial programs and it is always the same, they
21 want to get as many people out of social assistance and
22 that's why.

23 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** Sometimes it

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 doesn't even make sense to go to work on a social assistance
2 program, when you make much more being on social assistance
3 anyway.

4 **MS SHARON YOLE:** Just staying at home.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** That's a
6 problem also.

7 I would like to come back on education.
8 You said you would like to become a lawyer and a judge.

9 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** Yes.

10 **MS SHARON YOLE:** And be like you.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Well, for
12 others --

13 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** No, for northern
14 communities like what the Senator said today.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes, but of
16 course, you know you could make it.

17 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** I know I could make
18 it. That's why I'm putting myself back into school. I
19 know we need more northern native lawyers, where we can
20 understand a little bit more.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Because, as
22 you said, there are some programs coming up north and we
23 hope it will be possible to have more and more, but it

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 will always be necessary for people to go to get the
2 training in the south and with the cultural shock. We
3 are certainly -- we try to figure out how to make it
4 possible and easier for as many students as possible,
5 adults or young people. It is even more difficult for
6 young people to complete their secondary school. Is it
7 a money problem? Is it a problem of leaving the family?
8 I understand you have already quite a family and as such
9 is it a reality?

10 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** I don't see why you
11 have to leave your community to go to school. Why can't
12 we have it here? Why can't we have university courses
13 held here?

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** It's possible
15 and it will be more and more possible. Obviously, before
16 there is a law school around here it might be a few years
17 and you will be somewhere else in life. What I am saying
18 is -- because this is told to us. People tell us, if you
19 bring the college or the university to the reserve we will
20 do it. Obviously, with the technology it is going to be
21 more and more possible.

22 It's a matter of time. It's a matter
23 of subjects, disciplines and meanwhile I think we all feel

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 we have to work on making it possible for people to go
2 south also.

3 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** Thanks for
4 listening.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I hope you will
6 give a message of hope --

7 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** To my fellow
8 students, yes. Oh, here comes Edna, the politician.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** They are
10 upgrading their skills and so they are already in a positive
11 mood.

12 **MS EDNA DAIGNEAULT:** Thank you.

13 **MS SHARON YOLE:** Thank you.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Mary.

15 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I think you
16 took up all our time.

17 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**

18 Yes.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Probably.

20 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Thank you, Edna and
21 Sharon. (Native language - no translation).

22 Bernice Hammersmith from the Provincial
23 Métis Society, Provincial Secretary, original from

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Ile-à-La-Crosse, she was born here. I would like to
2 welcome her to make a presentation. Bernice.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Good
4 afternoon.

5 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH, (Métis Society**
6 **of Saskatchewan):** Thank you, Max.

7 Welcome, Commission members, to
8 Ile-à-La-Crosse. You will have to bear with me a bit.
9 I am a little bit uneasy about being in this building.
10 I buried my mother here a couple of months ago, so I have
11 to try to stay very focused here. I will do my best.

12 I am also honoured to speak in the
13 presence of my elders, my aunties and my uncles and all
14 my many relatives in Ile-à-La-Crosse. I am even more
15 honoured to be speaking in front of my own people. I will
16 speak today to many issues. However, I shall speak most
17 about two things: What the result of the Referendum meant
18 to many of my people and also developing a model of Métis
19 self-government.

20 In this recent Referendum, I noted one
21 particular thing that was common throughout all of Canada,
22 throughout all of the nations in Canada, as well as
23 throughout all the Aboriginal communities. It is that

DECEMBER 8, 1992**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 in this Referendum everyone agreed, for the first time
2 in history everyone agreed, that is everyone that's the
3 federal government, the spokespeople for the federal
4 government, and that is everyone that is part of the
5 provincial governments and territorial governments, even
6 the YMCAs agreed, the churches agreed, the women's groups
7 agreed, the Chamber of Commerce agreed, unions agreed,
8 city councils agreed and these particular groups that I
9 am mentioning now, as well as the native groups agreed,
10 are all part of our system in Canada. It was a
11 representative body of our system as Canadians in this
12 country. As I look at that and I think of the vote and
13 how it turned out, the vote meant, that no meant to me
14 and to many others that we reject that kind of a system.
15 We reject those people all getting together, first of
16 all, and agreeing on something. That's what the no vote
17 meant.

18 It meant that the people of Canada had
19 no faith whatsoever in the systems of government in this
20 country. It further meant to my people that it also has
21 no faith in the system of government of our own people
22 because what we were asking our people to vote yes to was
23 a ghost. We were asking our people to agree to something

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 that was not there, that something to our elders and our
2 people on the street and to our community members and our
3 leaders meant something that they could not identify, they
4 could not put a finger on. All it meant to them was that
5 somehow they were supposed to vote yes to this. Yes to
6 what?

7 That gives me a further dilemma because
8 I am currently in a government that was voted against.
9 I feel that when I walk into a community, any community
10 of Métis people, that these people have no faith in the
11 system that I currently sit in.

12 They have asked us many questions as we
13 go from community to community and told us many things.
14 However, because of lack of resources, possibly a lack
15 of manpower and possibly a lack of motivation in terms
16 of having any kind of satisfaction to their needs met,
17 my people voted no. They did not want that.

18 They also voted no to a municipal
19 structure because even the municipalities agreed to this
20 Referendum. They voted no to the churches. They voted
21 no to both federal and provincial governments. I could
22 go on about the many people that voted no to all of these
23 different structures.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 What I think my people are saying is that
2 there needs to be some form of a blueprint, something we
3 can look at, something we can pick apart and something
4 that we think will not divide our families. They need
5 to have some sense of hope that when they make a change
6 in government that the changes of that government, whether
7 it is in our own structure or in the provincial structure,
8 the municipal structure, that their needs will be listened
9 to and, secondly, met.

10 To some degree there needs to be a sense
11 of hope. What the Referendum said was that there is no
12 hope. Many of these structures that these people are
13 organized groups are all agreeing to.

14 So, one of the things that I would like
15 to present to this Commission, as well as to my own peers
16 and also to many of the Métis leaders in this room, as
17 well as the leaders for the new status, as well as the
18 treaty people in this room, that there may be some way
19 that we can do something about this because what I
20 understand from many of the structures that have been
21 proposed or even discussed, and even probably being
22 negotiated as a development model of self-government is
23 always from the top down.

DECEMBER 8, 1992**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 Currently, the Métis Society and the
2 FSIN are in negotiation with your federal and provincial
3 governments to talk about the self-government of these
4 people behind me, but they don't come here and talk about
5 that. In the Métis Society we have close to \$1 million
6 that these people have some say in. That is not happening
7 right now. It's not coming to the community. Developing
8 a model must have that basis in it, at least that, that
9 it should come from the community and that the community
10 should, first of all, have some stake in it, and that the
11 community has a meaningful role to play in that government
12 structure and in the resource and the use of those
13 resources.

14 The society that I represent currently
15 has many, many warts, if you want to call them. They are
16 currently set up in the structure that is very binding
17 to our people in terms of a non-profit organization. The
18 non-profit, as you may have heard through how many
19 communities, is a licence to hold bingos. It is exactly
20 that that binds our people together, as well as apart.

21 That constitution that we live under
22 currently represents this part of Saskatchewan. It is
23 meant to have people like Max Morin to represent the views

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 of our community, to a provincial structure with no
2 resources. Max Morin does not have a staff. I do not
3 have a staff. I'm not saying that the problems are rooted
4 in having staff. I would like to see how far the two of
5 you would go, or the three of you I should say, without
6 staff, without adequate resources to help you.

7 Our communities are suffering and they
8 are suffering at the lack of resources being given to those
9 communities, not necessarily to the structures in those
10 communities and at a provincial level. The community
11 needs to see, just as we say uranium development is not
12 doing northerners any good because the northern money is
13 not being used in the community. It is being channelled
14 through a provincial body which is the provincial
15 government. All the monies that you receive here from
16 uranium in terms of royalties goes to them.

17 Well, the same kind of system is being
18 used at this point in terms of getting money to the people
19 of Ile-à-La-Crosse, Pinehouse and all the different Métis
20 communities by giving it to a provincial body. That may
21 have worked previously and those structures are probably
22 good in their own right, but they are not being beneficial
23 to our people here.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 One of the things that the Métis Society
2 has had many problems with is that same Constitution that
3 I talked to you about. The Constitution was not born of
4 the people. It is a draft skeleton constitution out of
5 the non-profits corporations branch in Regina. That is
6 supposed to administer and that is supposed to appease
7 the needs of our people? I hardly think so. I hardly
8 think that it even meets the needs of a ball club in the
9 community.

10 The avenues we have to change that are
11 not in front of us. We were discussing a Métis act at
12 some point. That may still be something that we discuss,
13 but currently what is going on is the federal and provincial
14 governments are entering into negotiations with the Métis
15 Society regarding monies for some of the needs that were
16 identified throughout the time I've been here. Whether
17 they get identified I am not sure is even measurable or
18 whether there is even anything in the contract to measure
19 the evaluation or the success of those monies.

20 However, I think that they would be
21 measured far more adequately if they were given to the
22 community and the community had to assess whether they
23 met the needs or not.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Developing a model for self-government,
2 at least from some degree and from what I can tell from
3 the people who have spoken to me, as well as the many diverse
4 groups of people in our Métis communities in the north,
5 would not be I suppose meaningful in the south because
6 the south, as Edna says, are southern problems and has
7 its own kind of warts.

8 In the north we have very many diverse
9 communities and diverse people. So, we need to come
10 together to some degree in terms of these groups of people.
11 So, with provincial and federal representatives we have
12 to identify areas of geographic boundaries for, let's say
13 the Métis community in Ile-à-La-Crosse. We have to do
14 that so that we can identify areas that are exclusive to
15 the provincial government's jurisdiction, exclusively to
16 theirs. We have to be able to identify who has
17 jurisdiction in that particular boundary area, in that
18 geographic area.

19 Then we also have to identify areas of
20 exclusive federal government jurisdiction because those
21 particular areas are in this community. This community
22 is very unique in that way. That would mean the treaty
23 Indians in our community, that would mean probably the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 majority of welfare recipients in our community in terms
2 of an example for the exclusive provincial government
3 jurisdiction. We also then have to identify areas of
4 concurrent Métis provincial jurisdiction, where the Métis
5 have a say, where the provincial government has a say,
6 both happening at the same time.

7 We also have to identify areas of
8 concurrent Métis and federal jurisdiction. Also, we have
9 to identify areas of concurrent Métis, provincial and
10 federal jurisdiction, where all three parties are at work.

11

12 After having identified these
13 structures, then we have to identify at least to some degree
14 a proposed structure of government, of a Métis government
15 in the community of Ile-à-La-Crosse because the majority
16 of people in this community are of Métis ancestry.

17 We also have to identify executive
18 branch and administration for this type of government.
19 On the legislative branch, an administrative arm for this
20 type of government. If anyone wants to maybe get a picture
21 in their mind of what I am talking about, you possibly
22 could look at the way the NWT and the Yukon run. These
23 are governments represented by the people, for the people.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 This is basically the kind of model. It is not quite
2 exactly like it, but that was a model that I had been
3 familiar with.

4 We also have to identify a judicial
5 branch and an administration arm, not only just a
6 legislative as well as a judicial branch.

7 Then, with all these parties in hand,
8 federal, provincial and the Métis, we have to determine
9 how we are going to finance a Métis government, with
10 legislative powers, with an executive branch and
11 administration powers, with a judicial branch and
12 administration powers, no less than the NWT.

13 We also have to sit and develop a
14 constitution of this government, be it Ile-à-La-Crosse,
15 Pinehouse or whatever. We have to sit and develop a
16 constitution specifically for this community.

17 We also have to have a public government;
18 this government enfranchising all of the citizens of this
19 area. In other words, allowing them to have a say and
20 allowing them to have a vote in this area.

21 This is fine until possibly when there
22 are more white people here than there are Métis. So, what
23 needs to happen in this type of -- determining citizenship.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 You have to have at least a minimum protection, proportion
2 of the Métis executive and legislative representation,
3 if and when the Métis ever become a minority. So, it is
4 one thing to agree to say everybody can vote. There needs
5 to be a guarantee that in case where the Métis are no longer
6 going to be a majority in that community, that they have
7 some minimum protection.

8 In the judicial system, as I was talking
9 earlier and determining whether this government can
10 perform like a government, I would try to walk you through
11 a scenario of an offence being created in or have been
12 done in the community of Ile-à-La-Crosse. I think that
13 provincially legislated and federally legislated offences
14 may be heard first in a Métis court here in the community.

15 After that, the Métis federal and provincial agreement
16 on which categories of decisions may be appealed from a
17 Métis court to a provincial court to a Queen's Bench court,
18 to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal, to the Supreme Court
19 of Canada. It is only merely creating another level,
20 starting of course back at the community, not at the
21 provincial level, but starting at a community level.

22 Métis federal and provincial agreements
23 on areas of administration and/or program delivery, that

DECEMBER 8, 1992**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 the Métis government at its own initiative may delegate
2 by Métis government regulations to other orders of
3 government. In other words, what I am suggesting there
4 is that when things need to be administered through, for
5 the people in a geographic area, that they be administered
6 through a Métis government. That Métis government
7 basically becomes a contractor and will deliver those
8 programs on behalf of the people.

9 The community of Ile-à-La-Crosse can
10 establish maybe possibly a Saskatchewan pilot project in
11 Métis self-government with the opportunity after one year
12 for other communities in the same region to enter into
13 negotiations at their own initiative with the federal and
14 provincial governments to form their own Métis
15 governments. What I am suggesting to you is that maybe
16 the community of Ile-à-La-Crosse could be used for such
17 a project because of its diversity on citizenship in this
18 community.

19 After so many designated years and so
20 many communities have joined a system similar to what I
21 am suggesting of communities in the region, that at their
22 own initiative to have the option of initiating
23 negotiations with the federal and provincial governments

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 to form a regional Métis government, where the people in
2 that community can choose their leader in that community
3 and have them represented at a regional board. It is not
4 necessarily a board, excuse me, but I meant a regional
5 Métis government.

6 Regional government jurisdiction is to
7 be in the areas outside of the community government
8 boundaries. It would make decisions similar to if a
9 uranium industry was or if a uranium company wanted to
10 set up in northern Saskatchewan, it would have to go to
11 a regional board. The decisions would be made by the
12 regional board and the royalties would go to the regional
13 board. The regional board would then disburse them at
14 their discretion and at the mandate that they had been
15 elected on.

16 Regional governments may administer
17 provincial planning and development act and zoning outside
18 communities in the region. Those are things that could
19 be done as a region, as opposed to as a community. Things
20 such as hunting regulations, such as fishing regulations,
21 zoning regulations and planning and development that are
22 currently being done on behalf of us in Regina that we
23 cannot do here and it can be done.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Regional governments may assume
2 responsibility for regional administration of economic
3 development, of resources, of education, of health, social
4 services and other areas agreed to by the communities in
5 that region.

6 After many years of this type of
7 administration and so many communities entering into at
8 least to some degree and respecting this kind of
9 administration, in this northern administration district,
10 may decide to form a northern Métis council to co-ordinate
11 regional initiatives on a northern administration district
12 basis.

13 So, what I am suggesting to you as
14 Commission members is that there are alternative ways to
15 do this, alternative ways where the actual voices of the
16 people will be heard and that the resources that are being
17 now currently channelled through the provincial government
18 and federal government back to the communities is not
19 working and that there may be another way. This is just
20 an example, as well as one that may get picked apart and
21 that is fine. At least we have somewhere to start other
22 than the Non-profits Corporations Act, where at least the
23 non-native community, the native community, as well as

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 the Métis community can all be players, all together in
2 a government that is going to be representative of them.
3 And that the community will control the resources, not
4 the resources being controlled by the provincial
5 government and then further on to another provincial body
6 and then finally to a regional area and then back to the
7 community.

8 Those are not acceptable ways any
9 longer. Our people rejected that. There are not many,
10 many communities that had a majority yes vote in the Métis
11 communities in northern Saskatchewan. They did that
12 because they have little hope for this society that I belong
13 to and the one that I has some hope to be able to do something
14 similar to this, or something that would be representative
15 to the people will be listened to and at least discussed.

16 If anything, I would hope that many people would take
17 this apart. It is taking me quite a bit to put this on
18 paper and to be criticized.

19 When you write something you feel that
20 somebody shouldn't criticize it. Well, I have tried to
21 come up with a model that will not separate me from my
22 brother and my sister who are treaty Indian. I tried to
23 come up with a model that I can live in harmony with my

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 own people and that I sit in Saskatoon being able to say,
2 "Hey, I was placed here by those people," and different
3 structures and coming up in a different way and not in
4 a system that is probably something that you recognize
5 and respect and trust because it's a system you are familiar
6 with and have been raised in. It's not one I have been
7 raised in. It's one that is very unfair and very unfair
8 to women and very unfair to northerners.

9 So, I will leave this with you and,
10 hopefully, it will end up in one of your papers and someone
11 might say, "Hey, this might work in my area." It will
12 at least plant a seed where there seemed to be some
13 hopelessness. Then, many times in my communities as well
14 as my year at the Métis Society in February, I sit and
15 I ponder what really am I doing in terms of helping my
16 own people, in terms of identifying ways of going about
17 addressing some of the issues that were discussed here
18 today.

19 So, I am honoured to have spoken in front
20 of you. I am more honoured to speak in front of my own
21 community. I am very proud to be here. I wish you well
22 in La Loche. Thank you for your time.

23 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 much for coming and meeting with us and sharing your
2 thinking, your post-Referendum thinking.

3 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** That's what it
4 was.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We under-stand
6 that developing a model of self-government is certainly
7 a major concern for many people across the country after
8 the Referendum and for this Commission we are looking at
9 the alternatives now that we know the result of the vote.
10 The presentation you made is certainly directly in line
11 with what we are hoping to get. We really appreciate it.

12 We understand that it is not easy for
13 you to come up with a precise brief, a specific brief,
14 as this one, but we are very happy that you did it.

15 I understand you talk about a three-tier
16 government. I understand also that it would be a Métis
17 government, but that we start from the community.

18 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** That's right.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** It would be the
20 choice of people to include treaty people living in the
21 community and non-Aboriginal people. **MS BERNICE**

22 **HAMMERSMITH:** As well as non-native.

23 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** Yes.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** My question
2 is, the relationship with the province and the feds and
3 the municipalities, the municipal governments that will
4 still be here. Did you work on that?

5 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** My suggestion
6 is to have the two come together, as opposed to having
7 it separate at this time. Right now we have a municipal
8 structure that is a replica to rostern. It is very
9 inadequate and it is not meeting the needs of this community
10 or any communities in the north because it is that. It's
11 a municipality structure.

12 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So what you are
13 talking about is not a parallel system to the -- it's a
14 public government system?

15 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** That's right.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** That would
17 happen to be majority Métis?

18 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** That's right
19 and a minimum Métis.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** And a minimum
21 Métis, depending on the areas.

22 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** Depending on
23 the geographic area that you are discussing. It would

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 be similar to bringing together -- my assumption is that
2 when there is an election in the town of Ile-à-La-Crosse
3 that just as many people would show up to vote for the
4 mayor as would come out and vote for Max Morin, who are
5 two levels of government. It should surely not have to
6 be that way because, basically, they are dealing with the
7 same problems that happened in this community. Maybe
8 Bucklely may be specific to this community, but he meets
9 also with a regional board. That kind of government needs
10 to be respected, not in terms of a municipality respect
11 because that is a different ball all together, but respect
12 as a government of this community.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Mary.

14 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you
15 very much.

16 Mr. Dussault has to leave us for a few
17 minutes to do an interview, but I am going to continue
18 the line of questioning. I understand that we will have
19 a short break afterwards.

20 First of all, I would like to thank you
21 very much for your presentation. I look forward to having
22 an opportunity to examine it thoroughly because one of
23 the really difficult issues that we are looking at as a

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 whole is the whole issue of self-government. One of the
2 things we have heard from other presentations is that in
3 terms of self-government they feel that the accountability
4 is not an issue because elections can take care of that,
5 board of directors meetings can take care of that.

6 In other places we've heard that that's
7 what they have in place now with respect to the bands and
8 it still doesn't resolve the accountability issue. There
9 are many bands that are not accountable, for example, to
10 their membership. The membership is not involved in major
11 decisions and if there is any self-government model that
12 emerges it must be accountable.

13 I am wondering, in your model have you
14 considered that, how you can address this whole
15 accountability issue?

16 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** Just as there
17 are as many questions about accountability of Ray Funk
18 and Fred Thompson, yes, because those people are not being
19 asked to be accountable to a great degree. I find that
20 there is less scrutiny on them than there is on band chiefs.
21 Band chiefs will fall in line.

22 There needs to be at least some degree
23 of awareness created. Many native bands, no awareness

DECEMBER 8, 1992**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 is created and that model that they are working on is not
2 coming from them. It comes from an Indian Act. This I
3 suggest will come from this community, where the treaty
4 will meet with the Métis and the Métis will meet with the
5 non-native people. It will come from here. It will be
6 borne from here and it won't have the warts, I suspect,
7 that the Indian Affairs model has. There are ways to be
8 able to police that kind of activity because we finally
9 will have some jurisdiction about what goes on in our
10 communities, not just as a token, but legally we will have
11 because we will be another level of government in the
12 community, not in Saskatoon or Regina or somewhere else,
13 or possibly even La Ronge.

14 The government structure will be done
15 here, just as what happens in a social services scenario,
16 when I go to apply, the regulations of the provincial
17 government are being applied to me right in front of me
18 as I apply for social assistance. Well, the same
19 regulations will be applied to me from a Métis government
20 structure and that the negotiations between me and the
21 provincial government as somebody that votes in that
22 community will be a different area of jurisdiction. Who
23 I will be addressing my concerns to will be the Métis

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 government in that community and they will have to talk
2 to a provincial government because that will be the next
3 level of government. I shouldn't say levels, but
4 concurrent level of government. It will be a straight
5 line.

6 COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT: I guess I
7 don't know who you are referring to, but the same rules
8 of accountability will apply to certain people. For
9 example, I know we can look at the Ontario government.
10 For example, Cabinet ministers have to behave
11 appropriately. There have been some that have been
12 removed from their Cabinet positions. I don't know what
13 rules of accountability apply to them, but there are rules
14 of accountability that definitely apply to them.

15 What I hear in some other communities
16 from women and also from men are things which quite disturb
17 me personally. I hear, for example, of Presidents of
18 various associations or leaders of various associations
19 they abuse women. That's public knowledge, but still
20 there is no way of making that person accountable for their
21 behaviour, so I think that accountability is an issue in
22 some quarters. That's why I raise that particular issue.

23

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 I am wondering from your perspective is
2 accountability an issue as well?

3 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** Yes, it is.
4 Throughout this all, and I don't know if you have been
5 involved at all or have paid much attention to some of
6 the discussions that go on in Métis forums. However, one
7 of the things that needs to happen is we need to develop
8 some code of behaviour, just as you do in the legislature
9 now. You have a code of behaviour that upon performing
10 these kinds of outrageous activities that you will be
11 removed from office.

12 It's as simple as that. If the elders
13 don't remove them, then the legislation will because I
14 am telling you that what I am saying to you is this
15 community, as well as a regional board, will have
16 legislative powers to do that. They will have their own
17 legislature and it truly will come from here, as opposed
18 to coming from the south or from the top down.

19 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** So this
20 legislature that you are thinking about, will they be
21 elected?

22 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** Yes.

23 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** You

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 mentioned elders, right?

2 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** Yes.

3 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** So you see
4 a role for elders in this structure?

5 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** There is a big
6 role for elders, as well as a quota possibly even in terms
7 of affirmative action in getting women elected and
8 definitely a role for elders. My suggestion is always
9 that they be the supreme ruling body, just as you have
10 in terms of your government a Senate.

11 Well, our elders are very honourable
12 people and possibly would cost us less money if we would
13 go running to them, as opposed to running to a lawyer and
14 getting our problems solved. Our community people know
15 that, but there are some things that are beyond them too,
16 problems that are happening currently, things that they
17 have never had to deal with before. So, that kind of system
18 that I am asking some understanding on would have a
19 provision in there for elders and also a provision in there
20 for women.

21 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**

22 I have one question, Bernice. Getting out of the model
23 for the time being, have you ever thought of using the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Métis colonies in Alberta or something like that? Have
2 you ever thought of that?

3 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** Yes. I've
4 looked at those carefully. However, what I don't find
5 in them is the ability to make legislation. They are
6 exactly that, colonies. I don't want to turn
7 Ile-à-La-Crosse into a colony. I want it to be able to
8 have at least some legislative power and the ability to
9 make legislation and be able to participate alongside the
10 provincial and federal government, and to negotiate on
11 behalf of their own people in regards to things that go
12 on in the north.

13 Given, I understand, that there may be
14 a different structure for the south and the membership
15 there, the Métis membership.

16 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**
17 That's all I had.

18 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you
19 very much.

20 **MS BERNICE HAMMERSMITH:** Thank you.

21 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Thank you, Bernice.

22 We will now break for coffee for 15
23 minutes.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 --- Short Recess at 3:42 p.m.

2 --- Upon Resuming at 4:00 p.m.

3 MR. MAX MORIN: (Native language - no
4 translation).

5 We have D.W. Deschambeault. He is going
6 to be making a presentation on Aboriginal languages and
7 he says about five minutes. I am timing here, so I am
8 giving him five minutes.

9 Then we have Jim, then Brian, then Rick
10 Laliberte.

11 MR. DARREN DESCHAMBEAULT: Hi. My name
12 is Darren Deschambeault. I am one of those forgotten
13 people from Canada, a Métis, one of the original people
14 of this land.

15 One of the things that I would like to
16 address and talk about at this time is an Aboriginal
17 language institute. I think it is important. It's one
18 of the pillars of a society. Our languages are being lost
19 at a rapid rate, even though we are quadrupling and
20 multiplying at a rapid rate, we are losing at the same
21 time too.

22 I have been talking to people across this
23 country for the last ten years, telling them that it is

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 important. We have to try and retain our languages. It
2 is one of the key elements in a culture. If you lose your
3 language, you lose your culture, you lose your identity
4 as a people. You lose, you are lost, they've won.

5 I have been telling them we need to try
6 and retain this. How do we do this? We have to have a
7 language institute, an Aboriginal language institute.
8 When you look at the English language, there is Japanese,
9 Chinese, there are about ten maybe. If you look at the
10 Aboriginal languages, there are still about 75 different
11 Aboriginal languages in this country, but in the last ten
12 years, since I started talking about this, we have lost
13 about 17 Aboriginal languages.

14 I was talking to a guy the other day.
15 He was telling me "ugliwoogalibiutli" and nobody
16 understands what I've just said. He said he was the last
17 of his tribe, that was it. Once he's gone, it's gone,
18 it's history, it's toast.

19 We have to retain that language. It's
20 really important. We have to utilize our elders. Our
21 elders are our professors in linguistics. Those are our
22 professors. We have to try and utilize our elders in the
23 communities. This year alone in northern Saskatchewan

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 we must have lost about 22 linguistic professors that are
2 gone forever. All of that history, all of that knowledge
3 is gone. We cannot get that back. We have to get together
4 and not only does it have to be treaty or Indian or whatever,
5 but it has got to be the whole works, Métis, non-status,
6 treaties, everybody, the language.

7 Language doesn't look at what race you
8 are. It's a language. You learn that when you grow up.
9 Language is different too. You try and tell a story in
10 Cree and try and tell the same story in English, it doesn't
11 sound funny any more. It's gone.

12 Language can be used for the educational
13 institution. It can be used for -- I was just talking
14 to a fellow the other day about language and how it can
15 be used, how they can utilize all of these elders, educate
16 the young people. You can take the young people and
17 educate them in the justice system. Take them and they
18 could be trained in legalese. I was telling him the
19 federal government could save billions of dollars a year
20 on incarceration if you could teach these people how to
21 sit there and translate. A lot of these people are going
22 to jail for nothing. You could avoid all of that if you
23 could have an interpreter sitting beside the judge who

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 knows the Aboriginal language and also the legal
2 terminology. You could do away with a lot of money being
3 spent foolishly.

4 You could do a lot in regards to the
5 educational institutions and, for example, the Gabriel
6 Dumont Federated College, you could take some of these
7 elders and put them in the school systems themselves too
8 to retain some of that culture, some of that history.

9 You can take a 12-inch ruler and that
10 12-inch ruler itself, two inches of it is five years of
11 Aboriginal people in this country. The rest of that is
12 10,000 years of Aboriginal people's history which is
13 totally forgotten.

14 Why is that? These are some of the
15 things that have to be addressed, but with an Aboriginal
16 language institute, I think it would ensure that. That
17 has to be done now. I've been talking about it for ten
18 years. Seventeen languages lost now in ten years. What
19 is it going to be like in the next ten years? We are on
20 the verge of losing another three more in Canada right
21 now, but I think it is important.

22 All the time the politicians they go
23 talking and everything. Once in a while I hear one of

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 them will speak up in their Aboriginal language a little
2 bit and that's it. It's mostly in English. Everything
3 is in English.

4 My five minutes are up. Thank you very
5 much.

6 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Thank you.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I must say it's
8 not the first time that this proposal is put forward to
9 establish an institute for Aboriginal languages. We are
10 certainly going to look at it very carefully.

11 We realize that what you just said, that
12 many of those languages have been lost in the last ten
13 years. There are still more than people think there are.
14 It's time -- it shows that it's time for action on that
15 because that is going to be lost. Thank you very much
16 for your contribution.

17 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**

18 Before you leave, Darren, has anyone started implementing
19 some sort of a plan regarding the Aboriginal language
20 institute?

21 **MR. DARREN DESCHAMBEAULT:** Yes.

22 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**

23 Where it would be situated and have you got the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 documentation?

2 **MR. DARREN DESCHAMBEAULT:** What I did
3 was I talked to FSI and I talked to the Métis Society,
4 some people in GDI. I talked to Saskatchewan Education
5 and what they did -- what Saskatchewan Education did was
6 they have a proposal right now in place. It has been
7 sitting there for eight years and I don't know why, but
8 they have one for an Aboriginal language institute and
9 who would -- I don't know, but maybe they could get together
10 on this one, the treaties, the Métis and the non-status.
11 They could get together on this one, amalgamate and say,
12 "Okay, we are all in it together for one common purpose,
13 to retain language."

14 But who, I don't know, as long as it is
15 somewhere today, now. It doesn't matter who. Whoever
16 wants to it's up to them, but it has got to be somebody
17 soon, because you are looking at some school boards in
18 the north here. They have had Aboriginal language
19 teachers, some school boards, and now they don't even have
20 that. They have lost Meschef, they lost Cree, Dene. You
21 can look at some of the school boards in the north here
22 and they don't have them any more, Aboriginal language
23 instructors because of funding restraints, because of

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 cutting corners. I think it is important though.

2 COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:

3 Thank you.

4 MR. MAX MORIN: Thank you, D.W.

5 I will call on Jim Favel. He is a Métis
6 activist and the Deputy Mayor from Ile-à-La-Crosse. He
7 has always been speaking on issues pertaining to the native
8 people of the north. Jim.

9 MR. JIM FAVEL: Thank you.

10 I would like to welcome the Commission
11 to Ile-à-La-Crosse. I hope on your stay here you will
12 get a lot of information from the people you are listening
13 to today.

14 As I said the opening prayer this
15 morning, when I said it in my own language I said, let
16 these people hear us. Let them hear the things that we
17 are saying, that we've told other commissions that have
18 been around, the Spicer Commission, the Bayda Commission,
19 the Mitchell Commission, all of these commissions that
20 have been travelling throughout the north and asking people
21 what do you want. They always ask us that.

22 We have told them a hundred times, maybe
23 300 times what we want as native people is we want to control

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 our own future and our own destiny. I guess in simple
2 terms that's the way I have to put it because too long
3 we have been controlled by government institutions.

4 We talk about economic development.
5 Native people are the biggest economic development in this
6 country for other people. We are. There are so many
7 people looking after us. I always say it's time that we
8 take control of our destiny and our future.

9 When I was at the blockade this summer
10 I went there because I had a belief that justice should
11 be done for native people because when they brought in
12 the pulpmill they never came north. They never asked us
13 whether the pulp mill should be in Meadow Lake. They never
14 consulted with us when they started to log. The only time
15 they started to consult with us is when we started to stand
16 on the road.

17 We weren't against development. All we
18 were saying is that we want to be part of development.
19 But if we are not part of development, naturally we are
20 going to fight it.

21 Look around you when you travel around
22 Ile-à-La-Crosse. You will see a lot of houses built by
23 governments. These houses, most of them are rental

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 houses. People are on social assistance and they give
2 them rent and the government gets back their own money.

3 Why can't the councils of the north control these houses?

4 Why can't we have money coming back to our community?

5 When we talk about self-government these
6 are the things that we should be talking about. It really
7 makes me angry when I see things happening around me and
8 there is nothing you can do about it. The governments
9 always have their way. The big corporations always have
10 their way because they do a selling job and they have the
11 money. As soon as people try to stand up to the big
12 corporations they buy a few people and they say, "This
13 is good for you. It's going to create jobs. It's going
14 to do a lot of things for you in the north," but instead
15 they never look at the effects that it has on native people.

16

17 It has a lot of effects on us in northern
18 Saskatchewan. It has drugs, alcohol. You will see it,
19 suicides, and I always say they are building the ghettos
20 bigger in the north. The ghettos are getting bigger and
21 there is no economic stability.

22 Where are we going to go? There are more
23 and more people coming on stream. Kids are having kids.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 There are a lot of young people in northern Saskatchewan,
2 even here in my own community and looking around I don't
3 know a lot of young people, they are growing up so fast.

4

5 We have an industry, fishing, but some
6 years it is good and some years it is bad. Like this year
7 it's bad. It's a bad year.

8 When I watch the news, a lot of times
9 when they have problems in Newfoundland with fishing, the
10 government always supports them. They give them money.

11 When we have problems up here, nobody ever tries to help
12 us out. We are a lost voice somewhere in the wilderness,
13 that's the way I see ourselves as native people. I think
14 it's time that people started to listen to us.

15 I don't know where the things that we
16 are telling you are going to go, or are they just going
17 to go on the shelf. These are the things that I think
18 about because I've seen so many commissions, I've seen
19 so many reports that have been done and nothing has really
20 been accomplished.

21 Talk about the Referendum. I see the
22 Referendum as a thing that the government didn't really
23 push. They pushed it with ads, scare tactics, but they

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 really didn't want it to pass because they didn't really
2 want to give control to Aboriginal people, the control
3 that other people were talking about. That's the way I
4 see it and anything that I say here is my own opinion.

5 I didn't write a brief. I don't need
6 to write a brief because I know what I want to say. It's
7 here in my heart. I say it from the heart. I don't have
8 to have a brief. I think people are not concerned about
9 self-government at this time. People are concerned about
10 survival and that's what we are concerned about; how do
11 we survive as communities?

12 I sit on the Town Council of
13 Ile-à-La-Crosse. All we get a year is over \$500,000 to
14 run a community and the rest are on grants. We don't have
15 any money and there is all kinds of money flowing out of
16 north Saskatchewan. The big mining companies are coming
17 in, the pulpmill in Meadow Lake. I don't know what the
18 statistics are in the pulpmill. I don't know how many
19 native people work in the pulpmill. I don't know how many
20 native people can afford one of them tree snippers. I
21 don't know how many native people can afford skidders,
22 so that leaves us out again.

23 We don't have a place to go. We don't

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 have a bank where we can go and get money. We don't have
2 any cats. All we have is snowbanks and they melt in the
3 spring. The only cats we've got are house cats. These
4 are the things that I always thing about.

5 I don't blame anybody. I think it's
6 time that native people, our own people, have to get up
7 and they have to fight. They have to tell their
8 organization, the Métis organization, what direction they
9 are supposed to go. I don't think our Métis organization
10 should be oriented to programs. I think they should talk
11 on rights and self-government for our people. I think
12 you leave the programs to the bureaucrats, but that's the
13 way I see it anyway. I think there is too much of that.
14 There is too much power and control and that's the way
15 I see it right now.

16 Yes, at one time I was an activist and
17 I believe that native people have to go in one direction,
18 whether you are Métis or treaty. We didn't create that.
19 The government created us. They created a non-status
20 Indian. They created a Métis. They created a Bill C-31.
21 They created all of these Bill Cs and they make us fight
22 and they love that.

23 I remember in the 1970s when they were

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 bringing in the uranium mining, Justice Bayda was here
2 in Ile-à-La-Crosse and saying to the native people, "What
3 do you want?" "What do you want?" The native people,
4 number one, told them, "We want revenue sharing. We want
5 a technical school in northern Saskatchewan." I forget
6 the other one, but these are the things that native people
7 are asking for and an economic development board where
8 we can have a say where the next mines are going to go.
9

10 But we don't have a say in anything that
11 happens in northern Saskatchewan. We don't have a voice.

12 I think it is time that as native people we started
13 speaking out together. Just because the treaty Indian
14 is over here and the Métis is over here, we didn't create
15 that problem. The government created that problem. I
16 think it is time that we started to work together on issues
17 that affect all of us. That's the way I see things.

18 I am not going to speak very long and
19 I told that to Max. I have all kinds of concerns. I have
20 the same kind of concerns that Bishop had this morning
21 about land. The corporations are coming in, they are
22 cutting our forests. The mines are going ahead. Where
23 are we going to be left? We have a boundary of three miles

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 in Ile-à-La-Crosse. Where are we going to go? What are
2 we going to have for economic development? What if the
3 barrel goes dry one day, where are our people going to
4 go? These are the questions that I ask myself. What if
5 the government says this is enough, we are not looking
6 after the native people any more.

7 I think if they only gave us a chance
8 to get into development and be partners with them in mining
9 and forestry, I think we could make a go of it.

10 About the programs, that's in the Métis
11 Society of Saskatchewan. Most of them are in the south.
12 None of them are in the north. We get a few programs,
13 the odd program in the north. I feel that if we are a
14 part of the Métis Society, then some of the programs should
15 come over here because all the buildings are in the south.
16 It's just like the provincial government, they are all
17 in the south and we have always been forgotten as native
18 people in northern Saskatchewan. I think it's time that
19 people started to pay attention to us and started to look
20 at us as people. We are around, we are here and we are
21 here to stay.

22 One more thing before I go. Years back
23 when the uranium mine shut down in Uranium City, there

DECEMBER 8, 1992**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 were 10,000 people in Uranium City because it was a boom
2 town on uranium. There were 10,000 people there, but today
3 there are about 200 people left, maybe 250. I can't say
4 how many. At one time when there was a boom town in La
5 Ronge, it wasn't a boom town on industry; it was a boom
6 town on bureaucrats. They were falling all over
7 themselves to look after us in the north. They spent
8 millions and millions of dollars that could have been given
9 to the communities and the communities could have used
10 that money to build infrastructures in the communities.

11

12 There is no reason why we can't have a
13 good alcohol and drug centre in northern Saskatchewan,
14 instead of that old building that we bought. It's not
15 adequate.

16 There are a lot of things that haven't
17 been done for us in the north and yet we take everything
18 laying down, not saying nothing. I don't know why it is.

19 Maybe people are scared to go and stand on the road.
20 Maybe they say, "Where am I going to go if they cut off
21 my welfare cheque? How am I going to make a living,"
22 because they squeeze you and there's not very much you
23 can do. I don't blame them.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 These are the things that we face. I
2 hope you hear us and I hope you give the recommendations.
3 I know you will. When the Spicer Commission came here,
4 we told them the same things that we are telling you.
5 I think education is one important thing too for native
6 people in the north. If we want to survive and if we want
7 to compete, we have to be just like anybody else. We have
8 to stand in line and we have to have that certificate.
9 We have to say, "Hey, I'm qualified. I can do that job."

10 I think we are working towards that direction, but it
11 is slow and sometimes painful for young people, especially
12 Métis people. We just can't go and leave home and a lot
13 of our young people can't leave home and go to university
14 because they haven't got any money.

15 Frank was talking about a university.

16 I don't see why we can't have a university in northern
17 Saskatchewan. Why not? There are a lot of other
18 Aboriginal groups right across the country. Why can't
19 we have our own university as native people? Why can't
20 we educate ourselves? Native people are smart. We speak
21 two languages. But like somebody said, we are starting
22 to lose them.

23 I don't think we can blame the schools

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 for losing our language. I think the parents have to teach
2 their kids to speak Cree.

3 With that, I thank you for listening to
4 me. I wish you the best in La Loche tomorrow. Merci.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Merci. Thank
6 you for sharing your thoughts with us, particularly
7 because, as you said, the problems won't disappear by magic
8 solutions. When you talk about education, it's obvious
9 to us that much more could be done to bring more programs
10 in education up north. It is done in some countries and
11 there is no reason why it should not be done.

12 **MR. JIM FAVEL:** I think education is the
13 key for the young people.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** It is. People
15 are talking about it everywhere we go. This week we will
16 have covered 70 communities in the first two rounds of
17 Hearings.

18 **MR. JIM FAVEL:** There is one thing I
19 wanted to say too, that nobody ever talks about the
20 fishermen. There are a lot of fishermen who don't have
21 a trade or who have no place to go sometimes, even the
22 trapper. You have to do something for those people also.

23

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 You can do something for people in
2 Newfoundland and you can do something for people here.
3 I don't see any difference between us, except maybe we
4 are Indian and maybe they're --

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** And your
6 message that people are more concerned with improving life
7 conditions and survival than self-government, I take it
8 as not a statement that says that things are urgent. Of
9 course, self-government will probably be the solution for
10 helping the maintenance of cultures and also to help people
11 regain pride in their identity, but we realize that we
12 have to work as a Commission on both aspects.

13 **MR. JIM FAVEL:** I think self-government
14 will come in its own time, I feel anyway, but maybe you
15 could push it. I think Mulroney was really pushing the
16 Referendum. I think he killed it instead of helping it
17 along. If he would have maybe got out of the way it would
18 have passed, but people are pushing and they had so many
19 ads running all over the place that I feel they sort of
20 killed it. I don't think they were really serious in
21 giving us control.

22 That's the way I feel because I have been
23 around for a long time. I have seen a lot of government

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 promises that have been broken. I think we are going to
2 see a lot more before things get better.

3 I thank you for listening to me.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
5 much.

6 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you.

7 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Thank you, Jim.

8 I will now call on Brian Favel. He is
9 the Secretary-Treasurer for the Métis Society, Local 21
10 here in Ile-à-La-Crosse. He is going to be making a
11 presentation on a couple of issues. Thank you.

12 **MR. BRIAN FAVEL, (Secretary-Treasurer,**
13 **Métis Society, Local 21):** Thank you, Max. I would like
14 to welcome the Commission here to Sakitawak.

15 First of all, before I start my
16 presentation I would make a comment on what Senator Vital
17 Morin had to say regarding the justice system. It is true
18 that there is not a fair justice system for native people.
19 I would like to add one comment, before the prosecutor,
20 the judge and the lawyer get here to Ile-à-La-Crosse for
21 court, the decision is already made as to who goes to jail,
22 who gets a fine. That's why I am saying it's not fair
23 regarding the justice system for native people.

DECEMBER 8, 1992**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 The reason I am saying that is the judge,
2 the lawyer and the prosecutor all fly in together from
3 La Ronge and they have all the files with them of what
4 people are to be in court. This is not fair to the people
5 who are going to court. I would like to make my
6 presentation on the community based university programs
7 and student loans. I will begin with some background
8 information. The Gabriel Dumont Institute, an affiliate
9 of the Métis Society of Saskatchewan, an educational
10 institute for Métis people, I would like to maybe go back
11 to history in the making. 1983 was an historical moment
12 for Ile-à-La-Crosse here. The first ever university
13 accredited program to come north to Ile-à-La-Crosse was
14 offered by the Gabriel Dumont Institute, a pilot university
15 project which became successful and expanded to different
16 communities in the north.

17 People were impressed by university
18 programs coming north; opportunity here at last.
19 Post-secondary education closer to home and within the
20 native culture and that was supported by the citizens of
21 this community. We were given a chance to prove to the
22 government that as Métis people we could be educated at
23 the university level and compete for employment in the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 workforce with other cultural minorities. This became
2 a reality.

3 Since then, the Gabriel Dumont Institute
4 has been delivering university technical programs in the
5 north for the past ten years. Throughout the north
6 students have been graduating for these programs and some
7 have even furthered their education in obtaining a degree
8 or a Master's. That is the history or the background of
9 the Gabriel Dumont Institute here which has been very
10 successful in delivering programs.

11 Under the heading of student loans, I
12 would like to say that in looking back at all the programs
13 we received, I asked a question of was it all a waste of
14 time? To some it was. Due to the accessibility of
15 funding, which some students look at as government trying
16 to opposed Aboriginal people.

17 As Aboriginal people this type of
18 funding was new to us, student loans. Here is a student
19 loan, fill it out and they throw this funding on you.
20 People didn't know anything about the student loan system.
21 It was a student loan to be paid back to the federal
22 government and also to the provincial, Saskatchewan
23 Student Loans and Canada Student Loans.

DECEMBER 8, 1992**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 There were never any representatives
2 from financial services sent down to explain the process
3 of student loans, remission forms and students felt that
4 this type of funding didn't have to be paid back to the
5 government. Little did we know that we would encounter
6 problems financially related.

7 Under the heading of "Students Encounter
8 Financial Oppression," to think about it now, being
9 educated is to gain determination and insight to what the
10 work force had to offer us as Aboriginal people. Instead
11 of government looking at us as Aboriginal people with an
12 education, they go and create a new form of oppression,
13 financial oppression. I can say for a fact that students
14 throughout the north and as well as throughout Canada owe
15 the government Student Loan funding and this has become
16 a real problem, especially with Aboriginal people, due
17 to collection agencies. We get threats and harassments.

18

19 Students throughout the north are being
20 steadily threatened and harassed by phone, letters. How
21 does an unemployed person on welfare or UIC be expected
22 to pay back money they borrowed when living below the
23 poverty line. The people, the students who have some sort

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 of post-secondary training and have the determination to
2 work and want to work are being denied a right to gain
3 work experience. The reason being that collection
4 agencies find out you are working and they start
5 threatening and harassing you, such as, "We can garnishee
6 your paycheque," or "We can cut off you off your welfare,
7 pull your UIC cheque, income tax," without ever seeing
8 your income tax.

9 This is where financial oppression sets
10 in. It's back to the same government dependency, such
11 as social assistance.

12 In closing, I would like to stress to
13 the Commission my concerns for the people who are trying
14 to educate themselves and to compete in the workforce.
15 Number one, if the Commission could somehow find a solution
16 so that Aboriginal students are admissible for what the
17 government says we owe them. In order for us to obtain
18 a better education for the future generations is there
19 any way, or I'd like to say to the Commission if they could
20 recommend this to the provincial and the federal
21 governments.

22 Number two, with all the surrounding
23 mines in the north and all the minerals that are being

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 taken out and nothing being put back, government in
2 exchange should be paying for the right to education
3 regarding Aboriginal people.

4 Number three, if government can't find
5 a solution to the problem, education funding, we are going
6 to see more Aboriginal people quitting their jobs due to
7 the harassment of collection agencies. What will happen
8 is we will be pushed back to where we started, government
9 dependency, social services, which will make us feel that
10 we are not worthy of ourselves because we lose our
11 self-esteem, determination and the self-respect we have
12 as Aboriginal people.

13 Number four, within the northwest area,
14 that's from Green Lake down and regarding all the
15 communities, Beauval, Jans Bay, Cole Bay, La Loche, Turnor
16 Lake and all of these places, Buffalo Narrows, up here
17 in the northwest area is where the major Métis population
18 is. Statistics Canada says there are 12,000 to 14,000
19 Métis people, Métis men, women and children in this area.

20 In comparison to urban areas, a low percentage of Métis
21 population as opposed to the northwest area. So, to the
22 Royal Commission, the Royal Commission should make a
23 recommendation to the federal and provincial governments

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 that a major post-secondary institute be built in a
2 northern centralized community. The reason being the
3 major Métis population is in the northwest area.

4 Before I close here, I would like to
5 refer my next comment or question to Commissioner Durocher.

6 In 1989 I got involved in some research with Commissioner
7 Durocher. We went back as far as the first program that
8 came north, right to 1987 or was it 1989. We did some
9 research. I got the idea that since the collection
10 agencies were steadily harassing us in the north here,
11 trying to get money from us, I went back and we did some
12 research. I pulled all the files out of all the students
13 who have taken post-secondary education training, what
14 courses they took, how much they borrowed, how much they
15 owed and we wrote a covering letter and this was submitted
16 to the House of Commons. Ever since then we haven't heard
17 anything from the Provincial government or the federal
18 government as to what was to be done about that issue.

19 Maybe Commissioner Durocher can
20 elaborate on that.

21 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**

22 First of all, Brian, I would like to thank you for your
23 presentation. Getting back to the student loan thing,

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 I knew you had done a great deal of research on it. There
2 were other agencies that were involved in the research
3 and the process of trying to get the student loan being
4 done away with or to try and look at the major cause of
5 the amount owing, the students owing, post-secondary
6 students owing to the student loans.

7 The parties that were involved were the
8 GDI Management Board, the Gabriel Dumont Student
9 Association, the Métis Society of Saskatchewan and the
10 provincial government at the time was the Minister of
11 Education Nicholjohn.

12 I have been in touch since then with an
13 employee of GDI at the head office. I have been talking
14 to her about it. One of the things she told me was that
15 somewhere along the line some representative has been
16 getting a hold of these collection agencies to see if they
17 could -- or to government, to see if they can do away with
18 the interest that the students are paying back. I think
19 it's in small terms of \$5 or \$1 is what is being paid back.

20 One of the things that they were after
21 was, okay, we'll wipe out the interest if you can pay back
22 or even if you can pay back the interest your student loan
23 could be wiped out. As far as I know that's how far they

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 had gotten.

2 One thing I would stress or suggest maybe
3 is somebody mentioned in a presentation this morning about
4 91(24). Now it is just terminology, but if that came into
5 effect, I for one would want to see that that student loan
6 thing is part of that 91(24) as Métis people.

7 Maybe I can suggest now, if Max has any
8 update on it, as to what he has heard about the student
9 loan thing because he has been involved longer than I have.
10 But I share the concern that you have about student loans
11 because I, as a former student, am paying back my loan.
12 So, maybe I can get Max, the moderator, to comment on
13 this as well, Brian, if that is all right with you.

14 **MR. BRIAN FAVEL:** That's all right with
15 me.

16 **MR. MAX MORIN:** I brought that up this
17 morning. We would like to get the Métis people to be
18 treated like our Indian and Inuit brothers and sister.
19 Under 91(24) of the British North America Act they have
20 certain rights and one being education. They can still
21 apply for Canada Student Loans, but they are eligible for
22 a bursary while they are taking post-secondary education
23 programs. That's the kind of programs we initially

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 started in the Province of Saskatchewan with the provincial
2 government when the Gabriel Dumont Institute first
3 started. Then, in 1982 the Conservative government of
4 Grant Devine did away with that program. Since that time
5 our students have had to rely on just student loans to
6 take their post-secondary educational programs.

7 Some people owe as high as \$50,000 by
8 the time they finish their education. They did away with
9 even the loan remission portion of the loan, except for
10 SUNTEP, but the other programs that are currently being
11 delivered or that students with Métis ancestry take,
12 training programs, they have to pay back 100 per cent of
13 their Canada and Saskatchewan student loans.

14 For some of them it takes a matter of
15 10 years to 12 years and we have documented issues such
16 as if you would have stayed at home, like they said earlier
17 in the Woman's presentation, if they would have stayed
18 at home and took care of their children and get welfare
19 to pay for their house or whatever, then they would have
20 been better off and they wouldn't be owing that money.

21 The other thing too is while they are
22 going to school you are eligible for a housing subsidy,
23 a day care subsidy or whatever. If you are on the workforce

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 and you are a teacher or whatever, or whatever education
2 background you have, you lose all of those subsidies.
3 You have to pay your mortgage, rental, no subsidy, no day
4 care subsidy. You have to pay the full amount.

5 So, we have documented it that there are
6 students who are worse off after getting a Bachelor's
7 degree or a Master's degree than they were when they were
8 living on welfare.

9 It's a very crucial issue, student
10 loans. There should be a bursary program similar to what
11 the status Indians and the Inuit are getting while they
12 take post-secondary education. There was an issue
13 regarding putting a cap on that, but we don't have nothing
14 to start off with and we would be happy even to get some
15 sort of a bursary program for our students.

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

17 I think we can see what is the problem
18 very well. For one who has sat in many provinces, it is
19 the first time that it is raised that way, the student
20 loans. This kind of problem of programs exists across
21 Canada. Of course, the fact that status Indians and the
22 Inuit are covered by the federal responsibility, or at
23 least that's the way the federal government sees it, makes

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 this situation happen.

2 When you say in your brief that there
3 was confusion as to whether this was a loan at the start,
4 could you expand a bit. You mentioned at the bottom of
5 page 1 of your brief:

6 "No representative from financial services was sent down
7 to explain --"

8 When in fact was this program
9 implemented; many years ago?

10 **MR. BRIAN FAVEL:** In 1983 was the first
11 program up here. This was the first ever accredited
12 university program and which was a pilot project.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You just
14 received the forms and there was no explanation, nobody
15 came to --

16 **MR. BRIAN FAVEL:** Nobody came, but the
17 student loans were there and the student loans forms were
18 there. They gave them to us and said to fill them out.
19 That was it. There was no representation from Financial
20 Services in Regina regarding remission forms and how to
21 fill out the student loans and explain the whole student
22 loan process. There was quite a bit of confusion.

23 Also, remission forms that came in later

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 on after the course is finished, people didn't know what
2 the remission forms were for. They just chucked them
3 aside.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Is it the same
5 situation here in northern Saskatchewan, that the loans
6 are provided by the banks with the guarantee of the province
7 and the banks are the ones to file with the collection
8 agencies?

9 **MR. BRIAN FAVEL:** Exactly. The
10 Secretary of State -- if you don't pay off the bank, the
11 Secretary of State pays off your loan for you and the
12 Secretary of State in exchange sells your student loan
13 to a collection agency for half price. The collection
14 agencies collect all the money from you, from the student.
15 That's the way I see it. It's government money, it's
16 federal and provincial money.

17 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Just for clarification,
18 when the student loans were first initiated in 1983, like
19 Brian was talking about, there was an assumption and an
20 understanding amongst the people that as long as you got
21 a 60 per cent average and their attendance was about 90
22 per cent, you didn't have to pay back your student loan.
23 Nobody explained to them about remission application

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 forms or whatever.

2 There are two students loans, one is
3 through the Secretary of State and now the provincial
4 government operates the Saskatchewan student loans and
5 they used to issue a cheque every four months or something.

6 Now they are issuing cheques every month to make it a
7 little easier on the students, so they have a one to one
8 basis, but it's all payable. They have to pay it all back.

9 **MR. BRIAN FAVEL:** The remissions were
10 from Saskatchewan student loans now, but there is no
11 remission for federal loans. It's all repayable, but for
12 Saskatchewan provincial then there is some remission for
13 that now. There is a better understanding now than there
14 was before, but still students are being harassed and
15 threatened and they are scared to work. They are
16 determined to work, but they are scared to work.

17 If you work and the collection agency
18 finds out you are working, if you don't pay them back,
19 if you don't make that effort to pay them back, they are
20 going to garnishee your whole paycheque. Some students
21 are saying what's the use of being educated. You might
22 as well go back to government dependency, social
23 assistance.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do you know how
2 many of those loans were made, I suppose many, in the last
3 ten years?

4 **MR. BRIAN FAVEL:** There are quite a few
5 programs here. At least Dumont has been operating in the
6 north for the last ten years, the Gabriel Dumont Institute,
7 delivering technical and university programs through the
8 U of S, the U of R and through SIAS, KELSI. We are talking
9 about technical programs and university programs.

10 My main concern here is what can you do
11 as a Commission to make a recommendation to the federal
12 or provincial government in exchange for what they are
13 taking out of the north and putting nothing back. Could
14 they pay for our education? It's a right for Aboriginal
15 people to be educated and get their education paid, like
16 referring back to section 91(24).

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We have
18 commissioned studies on 91(24). We did that before the
19 Referendum and of course it's even more valid and we are
20 going to look at the root of the problem that is there,
21 the fact that there is no recognition of any
22 responsibility.

23 That being said, are you teaching or what

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 is your status?

2 **MR. BRIAN FAVEL:** I was co-ordinating
3 a program here last year from the
4 U of S, the health care administration program. The
5 Gabriel Dumont Institute was delivering the program.
6 Right now we have 16 students out there in practical
7 placements throughout Saskatchewan. That is a very good
8 percentage out of -- every program was very successful.
9 We have a lot of people who want to work and who could
10 get jobs, but they are scared to work.

11 I've been approached by students right
12 across the north regarding student loans after I did the
13 research. There is not very much I could do. This is
14 my only chance to express my concern on behalf of the
15 students that owe student loans to government.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** As I told you,
17 it's the first time, as far as I'm concerned, or maybe
18 Mary has heard about it before.

19 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I went
20 through it, but it was a long time ago.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We all know the
22 programs, but as far as the Métis people are concerned,
23 so I think you have put your point quite clearly, both

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 verbally and on paper. We are certainly going to have
2 a look at it and see what could be done. It's not an easy
3 chore.

4 Now, at this moment, the information is
5 known?

6 **MR. BRIAN FAVEL:** At this stage, no.
7 Students understand the process because I've been working
8 with the students here all along since the program, I've
9 been in town and I've been explaining the student loan
10 process now to them.

11 If you get funding from somewhere else
12 to go to school, don't take a student loan because you
13 are going to end up like the rest of us. You are going
14 to be oppressed.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** At least the
16 information is there now.

17 **MR. BRIAN FAVEL:** The information is
18 there now. The students now know, but before that it
19 wasn't known to us on funding.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you.
21 Mary.

22 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I would
23 like to thank you very much. I am just wondering, now

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 that the students know exactly what the process is, do
2 some not want to take courses because they know they have
3 to pay it back?

4 **MR. BRIAN FAVEL:** The students now have
5 -- well, I guess it's not a choice. They can go with
6 Manpower funding, CEC, Canada Employment Centre or
7 Manpower or whatever it is. They use that funding now
8 to fund students, but you also have a choice. You can
9 also borrow a student loan at the same time as you are
10 getting your Manpower funding. So, students don't know
11 right from wrong, whether to borrow a student loan or not
12 because the process isn't explained to them. Now they
13 understand the process of student loans because of what
14 other people had to go through.

15 I wanted to say one other thing here.
16 There is one woman in town here who has got six kids and
17 she went to school. They sent the sheriff down from --
18 I don't know where it was -- somewhere in Texas. That's
19 a long way just to come and check her out and see what
20 she had for collateral, like furniture and stuff like that.
21 Well, she never had nothing, so the sheriff came down
22 here and the sheriff just left. He said there was nothing
23 they could take away from her. This woman had to support

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 six kids and go to school at the same time. On top of
2 that, how are you going to pay back your student loan when
3 you are supporting a big family like that?

4 Most people who go to school up north
5 have families. You also should know that we are below
6 the poverty line and we are not expected to make much money
7 as we gain work experience. But that's the main thing
8 here, people want to work. They have a desire to work,
9 but they are scared to work.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
11 much for presenting this brief to us.

12 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Thank you, Brian.

13 I will now call on Rick Laliberte and
14 Harold Schultz to make a presentation on NORTEP, university
15 education.

16 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE, (Chairperson,**
17 **NORTEP/NORPAC Board of Directors):** (Native language -
18 no translation).

19 I wanted to use my first language and
20 I guess it also created an awareness that you have to depend
21 on technology, like you just did there.

22 It is an honour to be here on behalf of
23 the people that I represent in the jurisdiction of

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 education and the map highlights the boundaries that the
2 Northern Education District of NORTEP and NORPAC represent
3 in the communities that are highlighted there.

4 I also couldn't resist on commenting in
5 general on the mandate of the Royal Commission on
6 Aboriginal Peoples. I would like to deal with that first
7 before I focus on the main reason why I am here.

8 Reviewing some of the pamphlets that you
9 have issued, it highlights that the Royal Commission
10 started really when the Mohawk crisis highlighted the
11 Aboriginal issues in Canada and needed some attention and
12 some review. I had an opportunity to attend the crisis
13 in Kanesatake and Kahnawake when it happened in August
14 and September when the heat was on. I entered a war zone
15 in Kanesatake, a semi-war zone in Kahnawake. In Akwesasne
16 it kind of eased up.

17 On our way home we stopped at the Six
18 Nations Reserve and that was a peaceful Mohawk village.
19 So, I had a perspective of four different communities
20 in four different states.

21 I went there very scared with the friends
22 that I travelled with, but when I came back, even before
23 the treatment centre was dismantled, I came back with a

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 sense that there was a message and a reality that I had
2 learned. What I had learned was the white roots of peace
3 and the peacemaker's prophecy setting out the democracy
4 system of the Iroquois Confederacy, that people can govern
5 themselves and live in harmony under the name of peace.

6 So, as a message, or as I guess a focus
7 for the Commission, it is wise for you to educate yourself
8 in that whole democratic system and in the history of how
9 the peacemaker had brought those rules upon our people
10 here on Turtle Island.

11 I speak of Turtle Island as a new learner
12 of this term, that North American was known in the legend
13 as Turtle Island. I never knew that until very recently.
14 That is again the history of our people that is not passed
15 on directly.

16 Also, I guess your mandate is to review
17 and have a good vision of what is happening here in Canada.

18 I just happened to step into the school here in
19 Ile-à-La-Crosse, Rossignol High School, and there is a
20 student art piece on one of the walls and it says "From
21 a Distance." It is a mural of an eagle flying over the
22 land and that is your vision. That should be your vision
23 amongst these travels, as high as an eagle and as clear

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 as an eagle of what is happening on this piece of land,
2 on Turtle Island.

3 With that vision you must look ahead with
4 the Aboriginal vision of seven generations ahead. That
5 is a crucial decision making at this point of the directions
6 you are making and suggestions you will be making to
7 Canadian leaders, but also a lot of direction to be set
8 to our Aboriginal leadership, that we must set forward
9 in the seventh generation ahead, our children's children.
10

11 Also, at the eve of the International
12 Year of Indigenous People, 1993, the United Nations will
13 be declaring the International Year of Indigenous People
14 and I think we need a challenge as Aboriginal people that
15 will give us an opportunity to keep ourselves busy. In
16 Cree we call it "Otimuin" (ph), that means "busy". It's
17 the process of keeping busy.

18 In English you say "business", but then
19 it focuses on money-making things. It isn't necessarily.
20 Business doesn't have to be always making money. You
21 can "Otimuin matsuin" (ph), you can keep busy keeping your
22 life going. It doesn't have to be making money all the
23 time.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 What I would challenge all Aboriginal
2 people of this land is to create and document their family
3 tree in the year of 1993. I challenge all Aboriginal
4 people that we have jurisdiction, to document, to
5 officially put on paper what their family tree is and teach
6 their children. What it will cause is us to visit our
7 families and our elders to create a history, to knowledge
8 ourselves of our past. But it is also to create, to put
9 it in writing so that our children have something to stand
10 on in the future.

11 That is a definite challenge for 1993.

12 Those are some of the general comments
13 I wanted to start off with. I will go into the brief now
14 for the NORTEP program.

15 The brief that is submitted here is an
16 information package on the Northern Teacher Education
17 Program and the Northern Professional Access College.
18 This whole concept started in 1976 and one of your
19 colleagues who was supposed to have been scheduled here,
20 Allan Blakeney, was then the Premier of the province and
21 played an important role in providing leadership to make
22 this possible. It created a program where we deliver
23 university education in the north and the highlight was

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 that in the north back then there was only 3 per cent of
2 the teaching staff in our schools were of native ancestry.

3 Also, most of these teachers were from the south and would
4 come up and teach maybe one, two or three years, get ideal
5 experience and then move south again. It was a very
6 transient teaching staff.

7 So, with that mandate to have more
8 northern teachers, we started delivering a teacher
9 education program in 1976. This program was highlighted
10 for elementary teachers, for the smaller grades. By 1992,
11 just a statistic from the largest school division in the
12 north is the Northern Lights School Division, out of 280
13 teachers, we now have 24 per cent of Aboriginal ancestry.
14 Our goal for the future is under the Education Equity
15 Plan to have 75 per cent that will match the student
16 population that are of Aboriginal ancestry.

17 One thing that highlights the
18 jurisdiction, if you will look at the map, the jurisdiction
19 is covered by the boreal forest, also the Canadian Shield,
20 also two major river systems, actually a touch of the third.

21 The major one is the Churchill River system, the Missinipi
22 River. Then the Athabaska basin and that feeds into the
23 Mackenzie River system. We also have on the southeast

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 corner a touch of the Saskatchewan River system. That's
2 a whole different northern lifestyle as compared to the
3 southern half of the province where all the road grids
4 are and all the prairie farming takes place. It's a
5 different lifestyle.

6 We try and provide university education
7 programming that is work based and community based. We
8 have students who apply from the communities and they will
9 not leave their home while they are enroled in our program.
10 They will maintain their residence either in
11 Ile-à-La-Crosse, La Loche, Cumberland House or as far up
12 as Uranium City. They will go to La Ronge for their
13 classes. We provide professors in the La Ronge location
14 and we provide the university classes there. They will
15 then come home and practice the teaching skills in their
16 classrooms in the community schools.

17 So, these people as students get a
18 reality therapy type of thing for teachers. They will
19 really find out if they want to be teachers. Right from
20 day one in they are in the schools.

21 In 1989 we had to expand our program.
22 We had been busy keeping elementary teachers trained.
23 We now needed high schools. Our high schools were growing

DECEMBER 8, 1992**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 in the north, so now we needed to provide high school
2 teachers. In order to provide high school teachers we
3 needed arts and science programs. There wasn't enough
4 high school teacher involvement or applicants, so what
5 we did was we tied it on to a university bridging program
6 called NORPAC. It's called a professional access college
7 and we provide two years of arts and science in La Ronge,
8 along with the secondary teachers.

9 The university bridging program
10 provides services such as counselling, tutoring. We have
11 housing in La Ronge. It is also a work study program where
12 if somebody is interested in the legal profession we have
13 had people work at the prosecutor's office, we have had
14 people work at the legal aid office. People who are
15 interested in administration will work at village offices
16 or band offices. If they were interested in health they
17 will work in medical clinics. It's a work study program
18 that works quite sufficiently in providing University of
19 Saskatchewan classes and also the University of Regina
20 classes.

21 With all this initiative, the program
22 has its own identity and its own unity. The unity is by
23 elected educational leaders of the north. The original

DECEMBER 8, 1992**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 program was governed by the Northern Lights School
2 Division, which is a K to 12 school division that has an
3 elected mandate. In recent years we have negotiated the
4 tribal councils, the Prince Albert Tribal Council and the
5 Meadow Lake Tribal Council to sit on the governance of
6 NORTEP and NORPAC. In 1993 we will be inviting the
7 Ile-à-La-Crosse School Division and the Creighton School
8 Division to also be a part of the governance of the whole
9 program for future and potential needs in the
10 post-secondary, especially highlighting the university
11 end of education in the north.

12 A lot of our NORTEP teachers have Cree
13 or Dene as their first language, but their teacher
14 education is as regular classroom teachers. They are not
15 Aboriginal language teachers, so at some point in time
16 they are called upon to deliver the Cree and Dene language
17 programs at the schools, but they are not specialists as
18 language teachers. So, NORTEP in our program, we need
19 to specialize in that area. We have calls for more of
20 our schools that want Aboriginal language in the schools,
21 but we can't provide the teachers to deliver that. So,
22 we need to enhance that area.

23 We also have an opportunity for

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 professional development of existing teachers. Some
2 teachers have been teaching for 10, 20 or 30 years. They
3 would like to upgrade their skills. There is an excellent
4 opportunity for them to enter our program and upgrade some
5 of their classes, either get a B.Ed. or a Master's degree.

6 We also need to consider as part of our
7 professional access college some regional career needs.

8 If you look at the north again, we don't have any timber
9 industry careers or institutions that can create the jobs
10 and the human resource skills that are needed for the timber
11 industry. A little further north of that in the Canadian
12 Shield is the mining industry. Just recently there was
13 an ad in one of the northern newspapers asking for a mining
14 engineer for one of our northern uranium mines. I doubt
15 if any of our northerners were capable of applying for
16 that. As a matter of fact, the Universities of Regina
17 and Saskatoon cannot deliver a mining engineering program.

18 They are the farming universities. The University of
19 Saskatchewan just built a big Department of Agriculture.
20 That's their focus. We need a northern focus in northern
21 Saskatchewan.

22 In relation to that, I guess back to some
23 of the people's comments, a northern university is not

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 an unreal request. It should be considered. It should
2 be a reality let's say within 10 years. Halifax I think
3 has about five or six universities in one little corner
4 of the Atlantic, six universities in one city. The basis
5 of a university is a building block. All you have to do
6 is put a rock in some corner of a community and that's
7 the start of a building block. We have to have hard, solid
8 institutions, not programs that can wither away with a
9 budget cut. We need institutions that are solid. We need
10 to build them ourselves. We need the north to be proud
11 of what we can build ourselves. We need to do it ourselves.

12 As a matter of fact, there is a sad state
13 in the trades area. There are more university degrees
14 in northern Saskatchewan right now than there are trade
15 tickets. We have southern contractors building our
16 northern houses. The plumbers and electricians are coming
17 from the south over the years to build and we've got to
18 get a grasp on that. We need northern people to build
19 the northern basics of housing. We even had southern
20 contractors building our fences in Beauval just in the
21 neighbouring community, building a fence from a contractor
22 in Prince Albert. That's stupid and that's a sick society.

23 As part of our program we are seeking

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 support from you as a Commission, but also making other
2 people aware of what our endeavours are that in order for
3 a university to exist I think it has to be governed by
4 northern people. I don't think there are any northern
5 people sitting on university senates down south. We are
6 not invited to be a part of it.

7 But the other thing that you have to
8 maintain is that life is a continual path. You can't jump
9 around in life. Your life is continuous, each one of ours.

10 So, in light of our children, when they are born, the
11 parents take care of them continuously, grandparents.
12 When they enter a school system, kindergarten to grade
13 12, it seems like they drop off the edge at grade 12.
14 We forget about them and, all of a sudden, we expect them
15 to pop up at a university or at a technical school. There
16 is no continuous path for our children to follow directly
17 to higher education. At grade 12 they are on their own.

18 I think they need to build a solid bridging system beyond
19 grade 12.

20 With that, I will invite our Director
21 Harold Schultz to fill in some of the details on the program
22 and I'll stop at that.

23 MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ, (Director,

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **NORTEP/NORPAC) :** I won't say much because I think Rick
2 has pretty much covered the ground, but I would like to
3 say to all of the people here that I've really appreciated
4 this day, to listen and to learn and to hear of the issues.
5 Commissioner Martin Durocher I've known for quite a few
6 years and he has always spoken so highly of
7 Ile-à-La-Crosse. I didn't know if he was telling me the
8 truth or not, but today I have been impressed with the
9 leadership here, the genuine concerns elicited by the
10 people. There is a tremendous leadership potential in
11 this community that I hope will be allowed to develop.

12 Also, the other thing that one can't help
13 but be struck with is the fact of the magnitude of the
14 social, the economic and the political problems facing
15 northern Aboriginal people. Sometimes that just about
16 seems to be an overwhelming kind of condition. So, what
17 can you do about it? We are here to share a model that
18 has worked in empowering northern people in achieving a
19 career. In doing so, we present this as really a humble
20 kind of program offering because at once we are attending
21 to, say, this year our on campus enrolment at La Ronge
22 is about 150 students.

23 The demand is great. The demand for

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 post-secondary education in northern Saskatchewan is quite
2 profound. It is a sleeping giant, I would suspect. The
3 growing awareness by the people and the retention rates,
4 the number of young people coming out of high schools and
5 the older people that do want to get a career, there is
6 a tremendous pent-up need for post-secondary opportunity
7 in the north.

8 Last year for NORTEP's admission there
9 were over 160 applicants for 50 seats; 35 in the NORTEP
10 teacher ed program and 15 into the NORPAC two-year B.A.
11 program, the Bachelor of Arts program. So, the needs are
12 great and we are continuously having to defend NORTEP.

13 NORTEP is a model that is now recognized
14 nationally and, indeed, internationally as a delivery
15 system that works in a sparse geography. It has been
16 presented to conferences around the world and is considered
17 to be a model that works. That is why we present it here.
18 It is a model that works in the north.

19 But even with its history, 159 graduates
20 in the last ten years, 138 of those graduates are either
21 actively teaching or involved in education. I doubt
22 whether you could find a statistic like that anywhere else,
23 a statistic of success.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 But while we have a model that works,
2 we still continually have to be defending this program.

3 It seems as though one of the reasons we are continuously
4 needing to defend it is because southern people, especially
5 government people, get really, as we could say, choked
6 up by the costs. To deliver a successful program in the
7 north means you have to provide an allowance, you have
8 to provide accommodation, you have to provide
9 transportation so people can stay connected to their
10 families. When you add that, in addition to the education
11 costs of a typical university, you are into doubling at
12 least the cost per pupil. So, we continuously have to
13 be defending the program because of the people farther
14 south, their inability to understand the condition to offer
15 a program in the north.

16 Again, I agree with Rick, this is an
17 opportunity for us to present the program to your
18 Commission and invite you to consider it as a model that
19 works. We need the support both of the federal system
20 and the provincial system to have this program continue.

21 I won't say much more. I would invite
22 you to ask any questions, if you have them. **CO-CHAIR**

23 **RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you, both of you, for the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 presentation and also for giving us that brief. It is
2 certainly very interesting. I, for one, didn't have an
3 opportunity to look at it. I glanced at it. There are
4 a lot of statistics and data, so I wouldn't like to ask
5 too many questions where the answers might be included,
6 but I understand that the program is financed by the
7 provincial government?

8 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** The provincial
9 government provides a block grant. All of the band
10 students, the students from the reserves --

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Their provide
12 their own?

13 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** -- contribute on
14 a per pupil basis from the band resources.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** And your
16 program, of course, is available for Métis people?

17 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Yes.

18 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** And non-status
19 people?

20 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Yes.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** The college
22 itself, is this an independent college or is it linked
23 to a university or how does it --

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** It is directly
2 affiliated with the University of Saskatchewan and the
3 University of Regina.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Both of them.

5 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Yes. Agreements
6 were made originally with the incorporation of NORTEP with
7 both. So, we offer classes from both universities, so
8 that our students really get the best of both worlds.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** But these are
10 contract agreements, contractual agreements. You are on
11 your own as a body?

12 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Yes, we are
13 independent. Yes, we are run as an incorporated body
14 and Rick is the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.
15 They have the autonomy to operate this program.

16 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** I guess looking
17 over the history of the program, I think we have survived
18 many storms, political and financial storms because of
19 the electedness that we had in our body. If we were
20 appointed by government, they would have long pulled this
21 program out and put us out to pasture, but because of our
22 elected mandate they were a little hesitant to be so harsh
23 with us.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Every person is
2 elected in the Northern Lights School Division
3 representatives and each band -- the bands have
4 representation too, but they are the elected members from
5 the bands.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** What kind of
7 legal status do you have? You are a non-profit
8 organization?

9 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Yes, non-profit.
10

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** If I
12 understand well, you have the standard "A" and professional
13 "A" programs?

14 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Yes. It is now a
15 four year Bachelor of Education program. It is the same
16 requirements of the Board of Teacher Education
17 Certification as all teachers are required to meet in the
18 province.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** This gives the
20 student a teaching certificate too?

21 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Yes.

22 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** I guess our
23 expectation is to see a lot of these students obtain

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Master's degrees and start administrating our schools,
2 the principal and vice-principalship. It is starting to
3 happen, but at some point in time we want to see some of
4 them be superintendents and Directors of Education.
5 That's when we will see the true reality of the teacher
6 ed. program.

7 As far as the professional access side,
8 we need careers not only in teaching, but we need lawyers,
9 we need doctors, we need engineers to make the north a
10 viable economy. We can't look at the social side. We
11 have to look at the technical side as well.

12 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** That was to be
13 my question, of course you concentrate on the training
14 of teachers, professors.

15 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** As Rick said, we
16 have had a four-year experience in offering a two-year
17 Bachelor of Arts university program. It prepares students
18 to access any of the colleges in the universities down
19 south, so it is a preparatory two-year Bachelor of Arts
20 program.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do you have
22 many students in this particular program; this is to bridge
23 --

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Yes, that is the
2 bridging program. It has an intake of 15 per year.

3 We are really needing to expand.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You take 15 and
5 you had 51 candidates last year.

6 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Yes, right. There
7 is a tremendous need and I know it was expressed by previous
8 speakers.

9 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** There is also a
10 large increase of high school graduates projected for
11 northern Saskatchewan. The future of this sort of program
12 is needed, plus at some point in time someone is going
13 to have to decide when do you need a university that will
14 provide an institution in that sense.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** This is a
16 program, but you have facilities, it's located -- where
17 is it located?

18 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** The campus is in
19 La Ronge. The NORTEP centre is in La Ronge, so that the
20 students from Ile-à-La-Crosse, we have interns and
21 students here, they come into the two weeks of theory
22 training. Transportation is provided for the students,
23 so that again is a major cost, but again those are the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 supports that are required for northerners to be
2 successful.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do you have
4 housing on the campus?

5 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Yes. We provide
6 very fine student housing. We have residences. We have
7 the campus there. Then the students receive a monthly
8 allowance. Those are the underpinnings of a successful
9 program in the north.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** What is the
11 proportion of your budget coming from the provincial
12 government and coming from the bands themselves?

13 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Just a little bit
14 better than half comes from the provincial government and
15 a little less than half from the bands. Our student intake
16 now for the last number of years has been pretty nearly
17 half and half, 50 per cent treaty Indians and 50 per cent
18 non-treaty.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** In the 50 per
20 cent non-treaty what is the proportion of Métis people?

21 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Non-treaty?

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Métis, as
23 such.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** That is a good
2 question. I am not sure.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do you have
4 non-Aboriginal people?

5 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Not very many.
6 Very few.

7 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** Eighty to ninety
8 per cent of them would --

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes, of this
10 50 per cent. That's the bulk of it.

11 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** Yes.

12 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Yes.

13 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** I was going to
14 mention that we were talking about -- when you asked about
15 the budget of 50/50 from the federal and provincial. That
16 was the delivery budget. One hundred per cent of our
17 capital requirements are provided by the province, the
18 space and the housing.

19 **MR. HAROLD SCHULTZ:** Yes. An argument
20 they are bringing forward now is that they are paying too
21 much and they blame it on federal off-loading. That seems
22 to be the argument that people are using at the provincial
23 level now.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Here again in the next five years there
2 is going to be a tremendous need for relationship building,
3 provincially, federally, with the turnover of education
4 to the bands. It used to be very simple for NORTEP. One
5 trip to Regina to lobby the government for provincial
6 funds, one trip to INAC to lobby them for federal funds,
7 then NORTEP was set financially. Now it is a matter of
8 dealing with all of the individual bands because they have
9 achieved autonomy in funding for education.

10 So, we are in the midst of again a
11 delicate area so far as negotiations go. We are going
12 to need all the support we can get from the federal level
13 to support the ongoing funding for these joint ventures,
14 where there are so very few places where federal and
15 provincial people get together to provide a service for
16 education. This is one.

17 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** There is another
18 factor that is thrown into the decentralization of
19 post-secondary funds to the bands. In the north,
20 traditionally there wasn't that many students, especially
21 the far north. One of our communities had two students
22 maybe go out, so that's the ratio that they used for their
23 funding, out of a community of about 1,000 people the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 federal government recognizes the two students that
2 traditionally went out and that's the funding they
3 provided, as opposed to another reserve by Saskatoon, let's
4 say, that has a similar population of 1,000. If 50 of
5 those students had taken access, they'd fund them for 50
6 students. The north gets burned because of that formula
7 because traditionally we didn't send that many down south,
8 so they fund us to that traditional number. They don't
9 fund us to the reality number.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I think you
11 have given us a good picture. Thank you very much.

12 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** Thank you.

13 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Thank you, Harold and
14 Rick.

15 I would like to call on Brian Ratt to
16 make a presentation. He was our interpreter, but he is
17 also the agenda here to make a presentation. Then we will
18 have three more people after him I think to make
19 presentations.

20 **MR. BRIAN RATT:** Thank you, Max.

21 I welcome the Commissioners, the elders
22 and the participants of this Royal Commission on Aboriginal
23 Peoples here in Sakitawak, Saskatchewan. Ile-à-La-Crosse

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 is a French word, a French name, but the real name for
2 the first nations is Sakitawak.

3 I come here strictly on treaty issues
4 because there is starting to be quite a few treaty people
5 living in this community. Basically, I will try my best
6 to make people aware of that on election day.

7 Anyway, going back on the treaty issue,
8 Treaty 10 was written here in Ile-à-La-Crosse, Sakitawak,
9 Saskatchewan in 1906. We have asked for a reservation
10 to be somewhere around this area, but due to lack of
11 communications with our First Nations government, our
12 Indian Act governments, nothing has been resolved on that
13 issue.

14 People always ask me the same question,
15 how come there is no reserve in Ile-à-La-Crosse and yet
16 the treaty was written here in this community? I say that
17 the French and the church were here 150 years before Treaty
18 Commissioner arrived here, so already there was a strong,
19 viable Métis community in existence even before the Treaty
20 Commissioner came here. That's why I have always
21 supported that the Métis people have a strong historical
22 claim to land claims and self-government.

23 At the same time when Treaty 10 was

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 written out, it was written out on two basis: scrip for
2 the Métis and treaty for the people of First Nations.
3 Where the scrip went after that, I don't know, but I think
4 it all went to the church coffers, but our land is never
5 for sale for anybody, the church, the state.

6 I'm strictly here to represent the
7 off-reserve and the Bill C-31 Indians that reside in this
8 community. I've heard of other people coming into this
9 community from various other places, southern
10 Saskatchewan, southern Métis coming here and telling us
11 that if we wanted a reserve that we should go to Greenland
12 and get a reserve. Well, I was born in this community.
13 My grandfather raised my father and my uncles in this
14 community. I have more rights than the southern Métis.
15 That's what I strongly believe.

16 The off-reserve and the Bill C-31
17 questions and issues that arise from the amendment of the
18 Indian Act in 1985 raised a lot of issues and raised a
19 lot of concerns within the Aboriginal communities. First
20 of all, when I look at the amendment of the Indian Act,
21 1985, the discriminatory clause of the Indian Act which
22 said that if I marry a white woman that white woman gains
23 status. If my sister married a white man, she loses

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 status. So, in a way a justice was done that all people
2 that lost treaty, for whatever reasons, discriminatory
3 reasons that they lost their treaty rights, they were to
4 be given back those treaty rights.

5 At one time we were a minority in this
6 community for status Indians, but now since 1985 we have
7 quadrupled the numbers. It is safe to say that we
8 represent 300 treaty Indians in this community. But along
9 with that justice that was done to make the status quo
10 believe that a wrong and a right -- a wrong was done and
11 now we have to make things right, that we gave all treaty
12 Indians back their treaty rights. But at the same time,
13 the federal government and the Department of Indian Affairs
14 piggybacked a whole bunch of other stuff along with the
15 amendment of the Indian Act. They made seven little
16 Indians out of one Indian now and that really concerns
17 me.

18 I live with a Métis woman because I
19 married her after 1985. My two children that were born
20 before 1985 went under the male descendance clause, so
21 they became direct band members. I am a descendant of
22 the Canoe Lake First Nation. The two children that I have
23 after 1985 are somehow separated from me. They called

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 now 6(2)s because I married a Métis woman and they are
2 no longer members of a certain band. All they are is
3 general Indians. That really concerns me for the future.

4

5 When this Royal Commission on Aboriginal
6 Peoples was to come to Ile-à-La-Crosse and now you are
7 here in Sakitawak, Saskatchewan, lots of letters were
8 written out to First Nations governments, the Federation
9 of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, the Meadow Lake Tribal
10 Council, my own tribal nation, the Canoe Lake Nation, were
11 asked to come here and appear and to make any submissions
12 or presentations. You see those people are not around
13 here, so that just goes to show how much respect they have
14 for their Aboriginal descendants. They have become
15 protectionists under the Indian Act.

16 One moment you see these people talking
17 about getting rid of the Indian Act and another moment
18 they sure know how to go and hide behind the Indian Act
19 when the squeeze is on from off-reserve and Bill C-31
20 Indians.

21 We have Indian Act governments. I went
22 to Halifax about a week ago under the Native Council of
23 Canada and at the same time the name was changed to the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Congress of Aboriginal Peoples and I learned lots there
2 about treaties. For some treaty people the Indian Act
3 is totally irrelevant when it comes down to
4 self-government, especially the British Columbia Indian
5 people. They never extinguished their Aboriginal title
6 and that's why the B.C. government and the federals are
7 so scared to settle land claims in B.C. because they can
8 take the whole province if they wanted to.

9 People ask me why do I go to the Native
10 Council of Canada, when Ovide Mercredi is supposed to be
11 your national chief? Well, it's the media and white status
12 quo people that have portrayed him to be the national Indian
13 government chief. Well, he's not. He's an Indian Act
14 chief.

 I realize that treaties were being
15 signed 150 years before the Department of Indian Affairs
16 was even formulated, before Treaty 1, Treaty 2, Treaty
17 3, all the way to Treaty 11 came along. I realize that
18 the Indian Act treaties are what they are and they are
19 the most discriminatory treaties that ever existed in
20 Canada right now.

21 But coming back to the local community
22 here, I see ourselves as a minority in this community,
23 but at the same time I see my Métis compatriots as equal

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 to me as any other Aboriginal group in this country.

2 People have always said, how are you
3 going to accommodate white people? I have no concern about
4 white people because some day we are going to take over
5 all the jobs that are in this community. White people
6 only come into this community because of one reason,
7 employment. It is very cunning how the white man has
8 turned everything around and made us look like racists
9 when we start talking about white people. They say you
10 are a racist now. Well, I disagree with that. When I
11 stand up for Aboriginal rights, when I stand up for native
12 rights I'm not a racist. I'm standing up for my rights.
13 If some people feel offended that I talk about white people
14 all the time, well that's too bad. I'm meet you at the
15 firing line any time.

16 I would like to ask one question to the
17 Commission. Have you guys ever been to any blockades
18 throughout Canada or have you always been sitting in nice
19 plush offices and nice places to be, but you have never
20 really gone to where some of the problems are. I don't
21 think you have ever been to any blockades. It would have
22 been nice for you, it would have been a first. It would
23 have been very unorthodox for you people. I would

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 recommend that you do it somewhere down the line.

2 When we talk about treaty people living
3 in this community, I hear people talking about treaty
4 people getting everything free. Well, I went to the same
5 institutions and to the same post-secondary educational
6 programs that were offered here by the Gabriel Dumont
7 Institute, but as a treaty Indian I have to pay everything
8 back, so the myth that treaty Indians get everything free
9 is not true. It's just a myth that has been put into other
10 people to divide other people.

11 When we talk about an Indian having a
12 rough time on the reserve, a crisis has happened on the
13 reserve level, he doesn't have to go very far to go to
14 his social development officer and ask for a phone call
15 or to sit down with a counsellor. When a Métis in this
16 community has a hard time or is in a crisis situation,
17 there is a toll free number that is available to that person
18 to phone to Buffalo Narrows which is of course the nearest
19 social development office.

20 But what about the treaty Indian? He
21 is 200 miles away from his Department of Indian Affairs
22 in Meadow Lake. He or she has to hitchhike down there
23 or has to go around bumming phones off other people in

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 order for them to even get a hold of their welfare cheque.
2 When you talk about inadequacy, when you talk about unfair
3 advantages for people, that's us. We want a toll free
4 number for my social recipient clients. It's in the works
5 now after hollering for three years.

6 When we talk about Indian people living
7 off-reserve, the fiduciary responsibility of the Indian
8 Act or the Department of Indian Affairs should continue,
9 that when you step off the boundaries of the reserve it
10 seems that you seem to lose some of your treaty rights
11 and that should not be.

12 I am really concerned about
13 self-government. Somebody mentioned about the money
14 being the same, but it will just be brown people giving
15 you a rough time, or red people. I agree with that. That
16 is what has actually happened. The new Indian agents are
17 our own people now, but they got pompous names like Tribal
18 Chairman, Vice-Tribal Chairman, the National Chief, the
19 Provincial Chief and all that, but actually they are all
20 derived from the same policies and the same bureaucracies
21 of the Department of Indian Affairs. We see that. I see
22 that every day.

23 I believe strongly that somewhere down

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 the line that people in general, the Métis and the treaty
2 people have to get together. We saw that at the blockade
3 this summer. Man, were governments ever terrified when
4 they saw the Métis and the treaty people and the off-reserve
5 and the non-status and every denomination of Aboriginal
6 descendants that you could ever speak of were at that
7 roadblock. Governments were shaking to the core. But
8 you don't see that in the communities. People are more
9 worried about facilitating our white people in the
10 community. We are always worried about them. To hell
11 with them, they are only here for one reason I continue
12 to say and that's only for employment.

13 So, at the same time I encourage that
14 a university be established in northern Saskatchewan, that
15 some day we don't have to have all these white people moving
16 into the community. Even the RCMP some day will have to
17 be taken out of here and not be used any more because we
18 have our own people dressed in uniforms. Maybe not the
19 same type of uniform, but maybe with more Métis or treaty
20 characteristics.

21 There are 300 status Indians living in
22 this community and every day there are more and maybe some
23 days there are less. But where does the Department of

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Indian Affairs stand on these issues? We don't know.
2 Nothing is ever passed on to us. Nothing that matters,
3 the concerns of hunting rights, fishing rights, education
4 rights, not obligations but rights, none of those things
5 are ever passed on to us.

6 Sometimes we are fighting with our own
7 people they say. I think that is what it is because I
8 think if an Aboriginal group comes along and says, "we
9 want to take self-government into our hands," they take
10 it upon themselves that if they start getting criticized,
11 if things start happening at the reserve level or at the
12 grassroots level, they say, "Look, don't fight us. You
13 are conquering and dividing us." That does not work any
14 more because they are the ones that take the initiative
15 to say that they are ready for self-government. If they
16 can't handle the shit that's coming down from the
17 grassroots, then they are not a government.

18 We have no choice but to take our
19 membership, the treaty people, to the Native Council of
20 Canada, which is now the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples,
21 Ron George, because the FSI and the Meadow Lake Tribal
22 Council, as you can see none of them showed up for this
23 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. That just goes

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 to show you how much disrespect they have for the Métis
2 and off-reserve treaty people in general in northern
3 Saskatchewan.

4 They intervene in funding that was
5 submitted to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

6 It was rejected on the basis that the FSI has taken it
7 upon themselves that they should have that money, that
8 off-reserve and treaty people do not reside on reserve
9 and that Bill
10 C-31s fall into the category of this Indian Act system.

11 So, we were rejected for the intervenor funding under
12 the Native Council of Saskatchewan, which will be called
13 the Congress of Aboriginal People of Saskatchewan now.

14 It seems to me that the Indian Act has
15 created a set of twins here. An Indian who lives on the
16 reserve is treated differently from an Indian that does
17 not live on the reserve over here. The Indian Act
18 continues to say that they represent -- that they should
19 be responsible for two of these people, but they continue
20 to get away to say that one of the twins is mine and the
21 other one isn't, which could never happen.

22 We have over 100 First Nations people
23 plus that are from the Canoe Lake First Nation and under

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 the Canoe Lake First Nation they are through this treaty
2 land entitlement process. From our community standpoint,
3 the Canoe Lake Treaty people or the Canoe Lake First Nation
4 counted 1,096 treaty people in existence under this formula
5 of the Saskatchewan formula. The money is coming on, \$13
6 million, and it sounds good to a lot of people, but to
7 us we are going to totally reject it.

8 The framework agreement itself that was
9 signed by our late chief, or ex-chief, Frank Iron, but
10 in order for these treaty land entitlements to go ahead
11 it must be ratified by the people that were mentioned under
12 this formula. But now because of the Indian Act and the
13 way its set out, the Bill C-31s were also counted in this
14 formula, so every treaty man, woman and child was counted
15 as 128 acres times \$262. Well, every treaty Indian is
16 worth \$67,000 to that band, to that First Nation.

17 Now the ratification point, the
18 ratification part of this treaty land entitlement is coming
19 on. Do you know what they are trying to get away with?
20 They sent the whole package back to the Department of
21 Indian Affairs, to the Justice Department, and say, "If
22 we can get away without allowing these Bill C-31s to ratify
23 this vote, can we get away with it?" The Justice

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Department comes back and said, "I think you can just go
2 with your band membership."

3 They are willing and all are willing to
4 be responsible for Bill C-31 Indians and off-reserve
5 Indians when it comes to money. Pathways is a good example
6 of that. But when it comes to start putting the money
7 out to the people, it goes to the Meadow Lake Tribal Council
8 and then from there it goes to the bands and from the bands,
9 as protectionist as they are under the Indian Act, all
10 other people who do not live on the reserve are just what
11 they are, general Indians. There is a cause of concern
12 for that.

13 Myself personally, I have a silent
14 addiction and it is called activism. I believe in
15 Aboriginal rights. I think that is some of our problem
16 too. Many of our leaders, Aboriginal descendent leaders,
17 will never stand up and say, "I'm a proud Métis, " or "I'm
18 a proud Indian." They will never do that in public. One
19 or two made presentations here, but when it comes down
20 to getting money from the government on the backs of
21 Aboriginal people, their names are on the top of the list
22 to get that funding, but they will never stand up and say,
23 "I'm a proud Métis," or "I believe in Aboriginal rights."

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 I see people -- this blockade, people
2 say it's not happening. Well, it's still happening. I
3 am probably going back there tonight. I will go and talk
4 to the elders. They should have been here, but they
5 themselves are going through -- we don't have all the big
6 money that all these corporations are doling out or even
7 to you people.

8 I really strongly believe in my heart
9 that that blockade did a lot of things in northern
10 Saskatchewan. We even got people applying now for logging
11 permits who were supposed to be backing us up all the way,
12 but as the opportunists that they are, they have taken
13 the initiative on themselves to live off the backs of poor
14 people and that has got to stop.

15 People used to tell me, there is nothing
16 looking at you to be talking like this. At one time I
17 was able to not say anything about it because I didn't
18 have no children. But today now I've got four children
19 and I have as much right as anybody to talk about
20 governments against white people or anybody because I am
21 here to protect my children.

22 This Royal Commission on Aboriginal
23 Peoples is full of hidden agendas and I see it. The

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 perpetrator of the uranium mining in northern
2 Saskatchewan, Mr. Allan Blakeney, and I don't know why
3 he's not here, but he will be in La Loche tomorrow or the
4 next day. Out of 3,500 people that reside in La Loche,
5 when you get up there, one person works in that uranium
6 mine in Cluff Lake, yet people still walk around and try
7 to pass petitions that uranium mining is good for northern
8 Saskatchewan and I mean the business sector of northern
9 Saskatchewan.

10 Either he resigns from the Royal
11 Commission on Aboriginal Peoples or he resigns from the
12 CAMCO Board of Directors, that's what I say to Allan
13 Blakeney. I think maybe I will be going to La Loche to
14 stir it up a little bit.

15 The hidden agendas that you guys have
16 here, and I think you do have it, is that the Constitution
17 and the environment is irrelevant now. Now we get on to
18 economics, now we get into economic terrorism. People
19 say, "Well, yesterday you just came here and told me that
20 you are 95 per cent unemployed. Now you are against
21 uranium mining, now you are against forestry." I'm
22 totally against uranium mining, but I'm not totally against
23 forestry.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Under the Forest Management Lease
2 Agreement that has been what Mr. Bishop was talking about
3 it's just like they sold the whole north. It's just like
4 the treaty Indians sold the whole north and gave the whole
5 north away to these corporations without consulting the
6 Métis people that live in these communities. Some Métis
7 mayors will say, "We were consulted." But they are the
8 only ones that seem to have skidders out in the bush.
9 It's only their little families that are out there.

10 What about the rest of the people? And
11 nobody came and asked the 300 treaty Indians whether we
12 should give this land away to the Forest Management Lease
13 Agreement. Everything was based in Meadow Lake, as along
14 as the chief who are not elected by acclamation, but are
15 elected by squeezing by by five votes sometimes, so they
16 can't speak for everybody in northern Saskatchewan.

17 The thing that really bugs me is we have
18 southern Indians that are saying that they have more rights
19 to the north than we do. Well, I know there are some treaty
20 Indians, treaty people down in southern Saskatchewan who
21 have a hard time trying to find a tree for their sun dance
22 and yet they can come up here and tell us that these trees
23 are theirs. I don't agree with that.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 I came to this Royal Commission on
2 Aboriginal Peoples as an interpreter, but also I have a
3 lot of concerns here. I am as critical as I am, but it's
4 just the way I talk all the time. Everybody always wants
5 to be soft spoken and all that, let everything -- and the
6 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, to some people
7 anyway, as cynical as we are, is just another crying towel
8 that the federal government has thrown out to the native
9 people. We can all soak our little tears and our emotions
10 to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, but when
11 it comes down to recommendations where are we going to
12 be at. And you people have to be tested on that.

13 When you talk about round one, it was
14 a time when everybody came out and cried on the towel,
15 but now you say that phase two is a different thing; where
16 do we go from here? But you didn't come to Ile-à-La-Crosse
17 in round one, right. So, how do you know that all the
18 complaints and all the crying is not finished yet? It's
19 not finished yet, man. You've got to go a long way through
20 this country in order for you guys to finish your job.

21 Not to have any disrespect to you, your
22 honour, but you come from Quebec. I have always had
23 concerns about the distinct society clause under this

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 "harlot town accord" that they were going to pass, the
2 "political whores" that we had out there trying to pass
3 this thing. If I go to downtown Montreal, Bill 178 says
4 that you cannot have a bilingual sign on your stores no
5 more and somehow I get waylaid by the girls of the night
6 or whatever circumstances that arises, that when I get
7 up in the morning I'm lost. I'm in a totally different
8 country.

9 But when you have the same situation and
10 you come to Ile-à-La-Crosse and get waylaid by our ladies,
11 when you get up, your corn flakes tells you how much fibre
12 and how much cholesterol it has. You have that right and
13 I don't have that right in Quebec. That's the distinct
14 society clause and it always really concerned me on that.

15 Making short my presentation here, I'd
16 just like to say that the off-reserve and the Bill C-31
17 issue is going to continue to hound the Indian Act
18 governments that are in place right now. The resolve just
19 seems like one of the oldtimers that spoke on this, that
20 the only time governments seem to want to listen or pretend
21 to listen is when people get up and become radical or
22 militant. To me that is a blessing and not a curse. But
23 the people in this community, I don't feel that -- I've

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 always said and sometimes I get attacked by my own treaty
2 people. They say, "What the hell are you saying that the
3 Métis should have a land claim first before people set
4 up a reserve in this community." Well, I agree with that.

5

6 Why should we come into this community
7 as Aboriginal people or as treaty people and try to set
8 up a reserve before even the question of Métis land claims
9 has been answered in this area? It would be unfair and
10 governments would make us fight for that, but at the same
11 time I don't see the Métis people really getting their
12 act together to tell us where their land is. Because if
13 I came into this community and said, "I want to buy some
14 Métis land here, who do I give the money to?" Do I give
15 the money to Buckley Belanger, the local community
16 authority, the town council or do I give it to Max Morin
17 and the Métis Society? Who do I give it to?

18 Some old guys in the back say give it
19 to us and to hell with them. Anyway, I came here with
20 good intentions and I guess good intentions arrive from
21 the silent addictions that some of us have that sometimes
22 we get into a defeatist role, that sometimes it's not
23 working. We get really right down and out, but at the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 same time things always seem to pop up and the blood starts
2 pumping again and we continue to work.

3 People say you guys always talk for
4 nothing, but there are a lot of people benefiting from
5 our blockade. There are a lot of people benefiting from
6 our militancy. A lot of people have benefited from the
7 Oka standoff in Quebec and the Royal Commission on
8 Aboriginal Peoples is one of them because they employed
9 you people on behalf of that.

10 What is the answer for off-reserve
11 Indians? They have to take the initiative on themselves
12 to start organizing in northern Saskatchewan and going
13 after our Indian governments because after all they are
14 taking the initiative to be self-governments. Then they
15 say, "Well, what about the opposition? There is no such
16 thing as opposition in Indian governments." That scares
17 me, you know. That really scares me because the
18 accountability of First Nations government has to be we
19 have to take the responsibility for our own actions too.

20 What I mean by that is if I am a career politician and
21 I have always been a career politician, and there is an
22 accountant over here or an administrator that counts out
23 the money and all of a sudden as a politician I start having

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 strong desires to start counting the money, or that
2 accountant all of a sudden starts having strong desires
3 to be a politician and then that's when the shit hits the
4 fan because we are not following our job descriptions.
5 We are stepping into boundaries that we are not equipped
6 for and we don't have the job description for it.

7 As cynical as I may sound, I don't give
8 white people and I don't give Indian governments a chance
9 or a break to say, "Well, let's sit down and maybe we can
10 talk it out. No, we do the talking and you guys have to
11 do the listening and you guys have to do the doing.

12 Under the Indian Act, as it is right now,
13 I worked under the Bill C-31 Impact Study that was initiated
14 by the Meadow Lake Tribal Council and there is a lot of
15 scary stuff in there. Eventually, the reason why I want
16 the reserve here in Ile-à-La-Crosse, somewhere around
17 here, not in this community, maybe across the lake or
18 wherever they want to put us, we will give the Métis people
19 that right to tell us where we can have a reserve. I don't
20 want to go to the LCA. I don't want to go to Fred Thompson.

21 I don't want to go to the white people governments and
22 tell them, "Can we have a reserve?"

23 I'd like to go as an equal part to the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Métis people and say, "Listen, you Métis people, I want
2 you guys to ask me. If you don't want to give me no reserve,
3 no problem," but, at the same time, I want to go to Métis
4 governments and ask them for permission if we can have
5 some of their land. I don't want to go to the provincial
6 government. I don't want to go to the federal government.
7 I want to go to the Métis governments that are here and
8 have strong ties to the land.

9 With that, there is over 130 I guess that
10 are from the Canoe Lake Band and each of us is worth 128
11 acres and they want to buy those acres off us and I'm worth
12 \$67,000, other than what it is, but in trying to simplify
13 the whole treaty land entitlement process. So, if we were
14 to times that, that is over 12,500 acres that the band
15 is going to receive money on. That's almost \$1.5 million.
16 All we are saying is at least buy us some land in
17 Ile-à-La-Crosse where we can set up a reserve.

18 It sounds logical, it sounds like it's
19 just simple, but when it comes down to bureaucracies and
20 red tape and all that, it almost gets lost in the shuffle
21 of the White Paper. The White Paper, yes, that's the
22 terminology for that.

23 When I live in this community, and I've

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 always lived in this community, I was taken away from this
2 community for six years. You talk about people coming
3 back and reminiscing about the residential school system
4 or the residential syndrome. Well, I was raised in white
5 people's homes and that's why I've got no respect for white
6 people unless they have respect for me. It is that I also
7 want to start writing a book about how I was raised in
8 the white people's homes. Even my own father tells me,
9 "Well, you were living in a good home." Well, I wasn't
10 living in a good home. I mean I got a licking every day
11 for what I was. That's why today maybe that's why I am
12 going to continue fighting for Aboriginal people and nobody
13 else.

14 I have a lot of respect for people who
15 reside in this community that are of Aboriginal
16 descendants. I see people, the Ukrainians, the Japanese
17 and the Chinese getting compensation for wrongs that have
18 been done to them in the past. What about the native
19 people? I don't know. I am getting repetitious here,
20 so I should close off and maybe sit around for some
21 questions from the Commissioners. Thank you.

22 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: Thank you.

23 First of all, I would like to say that

DECEMBER 8, 1992**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 the Commission is pretty much aware of the challenge of
2 having those four rounds and to try to build upon each
3 other because it's a bit self-defeating one sense because
4 we would have had to go to the same communities four times
5 really to build upon each time. So, what we are trying
6 to do is two things at the same time, to visit more
7 communities because we really felt that was necessary,
8 to have as large a spectrum as possible, but at the same
9 time in giving the benefit of what was heard during the
10 first round and raising those questions, trying to get
11 some focus.

12 We are pretty much aware, we were from
13 the beginning, that we would hear the problems and
14 concerns, the airing of pain and it has happened during
15 the second round but, generally speaking, this round still
16 has been a bit more focused, probably because of this
17 document, but also because the work of the Commission has
18 been on for a longer time and there has been more work
19 also on the constitutional path and there is more
20 awareness.

21 So, we agree with you that it's not a
22 perfect set-up and we are trying to kill two birds with
23 one stone, but we thought it was the best solution anyway.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 So that's the reason why we are here. We knew we would
2 hear about problems, but also we heard about some
3 solutions. I think we are progressing.

4 We hope that rounds three and four, well,
5 we plan to have it different. We are going to be much
6 more focused this time. We are going to visit new
7 communities, but not to the same extent. So, that's part
8 of our technical challenge.

9 As far as having a hidden agenda, I must
10 tell you that our only agenda is to try to come up with
11 solutions that would be acceptable by all parts of the
12 country, all people. It is not an easy task. The variety
13 of problems is considerable. We don't have any hidden
14 agenda, nor does our staff. We hope that our only agenda
15 is to try to do our best effort with the help of everybody
16 because alone we are not much, frankly. That being
17 said, we heard a lot about off-reserve and Bill C-31
18 concerns and the fact that band councils get some money,
19 but do not transfer the money to the people or, in many
20 instances that it's very difficult for women who want to
21 return to the reserve to get a house and on and on, so
22 we know that it has been and it is a major problem.

23 We also know that the amendments to the

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Indian Act brought in 1985 has eased the discriminatory
2 situation for one generation, but passed it to the other
3 through the children. If you have good ideas as to what
4 should be done because we are hearing two things, --

5 **MR. BRIAN RATT:** I would --

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I would just
7 finish, we are hearing people telling us, and the women
8 and it's certainly the principle, the way you have to treat
9 women's children the same as men's children, but then we
10 keep hearing people saying if you do that you are going
11 to delude the critical mass and in a few generations the
12 "Indianess" will be lost. We are certainly very much
13 interested in hearing about how to cure the defect that
14 is acknowledged by everybody of Bill C-31. That is
15 certainly a good area to look for solutions and obviously
16 they are not easy.

17 Do you have an additional comment to
18 make?

19 **MR. BRIAN RATT:** I would like to say that
20 under the Indian Act system it is very dangerous for treaty
21 people to be living in a Métis community. What I mean
22 by that is that every time a treaty Indian, I don't care
23 if it's the chief's son or the chief himself marries again,

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 every time a treaty Indian marries a non-status Indian,
2 whether it be Métis or whatever, the child that derives
3 from that relationship is only have a treaty. So, if my
4 kids, the two, continue going to this community, eventually
5 because it is predominantly Métis, they are eventually
6 going to hook up with a Métis woman and, of course, I've
7 got all four boys.

8 So, it's no longer an honour to marry
9 the chief's son or daughter. There again, I have to do
10 my small part to try to get them away from this community
11 and amalgamate them where there is a percentage of treaty
12 people where like in the long run and people say that's
13 segregation, that's racism. I said, hey, we might have
14 to all go back to that system in order for us to protect
15 treaty as the way the Indian Act is right now.

16 We don't have access to the Beauval
17 Residential Indian School, where there is predominantly
18 treaty people. So, if I was to send my children there
19 at an early age, hopefully down the road I don't have to
20 lose any treaties, but at the same time it almost sounds
21 like a South African type of -- well, that's what we are
22 living in is an apartheid system anyway, but that's the
23 thing. I don't want to see my -- but I'll give that choice

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 to my children and I know somewhere down the road I won't
2 even have that choice. Kids do grow up and as outspoken
3 as I am, hopefully the genetics that are inside me will
4 be passed on to my sons.

5 It is just that we are going to be losing
6 treaty rights continually in this community. We already
7 see it. We already see children, one is a treaty Indian
8 and one is not and they say my children cannot be treaty.
9 Why not? Because my mother married a half-breed and now
10 I married a half-breed and now my children lose status.
11 So, we have to do our own little individual thing because
12 it is the treaty Indian's main job on this continent, Turtle
13 Island, to protect treaty rights. I agree with that.
14 That's my only solution is to get a reservation somewhere
15 in Ile-à-La-Crosse, set up our own school system.

16 Also, before I go, the Indian Act the
17 way it states, there are people who are walking around
18 in this community and in various other communities
19 throughout Canada that have a darker complexion than I
20 do, but they don't have a treaty number. Just because
21 the Indian Act says, "I don't recognize you as a treaty
22 Indian," does that mean that they stop being Indian? No.
23 They are still Indian people and no one group or one Indian

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 leader cannot extinguish Aboriginal rights in this
2 country. Nobody can do that. There is just no way for
3 that.

4 I learned that from Jim Sinclair, one
5 of our past leaders, that no Aboriginal person can
6 extinguish Aboriginal rights for anything.
7 Even Roland Crow can't do that under the land entitlement
8 question.

9 With that, I'd like to thank the
10 Commissioners and the invited guests that are here and
11 the people who have had to listen to me. I thank the Great
12 Creator for me being here and hopefully down the road you
13 guys will have some strong recommendations and that under
14 a strong Liberal government that these things will go
15 through.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
17 much for coming out of the booth and for sharing your
18 thoughts and concerns with us. We could go for much
19 longer. Thank you.

20 **MR. MAX MORIN:** We still have three
21 presenters, one representing youth, a woman representing
22 the Pinehouse Métis Society Local, but two presenters have
23 left. I will ask Ron Caisse, an advisor to the youth in

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 the community of Ile-à-La-Crosse and he has some specific
2 concerns pertaining to youth. I will turn it over to Ron.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Good evening.

4 **MR. RON CAISSE, (Métis Youth Advisor):**

5 I am an advisor for the youth here in Ile-à-La-Crosse.
6 The youth represent 24 years and under.

7 Fifty per cent or more of the population
8 in the north is in this age group. The jails are full
9 of young people between these ages, the AA centres, there
10 are people walking the streets that have nothing to do.
11 We don't have no programs, no recreational facilities
12 that are geared towards the Olympics. We are left out
13 of anything that is involved out there.

14 We have a little bit of hockey because
15 we have artificial arenas in a couple of communities in
16 the north here. What we need in the north are facilities
17 that are geared towards the Olympics for these young
18 people, so they don't have to go to jail or fill the
19 unemployment lines. Another thing I would like to talk
20 about is right now we are getting land from the town.
21 All we are getting is five acres. My grandfather got 240
22 acres. What is happening? I am a rightful descendant
23 of Louis Riel. Louis Riel had meetings like this 100 years

DECEMBER 8, 1992**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 ago and he never got nothing but -- he got hung for what
2 he did. All he was doing was talking for us, on our behalf,
3 trying to get a better way of life for us. Right now
4 we are all on welfare, just like the guy who was up here
5 for Dumont was saying that a lot of the people who are
6 going to school owe money to student loans. A lot of people
7 that have jobs owe money to student loans. They should
8 do away with these student loans. They should have it
9 the way it was before, provide our education, instead of
10 us after we are educated we are \$50,000 in the hole. That's
11 not right.

12 I have a family at home. I have eight
13 children. All of a sudden I owe the government \$11,000.
14 Last year it was only \$3,000 and now it's \$11,000. I
15 don't know where that came from. I have eight children
16 and the oldest is 14. We have been on welfare for at least
17 the last ten years. Every time I apply for a job in town
18 here they tell me, "You're on welfare. You are getting
19 more on welfare." Where is the respect for myself after
20 that when I keep getting turned down by my own people?

21 I would like to thank you guys for
22 listening to us. I hope you guys take some of these
23 recommendations to the government and I hope something

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 is done about it because I'd like to see my children become
2 world class athletes. I think they could be if there were
3 recreational facilities.

4 I tried about ten years ago to get into
5 the council in town here so that I could work towards that,
6 but nobody would listen to me. None of my kids come home,
7 the oldest is 14 years ago and the youngest starts going
8 to school right now, seven, eight years old and none of
9 them come home talking Cree. None of them come home and
10 talk about Louis Riel or Gabriel Dumont or their past
11 history. What is happening with our education system in
12 town here? It is not only the government that's to blame,
13 it's our leaders too. Thanks.

14 I hope and it's time you worked with us.
15 It's time you started working for us because before the
16 white man arrived here there were 80 million Indians in
17 North America. There are only 10 million. They talk
18 about the Holocaust, 70 million Indians in a little over
19 100 years. Thanks.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you for
21 sharing this with us.

22 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Marie Symes Grehan is
23 making a presentation on behalf of George Smith who is

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 the Deputy Mayor and also the President of the Métis Society
2 Local in Pinehouse.

3 **MS MARIE SYMES GREHAN:** Commissioners,
4 Mr. Smith asked me to give you his regrets to you that
5 he had to leave early and couldn't be here to answer
6 questions, but asked me to carry on with the presentation.

7 Several years ago --

8 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**
9 Excuse me, if I could intervene, could you tell us your
10 name?

11 **MS MARIE SYMES GREHAN:** Marie Symes
12 Grehan.

13 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY MARTIN DUROCHER:**
14 I am sorry for the interruption.

15 **MS MARIE SYMES GREHAN:** Several years
16 ago the Métis community of Pinehouse undertook the most
17 comprehensive harvest study and mapping program ever done.
18 It's the only Métis harvest study that is in existence
19 in this country. There have been other mapping programs
20 and harvest study programs to do with land claims, to do
21 with Indian land claims, but this is the only one in
22 existence for Métis. I think you earlier expressed that
23 there was going to be some component about looking into

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 this. You can get a copy or we will get you a copy of
2 this study.

3 A brief background to it was the Key Lake
4 mine was coming through and there were a lot of studies
5 going on at that time, environmental studies, impact on
6 the road from Beauval over and for the Key Lake mine.
7 There were community studies going on by the province of
8 the communities. In every one of those studies made there
9 was always one line, they must have pulled it out of each
10 other's studies, saying that hunting, fishing and trapping
11 was a thing of the past.

12 Pinehouse was quite disturbed by this
13 and asked if there was some way that we could get together
14 a program to show that this wasn't true. So, over the
15 course of five years we did several studies. This one
16 represents just simply the harvest study. In the course
17 of one year all the residents that use the land, which
18 was actually the majority of the adult male population,
19 kept track of the fish, moose, rabbits, bear, waterfowl,
20 beaver, muskrat, grouse, deer, caribou, lynx, all the meat
21 that was harvested and consumed by the community and
22 berries and fuel wood as well and came up with all the
23 figures on that.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 Then, one of the things that we did was
2 we compared the different sectors of the bush food and
3 then a second sector of the commercial fish, the commercial
4 wild rice and the furs.

5 A third is we looked at the wage
6 employment and then we looked at transfer payments.
7 Constantly here the thing is that 90 per cent of the people
8 were on welfare, so we looked very carefully at all of
9 the statistics. In Pinehouse it turned out that 35.1 per
10 cent of the total income for that year came from the bush.
11 We developed tables for the edible pounds on these animals
12 and we converted them and to get a dollar figure we used
13 a package of things like very inexpensive meats actually,
14 chicken backs and hot dogs and baloney, things like that,
15 so that no one could ever say that we inflated those
16 figures. But, of course, the quality of meat in a beaver
17 or something compared to chicken backs, you can't even
18 begin to compare it.

19 We wanted to err constantly on the
20 conservative side when we came up with those dollar
21 figures. This study has been judged by quite a few peers
22 right across the country and it is considered actually
23 probably the best one in existence.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 The wage employment was 31 per cent of
2 the total. The transfer payments was 33 per cent of the
3 total. We looked at strictly welfare and we talk about,
4 as I said, for some reason 90 per cent seems to be always
5 the thing that is talked about is the number of people
6 on welfare, but actually it was only 11 per cent of the
7 income of the community was welfare. So that even if there
8 are high rates of welfare, they still represent a very
9 low rate of income, of the community's income based on
10 this.

11 Another thing that was done, there were
12 150 maps made of the land use by the Métis there, going
13 back within living memory, so we got back to great
14 grandparent's time and mapped thoroughly the land use of
15 the Pinehouse Métis.

16 When looking at the figures of 35.1 per
17 cent for the bush commodities, I think it's important to
18 note that none of this is value added. The wild rice was
19 never processed, packaged or marketed in Pinehouse. The
20 fish were never processed, packaged or marketed and the
21 first that go out are all furs, so that the actual value
22 that could come back to the community of Pinehouse was
23 a very small investment. It could be much higher than

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 35 per cent if dollars were stuck into a fish plant there
2 for frozen fish sticks or whatever and they looked at a
3 lot of different ideas for investment that could be made
4 on a community basis to enhance the bush.

5 Another thing we looked at and it's
6 something that is not talked about in these studies and
7 has never really been talked about very much at all, there
8 is a belief that the land is empty and it is not being
9 used. There is no look at the investment in the land.
10 The amount of dollars in building the cabins and the roads
11 and the portages or the investment that families put in
12 the tools like boats, motors, ski-dos, chainsaws, guns,
13 traps and on and on and on. There is an incredible
14 investment by northern people over the generations into
15 the area that that particular family uses. Yet, mining
16 companies or pulp companies can come in at will and often
17 their infrastructure and roads are paid for by the
18 government. The tax is deferred, loan guarantees are
19 outright grants and they seem to have all kinds of land
20 use rights.

21 A trapping family that has been there
22 for generations basically get cut out by the pulp companies
23 or pushed off by the mining companies, even though they

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 have paid for leases and they have this huge investment
2 in that land. There seems to be absolutely no balancing
3 of rights or economic justice when it comes to land use.

4 I will confine this to northern Saskatchewan and to Métis
5 communities because that's what I know.

6 A couple of other points that George and
7 I had talked about sustainable development and resource
8 management, that the real need for baseline studies, such
9 as these, when we asked the Fisheries Department in La
10 Ronge how much fish the Pinehouse people take out in
11 domestic nets a year, how much when they are giving
12 allocations for tourist fishery or for commercial fishery,
13 what do they think Pinehouse people take out. They said
14 that they figured that they took 10,000 pounds of fish
15 to eat locally. The actual figure was 101,649 pounds,
16 so that's a complete order of magnitude greater.

17 Yet, resource allocation is based on
18 having no knowledge of the true value and the true extent
19 of resources that northern people do take off the lands.
20 It is constantly under-valued there.

21 One of the things in my work that I see
22 has to be done right now until the whole thing of the Métis
23 land claims gets settled is that northern communities must

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 have land use control right now, like next week.

2 In the south, rural municipalities have
3 land use, planning committees, land use planning
4 committees and yet northern people have never been given
5 that right to be part of making decisions for their land
6 base. They are confined to these three-mile boundaries
7 around their communities in the north and have absolutely
8 no say on the land which they totally depend upon for their
9 income. That's something that could be put in place with
10 the provinces very quickly, that they could -- because
11 I imagine Métis land claims is going to take a while to
12 work out, but with these land use or planning boards right
13 now they would at least have a place at the table to talk
14 about where or if pulping goes on in a certain area. It's
15 a right that exists all across this country in the south
16 to groups. It's a right that is constantly denied to
17 northern people, even though the stake for a community
18 and for individuals is much greater on the land here than
19 it would be in the south.

20 Another thing -- I am not sure how to
21 articulate it, but who benefits from mining and who
22 benefits from pulp companies. I think the people who
23 speculate on the Vancouver Stock Exchange in mining

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 companies take share of profits or the people that own
2 shares in pulp mills and the lumber companies take profits.

3 I don't really understand what the big problem is that
4 instead of for a handful of other people who seem to --
5 we seem to think they have this legitimate right to mine
6 and to pulp and to make profits, and yet we can't get our
7 mind around the idea of northern people controlling those
8 lands and those resources and taking the profits themselves
9 and investing it within the communities where it would
10 go around to a greater amount of people.

11 It has been a long day. I think I will
12 leave it there. Thank you.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
14 much. It was a very interesting presentation. Could I
15 have the title of the study you talked about and the date?

16 **MS MARIE SYMES GREHAN:** It's called the
17 Pinehouse Planning Project, Technical Appendix 1, Bush
18 Harvest Surveys, the Northern Village of Pinehouse,
19 Saskatchewan, August 1987.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** A second
21 question, do I understand that you propose that the
22 province should have a land use planning committee in the
23 north?

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **MS MARIE SYMES GREHAN:** In every
2 community right now. I came up here in 1979. I hate to
3 get into boundaries or any of that because I don't feel
4 I have the right to talk about that, but it seems that
5 the trapping blocks, each community has a trapping block
6 and that seems to be the land which the communities have
7 used. I think they started in the 1930s or the 1940s.
8 I think there is general agreement so that even drawing
9 boundaries, interim boundaries for planning committees
10 would not be a problem. I think there would be general
11 agreement among the communities that they simply control
12 their trapping blocks, which would cover all the land in
13 northern Saskatchewan. In northern Saskatchewan each
14 community has a block.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So your
16 proposal is to leave to each community a planning committee
17 that would be controlled by the community?

18 **MS MARIE SYMES GREHAN:** That's right,
19 a committee of the community and that all land use
20 development, interim land use development until claims
21 are settled, the committee would be involved in granting
22 that, the land use application. It's the same type of
23 thing as planning committees in the south do.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** There is no
2 overlap?

3 **MS MARIE SYMES GREHAN:** No, not in the
4 trapping blocks.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
6 much.

7 **MR. MAX MORIN:** Thank you, Marie.

8 I think we have one more. Bill Curry
9 said he was going to wait until the end and if you had
10 time, to make a presentation.

11 I have maybe one question for the
12 Commissioners. I heard organizations and individuals
13 were getting access to some funding from the Royal
14 Commission for intervenor status for some specific
15 projects. How do you get access or information? What
16 do you have to do? Do you have somebody who can write
17 a proposal for the people, the trappers or the fishermen,
18 or do you have a certain organization that you send
19 applications to? How do you get access to some sort of
20 -- there was a woman who came here about a month ago or
21 right after the Referendum. She said she was hired by
22 the Royal Commission to do a study. Who is funding her
23 or how come she's doing a study? We don't know about all

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 these things.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Just
3 additional information, the Commission has set up a fund
4 that is called the Intervenor Funding Fund or program.
5 It is chaired for the Commission on an absolutely
6 independent basis by David Crombie who was Minister of
7 Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the former
8 Mayor of Toronto.

9 This fund is an \$8 million fund for two
10 fiscal years. What we did is we published guidelines for
11 Mr. Crombie, but he has the final say and decision-making
12 power on the allocation of funds. We didn't want to be
13 in the position as Commissioners to decide that we would
14 give money to some presenters and not to the others.
15 Obviously there is a cap.

16 There were deadlines in that program and
17 the deadline was October 1st of this fall. Mr. Crombie
18 received over 150 or 155 applications. This was not open
19 to bands, but it was open to provincial organizations or
20 tribal councils or the Métis organizations or the women's
21 associations or organizations in the services. It was
22 wide open, but obviously you were not aware of the existence
23 of this fund, whether it could have been possible to make

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 an application. It's possible but --

2 **MR. JIM FAVEL:** There was a lady that
3 came here in November and I talked with her. She came
4 to the council and said she was from Vancouver. She said
5 they were willing to do some kind of a study on
6 self-government. She went back to Vancouver, but she said
7 she was coming back this month sometime, I don't know when,
8 but she said she was going to be back.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** What I am
10 telling you is that all decisions are not made yet, have
11 not been made yet by David Crombie, but the bulk of it
12 was decided. The time limit was October 1st to submit
13 the proposal. It was from July 1st this summer.

14 **MR. JIM FAVEL:** It was a surprise to us
15 as a council because she came to the council.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** That's the
17 situation at this point in time.

18 **MR. BILL CURRY:** Thank you, Max.

19 Commissioners, I am going to very
20 quickly make a few comments about some basically health
21 research information that I am passing on.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Could you
23 identify yourself for the record.

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 **MR. BILL CURRY:** Bill Curry. I am one
2 of the health care administration students from the Gabriel
3 Dumont program. I had the privilege to be a part of that
4 program and the honour to be here. Thank you.

5 My practicum is with the Northern
6 Medical Services which has a tripartite federal,
7 provincial and University of Saskatchewan agreement for
8 basically physician services for northern Saskatchewan
9 and which is much broader in scope in looking at the whole
10 area of health development and, further, or more
11 fundamentally, believing in and wanting to support the
12 healing that is taking place in the north.

13 I think it would healthy to use the
14 fewest words possible, that possibly everyone's health
15 would benefit from getting out of here, so I will try to
16 do it quickly.

17 I want to thank Rick Laliberte for making
18 mention of this being the eve of the International Year
19 for International Peoples. It is literally the eve
20 because the United Nations will on the 10th be officially
21 opening, it will be the official opening ceremony at the
22 United Nations General Assembly for the International Year
23 of the World's Indigenous People. I wanted to simply

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 repeat that because I find it interesting that we have
2 hardly heard about this in the general public. If the
3 Commission is in any position to prod or nudge that there
4 be more awareness of this, I am sure among indigenous
5 peoples there is awareness and the general public should
6 pay a great deal of attention. I think it is very
7 important.

8 I think it adds significance to your work
9 as a Commission that the timing of this, I think there
10 is something higher at work in bringing the various strands
11 together which we are part of.

12 I would like to preface a few comments
13 about the documents. I am passing on by just quoting a
14 couple of brief sentences which I will also be passing
15 on. This is from the Canadian Journal of Native Studies
16 and Charles Hobart wrote that the impact of resource
17 development on the health of native people in the Northwest
18 Territories. I think this is generally applicable to the
19 north. It is simply the first sentence:

20 "Despite the high visibility of megaprojects, such as
21 Syncrude, Arctic oil exploration and
22 northern mining activity and the fact
23 that virtually all are located in

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 northern areas where native people
2 predominate, sometimes in sizeable
3 numbers, there appear to be no published
4 studies of the effects of these
5 development projects on the health
6 effects of native people."

7 This is a 1984 journal. I want to
8 emphasize that date because back at the time when uranium
9 mining was coming on stream here and other megaproject
10 developments in other places, we would hear constantly
11 statements that essentially were saying we know a lot about
12 this. We can say that this will not adversely affect the
13 health of people. If anything, it will benefit the people.
14 By increased employment we will see improvements in
15 various areas of health status. The documents I want to
16 pass on I think show that one must at the very least question
17 this and the statements such as the one I have just read.
18 It suggests that those who are making those statements
19 didn't have a basis for what they said.

20 There have, of course, been some studies
21 since then and these need to be looked at closely.

22 The final sentence in the section that
23 I quoted is:

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 "At this juncture --"

2 again a 1984 journal:

3 "At this juncture it is not possible to draw any conclusions
4 about the consequences of development
5 projects for health conditions in
6 affected native communities."

7 It is also surmised in this that it would
8 be -- the hypothesis is in fact the effects are more adverse
9 than beneficial.

10 A sentence from a keynote address that
11 Thomas Berger made to the Circumpolar Health Conference
12 in Whitehorse in 1990:

13 "The disruptive effects of the advance of industry on
14 native values are intensified by a
15 particular kind of industrial
16 development that we often find in the
17 north. It is large scale capital
18 intensive industrial development."

19 I won't go on with that, but obviously
20 the effect on values which he mentions has a great deal
21 of importance in relationship to a number of other things.
22 He talks about some of the dysfunctions that we have heard
23 of. This may be illustrated in a map which is reproduced

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 in -- this volume is called "Social Health in Northern
2 Saskatchewan" which is produced by Northern Medical
3 Services with the University of Saskatchewan Association.

4 It is explained what the research process is in that.

5 One of the maps that is reproduced in
6 there is from the 1989 Canadian fact book on poverty.
7 I think you can see from there the black areas are the
8 areas of greatest poverty in Canada. This area that is
9 black is northern Saskatchewan. The rest of the country,
10 there is a little blip in Newfoundland, a little blip in
11 New Brunswick. This area of interlake in Manitoba. I
12 think it is very important that you have come to
13 Ile-à-La-Crosse and are engaging in these issues in
14 northern Saskatchewan as part of your nation-wide mandate.

15 I think there is something that is particularly important
16 when you hear people proposing some solutions, what we've
17 heard about the NORTEP program, what we have heard about
18 the recovery program where people here are taking hold
19 of these things themselves as we are receiving solutions.

20

21 What I am showing is where northern
22 Saskatchewan is highlighted and it simply confirms the
23 things that people have been saying here and it provides

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 documentation.

2 Just released are the latest set of vital
3 statistics in northern Saskatchewan, again Northern
4 Medical Services, the University of Saskatchewan. This
5 is the period of 1974 to 1988. I will pass this on and
6 I will make a couple of comments about that before closing.

7
8 One other document also from the same
9 source is entitled "Making One Voice." It is the
10 proceedings of the second annual Northern Health
11 Conference which was May of 1992. You will find in here
12 a presentation by Donald Favel who spoke earlier today
13 in which he talks about Ile-à-La-Crosse and that's
14 particularly relevant to Ile-à-La-Crosse, but what I want
15 to speak about is northern Saskatchewan and the health
16 process here.

17 Max Morin was the Chair of this
18 conference and was one of the initiating people. What
19 is happening in northern Saskatchewan is the northern
20 people taking control or are in the process of taking
21 control of northern health. St. Joseph's Hospital here
22 is now -- the board of the hospital consists of people
23 representing the communities of the area and so it is

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 essentially a northern run board. Prior to this and in
2 the origins of the NORTEP program was the formation of
3 the board of the local school, which was then as a board
4 of the people of this community.

5 So that process I think for Northern
6 Saskatchewan as a whole, education and now in health, can
7 be a model that can show the way. So, without going on
8 longer, I could talk quite a bit more and enthusiastically
9 about these things.

10 I want to make a reference to one of the
11 charts of statistics and relate it full circle back to
12 my first comment about the questions of whether people
13 who said that megaprojects would benefit people, that some
14 of the tests of that are the statistics in this document
15 regarding suicide rates and so on. The one I would like
16 to point to is a chart which refers to the death rates
17 below age one, death rates from congenital anomalies.

18 The chart is broken down for the periods
19 1974 to 1978, 1978 to 1983 and 1984 to 1988. The thing
20 I find interesting about this is that the first period,
21 1974 to 1978, is roughly at about the time that the Cluff
22 Lake mine was coming on stream and the Key Lake mine was
23 coming on stream in northern Saskatchewan and the strong

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 claims that were being made was that this would really
2 be beneficial.

3 I suggest that what this chart may
4 indicate is the exact opposite. I can't draw the
5 correlation between any of the activities that come from
6 these industries and the result. The only suggestion that
7 could be made is one has to look deeper into what are these
8 congenital anomalies, where do they come from.

9 I would simply like to close by reading
10 the passage that refers to this, which is:

11 "The northern death rate from congenital anomalies below
12 age one showed an increase during the
13 15-year period. In the 1974 to 1978
14 period the northern death rate from
15 congenital anomalies below age one was
16 about 250 per 100,000, but by 1984-88
17 the rate was double what it was a decade
18 earlier.

19 In contrast, the southern date rate from congenital
20 anomalies below age one had remained
21 constant during the 15-year period."

22 With that, I will close but for two
23 remarks. One is that the recent Governor General's award

DECEMBER 8, 1992

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

1 for Maggie Siggins for the book "Revenge of the Land",
2 this is some time ago, just before the book was actually
3 coming out, she said that the community of Ile-à-La-Crosse
4 is at the heart of that book in terms of what she learned
5 and what she realized the most. One of the things she
6 was dealing with was the relationship of the scrip swindles
7 of the Métis people and the transactions that took place
8 on that piece of land at Moose Jaw.

9 Ile-à-La-Crosse was used as the centre
10 for those by outside bankers and so on, for those swindles.

11 I wanted to make mention of that bit of history.

12 One other little bit of history related
13 to the blockade is, I understand that a copy of the recent
14 Briarpatch was passed on to the Commissioners and which
15 features the issues of forestry and the blockade
16 specifically. I would like to refer you in history to
17 something which applies equally on the Saskatchewan side
18 of the border and the Alberta side of the border and that
19 is the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range. There is one page,
20 it's page 17, which is entitled "Protectors of Mother
21 Earth" and it's by Ruth Arnon and Tracey Dougherty.

22 They say in one paragraph, actually it's
23 a couple of paragraphs:

15 People did receive some payments, but it wasn't until
16 many years later that they discovered
17 that they had signed quit claims in the
18 area now known as the Primrose Lake Air
19 Weapons Range. The people felt
20 betrayed by the government over the loss
21 of prime trapping land."

StenoTran

DECEMBER 8, 1992

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

1 area on the Alberta side of the border where virtually
2 the same things applies.

3 Thank you very much and thanks to
4 everyone for their patience in extending the afternoon
5 into the evening.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very
7 much. May I ask you to table some of those documents with
8 our staff?

9 **MR. BILL CURRY:** Yes.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you.
11 Perhaps we could have the closing
12 prayer.

13 **CLOSING PRAYER**

14 **--- Whereupon the Commission Adjourned at**

15 **6:55 p.m.**