

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR  
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON  
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

LOCATION/ENDROIT: LA LOCHE, SASKATCHEWAN  
L.A.C. COMMUNITY HALL

DATE: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1992

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"for the record..."

**STENOTRAN**

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Ottawa 521-0703

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1 La Loche, Saskatchewan

2 --- Upon commencing at 9:55 a.m. on Thursday,  
3 December 10, 1992

4 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: Good morning,  
5 everybody. I would like before going further to ask  
6 Theresa Montgrand to say the prayer.

7 OPENING PRAYER - THERESA MONTGRAND

8 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: The Mayor of  
9 the community, Sam Herman, is going to make opening remarks  
10 and welcome.

11 MAYOR SAM HERMAN: Good morning,  
12 everyone. First of all, I would like to welcome the Royal  
13 Commission panel. As you see, a lot of different people  
14 are here in the hall this morning. These people are with  
15 the Royal Commission. These people are travelling right  
16 across Canada and the reason they are doing this,  
17 travelling to different communities, is to hear the voice  
18 of the people in different communities.

19 If you have any concerns that you would  
20 like to bring up, this is the time you should bring them  
21 up because these people are here to hear your voices.

22 As we are behind schedule right now,  
23 maybe we should continue on with the agenda. Thank you.

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1                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
2 much, Mr. Mayor, for your welcoming remarks. I  
3 would like, in the wake of what you said, to mention that  
4 we are very happy to be here this morning. We are closing  
5 the second round of the Public Hearings of the Royal  
6 Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. There are two other  
7 rounds to come in 1993, but I would like to say at the  
8 outset that tonight we will have visited 70 communities.

9     A large majority of the communities we visited are  
10 northern communities. We did that on purpose, not only  
11 because many Aboriginal people live in the north, but also  
12 because we know there are specific situations, living  
13 conditions and that too often people who live in the south  
14 have difficulty to grasp the reality that is existing in  
15 the north.

16                   We started the Commission more than a  
17 year ago. This Commission was created in view of really  
18 trying for once, and hopefully once and for all, to look  
19 at all the issues involving the life of Aboriginal peoples  
20 in Canada and their relationship with the federal  
21 government, but also the provincial governments and the  
22 Canadian public.

23                   The mandate is very large. It is

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1 written up in 16 points, but it roughly goes from all the  
2 social issues like justice, education, health, language  
3 and culture, the related problems of alcoholism, substance  
4 abuse, family violence, the health problems like the AIDS  
5 situation that seems to be spreading and is becoming a  
6 major concern in some of the native communities of Canada.

7 We have to look at you with economic development, how  
8 to develop Aboriginal economies and northern economies,  
9 to strike the balance between development and  
10 environmental concerns, but also on the concerns of those  
11 who live and use the land in the traditional fashion.  
12 To reconcile development and the traditional way of life  
13 and the various uses of the lands.

14 The question of self-government is an  
15 important one. It has been discussed a lot during the  
16 constitutional discussions.

17 The land claims process, not each of the  
18 claims, but the process is within the mandate of the  
19 Commission, both outstanding land claims and specific land  
20 claims. In fact, the Commission is created to come up  
21 with solutions. The problems are known, though we realize  
22 that each community has its own situations and specifics  
23 and we are still hearing a lot about the problems, but

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1 we hope that we are going to hear, as we progress, more  
2 and more about solutions.

3                   As Commissions already in existence have  
4 done in the past, we have started a very large consultative  
5 process, but different this time. We really want to  
6 establish a dialogue, a good dialogue and that's the reason  
7 why we have decided to visit over 100 communities, probably  
8 closer to 120 or 125. We are doing it in a way where after  
9 each round we publish a document. You will find this  
10 document "Framing the Issues" on the table. This is an  
11 account of what has happened during round one of these  
12 Public Hearings.

13                   Round one started last April and it  
14 lasted until the end of June. We were on the road for  
15 ten weeks. We visited over 36 communities, heard more  
16 than 850 presenters, mainly Aboriginal presenters, but  
17 many non-Aboriginal presenters also. We heard elders,  
18 women, young people, young Aboriginals; we talked a lot  
19 about the future, their hopes, the dreams that may become  
20 realities, education and culture have been recurring  
21 themes of the discussion, how to manage to get young people  
22 educated, adults educated, to make sure that it is possible  
23 to go and have post-secondary training. In the health

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1 professions, for example, there is a tremendous lack of  
2 personnel. They are the jobs of the north, but too often  
3 they have to be filled by non-Aboriginal people coming  
4 in on a kind of a rotational basis.

5                   The teaching, teachers in the sciences,  
6 related to pulpmills, to mining and on and on.

7                   In parallel we started a huge, a massive  
8 research program. We are trying to work from the bottom  
9 up, from the communities. We want to build from what is  
10 already in existence and to move from there to where people  
11 would like to go. That's true for self-government, that's  
12 true for education, Aboriginal economies, but also  
13 northern economies and the conflicting, competing  
14 interests are pretty much within our mandate and very high  
15 on our mandate as priorities.

16                   We do not want to design the priorities  
17 ourselves. We want to do it with the people and that's  
18 the reason why we are meeting with as many people as  
19 possible across the country, not only the leadership, but  
20 people like you are. We are always very pleased when we  
21 have students because a lot of the Commission's work deals  
22 with students.

23                   Also, I would like to emphasize that we



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1 have meetings in homes, we have meetings in the schools.  
2 We have been in many penitentiaries and provincial jails.  
3 We know that there is a proportion of Aboriginal people  
4 who are in jails for all kinds of reasons that are  
5 unacceptable and that has to be changed. So, you should  
6 feel free to bring the issues. We know that there are  
7 some issues that are more difficult than others. We know  
8 that communities sometimes are divided on economic  
9 development projects because there are always pros and  
10 cons. I think it would be important to bring these  
11 concerns before the Commission and to discuss it with us.  
12 We want to hear from both sides.

13 We hope that we will be able to come up  
14 with solutions and recommendations sometime in the summer  
15 of 1994, not next summer but the one after. That will  
16 be three years after our creation.

17 The Commission is, and I might have  
18 started with this, but the Commission is made up of seven  
19 Commissioners. We break into three panels to visit as  
20 many communities as possible. I am René Dussault,  
21 co-Chair of the Royal Commission. I am here this morning  
22 with Mary Sillett who is an Inuk from Labrador. We have  
23 a Commission of the Day, Mr. Louis Morin.

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1                   While we are here this morning, Georges  
2 Erasmus who is the co-Chair with me of the Royal Commission  
3 is in Yellowknife with another Commissioner. There is  
4 another team in Manitoba. In fact, the Commission is made  
5 up of seven Commissioners; four of them are Aboriginal  
6 people. There is Mary. There is also Georges Erasmus  
7 who I mentioned as co-Chair. Georges is the former Chief  
8 of the Assembly of First Nations, a Dene from the Northwest  
9 Territories and you probably know him.

10                   There is Viola Robinson who is a Micmac  
11 from Nova Scotia, who was head of the Native Council of  
12 Canada, which changed its name last week to the Congress  
13 of Aboriginal People. Also, Paul Chartrand who is a Métis  
14 and is teaching Native Studies at the University of  
15 Manitoba.

16                   The non-Aboriginal Commissioners, apart  
17 from myself as co-Chair, I am a judge with the Court of  
18 Appeal of Quebec, there is Bertha Wilson who is a retired  
19 judge from the Supreme Court of Canada. Madam Justice  
20 Wilson has given many legal opinions on Aboriginal rights  
21 during the last decade, during her stay at the Supreme  
22 Court. Also, Allan Blakeney who has been Premier of  
23 Saskatchewan for more than a decade.

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1                   The Commission staff, the majority is  
2   Aboriginal. We have around 90 people on the staff of the  
3   Commission and many of them are here. They will be  
4   presented later on, but 65 or 70 per cent of our staff  
5   is Aboriginal. We wanted to have Aboriginal persons as  
6   the majority of the staff of the Commission because we  
7   thought it was essential, not only for the success of this  
8   Commission, but also to make sure that we would get the  
9   most out of what is the hope, what are the ideas and  
10  solutions from Aboriginal peoples.

11                   Of course we will have to come up with  
12  recommendations that are acceptable, seen as feasible by  
13  you, but also we hope to be able to translate them into  
14  a way where they are going to get implemented by government.

15   We would need groups to push governments to implement  
16  the recommendations of the Commission. These won't be  
17  patchwork recommendations. I think everybody agrees and  
18  that's the reason why the Commission was created, everybody  
19  agrees that there is a fundamental change in the  
20  relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the larger  
21  public and the various governments in Canada.

22                   We have to set out the direction for the  
23  future and the goals and the way to attain them, at the

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1 pace of each community. There can't be universal  
2 solutions. There is a lot of variety between the Inuit,  
3 the Métis, status Indians, non-status Indian people, Métis  
4 living off reserve, treaty people living in the major  
5 cities in the south, so the urban situation is a concern  
6 also.

7                   As you see, the mandate is very broad  
8 and you should feel free to address any of your concerns  
9 for these communities. Sometimes an idea that is a local  
10 idea, that addresses a local problem, has bearing on a  
11 much larger scale because the solutions are not all the  
12 time from legislation or big administrative structure,  
13 but very often they are within the communities, the  
14 parents, the leadership. Education is a good example.

15                   In closing, I would like to say that  
16 there is some symbolism for us being here this morning  
17 because it is December 10th and this is the official opening  
18 of the International Year of Indigenous People across the  
19 world. While we are holding these Hearings today and  
20 talking about Aboriginal issues, there will be Aboriginal  
21 leaders from all across the world talking, addressing the  
22 United Nations. I would like only to join that chorus  
23 to say the hope that is all over the world for the betterment

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1 of the situation of Aboriginal peoples.

2 I would like to say that this Commission  
3 is certainly one and probably the main public forum after  
4 the Referendum to really raise the concerns, to push for  
5 reforms, not only of the Indian Act, but reforms of the  
6 way the Department of Indian Affairs work, but also reforms  
7 as far as the Métis people are concerned. Everybody should  
8 use and benefit from this public forum to put forward --  
9 to push in order to avoid that there is a vacuum taking  
10 place after the "no" vote that was out of the Referendum  
11 held on October 26th, more than a month and a half ago.

12 I would like to welcome everybody and  
13 make sure that you will be at ease to speak out.

14 In closing also I would like to say a  
15 word about the Commissioner of the Day. This has proven  
16 to be a very successful method of doing things in the  
17 communities in the two rounds of Hearings. We have a  
18 Commissioner of the Day from the community who sits as  
19 a full-fledged member of the Commission for the duration  
20 of the Hearing. We debrief with the Commissioner of the  
21 Day at the end of the day. The Commissioner of the Day  
22 has a responsibility to make sure that we've got the context  
23 of the presentations and also sometimes to ask questions

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1 to clarify issues that are made by the presenters. I would  
2 like to welcome Mr. Morin. I hope we are going to have  
3 a fruitful day. Thank you very much.

4 I would like to ask Mary to say a few  
5 words.

6 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I would  
7 like to thank you all very much for being here. I am glad  
8 to be here. I'd like to say before I begin that we make  
9 it a policy of hiring people at the community level in  
10 order to make sure that our Hearings go well. I would  
11 like to recognize in this community and in this area the  
12 people who have helped us to get to this day. I would  
13 like to give extraordinary thanks to our guides and drivers  
14 for this week, Guy Bouvier and Dwayne Docken. I think  
15 their assistance to us since Monday has been extraordinary  
16 and that should be recognized.

17 We have hired also on contract Lorna  
18 Laplante to act as the regional co-ordinator for  
19 Saskatchewan. Our community representative in this  
20 community is Martha Herman. Our Chipewyan and Dene  
21 translator is Lester Herman. Also, I would like to welcome  
22 the Commissioner of the Day Louis Morin.

23 I would like to give special thanks to

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1 Arnold Janvier for the hall set-up and for providing the  
2 display of the art work. I think it says the Dene High  
3 School for providing the display of the art work. Also  
4 for broadcasting live to those who cannot be here I would  
5 like to thank Teddy Clark who is with station CHPN.

6 I think I would like to as well thank  
7 our Commission staff because it is they who work from very  
8 early in the morning to very late in the night to make  
9 sure that these Hearings go well. I would like to  
10 recognize Tammy Saulis from the Royal Commission, Michael  
11 Lazore, Brad Michael and Fred Wien. Also with us we have  
12 the ISTS people who are responsible for the sound system,  
13 Bernie Liesk, and our court report Bill Publow.

14 Having said that, I just want to say  
15 without delay that I've had an opportunity to experience  
16 the health system in this area. I ended up with sort of  
17 a mouth infection, so I've had an opportunity to have to  
18 drive from Beauval to Ile-à-La-Crosse to see the doctor  
19 who told me I had to go to Meadow Lake to see the dentist.

20 I said, "Hey, that's too long." So, here I am today and  
21 I look forward to hearing all of you. Thank you very much.

22

23 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: Thank you.

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1 I would like now to call our first  
2 presenter, Georgina Jolibois from the Métis Addiction  
3 Council, a youth worker, to come and join us.

4 Good morning.

5 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS, (Métis Addiction**  
6 **Council):** Good morning. Before I start, I would like  
7 to say good morning to the team of the Royal Commission  
8 and welcome to La Loche. It is a pleasure to have you  
9 here. As well, I'd like to say good morning to the  
10 audience.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Before you go  
12 further, I would like to say that we have translation from  
13 Dene to English for those who would like to use it. We  
14 have the devices available, the earphones. Thank you.

15 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** If you would  
16 like, I could say a few things in Dene as well while I  
17 give my presentation.

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

19 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** If I think it is  
20 necessary. Thank you.

21 La Loche has a population of young people  
22 of over 50 per cent. This presentation, my topic focuses  
23 on a few things. I would like to focus on the



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1 socio-economic aspect in the community and what I'd like  
2 to do as well is use the themes that were developed in  
3 the 1985 International World Youth Day. The themes were  
4 participation, development and peace. I will apply that  
5 to the community and, hopefully, northern Saskatchewan  
6 as well.

7                   Then, I will discuss my role as a youth  
8 counsellor with the Métis Addictions Council of  
9 Saskatchewan Incorporated and what I see on a regular basis  
10 when I am counselling students or giving presentations  
11 at the school on a daily basis in the community.

12                   As I was saying, La Loche is a beautiful  
13 community. However, with so many socio-economic problems  
14 in the community, young people are at a disadvantage.  
15 When I say young people, I am mainly speaking about people  
16 under the age of 25. Like I say, there are socio-economic  
17 problems that place our young people at a disadvantage  
18 and that is very unfortunate. You see, we are constantly  
19 as young people faced by things like a high drop-out rate  
20 among our high school students; not just the high school,  
21 but at the elementary level as well.

22                   Number two, there is such a high crime  
23 rate and incarceration rate among our young people that

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1 it is very sad to note.

2                   Number three, as usual, the lack of  
3 employment for not only the youth, but for the adult  
4 population in the community.

5                   Number four, family violence. It is so  
6 sad that on a daily basis a young teenager or kid who is  
7 at the elementary school are just so overwhelmed with  
8 issues that are happening at the home or in the community  
9 due to the violence.

10                  Number five, the big issues I find is  
11 alcohol and drug abuse. There is such a problem in this  
12 community that we definitely need to do something about  
13 it.

14                  Number six, high rate of teenage  
15 pregnancies. It is amazing that so many within the last  
16 five years, a 13-year old girl has gotten pregnant, so  
17 many. I don't have the statistics. However, I understand  
18 that the Town Council does have one.

19                  Number seven, welfare dependency. This  
20 community, with a lack of employment, a lot of people have  
21 no choice but to go on welfare.

22                  Number eight, poor housing. Yesterday  
23 I was counselling a student and he is 20 years of age and

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1 still a high school student. He was having such a hard  
2 time at home that he was having problems with coping.  
3 He is saying there is nowhere to go, no place to go. There  
4 are problems at home and with the grandparents, the  
5 teenager is stuck and it seems hopeless to help these young  
6 kids at the time.

7                               Number nine, my last point, lack of  
8 proper educational and recreational and social facilities.

9 We have so many young people who are willing to do a lot  
10 of things, who are willing to participate, but if there  
11 are no facilities and there are no programs, there is  
12 nothing they really can do, other than abuse alcohol and  
13 drugs.

14                               Like I was saying, in 1985 there was an  
15 International and World Youth Day. At this the following  
16 three themes were developed, participation, development  
17 and peace. Also, like I was saying, these three themes  
18 will be used in providing some suggestions and  
19 recommendations for the community and hopefully throughout  
20 northern Saskatchewan as well.

21                               You see, in today's society, and not just  
22 in La Loche, but in the Province of Saskatchewan and the  
23 country of Canada, as well as worldwide, there are so many  
problems that everyone is having. You turn on the radio

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1 or turn on the T.V. and what do you see is the news talking  
2 about the war in Somalia, the civil war in Bosnia. If  
3 it's not that, the drug bust in the States or somewhere  
4 else, and family violence. It is just so sad that these  
5 programs, the media are educating our young people because  
6 we don't have the facilities or the funds to educate our  
7 own young people and that is very sad to know. As I was  
8 saying, we have young people who are not only intelligent,  
9 small, capable and very competent to do something with  
10 their lives, but because like I was saying we don't have  
11 anything for them it just seems hopeless at times.

12                   There are several agencies in the  
13 community, these are only a very few and the young people  
14 can only turn to a very few. At times the RCMP are so  
15 overwhelmed with their caseloads that they don't have time  
16 to talk to our young people. The Denequan (ph), there  
17 is the youth worker there, the team parent worker and the  
18 court worker. These three are so overloaded with work  
19 as well that we don't have very much time to put on programs  
20 for our young people.

21                   Then the schools, the teachers are doing  
22 wonderful with the students, but it just needs more to  
23 be done because the problem seems so overwhelming. Myself

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1 as a youth counsellor, I will discuss that later. At the  
2 Clearwater Outpatients Centre there are three staff  
3 members, one counsellor and one director and there is also  
4 a secretary. These are simply not enough.

5                   There are a few more agencies in the  
6 community and, as I say, it is not enough for our young  
7 people. This is why we have such a high crime rate, high  
8 teenage pregnancy rate and, among other things, I find  
9 the number one problem with me, besides employment, would  
10 be the alcohol and drug abuse.

11                   On a daily basis I try and I always try  
12 to encourage young people to learn as much as they can  
13 because, as I was saying earlier, they are intelligent,  
14 capable and competent. There is a need to allow these  
15 young people the opportunity to develop their sense of  
16 identity as a Dene, a Métis and a Canadian, by teaching  
17 and providing them with the proper tools and skills for  
18 personal and professional development. These tools and  
19 skills cannot be taught if the young people are not given  
20 the opportunity to learn for themselves.

21                   It is so important that this community,  
22 not just for youth development, but for other developments  
23 -- and I am sure there have been more requests made on

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1 this one, more funds that are required in this community.

2

3                   The native communities across the  
4 country and across the province are underdeveloped and  
5 La Loche is no exception. As I was pointing out earlier,  
6 the few things that we are faced with, not just as young  
7 people, but the adult population as well. It is important  
8 to understand that in order to provide a future for our  
9 young people there is a strong need for economic, social  
10 and political development. To do this, like I was saying  
11 earlier, we need proper funds, not just a one-time fund,  
12 but perhaps on an annual basis of allocations, to help  
13 us develop our own programs and projects for our young  
14 people; not just the young people but for the community  
15 itself, so that we are not only focusing on one population.

16

17                   I think in order to make progress in some  
18 areas we need to get involved. We need to get not only  
19 the young people involved, but the whole population. For  
20 example, in 1993 there will be another International World  
21 Youth Day in Denver, Colorado where the Pope will be  
22 visiting. What I am hoping to accomplish is to have a  
23 group organized to take at least 30 young people, plus

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1 10 chaperons to this World Youth Day. In order to do that,  
2 I am not just focusing on young people. I am focusing  
3 on the parents and the agencies in the community, so that  
4 we can build not only friendships, but relationships to  
5 work together to do something for our community.

6 In this community there are basically  
7 only two youth workers/counsellors, myself and Leona  
8 Janvier out of Denequan (ph). Unfortunately, the two of  
9 us are not enough to handle the young population in the  
10 community.

11 I would like to take this time to read  
12 actually two sentences -- before I do that what I would  
13 like to say is back in September my organization was having  
14 problems with fundings from the government. My supervisor  
15 was concerned that my position as a youth counsellor was  
16 going to be cut, so in order to do that I had to get support  
17 letters written by a few people in the community. One  
18 letter was written from Dr. V.A. Nichols, he's a physician  
19 in La Loche and the other letter that I am going to read  
20 from it Greg Cache. Not only is he an elderly man, but  
21 the principal at Ducharme Elementary School.

22 The first sentence from Dr. V.A.  
23 Nichols' letter:

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1 "I write in support of the continuance of the Métis youth  
2 program in La Loche and the continued  
3 provision of funding for that program."

4 The next sentence:

5 "It would be a great step forward if such programs would  
6 flourish and expand to include all  
7 communities in the northwest of  
8 Saskatchewan."

9 The next letter from Greg Cache. This  
10 is a paragraph:

11 "I feel this position and the job Georgina is doing with  
12 it is of great importance to the youth  
13 of this community and should be  
14 continued. La Loche has a very young  
15 population and a position like this is  
16 of great benefit to the youth. Georgina  
17 is only one person and she can only do  
18 so much, but she is willing to do what  
19 is required and more. This town with  
20 its large population under 18 years of  
21 age could probably use five youth  
22 counsellor/workers."

23 As I was saying, the letters clearly



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1 state the need for more youth counsellors. I constantly  
2 say that to my organization and to other organizations  
3 as well, because Leona and I are doing so much, but  
4 sometimes when I am counselling I don't have the time to  
5 develop programs for young people for evening or on  
6 weekends. When there are no programs or anything for the  
7 young people, that's when they begin to entertain  
8 themselves by abusing alcohol and drugs. When they do  
9 that, they get into trouble, not only at home and at school,  
10 but also with the law and that is very sad.

11                   The next point I would like to bring out  
12 is La Loche, in my view, or the community to my  
13 understanding, requires a youth probation officer in La  
14 Loche. We have one coming in and out from Buffalo Narrows,  
15 but I never see this guy, not on a regular basis. I phone  
16 him and he never returns my phone calls. You see, the  
17 reason why I say this, like I was saying, there is such  
18 a high rate of crimes committed by our young people because  
19 there is absolutely nothing for them to do. There is no  
20 positive support, but before I do that I would like to  
21 discuss -- you see, back in April there were five young  
22 people who were being charged with break and enter. I  
23 spoke on behalf of these five people. The judge gave them

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1 not a sentence, but a probation. One was for them to  
2 receive counselling from myself under the supervision of  
3 the youth probation officer.

4                   Since then, I have not seen the youth  
5 probation officer regarding this matter or any other  
6 matter. This causes so many problems for our young  
7 offenders. If they are not given the proper supervision,  
8 they are going to recommit the same crime over and over  
9 again because it seems like there is no -- they get the  
10 feeling that they have no support from anyone and,  
11 therefore, no one cares. Like I say, we need someone in  
12 the community to focus on that.

13                   Also, more programs and workshops are  
14 required to be put on for the community, but because there  
15 are only two of us we can only do so much, as I was saying.  
16 There are programs focusing on addictions, family  
17 violence, self-esteem, culture, language and so on that  
18 we need to focus on.

19                   There is an arena in the community and  
20 there is a gym, but these two are not enough. There is  
21 no place really for young people to hang out in the  
22 community. With this, like I say, when there is nothing  
23 to do they go out and do things that are not acceptable.

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1

2                   Peace. I strongly believe that peace  
3 will not come about unless many people begin to work  
4 together and do something together. It doesn't matter  
5 what race, it doesn't matter what agency or organizations,  
6 to help our young people and to help the communities across  
7 northern Saskatchewan, across Canada and across the world.

8    We need to not only focus on participation and  
9 development, but peace as well. Peace will not come about  
10 also unless development and participation are done. It  
11 is a long ways to accomplish that, I believe, but if we  
12 try and try to provide a few things for not just the youth  
13 in the community and everywhere else, I think we can  
14 accomplish a lot of things.

15                  Now I would like to discuss my role as  
16 a youth counsellor in the community. I have been a youth  
17 counsellor since March of 1992, the last ten months. I  
18 have such a broad job description, I not only counsel,  
19 I give presentations on substance abuse, alcohol, drugs  
20 and solvent, family violence, self-esteem and many, many  
21 more issues that I try to bring out to our young people  
22 to make them feel important, to make them feel accepted  
23 in the community as much as I can for my part.

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1                   On a regular basis, sometimes I must  
2 admit that I feel hopeless when I am counselling a young  
3 teenager of 15 where at home there is family violence,  
4 abuse of all sorts and they are going to school to escape  
5 from that family violence. Trying to help this kind of  
6 young person it is very frustrating and very, very  
7 difficult. That's why we need in the community to have  
8 more addictions youth counsellors, an out-patient centre  
9 where these young people can go and get help. Like I say,  
10 there is one, myself, who is an addictions youth  
11 counsellor. Like I say, I am not enough. There has got  
12 to be more.

13                   Another point I would like to bring out,  
14 in northern Saskatchewan I strongly believe that we need  
15 a youth treatment centre in place in northern Saskatchewan.  
16 The nearest one is White Spruce Youth Treatment Centre  
17 which is in Yorkton. It is approximately a 13-hour drive  
18 from here. Up to this point I have not yet sent anyone  
19 to Yorkton because I am scared that it doesn't meet our  
20 needs as a person from northern Saskatchewan. There is  
21 definitely the cultural and the language barriers. Our  
22 young people are struggling and, you see, Chipewyan is  
23 our first language and our young people are still

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1 struggling with learning the English language.

2 To provide funds, and as I was saying  
3 earlier, we definitely need better summer programs as well.

4 This year the school season ends in May. We have three  
5 months for the holidays for young people. Last year I  
6 had the opportunity to organize a youth camp of 12 teenagers  
7 and it was excellent, but it was only one youth camp that  
8 I could put together because I didn't have the time or  
9 I didn't have a lot of things to go on.

10 This coming summer with three months as  
11 a holiday for young people, we need to put on more than  
12 one youth camp, youth festivals or whatever. There is  
13 definitely a requirement in that area.

14 In closing, like I was saying earlier,  
15 La Loche is a beautiful town and also a lot of people I  
16 hear whenever I go down south, they say a lot of terrible  
17 things about this community. They say isn't there such  
18 a high crime rate, isn't there such awful young people  
19 in the community. It isn't. I like to stress that because  
20 it is a very good community. We have potential young  
21 people who are capable of becoming lawyers, becoming  
22 doctors, more youth counsellors and who are capable of  
23 doing almost anything they put their mind to. I am one

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1 example only, but I know there are a few others. I had  
2 the opportunity to go to university and obtain an education  
3 and I keep telling grade 12s for next year to do the same  
4 and be a positive role model to them.

5 I think if more young people were to go  
6 out with support, not only for funds and other things,  
7 that they will do a lot of things for this community, not  
8 just for this community, but for themselves and for  
9 northern Saskatchewan and across the country as well.  
10 That is basically the end of my presentation. I hope that  
11 was enough.

12 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
13 much for a presentation that is certainly very useful at  
14 the outset of a day like this one. We are very mindful  
15 of the fact that even if there are problems in the community  
16 and you have mentioned them, there is a lot of hope and  
17 also of possibility of people, and young people in  
18 particular who are wanting to be given a chance to forge  
19 ahead. If I pick up on your last point, the role models,  
20 it is certainly a very important one. I expect that we  
21 are going to discuss education with a few presenters during  
22 the day and it is a very important issue. We are always  
23 very happy to have young people and some others joined

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1 us while you were talking and make the presentation. We  
2 are always happy when we see them in the front row because  
3 I think it is very important that they realize that what  
4 is going on here is largely for them, not only, but largely  
5 and that there is the possibility to fulfil what they feel  
6 they would like to do.

7 I understand you talk a lot about the  
8 lack of personnel, court workers, probation officers,  
9 counsellors like you and my first question will be: I  
10 understand you are working for the community, for the  
11 municipality of La Loche?

12 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** It's not the  
13 municipality, it's with the Métis Society of Saskatchewan  
14 and the organization is called the Métis Addictions Council  
15 of Saskatchewan Incorporated. With the organization  
16 there are five youth workers spread out throughout the  
17 province and there is one in Cumberland House, Prince  
18 Albert, here, Regina and there is one in Prince Albert  
19 -- I don't know if I said that already.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do I  
21 understand that you deal only with Métis people?

22 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** No. My  
23 supervisor keeps stressing this to me and I am thankful

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1 for that. If a treaty student came to you, don't send  
2 him away. I don't do that. If a non-native student or  
3 young person came to me, I hope out as much as I can.  
4 I don't only focus on Métis youth.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Is there a  
6 relationship between the Métis Society in which your  
7 branch, as you said there are five branches with this Métis  
8 Addictions Council, but what is the role of the  
9 municipality of La Loche as such? Is there a link? Do  
10 they have a role in the social services or within the  
11 community?

12 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** Within the  
13 municipality?

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes.

15 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** I don't know if  
16 I can answer that.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** In fact, what  
18 I wanted to know was whether you had established a link  
19 with them. I understand the services are coming more from  
20 organizations like yours than from the municipality  
21 itself.

22 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** What I did is I  
23 started as a youth counsellor. I make myself known



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1 throughout the community through different local agencies  
2 as well, including the town council. If that's the  
3 question, I think what I am understanding is that my  
4 developing a relationship with these agencies to help out  
5 as much as they can if they are not doing so much better,  
6 at least they have the understanding of what is going on  
7 in the community sort of thing. Is that what the question  
8 is?

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I wanted to  
10 know if your financing is coming from the Métis Society?

11 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** Our finances are  
12 coming from the provincial government.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** And the  
14 provincial government.

15 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** SADAC is what it  
16 is called.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** In fact, my  
18 question was probably more a question for the mayor of  
19 whether there was in addition some social services under  
20 the control of the municipality itself?

21 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** I don't believe  
22 there is.

23 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** There is none?

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1 MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS: No.

2 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: You have  
3 listed a number of situations, from the high dropout rate  
4 and the high level of crimes and the difficulty with the  
5 justice system for follow-up.

6 MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS: Right.

7 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: How many RCMP  
8 officers are there in the community?

9 MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS: There are  
10 roughly ten. I believe there are ten RCMP members right  
11 now, one sergeant and nine regular constables. I don't  
12 believe we have a corporal yet.

13 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: When young  
14 people go to jails where are they incarcerated?

15 MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS: If they happen  
16 to go to jail, they go with the adults.

17 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: Where is it?

18 MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS: In the  
19 community.

20 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: In the  
21 community there is a provincial jail?

22 MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS: Yes, there is a  
23 cell. There is one in the community in the RCMP station.

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1                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** And they have  
2 to go with the adults, there is no separation?

3                   **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** I don't believe  
4 there is a separation. I will have to check up on that.

5  
6                   As I was saying, because there are so  
7 many problems in the community, the RCMP is overwhelmed  
8 with a lot of work. It is amazing. They keep telling  
9 us that and they keep telling that to everyone. It is  
10 amazing. It seems like they don't have time for prevention  
11 and for policing. They go from call to call to call sort  
12 of thing.

13                  **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So you feel it  
14 is less a matter of attitude, but a sheer fact that they  
15 are totally overloaded?

16                  **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** I believe so.

17                  **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Is the  
18 relationship good?

19                  **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** In my view it is  
20 because a couple of weeks ago the RCMP called a local  
21 meeting with the local people and there was a large turnout.  
22 They pointed out some of their views. As I had the  
23 opportunity to work as a contract parole supervisor as

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1 well and I can see their viewpoint as well, that they are  
2 overworked as well, yes.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** On the  
4 situation of family violence that you have to deal with  
5 through the young people, you have mentioned that there  
6 is only one place where -- are there half-way houses?

7 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** In La Loche there  
8 is the Clearwater Out-Patients Centre. Like I said, there  
9 are three staff members there. There they get a lot of  
10 referrals from the probation services and the court  
11 systems, every Thursday when they have court. They have  
12 so many referrals and they don't have the time to deal  
13 with the youth as well.

14 I keep thinking about that because  
15 working with these young people there is essentially no  
16 place for them to go. They go to school and that's a  
17 wonderful place for them to go, but a lot of times if they  
18 are having problems at home and if they are starting to  
19 abuse alcohol and drugs, they go to school and they are  
20 not learning anything. They just go there as a way to  
21 get away from home and not deal with mom and dad or not  
22 deal with the home situation, not just the home situation,  
23 but the community. It is unfortunate the way it is.

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1                   A lot of these young people, like one  
2 girl I am dealing with and she is having such a hard time,  
3 that, yes, she is going to school, but her grades are not  
4 good enough because she feels that there is no support  
5 from home or the community in the positive sense. Of  
6 course, I am trying to help her, but sometimes I feel  
7 hopeless because there is no -- I don't say that to the  
8 student. I don't say it is hopeless. I try to provide  
9 hopeful situations for them as much as I can, but at the  
10 same time I know what the situation is like and it is  
11 difficult to deal with.

12                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You have  
13 mentioned a lack of recreational facilities. We are going  
14 to come up on this, but is there one secondary school in  
15 the community? Is there only one?

16                   **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** High school you  
17 mean? Yes, there is one high school.

18                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** How many  
19 children are at school, both primary and secondary -- at  
20 the secondary level?

21                   **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** All together  
22 roughly 800 students. I think the La Loche population  
23 is roughly 3,000.

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1 I would like to point out the Churchill  
2 Métis Labour Force Development Board Incorporated they  
3 got enough funding from the Saskatchewan government to  
4 begin a Start Program it's called. The Start Program is  
5 for four months and what it is is this worker, the project  
6 co-ordinator will be focusing on the high drop-out rate  
7 and to provide suggestions and recommendations to help  
8 the guidance counsellors and the home school  
9 co-ordinators.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Mary.

11 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I would  
12 like to thank you. I have only two questions.

13 To pick up on Mr. Dussault's point, we  
14 have heard in many, many communities that there are many  
15 social service agencies available in those communities.

16 One of the real problems is that those agencies sometimes  
17 don't work together and then their impact is minimized.

18 I am wondering in terms of the services, the existing  
19 services in this community, is there any working together  
20 to address the situation of the youth?

21 **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** No, not really.

22 Very few, like the schools work together and I try to  
23 work with the schools and very few agencies are trying

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1 to work together.

2                   What I am trying to do, I have so much  
3 work to do, but I don't have the time to do, but in the  
4 new year what I am hoping to do is start up an interagency  
5 to start working together. So, hopefully it will fall  
6 through and it will continue for a long period of time  
7 and so it will be effective, to focus on not only the youth,  
8 but in the whole aspect of the community.

9                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you  
10 very much.

11                   When you made your presentation you did  
12 mention something that is mentioned in many, many  
13 communities when they talk about youth and that's suicide.  
14 Is suicide an issue in this community?

15                   **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** In the next five  
16 years it will be an issue. In the last three months, like  
17 I said when I am counselling students, three of these young  
18 people had suicidal thoughts under the age of 25. There  
19 are only three and I know there are so many more. So far  
20 La Loche is very fortunate that not many -- so far we have  
21 no young person committing suicide, but I believe that  
22 if there is nothing being done in the next five years for  
23 sure there will be a rate I believe.

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1                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Actually,  
2 I am going to ask another question, but I was wondering,  
3 like you were saying, for example, there is no place for  
4 kids to go really who are suffering. They come from  
5 abusive families and their solace is the schools, their  
6 escape is the schools and sometimes if they are not doing  
7 well in school then they don't have that any more. I am  
8 wondering where do kids go like that? In the absence of  
9 modern facilities is this community -- like, for example,  
10 in some communities there is a network of families that  
11 takes in other families or the extended family is really  
12 strong and so they can support these kids in the interim.  
13 What is the situation in this community?

14                   **MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS:** Sometimes other  
15 family member do take in the kids and the children, but  
16 at the same time if there is a house that is a two-bedroom  
17 house and there is a family of five already and to bring  
18 in three or four other members of the family, the situation  
19 is overcrowded and that is being done on some basis, but  
20 like I was saying this one 20-year old is having such a  
21 hard time that if he were to go home and there is an  
22 overcrowding problem and he goes to the grandmother's,  
23 there is an uncle who is a chronic alcoholic and causing



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1 problems and this young person is lost. There is nowhere  
2 else to go. He tries to go to a different place, but he  
3 feels he is not welcome there because there are the same  
4 problems.

5                   It is very sad in that situation. I  
6 think young people, there has to be something a facility  
7 or whatever for these young people to go to and receive  
8 the help they need, not only the help but the support.  
9 It is just important to have that support.

10                   It doesn't matter if the student is doing  
11 well in school, getting straight As and is not practising  
12 alcohol and drugs yet, but this person does require support  
13 as well, because in a situation where 85 per cent of young  
14 people are abusing alcohol and drugs and there is 10 per  
15 cent of the group who do not practice and they are doing  
16 very well, they are going to feel pressured. They are  
17 going to feel, yes, they are going to feel that low  
18 self-esteem, "I am useless, I am awful. What is the point  
19 of even trying."

20                   I know of two people who are going  
21 through that. I encourage them and I provide the support,  
22 but sometimes I can understand what they are feeling  
23 because I have done the same thing when I was growing up

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1 in this community. Either way, not just for the students,  
2 but the young people are having problems, but also provide  
3 support for those who are doing very well in school and  
4 who are excelling and there is a lot of potential for them.

5

6 COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT: Thank you.

7 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: Thank you.

8 MS GEORGINA JOLIBOIS: Thank you.

9 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: I would now  
10 like to call Rick Laliberte from the Northern Lights School  
11 Division to join us.

12 MR. RICK LALIBERTE, Chairman, Northern  
13 Lights School Division): Good morning.

14 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: Good morning.

15 I think you are accompanied by Gord Rutten.

16 MR. RICK LALIBERTE: Yes, Gordon is  
17 our Superintendent for the schools on the west side.

18 Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Louis  
19 Morin and to all the residents of La Loche and especially  
20 the elders and the youth. My name is Rick Laliberte and  
21 as Chairman of the Northern Lights School Division the  
22 presentation here is intended to raise awareness to the  
23 Aboriginal people, not only in this area, but also

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1 throughout Canada, on some of our expectations and  
2 perceptions in the delivery of a kindergarten to grade  
3 12 program in this particular region, northern  
4 Saskatchewan.

5 I made a similar presentation in  
6 Ile-à-La-Crosse two days ago, specifically on the  
7 university delivery program with NORTEP and NORPAC. I  
8 think that the two locations and the two presentations  
9 that I am making will really highlight some of the breaks  
10 in the path of our children's education.

11 A philosophy of education was shared  
12 with me by an elder from the far north. The reason I had  
13 to learn about an education system from a different  
14 perspective, my first language is Cree. (Native language  
15 - no translation). I was raised in an Indian way, in the  
16 Cree way and my first language is Cree. So, everything  
17 I learn I always have to interpret back in Cree for me  
18 to truly understand anything.

19 That is the case of a majority of our  
20 students in northern Saskatchewan. Their Aboriginal  
21 heritage, either being Cree or Dene, anything they learn  
22 in their education system or in life they will try and  
23 interpret into their first language. So, when the elders

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1 shared with me the philosophy of education and the role  
2 of education, it is very simple. I couldn't draw it, so  
3 I will try and use words to paint it to you.

4                   It is the perception of an arrow. If  
5 you look at an arrow, the straight shaft of an arrow should  
6 be true. It is like a hunter. When you have a goal, a  
7 set target, you are aiming for that target and that is  
8 your fulfilment. It is similar with a child, that they  
9 have visions and they have perceptions and they should  
10 have set goals to fulfil a good life.

11                   But in the early years of that child you  
12 look at the tailfeathers of an arrow. Those are the  
13 support systems of that child's life. The first ones are  
14 their parents. They play a major supporting role for a  
15 child's life. When they enter the larger family, the  
16 grandparents, their sisters, their brothers, their aunts,  
17 their uncles, they all play a major part in that child's  
18 life in the early years. When they enter kindergarten,  
19 enter the institution of schools, that school plays an  
20 important part in the tailfeather of that child's life.

21 It goes on to a certain point where kindergarten to grade  
22 12, that education and support system in that child's life,  
23 all of a sudden there is a break and that's the mystery

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1 world of post-secondary education, university and  
2 technical. It is very real here in northern Saskatchewan.

3                   The universities are located away down  
4 south and a lot of these people have a hard time finding  
5 that trail to go to higher education. So, the role of  
6 the education system is support and it's also a balance  
7 with the family and the parents.

8                   One of the challenges that was set for  
9 us by our local school boards two years ago in a workshop  
10 was that we need to understand the K to 12 programming  
11 delivered in our schools. Going back to the elders'  
12 interpretation of schools and my problem with interpreting  
13 everything I see in education to my first language, there  
14 should be a document similar to what you have here in a  
15 report of the Royal Commission, where for parents and  
16 elders in communities to understand what is taught in the  
17 schools, a child enters kindergarten. On page 1 it should  
18 be right on the top "kindergarten" and in a very simple  
19 form explain what we are trying to achieve in that year.

20                   On the second page it should be grade  
21 1, in very simple form explain what it is, so simple that  
22 I can look at it in English and in my mind I can interpret  
23 it in Cree and so can anybody else in this community

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1 interpret it in Dene, all the way to grade 12. That way,  
2 parents and elders can play an active role in their  
3 children's education, understanding the expectations of  
4 the schools in an interpretative role in the Aboriginal  
5 language.

6 I don't think it has ever been achieved  
7 anywhere in Canada. I have not found a document that  
8 exists anywhere that can do that because if you start  
9 throwing words like "curriculum," "pedagogy," those are  
10 mysterious words and very hard to interpret. You've got  
11 to go back to the basics to make them understand. Then  
12 you will have a support system in the community and in  
13 the school, because the school is not an institution where  
14 walls are built inside a community and those children enter  
15 a different world when they enter the Ducharme Elementary  
16 School here in La Loche or the Dene High School here.  
17 It's not a different world. They have not left La Loche  
18 when they enter those walls. They are still a part of  
19 this community.

20 The schools must have a philosophy where  
21 this child is centred. They must learn themselves first,  
22 learn their body, their mind and their background before  
23 they learn anything away from them. They should not learn

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1 anything about the Chinese before they have learned  
2 anything about the Dene. That is what child centred and  
3 wholistic education is about.

4 One other challenge was set to us by  
5 local boards and that was a year ago. This challenge was  
6 on Aboriginal language instruction. A lot of our  
7 communities are experiencing the decline in the use of  
8 Aboriginal languages by the youth. The school does play  
9 a role, but also the parents play a role in providing the  
10 use of Aboriginal language. The school's role is to  
11 support the use of language in understanding and  
12 interpreting English and their studies in that language,  
13 but we don't have curriculum.

14 The research and development of  
15 curriculum is out of our reach. It seems like it is there,  
16 but our budgets are limited, our resources and human  
17 resources are limited. It is always just out of reach.

18 We need probably a co-ordinated effort amongst our schools  
19 and probably some neighbouring schools, either to band  
20 schools and the Indian schools that collectively we should  
21 create either a unit or an institution that can provide  
22 us with the necessary materials in these drawbacks.

23 We have a presentation here of a lot of

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1 the expectations that we have come forward and challenges  
2 that we have faced and need to accomplish in a very short  
3 while to improve the quality of education. I guess I will  
4 have to allow our Superintendent here, Gordon Rutten, to  
5 go through the document with you. I was trying to  
6 generalize some of the key points that we want to address,  
7 but these ones are a little more specific and I will be  
8 available for more questions and I will help make  
9 supporting comments to Gord's document and documentation  
10 of the recommendations. I will let Gordon Rutten take  
11 over.

12 **MR. GORDON RUTTEN, (Superintendent,**  
13 **Northern Lights School Division):** If you don't mind  
14 referring to the green document, I will stick a little  
15 more closely to that. As we planned, Rick set the  
16 philosophical or the umbrella position and my duty is to  
17 be a little more specific and narrow in focus.

18 In very general terms to set the context  
19 for the Northern Lights School Division, we cover 50 per  
20 cent of Saskatchewan in a geographical sense. We are 600  
21 kilometres by 600 kilometres. We have 28 schools in 25  
22 communities. We have 4,550 students, 3,800 of those or  
23 85 per cent are of native ancestry. One of the areas that



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1 Rick was talking about in terms of interpreting the  
2 provincial curriculum in terms of an Aboriginal  
3 perspective relates to the number of native teachers we  
4 have on staff. We have 25 per cent of our teaching staff  
5 of 264 are native people, very much thanks to a good  
6 northern program that we have, a university degree granting  
7 institution in La Ronge, namely NORTEP, which you probably  
8 have heard of before.

9                   So, 25 per cent of our teachers are of  
10 native ancestry and 85 per cent of our clients or students  
11 are of native ancestry, so there is quite a gap there,  
12 but we are making progress.

13                   I would like, if you are interested in  
14 a geographic perspective, on page 4 we outline the  
15 provincial map of Saskatchewan which shows where we are,  
16 but we are in the top half of Saskatchewan.

17                   If I could indulge you folks for a  
18 minute, on page 6 there is some specific information that  
19 Rick was talking about in a verbal sense and that is  
20 Northern Lights takes very seriously the idea of  
21 incorporating the native view of life into our curriculum  
22 and into our schools. I will be the very first one to  
23 admit that we have got a long ways to go there. We are

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1 perhaps in the second or third year of beginning to take  
2 this as a more serious level.

3                   The concept of the circle and the  
4 continuity of life is very fundamental, as everyone at  
5 your table will know. Just going to the very bottom of  
6 the page, we think that the circle has a place for everyone  
7 and everything. It is our objective within the Northern  
8 Lights School Division to seek to imitate the wheel or  
9 the circle and provide a place for everyone and everything.  
10 In fact, our basic duty, the task of our schools is to  
11 reach out and as expressed in the Dene language, "Sekwi  
12 helarehdi" touch a child. There will probably be a lot  
13 of smiles back there as I pronounce Dene, but anyway I  
14 said two words in Dene and I think it is important, the  
15 idea of the touching a child concept the way Rick spoke  
16 of it.

17                   Moving on to the very specific things  
18 on page 7, there are four broad focuses that Northern Lights  
19 thinks is important; a school focus, a northern focus,  
20 a social focus and a cultural focus. Firstly, there is  
21 the narrow definition of the school focus with the issue  
22 of student retention.

23                   Other speakers this morning have alluded

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1 to that basic problem. We have listed several items under  
2 "Student retention", sort of areas of progress because  
3 things have been happening with Northern Lights. We do  
4 need help, but things are happening. We have a  
5 well-established and provincially accepted education  
6 equity program. We have an alternative education in  
7 place. We have Indian and Métis staff development, native  
8 studies 10, 20 and 30 and so on down the list. I don't  
9 want to bore the Commission by reading every example of  
10 things we are doing, but there are some reasonably positive  
11 things.

12                               With regard to student retention and the  
13 whole drop-out rate, if you wouldn't mind turning to page  
14 14 at the back. There is a chart which indicates the  
15 increasing retention rate that we are accomplishing in  
16 Northern Lights and from the junior high, grades seven  
17 to twelve, from 1966 to 1992. It does show that we are  
18 making progress, of course the lighter grey being seven,  
19 eight and nine and the darker grey being ten, eleven and  
20 twelve. We have many miles to go, but we are making  
21 progress.

22                               On the next page, page 15, is a similar  
23 version of the growing match between the number of students

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1 passing from grade 9 to grade 10 and the number graduating.  
2 The gap is lessening. There are fewer and fewer drop-outs  
3 at that level. So, some reasonably positive things are  
4 happening and that's the basic structure of the next few  
5 pages, where we talk about the issue. We are doing some  
6 things and then we get the recommendations.

7 So, the seconde issue under school focus  
8 would be relevancy and there one of the things that we  
9 are the most proud of in Northern Lights relates directly  
10 to what Rick said and that is an expansion of cultural  
11 programming and particularly in this community, although  
12 we are representing 28 communities today, there are some  
13 very good things happening with regard to cultural  
14 programming; a trapping school, a cultural camp.

15 In the documents I gave to your staff  
16 there is a specific outline of some things that are  
17 happening with regard to cultural programming. For  
18 example, a one week, a two week, a three-week session out  
19 in the field and I think when the specific schools come  
20 forward they will give you more details about some cultural  
21 programming that is happening here, but various degrees  
22 of cultural incorporation into the curriculum are  
23 happening throughout Northern Lights.

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1                   Other things under the area of relevancy  
2   concern para-professionals. We have a fairly large number  
3   of para-professionals employed in Northern Lights, teacher  
4   assistants and tutors, as well as secretaries and library  
5   technicians and the whole janitorial area, bus drivers  
6   and so on, but just within the narrow definition of the  
7   in-school para-professionals, 85 per cent of the  
8   para-professionals are native people. So, we have a long  
9   ways to go on the teaching side of things, but in other  
10   areas we have made some progress. I think 85 per cent  
11   native people in that area contributes significantly  
12   towards inculcation or incorporation of that cultural  
13   attitude within the schools. So, we think that is  
14   important.

15                  Another fairly important area under  
16   relevancy is the whole industrial arts and home economics  
17   program. Of any subject that students take, other than  
18   language, we think this is a very high priority area because  
19   it's the kind of training that will lead to the jobs and  
20   jobs that exist in the north, our whole mining area and  
21   tourism and forestry and the whole thing relates closely  
22   to those two areas. In our recommendations we address  
23   that sort of special need or extra need in terms of a higher

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1 priority for industrial arts and home economics than  
2 perhaps down south and that comes up in our  
3 recommendations.

4                   Then autonomy; we made a conscious  
5 effort to empower local communities, both at the local  
6 board level and the individual school level. Rick alluded  
7 to that, the high priority of local boards.

8                   To move quickly on to Recommendation No.  
9 1 there, we speak of the recognition of the need for  
10 expanded curriculum development in the area of language  
11 and cultural programming.

12                   We also see under Recommendation No. 2,  
13 expansion of the NORTEP program to include university level  
14 training in silviculture, fisheries, and the geological  
15 sciences. In other words, those things that are  
16 specifically relevant to the north. We think that is  
17 important.

18                   Recommendation No. 3, expansion of  
19 industrial arts and home economics.

20                   Would you prefer us to pause at this  
21 time, Mr. Chairman, for feedback?

22                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** No, please  
23 carry on.

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1                   **MR. GORDON RUTTEN:** Do we have time?  
2 I don't want to necessarily read every one of these to  
3 you.

4                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Normally you  
5 have a half an hour.

6                   **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** What we can do is  
7 follow through with the recommendations and then if you  
8 have specific questions we can go into detail on them.

9                   **MR. GORDON RUTTEN:** You have the format,  
10 the progress and the issue. We will go straight to the  
11 recommendations.

12                   **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** I will take on the  
13 next recommendation there. It's a high priority because  
14 No. 4 is recognition of resource revenue sharing in lieu  
15 of a tax base.

16                   An explanation of the huge geographical  
17 area, about 90 per cent of that geographic space on that  
18 map is Crown land. A prime example is in the southwest  
19 corner of our school division we have a bombing range,  
20 an air weapons range called the Primrose Bombing Range.  
21 All the economic benefits of that entire bombing range  
22 are on the Alberta side.

23                   We don't receive one penny on the

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1 Saskatchewan side even for education as a priority, but  
2 for any other reason. We don't receive any benefit from  
3 a huge chunk used by the federal government that has taken  
4 away a large livelihood of the people of that section of  
5 the province.

6 In terms of education, we don't receive  
7 anything for higher education.

8 There are two timber industries that  
9 exist, the Weyerhaeuser Forest Management and also the  
10 NorSask Forest Management. The timber industry exists  
11 in the south. They cut the trees in the north, but all  
12 is delivered either in Meadow Lake, Big River, Prince  
13 Albert or Hudson's Bay, all southern-based industries.

14 The mining industry in the Precambrian  
15 Shield, the uranium mines, the gold mines, all function  
16 in the north, but very independent to the north. Their  
17 central offices are either in Saskatoon -- most of the  
18 central offices are in Saskatoon and we don't have access  
19 to tax or reap benefits from those resources, especially  
20 as a highlight, a sore point in education. We do need  
21 further resources, revenue to highlight and enable us to  
22 improve the quality of education in the north and these  
23 are some of the focuses we would like to point out. That



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1 because it is Crown land we don't have access to it and  
2 there is no representation, there is no regional bodies  
3 in the north that have an effect on the planning and the  
4 use of land use in the north.

5                   The establishment of a northern  
6 financial infrastructure to encourage and support economic  
7 development is a highlight and it has been brought to you  
8 before. We have legislated jurisdiction throughout the  
9 northern half of the province, but municipalities are  
10 limited to their municipal boundaries. There is no  
11 regional representation or regional governments that exist  
12 in the north and we would like, as educational leaders,  
13 to be involved with other people that are involved in the  
14 regional aspect.

15                   Recommendation No. 6, expanded federal  
16 investment in northern education. A lot of our  
17 developments have been involved with provincial resources.

18 I think the federal government has to recognize that the  
19 north is unique. We have northern factors because of the  
20 high cost of delivery and the federal government should  
21 recognize and provide the means of helping the provincial  
22 governments in providing quality education.

23                   Just in the last two years, we used to

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1 have a northern factor for recognition of the high cost  
2 of delivering education in the north through our grant  
3 formula. We used to have a 40 per cent recognition, that  
4 for every dollar spent in the south, the north would receive  
5 40 cents more. They dropped that down to 33 cents for  
6 no apparent reason, so we lost about \$1 million in revenues  
7 in one year and there was no consultation with us. They  
8 just felt that their budget would not allow it and they  
9 just did it because it was their authority to do it.

10 Recommendation No. 7, formal  
11 governmental support for seamless education involving the  
12 kindergarten to grade 12, community colleges, band  
13 schools, the G ' \*55\*

14

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1 nt Institute, et cetera. That is what I was referring  
2 to, that the child's education should be a clear path,  
3 either the governance or the educational leadership should  
4 provide a clear path for all children from kindergarten  
5 all the way until they finish university because there  
6 seems to be a clear drop-off after grade 12.

7 We have jurisdiction to grade 12, but  
8 we also should have an additional mandate for  
9 post-secondary included. So, there needs to be a  
10 continuous path for children's education.

11 On social issues, Recommendation No. 8,  
12 formal government support in the co-ordination of the  
13 activities of service agencies in the north, including  
14 financial incentives for the sharing of facilities,  
15 personnel and resources.

16 Schools are community institutions and  
17 we need interagency support amongst ourselves at the  
18 community level, but in a larger perspective we have social  
19 services that has expectations on children and we need  
20 to work with other agencies, such as judicial systems,  
21 police systems, the health systems. All of these agencies  
22 have an interest in the child and we should all be  
23 co-ordinating ourselves to make that child's life more

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1   wholistic.

2                   Recommendation No. 9, recognition of the  
3   northern factor in the tendering process where government  
4   agencies are involved. This has been a contentious issue  
5   with the school division due to the economic times. We  
6   have been constructing schools in the large contracts that  
7   are required. Because the southern economy is pretty low,  
8   people are bidding very low to get the contract, just to  
9   get access -- to obtain a contract, but because they have  
10   to build in the north and the high cost of constructing  
11   in the north, we get a shoddy job. Sometimes we have had  
12   situations where the contractor can't provide the quality  
13   school that should have been built in the first place,  
14   but because they underbid they have a hard time delivering  
15   that school in a first class program.

16                  So, we need to recognize the northern  
17   factor in contracting our tenders. Hopefully our northern  
18   contractors can get a preference, but because of provincial  
19   regulations we have to go to the lowest bidder. We are  
20   tied down to the lowest bidder, regardless of what quality  
21   we get.

22                  Expansion of northern Aboriginal  
23   training programs to meet the demands of ever increasing

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1 numbers of high school graduates. It is as sad fact I  
2 guess, the economy in the north and the industries in the  
3 north, we call for higher education and higher education  
4 requirements, but the jobs don't really exist. We have  
5 to create jobs as well for our children. In some cases,  
6 job training and entrepreneurial training might be  
7 required to better enhance them to maybe make their own  
8 jobs, instead of finding jobs elsewhere.

9                   More northern input at the developmental  
10 stage of program formation in the service agencies in  
11 northern Saskatchewan. We constantly need to be a part  
12 of those decision-making bodies that provide services and  
13 programs in the north. We have to have voting or  
14 representative seats in all the agencies that provide a  
15 service or program in the north, not only in education.

16                   A cultural focus; a government task  
17 force on the preservation and promotion of Aboriginal  
18 cultures and values. It is similar to what you have  
19 endeavoured in your mandate as a Royal Commission on  
20 Aboriginal Peoples, but I think we also need input from  
21 a wide variety of our communities on their expectations  
22 in the preservation of Aboriginal cultures and values that  
23 this be reflected in the philosophies of our schools and

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1 also the curriculum. We need a constant information  
2 gathering from the communities in a realistic way.

3                   We also discussed, similar to that, the  
4 need to involve elders in the educational system. That  
5 was a direction that was set by our local boards this year,  
6 as recently as last weekend we met them and the priority  
7 is to bring elders into the schools and for them to play  
8 an active role in providing education and also evaluating  
9 the programs.

10                   Recommendation No. 13, an expanded  
11 support for curriculum development in the areas of language  
12 and cultural programming and that is with a particular  
13 focus on the wisdom of the elders. That is exactly what  
14 I was referring to, that elders need to be an active role  
15 in the evaluation and also in support of the curriculum,  
16 but also provide as -- they are our linguist specialists.  
17 They probably have Ph.Ds in Dene and Cree, but they are  
18 not recognized by our institutions, but they are sitting  
19 in their communities and we are not utilizing them in our  
20 schools.

21                   The establishment of a Secretariat or  
22 co-ordinating agency to promote co-operation and the  
23 efficient use of resources, facilities and personnel

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1 involving all players in Aboriginal and northern  
2 education; status, non-status, Métis, urban, rural and  
3 northern.

4 I guess it is very crucial for us to  
5 combine our efforts regardless of what bureaucracy we may  
6 fall under, either the federal, the provincial, local,  
7 that some co-ordination take place so our children aren't  
8 confused and our people aren't confused and the services  
9 and programs are delivered.

10 The establishment of an awards for adult  
11 northern achievers modelled on the Lieutenant Governor's  
12 Awards of Excellence program. Recently as a motivation  
13 for our high school students and also junior high school  
14 students in northern Saskatchewan, the Lieutenant  
15 Governor's Awards were established to create an awareness  
16 of some of the high achievers in our schools. I think  
17 that needs to be expanded to more of the post-secondary  
18 and adult education programs in northern Saskatchewan.

19 In summary, the task of stakeholders  
20 involved in education in northern Saskatchewan is to  
21 deliver the provincial curriculum to its clients, the  
22 students, in a manner that is relevant and appropriate  
23 in the terms of the life skills needs of the students,

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1 as well as their career needs. In addition, the curriculum  
2 must be delivered in a manner that is culturally sensitive.

3 Finally, the curriculum must be  
4 delivered over vast distances in the context of the ESL,  
5 English as a second language in communities of high  
6 unemployment and with resources that are largely urban  
7 and southern in content and approach.

8 The north is truly unique and the unique  
9 ways of delivering education must be legislated, must be  
10 recognized by our governments. Our task is also a very  
11 honourable task of teaching education, but we intend in  
12 involving our children, our parents and elders. Our  
13 long-term expectations are high. We don't want to shoot  
14 low for our children's educational needs. We expect  
15 high-quality programs that will provide culturally  
16 relevant and high academic resources for them to choose  
17 a career and a future that they choose to be citizens of  
18 not only northern Saskatchewan, but Canada and also the  
19 entire world.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
21 much for a very practical presentation. I think after  
22 the presentation that was made by the previous presenter  
23 it fits well to move to the school system and to see the



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1 progress alongside of what is needed. We realize that  
2 a lot is done by your organization, but there is still  
3 a long way to go.

4 Your brief is very well done and  
5 detailed. I had just a chance to glance at the appendices  
6 and we are certainly going to have a close look at it.

7 I understand that the Northern Lights  
8 School Division is the only one of its kind in Saskatchewan?

9 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** Yes, it's  
10 geographically large and it covers half of the province,  
11 but also has the majority of students of Aboriginal  
12 ancestry.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** This Division  
14 was started many years ago?

15 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** The School  
16 Division was established in 1976. I think Louis played  
17 a leadership role when we first had autonomy to have a  
18 Board of Education to make decisions by northerners for  
19 northern education. It was as early as 1976. It is one  
20 of the youngest school divisions in the province.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** The thrust of  
22 your brief is that not enough account or consideration  
23 is given to the fact that you are operating in the north

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1 and in many of these aspects, the budgetary aspects in  
2 particular.

3 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** Yes.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You are funded  
5 all through the provincial government?

6 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** Yes.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** There is no  
8 local school --

9 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** We have a taxation  
10 base as well, but the percentage is out of every dollar  
11 that we operate with in our School Division, 15 cents of  
12 that is funded by local taxation and the municipalities  
13 in the north and 85 per cent of that dollar or 85 cents  
14 is provided by provincial grant directly from Regina.

15 **MR. GORDON RUTTEN:** If I might add to  
16 that?

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes.

18 **MR. GORDON RUTTEN:** The other part of  
19 that northerization aspect that is the major thrust,  
20 northernization particularly in the context of  
21 incorporating the northern attitude which is mainly an  
22 Aboriginal attitude, the curriculum incorporation of  
23 attitudes and values and beliefs, I think that is part

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1 of that package of our northern focus.

2 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** In comparison, we  
3 had always endeavoured to compare ourselves to the south,  
4 but in recent years we started looking at other northern  
5 school divisions. We have a neighbouring school division  
6 in Alberta and in Manitoba that are just as large as ours  
7 and that have the same student population in an Aboriginal  
8 perspective. Alberta, they operate at a \$10,000 grant  
9 per student. In Manitoba they operate at \$7,500 per  
10 student. We get funded at \$5,500 per student.

11 So, in terms of a northern educational  
12 system we are very efficient with the resources we have,  
13 but we are also getting short-changed in a northern  
14 perspective. I don't know in the Northwest Territories  
15 what their per student grant is.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Your  
17 Recommendation No. 2 is about the expansion of the NORTEP  
18 program to include university level training in  
19 silviculture, fisheries and the geological sciences. I  
20 understand that these would normally lead to jobs that  
21 might be available in the north?

22 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** In the north, yes.  
23 I guess it also highlights that in the province these

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1 specialties don't exist in any of our universities, that  
2 these are only unique to the north, so they are not  
3 delivered at the southern universities at all. You will  
4 have to go east or west to get higher education in these  
5 career paths.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Does it make  
7 it more difficult, the fact that it doesn't exist in  
8 universities in the south to make it possible for your  
9 organization to do it or it could go both ways somehow.  
10 What I am trying to see is is there a problem of principle  
11 of getting some training at the university level? Are  
12 there some programs in other areas? We were told yesterday  
13 -- or do you have some programs that are at the university  
14 level that could be credited?

15 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** We have programs  
16 that bridge our students to professional careers either  
17 in medicine, engineering or whatever field they want.  
18 We have the bridging program, the first two arts and  
19 sciences years. It will provide them with an experience  
20 in university education, but they won't waste time in those  
21 two years. They are getting credits, the basic credits  
22 for any career. It's just a general two years of arts  
23 and sciences. Then they can choose a university for a

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1 specific field.

2                   What this recommendation is for is for  
3 that same institution to maybe focus on some northern  
4 careers, like forestry, mining, that only unique --

5                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** But what you  
6 have in mind, is it a bridging program for those specialties  
7 that would mean that students will have to go not even  
8 south but to other provinces to complete the degree, or  
9 is it a technical program as such that could be completed  
10 here in the north?

11                   **MR. GORDON RUTTEN:** If I may comment,  
12 I think that more research would need to be done to decide  
13 which of those two paths that you suggest we should explore  
14 in depth and probably the answer would be both.

15                   I think that even NORTEP now, the  
16 education degree granting institution, there is a bridging  
17 aspect in that students go to our southern universities  
18 for part of that course. So, I think we would certainly  
19 see bridging, as Rick suggested, as an interim, where we  
20 would offer part of these fisheries or silviculture courses  
21 here. I would say that we need to do a lot more research  
22 to find out whether we should be sort of technically  
23 oriented or university oriented.

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1                   It's the concept that we are looking at  
2 here in terms of a northern opportunity.

3                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Did you  
4 discuss that with the industries that are operating in  
5 the north? It seems to me it should be to their interest  
6 to have person power or manpower in the north and not all  
7 the time to have to hire people from the south to take  
8 those positions.

9                   **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** We have had  
10 recommendations. We have a Northern Education Task Force  
11 that went through here. We had commissions and reviews  
12 that are headed by the provincial government and they are  
13 our representatives to the industries, because they  
14 negotiate the lease agreements that exist in the north.  
15 It is hoped that through that process the industries would  
16 be aware of our needs, but it isn't. It seems like we  
17 have to go and do it. We have to knock on their doors  
18 to do it and that's the next step.

19                   We have gone through the government's  
20 door and nothing has come to a reality or that conclusion,  
21 so I think it's us as educational leaders of the north  
22 that we have to go and knock directly on the Armed Force's  
23 door and probably CAMECO and Weyerhaeuser, knock on their

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1 door and say loudly what our educational expectations are.  
2 That's the next step.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Obviously you  
4 have to be aggressive because it doesn't work the other  
5 way around.

6 **MR. GORDON RUTTEN:** Yes, I think they  
7 are orientated to be friendly to this because they do have  
8 provincial government grants and conditions of their  
9 operation and they are operating in the province to work  
10 towards encouraging employment of northern people. So,  
11 they are certainly open to the concept. They would have  
12 to be because they have a legal obligation.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Because when  
14 you mention in your brief of the number of young people  
15 coming out of the schools and the level of jobs that will  
16 be necessary in the north, that's a major concern from  
17 the social side of things. If employment is not available  
18 it is going to get worse and worse.

19 **MR. GORDON RUTTEN:** Yes.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You certainly  
21 represent the major organizations as far as education is  
22 concerned. There are many agencies that are working on  
23 other aspects, but it seems to me that you are at the

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1 crossroads of many things.

2                   **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** I guess the other  
3 thing I wanted to reflect on, we are at an issue of altered  
4 school years recently as well. We have specific schools  
5 that have asked for instead of ten months of education  
6 in schools, they have asked for nine, to have a three-month  
7 summer. We have had situations where they want longer  
8 Christmas breaks. It's a variety of altered school year  
9 issues.

10                   I guess it is fine for a school to maybe  
11 close down after nine months, but I think as educational  
12 leaders, us as a Division and a School Division, we should  
13 not give up. We shouldn't say in ten months we are done,  
14 let's take a break. Maybe those summer months could be  
15 educational experiences as well, work experiences. They  
16 could go and have summer jobs, but they would be credited  
17 for a work experience class in the summer, maybe camps  
18 that are computer camps or work camps or cultural camps  
19 or academic camps. Maybe remediation of weaknesses that  
20 they have in academics or also maybe we have exceptional  
21 students that maybe build on their strengths in the arts,  
22 sciences or math or whatever.

23                   I think that has to be looked at in the



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1 realm of altered school years. We have to look at some  
2 programs within that three months, that we shouldn't give  
3 up the educational system. It should continue. It  
4 shouldn't stop or hop, or else we will be wobbling.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** This link with  
6 the question of summer camps, that was raised before us  
7 by the previous presenter.

8 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** All right.

9 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Not only to  
10 keep young people busy, but to make sure that they are  
11 progressing and they are learning additional things.

12 I would like to ask you what kind of  
13 support in a community like this one, you have 28 schools  
14 across northern Saskatchewan. There is a board for the  
15 high school that is here. What kind of support do you  
16 have from the community itself, from the parents and from  
17 the leadership of the community towards achieving these  
18 goals?

19 For example, a brief like this, was this  
20 discussed only at the technical level of the Northern  
21 Lights School Division or does it involve the community  
22 or the parents or through the various school boards? Would  
23 you explain that?

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1                   **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** As a reference, in  
2 my opening remarks I highlighted to a local board  
3 gathering. We have an annual gathering of local elected  
4 boards. In La Loche here I think we have a local elected  
5 board that can sit as five members or seven members. All  
6 communities have that. It is a local elected board of  
7 trustees. They are the community leaders in education.  
8 They are elected and mandated from the communities.

9                   With that we also have in-school  
10 administrators. They are also school leaders, the  
11 principals and vice-principals. They play a major role.

12 So, with that community team of local boards and  
13 principals we bring them to a north-wide conference or  
14 a workshop that happens in one location. Recently we have  
15 met in Prince Albert. We have only had it three years,  
16 so it's a result. This is a result of those comments and  
17 those issues that are raised there and that's how -- it  
18 has never been formally asked of them to vote on these  
19 issues, but it's a reflection of the issues they raise  
20 and the direction they have given.

21                   So, as a Division board that operates,  
22 it's nine members that operate from nine subdivisions.  
23 We have local boards and with a collection of that

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1 leadership we are starting to provide a goal and an aim  
2 for all educational needs in our schools.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** My last  
4 question, in a given community do you try to establish  
5 a link with other agencies? We had the youth counsellor  
6 who made a presentation before. Will the people at the  
7 school wait for this person to meet with them to share  
8 concerns about the drop-out situation and the family  
9 violence situation that affects the performance of the  
10 child, or would you do that yourself?

11 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** I guess what we are  
12 expecting is that the local school boards themselves and  
13 the principals in that community would be better informed  
14 of the immediate input of that school's needs and that's  
15 the expectation that they provide a leadership and provide  
16 consultation and advisory at the community level. The  
17 local school board then plays a major role in that. That's  
18 the expectation we are trying to --

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You are  
20 talking about expectation. I would like to hear about  
21 progress. Is it actually done? Is it in the process of  
22 being done more and more because I understand that's the  
23 expectation at the level of the whole Division. Do you

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1 push, do you try to make sure that each school in each  
2 community really tries to reach out?

3 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** I guess I will have  
4 to refer you to varying community situations as well, the  
5 various factors that exist in individual communities.  
6 To truly answer that question, you would have to speak  
7 to the community and school representatives.

8 I can say yes to some communities and  
9 extremely yes or no to others and that's the variance.

10 **MR. GORDON RUTTEN:** In my experience,  
11 I cover 13 schools as Superintendent. It is exactly as  
12 Rick said, we have broken front progress. In some areas,  
13 in some communities there is significant inter-agency  
14 co-operation and in others there is a neutral attitude,  
15 to put the most positive face on it. It is very much a  
16 broken front progress, but very much a goal of Northern  
17 Lights to make it happen.

18 If I might, Mr. Chairman, you asked about  
19 what other support is in this community of La Loche for  
20 the role of the school and the things the school is trying  
21 to do. I used to be an Administrator in this community  
22 before I have the present position I have, so I have a  
23 certain amount of knowledge. I think it is just absolutely

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1 excellent and I mean that with all genuineness. This  
2 community supports their two schools very strongly. It  
3 is clearly recognized as an avenue to success for students  
4 is through their school. There is a very solid, quiet  
5 and consistent support of the program here. They have  
6 two principals in the two schools that are both long-term  
7 people as far as living in La Loche and that's a big key  
8 to the success of it. They are part of the community.

9 I think La Loche is certainly in a  
10 leadership position amongst northern communities in terms  
11 of the positive, unstinting support of their school, their  
12 schools, in the plural.

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

15 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I would  
16 like to thank you both. I had a long opportunity to talk  
17 to Rick yesterday because he brought me to the doctor and  
18 then to the dental therapist and also with his wife, so  
19 we had many hours to talk about education and other related  
20 issues.

21 I have one comment. In reviewing the  
22 recommendations I was quite surprised by Recommendation  
23 No. 12. My surprise was based on the kind of experience

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1 that we have had with the Royal Commission. I think  
2 without exception in every community that we have ever  
3 gone, people say, "Oh no, not another Royal Commission.  
4 We've been studied to death," and that's the reaction  
5 that we get. Here you are raising the possibility of  
6 another task force being raised and it was somewhat  
7 surprising to me in view of our experience of a year and  
8 half.

9 **MR. GORDON RUTTEN:** Could I comment on  
10 that. When we did the reviewing of other Division board  
11 members and so on, we put the ideas together for this.  
12 The conception of task force was that it would be action  
13 orientated, a Royal Commission being more of a backgrounder  
14 in our minds anyway and a task force being more proactive.  
15 I don't know if that is your interpretation.

16 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** I guess also in  
17 reflection of the recommendation, that was before I truly  
18 understood the mandate of your Commission as well. Upon  
19 discussions yesterday it was understood that you are going  
20 to be recommending to the federal government. But I think  
21 these documents should also be available to our  
22 organization, so whatever you come up with in terms of  
23 general recommendations that we can build our support and

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1 our direction in a national sense what direction you are  
2 recommending or from the views you have from all of Canada,  
3 that in terms of Aboriginal culture and language you will  
4 make very strong recommendations in that area and that  
5 we can follow up and support ourselves towards that.

6 I think that is what we need is some  
7 support. We never felt that there was any -- there was  
8 no report on Aboriginal language or culture provided to  
9 us, either provincially, locally or federally and maybe  
10 your document will give us some direction in that area.

11

12 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Just to add  
13 that certainly we are going to have recommendation to the  
14 federal government because we are a federally appointed  
15 Commission, but we are pretty much aware that our  
16 recommendations will impact a lot on the provincial  
17 jurisdiction and also on various agencies, depending on  
18 the provinces and the feds also and on Aboriginal  
19 organizations because there will be a challenge for many,  
20 many people out of these recommendations.

21 Normally, if they are done well, people  
22 should be able to take them up and forge ahead with them.

23 So, you are quite right in saying that those documents

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1 are addressed not only to the federal government, but  
2 really addressed to everybody that is involved and has  
3 something to do for the betterment of the Aboriginal  
4 situation -- the situation of Aboriginal people across  
5 the country.

6 I would like to thank you very much for  
7 presenting this brief. We are certainly going to keep  
8 in touch with you. We plan to have a national round table  
9 on education and certainly northern education will be a  
10 major component. We will keep you posted on that.

11 **MR. RICK LALIBERTE:** Thank you.

12 **MR. GORDON RUTTEN:** Thank you.

13 **MR. RICK CUMMINGS:** May I ask them a  
14 question?

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes.

16 **MR. RICK CUMMINGS:** I have a question  
17 in regards to the provision of the NORTEP and NORPAC  
18 programming. Has there been any thought given to having  
19 NORTEP and NORPAC classes available in the west side?  
20 The reason I am asking is because most of the Métis in  
21 northern Saskatchewan are in the west, as opposed to on  
22 the east side. It often creates difficulties for students  
23 from the west side to go to La Ronge and to go to other



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1 far away centres.

2 Also, if there was programming  
3 established on the west side, if it was put in La Loche  
4 it would contribute to jobs in La Loche, the economy and  
5 that kind of thing.

6 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: Thank you.

7 MR. RICK LALIBERTE: I guess an  
8 initiative that we had identified was in terms of teacher  
9 needs and the types of teachers we needed. We needed a  
10 higher involvement of the Dene-speaking students to be  
11 a part of our teacher education program. We needed  
12 Dene-speaking teachers, a higher number of them.

13 So, we had asked for a Dene Bridging  
14 Program where the Dene communities in the north could have  
15 an opportunity to bridge them to our program. We are  
16 university bridging. We have built a bridge from the north  
17 to the universities, but we also need additional bridges  
18 from the communities to our program.

19 The provincial government supplied some  
20 funds for it, but they gave it to the wrong agency. It  
21 just so happened it was administered wrong and it fell  
22 by the way, but just recently the Prince Albert Tribal  
23 Council built that community bridging program in the

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1 Athabaska communities and it is being delivered in  
2 Wollaston, Black Lake and Stony Rapids -- not Stony Rapids,  
3 at Fond du Lac, those three communities.

4                   So, we need also that involvement in  
5 other communities and that's a step towards Rick concern  
6 that NORTEP should be present at the community levels and  
7 that's where our involvement is.

8                   We also need to expand the programs and  
9 upon expanding it it may mean decentralizing the  
10 educational services as well.

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

12                   We are going to break, call a short break  
13 for stretching time. We are running a bit short of time.  
14 What we will do is we will hear the next presenter after  
15 the coffee break, the Dene High School group dialogue and  
16 probably that we will move the presentation by the  
17 Community Project Development to after lunch, if it is  
18 acceptable. Thank you.

19 --- Short Recess at 11:50 a.m.

20 --- Upon Resuming at 12:05 p.m.

21                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** May we have the  
22 Dene High School, the principal Greg Hatch, and the other  
23 presenters to come forward and join us at the table.

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1                   **MR. GREG HATCH, (Principal Ducharme**  
2 **Elementary School):** Good afternoon.

3                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Good  
4 afternoon. You may proceed whenever you are ready.

5                   **MR. GREG HATCH:** Before I start, Mr.  
6 Chairman, I have some books that were done at the elementary  
7 school. It was done by the staff and students and this  
8 is a commercially made book and it is sold throughout  
9 Canada. It's a story book in Dene and English. I would  
10 like to present this to you and you may present it to the  
11 people on the Commission.

12                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Certainly.

13                   **MR. GREG HATCH:** I would like to take  
14 this opportunity to welcome the Royal Commission to La  
15 Loche. My name is Greg Hatch and I am the Principal of  
16 Ducharme Elementary School. Ducharme Elementary School  
17 is a K to 6 school and our present enrolment is 430 students.

18

19                   Our school is about 97 per cent English  
20 as a second language school. We provide service also to  
21 special needs students in our school. Our teaching staff  
22 is comprised of 23 teachers, of which two are Dene speaking  
23 from the community and our para-professional staff is ten

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1    which are people from the community.

2                   Also, for our elementary school half of  
3    our students are bus students. The students come from  
4    Black Point, Bear Creek. La Loche is very spread out and  
5    so we have students bussed from all different areas in  
6    the community.

7                   I would like to present some projection  
8    figures for the next five years to the Commission. As  
9    I mentioned before, our present enrolment is 430 students.  
10   Next year we will have 463 students. In 1994-95 we will  
11   have 496 students. In 1995-96 we will have 481 students  
12   and in 1996-87 489 students. In 1997-98 we will be back  
13   to 475 students. As you can see by those projection  
14   figures, we have a very large young population. Once again  
15   I would just like to state that this is an elementary  
16   school, K to 6.

17                  One thing that we have been lobbying  
18   different government agencies for recently is to establish  
19   a pre-school program in La Loche. At the present time  
20   the band school which is seven miles away has a pre-school  
21   and people who are fortunate enough to have transportation  
22   can take their students out to the band school. There  
23   are over 50 students who are eligible to enter pre-school,

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1 so that's one concern.

2                   The local school board has passed a  
3 motion that we would like a pre-school in La Loche and  
4 right now we are going through Mr. Ray McKay. He sits  
5 on the interdepartmental agency which is comprised of the  
6 Department of Education, Social Services and the  
7 Department of Health. We have let him know that the need  
8 is definitely here for a pre-school and that we would be  
9 looking at a cost-shared service which would involve the  
10 Town of La Loche, the Northern Lights School Division,  
11 the Northern Health Services, Social Services and the  
12 Department of Education because it has an impact on  
13 everybody.

14                   A pre-school would definitely benefit  
15 our school program because 97 or 98 per cent of our students  
16 have Dene as their first language. We are finding in the  
17 school, we just offered an oral Dene class to kindergarten  
18 and that our students are very, very weak in their own  
19 language. The school basically is trying to teach the  
20 students to speak English. So, they are now running into  
21 a problem where the students don't have a concrete base  
22 in their own language and then there is English on top  
23 of that, so the students are running into a problem with

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1 regards to that.

2                   We feel that the pre-school would  
3 definitely benefit our school program. There hasn't been  
4 a lot of thought put into how we would run a pre-school  
5 program. We are lobbying to get it first and then we will  
6 figure out the final details of how we are going to run  
7 it, but a pre-school could be run totally in Dene and then  
8 half-way through be switched over to English.

9                   At our school we look at Ducharme  
10 Elementary School as a very positive focal point in the  
11 community. There is a tremendous amount of support with  
12 regards to the school. We just had a parent reporting  
13 period and 90 per cent of the report cards were picked  
14 up, where the parents came into the school and picked the  
15 report cards up. This has drastically changed over the  
16 years and there is a lot of positive momentum with regards  
17 to education in the community of La Loche. The parents  
18 are very, very concerned with the education their children  
19 are getting in the elementary school and the high school  
20 as well, so there is that support for education in La Loche.

21                   I firmly believe from the elementary  
22 standpoint that within our division we are leaders in a  
23 lot of areas in our school division.

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1                   Our programming component, we look at  
2 the basic skills that are taught and that follows the  
3 provincial curriculum. The provincial curriculum is laid  
4 out in a way that you can have an adaptive dimension to  
5 it, so you can adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of  
6 your students and that's what we do to meet the needs of  
7 the students in La Loche.

8                   The school, we want it to be a positive,  
9 safe learning environment. We like to have a high,  
10 positive staff-student relations which I think happens  
11 in our school. It has got to be a very caring place, so  
12 that we work a lot on a positive self-image of the students  
13 and that is a very, very important part of learning. If  
14 you feel good about yourself, you are going to learn at  
15 a better rate than when not feeling that good about  
16 yourself.

17                  Cultural programming, the last couple  
18 of years we got into cultural programming. Like I  
19 mentioned, this is the first year that we have offered  
20 the Dene language in our school. That motion was passed  
21 by the local school board last year. We do it on a very,  
22 very small scale at the present time. We have one of our  
23 Dene teachers go into the kindergartens and present

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1 20-minute lessons once a week. We are just starting small  
2 and, hopefully, we will be branching out and adding on  
3 to grade 1 next year and right up through grade 6 in years  
4 to come and hopefully also will be writing it somewhere  
5 down the line also.

6                   This can only be put into action though  
7 if we have more Dene teachers coming into Ducharme  
8 Elementary School. There are more and more students from  
9 La Loche in NORTEP, so hopefully those teachers will be  
10 coming out of NORTEP and then coming back into our  
11 community.

12                   With our cultural programming we do a  
13 variety of things. We had tried, in the past we bought  
14 a lot of teacher resources with native content and we had  
15 it in the library, the teacher resource room and we just  
16 found that didn't meet our needs, so two years ago we  
17 decided we would take our programming to a more hands on  
18 type of activity base. We had the students go out and  
19 participate in trapping schools. At this present time  
20 we have three one-week sessions where we have 15 students  
21 go out each session with supervisors from the school and  
22 we have three instructors from the community, two of which  
23 are elders and one of which is a younger person, but he



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1 knows the traditional way.

2                   We also have a cultural fish camp and  
3 that's a two week block of time where we send out a larger  
4 number of students to camp out, do a lot of fishing,  
5 traditional types of activities away from the school.  
6 Last year we were about 90 miles north of here. We have  
7 had a lot of positive response from this. We still have  
8 a long way to go in this whole area, but at least it is  
9 a step in the right direction.

10                  We are trying to get more elders into  
11 the school to do a variety of activities, but we are also  
12 taking the classes out to the homes and watching people  
13 do the tanning of hides and that at the homes because people  
14 are very busy and they can't always come into the school.

15                  At the present time with regards to our  
16 cultural programming, we have an educational lease. We  
17 just purchased a cabin. We have a variety of nets, traps.  
18 We have a skiff that the students built. We have an  
19 outboard motor. We have a snow machine, so these are all  
20 items that we have purchased to run our cultural program  
21 and we want to be self-sufficient in that area.

22                  Are there any questions at all on the  
23 cultural programming before I go on or programming in

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1 general?

2 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I would like  
3 to clarify, you are speaking for both the high school and  
4 elementary?

5 **MR. GREG HATCH:** No, I am only speaking  
6 of the elementary school in this case.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Only the  
8 elementary school, because in our program you are listed  
9 as Dene High School.

10 **MR. GREG HATCH:** Our school also offers  
11 a wide variety of extra-curricular activities to give the  
12 students exposure to sporting events, fine arts and also,  
13 like I say, we have cultural programming going on with  
14 extra-curricular. We have a beading club at school and  
15 that type of thing where community members come in and  
16 work with the students in the evening. We are trying to  
17 expose the students to as many different activities as  
18 possible in our school, more of a wholistic type of  
19 education, working on the basic skills, the self-concept  
20 and basically the cultural component.

21 I would just like to touch a little bit  
22 on the local school board. The local school board has  
23 just become active within the last year. I think it is

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1 very, very important that people see the need of a very  
2 active local school board. The school board is a group  
3 of individuals that gives direction to the schools, the  
4 vision or whatever direction that they want to see the  
5 school go to best educate their children. I guess if you  
6 can just put it in a very simple way, if you are looking  
7 at a human being, the board would be the head, the brains  
8 and the people working at the school level we are the arms  
9 and the legs. We have to carry out what the brain and  
10 the head wants us to do.

11 I think it is really important that the  
12 local school board being involved and that is very  
13 important, especially in the community of La Loche where  
14 it is very large and there is a lot of different issues  
15 that have to be dealt with, especially in setting goals  
16 and where things should be going.

17 I guess one of the biggest concerns that  
18 I have is that at the elementary level we take them from  
19 K to 6 and when they get to the high school they go 7 to  
20 12 and then what happens then? Not every student should  
21 have to leave their home community to have to go to  
22 post-secondary institutions. It really doesn't happen  
23 anywhere else in Canada. There are always jobs in the

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1 community where a student may want to go and be a welder,  
2 maybe want to be a carpenter. The way it is set up in  
3 La Loche right now, everybody pretty well has to travel  
4 away from their home community, whether it's La Ronge,  
5 the University of Saskatchewan or whatever and take  
6 post-secondary education.

7 I am not putting down post-secondary  
8 education, but it is not for everybody. There should be  
9 jobs available in this community for people coming out  
10 of the school system. Right now we are 3,000 people.  
11 Ten years from now it is going to be 4,000, 5,000. So,  
12 the education system can do the best job possible and we  
13 can have students graduating at a very, very high rate.  
14 But what happens after that? There has to be some type  
15 of economic base put into this community or money  
16 redirected into this community to make jobs available for  
17 high school graduates. I guess the goal I would like  
18 to see somewhere down the line, especially at the  
19 elementary level, is that most of the teachers in that  
20 school and administration should be Dene speakers, people  
21 from the community. I think that will happen. That's  
22 all I have to say.

23 Steve.

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1                   **MR. STEVE INNES, (Principal, Dene High**  
2 **School):** Thanks, Frank. My name is Steve Innes and I  
3 am Principal of the high school. I appreciate the  
4 opportunity to speak with this Commission.

5                   A lot of the things I would bring up Greg  
6 has mentioned. Some of them, I will touch on them, but  
7 I won't elaborate since they have already been touched  
8 on. We didn't get together previously to discuss what  
9 each one of us would say.

10                  What I would like to do is talk about  
11 some of the positives that are happening in the school  
12 right now and then get on to some of our needs and concerns  
13 for the future. A little background on the school. As  
14 Greg mentioned, we are a 7 through 12 school. We offer  
15 an academic, a modified academic, an alternate stream of  
16 education. We have 348 students. We will be over 400  
17 in three years also at the current rate of growth and with  
18 the people coming over from the elementary school.

19                  Some of the positive things that are  
20 happening in school right now are graduation. 1983 was  
21 our first graduation, we had one graduate. This year we  
22 will have 24 graduates. One of the positives, we are  
23 looking at 42 in three years from now at the current rate

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1 and, hopefully, with the current rate of retention.

2                   The retention rate is another positive,  
3 although it has got a long way to go. As mentioned by  
4 Georgina earlier in her presentation, there are a lot of  
5 drop-outs, it is a problem. In 1983 we started with 285  
6 students and we ended up with 189 students, which is a  
7 35 per cent drop-out rate. This past year we started with  
8 348 students and ended with 303 which is a 14 per cent  
9 drop-out rate, so it has decreased 21 per cent over the  
10 last 10 years, still a long way to go. But the general  
11 trend is improving each year. Computers are the  
12 future and computers are one of the areas we key our school  
13 around. We are currently getting an addition to the school  
14 which involves a gymnasium and four classrooms, two of  
15 which will be computer classrooms and each classroom in  
16 the school will be hooked up with their own computers to  
17 the computer lab. We feel that is a very positive thing  
18 and it's the way of the future.

19                   As far as schools go in the northern high  
20 schools, I feel we are sort of leading the way in that  
21 area and it's a very positive way.

22                   Athletics are important. They are  
23 important for a student's self-esteem. They are important

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1 for the town's self-esteem. We are provincially  
2 recognized in basketball, volleyball, cross-country  
3 running and soccer.

4                               We have accomplished good feats  
5 provincially. We are starting an integrated industrial  
6 arts program and we are right at the start. This year  
7 we are starting it and it's a long program. I will get  
8 into what we need for that program later on, but essentially  
9 what it is is we like to produce things in our facilities.  
10 We have great shop facilities. We have a large  
11 woodworking area, a large metalworking area. We would  
12 like to have students produce items that are worth  
13 marketing. We would like to teach business to the same  
14 students who are going through this process and after  
15 graduating we would like to help them continue on to open  
16 up businesses for things.       For instance, the grade 8s  
17 are making hunting knives from scratch and grade 7s start  
18 off with smaller knives. There are a lot of items that  
19 can be sold. I happened to be watching TSN and I seldom  
20 watch that, but the other night a fellow was talking about  
21 making 15 million in the last four years, producing a  
22 whistle that doesn't have a cork or a little ball in it.  
23 Our grade 9 students are doing that same whistle and this

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1 fellow happened to be a little more innovative and is making  
2 15 million a year in Quebec now, doing exactly what our  
3 grade 9 students are doing in the shop.

4                   So, there are a lot of avenues there,  
5 but we are at the start of that and we are obviously going  
6 to need things in order for that to go on.

7                   We have a good work-study program, a  
8 successful program that has been happening in the school,  
9 just to mention a few things that are happening.

10                  Needs. Greg has mentioned some of the  
11 needs. I would like to go over a few of them that we see  
12 for the future and just sort of elaborate on what Greg  
13 has said a little bit. The educational system, in that  
14 system we have to accommodate and prepare students for  
15 the economy. We have to get them ready for that. In the  
16 Town of La Loche, to my knowledge and I could be corrected  
17 on this, there are no journeymen electricians, plumbers.  
18 Maybe there are one or two carpenters, et cetera. There  
19 is a huge need in a town of 3,500 with the reserve for  
20 these types of jobs.

21                  At the high school currently we only have  
22 one Dene-speaking teacher, so there is a huge need to get  
23 Dene speakers into the high school area.



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1                   There is one Dene-speaking RCMP officer  
2 out of ten. I don't believe there are any Dene-speaking  
3 nurses out of the eight nurses in town. There are a lot  
4 of areas that the school has to get people ready for just  
5 in town here, not including going south and upgrading their  
6 skills in other areas.

7                   As I say, we have the facilities for this  
8 sort of thing at the high school. We have elaborate shops,  
9 an elaborate home economics lab and commercial kitchen.  
10 One of our needs and you will hear the hue and cry  
11 everywhere is, of course, finances, money.

12                  We are funded the same as a school  
13 without any shops, without a home economics lab, without  
14 these types of areas. We are funded on a per student basis.  
15 We need to be funded on a programming basis, the number  
16 of programs offered and perhaps we should be funded on  
17 that, so that if you are trying to produce things, create  
18 things, create opportunities for the future, we have to  
19 be funded accordingly, otherwise we are just offering a  
20 skeleton type of program in all of these high-cost areas.  
21

22                  Apprenticeship programs. It has been  
23 bandied around by Sask Ed. for the last few years. I am

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1 not sure if it is in anywhere in Saskatchewan high schools.

2 I know it is in Alberta. We would welcome that. We have  
3 instructors for that, if we could get accredited  
4 apprenticeship programs through the high school, so that  
5 students could get hours towards apprenticeship programs  
6 as they are going through high school and then can continue  
7 on to other programs so they can come back and be those  
8 electricians that we have to go to Prince Albert for or  
9 whatever else.

10 So, the education basically must be  
11 relevant to the needs of the community, the needs of the  
12 people here and we'd like to do that, but we do need what  
13 everybody else needs which is funding; not extra funding  
14 perhaps, but funding that is allocated for other programs  
15 in town that could be better suited that way. I think  
16 Roy may talk more on that, Mr. Cheechum, when he comes  
17 up to speak.

18 As Greg said, we have to provide  
19 opportunities for grads. When we have two or three grads  
20 in 1985 and two go on to university, that's a great ratio.  
21 When we have 24 grads and only 6 on to university, that's  
22 only 25 per cent going out. The more grads we have, the  
23 less that are likely to go out. It's just a fact of life,

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1 if you are in rural Saskatchewan down south, yes, it is  
2 expected you go to U. of S. or U. of R., Wascana, wherever,  
3 but you are leaving your family and your home. In the  
4 north you are leaving your family, your home, language,  
5 your culture to go there. It is a lot more threatening.

6 People have to go out, but not everybody should go out,  
7 as Greg mentioned. There have to be opportunities here  
8 for students, for graduates, either to somehow get into  
9 the job market or create a job market, or opportunities  
10 where we can provide further training right in town here.

11 Between Turnor Lake, the reserve and La  
12 Loche, we probably have a Dene population of 5,000. Any  
13 community anywhere else with a population of 5,000 has  
14 some sort of post-secondary training institute in trades  
15 or whatever it may be. We definitely need that here more  
16 than most places.

17 One area I'd really like to touch on and  
18 Georgina Jolibois touched on it earlier today is we need  
19 much more accessibility to professional psychological help  
20 for students. With the immense social problems that are  
21 associated with the north, with La Loche, the psychological  
22 problems are just as immense on students. Basically now,  
23 I think Georgina alluded to it. She has talked to at least

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1 three students this year alone that have contemplated  
2 suicide. We probably have eight to ten a year that  
3 contemplate suicide.

4 As Georgina mentioned, it's not a big  
5 problem now. Five years from now if this many people are  
6 thinking about it, yes, it will be a big problem.

7 If I could read a note that I was handed  
8 this morning by a student it may get that point across.

9 It is totally confidential as far as names or anything.  
10 "Dear Mom, Dad and friends.

11 I have wanted to kill myself for some time now. The reasons  
12 may not be obvious. I was always quiet  
13 and not revealing my true feelings for  
14 my cause of this death."

15 almost past tense:

16 "I don't want you to feel bad because I'm gone. I'm okay  
17 because I don't have any more problems.

18 Now that I am dead and gone, things will  
19 be better for me. I may be crazy, but  
20 who cared. See you in the next life,  
21 if there is one."

22 This was this morning. The only reason  
23 I bring it up is because Georgina alluded to it. It is

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1 a serious problem and it will become a serious problem  
2 if we don't deal with it. How can we deal with this  
3 now? I can phone someone in Battleford who will tell me  
4 how to talk to the students. That's the extent of our  
5 professional psychological help.

6 There are a lot of social problems in  
7 this town and with them comes psychological problems.  
8 These things have to be addressed. We need more access  
9 to this type of thing and in places where there are  
10 increased social problems we need more access, not less  
11 access to this type of help.

12 I think anything else I have here I'd  
13 be reiterating, so I think I will end it there.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
15 much, both of you, for your presentations.

16 First, on the elementary school, you  
17 have mentioned that you had those cultural programs, either  
18 the trapping school or cultural fish camps. One of the  
19 issues that has been raised on and on as we travel across  
20 the country is the fact that the teachers in those kinds  
21 of courses have to be elders or people who live the outdoor  
22 life and they are not the regular kind of white-collar  
23 teachers. The problem is that school boards and the

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1 Ministries of Education across the country have great  
2 difficulty to accept those teachers as full-fledged  
3 teachers. Could you expand on that. Do you have problems  
4 or difficulties? What is the status of the teachers who  
5 participate in those programs?

6 **MR. GREG HATCH:** The first year to get  
7 it off the ground and to get people out there, we had Lester  
8 and he's the interpreter at the back, he's our school  
9 counsellor and also a non-Dene teacher went out. We had  
10 an elder also and his son go out, so that was the four  
11 instructors. We rely heavily on the elders to be key  
12 people in this program. It's a volunteer thing from  
13 school, staff and students. We encourage also non-Dene  
14 people to go out there, so they can have an idea of what  
15 the traditional way of life is also. It's a real learning  
16 experience for the non-Dene speakers also. They come back  
17 and they have a whole different outlook on the culture  
18 and also the students.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So I  
20 understand that you don't have full-time staff for those  
21 programs?

22 **MR. GREG HATCH:** No. These are  
23 seasonal activities and we ask people from the community

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1 to come in and be a part of the program. It would be very,  
2 very nice to have funding to have full-time people. That  
3 would be the best way to go.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So, you  
5 contract them out for the duration of the program?

6 **MR. GREG HATCH:** Yes. We pay people an  
7 honorarium. We have funding from our school board to run  
8 these programs and also we have an instructional budget  
9 and we can make decisions on what areas of priority we  
10 are going to put our money into.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Are these  
12 programs credit ones or are they on the side of the regular  
13 programs? Are they part of the curriculum and do people  
14 receive credits? I understand we are talking about the  
15 elementary level, but still is it part of the end result  
16 at the end of the year, their results? Do you mark the  
17 success -- or is it something that is outside the regular  
18 curriculum?

19 **MR. GREG HATCH:** It would be sort of the  
20 adaptive dimension of the curriculum. There are a lot  
21 of skills that are going on out there that students are  
22 not graded on, but by participation and I guess learning  
23 their cultural way is part of it. There isn't a second

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1 on the report card that says Dene culture.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** And they are  
3 all voluntary for the students?

4 **MR. GREG HATCH:** Yes. We ask the  
5 students who are interested to volunteer and then we select  
6 from there. Also with the staff, anybody who wants to  
7 participate, then we select them also.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** A second  
9 question, when you mentioned the necessity or the need  
10 for a pre-school and my question is: Is there a  
11 kindergarten?

12 **MR. GREG HATCH:** Yes, there is  
13 kindergarten.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So that would  
15 be before that?

16 **MR. GREG HATCH:** It would be junior  
17 kindergarten, pre-school, nursery, whatever title it goes  
18 by. They offer one at the band school at the present time  
19 and there are a number of people who take their children  
20 out there. It's sort of a head-start program. There is  
21 a real need for it. That's my own personal opinion, but  
22 I think people from the community of La Loche would  
23 definitely say there is a real need for it.



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1                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Of course,  
2 this is not included in the regular programs?

3                   **MR. GREG HATCH:** No, it's not.

4                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So there are  
5 no funds available for that.

6                   **MR. GREG HATCH:** We are working on  
7 trying to get one in place for the following year and there  
8 might be a good chance. Any time you talk about a  
9 pre-school program, people will say we don't want to set  
10 a precedent. I think we have to look at need, need versus  
11 precedent here. Do you know what I mean, there is a real  
12 need in this community.

13                   Looking at La Loche, I think you have  
14 to look at La Loche, the need and just not an education  
15 and everything else.

16                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** The last point  
17 about the board that has been an active board for about  
18 a year. If I understand correctly, before that there was  
19 not an active board in the community?

20                   **MR. GREG HATCH:** For many, many years  
21 the board was inactive, yes.

22                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** What was the  
23 impetus that brought this board to become active? Is it

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1 the school, coming from the school? What made it possible  
2 or why this year?

3 **MR. GREG HATCH:** I think we have some  
4 individuals who are definitely interested in the education  
5 of the children. I think it's the first time we have had  
6 a full complement of five people, which really helps, like  
7 I say, the arms and legs and at the school level because  
8 we need direction in where we should be heading. I can  
9 have my own ideas, but I am not from the community.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So these are  
11 parents?

12 **MR. GREG HATCH:** Yes.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** To get back to  
14 the question I asked to the Northern Lights School Division  
15 people, what do we do to bring the community interested  
16 in education and what can the school do to do that? The  
17 answer is that happened this year that there were people  
18 interested, but it might go when their children leave for  
19 the high school level. Are you thinking about how to raise  
20 the interest of the community on a sustained basis? Do  
21 you see a role from the school to try to make it possible?

22 **MR. GREG HATCH:** Yes, I do. I guess  
23 there is more communication between the school and the

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1 community and having an open door policy at your school,  
2 that the people are welcome at any time and which we have  
3 at both schools.

4 Just getting back to the local school  
5 board. I met people who are interested in serving on a  
6 board. I am not saying that people are not interested  
7 in education. People are very, very much interested in  
8 education because we just had report card period, as I  
9 mentioned, and there is a lot of concern and people come  
10 in and voice their concerns.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** There is  
12 always a larger indication to sit on the board because  
13 you do that for the community, not only for your own  
14 children.

15 **MR. GREG HATCH:** I think with boards in  
16 general it's just not in northern Saskatchewan and La  
17 Loche, but it's all over that the people who sit on boards  
18 a lot of times they have to deal in crisis management,  
19 the small things, the day-to-day things that maybe people  
20 in the schools should be dealing with, instead of looking  
21 at their vision and their long-term goals. So, there is  
22 a lot of responsibility sitting on a board. Sometimes  
23 you could be Joe Citizen one day and a board member the

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1 next day and you could not have as many friends the next  
2 day when you are a board member.

3                   There are a lot of things that go along  
4 with sitting on a board, but it definitely gives the people  
5 working at the school a lot of direction in where the  
6 parents want us to go with education.

7                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Moving to the  
8 high school level, when you talk about the fact that there  
9 are no Aboriginal electricians, plumbers and nurses, on  
10 the one hand you say there should be, but on the other  
11 hand you say they should not have to go south to get the  
12 training. I want to understand, are you equipped to give  
13 that kind of professional training at the high school?

14                   **MR. STEVE INNES:** No. We are equipped  
15 to get people on the right road, i.e. especially in the  
16 industrial areas. We are totally equipped with a little  
17 more backing to get people on the rights roads for those  
18 and those are the areas that are really lacking. Right  
19 now we do have, I think there are eight people going through  
20 their university degrees or NORTEP to become teachers at  
21 the current time. I think there are two going through  
22 to become nurses at the current time, so those areas there  
23 are people going through now, so obviously we are equipped

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1 to give them a grade 12, perhaps give them the ambition  
2 to go to this.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** But that's a  
4 general level. It's not a professional training, it's  
5 the general level up to grade 12.

6 **MR. STEVE INNES:** Right. There are  
7 programs, the apprenticeship programs offered in other  
8 provinces which I would love to see. It has been mentioned  
9 through Sask Ed. of offering apprenticeship programs  
10 through the high school, which would give training and  
11 hours towards that type of --

12 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** And you don't  
13 have that at the moment?

14 **MR. STEVE INNES:** We don't have that.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Have you  
16 discussed that with the general school board and the  
17 regional school board and the Department of Education?

18 **MR. STEVE INNES:** Basically it's at the  
19 Department of Education level, as far as I know now. It  
20 hasn't come -- they have discussed it -- the representative  
21 has discussed it personally with myself and we are all  
22 in favour it. That has gone on for two or three years.  
23 We haven't taken any further steps towards achieving that.

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1                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do you have  
2 some relationship with the industries, the few industries  
3 that are around, because it seems to me that if they were  
4 pushing that would help you to convince the Ministry of  
5 Education, the Department of Education to get those  
6 programs on?

7                   **MR. STEVE INNES:** No, I think you are  
8 right, there has to be a push and we have to try and find  
9 people that will push a little more. Whether that be even  
10 through the mining companies and whatnot because they  
11 require specialists. Most of the people that work in the  
12 mines from the north are just general labourers, heavy  
13 equipment operators and there are a lot of specialists  
14 positions up there that they always go south for.

15                   The push could be from them as to what  
16 do you need offered at the high school level that would  
17 help promote the La Loche people to go and work in the  
18 mines at higher level jobs.

19                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Because if  
20 young people knew that they could get a job after they  
21 do that, it will give an incentive to them. It seems that  
22 the relationship that the school can have with the  
23 industries might be key in a situation like this. Because,

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1 as you have mentioned, you started nine years ago with  
2 one graduate and you have 24 and you are going to have  
3 more. So, we are just trying to see because we know they  
4 are big solutions, but also from the community itself the  
5 pressure -- that's what we are trying to see in Public  
6 Hearings like this one.

7 Obviously, if Saskatoon was to decide  
8 that was the best, but to make it possible the pressure  
9 has to come from all quarters and not only the school but  
10 the industries also.

11 Mary.

12 COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT: I would  
13 like to thank you very, very much. I guess the majority  
14 of the people we talked to at the first round of our Hearings  
15 were Aboriginal people. There were very few cases where  
16 we talked to non-Aboriginal people, especially educators.  
17 There was something that occurred to me when you were  
18 talking. For example, there was one presentation and he  
19 was primarily from an Indian community. He was saying  
20 his experience in his school was that the majority of the  
21 teachers were non-Aboriginals. There were many, many  
22 attempts to get Aboriginal teachers within the school  
23 system.

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1                   The earlier attempts were to put into  
2 the schools teachers that had passed through or had gone  
3 through a summer or two summers of teacher education and  
4 then had gone back to the schools and acted as student  
5 assistants, but they weren't full teachers. His whole  
6 experience in the school was, for example, his own people  
7 not necessarily occupying, for example, the higher  
8 positions at the school, like the principals, the  
9 vice-principals. His own people, for example, not being  
10 dressed as well because they didn't have the money, they  
11 had more children. He said in him that reinforced his  
12 opinion that Indians weren't as good as the white people.

13                   I am wondering, with the structure that  
14 you have in this particular community is that the case  
15 here or what is happening in this particular community  
16 because I understand from your presentation that you have  
17 two teachers who are Dene. You have some involvement from  
18 the elders in terms of them teaching cultural immersion  
19 classes and stuff like that, so you have some involvement,  
20 but I assume that all the other positions are held by  
21 non-Aboriginals. Is that correct?

22                   **MR. GREG HATCH:** Yes, that's correct.  
23 Northern Lights School Division is an affirmative action



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1 employer and, like I say, they are trying to recruit  
2 teachers of native ancestry. In La Loche I think we've  
3 only had about eight graduates out of the NORTEP program  
4 since it started. We used to have two other native  
5 instructors, but they went to the band school because they  
6 are treaty and they don't pay taxes I guess on the reserve  
7 if you are treaty.

8 I think Northern Lights School Division  
9 loses a lot of teachers to the band system also because  
10 of the treaty status.

11 Any para-professionals that are hired  
12 in the school are Dene speakers. Any opportunity we have  
13 at the school level to hire Dene speakers we do. There  
14 just is a lack of Dene teachers at the present time from  
15 the community of La Loche and I think in northern  
16 Saskatchewan all together, as opposed to the Cree.

17 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** You were  
18 saying, for example, you are having a greater retention  
19 rate, so that you have more and more students graduating  
20 from grade 12. Last year you had 24 and next year you  
21 will probably have forty something. What is happening  
22 with these students? Are they leaving this community and  
23 not coming back or are they just being here and staying

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1 here and if they do stay here what are their opportunities?

2 **MR. GREG HATCH:** I will direct that  
3 question to Steve. He's the high school principal.

4 **MR. STEVE INNES:** Basically, when we had  
5 six, eight, ten graduates almost everybody was going out.  
6 The earlier presenter, Georgina Jolibois was one of our  
7 1986 or 1987 graduates, I'm not sure. So, when there were  
8 less graduates it seemed like and in fact up to 1991 80  
9 per cent of our grads had gone on and at least attempted  
10 something else, whether they were totally successful or  
11 not. Now that we are getting up into the twenties in  
12 graduates, we are finding that maybe only 40 per cent are  
13 actually going out now. It's the same number, maybe even  
14 more, as in ten out of twenty-four, as opposed to eight  
15 out of twelve.

16 What we are starting to realize now and  
17 we will see in the next five or six years is we are going  
18 to have a large glut of graduates and it's not everybody's  
19 calling to go out after grade 12. My own personal  
20 experience from my high school in London, Ontario with  
21 140 grade 13 graduates, I think only 14 of us went to  
22 university, which left 116, if my math is right, to stay  
23 with their grade 13, happy, working at Kellogg's,

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1 McCormacks, work at Ford or whatever because the  
2 opportunity was there to do that.

3                   What we don't have here is we don't have  
4 that opportunity for that other 114 to stay here and work.

5     So, we have to get more people out and the onus and the  
6 push is to get more people out, but it's just not in  
7 everybody's calling to go out. It is difficult for a lot  
8 of people to leave their home communities, whether you  
9 are down south or up north, but particularly more so leave  
10 your community, your culture, everything.

11                   I guess what I am saying is we are getting  
12 a good number going out. We would love to see more go  
13 out. We are still getting a good number out, but in the  
14 next four or five years we are going to see an increasing  
15 glut of graduates who are content with their grade 12 and  
16 maybe have levelled out with their grade 12, have achieved  
17 something. For the most part we have an older student  
18 population. I think Georgina earlier alluded to a 20-year  
19 old student she was talking to in school. Well, our  
20 average age in grade 12 is 20.2 years of age, so generally  
21 we have an older population anyway.

22                   Some of them already have -- well, a good  
23 number of them already have families, whether they are

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1 males or females, by the that time. For some of them it  
2 is not realistic to go out when they have already two or  
3 three children or they are trying to support a wife or  
4 common-law with two or three children. So, they look for  
5 whatever they can when they get their grade 12.

6 Realistically, we can't expected 24  
7 graduates to go out. I would hope that wouldn't happen  
8 either because we would like to keep some here and provide  
9 things for them. I think that's the main focus is to try  
10 to get things for them through some sort of economic base  
11 somewhere, other than just a welfare system.

12 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** We have  
13 heard that in many, many northern communities. People  
14 are very, very committed to the north and if all were well  
15 they would probably live there, be born there, live there  
16 and die there.

17 The other question I want to ask is one  
18 of information. The students that go here, how are they  
19 funded to go to university or technical school? Are they  
20 eligible for -- are the students here eligible for the  
21 post-secondary education for Indian students? They are  
22 Dene, right?

23 **MR. STEVE INNES:** We have a combination

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1 of both. Out of the 350 students we have at school 78  
2 are treaty, so the rest are Métis. They go through the  
3 same sort of funding process that I would go through to  
4 go through school, scholarships and whatnot.

5 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** You mean  
6 the Métis would, not the 78 per cent treaty?

7 **MR. STEVE INNES:** Yes.

8 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Because  
9 they are eligible for a different source of funding?

10 **MR. STEVE INNES:** Right. They are  
11 funded and they are funded through the Big Sea Band which  
12 looks after their funding with whatever the Meadow Lake  
13 Tribal Council has for funding for post-secondary, but  
14 the other 78 per cent or whatever go through just the  
15 regular applying for the scholarship programs and applying  
16 for loans and whatnot.

17 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** So, you  
18 have fewer Métis than treaty that are eligible for that  
19 funding. Does that affect the number of students that  
20 actually go?

21 **MR. STEVE INNES:** Actually, no, it  
22 hasn't. I don't have all the stats here, but I'd say it's  
23 almost the same percentage of Métis versus treaty that

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1 have gone. I don't think going through the regular process  
2 has stopped the Métis students from going on. I don't  
3 think the funding is that available for the treaties that  
4 everyone gets to go under. I think to my knowledge they  
5 are still restricted by the Tribal Council and how many  
6 out of the Meadow Lake -- the ten bands that formulate  
7 the Council, how much money they have available to send  
8 students out.

9 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** With the  
10 technical school is there any funding available for them  
11 to go, other than EEIC or would they have to pay their  
12 own way in order to go to college or trades?

13 **MR. STEVE INNES:** Basically, with  
14 technical schools they are still eligible for student  
15 loans. It's just whether they are going to Prince Albert  
16 or KELTSI. They are eligible for the same students loans  
17 as you go to U. of S., but just for a short period of time.

18 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** One final  
19 question, in many communities we have heard that, for  
20 example, the school is not very involved -- sometimes the  
21 school and its relationship with the community leaves a  
22 lot to be desired. For example, the school is seen by  
23 many native people as being an authority figure,

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1 inaccessible, there are language difficulties and stuff.  
2 I assumed from your presentation that the situation is  
3 definitely improved here. You are saying there is  
4 definitely a good relationship between the community and  
5 the school?

6 **MR. STEVE INNES:** That's my feeling.  
7 You always know it could be better and you are hopefully  
8 always striving for it to be better, but that's my general  
9 feeling, that it is a good relationship, that our students  
10 are at both schools until all hours of the evening, in  
11 school doing activities and there is the open door policy.  
12 Generally, I feel good, but you always want to get better.

13

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

15 A last question, there must be some  
16 non-Aboriginal students in the school in both elementary  
17 and the high school?

18 **MR. STEVE INNES:** We have one at the high  
19 school in grade 12 this year.

20 **MR. GREG HATCH:** We might have 10 to 20  
21 maybe.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So they do  
23 integrate well with the group?

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1                   **MR. GREG HATCH:** Yes.

2                   **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY LOUIS MORIN:**

3     How old are the students taking these trapping schools?

4                   **MR. GREG HATCH:** The oldest students we  
5     have in our school are about 13, so they would range in  
6     age from 9 to 13. Both boys and girls are involved with  
7     it. We tried just boys the first year and the females  
8     said that they should be involved in it, so now we have  
9     both boys and girls involved in the trapping school.

10                  **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY LOUIS MORIN:**

11     We are trying to get that in Turnor Lake too because I  
12     know it's needed. We haven't had any luck yet, but maybe  
13     later on.

14                  **MR. GREG HATCH:** One real positive that  
15     has come out of it is that the elders that we have working  
16     with the kids there has really been a relationship of  
17     linking the past and the present. There is a lot of respect  
18     by the young people, seeing what the role of the elders  
19     is in the community. I know Georgina used the same two  
20     elders on her trip across the Methy Portage and I went  
21     out to their place one day and some of the students who  
22     went on that trip were just out visiting the elders. I  
23     think it really gives the young people an opportunity just



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1 to see that the elders really have a very important role  
2 in the community.

3 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY LOUIS MORIN:**

4 Yes. Thank you.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We thank you  
6 very much for sharing your thoughts and presenting your  
7 views. We hope that the Commission will be able to come  
8 up with some recommendations that will be along the lines  
9 that you have developed to help give a push for some of  
10 those things occurring. Thank you.

11 **MR. GREG HATCH:** Thank you very much.

12 **MR. STEVE INNES:** Thank you.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We will break  
14 for lunch -- sorry.

15 **A SPEAKER:** Just before you break and  
16 while we are still on the educational issues, there is  
17 something that does not apply to elementary or secondary,  
18 but on the post-secondary level, northern students are  
19 facing a major problem of student loans being in default.

20 I have co-ordinated a program in Buffalo Narrows, the  
21 Integrated Resource Management and I've got several  
22 students there who are having a lot of trouble with the  
23 government because they are in default with loans in the

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1 past. I have just recently started another program here  
2 in La Loche, a Community Development Training Program and  
3 I have got several students there that are facing the  
4 problem of being in default with government student loans.

5 Is there anything that can be done?

6 Some of these students have got letters  
7 saying that they were absolved of these loans in the past  
8 and then they have gotten recent letters saying, no, we  
9 made a mistake, you now have to pay the money back and  
10 there is no way that they could come up with the kind of  
11 funds. They are being charged daily interest rates.

12 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We heard a  
13 presentation about the whole issue of student loans two  
14 days ago in Ile-à-La-Crosse. We received a written brief  
15 on that. We are going to have a look at it. It is a  
16 difficult thing and we were made aware of it.

17 Thank you for raising it again. Thank  
18 you.

19 We will break for one hour. We will  
20 resume at two o'clock. We will start at two o'clock with  
21 the presentation of the Community Project Development.  
22 Thank you very much.

23 --- **Lunch Recess at 1:00 p.m.**

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1 --- Upon Resuming at 2:10 p.m.

2 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: If everybody  
3 could take a seat. Our first presentation this afternoon  
4 is from the Community Project Development, Roy Cheechum.

5  
6 MR. ROY CHEECHUM: Thank you, Mr.  
7 Chairman. I have with me Mayor Sam Herman who will add  
8 a few words here and there as we go along. The general  
9 format we want to use in our presentation is -- I do have  
10 the format in front of me that I will try and go through.  
11 Although we have a lot of stuff here in front of us, we  
12 will try and be as brief and as informative as we can be  
13 and at the same time pointing out a lot of the important  
14 things that we would like for your Commission to know.

15 First of all, welcome to La Loche. We  
16 have a lot of things to talk about, as you are already  
17 aware. One of the things I wanted to do to start you off  
18 is prior to the start of the meeting you wanted sort of  
19 a brief rundown as to the background of La Loche. I will  
20 take an excerpt from one of the studies that we have come  
21 across here and it goes somewhat like this.

22 La Loche's early history is linked to  
23 the fur trade and the Chipewyan Indians of the area. The

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1 name itself dates back from this era and is French for  
2 a fish which is found in Methy Lake, a species called  
3 maraya. Peter Pond was the first white person to explore  
4 the area in 1778. At this time the area was known as Methy  
5 Portage, associated with a twelve and a half mile long  
6 portage that separates the water out of the Athabaska,  
7 the Mackenzie and the Churchill River systems.

8                   The North West Company established a  
9 fort there in the early 1800s and the Hudson's Bay Company  
10 established its first fort in 1853. In the 1800s the York  
11 boats left Fort Garry on the Red River to reach Methy  
12 Portage some two and a half months later to exchange trade  
13 goods and furs with men from the Mackenzie River system,  
14 otherwise known as the Arctic watershed.

15                   The missionaries quickly followed the  
16 traders and by 1895 had a permanent mission in what is  
17 now known as West La Loche, across the lake from the present  
18 community. The Catholic Mission has always played a  
19 strong role in the community, providing religion and  
20 education and in the early time the minimum level of health  
21 care for the community.

22                   Following the establishment of the  
23 mission there was a gradual migration of native families

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1 from wilderness camps and traplines to a larger fixed  
2 settlement around the mission and Hudson's Bay store.  
3 When the store burned down in 1937, the Hudson's Bay manager  
4 and the Catholic priest encouraged the people to move  
5 across the lake to the present site of La Loche. A store  
6 and a school was established on the present site in 1940  
7 and a convent and hospital in 1943. Families were  
8 encouraged to send their children to school. It has been  
9 reported that family allowances were withheld if they  
10 didn't.

11 With the establishment of government  
12 services in the community in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s,  
13 including a provincial school, the RCMP detachment, health  
14 care, social services, all-weather roads,  
15 electrification, housing and sewer and water,  
16 centralization of the population continued. The  
17 population of La Loche in the area today stands at just  
18 over 2,000 people. Again, as other people mentioned this  
19 morning, our census indicates that we are at 2,300. When  
20 you add the Big Sea Band population status to that we are  
21 nearing the 3,000 mark.

22 The missionaries and fur traders changed  
23 the lives of the Aboriginal people in the area forever.

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1 The wealth of the fur trade, based on the labour of native  
2 trappers helped finance industrial and commercial  
3 development in other parts of Canada and the world. In  
4 more recent time, development of resources, minerals,  
5 forestry, fishing, et cetera, has occurred in the north.

6 Although this has strengthened the economies in some  
7 communities and in other parts of the country, regional  
8 development remains weak in the La Loche area.

9 In spite of the efforts of the Hudson's  
10 Bay Company, the church and more recently the government,  
11 to mould the people and the community into a successful  
12 working model of a southern community, the settlement today  
13 lacks an economic base and which is going to be the thrust  
14 of my presentation today. It does not even maintain the  
15 historical function of an exchange centre that it had  
16 during the fur trade era. It is a community based almost  
17 entirely on the delivery of services through residents  
18 that depend extensively on government transfer payments,  
19 a situation not atypical of many northern communities.

20 High unemployment, high dependency on  
21 goods and services from the outside, alcoholism, drug  
22 abuse, crime, family breakdown and abuse and an increasing  
23 dependency on government service agencies characterize

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1 the community.

2                   The population has settled in La Loche  
3 but there are few reasons for the community to exist, other  
4 than to provide services to the people, many of whom are  
5 welfare dependent. Initiatives are required in two very  
6 important areas if general improvements to the quality  
7 of life and employment opportunity for people in La Loche  
8 are to become a reality. First, the development of an  
9 economic base and, second, more local involvement in  
10 development, planning and control of the economy and  
11 community services. The first will be very difficult,  
12 the second, however, may well be feasible in certain areas.

13                   That's a short excerpt from one of the  
14 documents I want your Commission to take note of.

15                   What I want to do is show you a document  
16 that had come out back in 1988, September of 1988. The  
17 document was done by Pine Ridge Consultants from Meadow  
18 Lake and it's called "The West Side Housing Study." The  
19 reason I want you to take note of this is that some of  
20 the points in this report are incorporated in the La Loche  
21 three year housing plan.

22                   The housing plan that was just recently  
23 done, just a few weeks ago, is a good plan as far as I

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1 am concerned and as far as Mayor Herman and the council  
2 are concerned. What we want to say here is that it is  
3 a plan and we want that plan implemented. We've seen  
4 enough plans go by this committee, as well as others in  
5 Northern Saskatchewan. Here is something that will  
6 address the housing needs of La Loche for three to five  
7 years and we want this plan implemented. We want that  
8 noted.

9 I want to go into some of the stats that  
10 I think are relevant to the different presenters that were  
11 here this morning. I will be again brief. Some of the  
12 stats I would like you to know of were done in 1985-86  
13 with the help of the council at that time and also the  
14 Northern Affairs Secretariat based out of Regina. At that  
15 time, it states here that young men from La Loche served  
16 close to 15,000 days in prison in 1985-86 at \$65 a day.  
17 So, the community the size that it was back in 1985-86  
18 spent 15,000 days in prison.

19 Per capital costs of the justice system  
20 in La Loche was \$762 in 1985 and 1986, compared to \$82  
21 for the rest of the province, which is nine times higher.

22

23 For a population of 1,832 in 1985 and



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1 1986, La Loche had -- I think the number here states 12  
2 and I think it is more like 10 full-time RCMP officers,  
3 at an annual average provincial cost of \$43,000 each.  
4 There are reasons why I am pointing this out because I  
5 will get back to these points later on.

6                   In terms of the growth rate, I had an  
7 opportunity of getting the recent stats from the public  
8 health people here, which points out that, number one,  
9 the single parent situation in La Loche is rising. When  
10 you take a look at the stats for La Loche, back in 1974  
11 the youngest single parent or the youngest female to be  
12 pregnant in the community of La Loche was 17. It may not  
13 have been that uncommon in the rest of Canada. But as  
14 you go on in the stats, it shows that the age of what are  
15 really kids getting pregnant in this community goes down  
16 to 13 years of age in 1989. There is a gradual decline  
17 in the age bracket, which shows that younger and younger  
18 females are getting pregnant in this community. That  
19 alone tells you of a lot of problems. The average  
20 birthrate in La Loche is constant at about 63 per year.

21                   What I want to do with that is point out  
22 that in the 1985-86 stats it points out also that between  
23 30 and 40 teen mothers drop out of high school in La Loche

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1 each year. I don't think that strays very far from what  
2 Principal Greg Hatch and Steve Innes told you this morning,  
3 that there is a problem in the drop-out rate. This  
4 information that I am talking about, as you can see, is  
5 relevant to their presentation and that's something I  
6 wanted to point out in terms of stats.

7                   In the area of employment, I wanted to  
8 point out also that there are a few jobs in La Loche, but  
9 the problem here is that we have a lot of who we term  
10 transient people holding down a lot of full-time positions.

11 I don't think that is uncommon in any other community  
12 and La Loche again is no different, but the numbers may  
13 be higher here.

14                   For example, in a survey done by the  
15 community in 1992, February of 1992, for full-time  
16 positions held, local residents held 78. Of that,  
17 transient residents held 115. For part-time or seasonal,  
18 local residents held 74, transients held eight. So you  
19 can see that there is quite a difference between who holds  
20 down the jobs in this community and perhaps who it should  
21 go to in the future. I think these stats are very important  
22 also.

23                   I want to take a few minutes to point

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1 out that from 1976 on to 1989, La Loche through various  
2 organizations, be it the village council and which used  
3 to be called the L.C.A., the La Loche Development  
4 Corporation, had gone through a series of ideas in terms  
5 of economic development. I don't want to take up a lot  
6 of your time, but I want to point out to you the files  
7 that I have here. I want to physically show you that these  
8 files do exist and that we would like to revisit some of  
9 these files, if possible, and I want to show you how we  
10 can do that.

11 In 1976 the community talked about a  
12 glass manufacturing idea, using sand and so on. The sands  
13 were tested and so on, but again it didn't go too far from  
14 there.

15 In 1977 we talked about a clothing  
16 factory. Again, for whatever reason, there was I think  
17 a proposal here, somebody was paid for doing this work,  
18 but where did it go? It didn't go anywhere.

19 In 1979 we talked about a sawmill and  
20 also in 1980 we talked about a sawmill again. Again, some  
21 government bureaucrat or someone talked about this and  
22 did some work and got paid for that, but do we see a sawmill  
23 in La Loche? No, we don't. It's something we would like

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1 to revisit. I have three files on that here.

2 In 1980 we talked of a commercial  
3 laundry. That's in conjunction with the new mines that  
4 were coming up, specifically the Cluff Lake mine. That  
5 hasn't gone anywhere.

6 There is a feasibility study that was  
7 done here by Intergroup Economists Limited of Winnipeg,  
8 Manitoba. It doesn't mean a hell of a lot right now because  
9 we don't have that.

10 We also talked about a sulphur plant or  
11 a depot in 1980. We have an economic development plan  
12 of 1980.

13 We have talked of greenhouses in 1980,  
14 a mobile dimension sawmill in 1980. This one had gone  
15 a little further than others, where we physically had a  
16 small sawmill here for the use of local people. I think  
17 it is still around, as far as I know, but again full use  
18 wasn't made of that and it was one small sawmill that  
19 probably a couple of people could run. That was the end  
20 of that.

21 We talked of a barrel manufacturing  
22 plant in 1981. Again, that was in conjunction with the  
23 various mines that were scheduled to go ahead up north.

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1 Again, Cluff Lake was earmarked as the target market.  
2 Again, we don't have the barrel manufacturing plant in  
3 La Loche.

4 A post camp idea in 1981. We had a post  
5 camp before 1981 which had shut down. It was an on again,  
6 off again situation. It was subsidized, but it was  
7 employing a lot of people. Again, that was talked of in  
8 1981. No post camp in La Loche in 1982.

9 There was an attempt in 1981, it was  
10 called Northern Ventures, whereby the La Loche Development  
11 Corporation at that time was trying to go joint venture  
12 in I think it was Key Lake in doing a lot of the contract  
13 work. Again, for lack of proper support and proper  
14 financing and so on, proper direction, it fell through.  
15 So, again we haven't made use of the mining sector.

16 A barber shop and hairstylist idea in  
17 1981. A welding shop in 1981. A commercial mall in 1981;  
18 poultry farms, 1981; cow-calf operations, 1981; woodlot  
19 operations, 1981; duck/geese farms, 1981; hog production,  
20 1981; line cutting and staking, 1981; a couple of files  
21 on that, a grade recovery test which involves some monies  
22 that exchanged hands here to have I think some local people  
23 go out and actually take certain species of trees and to

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1 find out what we could make out of these various trees,  
2 be it furniture or straight lumber or otherwise. We have  
3 some results, but no concrete action after that.

4                   A market garden idea in 1982. I think  
5 it should be pointed out here that before the market garden  
6 idea in 1982, there were people in La Loche prior to the  
7 idea of having the establishment of communities, people  
8 lived wherever it was suitable for them to live and they  
9 did have their own gardens. There were a lot of gardens  
10 when I was a child, or at least I remember that, but with  
11 the getting together of a community and the small lot  
12 approach to things, gardening just was not feasible.  
13 There was an attempt in 1982 to get back to that and even  
14 on a commercial scale.

15                   Aquaculture was talked of in 1985,  
16 otherwise known as fish farming. I know in certain parts  
17 of the north aquaculture has taken off, but certainly not  
18 in La Loche or in this immediate area.

19                   There was also an attempt to utilize  
20 various stones that are found along the Cluff Lake road  
21 corridor here for the use in building. Building stone  
22 is I think the appropriate name for that. Again, although  
23 it may be there, we have yet to revisit this again, but

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1 because we have a lot of trucks going up north, for example,  
2 hauling whatever materials they need to haul up there,  
3 although they may haul yellow cake and so on back down  
4 here, there are a lot of flatbeds that can utilize or that  
5 can take on this sort of stuff.

6 The Clearwater Heritage River of 1988,  
7 I think we were told at a certain point it may have  
8 represented a few jobs in terms of having to do with hiking  
9 trails and so on, but just the maintenance of the heritage  
10 river, we were told again that it may represent some jobs.  
11 I haven't seen any personally.

12 Tourism is the last file in this area  
13 that I want to dwell on. Tourism is always talked about,  
14 whether it was in 1976 or 1989 which this file represents.  
15 Again, tourism is to me sort of a give and take between  
16 the resource users. I notice that they are going to speak  
17 to you later on. There are other people who are for it  
18 and there are people who are against it and I suppose there  
19 are people who are indifferent to it, so it's going to  
20 be a matter of who you ask how good or how bad it is.  
21 Again, why not revisit the file.

22 One thing I want to point out from all  
23 the files that I've shown you is that there is no one

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1 economic solution to our plight here in La Loche. We don't  
2 think so, at least I personally don't think there is one  
3 magic solution to get us out of the position we are in  
4 now, but what we need is a variety of areas to touch on  
5 to get us out of the unemployment picture.

6 I want to take a few minutes to get into  
7 an area of government expenditures in La Loche and we are  
8 talking of La Loche alone. I want to talk a bit about  
9 my idea of redirecting existing money for long term local  
10 economic development.

11 I have some information in front me,  
12 again stats done in 1985-86 and again this has to do with  
13 La Loche alone. I want to point out where exactly monies  
14 do go when it comes to La Loche. We are talking provincial  
15 monies alone here. It doesn't include federal monies.

16 There is an area here that is called The  
17 Protection of Citizens in La Loche. In that it includes  
18 education at \$3.6 million. The justice area has \$1.395  
19 million, urban affairs at \$.82 million, social services,  
20 welfare payments, \$3.1 million and health at \$2.5 million.

21 That's what I would term the more social side of things.

22 On the other side you have economic  
23 development, diversification and you have virtually



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1 nothing. You have a bit for housing here, \$44,000,  
2 Northern Affairs Secretariat \$10,000 and SaskTel \$23,000  
3 and so on. The point I am trying to make here is that  
4 clearly we are not putting the money where we should be  
5 putting it. Clearly, it shows here some 85 per cent to  
6 90 per cent of the money that is going in to keep La Loche  
7 artificially afloat is going into the social side of things  
8 and perhaps we should look at an alternative in how we  
9 spend money in La Loche.

10 I want to go on to another page here which  
11 shows that again in 1986 the provincial government spent  
12 \$13.27 million. In 1990 the accumulated monies that will  
13 be spent in La Loche to keep La Loche going is going to  
14 be \$84.92 million. In the year 2000, the accumulated  
15 deficit because keep in mind that the province is, as  
16 everybody knows, flat broke. Every dime that we spent  
17 in La Loche is going to have to be borrowed money.

18 In the year 2000, in order to keep this  
19 community alive, we need to have spent \$475.2 million.

20 When you compare what is being spent in  
21 La Loche to other areas of government, we exceed seven  
22 different government departments. The money that is spent  
23 in La Loche exceeds seven other departments. We could

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1 have the "Minister of La Loche" if you went by the amount  
2 of money that is spent here to keep this place going.

3 My estimates bring me to 1991 or let's  
4 go into 1992. I think the accumulated deficit to keep  
5 La Loche going will be \$137.91 million. So, what do we  
6 do now? I think if we keep on rolling the way things are  
7 rolling, we will live the way we are and we will keep taking  
8 welfare money and keep taking the provincial and federal  
9 dollars the way things are going, but I'm thinking that  
10 we can do different things to change the picture around.

11

12 We have recently met with the MLA Fred  
13 Thompson. I have a short letter here that I want to read  
14 to you. This is again from Fred Thompson, dated November  
15 18th, 1992. It's a letter to Pat Atkinson, the Minister  
16 of Social Services in Regina. He writes:

17 "I am writing this letter to see if you would be able  
18 to come to La Loche and meet with the  
19 Town Council. I was in La Loche on  
20 Thursday, November 12th, 1992. While  
21 there I met with Doug Gailey, the Town  
22 Administrator, and Roy Cheechum. They  
23 indicated that the problems are growing

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1 fast and that something has to be done  
2 quickly. The town they feel should be  
3 designated a unique village with all  
4 provincial departments and the federal  
5 government implementing both an  
6 immediate plan and a long-term plan.

7 The town is getting an updated expenditure department  
8 by department. They only have  
9 1985-86 and it shows again \$13.27 million spent mostly  
10 on education, social services, health  
11 and justice, in this order, with very  
12 little, if any, in economic development.

13 If more was spent on job training and  
14 education as a whole than on social  
15 services, health and justice, it should  
16 drop.

17 It may be a good idea to bring the Minister of Education  
18 along to this meeting --"  
19 he says.

20 Clearly, after a meeting with the MLA,  
21 he's of the understanding that we should perhaps spend  
22 money a little wiser.

23 In that what I want to add in this section

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1 here is that an example of the numbers of dollars we are  
2 spending in La Loche in 1992, if in fact we are spending  
3 \$25 million, why is it so difficult for the powers that  
4 be to give this community, the elected officials in this  
5 community, let's say \$5 million to do local long-term  
6 economic development planning? Instead of sinking that  
7 into social programs and I have no quarrels with sinking  
8 a lot of money into education, again if it is spent right,  
9 but I do have problems when you spend that amount of money  
10 on justice to keep people in jail and when you have that  
11 amount of money, \$3 million, to mail people their cheques  
12 and you still have the social problems to go along with  
13 that.

14                   What I am saying is let's be a little  
15 innovative, let's have a little bit of imagination, let's  
16 take on this thing and take the existing monies. We are  
17 not talking about new monies, existing monies that are  
18 going to be spent anyway and transfer some of that directly  
19 into economic development, local and long term.

20                   The next area I want to touch on is --  
21 I want to go back a little bit here. There is another  
22 area where you can get money to do this sort of stuff.  
23 I am talking about the Bayda Inquiry of 1977-78. In the

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1 Bayda Inquiry, Justice E.D. Bayda talked about a lot of  
2 things when he toured the north. On page 187 he talks  
3 specifically about sharing royalties with northerners.  
4 The way things are working out now, we have royalties that  
5 are going down to Regina in two fashions and I will get  
6 into that.

7 In 1992, approximately \$21 million went  
8 to Regina in royalties alone. Well, to me that doesn't  
9 mean very much. All the royalties that are paid by the  
10 mining sector in the north went to Regina, but Regina paid  
11 it back up to keep La Loche alive, for example. What kind  
12 of sense is that? Are we going to have enough royalties  
13 when there are holes in the ground up north to keep La  
14 Loche alive? I think the time to act is now.

15 Specifically, on page 187 of the Bayda  
16 Inquiry of 1977-78, 8.9 states that time and time again  
17 we heard northerners express with much conviction the view  
18 that some of the royalties from that Cluff Lake mine and  
19 other uranium mines should be channelled directly into  
20 the hands of some governmental body controlled and elected  
21 by northerners. The Northern Municipal Council was  
22 sometimes mentioned as that body and that body doesn't  
23 exist at this point in time; to be spent according to the

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1 wishes and needs of northerners.

2                   They kept referring to a lack of tax base  
3 that you've heard from the Northern Lights people, as an  
4 example. There is no tax base in this community to speak  
5 of. They insisted that the south has vast amount of  
6 property, farmland, business and industrial holdings,  
7 homes, et cetera, that form its tax base, but the north  
8 has no such properties. The north for its tax base, they  
9 argued, must of necessity look to the only properties there  
10 of any consequence, namely the mineral resources and the  
11 royalties generated by the operation of such mines.

12                   From that it takes me to a royalty  
13 sharing scheme that myself and another partner of mine,  
14 we do a few things together and his name is Doug Gailey  
15 and he is the Administrator in town here. Back in 1991,  
16 just last year, we approached the provincial government  
17 and we have talked about how we thought that royalty sharing  
18 may be addressed.

19                   Out of that report came the Northern  
20 Economic Development Task Force Report. In reading this  
21 report, it doesn't go far enough. It doesn't talk about  
22 what I talked about. It doesn't talk about what Doug  
23 Gailey talked about. It doesn't talk about what other

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1 communities on the west side agreed to at that point.

2 I think Louis Morin may remember those things.

3                   What I want to point out again is that  
4 we need to revisit the Economic Development Task Force  
5 Report of that year, but we need to put teeth in that report.

6 We need to revisit the royalty sharing structures. I  
7 could mail you the copy that I have here. By no means  
8 are we consultants or professional writers. We think we  
9 know what we want and we can express our needs I think  
10 fairly well, but we need outside people to write things  
11 in a proper manner. We do the best we can, but I think  
12 we know what we want.

13                   What I want to do next is show you an  
14 example of what this community can do. We have a community  
15 construction company called Methy Construction. It's  
16 owned by the community outright. The directors on that  
17 corporation, it's a non-profit construction company and  
18 the directors are all the people that are duly elected  
19 to the Town Council. So, every three years or thereabouts,  
20 I guess, the change comes and certain people may stay and  
21 certain people may go, but the idea is that there is a  
22 certain continuity that is required here and that's lacking  
23 in a lot of northern communities.

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1                   I want to take a couple of minutes to  
2 maybe tell you about Methy Construction. Methy  
3 Construction was incorporated in 1983 under the Non-Profit  
4 Corporations Act. Any profits earned either go back to  
5 the corporation, it's projects or to the village. None  
6 of the board of directors or employees receive dividends.  
7 In the event of dissolution, the corporation's assets  
8 will go to the Village of La Loche.

9                   Again, Methy Construction came into  
10 being because there was no local construction company here.  
11 It did well through the years from 1983 on to 1992. For  
12 example, the amount in dollars that it did in terms of  
13 local construction in the years 1985 to 1992 sums up to  
14 a total of \$5.147 million worth of construction projects  
15 locally that would otherwise have gone south.

16                  Methy Construction on an average year  
17 employs some 13 local residents. The assets of this  
18 corporation at 1991 stands at \$818,000 and in terms of  
19 the three year Sask Housing document I referred to earlier,  
20 Methy would play a key role in the implementation of the  
21 three-year plan that I again previously talked of.

22                  To me, what I am trying to point out is  
23 that of the different files that have gone through, clearly



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1 it shows that we have the people that are willing to take  
2 the bull by the horns and do it if we are given the right  
3 resources in terms of monies and people, as shown by what  
4 Methy Construction has done.

5 A couple more items I want to bring up  
6 before I conclude. I know my time is almost up. One of  
7 the things that we don't quite agree with is and I think  
8 we may have a couple of members of the RCMP here, is that  
9 there is a new building coming into town here that Methy  
10 Construction cannot get access to. It is of course done  
11 by public tender and I think it is done by Public Works  
12 Canada.

13 If things were changed to accommodate  
14 the likes of Methy Construction in La Loche to take on  
15 the opportunities that we get in La Loche, a \$1 million  
16 or \$1.5 million project can go a long ways in employing  
17 local people. We are not, by virtue of the contracts that  
18 are given out by Public Works Canada, guaranteed that local  
19 labour will be used. They can bring whoever they like  
20 from Timbucktu to build that building from scratch to  
21 finish without any local labour, if they so choose.

22 We want those kinds of thing visited and  
23 we want those kinds of things investigated, so that the

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1 likes of local development corporations and the likes of  
2 local construction companies like Methy Construction can  
3 take advantage of those sorts of things because it means  
4 a lot to us.

5 I want to do a general focus on certain  
6 sections of the overview of the first round and maybe  
7 quickly go through it. I read the overview of the first  
8 round and I note that a lot of the things that I talk about  
9 I think have been mentioned in various other Aboriginal  
10 communities. It talks about Big Cove, Newfoundland or  
11 Nova Scotia I think. It talks about 80 or 90 per cent  
12 unemployment and so on. That's nothing new to us.

13 The one thing I would like to point out,  
14 though, is that when certain areas, let's say on the east  
15 side of Canada, has 25 per cent or so unemployment, I think  
16 the general population of Canada is up in arms over that.

17 La Loche has experienced 70, 80, 90 per cent unemployment  
18 since I was a child. It's nothing new to me. So, the  
19 thing is that part is nothing new to us. If 90 per cent  
20 unemployment existed elsewhere, anywhere else let's say  
21 in Ontario, people wouldn't stand for it.

22 I personally think that if you had the  
23 average education of each person in a community, let's

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1 say in Ontario, and if the average education was grade  
2 12, for example, I don't think they would stand for 90  
3 per cent unemployment in Ontario or anywhere else, but  
4 in La Loche we seem to accept that.

5 What I am saying is that we seem to accept  
6 that. We are not. We have different ideas that we want  
7 to implement. We need help in getting us there.

8 I think in conclusion I would like to  
9 thank you and your board members for taking the time to  
10 listen to us. I've gone over a lot of the things faster  
11 than I would normally want to do because of the time  
12 constraints, but that's fine by us. If you have any  
13 questions, I will try and answer them. I will invite Mayor  
14 Sam Herman to help me along wherever possible. Thank you.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
16 much. You certainly covered a lot of ground in your  
17 presentation. One of the points that you raised is that  
18 there was no cure-all magic, one kind of solution for  
19 economic development and it would have to be many, many  
20 things.

21 I would like to ask two technical  
22 questions first. All of those files that you presented  
23 to us, were they prepared by external consultants from

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1 various departments or was this done by the municipality?  
2 I want to understand exactly because you have said this  
3 was a consultant.

4 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** Not all the files  
5 were done by consultants. There are some files in there  
6 that were done by consultants. Some originated with local  
7 people in thinking that this may be a winner and others  
8 by the various village councils through the years.

9 Some are at very preliminary stages and  
10 some have been taken to testing, like if you would in 1976  
11 in the glass manufacturing area, we actually had sand  
12 tested from this area. Those sorts of things did occur.  
13 What I am saying is that perhaps in light of our situation  
14 now we should maybe revisit some of these files. I am  
15 not saying that each one is an economic winner. I am saying  
16 let's find out if it is or it is not.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** My second  
18 question is about the Bayda Inquiry in 1977. Could you  
19 give us the title of the report again because I want to  
20 be sure that we are talking about only one report. Was  
21 it on economic development?

22 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** The title that I have  
23 here is The Cluff Lake Board of Inquiry Final Report.

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1 I have established a date for that at 1977 to '78. The  
2 Chairman of that was the Honourable Mr. Justice E.D. Bayda.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** But what was  
4 the purpose of the Inquiry again?

5 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** The purpose I think  
6 from my understanding of the intent of the document was  
7 to find out how it would impact native communities along  
8 the Cluff Lake road corridor when it came into effect and  
9 how northerners can make good use of mining activities  
10 in their backyard.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I am raising  
12 that because this Inquiry was mentioned to us also in  
13 Ile-à-La-Crosse. We are in the process of making a survey  
14 of all the inquiries or commissions and task forces that  
15 reported in the last 25 years. I would ask one of our  
16 staff, Brad Michael, to make sure that a link is established  
17 and that we have this document.

18 It was in this report that the idea of  
19 sharing royalties with northerners came up? This report  
20 recommended the sharing of royalties with northerners?

21 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** Right. Excuse me,  
22 I don't think Justice Bayda alone came up with the idea.  
23 I think that again in his travels through the north that's

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1 where he established it.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** It had been  
3 floating around, but you mentioned it page 187.

4 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** Yes.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Then you went  
6 on to say we need to revisit that and to have a kind of  
7 a new royalty sharing scheme. My question is was there  
8 some work done on a new royalty sharing scheme?

9 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** There was no work  
10 done period on royalty sharing, apart from the indirect  
11 benefits that communities do get in transfer payments.  
12 We have a trust fund that sits in La Ronge that is called  
13 the Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You have a  
15 trust fund?

16 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** It's a trust for  
17 communities. It's a revolving type of a trust fund. It's  
18 called the Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account. In  
19 that there are -- I noticed one gentleman here was talking  
20 about the Primrose Air Weapons Range, for example. There  
21 is monies that are paid or have been paid by the federal  
22 government, for example, that should have gone into that  
23 fund. It didn't. That's why it doesn't filter into his

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1 system, being the Northern Lights School Division. That  
2 fund gets -- I forget my numbers here, but it gets its  
3 money from leases and two structures of royalty sharing  
4 schemes.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Is it a  
6 provincially established fund?

7 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** It's a provincial  
8 fund.

9 If I could spend a minute on the royalty  
10 system. A new uranium royalty system was introduced in  
11 June of 1990, retroactive to July 1989. It features two  
12 basic components. One is a basic royalty and the other  
13 is a profit-related royalty. The basic royalty is where  
14 on a monthly basis each uranium mine pays 5 per cent of  
15 the value of gross sales and this is the effect of minimum  
16 royalty and it is payable regardless of the profitability  
17 of the company.

18 The second one is a graduated profit  
19 royalty. The annual profit royalty is calculated as a  
20 percentage of profits, so that operating profit for the  
21 year is calculated and expressed as dollars per kilogram.

22 So, as an example, if the profit per kilogram is zero  
23 to \$2, there is no royalty rate in that second system.

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1 For example, again, if the profit per kilogram is \$2 to  
2 \$20, then the government gets 15 per cent of that. It  
3 escalates like that.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Has there been  
5 money in the last two years going to the fund?

6 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** Our closest estimate  
7 is that back in 1991 there would be about \$21 million paid  
8 by the mines, but keeping in mind that certain things like  
9 the mill rate hasn't changed since 1987, it should be  
10 revisited again. The other thing is that with the  
11 provincial government's opening up to more uranium mines  
12 and that, here is the time to seriously get into this act,  
13 before we end up with those holes in the ground that I  
14 keep talking about. Use the non-renewable sector to shift  
15 that money into the renewable sector because when you take  
16 a look at LaLoche, for example, I think we have a total  
17 of three people in any mine that you want to name in northern  
18 Saskatchewan. Clearly, the idea of training people and  
19 having people work over there is not working. It hasn't  
20 worked. The only alternative we have if that doesn't work  
21 is to take direct royalty sharing to create long-term local  
22 economic activity, that's my point.

23 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So the money



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1 that went into this fund has it been disbursed?

2 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** The communities,  
3 indirectly or otherwise, get it back for capital works  
4 and per capita funding, but that's just to keep northern  
5 communities goes. There isn't any extra money for  
6 economic development. Basically, it's money given to  
7 communities to keep sewer and water working, to keep the  
8 roads open and basic infrastructure going, not for any  
9 extra economic --

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** For new  
11 projects, northern development projects, all right.

12 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** Right.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** One last  
14 comment, when you stress the amount of money that is spent  
15 on the social side in comparison with the economic  
16 development, it's always the same problem of course. As  
17 weak as economy side is the more urgent the social problems  
18 are and when you say that there is no problem for money  
19 to be put into education, when you say that there should  
20 be \$5 million out of this \$25 million --

21 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** As an example.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** -- as an  
23 example, the difficulty and I would like you to think about

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1 it, it's one thing to say that, but it's another thing  
2 to say -- because you said it won't be new money, it doesn't  
3 have to be new money. We have to shift the balance.

4 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** Right.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** What do we do  
6 during this transition? The problems are still there and  
7 that's the difficulty all the time.

8 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** To me, the amount of  
9 money you are spending on social problems and the amount  
10 of money you are spending on the justice system and the  
11 amount of money on the RCMP and so on, all of those are  
12 present day fires. There is a reason for having gotten  
13 there.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I agree.

15 **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** I am saying let's get  
16 at the right end of the problem. Let's get at the root  
17 of the problem. When I say \$5 million, you are going to  
18 spend that next year anyway. I don't care who is in  
19 government, they are going to spend money to keep La Loche  
20 afloat. Instead of ten years down the road  
21 talking about it again, where you and I may meet talking  
22 about it here, why not do it now and save us a bundle,  
23 save us a lot of headaches.

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1                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** It's always  
2 the way to do it, to make the shift happen because when  
3 you mention that there are 15,000 days in prison --

4                   **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** Right. That's in  
5 1985-86.

6                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** That's a lot  
7 of money. This was seven years ago.

8                   **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** At \$65 a day.

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

10                  **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you.

11                  **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
12 much.

13                  **MR. ROY CHEECHUM:** Thank you for your  
14 time.

15                  **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I now call Mr.  
16 Armand Murray from the Métis Society Local. Mr. Murray,  
17 please proceed whenever you are ready.

18                  **MR. ARMAND MURRAY, (Métis Society**  
19 **Local):** Thank you for calling me up here because I have  
20 quite a few things that I would like to say. First of  
21 all, we have heard a lot of things about the problems and  
22 a few of the solutions. But the only real solution that  
23 I can see is for the federal government and the provincial

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1 government to start recognizing the rights, the Aboriginal  
2 rights of Métis and all Aboriginal people. That way we  
3 can have control over land and resources. Once we have  
4 control over land and resources, we can go into a lot of  
5 different things for economic development.

6 Land is very important to us because even  
7 a town of this size we can see a lot of the infrastructure  
8 in the town, the cafes, hotels and stuff are run by  
9 outsiders. These things were at first run by local people,  
10 but it looked like the government has programmed anything  
11 Aboriginal for failure. So now the stores that were run  
12 by my people are being run by white people, the businesses  
13 and tourism, none of our people are into tourism, which  
14 is a very, very rich industry.

15 The freshwater fish markets which are  
16 worldwide, these are these we could tap into. These are  
17 alternatives to pulp cutting, to clear cutting and  
18 polluting our northern lakes with radiation by uranium  
19 mining.

20 There are a lot of things that we could  
21 do. We are surrounded by resources, but we don't have  
22 any money to develop them.

23 There was a little bit touched on about

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1 the sawmill. I ran the sawmill here two years ago and  
2 proved that it could be a profitable business, a business  
3 that you could make money with. I proved it. I didn't  
4 have no other financial help from anybody else, but I know  
5 the market is there because I got letters from different  
6 wood products down south that would buy our products.

7                   The people up here, we are traditionally  
8 production-based people. We are trappers and fishermen.  
9 We always got paid on the amount of fish we brought in,  
10 the amount of fur we brought in. That's the kind of  
11 industry we have to have. We have to have piecework for  
12 everything we do because the past government that was here,  
13 the Conservative government, introduced a job creation  
14 program called SEDP, Saskatchewan Employment Development  
15 Program. All that did to my people was train them to be  
16 time killers. They put in eight hours and still they don't  
17 produce nothing. That's what happened. Now everybody  
18 seems to feel that as long as you put in your hours you  
19 can get paid.

20                   That wasn't the way it was before.  
21 Before we had a post camp here that was based on that,  
22 the old traditions. We got paid on the amount of posts  
23 we cut and delivered. We were proud. There were even

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1 little competitions among us to see who could bring in  
2 more posts and make more money. We were self-sufficient  
3 then. There was hardly anybody on welfare when the post  
4 came was there, but I am not going to just talk about the  
5 post camp.

6 I am talking about control over land and  
7 resources. We are going to have to have that as an answer.  
8 That is the answer to everything. That is the bottom  
9 line because from there we can have fish hatcheries. If  
10 we had control over land and resources we would be the  
11 ones to decide what the limits are on the lakes and what  
12 lakes we could fish, because we would have the forethought  
13 to have fish hatcheries so that we can keep these fish  
14 populations constant to the demands that the world market  
15 for freshwater is going to make.

16 This is the plan that I have, that I and  
17 my Local have always talked about in the past few years.  
18

19 I want to go back about six years. Six  
20 years ago the federal government -- the Saskatchewan  
21 government decided to make a park out of the Clearwater  
22 River. We protested it because there was no consultation  
23 with local people over what was going to happen inside

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1 that park, will we ever be shut out from there. We  
2 protested, we even had a blockade on one of the rivers,  
3 but it ended up that there was only two of us finally,  
4 everybody left us. I guess we can say that that battle  
5 -- it wasn't a failure. It is still there, they will never  
6 take it away from us, it will still belong to La Loche,  
7 the Clearwater River, but in name the provincial government  
8 has declared it a park.

9                   So, okay they won that battle, but the  
10 next step that I thought of was, okay, if we are going  
11 to have a park that close to our town, we should be the  
12 ones to run that park. I put in a package to train 25  
13 conservation officers in La Loche to be delivered by the  
14 Dumont Institute, which is a wing of the provincial  
15 organization, the Métis Society of Saskatchewan.  
16 Everything was going good until who is going to fund this.

17

18                   There was one woman called Elizabeth  
19 Thomas and she worked for a federal funding agency. She  
20 told me, well, if you can guarantee work for these 25  
21 people, we'll fund it. I had to go back to my office and  
22 start planning again. I put together an outfit called  
23 Dene Enterprises, which would consist of -- it would be

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1 an economic development board, a local board that would  
2 deal with fishing, tourism, all the different things that  
3 we are traditionally used to.

4                   What happened is like fishing and  
5 trapping, they say it is a dying industry, that nobody  
6 should get into it. You should get an education so that  
7 you can get something else, but I don't really believe  
8 in that. When I was growing up my father let me go to  
9 school until I was 14. When I was 14 he used to take me  
10 out in December to fish with him, so that I could learn  
11 the trade of fishing. I can fall back to fishing if my  
12 education doesn't help me and I guess that's the way my  
13 dad thought. I believe that.

14                   These industries, like fishing, they are  
15 very rich industries, but the fisherman himself gets the  
16 smallest percentage of that dollar. I have talked to  
17 people who have travelled worldwide, Chinese people. I  
18 have talked to business people in Saskatoon that have  
19 travelled worldwide and they tell me that some fish are  
20 \$10 a pound in Hong Kong, while we are getting \$1. Why  
21 can't we have direct markets right from La Loche to Hong  
22 Kong or Tokyo or other countries? There is no reason why  
23 we can't. All we need is the money to be able to go sell



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1 our fish.

2 Now, I was going back to Clearwater.  
3 After I got this Dene Enterprises on paper, I wrote a letter  
4 to Elizabeth Thomas guaranteeing four people to go into  
5 forestry, four people to go into fisheries, four people  
6 to go into park management and four people to go into  
7 tourist management and game farms. This is what the  
8 conservation officer training would give you. It would  
9 open the door to these trades, to these industries.

10 I wrote them a letter, but they never  
11 answered me back until today. The next thing I know, a  
12 couple of years ago, the conservation training package  
13 was started in a different town. Now, last night, one  
14 of the students from that town told me that my students  
15 that were from La Loche were left out. They were told  
16 to leave because their education standard wasn't high  
17 enough.

18 We had these high school people here this  
19 morning, telling us how good the education system here  
20 is. If this is truly the case, what is happening? Is  
21 our education system the same as everybody else's? That's  
22 what I don't know because what this one student told me  
23 is the La Loche students were let go because their education

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1 level wasn't high enough. That's something that I didn't  
2 really like because I thought that our school was just  
3 as good as everybody else's.

4 All this work that I do, like research,  
5 this is all volunteer work. It is hard to keep something  
6 going. We still have to make a living. So, at the present  
7 time I have been, I guess you could say I have been  
8 neglecting my Local for the past five months. I haven't  
9 had any meetings with my local people, but that doesn't  
10 mean that I have lost touch with them. I come back here  
11 almost every weekend and try to see what is happening.  
12 There have been a lot of different things happening with  
13 the organization.

14 The Referendum shot down a lot of things,  
15 but I don't believe that the Referendum should shoot down  
16 Aboriginal rights because I do believe I have Aboriginal  
17 rights. I still hunt. I still fish. I still cut trees  
18 when I need them. I live in the forest right now and that's  
19 where I am making my livelihood.

20 The fish industry, that is what I am very  
21 interested in that industry that we could take over  
22 completely if we had control over land and lakes because  
23 we could be the ones to decide how much fish is taken out

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1 of a lake. The way it is today, there are biologists that  
2 come from the south and say, "Well, no, you can't fish  
3 this much. You can only fish so many pounds of this fish.  
4 We've got to leave the rest for tourists." The  
5 tourists are walking around on our land, eating our fish  
6 and we are not doing anything about it. What's the matter  
7 with us? Every tourist that goes north should have a guide  
8 from La Loche.

9 I ran for mayor here last year and that  
10 was one of the things that I had on my platform. I said  
11 every tourist that went through La Loche would pick up  
12 at least one guide, just to keep people working, just so  
13 that my people can have something back from what the  
14 tourists are taking from our lands. I have nothing against  
15 tourism because it is the most environmentally safe  
16 industry there is. If it is well monitored there is  
17 nothing -- the forest would still look the same after the  
18 tourists walked through it.

19 If a harvester for a pulpmill went  
20 through it, you will see nothing but dirt because these  
21 even turn up the soil for new trees and they take 50 years  
22 to grow. I am totally against pulp cutting. If there  
23 is any wood cutting to be done, it should be done for local

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1 people, for local use. Everything is made out of wood.

2 Many things are made out of wood, furniture, picnic  
3 tables. That is one of the reasons why I had the sawmill.

4 I ran the sawmill to try out if we could make this kind  
5 of stuff to sell locally and to tourism.

6                   You have heard all of the problems  
7 already in the first part of your Commission. Now you  
8 are looking for answers. These are the answers that I  
9 am suggesting. I am not only suggesting them, I am almost  
10 demanding them, that this is the way it has to be. We  
11 are going to have to have control over the land and the  
12 resources and the only way to do it is through a Métis  
13 and Dene land claim. If we have to make the claim ourselves  
14 we will.

15                   There are a few other things I would like  
16 to talk about, but -- like tourism. Tourism just doesn't  
17 mean that you are going to take somebody out and catch  
18 fish for them or help them catch fish. Tourism goes into  
19 many things like bear hunting, moose hunting, deer hunting,  
20 caribou hunting, almost any kind of hunting you can do  
21 up north, wild game hunting. Today now the outfitters  
22 that exist, they are not my people. They are people from  
23 Meadow Lake. They are people from Edmonton. They are

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1 people from Fort McMurray. Those are the people who have  
2 the outfits up north.

3 If we want to get involved in there, the  
4 only thing we are going to get are the jobs guiding,  
5 filleting fish for people. That's not right. This is  
6 our homeland, but we should be the ones to decide who gets  
7 a tourist camp, who gets a bear hunting outfitting.

8 Another thing I wanted to talk about is  
9 the entrapment that the government does to my people by  
10 putting a road corridor game preserve from Green Lake to  
11 La Loche. If you carry an uncased rifle between here and  
12 Green Lake you are going to be charged with a wildlife  
13 offence. I have been charged with that. I lost a timber  
14 wolf to the conservation officers already once because  
15 of that and other people are charged with even shooting  
16 cardboard moose. There is a trial coming up in February  
17 which my colleague will tell you a little bit about, about  
18 a man who was trying to feed his family and shot a cardboard  
19 moose and the DNR were waiting for him there and they  
20 arrested him.

21 These things are not fair. That's not  
22 the way the Creator intended for us to live, to be dominated  
23 by an outside race. This is our home. I will not go into

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1 your home and tell you what you can do in your livingroom  
2 or what you can do in your other rooms. That's what they  
3 are telling us. They are telling us you can't hunt on  
4 the highway, you can't hunt at all unless you have a licence  
5 or else you are a treaty Indian. They don't ask you if  
6 you are an Aboriginal. They don't ask you if you are Métis,  
7 Dene or anything. They just ask you, "Are you treaty?"  
8 If you are not, then you are charged. On that highway,  
9 whether you are treaty or not, you are still being charged.

10                   There are a few things I'd like to say  
11 about forestry, the forest itself. The forest is alive.  
12 It's alive. If you ever walk alone in the forest, you  
13 will know it's alive. If you cut down all those trees,  
14 that forest is dead. It's not a forest anymore. Your  
15 lakes will die, your fish won't hatch because there will  
16 be no shade for them to hatch in. They can't hatch in  
17 the sun. We know that. We've got an example here in La  
18 Loche. When I first come here in 1963, the spring of 1964  
19 we hand snared pickerel in the river that goes through  
20 La Loche.

21                   A few years later, in 1968-69 they  
22 cleared all that land to make it a farm. They wanted to  
23 make a farm for us. After they cleared that land there

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1 were no more pickerel. Even the lake has no more pickerel  
2 because they don't go up the river any more. They don't  
3 spawn here any more. This is just an example of what clear  
4 cutting will do to our fish populations.

5 I really value the fish because fish is  
6 a medicine in itself. It is one of the most exotic gifts  
7 that mother nature has given to mankind and it is very  
8 expensive in some countries.

9 I think if you have any questions I might  
10 be able to answer them. If I can't, I have a lawyer beside  
11 me that might.

12 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
13 much. I must tell you that I don't think you need a lawyer  
14 to speak. You have told us things from the heart and with  
15 a great common sense. We certainly appreciate it.

16 When you advocate the control of land  
17 and resources, particularly here in the north, you are  
18 echoing or you are doing exactly what many, many people  
19 are telling us. One of the problems is that the multiple  
20 uses of the resources and the land have been overlooked  
21 by people coming from the south. We realize that.

22 When you speak about the fact that now  
23 you are putting in hours and you lost pride in what you

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1 do in comparison with the production of furs, of fish,  
2 it's part of the challenge also of all the community and  
3 of this Commission to come up with solutions that will  
4 take that into account.

5                   You mentioned the opportunity that seems  
6 to have been missed with the opening of the provincial  
7 park to train and form people for the working of the park  
8 and you mentioned also that there seems to be a gap in  
9 the formation or training of people coming out of the school  
10 here. This will have to be discussed with the school  
11 authorities and the school boards, but certainly the  
12 establishment of a provincial park might be an opportunity  
13 for jobs that are quite relevant to the expertise of people  
14 living in the area.

15                   Could you give me again the name of the  
16 park?

17                   **MR. ARMAND MURRAY:** Clearwater  
18 Wilderness Park.

19                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** The park was  
20 established --

21                   **MR. ARMAND MURRAY:** They started doing  
22 that in 1985-86. In 1986 we did the protesting and part  
23 of 1987. In 1987 they declared it.



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1                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You don't have  
2 data or information about the employees, those who are  
3 working for the maintenance of the park, as wardens and  
4 --

5                   **MR. ARMAND MURRAY:** No. I assumed that  
6 if we did get the training, our people could be the ones  
7 maintaining and looking after the park as permanent jobs.  
8 Then there would be people that would be trained.  
9 Conservation officers know all about fish enhancement,  
10 how to keep the populations good, big enough for the  
11 markets.

12                   There are a lot of different things that  
13 could happen in the north. Forestry. Forestry is good  
14 because the way we logged we did selective logging. We  
15 only took a log here and there that we could use to make  
16 lumber, but when a pulpmill cuts -- I cut pulp for the  
17 Prince Albert pulpmill in 1973. There is no other way  
18 to make money, you have to clear cut because it is a race  
19 against time. You only have eight hours to cut because  
20 it is a union. Clear cutting is the only way to do it.  
21 That's why I am totally against pulp cutting in this area.

22

23                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I understand

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1 from what you said that the outfitters in the area are  
2 all coming from outside?

3 **MR. ARMAND MURRAY:** From different  
4 parts. There are very few local people, if there are any,  
5 that I know of.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do they employ  
7 people from La Loche?

8 **MR. ARMAND MURRAY:** A few, like for  
9 guides.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I think you  
11 have made your point quite clearly. I thank you for your  
12 presentation.

13 Mary.

14 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I too would  
15 like to thank you very much for making your presentation.

16 I have one question. You were saying that parents are  
17 teaching their children that fishing and trapping is dying  
18 and they should get educated and get more jobs. We have  
19 heard this frequently in areas where I guess there is a  
20 subsistence, where people depend upon the land in order  
21 to make a living. I am wondering for this area how many  
22 people actually fish and trap and what is the future of  
23 the fishing and trapping industry for this area?

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1                   **MR. ARMAND MURRAY:** If we had fish  
2 hatcheries and if we had access to direct markets, we would  
3 be the ones that would be selling fish directly to Hong  
4 Kong or Tokyo or wherever. With fish hatcheries, we could  
5 keep these fish populations constant to the demands that  
6 the markets could make.

7                   I want to tell you a little bit about  
8 how my people were brainwashed into believing that  
9 education is the only answer. I don't fully believe that.  
10 Yes, I believe education will help a lot, but you would  
11 have to  
12 -- like ourselves, if the power went out in La Loche a  
13 lot of us would be hard up. There are very few people  
14 -- the older people maybe would survive, but a lot of young  
15 people wouldn't know what to do. If it is 40 below, if  
16 you are out on the trapline, if you are out in a cabin  
17 -- like I live in a cabin where there is no power. I use  
18 wood for heat and that's where I'm living right now. I  
19 have no worries. I don't worry if the power is going to  
20 go off or the water is going to freeze, but a lot of people  
21 don't even see that.

22                   They brainwash the people into believing  
23 don't teach your kids to fish any more because fishing

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1 is dying. That's what they said, if it was dying why is  
2 there the Freshwater Fish marketing service and those  
3 people are driving Cadillacs and the fur industry  
4 especially, there are millionaires in Paris, there are  
5 millionaires in London, there are millionaires in New York,  
6 Montreal who are very rich because of our fur.

7 If we could finish a fur coat here, our  
8 piece of fur would be 10 or 15 times more than what we  
9 are getting. That is the point I am trying to get across.

10 If we can train our people to do these things. We have  
11 so many very, very talented artists in town, as you can  
12 see from around you there are some paintings that people  
13 do. Local people do that. These things -- we have no  
14 access to any markets for that kind of stuff either.  
15 Handicrafts. People make different things, ornaments.  
16 I've seen some people that it's unbelievable that people  
17 did it by hand.

18 I will turn it over to Clem.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Go ahead.

20 **MR. CLEM CHARTIER, (Consultant, Métis**  
21 **Society of Saskatchewan):** Good afternoon, Commissioners.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Good  
23 afternoon.

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1                   **MR. CLEM CHARTIER:** Good afternoon,  
2 Senator Morin.

3                   What I have chosen to do today is try  
4 to bring to your attention and your knowledge what has  
5 happened to us as Métis people in this area in terms of  
6 the government process and the recognition or I guess  
7 current non-recognition of our rights, something that my  
8 colleague has referred to. Specifically, what I will be  
9 looking at is that in 1906 the government sent a  
10 Commissioner to Ile-à-La-Crosse where you were at a couple  
11 of days ago and to La Loche and that Commissioner dealt  
12 both with making treaty with the Indian people and issuing  
13 scrip to what they called the halfbreeds or, as we call  
14 ourselves, the Métis.

15                  As I say, this is just a preliminary view  
16 of this issue, a cursory overview to hopefully sensitize  
17 you to some of the reasons why you are hearing the kinds  
18 of statements that Métis people and leaders have been  
19 making in terms of the Commission and the Métis, sort of  
20 the mini-conflict I guess that is beginning to emerge and  
21 the reason why we are saying the Commission has to look  
22 at Métis issues specifically.

23                  The current position of the government

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1 is that Métis rights have been extinguished. Basically,  
2 what the government is saying to us is that section 35(1)  
3 of the Constitution, which recognizes the existing treaty  
4 rights of the Aboriginal peoples does not apply to the  
5 Métis because our rights have been extinguished through  
6 this scrip process and what they call the supremacy of  
7 Parliament, I guess the power of Parliament to take away  
8 our rights.

9                   Essentially, what the government has  
10 done is outlawed our way of life. My colleague again has  
11 stated how he has been convicted for violations under the  
12 Game Act. The violations or actions that a treaty Indian  
13 would not be prosecuted for or convicted for, so for the  
14 Métis, as I say, they have criminalized our way of life.  
15 They have basically made outlaws of us and refer to us  
16 as poachers.

17                   It is getting more difficult to use the  
18 resources on our lands. In fact, it is even getting to  
19 the point where it is difficult for people to get wood  
20 for their stoves. It is getting quite bad, so what good  
21 is section 35(1) to us if that's the case. It's something  
22 we have to challenge.

23                   In your folder because of lack of time

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1 to really develop something comprehensive and as a cursory  
2 view, I've put some excerpts of documentation. One of  
3 them is a demographic map showing poverty in Canada. It  
4 was found in a Canadian Fact Book on Poverty in 1989.  
5 You will see that northern Saskatchewan is probably one  
6 of the most impoverished parts of the country. Were we  
7 hopefully as fortunate as Labrador we might be sitting  
8 quite well.

9                   In any event, that's something we are  
10 facing here and you've heard that today. You have the  
11 presentation from the town and from the Métis Society  
12 Local, so it's quite bad.

13                   What I bring to you today, I think it's  
14 the action of the government in 1906 that has continued  
15 to perpetuate this poverty situation and this lack of  
16 economic opportunity because of lack of resources.

17                   One of the major things about this scrip  
18 issue that you should be aware of, for the Métis  
19 particularly in the northern parts of Canada, the prairies,  
20 is that scrip was not good for us in the sense that it  
21 was only redeemable for open Dominion Crown land. In other  
22 words, in 1906 and I should just mention my home community  
23 is Buffalo Narrows. I was born and raised there. I went

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1 to school in Ile-à-La-Crosse and so I'm from this area.  
2 My grandfather and grandmother got scrip and so did my  
3 mother as a child, so I am a direct beneficiary. My  
4 colleague is from that same area as well, the  
5 Ile-à-La-Crosse area.

6 In any event, this whole thing has  
7 started us off on a course and this whole thing of  
8 redemption of scrip shows how right from the start our  
9 people could not benefit. Who in their right mind would  
10 leave their traditional homelands in northern  
11 Saskatchewan, move to some unknown territory somewhere  
12 probably what is now south of North Battleford to live  
13 and to do what, to collect 240 acres of land. What good  
14 would that do when our people had the whole north and had  
15 our way of life? In fact, at that time our people were  
16 still dealing in furs with the Hudson's Bay Company and  
17 the Revion Frères company. There was no such thing as  
18 money, so money did not mean anything. The currency still  
19 was furs.

20 This other article that I have written,  
21 an excerpt of it, gives a brief description of this scrip  
22 process which you could hopefully read on your own time.  
23 It outlines that scrip was for 240 acres and there was



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1 also for children \$240 money scrip. The difference  
2 between the two is that money scrip was a bearer bond.  
3 Anybody that bought it, any speculator could take it to  
4 a land titles office and it was only good to purchase land.  
5 Land at that time was \$1 an acres, so that was basically  
6 a way to facilitate the speculator.

7                   The land scrip, you had to have your name  
8 on it and that you were supposed to register in person  
9 at a land titles office to select the land that you wanted.  
10 Of course, if it ever happened, it's a very exceptional  
11 case where a Métis person would actually have registered  
12 their scrip. This basically gives you some of that and  
13 you will also notice that most of the scrip, over 90 per  
14 cent, was delivered to the hands of speculators and of  
15 that over 52 per cent of the scrip issued ended up with  
16 the banks. So everybody made money off the backs of the  
17 Métis.

18                   In terms of description, there is also  
19 an except of a speech from an MLA in the Regina Legislature  
20 in 1938. It's kind of racist and kind of a racy document,  
21 but on page 7 it talks about the camp followers that came  
22 with the Commissioner. I quote:

23 "When the scrip mission moved from place to place it was

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1 followed by an army of camp followers  
2 whose business it was to chisel the  
3 unfortunate halfbreed out of the scrip  
4 as soon as it was issued to him."

5 Then it says further down, it says with  
6 respect to the Indians there was treaty and there were  
7 certain protections. I quote:

8 "The very opposite course was taken in respect of the Métis  
9 share in the Indian title. The  
10 consideration finally given them for  
11 their interest in the vast and fertile  
12 region was so small that if it were not  
13 pitiable it would be ridiculous. Where  
14 the Indians were fostered and protected  
15 and provided not only with a large landed  
16 estate, but with almost every other  
17 necessary service, the amount given to  
18 the Métis was in comparison like a bone  
19 thrown to a dog and not much more  
20 valuable. Instead of having safeguards  
21 around them, the government seemed  
22 intent upon paving the way for the  
23 despoiler."

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1                   So, this legislator I think accurately  
2 reflected how the Métis were treated.

3                   The other article is an article by  
4 Filmore. It's entitled "Halfbreed Scrip". It was  
5 written I think in 1976 in the Manitoba Bar News. It's  
6 interesting because Filmore in his later years decided  
7 to ease his conscience. He was one of the camp followers  
8 that came to this area with the Treaty Commissioner in  
9 1906 and he kind of describes the fraud that took place  
10 and I guess his role in that fraud and how the Métis were  
11 basically cheated of our birthright. So, that would be  
12 interesting for you to read.

13                  In terms of the scrip itself, there are  
14 some examples of the scrip applications. There is nothing  
15 in the applications that was signed that refers to  
16 voluntary extinguishment of any rights, at least I can't  
17 detect anything in there that so states and I think that  
18 is important. One of the scrip applications you have  
19 before you is by a person named Pierre Maurice who signed  
20 his scrip here in 1906. Listed as his children there are  
21 five, one of them is Marguerite who still is alive here  
22 in this community. She is about 92 years old, so this  
23 is not so far removed from us. This is kind of recent

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1 history and I think things need to be corrected.

2                   There is also a scrip application by a  
3 person named Eli Roy from Ile-à-La-Crosse. If you notice  
4 his scrip, he signs his name on it and this will be important  
5 when I bring it up in the context of a land assignment.

6

7                   There are a number of small scrips.  
8 These are receipts. There are a whole number of them.  
9 Basically, the Commissioner when he has filled out the  
10 application immediately gave to those he felt were entitled  
11 to halfbreed scrip, he gave them a duplicate and a receipt.  
12 I am not sure how long they retained this. I believe  
13 this is what they turned over immediately to the  
14 speculators.

15                   Then you have an example of the scrip  
16 itself. There are two scrips, one is for \$160 and one  
17 is for \$80. These two scrip were specifically copies of  
18 the \$240 money scrip which was issued to Martiel Montgrand  
19 from this community, son of Francis Montgrand. Francis  
20 himself had received land scrip.

21                   Then you have transfers. One of the  
22 applications was by a Bartholomew Cummings, known to us  
23 as Ross Cummings. He signed it in Ile-à-La-Crosse. He

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1 took scrip. His mom took treaty. I interviewed him in  
2 1976 and he explained that he had never travelled to North  
3 Battleford which his scrip had ended up, that basically  
4 he was given he believes something like \$30, maybe \$60,  
5 but he didn't know what it meant. Again, he explained  
6 that at that time they were still dealing in furs and this  
7 paper money meant nothing to them. That in fact a lot  
8 of people used this paper money to light their pipes and  
9 to do other things with it. It didn't mean a thing because  
10 they just were influenced by the clergy and others in  
11 authority, the Hudson's Bay people and they just sold their  
12 scrip to the speculator that was sitting right there beside  
13 -- I suppose a few feet from the camp where the treaty  
14 scrip Commissioner was dealing.

15                   If you read the Filmore article, it's  
16 interesting to note that Mr. Filmore stated that there  
17 were about six or eight of them and rather than compete  
18 in buying the scrip, they all threw their money in together  
19 and they bought the scrip for the least amount possible  
20 and then they divided it based on the amount of money they  
21 put in. That shows it all.

22                   Then there are land transfers and in it,  
23 for example, Alexander Janvier supposedly he signed over

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1 his scrip in Calgary. He supposedly went to Calgary in  
2 person, registered his scrip and then assigned his scrip  
3 to the purchaser. Even in today's travel, Calgary is still  
4 a long way. In that 1976 interview, Mr. Cummings said  
5 that at that time it would even take them about a week  
6 to get to North Battleford, so going to Calgary would take  
7 about two weeks. I don't think anybody from here went  
8 there.

9                   There is also evidence which is not in  
10 here that other people travelled to Lethbridge, Regina  
11 and other places to deal with their scrip. So, a lot of  
12 I guess fraud took place with respect to the Métis. Nobody  
13 benefitted, except of course for the speculator.

14                   That's basically a sample. There is a  
15 land transfer. I kind of skipped over it, signed by Eli  
16 Roy. His application is signed by himself. His land  
17 transfer which you have is signed by an "x" in Moose Jaw  
18 and then somebody would have to swear that this is the  
19 same person, but you can tell it was fraud because the  
20 person at Moose Jaw didn't realize that here is a Métis  
21 person in Ile-à-La-Crosse who knew how to spell his name,  
22 so they used the traditional "x". A lot of that is in  
23 these documents. I just brought a sample of them for your

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1 purposes.

2                   As well, there is an understanding by  
3 our elders that this scrip was not to have been a one-shot  
4 deal. The understanding was that land was to be issued  
5 at least every 25 years or for every generation. That's  
6 the understanding that they had and that's still the belief  
7 that they tell us.

8                   There is an excerpt of an article I did  
9 in law school in 1978. It's called "British North America  
10 Act 1930, The Legal Right to Hunt, Trap and Fish". There  
11 is a reference there to William Joseph who was an Indian  
12 elder, a medicine person from Big River Reserve. He was  
13 at our meeting in Pombear Lake in 1977 and there he says  
14 with regard to scrip, the government promised the Indians,  
15 the Métis Society -- he referred to everybody as Indians  
16 and not as Métis or treaty, but generically as Indians  
17 -- to have land scrip every 25 years, free taxes. So he  
18 says you have free land every 25 years, that's his  
19 understanding.

20                   Two pages further on there is also  
21 Charlie Janvier from La Loche and Ross Cummings from  
22 Buffalo Narrows and this is the translation. Senator  
23 Morin was the translator at that meeting, the interpreter.

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1     There again they said when they gave the scrip and they  
2     were both about 16 years old at the time that scrip was  
3     issued, Mr. Cummings said he was 16, the Scrip Commissioner  
4     had him down as 18 so he could get land scrip instead of  
5     money scrip but, in any event, their recollection of that  
6     was that they were promised everything, that all the kids  
7     or all their children were going to have another scrip  
8     and this was going to continue. That was their  
9     understanding and that's we believe an accurate  
10    understanding. It's our belief that they did not give  
11    up our rights at all.

12                   Armand has mentioned the impact that  
13    this has had on our traditional livelihood, resource use,  
14    hunting and fishing rights. There is a report here, again  
15    an excerpt of the Treaty 10 Commissioner was also the Scrip  
16    Commissioner and did a report. On the last page it says,  
17    in terms of describing people, he says:

18    "The Indians dealt with are in character, habit, manner  
19                   of dress and mode of living similar to  
20                   the Chipewyans and Cree of the Athabaska  
21                   country. It is difficult to draw a line  
22                   of demarcation between those who class  
23                   themselves as Indians and those who



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1                   elected to be treated with as  
2                   halfbreeds. Both dress alike and  
3                   follow the same mode of life. It struck  
4                   me that the one group was, on the whole,  
5                   as well able to provide for self-support  
6                   as the other."

7                   There again the mode of life was the  
8                   same, the traditional lifestyle was the same. So, it's  
9                   inconceivable that the Métis people would say yes, we are  
10                  giving up our way of life for this piece of paper that  
11                  doesn't mean anything to us. It doesn't make sense.

12                  Again, as I was saying, at that time  
13                  there was no currency. People were still dealing in furs.  
14

15                  I want to refer back to that law school  
16                  paper, again William Joseph at that same meeting at Pombear  
17                  said, "You have the same right to kill meat," he says,  
18                  "But you seem to be shivering. You are afraid to step  
19                  over. Don't be afraid." So, he is saying we should  
20                  challenge this. We shouldn't just accept what the  
21                  government is doing to us.

22                  In this case again, Charlie Janvier and  
23                  Ross Cummings stated that they were told that your hunting

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1 rights of everybody will never be affected. At a trial  
2 in I believe 1977 in this community, the Laprise case,  
3 George Laprise, Robbie Fontaine who was 79 at the time  
4 testified and he testified that he was a halfbreed Indian  
5 and that for the last 20 to 30 years -- it's only been  
6 the last 20 to 30 years, that's in 1978, that non-treaty  
7 Indians had to get licences to hunt. He said, and I quote:  
8 "He said that treaty and non-treaty Indians always lived  
9 the same lifestyle in the area."

10 So, Mr. Fontaine and there is some  
11 reference to him in here as well, he was the recipient  
12 of money script, he refers to himself and others in this  
13 community as non-treaty Indians, as opposed to halfbreed.  
14 That's a term that you may want to keep your ear open  
15 for because when we talk about status Indians or people  
16 covered by the Indian Act in this region, we refer to them  
17 as treaties. When people say Indian, it is used in the  
18 broad generic sense and that's how the elders have been  
19 using that.

20 In terms again of the traditional  
21 resource use, there was another Commission, maybe not quite  
22 similar to yours, here in the early 1900s. Their report  
23 was presented in 1911, December, and so they were here

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1   sometime that year. They were in fact at La Loche and  
2   a Baptiste Fontaine appeared and he was the father of Robbie  
3   Fontaine, who also had received scrip at that time. He  
4   appeared in La Loche.

5                   But at the Hudson's Bay post at La Loche  
6   there was Samuel Janvier, Michel Lemaigre, Joseph Janvier,  
7   Pierre Maurice and I mentioned Pierre Maurice as one of  
8   the scrip recipients. In the evidence it says that the  
9   Scrip Commissioners told the Indians they would not be  
10   interfered with in fishing and hunting. The term "Indian"  
11   is used very broadly here, but because of the Métis  
12   witnesses it's apparent that they were referring to their  
13   guaranteed rights from 1906, which was only five years  
14   earlier.

15                   At Volt's house, Raphael Laliberte gave  
16   evidence and in Ile-à-La-Crosse there was Louis Roy, Thomas  
17   Desjarlais, Baptiste Jordain, again Métis people and there  
18   again it says Mr. McKenna, who was the Commissioner, the  
19   Scrip and Treaty Commissioner:

20   "Mr. McKenna, Treaty Commissioner, said they would not  
21                   be interfered with."

22                   There again, those are clear and close  
23   recollections of that time and they are stating that their

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1 rights were guaranteed.

2 On the last page, which is page 62 of  
3 that Commission's report, it states:

4 "For the sake of brevity, the term "Indian" is meant to  
5 include halfbreed as well and one term  
6 might well include them both, for it has  
7 been repeatedly stated to the  
8 Commissioners that there are few, if  
9 any, pure breed Indians in existence at  
10 the present time, referring especially  
11 to those living in the north."

12 So, when he says the "Indians" he is  
13 meaning both the Métis and the treaty Indians of this area.

14

15 In terms of the 1930 Natural Resources  
16 Transfer Agreement where it says the Indians have the right  
17 to continue to hunt, trap and fish, the court in the Laprise  
18 case says:

19 "Indians mean those defined in the Indian Act."

20 I think it is a wrong decision. A lot  
21 of people do, but nevertheless there was an opinion. There  
22 is a letter there dated August 30th, 1933 by the federal  
23 Deputy Minister of Justice. He states:

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1 "I am of the opinion that it embraces and was intended  
2 to brace all the Indians of the province,  
3 whether treaty or non-treaty Indians."

4 So, his opinion is that the 1930 Natural  
5 Resources Transfer Agreement includes all Indian people  
6 in a generic sense, meaning treaty Indians, Métis, the  
7 non-treaty Indians, non-status Indians, whoever. I think  
8 there a lot of material that the Commission could look  
9 at in terms of looking at our rights.

10 In terms of this community specifically,  
11 there is an article in the next year Country magazine,  
12 published in 1974. It's entitled "Welfare Slavery in the  
13 North". I just have one page of that article. At that  
14 time that government instituted what was called welfare  
15 policy cut-offs. They had regulations which they called  
16 the blue pages and it's quite interesting that their  
17 advisor came up to this area that summer to examine how  
18 effective their policy was and what they tried to do was  
19 cut off all employable people, so that they would be forced  
20 to find their own way of making a living. Usually that  
21 happened in the summer, but this year they carried it on  
22 for the full year. He says that -- and he refers to  
23 everybody here as Indians. There is no distinction

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1 between a treaty Indian and a Métis. He says:

2 "Every single one of them, children included, is capable  
3 of rummaging up a few fish a day, as well  
4 as a rabbit and such."

5 He is saying if they are really starving  
6 they will go out and they will find it from the bush.

7 He says:

8 "In reality, the people are hungry, but they are not  
9 starving."

10 He says:

11 "With respect to the so-called Indian problem in La Loche,  
12 some picked up and moved out of town  
13 along the highway where they could catch  
14 enough wild game to stay alive and at  
15 the same time flag a ride down to come  
16 to town."

17 In fact, at that time a lot of people  
18 moved to the Big Muskeg, I think Mile 14, other places  
19 including Bear Creek, to try to make their living. At  
20 the end it says that there is a footnote to the regulations.

21 The footnote states:

22 "It is assumed that recipients in this category will be  
23 able to meet the other 50 per cent of

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1                   their food needs through hunting and  
2                   fishing."

3                   So, they are saying these hungry Métis  
4   should be able to make a living by hunting and fishing  
5   and yet it's against the law to hunt. It just doesn't  
6   make sense.

7                   In terms of trapping, you will be hearing  
8   from the trappers shortly. I am trying to wrap this up,  
9   but there is a need to look at that closely. There have  
10   also been some statements already about the conflict  
11   between clear cutting of the forests and trapping, so we  
12   have to address that.

13                  My colleague also mentioned this charge  
14   where a person shot at not a cardboard moose, but a full  
15   model moose set up and this person shot at it and,  
16   unfortunately, has been charged. The trial will be in  
17   February. There is a one-page thing there for your  
18   information on that.

19                  In conclusion, I wanted to give you a  
20   broad, quick overview of how it is that our people have  
21   been treated, how are rights are being denied, how our  
22   people are being persecuted in the courts still for  
23   hunting. Again, I briefly raised that in Ottawa two weeks

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1 ago at the round table on justice, to in fact say where  
2 is the justice for our people, the Métis people. Again  
3 I want to make this pitch, I know you've been hearing it.

4 We have to and that's my recommendation after all of that,  
5 that the Commission has to take a specific look at the  
6 Métis people. It's fine to say it's an Aboriginal  
7 Commission and that it is dealing with Indian, Inuit and  
8 Métis issues or Aboriginal issues generically, but we have  
9 to ensure that our issues are dealt with. We have found  
10 too many times that our issues have been marginalized.

11 I want to refer to the last document and  
12 you may have heard from your colleagues, from your co-Chair  
13 that earlier this week the Métis Nation of the Northwest  
14 Territories made a rather scathing attack on your co-Chair,  
15 unfortunate I think, but that happened. I have a copy  
16 of it. The Vice-President of the Métis Nation of the  
17 Northwest Territories stated, and I quote:

18 "To conclude, the Métis Nation of the Northwest  
19 Territories joins its Métis colleagues  
20 across Canada in voicing its displeasure  
21 with the treatment afforded Métis in  
22 front of the Commission. We are upset  
23 with the lack of recognition afforded



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1                   us and the fact that the Commission has  
2                   decided not to take the Métis seriously.

3  
4       We hope in the second round that our concerns will not  
5                   only be heard, but documented for the  
6                   public. However, in light of the fact  
7                   that the Commission is co-Chaired by a  
8                   person who has spent his entire  
9                   political career denying the existence  
10                  of Métis people, we are not holding our  
11                  breath."

12                 That's a public document that I thought  
13       should be brought to your to your attention. It is  
14       something that will have to be dealt with. I understand  
15       there is a meeting next week or, hopefully, next week  
16       between the Métis National Council and the Commission.  
17       I hope we can come to some kind of amicable resolution  
18       of what may be only an apparent conflict, as opposed to  
19       a real one, but sometimes apparent conflicts lead to be  
20       real ones.

21                   In closing, I tabled with you a blue  
22       report which comes out of the Métis Society of Saskatchewan  
23       Métis Constitution Commission, which held Hearings for

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1 a year around the province. It addresses some of these  
2 issues. It has a lot of recommendations in there as to  
3 what we would like to see. I think it will be helpful  
4 in your review. We will want to get into this in greater  
5 detail at some time.

6 On behalf of the Métis Society, Mr. Morin  
7 appeared in front of your colleagues about a month ago  
8 in Saskatoon and had recommended that the Commission set  
9 aside a day for the Métis Society and its affiliates, its  
10 institutions and its Senate and Métis Women's organization  
11 to appear in front of the Commission to give a full sort  
12 of overview and full sort of recommendation as to how the  
13 Métis collectively in the province would like to move  
14 ahead. We would like to again table that recommendation.

15 With that, I thank you for your  
16 indulgence.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Again, I would  
18 like to thank both of you for the presentation on behalf  
19 of the Saskatchewan Métis Society and Clem Chartier, also  
20 for the Local of the Society and Armand Murray.

21 Mr. Chartier, I would like to reiterate  
22 how happy we are to be in this part of Saskatchewan this  
23 week and holding these Hearings. Yesterday we were in

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1 Buffalo Narrows and we heard people. The day before we  
2 were in Ile-à-La-Crosse.

3 We are aware and concerned about the  
4 difficulty of making sure that we put across what we are  
5 doing as far as Métis people are concerned. I can only  
6 at this point in time assure you that the will of the  
7 Commission is really to look at the Métis situation as  
8 well as to the other Aboriginal peoples' situation. We  
9 are quite aware of the fact that there have been less  
10 studies and also that there is a very specific situation.

11 I hasten to say that we are pretty much  
12 aware also that there is not a controversy, but a  
13 distinction between Métis people here from the Red River  
14 and the Métis Nation as understood from the Red River.  
15 When we travel across the country of course we meet a lot  
16 of people who define themselves as Métis, but it's a  
17 different situation. I would like to say that we are quite  
18 abreast and we know how important this distinction is for  
19 Métis people in this part of the country and it's rooted  
20 in reality.

21 You provided us with a file that enables  
22 one in a nutshell -- there is so much literature and  
23 documentation to keep abreast. I for one appreciate it

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1 and certainly Mary and the Commission will appreciate you  
2 preparing that kind of documentation.

3                   In closing I would like to say that the  
4 whole question of scrip and what has happened is a major  
5 issue and concern and it goes to the root of the Métis  
6 situation. We hope to be able to come up with a way of  
7 functioning that will give confidence that we are going  
8 to address your concerns, the concerns of the Métis  
9 Society, not only of Saskatchewan, but also of the other  
10 prairie provinces, Alberta and Manitoba.

11                   We are running late on our agenda. I  
12 think it would not be very productive to try to go further  
13 technically on the file you have produced. I would like  
14 in closing just to say that we are aware that the Referendum  
15 result had a special impact on Métis people for various  
16 reasons. There was the Métis Accord and we are looking  
17 at this moment to alternatives to what should be done  
18 because we are quite concerned that there should not be  
19 a vacuum created after the Referendum. We know there is  
20 the temptation for governments to say, "Well, let the  
21 Commission do its work and we'll come back to the file  
22 after the report of the Commission."

23                   First of all, we want government to

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1 contribute to the work of the Commission, but also we are  
2 quite aware that there are things that are more urgent  
3 than that and have to be tackled on an ongoing basis.  
4 So, we hope to be able to come up sometime at the turn  
5 of the year with some suggestions for the various  
6 governments in the country to move ahead toward  
7 implementing not only self-government, but acting on some  
8 of the more fundamental problems.

9                   That being said, I would like again to  
10 thank you for coming and meeting with us. I reiterate that  
11 we are very happy to be in this community. Thank you.

12                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you.

13                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I think we  
14 should break for a few minutes. We are running a bit late  
15 on our agenda, but we are going to catch up. Everybody  
16 will have an opportunity to be heard. Let's say in seven  
17 or eight minutes we will resume with the presentation of  
18 Saskatchewan Justice, Annette Montgrand and Robert Woods  
19 and after that our Commissioner of the Day Louis Morin  
20 will make a presentation. Then we will continue on with  
21 our agenda. Thank you.

22 --- **Short Recess at 4:05 p.m.**

23 --- **Upon Resuming at 4:15 p.m.**

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1                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I would like  
2 to ask Annette Montgrand and Robert Woods to come and join  
3 us.

4                   Good afternoon.

5                   **MS ANNETTE MONTGRAND, (Saskatchewan**  
6 **Justice):** Good afternoon.

7                   As everyone is aware, there has always  
8 been a concern regarding the justice system. In the past  
9 few years, numerous programs have been introduced and are  
10 identified as community programs. In order to deliver  
11 these programs efficiently and effectively community  
12 involvement is necessary. The community can be  
13 responsible for the implementation of these programs, as  
14 well as the availability of resources to meet the community  
15 needs.

16                  As I am going through this I realize that  
17 a lot of times we can go on and cover more of what we are  
18 trying to say here, but I guess it wouldn't take too much  
19 time and if anyone has any questions we will more or less  
20 field it that way.

21                  In many instances victims have been  
22 denied or have failed to benefit from these programs, such  
23 as restitution in the way of community service work and

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1 the fine option and so forth. The reason often is the  
2 offender is unemployed and, therefore, the source of the  
3 income is from social services. This income is considered  
4 insufficient and yet the victim or victims also receiving  
5 social assistance has often been held responsible to  
6 replace or repair the loss or damages.

7                   Once more, we are referring here about  
8 the laws and references of property and so forth.

9                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** May I ask you  
10 before you go further to tell us what is Saskatchewan  
11 Justice. What is your organization?

12                   **MS ANNETTE MONTGRAND:** We are Probation  
13 Services.

14                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** With the  
15 provincial government?

16                   **MS ANNETTE MONTGRAND:** Yes, with the  
17 provincial government. I work in the La Loche office  
18 delivering all of these alternative programs that we  
19 currently now have in place. Bobby works in Buffalo  
20 Narrows.

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

22                   **MS ANNETTE MONTGRAND:** Often the  
23 offences are alcohol and/or drug related. These have

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1 always been identified as problems and yet most communities  
2 do not have resources or services to deal with these  
3 problems and particularly in La Loche. In order to address  
4 these issues, people must travel outside of La Loche to  
5 get treatment and so forth.

6 We have out-patients which is available,  
7 but in terms of addressing anything relating to alcohol  
8 issues, most often people must travel outside of La Loche.  
9 Therefore, it is necessary that we have resources to meet  
10 these needs.

11 It is necessary and important to have  
12 community members become involved to help those in need.  
13 Alcohol and drugs have been the major cause of many crises  
14 in many communities. Financial difficulties, family  
15 breakdown, violence, unemployment, you can go on and they  
16 are all serious concerns. Concern alone is not  
17 sufficient.

18 Direct contacts and services to monitor  
19 individuals involved in rehabilitation programs which will  
20 involve follow-up would be beneficial and respectful.  
21 The victims should be involved and included in the  
22 rehabilitation programs. Unless the family and the  
23 community become involved and be supportive, it would be



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1 difficult to overcome these problems and concerns.

2                   Rehabilitation programs will include  
3 marital counselling, anger and violence control, parenting  
4 skills, budgeting, education, housing, et cetera. In  
5 order to meet all of these, we require once more community  
6 involvement, community resources so that people are  
7 working together. We need to have the service right in  
8 our community. We should not have to get our service by  
9 going somewhere else. We should be supporting each other  
10 here and, therefore, it is very important that we do have  
11 resources.

12                   Resource services and information are  
13 lacking, considering the population in the north. In  
14 order for the effectiveness of these programs, they must  
15 be designed and delivered in the northern communities.  
16 It is recognized that southern programs are not designed  
17 for the northern structure. I guess what we are saying  
18 is that we need to have the policies and everything designed  
19 to meet our needs up here and it cannot be brought in from  
20 the south. They are designed for the south. They are  
21 not designed for us.

22                   In order that all of these programs  
23 become effective in our communities and that we understand

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1 each other and understand each other's roles, there is  
2 a need for community involvement. We must work together.  
3 One way I can see it is having resources right in our  
4 community. The mental health clinics that are currently  
5 coming in from Buffalo Narrows and that shouldn't be the  
6 case. We should have our own in the community. There  
7 are people now, we have students who are graduating and  
8 students who can be trained in these areas and can be  
9 trained on the job if we have all of these right here in  
10 the community.

11 That is all I would say myself. I would  
12 turn it over to Bobby. Thank you very much.

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

14 **MR. ROBERT WOODS, (Saskatchewan**  
15 **Justice):** What I would say is pretty well in relation  
16 to what Annette just spoke of. My name is Bob Woods and  
17 I am the Senior Probation Officer from Buffalo Narrows.  
18 I work for the Department of Justice.

19 I am going to start off here and it says  
20 that in Brian Dickson's letter of introduction he states:  
21 "If the Commission is composed of truly outstanding people,  
22 then this report and recommendations  
23 should be of great value."

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1                   It is my opinion here that the  
2 organization or community leaders must be the people  
3 responsible in appointing representatives to any  
4 organization or board or commission that is going to be  
5 dealing with our communities. They should be appointed  
6 at the local level or recommended from the local and then  
7 appointed if it is provincial or federal. They should  
8 listen to the people of the communities and see what they  
9 are saying because it is the people at the local level  
10 who know who they want for their own representation.

11                   I believe that it will be of great value,  
12 your report, once it is done, if it is coming from where  
13 they say it is going to be coming from.

14                   The relations of the Aboriginal peoples  
15 and the Canadian government and society as a whole, the  
16 attitudes and confidence of the people have changed for  
17 the worse and that's my opinion. The government doesn't  
18 seem to listen and it doesn't matter what party is in power.  
19 People do not have faith that things will get better.  
20 It appears that the Métis are only given a certain amount  
21 of attention and when I say Métis I guess I should be  
22 referring to a lot of northern people because we are quite  
23 a mixed society up here.

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1                   Conflicts arise and people begin to  
2   argue because of these. We are not listened to or else  
3   people say, yes, we are going to do this for you and it  
4   is never done.

5                   At present the Métis people are told that  
6   we are a federal responsibility and at one other time we  
7   are told we are a provincial responsibility, but nobody  
8   wants to take that responsibility and that confuses a lot  
9   of people. We are continuously confused. Someone must  
10   take that responsibility and quit the bickering back and  
11   forth. We have to maintain fighting for what we believe  
12   is true and for what we want.

13                  Some of the issues that Annette  
14   mentioned, such as housing and economic development and  
15   social programming, those all reflect on what we represent  
16   as community justice workers. The things I am going to  
17   state here are my opinions. I am not here to represent  
18   justice directly. I came here on my own and I want to  
19   say these things.

20                  At present one of the problems that I  
21   see in northern Saskatchewan and I say again northern  
22   Saskatchewan because that's where I am from is housing  
23   is a serious problem. Mortgage payments are too high,

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1 especially for the working people. Our arrears are very  
2 high and this causes problems such as ineligible for  
3 tenants to repair or upgrade their houses. They are  
4 ineligible for the Rural and Native Repair Programs,  
5 Emergency Repair Programs and whatnot because of those  
6 arrears. That's a problem that the government did not  
7 act on fast enough and they are not willing to compromise  
8 with us right now is the way it seems.

9                   They have come up with a new mortgage  
10 plan that just is interpreted differently than what it  
11 originally was. This causes people to believe that, no,  
12 they are not ready to resolve these problems. They put  
13 us in houses -- first of all, they took us out of houses  
14 that we thought were up to our standards and they said  
15 we would be living a better life, but they didn't tell  
16 us that if we got jobs and we bettered our lifestyles that  
17 we would be penalized for it.

18                   I started off as a labourer and they gave  
19 me one of these houses. To date I have a fairly good job  
20 and I have to pay 25 per cent of my household income.  
21 My wife also works and 25 per cent of her household income  
22 is also expected to come off there.

23                   If the government would have said at the

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1 start and treated us like normal tenants, we would have  
2 been trained today or we wouldn't even be living in those  
3 houses. If after we missed the first payment they said,  
4 "Either you pay up or else you're out," then we would have  
5 took notice and we would have been satisfied. But they  
6 waited. Today it's 13 years that I am living in that house.

7 There are very, very many people in the same position  
8 and today they are trying to solve that problem and they  
9 are saying, "You come up in a week or two with \$75,000  
10 or else you are out of that house." That's a little bit  
11 too much to take. There are a lot of people in that  
12 position now. That reflects on where our criminal justice  
13 is today. That's one of the things.

14 The other one I see reflects on the  
15 stores or the economic development in our community and  
16 I am going to use the Northern stores as an example. They  
17 have a monopoly. In every northern community that you've  
18 come to I am sure that you have seen a Northern store.  
19 We have tried to start businesses as local people, but  
20 we were more or less set up for failure. Governments did  
21 not help, but in turn they said "We've already sponsored  
22 some and they didn't come through. Therefore, we will  
23 not sponsor anybody else."

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1                   People should be given the opportunity  
2 to try again. There is a saying that says if you fail,  
3 try and try again. In our part of the country that's not  
4 true. We try, but we are not given the opportunity to  
5 make any progress.

6                   Northern stores have taken over the  
7 retail store here. They have also got groceries. They  
8 also sell snow machines. They did the same thing in  
9 Buffalo Narrows. They had competition over there, but  
10 they bought that competition out at a price that nobody  
11 else could afford. They put their prices up on groceries  
12 and everything else that they sell, clothing. It costs  
13 us money to go down south to buy these things, so we might  
14 as well just stay in Buffalo and buy them with what money  
15 we've got. They don't give anybody an opportunity to start  
16 up because nobody can compete with the size, nobody has  
17 the money, the funding, to do those and then again that  
18 reflects on it. The price of groceries, the lack of  
19 businesses to compete against them, we can't get anywhere  
20 with it.

21                   Those are the things we are looking at.  
22 They are driving people to poverty, so they are not helping  
23 at all. We have to be given a chance to start businesses

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1 through economic development programs. The government  
2 has to look at assisting people and trying to get businesses  
3 going and with a more positive attitude and a positive  
4 manner.

5                   Those are some of the things I am talking  
6 about and then what reflects off that is programs such  
7 as ours, community corrections programs, the social  
8 welfare program, all those other things come into play.

9 As Annette said, a lot of them are alcohol related.  
10 Probably 95 per cent of the people we work with are there  
11 because of an alcohol-related offence, but Northern  
12 stores, to go back to that one, their groceries they can  
13 jack up and down the prices. Yet, you go to a liquor store  
14 here and you pay the same price as you pay in a liquor  
15 store down south. Those prices go up and down, but nobody  
16 can own the liquor store either.

17                   In turn, people get into problems with  
18 the criminal justice system because of that. I have heard  
19 people talking about statistics here. We have statistics,  
20 but I didn't bring any with me. Anybody knows that they  
21 are very, very high. The people involved in the  
22 institutions, that are staying in institutions because  
23 of some kind of problem that they've gotten into is very



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1 high. People in our community programs, the statistics  
2 are high. We are constantly looking for ways to bring  
3 them down.

4                   Annette Montgrand and I work here as  
5 Senior Probation Officers. We run several related  
6 programs, as opposed to down south where for each program  
7 they have a co-ordinator. If our job description wasn't  
8 so broad, we could probably do a better job. I say a better  
9 job loosely because I think we as probation officers are  
10 doing a damn good job, because we've heard those comments  
11 before, but we could do a much better job if our job  
12 description was narrowed.

13                   We do the Community Service Order  
14 Program, the Restitution Program, the Early Release  
15 Program from the Corrections Centres. As I said, down  
16 south they've got one co-ordinator for each one of those  
17 programs, but then they say we don't work up here. Well,  
18 we can't work up here because we can't focus on it as much  
19 as we should. The clients that we have reoffend time and  
20 time again because we don't really have the time to counsel  
21 them as we are supposed to. We have to look after these  
22 programs.

23                   They call them community programs, but

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1 they are given to us as co-ordinators to pass down to the  
2 communities. If they were given directly to the  
3 communities and said, "Here is your program, there is so  
4 much money involved in it, perhaps you can hire somebody  
5 else," it would create another couple of jobs. Those are  
6 the things that the communities have been asking for, but  
7 nobody really seems to listen to that. Everyone who talked  
8 today said we don't have any jobs, we don't have any  
9 economic development. These are the chances and perhaps  
10 they can use that to create jobs and get some of the people  
11 working.

12 We have a lot of people in our community  
13 who are willing to work, but no chance to, no opportunity.  
14 We have a lot of people coming out of our schools with  
15 education, but no place to go after they are educated.  
16 These are the things.

17 In the past and, first of all, I'll go  
18 back to where I started here. I started with Community  
19 Corrections in 1980 as a native northern person. A program  
20 was presented to the north by the government, saying we  
21 want to hire northern people because they are from your  
22 communities, your part of the country. They know the  
23 people and they know the problems and they perhaps can

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1 give us some idea on where we are coming from and where  
2 we want to go.

3                   Sure, we took the training and we were  
4 led to believe that we were going to be professionals in  
5 our field. In terms we are professionals in our field,  
6 but I've only got a grade 9. They made us write an exam  
7 and some of us got our grade 10 as GED, but because of  
8 that we were not given professional status. I am only  
9 recognized as a Corrections Worker 2 at a certain level.  
10 I can't get any higher, unless I quit my job and I take  
11 my grade 12, then I go into a Human Justice Program and  
12 that's another two-year program. I can't afford to quit  
13 my job and I don't think Annette can or anybody else who  
14 is working in the north.

15                   To date we have a couple out of that --  
16 there were 16 of us who took the program and 15 completed  
17 it. We have them working throughout the three northern  
18 correction centres that were situated at that time. Out  
19 of that we have two or three now that I think are now the  
20 Directors of those centres.

21                   We have to be given more opportunity to  
22 advance. If I was to get that little piece of paper, I'd  
23 still be doing the same job, but all it would say is that

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1 I'm a certified corrections worker and I've got a diploma.  
2 I would automatically get \$400 or \$500 more, but I can't  
3 because I don't have that. Somebody has to look into  
4 giving us an opportunity advance without quitting our jobs  
5 or something.

6 I am not only speaking for myself. I  
7 am using myself as an example, but there are many, many  
8 of us who are in that same position.

9 The other thing is we hear a lot of people  
10 saying that community corrections programs, what are they?

11 Well, there is a lot of paperwork that is supposed to  
12 be given out, literature that says this is what this program  
13 is, for instance the Fine Option Program. Everybody knows  
14 in our communities what that is because they get a fine,  
15 they go and register at a community agency and they work  
16 off their fine and that's it. They don't have to worry  
17 about it any more. It works well in some communities,  
18 but in others it doesn't. That's why I am saying give  
19 them directly to the communities and maybe they can make  
20 them work better because everybody turns to us and, like  
21 I say, our job descriptions being so broad we don't have  
22 time to focus on them. Perhaps maybe that's one of the  
23 reasons why they don't work so great.

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1                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** As time is  
2 running short and we have many presenters, I would like  
3 to ask you if you could complete in a couple of minutes.

4                   **MR. ROBERT WOODS:** I am just coming down  
5 here.

6                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Please.

7                   **MR. ROBERT WOODS:** One of the other  
8 things is that we had court workers in our areas and which  
9 was a good program. People were here to interpret for  
10 the people that didn't understand what court was all about.  
11 They could prepare others for court or else they could  
12 appear. That's where we lack in understanding. A lot  
13 of the people don't understand what the court assumes.  
14 They don't understand that if they don't come to court  
15 that they can be charged for it and they are being charged  
16 for it. Many of those come to court like that and they  
17 are building up their records because of just not coming  
18 to court on time or not being there at all. The court  
19 workers program was good.

20                   We don't have any lawyers on our side  
21 of the province. They are all situated in one central  
22 place called La Ronge. The judges and the lawyers fly  
23 in and with not enough time to consult with the offenders.

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1 A lot of these people perhaps are going to jail or coming  
2 into our programs with no real reason, just because they  
3 want to get it over with.

4 They are looking at things in a more  
5 positive manner, but I'd really appreciate if  
6 recommendations would go that the direction they are  
7 gearing towards is now with the sentencing circles and  
8 stuff like that, more community input. That's the thing  
9 that I would like to see continue and maintained, people  
10 like the elders and the community resource people because  
11 we lack in resources.

12 We also have a classification system  
13 which does not suit us because it is a provincial standard.  
14 They have to understand that in northern Saskatchewan  
15 we don't have the resources that they have and so on.  
16 There are a lot of things that they lack and they have  
17 to come to us at times to redo these things and listen  
18 to how we can make the programs work better and work better  
19 with the clients that we have, the offenders that we work  
20 with. If we can do that, I think we will have a much better  
21 success rate with the people who are coming through.

22 The other thing I think is important here  
23 and which I will offer is that our corrections facilities,

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1 if we send people over there they don't learn anything.

2 I've suggested this before that, for instance, the Prince  
3 Albert Community Corrections Centre is built -- there is  
4 a secure unit, a semi-secure and so on and different units.

5 But we send a person to the Corrections Centre for perhaps  
6 say sexual assault or something like that. They don't  
7 take any therapy on that. Perhaps they could switch those  
8 units over and say this unit is for sexual assault  
9 treatment, alcohol-related treatment and so on, a  
10 batterers program in another one. Then they would come  
11 out with something, also pre-employment or some kind of  
12 training, so that when they come out they have something  
13 to look forward to. At present they are saying, "Well,  
14 what do we have to come out for. There is nothing there."

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
16 much. I know you could go on and on and on.

17 **MR. ROBERT WOODS:** Yes, there is lots.  
18 One thing I was asked to mention here and Roy Cheechum  
19 made a good presentation earlier and he covered a lot of  
20 area and he paints a good picture with what he said. The  
21 RCMP have a couple of representatives in the back here  
22 and they stated that if there were any questions in terms  
23 of what Roy said that they would be willing to answer them

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1 as well.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** In fact, we  
3 were told yesterday in Ile-à-La-Crosse that there is no  
4 court worker. There used to be one. This morning  
5 Georgina Jolibois, the youth counsellor, told us that in  
6 this community there should be a youth probation officer.  
7 I don't know if such a distinction --

8 **MR. ROBERT WOODS:** There is one.

9 **MS ANNETTE MONTGRAND:** There is one, but  
10 he is situated in Buffalo Narrows.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Well, that  
12 there should be more, that's what she said.

13 We had a round table on the justice  
14 system two weeks ago in Ottawa and everybody agrees that  
15 the involvement of the community should be much greater,  
16 not only at the last end of the system when the sentencing  
17 comes and probation, but also at the fore end, before people  
18 get charged for minor offences. In fact, my question,  
19 and I have only one at this point, is as probation officers  
20 in these communities do you try to do -- what do you try  
21 to do with the community to get more involvement on the  
22 part of the community into the administration of justice  
23 and the justice system, the delivery of the justice system?



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1 Do you try to -- I know you are probably in touch with  
2 the town council, because there seems to be that everybody  
3 is talking for its own part, but nobody seems to take charge  
4 of putting it as a whole.

5 **MR. ROBERT WOODS:** That's my point, to  
6 say that more community involvement, giving the programs  
7 directly to the community so that they can take  
8 responsibility for them. That would give us more of a  
9 chance to do our jobs as probation officers.

10 We do communicate with the community,  
11 the RCMP, the alcohol centres and so on. That's a thing  
12 that takes a lot away from us.

13 **MS ANNETTE MONTGRAND:** I feel too that  
14 if there was more community involvement by way of resources  
15 and so forth, that the offenders while in the rehab centre  
16 or in treatment or the correctional facility may be  
17 receiving some type of treatment programs, but yet if the  
18 community is not involved and the family is not included  
19 in these rehabilitation programs it will be a long time  
20 for them to really understand why their husband or their  
21 boyfriend or their brothers or sisters are reoffending.  
22 They have to be involved. They have to be included in  
23 all of these rehabilitation programs.

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1                   Therefore, it can't be done when they  
2   have to travel outside of La Loche. They have to go to  
3   Ile-à-La-Crosse for the nearest in-patient treatment.  
4   We should have our own for the number of people, for the  
5   high rate of alcoholism in this community. We should have  
6   our own in-patient centre right in La Loche.

7                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes, but  
8   before this happens what could we do tomorrow at least  
9   to help during a transition because if we are just waiting  
10   to get a centre it may take time. What is happening  
11   tomorrow?

12                  **MR. ROBERT WOODS:** That's one of the  
13   things I was going to make a point on. Even one of our  
14   judges specifically stated, "I come to this community once  
15   a month and when I come to this community I am sentencing  
16   this person and they come and stand in front of me once  
17   a month. When I am finished here for the day and I fly  
18   back to La Ronge and I don't see the person again."

19                  So, when they work with the community  
20   sentencing circles, at least the community is having their  
21   input there. When I leave the community I see what this  
22   person is going to be doing and that's why I say we should  
23   keep on that track at least and try to continue, so that

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1 the community knows. They are in touch with these people  
2 all the time.

3 I think it kind of reflects on what  
4 Annette said, that the family is also involved in that.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Are there  
6 community circles for sentencing now?

7 **MR. ROBERT WOODS:** They are just  
8 starting.

9 **MS ANNETTE MONTGRAND:** It hasn't come  
10 to La Loche, but hopefully it will soon

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes, because  
12 nothing prevents the organization of those circles in La  
13 Loche at the moment.

14 **MS ANNETTE MONTGRAND:** By having the  
15 whole family involved in the rehabilitation program,  
16 people could learn to resolve their problems at home,  
17 rather than running to the policeman or whomever when there  
18 are problems.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes, exactly.

20 **MS ANNETTE MONTGRAND:** They could  
21 clarify it because they would learn that from the programs  
22 and they would learn that because once they are finished  
23 at a program in the community, they will be returning back

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1 home and working on it at home, not this separation where  
2 the offender is often the one that is receiving the  
3 treatment in Ile-à-La-Crosse or in Saskatoon or somewhere,  
4 while the rest of the family is at home and still struggling  
5 with the same problems that he has to return to. As a  
6 result, at the end he is reoffending. That's why it is  
7 really important that we do have community involvement  
8 and we have our own resources.

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

11 **MR. ROBERT WOODS:** Thank you.

12 **MS ANNETTE MONTGRAND:** Thank you.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I would like  
14 to ask Geraldine Desjarlais of St. George's Hill to come  
15 to make a presentation.

16 As was mentioned to you, we are running  
17 late on the agenda. We are happy to give you an opportunity  
18 and you came to the Hearings to say what you want to say  
19 to the Commission, but you will have to try to make it  
20 in ten minutes. Thank you.

21 **MAYOR GERALDINE DESJARLAIS, (Mayor, St.**  
22 **George's Hill):** I would like to introduce myself. My  
23 name is Geraldine Desjarlais, Mayor of the northern hamlet

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1 of St. George's Hill. With me I have two Councillors,  
2 Pat Desjarlais and Theresa Montgrand.

3 The most important issue I would like  
4 to bring up from our community is Bill C-31. We have a  
5 population of about 200 people and about 70 per cent of  
6 the people there are Bill C-31. They are registered with  
7 the band from Dillon. The band there don't support the  
8 Bill C-31s at all.

9 Also, there are not enough jobs  
10 available for these people, for the Bill C-31s. Pat here  
11 wants to mention something about the bombing range and  
12 so I will turn the microphone over to him.

13 **COUNCILLOR PAT DESJARLAIS, (Councillor,**  
14 **St. George's Hill):** My name is Pat Desjarlais from St.  
15 George's Hill. I have something to say here about the  
16 bombing range.

17 Some people around us, like at Canoe  
18 Lake, the Cold Lake area, they got compensation and just  
19 like we are next door, St. George's Hill, we didn't get  
20 anything. We would like to see that we get a benefit out  
21 of it. These guys they got paid around us and we haven't  
22 got anything. I've got my trapline up to that bombing  
23 range and sometimes I go inside, even though I'm going

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1 to get shot or what. That's what I make my living on,  
2 fishing and logging. I would like to see if we could get  
3 something out of it. That's what I'd like to see.

4 **MAYOR GERALDINE DESJARLAIS:** That will  
5 be everything.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** St. George's  
7 Hill is a community of 200 people?

8 **MAYOR GERALDINE DESJARLAIS:** Around  
9 200, yes.

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Is the band  
11 close to the community?

12 **MAYOR GERALDINE DESJARLAIS:** Yes, about  
13 three kilometres away.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** How big is the  
15 band? What is the membership? How many members are on  
16 the reserve?

17 **COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND:** About  
18 500.

19 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Five hundred?

20 **COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND:** Yes,  
21 around there.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I under-stand  
23 that the members of your community encountered the same

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1 problems as people who recovered their status through Bill  
2 C-31 usually have. The problems are that they can't go  
3 back on the reserve, there is no housing?

4 **MAYOR GERALDINE DESJARLAIS:** The band  
5 would not allow them to come back to the reserve. They  
6 wouldn't allow them back on the reserve, so that's a problem  
7 there.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** When you say  
9 they don't allow them, do you mean that they say, "Well,  
10 we don't have lots or we don't have houses," or is it  
11 something more as a principle, that you are not allowed  
12 because most of the time the way it comes is the band says,  
13 "We have no money for building a house and housing on the  
14 reserve." Is that what you mean?

15 **COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND:** The Bill  
16 C-31 -- in St. George's the people, they are not recognized  
17 as the people in Dillon, the ones that are living in the  
18 band. Us Bill C-31 we are not living -- we don't have  
19 a reserve.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You live in the  
21 community. You don't live on the reserve.

22 **COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND:** Yes.

23 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** But you say you

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1 are not recognized by the band?

2 COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND: No.

3 COUNCILLOR PAT DESJARLAIS: Right.

4 COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT: Why is it  
5 the band won't let you on the reserve? Is it because they  
6 just say you can't live here or do they say, "We don't  
7 have enough houses?" or is it both of that?

8 COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND: We  
9 weren't living on the reserve before, like I lost my status  
10 when I got married. After that Bill  
11 C-31 came around and I got my status back, but I was treaty  
12 before. Automatically I got back my treaty rights and  
13 also my children and my husband. I don't know, they won't  
14 -- they don't seem to be helping the Bill C-31.

15 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: Do you receive  
16 some benefits, health benefits for example?

17 COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND: Not from  
18 the band, but from the Meadow Lake district. Like, if  
19 you want to ask like for welfare or something, they won't  
20 give you any welfare from the band in Dillon.

21 CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT: I under-stand  
22 that.

23 COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND: You have



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1 to go to Meadow Lake to get assistance.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** But now that  
3 you've recovered your status, you are entitled to health  
4 benefits, for example, even if you live outside the  
5 reserve.

6 **COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND:** Yes, I  
7 guess we are entitled to it, but they won't accept it.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So, you are  
9 treated exactly as you were before recovering your status?

10 **COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND:** Yes.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Nothing  
12 changed?

13 **COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND:** Nothing  
14 changed. Just for welfare I guess. That's it and  
15 medical.

16 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** When you  
17 are on welfare they cover your health costs and all those  
18 other kinds of costs, right? But if you weren't on  
19 welfare, if you were a Bill C-31, what would they give  
20 you? What kind of benefits would you have from being Bill  
21 C-31 that you didn't have before, if you weren't on welfare?

22 **COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND:** If you  
23 are not a Bill C-31 and if you are not on welfare, they

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1 would provide you with transportation for medical, but  
2 for meals and lodging they won't allow it.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** It's a  
4 difficult --

5 **COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND:** There  
6 are a lot of issues, but I wasn't prepared for this, so  
7 I can't think right now.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** What you  
9 expressed is a difficult situation and it is one that we  
10 find all across Canada. There are many bands that are  
11 acting that way, but most of the time the problem is housing  
12 and to get back to the reserve.

13 What is the name of the band?

14 **COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND:** The  
15 Buffalo River Band.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We are going  
17 to look at the situation of C-31 people because those are  
18 concerns that are expressed to us across Canada.

19 **COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND:** There  
20 was a guy that came down from Regina. I've forgotten his  
21 name. I think his name was Eldon. We gave him our  
22 concerns and he said he was going to talk about it when  
23 he gets back to Regina.

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1                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do you have  
2 other points to make?

3                   **COUNCILLOR THERESA MONTGRAND:** No.

4                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do you have the  
5 address of the Commission? You could always either phone  
6 us on one of the 800 lines and we will get back to you,  
7 or send us a note, a complementary note because we will  
8 come back to Saskatchewan.

9                   **MAYOR GERALDINE DESJARLAIS:** Thanks for  
10 your time.

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

12                   **COUNCILLOR PAT DESJARLAIS:** Can you  
13 give me an answer about the bombing range?

14                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Could you run  
15 that by me again?

16                   **COUNCILLOR PAT DESJARLAIS:** Could you  
17 give me an answer about that bombing range?

18                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Could you run  
19 that argument again? Could you explain --

20                   **COUNCILLOR PAT DESJARLAIS:** I was  
21 talking about the bombing range here. What I am getting  
22 at here is all the trappers got paid about 1952 I guess  
23 it was, around Dillon and Michel and St. George's Hill.

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1 We haven't got any compensation at all, so I would like  
2 to know what is wrong with it.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** What I will do,  
4 I can't give you an answer on that. I will ask Brad Michael  
5 to be in touch with you. He will take the details and  
6 we are going to take the information because I can't give  
7 you an answer.

8 **COUNCILLOR PAT DESJARLAIS:** I am not  
9 finished yet. Those Alberta guys, they got it, that's  
10 outside Saskatchewan. This bombing range is inside  
11 Saskatchewan and yet they got they got money for it, for  
12 their traplines. Me, I am next door to that bombing range  
13 and I haven't got anything, that's what I would like to  
14 know is why is this.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I can't give  
16 you an answer this afternoon.

17 **MS ELMIRA BAKATLA:** His point of view  
18 is he would like the concern to be brought into  
19 consideration and be looked into and support his issue  
20 in regards to the bombing range. He would like a reply  
21 to it. He would like the support done on it.

22 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes. This is  
23 on the public record, but I would like just to be sure

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1 or it might be useful that Brad Michael speak to you, just  
2 after the presentation and make sure that we have a full  
3 grasp of what you are telling us. We are going to have  
4 a look at it. Thank you very much.

5 Before resuming our agenda, I would like  
6 to ask our Commissioner of the Day Louis Morin to make  
7 a presentation.

8 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY LOUIS MORIN:**

9 Thank you. How much time do I have?

10 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Fifteen  
11 minutes.

12 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY LOUIS MORIN:**

13 That's good. I am going to tell you a little bit of history  
14 about Turnor Lake where we are living, how it come about  
15 that we moved from one community to another community.

16 In 1960 we had a community at Clear Lake  
17 right across from Buffalo Narrows and it was a good  
18 community. Everybody trapped and fished and made a good  
19 living. All of a sudden the government people came there  
20 and they said, "You guys are isolated. We can't keep  
21 teachers here. Move to Turnor Lake and we will build you  
22 a highway, we will build you a school and we will build  
23 you houses." So, everybody agreed and in 1965 we moved

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1 to Turnor Lake, but they never told us that the houses  
2 we would have to pay. They never said that.

3 I asked them, I was chairing the meeting  
4 at that time. I said, "What do we do with these houses  
5 here? We have our own houses, log houses and we are happy  
6 there." They said, "Burn them. We are going to build  
7 you houses over there."

8 We never got help, one cent from the  
9 government, to move there. We burned all of our houses,  
10 everything was burned down, the whole village. There were  
11 close to about 400 people living there and we were all  
12 moved to Turnor Lake. Now nobody owns a house in Turnor  
13 Lake. It is all government houses there, mortgage houses  
14 and rent houses. We don't own nothing. When we live in  
15 Turnor Lake --

16 The best time of my life in the 70 years  
17 that I live, was between 1940 and 1965 when we were living  
18 in Clear Lake. We were all happy, a lot of respect. Since  
19 we moved here, were pushed over here, we lost everything.  
20 There is no more respect for anybody. So, that's just  
21 something that you guys have to think about. We should  
22 get something for our houses that we burned down because  
23 we were told to do that.

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1                   Because everybody told you about the  
2 problem of everything, I am going to talk a little bit  
3 about resource users, but fishing and trapping is only  
4 one thing for us. We fish and trap, we fish and trap.  
5 So, when you are talking to a fisherman or a trapper it's  
6 only one thing there.

7                   We used to have a fur program from the  
8 provincial and federal program and the people run their  
9 own affairs. Then it was a ten-year program and after  
10 the ten years they threw it out, but at that time we used  
11 to get help to go and trap, because nobody can afford to  
12 go on their own, especially when you have to hire a plane,  
13 \$400 or \$500 or up to \$1,000 to go trapping. We used to  
14 get that help. All of a sudden we lost and the trapping  
15 went down.

16                  In 1976 just the La Loche trappers alone,  
17 they got 75,000 squirrels at 35 cents apiece, 75,000,  
18 because they got help to go and make money. Not only the  
19 squirrels, but I think about just over a half a million  
20 dollars worth of fur and they got it in their own community.

21       The government got some money back because they collected  
22 royalties and so on, taxes, from there. All of a sudden  
23 they throw that out and everybody is on welfare.

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1 I am not blaming the people in La Loche  
2 or Turnor Lake; I am blaming the government for doing that,  
3 putting people in a bad spot.

4 They won't help us now to go and find  
5 jobs, yet if there is a program in the welfare that if  
6 you want to go and look for a job they will help you find  
7 a job. Trapping is something that you go and find a job.  
8 You are going there to find some money, make some money  
9 and bring some meat home.

10 As an example, we had a meeting in Prince  
11 Albert just a couple of days ago with the government guys,  
12 the Saskatchewan government people. I told them this fall  
13 I made \$550 trapping, but you guys are only looking at  
14 the dollar figures. I brought that much meat from the  
15 bush to my family. That's \$1,100 in meat to me, but to  
16 you guys it doesn't count what I bring home. That's why  
17 everything is so bad in the communities because we can't  
18 afford to go up north and do what we used to do because  
19 there is no money and the government won't help us.

20 I am just asking if we can get that  
21 federal and provincial fur program again. They were a  
22 lot of help there and a lot of money has been made by the  
23 trappers. It expired in 1976 -- yes, i 1976 it expired



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1 and then for one year they kept it. Then after that the  
2 trapping went down, down, down and there's nothing, but  
3 everybody sitting in this room, the trapping would be there  
4 forever and everybody knows education won't feed  
5 everybody. Everybody knows the jobs they got in the north  
6 or they will never feed everybody. The logging will never  
7 feed everybody. You always have this thing here, that's  
8 our way of life. When we are gone, the other guys who  
9 are following us will go back to the same place, but if  
10 we don't get help to go to the traplines, they are finished  
11 again. They will have to stay here.

12                   It is no use to give you all the problems  
13 because you already heard everything all morning. I am  
14 just giving you something. Years ago when we were at Clear  
15 Lake there was no regulation. We ran our own hunting and  
16 fishing. When it's time to go fishing, we went fishing.

17    When it's time to go hunting, we go with all of our families  
18 and make a bunch of dried meat and stuff for the summer.

19    It was the good life we had. We lost that because they  
20 brought us to a community that we didn't agree with.

21                   That's all I am asking is let's try and  
22 get this provincial fur program in place again for the  
23 people and trapping. They are going to see a big

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1 difference. The problem will solve a lot of problems  
2 because people will be in the bush instead of hanging around  
3 in the communities. But they need help to go over there  
4 because it's costing a lot of money.

5 I fought that for the last 20 years and  
6 I am still doing it. In fact, I am the President of the  
7 Trappers Association.

8 So, that's what I wanted to talk about.

9 I wanted to see if something could be done to try and  
10 get that fur program back in place again for the sake of  
11 the trappers. Maybe it's not for us, but for the other  
12 generation that is going to follow us.

13 We all know it is going to solve half  
14 of that problem that these guys were telling you, a lot  
15 of problems will be solved because instead of back and  
16 forth in Turnor Lake from morning until dark you see these  
17 young people walking back and forth with no place to go.

18 If they had a chance and got help to out in the bush they  
19 would be less trouble. When we were in Clear Lake we didn't  
20 go inside the court. Nobody ever went to court. Maybe  
21 we broke the law, but we never went to court because nobody  
22 knows about it. Everybody was happy. We only had one  
23 head man there that gave us the instructions.

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1                   That's all I've got to say. I haven't  
2 got too much because everybody was telling you guys what's  
3 happening.

4                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
5 much, Mr. Morin. Can you tell me how many members you  
6 have in the association you are the President of, the  
7 Trappers Association?

8                   **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY LOUIS MORIN:**  
9 We have about 1,500. We represent from Prince Albert  
10 north, the whole north.

11                  **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So, it's a  
12 northern province-wide --

13                  **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY LOUIS MORIN:**  
14 We call it the Northern Fur Conservation Trappers  
15 Association.

16                  **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Earlier this  
17 afternoon, at the beginning of the afternoon or the end  
18 of the morning, the school people told us that they had  
19 cultural programs and some of them where they bring the  
20 kids, the young people to the field for three weeks. Do  
21 you participate in those programs with the school or some  
22 of your members?

23                  **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY LOUIS MORIN:**

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1 Yes, we do because we are not talking about the grownups.

2 Some of these students they are tired and bored and they  
3 are causing trouble in school and affecting the guys who  
4 are trying to learn. I said many times over and over when  
5 I meet government people, let's have a trapping program  
6 in the schools. If these guys are tired in school, take  
7 them out in the bush for a week or so and bring them back  
8 and they'll be fresh again in school when they start and  
9 that's the only way it will work, but it's the money that  
10 is the bad thing. I fully support that.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** But the money  
12 is not available?

13 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY LOUIS MORIN:**  
14 Well, we haven't got no money like for that. Our  
15 association is really not funded or anything. We get a  
16 little bit of money sometimes for our workshops and every  
17 February 12th, 13th and 14th is our convention for the  
18 trappers in Prince Albert and that's three days. We get  
19 a little money there to run our convention.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** As the  
21 President for all of northern Saskatchewan of the Trappers  
22 Association do you have any idea of how many of your members  
23 do, maybe not earn all their living, but a substantial

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1 part of their living through trapping still,  
2 notwithstanding all the difficulties and the fact that  
3 the market went down and the high costs?

4 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY LOUIS MORIN:**

5 There are quite a few going on, especially on the east  
6 side like in La Ronge, Deschambeault and that area and  
7 here too in this community there are a few that can afford  
8 it. Like I said, it's costly to go and live over there.  
9 You can't take the money you are receiving for your kids  
10 to take them to the bush. You have to leave that behind.  
11 So, you need to help to out and maybe when you come back  
12 you don't need any more help for a while.

13 There is still a lot of trapping. This  
14 trapping is going to keep on. It's 300 years old and I  
15 guarantee it will be forever, as long as -- but it's not  
16 only the dollars. It's the meat that we bring home from  
17 the bush to our families. **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:**

18 We heard about the situation of trappers all across the  
19 country. I was personally in Fort McPherson, Northwest  
20 Territories and this was a big concern. It's a concern  
21 all over the place. We are going to see what can be done  
22 to make it possible on a much greater scale than it is  
23 now. Very often it has to do also with the multiple uses

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1 of the forest, with the pulpmills and the clear cut.

2 We appreciate it that you make this  
3 presentation to the Commission. We hope to be able to  
4 come up with solutions that will be able to reconcile the  
5 purpose of your association with economic development in  
6 other sectors. Thank you very much.

7 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY LOUIS MORIN:**

8 Thank you.

9 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you.

10

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We now have the  
12 Traditional Resource Use Group, Archie Toulejour, the  
13 Fisherman's President.

14 **COMMISSIONER OF THE DAY LOUIS MORIN:**

15 They are not present.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We will go to  
17 the next one, but if they come back --

18 Louis Morin just mentioned to me that  
19 he thinks they asked him to represent them, so they are  
20 probably gone and they won't come back. If they do come  
21 back, we will make room on the agenda for them.

22 I would like now to ask the St. Martin's  
23 Hospital representatives and I think we have the Hospital

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1 Administrator Violet Lemaigre. Good afternoon.

2 **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE, (Hospital**  
3 **Administrator, St. Martin's Hospital):** Good afternoon.

4 I am Violet Lemaigre, Administrator of St. Martin's  
5 Hospital. With me here is Pat Malmgren and she is the  
6 Director of Nursing at the Hospital.

7 St. Martin's Hospital is a 12-bed  
8 hospital. It is an acute care hospital. We have eight  
9 adult and four paediatric beds. It's a 12-bed hospital,  
10 but sometimes we have as many as 14 patients. The hospital  
11 was built on a temporary basis in 1981, but 11 years later  
12 we still have the same building. It is very small. It  
13 is 12 Atco trailers put together.

14 Recently we were at a conference in  
15 Estevan and they have a brand new hospital there. It used  
16 to be the riding of the former Premier Grant Devine. We  
17 could fit our hospital in the kitchen of Estevan's  
18 hospital.

19 Because they are trailers the heat  
20 fluctuates a lot and we have no air conditioning. It gets  
21 very uncomfortable for employees and patients in the  
22 summer, like it gets very hot. In the winter it gets very  
23 cold.

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1                   The doctor's clinic is run out of the  
2 hospital and, therefore, our hospital is very busy. There  
3 is an average of 1,424 out-patients seen per month and  
4 that is an average on a 20-day working period of 70 patients  
5 per day. There is one doctor to see all of those patients.

6

7                   Due to the high patient load, it is not  
8 possible for the doctor to spend quality time with the  
9 patient. It is just to treat them and leave them. There  
10 can be no teaching. Patients have to wait a long time  
11 to get in to see the doctor. Sometimes there a two hour  
12 waiting period for one patient. Then we have irate  
13 patients on our hands.

14                  We have a lab and an x-ray department  
15 and they see an average of 396 patients per month. St.  
16 Martin's Hospital services Garson Lake, Turnor Lake and  
17 the Big Sea Reserve.

18                  We are constantly underfunded and are  
19 forever running in a deficit. Because we are so far up  
20 north it is costly getting supplies and getting equipment  
21 and also getting repairs done. For example, to put a \$200  
22 part in one of our boilers is going to cost us anywhere  
23 from \$1,100 and up because we do not have trained people



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1 in this community do that sort of work. We have to hire  
2 people from the south.

3                   Because of a lack of maintenance because  
4 of a lack of trained people and a lack of maintenance in  
5 the past, our equipment is constantly breaking down. We  
6 lack a lot of equipment, such as lifts and bathtubs and  
7 rooms to put them in. Like I said, our hospital is very  
8 small. We have only two bathtubs and one of them is in  
9 a patient's room and one is in a general area that is for  
10 everyone to use, including out-patients.

11                   We work with very few instruments.  
12 Medical equipment is very costly and because of our limited  
13 budget we are unable to buy everything that we need. We  
14 make do with what we have. Here is another example. A  
15 pair of 14-inch obstetrical forceps is anywhere from \$700  
16 to \$900. We were quite surprised at this when we found  
17 out.

18                   Our birthrate and teen pregnancy rate  
19 is the highest in Saskatchewan. The average for this area  
20 is 100 births per year and that's including Turnor Lake,  
21 Garson Lake and Big Sea. We see a high amount of trauma  
22 directly related to drugs and alcohol abuse. For example,  
23 when there is money in the community or a special occasion,

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1 the drug and alcohol consumption increases and with it  
2 also increases the visits of out-patients to the hospital.

3

4 We also see a huge number of communicable  
5 diseases, such as shigala and TB. This is related to lack  
6 of housing and the basic sewer and water.

7 A lot of our major medical emergencies  
8 are flown to Fort McMurray, Alberta. A road would be nice.

9 Right now there is a winter road, but it's only a winter  
10 road. If patients have to go there, they have to be flown.

11 If family members want to be with them, they have to fly  
12 and it is very costly to do that.

13 Some of our patients are flown to Meadow  
14 Lake or Saskatoon, depending on the nature of the illness.

15 Return from these two places is much more cost effective  
16 because we have a regular taxi service. We have no  
17 ambulance, so the local airline supplies a van to transfer  
18 patients to the airport and from the airport.

19 Housing for our staff is a problem  
20 because of the housing shortage in La Loche. There are  
21 rumours about moving the cut-off line for the income tax  
22 northern deduction to Clearwater north of here. I guess  
23 you may say what does this have to do with health? Well,

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1 the northern tax deduction is a deduction that allows you  
2 to retain a lot of your earnings. Without this there will  
3 be no incentive for people to work in the north.

4 About four or five years ago because of  
5 a shortage of staff, the hospital had to close its  
6 in-patient department because we were running short of  
7 nurses. The community does not have any nurses from within  
8 the community. All of our nurses we have to recruit from  
9 the south and sometimes we have problems recruiting people  
10 because of the high cost of living, housing shortages and  
11 everything else.

12 A lot of money is spent sending people  
13 south for services such as dental and optical. It would  
14 be more cost efficient if there were travelling clinics  
15 coming to the community, instead of sending like 10 people  
16 four times a week to North Battleford or Saskatoon. It  
17 would be much easier to send maybe three or four people  
18 from Meadow Lake to come here and provide these services.

19

20 Right now we have similar clinics but  
21 they are for ultrasound and ENT clinics. They come up  
22 here about four times a year, but for dental and optical  
23 it would have to be on a regular basis.

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1                   Resources for mental health are sadly  
2   lacking. We have a mental health worker who is situated  
3   out of Buffalo. He or she serves a big area. It does  
4   not meet the needs of this community. There is a clinic  
5   from North Battleford that comes to Ile-à-La-Crosse. They  
6   come about once a month I think and some of our patients  
7   are then taken down to Ile-à-La-Crosse to get treatment  
8   from these people.

9                   Also, I guess there is a need in the  
10   community for long-term care for the elderly and the  
11   disabled. Right now there isn't a great need, but in the  
12   next five or six years there will be a need. We have a  
13   young population now, but as they grow older we have no  
14   resources for the elderly.

15                  I think that is about all I have. If  
16   you have any questions --

17                  **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
18   much for your presentation and details that are contained  
19   in it. Could you tell us more about the professional staff  
20   you have working here in La Loche for the hospital?

21                  **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE:** Like what?

22                  **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** For example,  
23   you have nurses working in the hospital?

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1                   **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE:** Yes, we do.

2                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Is there a  
3 medical doctor?

4                   **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE:** We have two  
5 doctors. They come on a rotating basis. They are here  
6 for four days each. Like they are not here at the same  
7 time, so we only have one doctor and, like I said, over  
8 1,400 people are seen by that one doctor per month.

9                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** When you say  
10 they come for four days each, in a row? Does it mean that  
11 there is always a doctor available in the community?

12                   **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE:** Yes.

13                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** The delivery  
14 of babies --

15                   **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE:** That is done in  
16 Fort McMurray or Meadow Lake.

17                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** It's not done  
18 here?

19                   **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE:** No, we do not have  
20 the equipment to handle them. We only have deliveries  
21 here if we cannot get the patient out in time to do the  
22 delivery elsewhere. If we ran into complications, then  
23 we have no equipment to handle it.

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1                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So it's not  
2 done here. There is no midwife system?

3                   **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE:** Nothing.

4                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** What is the  
5 budget of the hospital?

6                   **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE:** A little over \$1  
7 million. We have a staff of about -- well, we have a staff  
8 of nine nurses and one Director of Nursing. Then we have  
9 nurses aides, maintenance and two lab technicians and we  
10 have an administrator, then like the operating of the  
11 hospital all comes out of that budget.

12                   Our telephone budget alone is \$4,000 per  
13 year and that barely covers the rental. Most of our  
14 telephone calls are long distance because we have to refer  
15 patients for specialists and they are all long distance  
16 calls. Our telephone bills -- well, last year it was over  
17 \$12,000 and the government funded us for a third of that.

18

19                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** The nurses are  
20 all coming from the south on a rotation basis. How long  
21 do they stay in the north as an average when they come?

22                   **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE:** It's getting  
23 better now. We have one who has been here I think coming

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1 on her fifth year. Before, if they stayed six months that  
2 was a long time.

3 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** What do you do  
4 -- do you meet with -- for example, we were told this morning  
5 there are 24 graduates in grade 12 at the high school.  
6 Did you meet with those graduates to see whether there  
7 would be some who would be interested to go into the nursing  
8 profession, to have a visit at the hospital? What kind  
9 of -- because we are struck by the fact that are very,  
10 very few Aboriginal people, whether Métis, Inuit or Indian,  
11 going into the health professions. That is a patent  
12 example that there would be jobs in the community.

13 **MS PAT MALMGREN, (Director of Nursing,**  
14 **St. Martin's Hospital):** I would like to answer that one,  
15 if I may.

16 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes.

17 **MS PAT MALMGREN:** I have done a couple  
18 of presentations, but more at the elementary level,  
19 although we do kind of catch some of the students when  
20 they come into the hospital and encourage them to go in  
21 for nursing. The Catholic Health Council which owns the  
22 hospital has set up a small scholarship trust fund that  
23 once they go in for something medical that they would be

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1 eligible for. We are trying.

2 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** There is some  
3 kind of effort, but --

4 **MS PAT MALMGREN:** It all takes time.

5 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Yes.

6 **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE:** Also, we encourage  
7 our staff to get further training, so they can hold one  
8 of those nursing positions or one of those lab positions,  
9 instead of always having to recruit somebody from the  
10 south.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We were told  
12 that a lot of it has to do or sometimes has to do with  
13 the fact that to get the training in the health professions  
14 it's a scientific profile and very often the basic high  
15 school diploma -- it's difficult to get students to go  
16 into scientific areas. It is a concern with the number  
17 of young people that will come out of this high school  
18 for example.

19 **MS PAT MALMGREN:** Even the fact that  
20 they have to go south for the medical training makes a  
21 big difference, but I mean that is something that you can't  
22 change.

23 **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE:** Instead of always



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1 having to send people south, it would be nice if they could  
2 bring some of those training programs closer. Maybe not  
3 right into this community, but somewhere closer to us.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Is there minor  
5 surgery performed at the hospital?

6 **MS PAT MALMGREN:** No.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** None?

8 **MS PAT MALMGREN:** There is no general  
9 anaesthetic or anything, no equipment of that kind. We  
10 can do minor things with a local anaesthetic, but that  
11 would be all.

12 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So, otherwise  
13 people have to go to Ile-à-La-Crosse?

14 **MS PAT MALMGREN:** They would be more  
15 inclined to go to Meadow Lake or, depending on what it  
16 was for, even Saskatoon or Fort McMurray.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** On the alcohol  
18 and substance abuse side of things, do you house some of  
19 the people who have major problems for a couple of days  
20 or do you serve as --

21 **MS PAT MALMGREN:** Yes, several times  
22 there will be admissions to help people over certain areas.  
23 I think most of my nursing staff are becoming very adept

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1 at counselling because there is a shortage of counselling  
2 services. Anyone that is involved in the field, it's so  
3 spread out just by numbers, that they can't be everywhere.

4 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** If you see a  
5 situation where a child seems to have been abused what  
6 do you do? Is there a social service where to refer within  
7 the community?

8 **MS PAT MALMGREN:** Yes. The community  
9 is starting to work together very well. All the different  
10 agencies are starting to relate very well.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you.  
12 Mary.

13 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I would  
14 like to thank you both very much. Out of respect for the  
15 time factor I am going to limit my questions to two. One  
16 of them is that all over the north we have seen similar  
17 circumstances where there have been professionals who have  
18 had to come into the north to assume positions like the  
19 nurse or whatever and of course in some communities there  
20 have been real problems with retention. In this community  
21 it doesn't seem like there is such a high turnover rate.

22 There have been many, many calls for  
23 higher education. We heard in the last two days about

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1 NORTEP which is sort of a distance education program  
2 encouraging teachers. I am wondering has anything like  
3 that ever been done with respect to the health field?

4 **MS PAT MALMGREN:** NORTEP also has a part  
5 of it called NORPAC which is the Professional Access  
6 Program. It involves any other area other than teaching.  
7 We have in fact a student in that right now. She plans  
8 on being a doctor, but she spends I think it's a third  
9 to a half of her time of the year at the hospital with  
10 us, learning the various aspects of the hospital and then  
11 the other part of the year is taking classes in La Ronge.

12

13 It's a two-year program, the same as  
14 NORTEP and at the end of that I think they end up roughly  
15 with a year and a half of university classes, as well as  
16 the practical that they have gained at the workplace.

17 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** What would  
18 that qualify them for at the end of that?

19 **MS PAT MALMGREN:** All it would qualify  
20 them for is university. They would have those university  
21 classes and then they would have to continue on in their  
22 chosen field until they finished. For the professional  
23 access part that's all it is is access.

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1                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** My second  
2 question really is one related to teenage pregnancy. I  
3 couldn't help but be struck yesterday when we heard some  
4 presentations. There were people who definitely were a  
5 decade younger than myself sitting at the other end of  
6 the table saying that they had six or eight kids. I was  
7 really struck by the issue of teenage pregnancy. We have  
8 heard several times today that is an issue.

9                   I am wondering, it's been identified as  
10 an issue, what is being done to address this issue? For  
11 example, does the medical profession or the clinic do  
12 public education? Does anyone else in the community  
13 respond to this issue and how?

14                   **MS PAT MALMGREN:** I believe Public  
15 Health would. We now have two public health nurses up  
16 here as of this fall. Before that there has only ever  
17 been one, which meant her time was pretty much reactive  
18 to things that she had to do. I believe they are  
19 approaching that. We do do a lot of education, or as much  
20 as we get time for, through the hospital, through the  
21 physician and the nurse.

22                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
23 much.

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1                   **MS VIOLET LEMAIGRE:** Thank you.

2                   **MS PAT MALMGREN:** Thank you.

3                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** The next  
4 presenter will be Antoinette Lemaigre for the Northern  
5 Saskatchewan Native Outreach.

6                   Good afternoon.

7                   **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE, (NorSask Native**  
8 **Outreach):** Good afternoon, Commissioners, and thanks for  
9 inviting me to speak. My name is Antoinette Lemaigre.  
10 I have been with NorSask Native Outreach as an employment  
11 counsellor for the past ten years.

12                   My role is jobs and training. I am  
13 liaison between clients, employers and education  
14 institutions. I do a lot of referrals to jobs and training  
15 and some of the barriers I have are as follows: We need  
16 more adult upgrading education right now. We have 15  
17 placements in ABE 8 to 10 level and 75 per cent of my clients  
18 are at a grade 5 and 6 level, so they are caught or trapped  
19 in a situation where there is no advancement into jobs  
20 or training.

21                   We need funding for adult ABE 5 to 12  
22 level, so that the people that have a level of 10 can  
23 continue education in their own community and look after

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1 their families at the same time. Youth that have dropped  
2 out can further their education by returning. So these  
3 people will have better access to jobs and further  
4 education into skills and trades.

5 Relating to this concern is  
6 accommodation for the instructors that are coming in to  
7 teach special classes. For example, I had requested  
8 school bus driver training and computer clerk training.  
9 Both of these courses are ready to go, but no  
10 accommodations for instructions.

11 As a result, the computer clerk course  
12 may be cancelled. A community development course has just  
13 started where the instructor is commuting out of Buffalo  
14 Narrows. We need more rental units to accommodate outside  
15 resources that are bringing in these programs.

16 My other concern is we need permanent  
17 jobs, not this six month welfare work programs that our  
18 people are working on, where they work for six months,  
19 go on unemployment insurance for a maximum of 40 weeks  
20 and then it's back to square one again of being unemployed.

21 We need to move into industries that can employ year round  
22 continuously, so our people are not shuffled from welfare  
23 cheques to welfare work programs to unemployment insurance

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1   cheques.  It's just a depressing cycle that gets nowhere.

2

3                   Maybe our industries can be fish plants,  
4   forestry and Roy Cheechum has touched on a lot of other  
5   possible industries this afternoon, an industry where our  
6   people can be employed continuously that will give them  
7   a sense of self-worth and security that every family needs.

8                   Another concern I have is the northern  
9   mines that are opening up and that are presently existing,  
10  uranium mines.  When they first came on stream we were  
11  promised jobs in La Loche.  Today it's a very sad situation  
12  for the numbers of people that are employed out of La Loche.

13

14                   The Key Lake mine site of CAMECO has four  
15  people employed.  AMOK, presently owned by Kogema has one  
16  person working.  AMOK had in the early 1980s the maximum  
17  people employed and were up to 14 people employed.  In  
18  the latter 1980s the numbers kept decreasing and for the  
19  last three years they had the same one person working.

20                   La Loche has not benefitted from these  
21  mines.  We need these jobs that surrounding communities  
22  are getting.  I am also aware of some of the problems that  
23  they are using to blacklist La Loche.  They are saying

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1 La Loche people do not want to work. In my ten years'  
2 experience in this field, I can strongly argue and point  
3 to anyone that is not the case. Many times I have posted  
4 road construction work, brush clearing work, fire  
5 suppression work for six months welfare work, programs  
6 for 20 positions and believe me it's just like confessional  
7 at Father's house before Christmas. I get to see 60  
8 clients average per day applying for these jobs. The total  
9 is 300 referrals to these positions.

10 Our people want to work if given the  
11 chance. What I want to request is when these future mine  
12 proposals go in for government approvals, if there was  
13 a way that the government would put stipulations and say  
14 these mines should hire from across the north, so many  
15 numbers from each community, instead of the way it's set  
16 up now. Each mine only hires from impact communities and  
17 again La Loche is missing out because so far all mines  
18 are on the east side and proposed mines are on the east  
19 side.

20 On my part, I am doing all I can to lobby  
21 for La Loche with these mines. I presented AMOK with their  
22 sad numbers of employees out of La Loche over the years  
23 and they have again promised La Loche 11 heavy equipment



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1 operator positions when they get their mine expansion  
2 approved.

3 I have also applied for personnel  
4 officer training on the job with CAMECO because I care  
5 for this community and I want to have an input in the uranium  
6 industry. I will know about this position next week.  
7 I need to put my foot in the door with these mines. If  
8 I get in, hopefully I will convince them to hire more across  
9 the north.

10 To stress this statement more, I will  
11 give you a clearer picture of any proposal that comes into  
12 the government for any future mines in the north. The  
13 government will look at it and before approving it can  
14 say you have to hire equally out of La Loche, Buffalo  
15 Narrows and so forth.

16 I have one more last concern. We need  
17 a trade school in the north. We were promised one several  
18 years ago and it was all approved, ready to go and it was  
19 snatched from us and place in Prince Albert, which is now  
20 Woodlands Campus. If the government allocates a facility  
21 to go in the north, it should be in the north where there  
22 are no parking meters; that is the tru north.

23 If we had a trade institution in the

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1 north today, we would have plumbers, electricians,  
2 carpenters. Our people must have these resources in the  
3 north on their turf where they can learn and better  
4 themselves in their own environment that they are used  
5 to.

6 This wraps up my presentation and I want  
7 to thank you for allowing me to voice my concerns.

8 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
9 much for a clear and straightforward presentation. I  
10 think you have put your message across very forcefully.  
11 The message is really twofold: First, that local people  
12 should benefit from the various businesses and  
13 undertakings that are around, whether in forestry or mines  
14 or other multi-nationals often. The second is that there  
15 should be some professional training in the north in order  
16 to have the professionally trained people available for  
17 those industries.

18 The whole question is how to get from  
19 here to there.

20 **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** That's right.

21 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** We are  
22 certainly going to look at it, but your suggestion to say  
23 that there should be a quota on people employed is one

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1 thing. Somebody was telling me over lunch that there was  
2 a 55 per cent quota with the uranium and there is only  
3 8 per cent. Very often the quota is not sufficient, if  
4 the professionally trained people are not available it's  
5 meaningless.

6 **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** A lot of the  
7 barriers I mentioned was lack of education, but in the  
8 last several years there are quite a few grade 12 students  
9 that are coming on stream. Now we are telling them we  
10 have the students, take them, just like the mines.

11 They had advertised for underground  
12 mining, but most of those trainings up were on the east  
13 side. I had a very difficult time placing out of La Loche.  
14 Like I mentioned in my report, for the mines that are  
15 situated over there, they can only hire in their impact  
16 area say, and I think some of their concern was to save  
17 money for themselves. So what if they had to spend extra  
18 dollars and fly people from out of these areas as well.  
19

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** The fact that  
21 they have to hire people from the impact site, it's not  
22 a regulation that is there? Where does it come from?  
23 It's easy to understand that if the mine is in your backyard

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1 that you've got the first priority to be employed, but  
2 --

3 **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** That's the way  
4 it seems, but the only mine that is in our backyard is  
5 AMOK. Like I said, they haven't lived up to their  
6 promises.

7 Now what I would like to see is us talking  
8 to these eastern mines and if they can somehow -- if the  
9 government can somehow put in the stipulation to hire  
10 across the north equally, instead of from the impact areas  
11 that they are proposing up to now. To me it seems like  
12 they just want to save themselves the cost of transporting  
13 employees.

14 They are gaining a tremendous amount of  
15 money from our land, so why not give out extra so that  
16 the whole north can benefit.

17 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** What I want to  
18 check with you is this: Is there a government stipulation  
19 that they should employ people on the impact side and you  
20 are asking us to broaden the stipulation to the whole north?

21 **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** Yes, I'd like  
22 to see that.

23 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** But there is

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1 already a government stipulation.

2 **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** Yes, from  
3 impact areas only. Now I am saying look at the broader  
4 picture of the north and hire equally out of each community.  
5 That is the only way I see La Loche benefitting because  
6 in the last ten years of mining La Loche has missed out  
7 on everything.

8 Like I said today, we only have five  
9 people working in the mines. I have active clients, 500  
10 people looking for jobs and training per month. Out of  
11 that only five are working in the mines for the past ten  
12 years and that's a sad situation.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Are you aware  
14 of the number of Aboriginal people, Métis, Indian or  
15 whatever, working for the mines on the impact side? What  
16 is the proportion, do you know?

17 **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** So far each of  
18 the mines have reached a maximum of 50 per cent. Other  
19 are around 40, so they are slowly reaching that 50 per  
20 cent. But again, they are viewing Prince Albert and north  
21 as the north. I am saying, to me wherever there is a  
22 parking meter is not the north. There has got to be bushes,  
23 lakes and freedom.

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1                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** The Commission  
2 is desperately looking for a criteria to define where the  
3 north starts. Maybe you have given us a clue.

4                   **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** Good.

5                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You might find  
6 that in the report.

7                   Mary.

8                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you  
9 very much. I am wondering as the employment counsellor  
10 do you have any relationship with the prospective  
11 employers, like AMOK you were saying or --

12                   **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** CAMECO?

13                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Yes.

14                   **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** How do you mean  
15 by relations?

16                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Do you talk  
17 to them?

18                   **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** Yes. I phone  
19 them a lot. Like I said, I had applied for a personnel  
20 officer position with them and I wish you people would  
21 give them the push to hire me because I think they should  
22 train northern people in those upper management levels.

23

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1 I have been in the workforce ever since  
2 I was 16 years old and I feel like I'm ready to be up there  
3 right now. If I say I'm ready, they should give me the  
4 first opportunity, so that I can have a voice in the north  
5 and to speak for my own people. We are willing to be given  
6 the chance to train for those positions.

7 One thing I would like to mention though,  
8 when they gave us a tour recently up in the CAMECO Key  
9 Lake mine site and there I noticed the senior management  
10 level positions were all non-native people, but when they  
11 gave us a tour of AMOK I noticed all their senior management  
12 positions were native people and I was really impressed  
13 with that. Unfortunately no one from La Loche, but the  
14 surrounding areas.

15 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** My other  
16 question is just a clarification, we've heard that there  
17 aren't that many people who go to get trained in the  
18 technical field, like plumbers or electricians or  
19 carpenters. Are there any who do that and if they do get  
20 trained do they come back?

21 **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** I've had quite  
22 a few who went out to take electrician's training and  
23 plumbers, but the thing is once their training is finished,

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1 let's say Woodlands Campus, KELSI, before they can become  
2 a journeyman they have to work under a journeyman outfitter  
3 to make several hundred, thousands of hours before they  
4 can become journeyman. The barrier here is we don't have  
5 any outfitters in the community to give them these hours,  
6 so they are stuck right after completing their training.

7 After their training, it would be nice  
8 if there was an employer set up to pick them up right away,  
9 so they can complete their training and so they can have  
10 a journeyman's certificate. If that was added on, it would  
11 be a successful training for our people, because there  
12 are two portions to that, the classroom, the book work  
13 and then the on-hands practice, but they don't get the  
14 on-hands practice and so they are stuck.

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Just to  
16 complete this, I suppose that when they have done those  
17 numbers of hours in the south they don't come back to start.  
18 Would there be room for starting an outfitting here?

19 **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** Yes, there is  
20 lots of room for native people to start businesses, but  
21 one major barrier we have is any native person applying  
22 for a loan to start a business, they need collateral and  
23 everything to get the money. How can we have collateral



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1 when we have been living on welfare from the start of the  
2 century? We don't own big things to show for collateral,  
3 so we are stranded. There is lots of room. Give us the  
4 money. We can prove we can do it. Forget all that --  
5 maybe we can use our lands for collateral, that the  
6 government has taken from us.

7 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very  
8 much and good luck.

9 **MS ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE:** Thank you.

10 I would now like to call Northlands  
11 College, Waldo Berg.

12 **MR. WALDO BERG, (Instructor, Northlands**  
13 **College):** Honourable Commissioners, ladies and  
14 gentlemen, my name is Waldo Berg. I am an instructor at  
15 Northlands College. This is the fourth year in which I  
16 have been the instructor of an Adult Basic Education  
17 Program, 8 to 10, in the local Northlands College facility.

18  
19 If you are following in the script here  
20 I am jumping to page 4 to start. I wish to begin with  
21 a quotation from page 8 of Brian Dickson's letter to the  
22 Prime Minister and for the information of people present,  
23 Brian Dickson was the person responsible for choosing the

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1 Commissioners for this Commission.

2 He wrote to the Prime Minister on August  
3 2nd, 1991 and he says:

4 "Most Canadian natives are remarkably decent, fair,  
5 tolerant and compassionate people."

6 I can honestly say that this statement  
7 describes the students that I have come in contact with  
8 over the past four years. However, my "success rate" has  
9 admittedly been less than encouraging. Of the  
10 approximately 40 students that have attended the class  
11 over the four years, a little better than three years  
12 actually, only four have been granted a grade 10  
13 certificate.

14 On the bright side, the drop-out rate  
15 has gone down considerably. During the first year I was  
16 here, I almost got dizzy because students came and went  
17 just about as fast as they could be processed. Last year,  
18 of the 15 students that began the class, 13 of them were  
19 still there at the end of the year and the overall class  
20 attendance average was over 88 per cent. This year I am  
21 hoping that I will have up to six people completing the  
22 course work.

23 So what is the problem? I would like

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1 to just touch on four areas, you've heard many. First  
2 of all, the problem is language. It cannot be denied that  
3 the Dene language is declining in La Loche. Although all  
4 of my students still speak it, I sometimes surprise them  
5 by how much I understand; not because I am learning their  
6 language, but simply because there is so much English mixed  
7 into it, that meaning can often be picked up simply by  
8 catching the English words.

9 I say this because it is an illustration  
10 of the fact that many people in La Loche are in a typically  
11 Métis position -- they are part of two worlds, with neither  
12 foot firmly rooted in either one of those two worlds.  
13 With the knowledge of the native language declining, it  
14 is no surprise that the students' understanding and  
15 abilities in English are limited and shaky, because if  
16 you don't have a firm grasp of your own language, it's  
17 obviously going to be hard to learn another one.

18 One thing that would make the ABE program  
19 more successful is an intensive language short course as  
20 a prerequisite for upgrading. English language  
21 proficiency is such a foundational prerequisite to the  
22 kind of learning that is required that it would be greatly  
23 beneficial for students to have English language training

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1 before they even start the course. A program such as the  
2 PALS program being offered at the high school this year  
3 is an example of such a language training course. if it  
4 were made a prerequisite to further education, it would  
5 be utilized more.

6 Secondly, the problem is childcare. In  
7 my class, a student without a child is the exception.  
8 Contrary to what you might think, good childcare in La  
9 Loche is not easy to find. More than one student has had  
10 to drop out of the program because adequate care of children  
11 could not be found. This needs to be acknowledged as an  
12 issue of equal importance to education itself.

13 Thirdly, the problem is alcohol. Again  
14 and again, I have watched sadly as well-meaning, sincere  
15 and dedicated students have been defeated by the strangle  
16 hold of alcohol. In my opinion, the village of La Loche  
17 needs to declare war on this ugly monster. It is doing  
18 so much damage and destruction that it makes my heart boil  
19 every time I see another semi-trailer backed up to the  
20 doors of the local liquor store. We can't expect to kill  
21 the dragon, but we must reduce its size and seriously injure  
22 it before it will stop injuring the people of La Loche.  
23 There are encouraging signs among native people that this

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1 war is being waged, but in La Loche I don't really feel  
2 that the battle has really begun in earnest.

3                   While I say the problem is alcohol, I  
4 hasten to add that alcohol is not really the problem.  
5 It is a symptom and you cannot solve a problem by attacking  
6 the symptom, but at the same time you must treat the symptom  
7 as you work on solving the problem, otherwise the symptom  
8 will destroy the whole person.

9                   Fourthly, the problem is cultural  
10 disparity. I will be the first to admit that although  
11 I may be quite sympathetic to much that I see in native  
12 culture, there is still a huge gap between native cultures  
13 and non-native cultures. The work ethic is different.  
14 Attitude toward time is different. Book learning is  
15 simply not a part of native life. What I would describe  
16 as "disciplined, organized, incremental work toward  
17 long-range goals" is not something that is being taught  
18 or learned.

19                   While native cultures may offer a  
20 wholistic world view, the average person, through no fault  
21 of their own, has a narrow world view, one that does not  
22 see beyond the local situation to the larger world. That  
23 is completely under-standable.

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1                   I see "cross-cultural pollination" as  
2 a good thing. We can all learn something when two cultures  
3 come together. However, I also admit that it would be  
4 preferable if positions like mine were filled by native  
5 people themselves. Short of that, there should be at least  
6 tow things happening. One, all teachers being hired in  
7 northern schools should be encouraged, that is teachers  
8 that come from the south, should be encouraged and perhaps  
9 even required to take some training in teaching English  
10 as a second language. This could be done by summer courses  
11 or perhaps the satellite system could be utilized for this  
12 purpose.

13                   Second, there should be a local forum  
14 in which not only teachers but other people moving to the  
15 north from the south would have an opportunity to be exposed  
16 to the language and culture of the local people on a formal  
17 basis. Why couldn't a local person be trained and employed  
18 to teach at least the rudiments of the language and at  
19 least some of the culture to non-native people coming into  
20 the community? It doesn't seem like too much to ask for  
21 a non-native person to at least try to understand a little  
22 bit of the language and culture of the people who have  
23 lived here over the years. We could at least start to

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1 try to bridge the gap that exists between the two worlds.

2

3 Now I would like to present a personal  
4 note, taking off my instructor's hat and speaking as a  
5 local resident of La Loche and speaking particularly to  
6 the people of La Loche.

7 I am a representative of a group of  
8 people who emigrated to Canada from Russia during the years  
9 when the prairies were being settled -- during the years  
10 when the land was being taken away from the native people,  
11 a time when native people were feeling more and more  
12 threatened by the encroachment of settlers on land which  
13 had traditionally been their hunting grounds. You may  
14 have guessed by now that I have a Mennonite heritage.

15 The history of my people is one of  
16 persecution and oppression up until the time they arrived  
17 in North America. The Mennonite people have traditionally  
18 been an agricultural people and were invited to Russia  
19 for that very reason. In the early 1800s however, they  
20 were coming under more and more threat and oppression in  
21 Russia, and the prospect of cheap land and a new beginning  
22 in North America was more than inviting to many of them.  
23 And so we came.

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1                   We came largely in ignorance of the  
2 native situation in North American. We did not know that  
3 we were innocently participating in the displacement of  
4 another group of people who were being illegally  
5 disenfranchised. My people are a peace-loving people like  
6 the native people and have stood against participation  
7 in war since their inception in the mid 1500s. A full  
8 knowledge of what was happening to the native people of  
9 North American during the time of immigration would have  
10 appalled my ancestors, but they were preoccupied with their  
11 own desperate situation and with their new beginning in  
12 a new land.

13                   Since then, a group which represents a  
14 cross-section of my people, a group known to many as MCC  
15 or Mennonite Central Committee, has become aware of, has  
16 studied the native situation, and since 1972, has actively  
17 planned and conducted programs among native people in an  
18 attempt to help remedy the injustices.

19                   At the beginning of this year, MCC also  
20 issued a public statement to the Aboriginal people of the  
21 Americas who have suffered at the hands of Europeans for  
22 the past 500 years. It is entitled "Mennonite Central  
23 Committee's Statement to the Aboriginal Peoples of the



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1 Americas in 1992, 500 Years After Columbus 'Discovered'  
2 The Americas". It reads as follows:

3 "We thank you, the First Peoples, for presenting an  
4 alternate view of the Columbus story.  
5 We thank you for reminding us that the Columbus story  
6 includes not only courage, excitement  
7 and wonder, but also military takeovers,  
8 capture of slaves, introduction of  
9 diseases, disrespect for your cultures  
10 and conquest of land.

11 As part of our response to God's call to 'love justice,  
12 seek mercy and walk humbly with the  
13 Creator, we ask your forgiveness:

- 14 - forgiveness where we have sanctioned the conquest of  
15 land and domination of you and your  
16 ancestors;  
17 - forgiveness where we have not fully recognized the  
18 humanity and dignity of aboriginal  
19 peoples;  
20 - forgiveness where we have, by our silence, endorsed cruel  
21 treatment of aboriginal peoples;  
22 - forgiveness where we have been unwilling or unable to  
23 separate the intertwined goals of God,

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1 gold and imperial glory;

2 - and forgiveness where we have used a false notion of  
3 cultural superiority as rationale for  
4 forceful takeover.

5 We thank you for your contributions, which have enriched  
6 cultures across the world, in areas such  
7 as domesticated foods, livestock,  
8 medicine, art, music, sculpture and  
9 literature.

10 We welcome your gracious offer to establish new  
11 relationships of mutual respect and  
12 co-operation. IN turn, we offer to work  
13 toward a fair and just life together.

14 We promise to work for the just and honourable  
15 fulfilment of outstanding obligations  
16 related to land, the resolution of  
17 conflicts over industrial development  
18 and other areas of dissonance.

19 We respect your traditional vision for a world in which  
20 all life is valued, all peoples  
21 treasured, and where recognition is  
22 given to the long history of life on this  
23 continent before Christopher Columbus'

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1 arrival in 1492.

2 We commit ourselves in 1992, and the years that follow,  
3 to learning and teaching the truth about  
4 events in the 500 years since 1`492.

5 We join you, the aboriginal people of the western  
6 hemisphere, in celebrating your valiant  
7 survival against 500 years of conquest.

8 We, of non-aboriginal heritage, pledge  
9 to join you in working toward a new  
10 chapter of honourable co-existence."

11 I should point out that I do not speak  
12 for Mennonite Central Committee. I speak as an individual  
13 who is related to the same ethnic group, but I wish the  
14 statement to be read in La Loche as my personal expression.  
15

16 My personal presence in La Loche as an  
17 ABE instructor for the past four years is motivated in  
18 part by a desire to participate in some small way in the  
19 spirit of this statement.

20 Then, I wish to end with what I hope is  
21 a breath of fresh air, what was a breath of fresh air to  
22 me. It came by way of a recent CBC radio interview. A  
23 university professor from Ohio was interviewed. He had

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1 just completed a year with the Federation of Saskatchewan  
2 Indian College, a college located on the campus of the  
3 University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. This particular  
4 professor has devoted his life to studying Aboriginal  
5 culture, people and issues. He described the Indian  
6 college on the Saskatoon campus as a diamond -- a diamond.

7  
8 It made me proud to be a citizen of this  
9 province. I want to say to the people of La Loche that  
10 there are non-Aboriginal people like this profess who are  
11 devoting their lives to the study of your cultures. A  
12 culture is nothing to be ashamed of. It is one expression  
13 of what it means to be human. No culture of course is  
14 perfect, but neither is any culture so corrupt that it  
15 should be condemned as yours too often has been.

16 It is right for you to defend it and try  
17 to rediscover it. The challenge is to sort through it.  
18 Salvage what is good. Leave behind what is not good.  
19 Let the diamond emerge to challenge the values of the  
20 dominant culture so that we can all become better people  
21 as a result.

22 Thank you.

23 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Thank you very

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1 much for your presentation. It is certainly one that is  
2 very interesting and frank also. When you list the four  
3 points on pages 5 and 6, the various problems or the way  
4 you see why so few people go through grade 10 and get a  
5 certificate, it is certainly very important, first, to  
6 under the problems, to start working on how to cure and  
7 bring a solution.

8 **MR. WALDO BERG:** I should also point out  
9 that when the students come to the problem they are at  
10 various levels of competency and they may begin at a grade  
11 5 or 6 reading level and it's not -- you can't expect them  
12 to complete a course in one year or even two. It takes  
13 time for them to complete.

14 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** The purpose of  
15 Northlands College is really adult education and  
16 upgrading?

17 **MR. WALDO BERG:** Adult education is one  
18 part of Northlands College. It's a fairly major part,  
19 but Northlands College also does offer skills training.

20 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I under-stand  
21 that, but you are a part of the Adult Education Centre?

22 **MR. WALDO BERG:** Yes.

23 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** You have been

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1 in operation here in La Loche for --

2 **MR. WALDO BERG:** Northlands College has  
3 been in La Loche since 1975 I believe with various programs  
4 over the years. Just prior to my coming there was very  
5 little happening.

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Are you aware  
7 of some of your students who have gone through and get  
8 their certificate for grade 10 and have moved to grade  
9 11 and further?

10 **MR. WALDO BERG:** Yes. One of those four  
11 has completed grade 12 and is now presently employed in  
12 La Loche.

13 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** When you  
14 mentioned the problem of English as a second language,  
15 could you expand on that. When you say that all teachers  
16 should be ready to teach English as a second language and  
17 not only their subject matter, because on the one hand  
18 you say the Dene language is decreasing in La Loche.

19 **MR. WALDO BERG:** My thrust in making  
20 that suggestion is that by taking courses in teaching  
21 English as a second language teachers become more aware  
22 of the difficulties that students have when they learn  
23 anything when their first language is not English. I am

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1 not thinking specifically of teachers of English.  
2 Teachers of anything, when they teach anything to a person  
3 whose first language is not English, they ought to become  
4 aware of and understand the difficulties that are involved.

5

6 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Do you have a  
7 connection with the high school as such, the regular grade  
8 10 program, for example, and those who deliver it, the  
9 teachers?

10 **MR. WALDO BERG:** Not a great deal, no.

11 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Not a great  
12 deal?

13 **MR. WALDO BERG:** No. Occasional  
14 contacts, but --

15 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** My question  
16 was do you feel that the handling of the language, of  
17 English, is better now through the regular programs or  
18 are future adults who will come into your program will  
19 have the same kind of difficulty?

20 **MR. WALDO BERG:** I can't really answer  
21 that because most of my students have been out of the  
22 regular system for four, five or six years, so I am not  
23 sure where the present population would be.

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1                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So normally  
2 they would come back for adult education a few years after  
3 having been through the regular system?

4                   **MR. WALDO BERG:** One of the requirements  
5 for entering my program is that they be out of school for  
6 at least one year. That's just some way of weeding because  
7 there are so many applications who want to get in.

8                   **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Are there some  
9 who have been away for ten years?

10                  **MR. WALDO BERG:** Yes.

11                  **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** And they could  
12 be selected in your program?

13                  **MR. WALDO BERG:** Yes.

14                  **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** It's open to  
15 everybody?

16                  **MR. WALDO BERG:** Yes.

17                  **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** How do you make  
18 the selection?

19                  **MR. WALDO BERG:** Fortunately I don't  
20 have to. We use the CTBS test just as a measuring stick  
21 of abilities. We choose or my superiors choose the people  
22 who score the best on these tests.

23                  **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** So there is



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1 some kind of competition test?

2 **MR. WALDO BERG:** Yes.

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

4 Mary.

5 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Since you  
6 have been here all day I feel sort of obligated to ask  
7 you several questions. I am going to say that I'm really  
8 glad that you have said that childcare is an issue for  
9 people who want to go to school. It's also an issue for  
10 women who want to work. I am glad that you identified  
11 that because clearly that is an issue.

12 I am wondering since childcare is an  
13 issue, does that mean that there are more male students  
14 than female students completing your courses, or what does  
15 that mean for the number of male or female students that  
16 complete your courses?

17 **MR. WALDO BERG:** Surprising that hasn't  
18 made a difference. Every year I've had a good balance  
19 of male and female.

20 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I would  
21 like to comment on your statement, you say that:  
22 "While native cultures may offer a wholistic world view,  
23 the average native person, through no

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1                   fault of their own, has a very narrow  
2                   world view -- one that does not see  
3                   beyond the local situation to the larger  
4                   world."

5                   I would like to make a comment, in many  
6           communities on the coast of Labrador, not so much native  
7           people, but coastal Labradorians and they have been born  
8           in those communities and they live in their communities  
9           and they die in their communities, I find that very, very  
10          true as well of people in those communities, like they  
11          are more concerned with things locally. They certainly  
12          don't want to hear about things -- they might be interested  
13          in things regionally, but they certainly don't want to  
14          hear about things nationally. I want to make that  
15          clarification.

16                   **MR. WALDO BERG:** Yes.

17                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** The other  
18          question I had is with respect to adult education and we've  
19          heard that a lot of kids drop out of high school, a lot  
20          of native kids. Are there a lot of people then in the  
21          adult education system after they've found out that they  
22          can't get work and it is better to go back to school?

23                   **MR. WALDO BERG:** I'm not sure I

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1 understand your question. You mean they are going back  
2 to school just because there is nothing else?

3 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I am not  
4 asking that. I am asking I guess are there a lot of native  
5 students going back to school and I guess their only option  
6 is adult education. Is that what is happening?

7 **MR. WALDO BERG:** We always have many,  
8 many more applicants than we can handle. There are usually  
9 30 to 40 applicants on file, so yes, I guess the answer  
10 is yes.

11 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you.

12 **CO-CHAIR RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I would like  
13 to thank you very much for sharing this with us.

14 At this point we have reached the  
15 completion of our agenda. We always like to have an open  
16 public forum at the end of the meeting. As was just  
17 mentioned, some of you -- many of you have been in the  
18 room all day. If there is somebody who would like to tell  
19 us something, you would be certainly welcome to join us  
20 at the table and share with us for a couple of minutes  
21 the concerns that you might have or your ideas. You should  
22 feel free. Nobody?

23 Then, on behalf of the Commission I would

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1 like to thank the community for its hospitality, all the  
2 presenters who made the effort not only to prepare briefs,  
3 orally or written, but also all those who attended the  
4 Hearing.

5                   As you know, everything that was said  
6 today is recorded and will be in the transcript of the  
7 Commission. We hope to publish a second discussion  
8 document after this second round of Hearings. We are just  
9 completing the second round of Hearings tonight. We  
10 started the day after the Referendum and we hope to get  
11 more focus as we progress.

12                   I would like to thank all of you and say  
13 that if there are after thoughts or additional concerns  
14 or thinking, you know how to get hold of us. Do not  
15 hesitate, either by phone through the 800 lines or in  
16 writing.

17                   Thank you very much. I would like to  
18 ask for the closing prayer. Do we have someone who would  
19 be available to say the closing prayer?

20                   **CLOSING PRAYER - ANTOINETTE LEMAIGRE**

21                   **--- Whereupon the Hearing adjourned at 6:25 p.m.**