

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

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**Royal Commission on
May 27, 1993**

Aboriginal Peoples

Calgary, Alberta

1
2 --- Upon resuming on Thursday, May 27, 1993

3 at 8:15 a.m.

4 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** I would
5 like to welcome everyone to this morning's Royal Commission
6 on Aboriginal Peoples hearing in Calgary.

7 On our agenda we have the National
8 Disabilities Society. Mr. Kim Gernack will be making the
9 presentation, and there will be a short statement by
10 Shirley Bigney McHugh, accompanied by Linda Newman.

11 At this time I would ask Mr. Gernack to
12 begin his presentation.

13 Thank you.

14 **KIM GERNACK, Calgary Native Disabled**
15 **Society:** Thank you, Joanne.

16 First of all, I would like to make a small
17 correction. It is not the National Disabilities Society;
18 it is the Calgary Native Disabled Society. I am a member
19 of the Board of Directors as well as being Rehabilitation
20 Counsellor with the Canadian Paraplegic Association.

21 My area of concern today is Aboriginal
22 people with disabilities and how they seem to be rather
23 lost in the shuffle as far as self-determination is

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1 concerned.

2 In a world that continues to fight for
3 the right to live in a manner in which we choose our own
4 path, there is a group of people who seem to have more
5 barriers placed in the way of self-determination than
6 barriers that are removed. This group is the disabled
7 Aboriginal people. The things that we take for granted
8 in our everyday lives are the same basic needs that continue
9 to go unmet for Aboriginal disabled people. These basic
10 needs -- housing, transportation, equipment and
11 accessibility -- continue to stand in the way of true
12 self-determination for Aboriginal disabled.

13 I will address each of these issues
14 separately in the following dialogue.

15 Housing is a major concern, whether the
16 person lives in a Native community or in an urban community.
17 Housing is inadequate at best. This isn't the fault of
18 the individual bands. They get a collective amount of
19 money for housing every year, and the amount of money they
20 receive doesn't even address their own needs let alone
21 special needs of people in chairs or people with mobility
22 problems.

23 I would like to see at some point in time

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1 perhaps a special amount of money set aside to provide
2 accessible housing for people with disabilities.

3 While federal and provincial laws
4 dictate that all government buildings will be built to
5 a minimum accessibility standard, they choose to ignore
6 that standard when designing buildings for Aboriginal
7 communities. Most of the band offices in the Treaty 7
8 area that I have been to are not accessible in any way,
9 shape or form. Only one meets minimum guidelines, which
10 brings in the whole question: When somebody in a chair
11 has a concern, how do they take it to the people they need
12 to take it to?

13 The question has to be asked: How can
14 an individual be active in self-determination when they
15 can't even access the washroom in the Band Office?

16 So housing is one area of concern.

17 With regard to transportation, people
18 in rural communities who have limited movement in their
19 arms or in their legs, to get to where they want to go,
20 have to rely on family or friends. There is no consistent
21 means of transportation to get them to appointments or
22 to shopping or even to the doctor.

23 In areas such as Calgary, where there

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1 is transportation available to them, the costs of the
2 transportation, when you live on a fixed limited income,
3 are prohibitive of doing very much travel at all.

4 Transportation, while it is better in
5 an urban setting than in the rural, isn't greatly
6 accessible either. Most of the communities that I have
7 been involved with have no ongoing transportation system
8 for people with disabilities.

9 The third area is equipment and
10 supplies. While much of the equipment and supplies that
11 are needed by Aboriginal people are addressed in a very
12 positive manner by Medical Services Branch of Health and
13 Welfare Canada, one of the problems seems to be that Medical
14 Services Branch doesn't keep up with the current trends
15 and the new advances in the field in which they deal.

16 The problem is further exacerbated by
17 the fact that most occupational therapists who work in
18 a hospital setting have little or no idea what it is like
19 out in the communities to which the people return. The
20 consequence is that the equipment and supplies that are
21 provided are a lot of times either outdated or inadequate
22 to meet the needs of the people.

23 The Canadian Paraplegic Association has

6 The fourth area is accessibility. This
7 issue may be the worst of all for Aboriginal people. Most
8 of the buildings in the communities are not accessible
9 -- community halls, band offices, schools, and so on and
10 so forth.

18 For us to start to move ahead, these
19 issues of accessibility have to be addressed first and
20 foremost.

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1 in the Treaty 7 area, I believe, is representative of
2 Alberta communities.

3 Until issues such as these are addressed
4 in some form, self-determination is just going to be a
5 word for the disabled population in Aboriginal
6 communities. Many are being forced, not because they want
7 to, to move to urban centres such as Calgary by the lack
8 of services that are available to them outside the urban
9 centres -- to leave their family and leave their friends
10 and move into a city to a life that they really don't want.

11 If self-determination has anything to
12 do with being able to live and to work and to socialize
13 in a place which I choose, then the road to this spot is
14 long and filled with curves for Aboriginal disabled people,
15 and the progress must start now.

16 Thank you.

17 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
18 you, Kim. Now we will move on to Shirley Bigney McHugh.

19 **SHIRLEY BIGNEY McHUGH:** Thank you.

20 I would like to speak on the issue of
21 the group of disabled persons just trying to get here today
22 for our presentation. Our time slot was changed four
23 times, including two times yesterday. In order for our

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1 group to participate, we must first get here. Only three
2 of us were able to get here because of all these last-minute
3 changes.

4 With the lack of transportation being
5 such an issue, I suggest the Royal Commission take into
6 consideration this concern before the next round of talks
7 is scheduled. I might also suggest that we could be asked
8 if we need a sign interpreter.

9 Thank you.

10 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
11 you, Shirley.

12 At this time, I would like to ask the
13 Commissioners if they have any statements to make or
14 questions.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
16 for your presentations. Sorry we had to ask you to change
17 so often.

18 In relation to the suggestions that
19 accessibility is the biggest problem for Aboriginal people
20 with disabilities in Alberta, what exactly is it that you
21 are looking at in the way of alterations to existing
22 buildings? Is it primarily having wheelchair access?
23 Is that the primary thing you are talking about?

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1 **KIM GERNACK:** I believe that wheelchair
2 access would be the primary concern -- ramps, being able
3 to come in and out of buildings. The two biggest areas
4 are the ramps and washroom and hallway size. A lot of
5 times in Band Offices there is a lot of stairs to access
6 different levels of the office, and no ramps are available
7 for them.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What is the
9 reasoning given that this hasn't occurred? Is this
10 happening even in new buildings?

11 **KIM GERNACK:** It seems to be happening
12 in the newer buildings. Buildings that have been built
13 probably over the last five to eight years have been fairly
14 accessible.

15 One of the problems seems to have been
16 that in previous buildings and previous capital projects
17 accessibility was never addressed as an issue in any way,
18 shape or form. A lot of the structures that are available
19 in our communities currently fall into that time range
20 of prior to 1985, when they were built. Those buildings
21 seem to have the most problems.

22 Of course, there are no new capital
23 dollars to replace existing community centres even. In

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1 the situation such as the one down in Standoff, we had
2 to wait until the new budget year for them even to come
3 up with the capital dollars for an elevator. When the
4 new budget year rolled around, the young lady had finished
5 her Grade 12 at the school and had gone on to Lethbridge
6 Community College. To my knowledge, it still hasn't
7 actually been addressed.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do you have
9 any idea how many disabled Aboriginal people there are
10 in Alberta?

11 **KIM GERNACK:** I haven't got a good
12 figure for Alberta as a whole. I know that my active
13 caseload -- and I deal primarily with paraplegics and
14 quadriplegics in the Treaty 7 area -- is currently at about
15 130 people. The Health Centre at Standoff tells me that
16 their chronic list of people with chronic diseases numbers
17 in the neighbourhood of 450 people, which means that we
18 are only able to scratch the surface as far as dealing
19 with people with mobility problems.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In relation
21 to transportation, you say the cost is a problem. Is that
22 the primary problem?

23 **KIM GERNACK:** In the urban centres they

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1 have transportation systems available. If you are on a
2 regular booking with the transportation system, if you
3 are able to set it up for a week at a time or a month at
4 a time, it is fairly decent service. However, if you want
5 to go on standby and phone and have somebody come and pick
6 you up and take you some place, the waiting period can
7 range from two hours to four hours and can be quite a
8 problem.

9 The charges, I suppose, by normal
10 standards are fairly reasonable. However, when you live
11 on a fixed income or a very limited income, \$3 a day for
12 transportation, if you are coming and going such as some
13 of the people at this table are, in volunteering their
14 services for a society, it becomes a real drain on your
15 pocketbook.

16 When we get outside the city limits --
17 and I mean just outside the city limits. Tsuu T'ina is
18 considered outside the city limits, even though it is
19 connected to Calgary. Then we have to go to an outside
20 independent system of Handibus service that charges a
21 per-mile flat rate which is very, very expensive.

22 Anything outside the city of Calgary
23 really doesn't have access to transportation on a regular

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1 basis. Some of the communities with which I deal have
2 accessible buses, but don't have the money to be able to
3 have the drivers on a consistent basis to provide an ongoing
4 service. Other communities have access to drivers, but
5 don't have the money for the accessible bus itself.

6 It is either one or the other. There
7 never seems to be quite enough to put in a good full-service
8 transportation system in any community.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In relation
10 to equipment, you say MSB is relatively good in providing
11 equipment. Does that mean that everyone who needs
12 equipment gets equipment but that it might be outdated?
13 Is that the major problem there?

14 **KIM GERNACK:** Yes. You have to
15 understand that MSB in Alberta, until just recently, wasn't
16 even on a computer system to access equipment.

17 Some of the policies seem to be outdated.
18 For instance, if you have trouble standing up under your
19 own power and you need a grab wire to help you in the
20 washroom, because the grab wire attaches to the wall, it
21 is considered a housing issue and is not covered under
22 Medical Services Branch, which to me is ludicrous. The
23 grab wire is needed for people to be able to lift themselves

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1 off the washroom.

2 Where they are fairly good is in large
3 pieces of equipment that are needed, and they move fairly
4 quickly on them. However, the technology in this field
5 changes so rapidly that, unless you really work at keeping
6 up to date with what is going on out there, you tend to
7 fall behind very quickly. The people at MSB just don't
8 seem to have the time to keep updated on new equipment
9 and new technologies that are coming forth.

10 We have in our world today the technology
11 to keep people alive. I have a client, a young man, who
12 is ventilator-dependent, whose neck was broken. We have
13 him at a C-3 level, and he is unable to move from here
14 down and breathes on a ventilator. We have that technology
15 to keep him alive at this time; what we don't have are
16 the resources for him to be able to come out of the hospital,
17 where he is still in the Intensive Care Unit three years
18 after his injury -- not because he is unable to come out.

19 Physically, he is able to come out and has been able to
20 come out for a long, long time, but we don't have the access
21 to the resources for him to be able to move into the
22 community and live in the manner which he deserves.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What would

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1 it cost?

2 **KIM GERNACK:** About half of what it
3 costs in the hospital. The nursing costs are estimated
4 to be about \$200,000 a year for 24-hour nursing care.
5 The government currently spends, or the hospital currently
6 spends in excess of half a million dollars a year to keep
7 in that intensive care bed.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
9 Those are my questions.

10 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I just
11 have a couple of points.

12 First of all, I want to apologize for
13 the inconvenience this morning, and your comments are very
14 well-taken. We certainly want to be sensitive to those
15 kinds of things.

16 With regard to housing -- and I talking
17 about the houses themselves. For the disabled, are they
18 having trouble renovating the houses for disabilities or,
19 when they build, are they having problems in having access
20 included?

21 **KIM GERNACK:** One of the problems is
22 that each band has access to X amount of dollars for
23 housing. Most of the bands and most of the housing

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1 departments I have talked to don't even have access to
2 enough money to house people in general. In fact, I had
3 one Housing Manager tell me that, if he could build 900
4 new homes tomorrow, he still wouldn't have enough to house
5 all the people who need housing in his community.

6 Out of that set amount of dollars they
7 have to build new housing, do the repairs and upkeep on
8 the housing that exists -- and that is usually the structure
9 that it goes by: new housing, upkeep, and then finally
10 what is left is used for some of the basic accessible issues
11 such as ramps.

12 A lot of the housing in our communities
13 is older housing. The doorways and hallways are narrow
14 and need to be widened.

15 I am told by people who are carpenters
16 and who know better than I do -- I am not a very handy
17 person -- that it would cost no more money to put in wider
18 doorways at the time of construction than it does to put
19 in the doorways that are being put in now.

20 Once inside, however -- once the ramp
21 is built and you are able to get through the doorway and
22 into the home, the set-up of the homes that are existing
23 is not good for people who are in chairs. They are unable

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1 to access fridges because of the narrow kitchens. They
2 are unable to access the kitchen sinks to be able to do
3 dishes -- that type of thing.

4 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** The
5 reason I ask is because, with provincial housing
6 authorities and with federal housing as well, in the past
7 -- and it might be different from province to province.
8 I know in some provinces they do have a program for
9 disabled, where they will rehabilitate a residence so that
10 it will be accessible. There are special funds set aside
11 just for that purpose.

12 I was wondering: Is that not so here
13 in Alberta?

14 **KIM GERNACK:** There is a program
15 available called the Home Adaptation Program, in which
16 \$5,000 is awarded as a grant to do that kind of
17 construction. However, the way the program is set up,
18 the \$5,000 has to be spent first and then bills submitted
19 to be able to have the money recovered. Most of the people
20 that we are dealing with don't have the up-front money
21 to be able to do their own construction, and most of the
22 Housing Departments aren't set up in a way that they have
23 a pool of money that they could do this and recover it.

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1 That seems to be the problem with that program.

2 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I guess
3 there is a difference from province to province on how
4 those kinds of programs are implemented. Disability is
5 a very important issue for our people, and what you say
6 is true. If you are going to get self-determination, you
7 have to get the inclusion of all sectors of your people
8 and not exclude anyone. To do that, accessibility is
9 important and some of the things you have raised here.

10 Do you think there has to be a change
11 in the responsibility? The responsibility for that should
12 be the federal government's. The recommendations that
13 we make we have to defend so sometimes we have to be pretty
14 clear on what it is that we are recommending and why.
15 We have to defend things. So how should that be changed
16 and what should be done to correct that situation?

17 **KIM GERNACK:** I think one of the things
18 we have to realize is that this population is a fairly
19 silent one, generally. When you include the isolation
20 that goes on because of some of the things I have outlined
21 in Aboriginal communities, they become almost unseen.
22 Part of the mandate of our society is to make this community
23 heard all over.

8 We currently have representatives in
9 each of the communities in the Treaty 7 areas, and the
10 Alberta organization, the province-wide organization, is
11 moving toward setting up groups of people with disabilities
12 in all of the communities, and that will certainly start.

22

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1 you.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
3 for coming forward.

4 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
5 very much Kim for your presentation on the native disabled,
6 and thank you for your participation.

7 **JOHN HOLLOWAY:** I would like to make a
8 comment on the disability issue.

9 My name is John Holloway and I am from
10 Brockhead Peigan.

11 The problems that the disabled are
12 facing is a problem that we are all facing. Specifically
13 the problem is justice. This society we live in is geared
14 for the non-Native, and it is always the minority and the
15 weak, especially the weak minority, that are not heard,
16 that are overlooked. The problem is no justice.

17 This Royal Commission here is attempting
18 to look for dialogue and solutions to problems, to
19 restructure relationships, to communicate and educate.

20 One prime example is the trial of Milton
21 Born With a Tooth, which is happening today. What happened
22 here is an example of somebody who was attempting to
23 communicate, attempting to provide a solution, and the

4 In these attempts to find solutions and
5 to dialogue we were answered with force.

15 The implications for this to all
16 Aboriginal people across the nation are very severe, very
17 ominous. If they can do it with us, they will do it with
18 anyone else. The solutions are all there, but the problem
19 is in implementing them. We want self sufficiency; we
20 want equity.

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1 We want to break the poverty; we want to get out of it,
2 but why can't we have more grass roots based companies
3 here rather than having Petro-Canada or all these
4 corporations that destroy?

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Could I
6 encourage you to try and wrap up? We have a schedule that
7 we are trying to maintain, please.

8 **JOHN HOLLOWAY:** We want to find common
9 ground. We want to tone down the differences between us.
10 The common ground is water, and the differences are really
11 nothing when we look at water and we see that we all depend
12 on it, fresh water. That makes us the same. We have to
13 protect that fresh water that is in these mountains here
14 because there is very little of it left.

15 Water is our culture. The water is a
16 culture of the Blackfoot people. Pure water means purity
17 of culture.

18 I would like to invite everyone here over
19 to the trial -- it's just a few blocks down the road --
20 rather than waiting until this Commission is over in 1994.

21 By then I'll be in jail.

22 We have to begin healing. Let's quit
23 talking about it and let's do something.

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1 Thank you.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.

3 I couldn't agree with you more, that things should begin
4 right away. As we have said many times, there is no reason
5 for anybody to wait for us. Solutions should be being
6 thought out and implemented across the country. The
7 working relationship we have with provincial governments
8 and the territorial governments and the federal government
9 is that no one needs to wait for us.

10 We are trying to put our minds to the
11 long-term solutions, but in relation to day-to-day issues,
12 whether they are urban issues, whether they are rural
13 issues, whether they are Métis questions or Elders' issues
14 or disability questions that we were just dealing with,
15 we certainly are not encouraging anybody to wait for us
16 at all. In fact, we have gone out of our way to make it
17 very clear that anywhere solutions can be found they should
18 be going ahead.

19 We applaud the kind of action that has
20 been taken in some areas, like the Inuit settlement, the
21 signing that just took place in the High Arctic.

22 We will move forward now to the mini
23 Round Table that is scheduled for this time.

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1 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
2 you, Georges.

3 On your agenda is a Mini Round Table on
4 expanding Aboriginal employment opportunities.

5 I would ask NOVA to come up: Ms B.L.
6 Tate, Vice-President, Marlene Cardinal, Armand Cardinal,
7 and Dave Yager, Editor of Roughneck Magazine.

8 Petro-Canada can come up to the table,
9 too: Peter Verity, Paddy Noskey and Randy Anderson, if
10 they are here.

11 Foothills Pipe Lines Ltd.: John
12 Burrell, Ron Sunshine, Robert Norwegian.

13 Canadian Association of Petroleum
14 Producers: Al Reid.

15 Industrial Biotech Services: Paul
16 Bercier, founder.

17 We will begin with Ms B.L. Tate,
18 Vice-President of NOVA. Because of the time constraints,
19 we will allow 10 to 15 minutes per company.

20 **BARBARA TATE, Vice-President, NOVA**
21 **Corporation:** Thank you for the opportunity for NOVA to
22 appear here today and to contribute to the findings of
23 the Commission, particularly in the area of this Round

2 My name is Barbara Tate. I am the
3 Vice-President for Community within NOVA Corporation, the
4 Alberta Gas Transmission Division, which is the pipeline
5 sector of NOVA. Responsibilities for Community include
6 Aboriginal affairs, community relations, environment and
7 land -- a demonstration of our commitment to those elements
8 of our community throughout our operations in the province.

19 We have some 3,000 employees in our
20 Pipeline Division located throughout the province of
21 Alberta in several geographic regions.

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4 In the early 1970s we learned from the
5 Aboriginal leaders of the great need in their communities
6 for employment and their sincere desire to take control
7 of their affairs. By the late 1970s activities with the
8 Aboriginal community were firmly established, and our
9 commitments were formally spelled out in 1982 when the
10 Aboriginal Employment and Business Opportunities Policy
11 was finalized.

17 - the relatively low numbers of
18 Aboriginal post-secondary graduates in the technical
19 field. Being a pipeline-related company, we are strongly
20 technically-based;

21 - higher competition for fewer jobs.

22 The economic situation in Canada in the last 10 years and

23 the recession have contributed to a much stronger

6 - relatively low numbers of Aboriginal
7 businesses, particularly for us to support the business
8 opportunities.

The Employment Opportunities Program:

In order to increase the number of Aboriginal employees within NOVA, to reflect the proportion of Aboriginal people in the Alberta population, as of March 1993 NOVA companies in Alberta have 126 permanent Aboriginal employees representing just under 3 per cent of our total work force.

23 We offer further support for Aboriginal employees and

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1 their supervisors.

2 We provide Aboriginal Awareness
3 Workshops to create a more supportive workplace. These
4 are conducted by Aboriginals. It is a training and
5 education program to assist others in our organization
6 with understanding.

7 We work closely with the Canadian
8 Council for Native Business in providing one-year
9 internships for Native individuals coming out of
10 post-secondary schools. They come into our organization
11 on an internship for approximately one year and are usually
12 very successful in securing permanent employment with us
13 after that.

14 We support student education in order
15 to increase the number of Aboriginal high school graduates
16 in Alberta.

17 We hired two Aboriginal university
18 students every spring to conduct motivational workshops
19 throughout the province.

20 Since 1986 we have given 216
21 presentations to more than 5,000 Aboriginal students.
22 We get continuing requests from the Aboriginal community,
23 and that has convinced us to continue offering this program

2 We participate in an Educational Awards
3 Program, again to assist Aboriginal students to obtain
4 post-secondary education relevant to the oil and gas
5 industry and to increase the number of Aboriginal
6 professionals in the petroleum industry in general and
7 in NOVA specifically. We provide an award each year at
8 southern Alberta colleges. Our bursaries are \$3,500 each,
9 awarded to Aboriginal students enroled in two-year
10 business or technical programs.

Fifty Aboriginal students have received this financial assistance since 1981. Eighty-three per cent of our recipients have either graduated or continued studying on their own. Over the years 17 of the graduates have held jobs in the NOVA Group of Companies.

19 Our Business Opportunities Program is
20 something that we are quite proud of, in terms of
21 encouraging Aboriginal participation in business
22 activities, and the nature of our business in pipeline
23 construction and maintenance is conducive to supporting

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1 those kinds of Aboriginal businesses. It helps to
2 eliminate discriminating barriers which may restrict or
3 prevent that involvement.

4 Specific measures that we have
5 undertaken include reserving certain types of work for
6 Aboriginal contractors. We break large contracts into
7 smaller units so that small businesses can, in fact,
8 qualify. We provide maximum lead times. We waive bonding
9 requirements. We offer contract liaison personnel and
10 other support services, and we encourage, and sometimes
11 require, our suppliers and contractors to employ
12 Aborigines and to use Aboriginal suppliers.

13 NOVA companies have awarded a total of
14 600 contracts to 128 Aboriginal businesses since 1976,
15 for a total of \$59 million. We require our construction
16 contractors to support our objectives by hiring Aboriginal
17 people, and we provide a support mechanism for that as
18 well.

19 In recent years we have attained an
20 average of 13 per cent Aboriginal hire on our NOVA
21 construction projects throughout the province.

22 In conclusion, from those programs are
23 results are that today we have a pool of very sophisticated

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1 Aboriginal bidders. Today any support counselling we do
2 is associated with on-the-job issues, as with all of our
3 employees. We see clearly the benefits of nurturing our
4 partnership with the Aboriginal community, of working to
5 achieve mutually beneficial objectives.

6 We were recently named Employer of the
7 Year by the Native Employment Services and have been
8 identified by the federal Treasury Board as a Best
9 Practices company for our Aboriginal programs.

10 Through this whole process we have
11 learned a great deal, as well. We have learned the need
12 to implement innovative, flexible and long-term programs
13 and to stick with it. We have learned that industry must
14 maintain open-door communication with the Aboriginal
15 community -- not talking, listening. That is extremely
16 important.

17 A company's reputation is earned through
18 action, not a piece of paper or a written policy, not a
19 brochure on a document, but through our actions.

20 Success requires strong, top-level
21 company commitment which must be communicated and
22 supported throughout the organization and have the buy-in.
23 Aboriginal programs must be everyone's responsibility;

9 That, Panel Members, is the conclusion
10 of my remarks. I would like to introduce Armand Cardinal.
11 Marlene Cardinal, unfortunately, has an illness in the
12 family and could not be with us today. Armand is one of
13 our Aboriginal employees within NOVA and would like to
14 speak to the Panel as well.

17 I would like to acknowledge everyone
18 here. I would like to state, first of all, that it's
19 certainly an honour for me to be a part of these
20 proceedings. Should I forget, I do invite your comments
21 and questions with regard to my employment at NOVA and
22 my prior employment history.

StenoTran

6 I have been employed with NOVA for
7 approximately two years now on a permanent, full-time
8 status, and I get the accompanying benefits package that
9 goes along with a regular employee. I am employed as an
10 electronics technician.

19 At the time of my graduating and
20 receiving my diploma in electronics at the technical
21 college here in Calgary, there happened to be an entry
22 level type electronics technical trainee position that
23 came up coincidentally at NOVA. I applied, was

3 I will give you some examples of what
4 I do in my type of work. I troubleshoot and repair faulty
5 components on printed circuit boards. I troubleshoot and
6 repair faulty modules in instrumentation used in NOVA's
7 pipeline operations. With the advent of computers and
8 micro-processor systems that we all hear about today, NOVA
9 is also currently in the transition of utilizing these
10 computer and micro-processor systems in their pipeline
11 operations. I am in a position at this point in time to
12 be able to acquire the necessary technical skills to work
13 on and repair these systems also.

22 If you want to consider employment
23 restructuring or educational restructuring in various

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1 companies and corporations with future growth in mind,
2 I have some notes that I have highlighted in my presentation
3 here.

4 It is not prominent to see high school
5 grads in the company or corporation business. For
6 example, NOVA might hire grads from local reservations
7 to work in their compressor stations, and possibly during
8 the course of their summer employment these grads might
9 be given tours at the beginning of their summer employment
10 or maybe in the middle of their summer employment to allow
11 them to grasp what industry is and what industry can do
12 for them, or how they can make the best of what industry
13 offers.

14 Another thing is the use of technicians
15 like myself and operators who gather meter-type
16 information, have these people present at Career Fairs
17 with their respective props so that we can communicate
18 to students at the grassroots level and let them know what
19 the oil and gas industry might have to offer them.

20 When Barb talked about the university
21 students giving motivational talks, this is another time
22 that you might be able to use these technicians and
23 operators in conjunction with university students.

8 Certainly, as we are all aware, the
9 economic situation in Canada at this present time is tough.
10 The one thing I realized when I was going to school here
11 in Calgary was that it was tough for me to try to grasp
12 all this technology that was coming my way in the college
13 environment. The last thing I wanted to worry about was
14 finances. If I could get that out of my hair, so to speak,
15 that was one less thing that I had to worry about. I would
16 recommend that those kind of programs be developed by
17 various corporations.

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1 recommendation that it should be mandatory to provide a
2 position for graduates, and certainly the continuance of
3 Educational Awards programs by other companies.

4 There is a lot of in-between-the-lines
5 type stuff here that I could probably refer to, but I will
6 leave it up to you. If you have comments or questions,
7 I certainly invite them.

8 Thank you.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I understand
10 our next presenter needs to leave relatively quickly.
11 If you wouldn't mind, I think we will hold off on our
12 questions for the time being. We will hear our next
13 presenter and have an opportunity to ask some questions.

14 **DAVE YAGER:** Good morning.

15 My name is Dave Yager, and I guess I want
16 to open by saying that I have absolutely no idea what I
17 am doing here. Robert Welch asked me. My involvement
18 as a commentator on Native affairs began about a month
19 ago when I wrote on a Wednesday night, facing a deadline
20 -- I used to be a newspaper columnist for the Calgary Sun,
21 and I wrote in about two hours to meet a deadline a stupid
22 newspaper column that has thrust me into the middle of
23 what I call the "political correctness" of the Native

2 I have been in the public opinion
3 business for 14 years. I specialize in saying things that
4 people don't want to hear. In 1986 I led a march on the
5 Legislature to tell the Alberta government and the federal
6 government that the oil and gas tax system was wrong.
7 I was scared shitless, but I was right. I am sitting here
8 today and I am scared shitless.

15 Robert Welch asked me to come down here
16 today to talk about employment and Native affairs. I can't
17 turn back the clock. I can't retrieve 100,000 newspapers,
18 but maybe I can make some comments that might be of some
19 value to someone and at least get people to quit calling
20 me a racist.

StenoTran

11 I want to make four points today and
12 hopefully get out of the room in one piece.

21 We talk about healing. Healing means
22 pain. There is perhaps going to be a lot more pain before
23 we ever get to a permanent solution.

9 My folks are visiting right now. They
10 reminded me that, when my great-grandparents came over,
11 they lived in a hole in the ground with logs on the roof
12 the first winter. They wished they knew as much about
13 surviving in winter as the Aborigines did at that time.
14 They made it.

18 I believe that everyone should have
19 self-determination, but I am talking about individual
20 self-determination, not collective self-determination.

21 Point No. 3 is self-sufficiency. I am
22 talking about individual self-sufficiency, not collective
23 self-sufficiency.

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1 When I talk about healing, I am not
2 talking about something temporary; I am talking about
3 something permanent. Although my dream world of complete
4 assimilation will be incredibly painful, in the end it
5 will be permanent.

6 The second point I want to make is that
7 we have to have a much better dialogue between the Native
8 issue and the rest of Canada. This silent rage I talk
9 about just scared me. I ended up leaving The Sun; it was
10 mutually agreed. I agreed that I wasn't doing a very good
11 job as a columnist, and they weren't very happy with what
12 I was writing. It's too bad, because actually now that
13 I know what I am talking about I don't have a newspaper
14 column any more.

15 The silent rage -- who speaks for the
16 rest of Canada? I tried and, by God, I was run over by
17 a train. The world has changed so much. We are going
18 back and talking about treaties signed between the colonial
19 government of Canada 120 years ago and then we talk about
20 a new society. Let me just bring you up to date on who
21 is out there today.

22 My wife teaches English as a second
23 language. She got the first generation of Vietnamese

10 There are 1.6 million people out of work.
11 The idea that there is a "have" society which is the rest
12 of Canada and a "have not" society which is the Aboriginal
13 community is just wrong. The whole country is turning
14 into a society of "have nots" because of high debts, high
15 unemployment. I just disagree completely with the idea
16 that there is this pocket of wealth and prosperity over
17 here and there is this pocket of maltreatment and injustice
18 over here. It's just not right. The "have" portion of
19 society is shrinking fast, and the "have not" portion of
20 society is expanding at a rapid rate in the increasing
21 ghettos of urban cities.

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1 that way. We have gangs in Vancouver, and the place is
2 going to hell in a hand cart.

3 What I am saying is that I think there
4 should be better communication, real communication, with
5 the rest of Canada so that, when you stand up and say maybe
6 someone else is having a rough time of it, too, somebody
7 doesn't say you can't say that. I don't believe the
8 political correctness of this issue is serving anyone very
9 well.

10 My third point is that I think we have
11 to look to the future at the same time that we look at
12 the past. On the whole Native issue we spend a lot of
13 time looking at the past. We look at the treaties -- were
14 they proper; were they fair? I heard Mr. Erasmus being
15 interviewed on the CBC while I was driving in this morning,
16 saying that some of the longstanding land claim issues
17 haven't been settled yet. That is looking to the past.

18 I want to warn everyone here that I think
19 we have to look to the future -- and I am talking about
20 a massive globalization of the world economy. I am talking
21 about borders that are falling down faster than we can
22 put them up. Look at the European Economic Community --
23 unheard of contracts being made between nations; borders

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1 coming down; the jet airplane; interglobal travel. We
2 are seeing a worldwide melting pot of all peoples, an
3 unprecedented rate of integration of all the peoples of
4 the world.

5 Look at the North American Free Trade
6 Agreement. Look at the foundations of the North American
7 Free Trade Agreement. Against this backdrop, some of the
8 things I hear about the Native issue is that the treaties
9 were made between sovereign nations. Holy cow! We have
10 a world where bigger is better and stronger, and the debate
11 we are having about Native issues is one where somehow,
12 if we go back to the land and adopt a more traditional,
13 agrarian, land-based lifestyle, it will survive.

14 I heard that fellow at the mike this
15 morning -- and this is hard to say and, like I say, I hope
16 I get out of here. There are five billion people eating
17 up this world at an absolutely frightening rate of speed.

18 We sit here in Canada insulated, in my opinion, from the
19 rest of the world. The rate at which the world is being
20 eaten up and spat out is just terrifying.

21 Can we, as a society, look backward
22 without looking forward? Does Native self-government
23 meet this test? Does Native self-government in any way

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1 help Natives or the rest of Canada? Does it help the
2 Canadian position? Is this the answer? I just don't
3 think it is.

4 Canadians have survived in a land-based
5 economy. There was a time when the west was settled by
6 the Europeans when you could raise a family on a
7 quarter-section of land. Then you needed a section of
8 land, and now you need 10 sections of land. Pretty soon
9 you are going to need 50 sections of land. Meanwhile the
10 number of people who have to work in offices and factories
11 to survive -- nobody wants to. Everybody would much rather
12 live out in the country, but they would starve to death.

13 Does this make sense? We are here
14 talking about employment and future opportunities for
15 Natives. Is this going to work? No, it isn't going to
16 work. I just think, if nobody is going to say that here
17 today, maybe it's a good thing I showed up.

18 The last thing, since I was slotted in
19 in the employment category, is employment opportunities
20 to break the poverty cycle. I just don't think it's going
21 to work. I think what NOVA has done is laudable, and I
22 am sure all the other corporations will tell you they are
23 trying. The gentleman on my left said, "We need more

6 I run a corporation. The myth that
7 corporations just by their very existence are able to make
8 money is just wrong. It's so bloody hard to make money.
9 The way taxes are going and the way finances are going,
10 this situation is going to get worse before it gets better.

20 I don't see a solution in
21 self-government. I don't see a solution in more land.
22 A lot of the land they are after, you can make a deal on
23 a land settlement in the Northwest Territories quite easily

6 If you tell me and the bank that I don't
7 own my house, we're going to have hell to pay. We are
8 going to have a 10-cent dollar and we are going to have
9 more misery in this country so quickly that it will make
10 our current problem with Native affairs pale by comparison.

15 I apologize. I tried to apologize in The Sun, and then
16 I got caught in the system. The Sun wouldn't print the
17 editorial because it made The Sun look stupid, so that
18 didn't help matters much either.

19 I hope that my comments are of some
20 value. I think all the problems are well-understood, as
21 I heard on the radio coming down this morning, and solutions
22 are going to be harder to come by. May I suggest that
23 a dialogue be opened up with the people out there who are

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1 not allowed to say anything. I think the resulting
2 solution will come out of this Royal Commission. If we
3 get a few more people in, who are scared to say anything,
4 to talk about what is really going on out there, perhaps
5 we can find a lasting solution.

6 Thank you very much.

7 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
8 you, Mr. Yager.

9 At this time Georges and Viola will ask
10 questions.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Sorry for
12 not introducing you. I was thinking that the Facilitator
13 was going to introduce you.

14 I guess we couldn't agree with you more
15 that there needs to be a dialogue. Certainly, we have
16 been making an effort to achieve that. I think if you
17 look into the operations of the Commission, you will find
18 that, when you compare us to other Royal Commissions, we
19 have probably tried more than anyone else to actually have
20 a dialogue. If it's not going to occur now, I don't know
21 how you get it to occur.

22 You keep repeating that you don't see
23 yourself as having any expert views in this case. You

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1 say assimilation is the way to go. For most Aboriginal
2 people, they believe that that is what they have been
3 experiencing. The residential school process -- when you
4 walked through the door, and they cut your braids off and
5 told you never to speak your language again and gave you
6 a new religion and tried to plant new values in you, the
7 good old work ethic, and tried to tell you the history
8 of the world from the viewpoint of another continent, I
9 think most Aboriginal people would probably tell you that
10 assimilation is what they have been experiencing. What
11 we now have is the result of it.

12 I wonder why you still think that that
13 is the way for it to work.

14 **DAVE YAGER:** If you are confusing my
15 definition of "assimilation" with the residential school
16 program, please.

17 In all fairness, I don't believe the
18 government can do anything particularly well. I got a
19 letter from Tom Siddon explaining what was wrong with the
20 contents of my cranium. He assured me that things were
21 going quite well with the Department of Indian Affairs.

22 I said, "I hope it is going better than the Treasury
23 Department. I hope you are doing better with the Natives

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1 than with the deficit."

2 Please don't confuse the past with the
3 future. When I talk about assimilation, I just don't see
4 a reserve-based system as working.

5 I think it is unfair, Mr. Erasmus, to
6 suggest that that definition of assimilation -- I
7 specifically said we should talk about the future, not
8 the past.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I was trying
10 to get to what you saw was different, and you still haven't
11 provided me. Outside of the reserves disappearing
12 tomorrow, why would Aboriginal people believe that it is
13 going to make things any better?

14 Let's look at the other Aboriginal
15 people who didn't have reserves. Let's look at the Métis.
16 Has there been success for them?

17 **DAVE YAGER:** There are new non-white
18 immigrants moving to Canada every day, and I doubt that
19 you would call their experience in Canada successful.
20 I think they are going out and encountering racism,
21 bigotry. I am not suggesting for a second that this
22 doesn't exist.

23 What astonished me when I wrote that

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1 article was the amount of racism and bigotry that still
2 exists. I would hope that, as part of a true assimilation
3 process, there would also be an opening of the hearts and
4 minds of my fellow Canadians such that, when whoever walks
5 in the door, whatever their background, they be judged
6 on their merit and, as this gentleman to the left of me,
7 on their technical qualifications and their skills for
8 the job.

9 There is no question that there has to
10 be a change in attitude. The question is: Is that change
11 in attitude likely to take place in a society that basically
12 enshrines the fact that Natives are different? I don't
13 see it. And I see the same problem with French Canada
14 as well.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Let's
16 revisit that for a minute. The understanding of what most
17 Aboriginal people have been telling us in all of our
18 hearings is that the reason we didn't have the kind of
19 pitched battles that we have seen in westerns about how
20 the west was settled in the United States was that here
21 in Canada there were peaceful treaties made on how
22 co-existence was going to occur.

23 What is your view on those historical

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1 documents? They are now enshrined in the Canadian
2 Constitution. For all intents and purposes they are part
3 of Canadian law. They are part of the way the country
4 was settled.

5 **DAVE YAGER:** Society changes. We have
6 had protective tariffs; we have had national energy
7 programs; we have had all manner of laws structured that
8 haven't survived the test of time.

9 I worked in the oil business at one time,
10 and we couldn't sell natural gas to the Americans without
11 a 25-year supply. That policy was enshrined. There were
12 federal elections fought over it. The country damn near
13 split up over it. Everybody looked around and changed
14 it.

15 I just think as society goes on, as the
16 economy globalizes, as the world shrinks, as peoples that
17 never even used to see each other integrate worldwide,
18 things have to change. One has to change with the times.

19 At the time of the treaties, it would appear that they
20 were quite successful, at least for the British side in
21 the sense that they were given access to this land, as
22 you say, peacefully. However, does this apply in the
23 nineties and in the next century? Is it going to work?

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1 Again, you are looking back, and I am
2 trying to look forward. I am asking everyone here to look
3 forward. Look at NAFTA; look at the European Economic
4 Community; look at the neighbourhoods of Calgary; look
5 at the world.

6 I am not suggesting for a second that
7 things have worked out well for the so-signatories of the
8 treaties, by any stretch of the imagination. My point
9 is that, if we look to the future, is it going to work?
10 I don't think it will. As I said, you are not supposed
11 to say that. Fine. I'll hopefully go at some point.
12 Maybe it won't be said again, and maybe it will.

13 I am asking you. You're a smart guy.
14 What do you think? I don't think it's going to work;
15 do you? Look at the pressures of the world; it's just
16 unbelievable.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Can you tell
18 me what you think would work. So far, outside of a
19 different version of assimilation, perhaps assimilation
20 with a kinder face than residential schools, what --

21 **DAVE YAGER:** I think there is a monetary
22 issue to be settled here. I believe that there is an
23 economic issue that has to be dealt with.

9 Because it would be a radical
10 restructuring of the relationship between Natives and
11 non-Natives, it would also be part of the process that
12 might result in that change of thinking that I am talking
13 about that is going to be essential for any true
14 assimilation to work. Apparently you are not allowed
15 to talk like a businessman, which I am, on these matters.
16 But if the last deal we signed is no good, let's do another
17 one, and I would look at, hopefully, a one-time cash
18 settlement. It would be voted on. The reserves would
19 be turned over to their owners to do as they saw fit.
20 The Department of Indian Affairs would be eliminated, and
21 we go on from there.

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1 have a few more minutes, I think Commissioner Robinson
2 would like to ask you some questions.

3 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I want to
4 thank you for the courage in coming here.

5 **DAVE YAGER:** Believe me, ma-am, this
6 took a lot of courage. Since that unfortunate article
7 came out, I see a Native and I cross to the other side
8 of the street. I'm ashamed of my comments, but the fact
9 is that there are things that I think have to said and,
10 what the hell, I can't turn the clock back.

11 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I think
12 what you have said here this morning has to be said, and
13 I am glad somebody has told us up-front. I think maybe
14 this is the thinking of a lot of people in this country,
15 and it's one of the things we are trying to grapple with
16 now -- to get some of the viewpoints of this thinking.

17 Saying that you are a businessman -- and,
18 certainly, if you are a businessman, you are interested
19 in revenue generation and profit. In honesty, I would
20 think, in looking at it from that perspective, would you
21 agree that, if you sign a contract with somebody in your
22 workplace, a business contract which is a legal contract,
23 a binding contract, each has to live up to its contents?

18 Yes, fine, let's live up to the letter
19 of the contract. Let justice be done, but understand that
20 solving a 100-year-old problem is not going to solve next
21 year's problem. So perhaps a completely different
22 approach, something along the lines I talked about, may
23 be more workable.

The second point I want to make is with regard to assimilation. Right today there are statistics which show that there are more Aboriginal people living off the reserves than there are living on the reserve, and the situation for them is no better and probably worse than for those who are on reserve.

22 How does that change? Even if we were
23 to agree with you and say, "Everybody is going to

2 **DAVE YAGER:** To show you how far apart
3 the two sides would be in the Native debate, I would say
4 the Native community feels it has been poorly treated by
5 the treaties, and a lot of mainstream society believes
6 that Natives have special treatment above and beyond that.
7 This is how far apart the debate is now, Ms Robinson.

19 The dialogue is what we need. You talk
20 about the government coming clean. I would have thought,
21 for God's sake, that by now you don't believe what the
22 government says. I never met a Tory that wasn't going
23 to balance the books if given the chance, and I have never

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1 met a Tory who, given the chance, has ever balanced the
2 books.

3 If they can't do it on the deficit, how
4 are they going to do it on Native affairs?

5 Secondly, the politicians will go out
6 and say one thing to you and then they will go discover
7 how much support there is, and that's it. Why do you think
8 this Royal Commission is here? Just so we don't have to
9 do anything for another two years.

10 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I agree
11 with the point about how far apart and how people don't
12 fully understand or are ignorant of the actual reserve
13 systems and the myth about how good things are. I can't
14 agree with you more on that.

15 I think there has to be a dialogue. I
16 wonder if you have any way of suggesting to this Royal
17 Commission how we can promote that kind of dialogue.

18 **DAVE YAGER:** Destroying the fax machine
19 would be a good start. I wrote an unfortunate column.
20 I knew that within hours. I tried to rectify it but, by
21 that time, my column had been faxed all over the
22 countryside, with the racism brand attached to it, and
23 away we went.

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1 I am just telling you what it is like.
2 What am I doing here? It looks like I am gong to get
3 out of here alive now, so I am slightly less nervous than
4 I was 20 minutes ago.

5 It is very, very difficult to say
6 anything other than the following about the Native debate,
7 and God help you if you do. Maybe some Native activists,
8 some of the people on the side that call everyone who
9 doesn't agree with them a racist, could back off a little
10 bit and look at your own position. That is one suggestion.

11 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank
12 you.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Would you
14 mind if I asked you another question.

15 **DAVE YAGER:** Go ahead.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You made a
17 comment in relation to the panel of representatives from
18 the oil industry. You said that what they are doing is
19 laudable but that it is not going to work.

20 What did you mean?

21 **DAVE YAGER:** It's laudable in the sense
22 -- for example, NOVA. NOVA is an ideal. Because of the
23 nature of the pipeline system, I am sure they deal with

3 Most large companies like to contract
4 locally. The idea that you would encourage local
5 contracting and all that is great.

10

15 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS: So they
16 shouldn't be doing this?

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1 But I don't believe there is going to be any lasting and
2 long-term solution available through the corporate sector.

3 I don't believe there is enough dough to go around.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I am trying
5 to understand what you are saying.

6 **DAVE YAGER:** The gentleman to my
7 immediate left suggested that corporations should take
8 a greater responsibility --

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Yes or no?

10 **DAVE YAGER:** No. What I am saying is
11 that, yes, they should; we can all say they should. But
12 can it be done? That is what I am saying. Ray Martin
13 said they should pay more taxes, and I am saying, yes,
14 by golly, corporations ought to be as socially responsible
15 as they possibly can. I agree with that in principle,
16 but I am also here to tell you in fact that, if it costs
17 money, because of the incredible pressures, it is going
18 to be very difficult to do.

19 That's another partial solution to a
20 greater problem.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** That is the
22 point you are trying to make, that it is only a partial
23 solution.

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1 **DAVE YAGER:** Exactly. Not only that,
2 but the same day that we hear we have to do this, we have
3 another completely different objective with that same
4 dollar. Trying to reconcile them all is very difficult.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I agree with
6 my colleague to my right. You showed great courage in
7 coming here.

8 **DAVE YAGER:** I am not a racist.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I certainly
10 heard you more than once say that you regretted some of
11 the views that you presented in your article.

12 Thank you for sharing with us. It was
13 most useful.

14 **DAVE YAGER:** Thank you.

15 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
16 very much.

17 At this time Petro-Canada will do their
18 presentation, Peter Verity and Paddy Noskey.

19 **PETER VERITY, Petro-Canada:** Thank you.

20 My name is Peter Verity, and I work as a Community
21 Co-ordinator with Petro-Canada. I also work as Chairman
22 of the Management Committee on the Peace Arch Project,
23 and I have been involved in this for the last couple of

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1 years.

2 In response to an earlier comment that
3 was made from the floor about Petro-Canada, I would like
4 to demonstrate here that we do constructive things from
5 time to time, and we would like to share with you a couple
6 of projects that we are involved in, the Peace Arch Project
7 being one of them and the other one being Petro-Canada
8 Resources' Community Relationship Approach which we have
9 been piloting for the last year or so.

10 In dealing with the Peace Arch Project,
11 I have Chief Paddy Noskey from the Loon River Cree Band
12 with me today. Paddy also is the Chairman of the
13 Community's Committee on the Peace Arch Project.

14 The Commission might also want to note
15 the spelling -- I see they have "Patty" instead of "Paddy."
16 For the sake of the record, that might be changed.

17 I also have Randy Anderson who is a
18 Council member of the Gift Lake Settlement who is going
19 to help me give a committee perspective on our program,
20 the Community Relationship Approach.

21 In dealing with the Peace Arch Project,
22 I need to start out by saying that Petro-Canada has been
23 involved as a lead representative for industry on this

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1 project for the last couple of years. As such, we have
2 been quite close to it, and we feel we are qualified to
3 speak on the project's behalf. So today we are
4 representing all stakeholders.

5 Just by definition, the project is a
6 joint community, industry and government initiative that
7 seeks to increase employment opportunities for Native
8 residents living in the Peace Arch area. It aims to
9 improve and enhance communications between local
10 communities, resource industries and government to find
11 ways to increase long-term employment and provide business
12 opportunities.

13 I would like to focus on the employment
14 aspects of this. I think a very crucial component of
15 employment is the backdrop of trust and co-operation that
16 the project has been building over the last six years.
17 This has developed principally through co-operation and
18 understanding and the attentive manner by which issues
19 have been identified and addressed.

20 We really great importance on involving
21 the communities in any key decision-making. This
22 encourages ownership and accountability. The project
23 also promotes good communication between the communities

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1 and, despite the varied political and social differences,
2 the project serves to unite them in the common goal of
3 finding employment.

4 A strong signal of support to the
5 communities is the level of industrial sponsorship. This
6 takes the form of financial contributions which are used
7 to assist the communities to participate in the activities
8 of the project.

9 With regard to training and education,
10 we have been going through a recession. The industry's
11 condition is not by any means as healthy as it has been,
12 and we have had to change our emphasis from strictly funding
13 permanent employment to moving into preparation for
14 employment through training. This has been the emphasis
15 especially in the last year or so.

16 In particular, the project has
17 co-ordinated a 10-months' duration program that was held
18 in Red Earth, which is central to the Peace Arch
19 communities. We worked this up in conjunction with two
20 educational institutions and also with very close
21 co-operation and input from the local oil patch companies
22 in the area. Candidates for selection in this program
23 were put forward by the communities, and the project

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1 screened and selected those applicants for the final
2 selection. I think there were initially 22 students
3 selected, and upon graduation about 50 per cent of those
4 students found immediate employment. We feel that is an
5 excellent result in today's climate. Another 30 per cent
6 found employment shortly thereafter.

7 We feel that the success of that program
8 is largely due to the fact that it was tailored very closely
9 to the needs of local industry. They were closely involved
10 not only in setting the course content but also in
11 scheduling and providing the practical work terms which
12 constituted an essential part of the program. The
13 companies involved were able to assess firsthand the
14 performance of the students, and this was taken into
15 account in any consideration for permanent jobs.

16 Another important factor was the
17 financial assistance that was provided to the students
18 to enable them to get to the classroom. We found time
19 and again that it is quite assumption to put these programs
20 on, but then the communities just have no physical means
21 of actually getting there. It does cost money. Even
22 though the program was put on, if you will, on their own
23 doorstep, there were still some logistical problems. So

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1 the project was able to come up with some additional funding
2 to enable them to overcome this barrier.

3 The project also administers a bursary
4 program which is designed with specific educational
5 training programs for individuals or smaller groups.

6 Earlier this year the project, in
7 focusing on its training program, leased an office at Red
8 Earth. This provides more visible presence to the local
9 industry in the communities and serves now as the project's
10 office as well as the industrial training centre. We have
11 used this facility to provide, since the beginning of the
12 year, some certification courses, again primarily aimed
13 at the oil patch. The intent here is to provide a cheaper
14 and more easily accessible alternative, and this is, by
15 and large, working out quite well.

16 We also try to cover our costs
17 completely. The project, incidentally, is a non-profit
18 organization, so any commitments we have in our budget
19 we would like to be able to cover.

20 In addition to the training activities,
21 the project's two full-time positions maintain regular
22 contact with the local residents and industry, and we try
23 to match the skills of the communities with the needs of

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1 the local industry. We have a skills inventory survey
2 that was completed of the communities, and we keep this
3 in mind when we identify openings with industry.

4 Another important aspect of the project
5 that we address is the mentoring. It is one thing to place
6 people in jobs, but it is really quite imperative that
7 any people who are employed or who find positions are able
8 to succeed. We don't walk away from these individuals;
9 we find that they have to be nurtured and supported, and
10 we need to make sure that the employers are satisfied with
11 their performance and that the newly-placed individual
12 works in a sympathetic and supportive environment. So
13 we are able to follow through and address any adjustments
14 or any problems that might be related to that.

15 By way of results and measures, then,
16 since its inception the project has placed 37 full-time
17 positions and over 200 temporary positions -- that is,
18 in the six-year life. This might seem quite modest, but
19 of course we don't have control over the condition of
20 industry. We know it is shrinking at this time, and there
21 is still quite a freeze on recruitment.

22 I think what is so very important and
23 cannot easily be measured is the valuable network that

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1 has been established between local industry and the
2 communities. This really isn't to be under-estimated.
3 It does provide a very solid foundation upon which future
4 opportunities can be based.

5 More recently, we seen that some
6 communities and individuals within them have been starting
7 their own businesses and are already contracting these
8 services to industry. Industry, from its own standpoint,
9 is also starting to recognize long-term benefits that these
10 communities can provide and are turning to them more and
11 more.

12 There is a cost involved in this. I
13 think industry realizes that, to take advantage of this,
14 there may be some initial premiums, risk and cost, but
15 companies by and large are prepared to pay this.

16 We have just recently undertaken had an
17 independent evaluation done of the project. It still
18 believes that the project provides some value, and the
19 underlying reasons that the project was formed in the first
20 place are still in place. The project's goal is to
21 eventually put the communities in a position where they
22 can pursue their own business and employment endeavours
23 independently, having been exposed to the workings of

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1 government and industry. We see that an interim step
2 toward this is perhaps to put the communities in more of
3 a leadership role to substitute that currently played by
4 industry on the project.

5 As to future challenges, the project
6 originally started out as a two-year project. It is now
7 in its sixth year, and I think we are very optimistic that
8 the project will continue for some time to come. There
9 is a concern, of course, that industry is expecting things
10 to turn around or to see some more tangible results more
11 quickly, but this really hasn't been that evident. I think
12 there is some good reasoning for this, but it does affect
13 our potential funding source. There is pressure growing
14 all the time on industry -- and perhaps this is what Mr.
15 Yager was alluding to. Funds are limited and priorities
16 do change with time.

17 It is, however, unrealistic to expect
18 the communities to be integrated into the industrial
19 economy in the foreseeable future. I think the need for
20 the continuation of a project such as this is really quite
21 important.

22 If the project continues, it needs to
23 progressively move more and more responsibility into the

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1 communities, and a strategy involving some organization
2 changes will be developed to allow this shortly.
3 Community commitment to the project could also be
4 strengthened through greater support and involvement by
5 their Councils. This is a concern that we have in that
6 Councils are very much preoccupied with political issues,
7 land claims being one of them, and it seems that economic
8 development is at the bottom of the list. When we are
9 trying to get the attention and support from the
10 communities themselves, apart from their actual
11 representation on the project, we see some weakness there.

12 The project also needs to get a higher
13 profile. There is a lot of promotion work that needs to
14 be done, especially with the local industry contacts.
15 I think more direct involvement and visibility of the
16 communities is something we need to work on here.

17 We have very much focused on the oil
18 patch. We know that the forestry sector is emerging and
19 that there are lots of opportunities to be taken here,
20 and we have yet to do this. We are starting to focus on
21 this. Indeed, we do already have a significant sponsor
22 from the forestry sector affiliated with the project, and
23 we will be working with them shortly.

20 These eight communities are broken down
21 like this: Two are Indian reserves; two Métis
22 Settlements; two bands without a land base; and two
23 settlements of Métis and Treaty on provincial crown lands.

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1 In terms of education and training, they
2 are diverse in the sense that some have had training and
3 education, some have little or no education in these
4 communities. Some of these communities have established
5 companies, and some are in the process of starting and
6 setting up local companies. Some are under-developed,
7 if I may say.

8 Oil industry and development has been
9 around us for more than 25 years, extracting resources
10 out of the area during that time, with little or no
11 opportunity for the local Aboriginals in terms of
12 employment and opportunities.

13 I became involved with this project when
14 I saw that the government, industry and communities could
15 work together to bring employment to the local Aboriginals
16 in the area. Four years ago was when I started to get
17 involved with it.

18 Until most recently, there has been
19 little or no employment for Aboriginals in the local area,
20 but since the Peace Arch project there has been some
21 opportunities, as Peter has alluded to.

22 There is a common interest in the project
23 with the communities here. We have been able to work

5 I have seen the communities become
6 progressively more involved, and I am encouraged by the
7 employment opportunities recently. However, there are
8 shortfalls in terms of government and also in terms of
9 industry and also on the part of some communities. I would
10 like to point out some of these shortfalls at this time.

15 The recommendations that we have been
16 harping on for the last four years have been directed to
17 the major oil companies here in Calgary.

18 Some of the problems I feel communities
19 are experiencing are that the big companies in Calgary
20 are not taking affirmative action regarding Native
21 employment to the subcontractors where the real
22 opportunities and action are. Unless the big companies
23 in Calgary here take action and direct their subcontractors

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1 to hire local people, I think we will continue to experience
2 the lack of opportunities.

3 I must say that the communities have seen
4 benefits generated by this project. I would like to see
5 this project continue. The project itself is slated to
6 end this September. We have seen the benefits the project
7 has generated by industry, government and communities
8 working together to meet that end.

9 I would like to close, before I turn it
10 over to Randy, by recommending to the Commission to take
11 a look at the project's organizational structure. It is
12 working for us in the area. We have seen the benefits,
13 and we need the Commission's support to continue the
14 project.

15 Thank you.

16 **PETER VERITY:** Mr. Chairman, if there
17 are no questions at this point, perhaps I can continue
18 and just discuss Petro-Canada's Community Relationship
19 Approach, and then Randy Anderson can provide some
20 community perspectives on that and perhaps add some more
21 comments about Peace Arch.

22 The Community Relationship Approach was
23 piloted a year ago with the vision of working harmoniously

8 At the outset, we felt there were some
9 opportunities for mutual benefits and that these things
10 could be derived through such things as developing a
11 qualified work force, developing local supplies and
12 services and developing a sound relationship upon which
13 solutions to future contentious issues could be based.

16 I will just focus here on the employment and business
17 opportunities that we have realized through this.

18 Just for the sake of the audience here,
19 the kinds of principle that we have been applying here
20 include such things as sharing with the communities
21 non-proprietary information on the company's operations
22 and future plans. Hitherto we hadn't really being doing
23 anything about this at all. We just had gone ahead and

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1 got the approvals without any consideration at all of the
2 communities. We felt that it was important to include
3 them in our plans and mutually identify any opportunities
4 that might come along, so that we could conduct facility
5 visits, open houses, and the like, educating employees
6 on this program. Cross-cultural education, I think, is
7 a very important thing; it is a crucial element of any
8 communication.

9 This program at this time has been
10 applied within the Peace Arch area. It has mostly affected
11 the Gift Lake Settlement, from which Randy Anderson is
12 here today, but we have also applied it to Paddle Prairie
13 and the Whitefish Lake Reserve.

14 I would like to tell you some of the
15 things that have resulted from this over the last year.

16 Petro-Canada has hired a full-time field
17 operator from the Gift Lake community. We have worked
18 closely with the Peace Arch project and provided some
19 valuable input into the training program that I mentioned
20 earlier. We have communicated more closely with the
21 communities on a routine basis. We have provided business
22 opportunities and information on the company's operations.

23

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1 In particular, there was a pipeline
2 construction contract that was awarded to a local
3 community, and this in fact led to other work from other
4 companies.

5 We have provided ongoing advice on
6 safety programs and helping the community run an oil field
7 maintenance business.

8 We have also turned more to local
9 services for such things as welding, pipefitting and
10 hot-shotting.

11 We have also visited the schools with
12 role model staff to encourage staying in school.

13 We are developing a greater
14 understanding and support internally for Native employment
15 and business issues.

16 For their part, the communities have
17 responded in different ways. Such examples would be
18 new-found co-operation. One community has helped our
19 field activities in one area by repairing roads that were
20 damaged by logging operations. Also we have been able
21 to settle a dispute over water-hauling by applying the
22 principles of this program. One community has also
23 extended its health services and courtesy police patrol

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1 to the plant site. This has been very beneficial to us.

2 By way of results and measures on this
3 program, we have gone a long way toward providing a
4 supportive work environment, we believe, for Native
5 employees. Before the program was piloted, a
6 questionnaire was sent out to the Gift Lake community in
7 particular to try to find some benchmark feedback on the
8 company's performance. In the next month or so, after
9 a year or so of implementation, we will be following up
10 on this and trying to get some sense of our progress against
11 this.

12 The program's success will be measured
13 ultimately by the benefits that were provided to both the
14 communities and the company, not just one party.

15 In looking ahead, it is not easy to see
16 the contributions such a program would make to the
17 company's bottom line. The company is very much driven
18 by hard economic factors. On the face of it, such
19 initiatives do cost money at the outset, but we feel and
20 we are very confident that this initial investment will
21 be more than offset in the long term.

22 The incentive for such a program also
23 is growing. Environmental regulations are making public

4 Our plan is to broaden the program's
5 application throughout the company. The incorporation
6 of its philosophy into a corporate policy is just the
7 beginning.

14 Lastly, while Petro-Canada is not
15 federally regulated, we do a large amount of business as
16 a federal contractor and, as such, must comply with
17 government requirements. Employment equity is one
18 component of that, and this program helps us meet these
19 requirements.

22 **RANDY ANDERSON:** Thank you, Peter.

StenoTran

3 First of all, Gift Lake is a community
4 of 700. It's a Métis Settlement in northwestern Alberta.

9 We have been in the middle of the oil
10 patch development in Gift Lake for the past 20 years or
11 so. It has only been recently that we have involved with
12 the employment and business opportunities in the oil patch.

16 I always remember a story that one of
17 the older gentlemen in our community told us. He said,
18 when we had one of our Peace Arch conferences, "Well, I
19 worked for the oil patch at one time. I got hired by a
20 seismic company to pull cables along. We pulled cables
21 along, and we hit a swamp and I was up to my chest in water.

23 Those are some of the things that have

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1 happened in the past and, as a result, the feelings in
2 our communities of the older generation are very negative
3 toward the industry.

4 At the present time Gift Lake is
5 fortunate that we have seven full-time employees in the
6 industry. These are battery operators, mechanics, and
7 so forth. We also have formed Gift Lake Development as
8 a company, owned by the community, and we also have a
9 pipeline company. We have succeeded in completing three
10 pipelines recently. We have proven that we can do it,
11 and it has benefited our community. It has given our
12 community good self-esteem in terms of the fact that we
13 can do it out there.

14 The seven young people who are employed
15 now have become really good positive role models in our
16 community. They are younger people who have graduated
17 from high school and now are working in the oil patch.
18 More and more young people are coming to us as leaders
19 in the community and saying, "I want those types of job;
20 I want to go to work in the oil patch as well."

21 As a result, I feel that projects like
22 Peace Arch are very important in our communities. Peace
23 Arch has opened doors for us.

6 It is good that companies like
7 Petro-Canada are out in the communities with their good
8 neighbour policy. I am sure that Petro-Canada will find
9 that we, too, are good neighbours. We are interested in
10 employment and business opportunities. I would emphasize
11 that it is good to have a company which has genuine interest
12 in our community, and I emphasize that we are genuine
13 because, in the past, that has not always been the case.

20 I feel that my community in particular
21 has proven that it can do the job in terms that we can
22 provide reliable people, in terms of the fact that we can
23 do big contracts, pipeline contracts, and we are there.

StenoTran

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1 We have always taken the approach in our community that
2 we only want the opportunity; we do not want handouts.
3 If given the opportunity, we can do the job.

4 We have a lot of young people in our
5 community at the present time that are growing up and
6 entering the work force, and these people want to be
7 contributing members of society, not necessarily moving
8 to downtown Calgary. The opportunities have to be made
9 in our communities.

10 Thank you.

11 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
12 you, Petro-Canada. At this time the Commissioners are
13 going to ask a few questions, and then we will have a
14 five-minute break.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Perhaps we
16 will start with Petro-Canada and then go back to the earlier
17 presenters.

18 This project has been under way now for
19 a while; you are into the sixth year. Do you believe it
20 is a model for how industry should be approaching a new
21 area when they are coming in? Have you learned things
22 here that should be considered for other projects in other
23 parts of Canada?

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1 **PETER VERITY:** I think it is a model that
2 could be applied quite universally. I think it has all
3 the key components that could be applied universally.

4 I am involved with industry's activities
5 to some extent in northeast B.C. With my exposure to what
6 is going on there with Treaty 8, I have seen, by degrees,
7 all the components that we have in Peace Arch emerging
8 and coming together -- the sorts of initiatives and
9 activities that the project is undertaking in Peace Arch
10 are actually coming forward now.

11 It is not the only model; I am sure there
12 must be other equally effective models. But we are
13 confident that it is effective and that it can be applied
14 elsewhere, not only for established areas. If industry
15 is newly going in, I think it is quite an appropriate one
16 to be looking at.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In your
18 covering presentation, you say that recently some
19 businesses have been created. You don't take direct
20 credit for it. Is that a by-product of what is going on,
21 or do you go around and show people what possible businesses
22 could be created? Is this something that you can directly
23 point to as something you helped create?

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1 **PETER VERITY:** I don't think we would
2 take direct credit for those businesses being established.
3 I think it is fair to say that we give them a helping
4 hand to try to get established. We show them how to apply
5 for funding support from various agencies.

6 I think it is the structure of Peace Arch
7 that really helps show them the way, and even perhaps steer
8 them toward some potential business. But I think it would
9 be an over-statement to say that we can take direct credit
10 for those businesses actually being formed in the first
11 place.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What kind of
13 actual presence do you have in the communities? Do you
14 go in and have community meetings or do you expect the
15 community representative to do the work locally?

16 **PETER VERITY:** There are two aspects to
17 that. We have talked a bit about the Communities Committee
18 -- and I know we haven't had much time to go into the
19 organization's structure. We have left that with the
20 Commission.

21 The Communities Committee does meet once
22 a month. The intent there is to have two representatives
23 from each of the communities attend that session. We have

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1 two full-time positions on the project, the Project
2 Co-ordinator and the Employment Training Co-ordinator.
3 Those two full-time positions are really the day-to-day
4 contact with the communities. They would really bring
5 the focus of the project into the communities.

6 Those individuals actually go into the
7 communities as well and meet. When we talked earlier about
8 those emerging businesses, that would be the opportunity
9 to talk and provide some assistance by the actual direct
10 visit into the community itself.

11 **RANDY ANDERSON:** Peter may not be aware,
12 but the Field Operator for Petro-Canada has been in our
13 community and is also going to our school. He has been
14 active in our community.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In relation
16 to the training that you have been organizing, is this
17 restricted to the oil and gas activity in the area, or
18 are you using the total oil patch in Alberta as a possible
19 area to place people and train them for? Is it locally
20 centred?

21 **PETER VERITY:** The initial thrust of the
22 training, I think it is fair to say, is local. The project
23 would look upon it as being an equal success if we can

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1 get people successfully trained to find employment
2 elsewhere. I think we would take the credit for that.
3 But we have to recognize that the more immediate needs
4 of the communities is to take advantage of local work and
5 perhaps find local employment through appropriate
6 training.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is there any
8 discussion in the industry -- and you seem to be
9 representing all of the major players here -- about a
10 similar program provincial-wide or for western Canada?

11 **PETER VERITY:** That hasn't emerged yet.
12 I don't believe the industry has an opportunity to apply
13 anything like this on a more global scale. I mentioned
14 earlier the activities in northeast B.C., around Fort St.
15 John, as being another geographically-specific region
16 where a similar program may evolve.

17 On a province-wide scale, I know of
18 nothing like this happening.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is there any
20 potential for industry looking at ways to have Aboriginal
21 people perhaps have training experience in management,
22 middle management or senior management?

23 **PETER VERITY:** In the context of the

6 When you talk about management
7 opportunities, Petro-Canada does have an Awards Program,
8 I believe, for sponsorship for promoting secondary
9 education through the degree program. We are also
10 affiliated with the Canadian Council of Native Business
11 which does focus on that aspect of it.

14 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS: What role
15 does the Little Buffalo Lubicon community play in this?

20 They have an open invitation to
21 participate in the Communities Committee. Officially,
22 they are a member of the project. But, of late, with the
23 emergence of the Cadotte Committee adjacent to that, the

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1 initial representatives from that community actually are
2 representing Cadotte at this time.

3 Little Buffalo doesn't really much
4 visibility or profile on the project at this time.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Perhaps I
6 will go back to the earlier presentation that was made.

7 I thought the barriers, the challenges,
8 the obstacles that you laid out at pages 2 and 3 were quite
9 excellent. Certainly, I think they are very realistic.

10 What about this suggestion that perhaps
11 the industry should look at trying to immediately place
12 the successful candidates in your training program,
13 graduates? I realize that the industry has been having
14 some tough times lately and, presumably, that is partly
15 the reason. Would that ever be feasible?

16 **BARBARA TATE:** I think the spirit and
17 the intent is there and is very important. Unfortunately,
18 like all businesses, it has to be balanced by the business
19 situation and the business need.

20 As was said earlier, we are all in the
21 kind of situation where we probably aren't doing much
22 external hiring and those kinds of thing. By the same
23 token, I believe it has to be very discouraging for the

6 With Armand's comments, it is certainly
7 something that we would like to look at more seriously.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Has
15 government been approached in this area to assist industry
16 in perhaps opening up a number of positions yearly where
17 there is partial funding from government?

22 Historically, NOVA has often taken a
23 position where we did not go for government funding. We

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1 did these things as a business.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I appreciate
3 that, and I think that is admirable.

4 As I asked PetroCan, has NOVA considered
5 opening up positions in different parts of your structure
6 so that Aboriginal people could have access to different
7 management experience, either as training or as part of
8 the team?

9 **BARBARA TATE:** We are doing that as we
10 can in terms of the job situations and the requirements
11 of the positions. If you are looking for people moving
12 into management and supervisory kinds of position, again
13 one of our obstacles or hurdles there has been the one
14 I mentioned in the relatively low numbers of post-secondary
15 graduates -- not only technical, but post-secondary
16 graduates to come into those kinds of fields.

17 We have a number moving into
18 professional kinds of ranks -- in environment, accounting,
19 and those fields. Probably, if we had looked at it a few
20 years ago, it was more a menial, utility kind of role,
21 and then we saw the move to technical. I think now we
22 are moving into the phase of more professionals, which
23 hopefully will lead toward the supervisory/management

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1 kinds of role as well.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** The
3 presentations to students -- it looks like you have made
4 presentations to a lot of Aboriginal students. Do you
5 do that more than once at a given school? If you made
6 a presentation in 1992, do you go back in 1993 or do you
7 think that community is covered?

8 **BARBARA TATE:** I am going to have to rely
9 on one of my colleagues in the audience in terms of the
10 details. I will ask Charlie Somers to respond.

11 **CHARLIE SOMERS:** Our students go to
12 approximately 120 schools in Alberta that have a high ratio
13 of Native students. They hit those schools about every
14 three years, again depending on the number of students.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Was there a
16 particular reason why it is every three years?

17 **CHARLIE SOMERS:** Yes, they do about 30
18 to 40 schools a year, so every three years or so they go
19 back.

20 They are hitting these students that are
21 coming up from Grade 9 to Grade 12 in that time. By doing
22 it that way, we should have full coverage of every high
23 school student graduating through the schools in Alberta.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is that
2 based on estimating that you covering everybody or is it
3 based on the strength of the number of people who are
4 actually doing the presentations?

5 **CHARLIE SOMERS:** It's both. We have
6 a time frame there. When you hire a university student,
7 they are only available, at the most, for two weeks of
8 possible orientation and training, from the end of April
9 to the middle of May. Then they only have a month to go
10 to schools because the education system doesn't like anyone
11 interrupting their exams after June 15.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What would
13 you think of the suggestion that was made by your employee
14 that there be opportunities for summer student employment
15 where they actually have access to the industry and have
16 to see it more up front?

17 **BARBARA TATE:** If I can just clarify,
18 we have a summer student program where Natives who are
19 in for summer student jobs do have a priority within our
20 summer student employment, along with the sons and
21 daughters of our employees.

22 If I am interpreting it correctly, what
23 Armand is referring to is almost a mentoring kind of process

7 We think the drop-out rate in the
8 education system is very severe and has a future negative
9 impact to business and industry from all walks of life.

13 That kind of program would be very
14 conducive to those kinds of thing.

22 **BARBARA TATE:** I have some numbers here
23 in terms of the actual awards and the numbers of students

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1 who have gotten them who have graduated. I don't have
2 the actual numbers that applied.

3 We have a 69 per cent graduation rate,
4 but those who have graduated or continued with self-study
5 for the 10-year period was something like 83 per cent.
6 Those who have graduated and are still studying were 86
7 per cent. Our financial contribution to that is about
8 a quarter of a million dollars.

9 Again, I would ask Charlie if he knows
10 the relativity of the number of applications.

11 **CHARLIE SOMERS:** We receive anywhere
12 from 12 to 16 qualified applications for the seven awards
13 each year. Occasionally, we have gone to a couple of
14 colleges because we haven't been able to give out an award
15 for a given year. What we do in that case is carry it
16 on to the next year. If we miss one year, we give two
17 to that college the next year, if we have qualified
18 applicants from those colleges.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Are these
20 applications primarily from Alberta?

21 **CHARLIE SOMERS:** Yes. One of the
22 criteria is one-year's residence in Alberta. We do get
23 people who have moved to Alberta, say, from Saskatchewan

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1 in the previous year.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is there any
3 consideration of opening it up to other people?

4 **BARBARA TATE:** From outside the
5 province?

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Yes.

7 **BARBARA TATE:** At this point, no there
8 isn't. This is a strategic issue for us. We operate in
9 Alberta, so we are tying it into our business strategy
10 of supporting it from that perspective.

11 While NOVA does have chemical operations
12 in the Chemical Valley area of Sarnia, they do a variety
13 of things in that community as well to support them there.
14 Our strategy right now, and has been, is to support the
15 Alberta network.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is there
17 some kind of Educational Aware program that the industry
18 as a whole is doing?

19 **BARBARA TATE:** Not that I am aware of
20 overall.

21 **CHARLIE SOMERS:** Foothills started an
22 award program in 1981. Husky, I think, came on with a
23 similar program in 1983.

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1 I should back up. The Foothills program
2 and the NOVA program is for colleges only. The other
3 companies, Husky in 1983 and Petro-Canada in 1985 and Esso
4 in 1987, I believe, are for universities also.

5 Maybe NOVA should be looking that way
6 because, with the changing technology, college courses
7 are minimum requirements more or less now.

8 **BARBARA TATE:** If you are asking if
9 industry gets together --

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Yes, that is
11 what I was asking.

12 **BARBARA TATE:** To the best of my
13 knowledge, there isn't anything through CAPP, the Canadian
14 Association of Petroleum Producers or the Canadian Gas
15 Association, in which a lot of us, whether we are producers
16 or pipeline companies, participate. We don't have those
17 kinds of thing.

18 There are a lot of areas right now where
19 industry is just finally getting together. While we
20 recognize we are competitive with each other, there are
21 some advantages to doing some things together. These
22 kinds of thing may be an area for that.

23 **CHARLIE SOMERS:** We did co-operate in

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1 1987-88 on applicants, so that the awards were spread
2 around, so that one student wouldn't get two or three
3 awards. That has sort of fallen by the wayside.
4 Everybody is going for the number one applicant.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Those are my
6 questions in that area.

7 Mr. Cardinal, you were making some
8 comments and I was wondering if you might want to elaborate
9 on some of the comments you were making in relation to
10 the kinds of thing you thought industry could do. It may
11 well be that Ms Tate has already answered your concerns.

12 **ARMAND CARDINAL:** I more or less tried
13 to base my presentation specifically on the fact that,
14 as was said in many of the presentations here, there is
15 a lack of post-secondary Native students.

16 In her presentation she states that
17 corporations vie for these graduates as they come out of
18 their respective fields of study.

19 I had the good fortune to be present at
20 a luncheon where Elijah Harper was the main speaker. This
21 seminar was put on by the Canadian Manpower and Employment
22 Centre who recruited at universities and colleges. A
23 representative from the east, representing Esso, was

7 The Esso representative went on to say,
8 "It's fine that he said that, but we, as a major
9 corporation, see that the government is trying to give
10 little programs where they train high school students that
11 haven't gone on to post-secondary study. They give little
12 programs and probably do some kind of training for a few
13 months, and they expect companies like Esso --" and I assume
14 he was referring to major oil and gas companies. "Sure,
15 this guy has a bit of training; he's a high school
16 graduate," but he intimated to me that they have a look
17 but they are not going to hire them.

21 I am basing my presentation on that point, and I am just
22 hoping that corporations will take up the rein and carry
23 the ball.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** The point
2 you are making is that all the goodwill in the world is
3 really not enough; what you need is highly-trained
4 individuals.

5 **ARMAND CARDINAL:** Sure.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** And to
7 ensure that that happens, the award programs should be
8 enhanced in a couple of ways. One way is to try to
9 guarantee, if possible, employment at the end of the
10 training, if you have won the award.

11 The other point you were making in
12 relation to summer students and mentoring and so forth
13 -- would you mind elaborating a bit on that, just add to
14 what Ms Tate has said.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I am sorry,
16 I guess I missed the question initially.

17 Again, I can refer back to a previous
18 point that I was stating.

19 We have high school students in
20 reservation high schools or in small town high schools
21 or in the cities, wherever they might be. In the company
22 that I work for, they are not prominent. Native high
23 school students aren't prominent in the place of my employ.

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1 I tend to think it would be good to have these students
2 at my place of employ so that they might be given the
3 opportunity to see what is industry, what is the oil and
4 gas industry, what are the business opportunities, what
5 is management.

6 I dare say that, if I were to use an
7 example of my home reservation, if you were to talk about
8 what opportunities lay in the oil and gas industry, it
9 would be hard to try to get an answer. What do they do
10 for me?

11 NOVA has a pipeline through the Saddle
12 Lake Reservation, but it is not significant to high school
13 students.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** The point
15 you are making is that, because there is such a lack of
16 awareness in the Aboriginal community of this industry,
17 young people are not even fully aware of what career
18 opportunities there really are because they don't
19 understand the way the industry works. If summer students
20 were employed, at the very least they would walk away with
21 an awareness. They would have had an education on what
22 the industry actually does, and it might prompt their
23 interest to start a career in it.

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1 **ARMAND CARDINAL:** Exactly.

2 Prior to working at NOVA, I worked for
3 Suncor. I was a heavy equipment operator there. I was
4 there for 10 years, and I never saw any university or
5 college students come to work on heavy equipment. Other
6 summer employment opportunities were provided to other
7 summer students.

8 I have heard now that they have a Native
9 Affairs Department. But that was after I left, so I
10 couldn't comment on it.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
12 Commissioner Robinson may have some questions.

13 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I don't
14 think I have any other questions except to thank you for
15 your presentations. I am encouraged by the initiatives
16 that have been undertaken to increase the employment of
17 Aboriginal people in the industry.

18 One comment I might make is that perhaps
19 there could be some sort of networking or something that
20 could be initiated that would encourage other industries
21 in other parts of Canada to begin the same kinds of
22 initiative that are being undertake here. Things cannot
23 be improved overnight, but I see this as a positive measure

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1 that will eventually lead to some improvement in the long
2 term. I think that is very encouraging.

3 I want to thank you for your
4 presentations.

5 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
6 very much. At this time we are going to take a five-minute
7 break, and then we will continue with Foothills Pipe Lines,
8 CAPP and Industrial Biotech Services.

9 --- Short Recess at 10:50 a.m.

10 --- Upon resuming at 11:05 a.m.

11 **JOHN BURRELL, Foothills Pipe Lines Ltd.:**

12 Thank you very much.

13 My name is John Burrell, and I am the
14 Vice-President of Project Development for Foothills Pipe
15 Lines Ltd. Also here today on our panel are Messrs Ron
16 Sunshine on my right and Robert Norwegian on my left.
17 Mr. Norwegian is an Operating Technician Level 4 with NOVA
18 Corporation of Alberta, and Mr. Sunshine is Special
19 Projects Co-ordinator for the Lesser Slave Lake Regional
20 Council.

21 First of all, let me express our
22 appreciation to the Commission for the opportunity to
23 appear before you today. Over the years Foothills has

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1 taken a number of initiatives to inform residents,
2 particularly Aboriginal people, about our pipeline
3 projects and also to involve them in opportunities related
4 to business, training and employment which projects such
5 as ours offer.

6 Today, consistent with the theme of this
7 Round Table, our presentation will focus on the training
8 and employment of Aboriginal people, more specifically
9 on the observations and experiences of Messrs Norwegian
10 and Sunshine. Both have developed successful careers and,
11 while neither are employees of Foothills, each as part
12 of their earlier career development participated in a
13 training program sponsored by Foothills. We believe their
14 observations will be of particular value to the Commission
15 and is the primary reason for our appearance today.

16 As background, I will first give a brief
17 description of Foothills' training programs in which Mr.
18 Norwegian and Mr. Sunshine participated, as well as a brief
19 overview of Foothills for those who may not be familiar
20 with our company. Following that, these two gentlemen
21 will make their presentations.

22 Foothills Pipe Lines Ltd. is a company
23 owned equally by NOVA Corporation of Alberta and Westcoast

7 In the early 1980s, however, Foothills
8 prebuilt the lower Canadian portion of the Alaska Natural
9 Gas Transportation System, which we refer to as ANGTS,
10 for the purpose of transporting additional Alberta gas
11 to the United States. ANGTS is the pipeline system
12 approved in both Canada and the United States for the
13 transportation of Prudhoe Bay gas to market.

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16 The objective of the program is to train
17 and qualify local residents in skilled trades such as
18 millwrights, mechanics, technicians, purchasing agents,
19 operators, et cetera, so that, when the northern pipeline
20 became a reality, they could return north to fill skilled
21 positions. It should be emphasized, however, that
22 providing this training was not a one-way street. By a
23 realizing a stable work force knowledgeable in the

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One of the drawbacks of the program was that, in order to provide the required hands-on skills training, it was necessary to relocate the trainees temporarily to Westcoast and NOVA pipeline facilities in southern Canada, as no such pipelines existed in the north.

17 Trainees were provided with on-the-job
18 training at established NOVA and Westcoast facilities and,
19 if pursuing an apprenticeable trade, were enrolled in a
20 formal apprenticeship program. Those pursuing
21 non-apprenticeship trades were enrolled in other skill
22 upgrading courses.

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8 In total, 74 northerners, of which 54
9 were Aboriginal people, were brought into the
10 Foothills/NOVA/Westcoast training program between 1971
11 and 1982. Many of them through participation in the
12 program earned their journeyman status. In 1982, when
13 the program was put in abeyance, 24 Aboriginal people were
14 in the program, and currently 11 of them are still employed
15 with NOVA or Westcoast, holding skilled positions such
16 as lead hand, technician, mechanic or millwright. Many
17 of the trainees who left the program over time returned
18 north to undertake business opportunities or other
19 employment.

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1 pipeline operations training program.

2 Pipeline construction also provides
3 training and employment opportunities, although on a
4 short-term basis, unless one elects to pursue pipeline
5 construction as a career.

6 In the late 1970s, when Foothills was
7 preparing to construct the prebuild portion of ANGTS, it
8 initiated and sponsored with CEIC and Alberta Advanced
9 Education a job-readiness training/life skills program
10 to help Aboriginal people living in communities near the
11 pipeline corridor prepare for construction jobs on the
12 pipeline. The program was designed not to define a career
13 path but, rather, to give the participants a "kick start"
14 toward employment.

15 The course was conducted at the Alberta
16 Vocational College at Grouard and lasted approximately
17 15 weeks. Afterward, Foothills made concerted efforts
18 to help graduates of the program find construction jobs
19 on the pipeline. Six separate training sessions were
20 conducted, 147 people enrolled, and 96 graduated, of which
21 95 were Aboriginal people. Of these, 78 found employment
22 after graduation, with seven of them currently full-time
23 employees of NOVA. Mr. Sunshine is a graduate of this

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1 Grouard Training Program.

2 Before hearing from Messrs Sunshine and
3 Norwegian, as a closing to my portion of the presentation,
4 I believe it is fair to say that Foothills and other
5 companies have sponsored programs and have taken policy
6 decisions which have been successful in providing
7 meaningful training, employment and entrepreneurial
8 opportunities for Aboriginal people. Providing such
9 opportunities requires companies to be willing,
10 understanding and innovative but, in my opinion, the key
11 to success is the sincere and strong support by very senior
12 company management.

13 Thank you.

14 Perhaps I could call on Robert Norwegian
15 now to give his presentation.

16 **ROBERT NORWEGIAN:** Thank you, John.

17 I would like to thank everybody, the
18 Royal Commission and the corporations, for letting me say
19 something here on behalf of the Native people working for
20 NOVA Corporation.

21 I am not a real politician. I usually
22 leave that up to my brother, Herb. He is the Chief of
23 the Mackenzie Delta Region now. I have written something

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1 down. I don't know whether it will make any sense, but
2 we will go.

3 I start off by saying: Who Am I? I am
4 a Dene Aboriginal Treaty person originally from Fort
5 Simpson, Northwest Territories, a direct descendant of
6 SU-ZAH MAY-TAH who fed and protected against all elements
7 for the safe journey of Sir Alexander MacKenzie down the
8 Deh-Cho, Mackenzie River, to the Arctic Coast and on to
9 Coppermine in the 1700s.

10 I am the grandson of Chief Joseph Ethlo
11 Norwegian and Elizabeth Bouvier who was the main spokesman
12 and negotiator in signing of the Treaty in the mid-1920s.
13 They also raised and taught me the true traditional values
14 of the Dene.

15 A direct descendant of Louis Riel, I
16 would like to dedicate this to all my ancestors and
17 unrecognized Native guides that helped your forefathers,
18 explorers and settlers directly and indirectly to make
19 this country what it is today. They saw that, even under
20 extreme pressures and cruelty from both sides, some day
21 we could all work together and live together as true
22 Canadians -- not the stroke-of-the-pen type based on greed.

23 Today I sit in front of you as a humble

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1 family man. My name is Robert (Bobby) Norwegian of Edson,
2 son of the late Roderick Norwegian and mother Sarah
3 Champlain of Northwest Territories. I have three
4 beautiful children and a very caring and loving friend
5 and wife, Debbie. We will be celebrating our 20th
6 anniversary this June 9.

7 I have chosen a little different path
8 from my forefathers -- not a politician or an excellent
9 woodsman but a man that might break a different path into
10 a world of many rivers of life.

11 But as a true Dene, we are very proud
12 people. We always kept our heads up high and always looked
13 into the brighter future for our people and most of all
14 our children and their children. Through their eyes we
15 shall always see and live forever to the end of time, with
16 respect for the land and each other. This is the Dene
17 way.

18 There is one person who really inspired
19 not only myself but many young Native people who lifted
20 our hearts, that there was light and hope at the end of
21 this rugged, lonely, missionary lifestyle of our education
22 and to go on into the new way.

23 It was close to the end of my high school

6 One year later I graduated from high
7 school. Another very important person that I must
8 mention, who gave me great directions and true visions,
9 was Mr. Robert Blair, former Chief Executive Officer of
10 NOVA and Foothills Pipe Lines. Without his keen ideas
11 and philosophies, I would not be sitting here with you
12 today.

21 We don't where this fast stream of life
22 is taking us. Even our spiritual medicine, our guidance
23 of the Dene ways have left us. We are now in limbo.

7 I was approached by our local
8 government, Manpower, and thinking: This is it; I am
9 heading to Vietnam. But, to my surprise, they asked if
10 I would be interested in another venture, working for a
11 pipeline company: "There is talk of a major pipeline going
12 through here from the Arctic down to Alberta." This more
13 or less gave me a second breath of life, so to speak, and
14 I put this Air Force business off to see what it was all
15 about.

23 Yes, we were trained very intensely on

4 I studied as a Controls Technician,
5 training as a Controls Technician and finally to a Senior
6 Controls Technician, all based on most electronics,
7 pneumatic and hydraulic controls. I have many
8 certificates that all relate to my job, and most of all
9 I cherish my Journeyman Electrician's Certificate with
10 provincial and interprovincial seals on it, completed at
11 SAIT here in Calgary in 1976.

As time changed from weeks to months and
months to years, after twenty-two and a half years with
NOVA, I feel I have become part of the top technical team
which is the main backbone of this company. I can say,
looking back, that I am proud to have been part of this
new and growing company.

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1 to this new fast pace of life plus loneliness.

2 If there is any discrimination from our
3 own survey that was done -- and I have talked to many
4 different groups of Natives who have come and gone, who
5 quit or moved on or whatever; this is my own personal
6 survey. It was done more directly at a few supervisory
7 levels above the workers directly. Maybe they wanted
8 their friends in before the Aboriginal people -- who knows?

9 This is why I tell myself to have thick
10 skin and bad hearing. I don't think you will ever get
11 100 per cent no discrimination but, on the other hand,
12 I have some of the greatest and respected non-Native
13 friends that override these problems.

14 Our management and administration
15 levels and on up are very understanding and concerned and
16 always ready to be helpful with any way they could resolve
17 this misunderstanding in a professional and caring
18 fashion.

19 NOVA and Foothills Pipe Lines have a good
20 foundation for Natives working for them and are very
21 positive and sincere, I have personally felt. They have
22 let me put my foot in the door, and I will be damned if
23 I am going to pull my foot back out. Just maybe our

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1 children will open the door and have a look down the
2 hallways, and their children will go even farther.

3 Before light goes out from my eyes,
4 hopefully from old age, I will see Natives doing other
5 positive things besides our fighting for our rightful place
6 here.

7 In answering the first question, Who Am
8 I?, I am a true Dene. You must live a while to understand
9 and earn it.

10 In closing, I would like to thank both
11 the corporations and the Royal Commission group for being
12 concerned. Remember, most of the time a cry in the
13 darkness is never heard, but sometimes people like
14 yourselves care to listen and help us dry our tears away.

15 Thank you very much. Maceto.

16 **JOHN BURRELL:** Perhaps we can hear from
17 Ron now.

18 **RON SUNSHINE:** Thank you, John.

19 I am Ron Sunshine, and I am involved in
20 the Grouard Program.

21 The Grouard Program in a six-month
22 period allowed me to experience working off-reserve for
23 the first time. The program has taught me skills, how

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1 to work hard and how to deal with people. These skills
2 have helped me a great deal in my workplace and in my daily
3 life.

4 My first employment after completing the
5 Grouard Program was a job with the Alberta Gas Ethylene
6 Company. I worked as a warehouseman. This was a new
7 plant, and I was fortunate to be part of the setting-up
8 of the warehouse from the ground up. The plant was run
9 on a team system, and through this I learned to work with
10 the other departments in the plant.

11 This management process also allowed me
12 to have input in top management. In this segment of my
13 job experience I had tremendous support from management
14 and my co-workers. This is a credit to the company and
15 their support for Native people.

16 An opening for a Socio-economic
17 Counsellor became available at the Foot Hills Pipe Line
18 Company. With my experience with the Grouard Program and
19 my employment at the Alberta Gas Ethylene Company I felt
20 confident in applying for this position. I was successful
21 and worked for Foot Hills until the oil boom went down
22 in 1982.

23 I was given an opportunity to seek

4 This experience with NOVA and Foot Hills
5 Company has opened doors for me that otherwise I would
6 never have access to. To this day I stay in contact with
7 NOVA staff, and I sometimes seek advice and information
8 on Native employment.

I am currently employed at the Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council in the capacity of Special Projects Co-ordinator. Also I work as a technician for the Grand Council of Treaty 8. In my view, this is valuable experience for a person living on reserve and who wants to find a way to gain meaningful employment.

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1 technology, should the company decide to run this type
2 of program.

3 Thank you for listening to my
4 presentation.

5 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
6 you, Foot Hills Pipe Lines Ltd. At this time I would like
7 to call on Al Reid. He represents the Canadian Association
8 of Petroleum Producers. He is employed at Shell Canada,
9 but he is representing this group.

10 **AL REID, Canadian Association of**
11 **Petroleum Producers:** Thank you for the introduction.

12 We in CAPP are appreciative of the
13 opportunity to address the Royal Commission this morning
14 in Calgary. I should provide a little background on the
15 Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers first.

16 It is a group of upstream petroleum
17 companies that are involved in exploring for, developing
18 and producing crude oil and natural gas and their primary
19 products. Its membership encompasses about 200 companies
20 that produce roughly 95 per cent of Canada's oil and gas,
21 primarily in western Canada.

22 CAPP, as an association, serves as a
23 focus for its member companies to come together to develop

4 To take a look backward to past
5 relationships that have existed between CAPP companies
6 and Aboriginal groups, its companies have had a long
7 history of exploring for and producing oil and gas on
8 traditional and reserve lands, primarily in western and
9 northern Canada.

Our submission this morning would intend to offer some responses to questions posed in the Royal Commission's documents which impact on CAPP's membership and to provide a brief summary of current undertakings between CAPP companies and Aboriginal communities. We believe that the Royal Commission may find some of these

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3 Before getting into the economic and
4 employment arena, I do want to make a comment with respect
5 to Aboriginal self-government as it may impact on CAPP.

8 There is a need to have a government environment, whether
9 it be the existing one or an Aboriginal one, that allows
10 CAPP's companies to compete in this world-wide setting.

14 There are examples of this currently in the various
15 northern land claim agreements.

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1 for the company to work with the Aboriginal government
2 in a spirit of co-operation, trust, honesty and openness.

3 With respect to employment
4 opportunities for Aboriginals with CAPP's member
5 companies, I make the following observations.

6 As you have heard from some of the
7 individual companies earlier this morning, our member
8 companies who are active on and around Aboriginal lands
9 can, and do, communicate job and career opportunities to
10 Aboriginals in our industry. This communication takes
11 place at both the local community school levels and at
12 post-secondary educational institutions.

13 While some job opportunities do exist
14 with oil and gas operating facilities adjacent to
15 Aboriginal communities, career paths for professional
16 employees usually require a willingness to work in
17 different geographical locations.

18 To encourage Aboriginals to enrol in
19 post-secondary educational institutions, CAPP's member
20 companies offer financial support to Aboriginals, either
21 in the direct form of scholarships and bursaries or
22 indirectly to the institutional programs and facilities.

23 Some joint

6 I might add as an aside that, if there
7 was an opportunity for the Royal Commission to create a
8 simpler way of approaching the provincial and federal
9 funding process to facilitate the completion of education
10 and acquisition of job skills, I think that would be a
11 very useful direction for the Commission to take.

20 To assist the Aboriginal employee to
21 succeed, the company needs to make its existing employees
22 aware of the unique qualities, experiences and beliefs
23 that the new employee possesses and, if required, provide

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1 a support or coaching system for them.

2 We have created a number of beliefs that
3 we believe are important with respect to building
4 Aboriginal relationships with CAPP's member companies.
5 We believe that barriers currently do exist to Aboriginal
6 people finding employment and with Aboriginal companies
7 receiving orders and contracts from the industry. We
8 believe that the companies need to help break down these
9 barriers, whether they be real or perceived ones. We
10 believe strongly that, in building a successful
11 company/Aboriginal community relationship, it is
12 necessary that the Aboriginal people's history, cultures
13 and values be understood and respected by the company,
14 but equally that the company's business objectives and
15 plans be understood and respected by the Aboriginal
16 peoples.

17 Increased awareness within the oil and
18 gas industry is needed to recognize that the migration
19 of effective control from the federal government to
20 Aboriginal communities is a reality. Hence, there is a
21 need to establish strong industry/Aboriginal working
22 relationships.

23 CAPP's member companies need to support

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1 oil and gas-related job training initiatives for
2 Aboriginals where active Aboriginal support exists for
3 those requirements and where real hiring opportunities
4 exist.

5 Aboriginal leaders and Elders can play
6 a valuable role in encouraging their young people to remain
7 in school such that they can satisfy the entry level
8 academic standards for the industry.

9 Making economic opportunities available
10 to Aboriginal community businesses can serve as a useful
11 role in building this relationship with the community.
12 By fostering and facilitating the development of
13 Aboriginal businesses, the oil and gas industry can
14 contribute to its own long-term acceptability to
15 Aboriginal communities.

16 Again, I think there is another
17 recommendation to the Commission here, and that is to
18 encourage the creation of relationships between industry
19 and Aboriginal groups across the country. I believe that
20 would go a long way toward creating job opportunities for
21 Aboriginals.

22 I want to close by citing a few examples
23 of where CAPP member companies are working on establishing

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1 relationships with Aboriginal groups.

2 First, I would like to comment on a
3 Memorandum of Understanding that has been put in place
4 recently between CAPP and the Canadian Indian Energy
5 Corporation. My good friend, Larry Kaida from IEC is out
6 there some place, and he will probably keep me honest with
7 what I am about to say.

8 A Memorandum of Understanding was signed
9 in April 1992 between CAPP and the IEC. The IEC represents
10 a little over 100 First Nations bands across the country.
11 The Memorandum of Understanding requires that the leaders
12 of these bands and the CAPP companies signatory to the
13 agreement meet annually to discuss issues. That meeting
14 has become dubbed the "Chief-to-Chief" meeting, and we
15 have had two of them now.

16 The MOU similarly has set up a joint
17 working committee that is intended to address ongoing
18 subjects such as employment and training, both the needs
19 of the industry and ability of members of those First
20 Nations bands to meet those needs, to improve the
21 opportunities for commercial development on First Nations
22 lands, and to try to create a more efficient framework
23 of managing Indian lands for oil and gas development.

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1 That, in essence, is the thrust of the
2 Memorandum of Understanding. We believe, from the
3 industry side, that its signing a year and a half ago we
4 have made good progress in terms of communication geared
5 toward understanding our respective needs and priorities,
6 anticipating future issues and setting the stage for a
7 direct business relationship without direct federal
8 government involvement.

9 A second example of where our industry
10 has worked with Aboriginal groups is in northeast B.C.
11 through the formation of a gas producers' group. It was
12 created in 1990 as a forum to discuss opportunities and
13 expectations between members of the Treaty 8 bands in the
14 region and gas companies involved in exploring for and
15 producing natural gas. It has grown since then to include
16 local educational institutions and provincial government
17 representatives.

18 There has been specific joint task teams
19 established to address the following areas: first,
20 closing the gap in formal education; second, training for
21 advancement in industrial employment and business; third,
22 developing industrial careers; fourth, developing
23 relationships between industry and Aboriginal businesses,

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1 informing Aboriginal communities about industry, the
2 so-called Gas School and, the flip side of that, informing
3 industry about Aboriginal communities which has become
4 known as the "Moose School."

5 Again, in terms of looking for models
6 that may have application elsewhere in the country, perhaps
7 this northeast B.C. one is a consideration.

8 Each of these task teams has established
9 short and long-term objectives. The membership from the
10 industry side includes the majority of CAPP's companies
11 that operate in the area and each of the seven First Nations
12 bands.

13 Accomplishments to date have included
14 the creation of an increasingly open and frank dialogue
15 in a round table format, the creation of a Native
16 Construction Contractors' Association in the area to
17 better represent the budding Aboriginal contractors.
18 Also the gas companies are changing the way in which they
19 subcontract construction work to better create
20 opportunities for those young contractors. As well,
21 specific job skill training has been provided to individual
22 Aboriginal workers.

23 The third example is one that my friend,

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1 Peter Verity, has talked to, and that is the Peace Arch
2 Project. Again, I would support Peter's contention that
3 it may well deserve consideration also as a model of
4 government, industry and Aboriginal communities working
5 together for economic improvement.

6 In closing, I would like to say that our
7 submission has endeavoured to share CAPP's recent
8 experiences, its undertakings and its beliefs relative
9 to issues defined by the Commission that impact on or are
10 impacted by its member companies.

11 I would say that there are a number of
12 equally important issues that have not been addressed
13 because we believe they fall outside the bounds of our
14 association. Issues defined by the Commission have been
15 created over a long period of time, and it is unlikely
16 that resolution of those problems will occur quickly.

17 CAPP believes that its member companies
18 can contribute to some of the solutions by looking for
19 opportunities to build relationships with Aboriginal
20 communities in areas of their operation that will provide
21 economic opportunities for Aboriginal businesses and
22 employment opportunities in our industry.

23 Hopefully, these examples of such

8 Personally, I would say that, unlike my
9 friend Dave Yager, I am personally optimistic that the
10 oil and gas industry can help Aboriginal communities and
11 individuals to meet a number of their economic expectations
12 without a simultaneous loss of their identity.

16 Thank you.

19 At this time Industrial Biotechnology
20 Services will do their presentation.

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1 to, I guess, as an assimilated Canadian -- although it
2 has been hell to become one.

3 I would like to speak on three items.

4 I would like to tell you a little bit about my background,
5 the business I am involved in, and about an innovative
6 training program that I am in the process of developing,
7 which is focused specifically on biotechnology at this
8 point but perhaps there might be an opportunity to expand
9 it to other industries such as oil and gas, architecture
10 and various other industries like that. It is focused
11 on high tech opportunities and it is focused on not just
12 looking at graduates today but getting deeper into the
13 school systems so that we can develop and mentor graduates
14 to the point where they become potential candidates for
15 employment with various companies in the higher tech areas
16 rather than the menial opportunities.

17 I was in the Canadian Forces for 16
18 years. I progressed from Private to Senior Officer. I
19 completed Staff College and I attended Carleton
20 University.

21 I then went into the oil and gas industry
22 for 12 years, where I was part-owner, Vice-President and
23 General Manager of the Northern Gas Service Company. We

3 I left that industry and got into
4 biotechnology where I am currently employed. I worked
5 at biotechnology for two years and then started up my own
6 company in 1992.

15 We currently have projects in Canada,
16 U.S., Egypt and Ecuador, so it's an international
17 opportunity when you are involved in both biotech and the
18 environment.

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1 Also, from an Aboriginal standpoint,
2 those two particular industries are very natural to
3 Aboriginal people. I would foresee the point in time when
4 we could become experts in those two industries and perhaps
5 export our expertise to indigenous peoples throughout
6 Central and South America where they can really use our
7 services.

8 Once I set my company up, I then
9 developed an interest that I have had for a long time,
10 and that was to establish a school for Work Transition
11 programs for Aboriginal people. When I went through this
12 particular problem, I found it very, very difficult. I
13 went through prejudice. In the Forces, for example,
14 people were looking for me to fail, not to succeed. Every
15 step that I went up the chain of promotion, people didn't
16 assess me on the basis of what they thought I might be
17 able to do positively but where was I going to fail. Most
18 of it was overt type of discrimination, but some of it
19 was right out.

20 You can do things one of two ways: You
21 can either quit at that point and do something else, or
22 you can bear down and fight harder, and that is what I
23 chose to do.

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1 The training program, the model for
2 which I have here, is basically focused on biotechnology.
3 It is focused on my company, Industrial Biotech Services.
4 The idea is to take students from high school, vocational,
5 college, university, and you put them through an on-the-job
6 training program within a specific company like mine.
7 You then allow them to make choices, whether they want
8 to get involved in that particular field or whether they
9 want to go back to school for some post-graduate training
10 or whether they want to look for opportunities in other
11 companies in similar fields.

12 I was then approached by the local Métis
13 organization, Zone Three, to determine if I would be
14 interested in expanding this model both within
15 biotechnology and the environment and perhaps looking at
16 it for the oil and gas industry, pulp and paper and various
17 other technical industries.

18 They then approached Canada Manpower.
19 I am currently working on a research project to determine
20 if there is a need for that, to determine if we can put
21 the employer's resources to conduct such programs and to
22 determine the feasibility of actually getting these people
23 jobs at the end of the pipeline. The idea is to establish

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1 this pipeline, interest younger people in the school
2 system, make them aware of industries that have job
3 opportunities at the end -- not just job opportunities
4 with other companies but business opportunities where they
5 could actually set up a business and get Aboriginal people
6 into businesses so that there are mentor opportunities
7 within these businesses, and then to build on that
8 particular system.

9 I am currently at the stage where I have
10 done the research with various resource groups at the high
11 school, university and college level. We have determined
12 that there is a definite interest. Most Aboriginal youth
13 want to get out there. They want to succeed. They want
14 to compete for opportunities. Now we are in a position
15 where we can perhaps present them with that opportunity
16 right from start to finish. Don't abandon them after high
17 school or after graduation from college or university.
18 That's terrible.

19 A lot of the students I spoke to are
20 actually working in totally unrelated fields at this point,
21 so they have wasted a good four years of hard work and
22 they are actually not working in their particular field.

23 I am currently about to embark on the

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1 employer part of this, and I am extremely interested in
2 some of the comments that I heard today from the companies
3 that are present. I do believe that you are sincere in
4 what you said today, and this perhaps can be the opportunity
5 to back it up.

6 More important, from CAPP's point of
7 view, I would like to see the opportunity to involve other
8 companies. The companies that are here today are the
9 companies that are very, very involved in this particular
10 business of helping Aboriginals get into the work force.

11 It seems that some of the companies that I would have
12 liked to have seen here today are the companies that are
13 not, and let's find out why they are not.

14 I basically want to determine what
15 interest we have and then establish a total package. The
16 package would follow something like this: You have
17 Project Minerva that looks at the young students in the
18 school system. Then you go to the CAPP system or something
19 similar to that. CASTS is the Canadian Aboriginal Science
20 and Technology Society which is an organization similar
21 to the one they have in the United States. Then you get
22 into the employer training program, and then, through the
23 employer network system, hopefully you will get these

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1 people employed in job opportunities.

2 I would dearly like to see this program
3 work as a joint non-Aboriginal/Aboriginal program, but
4 I have the determination that, if it doesn't work that
5 way, then perhaps what we need would be more Aboriginal
6 businesses that would simply compete with existing
7 non-Aboriginal businesses, such as oil and gas companies,
8 where we can make our own training opportunities. But
9 that would be a last resort. I believe in working together
10 for this.

11 Thank you very much.

12 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
13 you, Mr. Bercier. I will hand it back to the Commissioners
14 to ask their questions.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I would like
16 to thank all the presenters. Perhaps we could start with
17 Foothills.

18 The story that was told to us this
19 morning about some of the training programs that were done
20 in the late seventies and early eighties seemed like they
21 were quite successful. I understood why the training was
22 set up in relation to the proposed Mackenzie Valley
23 Pipeline which didn't occur at that time. I am a little

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1 disheartened to see that the program training didn't
2 continue on.

3 Of course, one of the concerns everybody
4 had at the time, when Mackenzie Valley Pipeline was being
5 proposed and in other situations like it, was that training
6 should have begun 10 years earlier, before we discussed
7 whether or not it should be built, the reality being that
8 training should be done today for an eventual pipeline
9 down the Valley or wherever else.

10 Is there any thought about revisiting
11 training projects like this, not necessarily with the Dene
12 and the Aboriginal people in the Arctic, but just the
13 concept of actually getting involved in trying to find
14 quick ways of getting Aboriginal people to be involved
15 in this career and in this business? It seems like the
16 training certainly was successful for a number of people.

17 Whether or not they are directly employed in these
18 particular companies, it seems that they are probably
19 employed elsewhere in the industry or related work.

20 **JOHN BURRELL:** We believe the program
21 was very successful. We were disappointed, too, that we
22 had to put it in abeyance in the early eighties. As I
23 mentioned, it was targeted to providing employment

5 We couldn't do that, and we didn't think
6 that was fair -- and we have heard it from others here
7 -- that you have to continue on, not just employment and
8 then stop, but you have to go on and give training.

13 I also appreciate, as you said, that
14 there would have to be sufficient lead time, and we
15 recognize that. This program, as we see it, would be
16 initiated and activated in sufficient time to allow the
17 people coming out of it to have the skills necessary to
18 operate the pipeline. In addition to that, once the
19 pipeline was in operation, we would expect that all that
20 training would be transferred north and that we would
21 continue on being able to provide such training to the
22 people in the north.

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3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What about
4 the ongoing operations?

12 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS: I didn't
13 appreciate that. You just build the pipeline.

23 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS: In relation

5 **AL REID:** I will try, Mr. Chairman.

11 What I might suggest is that there needs
12 to be a fairly tight link between completion of formal
13 education, acquisition of specific training skills and
14 a real job. If the first two links are there but the third
15 one is not, then it just becomes an exercise in frustration
16 for the individual.

22 The northeast B.C. example is a region
23 of the province that has seen recent significant increase

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1 in oil and gas industry operations and has brought along
2 with it a real opportunity to link completion of education
3 and acquisition of specific job skills with a real job
4 at the end of the day, as opposed to a province-wide or
5 nation-wide concept.

6 What I would say in response is that I
7 think the successful examples are ones that tend to be
8 focused to a specific community or series of communities
9 in a given region where there is an oil and gas company
10 or a number of oil and gas companies that have a particular
11 interest in that region, as opposed to a province or
12 nation-wide one.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** That means
14 that you have already come to the conclusion that you
15 wouldn't create national training programs or national
16 educational awards.

17 **AL REID:** It seems to me that there are
18 a number of different undertakings already there from
19 federal and provincial governments. The perception is
20 that perhaps they aren't all co-ordinated and easily
21 accessed by Aboriginals seeking to benefit from them.

22 Another nation-wide kind of undertaking
23 -- if I look at those past examples, I am not sure how

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1 successful it would be.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What do you
3 think of this last presentation that was just made by
4 Industrial Biotech Services? Does that make sense to you?

5 **AL REID:** Going down the road of
6 Aboriginals having the confidence and the capability and
7 the fortitude, in some cases, to create their own
8 businesses is the right thing to do long-term, and our
9 industry can help them.

10 We are a capital-intensive industry.
11 We are not directly large employers. But, in making our
12 capital investments, we do hire a large number of companies
13 to design and construct and maintain facilities for us.
14 So we do have a significant opportunity as an industry
15 to help create and grow Aboriginal businesses in the areas
16 that we do operate.

17 I don't think we would necessarily see
18 these service maintenance industries as competitors, but
19 I do think their growth would be a big step toward
20 Aboriginal business people being able to create employment
21 opportunities for other Aboriginals, as opposed to
22 depending on the so-called large mainstream oil and gas
23 companies.

3 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS: What about
4 the training scheme he has?

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Mr. Bercier,
13 how many people have you actually brought through your
14 present system, the scheme you originally started?

19 All of our new positions will give
20 preference to the Aboriginal community. We expect to grow
21 to about 10 people within the next two years.

22 I was just setting up the program when

23 I was approached by the Métis Nation and by Canada

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1 Employment to expand the program that I had intended to
2 introduce in my company to include other similar companies
3 and to go a step farther by looking at other industries
4 in the same context.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** When do you
6 think you will be at the writing stage of describing what
7 this actually looks like? You said you have done some
8 of the research and the interest is there amongst the young
9 Aboriginal people. When will you finally have this
10 written up?

11 **PAUL BERCIER:** The end of June is the
12 target I have set for this. What I wanted to do is to
13 meet with a number of private companies. I have met with
14 a number in the biotechnology area, but I would also like
15 to get some additional information from the other
16 industries, particularly the industries that are about
17 to prosper, such as the oil and gas industry and perhaps
18 the pipeline industry, and look at other industries.

19 I don't want to dilute my final report
20 by looking at too many areas. I would like to have the
21 report more focused.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** We certainly
23 would appreciate and benefit from your work if we could

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1 be lucky enough to share the results of what you have done.
2 June would be very good timing for us, if we could get
3 our hands on it.

4 **PAUL BERCIER:** I would be delighted.

5 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I don't
6 have many questions; I just have one very general, overall
7 question, and it would apply to just about anybody here
8 who has talked about training.

9 What percentage of the training is
10 directed to women, or are there any in the companies?

11 **BARBARA TATE:** I will ask Charlie to
12 comment on the training mix in the NOVA program.

13 **CHARLES SOMERS:** On the NOVA program I
14 don't have any comments but, on the AVC Grouard Program,
15 it was open to both men and women. There were several
16 ladies in the program, and they did very good jobs, too.

17 **BARBARA TATE:** All of our programs are
18 open to both. If Marlene had not had a family situation,
19 we would have been fortunate enough to have had a female
20 here today.

21 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I just
22 asked because there was no reference made to women in all
23 the presentations that were made. I just wanted to find

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1 out.

2 **JOHN BURRELL:** If I recall correctly,
3 I believe in our O&M training program there were two women
4 involved -- two or three perhaps -- working in office work.

5 In our construction programs we also
6 emphasize the employment of women as well as Native people.

7 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank
8 you.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** We would
10 like to thank you all for participating in this Round Table
11 and spending the length of time you have with us. We
12 certainly appreciate it.

13 If you can think of anything else that
14 you might want to send us in writing or otherwise, we would
15 appreciate it very much. Thank you.

16 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
17 to the oil and gas industry. At this time I would like
18 to call on Deanna Grey Eyes, Pat Shirt, and Wilson Okeymaw.
19 They are with the National Native Association of Treatment
20 Directors. Pat Shirt, from the Poundmaker's Lodge, will
21 be doing the presentation.

22 **DEANNA GREY EYES, National Native**
23 **Association of Treatment Directors:** Good morning, Mr.

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1 Commissioner. I am Deanna Grey Eyes. I am with the
2 National Native Association of Treatment Directors.

3 Very briefly, our association is made
4 up of the men and women who run the various Native alcohol
5 and drug treatment centres across Canada. Currently our
6 membership is at 38.

7 Last July in Edmonton, at the Healing
8 our Spirit Worldwide Conference, our membership voted to
9 open up the membership to include the prevention workers
10 who work on the reserves.

11 We are here today to share with you some
12 of our findings as a result of a survey that we conducted
13 with our membership.

14 With me is Pat Shirt who is the President
15 of our association. He is also the Executive-Director
16 of Poundmaker's Lodge in Edmonton.

17 Wilson Okeymaw is our First
18 Vice-President. He is the Executive Director of the
19 Nayo-Skan Centre in Hobbema, Alberta.

20

21 **PAT SHIRT, President, National Native**
22 **Association of Treatment Directors:** Thank you, Deanna.
23 Thank you, Commissioners.

6 If Commissioners will turn to page 7,
7 that is where I will start my brief.

We treat approximately 7,500 Native people for addictions every year, and we deliver treatment programs that are designed to meet the needs of the clients and the communities that we serve. As a result, our members' treatment programs and philosophies of treatment are diverse. However, the one common element to all programs and treatment philosophies is the belief in the necessity of incorporating a strong cultural component into a treatment process based on the value of holistic

3 As a group, we share approximately 350
4 years of experience in the addictions field. Since we
5 became a national organization, we have learned much
6 through sharing our experience and expertise -- so much
7 so that we believe that we cannot share this knowledge
8 and expertise with you in a brief half-hour. Therefore,
9 we have produced a written document based on primary and
10 secondary research which details some of the things we
11 will share with you now. It details our successes and
12 challenges and provides the rationale for the
13 recommendations we now make.

21 We, the National Native Association of
22 Treatment Directors, know this, maybe better than anyone
23 else because it is to our members' healing centres that

3 We know that substance abuse,
4 specifically alcoholism, is the most serious medical
5 condition as it has wide-ranging social ramifications.
6 It is the primary cause of mortality and morbidity and
7 contributes to domestic violence, family dissolution and
8 criminal behaviour. We know that socioeconomic concerns,
9 including poor health, unemployment, poverty, inadequate
10 education and the resultant low self-esteem, are both
11 causes and effects in relation to substance abuse.

19 We see men, women and our youth who spend
20 most of their lives in prisons, who may never have a
21 permanent job and who maim each other in drunken stupors.
22 We see youth who seem bent on destroying themselves
23 through alcohol, other drugs and criminal behaviour. We

5 When we drink, we neglect our families,
6 and our children end up in foster care, shuffled from home
7 to home because their own families and relatives can't
8 or won't take care of them. Sometimes these children learn
9 to hate their families, themselves and their people.

15 We know there is never enough jobs,
16 housing or money. As well-informed, educated Aboriginal
17 people, we know the theories of the impact of the
18 colonization process and we understand that many things
19 in the past have contributed to our present-day situation.

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1 they experience.

2 The "drunken Indian" image has become
3 a well-known stereotype in Canadian society. Some
4 theorists believe our people are predisposed to addiction;
5 they believe it is in our blood. They believe that all
6 Indians are drunks and that the Canadian tax dollar spent
7 on addictions services to Aboriginal people are wasted
8 because we are lazy and unreliable.

9 As Aboriginal people, we have spent a
10 great deal of time, energy and money blaming and often
11 perpetuating the images and stereotypes of ourselves as
12 victims -- victims of cultural genocide, the residential
13 school system, sexual abuse and inadequate justice,
14 education or social service systems.

15 There are those who believe that, if
16 socioeconomic conditions in our communities were improved
17 and our people did not feel so powerless, substance abuse
18 would disappear. Many of us believe that socioeconomic
19 conditions will not change until alcohol and other drug
20 addictions are addressed. Others believe that substance
21 abuse generates despondency and apathy. We know that the
22 two become part of a vicious cycle, and we have learned
23 that sobriety breaks into this cycle.

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1 When we sober up, we begin to take care
2 of our homes, our families and our communities. As
3 treatment directors, we cannot afford to waste the time
4 and the money debating the causes of substance abuse or
5 feeling frustrated by things over which we have no control.

6 We see that the cycle of abuse that exists right now is
7 what we have to focus on, and we know treatment programs
8 work to reduce not only substance abuse but also to reduce
9 family violence, sexual abuse, child abuse and neglect,
10 apathy and the feeling of powerlessness.

11 As directors of Native substance abuse
12 treatment centres, we do not deny that we have suffered.

13 In fact, most of us have spent a lot of time discussing
14 with our clients in treatment, our staff and each other
15 how and why we became victims.

16 More important, however, we discuss how
17 we can change that victim identity to a survivor identity.

18 We emphasize that while we, as a people, were victims,
19 we are also survivors. We emphasize that we are a strong,
20 resilient people and that we can change our lives and our
21 communities so as to restore our dignity and self-respect.

22 Because we believe that low self-esteem
23 -- that is, a negative self-image -- is what makes it

11 We help those who present themselves to
12 the centres to regain their cultural identity and to
13 reintegrate traditional values into their daily lives.
14 We help them develop coping skills to deal with the
15 pressures we know they experience when they return to their
16 families and communities which may still be dysfunctional.

22 We believe that our Native Treatment
23 Centres are more successful because our staff are Native,

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1 are familiar with Native values and are proud of their
2 heritage. They are positive role models and are
3 non-judgmental. The staff at Native Treatment Centres
4 are able to provide counselling services which are
5 culturally relevant, non-clinical, non-confrontational
6 and based on traditional values. We cannot prove this
7 empirically, but we know our people heal more quickly in
8 our centres because they are with their own people who
9 have shared many of the same experiences.

10 As a collective, we have identified our
11 successes as deriving from:

- 12 - program development and delivery;
- 13 - cultural programming to increase the
14 awareness and self-esteem;
- 15 - the use of Native counsellors as role
16 models;
- 17 - introducing or strengthening
18 traditional spirituality; and
- 19 - helping our clients learn to help
20 themselves.

21 We cannot say that 40, 60, 70 or 80 per
22 cent of the 7,500 people that we treat annually have
23 remained sober or drug-free because we do not have access

As a national body, our successes are clearly evident in the workshops, training and training manuals that we have produced and developed. We have delivered workshops designed to meet the needs of the Native clients to some of our Native counsellors and other human resource people on a wide variety of issues. We have produced extensive culturally-relevant training manuals for therapeutic recreation and physical development, family systems, sexual abuse, and have trained some of our counsellors and others in these areas.

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1 of Canadian Native addiction services. We have also
2 hosted one of the foremost national conferences on Native
3 addictions, "Bridges into Tomorrow," and more recently
4 co-hosted the international conference on Native
5 addictions, "Healing our Spirit Worldwide." Our trainers
6 are in demand across Canada, in the United States and,
7 in particular, in Alaska.

8 We have produced what we and other
9 accredited addiction training centres believe is some of
10 the best training material available for working with
11 Native people. However, we cannot afford to send our
12 members' counselling staff to receive this training, nor
13 can we afford to bring the trainers into all the communities
14 requesting our services.

15 We work with what we have to combat the
16 effects of substance abuse in our communities. However,
17 we can only work primarily with the client who is in
18 treatment, with few exceptions.

19 Failures or weaknesses derive not from
20 treatment services, but from:

- 21 - poor networking ability;
22 - clients returning to dysfunctional
23 communities;

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1 - inadequately trained staff for
2 delivery of mental health services; and
3 - inability to follow up on maintenance
4 programs, such as aftercare, and gaps in services such
5 as: lack of training; lack of target group programs for
6 adolescents, families, solvent abusers; lack of shelters
7 and crisis lines; and inadequate or absent referral
8 systems.

9 While all our clients leave our centres
10 feeling better about themselves, with new coping skills
11 and a clearer mind, there are times when we have to send
12 clients home who we know are not ready to cope with the
13 extraordinary stresses of daily living existent in First
14 Nations communities. Sometimes it is because our programs
15 are not long enough or our counselling staff do not have
16 the time or the training to adequately counsel clients
17 who need to deal with past traumas or have mental health
18 problems.

19 It takes many of our clients until the
20 last week of their stay with us to be able to share their
21 history of violence, sexual abuse, neglect and despair
22 and truly begin the healing process. Unfortunately, many
23 of these people are returning to families and communities

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1 which remain sick and cannot, or will not, support this
2 person struggling to get well.

3 We worry when we see our overburdened
4 staff deal with crisis after crisis, unable to take the
5 time to deal with maintaining their own recovery and
6 healing process. We are unable to give them the necessary
7 time off because we have to meet our per-bed contribution
8 agreement quotas.

9 We mourn the loss of our well-trained
10 counsellors who finally move on to less stressful,
11 better-paying jobs because we cannot compete with the
12 benefits other agencies can offer. Then we begin training
13 a new counsellor, often disrupting the quality of care
14 that we can give to the client.

15 We are frustrated over the rigid nature
16 of our contribution agreements which make it impossible
17 for us to delivery the necessary support services to our
18 clients who live in isolated communities or even those
19 in close proximity because we do not have enough
20 counsellors in our centres to enable them to travel for
21 home visits or to assist in helping to develop and maintain
22 self-help programs.

23 We get angry when a highly successful

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1 youth program in our community is forced to stop because
2 our community feels that this year's priority is to be
3 focused on another target group or issue.

4 The most pressing issues in Native
5 addictions identified by our membership are adolescent
6 treatment, community wellness, education and training.
7 Interestingly, the most pressing issues identified are
8 parallel to the gaps identified by members earlier.

9 We look to high profile communities like
10 Alkali Lake and the O'Chiese Band with great pride. We
11 know that they are moving toward independence and health
12 because they have received the benefits of treatment and
13 support services through the combined efforts of
14 individuals, service providers, leadership and
15 government.

16 We rejoice in their victories and hold
17 them up as symbols of unity of purpose. Almost every one
18 of our centres own the video tape of Alkali Lake which
19 we share with all our clients to inspire hope. We believe
20 that these communities are historically significant and
21 that in the future their healing will be cited as the
22 catalyst for dramatic changes in health services to Native
23 communities. We hope the Canadian government also sees

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1 them in this way.

2 We share the joy of the new-found hope
3 with the Davis Inlet Innu and take great pride in the fact
4 that one of our member centres, Poundmaker's Lodge,
5 delivered the treatment services to this struggling
6 community.

7 We acknowledge that television has
8 contributed to prejudice and stereotyping, but we are also
9 grateful to media services because they make it possible
10 for Canadians to better understand Aboriginal issues.
11 We acknowledge the media has and will continue to shape,
12 or at least influence, the minds and hearts of the general
13 public and we want to further our cause through this vital
14 medium.

15 We know that substance abuse is the
16 number one killer of Native people and that it is our
17 greatest health problem. As a result of the wide-ranging
18 repercussions of addiction, it also taxes the health care,
19 justice, education, welfare and social service systems,
20 among others.

21 We have learned that in the United States
22 researchers have demonstrated an 80 per cent return on
23 treatment services. We wonder why the Canadian government

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1 does not see this or does not act on this kind of
2 information. We hope that soon the short-term and
3 long-term financial impacts of addiction treatment
4 services will influence funding agencies toward more
5 comprehensive approaches to Native services in general
6 and that the treatment for addiction will receive the
7 priority it deserves.

8 We have learned what works and what does
9 not work to reduce substance abuse in our communities.
10 We know our strengths lie in our commitment, experience
11 and in reliance on traditional healing practices, cultural
12 identity and persistence. We are very proud of our people
13 who have survived nearly insurmountable odds; proud of
14 our centres which have proven their effectiveness time
15 and time again. We are proud of our Association which
16 has remained a vital support service for members and gained
17 our international recognition in treatment services.

18 We believe that, in order to increase
19 our treatment effectiveness and availability, we need
20 government to work in partnership with us by providing
21 increased funding and flexibility in that funding.

22 We require adequate staffing to deliver
23 the necessary follow-up or aftercare services to assist

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1 the client in maintaining his new-found resilience. We
2 require training dollars to ensure our counselling staff
3 can deal with all the issues which are disclosed during
4 the treatment process. We need specialized treatment
5 programs which target adolescents, solvent abusers, sexual
6 abuse survivors, families and Elders. We seek longer-term
7 programs for those clients who need more time to deal with
8 all their issues. We need training dollars and adequate
9 salaries to maintain well-trained, healthy counsellors.

10 Basically, our goal is to have the human,
11 community and financial resources to deliver what we know
12 is necessary to maintain the healing process.

13 While there are no simple answers or easy
14 solutions to substance abuse in Native communities, there
15 are methods and models which have proved to be successful
16 in combatting this disease. The solutions are complex
17 and must be comprehensive and wide-ranging. We must
18 utilize a systematic community approach that takes into
19 account the physical, the mental, emotional and spiritual
20 well-being of every individual in the community.

21 We would like the Commission to review
22 our detailed support document and seriously consider the
23 following recommendations.

3 1. That the funding formula of the
4 Addictions and Community Funded Program of Health and
5 Welfare Canada, which is presently based on a per-bed
6 criterion, be reviewed to better meet the needs of
7 treatment centres located in communities with little or
8 no access to support and referral services;

12 3. That more emphasis be placed on
13 media, especially television, to educate the general
14 public and dispel common misconceptions regarding
15 Aboriginal people and substance abuse;

21 5. That the National Native
22 Association of Treatment Directors participate more
23 directly in research in Native substance abuse to ensure

3 6. That additional treatment centres
4 be built in strategic locations to deliver treatment
5 services to specific target groups such as adolescents,
6 elders, sexual abuse survivors and families;

10 8. That research specialists work with
11 the National Native Association of Treatment Directors
12 to design a methodology which will enable us to document
13 the impact of delivery of culturally-based treatment
14 programs;

15 9. That non-Native professionals who
16 come into our communities receive training in
17 cross-cultural relations to enhance their service delivery
18 and thereby escalate the healing process.

19 As directors of Native treatment
20 centres, we believe that an enhanced focus on the delivery
21 of Native substance abuse treatment and maintenance
22 programs for Aboriginal people will in the long term prove
23 to be cost-effective for the Canadian government and

2 The full document we have will be
3 delivered to the Commission.

6 **WILSON OKEYMAW:** I would like to say a
7 few words, Commissioners.

11 Because of the forums that we have to
12 deal with this devastating problem in Indian country, there
13 are a couple of things I want to mention and which Pat
14 mentioned already.

23 One of the things I would like to

9 One of the difficulties that is
10 happening across Canada is understanding ourselves as
11 Indian people.

20 As I look at it, the pendulum is swinging
21 the other way because of the directors and counsellors
22 and all the people that pull together in that area. Now
23 the pendulum is swinging the other way.

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1 Pat mentioned role models. There is a
2 lack of role models in Indian country that you go into
3 hotels like this. To find that dignity is not wearing
4 a pair of moccasins; the values exist within your heart
5 as an Indian person, to start that road to recovery, to
6 be able to understand yourself as an Indian person.

7 The Commission should take a look at
8 creating that awareness with the non-Aboriginal people.
9 First you have to create an awareness and, second, you
10 have to seriously take a good look at the value system
11 of Indian people. Do we know, as Indian people sitting
12 here -- do we know that value system? What is the value
13 system of Indian people?

14 Once you take a value system, something
15 starts to happen. Attitudes start to change. Our own
16 attitudes have to change as Indian people in order for
17 the attitudes of non-Aboriginal people to change.

18 Finally, when attitudes start to change,
19 we start to make better choices as Indian people, and
20 collectively with the non-Aboriginal people. We start
21 to make some changes and start respecting one another.

22 The funding -- and why I got involved
23 in this National Native Association of Treatment Directors

8 In conclusion, we are still looking for
9 that one Aboriginal person that is not affected by
10 alcoholism today; we are still looking. In Canada either
11 your distant cousin or everybody is affected by alcoholism.

16 When I look at the time element, we are
17 placed, as the key problem in Indian country, at the dinner
18 hour when everybody is hungry and wants to go. I think
19 we should be put in the forefront to be dealt with, in
20 front of the media. Yes, we need to address this problem.

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1 is the high risk of Indian people and that is going to
2 destroy us.

3 Thank you.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I want to
5 thank the three of you for your presentation.

6 I must say that we have heard a lot about
7 the results of your work, your centres, across the country
8 in the travels we have done. It is certainly look to us
9 anyway that you have many reasons to feel successful.

10 I appreciate what you are saying, that
11 there is a lot of work to be done and that the actual stress
12 on the people doing the work is very high and that the
13 continuing recovery and healing of the actual workers,
14 the care-givers, is also important.

15 You brought up a number of points that
16 I would like to ask some questions on.

17 One of the concerns you have is the rigid
18 Contribution Agreements. Could you elaborate on what the
19 problem is.

20 **DEANNA GREY EYES:** One of the ideals
21 that we would like to acquire eventually with our
22 Contribution Agreements is that we go to a more global
23 type of funding as opposed to line-by-line items where

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1 we are restricted in terms of having to spend the dollars
2 according to how the contribution is made out, as opposed
3 to using the dollars to meet the needs that are identified
4 in the community.

5 If our Contribution Agreement is such
6 that we must have 150 people go through our treatment
7 centres in order to maintain a certain level of funding,
8 we would like the freedom to be able, as the need arises
9 -- for example, if we realize that, instead of running
10 four sessions of four weeks, some of our clients need eight
11 weeks, we would just as soon have them spend eight weeks
12 in the Treatment Centre, but we don't get funded for that
13 additional time that we put in with the same client. We
14 would like that type of flexibility.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I see what
16 you mean. There is not enough flexibility that you can
17 go back to the funding source and say, "We have X number
18 of people who need to stay on for the second four-week
19 period."

20 **DEANNA GREY EYES:** That's correct.
21 Also the other large area is around family treatment.
22 The dollars are generally allocated for individuals that
23 are in for the primary addiction, which is the alcoholism.

4 Within our Contribution Agreements we
5 can't move the money around to accommodate family members
6 coming in for treatment.

9 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS: Is most of
10 the funding from the federal government?

15 **PAT SHIRT:** I happen to one of those
16 people that is funded by the province. With them it is
17 a much different system in that they give us global funding
18 and we do with that money what we want. It is really an
19 arm's-length partnership, in that we are not controlled
20 in terms of how we are going to work our program. That
21 is with the Province of Alberta.

22 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS: Is that
23 because of the image that Poundmaker's has? You have been

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1 around for a long time. Was it always like this, or since
2 you have more or less proven yourselves?

3 **PAT SHIRT:** It has not always been like
4 this. One of the things, when we first started in 1973
5 when ADAC funded us, that happened at that time was that
6 we had to take all of our bills in a shoebox to ADAC, and
7 then they paid for them. Over the years, one of the things
8 that happened after that was that they don't attend our
9 Board meetings, they don't make any agreements in terms
10 of what we are going to do. It is really a global funding,
11 and we deal with that funding as we see fit in terms of
12 what we can do with the program.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** If your
14 presentation you made some reference to a researcher in
15 the United States, Goodman, demonstrating an 80 per cent
16 return. Can you tell me a bit more about that? What
17 exactly did they demonstrate? Whatever investment is made
18 by the state and the recovery of individuals is a return
19 -- is that the concept?

20 **PAT SHIRT:** One of the things we have
21 found in terms of cost effectiveness, if you look at health
22 care -- a friend of mine got into an accident because he
23 was drinking. He hit a telephone pole and he broke his

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1 neck, and he is a quadriplegic. He spent a year at the
2 University Hospital in Edmonton, and that was \$645 a day.

3 The other thing that he did after that was spend another
4 year between Eberhart Hospital and the Misericordia
5 Hospital in Edmonton, which is less than the University
6 Hospital but it was something like \$400 a day, and then
7 another year in a group home. With that, the cost was
8 more than a quarter of a million dollars, and that was
9 from a direct impact of alcohol.

10 If a person sobers up, even if he went
11 to see a doctor every week of his life, he probably wouldn't
12 make that kind of cost impact to the health care system.

13 It's the same with the criminal justice
14 system. If a person gets drunk and happens to commit some
15 sort of crime, the next thing we know he is in jail for
16 \$40,000 a year. If he didn't drink, then they take care
17 of their families and they don't end up in jail. There
18 is a lot of documents in terms of the number of people
19 that have sobered up and never ended up back in jail, even
20 if they had a revolving door in that place before they
21 sobered up. There is a number of studies like that.

22 There is another study I read on Native
23 youth. Their biggest finding from that study was that

4 They also found in that study that the
5 ones that used the least amount of alcohol and drugs were
6 the ones who were bicultural, who were able to adapt from
7 one culture to the other culture depending on what the
8 situation required.

11 It goes: "Haia(PH) Haia, Haia, Haia, Haia, Haia,
12 Ee-i-ee-i-oh."

21 We started with the values and the cultural traditions
22 that were important to us in our area.

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1 different things that worked in white communities, such
2 as Alcoholics Anonymous which has been proven to work and
3 it works for us also, and other things, in terms of
4 counselling skills and in terms of literature review and
5 adding different things to our program. That was really
6 important in a lot of ways.

7 One of the things is that we have had
8 a lot of successes in Indian country, I think more so in
9 Alberta than in different provinces -- and maybe it is
10 the history we have had. We have had things like National
11 Native Addictions Week, which is one of the fastest-growing
12 health promotion programs in Canada. We have things like
13 sober walks in Edmonton, where we had 2,000 Natives come
14 for an afternoon to basically say, "It's great to be sober;
15 it's great to be in recovery, and it's great to do things
16 like that."

17 The other successes we talked about were
18 Alkali Lake and O'Chiese, but we also have a lot of sober
19 activities now in Alberta. Those include things like the
20 pow-wow. Poundmaker's Lodge last year had 10,000 Indians,
21 all sober, at the pow-wow. That's great to see. There
22 are sweat lodges in the communities, the Pipe ceremonies,
23 and a lot of other sober dance things.

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1 There are also other things that I think
2 are important to note. Somebody said one time that 70
3 per cent of our Native leadership is sober. I know on
4 my reserve there are 10 Councillors and a Chief who are
5 all sober. That's great to see. Twenty years ago it
6 wasn't like that. Twenty years ago it was our Chiefs and
7 our Councillors going up to a conference and being stoned
8 and passed out in hotel lobbies. Now we see that changed.

9 The other thing that has been important
10 for us is the value change. When I first sobered up 20
11 years ago and I went back to my home community of Saddle
12 Lake and said to a friend of mine who was offering me a
13 drink, "You know, I quit drinking," he said, "Are you trying
14 to act like a white man?" Nowadays, if you go back to
15 my home community, one of the things that they would say
16 to me if I went down the street staggering and drunk, is,
17 "Are you trying to act like a white man?" So there has
18 been a value change, and that is really important in a
19 lot of ways.

20 I think one of the things is that the
21 treatment programs have worked. Alcoholism treatment
22 programs -- I think a lot of people have probably tried
23 to quit smoking, and it is very, very difficult at the

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1 beginning. I think we spend about 80 per cent of our energy
2 at the beginning. It is the same as a trip to the moon.
3 I think 80 per cent of the energy is spent just getting
4 out of the earth's atmosphere, and the other 20 per cent
5 is going around the moon and coming back. It's the same
6 way with treatment centres. You spend 80 per cent of your
7 energy there. It is very difficult to sober up.

8 One of the things that we have been
9 working much harder on is to develop community-based
10 programs so that we have some social constraints. If you
11 have seen the Alkali Lake movie, a lot of them at the
12 beginning went to treatment centres and got sober and they
13 established a base. But the other things they also did
14 in the community was have social constraints. If they
15 went out, they helped them. If they were drinking, they
16 had to get a voucher for food, and different things like
17 that, in terms of social constraints. It was not okay
18 to drink; it was okay to get sober and start looking after
19 your family and start looking after your children.

20 We know that in communities like Alkali
21 Lake, if you sober up the man, the wife wins. If you sober
22 up the wife, the child wins. If you sober up the child,
23 the family wins. When the family wins, the community wins.

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1 When the community wins, the nation wins. We have seen
2 that happen in different communities. We have seen it
3 happen to a lesser extent in different communities, but
4 those are the two leading communities that we talk about.

5

6 It needs to be broad-based where
7 everybody is involved. In terms of addictions programs
8 or in terms of health care programs, it's everybody's
9 business. The person who is drinking and whose family
10 is suffering, it needs to be the leadership's business and
11 it needs to be the school's business, and so on.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You treat
13 7,500 people a year in the different treatment centres.
14 How many do you think actually should be treated on a
15 yearly basis?

16 **PAT SHIRT:** I can talk about
17 Poundmaker's Lodge. Last year we had 739 clients come
18 into the Adult Centre at Poundmaker's Lodge. That was
19 at 97 per cent occupancy for the whole year.

20 We had 1,683 referrals to Poundmaker's
21 Lodge, and we were only able to take 739. We had to refer
22 300 clients to the other treatment centres, to other
23 treatment programs. We do very little going out to get

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1 clients. We have more people wanting to get into treatment
2 centres than we have beds for. That, in some ways, needs
3 to be addressed. I think there are more beds in Alberta
4 than in the other provinces, but they need programs in
5 the east.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do you have
7 any idea of how many additional treatment centres are
8 needed, or how many more beds, whichever makes more sense?

9 **PAT SHIRT:** One of the things is that
10 we would have to do more for less. One of the things we
11 talked about in terms of planning and also research and
12 development is that we have been so busy doing that we
13 haven't had time to sit back and study.

14 One of the things that has been difficult
15 in this country is also getting research dollars so that
16 we can have a much more comprehensive planning effort in
17 terms of studying where they are needed and where we could
18 be more effective for as many people as we can for that
19 particular area.

20 A number of beds are needed, more so in
21 the east than in the west. I can't tell you the exact
22 number because we haven't had that kind of planning effort
23 or resources to do that kind of study. We know there is

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1 a big demand.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Did your
3 organization apply for research funding from the
4 Intervenor Funding Program?

5 **DEANNA GREY EYES:** Yes, that is who
6 assisted us for the preparation of the brief and the
7 research.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You
9 mentioned some research that you would like to see
10 developed. One is to develop a methodology to enable you
11 to document the impact of the delivery of culturally-based
12 treatment programs.

13 Did you try to convince our researchers
14 to do this work?

15 **DEANNA GREY EYES:** No. I wasn't aware
16 that that was available to us under this Participant
17 Program.

18 It was actually quite exciting. About
19 a year and a half ago there was a program that was announced
20 by Health and Welfare Canada to do research in, I think,
21 social services and the humanities. The difficulty we
22 had in tapping into that was that they wanted extremely
23 academic orientation, so we had to ally ourselves with

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1 a university. I know there was a number of other Native
2 organizations that I spoke to across Canada that were in
3 the same situation -- wanting to conduct research specific
4 to Native people. But the restriction that was being
5 placed on the funds available was that you had to very
6 much an academic, university-driven type of research on
7 methodology.

8 **WILSON OKEYMAW:** Another thing in
9 reference to that, in terms of a study being done -- in
10 the kind of study you require and the questions you are
11 asking the grassroots people have to be involved. Those
12 are the people who know what kinds of treatment and
13 prevention programs are required within the communities.

14 You cannot bring in a European system
15 within the community. It will fail every time. The
16 healing must begin from the community within the Indian
17 people.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** When you
19 were answering me earlier in relation to the problems with
20 restricted Contribution Agreements, were you also
21 addressing the problem of the per-bed funding system?
22 Were you covering both at the same time?

23 **DEANNA GREY EYES:** That's correct, yes.

11 In order to do that, we had projected
12 that we would need at least half a million dollars to
13 effectively run our organization. When we approached
14 Health and Welfare Canada, we were working on the basis
15 of \$297,000 to service our current membership, and we
16 received an additional increase of \$120,000. So that is
17 a jump in membership from 38 to well over 400 with only
18 an increase of \$120,000. So we are faced with the
19 situation of having to find funding in addition to what
20 we have from Health and Welfare Canada.

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1 end, we have hired a fund-raiser.

2 I think the treatment we received at the
3 hands of Health and Welfare when we were in fact providing
4 services to their workers was very shabby.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** The work of
6 people going around and intervening in other work -- you
7 mention it here. For instance, I know a number of people
8 went up to Davis Inlet and I think in Canim Lake, when
9 we were there, there was a number of people. In fact,
10 I think there is a meeting in early June in Ottawa on
11 suicide. There was one about six weeks ago, and we had
12 some of your members.

13 Is it the national organization that is
14 providing these different resources, or is it the
15 individual treatment centres?

16 **DEANNA GREY EYES:** It's the individual
17 treatment centres.

18 Generally, the function that the
19 association will serve is referring resource people to
20 the communities that request. We had one community not
21 long ago grappling with the issue of solvent abuse amongst
22 their young people, and they requested that we put them
23 in touch with someone who could assist them in developing

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1 a community-based program such that they wouldn't have
2 to move their young people out of the community to receive
3 treatment. We act somewhat like a clearing house of
4 individuals that we know will provide this service to the
5 communities, and we refer them to them.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
7 Those are my questions.

8 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank
9 you. I want to say, first of all, that the issue of the
10 treatment centres and what you are dealing with is a very,
11 very important issue in Canada. In our travels into
12 communities, it is one that is raised over and over again,
13 and the inadequacies of dealing with it within the
14 communities has been raised. It's a very serious issue,
15 I agree. I think it is one of the most serious issues
16 facing Aboriginal people and the future of our people.

17 The other thing I want to raise, before
18 I get into any specific questions, is the issue of whether
19 there is any link or dealing with Aboriginal people in
20 the urban centres. I have travelled to Winnipeg and
21 Edmonton and Regina and Saskatoon, where the urban
22 organizations have come forward. There is a lot of
23 Aboriginal people in the cities, young people in

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1 particular. I was shown on the streets of Winnipeg young
2 Aboriginal kids, our kids exposed and experiencing drugs,
3 solvent abuse and all kinds of social-related problems.

4 I am just wondering, with the work that
5 you are doing, is there any way that you are linking your
6 work to those situations, or are you restricted from
7 dealing with them? Can somebody enlighten me on that?

8 **PAT SHIRT:** The two largest reserves in
9 Alberta are Edmonton and Calgary. One of the things is
10 that we can very easily fill up our treatment centres with
11 just the people from the communities in Edmonton and
12 Calgary.

13 One of the things that I think happens
14 in other provinces is that they don't have treatment
15 centres in a lot of their urban centres, which are magnets
16 to a much larger group of Natives from all the areas.

17 That would be one of the things that we
18 would like to see, to have alcohol and drug treatment
19 programs that are geared specifically to Natives in urban
20 areas.

21 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** So you
22 would support that idea. We are looking for ways to
23 address that. It is really difficult for us because of

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1 jurisdictional issues, government-wise. You don't know
2 who wants to take responsibility for it. Some governments
3 say, "It is not our responsibility." Those are the things
4 we are grappling with, and we are always looking for
5 assistance or some guidance from people to give us help
6 in dealing with that.

7 The other question I have is with regard
8 to the 38 members. Are those from across Canada? I guess
9 they are primarily from the west.

10 **DEANNA GREY EYES:** No, they are all
11 over. We have members from the Atlantic region, we have
12 members from Quebec, from Ontario, from Manitoba, from
13 the Territories, from Alberta, Saskatchewan and B.C. We
14 cover all of the provinces.

15 Just going back to your previous
16 question, Viola, I think one of our members yesterday,
17 Cecil Thompson from the Crowfoot, summarized it in a
18 presentation to you. I think his situation is typical
19 of the treatment centres that we have in the urban centres,
20 where his clientele is predominantly Native, predominantly
21 status, and he does not receive any funding for
22 his program.

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1 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** That's
2 the problem that we are faced with as well.
3 What I wanted to get back to is that you have given us
4 some good recommendations that we can move ahead on. I
5 take it there are 38 treatment centres in Canada, which
6 is not very many for the amount of people in Canada. I
7 guess you would be looking at increasing treatment centres.
8 Would that be one of the recommendations?

9 **DEANNA GREY EYES:** In total, there are
10 55 Native treatment centres in Canada, 38 of which are
11 members of our Association. The membership in our
12 Association is voluntary. Our members pay fees to join
13 our Association, and those fees also offset our operating
14 costs.

15 As well, we generate revenue through the
16 manuals we have developed. One is "In the Spirit of
17 Family", which is a manual specifically for dealing with
18 Native families. The other one is dealing with
19 disclosures of sexual abuse in a treatment setting,
20 although we find it is transferred over to the community
21 setting as well.

22 By selling those manuals and also by
23 providing training that accompanies the manuals, we

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1 generate revenues to offset some of the costs that are
2 not covered by our funding agencies.

3 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** That's
4 good to know. That's about all the comments I wanted to
5 make. I certainly want to wish you all the best in the
6 work that you are doing. I think it is very, very
7 important.

8 **WILSON OKEYMAW:** On behalf of the
9 National Native Association of Treatment Directors, we
10 would be willing to provide services for the urban areas.
11 Definitely I think it is one of the things to emphasize
12 in working together, absolutely.

13 **DEANNA GREY EYES:** On that point, Viola,
14 all our members met last week in Winnipeg to finalize the
15 by-laws of our Association. The by-laws of our
16 Association have opened up memberships so that we will
17 be able to provide membership and services, if people so
18 choose, from the urban centres -- the Friendship Centres
19 and the various Native Counselling Services. Their
20 managers will be eligible for membership in our Association
21 and, as a result of that, for all of the services that
22 we provide.

23 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** That is

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1 good to know. Thank you.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
3 for coming forward.

4 **WILSON OKEYMAW:** I just want to qualify
5 that statement that I made. It is subject to funding.

6 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
7 very much.

8 At this time we are going to take a very
9 short break and then we will call on the people involved
10 with education.

11 --- Short Recess at 1:15 p.m.

12 --- Upon resuming at 1:20 p.m.

13

14 **GEORGE CALLIOU, Calgary Aboriginal**
15 **Education Consortium:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 A group of us who are committed to
17 providing quality support services to Aboriginal students
18 within the city of Calgary have come together. We are
19 at the moment using the term, Calgary Aboriginal Education
20 Consortium.

21 We are beginning to work together a lot
22 more than we have in the past, and we wish to make a joint
23 presentation today.

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1 Also within our time frame, Treaty 7
2 Tribal Council will be making a presentation. When we
3 are finished with the Calgary Aboriginal Education
4 Consortium, we will be turning it over to Treaty 7 Tribal
5 Council, and we will allow them to introduce themselves.

6 I would like to quickly introduce our
7 people by name and by affiliation, and then we will go
8 into our presentation.

9 To my far right, Janice is a student at
10 Mount Royal College. She is on the Executive of the
11 Students' Union Association. She is the Vice-President,
12 Finance.

13 Doreen Spence is President of Plains
14 Indian Cultural Survival School.

15 Nancy Lynch is President of Alberta
16 Vocational Centre here in Calgary.

17 To my immediate is Elsie Wuttunee with
18 the Calgary Catholic School Board.

19 To the left of the Moderator is Audrey
20 Breaker, with Mount Royal College.

21 Beside her is Aiden Meltingtallow,
22 Chairman of the Advisory Committee with the Aboriginal
23 Education Project at Mount Royal College.

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1 As I mentioned before, I will allow
2 Treaty 7 Tribal Council to introduce themselves when their
3 time comes. At the moment they are sitting with us.

4 What I would like to do is read the
5 preamble and then allow each group to make their own
6 presentation. We would like to limit each presentation
7 to 10 minutes maximum, and we would like to allow more
8 time for dialogue with the Commission members.

9 I would like to start by commending the
10 work that the Commission is doing. It is a task that
11 certainly is challenging. I think all of us look forward
12 to very challenging recommendations and, more important,
13 action.

14 As you know, a lot of reports have been
15 done and a lot of Commissions have been established.
16 People as a whole in Canada, especially Aboriginal people,
17 are now wanting some kind of action that will emanate from
18 the work you are doing. We, as educators within the city
19 of Calgary, certainly look forward to some support and
20 to some action in assisting us to fulfill our commitment
21 to quality education and quality service to Aboriginal
22 students.

23 With that, Mr. Chairman, I would like

3 The educational institutions of the city
4 of Calgary involved in Aboriginal education wish to make
5 this submission on several areas of concern that impact
6 education. We also wish to address associated factors
7 such as social, cultural, economic, and political matters
8 as they affect education. While these concerns are not
9 conclusive, they are the concerns which have been drawn
10 up for the purpose of identifying some of the major areas
11 that require attention.

18 The manner in which we wish to make our
19 presentation is to present a continuum of the process of
20 Aboriginal education as we see it in the city of Calgary.

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1 Each educational institution will
2 address the issues and concerns pertaining to their
3 specific situation and current reality.

4 With that, I would like to ask Elsie
5 Wuttunee to make the first presentation on behalf of the
6 Calgary Catholic Separate School District No. 1.

7 **ELSIE WUTTUNEE, Calgary Catholic**
8 **Separate School District No. 1:** First of all, I will give
9 you an overview of what we do with Native education in
10 the Calgary Catholic Separate School District.

11 The history of Native education within
12 the Calgary Catholic Separate School District No. 1
13 originated in 1982 with initial funding being granted
14 through the Equal Opportunities Funding under the Alberta
15 government. The position of a consultant was established,
16 and Native program were initiated for Native students the
17 following year. In 1985 Alberta Education established
18 the Native Education Project Team to develop a Native
19 Education Policy. The Calgary Roman Catholic Separate
20 School District No. 1 Native Education Program was one
21 of the first to be granted funding for their
22 already-established programs.

23 What were the Native programs? Native

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1 parents recognized that the barriers to quality education
2 handicapped Native students, resulting in low self-esteem,
3 low achievement and severely limiting our students. A
4 common concern of parents is when schooling becomes a
5 threat to their developing child's identity, primarily
6 when the values and world view that prevail at school
7 contradict or ignore the existence of a different
8 perspective the child lives with at home.

9 In the case of students of Aboriginal
10 ancestry, this situation is all too common. The result
11 can be that the child experiences serious conflict and
12 doubt about the validity of his or her own identity. When
13 an Aboriginal child's identity has been threatened, they
14 will:

15 - withdraw into themselves, become
16 silent and refuse to participate as a means of protecting
17 themselves from criticism and rejection;

18 - attempt to abandon their previous
19 identity and mould themselves to the culture which they
20 perceive as more valid or acceptable; or

21 - the may take on non-productive and
22 rejecting attitudes which generally culminate in failure
23 or dropping out.

5 If schools were to reach Native students
6 who were dropping out at alarming rates, they had to ensure
7 that the development of their students' sense of identity
8 was a fundamental goal. This did not occur for a number
9 of different reasons that we will elaborate on.

```
13         1. To enhance Native students'
14 self-esteem.
```

18 3. To provide opportunities for Native
19 students to learn and perform to the best of their
20 abilities, thus improving their academic achievement.

21 4. To provide opportunities for all
22 students, teachers and parents within our school system
23 to learn more about the various cultures, values, and

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1 lifestyles of Native people today.

2 5. To provide opportunities for
3 parents of Native students to become actively involved
4 in the education of their children.

5 What were the obstacles to the
6 achievement of all of those that I have said? Perhaps
7 we will look at the unstated personnel policies within
8 the Board.

9 (a) The decision-makers in the Native
10 Education program were all non-Aboriginal, beginning with
11 the Superintendent in charge at the District level to the
12 consultant in charge of the program.

13 (b) All the accredited staff employed
14 in this program were non-Aboriginal. Efforts to employ
15 Aboriginal people were hampered by lack of knowledge of
16 the Native community by all involved.

17 (c) Non-accredited Native staff
18 employed who did not have the skills or the political
19 knowledge to change administrative policy.

20 (d) Teachers of Native ancestry are not
21 employed with the system as regular classroom teachers.

22 If there are Native teachers within the system, they often
23 do not identify themselves as Native, losing the

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1 opportunity to be effective role models to Native students.

2 (e) There is a tremendous lack of
3 knowledge and interest in Native culture and education
4 at different levels within the system.

5 This begins at senior levels, carrying
6 into all the different levels to the classroom teacher
7 who reflects administration. Native Education staff
8 continually need to educate, in-service and advise.

9 Another obstacle is the lack of
10 validation of the Native Education Program.

11 (a) Funding dollars have increased for
12 the program, but always from the funding source and never
13 from the Calgary Catholic Separate School District No.
14 1.

15 (b) Staff have not increased to
16 accommodate the growing enrolment of Aboriginal students.

17 (c) Programs are not accredited within
18 the schools but continue to be dependent on the perceived
19 needs of school administrations.

20 What are Alberta's governmental
21 policies?

22 In the "Achieving the Vision - 1992"
23 report, published by Alberta Education, it states the

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1 achievements and the progress made in Native Education.

2 In contradiction to this report, Alberta Education has
3 begun to eliminate the monitoring strategies to ensure
4 this. The Native Education Project with Alberta Education
5 is in the process of being abolished.

6 Another obstacles is the problems
7 experienced by Native Education from within the Native
8 community.

9 (a) The funding from Alberta Education
10 causes a concern to the Treaty areas regarding the
11 detrimental effects on treaty rights for education.
12 Therefore, they are not always in support of our programs,
13 our students or our families.

14 (b) What about Native politics?

15 The Native political organizations
16 provide no co-ordinated approach to the problems facing
17 urban Native parents and urban Native students.

18 (c) Parent Participation.

19 Native parents often do not take an
20 active role in the education of their children.
21 Participation in home/school events by parent is
22 repeatedly lacking.

23 (d) Let us look at colonial mentality.

10 (ii) What about First Nations?

(iii) School administrators on reserves are almost always not Native. At the time when a child's development is most crucial, she realizes that education is not for Indians. The confusion begins.

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1 district. Schools which have a large number of Native
2 students may have a program within their school to meet
3 the specific needs of these students. These programs
4 emphasize Native culture, acquisition of language arts
5 skills through relevant materials and experiences, Native
6 language acquisition and Native Awareness for all students
7 and staff.

8 The success of the programs have been,
9 and continue to be, assessed by the following criteria:

10 1. Academic progress of Native
11 students.

12 2. Attendance.

13 3. Participation by Native parents.

14 We find that there is still a great gap
15 between the academic success of our students and those
16 of non-Aboriginal students. There is a communication gap
17 between the families and the schools. The method of
18 interaction between school personnel and our Aboriginal
19 families often cause difficulties. Our Aboriginal
20 parents know about guidelines and procedures, but can have
21 difficulty in conceptualizing the correct procedure to
22 follow.

23 What are the solutions and

2 1. Native Education must be a
3 department with all the attendant benefits of the Calgary
4 Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 1.

7 3. The Native consultant of Native
8 Education should report directly to the Superintendent
9 of Schools.

13 5. All staff employed by Native
14 Education must be encouraged to become accredited.

18 7. The apathy in our own Native
19 community must be addressed, not by the few but by the
20 many.

21 8. The School Districts must make it
22 policy for Student Services personnel and teaching staff
23 to become educated in First Nations cultures.

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1 9. The School Districts must take the
2 initiative to endorse and validate Native Education
3 through evaluation and corrective measures.

4 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Thank you, Elsie.

5 Mr. Chairman, we would like to go through
6 our total presentation before we get into a dialogue.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I agree with
8 that. I just would like to suggest that perhaps there
9 be less reading of every word and perhaps a synopsis, and
10 let's get to the recommendations. Give us enough of the
11 problem that we understand it, and then let's move to the
12 recommendations.

13 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Thank you for the
14 guidance, Mr. Chairman.

15 I would like to introduce Doreen
16 L'Hirondelle, recently hired by the Calgary Board of
17 Education. She is the Aboriginal Education specialist.
18 Doreen will be making a presentation for the Public School
19 Board.

20

21 **DOREEN L'HIRONDELLE, Calgary Public**
22 **School Board:** Good afternoon.

23 I have only been in this position for

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1 one month, and I am looking at the Calgary Board of
2 Education through that perspective.

3 The Calgary Board of Education is the
4 second-largest school board in Canada, and services about
5 6,000 to 8,000 Aboriginal students. The Calgary Board
6 has recently gone through a restructuring process and has
7 identified Native Education as a priority within a
8 strategic plan.

9 Within the strategic plan is categories
10 of learning and teaching and the following strategy, which
11 is stated as such: "Develop a system direction, programs
12 and services in Aboriginal education."

13 The Calgary Board of Education, I feel,
14 has made a commitment to implementing this goal from the
15 actual reasoning that they have hired myself, an Aboriginal
16 specialist in education, who will provide leadership in
17 the area of policy and programming within the Calgary Board
18 of Education.

19 There have been 12 recommendations that
20 have been recommended as the result of a report compiled
21 by a former Principal, Mr. Gordon Millar. It was called
22 "Vanquishing the Despair." The report was compiled from
23 meeting with Aboriginal educators and leaders. Also, Mr.

6 Recommendation No. 1 is: The
7 establishment of a Native Education Department within the
8 Calgary Board of Education that consists of a supervisor,
9 an elementary consultant and a secondary consultant.

12 The committee would be established by appointing one
13 representative from each tribe around Calgary that has
14 significant numbers in Calgary, such as the Cree, the
15 Sarcee, Blackfoot, Métis, Stoney , et cetera.

Recommendation No. 4: To highlight and
applaud Native symbols and Native contributions in our
schools.

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1 seek to employ Aboriginal staff -- teachers, secretaries,
2 caretakers, liaison workers.

3 Recommendation No. 6: Assign the
4 responsibility for Native Education to one superintendent.

5 Recommendation No. 7: A policy on
6 Native Education established by the Calgary Board of
7 Education. That is a very important one.

8 Recommendation No. 8: Designation of
9 one person in the Calgary Board of Education to co-ordinate
10 information and funding.

11 Recommendation No. 9: Recognize Plains
12 Indian Cultural School as a completely legitimate
13 alternative high school that is funded and staffed
14 according to a regular high school regardless of the age
15 of the student.

16 Recommendation No. 10: Use of
17 continuing education funds to assist in the staff of Plains
18 Indian Cultural School.

19 Recommendation No. 11: The Calgary
20 Board of Education urges Alberta Education to expand the
21 Native Education project.

22 Recommendation No. 12: Establish a
23 Native Chair at the Calgary Board of Education meetings.

Looking at Recommendation No. 1, the establishment of a Native Education Department within the Calgary Board of Education which consists of a supervisor, an elementary consultant and a secondary consultant, part of this recommendation has been implemented by the hiring of myself, an Aboriginal specialist, to provide leadership in policy and program development affecting all Aboriginal education within the Calgary Board of Education.

Looking at Recommendation No. 2, the establishment of a Native Education Steering Committee, this committee would be established by appointing one representative from each tribe that has significant numbers in Calgary. The first meeting of the Aboriginal Steering Committee will occur on June 2, 1993.

18 Recommendation No. 3, the establishment
19 of Native Awareness programs for Administrators,
20 Counsellors and Teachers, will be incorporated into the
21 planning for the year 1993-94. Activities that we will
22 be involved in for 1993-94 will be awareness to
23 administrators and staff on teaching strategies and

3 Those are the three recommendations that
4 we will be looking at implementing this year. There are
5 nine other recommendations that we will work on also, but
6 those are the three specific ones that I can say we are
7 already involved in.

8 I want to also talk about the work to
9 date on Aboriginal education within the Calgary Board of
10 Education. This has been primarily carried out by Native
11 Education liaison workers. Some initiatives that they
12 have been involved in are the following:

13 (a) Providing cross-cultural sessions
14 to staff, administrators and support groups within
15 schools. There has also been assistance provided to
16 schools in planning cross-cultural workshops.

17 (b) They also recommend resource people,
18 appropriate videotapes and books for schools.

19 (c) They have also been involved in
20 establishing partnerships with outside agencies such as
21 the Chamber of Commerce. This has involved working on
22 a joint initiative which is a role model program for youth.

23 (d) They have also established Native

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1 clubs, taught Native arts and crafts and provided some
2 tutoring to students.

3 (e) The have also provided liaison with
4 family and outside agencies such as Social Services and
5 other agencies.

6 (f) They have been involved in crisis
7 intervention with children.

8 (g) They have facilitated activities
9 for cultural awareness in schools.

10 That is some of the work that has been
11 done up to date. I will be working with those individuals
12 to begin a concrete direction in Aboriginal education.
13 What we will be doing is establishing a work plan that
14 will focus on initiatives that will be carried out next
15 year.

16 I think there is a lot of work to be done
17 with limited staff. With cutbacks in education, I think
18 this is a first step in making Aboriginal education one
19 of the priorities of the Calgary Board, and that is
20 specifically hiring an Aboriginal specialist in education.

21 I didn't want to go into an in-depth
22 report because I have only been in this position for one
23 month. I just wanted to give an overview of some of the

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1 direction at this time.

2 Thank you.

3 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Thank you very much,
4 Doreen. I would like to introduce Doreen Spence,
5 President of Plains Indian Cultural Survival School.

6 The modern technology wasn't working for
7 us in the last couple of days, and the presentation is
8 separate from the one we have given you, and you have a
9 copy of it.

10 Doreen will make a short verbal
11 presentation on the Plains Indian Survival School.

12 **DOREEN SPENCE, President, Plains Indian**
13 **Cultural Survival School:** Thank you, George. Good
14 afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

15 I have a brief which I faxed through
16 yesterday but, as George mentioned, our fax machine at
17 the other end was not working.

18 I will to be as brief as possible, but
19 it is imperative to give some history as to why the Plains
20 Indian Cultural Survival School exists.

21 In about 1979, when I came to Calgary,
22 there was about a 97 per cent drop-out rate of young people.

23 I have spent 33 years as a volunteer in Native education,

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1 as a Mom, taking books off the shelf and trying to eliminate
2 the stereotyping that existed within the school system.

3 The Plains Indian Cultural Survival
4 School essentially is a junior high program which meets
5 the needs of those who have been failed by the system.
6 PICSS is unique in its provision of both academic and
7 cultural programs. The school offers accredited courses
8 which lead to a high school diploma. It basically
9 emphasizes a strong Native cultural component of
10 traditions, culture, Cree and Blackfoot languages,
11 beading, drumming, singing, dancing and all those relevant
12 courses which apply to Aboriginal people.

13 PICSS is incorporated as a non-profit
14 organization since 1978, and from its inception the central
15 goal of the society has been to promote the education of
16 Native students. In pursuit of this goal, the society,
17 with some support of the Calgary Board of Education,
18 established a unique and highly successful junior high
19 school program which has been operating since 1979. The
20 success of the school is undoubtedly linked to its
21 uniqueness as expressed in the following excerpt from the
22 society's philosophy and objectives:

23 The linking of Indian culture, history

In the final analysis, the creation of
a school that integrates Indian life into a meaningful
academic, social and personal living skills program will
enhance the probability of Indian students becoming more
successful in school and in their future endeavours.

The group of students are all Native youth representing numerous bands, Métis and other Aboriginal people. Many originate from the various reserves surrounding Calgary, but some come from as far as Manitoba. We have had Innu, and we have also had people from Nova Scotia.

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1 through the completion of high school, but experience has
2 shown that an alternative to the high school diploma is
3 needed for some Native students.

4 It is due to this requirement for
5 upgrading through AVC training and work experience that
6 the society now turns its attention to a job training
7 program. We have just completed our third year in the
8 job training program, and that was funded specifically
9 under the CEIC.

10 We have also opened a Native day care,
11 the first of its kind, three years ago, and we have 33
12 young people coming to the day care. It is imperative
13 that this be within the community because many of our people
14 have lost their parenting skills, and this must be given
15 back for empowerment.

16 We teach life skills as well, and the
17 parents have full participation in the day care as far
18 as their young people's educational process.

19 There are other schools with similar
20 arrangements with their school boards and, in most cases,
21 cost is borne through tuition fees paid by parents.
22 Needless to say, our students are not charged because they
23 cannot afford it.

8 It must be understood that under the
9 human rights legislation equal access to education for
10 First Nations students must be pursued.

13 Systemic discrimination must be
14 eliminated.

19 We must instill a sense of pride and
20 self-esteem in our Native youth so that they can take their
21 rightful place in society.

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1 any academic program. Our youth must be encouraged to
2 attend school and to complete their post-secondary
3 education.

4 Access to educational funding from ECS
5 to post-secondary should be available. Legislation must
6 be implemented to see that this is carried through.

7 Above all, I have added, funding for the
8 students regardless of their age.

9 Thank you.

10 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Thank you, Doreen.

11 Those three presentations dealt with the
12 school level below post-secondary. We would like to now
13 jump into the post-secondary field of education. We will
14 start with a presentation by Nancy Lynch, President of
15 the Alberta Vocational Centre here in Calgary.

16 **NANCY LYNCH, President, Alberta**

17 **Vocational Centre:** Thank you, George.

18 The Alberta Vocational College is a
19 provincially-funded college and it serves about 6,000
20 full-time students. It is a non-Native institute, but
21 of our upgrading program that we have 18 per cent of the
22 graduates self-identified as having Aboriginal heritage.

23 I would like to give you a brief outline

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1 of some of the programs that the Alberta Vocational College
2 is involved with.

3 We have federally-funded programs which
4 CEIC has funded for several years with the Stoney Band
5 at both Morley and Eden Valley, which provide academic
6 upgrading, and one this year with the Tsuu T'ina Nation.

7 We have also been contacted by the bands
8 to do upgrading programs and also, as Doreen has mentioned,
9 to develop work component programs within those so that
10 the students not only get upgrading but also get work
11 experience. Those programs have been designed
12 specifically by the bands at their request.

13 In all of those programs we have joint
14 hiring panels for selection of the teachers and provide
15 tutorial services as well. All of those programs are
16 competency-based, self-paced programming so that people
17 can move in and out of the programs to meet their needs
18 as an adult learner.

19 The core programs involve reading,
20 writing, mathematics and, if they want to get their General
21 Education Diploma or equivalent of a Grade 12, we provide
22 those programs as well.

23 The third type of programming is funded

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1 by the provincial government. Presently within Calgary
2 the College has a partnership with Local 87 of the Métis
3 Association, where the college provides the instructor
4 and the materials and the Local 87 provides the space,
5 the Elder for counselling, and a counsellor. We jointly
6 provide the curriculum and the course. That has been a
7 successful program and is ongoing.

8 As I mentioned earlier, there is a
9 variety of programs throughout the college where the
10 students are integrated into the programs.

11 With that overview, that brings me to
12 the issues facing Aboriginal education within Calgary --
13 the question of whether they are to be integrated or
14 separate programs. I think the answer perhaps is both.
15 There may be in the post-secondary areas programs that
16 are highly capitalized -- and I think of some of the
17 programs at SAIT with the engineering technology programs.

18 It makes sense for those programs to have an integrated
19 program.

20 I am familiar with the program in nursing
21 out of Saskatchewan -- integrated but, at the same time,
22 they had separate components of it where they were able
23 to deal with cultural and spiritual values that were needed

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1 within that curriculum.

2 If a program is integrated, then I think
3 it behooves all of the traditional institutes, non-Native
4 institutes, to challenge themselves to make sure that they
5 value diversity and provide the support services that are
6 needed.

7 When I speak to Native students at AVC
8 Calgary, they tell me that their financial problems,
9 balancing their work, school and family life and their
10 academic needs are the same as the students that they sit
11 beside, but they would also like to be in an environment
12 where they feel that they are competing on an equal footing,
13 and they would also like to have counsellors which they
14 feel can easily identify with their needs. That, they
15 feel, can only be obtained by having counsellors and
16 teachers of Aboriginal ancestry.

17 I think the heart of the question for
18 post-secondary, upgrading for students inside Calgary and
19 the students in the K-to-12 system that Doreen has referred
20 to, the students that have fallen out of the system, is
21 that there will be an Aboriginal education centre funded
22 ongoing, without ad hoc funding but permanent funding,
23 and that it be implemented and that there be co-operation

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1 amongst the two forms of government, federal and provincial
2 and the bands as well, so that we have a collaborative
3 effort to serve the Native students in Calgary.

4 Thank you.

5 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Thank you, Nancy.

6 Southern Alberta Institution of
7 Technology is also a partner in our recent efforts to work
8 together. They were unable to prepare a presentation at
9 this time; nevertheless, they wanted us to make a few
10 comments on their behalf.

11 One is that they participate to develop
12 a Native Programs Department which specializes in training
13 for Aboriginal groups across Canada.

14 The second one is that the students have
15 also established a First Peoples' Association which
16 provides support to the students.

17 Three, they have just recently this year
18 inaugurated their first Native Awareness Week, and they
19 hope to continue that within the institution itself.

20 At this time I would like to introduce
21 Aiden Meltingtallow and Audrey Breaker and Janice to make
22 a presentation on the Aboriginal Education Project at Mount
23 Royal College. Janice will also make additional comments

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1 from the students' perspective.

2 I will turn it over to Aiden.

3 **AIDEN MELTINGTALLOW, Mount Royal**

4 **College:** Thank you, George.

5 The Aboriginal Education Project at
6 Mount Royal College commenced operation in September 1992.

7 I will give a brief history off the top of my head.

8 The whole process started in 1988 when
9 we thought we could all come together and come up with
10 some solutions to our housing, to our employment, to the
11 justice system -- in all areas that Native people are
12 deficient in services.

13 We struck up a task force then, and each
14 area that we looked at pointed back to education. If you
15 want a better job, you need a better education; if you
16 want better housing, you need education. So we struck
17 up another committee, and we came up with the Aboriginal
18 Educational Task Force.

19 From there we hired a resource
20 consultant. As Doreen alluded to, we have been researched
21 to death and studied to death. What we did was take all
22 these recommendations and we looked at all the educational
23 recommendations, and we said, "Let's just go for it."

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1 That's how we started.

2 We tried to model it after the Vancouver
3 Educational Institute. Since then we have been looking
4 at other institutions.

5 Due to time, I will turn it over to Audrey
6 to talk about what is happening to date with this program.

7 **AUDREY BREAKER:** Thanks, Aiden.

8 Today we have a summer session going.
9 We have only been there for one semester so far. We had
10 49 students that came in in January and finished one
11 semester of Levels 1 and 2 in the program that you see
12 there.

13 Forty-three per cent of those students
14 were from the Treaty 7 area. The rest were from across
15 Canada, all the way from the Micmac Nation to the west
16 coast. So we have students from everywhere.

17 We offer a good basic program in English
18 and Math, Aboriginal Studies, Computer Lit and those things
19 which we think would give them a good basic background
20 and provide the skills necessary for them to survive in
21 college or university.

22 The first activity we had was an
23 instructors' Aboriginal orientation in the fall for

3 We had a traditional pow-wow, a
4 graduation pow-wow, in November to honour our students
5 that were graduating -- not just our students, but the
6 regular college students. We have over 50 grads. That
7 was the first time any pow-wow had ever been held at Mount
8 Royal College, and I just want to thank the people who
9 supported us -- the college itself, the Students' Union,
10 et cetera, et cetera.

Our prep program is the yellow paper you have there. That tells you exactly what we have as far as our Aboriginal post-secondary program goes. We implemented the third level as of May 1, when the summer session started. We felt it was necessary to provide that level of academics for our students to move in a smooth transition from the second level into the third, and also provide the required prerequisites for some of the courses and programs that our students had applied for at the

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1 college and at the university.

2 I just wanted to go through this briefly
3 and not elaborate on anything too much.

4 At the end of the semester we had a
5 student celebration because we felt it was really necessary
6 to recognize some of the successes our students had had
7 this past semester and also to give a pat on the back to
8 the people who were involved in putting the whole project
9 together -- our Steering Committee, people from the
10 community, the instructors that were there, all the people
11 that really gave us the support we needed.

12 There is a little article that was
13 written in, believe it or not, The Calgary Sun TV Guide.
14 I just want to read a couple of excerpts from it. It
15 was written by a fellow by the name of Inar Brasso. He
16 attended our students' celebration and he was very
17 impressed with what he saw and what he heard.

18 "Recently I had the opportunity to attend the graduation
19 ceremonies of the first class of
20 the Aboriginal Education Project
21 at Mount Royal College. There
22 were 58 students there."

23 Actually, there were less than 58.

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1 "They ranged in ages from 20 to 40, who were graduating
2 from a program that upgrades their
3 high school marks and allows them
4 to further their education and job
5 opportunities. These people were
6 very proud of their
7 accomplishments, and rightly so.

8 The aura of motivation, pride and
9 achievement was electric. These
10 folks could see through the window
11 of opportunity, probably for the
12 first time in their lives.

13 A huge amount of credit must be given
14 to the Steering Committee led by
15 Roy Cunningham and Aiden
16 Meltingtallow, Audrey Breaker and
17 Mark Stang and the decision-makers
18 at Mount Royal College. This very
19 worthwhile program, one that will
20 give the Natives the opportunity
21 to break through the inequities of
22 the past 150 years, will only
23 succeed with committed funding.

5 And then he made a few other comments.

Not only that, the student support programs that are in place with Indian Affairs and other agencies that provide support for our students is a concern. Constantly I have students streaming into my office, worried that their funding is going to be cut off at any time and that they will not be able to continue.

17 I think people who are involved in
18 providing support for our programs need to give some
19 security to our students so that it will allow them to
20 focus on their studies and on being successful rather than
21 worrying about where the next ten cents or dollar is coming
22 from to buy a quart of milk for their children.

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1 program are included at the end.

2 **JANICE MANYGREYHORSES, Mount Royal**

3 **College:** Hello. My name is Janice ManyGreyHorses, and
4 I am the Finance Vice-President for Mount Royal College.

5 I am the first Native who has ever taken this position.

6 One of the many concerns that always
7 comes up when I sit with Native students is that of the
8 sponsorship that we get from Indian and Northern Affairs,
9 and now they are going to each individual band. A lot
10 of the students feel that the 48-unit cap isn't enough,
11 and they feel that they are being limited in their education
12 because of that 40 units.

13 A lot of them want to go into specialized
14 programs but, in order to go into specialized programs,
15 you have to take your General Arts and Science and then
16 you go into your specialized programs. A lot of us feel
17 that this 40 units really limits us to only taking the
18 General Arts and Science Program.

19 We feel that a lot of us could be experts
20 in different various fields but, because of these kinds
21 of limitations on us, it only allows us to be at a very
22 basic level within our communities.

23 When I have gone back to my community,

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1 I see a lot of non-Native people working in our communities.

2 I always think there can be Native people that can easily
3 take over those position but, because we are always so
4 limited to so many different things, to me, I think this
5 is just one way of Native Affairs oppressing us again by
6 limiting us to that 48 units.

7 When Native students come into a
8 post-secondary education, our level of academics is not
9 that of those of the community around us. Ours is probably
10 only at a Grade 10 level. We have to struggle, we have
11 to go through a whole almost humiliating process to get
12 to that level that our peers are at.

13 A few of us have failed our Englishes
14 and our Math classes, but we have the determination to
15 stay in there and to do it again and again. The frustration
16 comes when it comes to our funding. That is where our
17 frustration is.

18 I speak to a lot of Native students, and
19 a lot of Native students are singing the same song, and
20 it is: Uncap the 40 units. Let's go with something that
21 is more negotiable, like a GPA system where you are going
22 to be investing in something that is going to bring back
23 to the community of Native people.

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1 You have already heard all the sad
2 stories of Native people and their oppression, but let's
3 not oppress our Native people any more by limiting them
4 to just 48 units of funding. Let's give ourselves that
5 chance and let's be able to go to the GPA system and say,
6 "Let's make a good investment in our Native communities
7 and let's start coming out with experts."

8 My objectives and my strive within the
9 Mount Royal College within the Mount Royal College Student
10 Association -- I have gone to the Board of Governors of
11 Mount Royal College; I have sat with the Students'
12 Association, and I have been educating a lot of these
13 non-Native organizations about the Native students' plight
14 in their post-secondary education. That is really hard
15 to do because a lot of them are very ignorant of us Native
16 people and they don't understand. They think, "Oh, yeah,
17 we signed a treaty and you guys do get all these free
18 things," but they don't realize that we are only limited
19 to so much.

20 It is really hard when you feel like
21 you're the only Native person that is addressing these
22 issues to the outsiders. A lot of them have told me that
23 I have been the only one that has brought this to their

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1 attention. For me, I think this should have been brought
2 to their attention a long time ago, not just this year.
3 A lot of us have gone through and have our degrees, and
4 a lot of us have the opportunity to sit down with these
5 people. It surprises that nobody has brought this
6 awareness to the outside public.

7 My recommendations are in the pamphlet,
8 but this was just an issue that I wanted to address --
9 to eliminate the 40-unit cap and go with the GPA system
10 because that would do a lot of good for the Native students
11 in post-secondary education.

12 Thank you.

13 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Thank you very much.

14 I would like to provide the last
15 presentation for The Native Centre of the University of
16 Calgary. I will read the Introduction and Philosophy and
17 then jump to the back and talk about some of the desires
18 that we have at The Native Centre.

19 The purpose of The Native Centre is to
20 provide support to Aboriginal students, the Aboriginal
21 community and friends of Aboriginal people in their pursuit
22 of knowledge and academic education.

23 The underlying philosophy of The Native

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1 Centre is to provide a culturally appropriate environment
2 for successful academic pursuits of Aboriginal students.

3 This includes giving recognition to the needs of
4 Aboriginal students. In giving recognition to the needs
5 of Aboriginal students, The Native Centre endeavours to
6 provide a supportive environment.

7 In providing a supportive environment,
8 The Native Centre firmly believes that Aboriginal
9 students, the Aboriginal community and friends are
10 entitled to a friendly, enthusiastic and committed staff.

11 The staff, of course, pursue in building this supportive
12 environment by seeking input and collaboration from all
13 those who believe in the purpose of The Native Centre.
14 It is the position of The Native Centre staff to effectively
15 include Aboriginal students, through their First Nations
16 Student Association, in all aspects of The Native Centre,
17 and they are an effective part of the decision-making
18 process.

19 What I would like to do now is to jump
20 to page 17 of my presentation and read the three paragraphs
21 there and then talk a bit about some of the desires from
22 The Native Centre perspective.

23 With the current financial constraints

11 Just to add comments to that, some people
12 in these tough times tend to retrench and not move ahead.
13 That kind of attitude is also affecting our Aboriginal
14 communities. In these tough times that is when tough
15 decisions need to be made and people to stand above the
16 rest and provide extra support to those in need.

20 The Native Centre believes that, with
21 the current political reality in Canada, especially with
22 heightened awareness and support of Canadians in matters
23 like Aboriginal self-government and the positive sense

4 In many, many cases, institutions like
5 universities or post-secondary institutions need advice
6 from major Aboriginal organizations, even organizations
7 like the Royal Commission.

15 One is certainly to be an effective
16 player within the Division of Student Affairs and the
17 University of Calgary.

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8 The second part is to facilitate,
9 support and enhance the academic, cultural, social and
10 emotional needs of Aboriginal students associated with
11 The Native Centre.

18 Within the short time I have been at the
19 university as Director of The Native Centre, I have seen
20 a dramatic purpose in some of the students. Their attitude
21 is not just the past now; their attitude is to obtain a
22 degree with distinction or to obtain a degree and be on
23 the Dean's Honour Roll, and so on. So there is a changing

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1 attitude toward becoming master students.

2 The aspect of cultural support is very
3 important for Aboriginal students. In many, many cases
4 our leadership doesn't take the time to visit our students
5 and to provide that kind of linkage back to the community,
6 to make their educational efforts relevant back to the
7 needs of our own communities.

8 On the aspect of social support, many
9 of our students come from the environment which has been
10 described earlier, where they have no supportive
11 environment within the system prior to coming to
12 post-secondary education. In many, many cases the
13 parents, not having had the education and not having had
14 the opportunity to pursue post-secondary education, may
15 not provide the social support necessary for success at
16 the post-secondary level.

17 We need to be cognizant of those
18 realities. We also need to provide the emotional support.
19 In many cases our students don't have that kind of
20 emotional support.

21 The third one is to provide and maintain
22 a physical environment compatible with the needs of
23 Aboriginal students at The Native Centre.

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1 We are lucky at the University of Calgary
2 to have first-class facilities. We are in quite an
3 enviable position to other universities across the country
4 that realize what we have here at the university in terms
5 of physical facilities. Certainly, we have a lot of hungry
6 guys within the university itself on the kind of
7 facilities, so we are blessed with that at the university.

8 The fourth one is to provide a
9 supportive, positive and friendly environment for
10 Aboriginal students and The Native Centre friends and
11 supporters.

12 In many cases, we cannot just provide
13 the service ourselves alone; we need supporters and friends
14 from the surrounding communities, whether they are
15 business or political or cultural -- certainly with a lot
16 of emphasis on the cultural support.

17 The fifth one is to increase access for
18 Aboriginal students to the university and its services
19 through the provision or establishment of additional
20 programs and initiatives.

21 Certainly, one of the areas that we
22 desperately need is to have adequate resourcing so that
23 we can do an effective recruitment program back to the

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1 high schools, the junior high schools in the Aboriginal
2 communities around Alberta and across Canada. A lot of
3 people tend to look at other institutions because of the
4 Native Studies program. A lot of students look at the
5 University of Calgary because it has a long-established
6 support service, away back to 1972.

7 The sixth one is to enhance the linkages
8 with the academic, business, political and Aboriginal
9 communities.

10 To extend that notion of the effective
11 partnership, we need to establish that linkage with other
12 academics, not just within the University of Calgary but
13 within the city of Calgary itself, with the business
14 community, with the political community and with the
15 Aboriginal communities. We need to establish a strong
16 linkage, but we also need those groups to establish
17 linkages with us.

18 The seventh is to develop an Aboriginal
19 Studies Program in co-operation with appropriate
20 stakeholders.

21 One of the mandates that has been given
22 to me is to develop a program along those lines. It may
23 not be modelled after existing Native Studies programs,

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1 but we are certainly looking at those and looking at
2 something unique.

3 Number eight is to facilitate and
4 promote the activities and aims of the First Nations
5 Student Association.

6 We are lucky at the University of Calgary
7 to have an effective First Nations Student Association
8 executive, and they are part and parcel of our
9 decision-making process on a daily basis. They,
10 themselves, planned an annual recognition graduation
11 ceremony where they honour the graduates with a blanket
12 and an eagle feather. That is done through the First
13 Nations Student Association, and they would require
14 assistance to purchase the blankets because they are fairly
15 expensive.

16 Nevertheless, that purpose was to bring
17 forward our traditional forms of recognition of
18 achievement, and we want to continue that. Certainly,
19 any kind of financial assistance to maintain that kind
20 of recognition would be appreciated.

21 We continue to provide the Red Lodge.
22 That is the student lounge at the University of Calgary,
23 and they have their own office space.

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1 We would like to invite the executive
2 of the First Nations Student Association to be an integral
3 part of the planning and decision-making at The Native
4 Centre.

5 They also have recently formed a
6 city-wide post-secondary student association group with
7 students from Mount Royal, from SAIT, from AVC and the
8 University of Calgary.

9 Number nine is to establish a Steering
10 Committee or an Advisory Council for The Native Centre.

11 We have been fortunate enough to have
12 the leadership of Dr. Vivian Ayoungman as the Chair of
13 that Advisory Council for The Native Centre, and we are
14 currently in the planning phase of making sure that becomes
15 an effective Advisory Council to The Native Centre and
16 to the university. Foremost in the representation, of
17 course, is an Elder and also the First Nations Student
18 Association.

19 Number ten is to establish a new
20 organizational structure to reflect the future aspirations
21 of The Native Centre.

22 That, of course, implies financial
23 support.

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1 Number eleven is to promote academic
2 scholarship within The Native Centre.

3 We need to revamp one of the original
4 objectives of The Native Centre which was a research
5 component. We need to develop our research within The
6 Native Centre. If there is one area that needs to be looked
7 at, it is a central, effective research institute dealing
8 with Aboriginal education or even dealing with several
9 elements of our Aboriginal community. We need those
10 research institutes to provide the background and a
11 resource centre and a library for the various developments
12 of our own communities.

13 Of course, we need to investigate and
14 secure additional resourcing to supplement or strengthen
15 the purpose of The Native Centre. We need to find new
16 ways of obtaining financial support to the development
17 of The Native Centre.

18 I present those more as information
19 rather than recommendations, but I certainly support the
20 students from Mount Royal College who say that one of the
21 dire needs is the financial needs of Aboriginal students
22 and the inconsistency of government and policies of Indian
23 Affairs in dealing with off-reserve Indians and reserve

2 There is an expectation of Indian
3 Affairs to have Indian people graduate within a four-year
4 time span for their undergraduate degree. The overall
5 Canadian average of Canadian society is six years. Either
6 they are discriminating against us or they are calling
7 the white people dummies for taking six years and saying
8 Indian people can only take four years. I am not sure
9 what Indian Affairs is saying in that kind of policy
10 environment.

13 What I would like to do before we make
14 our concluding statements is go into the challenges that
15 we have presented to the Commission. What I would like
16 to do is read the challenge and then I would like to ask
17 Audrey Breaker to read the solutions. Then we, of course,
18 would like to have a chance to dialogue with the Commission
19 members here.

23 **AUDREY BREAKER:** The solutions we have

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1 are that:

2 - Aboriginal people should formulate
3 policies, implement policies and do performance
4 evaluations;

5 - establish an Aboriginal Education
6 Centre in the city of Calgary;

7 - a concerted effort amongst all
8 Aboriginal educational institutions to achieve their goals
9 and priorities;

10 - We also require political support from
11 Aboriginal organizations;

12 - support from the different levels of
13 government to access necessary funding;

14 - prepare curricula pertaining to the
15 Aboriginal people, have it standardized by Aboriginal
16 educators and make it accessible to all provincial school
17 jurisdictions.

18 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Challenge No. 2 is that
19 the self-government framework must prioritize education
20 which will provide for quality learning.

21 **AUDREY BREAKER:** The solutions are:

22 - We need more collaboration among
23 institutions and Aboriginal political organizations in

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1 providing educational services;

2 - more parental involvement in the
3 decision-making process in the delivery of programs.

4 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Challenge No. 3:
5 Intercultural in-servicing must be mandatory for all staff
6 within educational institutions which provide services
7 to Aboriginal students.

8 **AUDREY BREAKER:** The solution is to have
9 trained Aboriginal staff and Elders available to implement
10 the in-services.

11 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Challenge No. 4: A
12 more effective tracking system must be implemented by all
13 educational institutions which will provide pertinent
14 information and facilitate educational objectives of
15 students.

16 **AUDREY BREAKER:** The solution is the
17 implementation of a comprehensive data base and
18 counselling follow-up system similar to that in New
19 Brunswick. Information is put in daily, i.e.
20 attendance. They keep track of the drop-outs and where
21 the students go, family visits and also when students
22 transfer from system to system. This will also give stats
23 as to the successes of our students and try to change the

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1 bleak picture we have in Canada of our Aboriginal students
2 having such high drop-out rates.

3 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Challenge No. 5:
4 Flexible and consistent funding for Aboriginal students
5 at all levels of their educational endeavours.

6 **AUDREY BREAKER:** The solution is to have
7 more consistent policies developed from all Aboriginal
8 organizations which include Indian Affairs, First Nations,
9 Métis Nations, and other organizations regarding urban
10 Aboriginal students.

11 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Challenge No. 6:
12 Aboriginal educational institutions must employ qualified
13 Aboriginal staff in senior positions.

14 **AUDREY BREAKER:** Some of the solutions
15 are:

16 - When employing staff for positions
17 pertaining to Aboriginal people, such as Native Liaison
18 Workers, et cetera, it should be necessary or mandatory
19 that the hiring committee be predominantly Aboriginal,
20 and successful candidate should be Aboriginal.

21 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Challenge No. 7: A
22 support mechanism is required to facilitate a successful
23 transition from secondary to post-secondary education.

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1 **AUDREY BREAKER:** Solutions:

2 - More information sharing, role
3 modelling programs, career days, peer counselling and
4 Native student clubs at the junior/senior high level,
5 especially in isolated and remote areas in the country.

6 I am thinking of places in northern Alberta where they
7 don't know the programs that are available to them and
8 what the standards are for them to get in there.

9 - to match programs to student
10 expectations and abilities;
11 - to have a more concerted effort on the
12 part of post-secondary institutions to provide orientation
13 at the senior and junior high levels so that students will
14 understand exactly what is there for them.

15 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Challenge No. 8: To
16 eradicate the apathy endemic amongst our urban Aboriginal
17 people.

18 **AUDREY BREAKER:** The solutions are:

19 - to hold more public hearings such as
20 this at school and educational support institutions;

21 - public service advertisements urging
22 Aboriginal leaders, Elders, parents and students, to
23 encourage Aboriginal students to take up the educational

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2             - encourage media, such as Windspeaker,
3 to feature success stories at the workplace;
4             - to initiate a systemic approach to
5 self-esteem, self-identity workshops and stress
6 management;
7             - to set up a "help" and "volunteer"
8 emergency number.

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12 **AUDREY BREAKER:** The solutions are:

16 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Challenge No. 10: To
17 increase the number of bursaries and scholarships in all
18 fields of education, i.e. technical, vocational,
19 professional and performing arts for Aboriginal students.

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1 programs.

2 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Thank you, Audrey.

3 Before I make the concluding statements,
4 Doreen L'Hirondelle wanted to make an additional comment.

5 **DOREEN L'HIRONDELLE:** I would like to
6 address this comment to the Royal Commission.

7 I felt very uncomfortable because we
8 were scheduled for three different times to meet. I think
9 education is a very important issue.

10 Also, I think there has to be a better
11 co-ordination of activities. We look at the education
12 of Aboriginal people within Calgary, and that is what
13 happened.

14 It made me feel like I was a second-class
15 citizen coming to a forum on Aboriginal education.

16 That's a comment I would like to direct
17 toward the Commission.

18 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Thank you, Doreen.

19 What I would like to do now is read the
20 concluding statement we have. We would certainly invite
21 comments and questions from the Commission. After that,
22 of course, I would like to turn our time over to Treaty
23 7. Dr. Vivian Ayoungman will introduce that group.

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1 In a spirit of co-operation, this report
2 has been compiled by people involved in educational
3 institutions within the city of Calgary who deliver
4 Aboriginal educational programs. In the collaborative
5 process of making this submission, we reaffirm our
6 traditional form of education as a lifelong learning
7 experience. This affirmation includes quality education
8 for all Aboriginal students in the city of Calgary.

9 Our collaborative endeavours will set
10 the precedent for future initiatives and educational
11 partnerships. From the successful networking
12 partnerships of our respective organizations, we have
13 presented the challenges. The door is open to this
14 partnership.

15 Thank you very much for the time you have
16 given us, Mr. Chairman.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I would like
18 to thank you for your presentation. It was certainly a
19 very thorough presentation. The concept of bringing
20 together all these different agencies and educational
21 institutions to work together is an excellent idea.
22 Whoever thought of it should be congratulated. It is
23 certainly a good way to approach this particular issue.

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1 I have very few questions.

2 In relation to the Plains Indian
3 Cultural Survival School, on the question of funding for
4 students 19 years and older, is that still in the air or
5 has that been resolved? Is that a firm decision by the
6 Calgary Board and they are not going to review it?

7 **DOREEN SPENCE:** Basically, the question
8 of funding for students over 19 has been there since the
9 inception of the school. We have had some verbal
10 commitment from some of the local people. The Calgary
11 Board of Education said they would probably tip in for
12 a .5 teacher, and AVT, Mutart Foundation and the other,
13 I believe, is coming from Social Services. So it is a
14 joint effort.

15 However, these are verbal promises. As
16 an Aboriginal person and an Aboriginal leader, verbal
17 promises don't mean anything to me. I have to see it on
18 paper.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I don't
20 understand what the problem is. With all the money the
21 country is supposed to be putting into training and
22 preparing people for the next century, I don't understand
23 why 19 years is a magic figure.

8 As I say, it is cheaper to educate than
9 to incarcerate or keep our people on welfare, which is
10 essentially what happens. As a volunteer, it is hard for
11 me to understand spending some 90 per cent of my life for
12 the people in education, and yet people can't even dip
13 in the few little bucks that are needed for these young
14 people.

17 **DOREEN SPENCE:** We don't charge our
18 students. The students under 19 years of age get the same
19 funding, as you will see in the report, as any other public
20 school system.

21 However, the School Board says that they
22 don't get funding for students over 19. I can dispute
23 that, too, because there is advanced education funding.

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1 That, itself, is the way it is allocated. It is not a
2 matter of being for a specific purpose or a specific target
3 group.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is the
5 School Board funded by a tax base in Calgary?

6 **DOREEN SPENCE:** Yes.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** And they
8 restrict their taxes to 19 years and younger; is that it?

9 **DOREEN SPENCE:** I don't think so. The
10 Calgary Board of Education -- and you can jump in on this
11 one, Doreen. It is my understanding that any students
12 over 19 are deemed as adult education or continuing
13 education. They have an institution within our area,
14 Viscount Bennett, which provides for students in that age
15 bracket.

16 However, when we interviewed our
17 students, there is no support system for them there. There
18 is virtually nothing there that will attract them.

19 Because of the uniqueness of the
20 cultural program and the resident Elders within our
21 institution, they have a very strong cultural component
22 which actually attracts them to the school. They feel
23 comfortable there. They feel they are part of that

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1 extended family situation.

2 **DOREEN L'HIRONDELLE:** Speaking from an
3 Aboriginal point of view, I think the cultural component
4 of Plains Indian School is very critical to the students.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** We thank you
6 for your presentation, and we will move to the next
7 presentation. Please introduce your members.

8 **VIVIAN AYOUNGMAN, Director of**
9 **Education, Treaty 7 Tribal Council:** I am Dr. Vivian
10 Ayounyman from the Treaty 7 Tribal Council, Director of
11 Education. To my immediate right is Vera Marie Crowchild,
12 Director of Education of the Tsuu T'ina Tribe, and Joyce
13 Goodstriker, Superintendent of Education of the Blood
14 Tribe.

15 Mr. Chairman and Commissioner, I would
16 like to bring to your attention that you will be getting
17 a very detailed submission from my office relating to my
18 concerns in education as an Indian professional. A lot
19 of these will be my personal viewpoints because I want
20 to express them, and some of them will be a summary of
21 the collective concerns of the Treaty 7 Nations.

22 To try to address all of these issues
23 in this very short time we have would be an injustice,

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1 to address those issues adequately. However, Vera Marie
2 and Joyce will address some specific issues that will give
3 you a sample of some of the concerns that we do have.

4 The one thing that I want to express very
5 emphatically is this whole process of the Royal Commission
6 hearings in Calgary. I want to thank George Calliou and
7 the urban group for giving us part of their time, because
8 we were not even initially scheduled to present.

9 I think the Royal Commission is nothing
10 but a farce when it leaves out a whole segment of people,
11 the Treaty First Nations of southern Alberta, on such a
12 critical issue as education.

13 A little more than a month ago I met with
14 one of your staff, and I felt I was very co-operative.
15 I gave a lot of guidance, gave her number and introduced
16 her to people in the city. Then I waited to get a call
17 because I was assured that we would be given a time to
18 present, so that we could prepare.

19 I did not receive the courtesy of a
20 telephone call until indirectly I heard other people
21 talking about their scheduled times. So I called the
22 Commission's office, did not have my calls returned, so
23 I was becoming very frustrated.

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1 I was finally able to get the name of
2 a person in the Calgary area who was involved in the
3 organizing, and he referred me back to this urban group
4 and pointed a finger at them and said that they were the
5 ones responsible for setting up the schedule. But that
6 was not their understanding. This urban education group
7 were led to believe that we were presenting at the
8 Lethbridge hearings, which was news to me.

9 So when I finally did talk to one of your
10 local people, I told them the Commission hearings were
11 nothing but a farce if they leave out certain segments
12 of the population. I think the Treaty First Nations of
13 Canada deserve a place at these hearings -- not just a
14 few minutes set aside by another group.

15 Therefore, I am not going to do injustice
16 to the very significant remarks that I would like to have
17 made, so you will get a very professional, detailed summary
18 of my position.

19 I would like to state, however, that the
20 whole process of devolution of education to the First
21 Nations of this country has been totally unacceptable.
22 There are many, many different areas that we deal with.
23 In the Treaty 7 area we have a core group of professional

6 There is the whole issue of all of the
7 adult and post-secondary issues. I am glad that the
8 student made reference to it. I listened with interest
9 to what the other people had to say because I agree with
10 everything they have said.

21 We have gone to MPs, we have gone all
22 over the place to try to be heard. We organized a national
23 rally last November in the city, and I want to thank the

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1 University of Calgary students for being very active in
2 organizing that and participating in that to bring that
3 whole issue of the inadequacy of post-secondary funding
4 to the rest of the citizens of Canada.

5 People assume that we get all kinds of
6 dollars to run our programs. The reality is that it
7 doesn't even get close to the mark. There are many, many
8 different gaps in the post-secondary area. The tribes
9 do not even get funded to provide assistance to vocational
10 and trade students, for example. Students who are in
11 trades programs, in electrical programs at SAIT, and so
12 on, for example, quite often never know where to turn
13 because our post-secondary departments and adult education
14 departments do not get that kind of funding.

15 Our post-secondary adult education
16 institutions on the reserves have proven that they can
17 do the job, that they can upgrade some of our students
18 and successfully get them into post-secondary programs.
19 Some of these people have become our own teachers on our
20 reserves, and they have excelled when they have moved on
21 to post-secondary institutions in the urban settings.

22 These institutions do not get any kind
23 of core funding. They scrape by from year to year,

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1 wondering whether they are going to make it or not. We
2 have often suggested that our Canadian government should
3 use the example of our neighbours to the south and look
4 at the success rate of those post-secondary institutions.
5 They have really made an impact in their home communities
6 by training their leadership and by offering a whole range
7 of very relevant programs.

8 As I said, I am not going to go into
9 detail on many of these issues. I am just going to give
10 you some of the topics that we talk about.

11 For in-school issues, there is the whole
12 issue of student transportation, the Master Tuition
13 Agreements that we negotiate with public schools. There
14 is the whole range of student services and counselling,
15 special education, graduation, our capital projects for
16 school construction, our minor capital, school
17 evaluations, operation and maintenance agreements, staff
18 and professional development, curriculum development
19 across the subject areas.

20 There are the issues related to school
21 authorities, such as insurance, legal fees, audits, board
22 training, even urban education issues. We would love to
23 offer support and assistance to off-reserve residents,

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1 but the fact of the matter is that our local governments
2 do not get any kind of funding for students who live off
3 the reserve.

4 In some circumstances, the tribes do try
5 to scrape up a few dollars so they can provide this kind
6 of assistance, but those kinds of funds just simply are
7 not provided for.

8 We have looked at a lot of these issues
9 in depth and have come up with strategies, have made
10 recommendations, have made them to deaf ears as Doreen
11 Spence already pointed out. I am hoping that my vision
12 of the Royal Commission as being nothing but a farce is
13 turned around by somebody actually doing something, not
14 just shelving all of these documents.

15 I am really wondering if this whole
16 exercise is nothing but another waste of a lot of dollars.
17 If there is a federal election coming up, who is going
18 to do something about any of these issues?

19 To the local group who may have had a
20 major oversight, who did not have the courtesy to return
21 our calls, who did not include Treaty First Nations
22 education on their agenda, I am here to say that my voice
23 is going to be heard anyway because I will make that written

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1 submission.

2 That's all I have to say. I will turn
3 it over to my colleagues to address a couple of specific
4 points that they want to make.

5 **JOYCE GOODSTRIKER, Superintendent of**
6 **Education, Blood Tribe Education Board:** My name is Joyce
7 Goodstriker. (Native language -- not translated) That
8 means: Hello, I am glad to see you, that you have come
9 to our country.

10 My main presentation today deals with
11 high-cost special ed. As Vivian said, we could go longer
12 than the 10 or 15 minutes that we are allocated. I do
13 have some other issues that are not in the brief that I
14 have presented.

15 The Blood Tribe has over 7,000 members.

16 I am Superintendent of the school system that governs
17 1,200 students on the reserve and 800 students attending
18 public schools in four school districts that surround us.

19 We also have another 400 to 500 students
20 living off the reserve, including post-secondary students
21 that we are not funded for.

22 The Blood Tribe Education Board also
23 governs Red Crow College and all post-secondary programs

4 Marie Small Face Marule, President of
5 Red Crow College, made the presentation on post-secondary
6 issues to the Royal Commission in Lethbridge on May 25.
7 I was unable to make it at that time. Vivian said we
8 had some time here, so I just demanded that I get some
9 time here today.

10 I agree with everything that Marie
11 presented. Just to reiterate, being a big tribe, we are
12 not equitably funded when it comes to our numbers. I will
13 go into why I think we are being treated unfairly. A lot
14 of it is a political issue with the government, whether
15 or not we go with AFA Agreements or stay with the
16 Contribution Agreements.

17 We think AFA Agreements are a political
18 sell-out for many Indian bands, and we feel that is one
19 issue why we are being treated the way we are.

20 I speak simply from the treaty
21 perspective. I sympathize with other people. I
22 sympathize with C-31, but we don't get additional funding
23 for those people. My issues here today are strictly for

3 We control the four public systems,
4 students going to four public systems within our area,
5 which is two systems in Lethbridge, Willow Creek which
6 is Fort McLeod, and one in Cardston.

17 Out of that 200, approximately 40
18 students would be FAS/FAE -- and I don't know if all of
19 you are familiar with that, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and
20 fetal alcohol affected children which are very hard to
21 detect. We have many of those children in our system,
22 and at least 40 of those students need one-on-one teacher
23 assistance, either with a specialized teacher or at least

2 The Indian Affairs Department in
3 Edmonton still makes funding very inequitable for our
4 students. Public systems obtain what they want without
5 the kind of lobbying that we have to pursue. I think 50
6 per cent of my time is spent lobbying, plus being expected
7 to run three schools on the reserve and our central
8 operations. It is very discouraging, and we go through
9 this every year. There is nothing in place that will
10 guarantee that we have parity with public systems, at least
11 those students bused from the reserves into the city
12 schools or public systems.

22 In many of our classrooms we may have
23 four students who need the special help, and all we can

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1 afford to bring in is maybe one Teacher Assistant, maybe
2 not even that, plus a resource teacher who pulls them out
3 maybe 20 to 30 minutes a day to work with them. The
4 resources we have to work with with our students are just
5 totally inadequate.

6 I have given examples to the Commission
7 here. I do have some corrections I need to make.

8 I know for fact that in a couple of
9 schools in Calgary \$1,000 a month goes for students
10 attending a private school in Calgary which claims to be
11 providing special ed services; yet, they don't do the
12 testing; they are not expected to do the testing that we
13 have to. Yet, we are questioned every step of the way
14 when we submit our proposal for special ed children. They
15 question us: Are you really qualified to test your kids?
16 Are your kids really tested?

17 We have a staff member who is obtaining
18 a doctorate in special clinical psychology. She has a
19 Master's in special ed; yet, they question her ability
20 and the people that work with her in assessing who is
21 special ed.

22 Another system here in town charges
23 \$1,400 a month for students in special ed. That is \$14,000

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1 a year.

2 On the reserve we have a formula that
3 DIA magically came up with. A year ago it was a little
4 bit less. This year they have increased it a little bit.
5 For the first eight students we get \$5,000 a student,
6 so that is a base rate of \$40,000. That doesn't even cover
7 one special ed teacher's salary. Our average teachers'
8 salaries are about \$45,000 a year. Somebody in special
9 ed usually needs to have more training than a regular
10 teacher. For the balance of 32 students we get \$1,200
11 for each of those students. That is \$38,000. For these
12 40 students -- and I gave the example to the Commission
13 of 40 students that would be funded. For these same 40
14 students, if they attended a reserve school locally, that
15 reserve would only get \$78,000 for special ed, but they
16 would also get the base rate that we get for students in
17 the Treaty 7 area, which is \$4,850 times 40; that would
18 make it \$194,000.

19 When you figure out what the public
20 system gets, \$400,000 for the students who may be going
21 to the city -- if they were to go back to the reserve,
22 the reserve would only get \$272,000 for those students.
23 So there is still a gap of \$128,000.

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1 What is the incentive for parents to send
2 their students back to the reserve when there is that much
3 of a disparity?

4 With our tribe, if we were to send the
5 209 students to the system here, the public system would
6 get \$2,900,000; if they were to stay on the reserve and
7 we educate them, we would lose \$1 million at least. So
8 there is a big difference in how it is funded.

9 We are not going to back down this year.
10 Last year we threatened to go to Human Rights, when we
11 found out that they didn't provide the amount that we
12 expected after all the work we had put into it. We are
13 going to go to the Human Rights Commission. If that
14 doesn't work, we are going to go to the United Nations
15 Human Rights Commission and sue. Maybe it will be a class
16 action suit from parents to the government on this
17 disparity.

18 I don't know what the situation is in
19 other parts of Canada, but whenever I meet with Indian
20 professionals from other provinces, there is a great
21 disparity. Tuition Agreements -- we have been controlling
22 those since band control. We have never had
23 administrative dollars for that, and we found out people

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1 in B.C. get 2 to 5 per cent to control those dollars.

2 Finally, they are agreeing to give us
3 a little bit this year. It's a continual struggle to get
4 equality in funding.

5 My big concern this year in our funding
6 is special ed.

7 The Blood Tribe Board also controls
8 post-secondary ed. There are some other issues that
9 relate to that. There is no funding for off-reserve
10 students. As I said, we have about 400 to 500 students
11 who are going to school off the reserve. Our tribe gives
12 them \$25 each a year; that's nothing. How we are able
13 to do that is that we do make interest payments on our
14 tuition dollars. We hold off as long as we can before
15 we turn over the funding to the public schools, and that
16 is how we are able to help some of our people whose children
17 go to school in the cities and are not covered under the
18 treaty rights on education.

19 Because we have a big funding base, that
20 is the only reason we can do that. If we were a small
21 tribe, we could not afford to do that. And are we even
22 allowed to do that legally? I guess what we do with the
23 interest we make is our business, so that's how we approach

2 These people who live off the reserve,
3 many of them being post-secondary students, how can they
4 afford school supplies, special programs for their
5 children, when they get a base rate of \$670 for single
6 students and for children it goes up a little bit? It's
7 just impossible for those people. We feel bad at the local
8 level that we can't meet their needs, but the reality is
9 that that is all the funding we get from Indian Affairs.

On capital funding, there is never enough money in Alberta for capital funding for all the reserves. The school accommodation standards for facilities design are again inferior to what public schools have in Alberta.

20 The other issue is the AFA Agreement.

21 As I mentioned, unless you go with the AFA Agreements,
22 you seem to suffer. Red Crow College has done a study.
23 They are one of the few institutions who are suffering

5 That is a key issue with us, and I don't
6 think we are ready to compromise our treaty rights just
7 to get more funding, which may look more attractive at
8 the time.

12 On the special ed funding, a lot of the
13 funding that is available to other bands, we suffer. They
14 tell us, "Well, you get that much anyway; you don't need
15 any more. You are getting away more than the smaller
16 tribes." I don't think that should be a consideration.

21 I will touch on curriculum development
22 a little bit. For all of Alberta Indian Affairs has
23 \$200,000. There are 42 bands, and they do use that "divide

5 We are 350 miles south of Edmonton. We
6 are right on the U.S.-Canada border, and it is expensive
7 for us to always go up and lobby and negotiate. It is
8 always people who seem to get into the office more and
9 people who live closer who tend to get more funding. I
10 don't think that's fair.

17 The Hot Lunch Program is another one.
18 It is too bad that we let this go years ago. We used
19 to have a Hot Lunch Program.

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1 have anything like that in Canada. It's really sad.

2 In our schools people raise money. We
3 use some of our budget for a Hot Lunch Program, but there
4 we are running into trouble. Many times we are not using
5 professional cooks, and our Teacher Assistants are working
6 double time to help out with these Hot Lunch Programs.

7 I think something like that should be
8 guaranteed funding for all tribes in Canada, especially
9 for the children who are at this level. For people who
10 live in the cities this would sure come in handy for their
11 children if they had some kind of a lunch program like
12 that.

13 My nephew goes to the University of
14 Lethbridge. He said, "Sometimes I have to go to the --"
15 what is that place where they feed people? The street
16 people go some place to eat. Many of our students go to
17 those places to eat. Is that really fair?

18 I would like to end with that. I will
19 add a lot of our other concerns along with the Treaty 7
20 presentation.

21 I would like to thank the Indian people
22 who are here today and the Commission for your attention
23 and your willingness to listen to our concerns, even though

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1 this particular meeting was not that well organized.

2 Thank you very much.

3 **VERA MARIE CROWCHILD, Sarcee Education:**

4 Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I am Vera Marie
5 Crowchild from Sarcee Education, Tsuu T'ina as we call
6 ourselves.

7 I have several issues I want to bring
8 up, but because of time restraints I will present them
9 with the Treaty 7 paper.

10 There is one issue that has bothered me
11 since I came back to my reservation to work as Education
12 Co-ordinator, and that is that the Tsuu T'ina people have
13 been educated in the city of Calgary for over 35 years.
14 Out of that 35 years they have not graduated one Grade
15 12 student to go on to university to graduate in a
16 post-secondary education. After 35 years, what has
17 happened to all that money where we are supposed to be
18 educated?

19 That is my main concern -- all that money
20 that has been spent on my reserve on our behalf to the
21 City of Calgary to educate over 800 children.

22 Right now we only have 240 children in
23 the system, but out of that 240 children not one will go

2 The only recommendation I would say is
3 that someone has to be made accountable for all that money
4 that is spent on education of Indian people. If the
5 Commission does not look into mismanagement of funds by
6 INAC or the school boards, then they are still doing an
7 injustice to my people.

9 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS: I would like
10 to thank you for coming forward. I apologize for the
11 mix-up. It is unfortunate that we couldn't get together
12 on timing yesterday morning. We were here at 8 o'clock
13 and we were looking at an empty room. Then in mid-morning
14 we stopped for about an hour and a half to wait for
15 presenters because we couldn't track down enough people
16 to present at that particular time.

20 I am very, very happy that you are
21 bringing forth the information on the finances. That is
22 an issue that we have heard about, but I don't think we
23 have ever been given the kind of facts and figures that

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1 you are providing us. It is very black and white.

2 I would encourage you to follow through
3 on that. It doesn't seem to be very fair if students are
4 going to be funded off the reserve for a lot more than
5 they would be on reserve. It's just not fair at all.

6 I look forward to the other information
7 you are going to be providing.

8 Likewise, the curriculum budget.
9 \$200,000 a year certainly doesn't do much in the area of
10 curriculum development when there is so much curriculum
11 development that needs to be done for Aboriginal peoples.

12 Another point I was really glad you made
13 is that you made mention of C-31 students and also
14 off-reserve students. We hear a lot about people who
15 believe that they are not getting funding from bands, and
16 they never turn around and blame Indian Affairs. The blame
17 is on the band that they are not providing them with
18 dollars. It's as if the community is receiving all of
19 this money for the others, and then they are hanging on
20 to it. I was very glad that you brought that up.

21 Unfortunately, I am going to have to run.

22 I don't have a lot more time if I am going to catch the
23 flight I was hoping to catch.

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1 Once again, I apologize for the
2 inconvenience we may have caused those people whom we asked
3 to reschedule.

4 Marie Marule did bring up quite a few
5 of the subjects that you brought up, but by your adding
6 your presentation you have complemented the kinds of thing
7 she was bringing to us.

8 She did bring up the fact, for instance,
9 that post-secondary institutions, like the one she is
10 running, are not getting enough money. A decision was
11 made in Ottawa by the federal government that there would
12 be one major institution like that in Canada and the rest
13 are really being under-funded. It's a point that was made
14 in Ontario and was also made in British Columbia by First
15 Nations people who want to have their own institutions
16 in their own part of the world. So we have heard that
17 before.

18 I look forward to the information you
19 are going to provide us. If there are other people out
20 there who wanted to make presentations to us, please take
21 the time to sit down and write us your views.
22 Unfortunately, we just don't have any more time.

23 **FRED YELLOW OLD WOMAN:** I would like to

6 Throughout this meeting that I have been here, I have
7 heard mentioned several times cultural genocide.

16 The last part says: "Certainly, a lot
17 of people think money is part of the solution, but with
18 the kind of tight situation Canada finds itself in, it
19 is obviously not going to be the only way that things are
20 going to move ahead."

23 I am very, very concerned about our future generations,

4 What I would like to say is -- you said
5 here "it is obviously not going to be the only way that
6 things are going to move ahead." I put down here my own
7 recommendation as a concerned grandfather and a parent.
8 I would like you to hear this, Georges.

15 I fully support what the professional
16 people have said today.

18 **MELINDA DEVINE:** May I ask two
19 questions, just quickly.

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3 COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:

11 There are a number of ways of making your
12 concerns known to the Royal Commission -- either through
13 a toll-free number or written submissions or even through
14 tape, if you want to put yourself on tape and send it in,
15 as long as we get the message.

18 It was a Youth Round Table, so we did get a good perspective
19 there from the youth.

20 There are so many people in this country
21 and so many communities, and we are trying to get to
22 everybody. Our time is limited with the travelling. It
23 is difficult to reach everybody, but the youth are going

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1 to play a very significant role in addressing any issues
2 that might be of concern to them.

3 I offer you that opportunity to do so.

4 You can write it, you can put it on tape, or you can call
5 a toll-free number. You can contact the Youth
6 Co-ordinator at the Commission. The staff will give you
7 the information, who to contact.

8 **DOREEN SPENCE:** I would just like to
9 make a comment in response to what Dr. Vivian Ayoungman
10 mentioned earlier.

11 Truly, this is disorganization in its
12 finest form. We should be notified, as Aboriginal
13 leaders. I can identify through Ottawa who we are and
14 what institutions we represent.

15 This was the first time we have been able
16 to access the Royal Commission. The young girl who asked
17 why youth aren't involved -- they should be involved.
18 Internationally, when we look at the likes of New Zealand,
19 they have so many seats in Parliament set aside for their
20 First Nations. They have throughout the whole judicial
21 process their First Nations talking on First Nations
22 issues. They have youth groups.

23 We, in Canada, just study our people and

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1 take back these reports and shelve them. This is really
2 what the anger and the bitterness that many of our young
3 people are facing.

4 If we were to have a youth group, you
5 would see that hurt inside that these young people face.

6 I speak for these young people because I see them every
7 day. Many of them don't have the food, the necessities
8 of life that they require; yet, we exclude them from things
9 like this where their voice should be heard.

10 Thank you.

11 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
12 very much, Doreen.

13 I just want to ask Vi if she has more
14 questions.

15 Beryl Kootenay is at Mike No. 2 and wants
16 to ask a question.

17 **BERYL KOOTENAY:** My name is Beryl
18 Kootenay, from the Stoney Band, Morley, Alberta.

19 I kind of feel disappointed here that
20 Georges left early. I was looking forward to making this
21 presentation. Last night my friend told me that the
22 disabled were making a presentation earlier today, at about
23 11 o'clock.

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1 I am a Past-President of Calgary Indian
2 Friendship Centre's Native Disabled Support Group, one
3 of the co-founders. I thought we were going to impress
4 Georges by making our presentations earlier. I feel just
5 like others have mentioned here, that when it comes to
6 voicing out, we are always put in the last of the line
7 or next to gays and stuff like that.

8 It is still a support group; up to now
9 it is not incorporated. We got funding from Secretary
10 of State of \$8,000 to get ourselves incorporated as an
11 organization in the city, the Calgary Native Disabled
12 Society, but up to now, as far as I know, it is not
13 incorporated. Hopefully, in the future it will be
14 incorporated.

15 I had to resign from that position
16 because I, myself, as a Treaty Indian, lived in Calgary
17 for many years. I feel I got a lot of experience to turn
18 to my grassroots.

19 My position right now is that we recently
20 got this provincial Aboriginal Disabled Society
21 incorporated. As Vivian is saying, I am a representative
22 for the Treaty 7 sovereign Alberta. That was my concern.

23 For the first time in history, this year

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1 the disabled have come forward, the active disabled, and
2 we have become very independent. This provincial
3 Aboriginal Disabled Society is an interim working group.
4 We got funded from the federal government for five years,
5 and we are a group to promote education and awareness,
6 to reach out to the disabled. It is not just a one-way
7 street of paraplegics or amputees; there is a broad range
8 of disabled people, visually-impaired, hearing-impaired,
9 speech-impaired and on and on. Some are in wheelchairs
10 for the rest of their lives.

11 I really like what Pat Shirt said. Some
12 of us are from alcohol-related accidents and confined to
13 wheelchairs, and that seems to be the real problem in our
14 Native and urban communities.

15 This group is to reach out to the
16 disabled at a grassroots and to off-reserve, promoted for
17 Calgary and Edmonton.

18 I also am a representative for southern
19 Alberta and for western Canada on the National Aboriginal
20 Network on Disabilities. We are a non-political group
21 and also a platform for Canadian Aboriginal disabled.

22 For once in our lifetime history, we are
23 becoming very strong. The disabled are coming forward,

3 Our concerns for the disabled is for
4 housing, transportation, education, social recreation,
5 and employment. What I wanted to ask Georges, or it was
6 recommended that the grassroots want to set up some
7 programs for education and employment, and money seems
8 to be the problem all the time. We recommended funding
9 for community accessibility, health care and home care.

11 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
12 very much, Beryl. Maybe Vi can respond to your
13 recommendations.

16 We did hear from the Disabled Society
17 this morning, and they made some really good, forceful
18 presentations and made some recommendations that are
19 directly related to the same issues that you are talking
20 about now.

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1 will be considered and will be taken into consideration
2 in the final report.

3 I want to thank you for your
4 presentation.

5 **BERYL KOOTENAY:** What I am trying to say
6 is that I am very disappointed, like Vivian. For two weeks
7 I have been asking to make sure they put me on the agenda
8 with the Calgary group since I am one of the co-founders.
9 I don't know why they never put me on the agenda or even
10 got a phone call.

11 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I really
12 apologize for that. I don't know either. The
13 Commissioners just came in, and we don't organize these
14 things as Commissioners. Certainly, it is unfortunate,
15 and I hope that your concerns will be registered
16 accordingly and that your voice is heard.

17 **BERYL KOOTENAY:** Thank you.

18 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** You are
19 welcome.

20 I just want to make a few closing remarks
21 here.

22 In all the travels that we have done
23 across this country as a Commission, the social part of

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1 our mandate, which deals with all the social ills of the
2 Aboriginal communities and the Aboriginal people of this
3 country, is one of education and the substance and drug
4 abuse and the topics that were discussed here today. They
5 have been brought up over and over and over again. They
6 have been stressed so adamantly by all the Aboriginal
7 people, how important education is. Education has been
8 prioritized. People are concerned with healing, going back
9 to their traditions and their culture.

10 There seems to be a movement in this
11 country, and I can see it even through travelling that
12 people are changing, that the message is getting out and
13 people are starting to work toward healing. That is
14 encouraging.

15 The research that the Commission is
16 involved in in all aspects of our mandate -- one of them
17 is education, and I encourage anybody, any treaty group,
18 band, Aboriginal people wherever you come from in this
19 country. We can't hear you all. We would like to, but
20 there is not enough time. We don't have the ability to
21 do that. We have done the best we can to go into remote
22 areas and northern communities and urban communities, as
23 many communities as we could.

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1 We want people to give us your
2 information. Put your concerns on paper and send them
3 to us. We are gathering information from three different
4 streams -- through public participation, through written
5 submissions, through research and through Round Tables.
6 There will be a Round Table on Education, I think sometime
7 in June or July -- I think it is July 5 to 7, a National
8 Round Table Education in Ottawa. The Commission is trying
9 to look at all these things.

10 All the information that we gather will
11 be considered and looked at and studied, and
12 recommendations will come out of that.

13 What we want to hear from the people is
14 your recommendations. We have heard some very, very
15 touching, emotional testimony with respect to all kinds
16 of problems that Aboriginal people face in this country.
17 We have heard horror stories about all kinds of issues
18 as well.

19 We want to now turn our minds around to
20 how we can deal with these issues. It was always my
21 perception that people know how to deal with them. It
22 was always my perception that you have the answers. I
23 believe that. What we want now is for you to give us some

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1 indication as to the best way to deal with those issues.

2 Those are the kinds of recommendations that we have to
3 try to formulate from the information that we get.

4 I must say that today and yesterday the
5 presentations we heard here were of the best calibre.

6 Some of the material we have here is very, very good, some
7 of the best. There have been endless hours of work that
8 have been put into some of the presentations, and we
9 appreciate that.

10 We are looking forward to hearing from
11 you. Again, I apologize for all the mix-up that occurred.

12 I just wish that we did have the time. I wish we had
13 the time to sit down with every community and with every
14 person that wants to talk to us, but unfortunately it is
15 humanly impossible to do that.

16 Don't let that stop you. There are
17 ways. There are all kinds of ways to get the message to
18 us, and that is what we want to hear.

19 I want to thank all the presenters. I
20 want to thank all the staff and our capable Moderator here
21 for the two days that she spent with us. We will be looking
22 forward to hearing from you.

23 Thank you.

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1 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** I would
2 like to thank the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
3 for their two-day hearings here in the city of Calgary.
4 I would like to adjourn this meeting
5 today. Thank you.
6 --- Whereupon the Hearing concluded at 3:30 p.m.