

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR  
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON  
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

LOCATION/ENDROIT: CITADEL INN, BALLROOM C,  
OTTAWA, ONTARIO

DATE: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1993

VOLUME: 4

"for the record..."

**STENOTRAN**

1376 Kilborn Ave.

OTTAWA 521-0703

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**  
**Citadel Inn**  
**Ottawa, Ontario**  
**November 18, 1993**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Opening Prayer by Elder Noel Knockwood	864
Opening Remarks by Commissioner Meekison	864
Presentation by Canadian Executive Service Organization William Draper Daniel W. Haggerty Bill Shead Claude McCabe	866
Presentation by Canadian Association of University Teachers Alan Andrews Tim Stutt Gordon C. Piché	914
Presentation by Canadian Paediatric Society Dr. Victor Marchessault Dr. Fred W. Baker Dr. Gary Pেকেles	942
Presentation by Canadian Federation of Students Heather Morin Jaimie McEvoy Caryn Duncan	1013
Presentation by Conference Board of Canada Gilles Rhéaume Stelios Loizibes	1068

NAME	PAGE
Presentation by Canadian Co-operative Association Nora Sobolov Jo-Anne Ferguson	1105
Remarks by Linda Jordan, Secretary, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples	1132
Presentation by St. John Ambulance/Meadow Lake Tribal Council Eric Barry Joan Wills Max Rispin Fred Martell Marcia Mirasty	1133
Presentation by Anne Pennington Mayer	1174
Closing Prayer by Elder Noel Knockwood	1188

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 **Ottawa, Ontario**

2 --- Upon Resuming on Thursday, November 18, 1993

3 at 8:45 a.m.

4 **COMMISSIONER J. PETER MEEKISON:** I would  
5 ask the meeting to come to order, please.

6 I would like to welcome everybody to our  
7 fourth day of hearings in Ottawa. We will open today's  
8 proceedings with a prayer by Elder Noel Knockwood.

9 **(Opening Prayer)**

10 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Thank you,  
11 Brother Knockwood.

12 Today is our fourth and final day of  
13 hearings in Ottawa, and at the end of the day for two of  
14 us that will represent the end of the public hearing  
15 process. I joined the Royal Commission in June. I know  
16 the others have been through four rounds of hearings, this  
17 being the fourth, and I think they have spent the better  
18 part of two years on the road hearing thousands of people  
19 make presentations and express their thoughts and views  
20 to the Royal Commission as it goes about its important  
21 work. This I think really is my only experience at the  
22 public hearings, this and of course meetings last week  
23 and the week before. I would like to say that I have found

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the presentations extremely encouraging. I certainly  
2 find the presentation that we are about to hear extremely  
3 encouraging and forward looking.

4 It has been a privilege to hear so many  
5 concerned individuals and organizations.

6 I do not know if either of my colleagues  
7 would like to make any opening comments since this is the  
8 last day.

9 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Just to  
10 say welcome. We are delighted that you have taken time  
11 out to come and talk to us. We appreciate it very much.

12 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** You have  
13 introduced yourselves. I think everyone knows Madam  
14 Justice Bertha Wilson who was formerly of the Supreme Court  
15 of Canada, and Mary Sillett who is the Past President of  
16 Pauktuutit, the Inuit Women's Association.

17 I am Peter Meekison. I am a Professor  
18 of Political Science at the University of Alberta.

19 I would like to welcome the Canadian  
20 Executive Service Organization. The presenters are Mr.  
21 Bill Draper, Chairman of the Board of CESO, Mr. Daniel  
22 Haggerty, President and Chief Executive Officer; Mr.  
23 Claude McCabe, who is the Vice-President of Aboriginal

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Services; and Mr. Bill Shead.

2 Welcome to the Royal Commission,  
3 gentlemen. We are looking forward to your presentation.  
4 The floor is yours.

5 **WILLIAM DRAPER (Chairman of the Board,**  
6 **Canadian Executive Service Organization):** Thank you, Mr.  
7 Chairman and members of the Royal Commission, for the  
8 opportunity to present the findings of our CESO RCAP  
9 research project.

10 Before I introduce our presenters, let  
11 me say now how proud we were, and are, to have Viola  
12 Robinson, who is a member of our Board of Directors,  
13 appointed as a member of the Royal Commission. Our pride  
14 is only exceeded by our determination to be part of the  
15 solution that the Royal Commission seeks.

16 Our presenter delegation today includes  
17 Claude McCabe on my far right, Vice-President of CESO  
18 Aboriginal Services; Dan Haggerty, on my left, President  
19 of CESO; Bill Shead to my immediate right, who is a Director  
20 of CESO and a Director of CESO Aboriginal Services. Bill  
21 is the CEO responsible for bringing Winnipeg's magnificent  
22 aboriginal centre to life.

23 I am Bill Draper, Chairman of CESO, and

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 in my other life I am President of the Winnipeg Chamber  
2 of Commerce.

3 The needs of the aboriginal community  
4 in Winnipeg were what brought me originally to CESO as  
5 a volunteer and what keeps me there.

6 CESO is a not-for-profit,  
7 non-governmental organization. It provides volunteer  
8 advisers to aboriginal business and aboriginal  
9 communities. When we started our program it was almost  
10 exclusively service to business in the aboriginal  
11 community. In the last several years there has been quite  
12 an evolution in what we do, matching the evolution  
13 occurring in the aboriginal community. Now about 50 per  
14 cent of our services relate to community development in  
15 the form of training for various elements of  
16 self-government, like how to be an effective Band Council  
17 member, a Chief, how to run a school board or a social  
18 service agency, whatever the community needs.

19 The RCAP research project that we  
20 undertook was intended to get field experience from our  
21 volunteers who had worked in the field for some time.  
22 To do that, we set up four round tables; one in Edmonton  
23 which included volunteer advisers from Alberta and British

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 Columbia; one in Winnipeg, including people from Manitoba  
2 and Saskatchewan; Toronto's round table included Ontario  
3 and the Atlantic Provinces; and Quebec was our fourth round  
4 table representing the French community in Canada.

5                   The research program we conducted had  
6 as its objective to identify solutions from the field.  
7 The result was a list of practical solutions which our  
8 report brings to you. That set of solutions came from  
9 first CESO, an organization with 25 years of experience  
10 working in the aboriginal community. The 60 volunteer  
11 advisers that were involved in the process at the round  
12 tables collectively have 2,000 years of practical business  
13 and community experience behind them. Those same  
14 volunteers -- we added it up last night -- have 252 years  
15 of experience as CESO volunteer advisers.

16                   That group has put together a very  
17 significant list of recommendations, and I now call on  
18 Dan Haggerty to present the first of that series.

19                   **DANIEL W. HAGGERTY (President and Chief**  
20 **Executive Officer, Canadian Executive Service**

21 **Organization:** Thank you, Bill. It is very difficult in  
22 15 or 20 minutes to summarize fully the report which you  
23 have in front of you or will be receiving very shortly.



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   We covered a number of areas, and I  
2   propose to highlight some of those this morning. Many  
3   of them are things that you perhaps have heard before so  
4   I will not dwell on them particularly. But there are some  
5   thoughts that came from our round tables that I think are  
6   of particular significance and I would like to share with  
7   you in a little more detail.

8                   I think the basic starting point is our  
9   efforts to try to reflect on the meaning of development  
10  as it concerns aboriginal communities. We felt that it  
11  is much more than simple project development. If economic  
12  development is going to be successful, there has to be  
13  an integration of our approach, and we tried to cover that  
14  in our presentation. We think there is a need to balance  
15  at least three elements that have to come together and  
16  be the basis for successful economic development.

17                  These are, first of all, examination of  
18  the economic factors that surround development and to  
19  ensure that it is done in a way that is coherent with  
20  aboriginal values. I think sometimes that is overlooked  
21  in many ways, and I think that is very important.

22                  The third thing is to look at it in terms  
23  of the long-term development and the development of the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 capability of aboriginals and the human resources that  
2 all that entails.

3                   A common observation of our volunteers  
4 is that there is a lack of managerial and technical  
5 assistance beyond the start-up phase of a project. This  
6 is something we have heard over and over again and an area  
7 where CESO I think offers great opportunity for aboriginal  
8 development.

9                   Our 3600 volunteers, as Bill was saying,  
10 collectively have an enormous experience, and they are  
11 prepared to share that experience with aboriginal  
12 clientele right across the country.

13                  We think a development approach which  
14 focuses on the transfer of skills and knowledge to local  
15 community members is the only effective approach to  
16 long-term development. Our report outlines that in some  
17 detail as to how we think that can be done.

18                  We also deal with the need to assist in  
19 the development of local governments. We give a number  
20 of recommendations in the areas of assisting normal  
21 academic programs, modifying programs to be more  
22 accessible to less educated people who are in positions  
23 of responsibility. And I will not go into those in any

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 detail.

2                               One thing that came out was a need to  
3 provide a mutual support network for aboriginal managers.

4    Our volunteers in many, many of the communities that they  
5 are working with have come across opportunities where they  
6 are working with local school boards or local  
7 administration, and in many areas these individuals are  
8 isolated. There is a major support network available in  
9 the non-aboriginal community and we encourage the Royal  
10 Commission to consider ways that these associations that  
11 already exist in the non-aboriginal community can be  
12 brought together to provide the kind of support that will  
13 help specifically in the areas of education,  
14 administration, and so on. And we talk about that at some  
15 length in the report.

16                           Our volunteers were also very concerned  
17 about the access to capital that aboriginal people have  
18 across the country, and I know you have heard that on many,  
19 many occasions from other people so I will not go into  
20 that at all except to say that we do address it in our  
21 report and offer some suggestions as to how that might  
22 be improved.

23                           One element, though, that I will dwell

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 on momentarily because I think it is terribly important  
2 is the Calmeadow lending circles model. And I am sure you  
3 have heard about that. We think that has enormous  
4 potential and I hope that the Royal Commission will look  
5 at that carefully and make some specific recommendations  
6 in that area.

7                   The last thing I want to talk about  
8 briefly is the overall need for help in the area of human  
9 resources development. We think it is terribly important  
10 that there be brought forward ways that a positive attitude  
11 toward business can be developed amongst aboriginals  
12 across Canada. This can be in school curricula. It can  
13 be something as simple as a junior achievement model on  
14 aboriginal communities. But it is something that we think  
15 is very important and we deal with that at some length.

16                   We talk about the need for  
17 apprenticeships tied to specific job opportunities. And  
18 something that I think is quite important is the need to  
19 repatriate jobs done by outsiders. Our volunteers have  
20 often noted when they go into a community the work that  
21 is being done by outside people. They have seen many cases  
22 of tradesmen and labourers coming on to the reserves from  
23 outside to deliver services which could be provided by

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 local reserve residents.

2                               Similarly, there are many opportunities  
3 to train local residents to maintain community  
4 infrastructure; buildings, roads, water, sewage and so  
5 on. And that I think is something of great importance  
6 and something that CESO could be of considerable help with  
7 because of the experience that our volunteers have in  
8 working with communities and transferring these skills  
9 and experience.

10                              We talk about the need for internships  
11 and exchanges. You have heard about that from other  
12 presentations so we will not go into that as well, except  
13 that our volunteers recognize that there are opportunities  
14 there as well.

15                              Finally on this section I want to talk  
16 about the mentoring and advisory services that CESO  
17 provides and the importance we feel that has for aboriginal  
18 economic development.

19                              In many aboriginal communities  
20 administrators and entrepreneurs do not have access to  
21 a peer support network similar to the one which is taken  
22 for granted by most of their counterparts in the mainstream  
23 communities. Mentoring and advisory services can help

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 fill this gap until such support networks become available.

2 It is an area in which I think CESO offers particularly  
3 significant advantages.

4 Bill, maybe I can turn it back to you  
5 now.

6 **BILL DRAPER:** Thank you. I have chosen  
7 to deal with two issues. The first one is promotion of  
8 aboriginal trade.

9 It is the view of the people from the  
10 round tables, and that one that our Board supports, that  
11 the Canadian public is very interested in aboriginal  
12 product and goods and services. Likewise, there are  
13 millions of visitors to Canada who would like to support  
14 aboriginal business. But the products need some form of  
15 common identification, some sort of a symbol that indicates  
16 that they are aboriginal products.

17 Once they are identified, we have to look  
18 at how to get started the process of sale. We in the  
19 Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce have very considerable  
20 experience in the area of government procurement and tying  
21 our members to government procurement as a way to start  
22 marketing business products. I think bringing those  
23 things together for aboriginal producers would be very

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 positive.

2                   Our federal and provincial governments  
3 have trade agencies all over the world and they are  
4 supporting products. For example, the Trade Facilitation  
5 Office here in Ottawa is current designed to help Third  
6 World countries to bring their product to Canadian  
7 purchasers. I think the TFO should have a specific mandate  
8 to include aboriginal products in their process. Trade  
9 offices all over the world similarly should have a specific  
10 mandate to help sell aboriginal products around the world.

11                  The second area I wanted to talk about  
12 is networking and linking in the aboriginal development  
13 organizations. There exists a very extensive network of  
14 non-aboriginal regional and municipal development  
15 commissions and our proposal suggests that these agencies  
16 should be linked or tied together to facilitate both  
17 co-operation, exchange of information, training, and so  
18 on.

19                  For example, we have eight in Manitoba,  
20 one in Winnipeg and seven rural development commissions  
21 whose job it is to foster the economic enhancement of the  
22 dominant society communities. The aboriginal development  
23 organizations in those regions should tie themselves or

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 be tied, and even have maybe an exchange of directors.  
2 But they should be working together to foster and support  
3 one another's efforts.

4 Our next section deals with local  
5 government and we happen to have an expert sitting to my  
6 right.

7 **BILL SHEAD, Director of Aboriginal**  
8 **Services, Canadian Executive Service Organization:**

9 Ladies and gentlemen, this is the first opportunity I have  
10 had to be in front of a Royal Commission since Tom Berger  
11 conducted his inquiry some couple of decades ago. What  
12 I bring to the table now is perhaps little bit more  
13 experience, particularly in local government. I had  
14 served as Mayor of the town of Selkirk. My role this  
15 morning is just to highlight the last three recommendations  
16 in the report, and I will probably use some language that  
17 you will not find in the report and some examples that  
18 I have in my head but no place else.

19 First of all, on the issue of local  
20 government for aboriginal people, their task is becoming  
21 increasingly complicated yet they are faced with a  
22 significant challenge in trying to deal with the challenges  
23 that they face in a shorter election term. They spend



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 a great deal of time going from election to election  
2 campaigning as opposed to spending a little bit more time  
3 between elections to get on with the task.

4 So the major recommendation that you see  
5 in the report is one addressing the length of the term  
6 of office for local aboriginal government.

7 In my view, I found that a three-year  
8 term as a Mayor of a city is just barely enough time to  
9 get on with the job, and I cannot see how our chiefs in  
10 council could deal with the same issues that they have  
11 to deal with in the two-year term and then go off and fight  
12 another election.

13 We need to address that. We are not  
14 saying that it should be a democratic model or a traditional  
15 model. However perhaps more time for the leadership of  
16 local government to be in office would be in order.

17 I would note that in the past local  
18 governments used to be elected every year, but as our task  
19 at local government in the dominant society became  
20 increasingly complicated, we lengthened the term.

21 There has to be separation between  
22 administration and policy direction. In some cases we  
23 find that when you examine an aboriginal local government

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 politics and administration are not entirely separated.

2 And perhaps there is a way that can be done.

3 The next issue I wanted to highlight is  
4 the participation of aboriginal women.

5 They face special difficulties.  
6 Generally they are family heads and perhaps they are the  
7 only family head. But in order for them to participate  
8 fully they need some special measures, particularly in  
9 the area of day care, access to financing, increased  
10 advisory services, and access to the non-traditional  
11 options that are available to the broader Canadian society.

12 I will leave those thoughts with you  
13 about aboriginal women, and perhaps there would be some  
14 questions that would draw out more detail later.

15 The last area that I wanted to touch on  
16 on behalf of CESO is the issue of goodwill.

17 There is a considerable amount of  
18 goodwill in the Canadian community to help aboriginal  
19 people. They just need to be asked. To give you an  
20 illustration, in January of this year I became the Chief  
21 Executive Officer of the Aboriginal Centre of Winnipeg,  
22 which is the old Canadian Pacific Railroad Station, a  
23 building of some 120,000 square feet. Our task was to

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 put it into operation again. It has been vacant for four  
2 years.

3 I did not know anything about managing  
4 a building or putting it into operation, but I asked my  
5 colleague Bill Draper and he put me in touch with Martin  
6 Eava, the President of John A. Flanders. Martin and a  
7 group of architects and engineers spent a good two weeks  
8 of their own time helping us to get started on that project.  
9 All we had to do was ask.

10 I am sure that that is the case for any  
11 task or any challenge facing the aboriginal community,  
12 that there will be assistance available from the dominant  
13 society. It is just a question of asking.

14 Those are the highlights I wanted to  
15 touch on. I hope it will lead to some further discussion  
16 or inquiry, and I would be pleased to respond.

17 I think I turn it back to Dan, because  
18 he is the wrap-up.

19 **DANIEL W. HAGGERTY:** I just want to  
20 summarize very quickly. Our verbal presentation has been  
21 very brief. It does not go into any detail of what the  
22 report contains, but we tried to give a very quick overview  
23 so that there is enough time for conversation, discussion

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and perhaps a dialogue addressing some of the issues you  
2 think we have raised that might be of some importance.

3 I would like to finish up by saying that  
4 in our view the skills and experience of retired and  
5 semi-retired Canadians is one of the most underutilized  
6 resources the country has. CESO is an organization that  
7 makes use of those skills. We have 26, 27 years of  
8 experience, now 24 working with aboriginal communities.

9 And without question we are probably the oldest private  
10 organization that has been working with aboriginal people  
11 across Canada.

12 So there is an enormous background there  
13 and an ability to respond to some of these needs that we  
14 have been talking about this morning. Our volunteers are  
15 there; they are right across the country. They are  
16 prepared to work with the aboriginal communities and I  
17 think what we have done has demonstrated very clearly what  
18 we are capable of doing. And to continue to help the  
19 aboriginals help themselves is what the CESO program is  
20 all about.

21 That is our formal presentation. We  
22 would be glad to answer any question.

23 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Thank you very

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 much for your presentation and for your comments this  
2 morning.

3                   Before turning it over to my colleagues  
4 to start the questioning, I would like to make a comment.

5     It flows from the letter that you have appended to the  
6 front of the report to our two Co-Chairs, Mr. Dussault  
7 and Mr. Erasmus. Two things leapt out at me in the letter,  
8 one of which you have already touched on.

9                   The first is "the immense goodwill in  
10 the mainstream population of Canada to assist aboriginal  
11 people". That certainly comes through in your report,  
12 particularly as a result of how the report was gathered,  
13 when you have gone out into the communities, to these  
14 workshops. That was the first thing that struck me.

15                  The second one is that as a result of  
16 getting involved -- and I hope I am putting the correct  
17 interpretation on this -- with the Royal Commission you  
18 have completely reorganized the way you work with the  
19 aboriginal community.

20                  The other statement that leapt out at  
21 me is:

22 "Relations with Aboriginal groups are now framed in a  
23                   context of partnership rather than

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 as supplier-and-clients."

2 It is the partnership concept which I  
3 think is so critical as well. Our last publication was  
4 "Partners in Confederation" with respect to  
5 self-government. I really appreciated not only the  
6 transmittal letter but the message that that letter  
7 conveys. To me it was one of hope and promise.

8 I know there will be a number of  
9 questions so I will turn it over to my colleagues to start.

10 **DANIEL W. HAGGERTY:** If I could respond  
11 to that very quickly, we have several appendices in our  
12 report and one of them is a summary of this new program  
13 of co-operation, which we did not dwell on here since it  
14 is all detailed there. I recommend that you spend some  
15 time on it if you would care to get more information as  
16 to what we are doing.

17 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** I saw that as  
18 well.

19 Mary Sillett has a few questions.

20 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you  
21 very much for your presentation. As you know, we have  
22 heard from many, many people. At this point I guess we  
23 have heard from over 2,000 people. In the course of our

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   consultation we have heard many of the issues that you  
2   have raised.

3                   First of all, I have a comment rather  
4   than a question. I would like to tell you what we have  
5   heard, for example, from the EDCAW group, Economic  
6   Development for Canadian Aboriginal Women, and Pauktuutit,  
7   the Inuit Women's Association of Canada with respect to  
8   business. I think basically what they are saying is the  
9   same kind of thing that you are saying.

10                  We did hear from EDCAW that Calmeadow  
11   is a good concept. However, the kind of money they are  
12   talking about is so little money, and that is considered  
13   not an attractive option sometimes.

14                  We have heard about the difficulty that  
15   aboriginal women have had in accessing financial  
16   institutions, and I know that EDCAW is working very  
17   actively to address that issue. And we have heard much  
18   about the need for day care so that aboriginal women can  
19   have the opportunity to go out and work and not have to  
20   worry about their children.

21                  We have also heard, for example, a  
22   recommendation saying that if there are businesses that  
23   are developed in any area, the businesses should consider

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the possibility of creating buildings so that there are  
2 proper spaces for a day care, because I think in many of  
3 the communities you have a real infrastructure problem;  
4 you have a real building problem.

5 I just want to say that that is something  
6 that particularly interested me.

7 My second point is that we have heard  
8 from the Métis saying that they want equitable access to  
9 resources, that they have been always excluded. I know  
10 your brief acknowledges the inability of CESO to provide  
11 services to certain groups of people, and I would like  
12 to hear more about that. Would you be able to give us  
13 an idea how that would work? I know your recommendation  
14 is very broad. This is an issue that has been identified  
15 over and over again. There are certain groups, for  
16 example, who do not have the same economic development  
17 opportunities, and that has to be addressed, they say.

18 I was wondering if instead of just giving  
19 a broad recommendation as to how that could be addressed  
20 if you could give us more ideas.

21 **CLAUDE McCABE, Vice-President, Canadian**  
22 **Executive Service Organization Aboriginal Services:** We  
23 do work with the Métis people in one province, and this



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 is Alberta. This is simply on the basis that the  
2 provincial government there is the only one in the country  
3 which has provided some funding to work with the Métis  
4 people. We have two agreements there, one to work  
5 off-settlement and another one to work on-settlement in  
6 the area of economic development and on-settlement is also  
7 community administration.

8                   What we do is provide advisory services  
9 across the country. It is just a question of having the  
10 means to do it. For every dollar we receive the  
11 calculation in Alberta was that we delivered something  
12 like \$4.00 of services. So the economics are good.

13                   **DANIEL W. HAGGERTY:** The big challenge  
14 we face as an organization is we are not a funding agency  
15 ourselves. Our resource is the skills and experience  
16 of our volunteers. So because they are volunteers, it  
17 is an extremely cost effective means of transferring skills  
18 and technology. But nevertheless there are other issues  
19 involved and that is one of the issues that we have to  
20 deal with on a day-to-day basis.

21                   **WILLIAM DRAPER:** Our primary funding  
22 comes from INAC and their mandate is for First Nations  
23 only. We started a process which is ponderous and

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 difficult, and that is fund raising, seeking other sources  
2 of funding. But with adequate funding we could do far,  
3 far more than we do. We have 3,600 volunteer advisers.  
4 We could double that network if we could give them a  
5 reasonable expectation to be able to contribute. But our  
6 funding limits the amount we can do.

7 **BILL SHEAD:** There is one other issue.  
8 Within the urban setting, particularly the major cities,  
9 you probably find that there is no real organization,  
10 whether it is Métis or First Nations, that could look after  
11 the interests of the aboriginal people who are resident  
12 within the urban community. In many cases you may have  
13 to take a status blind approach to the issues affecting  
14 aboriginal people who live in the large urban city.

15 I know that CESO has provided a service  
16 to us in the aboriginal centre, but again it is very simple  
17 for them to come from their home in the city to a meeting  
18 at the aboriginal centre and provide advice. Our costs  
19 are basically the cost of their travel from their home,  
20 which may be a bus ticket or gas and a cup of coffee at  
21 the meeting. But what we get out of them is a tremendous  
22 amount of experience.

23 For example, we have an engineer, an

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 architect and a contractor who have spent several hours  
2 with me going over reports and providing advice on how  
3 we approach certain problems. I doubt if it has cost our  
4 organization much more than -- well, less than a gallon  
5 of coffee.

6 **DANIEL HAGGERTY:** If I can add to what  
7 Bill said, one of the great strengths of the CESO concept  
8 is the inherent objectivity of our volunteers. It is as  
9 close to altruism as one can get, I think, in society today.  
10 Our volunteers are doing this because they want to help.  
11 They are not doing it because they are making any money  
12 or they are selling anything. They are only doing it to  
13 help. As a result, they can be very objective. I  
14 know that on many occasions we have told aboriginal clients  
15 things they do not want to hear. They might have an idea  
16 of something that they want to do and it is just not  
17 appropriate for all kinds of reasons. And our volunteers  
18 are not afraid to say that.

19 It comes back to how do we as an  
20 organization find the resources to make that talent  
21 available across the country in a larger way.

22 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Something  
23 prompted my thinking when you were talking. I think there

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 are a lot of people who are interested. I have heard a  
2 lot of people, for example, in remote northern communities  
3 talk about their desire to start a business, and the  
4 information is not so good sometimes. People start  
5 thinking that way because there is usually no other way  
6 to make a living.

7 We know, for example, in Labrador where  
8 we come from the fishery is almost dead and the hunters  
9 and the trappers have had a hard time thanks to the anti-fur  
10 lobby. The caribou are still there; they are right on  
11 the land. But that is probably the only way of getting  
12 food these days in northern Labrador.

13 Basically, people are looking at ways  
14 of making a living. When they start looking at the  
15 possibilities, first of all where do you get the  
16 information? I had to phone a central office and they  
17 refer you somewhere else. I am wondering in terms of  
18 information how well publicized is your organization and  
19 the kinds of services that it provides?

20 **BILL DRAPER:** When we did the study that  
21 you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, to restructure and strengthen  
22 our organization, one of the things we learned was that  
23 we were not as well known as we would liked to have thought.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1     That supports your question.

2                     Another part of your question is about  
3     information services and so on. We have people who can  
4     deliver the specific information people need. We have  
5     to find the mechanism to get there.

6                     Another point you raised that I would  
7     like to comment on is the need to create your own employment  
8     by creating a business. That is getting to be an extremely  
9     common situation right across Canada, whether it is an  
10    aboriginal community or a dominant society community.  
11    More and more people in the downsizing that is going on  
12    are doing this.

13                    The difference is that in the larger  
14    cities most of these people start with information  
15    networks. Those networks are often not available to even  
16    aboriginal people or groups in Winnipeg, say, because they  
17    do not have that network. But it is even more critical  
18    when you get up into northern Quebec or northern Manitoba  
19    or somewhere where all of these things are far removed.

20                    We have the answers and we have the  
21    people who can deliver them. Our shortfall comes in the  
22    area of resources to get them there and back primarily.

23                    **DANIEL HAGGERTY:** One thing that we have

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 noticed on many occasions is that there is often funding,  
2 sometimes quite limited, for feasibility studies, business  
3 plans, and those kinds of things we are called upon to  
4 help, but when that is done that is all there is. It is  
5 when the business starts where help is needed, follow-up,  
6 just a regular visit: How are things going? Are you  
7 having any problems? This mentoring follow-up is a  
8 terribly important element in ensuring the longer term  
9 success of an economic venture of some sort. It is  
10 something that we have preached for many, many years and  
11 so far have not been able to get the resources that are  
12 needed. Quite often we are called in at the very last  
13 minute when it is almost too late, and all we can do is  
14 help to wind it up the most effective way instead of perhaps  
15 saving it.

16                               On another example, we operate in 58  
17 countries around the world as well, as you probably know.  
18 A volunteer just came back from the Slovak Republic just  
19 a couple of weeks ago where he was involved in a project  
20 there that was responsible for saving 400 jobs. He got  
21 there early enough to help this organization that was in  
22 the process of privatizing and was doing a bad job of it,  
23 but he was there to bring the western approach and in fact

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 save 400 jobs over the course of a two-month project.

2 I am not sure that we can do that every  
3 day of the week, but that is an indication of the kinds  
4 of resources that an organization like CESO can bring to  
5 bear.

6 **BILL SHEAD:** I don't want to argue with  
7 the President but I think the issues we face in Canada  
8 are slightly different than you would find in developing  
9 countries in Europe and in other parts of the world. Our  
10 geography and the traditional life of many of the  
11 aboriginal people in the northern parts are completely  
12 different than those that are living in the urban settings.

13 In some cases while it may be nice to start a business  
14 in northern Labrador or northern Manitoba, you have to  
15 consider other matters that relate to networking, access  
16 to markets, and a few other things like that which could  
17 be very complicated.

18 A technique that works in an urban  
19 setting may not necessarily be one that you would want  
20 to try in the north. You may want to deal with a couple  
21 of different realities, or at least two different poles  
22 of a reality and try different techniques, particularly  
23 in the north. I am particularly sensitive to the fact

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 that it is very difficult to create a modern economy in  
2 a place that is nothing but muskeg, rock and scrub pine.

3 It may be more suitable for the more traditional way of  
4 living. How would you try to make telephones and who would  
5 you sell them to?

6 That is a wild example, but those are  
7 the sorts of challenges that we face when we are dealing  
8 with these two realities.

9 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I think we  
10 have been told very clearly that there are different  
11 realities. Another thing I found in travelling, no one  
12 could have ever told me that some parts of the northern  
13 provinces are very similar to what I grew up believing  
14 to be the north. Boy, did I ever find out something.  
15 There are more similarities to the northern provinces and  
16 the northern territories than you would care to think  
17 about. The temperatures are a bit severe really north  
18 of sixty, if you go to Grise Fiord, and stuff. But in  
19 terms of lack of services, difficulty in travelling, the  
20 same kinds of transportation problems still exist.

21 Having said that, I know this is off the  
22 subject but it is about the term of office of people.  
23 One of the things I have observed is people saying yes,



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 in terms of office of various leaders there is a need to  
2 look at that seriously. The reason you have to look at  
3 that seriously is you have to give someone a real  
4 opportunity to make sure that the job is done, and sometimes  
5 continuity really does help things go well in your  
6 community.

7 But on the other hand, there is a real  
8 need to look at the whole issue of accountability. I can't  
9 stress that enough because I think we have heard so much.  
10 I always knew it anyway. I always believed it anyway.  
11 But I keep on thinking there is a need for that balance  
12 and we should never lose sight of that.

13 My final question is this: We have been  
14 told that when we look at our recommendations we have to  
15 try to be as detailed as possible because if you have  
16 general recommendations and you want to make sure that  
17 something ends up on the shelf and ends up there forever,  
18 you can make that that is the way to go; go general and  
19 don't have any details on your recommendations. When we  
20 do meet with groups we try to ask them to be as specific  
21 as possible about some of the recommendations to us.

22 I am asking now about the problem that  
23 you have identified that you have heard about, that we

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 have heard about, is that many First Nations groups --  
2 and when I say First Nations, I am specifically talking  
3 about Indians on reserves. They have a real problem using  
4 land as collateral, and that has something to do with the  
5 Indian Act.

6                   You are recommending, for example, in  
7 4.1, that there be innovative ways that should be developed  
8 to address these kinds of situations. I am wondering if  
9 you have any more thought to that recommendation. Are  
10 there any more specific recommendations that you can make  
11 to address this issue?

12                   **BILL SHEAD:** Maybe I could take that.

13

14                   I am also Vice-President of the Median  
15 Credit Union, which is an aboriginal credit union in the  
16 city of Winnipeg. We have been in business for over ten  
17 years. We have had a great deal of difficulty with that  
18 very issue and it is not necessarily the Median Credit  
19 Union that has the difficulty. We have a great deal of  
20 difficulty getting the credit union movement to deal with  
21 the issue. It is again a matter of trust.

22                   I cannot really answer your question,  
23 Mary, but I believe that the issue does not lie within

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 changing the Indian Act per se. I think it lies in the  
2 financial community. I think they have to be the ones  
3 to say: "All right, what do we do?" I know that I have  
4 tried and my colleagues on the board of Median have tried  
5 over the past several years to encourage the credit union  
6 movement to get involved because there are literally  
7 billions of dollars worth of business in the aboriginal  
8 community. If they don't get into business and provide  
9 that service, the aboriginal community is going to be the  
10 big mover, and the credit union and the banks are going  
11 to be the big losers.

12                   The banks have been making tremendous  
13 strides. The Royal Bank has just opened a branch at the  
14 Peguis Reserve in Manitoba and there are others I believe  
15 that are happening in very short order.

16                   But prior to this the best bank was the  
17 Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Stores Companies  
18 because they were the ones who were doing all the cheque  
19 cashing and what have you in the north, as you probably  
20 well know. That is where cash came from and that is where  
21 you got your financial services.

22                   But today, if you really want to make  
23 the inroads of providing personal banking services, the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 banks and the credit unions and the trust companies have  
2 to get involved. And it is the banks, trust companies  
3 and credit unions that must be called upon to address the  
4 issue that Commissioner Sillett is really worried about.  
5 They are the ones that have to find the innovative ways.

6 I am not a banker. I am involved in the  
7 credit union movement and I do bank at one of the major  
8 banks. But I know that the biggest issue within the  
9 bureaucracy of the bank itself is to how they deal with  
10 issues of collateral and what they will accept.

11 **DANIEL HAGGERTY:** I think as an  
12 organization, Mary, we do not have any specific  
13 recommendations in that area. This particular report is  
14 an attempt to encapsule the comments of our volunteers  
15 in these round tables. Suffice it to say that they  
16 recognize the problem and encourage any solution of it.

17

18 But we do not have any specific formal  
19 recommendations to put to you.

20 **CLAUDE McCABE:** If I can add a point  
21 here, I agree that the solution has to come from the  
22 financial institutions. They have been very slow in  
23 developing different models. They have kept on thinking

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 in the traditional model.

2                   Aboriginal capital corporations were  
3 supposed to resolve that, but the comment we get from them  
4 is that they have been pushed into the same mould as the  
5 banks. They are forced to act more or less like banks,  
6 which defeats the purpose. They have a very important  
7 development role. Some of them have tried to do as much  
8 as they can in their area but they are all very constrained  
9 by lack of resources. They are definitely part of the  
10 answer, I think.

11                   **WILLIAM DRAPER:** Another area regarding  
12 the ACCs is the fact that because they are now pushed  
13 directly into the role of banks they do not have the  
14 opportunity or the resources to be the advisers and  
15 facilitators that was originally intended. It was not  
16 just loaning money; it was to help businesses succeed.  
17 It is very difficult to be both the lender watching the  
18 capital asset and somebody who is the provider of advisory  
19 services as a business development.

20                   That issue ties to our ability to deliver  
21 advisory services within the resources we have. They are  
22 too limited to do the job completely.

23                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 very much.

2 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Bertha?

3 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Before I  
4 put my question, I would like to say that the concept behind  
5 your organization is wonderful. It helps to restore one's  
6 faith in human nature. I am very impressed with what you  
7 are doing.

8 There was one thing in your brief  
9 particularly that twiggged my interest and that was -- you  
10 touch on it lightly -- the compatibility or incompatibility  
11 of business activity with fundamental native values. I  
12 think this is a very interesting area because as we went  
13 through the communities -- and I agree with what one of  
14 you has said that in some communities talking about  
15 business development, there is just nothing there at all.  
16 One has difficulty in even thinking in those terms.

17 As we went through the communities we  
18 heard so much about business endeavours that had started  
19 up and failed and obviously to a large extent just through  
20 lack of knowledge. But in some cases it was because of  
21 what seemed to be a kind of incompatibility with native  
22 values. I am thinking particularly of the values of  
23 sharing and the tendency to trust people that you find

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 in native people.

2 I think this was highlighted for me in  
3 one of the communities by the hunter and trapper who had  
4 developed a humane trap for certain kinds of animals.

5 It was obviously a great idea and there would have been  
6 a great market for this throughout Canada and elsewhere.

7 But this man shared with others his experience and how  
8 he had come to develop this and he made available a model  
9 to his first non-aboriginal customer who persuaded him  
10 that he was going to order a large number of these things.

11 In no time this customer had filed for a patent and  
12 obtained it. That was the end of this business venture.

13 This man just had no idea whether he  
14 could do anything about this or what to do or how to go  
15 about it. For me, that highlighted this problem of native  
16 values and business activity.

17 I am wondering what can be done about  
18 that because it was a story that we heard in many  
19 communities and was the reason why these little businesses  
20 that seemed to be great ideas and had a real future to  
21 them, something happened that was obviously, quite apart  
22 from the fact it finished the person's business enterprise,  
23 was also a very hurtful thing that came as a tremendous

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 shock.

2                   There is something there about native  
3 values and business activity that perhaps should be  
4 explored more.

5                   **BILL SHEAD:** In that case, it really was  
6 not the question of the values of the native entrepreneur,  
7 the native business person. What it was was unethical  
8 behaviour on the part of the partner.

9                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Well, it  
10 was both. It was really both. If you are not aware of  
11 the risks, if you don't know, if you are not suspicious  
12 enough -- non-aboriginal people are very suspicious and  
13 in a way distrustful, particularly about business  
14 activities, particularly something new that has value.  
15 Native people do not think that way. They want to talk  
16 about what they have been doing and how they got there  
17 and share their ideas. They seem to me to be completely  
18 trustful, and that does not serve them well.

19                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Mary has  
20 another example.

21                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I would  
22 like to give another example. I am not going to say a  
23 better example because no one can give better examples



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1    than Mrs. Wilson.

2                               When we were at the economic round table,  
3    I always remember this because I see it in Labrador very  
4    often. This was in northern Quebec somewhere. I think  
5    it was with the Crees. I guess they got a lot of money  
6    because of their land claim settlement. They were  
7    starting businesses, and they started doing tourism.  
8    Whoever was talking -- I can't even remember who -- said  
9    it was very, very difficult. Initially they had to bring  
10   in white people to help with the business part. They could  
11   not get the aboriginal guides to understand that with the  
12   American or the tourists that came in, you had to lug their  
13   suitcases and help them with their gear. Bring all this  
14   gear to their boats and help them out and be hospitable  
15   because the native was was always take care of yourself,  
16   be really independent.

17                           Whenever those native guides were told  
18   to be hospitable, they would say: "Why do we have to carry  
19   these guys' stuff? They are big enough they can take care  
20   of themselves. They can lug their own things."

21                           And I have seen that attitude,  
22   especially with native people in the Commission. If the  
23   Commissioners cannot carry their own suitcases, or

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1    whatever, some of the staff are expected to do that. And  
2    I hear some of the native staff complaining: "They are  
3    big enough. Can't they take care of themselves?"

4                    **BILL SHEAD:** My mother used to say: "Big  
5    enough and ugly enough."

6                    **CLAUDE McCABE:** If I can get back to the  
7    point of sharing, this is not something that is unique  
8    to the aboriginal people. You find that in all small  
9    communities. The most eloquent speaker I heard about his  
10   is Michael Martin, who used to be a member of Parliament  
11   in Labrador. He speaks about small communities in  
12   Labrador and you visualize what is happening in aboriginal  
13   communities.

14                   It is the culture of small communities.  
15   It is something that our volunteers find is the biggest  
16   obstacle to business in small communities. Credit  
17   management is absolutely impossible, and credit management  
18   is the downfall of most of the small businesses.

19                   The only way is-- it is not something  
20   that can be taught as such. It has to be learned by  
21   osmosis. We have learned it through generations of  
22   rubbing elbows with business and we take it for granted.

23   I think it has to be done with the young people starting

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 early so that in a generation you will see a difference.

2 But it is a very slow process, I think.

3 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Mike Martin  
4 is from Labrador so I know him. But I think there is  
5 something that he missed.

6 I know he is from southern Labrador and  
7 he is right; in small communities there is a certain way  
8 of behaviour. But in northern Labrador where there is  
9 a mix -- for example, there are people there who have  
10 European background and there are people who are really  
11 Inuit. for years and years and years the only people who  
12 ever started businesses in northern Labrador are what they  
13 call the settlers, or the people with European ancestries.  
14 And I always wondered why.

15 If you looked at the Inuit as opposed  
16 to the people who had European background, it is because  
17 money was never in the Inuit society, ever, ever at any  
18 time. Somewhere along the line there was money or a  
19 concept of money, a different kind, more aggressive value  
20 about money that was never in the Inuit community until  
21 recently.

22 In southern Labrador there are many  
23 businesses there, many people who know what money is.

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1                   **CLAUDE McCABE:** If you are an outsider  
2 in a small community, it is much easier. You are not  
3 expected so much to live up to the standards of the  
4 community. If you are part of the community for  
5 generations, then you are bound by the community values.

6                   **BILL SHEAD:** I think, Claude, another  
7 aspect too is that if you have a cash society you have  
8 to have the institutes to support cash. In the remote  
9 communities there is no institute to support a cash  
10 society. Money exists only in a cheque that is handled  
11 by the northern store and there is no circulation of money.  
12 There are no banking services, or anything like that.  
13 No cheques are written. It is just a bookkeeping entry.  
14 It is probably an example of a cashless society that is  
15 being tried out with these new debit cards and credit cards,  
16 and what have you.

17                   I think that is probably the real problem  
18 in the remote communities, that you do not have the  
19 infrastructure. You do not have credit unions. You do  
20 not have banks. And you do not deal with cash. As a  
21 result, you do not have the discipline of how you deal  
22 with it. You do not have the business sense of managing  
23 it. You do not have the other supporting structures that

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 are necessary to make it work, the ethics, the Chambers  
2 of Commerce and other things that provide cheques and  
3 balances that exist in other communities.

4 I think that is a big problem and if you  
5 want to make business succeed in northern communities,  
6 you have to provide all those additional things that we  
7 take for granted in the south, even in small communities.

8 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** But if you  
9 don't know how money works in Hopedale, you move to Goose  
10 Bay and you don't know how money works in Goose Bay. You  
11 go to St. John's and you don't know how money works in  
12 St. John's. It does not matter if you have the  
13 institutions there if you have not learned that, if you  
14 don't have that value.

15 **BILL SHEAD:** That is the answer.

16 **WILLIAM DRAPER:** I would like to comment  
17 on that because our brief does deal to some degree with  
18 the fact that there needs to be an economic development  
19 education process. The sense we got from our volunteers  
20 that did these round tables was that business was almost  
21 a dirty word, that it was not something that was appropriate  
22 to the aboriginal culture.

23 If you go back to my community of

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   Winnipeg, we have had aboriginal trading for 6,000 years  
2   right in the centre of our city. It was the trading centre.  
3   Aboriginal people are great traders. They have a  
4   business background. They just have not related their  
5   real history and translated it into today's terms. So  
6   there needs to be an education process.

7                   I would like to come back to Commissioner  
8   Wilson's comment about the trapper that invented the trap.  
9   If he had by some good happenstance run into a CESO  
10  volunteer who acts with complete altruism that Dan Haggerty  
11  mentioned, he would probably be the centre of a small  
12  thriving business.

13                  So we have to be able to get out more,  
14  be able to tell our story more, be better known, as  
15  Commissioner Sillett suggested. It is for us a matter  
16  of resources. We are doing everything we can within the  
17  limitation of our resources.

18                  I think that the stock we have which is  
19  the goodwill of thousands of experienced people who are  
20  willing to share their experience and mentor projects in  
21  communities can be a big part of the answer. But there  
22  have to be resources to go beyond what we can do now, and  
23  we have not found those.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Do you put  
2 out leaflets and things that get distributed through  
3 communities? I agree with what you said, that this would  
4 never have happened. That was the tragedy of it. It was  
5 such a good thing and there would have been such a good  
6 market for it throughout the country.

7                   I realized that when I was reading your  
8 brief and was going to ask the same question Mary asked:  
9 How does a person like that trapper find out that you  
10 exist?

11                  **WILLIAM DRAPER:** This is for us a very  
12 difficult process. We are slowly but surely I think  
13 learning ways to communicate into the aboriginal  
14 community. Our processes and the aboriginal processes  
15 are different. We found, for example, that a brochure  
16 or a booklet is not nearly as effective in getting the  
17 fact of CESO acknowledged as a poster, particularly if  
18 it is of aboriginal design. Things like videos and so  
19 on do not reach a lot of people.

20                  Just recently as part of the new  
21 development in CESO Aboriginal Services we have doubled  
22 the size of our communications staff and hired an  
23 aboriginal communicator as part of the team, because we

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 have to learn better how to make that communications  
2 connection.

3 **DANIEL HAGGERTY:** As a corollary to  
4 that, we are in a Catch 22 situation also because our budget  
5 is about \$1.6 million a year and every dollar we spend  
6 on communications means we do not spend that dollar on  
7 project work. So that sort of a balance has always been  
8 difficult for us. We have tried to emphasize the project  
9 work and let the infrastructure be a very minimum element  
10 of our whole cost.

11 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Thank you.

12 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Unfortunately,  
13 we do not have any more time this morning to go into the  
14 balance of your presentation. I found the report rich in  
15 both recommendations and in terms of comments. A number  
16 leapt out at me, one of which is on page 17. It is a  
17 statement but it is something that I think we have to be  
18 mindful of:

19 "As the pace towards self-government accelerates, the need  
20 for educational training in  
21 management and administration  
22 becomes more important."

23 This is something which I think is



November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 critical. the fact that you are both cognizant of that  
2 and sort of on top of it is encouraging. In many of the  
3 presentations there is a recognition that it is around  
4 the corner but is there the infrastructure, the people  
5 who can in fact start self-government? It just does not  
6 happen.

7 So the preparation for that eventuality  
8 is critical. The idea of investing in human capital is  
9 something that we have to take into consideration.

10 I don't know if you have any concluding  
11 remarks you would like to make. Please feel free to do  
12 so.

13 **WILLIAM DRAPER:** I would like to add the  
14 fact that we hope as the report is written that we will  
15 see ourselves in that report as part of the solution.  
16 We want to be part of the solution. We have a good part  
17 of the necessary resource; we don't have it all.

18 As you get into the detail, if there are  
19 ways that we can help either Commissioners or Commission  
20 staff to understand detail, we hope you will call on us  
21 because we will continue to contribute as long as it is  
22 positive for the work you are doing.

23 Thank you very much for this

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 opportunity.

2 **BILL SHEAD:** Your last comment  
3 stimulated one thought in my mind. We have some great  
4 institutions in this country that can address some of the  
5 problems that are missing in the aboriginal community,  
6 whether it is in the Canadian Forces at the military college  
7 to provide access, along the same line that the Native  
8 Law Student Program provided access to aboriginals who  
9 wanted to become lawyers. I think those are the things  
10 we can tap today to address the shortcomings of the  
11 resource. We do not need to invent anything else. I think  
12 there is the goodwill and we have very good institutions  
13 and a willingness to do it. It just needs some leadership  
14 and commitment.

15 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Thank you very  
16 much and thank you very much for your presentation. I  
17 am sure you will find that you will be part of the solution  
18 and many of your ideas, I am sure, will be reflected in  
19 the final report. Your offer of assistance did not go  
20 unnoticed.

21 Thank you very much.

22 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you  
23 very much.

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Our next  
2 presentation is from the Canadian Association of  
3 University Teachers.

4                   The presenters are Professor Alan  
5 Andrews, who is the President of CAUT; Mr. Tim Stutt,  
6 Relations with Governments Officer; and Mr. Gordon Piché,  
7 who is the Acting Executive Director.

8                   Is that correct? And you are replacing  
9 Mr. Savage, as I understand. The reason I say that is  
10 we were out at Carleton University to a forum the other  
11 night and I was wandering through the halls and there was  
12 Mr. Savage about to embark on a class.

13                  I apologize for keeping you waiting but  
14 we have found in the past that our presentations do tend  
15 to run a little overtime because of the volume of material  
16 and information that each group is presenting.

17                  The floor is yours.

18                  **ALAN ANDREWS, President, Canadian**  
19 **Association of University Teachers:** Thank you very much,  
20 Mr. Chairman. I will, if I may, speak in English to the  
21 Commission this morning.

22                  You have already introduced my  
23 colleagues who are here with me so I will skip that part

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of the presentation and save a little time.

2                   May I say also that my view of our brief  
3 is that it is essentially supportive of positions that  
4 have been represented to you in other briefs and other  
5 submissions that you have already received and we would  
6 not be offended if you felt that you had finished with  
7 us in less than the hour that you actually allocated to  
8 CAUT for the Commission. On the other hand, we want to  
9 be available to you in whatever way we can, in whatever  
10 way we can help the Commission.

11                  I must say, if I may, Mr. Chairman, that  
12 having reviewed your documentation, the overviews of the  
13 various public hearings you have had -- and this is merely  
14 a personal comment -- I find myself somewhat envious of  
15 the Commission for the opportunity that it has had to gain  
16 a depth of knowledge and awareness of a part of the fabric  
17 of Canadian society, a part of this country which I think  
18 many of us in fact are grossly ignorant of. Professors  
19 do not normally admit that they are ignorant but I am quite  
20 willing on this occasion to admit that I am ignorant, and  
21 I think I am representative of many members of CAUT. I  
22 hope that the work of this Commission will in fact go some  
23 way to remedying what seems to me a serious deficiency

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 in public education in the most general sense in this  
2 country.

3 As I indicated at the beginning, the  
4 focus of our brief is essentially on the attitude of the  
5 federal government to post-secondary education for  
6 aboriginal peoples and particularly our concern is with  
7 the changes that have occurred in the last half dozen years  
8 or so, a change in practice which resulted from the  
9 replacement of what was the post-secondary education  
10 assistance plan by something that came to be called the  
11 post-secondary student support plan.

12 I think if you look at our brief you will  
13 see that we indicated to you that there was some period  
14 of confusion and uncertainty in that transitional period  
15 which perhaps in itself was unfortunate. But one of the  
16 things that was clear throughout that discussions is that  
17 there was strong opposition to what I think was the  
18 essential motive of the government of that point, and that  
19 was to put a cap on funding that was made available under  
20 the post-secondary education assistance plan. This is  
21 clearly what resulted with the replacement plan.

22 We support those other organizations and  
23 individuals and institutions who have opposed the cap,

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and we hope the Commission will consider very seriously  
2 the representations that have been made with respect to  
3 that and particularly the representations that have been  
4 made with respect to the right to support for  
5 post-secondary education.

6 I expect the Commission has already seen  
7 the paper by Marcel Swain which we have appended to our  
8 brief, but we find a great deal of merit in that paper  
9 and that presentation and we would certainly endorse it.

10 If I may use the phrase, the government  
11 it seems to me has spoken with a forked tongue on the  
12 question of whether or not post-secondary education is  
13 in fact a treaty right. It does seem to us that the proper  
14 interpretation of history is that it is. And even if that  
15 were not the proper interpretation, it would seem to us  
16 that past practice of the government -- that is, the  
17 practice under the Post-Secondary Education Assistance  
18 Plan -- indicated that the government in fact had accepted  
19 in the past that it had a responsibility to support  
20 post-secondary education for aboriginal peoples.

21 You will see at the end of our brief that  
22 the CAUT Council, which is the governing body of CAUT,  
23 has passed resolutions on this matter and I am of course

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 as President bound by those resolutions and happy to be  
2 bound by those resolutions. It is on that basis that we  
3 make our submission to you today.

4 I would like to say just a couple of other  
5 things about the value and the desirability of the  
6 participation of aboriginal students in post secondary  
7 education institutions in this country.

8 One of the reasons why I think this is  
9 in fact a valuable part of our university is that there  
10 is of course a general benefit to society from  
11 post-secondary education and that is a benefit that  
12 certainly ought to be extended to the aboriginal community  
13 in as fulsome a way as the rest of us can extend that  
14 benefit.

15 But the other is that there is a benefit  
16 to the university community itself from having aboriginal  
17 students participating in the activities of the  
18 university. As we point out in our brief, the  
19 participation rate is still not at the level of the general  
20 participation rate. It is probably also quite localized  
21 in various parts of the country and it would be, in my  
22 view, desirable to see that participation extended to its  
23 maximum.

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1                   If I may make finally one comment on the  
2   budgetary aspect of funding, it does seem to me that at  
3   the very least the government might have established as  
4   its budgetary level funding that would have assumed that  
5   the participation rate of aboriginal peoples was at the  
6   same level as that of the general population. This I  
7   think, at least for the time being, would have ensured  
8   that there was adequate funding available.

9                   I recognize that that would not have  
10   addressed the major point that we make in our brief, but  
11   I do make that point to you today as an indication of the  
12   relative -- I was going to say meanness, but perhaps that  
13   is too strong a word in front of a microphone -- the relative  
14   parsimony of the government with respect to funding.

15                  I will stop there, Mr. Chairman. I  
16   would be happy to answer questions. I should say that  
17   Mr. Stutt is the member of our staff who prepared the brief  
18   and who has the handling of this file in our office. If  
19   there are questions of detail, he would be a more  
20   appropriate person than me to answer your questions.

21                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Thank you very  
22   much, Professor Andrews.

23                   Bertha?



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I would  
2 just comment that after perusing your brief I wrote down  
3 my conclusions as to the effect of it. It was cap removed  
4 and available funding for post-secondary education and  
5 no non-academic barriers to the full participation of  
6 aboriginal people in post-secondary education. Those  
7 were the two things that I got out of it. There were lots  
8 of other things, but these were the two things that really  
9 leapt out at me as being your message to us and your  
10 recommendation as to what our message to government should  
11 be.

12                   **ALAN ANDREWS:** If we had provided an  
13 Executive Summary, that is what it would have said.

14                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Thank you.

15                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** I have a few  
16 questions based on the brief, but I would also like to  
17 explore the whole question of the numbers of aboriginal  
18 faculty members, do we have any data on this and what can  
19 we do to encourage more aboriginal faculty members.

20                   I am not sure of the numbers at my own  
21 university; I know of one. But I am not sure of the exact  
22 numbers. I don't know if CAUT has any data on its  
23 membership according to those lines or categories.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   **ALAN ANDREWS:** The short answer, I am  
2 sorry to say, is no, we do not have that data.

3                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** This is  
4 something I think we might want to spend some time on this  
5 morning. Many of the briefs have talked about the  
6 importance of education and I don't think anybody is going  
7 to deny that. But one of the things we also need I think  
8 is role models and how we can encourage this.

9                   Another thing which I would like to  
10 explore with you and get your views on -- and it is something  
11 I know that university administrations and suspect faculty  
12 members may have different views on, and that is the role  
13 of elders instructing on the campus. I know they don't  
14 have, as one of the elders said the other day, more degrees  
15 than a thermometer. They don't have degrees, yet there  
16 is something there that they could pass on. Issues such  
17 as using aboriginal languages as language substitutes for  
18 languages other than English and meeting other  
19 requirements; issues such of bringing the universities  
20 and instruction to remote parts of the country, how we  
21 can do more of that.

22                   One of the concerns that we hear is that  
23 people are hesitant to leave their communities. How do

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 we bring instruction to them? And of course there is  
2 modern technology, satellites and things of that nature,  
3 video cassettes, all sorts of things that one can think  
4 of.

5                   What I would like to do, in addition to  
6 some of the points in your brief, is really have you reflect  
7 on some of these broader issues. We need to spend a fair  
8 amount of time and attention on the education provisions  
9 or chapters or recommendations in our brief. While we  
10 have you here, I think it would be very helpful to have  
11 a dialogue on some of these issues. I know that they are  
12 debated on campuses and I know that your organization,  
13 of which I am a member, spends time on these things.

14                   Any thought that you might have, any  
15 advice you might have for the Commission, would be  
16 gratefully received.

17                   **ALAN ANDREWS:** I appreciate that  
18 invitation, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure how helpful I  
19 am going to be able to be.

20                   I certainly agree with you that the  
21 question of an increase in faculty members of aboriginal  
22 origin is highly desirable. There are, of course, ways  
23 in which we have addressed this question for other groups

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 in society. There are a number of collective agreements  
2 in this country, for instance, which do include affirmative  
3 action provisions with respect to appointments. So  
4 provided you can reach a situation in which there are  
5 qualified applicants for positions that are available in  
6 universities -- and that may be the first step that needs  
7 to be addressed. But provided you can reach that step  
8 -- Ph.Ds being graduated from graduate programs would I  
9 suppose be the normal measure of that -- you can I think  
10 by affirmative action programs in fact do something to  
11 ensure that those are applicants that are not merely not  
12 discriminated against but in fact are given proper  
13 consideration for those positions and they are given an  
14 opportunity to fill them.

15 My own collective agreement at Dalhousie  
16 University does in fact contain a specific provision in  
17 the collective agreement with respect to the  
18 responsibility of the employer in making appointments to  
19 in fact recognize groups that have been traditionally  
20 disadvantaged in various ways with respect to appointment.  
21 So there is that.

22 There is of course the opportunity for  
23 specific scholarship programs, to come back to the Ph.D

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 level, specific scholarship programs which will encourage  
2 persons who meet particular qualifications or criteria  
3 to enter those programs.

4                   It seems to me, simply speaking off the  
5 top of my head, those are a couple of things that can in  
6 fact be done by regulation, by agreement, by provision  
7 of funding support.

8                   I do not feel competent to comment  
9 specifically on the question of the appropriate role for  
10 the elders in university instruction. That clearly  
11 depends on the kinds of programs we are talking about.  
12 I would assume that there are in some universities programs  
13 in which they would be appropriate instructors, and it  
14 seems to me that there may be room for some comment on  
15 their exclusion as instructors from those programs, if  
16 that is what they are representing to the Commission.

17                  Again, a personal opinion: I think we  
18 do not do as much as we might do in terms of providing  
19 access for the study of aboriginal languages or the  
20 recognition of aboriginal languages as a part of the  
21 fabric. We are happy to recognize a requirement that  
22 students demonstrate some competence in a language other  
23 than English, but I imagine there are very few universities

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1    which even provide the opportunity for students to  
2    demonstrate that competence in one of the aboriginal  
3    languages.

4                    I agree with you of course that there  
5    are opportunities available now for the extension of  
6    instruction by various technological means which can to  
7    some extent overcome the barriers of distance and can allow  
8    students who wish to do it to pursue higher education,  
9    post-secondary education in their homes, wherever those  
10   homes are in fact.

11                   Those are my initial responses to the  
12   various points that you put to us.

13                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:**    Does CAUT have  
14   any ongoing studies or committees which might examine these  
15   types of things?    Are these the kinds of things which are  
16   discussed at your council meetings?

17                   **ALAN ANDREWS:**    We do not have any  
18   standing committee which would include these matters as  
19   part of its brief.    It would have to be an initiative by  
20   the executive committee of CAUT.    I do have to tell you  
21   that CAUT is not overly resourced at the moment in terms  
22   of taking on new tasks.    Like I suppose many organizations,  
23   our ability to take on new tasks is really quite limited.

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** I know the  
2 problem. I have talked to my colleagues about it.

3                   **ALAN ANDREWS:** Right.

4                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Going to the  
5 brief and some of the points you have raised, one of them  
6 is at the top of page 10 on the administration of the program  
7 where it says:

8 "...Band administrators have been forced to consider  
9 financing students only at the  
10 closest (and therefore the  
11 cheapest) post-secondary  
12 institutions..."

13                   And you go on to say:

14 "The Association is also concerned that the emphasis on  
15 self-government, while in keeping  
16 with the aims of the First Nations,  
17 may result in discrimination  
18 against certain academic areas,  
19 thereby restricting the career  
20 choices of some aboriginal  
21 students."

22                   This point is made in another brief we  
23 are going to receive later today. Would you care to

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 amplify or develop that theme a little further in terms  
2 of specific recommendations which we might want to  
3 consider?

4 **ALAN ANDREWS:** I think the point that  
5 we want to make here -- and it is a consequence I think  
6 mainly of the cap on funding and what has been called in  
7 other contexts downloading of the responsibility for  
8 supporting students.

9 We see some danger, I suppose, that  
10 students will be cut off from access to programs or academic  
11 areas that are not immediately available in some local  
12 institution or indeed the institution of their choice with  
13 respect to post-secondary education. I believe that is  
14 the point we were trying to make here.

15 I don't know that we have specific  
16 evidence to support it. What we are concerned about is  
17 what is a possible consequence of the change in the  
18 arrangements.

19 Let me just link it back to your question  
20 about the question of whether or not we can increase the  
21 proportion of faculty who are from aboriginal background.

22 It seems to me that if what one does here is establish  
23 a kind of unwritten assumption about what is the



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 appropriate kind of education for aboriginal students,  
2 and it does not include the kind of education which would  
3 enable students to qualify themselves for academic  
4 positions in universities and other institutions of higher  
5 education, this becomes in the end what I think is properly  
6 called a vicious circle.

7 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** I think you are  
8 right on that.

9 **ALAN ANDREWS:** Just to add to it, the  
10 community college program, the two-year technical program  
11 is not typically a program that leads to post-graduate  
12 work.

13 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** No, not unless  
14 there are very good transfer arrangements and that in  
15 itself is another problem. But I won't get into that one.

16 The other point I notice here, and it  
17 is more by way of comment, is in the next point (c), the  
18 assistance levels and duration and particularly duration,  
19 and the way the program is structured. Students do change  
20 their minds once they get into university. They go into  
21 science and they find they do not like it and they have  
22 to switch into arts, or they find that five courses are  
23 too many and they want to take three, or whatever the number

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 is. Or they do not like the course and they want to drop  
2 out. They have to continue their programming.

3 That is something that all students  
4 face. But I think with aboriginal students in particular  
5 in many instances there is the shock of going from a small  
6 community into a large centre, a large university, and  
7 just getting used to it. I know there are on many campuses  
8 support programs, but I am not sure they are adequate.  
9 So this point I think is critical that you make in that  
10 particular paragraph, particularly the idea of academic  
11 program changes and the difficulty, that the funding and  
12 how it is structured limits the degrees of freedom which  
13 students have.

14 **ALAN ANDREWS:** Yes, I think it is worth  
15 saying in this forum -- it is a general point that I would  
16 say in other places as well -- that the notion that students  
17 should restrict their studies at university only to those  
18 things which lead directly to a particular degree is not,  
19 it seems to me, necessarily to take best advantage of the  
20 opportunities that are available to students in the  
21 university when they get there.

22 I expect you and I both know students  
23 who, because of the university regulations, find they do

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 not have the right courses to fit into the right slots  
2 in order to satisfy the graduation requirements.

3 But if you ask them another question --  
4 and that is whether they thought it was worthwhile to take  
5 the course which does not fit into the graduation  
6 requirements -- you get a different answer from the  
7 question of whether or not it turns out to be the  
8 immediately required or necessary course to have taken.

9 I think if we were actually interested  
10 in extending the benefits of education, we should not be  
11 so obsessed with this notion of completion rates and  
12 studying the minimum that is necessary in order to satisfy  
13 degree requirements.

14 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** I agree with  
15 you there but of course I think you and I have a professional  
16 bias on this.

17 My last question in terms of the brief  
18 itself is more of a question of fact. It is on page 13,  
19 and it is the issue of the participation rate. In the  
20 second paragraph it says:

21 "As was shown above in the section on PSSSP's financial  
22 limitations, in 1991-92 the rate  
23 of participation in post secondary

November 18, 1993

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   education for Indians aged 17 to  
2                   34 was 8.08 per cent--well below  
3                   the 10.68 per cent for all  
4                   Canadians in that same age group."

5                   That figure applies, does it not, to  
6                   Status Indians or is it all aboriginal people? The program  
7                   is limited, is it not, to a particular group of aboriginal  
8                   peoples?

9                   **TIM STUTT, Relations with Governments**  
10                  **Officer, Canadian Association of University Teachers:**

11                  That figure was taken from a report made by the House of  
12                  Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs. the  
13                  use of the term Indians conforms with their use of it,  
14                  namely to refer to status Indians.

15                  **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** This figure,  
16                  then, does not include non-status Indians or the Métis  
17                  or others who would not benefit from federal programs.

18                  **TIM STUTT:** That is right.

19                  **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** If we use these  
20                  figures, we have to make sure t hat we are using them in  
21                  a very specific way because I suspect the participation  
22                  rate may be somewhat lower than is presented.

23                  **TIM STUTT:** Yes. And that will be a

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 difficult task for you because the collection of such data  
2 is rather scanty at the national level right now.

3 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** The other brief  
4 we will be hearing today has a different way of showing  
5 participation rates. I did want to make a note of that  
6 because I wanted to make sure that if those figures do  
7 end up, I don't want to have something in a report where  
8 somebody can say: "Of course you don't understand what  
9 the figures are."

10 So I just wanted to get that clear.

11 **ALAN ANDREWS:** I take it, though, there  
12 is not an argument about whether or not that participation  
13 rate for that particular group -- as long as we have the  
14 group properly defined -- falls below the average  
15 participation.

16 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** No, there is no  
17 argument there. My sense, if you added the other in, is  
18 that it would be lower.

19 **ALAN ANDREWS:** What I take that it is  
20 an indication of is what in fact the funds that were made  
21 available under the PSSSP allowed in terms of  
22 participation.

23 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Yes, that is

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 right. It measures a number of things but I want to make  
2 sure I have the right --

3 **ALAN ANDREWS:** I just want to pursue  
4 this point with you for a moment.

5 So what we have is the government saying  
6 yes, we are prepared to support participation in  
7 post-secondary education but at a lower level than the  
8 participation rate for the population as a whole.

9 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** That is what it  
10 would lead to, yes.

11 The other point in that same paragraph  
12 which I think is critical, from the Saskatchewan Indian  
13 Federated College, that:

14 "...education is a sound investment, partly because the  
15 costs of failing to do so must be  
16 absorbed by other social programs  
17 such as social welfare and  
18 rehabilitation."

19 I think that is all too often overlooked  
20 that education is an investment.

21 Those are all the questions or comments  
22 that I have.

23 I don't know, Bertha, if you have any

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 more.

2 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I would  
3 just like to respond to what you said in the opening that  
4 for me as a non-aboriginal member of the Commission it  
5 has just been a tremendous educational experience to cross  
6 the country and go into these communities and meet and  
7 talk to the people.

8 I agree with what you say that there is  
9 just an appalling ignorance in the non-aboriginal society  
10 about native people. One of the challenges that Brian  
11 Dickson set us when he created the Commission was to engage  
12 and not to lose sight of the fact that public education  
13 was a major part of our responsibility. I must confess  
14 that I think in this area we have not been able to accomplish  
15 what he had in mind and what I see so clearly needs to  
16 be done. But I must confess that so far I do not think  
17 the Commission has been able to come up with an answer  
18 as to how to do that.

19 This is very helpful to get the briefs  
20 from major non-aboriginal organizations. This is  
21 obviously one step that is helpful in that respect. But  
22 it just touches the fringes. I really do not know how  
23 we could have done or could do a better job of the public

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 education aspect of our mandate.

2 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Professor  
3 Andrews?

4 **ALAN ANDREWS:** As Commissioner Wilson  
5 was speaking it did occur to me that the federal government  
6 has funded special chairs in women's studies in various  
7 Canadian universities. It seems to me that it would be  
8 a very small beginning, a very modest beginning, but one  
9 of the things that the federal government could do to  
10 demonstrate its commitment to a larger public education  
11 would indeed be to support the establishment of federal  
12 chairs in universities with perhaps some commitment that  
13 there be public lectures associated with those  
14 appointments.

15 I can see no reason why that should not  
16 be done and it would demonstrate a commitment by Canada  
17 to this area of education, and I think it would have some  
18 productive results. I think there is no doubt that the  
19 chairs in women's studies have had productive results  
20 within university communities and in the larger community,  
21 and there is no reason why we would not expect the same  
22 thing to occur if this were done.

23 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** That is a



November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 good idea.

2 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** That is a good  
3 idea. As I recall, there were five such chairs  
4 established.

5 One final thought that comes to mind.  
6 When we were at Carleton we asked the students about the  
7 nature and structure of our report, not so much the content  
8 because I think the content is pretty well defined by our  
9 mandate that there will be recommendations, and so on.

10 Do you have any thoughts as to how we  
11 should present the report? And by present, I don't mean  
12 it has to go to the government and it has to be done in  
13 a certain way. A report of a thousand pages is going to  
14 be not necessarily read by many people. As Commissioner  
15 Sillett said to the previous group, there is the problem  
16 of having the report just stay on the shelf because it  
17 has just general recommendations.

18 Do you have any thoughts as to what we  
19 should do with the report or reports to make sure that  
20 it is accessible, for example that it can be used in classes  
21 or it can be used as a text, or things like that? Do you  
22 have any suggestions or ideas that we might want to reflect  
23 on?

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1                   **ALAN ANDREWS:** Not off the top of my  
2 head. If what you want to do is to get the document into  
3 the education system, as I understand from the end of your  
4 comment is what you had in mind, it seems to me that the  
5 full report is likely to be studied in certain specialized  
6 areas. It is likely to be studied where people look at  
7 public policy, particularly public policy in this area.  
8 You can expect that faculty and certainly senior students  
9 in those areas are likely to take an active interest in  
10 it.

11                   But if you want a more general awareness  
12 in the university community, it seems to me something other  
13 than the report would be necessary; that is, a shorter  
14 book which is descriptive of the report rather than  
15 necessarily the whole report itself, or even the  
16 recommendations that are in the report; but is descriptive  
17 of the report, descriptive of the process.

18                   Also, may I just say that we always think  
19 of books as being the instruments. It does seem to me  
20 that many of our students now, if not our faculty members,  
21 spend more time looking at television screens in the day  
22 than they do reading books. Certainly that is true I think  
23 in the school situation.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   So if the resources run to it, it seems  
2   to me that the most useful thing you could do in that area  
3   would be to prepare one or more than one intelligent video  
4   presentations. I am not thinking here about talking  
5   heads. It would require a certain amount of -- dare I  
6   say it -- theatrical resource in order to do this. I do  
7   not have any particular advice for you as to how this might  
8   be done, but I am sure there are within the aboriginal  
9   community people who could help you do this and do it  
10  effectively -- not for the aboriginal community but for  
11  the rest of Canada.

12                   Does that help?

13                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** That is very  
14  helpful. In fact, that idea came out at the session we  
15  had at Carleton the other night, that it just can't be  
16  print; it has to be audiovisual as well. There may be  
17  many ways of producing a report.

18                   **ALAN ANDREWS:** And I think members of  
19  the Commission, if I may say so, have something of a profile  
20  in Canadian society and there is no reason why the  
21  Commissioners themselves should not fan out across the  
22  country and give public lectures, take part in public  
23  discussions and public debates. And I think university

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 campuses are ideal sites for that sort of activity. I  
2 don't doubt that the local sponsorship would be available  
3 for that in many places.

4 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** This does raise  
5 the question of what happens once the report is presented.  
6 This is also something that we are trying to come to grips  
7 with. It is one thing to present the report and say "that's  
8 it, we have done our bit", but the implementation, the  
9 follow-up itself is critical to the success of the  
10 enterprise as it were.

11 **ALAN ANDREWS:** I am not going to commit  
12 CAUT to actually doing anything, but if there were a role  
13 for CAUT we would certainly consider assisting the  
14 Commission if we could in that activity.

15 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Thank you very  
16 much; that is very helpful.

17 Thank you very much for your  
18 presentation this morning. It is a pleasure to meet you.  
19 Your faces leapt out at me from the bulletin for a while,  
20 so it is a pleasure to meet you.

21 **ALAN ANDREWS:** Thank you.

22 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** We will have a  
23 coffee break until 11 o'clock.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 --- Short recess at 10:30 a.m.

2 --- Upon resuming at 10:55 a.m.

3 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** We will  
4 reconvene our hearings.

5 Our next presentation is from the  
6 Canadian Paediatric Society. The presenters are Dr. F.W.  
7 Baker, Dr. Gary Pেকেles, and Dr. Victor Marchessault.

8 I hope I have pronounced the names  
9 correctly; if not, I apologize.

10 We have your material and we are looking  
11 forward to your presentation this morning. Please  
12 proceed.

13 **DR. VICTOR MARCHESSAULT, Executive**  
14 **Vice-President, Canadian Paediatric Society:** Thank you.

15 I will start by saying I am the Executive Vice-President  
16 of the Canadian Paediatric Society, something I started  
17 for a few years. I have been doing this for 25 years now.

18 There is a lot of history, but I won't bother you with  
19 the whole history of the society and how this committee  
20 came to be formed at the request of medical services.

21 Seeing what was needed, it was very important and one of  
22 our chairs decided that we should have representations  
23 from our aboriginal people. This started quite a few years

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   ago.

2                   Mary Sillett was one of our members at  
3   that time.

4                   The Committee is composed of 18 members.

5    It looks like a large committee compared to the usual  
6   ones that we have on experts' committees which I think  
7   is theoretically a maximum of six. But we have included  
8   a lot of consultants. The Committee is composed of  
9   physicians, paediatricians but mainly those who have  
10  expertise in the health of aboriginal people by either  
11  running a program themselves or having been consultants  
12  in the field.

13                  The Canadian Paediatric Society is a  
14  professional association representing close to 2,000  
15  paediatricians across Canada. It is the only one of its  
16  kind for paediatricians. We represent about 85 per cent  
17  of Canadian paediatricians.

18                  The mission of the society is twofold:  
19   one is to service the children of Canada; and the second  
20   one is to service its membership by making things to them  
21   in order to maintain their competence as paediatricians.

22                  The goal for the next few years has been  
23  established as serving the disadvantaged child, and we

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 had a conference where we established a lot of the needs  
2 of Canadian children. This is what we would like to  
3 present today.

4 The committee is headed by Dr. Baker,  
5 who is the Director of Sioux Lookout Program and based  
6 at the University of Toronto. He will not read you his  
7 brief but he will tell you some of the highlights.

8 **DR. FRED W. BAKER, Canadian Paediatric**  
9 **Society:** Thank you very much, Dr. Marchessault.

10 I have been involved in providing health  
11 care to aboriginal people for about 35 years in one form  
12 or another, some in private practice when I was in  
13 Saskatchewan, and for the last eight years I have been  
14 in Toronto, and for the last four years I have been the  
15 Director of the University of Toronto Sioux Lookout  
16 Program, which provides health care to native people in  
17 the northwest side of the province.

18 We have an area of land mass which is  
19 about a quarter to a third of the total land mass of Ontario,  
20 about the size of continental France, and we have 14,000  
21 to 15,000 people in 28 communities in that area.

22 When I took on the chairmanship of the  
23 Indian and Inuit Health Committee, one of the first things

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I did was to review the documents that we had presented  
2 to see whether we should be redoing them or putting them  
3 off in an archival file. I had sat on the committee  
4 previously as a member and also as the director responsible  
5 to the executive for the committee at one time.

6 One of the papers that I came across was  
7 what had been entitled the "White Paper" and had been  
8 prepared in 1969-70 and presented to the Prime Minister  
9 and to Medical Services Branch, looking at health problems  
10 of aboriginal peoples, not just the paediatric age group.

11

12 Mary Sillett had asked what that is, and  
13 I guess it is 18, although some of us will lose our  
14 paediatric patients sooner than that because the  
15 adolescents do not like to sit in the office with little  
16 kids. And on the other hand, some of them will continue  
17 to come back to us for advice even when they have children  
18 of their own, depending on the relationship you have.

19 When I went over this White Paper some  
20 of the things that struck me were that the recommendations  
21 which had been made in 1969-70, the majority of them had  
22 never been implemented. I thought it would be worthwhile  
23 to emphasize to the Commission some of my biases about



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 where we should spend more of our efforts as physicians,  
2 paediatricians, health care givers.

3 I will not bother reading the document  
4 because I am sure you have had the opportunity to do that  
5 already. But the things that really concerned me are in  
6 the area of violence, in the area of accidents, in the  
7 area of parenting, in the area of education in the general  
8 field, and also specific things such as dental care.

9 I am sure Dr. Pেকেles is going to go over  
10 some of the other areas as well.

11 My feeling is that we will not really  
12 get anywhere with the implementation of any programs until  
13 the native people have more ownership of those programs  
14 and feel that they have an input which is not just advisory  
15 but rather something which they can depend on being  
16 utilized to implement programs and changes.

17 We are attempting to do that through some  
18 of the programs across the country. Certainly we attempt  
19 to do that in the University of Toronto program.

20 Part of the problem that we come across  
21 is where the responsibility for the provision of health  
22 care lies, whether it is with the provincial government  
23 or with the federal government. The provincial

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 governments feel that all of the members of the province  
2 do have the right to access the health care system, and  
3 by treaties and by tradition the federal government has  
4 a responsibility for the health care of aboriginal peoples.

5 But as I am sure you are all well aware, that is basically  
6 limited to the status Indians and the Inuit. That does  
7 not account for many of the other people who belong in  
8 the aboriginal group.

9 I would like to see more emphasis on  
10 training of aboriginal people for the health field. There  
11 have been a number of aboriginal people who have gone into  
12 nursing. There have been some who have gone into social  
13 work, and a very few who have gone into the medical field.

14 The representation that we have on the  
15 Indian and Inuit Health Committee includes the aboriginal  
16 Inuit and Indian Nurses Association which I believe is  
17 now called the Aboriginal Nurses Association, the  
18 Association of Aboriginal Physicians in Canada, which has  
19 just joined us as a consultant; and also the National CHR  
20 group.

21 All of these groups are useful in the  
22 provision of health care, and I would certainly like to  
23 see them re-emphasized as fields which the native young

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 people could go into.

2 I feel that eventually the aboriginal  
3 health authorities of the various groups across the country  
4 will feel secure enough to take over running programs  
5 themselves and I think that they have to be involved with  
6 negotiations for any changes or modifications to the health  
7 care system.

8 We would certainly like to see the  
9 Canadian Paediatric Society better utilized by people who  
10 are looking at providing health care to children. We have  
11 committees other than the Indian and Inuit Health Committee  
12 which would be of use to people providing health care in  
13 that area.

14 I believe you have already received  
15 information about the effects of poverty on health and  
16 the diseases which are associated with poverty. Certainly  
17 this applies to the native people as well.

18 Dental disease is a particular concern  
19 to me. I think the Dental Therapist Training Program which  
20 is currently based in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, and  
21 was formerly in Fort Smith, provided a very good dental  
22 care because it was community based and there was a lot  
23 of preventive dentistry involved in it not just

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1    interventive dentistry. The dental therapy program has  
2    been blocked in some provinces because of the provincial  
3    dental associations and I would hope that there would be  
4    ongoing negotiations to try and provide more community  
5    based dental care as well.

6                   Injuries, violence, accidents account  
7    for a high percentage of the deaths which Statistics Canada  
8    provides us with. There has to be ways of looking at how  
9    this can be reduced. I think there should be better  
10   studies going on at the present time.

11                   In the Sioux Lookout zone in Ontario we  
12   are using the CHIRP program which collects data around  
13   accidents and injuries in children's hospitals originally,  
14   but we are now using it in some of the general hospitals  
15   and we are also using it in some of the nursing stations  
16   to collect data which we hope will be of use to the  
17   communities themselves in implementing preventive  
18   programs.

19                   Tuberculosis is again a big problem and  
20   we have to get back to looking at prevention of tuberculosis  
21   and not just the treatment of it. Some areas of Canada  
22   have up to 25 per cent of their cases of tuberculosis as  
23   drug resistant organisms. We have not seen this same

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 incidence in northwestern Ontario. But we still see a  
2 very high incidence of tuberculosis.

3                   The other area t hat I think has to be  
4 looked at if we are going to make any changes in the general  
5 health of the population is education. The education  
6 system has not provided the young people with the means  
7 of surviving in their own communities nor has it really  
8 provided them with the means of surviving in the mainstream  
9 society.

10                   Hopefully some of the programs that are  
11 in place in the James Bay area, where the children are  
12 taught in the their mother tongue and learn English and  
13 French as second languages may well be a way of  
14 re-establishing the traditions and culture of the group.

15                   I think that is all I will say for the  
16 moment. I will be happy to answer questions afterwards,  
17 but I think Dr. Pekeles is going to make his presentation  
18 first.

19                   **DR. GARY PEKELES, Canadian Paediatric**  
20 **Society:** Thank you, Dr. Baker.

21                   The last time that I ran into part of  
22 this Commission I guess was about a year and a half ago  
23 in Pangnirtung and I commend you all for your endurance

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and perseverance. I am sure that in many areas you all  
2 feel that you have heard the range of problems over and  
3 over again with particularly different slants and I am  
4 sure that you, as we, are focusing on where do we go from  
5 here, what are the solutions.

6 I want to deal with one specific aspect  
7 of that as we go along.

8 I had originally planned to review some  
9 of the health statistics that we have at hand but in  
10 particular looking at the Path to Healing book and the  
11 piece by John O'Neil. But I think that would be redundant.

12 You all know the issues at this point, I am sure, as well  
13 as we do in terms of pattern of improving but still  
14 discrepant health indices, be it in the area of infant  
15 mortality which is of particular concern to us. And more  
16 troubling perhaps an area that has not improved are the  
17 alarmingly high death rates related to accidents and  
18 violence in general, and suicides in particular, in our  
19 age group.

20 I think it is clear to us narrow medical  
21 technicians though we may be that the important further  
22 steps in improving health status to aboriginal populations  
23 are largely going to come from outside the medical sector,

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 narrowly defined. Again, you have heard much about the  
2 importance of living conditions, stable economic base,  
3 settings in which cultural roots of communities are  
4 strengthened rather than weakened as being important  
5 determinants of health status down the line.

6 I do not want to elaborate on those any  
7 more at the moment either.

8 I am concerned about two particularly  
9 simplistic responses that occur at time, and I want to  
10 go beyond those. Often one has a sense, if one reads,  
11 that there are two easy solutions to the problems that  
12 face us. One is money, or the lack of it, and two is  
13 self-government, and that with those two in place paradise  
14 on earth will be ours.

15 I am in complete agreement that a strong  
16 financial base and self-government are necessary  
17 conditions to improving the health and welfare of  
18 aboriginal populations. I would argue that in themselves  
19 they are just a beginning, a necessary but not a sufficient  
20 condition for meeting some of the goals that we have.

21 I am based at the moment at McGill  
22 University. We have had a long history of activity in  
23 the Baffin area and with the James Bay Cree and the Inuit

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of Northern Quebec. As luck would have it, these three  
2 areas that we have been dealing with from a quarter of  
3 a century to 30 years in fact were the first three areas  
4 within Canada where autonomous locally run aboriginal  
5 health boards were established. Those of the James Bay  
6 Cree and the Inuit of Northern Quebec came about as part  
7 of the James Bay and Northern Agreement and although there  
8 are clearly problems there -- and one might not necessarily  
9 want to see those as a model of self-government for the  
10 future -- the fact of the matter is that they did establish  
11 locally run health authorities, school commissions and  
12 municipal authorities.

13                   In the case of the Baffin Region the  
14 process was a bit different. There was a decentralization  
15 of responsibility at first from the Federal Department  
16 of Health and Welfare to the territorial government and  
17 then to the establishment of regional health boards. The  
18 regional health board there is territorially defined  
19 rather than ethnically defined, but the reality is that  
20 85 per cent of that population is Inuit and it effectively  
21 is an Inuit run health board.

22                   As we have worked with those boards over  
23 time, there have been major joys, great frustrations, lots



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of mistakes that have occurred over time and I think there  
2 has been a learning all around about where we go once that  
3 level of autonomy is established. One takes as a point  
4 of departure for this discussion that when such boards  
5 are established there is sufficient financial resources  
6 for them to begin to deal with the problems that they face.

7                   Again this legal transfer of control  
8 even with sufficient resources is really only the first  
9 step to true control of sources. We have found this sort  
10 of irony in the areas that we have worked, that one  
11 typically has a pattern where you have a health board with  
12 representation from the communities that is entirely  
13 either Cree or Inuit, as the case may be. You have people  
14 functioning at levels of secretarial support, maintenance  
15 and what not, who are aboriginal peoples as well. And  
16 then you have this broad swath of middle management and  
17 health professionals that remain firmly and strongly  
18 non-aboriginal.

19                   That is not to say that this has not  
20 represented a great step forward. Their masters are the  
21 local health boards which set health priorities without  
22 any question, the whole frame of reference in which  
23 discussion of priorities changes as a result of that change

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 in governments. But it still remains that the dynamics  
2 within the working of those health institutions remains  
3 not necessarily as changed as one might have expected as  
4 a result of that change of governments.

5                   The challenge is to take that change in  
6 jurisdiction, the governance arrangement, and really  
7 evolve from that toward a true change in orientation, in  
8 management, in the feel of the places.

9                   What are the additional conditions that  
10 need to be met in order to achieve this? Again in the  
11 case of health -- and I am using health here because it  
12 is a sector obviously that I know best but I think certainly  
13 some of the lessons there can be extrapolated to other  
14 sectors as well. Clearly, there is a need to develop  
15 further the cadre of aboriginal health professionals.  
16 There have been some good efforts in that area. On the  
17 medical side I think particularly about the experience  
18 of the University of Manitoba firstly and to a secondary  
19 degree at the University of Alberta where there have been  
20 a number of initiatives in terms of developing more native  
21 nurses.

22                   And that is not to say that all these  
23 health professionals will end up going back to health

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 communities. We remain in a system where folks make their  
2 individual choices. But the experience has been that a  
3 significant percentage of them do in fact work within  
4 native communities, even if they are not their own  
5 particular communities. That is a step forward. Until  
6 now we have sort of had a model where the universally  
7 recognized health professions -- the docs, the nurses,  
8 the techs -- have largely been non-aboriginals and one  
9 had a parallel very important system of community health  
10 representatives to which Fred alluded earlier. The  
11 interaction between those folks has not always been as  
12 smooth as one might have hoped, and I think there is an  
13 important priority of developing a larger number of  
14 aboriginal health professionals.

15 I think an additional challenge as we  
16 look at this decentralization of health authorities to  
17 truly aboriginal run health boards is the following. It  
18 is reasonably easy to fed bash, and I have indulged in  
19 some of it myself over my years, but the fact of the matter  
20 was that Health and Welfare Canada did represent a major  
21 player in the domain of aboriginal health. And to the  
22 extent that one could move or shift or cajole the priorities  
23 within that institution, one had an effect that was likely

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to spread across the country.

2                               We pushed for that model to change. It  
3 is starting to change. But the challenges that are going  
4 to come to us as a professional organization, a national  
5 professional organization, or to academic faculties of  
6 medicine, is going to be that there is going to be a broad  
7 array of players in the future and one is going to need  
8 to look at ways of developing local partnerships. And  
9 the challenge to folks like us is going to be to serve  
10 as consultants to native health authorities in a way that  
11 helps to enhance the development of true as opposed to  
12 just legal autonomy in these areas over time.

13                           We run the risk of going in one of two  
14 extremes that I think is not the road to go. Again from  
15 our own experience we have erred in both these directions  
16 at times.

17                           On the one hand was to say: Well, these  
18 new health authorities have been established. They've  
19 got the mandate. They've got the bucks. Time for us to  
20 back out and let them run things, and we will be sort of  
21 passive observers. If called upon we will offer some  
22 expertise but it is no longer our place to be as proactive  
23 as we might have once been earlier.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   At the other end is to say business as  
2 usual. We are the experts. We will go in and tell folks  
3 the way things need to be.

4                   Again, we have done both of those. I  
5 have over my career in this domain. Really, what we are  
6 looking for is a middle road that allows us to remember  
7 very clearly who is setting the priorities for health in  
8 these areas in the future but to act as more active partners  
9 in really helping to develop the expertise, the experience,  
10 the competence, the orientation that is required so that  
11 resources will be limited, even if they are under the  
12 responsibility of native health authorities, and will be  
13 wisely spent and used in the most effective way possible.

14                  So I see a challenge for us as  
15 individuals, as a national professional organization, and  
16 since most of us are academically based, out of our  
17 faculties of medicine. I see a challenge as well to the  
18 native health authorities once they have that  
19 responsibility for running their own health services to  
20 have the confidence and assurance that they remain in  
21 control and can call upon those areas of benefit that they  
22 may have from consultants such as ourselves.

23                  I think I will stop there at the moment

StenoTran

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and open it up to picking our brains. Thank you.

2 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Thank you very  
3 much for the comments from all of you. It has been very  
4 informative and very insightful. A number of the points  
5 you have raised and reflected on have been presented to  
6 the Commission in a variety of venues from a number of  
7 different organizations, some of whom we have heard from  
8 earlier today.

9 I think you will find there will be  
10 vigorous discussion and dialogue for the balance of the  
11 morning and I look forward to it. You have obviously put  
12 a great deal of thought into this, but not only that you  
13 have had a considerable amount of experience and I think  
14 we want to tap into that experience. We are looking for  
15 solutions and for recommendations, and we will take you  
16 up on your offer to ask questions.

17 Bertha, would you like to go first?

18 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** As we have  
19 gone across the country and heard the native people speak  
20 about self-government, they have expressed loud and clear  
21 the view that they do not see self-government in terms  
22 of service delivery of administering programs designed  
23 by other people, that it is basic to their aspirations

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to be in control of determining priorities and policies  
2 as well. And that, of course, makes a lot of sense.

3 Since you have experience with these  
4 autonomous health authorities, what change has happened  
5 in that area of policy making as a result of the autonomous  
6 boards? Has there been much? How is it working?

7 **GARY PEKELES:** It has been variable  
8 among the three boards and those reflect the peculiarities  
9 of those boards. Again there is a history there of  
10 anywhere from 10 to 15 years, so each of those boards has  
11 been in different phases through its existence. There  
12 was the initial exhilaration of the prospect of now we  
13 are finally in control, the early years of developing  
14 competence within the bizarre rituals of boards and the  
15 procedures by which boards work. There have been some  
16 changes in that, but largely the boards have functioned  
17 in the conventional way that boards might have earlier.

18 A major difference, of course, in each  
19 of the three of these is that the language in which those  
20 boards operate are the local languages. So that  
21 immediately opens the accessibility. Each of those boards  
22 is composed by community-elected representatives of the  
23 communities served by that region.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   There were then periods of despair for  
2 individual boards, major confrontations with their source  
3 of funding in terms of what was enough, what was too much,  
4 and so forth, that are not unique to native health boards.  
5       There probably is not a health institution within the  
6 country that feels it is adequately funded.

7                   Orientation and policy, where have they  
8 changed? There has been a much greater sensitivity, by  
9 and large, that when health priorities are established,  
10 the kind of approach to dealing with those problems was  
11 going to be very much more locally based and the input  
12 into designing programs around specific issues has changed  
13 dramatically in terms of one makes use of externally  
14 available resources, but one almost builds them from  
15 scratch to be most appropriate within the communities.

16                  If one looked at the list of health  
17 priorities, say, within the Cree Health Board in 1990 as  
18 opposed to 1965 when there really was not a Health Board  
19 as such, the general thrusts probably have not been that  
20 much different. There is the usual lip service paid to  
21 the importance of community health programs but there is  
22 the reality of feeling the need to respond to locally  
23 expressed needs for increase in curative care and that



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 is a dynamic that any health authority has to deal with  
2 across the country.

3 But there have certainly been some areas  
4 that a more conventional health board might nt have seen  
5 as "falling within the health sector" but where communities  
6 said this is a health problem. We don't care where the  
7 solutions come from, which sector this should be. We see  
8 this as a problem. Our people are telling us that we must  
9 do something about it. So there has been more of a  
10 willingness to go beyond conventional boundaries of what  
11 falls to health, what falls to social services, what falls  
12 to education. There has been less pigeon-holing, I would  
13 say, than would occur in other areas.

14 Again, the fair comparison probably to  
15 make is not so much between what exists today and what  
16 existed 25 years ago as opposed to what are the orientations  
17 of this area compared to an area that has not evolved to  
18 an autonomous health board in the interim? I think a  
19 lovely example within northern Quebec that I am sure you  
20 have heard about at times has been the change in orientation  
21 toward child birth, a major departure in terms of the model  
22 of how prenatal and natal care was going to be provided  
23 to make it more locally based to involve in a very real

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 way, and not just a formal way, local nurse/midwives within  
2 a program, to be much more sensitive to the issues from  
3 the perspective of the families and those women of what  
4 was important to them.

5 I think that is a lovely example of where  
6 the issues were very clearly put on the table about what  
7 the trade-offs would be to change from a model where women  
8 were moving out for the last four weeks of their pregnancy  
9 into a place that was remote for them for their deliveries.  
10 They understood very clearly as communities that there  
11 was a downside risk to this. But in balancing the pluses  
12 versus the minuses, I think they made an informed and  
13 appropriate decision about the route they wanted to go.  
14 And I think that has been a stellar success.

15 I think that is the most startling  
16 example.

17 The hospital that developed in the  
18 Hudson Bay after that Kativik Health Board came into  
19 existence has a very different orientation to this day  
20 from the other hospital that is nominally under the aegis  
21 of that board but that was established before that board  
22 came into place. That is a very nice example of two  
23 hospitals that were born at different points of time that

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 have taken very different orientations in terms of their  
2 commitment to community involvement, to their involving  
3 local workers, the importance of the interpreters, the  
4 community health representatives on one coast versus that  
5 on the other. Each has learned from the other's  
6 experience.

7 But in my view the mindset of the  
8 operations of those institutions is completely different,  
9 and I think that has largely to do with the fact that one  
10 was established under the old conventional model. In that  
11 particular case it was not the federal health authority  
12 but a provincial health authority. The second was  
13 established at a later date, once the Kativik Board already  
14 existed.

15 **F. W. BAKER:** I wonder if I might just  
16 add to what Dr. Pেকেles was saying based on what has  
17 happened in the Sioux Lookout Zone or in the Nishnawbe-Aski  
18 Nation which includes the Sioux Lookout Zone plus the  
19 Churchill Zone.

20 The problems there have I guess been made  
21 more evident by the medical model which we have put in  
22 place through the University of Toronto program in that  
23 we have found increased incidence of the complications

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of diabetes. We have found chronic disease problems, et  
2 cetera. But the priorities for the people are more around  
3 the suicides, the violence and the poor parenting.

4 So NAN, the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation,  
5 through its health division has emphasized those factors  
6 rather than the interventive care.

7 The chiefs decided to form an aboriginal  
8 health authority as a follow-up to the Scott McKay Bain  
9 Report which was a commission which was struck as a result  
10 of a sit-in or a hunger strike at the hospital in Sioux  
11 Lookout in 1987 or 1988. One of the recommendations of  
12 that commission was that there be an aboriginal health  
13 authority. That has been established.

14 That group will assume administrative  
15 control of the mental health arm of the University of  
16 Toronto program next April. They will control the money  
17 which, as Gary said, is very important. But they will  
18 also set the priorities for where that program is going  
19 to go. That has caused a lot of anxiety for the people  
20 who are working for the program. It has been in existence  
21 for about 20 years. It is probably the only native run  
22 mental health program in the country.

23 There is one on Manitoulin Island but

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I don't think it has the same number of native mental health  
2 workers as the one in Sioux Lookout does. But they will  
3 take over running that themselves.

4 This is in an area where there has not  
5 yet been transfer so there are moves in those areas as  
6 well. My hope is that over the next four years I will  
7 be able to have a native assistant who will take over what  
8 I am doing with that program also; in other words, the  
9 total control of that program will be under aboriginal  
10 peoples rather than the University of Toronto, with the  
11 university continuing to act in a consultant capacity.

12 We are prepared to continue running it  
13 until the people feel satisfied that they can do it  
14 themselves.

15 The Province of Ontario has brought in  
16 a law around midwives and the same thing that Gary was  
17 talking about in northern Quebec is probably going to  
18 happen in northern Ontario. The women do not appreciate  
19 coming out at 34 weeks to sit in Sioux Lookout where they  
20 do not have any family support until they finally deliver  
21 their baby. I certainly would agree with that.

22 The problem that we have run across in  
23 the communities is that the women who had been trained

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 as midwives, the native women who had been trained as  
2 midwives, have not delivered babies for a long time. So  
3 they need to get confidence back in doing something as  
4 well.

5 The system that we would hope to see in  
6 the Sioux Lookout Zone is not nurse/midwives but rather  
7 native midwives who would do the deliveries with support  
8 again from the nursing stations and from the health care  
9 system.

10 Thank you.

11 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** That is  
12 very interesting. I was in Sioux Lookout and one of the  
13 interesting things was we had a session with a women who  
14 must have been well over 80, a woman who had delivered  
15 a huge number of babies, and there were one or two young  
16 mothers. She had delivered the mothers and she had  
17 delivered their babies.

18 One of the interesting things that I  
19 learned from that meeting -- and this really had not got  
20 through to me before -- was the cultural aspects of giving  
21 birth. These young women explained to me that a birth  
22 right in the community was an extremely important event  
23 because of the aboriginal concept of the extended family.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1     So a baby born right in the community had tremendous  
2     significance, far greater significance than a baby born  
3     in a non-native community would have. They were trying  
4     to explain to me how different it was when somebody went  
5     away and then came back into the community with a baby.

6                     I had not appreciated that aspect of  
7     giving birth in a native community, the significance of  
8     it and the way that it bound the community together. This  
9     was an event because everybody was related to this baby,  
10    in effect.

11                    That was something I learned from  
12    meeting with these women.

13                    But another thing I had not thought about  
14    was the relationship between taking the pregnant woman  
15    away south to have her baby and family breakdown. Some  
16    of these young women who talked to me said that,  
17    particularly if there was an alcohol or drug problem in  
18    the family with the father, how the woman could come back  
19    from the south with her baby and find that in effect she  
20    had been replaced or that some terrible disruption had  
21    happened in the family while she was away. That was  
22    another aspect of taking the mother out of the community  
23    that had not occurred to me at all until I heard all these

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 families, being told about all these families where these  
2 terrible things had happened while the expectant mother  
3 was absent.

4                   One thing I wanted to ask you about was  
5 child abuse in the communities. Are you required now --  
6 I don't know whether the law is different in Ontario from  
7 Quebec or the other provinces -- to report incidents of  
8 child abuse when you become aware of them? Is there an  
9 obligation?

10                   **VICTOR MARCHESSAULT:** Yes. All  
11 provinces now have legislation that anybody aware of a  
12 child being abused has to report it, and there is protection  
13 for the person who does that.

14                   **GARY PEKELES:** Again in the three  
15 jurisdictions that we work with, the youth protection  
16 responsibility is with a locally based native run youth  
17 protection authority. The dynamics of the approach to  
18 the problem has shifted dramatically. Where previously  
19 you would have folks with kids who might have been  
20 identified at risk, often related to a visit to a referring  
21 hospital and what not, and then well meaning remote social  
22 workers would decide what the appropriate solution to that  
23 problem was, you very much now have a problem maybe



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 identified within a community or from outside the community  
2 that -- in French it is a "signalement", the identification  
3 of the kid at risk.

4 But it then becomes the responsibility  
5 of that local youth protection agency and individual to  
6 deal with that problem and work out a solution. So the  
7 dynamics are very different from what they used to be.

8 That is not to say that all problems have  
9 been solved because particularly within the context of  
10 a small community the difficulties of working out a  
11 solution that has that child's best interests at heart,  
12 respects the integrity of the family, and deals with the  
13 very locally felt pressures around the issue are a  
14 tremendous challenge. A lot of media attention has been  
15 focused on that and often in the slant, particularly in  
16 experiences of Quebec, of local native youth protection  
17 agencies pulling their punches and not advocating as firmly  
18 as they might on behalf of individual kids. At times that  
19 criticism has been well based.

20 The fact of the matter is, though, that  
21 those dynamics are not any different than they would be  
22 in another non-native small community. These are very  
23 difficult issues to deal with. Again, this system is in

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 its early years yet. As a paediatrician there is no  
2 question that my bias is in favour of the protection of  
3 the child at all costs, and there is no question but that  
4 at times decisions have been taken by local youth  
5 protection agencies that are not the decisions I would  
6 have taken. I have my input. Our southern based social  
7 workers who are now employed by those social service  
8 agencies on their behalf have their input as well. But  
9 finally it is the call of those local authorities.

10 I think that is an important step  
11 forward.

12 But again, as I was saying earlier, that  
13 is not the end of the problem. There still are challenges  
14 that face those youth protection agencies. There is no  
15 question about it.

16 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Thank you.

17 **F. W. BAKER:** You may have heard when  
18 you were in Sioux Lookout, Mrs. Wilson, that there is a  
19 native Children's Aid Society based there called Tikanogin  
20 and they run across the problems that Gary was talking  
21 about.

22 The other problem that we have in many  
23 of the small communities, we had one community where 17

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 young boys revealed to somebody that they had been sexually  
2 abused. When I went in to examine the children and to  
3 meet with the chief and council, one of the young  
4 counsellors at one point asked how long it would be before  
5 there would be some help for this problem. I said I  
6 understood that they had had a problem with alcohol in  
7 the community and that they were getting that under  
8 control, and they said yes they were, and I said: "What  
9 percentage is under control?" And they said about 85 per  
10 cent. And I said: " You have been doing that for five  
11 years now?" And they said: "Yes." I said: "This is a  
12 much more pervasive problem and probably it will take  
13 longer."

14 Then the same young counsellor said:  
15 "You realize, of course, that everybody in this community  
16 has been abused." I said I didn't know that. I said:  
17 "Do you mean every man, woman and child?" And he said:  
18 "Yes."

19 So the dysfunction in the communities  
20 is something that will have to be looked to as well.

21 I had never heard a statement like that  
22 before and I certainly had never received any training  
23 in my educational system to handle a problem like that.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1     So there has to be interaction between various groups  
2     if we are going to have any impact on these sorts of  
3     problems.

4                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:**   We have  
5     heard that in spades. It is obviously a major problem.  
6     This is why I wondered about how the different approach  
7     of native culture to problems like that, the concept of  
8     healing and reconciliation between the offender and the  
9     victim and the different concept of how to deal with those  
10    things, how that impacted on your relationship with the  
11    people in the community, particularly if you had an  
12    obligation to report abuse.

13                   I have often wondered about that. Did  
14    that do anything to the nature of the relationship that  
15    doctors have and need to have with people in the community?

16                   **F. W. BAKER:**   I don't think it has had  
17    any more of an effect on the relationship that I have had  
18    with the people in the small remote communities than it  
19    has had with the families in Toronto. In another life  
20    I was the Medical Director for the Metro Children's Aid  
21    Society in Toronto, which is a huge conglomerate. The  
22    law in some ways was a help because you had to say to people:  
23    These findings would suggest that there may be other

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 avenues that should be investigated and by law I think  
2 that somebody has been abusing this child. I am not sure  
3 who it is but I think it has to be checked and investigated,  
4 and by law I must report this to the Children's Aid Society  
5 or to a law enforcement officer. And they will be around  
6 to check things out.

7 As Gary said, our job as physicians,  
8 particularly as paediatricians, is to protect the child.  
9 That is the same thing that happens in the communities.

10 The system within which you have to work,  
11 I guess physicians have to learn to be a little more  
12 adaptable too. We come across as fairly rigid at most  
13 times, I think, but some of us have learned that if you  
14 don't adapt you disappear. So you have to learn how to  
15 adapt within that system.

16 Sometimes the approach that the  
17 organization in the community has would not be exactly  
18 how I would approach it. But so long as I can still feel  
19 secure in my own area of expertise that there is not any  
20 ongoing problem for the child, then I am quite happy to  
21 go along with whatever they have decided might work.

22 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Thank you.

23 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Mary?

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I want to  
2 share with you some of the images that crossed my mind  
3 while this discussion was going on.

4                   In northern Labrador now for many, many  
5 years women have had no choice but to go to usually Goose  
6 Bay to have their babies. Some women are lucky enough  
7 that they give birth before they get to Goose Bay or  
8 sometimes there have been cases reported where children  
9 have been born on the planes, on the Twin Otters, in  
10 different places. Nevertheless, that has been a way of  
11 life in my part of the country for a long time.

12                  I think when the baby is born, the baby  
13 is born well, someone phones home and even though you are  
14 not home everyone is celebrating a life. And then when  
15 you come back home there is another sort of homecoming.

16       I think that is another story. I think people recognize  
17 that that is the way it is; that you have to go to the  
18 hospital. But they still find a way of celebrating.

19                  I saw images, for example, I know of  
20 cases in northern Labrador where children for medical  
21 reasons or whatever have had to stay away from their  
22 mothers, stay away from their community for a long time.

23       I know one boy who had to stay in hospital until he was

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 maybe three years old. He was a lucky boy. He was an  
2 Innu child from what they call across the river and his  
3 parents just lived across the river. Every once and a  
4 while his mother would come and visit him. But there was  
5 a point when she could not talk to him because she could  
6 only speak Inuamun and the boy had been raised in the  
7 hospital, and he didn't hardly know who she was.

8 I always remember the shyness. She was  
9 very, very shy. She would come in and look at him. I  
10 guess the result was that it was very difficult to bond  
11 in those two situations. With Semuni, the Innu boy,  
12 eventually he was adopted into another Innu family because  
13 he had to live in a certain kind of home and the mother  
14 could not provide for that.

15 With the other child, the mother often  
16 said that she never felt that was her daughter because  
17 she was away for so long and when she came back she could  
18 not relate to her. The child was not abused but neglected.  
19 The child slept anywhere and everywhere.

20 I have always felt that -- and as an Innuk  
21 I can say this -- in our families, our communities, our  
22 families choose favourite children and they choose  
23 children who are not favourite. Depending on how you are

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 treated, you are either neglected or spoiled rotten. I  
2 think that has to change in our own communities.

3 It is up to people like me and other  
4 native people to challenge the way we treat our own children  
5 because I don't think anyone else can very legitimately.

6 Having said that, I know that in talking  
7 to Joyce Ford who is from Ikobik, Labrador, she has always  
8 told me that she was always spoiled rotten. And she said  
9 the reason I was spoiled is because I had a heart problem  
10 when I was a child. So my sisters did not get the same  
11 kind of treatment. I said: "Well, your story is like  
12 almost every other story in northern Labrador." There  
13 are favourite children and then there are children who  
14 are not loved.

15 My question actually is this: We have  
16 heard much of what the possibilities are in the event of  
17 self-government. When I think of self-government in the  
18 Inuit way, it is James Bay. In Nunavik, it is northern  
19 Quebec. It has had sort of a modern day treaty since the  
20 mid-1970s and from other Inuit looking at northern Quebec  
21 experience we always say they have more money. they have  
22 more leaders. Their leaders, for example, are very  
23 strong. Their leaders are recognized not only nationally



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 but internationally. As you said, there is a model in  
2 Nunavik, the Inulasavik, which is Bevonituk. It is an  
3 institution. They have many institutions which meet the  
4 needs of their own people.

5 But nevertheless I always ask myself:  
6 Northern Quebec is supposed to be so advanced by I can't  
7 really tell you if there are any doctors. I don't know  
8 if there are any doctors from that region. I don't even  
9 know if there are many nurses.

10 Is their situation, for example, the  
11 same as Iqaluit. When we went to visit the hospital in  
12 Iqaluit I remember our fellow commissioner Mr. Blakeney  
13 saying to me: "One thing that I can't get over is you  
14 walk into this institution and one thing that really hits  
15 you is all the senior people are non-aboriginal. The  
16 maids, the nurses assistants, the receptionists or the  
17 janitor, they are all Inuit."

18 It hits you wherever you go in the north.

19 If they don't have doctors, for example,  
20 with the advent of self-government in northern Quebec,  
21 why not? If there are not any nurses running the nursing  
22 stations, then why are there not? The Inulasavuk model  
23 I know does have a midwife. She is a Haldinak and she

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 works with the other Inuit. But she is really the senior  
2 person. This is an advanced territory.

3 Perhaps you would like to comment on  
4 that.

5 **GARY PEKELES:** You are alluding to the  
6 same problem that I have felt as well as we look at the  
7 change, what has changed and what has not changed.

8 As a first start, there probably is some  
9 difference between what has occurred in northern Quebec  
10 and in the Baffin area. Although on paper they have the  
11 same degree of autonomy, the fact of the matter is that  
12 the CEO of that health board in northern Quebec, the CEO  
13 of each of the two hospitals is an Innuk woman, and that  
14 is different from what exists in Baffin. There is some  
15 middle administration that is Inuit to a greater degree.

16 But the feel of the place is not significantly different  
17 as you walk into the ward of the hospital from what you  
18 experienced in Baffin. There are no Inuit physicians in  
19 northern Quebec. There was a program for nurse's  
20 assistants. There was a graduating class of some years  
21 ago of which perhaps two are still functioning in that  
22 area.

23 Why, you ask? This is a small

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 population of about 6,000 people altogether. As you know,  
2 historically there were not a large number who completed  
3 secondary education although proportionately among Inuit  
4 certainly northern Quebec has had more than its share.  
5 There are some questions about why that is, why did the  
6 community of Inujuak produce more women leaders within  
7 the Inuit community across the country than any other?  
8 It is striking. Why is that? I am not sure.

9                   But if you looked at the priorities from  
10 the standpoint of those communities, that you have a  
11 limited number of folks who have completed secondary  
12 education, where would your priorities be for them? I  
13 think on the political level I think that schools would  
14 probably have a priority over medical services, and that  
15 is reflected. You go into the Kativik schools and there  
16 are many more teachers who are Inuit as opposed to having  
17 no nurses. I think that was an appropriate priority in  
18 terms of where it was most important to have local people.  
19 The schools would take priority over medical services.  
20 Social services would take priority over health services.  
21 And you might argue that within the health sector itself  
22 the first priority was to have health administrators and  
23 policy makers who were Inuit and then work at the health

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 professions after that. I think you see that reflected  
2 in where people are working.

3                   There is the other very real issue that  
4 particularly within the health professions a greater  
5 degree of scientific competence was required in terms of  
6 base education. Historically, it has been true that  
7 within the schools in that region the science curriculum  
8 has been relatively weaker than other parts of the  
9 curriculum. So you were turning out more folks who if  
10 they were likely to turn to professions were more likely  
11 to become lawyers than they were to become doctors, because  
12 that is where their strengths were.

13                   I think it is that kind of issue that  
14 is being addressed by a program like that at the University  
15 of Manitoba. It has taken secondary school students and  
16 not waited until an application into medical school or  
17 nursing school but worked with them in pre-med,  
18 pre-nursing, pre-dental programs to give particular  
19 reinforcement in the areas where one knows they were weak  
20 because of their educational experience; more importantly,  
21 to give them the social support that was required for them  
22 going out, albeit it is at a later age than the residential  
23 schools that we have heard about at length. But still

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 it is a challenge for an 18-year old to move out of a small  
2 community in the Keewatin or northern Manitoba into  
3 Winnipeg for his pre-health profession university  
4 education before he goes on there.

5                   That has been a program that has not been  
6 characterized by designating particular slots for native  
7 applicants but has seen as its thrust to build up the skills  
8 so that folks can apply with equal likelihood of being  
9 accepted into some of those programs. But it is a slow  
10 process.

11                   I still think in retrospect that the  
12 priorities were right; that it was more important to have  
13 Inuit school teachers than it was to have Inuit nurses;  
14 that it was probably more important to have directors of  
15 hospitals who were Inuit than to have docs who were Inuit.  
16 That is the next phase.

17                   It has gone much more slowly than I would  
18 have predicted or hoped for 20 years ago. I am hopeful  
19 it will evolve. But it is still a major problem, no  
20 question.

21                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I am glad  
22 to hear you respond that way because I don't think we have  
23 ever got such a thorough answer to that particular

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 question. I also always felt there was more to it than  
2 just not having sciences in the north.

3                   In terms of post-secondary education,  
4 what we have heard is that of all the Inuit regions Labrador  
5 is probably the place where most students have gone to  
6 university. We often hear LIA complain, saying we don't  
7 have enough money to pay for all the university students  
8 who want to go to university. And yet Labrador is the  
9 poorest, is clearly the poorest of all the regions.

10                   I have always wondered in my own head  
11 -- for example, northern Quebec with all the money does  
12 not have as many university students but has more leaders.

13                   I think too there is a generation in  
14 northern Quebec that skipped school. They went right from  
15 being -- they are probably bright kids and because they  
16 could speak both languages went right into the political  
17 arena. It started in the 1970s. So you skipped that  
18 school.

19                   I would also like to make a comment about  
20 women leadership. I think one of the things we have always  
21 been told in Labrador, and women have always talked about  
22 this privately, is that it seems that if you look at all  
23 of the organizations most of the jobs are held by

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 women -- not necessarily the big jobs, but there are a  
2 lot more women who are making money than their husbands.  
3 And in some communities that sometimes creates  
4 resentment. Some people have said that is one of the  
5 reasons for family violence in our communities.

6 Inuit men are supposed to be working and  
7 taking care of the family, and the roles are changing and  
8 they may feel a bit threatened. They are not accustomed  
9 to it and this feeling of helplessness, hopelessness, et  
10 cetera, is turned outwards.

11 I have another question. In terms of  
12 the health of native children in the James Bay area, and  
13 in terms of the children in the Baffin Region, is there  
14 a difference in the health status?

15 **GARY PEKELES:** In the main, probably  
16 not. Each of these are small populations so one needs  
17 to be careful about numbers and rates that look  
18 impressively different at one point or another. If you  
19 look at one period of five years, it seems like the suicide  
20 rate in Hudson Bay was much greater than in Baffin. But  
21 if looked at over a larger period of time they are both  
22 appallingly high. I am not convinced that there are  
23 significant differences.

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1                   I think you have to compare Inuit to  
2 Inuit in terms of looking at Hudson Bay versus Baffin.  
3 There are some differences between the Inuit of northern  
4 Quebec and the Cree of James Bay, for a variety of reasons  
5 in some health markers. But in terms of the big numbers,  
6 infant mortality rates, life expectancies, rates of  
7 infectious diseases, the biggest differences have been  
8 in rates of respiratory infections. That remains  
9 significantly higher among all the Inuit versus the Cree.

10                  Between the Inuit of northern Quebec and  
11 those of Baffin, our numbers do not suggest that there  
12 is a significant difference. So in terms of health markers  
13 at the end of the day, we don't see much difference. Again,  
14 populations are small. Differences would have to be huge  
15 for us to be convinced that there were significant  
16 differences over a longer haul.

17                   **F. W. BAKER:** I would like to add a  
18 couple of comments.

19                  Around the education system at the  
20 University of Toronto what we do is have secondary school  
21 students come down and spend a week in Toronto and if they  
22 are interested in the health field look at what happens,  
23 what occurs, in the training centres at the school, at



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the university, and also at the hospitals. I think that  
2 has either convinced some of them that they certainly don't  
3 want to get into that field or maybe convinced some of  
4 them that that is what they do want to do.

5                   We have the Aboriginal Health  
6 Professions Program which Diane Longboat runs at the  
7 University of Toronto, and that is purely a tutoring system  
8 looking at the skills which the student has and then  
9 specifically tutoring that person to get back up to a level  
10 where they can compete for positions.

11                   The University of Toronto presently has  
12 two native physicians, one in first year and one in second  
13 year. But an anonymous survey which was done, which Dr.  
14 Rossi did last year, suggested that there are five others  
15 in the school who identified themselves as native but have  
16 never been identified as such by the school itself. I  
17 think that reflects the fact that these people are  
18 struggling to survive in the megalopolis of Toronto and  
19 they really don't need something else added on top of all  
20 the other problems that they have.

21                   Certainly the point that was made about  
22 a young person coming down to schooling is valid in Sioux  
23 Lookout. Some of the communities in northwestern Ontario

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 do not have secondary school, but they can come to Sioux  
2 Lookout for their high school. Sioux Lookout is a  
3 community of -- it says 3,500 on the sign but it is probably  
4 closer to 4,500. And for many of these young people that  
5 is the biggest place they have been.

6                   The dropout rate in 1992 amongst native  
7 students who came to Sioux Lookout to do secondary school  
8 was 92 per cent, and they ended up going back into the  
9 communities again where the unemployment rate is somewhere  
10 between 45 and 85 per cent depending on which community  
11 you go to. So the education system does not provide them  
12 with anything that they can survive on when they get back  
13 home.

14                   The figures for suicides, although again  
15 I support what Gary is saying that statistically it is  
16 not important. In the Sioux Lookout Zone we have always  
17 had one to five per year of suicides in the time that we  
18 have been looking at this since the mid-1960s, but this  
19 year, to date, we have had 26 suicides. And the most  
20 disturbing part of this to me is that it is a 50/50 ratio  
21 between young women and young men. The youngest suicides  
22 we have had up there have been 12-year old boys. Some  
23 of them have been young adults. Some of them have had

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 families. Some of them have markers, when you go back  
2 and review the cases, that would suggest that somebody  
3 should have picked up that this might happen. But some  
4 of them don't have any markers at all. So it is a very  
5 complex problem.

6 Again NAN is looking at some ways of  
7 trying to get a handle on this and trying to help with  
8 this in a much more constructive way.

9 Thank you.

10 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I think on  
11 the issue of suicide, we have heard the statistics, as  
12 Mrs. Wilson would say, in spades. That is her term. I  
13 have heard that and I think it is really tragic.

14 What I heard the other night when we were  
15 at the university forum was the saddest thing I ever heard.  
16 Someone said that they heard -- she is here obviously  
17 away from her reserve, but she heard of a suicide and she  
18 said it was no big thing. That happens all the time.  
19 It happens so often that people are feeling that way.  
20 That tells us there is a real crisis out there.

21 Two more questions, although I could go  
22 on all day. Children are very important and we have to  
23 talk about these issues. I am a mother.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   We heard the other day from the Native  
2 Association for Native People with Disabilities that they  
3 predicted that 40 per cent of all native people will have  
4 hearing disabilities.

5                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Forty per cent  
6 of the youths.

7                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Forty per  
8 cent of the youth will have hearing disabilities. I knew  
9 that you were coming today so I want to ask you why. Why  
10 is that prediction?

11                  **GARY PEKELES:** We can get back to the  
12 specific statistics in a second, but it has certainly been  
13 well documented that in Inuit communities in particular,  
14 and to a lesser degree but still true within Indian  
15 communities, there have been high rates of conductive  
16 hearing loss that traditionally have largely been related  
17 to problems of chronic ear infections.

18                  That is a lovely example to go back to  
19 your first question about a difference of approach to that  
20 problem. It is not that the priority was different but  
21 how it was approached within northern Quebec as opposed  
22 to Baffin in its earlier days before it was a locally run  
23 health board in terms of involving local women within

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 communities in terms of monitoring, screening, being  
2 trained in the south but not having just the travelling  
3 consultants come up, but really have a locally based  
4 resource in that area.

5                   The data from Baffin which has a long  
6 experience but which was run on a more traditional model  
7 have shown impressively encouraging results in terms of  
8 the rates of hearing loss for early school age children  
9 that existed in the Baffin Region 20 years ago versus now.

10                   I would disagree with that number of 40  
11 per cent in the long haul when we look at the current cohort,  
12 at least in some populations, that it will be far less  
13 than that. It is an example for me of a problem that if  
14 asked 20 years ago I would have said this is going to be  
15 with us forever until we have perfect housing and have  
16 eliminated poverty within the Baffin Region.

17                   But it is a demonstration where a  
18 targeted selective medical intervention, to be sure with  
19 improvements in living conditions over that period of time,  
20 has made a big difference in that rate of hearing loss.

21 It is hard to the extent that those kind of interventions  
22 are adapted elsewhere -- and I know that they have been  
23 in many areas. I think in the long run that 40 per cent

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 figure is going to be way too high, which is great news.

2                   When we do prevalent studies in the adult  
3 population, again reflecting standards of care from 20  
4 years ago, even in the worst areas we don't see anything  
5 near that number for persistent hearing problems. And  
6 again for many of the kids, they grow out of their hearing  
7 problems. The difficulty is that they have them at the  
8 time when they are most critical, when they are acquiring  
9 language skills. So it is not enough to say that they  
10 will grow out of it. It is not acceptable for them to  
11 have those hearing losses between the age of 2 and 8 years,  
12 because those are critical years for developing the  
13 language skills that will allow them to benefit from  
14 schools.

15                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I guess  
16 that leapt out at me yesterday because I have been home  
17 so many times. There are kids around all the time and  
18 sometimes you call a child's name and they don't hear you.  
19 So you yell and they still don't hear you. And when  
20 they speak to you it is like you wonder is it because -- I  
21 often wonder sometimes why are my nephews and nieces  
22 talking to me like this? Why can't they speak like my  
23 children? These are my nieces and nephews most of them.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I always though Maria, my sister in law, should learn  
2 how to take care of her children.

3 For example, when they get antibiotics  
4 from the hospital, after the first or second day they just  
5 throw them away. They leave their babies in the cribs  
6 and they have bottles and sometimes the milk gets behind  
7 their ears. I don't know the reasons for chronic ear  
8 infections are but I suspect those are some of them, based  
9 on what I have learned.

10 **VICTOR MARCHESSAULT:** I think this is  
11 one of the basis of the Canadian Paediatric Society, just  
12 as an example, is the prevention instead of trying to cure;  
13 education in how to prevent ear infections. There is lots  
14 of association with breast feeding, smoking, which are  
15 things that will influence the outcome.

16 I think if there is a message that the  
17 Canadian Paediatric Society can leave with you, it is that  
18 the emphasis that we propose is to make it on prevention;  
19 make sure that all the children are immunized; make sure  
20 that the children are fed properly and breast fed,  
21 principally because this can make it a lot easier in the  
22 long run. Proper nutrition will also make them more  
23 resistant to infections that children have when they grow

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 up.

2 I think once you have identified a child  
3 with an ear infection, we think there is genetic problem  
4 and this is why you have more of it also, but I think there  
5 are ways now to prevent the recurrence of it or to make  
6 sure that the hearing loss is not permanent and is treated  
7 adequately.

8 I think educating the people, saying  
9 that you don't live with an ear infection, you just have  
10 to wait until it goes away because it won't go away. You  
11 have to make sure it is treated properly.

12 **F. W. BAKER:** Natural history of ear  
13 infections, of course, is something that Vic was alluding  
14 to and that was studied through the Mayo Clinic a few years  
15 ago in a nice report that showed that conductive hearing  
16 loss after ear infection takes months to completely  
17 disappear. But we are not talking about that. We are  
18 talking about the chronic problems. These vary from group  
19 to group across the north.

20 The vaccinations help with some of the  
21 infections and they should certainly be followed.  
22 Propping bottles is asking for trouble because the milk  
23 pools in the back of the baby's throat when he or she falls



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 asleep and that is where the opening of the eustachian  
2 tube is, which is the tube which leads from the middle  
3 ear down into the throat and balances pressure on both  
4 sides of the eardrum. If the eustachian tube is open,  
5 the milk can seep up there and then it is a nice culture  
6 medium for bacteria to grow in the ear.

7 We suggest that propping does not do much  
8 for bonding either, but it also primarily causes some  
9 serious problems.

10 Thank you.

11 **GARY PEKELES:** One last point on that.  
12 What we have seen in Baffin is not so much a decrease in  
13 the incidence of acute ear infections. Breast feeding  
14 has been traditionally high in that area, at least for  
15 the last 25 years. So that has not been much of a change.  
16 The risk factors of smoking and late bottle feeding after  
17 breast feeding are still risk factors. So we have not  
18 dealt with the primary prevention issue of reducing the  
19 rates there but by relatively simple interventions have  
20 managed to reduce impressively the sequelae of those  
21 infections.

22 So we are probably seeing just as many  
23 acute episodes of otitis media but we are seeing far less

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 chronic draining ears, chronic ear problems that relate  
2 to the persistent loss of hearing over time.

3 We have dealt with the second best level  
4 of approach to that, but we still have a ways to go on  
5 the primary prevention in that area.

6 **F. W. BAKER:** Just to show you the  
7 differences in incidents, I was in Alaska last week and  
8 one of the ear, nose and throat people in Anchorage was  
9 telling me that he and his group go out and do clinics  
10 in the outlying communities. They see 1,000 children  
11 every two weeks and 150 of them require surgery, some of  
12 them for rotation of flaps for chronic otitis media, some  
13 of them for just opening the drum to let the pressure off  
14 and allowing things to heal.

15 We certainly don't deal with that sort  
16 of incidence in northwestern Ontario and I don't know  
17 whether you do, Gary, up in northern Quebec or not.

18 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** We have gone  
19 well beyond our time and that does not surprise me somehow  
20 when I consider the great insights you have brought to  
21 our deliberations.

22 I do have a few questions myself. I am  
23 not sure I will get into them all.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   When I read the presentation, it took  
2 me a minute to realize that it was written a number of  
3 years ago. I read the recommendations and I thought you  
4 might change a few words around but they could be written  
5 today. It made me realize that there is a question of  
6 follow-up implementation, and I was wondering if you had  
7 any advice or thoughts to give to the Commission not only  
8 in the area of health, which is I know your specialty but  
9 in other areas.

10                  One of the points that has been brought  
11 home to us frequently is the level of frustration felt  
12 by the aboriginal people. We have gone through a number  
13 of these policy areas, including health, and we get big  
14 binders. And one of the sections in the binders is  
15 entitled Other Studies and Commissions, and things like  
16 that. We go through them and each one lays out all the  
17 different recommendations.

18                  When I look at all the areas that we have  
19 been mandated to examine and add up all the  
20 recommendations, they run well into the thousands. I  
21 don't want to know how many beyond the thousands there  
22 are, but I suspect if they were all added up it would be  
23 a staggering number of recommendations.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   The other thing that comes across is  
2 while many have been made, some have been acted on but  
3 many have not been. When I look at your paper I realize  
4 it was presented to government in 1969-70. That is a long  
5 time ago and of course there are very different economic  
6 circumstances then than now.

7                   So if you have any thoughts or  
8 suggestions with respect to implementation and follow-up  
9 which the Commission can take into consideration, I would  
10 certainly be grateful for your comments.

11                   **VICTOR MARCHESSAULT:** I think the  
12 format that exists now through the Committee of the  
13 Society, in collaboration with the aboriginal people, has  
14 made more progress in the past two years than we have done  
15 since 1969-70.

16                   What happens there is the agenda is not  
17 made by us but is made by people who say: This year, we  
18 have a major problem with suicide, we have a major problem  
19 with diabetes. How can we deal with the problem? Instead  
20 of saying here is what we think you should do and here  
21 is how maybe we could help you solve the problem by this  
22 and this and that, we prepare guidelines, papers for their  
23 help. Oral solution has been one way for people to treat

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 it in their own home instead of having to go to the hospital  
2 to get intravenous therapy.

3 I think by encouraging the individual  
4 responsible, people who have the financial support --  
5 because we are not a rich society -- encouraging these  
6 contacts where with our expertise we can provide different  
7 types of solutions that they can adapt to their situations,  
8 I think this dialogue between the needs of the people and  
9 us not being there as we know it all, we know how to do  
10 it, we are just trying to find the solution with them.  
11 How can we best solve the problem.

12 Injury prevention is a major problem.  
13 We know all terrain vehicles are dangerous but this is  
14 all the teenagers travel with in this area because of the  
15 distances. So we have to find a way. If you cannot ban  
16 the all terrain vehicle, at least teach them how to drive  
17 them safely.

18 **F. W. BAKER:** I support what Vic is  
19 saying. I think that the recommendations that came out  
20 in 1969 and 1970 there were probably too many for the people  
21 to get a handle on. Nobody sat down and prioritized them.  
22 They all had the same weight. Subsequently, some of the  
23 problems that have come up have been prioritized either by

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   aboriginal groups or by medical services branch of Health  
2   and Welfare, which is now National Health, as we know.  
3   They have asked the Committee to look at specific problems.  
4   Those are things we can work on, get consensus for  
5   treatment protocol, for example, or investigative  
6   protocol and this becomes policy for Medical Services  
7   Branch for all of their nursing stations.

8                   I think in a similar way, if the  
9   aboriginal groups were to look at the recommendations that  
10  come out of something like the Royal Commission and decide  
11  which ones are important for them, then they can go to  
12  groups such as ours or university based groups and say:  
13  "Can you give us help with this?" And I would hope that  
14  the groups would be honest enough to say: "No, we can't  
15  but here is where you can go and get help." Or they would  
16  say: "Yes, we can."

17                   I think this might move things along a  
18  little more rapidly.

19                   Certainly as Victor said, there have  
20  been changes in the last few years and a lot of the problems  
21  associated with poverty, lack of running water, lack of  
22  sewage, garbage disposal, et cetera, these are being looked  
23  to now in the north. But it is going to be another decade

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 before we see any changes in the health status based on  
2 those changes in the communities.

3                   The problems, as far as things like  
4 suicide are concerned, even if I were to find some program  
5 which I thought might work, I will be long dead by the  
6 time we can see the changes because it is going to take  
7 basic change in the philosophy of the communities  
8 themselves and the people themselves in order to change  
9 some of the things that we see; the abuse, for example,  
10 of whatever variety you want to think about; the  
11 dysfunction in the communities. These are things that  
12 will take one or two generations to really see changes  
13 in.

14                   That does not mean I am not going to try  
15 and get something in place, but it is going to take a long  
16 time.

17                   So there has to be prioritization,  
18 otherwise it just becomes overwhelming and then you sit  
19 back and think: What is the sense? As Commissioner  
20 Wilson said, you have had it in spades and it is pointed  
21 out to us in spades all the time what the problems are.

22       And when the problem is severe in the community, the  
23 community wants a solution yesterday, not today, and they

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 are not even about to consider tomorrow. So there has  
2 to be some way of putting the sense of power and control  
3 back in the hands of the people who have the problems and  
4 then showing them where they can go and get some help.

5 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Thank you.

6 **GARY PEKELES:** Are you asking us  
7 specifically within the health sector or more broadly?

8 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** I suppose it is  
9 really both. It strikes me, for example, in listening  
10 to your own presentation -- I teach political science and  
11 I certainly would love to have you in my class to talk  
12 about the politics of local boards. Clearly what you are  
13 talking about goes far beyond health care. Your  
14 description and analysis of priorities in the community:  
15 if you have on dollar, do you spend it on teacher education  
16 or on health education? You only have that one dollar.  
17 That type of thinking I think has been very helpful, so  
18 if you have any thoughts on the health area.

19 But my sense is that the issues of  
20 implementation are not well, we will get one set of  
21 reactions to the health, another set to education and  
22 another set to the justice system. The report will come  
23 out as a package. So if you have any thoughts on it, I



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 would certainly like to hear them. And if you can't do  
2 it now, any further discussion we can have between the  
3 Society and the Commission would be helpful, because I  
4 think you are right about priorities. If you have a  
5 thousand recommendations, people get overwhelmed.

6 **GARY PEKELES:** Let me have a first stab  
7 at it anyway, and again I have a health bias. That is  
8 where I am rooted. But I think there are some  
9 generalizations that one can take from that particular  
10 experience.

11 I would perhaps make some general  
12 observations about process and structure down the line  
13 as opposed to specific areas.

14 One of the concerns that I have had is  
15 with the preoccupation with jurisdictional and  
16 constitutional issues if you will, that so much energy  
17 has been put into those areas that at times it gets in  
18 the way of dealing with specific issues at hand. If I  
19 can say so -- and it is not because of the particular  
20 audience I have here -- my own experience has been of the  
21 various national native organizations that have some  
22 interest in health with which I have dealt over the years,  
23 I really feel that Pauktuutit, the Inuit Women's

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Organization, has been the most successful at saying yes,  
2 these jurisdictional issues are very important. There  
3 is another forum in which they are being dealt with. Let  
4 us focus on what we see as priorities at hand. And in  
5 terms of some of the most difficult ones, they have been  
6 not shy of becoming involved with the very difficult issues  
7 of family violence, for example, to say it is on us to  
8 look at developing an approach.

9 I think clearly that process of evolving  
10 toward self-government is going to go on. But I am often  
11 worried at times -- and we have seen examples of that in  
12 northern Quebec -- where the jurisdictional issues got  
13 in the way so that the structures meant to provide service  
14 just ceased to function. And that was just a tragedy.  
15 Perhaps it was inevitable that that was going to happen.  
16 But it did happen at times and that is something that  
17 needs to be avoided at all costs.

18 And somehow the process which one sets  
19 up for this evolution has to allow these things to be going  
20 on simultaneously but to try and not let the one get in  
21 the way of the other in the short term.

22 In the long term, my own personal belief  
23 is that the evolution of that first is going to have a

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   beneficial effect on the other. But in the short term  
2   it can be deleterious.

3                   I also think that one needs to look at  
4   issues of scale and scope. I think we can go too far in  
5   decentralization, that we get down to units of provision  
6   of service or communities that are so small that to say  
7   "here are the bucks, you take care of your problems" is  
8   condemning the to failure. I think we need to look at  
9   some minimum size, if you will. And again, far be it from  
10  me to pontificate about the specifics about how native  
11  self-government is going to work. But I think some notion  
12  of size.

13                  So if we look at structures at a regional  
14  level as a primary point rather than at a local community  
15  level, I think that is very important.

16                 Beyond that, I think there is going to  
17  be tremendous learning that needs to occur from different  
18  experiences across the country. I am often frustrated  
19  when I hear discussions about transfer of control and  
20  health services going on in Alberta, how little they are  
21  informed by the experience that has already existed  
22  elsewhere in the country. I think that structures that  
23  allow us to share experiences across the country are

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   tremendously important.

2                   Recent examples of this that I have been  
3   involved with that were terribly exciting were where one  
4   had representatives of the six health boards dealing with  
5   Inuit people across the country; four in the territories,  
6   one is in Labrador, one is in Quebec. So there is no  
7   jurisdiction. No province, no territory is going to be  
8   happy to encourage those kinds of things because in a sense  
9   they are challenges to their own jurisdiction.

10                  But getting that kind of round table of  
11   folks involved with provision, planning of services within  
12   one area to really share experiences and learn from the  
13   other is very fruitful, and again not just among health  
14   authorities but between those health authorities and  
15   sources of a different kind of expertise that may be helpful  
16   to them. Again mother federal government is not going  
17   to provide that context any more for us.

18                  But some way that encourages sort of  
19   sharing of experiences, sharing of expertise among these  
20   regional authorities, be they in health, be they in  
21   education, be they for the whole package, whatever forms  
22   complete self-government eventually takes place. I think  
23   that is going to be very important.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   One of the problems in doing that through  
2 many of the national native organization to my own view  
3 has been that the preoccupations of those organizations  
4 has been, rightly, so political than when one wants to  
5 get into substantive discussions about issues that have  
6 national echoes it is often very difficult -- perhaps not  
7 impossible -- to do that under the umbrella of those  
8 national native organizations and keep the purely  
9 political aspects of it aside so that one can focus on  
10 the issues at hand.

11                   It may be as those organizations evolve,  
12 as the pressure of the political change and the  
13 preoccupation with jurisdiction attenuates over time, that  
14 they will be able to become more useful as fora for  
15 discussing issues of substance, where it is more  
16 nitty-gritty, perhaps more mundane but in many ways I think  
17 as important as the larger jurisdictional issues that form  
18 all our discussions at the moment.

19                   Those are just a few thoughts at the  
20 moment. It is a tough one to answer while standing on  
21 one foot. It is very complex.

22                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** It is but you  
23 have done an excellent job.

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1                   **F. W. BAKER:** I wonder if could just make  
2 one other comment.

3                   I guess part of the reason that the  
4 Indian and Inuit Committee has been continued with the  
5 Canadian Paediatric Society -- because it is a committee  
6 that is at the aegis of the board really -- is that it  
7 has been around long enough now that it has some  
8 credibility. The first chairman quite rightly said that  
9 it is a completely non-political organization, and I think  
10 that that has been one of its strengths too. We are not  
11 honing any axe for any particular group. we listen and  
12 we try to use the expertise of the people who are on the  
13 committee, all of whom have many, many years of experience  
14 working in various parts of this country, both close to  
15 the southern communities with native people who live in  
16 that area and also in the Arctic and the tundra and the  
17 bush country, rock and lake country.

18                  I think that the expertise has allowed  
19 the development of various policies and protocols, and  
20 it has not mattered. There is no political connotation  
21 to it.

22                  But the problem of course, just as Gary  
23 has said, is that the politics sometimes get in the road

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 if you don't have that sort of an organization that this  
2 particular committee has.

3 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** As you can  
4 imagine, we can go on. But I don't want to take advantage  
5 of you. It has been very helpful to us, and I know I can  
6 speak on behalf of my colleagues, that we appreciate you  
7 spending the time with us this morning and staying  
8 overtime, and your enthusiastic and informative responses  
9 to our questions.

10 The advice you have given us is certainly  
11 helpful. I know it will help me in going about the task  
12 of preparing the final report. There is a lot of wisdom  
13 in what you have said. I will have to get you out to do  
14 some political science teaching.

15 Thank you very much.

16 We stand adjourned until 1:30.

17 --- Lunch Recess at 12:35 p.m.

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

19 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** We are resuming  
20 our hearings. I would like to welcome the Canadian  
21 Federation of Students. The presenters are Heather Morin,  
22 the Aboriginal Students National Executive  
23 Representative; Caryn Duncan, Researcher with the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Federation; and Jaimie McEvoy, who is listed as a Deputy  
2 Chairperson.

3                   The floor is yours. I heard you say,  
4 Heather, that you were nervous. Please don't be nervous.  
5 We want to hear what you have to say. Take as much time  
6 as you like and when you finish we will get into some  
7 questions and answers.

8                   **HEATHER MORIN, Aboriginal Students**  
9 **National Executive Rep, Canadian Federation of Students:**

10 I would like to take this opportunity to thank Caryn Duncan  
11 for the excellent job on the brief that she did, and Jaimie  
12 McEvoy for his support.

13                   My name is Heather Morin and I am the  
14 National Executive Rep. for the Canadian Federation of  
15 Students and I represent the Aboriginal Constituency  
16 Group.

17                   The Canadian Federation of Students has  
18 been fighting for fully funded public post-secondary  
19 education for all Canadians for over a decade. We believe  
20 that education is a right for all and not a privilege for  
21 the few. Inherent to this is our belief that all  
22 aboriginal people should be able to exercise this right.

23                   Therefore, the Canadian Federation of



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Students does not accept the distinction that only status  
2 Indians as defined by the Indian Act have the right to  
3 an education. All aboriginal people, be they status or  
4 non-status, Métis or Inuit, should be entitled to this  
5 right.

6 We also do not accept the present  
7 government's interpretation of the Indian Act that  
8 guarantees only elementary and high school education for  
9 status aboriginal people while post-secondary education  
10 funding is seen as discretionary.

11 For aboriginal people the right to an  
12 education is enshrined in aboriginal treaties and in the  
13 Constitution Act of 1982. Section 35 of the Constitution  
14 states that:

15 "The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the  
16 aboriginal peoples of Canada are  
17 hereby recognized and affirmed."

18 It also specifies that:

19 "...aboriginal peoples of Canada includes the Indian,  
20 Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada."

21 At the Winnipeg hearings of the Royal  
22 Commission, Phil Fontaine, Grand Chief of the Assembly  
23 of Manitoba Chiefs, spoke about the government's

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   abrogation of its treaty commitments. He stated the  
2   following:

3   "In return for all the land which our people are willing  
4                   to share we expected certain  
5                   guarantees, guarantees that  
6                   translated into rights. Very few  
7                   of these rights have been honoured.

8                   When government decided two years  
9                   ago that the right to an education  
10                  did not include the right to  
11                  post-secondary education the  
12                  officials argued to us that the  
13                  text of the Treaties makes no  
14                  reference to universities and  
15                  community colleges. Well, when  
16                  Treaties were signed here in  
17                  Manitoba in 1871, I don't think any  
18                  universities existed in that part  
19                  of the country. So, how could  
20                  these people that negotiated and  
21                  executed these agreements make  
22                  provision for attendance at the  
23                  University of Manitoba?"

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   The Canadian Federation of Students has  
2   adopted policy which recognizes post-secondary education  
3   as an aboriginal and treaty right and supports the right  
4   of all aboriginal students to:

5                   1. Access to funding that ensures the  
6   opportunity to participate in, and complete, a quality  
7   post-secondary education;

8                   2. an education which reflects the  
9   lifestyle and needs of aboriginal communities; and

10                  3. the recognition and utilization of  
11   aboriginal languages as an option for college and  
12   university language requirements.

13                  Aboriginal people are under-represented  
14   in colleges and university. This is largely due to the  
15   criteria that is set up for funding. Only people  
16   registered under the Indian Act are eligible for funding  
17   so our representation is very minimal. We have a lot of  
18   people who want to return to school but they are ineligible  
19   due to not being "status Indians". Of the aboriginal  
20   people that are in post-secondary institutions only 3.9  
21   per cent of that population actually receive a degree.  
22   This is largely due to no transition programs are made  
23   available to prepare aboriginal students to perform to

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the standards set out by colleges and universities.

2 We have students that are interested in  
3 taking traditional spiritual healing but they are unable  
4 to do this as the institutions they want to go to are not  
5 a recognized post-secondary institution. An example of  
6 this is the Wild Rose College of Natural Healing in  
7 Vancouver and Calgary.

8 We also need to have our native languages  
9 recognized as secondary language entrance requirements  
10 for university. As what happened with residential  
11 schools, many people were forced to learn English. Now  
12 they are required to learn French, Spanish, German,  
13 et cetera, to enable the to enrol in universities. This  
14 is a grave injustice to our people as we are again being  
15 told that our native languages don't count and as  
16 aboriginal people we don't count. We must stand up and  
17 fight against this by refusing to accept this and push  
18 to have our languages accepted.

19 Now I would like to talk about the  
20 problems with the post-secondary student support program,  
21 as outlined in the brief.

22 Due to the cap put on moneys allocated  
23 for this program, it is now based on a fixed funding, not

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 demand based. Therefore, the program funding has not and  
2 is not able to keep pace with the increasing demand by  
3 aboriginal people for post-secondary education.

4                   Second, as a result of fixed program  
5 funding, the government has established student priority  
6 categories for granting financial assistance under the  
7 Post-Secondary Student Support Program. As the  
8 administering organizations, aboriginal bands, tribal  
9 councils and education authorities are forced to make  
10 difficult decisions about who gets financial assistance  
11 according to a priority list that is determined by the  
12 government, which is in fact saying that some native people  
13 are more worthy of a post-secondary education than others,  
14 which is untrue.

15                   Third, not only are some eligible  
16 students not pursuing a post-secondary education because  
17 the program funding has not kept pace with student demand,  
18 but those who are receiving assistance under the  
19 Post-Secondary Student Support Program find that it is  
20 inadequate to live.

21                   For example, the average student  
22 allocation under the Post-Secondary Student Support  
23 Program in B.C. was \$7,282 while the actual cost of

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 attending university ranged from \$7,381 to \$10,588. This  
2 assumption is based on the fact that the student is single,  
3 whereas most students who are returning to school are  
4 students with dependents.

5                   Fourth, as 87 per cent of the control  
6 of aboriginal education is now in the hands of aboriginal  
7 people, we would like to see all of the moneys put in the  
8 hands of aboriginal people. We see a major problem with  
9 this as we view the Post-Secondary Student Support Program  
10 as dysfunctional.

11                   As aboriginal people are forced to  
12 compete for limited funds the classification system set  
13 up by the Post-Secondary Student Support Program has  
14 inadequate criteria requirement. If you are enrolled in  
15 a one-year program and obtain a degree or certificate,  
16 you are eligible for funding. But what happens to the  
17 students who need to upgrade their skills in order to go  
18 on to college or university? They are sort of left on  
19 their own.

20                   Students only receive assistance for the  
21 length of the program they are involved in. You can get  
22 a one-year extension if you need one if you can prove that  
23 health or illness has interrupted your studies.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   Lastly, the Department of Indian Affairs  
2    has set the criteria for scholarships, not bands and  
3    tribal councils. This is an inadequate process as the  
4    Department of Indian Affairs does not know what studies  
5    constitute self-government.

6                   Some solutions that we have come up with  
7    are:

8                   First, the federal government must  
9    fulfil its obligation, historically agreed to and as stated  
10   in the 1982 Canadian Constitution, to guarantee all  
11   aboriginal people, be they status or non-status, Métis  
12   or Inuit, a post-secondary education.

13                  Second, the Post-Secondary Student  
14   Support Program must receive adequate federal government  
15   funding to ensure that all aboriginal people receive the  
16   financial assistance necessary to pursue a post-secondary  
17   education.

18                  Third, the federal government must  
19   transfer authority for post-secondary programs, including  
20   the Post-Secondary Student Support Program, over to  
21   aboriginal people by 1995-96, the deadline set by the  
22   Department of Indian and Northern Affairs for renewing  
23   or replacing the program. All aspects of the program,

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 including authority over funding levels, should be  
2 controlled by aboriginal peoples.

3                   Fourth, the federal government must  
4 provide the necessary funding for aboriginal peoples to  
5 establish post-secondary institutions such as the  
6 aboriginal controlled degree-granting Saskatchewan Indian  
7 Federated College. Presently, the federal government  
8 provides money for program and institutional development  
9 under the Indian Studies Support Program. However, total  
10 government funding for this program amounted to only \$17.4  
11 million or 9 per cent of the government's overall  
12 aboriginal post-secondary education budget in 1991-92.

13                   Fifth, federal government funding for  
14 transition programs must be increased. These programs  
15 are necessary to prepare students for college and  
16 university entrance and to enhance the success of  
17 aboriginal students. Presently, the federal government  
18 provides financial assistance under the University and  
19 College Entrance Preparation Program to post-secondary  
20 institutions so that they may run transition programs.  
21 Unfortunately, the Department of Indian and Northern  
22 Affairs does not isolate the budget for this program from  
23 its overall aboriginal post-secondary education budget.



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1     The obvious conclusion is that it is not a high policy  
2     or financial priority for the government.

3                     Sixth, Canada Student Loans and  
4     provincial student loans held by non-status aboriginal  
5     people should be forgiven. The Canadian government should  
6     redress the situation by assuming financial responsibility  
7     for student loans presently held by all those aboriginal  
8     people not defined as "status Indians" under the Indian  
9     Act and therefore not eligible for assistance under the  
10    Post-Secondary Student Support Program. These aboriginal  
11    people have been forced to borrow under the federal Canada  
12    Student Loans Program and provincial loans program for  
13    student financial assistance which they should have been  
14    entitled to as a matter of right.

15                    The Canadian Federation of Students  
16    maintains that each of these recommendations fulfils  
17    Canada's historic obligation to the aboriginal and treaty  
18    right to an education. Only when each of these  
19    recommendations has become federal government policy will  
20    Canada be on the right track regarding aboriginal  
21    post-secondary education.

22                    **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Thank you very  
23    much, Heather. We appreciate your comments and remarks

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and we appreciate the thought and detail which has gone  
2 into the report. It has been very helpful.

3 Do either of your colleagues wish to make  
4 any comments at this time?

5 Then if you don't mind, we will ask you  
6 some questions.

7 Who would like to lead off?

8 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** We heard  
9 earlier today from the Canadian Association of University  
10 Teachers. You people did not write their brief, by any  
11 chance, did you?

12 **HEATHER MORIN:** No.

13 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** It is very  
14 interesting. They covered similar areas and came up with  
15 the same conclusions and the same recommendations. But  
16 they of course started off with the proposition that  
17 post-secondary education was a treaty right; that is was  
18 not a matter of discretion.

19 But the two big things that they stressed  
20 with us in their brief was that the funding cap should  
21 be removed from the funding for post-secondary education  
22 and that the funding should be there to meet the demand.

23 The second thing that they emphasized

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 was -- and I suppose this was really the key to their whole  
2 brief -- that there should be no non-academic barriers  
3 to the full participation of aboriginal people in  
4 post-secondary education.

5                   These were really the things: that  
6 funding should be there to meet the demand, and that there  
7 should be no non-academic barriers. Everybody who wanted  
8 to go ahead and take the benefits of a post-secondary  
9 education should be able to do so. Obviously, that makes  
10 a lot of sense.

11                   That is why I was asking if you wrote  
12 their brief. There was a terrific similarity.

13                   One question that I wanted to ask was  
14 that we heard in a few communities from young people that  
15 they had a sense of injustice because the chiefs were not  
16 giving them the funding for their post-secondary education  
17 that they felt they were entitled to.

18                   Can you tell me something about how this  
19 works in terms of the band having control over the  
20 decision-making as to who gets funded and who does not?

21                   Do you know anything about that?

22                   **HEATHER MORIN:** There were two points  
23 that I wanted to raise but I didn't, and I guess now would

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 be an appropriate time to raise them.

2 As a person involved with aboriginal  
3 students across Canada, I deal with a lot of problems with  
4 the process and the allocation of funding. Right now,  
5 unfortunately our people are sort of all across the board.  
6 Some bands say that you have to have five courses to be  
7 eligible for funding; some say four; some say three.

8 Without government intervention, what  
9 would be the perfect solution is that we have all the same  
10 funding requirement all across Canada. Unfortunately,  
11 in some of our communities we have the role of nepotism  
12 where if you are related to the chief or something like  
13 that you are more likely to get the funding. I have had  
14 to write many letters to different bands and tribal  
15 councils about why certain people have not received  
16 funding.

17 I think we need to work together as  
18 aboriginal people to make sure we are not forgetting those  
19 students who want to go to school, saying: "I am sorry,  
20 you can't do this."

21 A lot of it I think has to do with the  
22 money that is allocated to the bands. We have a harsh  
23 demand of people that want to go to school but they are

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   unable to because of the money that is allocated by the  
2   federal government. Let's say a band has 700 members and  
3   50 of them want to go to school. They have to make a  
4   decision. In all reality, they would probably like to  
5   fund all 50 of them, but they can't. They can only fund  
6   maybe 12. So they have to sit there and decide which 12  
7   they are going to fund.

8                   Priority is usually given to people that  
9   come out of high school, and things like that. It is hard  
10  for our people to have to decide who should get funding.  
11  It is like an eeny, meeny, miney, moe process.

12                  And then we have rising tuition costs  
13  also. They get their money and they have to put something  
14  in by I believe June 30th about how many students are going  
15  to fund for post-secondary education. Usually tuition  
16  fees go up in September. So they might fund 12 students  
17  this year but then it might have to drop down to 10 because  
18  they don't have enough money and these people are  
19  continuing their studies.

20                  **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** It is not  
21  that simple to make these decisions, is it?

22                  **HEATHER MORIN:** No, it is not. It is  
23  kind of like pitting aboriginals against aboriginals and

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   that is unfair.

2                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:**   I can see  
3   how these beefs would develop among the young people.

4                   **HEATHER MORIN:**   It is like a fixed  
5   funding.   It is not based on demand because of the cap.  
6   If we got the cap removed, I think it would solve some  
7   problems.

8                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:**   That would  
9   solve it, yes.   Thank you.

10                  **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:**   Thank you  
11   very much for your brief.   I know you focused in on funding  
12   but there is something that came up in our hearings and  
13   I would like to ask you about it.

14                  We heard, for example, that not many of  
15   our people finish high school.   There are only a few of  
16   them that go to university.   University is easier for some  
17   people than others, I guess, because as you said there  
18   is financial assistance available for status Indians on  
19   reserve, in some cases for Inuit, certainly not for Métis,  
20   and a more difficult time for urban Indians.   We have heard  
21   many Bill C-31 Indians talk about how they are at the  
22   end of the priority list and what kinds of problems that  
23   creates for them.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   We have also heard, for example, that  
2 many aboriginal people who end up in university, there  
3 are not that many who might finish. For example, there  
4 isn't 100 per cent success rate.

5                   My first question is really: What has  
6 to be done in order to ensure that more and more aboriginal  
7 students complete their course of study?

8                   My second question is this: In some  
9 cases we have been told that existing institutions are  
10 not good enough, that there must be separate institutions,  
11 post-secondary institutions, separate colleges for  
12 aboriginal peoples. Last week we heard from many of the  
13 national groups. Even as recently as last week we heard  
14 a proposal, for example, from the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada  
15 calling for a separate university, not for aboriginal  
16 students but for Inuit students.

17                  I was wondering if you had any thoughts  
18 on that. I guess your Federation has meetings and I was  
19 wondering if you ever talked about those kinds of issues  
20 and what your responses would be to those questions.

21                  **HEATHER MORIN:** In response to your  
22 first question, I am studying to be a high school teacher  
23 because of our unsuccessful rate in high school. I think

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 it starts there with no role models. I have visited a  
2 lot of high schools and talked to the aboriginal students  
3 there. We have no aboriginal teachers there. There is  
4 no one to understand the transition that they have to go  
5 to because when they are in the elementary school program  
6 -- it starts from there -- they are usually in band operated  
7 schools or in small communities where they know people.

8                   When they hit the high school level they  
9 have to go down to a big city and it is very hard to make  
10 that transition from the small community to the big city.

11 There are no resources for those people. They don't see  
12 other aboriginal people. They have no role models, nobody  
13 to look up to to say: "Look at the success of that person.  
14 Look at how well they are doing. I would like to be like  
15 that." Other cultures do have those things set up for  
16 them.

17                   I think it is the same in university.

18 I go to a college called Langer College and we have two  
19 aboriginal teachers there. Our success rate for  
20 aboriginal students, I think we need to have native student  
21 centres set up on the campuses. We can go there as people  
22 and sit there and relax and be around people of our own  
23 culture so we know that we are not alone in any of the



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 struggles or the problems, because too many times we are  
2 put into these institutions and we think that all the  
3 problems and all the bad experiences, or the good  
4 experiences, that we are experiencing are only felt by  
5 us. But it is really amazing when you have a native student  
6 centre and you go in that room and you hear that these  
7 people are having the same problems. So you get together  
8 as a collective and say: "How can we solve this problem?  
9 What can we do to alleviate that problem?" It is like  
10 a sharing of information and it makes you feel good.

11 The native student centres also could  
12 be used as liaisons for the people that come from the small  
13 communities to help them find native housing in the  
14 community, to set them up with maybe family counselling  
15 services if they have children, day care, which are all  
16 added burdens of going to school. You are always worrying  
17 about are my children being looked after, if you are a  
18 person with dependents.

19 I really believe that native student  
20 centres and more aboriginal teachers and counsellors would  
21 be a more effective way to deal with some of those problems.

22 **JAIMIE McEVOY, Department Chairperson,**  
23 **Canadian Federation of Students:** I would like to add on

**November 18, 1993****Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the concept of separate institutions, the Federation is  
2 generally in favour. But I would add that there are other  
3 considerations that obviously need to be taken into  
4 account, that the purpose of separate institutions would  
5 not only be to help to facilitate the development of a  
6 post-secondary education system that native people control  
7 but also one that serves the needs of native people. Then  
8 we get into issues of development of curricula and resource  
9 support.

10                   The Assembly of First Nations did a study  
11 either last year or the year before, for example, on the  
12 resources that are available in language education and  
13 found that the majority of instructors in native languages  
14 had virtually no resource materials available to them and  
15 in some cases no existing textbooks, and that many of those  
16 courses were largely taught based solely on the  
17 instructor's own experience and knowledge of the language  
18 without adequate resource materials available and no money  
19 anywhere to develop the curricula, no money anywhere to  
20 develop a textbook or resource materials.

21                   We do hear from students about the effect  
22 of dislocation. We know that aboriginal students cite  
23 the effects of culture isolation and dislocation as one

**November 18, 1993****Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of the main reasons why they quit their education, quit  
2 their studies. So we know that to some extent travel to  
3 far off institutions is not necessarily the answer. But  
4 we also know that we have community colleges in this country  
5 that have as few as 800 students. The University of  
6 Northern British Columbia, a fully accredited university,  
7 will have 2,000 students when it opens. So we are not  
8 necessarily talking about institutions that need to serve  
9 thousands of people.

10 To some extent the community colleges  
11 model could also serve as a model for native communities  
12 in terms of how to deliver education within a community  
13 rather than forcing people to dislocate, forcing people  
14 to travel away from their homes.

15 The transition between high school and  
16 university you also asked about. Again dislocation  
17 becomes a factor. The academic environment is dislocating  
18 to a number of people besides native people, and there  
19 is inadequate support within institutions that are not  
20 native controlled, inadequate support to deal with  
21 cultural isolation and inadequate support to deal with  
22 any kind of personal problems or counselling problems.

23 Native students, for example, talk about

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the difference between dealing with elders versus dealing  
2 with professional counsellors at an institution.

3                   The last point I would like to make is  
4 that some institutions inadvertently discriminate against  
5 native people through entrance requirements. Heather has  
6 already talked about the language entrance requirement,  
7 but I could give you another example. Grade point average  
8 entrance requirements, for example, are not going to do  
9 very much for somebody who needs to finish their high school  
10 before they get back into university.

11                   The majority of students funded under  
12 the Post-Secondary Student Support Program are much older  
13 than the average student, people who are older, getting  
14 their lives together, returning back to school and  
15 basically pulling themselves up by their own bootstraps.

16 But many universities in their admission requirements  
17 have obstacles to anybody in that category of life, that  
18 general category of student.

19                   We know there have been a number of  
20 studies done. The Toronto Board of Education did a study  
21 showing that the majority of students who have low grades,  
22 that the most direct parallel you can draw to that  
23 phenomenon is that of the average household income during

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 that person's childhood. We know that native people live  
2 in poverty and native people are affected by that poverty  
3 in terms of educational attainment, that there is  
4 absolutely no doubt about that. So grade point average  
5 requirements, entrance requirements to university wind  
6 up playing a discriminatory role against a number of people  
7 who grew up in poverty, including native people.

8 **HEATHER MORIN:** I just want to say one  
9 more thing in response to what you were talking about.  
10 I did forget one thing.

11 There is a transition program that is  
12 set up at the University of British Columbia. If the  
13 federal government could look at the way that it is set  
14 up and how successful it is, I think our success rate of  
15 aboriginal people would be a lot higher.

16 What they do is they take aboriginal  
17 students down from small communities that want to go into  
18 university and have the billeted in the university for  
19 approximately a month and a half so that they are in the  
20 university atmosphere. They do offer courses in the  
21 summer. They are in the university atmosphere and they  
22 know what to expect when it actually happens. And it is  
23 not quite such a shock.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   I have talked to students who have gone  
2 through the program, and those students are doing really  
3 well at the university now because they have had a taste  
4 before of what it is like so they know what to expect when  
5 you go in. Usually we are just put in these institutions.  
6 We decide to go back to school and we are put in these  
7 institutions. There are no aboriginal teachers for us  
8 to look up to or no aboriginal counsellors for us to go  
9 talk to. The requirements, the English, the essays --  
10 I am a student myself and I still have problems pumping  
11 out those essays and doing them as per the correct way  
12 that they want them done, because I did not have any of  
13 that training before.

14                   I think transition programs and looking  
15 at the University of British Columbia one is a very good  
16 model for them. It is really successful and people like  
17 it. Parents are impressed with the success rate of it.

18                   **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** Thank you  
19 very much. The reason that I sort of chuckle is because  
20 I could not believe the amount of preparation that had  
21 gone into your work. Obviously you worked very hard and  
22 it is shocking to see so much information coming out to  
23 one question.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   The final question I have is this: We  
2   were reviewing the women's issues not very long ago in  
3   the context of our policy work at the Commission and one  
4   of the things that really struck me was that there has  
5   been statistical data done through Census Canada and it  
6   showed that aboriginal women more often than aboriginal  
7   men completed post-secondary education. Of all,  
8   aboriginal people as a whole have lower post-secondary  
9   educational achievement but aboriginal women are not doing  
10  too badly in that regard.

11                  I thought that was pretty amazing  
12  considering there are many single mothers out there. If  
13  you talk about women who are going to university, you may  
14  be talking about older women or even younger women with  
15  children, that they have been able to overcome those  
16  barriers. I was wondering if you have any ideas as to  
17  why that is the case.

18                  **HEATHER MORIN:** I am a single parent  
19  with two dependents. Sometimes people ask me how I do  
20  it, how I go to school and be a mom and work with the  
21  aboriginal students across Canada. But it is something  
22  that I believe in. I think that women have always been  
23  sensitive to the issues that are happening in aboriginal

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 communities but they are becoming more committed to those  
2 issues. We know what we need. As women and as mothers,  
3 I think we see the issues and how they should be addressed,  
4 and we are not going to be waylaid by anything. I think  
5 it is called perseverance. We have more commitment to  
6 those issues. I know I am impressed with all the women  
7 too.

8 **CARYN DUNCAN, Researcher, Canadian**

9 **Federation of Students:** I would like to make one comment.  
10 The chart on pages 5 and 6 of the brief reflects some  
11 of what you are talking about. It is a breakdown of  
12 university degree attainment by different ethnic groups.  
13 It is interesting because for almost every single ethnic  
14 group the male has a higher attainment than the female  
15 except -- there are two observations. It is very  
16 unfortunate that native Indians, Métis and Inuit, are very  
17 low down in terms of their attainment but interesting that  
18 the female-male breakdown shows no significant difference;  
19 whereas for every other ethnic grouping it shows that men  
20 tend to attain a university degree at a much higher rate  
21 than women.

22 I think one thing we cannot overlook is  
23 that the aboriginal post-secondary education population



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 starts out with more women to begin with. There are more  
2 women aboriginal students attending universities and  
3 colleges than male aboriginal students. So you are right  
4 in the end women and men are graduating on par, but the  
5 fact of the matter is that there are still significant  
6 numbers of women who are dropping out to even out the  
7 male-female numbers.

8 Do you see what I am saying?

9 There is a bigger pool of women to begin  
10 with in the aboriginal community. That is one statistical  
11 explanation as to why men and women are graduating at  
12 basically the same rate from universities and colleges  
13 from the aboriginal community.

14 I think we cannot forget that, and we  
15 have to remember that there are large numbers of aboriginal  
16 peoples dropping out. But there are larger numbers of  
17 women because they are not graduating at a higher rate  
18 than the men, and they should be because they are a larger  
19 pool to begin with.

20 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I would  
21 like to say too that it just occurred to me -- sometimes  
22 you forget your own life experiences but it seems to me  
23 that in many of our communities the big jobs go to the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 men. They don't need half the education that women do  
2 in order to get the big paying jobs.

3                   If you look right across the country,  
4 I bet you the chief positions, especially on the reserves,  
5 like the chiefs, there are more men chiefs than there are  
6 women chiefs. You can go right down the line and say that.

7                   I don't have any data to support this,  
8 but I suspect in the middle management or maybe in the  
9 lower management you have more women. I suspect that the  
10 reason why more and more women are going to university  
11 is because they need that education in order to have the  
12 same kind of jobs.

13                   I can't remember my final question so  
14 I will pass to my colleague, Mr. Meekison.

15                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Thank you,  
16 Mary. There are a number of questions which I would really  
17 like to have you develop your thinking on.

18                   One is dropouts. We have just touched  
19 upon it; certainly Jaimie, you have touched upon it and  
20 it is reflected in the brief as well. Indeed,  
21 recommendation no. 5 speaks to that point in terms of the  
22 counselling services and the transition programs that are  
23 necessary.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 All too often in these areas one finds  
2 that the universities say: "Well, we don't have the  
3 money." The Government of Canada says: "We don't have  
4 the money." So therefore the matter does not get solved.

5 What can be one in this area? Where do  
6 you think responsibility rests for funding these programs?

7 I think they are critical.

8 People can look at the data and say well,  
9 in 1986 there were so many students, but then if you look  
10 at 1989 or 1987 they will say how many of those same students  
11 are still in the system and how many have fallen by the  
12 wayside? To me, it is a tremendous waste in resources.

13 I think there is also tremendous effect on the  
14 individual's personal self-esteem, and so on, by dropping  
15 out and saying "this isn't for me".

16 I think the universities have to do more.

17 But I would really like to hear what you think about this  
18 and how we can deal with this question.

19 **JAIMIE McEVOY:** The old game about who  
20 has responsibility is one that needs to be settled through  
21 provincial-federal negotiation -- real negotiations, not  
22 the kind of negotiations we have around land claims, for  
23 example, that will take 150 years to resolve each one.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I don't think there is any other answer.

2 I thought you were going to ask me about  
3 the deficit and in a way I am glad you did not, because  
4 even in a situation where government is trying to establish  
5 its spending priorities clearly there is still some equity  
6 required in terms of the access to services and the access  
7 to rights that all citizens have. And that equity does  
8 not exist for the aboriginal community.

9 Our position has been that federal and  
10 provincial governments must negotiate seriously in order  
11 to solve questions around funding. These questions have  
12 a real impact on some of our members. One of our aboriginal  
13 national commissioners right now has no funding because  
14 there are questions about his status, and he does not have  
15 access to any of the federal funding programs right now  
16 for his education. So these questions, hopefully the  
17 Commission can play a role in identifying some of the  
18 specific questions that remain unresolved between federal  
19 and provincial governments and encourage those two levels  
20 of governments to negotiate appropriately their respective  
21 roles.

22 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Let's leave the  
23 funding issue aside because I agree that the deficit is

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   there, and I am not going to get into that argument. It  
2   is a different question. When I look at the number of  
3   aboriginal students who are in post-secondary  
4   institutions, the question of drop-out remains. So what  
5   is really needed are policies and programs that will help  
6   the students stay in university or college, or whatever  
7   institution they happen to be located in.

8                   Really, the question is: What kinds of  
9   advice can you give us as to the types of programs or  
10  policies which need to be put in place? Leave aside the  
11  funding. I know that at some point that has to be  
12  considered but if we were designing something, what kinds  
13  of policies would you recommend we could give consideration  
14  to. That is really what I am trying to find out.

15                   **HEATHER MORIN:** I think I might be able  
16  to answer that as a native student enrolled in a  
17  post-secondary institution.

18                   It is hard to have a high self-esteem  
19  and go to a post-secondary institution where, as I have  
20  said before, there are no role models, nobody to look up  
21  to, where there is nowhere to go as an aboriginal person  
22  and be amongst people of your culture.

23                   Cultural programs are very important to

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 us, because as aboriginal people we believe in our culture.  
2 We believe in our language and things like that. There  
3 are not enough native studies programs. All the history  
4 that we learn is done through non-native eyes. When they  
5 do have history programs put on by aboriginal people, they  
6 have to be very careful of what they say, that it does  
7 not go against anything that is set out by the criteria  
8 of the college or the university.

9 Entrance requirement to post-secondary  
10 education -- I am a Cree and I don't speak it fluently,  
11 unfortunately. I am learning because I want to learn  
12 because it is a part of me. But language courses like  
13 that, where people are allowed to learn their languages  
14 so they feel they are a part of society, that they are  
15 going to be a good part of society, once we are finished  
16 our education, we can go back to our people and help the  
17 youth see -- I am sorry.

18 With all the social problems that we have  
19 on our reserves, we need those people to go back to the  
20 reserves and to show our youth that there is a way out.

21 When they go to high schools, there is no one there to  
22 talk to. They feel like they are going through all these  
23 things themselves. If we could have people educated,

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 remove the cap from funding, have these people be educated  
2 and go back to the reserves and show our youth that  
3 committing suicide is not a way out. There are other  
4 things that you can do.

5 I firmly believe that we need more. It  
6 starts at the elementary school level. It actually starts  
7 at kindergarten where we need native people to be teaching  
8 our languages to our children, have aboriginal teachers  
9 in the elementary school. When you go to high school you  
10 don't see that many aboriginal teachers.

11 That is where our drop-out rate is really  
12 high. And it is because of the self-esteem, they go in  
13 there: Oh, I am really proud to be a native. I am proud  
14 I can speak my language. I am proud I practise my  
15 traditions. But when they go to a high school or even  
16 an institution that does not believe in that, and "you  
17 have to follow our way of thinking sort of thing", it just  
18 takes away from all of that and the pride that we have  
19 as native people.

20 **JAIMIE McEVOY:** I guess in summary we  
21 have arrived at a list of three to make it simple. One  
22 is transition programs. One is the relevance of  
23 curricula. We do not have any statistics, but I think

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I can say with almost a certainty that a student who can  
2 take a course in First Nations studies is more likely to  
3 finish that history degree they might be working on as  
4 well when the academic programs seem to present some direct  
5 relevance to one's own life experience and culture.

6                   The third is funding. I said earlier  
7 that among native people the number one reason cited for  
8 dropping out is cultural dislocation and isolation. Among  
9 non-native people, other than academic difficulties,  
10 funding is one of the major issues. A person simply runs  
11 out of money or the expenses climb too high. They don't  
12 have the money to drop out of school and they drop out.

13 There is no doubt that given the current state of funding,  
14 student aid in general and particularly with student aid  
15 available to native students, there is no doubt that people  
16 reach a point at some time where they simply run out of  
17 money or the budget they planned did not work, or the  
18 tuition fees increased too much that year, or your cheque  
19 bounced and you just cannot continue your studies because  
20 you don't have the cash.

21                   I think those are the three major  
22 barriers.

23                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Speaking in



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 terms of transition programs, you mentioned the program  
2 at UBC. You think that is a particularly effective one?

3 **CARYN DUNCAN:** Yes.

4 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Do you have any  
5 information on that?

6 **CARYN DUNCAN:** No, but I can get you some  
7 information.

8 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** That would be  
9 very helpful; thank you very much.

10 Another thing in your brief, on the first  
11 page are all the things you said you will not talk about  
12 but you looked at the funding question. But some of the  
13 other issues are, I think, very interesting and important  
14 that at least we get your thoughts on.

15 One of them is the formulation of  
16 strategies to tackle racism. It is not just racism within  
17 the university but how do we make, for example, the courses  
18 in faculties of education sensitive so that the people  
19 who are going out and doing the teaching are made aware  
20 of the importance of tackling racism?

21 Do you have any thoughts on the kinds  
22 of strategies which one might want to recommend or to  
23 develop or to talk about?

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1                   This is just a dialogue we are having.  
2       There are no right answers. I want to hear your views.

3                   **JAIMIE McEVOY:** There are a number of  
4 organizations that have done some significant work on this  
5 issue in different ways, and in some cases in different  
6 contexts. But I guess the greatest single manifestation  
7 to deal with a problem of discrimination on campus is  
8 development of harassment policies and harassment  
9 complains departments, or whatever you want to call them,  
10 mainly geared towards women.

11                   What is needed is some visibility on the  
12 part of the institution and some clear response that both  
13 native and non-native students can see that discrimination  
14 is inappropriate on campus, that harassment is  
15 inappropriate on campus. People need to know what the  
16 policy is, if there is a policy. We have found that it  
17 is difficult to convince institutions that it is in their  
18 interest to have a policy around discrimination issues.  
19 Some institutions fear that it will invite controversy  
20 rather than work to solve problems, and we have found it  
21 is difficult to open that dialogue with administrations.

22                   Native students often are not certain  
23 what the commitment of the institution is, whether the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 institution and the leaders of the institution really think  
2 native students belong there or not. There needs to be  
3 a public statement and a public policy on the part of the  
4 institution that states clearly how the institution views  
5 the native student, views its role with regard to native  
6 education, and how the institution would respond in a case  
7 of discrimination or harassment.

8 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Are there any  
9 models that we should be looking at which you think are  
10 particularly successful?

11 **HEATHER MORIN:** I am unable to answer  
12 that question right now but I could look and find some,  
13 I am sure.

14 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** If you can,  
15 that would be again helpful because I think that is one  
16 of the things we have to come to grips with. There can  
17 be general recommendations or specific ones, but if there  
18 are certain ones that you think have been particularly  
19 successful, then we can focus in on them and try to find  
20 out why they are successful.

21 **JAIMIE McEVOY:** There are some that I  
22 know of. I am not sure I know enough about them to evaluate  
23 their success. One that pops immediately to mind is the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 York Centre for Race and Ethnic Relations, which is not  
2 specifically about aboriginal people but that centre holds  
3 workshops on campus. It produces awareness material for  
4 distribution to students and faculty and other personnel  
5 at the institution. It works with the institution and  
6 other groups at the institution: the student union, the  
7 faculty association, and so on, to develop policies around  
8 issues of discrimination and harassment, and actively  
9 monitors and intervenes in situations on campus, and  
10 monitors what the situation is so that the administration  
11 can know where it stands.

12                   For example, if there is an incident of  
13 graffiti or if there is an incident of harassment that  
14 is reported, the Centre will maintain those statistics  
15 for the sake of the institution. And although there are  
16 problems with maintaining those kinds of statistics, we  
17 know people don't always report and you don't always catch  
18 every incident, the institution at least has an arm, if  
19 you like, a formal part of the university that, first of  
20 all, is proactive and preventative in terms of problems,  
21 and then is responsive in a preplanned, organized and  
22 responsible fashion to any incident that does occur.

23                   That is one that I can think of that might

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 be worth looking at.

2 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Thank you.

3 I would like to turn now to a different  
4 line of questioning that comes out of the brief on page  
5 12 of your presentation. The particular question I would  
6 like you to comment on is the scholarship program for  
7 students who pursue "disciplines related to Indian  
8 self-government or economic self-reliance".

9 You are quoting somebody else as a  
10 policy, I take it. You are questioning the government's  
11 commitment to aboriginal self-determination and I take  
12 it that means that the scholarship should be not channelled  
13 in particular directions.

14 The same thing was raised earlier today  
15 by the Canadian Association of University Teachers. They  
16 focused in on that as well.

17 Could you develop that a little further?

18 I see the argument but there is another thing underneath  
19 this, and this is the whole question of the importance  
20 which a lot of people are attaching to self-government.

21 Does this in fact encourage? there are clearly policy  
22 alternatives here.

23 Do you have any further thoughts? I do

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 have some other questions related to this, but I would  
2 like to get your initial thinking on it.

3 **CARYN DUNCAN:** It seems ironic to me  
4 that the federal government and/or political parties, or  
5 the past government, could claim to support in some hazy  
6 fashion this notion of self-government but then intervene  
7 and define under the parameters of this program what  
8 courses constituted the furtherance of self-government  
9 according to their definition. There is an irony there.

10 If the government is committed to  
11 aboriginal self-determination, then why is the government  
12 not giving up this control over particularly the  
13 Post-Secondary Student Support Program? And this is one  
14 example which I think points to that. It seems pretty  
15 clear to me that it should be up to individual granting  
16 authorities, to the bands, to determine who should be  
17 getting these scholarships. It should not be the federal  
18 government that lays out the criteria as to who is eligible.

19 That is the way it works now.

20 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** I don't know  
21 much about this particular program. How many scholarships  
22 are there? How does this program work?

23 **CARYN DUNCAN:** I can't tell you exactly

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   how many students are actually given scholarships.

2                               Just on a personal note, I found it very  
3   frustrating writing this brief because it is very difficult  
4   to get numbers. It is very difficult to get information  
5   from the department. Although they were very helpful and  
6   tried to provide me with many requests that I made, often  
7   I heard from the one particular individual that was trying  
8   to help me out that the numbers just are not being collected  
9   any more. Now that the authority to grant funding under  
10  the program is held by individual bands and granting  
11  authorities, this decentralization of the program has  
12  resulted in no stats being collected basically on a  
13  national level.

14                           The federal government is in an  
15  interesting position where they have washed their hands  
16  from any -- I don't want to be too nasty, but we are not  
17  getting the numbers. We don't know what the picture is  
18  any more because they are arguing that they cannot get  
19  the numbers because they have decentralized control over  
20  the program.

21                           That seems to me to be a little too simple  
22  and easy a way to not be able to provide the data, and  
23  without the data you cannot evaluate the effectiveness

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of the program. I think there are some attempts being  
2 made to try and have the individual granting authorities  
3 produce the numbers and then have it tabulated at a national  
4 level. But we are not there yet.

5 So I do not have a clear picture of how  
6 many people are being granted these scholarships.

7 I think a bigger issue, something that  
8 I have given some thought to, is the whole issue of  
9 distinguishing between a needs-based system and a  
10 merit-based system. Is there value in doing that when  
11 there is such a limited amount of money available to  
12 aboriginal students right now?

13 That was a judgment call that the people  
14 who developed the program made. They decided that it was  
15 valuable to reward merit, which I don't necessarily have  
16 a problem with. but there is a scarcity of resources.  
17 At what point is need more important and the use of these  
18 funds for needy students to get into those institutions  
19 more important than a merit-based scholarship system?

20 Those are just a few of my thoughts.

21 **HEATHER MORIN:** When I received my  
22 status in 1990 I was sent information sheets from the  
23 Department of Indian Affairs about what kind of money they



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 allocate. The incentives that I received -- I will just  
2 read from the information sheet.

3                   It says the Post-Secondary Student  
4 Support Program provides three incentives in the form of  
5 scholarships: Level 3 incentives.  
6 "Students enrolled as fulltime students in a Level 3  
7                   program may receive incentives of  
8                   up to \$1,500. This scholarship  
9                   will only be provided once. A  
10                  student may become eligible to  
11                  receive it upon commencement of the  
12                  second year of the program of  
13                  studies."

14                 When I received this I phoned the and  
15 I said: "What constitutes Level 3 programming?" And I  
16 was not able to get a clear answer from them. So I did  
17 not know if I was eligible this year to get that because  
18 I am in my third year of program, and I thought that was  
19 Level 3.

20                 There is a strategic study scholarship:  
21 "Administrating organizations may award scholarships up  
22                   to a maximum of \$3,500 to students  
23                   who are enrolled in a Level 2

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   program and who pursue disciplines  
2                   related to Indian self-government  
3                   or economic self-reliance."

4                   As I stated in the problems regarding  
5   the scholarship program, I feel it is an inadequate process  
6   as the Department of Indian Affairs does not know what  
7   studies constitute self-government. According to them,  
8   being a high school teacher would not bring anyone closer  
9   to self-government. But I would be an important factor,  
10  whether they believe it or not, in helping with the  
11  self-esteem of students and helping them achieve their  
12  goals.

13                   The third one is the academic  
14  achievement scholarship:

15  "In recognition of academic excellence an administrating  
16                   organization may award  
17                   scholarships up to a maximum of  
18                   \$1,000 to students who are enrolled  
19                   in Level 1 or Level 2 programs and  
20                   who have achieved an average of B  
21                   or higher."

22                   Because according to them I am a marginal  
23  student because I just get C-pluses, I am a good student

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and I work hard but my grades are C-pluses. If I get A's  
2 I am really happy, but I generally don't expect them.  
3 I don't think that a lot of students get those. They sent  
4 me a letter when I was applying for my tuition money and  
5 they said: "We are sorry, we wish we could award you the  
6 academic achievement scholarship, but due to your grades  
7 --"

8 Well, thank you very much for pointing  
9 that out to me that I am not eligible to receive the  
10 scholarship. I knew that already. I did not need it  
11 pointed out again.

12 Those are the scholarships they offer  
13 and some of the problems that go with it. People don't  
14 need to be reminded that "you can't receive the scholarship  
15 because you are not a B student". Well, I know that  
16 already. I don't need it being reinforced again.

17 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** The issue of  
18 the scholarships in this area make me think of the broader  
19 question, and that is: How we will go about the training,m  
20 the preparation of people who will move into positions  
21 in self-government.

22 Your point, Heather, about education and  
23 the importance of education was driven home to us this

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 morning by a representative fro the Canadian Paediatric  
2 Society who tried to explain why there were not more health  
3 workers in certain areas. He said -- and this is in  
4 northern Quebec: Well, the communities made the choice  
5 that the people were better off going into education.  
6 And he said: "I agree with that. If people have to make  
7 a choice, I think that is where they should start."

8                   So I think you have chosen the right  
9 path. I would like to continue our discussion but we have  
10 gone a bit over time as it is, and I think I am going to  
11 have to bring it to a close.

12                   Mrs. Wilson has a comment to make and  
13 I would also like to give you the last word. You mentioned  
14 earlier that there were a couple of things you did not  
15 talk about. You mentioned one of them and I don't know  
16 if you have the other point out. If not, we will give  
17 you a chance.

18                   You reached in your briefcase and pulled  
19 out something so I thought -- if you have any other things  
20 you would like us to think of, but while you are thinking  
21 of that, I will have Mrs. Wilson make a comment.

22                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I was just  
23 going to mention, because you raised the issue of

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 discrimination and sexual harassment policies, that the  
2 Canadian Bar Association's Task Force on Gender Equality  
3 that I had the privilege of chairing has just filed its  
4 report, and it did not confine itself just to gender.  
5 It also dealt with the problems faced by visible  
6 minorities, aboriginal students, coloured students, and  
7 so on.

8                   As an appendix to that we are producing  
9 model policies. I could say we selected those from an  
10 abundance of policies that we received from various bodies  
11 including some of the universities and colleges and we  
12 sort of picked out what we thought were the best of the  
13 ones that we looked at.

14                   I just wanted to make the comment that  
15 in this area, the problem with these issues like  
16 discrimination and sexual harassment is not so much the  
17 having of the policy; it is how you enforce it.

18                   The problem, for example, was raised  
19 before us by students of the difficulty of making a  
20 complaint and what the impact of that can be. And the  
21 same with young lawyers in law firms. It is no way to  
22 start off your career in a law firm to complain that the  
23 firm or a partner has discriminated against you or is guilty

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of sexual harassment. We spent a lot of time on the problem  
2 of how you enforce these things because we all realized  
3 that perhaps worse than the discrimination itself or the  
4 harassment itself is the retributive measures that are  
5 sometimes taken against the person who dares to make a  
6 complaint. So we tried to address that. It is one of  
7 the most difficult aspects of enforcing any of these  
8 policies.

9 But if your address is the address on  
10 the front of your brief, I would be glad to send you our  
11 report and our model policies so that you can see what  
12 you think of them.

13 Is that your address on the front of the  
14 brief, Metcalfe?

15 **HEATHER MORIN:** Yes.

16 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Heather, do you  
17 have any concluding remarks that you would like to make?

18 **HEATHER MORIN:** I would just like to  
19 thank you very much for letting me present and  
20 understanding the problems that we are facing as aboriginal  
21 people. I think the most important thing we have to  
22 remember is that there is a cap on the funding and we need  
23 to remove that cap. If we want to achieve our goal of

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 self-government and self-determination, we should not  
2 exclude anybody from trying to achieve a post-secondary  
3 education, be it through traditional spiritual healing,  
4 administrative, tribal police, anything that will benefit  
5 our people.

6                   We would like you to look at the  
7 transitional programs on how to make it easier for  
8 aboriginal people to succeed in colleges and universities.

9 I think those are very important things.

10                   Look at language enhancement programs  
11 where we are allowed to speak our language or use our  
12 language per se to go into university so we do not have  
13 to learn another language. I think as aboriginal people  
14 we are tired of it.

15                   I personally do not want to learn French  
16 or German or Spanish. I would like to get in on my language  
17 which is Cree, and I am sure that other people would like  
18 to use Ojibway or Dene or Inuit, or any of the other major  
19 languages that there are.

20                   I think we need to be sensitive to the  
21 issues of aboriginal people and the concerns that they  
22 are facing in the post-secondary institutions. The native  
23 student centres are very important, and they are excellent

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 transition phases for the students. If you look at the  
2 native student centres that are on campuses you will see  
3 a higher success rate for the aboriginal people because  
4 it is somewhere they can go and be amongst their own people  
5 and deal with some of the problems that they are dealing  
6 with: more aboriginal counsellors, more aboriginal  
7 teachers.

8 I think that is about it. I know that  
9 is a lot. Those are things that we would like to see as  
10 aboriginal students and as people that have to deal with  
11 these problems every day.

12 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** First of all,  
13 I appreciate you giving us your thoughts on this and your  
14 priorities because it is helpful to us. We feel what you  
15 have to say is important.

16 I agree with you, by the way, about the  
17 second language entrance, and this is something  
18 universities have to deal with. I agree with you 100 per  
19 cent on that, particularly when we also are told that some  
20 of these languages are in danger of extinction by the year  
21 2000. I think there are responsibilities there. So what  
22 can be done to encourage their continuation is very  
23 important.



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I would like to conclude by thanking you  
2 very much for your presentation and the time and attention  
3 which has gone into the preparation of the brief, and I  
4 wish you well in your studies. We will certainly take  
5 into consideration what you have told us this afternoon.

6 **HEATHER MORIN:** Could I ask you one  
7 question?

8 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Yes.

9 **HEATHER MORIN:** As an aboriginal  
10 person, I am curious: I need to know who you are making  
11 your recommendations to and how much -- you are going to  
12 be making recommendations to people. How far will those  
13 recommendations go?

14 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** That is a very  
15 good question and it is one that we are wrestling with  
16 ourselves.

17 As a Royal Commission, we will be making  
18 recommendations to the Government of Canada, which is the  
19 body which established us. The recommendations that we  
20 will be making, by virtue of the broad mandate we have  
21 some will obviously be addressed to the government. For  
22 example, some of your recommendations are directed to the  
23 federal government: the federal government must do this,

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the federal government must do that. These are the kinds  
2 of things we would have to take into consideration as well.  
3 It is not just confined to this area.

4 I think Jaimie's point on  
5 federal-provincial relations, obviously some of our  
6 recommendations will have to be directed to provinces.  
7 Others will be directed to maybe the public at large, to  
8 professional organizations, to aboriginal organizations,  
9 aboriginal peoples. When you start to look at the number  
10 of issues we are dealing with, the recommendations will  
11 be directed I think to a number of people.

12 We do not implement, so one of the things  
13 we also have to reflect on is follow-up. It is all very  
14 well to make recommendations; indeed, the Canadian  
15 Paediatric Society's brief to us was written in 1969.  
16 It was done in 1969-70. It was a brief to government.  
17 When we look at the recommendations they made, they are  
18 making them again 23 years later.

19 So one of the things we have to consider  
20 is implementation and follow-up. This is where I think  
21 organizations such as yours should see what we have  
22 recommended and see where it fits in with your interest  
23 and agenda and say: Here is something else that buttresses

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 our position.

2                   There is another point, though, that  
3 needs to be considered, and that is before we finalize  
4 the report we will be going through a series of testing  
5 seminars where we will take pieces of the policy issues  
6 and try to narrow them down, develop a series of preliminary  
7 recommendations or policy directions. And we hope to test  
8 these with governments, with aboriginal people and people  
9 in the area so we get some idea that yes, we are getting  
10 it right; yes, these are the priorities; or you have it  
11 right but you have put the wrong nuance on it, or something  
12 like that.

13                   These will be done in the spring and  
14 early summer. So what I would request of you is that you  
15 keep an eye on our progress and when the report comes out,  
16 I would hope that your organization would be one that  
17 comments on it and says here are some important  
18 recommendations that we would like to see action on.

19                   Thank you for the question.

20                   Our next presenter is the Conference  
21 Board of Canada. I would like to welcome Gilles Rhéaume,  
22 who is the Vice-President; and Stelios Loizibes, Research  
23 Associate.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   Welcome to the Royal Commission. I  
2 apologize for keeping you waiting but we have found that  
3 usually there is far more to discuss than the time  
4 allocated. I apologize and Commissioner Sillett has  
5 apologized to you for having to leave before your  
6 presentation. She felt it appropriate not to get up in  
7 the middle of it. Please accept her apologies as well.

8                   The floor is yours.

9                   **GILLES RHÉAUME, Vice-President,**  
10 **Conference Board of Canada:** On behalf of the Conference  
11 Board of Canada, I want to thank you for giving us the  
12 opportunity to make a presentation this afternoon.

13                   The Conference Board of Canada is the  
14 largest independent private research organization in  
15 Canada that does research in applied areas of economic,  
16 management and public policy issues. We have more than  
17 600 organizations across Canada that are members of our  
18 organization. They comprise of corporations,  
19 governments, associations, unions, et cetera. We also  
20 organize networks for people to dialogue and to share  
21 views, and we organize more than 200 meetings per year  
22 in order to do that.

23                   Over the last year many of our members

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 have mentioned to us their concerns about the state of  
2 affairs of aboriginal peoples and their relationships with  
3 mainstream Canada. Our members recognize the need to  
4 enhance economic development of aboriginal peoples and  
5 to improve the relationships between them and the  
6 non-native peoples and organizations.

7                   The purpose of my comments this  
8 afternoon is, first, to give an overview of the economic  
9 trends that we are seeing in the 1990s and into the 21st  
10 century that will give you the landscape in terms of the  
11 way we see it of the environment in which we will be living.

12                   On the basis of that environment, I would  
13 like to address the challenges that we see for aboriginal  
14 and non-aboriginal peoples and organizations. And  
15 finally, I would like to address some potential actions  
16 that could be taken to meet these challenges.

17                   If we are looking at the economic trends  
18 in the 1990s and into the 21st century, one that is often  
19 in the papers has to do with the globalization of markets.  
20 This globalization is rampant. We are seeing that not  
21 only with the level of product flows across countries but  
22 also in terms of capital. Today there are no closed  
23 markets and we are becoming increasingly interdependent.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   At the same time we are seeing the  
2   integration of the North American economy. This is  
3   leading to a single North American market. The  
4   Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement is bringing major changes  
5   in Canadian enterprise, including subsidiaries of U.S.  
6   multinationals and in some traditional industries.

7                   NAFTA will only accelerate the process  
8   of North American economic integration and will require  
9   further changes in Canadian businesses.

10                  Overall, we are becoming a completely  
11   open economy with its threats and opportunities.

12                  At the same time we are looking at  
13   technological developments that are happening fast,  
14   changing the way we do things. We are looking at automated  
15   manufacturing, CAD-CAM technology, robotics, information  
16   technology, et cetera. It just gives you an overview of  
17   the types of changes that we are seeing in terms of the  
18   way we produce products and services. Significant  
19   investment is taking place in Canadian firms in order to  
20   adapt these new technologies in the work place.

21                  There is another dimension to that, and  
22   that has to do with the customer.

23                  The customer has become the major focus

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of business. there are increasing demands for quality  
2 and fast delivery of products and services. Consumers  
3 also want more variety than ever before.

4 This is leading to again some further  
5 major changes in organizations, including their management  
6 systems and the aspect of trying to speed the process from  
7 customer requirements to delivery of products. At the  
8 same time, we are also seeing major environmental problems  
9 that need to be addressed. Solid and hazardous wastes,  
10 water effluents, air emissions, natural resource  
11 depletion, loss of animal and plant species are all  
12 examples of that.

13 Some of the are problems that are local  
14 in nature but quite a few of them are national and global.  
15 Governments and markets will continue to respond to these  
16 environmental problems which will have an impact on  
17 Canada's economy.

18 There is also the issue of public debt.  
19 The federal and provincial governments have accumulated  
20 a significant level of debt and deficits remain high.  
21 This situation is unsustainable and governments will need  
22 to address this problem.

23 Cost cutting is becoming the only

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 alternative to resolve this issue. some of these cost  
2 savings can occur by reducing the amount of duplication  
3 and overlap between levels of government, as well as  
4 improving the co-ordination and delivery of programs among  
5 different government departments. However, this will  
6 likely not be enough and Canadians will face hard choices  
7 in examining what they can and can no longer afford.

8                   Governments will also have to develop  
9 policies to promote job creation in order to generate  
10 income in this country which will increase tax revenue  
11 and reduce spending on social assistance. It is  
12 impossible to reduce the deficit without any gains in  
13 employment. And this is a lesson that we are currently  
14 learning.

15                   What are the implications for Canada,  
16 its peoples and its organizations?

17                   Canada must compete in the world  
18 marketplace. When looking at competition, we must include  
19 all of its dimensions, such as price, quality, variety,  
20 timeliness of delivery to customers.

21                   We do have some potential advantages.  
22 We can build on our natural resources, but in order to  
23 do this it must become increasingly productive in



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 extraction and processing. It also needs to encourage  
2 increased production of resource-based highly-valued  
3 products at home.

4 Another advantage that Canada has is  
5 flexible, small run production.

6 Canada has small scale plants that can  
7 use technology and a highly skilled workforce to produce  
8 customized products and services. This is an advantage  
9 over U.S. companies.

10 We also have a potential advantage of  
11 producing ore value added products and services, leaving  
12 the lower valued products to be produced by developing  
13 countries. Basically, we cannot compete against  
14 countries like India, China, Korea, Mexico in producing  
15 low valued products.

16 In order to be successful in the 1990s  
17 and into the 21st Century, Canada will require a  
18 well-educated and highly trained workforce. If not, we  
19 will have to accept third world wages and a third world  
20 standard of living.

21 In order for Canadians to be  
22 competitive, we must be able to develop and apply  
23 state-of-the-art technologies in the most effective way

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 throughout our organizations. By combining a highly  
2 educated and trained workforce with state-of-the-art  
3 technologies, Canada will be able to compete successfully  
4 and be prosperous.

5 Technology is also opening the doors to  
6 smaller remote communities for new business opportunities,  
7 education and training. Small and remote communities  
8 today are able to enjoy some of the economic benefits of  
9 the large urban centres.

10 As environmental problems are being  
11 addressed by government and industry, as well as market  
12 forces, Canadian producers and consumers will be affected.

13 The way we produce, consume and dispose of products will  
14 change dramatically. And that also will have an impact  
15 on resource-based industries.

16 The level of public debt is another  
17 implication in terms of the limit of what governments can  
18 do in terms of economic development. They will have severe  
19 limitations in their level of financial support to  
20 communities and projects. Canadians will no longer be  
21 able to rely on government funding for economic  
22 development. Collaborative efforts of all segments of  
23 society will be necessary for this development to take

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 place.

2                               Given these general trends and  
3 implications that I have presented, aboriginal and  
4 non-aboriginal peoples have major challenges that must  
5 be addressed. In order to do so, they will have to work  
6 together since no single group or organization can do it  
7 alone. The following are some of the challenges that we  
8 have identified.

9                               First, the current gaps in economic  
10 wellbeing between aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples  
11 will widen over time unless important changes take place.  
12 Aboriginal peoples, on average, have lower incomes and  
13 standards of living than the average Canadian. These  
14 differences will become greater if aboriginal peoples do  
15 not complete their schooling and be successful in earning  
16 income from productive activities. These gaps will get  
17 worse if aboriginal and non-native peoples do not work  
18 successfully together.

19                              Aboriginal peoples have a higher level  
20 of high school dropouts than non-natives. Although it  
21 is difficult to estimate the degree of that difference,  
22 given the level of data, current information supports this  
23 general statement.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   According to a Conference Board study  
2   on high school dropouts, it costs \$129,000 in lost income  
3   for each male high school dropout over his lifetime and  
4   \$107,000 in lost income for each female dropout over her  
5   lifetime. For aboriginal peoples, such estimates could  
6   be higher because of larger differences in opportunities  
7   for aboriginal graduates and aboriginal dropouts.

8                   The high school dropouts have fewer job  
9   opportunities, higher level of unemployment, and lower  
10  incomes than the graduated and well educated population.  
11  Dropouts are also usually less productive and are more  
12  dependent on social welfare than graduates. These  
13  differences will be greater in the future as employers  
14  require a well-educated workforce that can continuously  
15  learn new functions and work in a highly technological  
16  environment.

17                  When we are looking at the relationships  
18  between aboriginal employees and non-native employers  
19  there are mixed results and frustrations. Non-aboriginal  
20  employers have difficulty coping with the aboriginal way  
21  of doing things, which can be at odds with the  
22  organization's usual business practices and policies.  
23  Aboriginal employees, on the other hand, find it difficult

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to work in a white man's environment that is often  
2 inflexible.

3                   There are cases, however, where  
4 aboriginal employees and non-native employers work  
5 together very well. Lessons from such cases could be  
6 learned by others.

7                   There are also mixed results and  
8 frustrations between native and non-aboriginal business  
9 leaders and executives.

10                   The business linkages between  
11 aboriginal and non-aboriginal companies are often  
12 unsuccessful. The reasons for these failures are  
13 numerous. They include lack of training of aboriginal  
14 entrepreneurs, lack of financial and technology support  
15 in the business relationships, lack of understanding of  
16 each other's way of doing things. Once again, though,  
17 there are cases where such business linkages have been  
18 successful, and we could learn from them.

19                   Another dimension in terms of the  
20 challenges is the conflict between the traditional way  
21 of life and the development of new businesses.

22                   Traditional activities such as fishing,  
23 hunting and trapping are part of the aboriginal way of

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 life. However, in order to foster economic development  
2 of aboriginal communities, it is important to have new  
3 forms of economic activities including resource-based  
4 industries, manufacturing and services. However, the new  
5 sectors can conflict with the traditional activities.

6 Another challenge has to do with the  
7 aspect of land claims.

8 There are many unsettled land claims and  
9 those aboriginal communities that have gained control of  
10 their land must now cope with the responsibility of  
11 managing this land and resources. There is still  
12 significant uncertainty in the control and management of  
13 land and resources which is a difficult situation for  
14 aboriginals as well as non-aboriginals.

15 Given these challenges, what are some  
16 of the options for action that can be taken? The following  
17 is a brief exploration of activities that I would say could  
18 be taken to meet the challenges of aboriginal economic  
19 development.

20 First of all, there is the aspect of  
21 improving the education of our peoples.

22 The Employability Skills Profile  
23 developed by the Conference Board's National Business and

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Education Centre with the help of employers describes the  
2 skills that we must acquire in order to have productive  
3 and rewarding employment in organizations that can compete  
4 in domestic as well as world markets. These skills are  
5 applicable to aboriginal as well as non-native peoples.

6 In addition to these skills, it is also  
7 important to recognize aboriginal cultures, history and  
8 contributions to Canada's society within the education  
9 of our children. By recognizing our First Peoples, it  
10 will help a better understanding and appreciation of  
11 aboriginal peoples by non-natives, and foster in  
12 aboriginal students a sense of pride and identity that  
13 is often lacking in current education.

14 In order to improve the education  
15 system, it is also important to explore the role of new  
16 technologies such as computers and telecommunications,  
17 especially in remote communities. It is no longer  
18 essential to have a physical building called a school in  
19 order to have education.

20 Another option has to do with improving  
21 the economic relationships between aboriginals and  
22 non-aboriginals.

23 There we need to learn from our successes

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 so that future initiatives are also successful and learn  
2 from our failures so that we will be able to avoid repeating  
3 our past mistakes. Areas of improvement include the  
4 following.

5 The aspect of training and development.

6 There is a need in Canada to develop what  
7 is called the learning organization and to use the latest  
8 technologies to be competitive. To do this, a well  
9 educated and trained workforce is essential. A strong  
10 commitment to training and development is, therefore, a  
11 prerequisite for success for aboriginals as well as  
12 non-aboriginals.

13 There is also the challenge and option  
14 of managing cultural differences in the workplace.

15 Employers need to recognize aboriginal  
16 cultures and learn how to manage their operations by  
17 building on the strengths of this culture and the  
18 contributions that aboriginal employees can bring to the  
19 organization. On the other hand, aboriginal employees  
20 need to be productive and to contribute to the continuous  
21 improvements required in business to be competitive.

22 By having a properly educated and  
23 trained workforce, it will also be important for all



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 employees, including aboriginals, to have opportunities  
2 to have successful and rewarding careers.

3                   When we are looking at the linkages  
4 between aboriginal and non-aboriginal businesses there  
5 is the possibility of developing success there that are  
6 good for all parties. Such linkages include contracting,  
7 joint ventures, alliances, technology co-operation, et  
8 cetera. These linkages must be a win-win situation for  
9 all parties in order that the parties see that as an  
10 advantage to them.

11                   When we are looking at the harmonization  
12 of traditional activities with new businesses, this is  
13 an issue that aboriginal communities will have to deal  
14 with and they will have to come to terms in bridging their  
15 past with their future. Traditional activities alone  
16 cannot satisfy the aspirations of younger generations.  
17 New business activities alone divorce the community from  
18 its culture and identity. By finding the right balance,  
19 aboriginal communities will be able to provide the  
20 opportunities for economic development needed while  
21 preserving their heritage and way of life.

22                   Land claim settlements will need to be  
23 resolved and aboriginal communities will need to have god

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 relationships with business and government. If not, I  
2 fear that we will all fail in ensuring our future  
3 prosperity. Co-operation and co-ordination between  
4 aboriginal communities, business and government are  
5 essential if we are to compete successfully in local and  
6 world markets.

7                   Sustainable development is also a  
8 requirement in order to integrate the environment and  
9 economic decision-making. Companies need to have access  
10 to land and resources and will have to use them in an  
11 environmentally sustainable way.

12                   When we look at technology, technology  
13 opens doors for new business opportunities in capturing  
14 new markets for existing activities. Computers, fax  
15 machines, telecommunications are examples of technologies  
16 that can be used for businesses in remote areas to have  
17 access to world markets. By exploring the use of  
18 technology in aboriginal communities, it is possible to  
19 develop new opportunities for economic development.

20                   There is a major hurdle and that has to  
21 do with public awareness of each other.

22                   The public is generally ignorant about  
23 the state of affairs except when crises occur. Generally

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 speaking -- and I know there are some exceptions -- the  
2 non-aboriginals fail to understand the aspirations and  
3 values of aboriginal peoples. Aboriginals fail to  
4 understand the needs and concerns of non-aboriginals.  
5 We have stereotypes of each other that create barriers  
6 for successful relations that will be necessary for our  
7 mutual economic development and prosperity. It will be  
8 necessary to bring down these barriers and public education  
9 will be a key to address this issue.

10 To conclude, the aboriginal peoples is  
11 an important economic group in Canada that will need to  
12 tackle the challenges that I have mentioned. By working  
13 together and building strong relations between aboriginals  
14 and non-aboriginals, we can meet the future challenges  
15 that we face and build an economy that is strong and  
16 prosperous while also ensuring a sustainable environment.

17 Aboriginal peoples will need to become  
18 economically self-sufficient, that is, being able to  
19 generate income through legitimate productive activities  
20 whether they are employees or entrepreneurs, executives  
21 or political officials. Non-native organizations will  
22 need to work well with aboriginals in order to be  
23 successful.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   These are our opening comments.

2                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Thank you very  
3 much for your comments and for the time and attention which  
4 has gone into the preparation of your submission.

5                   I am sure we have some questions which  
6 we would like to ask of you, if you don't mind.

7                   Mrs. Wilson?

8                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** One of the  
9 interesting things about sitting on a Commission like this  
10 and hearing the presentations is the perspectives, the  
11 different perspectives, that different groups bring to  
12 the issues. And one comes to realize when one reads a  
13 brief from one organization that one should reach no  
14 conclusions until one has read the briefs from the other  
15 organizations that are going to bring a different  
16 perspective to the same issues.

17                   There are one or two things that have  
18 made me realize this. Each brief is usually set out so  
19 clearly, and the issues seem so clear and the solutions  
20 seem relatively clear until we have read the other briefs  
21 and then we see that they are not clear at all.

22                   Reading your brief caused me to reflect  
23 on two others that we have heard recently. One was from

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the Trade Union Movement presented by the CLC, and as you  
2 can imagine they were bringing a rather different  
3 perspective to some of the issues you have discussed here.

4 Another one was from the Canadian Anti-Poverty  
5 Association who were also bringing a different perspective  
6 to some of the issues that you are discussing here.

7                   One of the things -- because you mention  
8 it several places in your brief -- is the issue of  
9 technology and the emphasis that you make on the need to  
10 be competitive. Of course some of these other bodies,  
11 particularly I suppose the Anti-Poverty Organization,  
12 says: Well, the attitude of business is that we need to  
13 be competitive and in order to be competitive we have to  
14 resort to the new technology. If that means that people  
15 -- they put the big emphasis on people -- lose out, that  
16 is just too bad. And of course that is not their  
17 perspective naturally.

18                   So we had quite a long discussion with  
19 them about, for example, what the social obligations of  
20 business corporations were. We talked about the fact that  
21 corporations have an obligation to their shareholders and  
22 their duty is to make a profit. The Anti-Poverty people  
23 said to us: But they should have a duty to provide jobs.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   That lead to a discussion about the fact  
2   that individuals had to be good citizens in their  
3   community, and that lead us to ask what is involved in  
4   being a good corporate citizen in the community where the  
5   corporation is doing business. I recalled vividly the  
6   hearings that we held in Timmins and how some of the native  
7   people were talking about their land claims and wishing  
8   that things could be speeded up so that their land claims  
9   could be settled, and some of the corporate executives  
10   from the mining companies who were there said: "Look,  
11   if you keep talking about your land claims, we will pick  
12   up our entire operations and move to Cuba."

13                  So you have some questions that underlie  
14   some of these issues that you are raising. And I suppose  
15   as a Commission we have to think about those. Those have  
16   been highlighted for us in some of the other briefs.

17                  One point, for example, that was made  
18   by the Canadian Anti-Poverty Association was: Well, these  
19   land claims are dragging out and dragging out for years.  
20   Isn't it only right that while they are being negotiated  
21   and before we know ultimately what the result is going  
22   to be that the proceeds from resources on those lands should  
23   be held in trust for the parties as their ultimate right

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 should be determined as a result of the negotiating  
2 process?

3 I thought to myself: Well, that would  
4 certainly speed up negotiations.

5 But that is a different point of view  
6 and way of looking at it. To them, it is only fair that  
7 if you don't know what the settlement is ultimately going  
8 to be, then nobody should be able to make off with the  
9 proceeds of these resources in the interval. Maybe they  
10 should be set aside until we know what the answers are.  
11 It makes very good sense.

12 We are hearing these different  
13 perspectives being brought to bear on some of the things  
14 that you are touching on, and I must say it is the most  
15 fascinating aspect of sitting where we sit and having these  
16 submissions made by different groups with different  
17 perspectives on the same issues. One comes to realize that  
18 none of them are easy. They are extremely complicated  
19 and extremely difficult.

20 With that opening, I wonder if you would  
21 like to respond to that.

22 **GILLES RHÉAUME:** I certainly can  
23 respond in a number of ways because you have mentioned

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 quite a lot of things here.

2 First, yes, I did focus on the aspect  
3 of competitiveness. I focused on that mainly because of  
4 the way we see the world today. Not too long ago, a few  
5 years ago, we had some trade barriers that protected  
6 certain industries from competition. We did not have the  
7 southeast Asian countries that had industries growing and  
8 being able to capture some of the markets that we had access  
9 to before, including our own.

10 And here we are faced with competition  
11 coming from all over, not only from the States which tended  
12 to be our traditional competitor, but now it is coming  
13 from Japan, southeast Asia, from the developing countries.

14 It is putting some pressures on our organizations in order  
15 to be able to continue to produce products and services.

16 If we cannot continue to produce products and services,  
17 we will not have jobs.

18 Unfortunately, though, in order to be  
19 able to do that, we have to look at our comparative  
20 advantages. We are basically a high wage type of country.

21 In order to be able to compete and to be able to continue  
22 to have jobs in this country with the high wages that we  
23 have, we have to be highly productive and to use basically



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 state of the art technology. That is a fact of life that  
2 we are living with at the moment. The only way that we  
3 could resolve that issue is saying could we go back to  
4 where we were before. And I don't see that as a  
5 possibility.

6                   When you are talking about corporate  
7 responsibility as well, the responsibility of corporations  
8 is not only to shareholders; the responsibilities are to  
9 their customers, their employees and the communities in  
10 which they operate. Good corporate citizens realize that  
11 and have ongoing discussions, relations with all of these  
12 groups.

13                   Therefore, it is not only to focus on  
14 one segment; it is actually to focus on all segments.

15                   In terms of the example of Timmins, one  
16 aspect that we have found -- and that is why I mention  
17 in the brief that there are a lot of frustrations that  
18 exist between aboriginal communities, aboriginal peoples  
19 and Canadian corporate executives. There are  
20 frustrations on all sides. But there are examples in  
21 Canada where these sets of relations have reached a win-win  
22 situation, have been able to profit the aboriginal  
23 communities in providing them with opportunities for

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 economic development. They have provided job  
2 opportunities for aboriginal peoples and the corporations  
3 have been able to work with these people very closely and  
4 ensure that all involved were successful.

5                   But those are some cases. And there are  
6 lots where I feel there are still a lot of frustrations  
7 and a lot of failures. The same thing with business  
8 linkages. In my talking to corporate executives across  
9 the country, they show certain instances where they saw  
10 some aboriginal businesses be very successful and they  
11 are basically contractors to these corporations and are  
12 thriving on the demands from these corporations. But  
13 there are other examples where it has failed.

14                   It is only when we can learn from the  
15 successes and the failures that I think we will be able  
16 to improve the relationships that exist between the  
17 corporations and the aboriginal peoples. But it is not  
18 easy. It is not something that we can do overnight and  
19 it is not something that the government can do necessarily.

20       It really involves a lot of groups and it involves as  
21 well a lot of education and training. First of all, you  
22 have to actually go out there and see where are the  
23 successes, where are the failures, and try to learn from

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   them and try to then communicate that to others so that  
2   others can learn.

3                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:**   I couldn't  
4   agree more.

5                   Does the research that you do tell us  
6   anything about the -- is the gulf widening between rich  
7   and poor in Canada? Do your studies address that kind  
8   of question?

9                   **GILLES RHÉAUME:**   It is hard to identify  
10   that. We have not done it per se. The trend we are seeing  
11   is very recent in the sense that if we are looking at that  
12   it really started with the 1990-91 recession, and major  
13   changes have occurred since then.

14                  Of course for those who are gainfully  
15   employed and those entrepreneurs who have been very  
16   successful, there is a lot of income being generated out  
17   of that. On the other side, those who have lost their  
18   jobs or who cannot find employment, they are in greater  
19   and greater difficulty.

20                  I would say that we do not have the  
21   evidence yet to support or refute the thesis that the gulf  
22   is widening, but I would imagine that if the trend continues  
23   it will widen over time, if it has not already.

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1                                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:**

2   Apparently the studies done in the U.K. indicate that this  
3   is so very dramatically, that the gulf is widening.

4   Certainly you hear a lot of people who would have hitherto  
5   described themselves as the middle class no longer so  
6   describing them. They are lining up at the food banks.

7                                   So it looks as if the same trend is maybe  
8   present here.

9                                   **GILLES RHÉAUME:** I think we would agree  
10   with that, and in terms of that if we are looking at the  
11   situation of unemployment in Canada, a lot of them tend  
12   to be longer term unemployment than we have seen before.

13   That is creating some problems in terms of the  
14   distribution of income between the lower income and higher  
15   income families. It is not like we saw, for example, in  
16   previous recessions and recoveries where the length of  
17   unemployment was not as long as we are currently seeing  
18   and the major changes that we are seeing in business and  
19   in government now, we have not seen that before, at least  
20   since the great depression.

21                                   Therefore, I would say that is creating  
22   more tension in terms of the gulf that you have mentioned.

23   We don't see that being resolved in the short term. We

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 think it is going to last for a while yet.

2 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Certainly  
3 we read that many of the jobs that have been lost have  
4 been lost permanently, that they are not going to come  
5 back; hence the emphasis on retraining.

6 Is it your sense, the sense of the  
7 Conference Board, that there is not much happening in  
8 terms of retraining of the people whose jobs are  
9 permanently lost? This is certainly what we hear.

10 **GILLES RHÉAUME:** There is a challenge  
11 there. First of all, there are a lot of jobs that have  
12 been lost and have been lost permanently, and that is right.  
13 A lot of them have tended to be in large organizations  
14 as well. There are other jobs that are being created in  
15 small and medium-sized dynamic firms. Unfortunately, the  
16 skills that they require are not necessarily the skills  
17 that are out there in the marketplace, and those who have  
18 lost the jobs often do not have those skills.

19 Retraining is a major issue and looking  
20 at the evidence so far there is still lots to be done in  
21 that particular area.

22 So it is a major challenge.

23 In terms of training inside the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 organizations for those that are employed, employers are  
2 increasing their efforts in terms of training their  
3 workforce, and that is evident. But it is for those who  
4 are out of work where we see this problem.

5 Another major issue has to do with labour  
6 mobility. Where job opportunities may be created are not  
7 necessarily where you see the greatest gaps in terms of  
8 unemployment. There is that problem of being able to  
9 mobilize people from one area to another in order that  
10 they can find a proper jobs as well as be trained and be  
11 gainfully employed afterwards.

12 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Certainly  
13 the unemployment rates in aboriginal communities are  
14 frightening, to say the least.

15 **GILLES RHÉAUME:** Definitely.

16 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** About 80  
17 and 90 per cent in some areas.

18 **GILLES RHÉAUME:** And this I think a  
19 challenge in the sense that for the survival of these  
20 aboriginal communities we must find forms of economic  
21 development, forms that when I refer to technology, it  
22 is one option. But at least technology is opening a door  
23 that was not there before and it is one that could be

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 explored more fully, including the areas of education as  
2 well as basically new businesses that could be developed.

3                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** I agree with  
4 your comments about technology. I think it can be both  
5 a blessing and a curse, and I think it can have some negative  
6 consequences for traditional societies when you have the  
7 two systems, mindsets, cultures, living side by side.

8                   As Mrs. Wilson said, it is interesting  
9 how the different briefs raise things that stick in one's  
10 mind. In the presentation we had this morning from the  
11 Canadian Executive Services Organization, one of their  
12 points was that from their volunteers is where computer  
13 networks have been installed in local governments -- these  
14 are aboriginal governments -- to make them more efficient.

15 But few communities arrange for training of their members  
16 to use and maintain these systems, resulting in under use  
17 and neglect of the systems.

18                   They say there is always money for  
19 feasibility studies to start up and then everybody goes  
20 home and there is nothing left for follow-up and  
21 continuation. It strikes me that if we are going to  
22 recommend the increased utilization of faxes and local  
23 area networks and satellites and all the other gadgetry

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 that we have come to take for granted now, we also have  
2 to remember that the repair and maintenance and operation  
3 of these systems is not like turning on a light switch.  
4 It requires a fair amount of training and back-up.

5 Another point: In the brief that you  
6 submitted to the Commission in September you mentioned  
7 that a number of resource development companies are  
8 postponing expansion or development plans pending  
9 decisions on land claim settlements, which makes me realize  
10 that the more quickly these land claims are resolved the  
11 better everybody is, not just getting the uncertainty out  
12 of the way but the fact that a number of things can be  
13 done with respect to them.

14 Were there any examples that came to mind  
15 when that comment was made, things that we could point  
16 to?:

17 **GILLES RHÉAUME:** It is hard to give you  
18 an example right off the bat like that. It is just that  
19 over the last year I have been travelling across Canada.  
20 I have travelled a lot in western Canada and spoke to  
21 quite a number of executives in the mining, forest  
22 products, oil and gas sectors. And the message came time  
23 and time again in terms of that as an issue. This is why



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 we feel that that is one issue that has to be resolved.

2                   It is hard for a company that needs to  
3 have access to land or to its resources not knowing who  
4 will eventually control and manage this land and resources.

5     It is a question of that uncertainty as well as getting  
6 the rules set up in the beginning that is creating a lot  
7 of difficulties in order to see further development of  
8 these resources and further development of thee  
9 organizations.

10                  It is an aspect that I am saying that  
11 because they are not being resolved, it is creating some  
12 frustrations, not only for the aboriginal groups that are  
13 trying to negotiate them but also for Canadian  
14 corporations.

15                  The other aspect that I feel is important  
16 to note is that there is also an issue that once land claims  
17 are settled it is still an issue in terms of how these  
18 resources will be managed and what will be the rules in  
19 terms of these resources. That is one which I think is  
20 still one that needs to be resolved as well.

21                  So it is not only the land claim  
22 settlements but once they are settled, what comes next?  
23 That is going to be one of the other challenges, I think.

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** I think you are  
2 absolutely correct on that. Again, this is something that  
3 has been pointed out to us. Indeed, in the Canadian Labour  
4 Congress brief that we heard on Monday of this week, this  
5 is one of the issues they raised as well. I think they  
6 are very conscious of it.

7                   There are a couple of other points in  
8 your brief that I think need stressing as well. there  
9 is the emphasis you place on the problem associated with  
10 drop-outs. I think you heard prior our discussion with  
11 the Canadian Federation of Students. They too are  
12 concerned about that.

13                  I suppose one of the most critical things  
14 is what you state in your brief at page 8, that being the  
15 harmonization of traditional activities with new  
16 businesses and how to find -- I think you used the term  
17 the right balance, and how do these two world views connect.

18                  An earlier presentation feels that there  
19 is tremendous potential for -- I think you call them  
20 micro-enterprises; they said small business opportunities  
21 -- in many of the native communities, and they were trying  
22 to develop ways in which these could be stimulated and  
23 blended into the larger mainstream society. One of the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 examples that they use is that many of these aboriginal  
2 micro-businesses or small businesses should concentrate,  
3 for starters, for example, on government procurement  
4 programs where they can get their products into the market  
5 that way. Another thing they talked about was an  
6 aboriginal trade market where people knew that this  
7 particular thing was manufactured or made by an aboriginal  
8 community.

9                   They like you are trying to find ways  
10 to harmonize both worlds, we might say.

11                   Those are all my questions. You might  
12 want to respond to that or make any concluding comments.

13                   **GILLES RHÉAUME:** The only thing I would  
14 say in terms of an example of that as well that I was  
15 interested in finding out has to do with Syncrude Canada  
16 and its operations in Fort McMurray. They have a number  
17 of visitors from all over the world and they used to give  
18 them gifts. But these gifts tended to be produced in other  
19 parts of Canada, actually other parts of the world, until  
20 they found this artisan in the Fort McKay Band who produced  
21 beautiful artifacts. They decided instead of spending  
22 money on these gifts that are produced elsewhere, why don't  
23 we join forces with this artist? And they have done so.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 It has been so successful that now it is a thriving little  
2 business where she is not alone but she has others working  
3 with her in terms of these artifacts.

4 That is a small example but it is an  
5 example of things that could be done differently and that  
6 would be successful for all parties concerned.

7 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** That is an  
8 excellent example and is certainly one that I will take  
9 note of since Syncrude is in my backyard. I think in our  
10 final report and our docs we have to point to specific  
11 success stories where people can say "I can relate to that",  
12 as opposed to some vague generality. So concrete examples  
13 like that are very helpful.

14 Do you have any concluding remarks or  
15 observations?

16 **GILLES RHÉAUME:** No. I just want to  
17 thank you for giving us an opportunity to speak this  
18 afternoon. As an organization, we are looking carefully  
19 in terms of where we can make a contribution in this area.  
20 Our members are looking at this as a major issue facing  
21 Canada, a major issue facing their organizations and they  
22 are looking at us in order to see how we can make a  
23 contribution given our expertise and our knowledge in terms

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of making contributions to help in terms of aboriginal  
2 economic development and the relationships that exist  
3 between aboriginals and non-native groups.

4 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** You have made  
5 that very clear in your brief and in your presentation  
6 that we received, dated September. I know there are some  
7 questions you raise in terms of research and I intend to  
8 get back to our organization to make sure that some of  
9 these questions are at least being addressed or at least  
10 that they are aware of them.

11 Thank you very much for your time this  
12 afternoon and for your presentation. We appreciate it  
13 very much.

14 We are having a little huddle up here.  
15 We have to re-adjust the schedule a little bit. So  
16 please bear with us for one second, please.

17 Ordinarily, we would break at this time  
18 for coffee but one of our next presenters has to catch  
19 a plane at 5 o'clock, and so do I. I am going to Edmonton  
20 and if I don't catch this plane that means I will not get  
21 home tonight, which means I do not teach my class tomorrow  
22 at 9 o'clock, which means I will have some upset students.

23 So with your indulgence, what I would

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 like to do is, first of all, apologize to you for the delay,  
2 but some of the presentations have taken a little longer.

3 We invite you now to make your presentation.

4 I would also like to apologize to the  
5 Meadow Lake Tribal Council for not being in a position  
6 to hear your presentation because I was looking forward  
7 to it.

8 Commissioner Wilson will be here to take  
9 your presentation and I can assure you I will look at the  
10 transcript to see what your remarks were.

11 In terms of this next presentation, what  
12 we should do is make the presentation and then maybe figure  
13 out where we go from there. I don't know how long it takes  
14 to get out to the airport, but the line-ups sometimes are  
15 a little long.

16 **NORA SOBOLOV, Director, Government**  
17 **Affairs & Policy, Canadian Co-operative Association:** I  
18 am an expert at getting people to the airport on time.  
19 It is part of my job. So we will get you there.

20 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** You are on.

21 Let me welcome the Canadian Co-operative  
22 Association. Our presenters are Ms Jo-Anne Ferguson and  
23 Ms Nora Sobolov, who is the Director, Government Affairs

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1     & Policy.

2                             The floor is yours.

3                     **NORA SOBOLOV:** Thank you. I am Nora  
4     Sobolov, and on behalf of the Canadian Co-operative  
5     Association we would like to thank you for this invitation  
6     to appear before you today.

7                     I would also like to apologize for our  
8     inability to get you a brief in advance. We were rather  
9     occupied with the recent federal election and we were  
10    unable to do that.

11                    I would like to give you a brief  
12    introduction to our organization and the co-operative  
13    system and then I will ask my colleague from Credit Union  
14    Central of Saskatchewan, Jo-Anne Ferguson, to outline for  
15    you specific ways in which the provision of financial  
16    services could be improved for both on and off reserve  
17    communities.

18                    The co-operative systems spans many  
19    sectors of the economy, but due to the limitations of time  
20    we will concentrate on this key aspect of our system.

21                    Co-operatives were created to allow  
22    economic and democratic self-reliance for communities  
23    across Canada, and we feel that we are uniquely suited

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to suggest solutions to some of the problems you address.

2                   The Canadian Co-operative Association  
3 is a national trade association for Canada's  
4 non-francophone co-operatives. We work closely with our  
5 francophone colleagues, the Conseil Canadien de la  
6 Coopération, on a number of initiatives at the national  
7 level.

8                   Canada's 10,000co-operatives play a  
9 vital role in the economic and social life of the country.  
10 They are a model of community innovation and self  
11 reliance, giving members and their communities control  
12 over a piece of their economic future. With assets of  
13 over \$100 billion, the co-operative system provides a wide  
14 range of goods and services through many different sectors  
15 of the economy. While many second tier co-operative  
16 businesses such as the Wheat Pools and Federated Co-op  
17 stores were listed among Canada's top companies, due to  
18 the nature of our structure primary co-operatives operate  
19 as community owned small businesses.

20                   One way to envision the difference  
21 between a co-operative and a conventional joint stock  
22 company is to consider an inverted pyramid. the members  
23 of the local primary co-op, for example a retail store,



**November 18, 1993****Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 own the store and decide how it will run. Their membership  
2 is not based on the size of their capital investment; rather  
3 each member may own shares, but each has an equal say in  
4 the running of the retail. The retail in turn sends  
5 representatives to make decisions about the wholesaling  
6 operation. The wholesaling operation (a second tier  
7 co-op) looks for ways to maximize the savings to the retails  
8 and provides collective services, such as training, to  
9 the members. It sends surplus over operating costs back  
10 to the retails in the form of patronage rebates.

11 This system has sent millions back into  
12 local economies through the years. In some communities  
13 the co-operative is the economic lifeblood in the area.

14 Millions of Canadians are members of  
15 co-ops and through these organizations Canadians own and  
16 control their own businesses, which provide them with  
17 marketing, financial services, data retrieval, retail  
18 stores, housing, health care, and a host of other services.

19 You have already heard from Arctic  
20 Co-operatives, who is one of our members, during your  
21 earlier hearings. Many other co-ops within their specific  
22 service or industry sector have Band Councils and First  
23 Nation peoples as members. As part of our mandate, one

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 section of our upcoming national Congress will be an  
2 examination of ways to better serve the aboriginal  
3 community, and we would be pleased to keep you informed  
4 of our progress.

5 But what we would really like to do today  
6 is offer some concrete examples of ways in which we are  
7 trying to serve the aboriginal community and things we  
8 feel need to be improved.

9 I would like to turn to my colleague  
10 Jo-Anne Ferguson, who will outline for you some of the  
11 work of her organization.

12 **JO-ANNE FERGUSON, Manager, Research,**  
13 **Credit Union Central of Saskatchewan:** Thank you very  
14 much. I work with the Credit Union Central of  
15 Saskatchewan. In that province over 40 per cent of the  
16 people who live there are credit union members and over  
17 24 per cent of all mortgage loans and 20 per cent of all  
18 farm loans are held by credit unions.

19 As at the end of last year, total assets  
20 were \$5.4 billion. We have over 350 service outlets around  
21 the province that credit union members are served through.

22 I work with Credit Union Central, and  
23 we are the provincial association which is owned and

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 controlled by the local credit unions.

2 The experiences I will describe are from  
3 Saskatchewan. However, I know that these are experiences  
4 by credit unions and aboriginal people right across the  
5 country.

6 As background, credit unions are full  
7 service financial institutions competing in a very highly  
8 competitive marketplace, serving the needs of consumers  
9 as well as their corporate account needs.

10 As co-operatives, credit unions are a  
11 vehicle for the development of communities. They offer  
12 financial services to residents of the community and are  
13 owned and controlled by their members. Credit unions were  
14 formed because people needed financial services. Since  
15 they continue to serve the needs of members, they continue  
16 to thrive.

17 Credit unions do have a strong  
18 relationship with aboriginal people and aboriginal  
19 communities. In Saskatchewan over 25 per cent of First  
20 Nation Bands conduct a substantial portion of their  
21 business with the local credit union. For many credit  
22 unions First Nation Band members represent a large  
23 percentage of their membership base.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   Earlier this year Saskatchewan credit  
2 unions together with the Gabriel Dumont Institute, which  
3 is owned by the Métis Society, jointly sponsored a  
4 conference on northern economic development.

5                   A few other examples of how we are  
6 directly involved include the following:

7                   During the height of seasonal employment  
8 Prince Albert Credit Union sends a loan officer and a teller  
9 to the Montreal Lake Band reserve which is about an hour  
10 and a half from the nearest town. They set up an office  
11 in the band member-owned grocery store and cash cheques  
12 and take loan applications.

13                  Three credit unions in the province  
14 which are located adjacent to reserves offer regular summer  
15 employment and co-op student job placements to Band  
16 members.

17                  The Prince Albert credit union, as well  
18 as the Northwest credit union, which is located in the  
19 northern part of the province in Buffalo Narrows, have  
20 taken a youth money management program which is called  
21 "Your Money's Worth" to norther communities such as Stanley  
22 Mission and La Loche. They are also piloting consumer  
23 financial planning workshops with employees of the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Montreal Lake Indian Band. This material will be used  
2 by credit unions around the province in offering services  
3 to aboriginal people.

4                   The LaRonge Indian Band is going to be  
5 opening a service outlet of the Prince Albert Credit Union  
6 early next year, and this will be an on-reserve service  
7 outlet.

8                   In 1990 a new credit union opened in  
9 Saskatchewan, the NorthWest Credit Union. Buffalo  
10 Narrows is primarily an aboriginal community. This was  
11 the first new credit union that had been opened in the  
12 Prairies for quite a number of years, and it is the most  
13 northern financial service in the province. Eighty per  
14 cent of the employees of the NorthWest Credit Union and  
15 80 per cent of the board of directors are First Nation  
16 or Métis people.

17                   There is the Median Credit Union which  
18 is located in Winnipeg. It serves exclusively Métis and  
19 First Nation people.

20                   The White Bear Indian Reserve has  
21 accepted a proposal from the Estevan Credit Union in  
22 Saskatchewan to provide automated banking services in the  
23 on-reserve casino.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   In 1994 Saskatchewan credit unions will  
2 continue to work on improving the way that we provide  
3 services to aboriginal communities. An assessment of the  
4 financial service needs of aboriginal people, communities  
5 and organizations is just about complete. Since May of  
6 this year we have interviewed leaders of 25 First Nation  
7 bands, five Métis Locals, as well as a number of  
8 aboriginally-owned organizations and a cross-section of  
9 aboriginal consumers and business owners.

10                   These interviews, along with our ongoing  
11 relationship, have led us to think that the following are  
12 the issues for aboriginal people and for offering financing  
13 services to aboriginal people and communities:

14                   First is education.

15                   Aboriginal consumers as they secure  
16 employment and develop income-generating ventures are  
17 looking for information to assist in money management and  
18 budgeting skills. I mentioned a couple of examples that  
19 are already under way.

20                   Most institutions, and in particular  
21 credit unions, are looking for effective ways to contribute  
22 to, and encourage, the education of aboriginal people.  
23 One example, we have made a contribution to the building

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College facilities.

2 As well, staff of credit unions and  
3 Credit Union Central are often working with the Indian  
4 Federated College or Gabriel Dumont Institute in helping  
5 the instructors present workshops on planning, research,  
6 board responsibilities, marketing and finance to  
7 aboriginal business students. As well, quite a number  
8 of credit unions around the province have scholarships  
9 to encourage post-secondary education.

10 As economies on reserve communities  
11 continue to develop, they are going to need on-reserve  
12 financial and other retail services. We are looking for  
13 viable ways to deliver financial services. One way we  
14 are attempting to meet some of these unique needs is using  
15 available technology. For example, loans can be arranged  
16 over the telephone, the teleservice idea, and the documents  
17 could be signed using a fax machine.

18 We are also trying to use the debit card  
19 technology so that cash can be available at the local  
20 band-owned grocery store.

21 Employment is an important issue.  
22 Education continues to be the key. We need to build  
23 bridges and maintain bridges between educational

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 institutions, financial institutions and aboriginal  
2 leaders so that candidates are available with the necessary  
3 post-secondary training.

4                   We find in the financial industry that  
5 entry level jobs require a higher level of skill today  
6 than they did a decade ago. There is no longer a cheque  
7 filing clerk. That is done by machine. So the entry level  
8 position in a financial institution now requires some  
9 business education training. When you come in and deal  
10 with the teller, he or she is also going to be able to  
11 talk to you about doing your investments. That is the  
12 way the financial industry is moving.

13                   We need to make sure that aboriginal  
14 people are well trained to move into those positions.

15                   Credit unions would like to obtain the  
16 skills and expertise of aboriginal leaders on boards of  
17 directors to ensure the diversity among their members is  
18 represented. Through the democratic control structure  
19 aboriginal people have the opportunity to be elected to  
20 credit union boards of directors. This role can also  
21 benefit aboriginal people. It provides leadership skills  
22 and business practice skills that can assist in some of  
23 the educational goals of developing aboriginal nations.



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   A number of credit unions are directly  
2   soliciting board candidates from the neighbouring bands  
3   so that they can have aboriginal people on their boards  
4   of directors.

5                   As well, we have a director training  
6   program called the Credit Union Director Achievement  
7   Program that is being made available to aboriginal boards  
8   of directors. It covers things like board's rules and  
9   responsibilities.

10                  The development of co-operative  
11   organizations is attractive to many aboriginal communities  
12   and it has been used extensively in the North. You have  
13   already heard from the Arctic Co-op, which is a member  
14   of the Canadian Co-operative Association.

15                  The co-operative model is one of  
16   self-development and self-reliance and it may be suitable  
17   for self-government initiatives. Through credit unions  
18   First Nation and Métis people can circulate capital within  
19   their community while developing human capacity.

20                  The development of credit unions to  
21   serve the northern communities has been carefully  
22   researched. The issue for co-op development in the north  
23   is the need for the development of infrastructure to

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 develop these services and make them viable. There have  
2 been proposals and business plans developed particularly  
3 by northern community bands and groups like the Arctic  
4 Co-op. The southern credit union system is ready to  
5 participate, both with financial and technical assistance.

6 So far, governments have focused on individual  
7 development of financial institutions, but this method  
8 of development, in our experience, does not lead to  
9 long-term viability or sustainability. We need to look  
10 at having the infrastructure to serve the needs of the  
11 community and the developing organizations.

12                   Aboriginal communities are very aware  
13 of the outflow of investment dollars and are seeking ways  
14 to recirculate this capital from the development of their  
15 own communities. As credit unions, we are looking for  
16 ways to assist.

17                   Economic development of aboriginal  
18 communities creates the desire for business development  
19 by band members, and their needs are for start-up and  
20 investment capital business education as well as business  
21 skills. Some programs do exist but we have found that  
22 aboriginal micro and small business owners do not feel  
23 that they have easy access.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   Currently we are looking at joint  
2 ventures with established or emergent aboriginally-owned  
3 organizations, such as the Saskatchewan Native Economic  
4 Development Corporation or the Saskatchewan Indian Equity  
5 Foundation, to syndicate loans for small business  
6 development as well as we are working with the Community  
7 Futures Group to provide business education, such as record  
8 keeping and business plan development.

9                   Youth is an important interest for  
10 everybody, and the demographics show a growing need to  
11 concern ourselves with the constructive involvement of  
12 aboriginal youth. Education and employment are of course  
13 critical. In many northern communities language and  
14 access often are barriers.

15                  Credit unions, including all  
16 co-operatives in Saskatchewan, are working on a joint  
17 venture with aboriginal organizations to develop a  
18 co-operative youth leadership program. This program  
19 would be of interest to aboriginal as well as  
20 non-aboriginal young people.

21                  Financial institutions are not always  
22 aware of important band financing, band member or Métis  
23 financing issues. This can inhibit successful service

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 relationships. Also, with the many changes happening in  
2 the Indian Act and other related legislation, sometimes  
3 it is difficult for credit unions to navigate the  
4 legislative maze and to keep up with the changes.

5                   At Credit Union Central we are  
6 attempting to keep on top of these changes and pass this  
7 information to credit unions. We are also attempting to  
8 help credit unions as well as credit unions are trying  
9 to help people in their communities understand the changes  
10 that are going on in the aboriginal development.

11                   The Canadian public is not always aware  
12 of the circumstances or issues of negotiation between  
13 aboriginal and non-aboriginal nations. For example,  
14 there is widespread misunderstanding in a lot of prairie  
15 communities about the intent and effect of the Treaty Land  
16 Entitlements.

17                   How this affects credit unions, I will  
18 give you an example.

19                   There is a community just outside of  
20 Regina at Fort Qu'Appelle and the Star Blanket Band is  
21 negotiating to purchase some land in town and then go  
22 through the process to have that declared Reserve land.  
23 They are negotiating with the town to replace the tax

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 laws and offer a package, and the town has come out and  
2 said: "No, absolutely not. We do not want to lose this  
3 tax income." So the town is being split. The credit  
4 union, of course, serves aboriginal and non-aboriginal  
5 people, and it is an important issue for them to understand.

6 We are trying to help credit union  
7 leaders understand and be informed on the issues, but there  
8 is still a need for the public. Credit unions and all  
9 co-operatives are a reflection of their members'  
10 attitudes.

11 Credit unions are committed to serving  
12 aboriginal people and aboriginal communities. There are,  
13 however, a couple of major problems that are having an  
14 effect in this area.

15 One is taxation. The earnings on  
16 investments by First Nations or First Nation Band members  
17 in a financial institution which is headquartered  
18 on-reserve are not taxable. There is a great deal of  
19 confusion about the application of this ruling. Since  
20 most established credit unions are owned by both aboriginal  
21 and non-aboriginal members, it is difficult for credit  
22 unions to provide this non-taxable status. Other  
23 financial institutions have opened branches on reserves

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to comply with this ruling. However we are still uncertain  
2 if a branch on-reserve meets the taxation regulations and  
3 the definition of a branch. The intent of this taxation  
4 issue really needs to be clarified.

5 The second issue is lending.

6 Credit unions want to lend to both  
7 aboriginal consumers and their commercial accounts; for  
8 example, First Nation bands and band-owned businesses.  
9 This service is demanded by our customers who are also  
10 our members and owners. There is a section in the Indian  
11 Act -- and I am sure you have heard lots about it through  
12 these hearings -- that complicates lending to First Nations  
13 people. It prohibits collection of collateral if it is  
14 on-reserve as well as the taking of land as collateral.

15 It seems to us that the corporate  
16 financial needs of bands or band-owned businesses seems  
17 to be served relatively well mainly through creative  
18 response to the Act. However, individual consumer band  
19 needs are not adequately being met.

20 Agreements between the government,  
21 First Nation bands and organizations can cause further  
22 complications. Credit unions and their larger band  
23 members have been looking at ways to take security within

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the confines of the Indian Act. This is, however, a  
2 pervasive issue.

3                   Recently, our colleagues from Manitoba  
4 described a problem to us. The Credit Union Central there  
5 was asked by a credit union to help them deal with an  
6 operating loan to a band. All the band's other lines of  
7 credit had been withdrawn. The band depends on winter  
8 roads to bring in supplies and without a loan, no supplies  
9 can be purchased and the roads will not be fit for  
10 travelling soon.

11                   Officials from Indian and Northern  
12 Affairs brought a new agreement forward, but this agreement  
13 assigned band payments to the credit union. However, it  
14 also stated that should a financial manager of the band  
15 decide to pay other operating expenses instead of the loan  
16 payments, the loan would not be paid. Under these  
17 circumstances it is unlikely that any financial  
18 institution would provide this lending.

19                   These are long-standing problems which  
20 I am sure you have heard lots about, but I raise them only  
21 to highlight that even financial institutions that are  
22 owned by their consumers are unable to serve their needs  
23 with this type of legislative impediment.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   The third issue is the Treaty Land  
2 Entitlement Agreement.

3                   Credit unions are not listed as a  
4 possible financial institution on the Treaty Land  
5 Entitlement Agreement. We believe that this was due to  
6 a lack of awareness of the structure and importance of  
7 credit unions among federal government officials. Since  
8 that time, Saskatchewan credit unions were granted blanket  
9 approval as an acceptable financial institution.  
10 However, other credit unions across Canada have not been  
11 included.

12                  Credit unions are working with  
13 aboriginal people to determine their needs and  
14 expectations and were committed to developing ways to meet  
15 these needs. Using the needs assessment, we are moving  
16 to meet the needs of both band organizations and individual  
17 consumers. We believe that when both sets of needs are  
18 addressed, the economic development opportunities of  
19 communities will be realized.

20                  I would like to thank you very much for  
21 this opportunity and we would be pleased to answer any  
22 questions that you might have.

23                  **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Thank you very



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 much for your presentation. You certainly have touched  
2 upon a number of the issues which have come up before us,  
3 including why aren't more credit unions or co-ops  
4 established. This has certainly been very helpful in  
5 clarifying some of the issues but also in indicating what  
6 is possible. And for that I thank you.

7                   It is very educational and instructive  
8 for us, particularly your highlighting at the end of the  
9 paper some of the problem areas. We have certainly heard  
10 about the second one, the lending. I do not know if we  
11 have heard about the taxation one. But we have certainly  
12 heard about the lending, and the example that you give  
13 is one of course that is quite interesting because  
14 obviously there is a real problem with respect to getting  
15 in the supplies during the winter.

16                   Mrs. Wilson, do you have any questions?

17                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** In  
18 relation to education and the problem of the level of  
19 education that most aboriginal people have in their  
20 involvement with credit unions, have the credit unions  
21 done any surveys as to the extent of the involvement of  
22 aboriginal people and the credit unions?

23                   **JO-ANNE FERGUSON:** Are you thinking as

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 members?

2 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** No. You  
3 mentioned that they could be on boards of directors in  
4 relation to the government's aspect that you are  
5 addressing. I am wondering if that is happening, in fact.

6 **JO-ANNE FERGUSON:** To my knowledge,  
7 there are four First Nation people in the province of  
8 Saskatchewan who sit on credit union boards. There have  
9 been more and less in the past, but probably no more than  
10 ten in the last decade. Right now, in the last two or  
11 three years, and it will continue, there is a real push  
12 by probably a dozen credit unions to find First Nation  
13 or Métis people to sit on their boards. We are not finding  
14 education to be a barrier. What we are finding is that  
15 the people who are usually interested in serving on a credit  
16 union or co-operative board are the leaders in the  
17 community, people who are committed to the development  
18 of the community. We are finding in the First Nation and  
19 Métis communities that their leaders are already  
20 overworked. That is the practical difficulty we have had.  
21 They are so busy in building their own nation that it  
22 is difficult to reach out.

23 But we also have had more success. the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 experience that a number of bands are having as trustees  
2 of their Treaty Land Entitlement dollars, there are more  
3 band members getting involved in the financial development  
4 of the band so it is piquing their interest to be involved  
5 in the credit union as well.

6 But there is a tremendous demand on the  
7 leadership.

8 **NORA SOBOLOV:** I think in the north it  
9 is a bit of a different issue. I think we point out that  
10 in great numbers people have come forward and said that  
11 they would like to start credit unions in the north,  
12 particularly because there are not alternative financial  
13 institutions there. And there are people prepared to run  
14 those boards, sit on those boards and run the  
15 organizations. The problem there is the infrastructure.

16 Since I have been with CCA, which is  
17 about four years now, I have had approaches from Indian  
18 and Northern Affairs about five times asking if there was  
19 some way that we could do development of credit unions  
20 in the north. We worked with the band groups who did a  
21 business plan and said yes, we would like to participate  
22 and we would like to do this. We have the business plan,  
23 the financial support, all of those things. What we do

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 not have at this stage is the government support for that  
2 type of development. So I think the people are there and  
3 I think the plan is there. I think in this case what we  
4 need is a sort of switch view about how development happens  
5 and what would be a viable system of financial institutions  
6 in the north.

7 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Credit unions  
8 are established by the provinces under provincial  
9 legislation?

10 **NORA SOBOLOV:** They are regulated by  
11 provincial legislation but they are established by those  
12 people in the communities.

13 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** But they are  
14 regulated provincially.

15 **NORA SOBOLOV:** Yes.

16 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Is there any  
17 impediment to credit unions being established in either  
18 the Yukon or the Northwest Territories?

19 **NORA SOBOLOV:** The biggest impediment  
20 is the lack of an infrastructure there. While there are  
21 central in all the provinces, there is no stabilization  
22 fund, a range of things that you need to ensure the healthy  
23 activity of those financial institutions.

November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** So just a  
2 blanket recommendation that credit unions in the north  
3 would be a great idea, it is not that simple.

4                   **NORA SOBOLOV:** No.

5                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Another  
6 question -- and I am also mindful of the time.

7                   Let's say a group of people want to  
8 establish a credit union. What is the critical mass of  
9 people? What is the minimum number of people you need  
10 to establish a credit union?

11                  **JO-ANNE FERGUSON:** I wish I could just  
12 say a hundred and that's it, but it is not quite that easy.  
13 It depends how much you want to do. A credit union can  
14 be everything from a savings and loans place to a place  
15 that you go to buy mutual funds. It can be everything.  
16 It depends what your business case is, what you want to  
17 do.

18                  The rule of thumb -- it comes down to  
19 money -- is that you need 10 per cent in equity, 10 per  
20 cent of what you want to led out. So it depends how big  
21 you want to do and what you want to do with it.

22                  There are credit unions operating very  
23 nicely, thank you, in communities of 500 people.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   Credit unions in the prairies grew out  
2 of -- we talk about development of communities. There  
3 is the two surrounded by the farm, and that is where the  
4 credit union grew out of. So as we are finding towns  
5 declining in population in the prairies and  
6 correspondingly the number of farmers are declining too,  
7 there are credit unions operating very nicely with two  
8 and three hundred members.

9                   So it is possible but it depends what  
10 they want to do.

11                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** My final  
12 question, then -- and you and I can perhaps discuss this  
13 in the taxi and Commissioner Wilson and Nora can continue.

14                   Is there a minimum geographic area or  
15 can a credit union be province-wide? Does it tend to be  
16 geographically located?

17                   **JO-ANNE FERGUSON:** It depends on your  
18 bond of association; it depends who your members are.  
19 There could be an ethnic credit union that covers the whole  
20 province. Historically there has been a parish community  
21 or a Ukranian credit union which was for all people of  
22 Ukranian origin in a province, or it could be a geographic  
23 town or it could be a community within a town. It depends

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1    what the credit union sets up as its bond of association,  
2    who they wish to serve.

3                    **NORA SOBOLOV:** Part of what Jo-Anne  
4    described around the technology was trying to serve remote  
5    communities through branches and through fairly creative  
6    means with existing both services and stores as well as  
7    technology. I think that is quite possible, getting rid  
8    of some of the impediments that we talked about.

9                    **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** I would like to  
10   continue but I think I had better resist the temptation.  
11   This has been very instructive and informative to me.

12                   **JO-ANNE FERGUSON:** I would offer to give  
13   you information on the way to the airport, but if there  
14   are other things that we can provide information on, Nora  
15   or I would be happy to.

16                   **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** This may be the  
17   first part of our hearings which have been conducted in  
18   a taxi.

19                   Commissioner Wilson reminds me that we  
20   have two more presentations this afternoon, so I think  
21   we will call this one to a close. Thank you very much  
22   for your time and energy in putting this together. It  
23   will be helpful. I can assure you of that. We can

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 continue the dialogue.

2 **NORA FERGUSON:** I would just say feel  
3 free to contact our Ottawa office if you have any questions  
4 or want more information.

5 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** I see you have  
6 one in Edmonton too.

7 **NORA FERGUSON:** We have one in every  
8 region of the country.

9 **COMMISSIONER MEEKISON:** Our next  
10 presenters are the St. John Ambulance and the Meadow Lake  
11 Tribal Council. I would ask them to come forward.

12 We will have to move a table so it will  
13 take a minute or two before we can get everyone together.

14 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Since my  
15 fellow Commissioners have progressively deserted me as  
16 the day has worn on, I have invited Linda to join me for  
17 moral support. I will ask her to take over and to tell  
18 you a little bit about yourself.

19 **LINDA JORDAN, Secretary, Royal**

20 **Commission on Aboriginal Peoples:** Good afternoon and  
21 welcome.

22 My name is Linda Jordan. I am the  
23 Commission Secretary to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal



November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 Peoples, and I am of Ojibway heritage.

2 As Commissioner Wilson indicated,  
3 Commissioners Meekison and Mary Sillett due to prior  
4 commitments have had to leave the session early today.  
5 As you may know, today is the last day of our public hearings  
6 being held in Ottawa. This is the fourth and final round  
7 of public hearings. During the week of November 29th there  
8 will be one additional week of hearings held in Montreal.

9 In my capacity as Commission Secretary,  
10 I am responsible for overseeing much of the executive level  
11 support required for the Commissioners and in that capacity  
12 I am pleased to be able to be here this afternoon and to  
13 hear the brief of the Meadow Lake Tribal Council and St.  
14 John Ambulance.

15 I understand that it is Mr. Eric Barry,  
16 Chancellor. Perhaps you could proceed and introduce your  
17 colleagues.

18 **ERIC BARRY, Chancellor, St. John**

19 **Ambulance:** I would be delighted. Thank you very much.

20 This is a joint presentation by St. John  
21 Ambulance and the Meadow Lake Tribal Council.

22 There will be five of us making brief  
23 interventions, and I will introduce them in the order in

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1    which they will appear. First of all, there is myself,  
2    the Chancellor of St. John Ambulance, which is the way  
3    we describe the national chairman. I am a volunteer.

4                    Second, there will be a brief  
5    presentation by Miss Joan Wills, who is Deputy Director  
6    of Training Health Care on the staff of the St. John  
7    Ambulance national organization.

8                    Third, we have someone with us who has  
9    had long experience in relating to aboriginal peoples,  
10   Mr. Max Rispin, who is the Commissioner for the St. John  
11   Ambulance Brigade in the Northwest Territories and who  
12   has come from Yellowknife to be with us today.

13                   Finally, from the Meadow Lake Tribal  
14   Council we have Senator Fred Martell and Ms Marcia Mirasty.

15                   Our colleagues from the Meadow Lake  
16   Tribal Council have an exciting story to tell and a moving  
17   message and to afford them full opportunity and to leave  
18   some time for questions those of us intervening from St.  
19   John Ambulance are going to abbreviate what opening  
20   statements we filed with you a little bit. We have both  
21   put in detailed submissions. So let us proceed.

22                   I should tell you that there are really  
23   three objectives today.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   We want to tell you first, very briefly,  
2   about the St. John Ambulance organization.

3                   Second, we want to tell you something  
4   to share with you something of the long experience we have  
5   had in providing training and health care services to  
6   aboriginal peoples in different parts of the country.  
7   That is why Mr. Rispin is here. Our greatest activity  
8   has been in the Northwest Territories but we have been  
9   doing this in all provinces of Canada.

10                  Third -- and we wanted to spend the major  
11   part of the time on this -- we have embarked on an exciting  
12   new experiment with the Meadow Lake Tribal Council through  
13   our Saskatchewan Council of St. John Ambulance, and we  
14   will tell you a little bit about that in the course of  
15   the day.

16                  St. John Ambulance is a national,  
17   non-governmental organization with a mission to enable  
18   Canadians to improve their health, safety and quality of  
19   life by providing training and community service.

20                  In a moment Joan Wills will describe some  
21   of the courses and the types of training that we offer.

22                  We have had a long and proud relationship  
23   working with aboriginal Canadians across the country.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Our contact, as I said, has been mostly in the Northwest  
2 Territories where St. John Ambulance courses are taught  
3 with training materials translated into Inuktitut and a  
4 variety of languages spoken by the Dene people.

5 We have brought samples of some of this  
6 literature and we have a package to leave with you.

7 In Ontario, to cite another example, we  
8 have just developed a new northern wilderness first aid  
9 course which is being designed to support aboriginal and  
10 non-aboriginal survival skills.

11 At this time we would like to reiterate  
12 our commitment to the aboriginal peoples by offering health  
13 promotion courses that will assist healthy lifestyles,  
14 reduce injuries and prepare individuals to cope with life  
15 threatening situations.

16 As I said earlier, we met with the Meadow  
17 Lake Tribal Council staff. We offered to it the courses,  
18 the instructor training and the Brigade organization that  
19 we have, and these services have been well received. We  
20 will tell you a little bit more of that story as we proceed.

21 What we offer to aboriginal communities  
22 is what we offer to all Canadians, and that is an  
23 opportunity for empowerment through the provision of

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 knowledge. We need to access resources that will  
2 strengthen us as a nation. We need information and skills  
3 that will empower us to assume control and mastery of our  
4 life and environment. St. John Ambulance courses are one  
5 of the resources that can help us to do that.

6 What I would like to do now is show you  
7 a very brief video just to dramatically illustrate that  
8 first aid training is just a little more than applying  
9 a bandade or stopping a nose bleed.

10 **(Video Presentation)**

11 **ERIC BARRY:** The second presentation is  
12 by Joan Wills.

13 **JOAN WILLS, Department Director of**  
14 **Training, St. John Ambulance:** Good afternoon.

15 I would like to talk a little bit about  
16 our various courses.

17 Decisions are influenced by our  
18 knowledge, our experience, common sense and sometimes  
19 intuition. It is important to use these components to  
20 make good decisions, especially when they relate to healthy  
21 lifestyles.

22 St. John Ambulance courses help  
23 Canadians make decisions. Our courses are practical, the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 content easy to understand, and the practice sessions  
2 realistic.

3 St. John Ambulance courses are designed  
4 to help anyone cope not only in emergency situations but  
5 in daily living. To do this, St. John Ambulance has  
6 developed courses for all age groups. For example, the  
7 "Child Care Course" for new parents describes caring,  
8 feeding and getting along with your baby, as well as  
9 immunization and childhood illnesses.

10 The "We Can Help" course for young  
11 children uses cartoons to stress safety and basic first  
12 aid. The babysitting course entitled "What Every  
13 Babysitter Should Know" teaches the care and handling of  
14 infants and young children to prepare for a babysitting  
15 job.

16 First aid courses range from basic  
17 preparation to advance training for those living where  
18 emergency help is not readily available.

19 Cardiopulmonary resuscitation, CPR, can  
20 save a life. It is what is needed when breathing stops  
21 due to choking, a stroke, drowning or electrocution.

22 Our "Family Health Care Course" looks  
23 at health within a family and how to care for a sick or

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 convalescent person at home, including using materials  
2 available around the house to make the sick person  
3 comfortable.

4                   The "Healthy Aging Course" helps older  
5 people to continue living independent, healthy and  
6 productive lives while the "Caring For the Aged Course"  
7 teaches the nursing skills needed to care for an elderly  
8 person at home.

9                   Other courses such as "Wilderness First  
10 Aid" and "Northern Survival" are important for those living  
11 or working in remote areas.

12                  In some areas the St. John Ambulance  
13 instructors are aboriginal nurses or community health  
14 representatives who adapt St. John courses to meet the  
15 needs of the community. The impact of St. John courses  
16 is fewer injuries. This is due to the safety orientation  
17 that is part of each course. It is, however, not enough  
18 to know why injuries happen. We must know how to prevent  
19 them as injuries are one of the leading causes of death  
20 in our population.

21                  St. John Ambulance offers training to  
22 promote health, reduce injuries and cope with emergencies.

23       St. John Ambulance is aware that aboriginal communities

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 face many health and social problems. We feel strongly  
2 that we can help.

3 St. John Ambulance resources can be an  
4 effective part of health and wellness programs for the  
5 aboriginal peoples. The courses are one option that can  
6 increase self-reliance and healthy lifestyles.

7 St. John Ambulance is interested in  
8 working with the Meadow Lake Tribal Council and other  
9 aboriginal communities to assist them in reaching their  
10 health and wellness goals.

11 In closing, I want to show you a brief  
12 section of a video that was produced by St. John Ambulance  
13 concerning health for aboriginal seniors.

14 **(Video Presentation)**

15 **ERIC BARRY:** The third part of our  
16 presentation is by Mr. Rispin.

17 **MAX RISPIN, Provincial Commissioner for**  
18 **NWT, St. John Ambulance:** Thank you.

19 Just as background, I have lived in the  
20 north, both in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories,  
21 for over 30 years and have worked as an educator, instructor  
22 and more recently as the Emergency Measures Co-ordinator  
23 for the Territorial Government. My children live in the



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Northern Yukon in Old Crow, and my daughter is the sub-chief  
2 of the band up there, so I have worked closely with the  
3 people of the north.

4 In the late 1970s while funded by Donat  
5 Foundation of Canada my mandate was to train native  
6 northerners in first aid, health care and CPR, and to give  
7 further training to those people who had an inclination  
8 and wanted to become instructors in their own communities.

9 During this time I delivered specific courses to groups  
10 as diverse as polar bear hunting guides and airline crews.

11

12 These courses included the use of  
13 so-called bush remedies, such as the use of spruce gum  
14 as an antiseptic and also for using it for stitching cuts  
15 when combined with sugar and vasoline. Another remedy  
16 called for the use of spores from puff balls to aid in  
17 coagulation at a wound site.

18 I mention these as but two examples of  
19 the type of knowledge that is provided for people that  
20 live and work on the land.

21 My association with the St. John  
22 Ambulance Brigade over the past 15 years, together with  
23 the resurgence of interest in holistic health care, has

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 led us in the north to make a start in providing a way  
2 for aboriginal northerners to enter some of the health  
3 care professions.

4 Initially this process which I am going  
5 to describe will be set into motion in the following  
6 communities: Ft. McPherson, Norman Wells, Lac la Martre,  
7 Ft. Providence and Rankin Inlet. These communities  
8 already, with the exception of Ft. Providence, have mobile  
9 units or ambulances which are principally used to transport  
10 patients from the health centre to the airport for the  
11 nurse in charge.

12 Using Lac la Martre as an example of what  
13 in the Brigade are attempting to do, is as follows:  
14 Twenty-four volunteers have signed up for the initial first  
15 aid course which will lead the participant to become an  
16 active Brigade members. This will be followed by a  
17 defensive driving course and other instruction leading  
18 to a Class 4 drivers licence. A Class 4 drivers licence  
19 is necessary if you want to drive an emergency vehicle  
20 such as an ambulance and/or a fire truck.

21 We have worked with the various chief  
22 and mayors of these communities to identify potential  
23 candidates. Initially, the ambulance would be fully

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 controlled by the health centre but our experience and  
2 expectation is that as the embers become more confident  
3 and their skill and knowledge levels increase, they will  
4 be allowed more independence.

5                   In Fort Rae, for example -- St. John  
6 Ambulance has a professional ambulance operation there  
7 -- four of our staff will complete their emergency medical  
8 technician training this weekend. I am pleased to learn  
9 that one member has a mark of 99 per cent and will likely  
10 be identified as an individual having instructor  
11 potential.

12                   I would anticipate that the members from  
13 these other communities would be able to spend time with  
14 their colleagues in Fort Rae or in Inuvik to advance their  
15 skills. For those members interested, the level of  
16 Brigade training could be extended to the advance level  
17 and lead to possible employment as emergency services are  
18 developed in the communities.

19                   At the present time there are no  
20 standards for the provision of ambulance service in the  
21 Northwest Territories. Together with the Fire Chiefs  
22 Association, we expect to implement standards early next  
23 year. These standards will require ambulance attendants

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to hold or be working toward certification as an emergency  
2 medical technician.

3                   We are working together with our local  
4 arctic college to establish courses that will lead  
5 graduates to become public nurses, registered nurses or  
6 registered nursing assistants. Who knows, maybe one day  
7 we will see a number of local northerners becoming doctors.

8                   The north is in a state of flux. I think  
9 that we have just begun to scratch the surface in  
10 identifying mineral deposits. There really are diamonds  
11 in the rock and the muskeg that make up our land. In the  
12 absence of any major infrastructure to support this type  
13 of development, there is a demonstrated need for a  
14 proactive method of teaching first aid so that people are  
15 prepared to deal with the difficulties of living on the  
16 land.

17                   We have had some successes. Last summer  
18 three teenagers in Lac la Martre rescued a young boy from  
19 the lake. In the four to five minutes that he was under  
20 water his core body temperature dropped from 39 to 34  
21 degrees. You realize that usually at four minutes without  
22 oxygen, the person is brain dead. Not only did the three  
23 teenagers pull the young lad from the lake but they also

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 resuscitated and provided the correct treatment for  
2 hypothermia. The community health nurse advises that the  
3 young boy would not be alive today if it had not been for  
4 their intervention. All of their skills had been acquired  
5 through their St. John Ambulance training.

6 In the last year we have had similar  
7 stories come out of Iqaluit, Iglulik, Fort Simpson and  
8 Fort Rae. St. John has a system for recognizing heroic  
9 behaviour such as this. I hope that each one of the  
10 individuals involved feel some sense of pride in that which  
11 they have done. I know that I am proud of them.

12 Thank you.

13 **ERIC BARRY:** Next is Senator Fred  
14 Martell from the Meadow Lake Tribal Council.

15 **FRED MARTELL, Meadow Lake Tribal**  
16 **Council:** Good afternoon.

17 Without going through where I come from  
18 and all that and my biography, I will give you the reason  
19 why we think very strongly of requesting education in the  
20 health area. I won't go into it too much because the young  
21 lady here will be presenting the submission.

22 I come from the memory since 1929 and  
23 the 1930s of the education system that existed at that

**November 18, 1993****Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 time. It was not very much considering that, I suppose  
2 for a lot of reasons, at 15 years of age if you started  
3 at 12 years old you was automatically turned out. The  
4 education was not controlled by us but mostly by  
5 missionaries. Two forms of education was religion and  
6 a bit of agriculture up to 15. I suppose in them days  
7 I could not have expected too much.

8 But up to 25 years ago, in late 1967-68  
9 when we formed as a district, the ten reserves, for a lot  
10 of years we did not have people that graduated from grade  
11 12. We hardly ever heard of that. My first move after  
12 20 years of work going through the Northwest Territories,  
13 B.C. and Saskatchewan in all forms of work, I went to the  
14 reserve and as the paper says I became chief six months  
15 later and held the seat for 25 years with my full power  
16 and to get some form of education. Today I am happy to  
17 be sitting here with people presenting something that I  
18 have lived with. For ten years I had the only vehicle on  
19 the reserve. I have had babies born in my car 50 miles  
20 away with no knowledge of anything. I have had three  
21 babies born in my car. I have had people die in my car.  
22 The only vehicle 50 miles away, no store, no nothing.  
23 It was not a happy situation. But I pulled through it

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and lived through it to today and I am sitting here today  
2 and enjoying my life.

3                   The submission that is in front of us  
4 today is why I think strongly that even families need  
5 education. Even if we have nurses, where are they at  
6 night? They have gone home 40 miles away, or whatever.  
7   Ninety per cent of our problem seems to exist in that  
8 area, at night, and without the knowledge and without  
9 anyone taking over the action it is not so easy to live  
10 way out 50 miles away from the first service. We are lucky  
11 we can say 50 miles. The farthest reserve community would  
12 be 250 miles. But there is a hospital within 120 miles  
13 from La Loche to Ile à la Crosse. The next is Meadow Lake  
14 which a lot more people come into that.

15                   The education that is required by the  
16 St. John Ambulance is so important in my mind that could  
17 help people, the young children. I am trying to cover  
18 time here and cutting across everything. That is why it  
19 is a little bit harder for me.

20                   With that I think you can understand me.  
21   You have knowledge of the past performance. I have in  
22 the hardest of ways lived through that portion. Today  
23 if we had some form of education I think today we are seeing

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the high cost of health in the northern area, in northern  
2 Saskatchewan. It is because people have to be transported  
3 and planes have to be used and everything. The knowledge  
4 is needed there.

5 I would certainly like to hear the young  
6 lady present the submission. Thank you.

7 **MARCIA MIRASTY, Health Promotion**

8 **Co-ordinator, Health & Social Development, Meadow Lake**

9 **Tribal Council:** Thank you. I would like to first begin  
10 by talking briefly about our history as Indian people.  
11 To understand what I am going to be talking about, I am  
12 going to be talking about the challenges that we are facing  
13 as a health and social development unit, which is part  
14 of the Meadow Lake Tribal Council.

15 We have a history of oppression and  
16 disempowerment from the government and the residential  
17 school systems. In that we have multi-generational grief  
18 which is issues that have been passed on from our  
19 great-grandparents to our grandparents, to ourselves.  
20 And if we are not aware of it, it can be passed on to our  
21 children and our grandchildren.

22 There have been a lot of abuses that have  
23 taken place. Perhaps one of the strongest abuse in our



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 mind is the disempowerment, the taking away of control  
2 from Indian people to government agencies. One instance  
3 of that is the residential school which took away children  
4 from their families and the hospital systems which  
5 discouraged traditional medicines and herbs.

6 I would like to talk about some of the  
7 needs that are being expressed by our communities.

8 Our needs are defined by the  
9 communities, our First Nation communities. They are  
10 community based and community paced. They determine what  
11 they want and when they want to start it. The needs are  
12 guided by the wisdom of the elders and the community  
13 grassroots members which are carried out by chief and  
14 council.

15 Some of the challenges of health and  
16 social are kind of in two separate categories.

17 The social needs that have to be  
18 addressed are issues like family violence, violence  
19 against women, child neglect, sexual abuse,  
20 drug/alcohol/inhalant abuse, verbal abuse, suicide,  
21 accidental deaths, and the list goes on. In terms of  
22 health, we are trying to take a preventative look at health.  
23 In our northern area we have a high incidence of diabetes

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and TB. With our high birth rate we have to look at  
2 preventative measures for AIDS and STDs. With the high  
3 alcoholism we have to look at fetal alcohol syndrome, which  
4 is 100 per cent preventable. We have to look at our  
5 nutrition and our traditional foods and encourage  
6 traditional medicine and herbs to be passed on.

7                   The ways that we are meeting these  
8 challenges are through education. We have been holding  
9 community workshops and school presentations and we have  
10 been having skill transfer training for caregivers. We  
11 have had three main training events for our caregivers  
12 in which we bring the front line people into one main  
13 location and talk about what they determine to be their  
14 greatest need.

15                   The first one we did was kind of a basic  
16 overview of family systems of Indian people. In that they  
17 looked at the history and the multi-generational grief  
18 issues that have been passed down. It was then followed  
19 by inner child work, because we believe you can only help  
20 people as far as you have helped yourself.

21                   For a lot of our caregivers, they need  
22 to identify what is holding them back from helping other  
23 people. Maybe that is why they cannot help the person

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 who has been physically abused because they have never  
2 done anything about their own abuse in the past.

3                   Our proudest accomplishment is when we  
4 had a chief's assembly in April. We had about 300 people  
5 in attendance, and basically this assembly was a three-day  
6 awareness workshop on the issues of health and social  
7 development. We had a caregiver's panel in which the  
8 caregivers in the community talked about what issues they  
9 are facing, what do the people talk about when they go  
10 to the NNADAP worker or the CHR. What are they really  
11 facing? They talked about sentencing circles, which is  
12 an alternate form of sentencing people. They talked about  
13 their vision for zero tolerance.

14                   With that I will get into visions.

15                   For our tribal council the main vision  
16 is self-government. We would like to take control over  
17 services from the government to ourselves to control the  
18 services. We have taken over technical services,  
19 education, health and social development and economic  
20 development. They have a large number of people working  
21 in the forestry section and we are looking into other ways  
22 of self-government.

23                   For our health and social development

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 office we are looking to build community infrastructure  
2 to build up health and social committees at the band level  
3 and human resource teams to address issues on their  
4 reserve. We would like to assist the First Nations in  
5 developing their own unique community visions. We would  
6 like to see that holistic health, the balance between mind,  
7 body and spirit, be inter-disciplinary between programs  
8 at the Tribal Council level and within their own band staff  
9 and within other programs with other Tribal Councils within  
10 the province.

11 We would like to encourage networking,  
12 team working and co-ordination.

13 The First Nations at the chiefs'  
14 assembly expressed the desire for continued healing. We  
15 are in an era of healing for aboriginal people. Healing  
16 is a long process. They have a vision of zero tolerance  
17 whereby family violence will no longer be acceptable,  
18 violence against women will not be acceptable, elder abuse  
19 will not be acceptable, et cetera.

20 They are looking at maintaining their  
21 culture, pride and language. They are looking for  
22 responsible leadership and they are looking forward to  
23 healthy and happy communities.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   I would like to now talk about wellness  
2 and healing journeys.

3                   Wellness is a state of mind. It is the  
4 balance between mind, body and spirit. A healing journey  
5 is addressing issues that have affected you in your life.  
6 It is a life-long journey and it has a rippling effect.

7                   People are becoming aware of healthy and  
8 unhealthy behaviours. They are becoming accountable and  
9 responsible to self, family and community. There is also  
10 a negative side to the journey to wellness, and that is  
11 that there is a lot of denial and fear out there.

12 Communities are saying: "No, we don't have sexual abuse.  
13 We don't have an alcohol problem. We don't have child  
14 neglect here." But yet there are tragic stories to be  
15 told in our communities.

16                   So awareness and education is our big  
17 tool to combat this.

18                   In terms of my own health promotion  
19 program, I try to incorporate traditional values and  
20 culture into every project that we undertake. I have  
21 worked on AIDS awareness, fetal alcohol syndrome awareness  
22 and right now we are working on a role model writing  
23 contest. We hope that out of this we can get people

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 thinking about what are role models and then follow it  
2 up with a Tribal Council role model poster because too  
3 often children have a hard time identifying with other  
4 role models.

5                   We are interested in networking with  
6 other organizations who have the focus of preventative  
7 health. That is why we have looked to St. John Ambulance  
8 because we do have a high number of preventable injuries.  
9     Statistics show that 90 per cent of injuries are  
10 preventable. Our communities have expressed the desire  
11 for skills transfer in the area of safety, emergency first  
12 aid, CPR and babysitting. We are networking with St. John  
13 to complement and enhance both our visions of health and  
14 wellness, by improving health, safety and quality of life,  
15 by providing training and community service.

16                   We would like to combine all  
17 preventative aspects into the health promotion programs.

18                   Since we have taken over health and  
19 social development in the last two and a half years, what  
20 we have learned is that we have to draw on our strengths  
21 as a Tribal Council. We have two cultural groups, the  
22 Dene and the Cree. We need to draw on the wisdom of the  
23 elders. We need to continue the use of our traditional

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 values. We need to look at our cultural heritages and  
2 our pride in our language. We need to encourage practise  
3 of traditional medicines and herbs.

4 So meeting needs is having an effect.

5 It is empowering people by instilling confidence,  
6 promoting teamwork and networking between our First Nation  
7 communities. The net result is that people are becoming  
8 increasingly aware of the health and social issues that  
9 we are facing. The widespread awareness is leading to  
10 community action, community planning and vision building.

11 There is a desire to stop the cycle of abuse and  
12 dysfunction and lean toward a more positive lifestyle which  
13 incorporate a sense of pride and culture.

14 Networking with outside agencies is  
15 helping us meet our needs. Self-government is our vision  
16 for the future, and healthy people make healthy decisions.

17 Thank you.

18 **ERIC BARRY:** That concludes our  
19 presentations. We would be very happy to answer  
20 questions.

21 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** We have  
22 been hearing as we have travelled through all the  
23 communities about the issue of healing and about the many

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 factors that have contributed to the creation of  
2 dysfunctional communities. One of the things that has  
3 troubled me during our hearings was the ambivalent attitude  
4 of many of the women and women's groups about testifying,  
5 coming forward and speaking to us about the living  
6 conditions in their communities. I think we must have  
7 gone on for almost a year without hearing very much from  
8 the women. In many cases they would put their names down  
9 to make a presentation at the hearing, but when the time  
10 came for them to come forward they would not come forward.  
11 And we were becoming increasingly concerned about that.

12 We finally decided to hold in-camera  
13 hearings. We had some concern initially about whether  
14 you could hold public hearings in-camera. It seemed a  
15 little strange. However, we did realize that if we did  
16 not hold in-camera hearings for the women and women's  
17 groups we just were not going to hear what they wanted  
18 to say to us.

19 I think it was a very sensible move on  
20 our part because we did hear a lot about the things that  
21 you are talking about, family violence, sexual assault,  
22 and other problems in the community.

23 It seems that there has been this



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 tendency to deny the existence of some of these problems.  
2 Certainly we must address them somehow or other in our  
3 report because they are there and they are a reality.  
4 That is one of the matters that we are extremely concerned  
5 about.

6                   In fact, some of the women and women's  
7 groups have gone so far as to say to us: "We are not sure  
8 that our communities are ready for self-government until  
9 we have gone through the healing process." They have  
10 indicated their concern that maybe it was premature to  
11 think about self-government before at least some measure  
12 of healing had been accomplished in the communities.

13                   We have now heard a great deal about this  
14 problem and we are very concerned about it. We realize  
15 this is something that aboriginal people have to do for  
16 themselves, that there is not perhaps a great deal that  
17 we can recommend or governments can do other than, I  
18 suppose, provide funding where that is required and would  
19 be of assistance. But essentially it would seem to be  
20 something that the native people have to do for themselves.

21                   I mention that because it has come  
22 through to us that many of the native women are more  
23 hesitant about the concept of self-government than the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 native men.

2                   The other thing that we learned from the  
3 women at these in-camera hearings was their concern about  
4 native self-government in terms of wishing to be reassured  
5 that it would be accountable to the constituency and  
6 particularly of course to the women in the communities.  
7 That was another emphasis that was made to us.

8                   In connection with the health and  
9 wellness of course we learned a great deal from the native  
10 people about their holistic approach to health and that  
11 polluted water and absence of sewage systems, and so on,  
12 were health issues as far as they were concerned. I must  
13 say that that approach to health has a tremendous appeal.  
14 It makes an awful lot of sense.

15                  I understand that this is one of the  
16 things we learned today from one of our presenters, that  
17 this is one of the interesting differences that has taken  
18 place since native health boards came into existence, such  
19 as under the James Bay Agreement where native people have  
20 taken charge of things like health boards, education boards  
21 and so on. This is one of the changes that happened, was  
22 this much broader definition of health that the new health  
23 board with native leadership had developed.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   I had been asking what difference -- we  
2    had heard so much about the fact that the native people  
3    did not just want to administer services; they did not  
4    just want to be service providers. They wanted to be  
5    determining the priorities and making the policies with  
6    respect to health. That is what prompted me to say: Would  
7    there be much difference? Is there much difference in  
8    areas where native people have their own health board?  
9    And one of the illustrations that was given was this larger  
10   perspective of what was involved with health, and that  
11   these things should be the responsibility of the health  
12   board, things like sewage systems, clean water, and so  
13   on. That was very interesting.

14                  One question I wanted to ask is this:  
15    We had been told that accidents were very prevalent in  
16    native communities. Is there some reason for that?

17                  **FRED MARTELL:** In most stages of life  
18    the lack of education, the lack of performance in so many  
19    ways without education, you can see that happening anywhere  
20    in the world. For the past 25 years especially, the  
21    promotion of self-government, I have lived so long with  
22    being told every day that I wanted to say take over  
23    education, take over social services, because I can do

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 better knowing the people. I was pretty strict when I  
2 handled welfare. I said if you quit school for no reason,  
3 you are going to have to answer to me, and two years from  
4 now don't step in my office. Go back to education. If  
5 you quit your job for no reason, you are going to have  
6 to answer to me. If you have a good job, build yourself  
7 up. In so many ways we have to learn. It is just an  
8 indication of having to learn.

9                   Towards self-government, for the last  
10 25 years I pushed that in every place until now today,  
11 just like I said, we have educated people that are going  
12 ahead. I just sit on the side and feel happy that it is  
13 happening in so many areas, policies, administration,  
14 accountability. All these can never happen without  
15 experience. A hundred years from now if just sit down  
16 and all of a sudden I want to take this and be accountable  
17 and be done, who was perfect 100 years ago? Our education  
18 has been going on 100 years. Today we have caught up to  
19 it and we are going to take some control of it, have some  
20 say so. And I think we are getting a few hundred people  
21 graduating in every stage right now and making policies.

22                   Next week I have most of the week in  
23 Edmonton called by chiefs and councils, some that want

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to ask me questions in regards to policies, administration,  
2 accountability, and all that. I say I am not educated  
3 but I have been through the mill for 35 years and pretty  
4 well in every nature. All these things are nothing new.  
5 It is something we have to learn.

6 In justice I covered quite an area, North  
7 American review of justice this past July in Tulsa,  
8 Oklahoma. I spent four days there. I got an invitation.  
9 Again I got another invitation in Vancouver in the justice  
10 department area; next week in Edmonton. I am not saying  
11 because of this but I think I have covered a large area  
12 and educated myself to the point.

13 In the wellness and healing system, a  
14 lot of people say: "What are you going to use?" I have  
15 to have deep respect for myself and forgive and respect  
16 other people as they come along. That is one form. It  
17 is forgiving, sharing and all that. That is the greatest  
18 healing process that we can live with. As you all know  
19 the history, when we did not have a voice, when we did  
20 not have a say so, we were pushed to the extreme. I am  
21 not trying to build it up or anything like that, but having  
22 lived through it, that is the healing portion.

23 A lot of the young people ask me: "What

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 do you use to heal?" A circle. "Why the circle?" The  
2 circle is we sit down and everybody is equal. No big people  
3 to answer to or anything like that. We are all the same.  
4 We all sit in a circle. Everything we do is in a circle.  
5 That is a form of healing.

6 All these things build a future for us,  
7 how we can be of some good to the society that we live  
8 with, to the government that is responsible to us and for  
9 us responsible to them. It is a learning situation.

10 Thank you.

11 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** We have  
12 heard at many of the hearings how important the native  
13 people felt education was and we have heard about a lot  
14 of the problems that they ran into, particularly when the  
15 children had to leave their own community to go to the  
16 nearest centre to high school, and particularly the fact  
17 that if at the lower levels of the schooling, at the junior  
18 level, primary level, if they had not acquired a sense  
19 of self-esteem through being exposed to their own language  
20 and culture and history and tradition, if they had not  
21 acquired that then they would encounter problems when they  
22 left the community and went into the city and encountered  
23 the racism that they were inevitably going to encounter

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1   there.

2                               We were told about some very imaginative  
3   curricula that had been developed by elders and teachers  
4   and parents in the communities. Many of them said the  
5   provincial curriculum is no use for us. It is not suitable  
6   for the education of our children and we want to take control  
7   of the education of our children. Several communities  
8   came up with I thought wonderfully imaginative curriculums  
9   to build up the sense of identity of their children when  
10  they were quite small so that when they got older they  
11  could go out of the community and would not drop out of  
12  school, would not be back in the community after three  
13  weeks in the high school. They would be able to handle  
14  it if they had this solid training and teaching from the  
15  elders and others as to who they were, where they came  
16  from, and had a real pride in themselves and their people  
17  that this was the way to go in order to solve the drop-out  
18  problem so that the kids would continue in the high schools  
19  and graduate and hopefully move on from there.

20                           So education is something that we have  
21  heard so much about as we have travelled in the communities.

22                           **FRED MARTELL:** I am very talkative.

23   That is one of my problems. I can see what you mean.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I think we have overdone some of the education aspect of  
2 our lives. Now today we find our grandchildren not talking  
3 our language, all talking English. We talk to them in  
4 our language and they laugh at us.

5 At one time I had brought children to  
6 the next community 25 miles away so that they could learn  
7 faster and mix easier and better. I had that intention  
8 for a long time. But then after three years of our children  
9 attending, we was told we could come in and sit down some  
10 place but could have nothing to say. You have no business  
11 here. We have our board. You don't have a word in here.

12 I kept that for three years and finally  
13 I said: "All right. You have your board. You have your  
14 work. I will make my work." today we have our high school  
15 and everything. The community is still fighting amongst  
16 themselves: Why didn't you tell them that? Why didn't  
17 you come out? I wanted to do that. I tried for many years  
18 to have that but every time you sit down being told you  
19 haven't got a word, finally you get tired of it. Sadly  
20 to say, it is sad because a lot of people in that area  
21 are good friends of mine. They still are. But we have  
22 a little bit of friction. too bad it didn't happen that  
23 way.



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   We are going ahead. There is a problem  
2 from our schools to the universities. Because I have  
3 broken English I have sat in universities this summer,  
4 the University of California at Sacramento, for three or  
5 four days there and I watched people freely speaking in  
6 that university there because there are four or five  
7 different languages. You come from a Cree language into  
8 Saskatoon University, I watch our own people. They get  
9 scared of the language, scared they will make a mistake.  
10 It does happen. But sooner or later I think that is what  
11 we are trying to build on: strength, pride. No matter  
12 if I make a mistake. That is not new. I have always made  
13 mistakes. One failure again. I will come out of it.

14                   Thank you. I talk too much.

15                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I think  
16 this is a wonderful partnership that you have instituted  
17 with the St. John Ambulance. That is just great. I am  
18 delighted to hear about that. That is a real model that  
19 could be adopted in other communities.

20                   It is obviously going to be quite a long  
21 time before there are enough native doctors, nurses and  
22 other health care workers to serve the communities. That  
23 is going to take quite a while. So I think this is a great

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 idea. You are to be complimented on achieving that. That  
2 is wonderful.

3 **LINDA JORDAN:** Picking up from  
4 Commissioner Wilson in congratulating you on the  
5 partnership that you have developed, can you share if there  
6 were any obstacles that you had to identify and overcome  
7 in bringing the St. John Ambulance and the Meadow Lake  
8 Tribal Council together? And how did you overcome them?

9 **JOAN WILLS:** This is very early in our  
10 relationship and I think for us certainly it is a great  
11 learning experience. There is much we don't know about  
12 aboriginal ways. Even in our teaching materials, some  
13 people feel it was all created for downtown Toronto and  
14 Ottawa and does not have the cultural sensitivity. We  
15 are quite aware of that and we are building that into our  
16 courses.

17 For us it is really, as our Chancellor  
18 said, an honour and a privilege to be able to work with  
19 the people, that they are willing to take the time because  
20 they have many, many things to do, as you have heard.  
21 But then we can sit down together and take from our  
22 materials or the resources that we have that they could  
23 use and we would support 100 per cent that it is important

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 that their people present the information to their own  
2 people. It is not well accepted if we go in and tell them  
3 how. That is not the way to teach.

4 We would like to work along with them,  
5 so we are starting out. It is very exciting. We have  
6 not had any problems to date. I guess we are kind of still  
7 looking at all the avenues and what can be accomplished  
8 because the more we tack the more we see the possibilities.  
9 That is the excitement.

10 **LINDA JORDAN:** For Senator Martell, you  
11 had commented about your concern for the youth. I was  
12 wondering in terms of the development of the courses and  
13 the participation of youth in the work that you are doing,  
14 can you share with us some of the ways in which you are  
15 providing motivation for youth to become involved? Has  
16 that been a problem? And how are you approaching that?

17 **FRED MARTELL:** I think what she has come  
18 up with with what we have today and the level of work that  
19 is being done at the local communities. Maybe there were  
20 a couple of words I didn't hear, but what she has said  
21 of what we have today and what we use for every form of  
22 education and health, using elders, using past  
23 performance, using what creates the diseases, to look at.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I think basically it is the cost. We feel guilty of the  
2 high cost. I do. And a lot of times I neglect myself  
3 because of that. I don't want to be running back and forth  
4 to see a doctor. I think I can cure myself with my head  
5 and strong thinking, being of that reason.

6 I have for many years felt guilty. Like  
7 I said, ten years with the only vehicle for travel. I  
8 never said a word. Got \$6.00 for one whole day of  
9 travelling 100 miles. For 25 years not getting a nickel  
10 as a chief except the \$25.00 a year. I survived through  
11 that and I am proud of it. I have tried to teach in my  
12 own way.

13 When I was sick once in 1954, very sick  
14 and could not work, I accepted a little bit of help. Since  
15 then I have never accepted nothing. A portion of the  
16 house; I built most on my own, to teach people that it  
17 could be done. Even as poor as I am I still laugh and  
18 smile and say I am going to try and do it again. But I  
19 don't need no help. I have had a cheque come to me from  
20 Battleford from Indian Affairs, saying "here, we want to  
21 help you" and I said: "No. Take it back." But I'll make  
22 sure, I'll call if it is taken back and make sure where  
23 it comes from. I don't want it. I've had hard times but

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 my kids are looking at it. I am proud of it. I think  
2 that is one thing that will keep us going. That is what  
3 we are trying to learn. Give them some form of help and  
4 all that, it takes time. I am not that big a politician  
5 to say I will cut costs today and build them up the next  
6 day. I am not saying anything too much. But I think in  
7 time as we are a new nation, taken from here to where we  
8 come from is about 150 years' difference. In 1930 I am  
9 aware of two people of the other side in the community  
10 and education, in 1952 we had a one-room school built with  
11 a road along the lake and all that. From the last 25 years  
12 we have been going and I hope somebody sees what we have  
13 done. We have never stopped. We still got to be with  
14 the leaders and the people that we have are working for  
15 the district. They are very dedicated. I wish them well  
16 yet.

17 I don't know if I bring the right thing  
18 to say.

19 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I think  
20 you are to be congratulated on what you have achieved.  
21 In fact, one of the things that has impressed me  
22 tremendously as I met more and more native people in my  
23 travels is their determination and their will to succeed

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and to survive. I guess that is the secret of how they  
2 have managed to survive in light of all that has happened  
3 to them over the last period of time. It is truly  
4 remarkable.

5                   The other thing that amazes me is how  
6 they have been able to keep their sense of humour. It  
7 is really wonderful.

8                   **FRED MARTELL:** In the past I can  
9 remember my wife's grandfather was one that in 1885 was  
10 involved in the Riel disturbance. Her father is still  
11 alive but I remember back in the the late 1930s when we  
12 used to make that old guy tell stories. In history it  
13 looks bad for them, bad things were written. But as far  
14 as the elders that used to tell us stories, especially  
15 her grandfather, they said: We had to. We was pushed  
16 to the extreme where we could not start running. We had  
17 to fight back although we didn't like it. But we were  
18 pushed by some people. He used to say that he hated it  
19 but he was mixed up in it.

20                   Today her father is still alive and get  
21 his stories. He is the last few days in University  
22 Hospital in Saskatoon. I got to stop there tomorrow and  
23 talk to him again.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1                   What I am trying to come out is that --  
2   I don't know, I better quit talking.

3                   **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** We have  
4   another presenter that we have to hear from. I could  
5   listen to you all evening but I am afraid I can't.

6                   Would the St. John Ambulance  
7   representatives like to say anything before we close?

8                   **ERIC BARRY:** Only to thank you for this  
9   opportunity. We think that what we have embarked on is  
10   exciting and we hope we may have an opportunity to come  
11   back to this or some other Commission in the future and  
12   report success. But it has been for us as well not only  
13   a learning experience but a moving experience too.

14                  **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** I would  
15   like to thank you all very much for coming. It has been  
16   very interesting and informative. Every day as I sit on  
17   these hearings I learn more and more. It has been a  
18   tremendous educational experience for me as a  
19   non-aboriginal person and just a tremendous privilege to  
20   hear what the native people have had to tell us.

21                  I must say when I was first asked to go  
22   on the Commission -- because I thought I had retired --  
23   I was somewhat hesitant. I thought now was my time to

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 do all kinds of things that I have always wanted to do.  
2 But I must say that I have not regretted the decision  
3 to become a Commissioner on this Commission. In fact,  
4 I wouldn't have missed it for anything. It has been a  
5 marvellous experience for me.

6 **LINDA JORDAN:** Our next presenter is  
7 Anne Pennington Mayer. Good afternoon and welcome.

8 At any time when you are ready, please  
9 proceed.

10 **ANNE PENNINGTON MAYER:** Thank you. I  
11 was here the other day, Commissioner Wilson, and I left  
12 with a view that if I didn't do something very quickly,  
13 it would be my fault. I do excuse the hastiness of putting  
14 the material together. It would have been done more  
15 professionally otherwise.

16 In a few days Winston Churchill would  
17 have been 119 years old. I had the fortune of doing some  
18 research on him. I was brought up with him. When I was  
19 a very young child we listened to the speech from the Hill  
20 in England, and my father said it was going to be a very  
21 tough winter. So he went out and bought a Wessex  
22 Saddleback and we were able to eat for the winter after  
23 the appropriate time. I think four months you had to keep



**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the pig.

2 Of course Winston Churchill is very much  
3 a part of my thoughts in many ways.

4 I was also fortunate to marry a Hungarian  
5 freedom fighter who came to this country, and he was  
6 honoured by the then Indians who were representing the  
7 Hereditary Chiefs of the Quakootal Nations. His name was  
8 Nunwakawe, meaning cultural wisdom. To give a white man  
9 a name of that nature is quite extraordinary. He pretty  
10 well single-handedly revived the Northwest coast Indian  
11 art from 1959 on, and he did it in the most traditional  
12 way. He did not wish a distortion. He was very concerned  
13 about the hereditary chiefs being represented and not the  
14 dual master of the spirit and the Canadian government.  
15 That still exists today.

16 We have Indian Affairs of course running  
17 through from the Indian Act. It is almost like a puppet  
18 organization in that sense because you have a conflict  
19 of the spirit for any healing that will have to be done  
20 is not possible if you have two masters. It is those  
21 principles that I wish to address.

22 Having been November the 11th, it was  
23 lest we forget. And fortunately I was able to write an

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 article which you have before you, which dealt with  
2 Churchill's vision of the world at that time. Of course,  
3 the hinge of fate was written with a view to looking at  
4 the world after the war. He knew of his ancestry very  
5 well and on many occasions he would say to the Americans  
6 or the British: "Tell them that I was there before them."

7 In that connection I believe that his  
8 great, great grandmother has a great spiritual interest  
9 still on the hill.

10 The National Arts Centre seems to be a  
11 natural venue for her activities on May 27th of any year,  
12 and without asking I receive information on various  
13 activities; for instance, Ovide Mercredi was having  
14 difficulty in the Royal York during the negotiations for  
15 the referendum, the Charlottetown Accord. I asked a  
16 question of Mr. Morden: Why couldn't he dust off the  
17 treaties. I thought that was very important because if  
18 we are going to go to principles, I think we must be  
19 honourable.

20 I have a dual citizenship. I am British  
21 and I am also very much Canadian. But I do believe that  
22 the lords of the Privy Council, not the Justice Division  
23 -- I will give exception to them; they were doing things

**November 18, 1993****Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 with I say the governors of that time which were not in  
2 the interests of either Britain or of the First Nations,  
3 because they went against the rules and regulations that  
4 were prescribed at that time. You simply have to  
5 look at the Treaty of 1761. That was the year that Anna  
6 Baker was born in the colony of Nova Scotia. She was a  
7 full-blooded Iroquois and I believe it was Winston  
8 Churchill who used his as I would say fourth world values  
9 to help the first, second and third world survive. And  
10 we are constantly being reminded of that.

11 We have, therefore, a duty in Canada  
12 where we are dealing with a government situation. I  
13 believe we have a duty not to distort the truth of our  
14 history. I constantly see stories in the newspaper  
15 regarding the French and the First Nations and they are  
16 put on a par. It was La Galisionel, the old governor,  
17 a Frenchman, who told the British -- perhaps I can tell  
18 this story -- that the British are too well schooled in  
19 the law of nations not to know the truth that the First  
20 Nations are an independent nation status in the law of  
21 nations. Those who are erudite in the law perhaps would  
22 be able to back me up on that.

23 There are very many references in the

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Law of Aboriginal Rights, which is a very interesting book.  
2 You know it very well, of 1972. But there perhaps are  
3 other references. I believe one can go on and on in that  
4 field. But I think it is a distortion of history.

5                   When my daughter was at school in Toronto  
6 she was not allowed to learn about 1838, but she happened  
7 to have been to Jarvis Collegiate and they were having  
8 their 150th anniversary and her project was to do something  
9 about a certain part of Rosedale. She went into the  
10 Archives and dug up some most interesting information and  
11 she asked the question: Why aren't we allowed to learn  
12 about that part of our history?

13                   Whether it is not allowed to be learned  
14 or whether it is distorted is of concern to me.

15                   I think the media has a duty to prepare  
16 themselves when they are interviewing people for programs  
17 such as when Ovide Mercredi is being interviewed on his  
18 book. They should do some background study and by now  
19 they should know a lot more than they do.

20                   I think there are some other aspects.

21 If you have time to read the Lest We Forget, I do mention  
22 that women's rights was not an issue. It was quite the  
23 reverse. I think we have to have a level playing field.

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I would like perhaps for your consideration to go back  
2 to the level playing field of the treaties.

3 I believe that the Treaty of Paris is  
4 very much valid. If it is valid for the First Nations,  
5 it is also valid for the French. The fine print is very  
6 interesting to be read about their responsibilities. It  
7 appears to me I might understand it but if I were to become  
8 a member of a nation it would either be because I was born  
9 into it or someone else had chosen to stay. Therefore,  
10 it would be a question of if I did not wish to be in a  
11 nation, I would want to leave.

12 Perhaps there is a consideration of any  
13 nation in the world on that basis. There is provision  
14 in the Treaty of Paris for that. It is quite an interesting  
15 aspect of it.

16 I think it is very interesting being  
17 British. I was looking at our history and we were invaded  
18 by the Teutons. We were the natives in those days and  
19 our family were Celtic Norse, I suppose if I were to look  
20 back in history. Pennington was always in the Domesday  
21 Book and my father always reminded me of that fact.

22 Education is a very large subject,  
23 particularly this year I think it is the 2500th anniversary

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of democracy. When I look back to the philosophy of  
2 education, it is to educate the whole person. It is not  
3 unlike being a First Nations person. They indeed can show  
4 us many things about how to live holistically and to be  
5 stewards of our planet.

6 I don't know how much time I have left.

7 I am very interested in this subject. I do believe that  
8 we have a responsibility in government in Canada to  
9 truthfully obey the providence of the BNA Act. I would  
10 say that that belonged to the Petition of Right when it  
11 was almost like a document to make sure that everything  
12 that was not compatible with the Magna Carta was thrown  
13 out. That is how we have our present monarchy today.  
14 If we were to go back to the basics, go back to the  
15 principles, go back to the level playing field, we would  
16 solve an enormous number of problems, not only for the  
17 First Nations but for ourselves. We are, as I see it,  
18 unless one sticks to one's road, we can become extremely  
19 confused, particularly the new generations coming up  
20 because there is nothing to hang on to. Sometimes the  
21 quality in teaching is not in keeping with the principles  
22 that one would hope to have in the schools.

23 We are always fighting fires instead of

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 preventing problems. We have to remember that if we don't  
2 become the stewards of our plant, not just environmentally  
3 speaking, but in every way, we actually are at our peril  
4 in not doing so. Nature actually is already taking over.

5 I had an interesting thought about your  
6 wrestling with the problems of ancestry for the First  
7 Nations. I did not know if there was some way -- if they  
8 are technically Canadian citizens now; I don't know exactly  
9 how the legal wording is -- that they could be dual citizens  
10 of a country. It is either by choice or by ability.

11 I know that up to the age of 18 a daughter  
12 or a son of mine can apply for a European Community passport  
13 and have full British citizenship. If they become 18,  
14 they can't. They have to go through another phase. I  
15 think that some imaginative use of the law could be  
16 instituted and it could eliminate a lot of things and  
17 therefore go back to the level playing field again.

18 I think we have created a lot of problems  
19 along the way and I think the Constitution Act of 1791  
20 was entirely out of order. I am not a lawyer, though.  
21 But that is what I feel in reading it.

22 I also believe that the French people  
23 should be able to be truthfully themselves within

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 themselves, as I wish to be British within myself within  
2 a Canadian context. I enjoy the fact that having had the  
3 opportunity to travel in other countries, I believe that  
4 the other persons who choose Canada as their country should  
5 be able to be, first of all, Canadians and fully themselves  
6 within their own personal wishes; that is to say that they  
7 can appreciate their own heritage in its true perspective.

8 I don't know what Churchill would think  
9 of the Club of Rome but he certainly said that there was  
10 no time to lose and we must get on with the job, and in  
11 calling on the Great Spirit always, many of the words he  
12 used.

13 In the closing words of my presentation  
14 of October 1990 -- I would like to read it:

15 "As Churchill lay in State in Westminster Hall, the three

16 British Party leaders stood  
17 together in silence before the  
18 catafalque. It was in this hall  
19 and on the very spot where  
20 Churchill lay that Simon de  
21 Montfort had called together  
22 Britain's first parliament seven  
23 hundred years earlier almost to the



November 18, 1993

Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples

1 day. Simon de Montfort had  
2 skilfully turned what had been the  
3 King's Grand Council into a  
4 committee of two parts, Lords and  
5 Commons, thus putting teeth into  
6 the idea of 'the rule of law', for  
7 the Magna Carta was, at first, only  
8 a matter of swearing and sealing  
9 parchments --"

10 Perhaps as was the old Iroquois law.  
11 "-- but was clearly to guarantee henceforth 'the liberty  
12 of the subject'."

13 I think if we look at ancient law there  
14 is perhaps a plea that all the references to the Magna  
15 Carta and the real common law of England be dusted off  
16 out of the hidden crevices of famous legal libraries.  
17 They are hidden and I think the true extent to which the  
18 law could be used in Canada today, because we have that  
19 ability, could be done through some very erudite laws of  
20 appeal from Britain, such as we have an interesting  
21 situation in England and Scotland. We have the two kinds  
22 of law, exactly as we have in Canada.

23 So although it is not an official

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 situation and as Sir Ivor Jennings said, he thought it  
2 was rather a silly idea in 1956 not to take on certain  
3 opportunities that were there, that perhaps we should look  
4 at that again. Some of those gentlemen are retired and  
5 very well able to help us. I think it would be rather  
6 an exciting experience and they would be the true  
7 hereditary lords of the Privy Council, the ones who go  
8 back to the Teutonic era in their heritage. I think they  
9 would look at it as a world vision.

10 "The 'Grand Council' meeting of the statesmen of the League  
11 of the Iroquois met on June 10th,  
12 1870 for two weeks to thoroughly  
13 consider Canada's new Indian Act  
14 following the traditional opening  
15 and welcome by the Onondaga  
16 Firekeeper of the Six Nations and  
17 the historic reading of the Wampum  
18 belts and strings (tokens of  
19 treaties made by the founders as  
20 far back as 1613 or thereabouts."

21 Today as we view our country and the  
22 world as a field of opportunities we can play a Plus Sum  
23 Game. That is why I end up with the reference to

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 interexistence from the Club of Rome's recommendation and  
2 a reference to playing cricket.

3 Grantland Rice said it all when he wrote:

4 "For when the One Great Scorer comes

5 To write against your name

6 He marks - not that you won or lost

7 But how you played the game."

8 I do thank you.

9 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Thank you  
10 very much for coming and speaking to us. You have touched  
11 on a great many subjects that we are going to be addressing  
12 in the Commission, particularly the comments you made at  
13 the beginning about the distortion of history. This is  
14 something that we are greatly concerned about because we  
15 really don't have a proper history of Canada written from  
16 an aboriginal perspective. It just does not exist.

17 It has been suggested to us by quite a  
18 number of experts in the field of racism that the fact  
19 that this distortion of history has been presented to  
20 Canadians and taught in schools has probably played a very  
21 large role in bringing about the racist attitudes that  
22 we find in Canada.

23 I am also interested in what you said

**November 18, 1993**

**Royal Commission on  
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 about the holistic approach. That also is something that  
2 has impressed me greatly and I can identify with, and  
3 particularly what you were saying about the environment.

4 I realize that the native people were the first real  
5 conservationists. This is something that we have a great  
6 deal to learn from them. It is interesting that you have  
7 been picking up as an English person the same things I  
8 have been picking up as a native Scot, that where we can  
9 really learn a tremendous amount from the native people.

10 I think it is fascinating.

11 I would like to thank you and I would  
12 like to thank you for the material that you have left with  
13 us. I will certainly be happy to read it. It is very  
14 good of you to come.

15 I think that concludes the  
16 presentations. We will call on Elder Knockwood to close  
17 with prayer.

18 **(Closing Prayer)**

19 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** Thank you  
20 very much, Elder Knockwood.

21 --- Whereupon the hearing ended at 5:30 p.m.