

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

LOCATION/ENDROIT: CITADEL INN
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"for the record..."

STENOTRAN

1376 Kilborn Ave.

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Ottawa, Ontario

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1 Ottawa, Ontario

2 --- Upon resuming at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, June 8, 1993.

3 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Dr.

4 Maggie Hodgson, Nechi Institute.

5 I would invite Mrs. Jock to say the
6 opening prayer please.

7 **(Opening Prayer)**

8 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** I have no
9 more sick jokes so you will be happy Nelson.

10 We are going to have a bit of a change
11 in the agenda that has put forward. Ruby is going to be
12 doing some slides with her art exhibit. At the back of
13 the room here are a number of pieces of art. Is Ruby in
14 here? Well, we are waiting for her.

15 I was asked to do an opening comment and
16 anybody that knows me, knows that I don't know how to make
17 short comments.

18 When I listened to the groups yesterday
19 and was able to sit in for a few minutes in each one of
20 the sessions I felt a lot of joy, and the happiness that
21 I felt really had to do with the fact that, yes, there
22 are recommendations being put forward to the Royal
23 Commission and, yes, there are people here that are willing

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1 to listen to those recommendations.

2 That wasn't what made me happy. What
3 really made me happy was that the discussion that went
4 on in the groups talked about not what we ask of the
5 government, not what we asking of our leaders but what
6 you, as participants, are already doing in your community
7 and what has already been done.

8 When I see the movement that is happening
9 in our communities and when I see the commitment, even
10 if there is a struggle, to the vision of healing, I know
11 that regardless of what recommendations, the Royal
12 Commission ultimately is successful in getting the
13 government to hear that our future is not going to be
14 determined by the Royal Commission because we are
15 determining that ourselves.

16 Ultimately I believe that, that is what
17 is going to create the continuous response in our own
18 ability to love one another, love ourselves, and ultimately
19 love the creator. When they see the change that has
20 happened over the last 20 years, and I know the
21 desperateness I felt of this young woman in the field.

22 I don't feel that sense of desperateness
23 anymore because I know when I see as many young people

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1 that are involved in the field in what is happening, that
2 this issue of suicide and death in our communities is
3 already in our hands. Our old people -- one of my teachers
4 always says, it is up to you, and then he says, we don't
5 get something for nothing. You know that already because
6 you are already doing it. I know that you are not expect
7 something for nothing because you are working at what you
8 are doing.

9 So I am really proud to be a member of
10 the Aboriginal Community and the Native Women's Community
11 right today. I really feel humble that having been asked
12 to chair the session for the last day and half. I know
13 when I get to be Mrs. Jock's age and I listen to that prayer
14 in the morning, I think: Oh my god, I wish I could remember
15 all of those words. They fit so perfectly and they are
16 such a good way to start a good day. I really thank you
17 very much, Mrs. Jock.

18 Are the slides ready yet? We will just
19 wait a few minutes. Nelson, do you have a joke? He
20 doesn't have any king jokes, sorry.

21 --- (A Short Pause)

22 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Myrtle,
23 do you think we could borrow a slide projector from AFN,

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1 Native Council of Canada? One of the organizations must
2 have something. What we will do is, we will do that at
3 the end of the session okay. Thanks very much, Kim.

4 So we will move on with the presentation.

5 I am sorry about that. We had asked for one yesterday,
6 but apparently the hotel doesn't have a slide projector.

7 We were going to try to get one from one of the Native
8 Organizations.

9 So we will get right into the
10 facilitator's report "Setting Priorities For Action".
11 The facilitators got together last night and attempted
12 to amalgamate the common recommendations that came forward
13 from the different groups, and Nelson was so good as to
14 volunteer to present the -- my name is Mr. Snowshoes it's
15 not Mike -- I know he is going to get back to me so I am
16 not going to let him get one up on me. He was there way
17 ahead of us and we were late, you know, and he waited for
18 us. He was so good because our supper never came. So
19 he had to leave on time and we were still working because
20 we had come late. So while he was gone, we voted him in
21 as our presenter. Right Nelson, that is the truth, I am
22 going to go to heaven now. Okay. Go for it Nelson.

23 **NELSON MAYER, NATIVE COUNCIL OF CANADA:**

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1 Vice-President of United Native Nations.

2 The other facilitators could come up,
3 we could have them stand on chairs and hold the flip-chart
4 paper up.

5 Actually, what we did was we compiled
6 the four reports from the four workshop groupings into
7 four areas. We have called them "Ownership",
8 "Governments", "Community" and "Resources".

9 All right. The plan, as just related
10 to me, is I will read out the recommendations and then
11 we are getting some tape and we will post the flip-chart
12 paper up on the side if anyone would like to take a closer
13 look at them or ask any questions.

14 The first one is under "Ownership", we
15 have No. 1. Cultural specific education must be funded,
16 operated by the specific cultural group, i.e., customs,
17 ceremony, tradition, language, heritage, etcetera, of the
18 Métis, Inuit, Cree, etcetera. So the recommendation is
19 basically cultural education specific by the nation.

20 The second one is that academic
21 education to fit the needs of the cultural group itself",
22 prepared by and accountable to the group; (a) Post
23 secondary courses, (b) Thesis programs in cultural

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1 language, (c) Curriculum developed by cultural groups.

2 The third one is to provide education
3 that promotes self-awareness and self-esteem in cultural
4 specific identity.

5 Behind those series of recommendation,
6 come the thought that: If you take a look at what our
7 children and the non-aboriginal communities' children are
8 learning in the school system, through the history that
9 is taught, there is nothing that is accurate in the way
10 that aboriginal people and our contributions to the
11 development of this country are reflected. If you think
12 about that and the impact on children in their formative
13 years, it leads to a lot of low self-esteem from our
14 aboriginal children because they don't learn, in the school
15 the system, their own culture.

16 Again, you know we are lumped in and you
17 know the stereotypes that come out in terms of then
18 education. So a lot of that -- we own that in terms of
19 that is what we can do. We can develop those curriculum,
20 we can develop those teaching methods of getting in to
21 the school system.

22 The next one, we have "Governance" and
23 the first recommendation is -- and some of this relates

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1 to self-government in terms of us and our national
2 leadership -- the first one which came out loud and clear
3 is that we respectfully request that our leaders be sober
4 and healthy role models.

5 Our second one is that leadership be made
6 accountable for recommendations stemming from previous
7 well-being conferences.

8 The third recommendation is that women
9 be sought out to run for elected positions and appointed
10 to leadership roles, elsewhere.

11 The fourth recommendation is that there
12 be an equal percentage of the cultural groups served, i.e.,
13 Métis and Inuit, on government appeal committees/boards
14 in respect to the particular jurisdiction, i.e., child
15 welfare percentage of Métis, Inuit children in care,
16 another example, the National Parole Board.

17 Number five is that our national leaders
18 -- these are recommendations -- we recommend our national
19 leaders be elected by the community at the community level
20 instead of being elected by Chiefs or a few Métis leaders
21 or a delegate system.

22 The sixth one is that we review policies
23 with the view of developing new policies that will

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1 identify: (a) Métis and notify Métis Nation, (b) The Inuit
2 and the Inuit Population, (c) Other cultural groups in,
3 i.e., child welfare, mental health, justice and
4 fatalities.

5 Seven, jointly develop protocol to
6 contact the Métis Nation, Inuit population and other
7 cultural groups where said people are involved in the
8 system so that decisions can be reached in accordance with
9 the said groups' world view.

10 Number eight, recognition of the Métis
11 Nation by the Canadian Nation, "Open and Honest Dialogue".

12 Number nine, programming for the benefit
13 of all Métis citizens, not just organization members.

14 Number ten, must be strategic plans for
15 ministries or portfolio areas to facilitate a national
16 agenda in the Métis Nation.

17 Number eleven, that there be a follow-up
18 to recommendations to: (a) National Métis Child Welfare
19 Conference, (b) National Indian Child Welfare Conference,
20 and respective leaders be held accountable for these and
21 their use in the communities.

22 Under "Community" our first
23 recommendation is that we develop a national newsletter.

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1 No. 2, that we have a national 1-800
2 line.

3 No. 3, that we develop a national
4 strategy for holistic processes for respective cultural
5 groups.

6 No. 4, we do national networking between
7 communities and an example would be to have an annual
8 conference.

9 No. 5, establish training in communities
10 that are specific to those communities.

11 No. 6, that we have community diversion
12 programs for youth at risk.

13 No. 7, to have a cultural specific
14 justice approaches.

15 No. 8, to develop strong inter-agency
16 groups, committees within the communities. No. 9, to
17 provide support for self-help groups.

18 No. 10, Métis Elders, Inuit, Cultural
19 Groups to teach and have a place as part of school,
20 community groups, day-cares, seniors, to spend time with
21 children.

22 No. 11, Métis Senior Drop In Facility
23 (Education/treatment/community), cultural camps to

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1 develop belonging, i.e., Métis, Inuit and other cultural
2 groups.

3 No. 12, recognizing ourselves as
4 resources and begin looking within instead of out for
5 consultation and expertise.

6 No. 13, resources be provided for a
7 National Métis Child Welfare Conferences, as well as other
8 cultural groups.

9 No. 14, grieving circles to be
10 established.

11 Under "Resourcing", No. 1, research
12 funding be allocated for: (a) The Métis/Inuit/Female
13 populous to be identified specifically in the police
14 reports (municipal), court system (provincial), child
15 welfare (provincial), coroner's report
16 (provincial/territorial).

17 (b) Participatory and qualitative
18 research done by and accountable to the cultural group
19 being studies.

20 No. 2, adequate funding be allocated for
21 community strategies to address critical social/health
22 problems from holistic perspective.

23 No. 3, necessity of multi-purpose

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1 facility to accommodate battered families, children at
2 risk, pre and post-treatment clients.

3 No. 4, that a national labour market
4 analysis be done to identify workers in the health and
5 well-being field, to reallocate resources to ensure
6 training dollars be set as a priority in these fields.

7 (a) Crisis team - Post trauma. (b)
8 Family violence workers.

9 (c) Child welfare.

10 (d) Substance abuse.

11 (e) Corrections.

12 (f) Parenting, cultural, spirituality
13 and ceremonies.

14 (g) Mental health workers.

15 (h) Holistic teams to cross boundaries,
16 i.e., leadership/organizational development.

17 (i) Traditional healers.

18 (j) Traditional teachers.

19 (k) Metamorphoricalization -
20 storytelling.

21 (l) Grieving - using cultural
22 approaches.

23 (m) Acceptance of peoples gays,

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1 lesbians.

2 (n) Sexuality.

3 (o) Evaluation.

4 No. 5, acknowledge the organizational
5 development, sociological development through O.D.,
6 Organization and Development training. This to deal with
7 in-fighting and ways to ensure cohesive working
8 relationships.

9 No. 6, that the major churches hold one
10 collection per year to be allocated to healing of former
11 residential schools, victims, students and their children
12 and funds to be put in a national foundation which would
13 be administered by the cultural groups who were residents
14 and the churches jointly. This will assist those people
15 who do not wish to press charges to access dollars for
16 healing and will be conducive to not using adversarial
17 process and will not further shame those who do not want
18 to be public and/or if the perpetrator is now dead and
19 cannot be charged. This could happen for 15 years, that
20 this be negotiated by leadership with church leaders.

21 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** That is
22 it. Maybe they have some, remember they didn't have their
23 stuff there last night.

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1 **NELSON MAYER, NATIVE COUNCIL OF CANADA:**

2 And that is based upon the reports we were able to have
3 collected last night. Ruth, do you have any
4 recommendations from the group that you came out or are
5 not included in the group that we have as a whole?

6 **RUTH NORTON, NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION**
7 **OF CANADA:** Director of Aboriginal Languages, Assembly
8 of First Nations.

9 Yes, I have got this from the native
10 women.

11 **NELSON MAYER, NATIVE COUNCIL OF CANADA:**

12 Good. Thank you. I am done.

13 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I have a
14 question.

15 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Yes.

16 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Inaudible.

17 **NELSON MAYER, NATIVE COUNCIL OF CANADA:**

18 No. The Gitscane (PH), the Micmac (PH), the Carrier,
19 the Blackfoot, the Blood, the Sarsea (PH), the Paygan (PH),
20 every nation, that is why it is the etcetera.

21 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Inaudible.

22 **NELSON MAYER, NATIVE COUNCIL OF CANADA:**

23 I don't know, I left before they got to that one.

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1 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** If you
2 want to have that report adjusted to include other nations
3 that is fine. We had a discussion on what words to use
4 in terms of aboriginal groups, other nations, first
5 nations, and if other nations suits you better that is
6 fine with us. That is no problem.

7 The reason that we identified the Métis
8 and Inuit group as a priority is that generally the Inuit
9 group is one of the groups that is ignored by reports and
10 the Métis group tends not to get the attention that it
11 needs in terms of national funding. So when we said other
12 cultural groups, we meant other nations. We had this long
13 discussion about what word would be suitable to who.

14 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Other cultural
15 groups would mean all other nations. That would mean the
16 --

17 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** We will
18 put what you want. If you want other nations, we will
19 just slash out cultural groups and put nations.

20 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Inaudible.

21 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** I know
22 that, but there was a woman in our group, from your group
23 as a matter of fact, who had problems with the word

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1 aboriginal. So you just can't make all of the people happy
2 all of the time. Do you want aboriginal groups? Do you
3 want to have nations?

4 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** First Nations or
5 Aboriginal to identify the first people and put First
6 Nations.

7 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Okay, we
8 will put First Nations. Mary.

9 **MARY SILLETT:** I just wanted to say that
10 I think "Nations" is a term that seems to be more applicable
11 to status indian groups. I think the term that we use
12 to be inclusive is "First Peoples".

13 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** So do you
14 guys want "First Peoples" then. Is that acceptable to
15 everybody. This means, yes, and this means, no. So
16 "First Peoples". Okay. We will replace the words
17 "cultural groups" with "First Peoples" then. Thank you
18 very much for that feedback.

19 The native women were working on their
20 report last night when we had arranged that everybody work
21 on our reports together. So this is an amalgamation of
22 the other reports now. The native women are going to be
23 presenting theirs as a separate group.

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1 RUTH NORTON, NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

2 **OF CANADA:** Okay. Just to clarify that word "aboriginal".
3 What I did indicate yesterday, when we were meeting last
4 night, was that a couple of the Elders that I work with
5 did not like the term "aboriginal" because it is all lumped
6 together and they felt that when you say "aboriginal" it
7 means abnormal. That is what they were saying so that
8 is why I brought it up. Ab-normal, Ab-original. That
9 was me that brought that up.

10 However, we are tabling this report from
11 the Native Women's Workshop and our people that were taking
12 notes, were compiling this while the facilitators were
13 meeting last night. Anyway, what I am going to do is just
14 read out the summary and then we will have copies available
15 for everyone.

16 Just a summary of the two works. (1)
17 The primary elements of suicide prevention. No. 1.
18 There is process happening across the country with people
19 believing in themselves.

20 No. 2. We have to develop our own
21 history, teach young people about shackles of colonialism.

22 No. 3. Our customs, traditions,
23 languages, manner.

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1 No. 4. Young people need to learn about
2 aboriginal philosophy -- there is the word again --
3 spirituality, they need to learn it, believe it and live
4 it because that is part of the healing process.

5 No. 5. We talked about concerning
6 employment for young people. We have to encourage them
7 to find jobs and be part of the society.

8 No. 6. We have to teach our young people
9 arts and crafts as part of developing their identity.
10 This would preferably be done in a traditional setting.
11 A primary foundation for youth comes from communities
12 providing recreation, activities.

13 No. 7. We need to develop our own ways
14 of healing by learning the traditional teachings.

15 No. 8. There is a need for sharing and
16 networking.

17 No. 9. We need to be able to talk to
18 each other and network through our families.

19 No. 10. Need to be able to trust someone,
20 caring and encouragement are primary ways of preventing
21 suicide.

22 No. 11. There is a need for the training
23 of youth in the social norms of our community.

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1 No. 12. They are a lost generation.

2 No. 13. It is important to provide
3 recreation programs for youth.

4 No. 14. There is a need to encourage
5 youth to have a role in the community. In learning these
6 skills, the youth will have more self-esteem, also
7 responsibility will be put in their hands.

8 No. 15. Tell the youth they matter.

9 No. 16. Have to look at successful urban
10 programs.

11 No. 17. Need to have healing circles in
12 institutions to lay the ground work. No. 18. Need to
13 teach the native world view, whether Cree, Carrier,
14 Squamish (PH), Micmac (PH), or Ojibway (PH) and all of
15 the rest of the 56 nations across the country.

16 No. 19. It is the sweats and ceremonies
17 that help us work out the hurts. In working with patients,
18 we learn this from the Elders. We have to respect their
19 right to speak. No. 20. You can't learn patience from
20 the clock. Patience is a gift from the creator, it is
21 something we can give back to the community.

22 No. 21. There are many elements, not just
23 one, such as traditional, spiritual, emotional, physical,

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1 mental, well-being. We have to train people to take
2 responsibility or help to take responsibility.

3 No. 22. Peace keeper and family healing;
4 people at the local level can get assist from the regional
5 and national representatives.

6 No. 23. RCAP needs to understand that
7 we have our own processes and each community has its own
8 way of dealing with this issue.

9 No. 24. Governments can provide
10 financial support. They have to respect us enough to take
11 our considerations seriously.

12 No. 25. Have to organize work shops in
13 the communities.

14 No. 26. Need to lobby the government to
15 create women's healing circle lodges.

16 No. 27. Women as caregivers, women as
17 bearers of language and culture.

18 No. 28. Need networking, developing
19 strategies.

20 No. 29. In the area of policy. Policy
21 recommendations to Local, Provincial, and federal
22 governments.

23 No. 30. Recommend government look at

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1 healing lodges.

2 No. 31. People to go before the crisis
3 occurs is a form of suicide prevention. There is no place
4 for women to go. The option is limited.

5 No. 32. If facing suicide or getting
6 locked up have to deal with pre-crisis before it becomes
7 a post-crisis situation.

8 No. 33. Need to provide help when needed.
9 (a) Need to provide support before the crisis. (b) Accused
10 receives support and there is not support for the victims.
11 (c) Need a support group for the victims. (d) Need healing
12 homes and workshops. (e) Crisis lines needed in every
13 community. (f) Encouraged training of crisis workers in
14 aboriginal language.

15 So the summary of what we are saying is:
16 The process of teaching our own philosophies and histories
17 must be integrated into the education system. More
18 employment opportunities. We need more sharing and
19 networking. We need traditional ways of learning. circles
20 within our communities and so forth.

21 We will give this to Maggie who is the
22 Chairperson, as our report. Thank you very much.

23 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** What we

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1 will do with the Native Women's Report is post it up on
2 the wall with the rest of them. We are going to break
3 for coffee and that will give you a chance to -- I know
4 that the stuff was read quickly and it may not have given
5 you a chance to really look at them. After coffee, what
6 we will do is we will have an open discussion.

7 So if we break for 15 minutes, and we
8 will post these things up, and see you back at 10:10.
9 Thanks.

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

11 --- Resume at 10:20 p.m.

12 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Okay.

13 We are going to open the floor to discussion. If you could
14 identify yourself when you come to the microphone, please,
15 for the interpreters and for the recorders. Thank you
16 very much.

17 **RODA GREY:** Roda Grey from Pauktuutit,
18 Health Coordinator. When they came with our
19 recommendations one was missing. I have a lot of concern
20 about our women -- not women -- men. We have to do
21 something to help our men.

22 As a woman, we can express our emotions.
23 We can talk to our friends. We can handle our emotions.

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1 We also have programs, we have shelters, we have social
2 workers. You know, we are always the one to do everything
3 as a woman. But we tend to forget our men who are stuck
4 with their emotions.

5 In our communities, maybe we should
6 start something on how we can help them because there are
7 lots of men, there are not many of them, can start to talk
8 now. I was in a workshop in Inukjuak (PH). One of the
9 men who was beating his wife, he was into drugs and he
10 stopped and he wanted recognition from the communities
11 that he has changed, but he is still be judged what he
12 was. I think we have to make an effort to make recognition
13 for our men.

14 Thank you.

15 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Thank you
16 very much. Just so that you know, each group that did
17 their flip-chart work, and in the Native Women's case the
18 typed summary, those will be submitted to the Royal
19 Commission as supporting documents. So the
20 recommendations that were put forward by the Inuit group
21 and the Métis groups, etcetera, those will be submitted
22 to the Commissioners. So if there is any that have been
23 overlooked, they will be still part of the public record.

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1 **JOE KARETAK:** My name is Joe Karetak
2 from Sappujjijit Friendship Centre.

3 One thing about the crisis line is that
4 we are having to reapply constantly for funding. For some
5 of the communities that have got a program going, if there
6 was anyway we could get some ongoing funding for that
7 because we if we don't have any funding it is being operated
8 by volunteers only and it gets very time consuming to do
9 all of the paperwork.

10 We would like to actually have one
11 full-time to even just do the books and stuff like that,
12 take care of the bills. If we are able to get some partial
13 funding through step programs and things like that, but
14 we are never sure about our future. So at any one time,
15 it could be recognized as a social services program. I
16 would like to see that. Thank you.

17 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** I wonder
18 whether your concern at a community level is part of a
19 bigger concern and that is the issue of the need for
20 national recognition for the need of a mental health policy
21 and out of that policy, there is a potential of developing
22 and allocating specific resources for mental health
23 programs such as a crisis line.

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1 One of the issues that I know about with
2 regard to the territories is that because of the settlement
3 there seems to be a question as to whether federal funds
4 actually go into the territories anymore, particularly
5 in the area of non-insured benefits.

6 One of the difficulties, I think, that
7 is present, is that programs of mental health that are
8 urban specific, or native woman specific, or inuit
9 specific, there is no funds allocated because it doesn't
10 exactly fit under social services and it doesn't exactly
11 fit under health. I think that, that identifies the need
12 for a mental health policy, on a national basis,
13 acknowledging that there is mental health needs amongst
14 the different First Nations groups across Canada.

15 So I think that your concern at a local
16 level really is a national issue. It may not feel like
17 that when you are having to work bingos every night, there
18 is keep your crisis line going, but I think that there
19 are many local groups that do fund raising to sustain what
20 should be a standard program.

21 **TOPSY COCKNEY:** My name is Topsy
22 Cockney. I kind of wanted something just explained.
23 There is one there that is under governments that was:

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1 Women be sought out for elected positions and appointed
2 to leadership roles, elsewhere. I just want to know, was
3 it something to do with some women are not allowed to run
4 in some areas. It is just kind of a question.

5 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** The group
6 that had that recommendation, is that all your group.
7 Do you want to answer that question, please, at the
8 microphone.

9 **FACILITATOR CHERYL ANN CARR:** The Métis
10 group put down female leadership as one of their
11 requirements or their suggestions, and last night we made
12 it into a more fuller recommendation as you read because
13 it is not that women aren't allowed to, it is that not
14 enough of them, in our opinion, are actually coming
15 forward. Perhaps feeling that they are not adequate or
16 that they don't have enough support from their own
17 communities, as in babysitters or transportation, or
18 something like that, to actually seek office in our elected
19 organization.

20 So our recommendation would be that
21 these people be looked for, and groomed, and helped, and
22 given the support that they need in their community so
23 that they can eventually be at least 50 per cent of the

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1 leadership because we really need that, in our opinion.

2 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Thanks
3 very much. Adamie.

4 **ADAMIE SULLUALUK:** Adam Sullualuk,
5 Coordinator of social programs.

6 I just wanted to point out that when we
7 looked on our priorities for action this morning, there
8 was something that I would like to talk about -- a bit
9 of problems.

10 We as workers, helpers and caregivers,
11 we always look on existing problems and we try to work
12 as much as we can to try to find solutions.

13 Every time we talk about existing
14 problems like alcohol, drugs, sexual abuse, all of those
15 problems we try to work on. First things that one of the
16 priority would be is to work on non-existing problems
17 inside our feelings. These young people when they are
18 counselled or -- we try to help existing problems and that
19 is one of the reasons they sometimes don't come back or
20 we don't go to them.

21 One thing that I just wanted to point
22 out is: Let's start working on the problems at first,
23 then if it doesn't work, the second priority would -- yes,

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1 let's work on the existing problems.

2 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Is there
3 anybody that would like to make a comment in relation to
4 what Adamie said?

5 **MARGARET LAVALLEE:** My name is Margaret
6 Lavallee and I am from Winnipeg or from Manitoba. I work
7 in Winnipeg, I don't live in Winnipeg.

8 I just wanted to say to the people who
9 presented into the facilitators that they did a really
10 good job and Chairperson, you are doing a good job, and
11 all of the people that were in the circle and shared.

12 Yesterday they came up with some really
13 goods ideas and I feel and think that the women are the
14 leaders of our nation. I guess we are the backbone of
15 our communities, and we are beginning to be healthy and
16 we are coming up with good ideas and working really hard
17 towards a healthier nation, but we still have to work
18 harder. That is what we are doing. We are coming up with
19 our own solutions and the resources are there within our
20 own communities.

21 I see a lot of good programs that are
22 flourishing all over the country and looking at the
23 holistic healing approach, and that is what we are talking

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1 about this last day and half that we have been talking.

2 So I want to congratulate all of the
3 people that presented yesterday, and the sharing circle
4 last night was really good, and I want to thank you for
5 being there for us. In our language, thank you, we say
6 Imiwich (PH). So imiwich (PH) to all of you.

7 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** I would
8 like to support that. I really appreciate Rheena, you
9 and the women that supported you, in facilitating the
10 healing circle last night. I think that the comments that
11 I have received today have been very positive, and the
12 healing circle was a good experience for the people
13 involved. So I thank you for being so good as to, again,
14 work another 15 hour day.

15 **JAMES DONAHUE:** My name is James
16 Donahue. I am representing the Métis National Council.
17 I am a youth representative for British Columbia to the
18 Métis National Council.

19 As one of the few youth here, I think
20 it is my responsibility to British Columbia youth and
21 Canadian youth too. I don't know what process has gone
22 on before with the Commission, whether youth have been
23 consulted, but going on Stats Canada, I know that a lot

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1 of times they are not always as correct as they should
2 be.

3 A large number of the suicides, as most
4 of us do know, are the youth. I think that not having
5 the youth consulted at forum such as this is taking away
6 -- there is a different perspective from youth. I went
7 to a workshop, it is all on abuse, in Winnipeg and a lot
8 of good strategies, projects came out of that. They were
9 presented to Canada Health and Welfare and hopefully they
10 will be implemented.

11 But I just have to go on the record and
12 say that I wish and I hope to see something that involves
13 the youth and has their perspective put into this. Thank
14 you.

15 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** I think
16 that is a good recommendation, especially when we have
17 such a high population of youth. What I wonder is that
18 whether it would also be possible for you to raise that
19 issue with the Métis National Council because it was not
20 those bodies -- it was not the Royal Commission who chose
21 the participants. It was each respective group and that
22 there lay some responsibility with the people who chose
23 the delegates to attend.

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1 **RHEENA DIABO:** Two things I would like
2 to say. In the papers that were put up, there was one
3 that was an oversight, I guess. It has to deal more with
4 Treasury Board. A lot of the things we were directing
5 were more to federal departments, but a lot of times the
6 funding arrangements that our communities and
7 organizations have to work under don't really responde
8 to the needs of our community and don't respect our values
9 and principles as a people.

10 So I think the recommendation that came
11 out is maybe to do a research project on how the present
12 funding structure and Treasury Board does not take into
13 consideration the reality of indian communities, whether
14 they be in urban settings -- because community means people
15 coming together and not necessarily a physical location.

16 If you want to use the term "First
17 Peoples" or "Aboriginal" but I include all of the
18 organizations that were this week, all the First Peoples.

19 What happens is that there is usually
20 a lot of good intentions created by the programs when they
21 first start out, but by the time they get down to the
22 community level, what ends up happening is, we are limited
23 by a lot of guidelines and restrictions on how we can

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1 deliver the services and they end up not meeting the needs
2 of the people and really limiting the people who do the
3 intervention.

4 I have a belief that this also
5 contributes to the burnout in turnover because, what
6 happens is, the workers within the systems end up becoming
7 victimized by the system. So I think Treasury Board is
8 an area we need to look at and how they function in structure
9 -- their arrangements with our people.

10 The second thing I would like to address
11 is --

12 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Is that
13 a recommendation and if it is a recommendation, can you
14 make it more specific so that the people --

15 **RHEENA DIABO:** Okay. We would like to
16 recommend that a more intense study maybe be done on
17 Treasury Board practises within the funding arrangements
18 and how these arrangements are governed when they get
19 through the federal departments and are channelled on down
20 to the community, to make them more functional, more
21 responsive to community needs and respect the values and
22 principles of the First Nations and First Peoples.

23 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Okay.

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1 That is the recommendation, now you are giving an
2 explanation. Just for the people that are doing the
3 record, you know, so that they can cut it off at that point.
4 Okay.

5 **RHEENA DIABO:** Like you are doing.

6 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Now this
7 is your editorial comment, right?

8 **RHEENA DIABO:** Yes.

9 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Okay.

10 **RHEENA DIABO:** I think I preambled it
11 anyways. Thank you for making me aware of that.

12 The other thing I would like to address
13 is: We have gone through a lot of pain in our letting
14 go sometimes, that we visit a place of anger. If we don't
15 do it in a good way, what we do is we end up victimizing
16 the people around us because we don't work through the
17 anger and use it in a productive piece. We don't take
18 the power and energy of that anger and direct it to
19 productive things.

20 I think that is one of the things that
21 I observed in this day and a half and I would like to feed
22 it back to this audience in that, not all, but there are
23 some, in the course of their sharing ended up making some

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1 very racist comments. I think what we need to get in touch
2 with when that happens is: We actually trade-off our
3 values and principles as First Nation People because that
4 doesn't belong with us, it wasn't part of our way of doing
5 things. So when we allow our anger to do that, we really
6 change who and what we are and what we want to be. So
7 we need to be conscious of that.

8 So I would recommend to people that maybe
9 they need to participate either in some more healing
10 circles or go for counselling in order to deal with that
11 pain and hurt in a good way so that we don't end up
12 victimizing more people along our healing journey.

13 Thank you.

14 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** You know
15 I hear you when you were saying that it is a really a healing
16 process. I also think that, as facilitators, we can
17 acknowledge that they are coming from a place of pain,
18 but we can also reflect to them at that time that there
19 is racism going on in relation to reverse racism in relation
20 to white people.

21 I think sometimes that we, as First
22 Nations People, are afraid to address issues among
23 ourselves, and if we can't address such a simple issue

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1 as racism, how are we going to address the issue of sexual
2 abuse or suicide.

3 So I think it takes a little bit more
4 courage in our groups, as facilitators, to reflect back
5 to the people who through out of their pain come and say
6 racist comments.

7 Are there anymore comments or questions
8 in relation to the reports or the last day and a half?

9 **CHERYL ANN CARR:** C. E. Carr from
10 Winnipeg.

11 We have a question that we are not clear
12 of. Will we be getting a copy of the proceedings that
13 went on or a final report? Are we doing conferences or
14 this just our input to the Royal Commission, and when the
15 final dust clears we will hear what happened with it?

16 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** The
17 people will be receiving a copy of the final report and
18 it is Infolink who is doing the recording, is it?

19 My experience with Infolink at other
20 forums, at Bouchard's Forum on Suicide, they were really
21 an excellent recording company and I don't think that I
22 have every had my comments reflected more truly then how
23 they were done at the Bouchard Forum.

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1 So if they have the same quality people
2 as they had at that forum, there is really not risk at
3 being misinterpreted or whatever. So you will be
4 receiving a copy.

5 Any more comments or questions? Going
6 once, going twice, gone.

7 Before we move into the closing, we will
8 go back to Ruby. I think she has got her slides here now.
9 Ruby, are you back in the room again?

10 **RUBY ARNGNA'NAAQ:** Hi. My name is Ruby
11 Arngna'naaq. We did get a slide projector this time so
12 we should be able to see what is happening. I was even
13 given a gadget that I can flip things with now. I am in
14 total control.

15 I will do a very brief introduction of
16 what the show is about. It was put together about all
17 last year. It took about a year to put it together. It
18 is from a little artist-owned gallery. It was sponsored
19 by them called "The New Gallery" in Calgary, Alberta.

20 The show goes and we are hoping -- we
21 are fund-raising to have it travel across southern Canada
22 and to home communities of each artist.

23 You may have noticed that in the back

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1 there is a few pieces of art, some works, just a sample.

2 It is about a third of the size of the show.

3 One other group of contributors were the
4 Inuit women who attended a Banff Centre Residency which
5 made into sort of a Pan Arctic Exhibition on suicide; the
6 effects of it, what it does to people, what you feel about
7 it, what you think happens or the causes of it.

8 It was just one of the small ways and
9 means of reintroducing an all Inuit concept which is that
10 art and the production of crafts has always been
11 incorporated into our lives. It was not a separate little
12 group of people producing art, and then people pop by for
13 it. It was all part and parcel of our lives. It was in
14 our clothing, it was in our implements.

15 We incorporated our art work and our work
16 into our lives as opposed to, say, the western system which
17 used to -- I don't know if it still does -- used to have
18 a little group of artists who are kind of eccentric and
19 considered desperately poor and desperate all around.

20 When we chose the subject suicide, there
21 was myself, Ruby Arngna'naaq, and a man named Jack Butler,
22 who spent some years in Baker Lake as an artist and teaching
23 us how to make prints, offset printing from carvings.

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1 It was originally only supposed to
2 encompass Keewatin (PH) artists, but because of the Banff
3 Centre and the work that Pauktuutit did in conjunction
4 with the Banff Centre. It became a Pan Arctic. It grew.

5 So I guess, hopefully not boring you,
6 we will start here. The screen is over this way if you
7 want to look, not at me, at the screen. I am a fine piece,
8 but. Anyway we will give it a shot. Can people see that?

9 It is all right? Is there any way of turning the lights
10 down? I guess not. Either that or anybody who wants to
11 see it better, or can't see it in the back, come closer.

12 The artist's name is Ruth Anaqtusi. Her
13 work is very complex, as you can see, surrounding any given
14 image that she wants to portray. We call this piece, or
15 she called it "these skills earn money". In the context
16 that when a person is busy, they don't have time to
17 contemplate suicide and, the fact that when you are busy,
18 you have self-worth, you have self-esteem, and you have
19 got reasons to be. Therefore, you don't have that much
20 time to contemplate other violent acts. You all know that
21 even the children are busy and no one, really, there is
22 idle.

23 Traditionally, of Ruth's work, she has

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1 a lot of writing in syllabics and what each character
2 represents. We don't really have time to go into what
3 she has written down.

4 On the next piece, this one is done by
5 a lady from Labrador, Dinah Andersen. It was originally
6 displayed in a little case. They are only about five
7 inches, each piece, if that. Her explanation is
8 the fact that this is our land and we had a certain life
9 style but christianity came along. When people die by
10 natural means, either that or with no help from the person
11 themselves, they were given a cross. On the last piece
12 there, you will notice that it is an inverted cross which
13 is, according to christian religions, suicide is a sin.
14 Therefore, people who commit suicide should not be marked,
15 nor should they be recognized as having gone to paradise
16 heaven, whatever.

17 So in the first cross you will note that
18 it was outward. People who die from sicknesses or natural
19 death are marked and people who committed suicide, they
20 go into purgatory.

21 This one is done by a lady named Jeannie
22 Ziska. She is originally from Baffin Island and she calls
23 this -- it is a wall hanging -- she calls this "different

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1 integrational stages between Inuit, Qalluuna and the
2 repercussions of assimilation or one influencing the
3 other".

4 She was also once told, as she explained
5 this wall hanging, that mixed blood children or people
6 are not only physically different in that they look
7 different, but become a whole thought pattern all together
8 different from either race.

9 One other comment about this piece and
10 the assimilation is that when males married our women,
11 they tended to put the identity of the children with our
12 culture, but in today's life style where our females are
13 joined together with other races it is more often that
14 the culture of the female is more dominant than the male,
15 which means we have now got about four different groups
16 of people encompassing our communities. Although their
17 base and the root is the same an Inuit.

18 You probably recognize all of the
19 personalities in there, and they explore the whaler, the
20 trader, the RCMP, the church and then lower down it becomes
21 our life today back to where some of you can remember.

22 This one is done by Myrah
23 Kukiiyaut-Arngna'naaq. Her work makes everything and

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1 everyone flow in whatever direction. Her style has always
2 had a sway as if the air around and the environment
3 influences who and how we are. This is called "the black
4 committee".

5 She says that there are evil forces
6 attempting to ruin human beings, or influencing human
7 beings. She also said that regardless of who you are,
8 there are unhealthy and evil thoughts that go through
9 anyone. The thing to realize is, No. 1, that everyone
10 has those kinds of thoughts going through, No. 2, there
11 are more positive and useful thoughts that also come more
12 often than negative thoughts.

13 This one is portraying traditional life.
14 Her name is Vickie Grey. She is from Northern Quebec,
15 I believe, Inukjuak (PH). She is very young. When I say
16 very young, it means less than 25, by the way. She is
17 just starting out as a drawing artist. She has done other
18 work before. She has done jewellery, she has done other
19 life styles.

20 She says that she wants this in the show
21 because it portrays the usefulness or the positiveness
22 of Inuit old life style in that everyone was useful.
23 Although the work was very hard, like trying to pull a

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1 seal is next to impossible by yourself from the underneath
2 the ice. She says it is really, really hard to do it on
3 your own, but the fact is that it was done. And in today's
4 life style, regardless of how hard it is, you could still
5 do it.

6 This one is a wall hanging donated to
7 Pauktuutit from Lilia Portuquo (PH). She is from Pond
8 Inlet. She gave this as a present to Pauktuutit. It is
9 an Inuit women symbol. She told us that the different
10 colours are different issues that Pauktuutit has had to
11 deal with. It was the women that brought out the issues
12 of family, and feelings, and violence, and what to do about
13 them.

14 This was is very delicate. Her name is
15 Oqqi Tactu. She is from Northern Baffin Island. She
16 works on realistic images. What this one was -- you will
17 see later that she did a painting of that one, but how
18 she does her work is that she does these very delicate
19 lined pencil drawings first before she does the painting
20 itself.

21 The interesting thing about her, to
22 those of you who are interested in art, is that she does
23 not do the painting over the pencil drawing. She does

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1 another paint. She does another piece of work on a
2 different piece of paper all together. She called this
3 one "the causes of suicide and the devastating effect of
4 substance abuse" which often leads to suicidal tendencies.

5 This is also interesting in that it is
6 admitting that substance abuses and dependencies leads
7 to certain mind-sets and thoughts that are very negative
8 to a human being. And the position, there are two things
9 to know, she made a male. The fact is, among our and among
10 Inuit, more males commit suicide than females. That is
11 not talking about attempts or saying that you want to commit
12 suicide, but the ones who go through and succeed are more
13 often male Inuit, young male Inuit, who commit suicide.

14 The other thing to note here in her work,
15 one is, she said, often hung up on substance abuse.

16 This one was given to us and the artist
17 wanted to say anonymous. The photograph is mine and it
18 went well with the poem. This poem was done by a sixteen
19 year old Inuit female who is not yet of legal age today.

20 How sad to admit that you know and are victim to all of
21 these abuses before you become legally responsible for
22 yourself.

23 Yet the nice thing about this is that

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1 she ends the poem on a positive note on an encouragement
2 to others. She says: I am a survivor.

3 This is one of my very favourite. I love
4 this one. This one is done by Rhoda Karetak. She is one
5 of our most valuable Elders among the Inuit world. She
6 has spent most of her precious life in helping everyone
7 else, but one of the most joyful and pleasing past times,
8 she started before she had a lot of children, was making
9 art.

10 Her work often portrays a lot about life.
11 The fun things, the joyful things, the hurtful things.
12 Here she is asking how deep will the lake of tears become.
13 In this particular case, she has added her own thoughts
14 about what suicide does and the effects of it. I will
15 be quoting her a little bit later on. She asked a crucial
16 question in that it is these women who are crying. Please
17 note that we don't see a male crying in there.

18 This one, it didn't photograph very
19 well, is a photocopy of a facsimile we received from Susan
20 Amarouk. Susan Amarouk is about 26 years old and what
21 I have been calling a victim of suicide. Someone very
22 close to her committed suicide without indication to her
23 or to anyone else that he was going to commit suicide.

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1 She wrote this about five years ago and it is just starting
2 to be published among other people.

3 What she says, she talks about the pain,
4 the anger and the frustration of having been so close to
5 someone who committed suicide. The frustration in the
6 sense that you can't express your anger. You can't express
7 the anger you have towards a person.

8 The next few of these slides we will put
9 in a publication by Pauktutit. It was on family violence.
10 The publication is about \$10.00 and it is still in print
11 at our Paukuutit office in the Inuit Women's Association.
12 The booklet was on family violence and child sexual abuse
13 and childhood abuses.

14 Sometimes we have to bury someone, not
15 because of natural death, not due to sickness, but because
16 of abuse and some of the causes of abuse, family violence,
17 and the effects.

18 This one was done by Myrah Kukiiyaut.
19 It was again on suicide. It was part of the show. She
20 said that the two in green coats are the parents and the
21 one in grey in the centre is a young person talking about
22 committing suicide. She said the institutions shows that
23 the governments or the RCMP are rendered useless and

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1 helpless when it comes to dealing with real family hurts.

2 The RCMP comes too late, a social worker is busy at a
3 desk.

4 I will be alluding to this a little bit
5 later on. I will note that it is a traditional custom
6 for a man and woman, and that what she says to the Qualluuna,
7 in today's life style she is wondering if both have changed
8 and the fact that it is sometimes very hard, when you first
9 meet someone, to tell whether they are male or female.

10 In the old days it was very distinct.

11 You knew when you met a male or you knew when you met
12 a female regardless of how far they are. Even if you
13 haven't talked to them, you know which gender they are.

14 She wonders what kind of effect that had.

15 She also says: One very good thing about today's life
16 style is that females are allowed to develop general
17 skills. Regardless of whether they are male or female,
18 the skills are needed. And that in a lot of ways, the
19 female having loosened, are allowed to be who she is, not
20 role demands because of her gender.

21 This is the painting done by Oqqi.

22 There is gas sniffing, the drugs, there are children who
23 are hurt, family violence, substance abuse, and nearly

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1 everything is in there -- alcohol and other abuses.

2 This is done, again, by Myrah Kukiiyaut.

3 It is a pastel oil, not a watercolour. I put that in
4 there because it is just so very strong. It is very hard
5 to tell, like in Rhoda's print, if that is a male or a
6 female in today's terms. But in the old days if it is
7 referring to the old life style, it is definitely a male
8 because males were allowed to play physical games.

9 I am nearly at the end. I want to talk
10 a few more minutes and then I will be finished.

11 According to Inuit artists, the balance
12 has many roots and repercussions in that they are real
13 victims. But the sad thing about the suicide is that there
14 is a finality to it. It makes a person feel very helpless.

15 As a matter of fact, he is helpless, when someone close
16 to him succeeds in committing suicide. But like all kinds
17 of violence it has victims, and according to some victims
18 those people who are so close to the people that succeeded
19 in committing suicide, lives with that death for the rest
20 of their lives. They are haunted, whether you are a
21 parent, a spouse, a child, a friend.

22 The problem with suicide is that it has
23 become an epidemic among our own people. Therefore, it

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1 forces us to deal with it and to talk about it. It brings
2 it out to the forefront. Unlike other forms of violence,
3 it is totally and completely preventable.

4 Inuit life as opposed to the western
5 world's life style was based on prevention. Our life style
6 was based on prevention which means one is taught that
7 life is precious and dear at a very early age. Therefore,
8 it has to be treated and cautioned and prevented in the
9 early stages of child development.

10 According to most child psychologists
11 and professions that deal with it in the teaching
12 profession, people are beginning to realize, and maybe
13 even parents like some other adults, that the first three
14 years of the child is when the personality and the thought
15 patterns are learnt. From three to five years on, a person
16 will act out according to her genes and what she has learned
17 in how she is going to react. She has already developed
18 a certain kind of reaction to authority, to respect, to
19 learning, to having a memory, how she is going to take
20 substance abuses, the environment and so on.

21 Another point that, in light of modern
22 knowledge, people are also beginning to learn that a person
23 is because of how they were brought up, not who they are.

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1 It is how they are brought up and what they learn in the
2 first three to five years of their life.

3 Taking that one step closer to home, I
4 would like to be so bold as to advise parents and anyone
5 else, in the interest of preventing suicide and other forms
6 of family violence, which is this: Rear your children
7 -- bring up your children as equals regardless of gender,
8 depending on their skill and the environment, but not
9 according to gender.

10 As I said earlier, I will be going back
11 to our Elder Rhoda Karetak in her work of demonstrating
12 male and female roles and admitting that there is a change
13 in community oriented life style as opposed to family
14 oriented life style. Common sense is beginning to make
15 people realize that we have got to start teaching gender
16 equality right from very early stages of life.

17 We have to consider a number issues,
18 under violence which is one. We have to come up to today.
19 Survival tactics are now different today than they were
20 in the old days. So some facts don't work in today's life
21 style that were very useful in all of our lives.

22 The other is that life style has
23 drastically changed. Therefore, doesn't that mean some

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1 of the traditional -- we have to abandon some of the
2 traditional learning skills in order to survive healthy
3 people in today's life style.

4 I say this because in watching males and
5 females react when they are together, alone, one on one,
6 males and females react very differently. When males get
7 together and they are old friends and they haven't seen
8 each other in while, a day or two, they play rough and
9 tough. They don't talk about feelings. They don't dare
10 talk about what hurt them, together. That is the
11 traditional role.

12 They were often taught, don't cry you
13 are a male. Males don't cry. Big men don't cry. Don't
14 talk about your feelings. They were often told not to
15 express their own feelings. Whereas, a female was allowed
16 to cry over the most stupid thing in the world, like if
17 you bump your toe. A male does that and was often told,
18 don't cry you are a male. You know, you are a boy. Boys
19 don't cry.

20 The artists, when they were talking
21 among themselves, began to wonder just how much is taught.
22 What do we really teach our children in our homes. Do
23 we teach them to become tough, rough, it's a mean world

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1 out there, take it.

2 Thank you very much.

3 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Thank you
4 very much. I think that there are many ways of speaking.
5 As much as people here have been speaking for the last
6 day and half, the pictures speak to the spirit of our women.
7 So I really appreciate that, as much as it was not part
8 of the agenda, it became part of the agenda .

9 If we could have the representatives
10 from the Native Women's Association, The National Native
11 Council of Canada, The Métis National Council and the Inuit
12 Tapirisat up to the front here to make your closing
13 comments. After the representative groups, Mr. Dussault
14 will be making his closing comments.

15 If we could have all of the
16 representative groups up here before we start please so
17 that we can move straight from one to the other. Thank
18 you very much.

19 If we could start with the Native Women's
20 Association, please.

21 **BEV JULIAN, NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION**
22 **OF CANADA:** My name is Kauqualit (PH). I forgot to say
23 that at the beginning yesterday. That is my indian name

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1 from my grandmother. On the streets they call me Bev.

2 The last day and a half has been a real
3 pleasure to be here and listening to all the presenters,
4 the people that have spoken and the workshops that we had
5 entered yesterday.

6 I am really proud of all of the people
7 that are here today and yesterday because of the way they
8 have presented themselves, the knowledge they have for
9 the work that they are doing and the love that they have
10 for each other as a group. In all the years that I have
11 worked in the communities and how much the people have
12 grown in the knowledge that they have and caring for their
13 people.

14 Most of all in the lives that we have
15 to look after our youth, to stop the abuse, the turmoil
16 that the children have to go through. We have to start
17 with them to be able to break the chain.

18 I was sitting in the audience and
19 thinking about it. I admire the lady that stood up, the
20 little lady that stood up and spoke about our men. We
21 have to really think about them too. I have been married
22 for 31 years. I have been through that role, and I would
23 like to see it stopped.

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1 I really, once again, admire each and
2 every one of you for who you are, and the way you are.
3 Please continue and train some of our young people.

4 Thank you very much.

5 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Thank
6 you very much, Bev.

7 Native Council -- you're representing
8 the Métis group are you, Joey? Okay. Go for it, Joey.

9 **JOEY HAMELIN, MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL:**
10 I drafted up some notes, so I'm going to be reading them.

11 I wish that I could say that I had a Cree. However, I
12 am very proud to be named after my grandmother,
13 Josephine-Marie Hamelin. I think that's probably
14 converted or taken from the Roman Catholic Church.

15 Good morning. I'd like to acknowledge
16 again our Elder Jock and Dr. Hodgson for facilitating this
17 day-and-a-half workshop, the Royal Commission on
18 Aboriginal Peoples' representatives, and the First
19 Peoples' delegates.

20 It is both an honour and a privilege for
21 me to have participated in these discussions on behalf
22 of the Métis National Council. We thank you.

23 Again, as I emphasized in the opening

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1 remarks, we appreciate being invited and included in
2 participating again as equal partners in this process,
3 as it is our belief that together we can accomplish more,
4 and that unity is very important as First Peoples of Canada.

5 Suicide is a very tragic reminder that
6 life is not worth living. Having attempted suicide twice
7 in my life has led me to believe that I have a purpose
8 in life and that I do not have a right to take my own life,
9 and that it is the Creator's gift in giving me this life.

10 It's important, and I strongly believe that many of us
11 are here because we have a strong purpose. We're here
12 as part of the healing process that our communities have
13 to go through.

14 Suicide prevention is a critical concern
15 to the Métis community, and we strongly believe that it
16 is a community responsibility.

17 We explored the idea of a mini roundtable
18 intended to bring 20 Métis professionals, technicians,
19 to dialogue on child welfare in the prevention of suicide,
20 in the prevention of Métis children and families breaking
21 up, in the prevention of family violence, and in our
22 attempts for a community healing process. This mini
23 roundtable would be solution-oriented.

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1 To this end, the Métis National Council
2 and the Métis Nation, Métis National Council of Women,
3 are willing to participate and co-host this proposed event.

4 WHEREAS a strong sense of identity is
5 critical to the well-being of Métis youth;

6 WHEREAS the Métis are in a unique
7 jurisdictional situation with the federal government
8 refusing to address the critical needs of Métis children
9 and families, and the Métis are subject to inconsistent
10 and uncoordinated responses from the provincial
11 governments to the needs of Métis children and families;

12 WHEREAS there is a need for more
13 sensitive targeted initiatives of Métis people to address
14 the need of and provide support to Métis children and
15 families in distress, and

16 WHEREAS a forum is required to bring
17 together Métis child care professionals, provincial and
18 federal governments,

19 THEREFORE, the Royal Commission on
20 Aboriginal Peoples should endeavour to sponsor further
21 research and host a mini roundtable to deal directly with
22 solutions to the needs of Métis children and families.

23 I would like to thank the Métis delegates

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1 for their insight and input into the issues of suicide
2 prevention. At our workshop yesterday there were six of
3 us -- well, seven. Out of that small number there are
4 three of us who are former or previous attempters of
5 suicide.

6 I wish you all a safe trip home, and may
7 the Creator continue to provide support and guidance as
8 we provide support in the healing of our communities.

9 Thank you.

10 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Thank you
11 very much, Miss Hamelin.

12 The lady representing the Inuit
13 Tapirisat.

14 **MONICA ITTUSARDJUAT, INUIT TAPIRISAT OF**
15 **CANADA:** (Native language). My name is Monica
16 Ittusardjuat. I'm representing Inuit Tapirisat of
17 Canada. I'm from Iqaluit, Northwest Territories, on
18 Baffin Island. I'm a cross-line volunteer.

19 I just came from an international
20 association for suicide prevention, which was attended
21 mostly by psychiatrists and social workers, and so on.
22 I was beginning to feel disappointed in the professionals.
23 My disappointment is gone now because I'm here with a

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1 bunch of people from all over Canada who are very human
2 and who come from mainly the grassroots level and who know
3 what they're talking about.

4 Looking at the map, I used to say that
5 people from all over Canada -- the north, the west, the
6 est, and so on, coastal people, mountain people, look at
7 all the differences and ask myself how can Ottawa help
8 all these people? Putting together the ideas and the
9 experiences that people talked about in that international
10 association for suicide prevention and the Commission I
11 realized that we're not all that different. There is more
12 similarities than differences because we are all human,
13 we have limitations.

14 What comes out also is the strength, that
15 we have each other. I also feel when I am trying to help
16 somebody, I get something in return, and each time I help
17 somebody, I get something in return. We have to admit
18 our limitations because we can only do so much. We have
19 to think about the people we serve, people who are wanting
20 to commit suicide, who think there is nothing to live for.

21 We have to drag them from that place because we have
22 dragged ourselves from that. We have the strength. I
23 get strength from other people, they can get their strength

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1 from us.

2 I used to get mad at my parents or
3 somebody who had gone through something and they are okay
4 because I am there and I know that I can be okay too.
5 Just the knowledge that I can't just commit suicide. It
6 is criminal to think that. That was what I was getting
7 made about, the knowledge that I can make it too.

8 Now that I am out of the rut, I am saying
9 life is good, it is great to be alive, it is so interesting
10 and it can be so beautiful. That spirituality I have never
11 seen when I was in a rut. I know there is more out there
12 than in the physical realm. I think that is the message
13 we have to give our young people. We have to give our
14 young people, you know, hope and the knowledge and the
15 skills that they lack so that they can have freedom to
16 continue life instead of freedom to kill themselves.

17 Thank you.

18 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Thank you
19 very much. Freedom to live instead of freedom to kill
20 themselves. What I am going to remember in this last day
21 and half, that is one of the things that I am going to
22 remember. Thank you for that.

23 Well, Nelson. He is always like the

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1 reluctant bride, this man.

2 **NELSON MAYER, NATIVE COUNCIL OF CANADA:**

3 I too would like to thank the Elder for the opening prayer
4 and, as well, on behalf of the Native Council of Canada,
5 express the appreciation to those who attended on behalf
6 of the Native Council of Canada and participated in this
7 workshop, and to all of the delegates from the other groups.

8 It is sad that a workshop such as this
9 has to take place and is needed. When I think about it,
10 I think about the people that I am aware of who have been
11 touched by the issue of suicide, those who have lost loved
12 ones and those who will be loosing loved ones as a result
13 of this.

14 I think it has become apparent. The young
15 lady from the Inuit Tapirisat has mentioned that there
16 is a commonality amongst us. We talk about being
17 non-reserve in representing those aboriginal people who
18 chose to reside in non-reserve settings, rural remote as
19 well as urban. It is an issue that we face daily. Our
20 workers struggle with it, our leaders struggle with.

21 The point I am trying to make is that
22 we came here as Métis National Council, Native Council
23 of Canada, The Inuit Tapirisat, The Native Women's

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1 Association of Canada and its continual processes have
2 been there and historically have kept us divided and away
3 from one another. I think it is by putting our heads
4 together and talking that we really do reach the solutions.

5 I thank the Royal Commission for the
6 opportunity for the Native Council of Canada to participate
7 in the recommendations that we have put forth individually,
8 as individual reports from our respective organizations,
9 as well as collectively through those commonalities. I
10 hope that the politicians will listen to them and will
11 act upon the recommendations that we have made.

12 To all of those who have participate,
13 we give you a thanks and, with that, wish you all a safe
14 journey home. It was nice meeting everyone. I thank our
15 Chairperson, Dr. Maggie Hodgson, for cracking the whip
16 over me continually the past couple of days. I thank the
17 fellow facilitators, my fellow facilitators and our
18 therapeutic intervention facilitator. I thank Cheryl Ann
19 Carr for teaching me metamorphoricalization. I am going
20 to use that when I go home. Thank you, one and all.

21 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** I would
22 like to thank each one of the representative groups and
23 I would like to invite Mr. Dussault up if we could squeeze

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1 him in.

2 **CO-CHAIRMAN RENÉ DUSSAULT:** I could
3 stand here?

4 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Go ahead,
5 sure.

6 **CO-CHAIRPERSON RENÉ DUSSAULT:** First of
7 all, I would like to extend the Royal Commission's thanks
8 to each and every one of the facilitators we had during
9 the last day and a half. We were very happy to be able
10 to have this second part of our special consultations.
11 One had been done with the AFN, The Assembly of First
12 Nation. Of course, we felt it absolutely essential to
13 share and listen to what all aboriginal people across this
14 country had to say and share with us as far as this very
15 delicate issue of suicide is concerned.

16 So I would like to, as a token of our
17 appreciation, give a Commission logo to each of the
18 facilitators.

19 For Inuit Tapirisat out of Canada,
20 Debbie Klengenberg.

21 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Maybe we
22 could all thank Debbie.

23 **CO-CHAIRPERSON RENÉ DUSSAULT:** Native

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1 Council of Canada, Nelson Mayer.

2 I understand the facilitator for the
3 Inuit Native Women's Association of Canada, Ruth Norton,
4 had to go to a meeting.

5 Cheryl Ann Carr for the Métis National
6 Council.

7 I would like also to acknowledge our
8 Therapeutic Intervention Facilitator, Rheena Diabo.

9 I would like to recognize and thank our
10 Elder Ann Jock. I have a small gift for you, if you could
11 join us.

12 Finally, our Chairperson, Maggie
13 Hodgson.

14 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** I never
15 know whether you kiss on the right side or the left side
16 first.

17 **CO-CHAIRPERSON RENÉ DUSSAULT:** She
18 seems to have survived quite well.

19 Of course, we all know how difficult it
20 is to address this issue of suicide. Many of us in this
21 room have been touched personally, very closely by these
22 sad events.

23 As we travelled across the country in

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1 the last year, or 15 months, with all those rounds of
2 hearings from east to west, north to south, the
3 territories, the provinces, the various communities, the
4 urban settings, the situation of aboriginal peoples has
5 appeared quite strongly as a major human problem that is
6 unique in Canadian society. Many people are obviously
7 unduly suffering.

8 We had over 150 presenters who spoke
9 about suicide. It was more than a cry for help. It was
10 a cry for action plans, integrated and specific action
11 plans. Presenters stressed the situation of young people.

12 They spoke about the bleak future that
13 many in the communities faced, in particular the young;
14 the low self-esteem; the difficult situation as far as
15 employment is concerned; the high level of unemployment;
16 the difficult family relationships that very often are
17 the reality. They spoke about longer term solutions
18 like self-government, economic self-sufficiency, the hope
19 for a new relationship with Canada that will be based on
20 values and principles that will enable a lasting
21 relationship and a productive one, like respect,
22 reciprocity, sharing, and on and on.

23 They spoke about the necessity to

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1 recover self-identity and of being proud people again.
2 So culture and self-identity is all over the place, along
3 side of economic development and self-sufficiency.

4 Presenters spoke about the absolute
5 necessity of a healing process. That would involve the
6 people themselves. Those who are living the situations
7 in the community.

8 So the Commission made a follow-up
9 through different events. We had this national round
10 table in Vancouver in mid-March on health and social
11 issues. We would have liked to have a greater focus on
12 the prevention of suicide and that is the reason why soon
13 afterwards -- at the request, in fact, and also we shared
14 so much that concerned the requests with the groups, the
15 communities and national organizations.

16 We decided to have those consultations.
17 We started with one late in April with the Assembly of
18 First Nations and we had these consultations today with
19 the four other national organizations, the Inuit, the Métis
20 National Council, the Native Council of Canada. We felt
21 that it was absolutely necessary to get the whole spectrum
22 and as many ideas as possible because everybody is very
23 humble confronting suicide, not only in aboriginal

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1 communities, but in non-aboriginal communities.

2 It is clear that there are causes
3 associated with the social conditions, but not all the
4 time, and it is a reality that is difficult to corner and
5 to tackle.

6 During this day and a half, some of you
7 spoke about your own suicide attempts or about those of
8 relatives, shared with us the causes or reasons for these
9 attempts. Many laid out specific steps undertaken by
10 their community to fight and to prevent suicide. This
11 was certainly the highlight of this day and a half.

12 We are coming out of this day and a half
13 with a lot of examples of initiatives that were undertaken,
14 that are actually taking place in the communities, whether
15 Métis, whether off reserves, in cities, with the women
16 in particular. The prevention crisis lines are
17 developing and seems to be very useful, but we realize
18 that resources, both physical and money, are important
19 in order to avoid people getting burnout.

20 Many others stressed values like love,
21 security, respect. Finger-pointed differences between
22 parents and professional values on the one hand and young
23 people's values on the other. This seems to be quite

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1 crucial.

2 Everyone stressed the necessity to
3 involve the whole community in the design and the
4 management of prevention programs. Solutions from
5 outside won't work. As one presenter said, I think it
6 was this morning, the problems are our, the solutions have
7 to be ours and governments should come in support of design
8 made within and by the communities.

9 The strong message was sent to leaders
10 to act as role models. The leaders must recognize that
11 there is a suicide problem in their community. One of
12 the difficulties very often is that we act when the crisis
13 occurs and, of course, the whole idea is to prevent the
14 crisis to occur.

15 All solutions start in the recognition
16 of the social problems which are very often the basic cause
17 leading to suicide. I know everybody recognized that very
18 often it is quite big.

19 When our speaker Dr. King at lunch time
20 mentioned that for one individual case, we have to break
21 down the whole mess within different elements, set out
22 priorities and bring the person to see the parts instead
23 of all of the time the whole thing, and that could be seen

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1 as too heavy, but communities have to do the same thing
2 with the problems that are there.

3 I think we have heard quite a bit about
4 that during the last day and a half. Government must be
5 more sensitive of the specific needs of communities as
6 far as mental health is concerned.

7 We received, and I am anxious to read
8 them, dozens of recommendations from the various workshops
9 that were held yesterday. These were read to us this
10 morning, but I can assure you that they are going to be
11 looked at very, very carefully by the Commission.

12 I see Myrtle Bush saying that they will
13 be available, they are available now, and they will be
14 available for everybody before leaving this room.

15 The greater involvement of aboriginal
16 people in the mental health profession stressed that
17 there is such a strong cultural aspect in health that this
18 is very, very important.

19 Of course, one of the speakers in the
20 closing statements said that the overall challenge is to
21 make life more attractive than this for young people.
22 It is nice to put the challenge in blunt words like this
23 but, of course, the challenge is to find ways to make that

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1 a reality.

2 So the Commission hopes to come up with
3 immediate recommendations in an interim report as soon
4 as possible. We hope before the end of the summer. We
5 know that there are long term solutions that are very
6 important. They are going to be dealt with in our final
7 reports, but we feel that there is such an urgency that
8 we can't wait before at least trying to get as much support
9 to those who are working and wrestling with the situation
10 in the communities.

11 We are going to have an interim report
12 before the end of the year on the residential school
13 situation. It might be helpful as far as suicide
14 prevention is concerned. Also, we plan to have a church
15 summit at the end of October with all of the churches and
16 the aboriginal people to come up with some kind of
17 ecumenical statement.

18 So these are steps made, but we realize
19 that the solutions have to come from the communities
20 themselves, from the families, from the extended families.

21 What we have tried to do is, first of all, make sure that
22 we heard you correctly. We will use your best effort as
23 effectively as possible in this report on suicide and we

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1 realize that it won't be the end of it, quite the contrary.
2 We hope it will give a boost for further actions. It
3 was stressed that there was a need for community research.
4 The needs are enormous.

5 One of the things that struck me is that
6 there is a lot of demands for resources, for money, for
7 funds, but alongside there is also recognition and a strong
8 willingness to take action within the communities without
9 waiting for government or even for leadership. Obviously
10 the message is that action should be taken at higher levels
11 and everyone will be stronger fighting this phenomenon
12 that has to be, if not erased, really made in a situation
13 where it won't happen.

14 We hoped that you learned as much as we
15 did and I hope that going back to your own community, this
16 day and a half will be a kind of light that will give you
17 strength to forge ahead and never give up.

18 Merci beaucoup.

19 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Thank
20 you, Mr. Dussault.

21 I started off by talking about respect,
22 relevance and reciprocity. I think that the respect that
23 we have been able to show one another here by and large

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1 I think is important if we are going to live.

2 With regard to the comment that you made,
3 James, about representatives of youth. When Mr. Dussault
4 talked about hearing. I have been in the field now 23
5 years and often I listen but sometimes I don't hear, you
6 know. Well, you will be happy to know that 23 years later
7 I finally heard.

8 I have had occasion to chair many forums
9 in different venues and each time the groups are asked
10 to send representatives. I thought about a way of
11 reframing that request now, as a result of your comment,
12 in the way that I am going to encourage the group that
13 is making a request that they allocate at least 40 per
14 cent of the participants to be representatives from youth.

15 Ultimately, the decision would be from
16 the political group that is sending the participants, but
17 if we have 62 per cent of our people being youth then I
18 think that there is responsibility of us, as that young
19 man called me at that meeting, the Dinosaur group, to be
20 respectful, that you have something to say and that we
21 will be able to hear it.

22 So I would like to thank you for that
23 recommendation, and what I can about it within the forums

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1 that I work with in the future.

2 When I was involved in suicide
3 prevention in 1984 and when I see a lot of those people,
4 I see them being leaders in the field today because I know
5 we are moving and we have come a long way.

6 When I was invited, approximately a
7 month ago, to chair, I said yes, even when I knew that
8 there was challenges for myself at the time. I have
9 experienced four family deaths in the last two months and
10 my brother died two weeks ago. I wondered whether I would
11 be able to sit with people and talk about death. In your
12 case you are talking about suicide and in my case it is
13 family deaths from terminal illnesses.

14 My brother died, as I mentioned, two
15 weeks ago and we have had three other deaths. As a result,
16 one of the things that I trust within the community is
17 that I trust that by and large we love one another. I
18 chose to come because I knew that the very substance of
19 what maintains us in our workplace, would maintain me in
20 this last day and a half and it has.

21 So I thank you for the support that you
22 have given me and how cooperative you have been because
23 ultimately, you know, that is what is going to continue

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1 to build a foundation for where we are going.

2 When I was in New Zealand I went into
3 a radio station and hanging on the wall was this painting.

4 This painting was a picture of a shark eating a mackerel.

5 The shark was saying: Let's assimilate. I usually use
6 that story when I am talking to a government body who has
7 difficulty about seeing the need and the necessity for
8 distinctness of services.

9 One of the pieces of education that I
10 have received in chairing this forum is that, that picture
11 does not only fit mainstream versus the aboriginal
12 community and First Nations being the mackerel.

13 I think by and large what we are in Canada
14 is: We are different schools of fish. Each of us our
15 own size and each of us our own distinctness.

16 This is my first experience in working
17 with political groups. In the position and in the concern
18 expressed by native women, in the position and in the
19 concern expressed by the Inuit, in the position and the
20 concern that was expressed by the Métis group about not
21 wanting to be the mackerel within the national picture
22 of that aboriginal face, for me has been my learning and
23 it is going to be an issue that I am going to pay attention

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1 to in future forums.

2 I think that I have been aware of the
3 Native Women's issue a little bit more than Métis. I have
4 not really been conscious of how overlooked the Inuit are
5 on that aboriginal face. So I thank you for the learning
6 that you have offered me in this last day and a half.

7 I think about Alvin Morris and he says:
8 If you have a need to dream, you have a need to succeed.
9 I think that what is happening is that there is more than
10 dreams happening. In reality we are moving and we are
11 getting there. Thank you very much.

12 Myrtle, did I forget anything? Oh
13 Jesus, our closing prayer. I also associate prayers
14 before I go to bed. Sorry about that Mrs. Jock.

15 **(Closing Prayer)**

16 **MAGGIE HODGSON, CHAIRPERSON:** Thank you
17 very much, Mrs. Jock. Thank you. Have a safe trip.

18 --- Whereupon the hearing adjourned at 12:10 p.m. on June
19 8, 1993.