

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

LOCATION/ENDROIT: OTTAWA, ONTARIO

DATE: THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 1993

VOLUME: 4

"for the record..."

STENOTRAN

1376 Kilborn Ave.

Ottawa 521-0703

TABLE OF CONTENTS
OTTAWA, ONTARIO
April 8, 1993

NAME	PAGE
Presentation by Lazarusie Epoo	522
Presentation by Lizzie Amagoalik	537
Presentation by Jaybeddie Amagoalik	542
Presentation by Lizzie Amagoalik	546
Presentation by Elisapee Nutaraq	547
Presentation by Jaypettie Amarualik	550
Presentation by Elisapee Nutaraq	553
Presentation by Johnny Epoo	556
Presentation by Samwillie Elijasialuk	561
Presentation by Simeonie Amagoalik	564
Presentation by Markoosie Patsauq	565
Presentation by Allie Salluviniq	567
Presentation by Markoosie Patsauq	570
Presentation by Samwillie Elijasialuk	573
Presentation by Elisapee Nutaraq	575
Presentation by Lazarusie Epoo	576
Presentation by Minnie Nungaq	581
Presentation by Allie Salluviniq	583
Presentation by Elizabeth Allakariallak	585
Presentation by Bobby Patsuaq	589
Presentation by Martha Flaherty	597

Presentation by Larry Audlaluk	602
Presentation by Paul Amagoalik	605
Presentation by Larry Audlaluk	612
Presentation by Minnie Killiktee	615
Presentation by Allie Salluviniq	622
Presentation by Susan Salluviniq	624
Presentation by Simeonie Amagoalik	625
Presentation by George Eckalook	628
Presentation by Zebedee Nungak	631
Closing Remarks by Co-Chair Georges Erasmus	637
Closing Remarks by Mary Sillett	642
Closing Remarks by Commissioner Paul Chartrand	643
Closing Remarks by Commissioner Bertha Wilson	646
Closing Remarks by Rene Dussault	647

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Ottawa, Ontario

2 ---Whereupon the hearing commenced at 9:00 a.m. on
3 Thursday, April 8, 1993.

4 **GEORGES ERASMUS:** I would like you to
5 know now that we are going to have an in camera session
6 today around mid-day. It will start at approximately 11
7 o'clock, and it will go into the noon hour, so we will
8 reconvene the public portion of this at around 2 o'clock.

9 We will try and have the in camera meeting and lunch cover
10 the 11 to 2 o'clock period.

11 For those people who do not have their
12 translation equipment on yet, we will make this
13 announcement again. I just wanted to let the viewing
14 public and the television cameras and everyone else to
15 be aware of our general plans.

16 Perhaps Mary could just repeat for me
17 what I just said so that everyone in the room is familiar
18 with our general plans. Whatever we are doing around 11
19 o'clock will end after the most convenient speaker, and
20 we will resume the public portion at around 2 o'clock.

21 Mary.

22 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

23 Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. I will be repeating what Mr.

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Erasmus said in Inuktitut for those people who do not have
2 receivers. We will start with Lazarusie at 11 o'clock.
3 We will have an in-camera session so that you can make
4 your comments known and, perhaps, until 11 to 2. If we
5 have to extend it, we will extend it. We will have an
6 in camera session from 11 until 2 o'clock.

7 While the TV crew and reporters are out
8 we will not be using the receivers. Mr. Erasmus wanted
9 you to know this.

10 **GEORGES ERASMUS:** So what we will do this
11 morning is continue on with the presentations and we will
12 deal with the normal schedule that we had originally agreed
13 to in the plan that was set up earlier.

14 To begin our morning proceedings, we
15 will start with a prayer. Perhaps we could ask everyone
16 to stand. We will ask Lizzie Amagoalik to begin the
17 meeting for us with a prayer. Please stand.

18 **(Opening prayer)**

19 **GEORGES ERASMUS:** Mary, would you please
20 take over? Thank you.

21 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Thank you, Mr.
22 Erasmus. We are ready to begin again. This is the last
23 day of the hearings, so I hope we will be able to conclude

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 before it is too late tonight.

2 The opening presentation is going to be
3 made by Lazarusie Epoo.

4 (Translation) Lazarusie Epoo will be the
5 first speaker to the panel.

6 Starting from the year 1953, up to today,
7 he will be making comments on those years. The floor is
8 yours.

9 **LAZARUSIE EPOO:** (Translation) My
10 name is Lazarusie Epoo from Inukjuak. I am not a
11 relocatee, but I am going to describe some observations
12 of my own on this whole issue. I am going to try not to
13 go too fast. I am going to have to be reminded not to
14 go too fast, for sure.

15 I want to make three basic points on the
16 whole relocation project -- about the relocatees
17 themselves and the adverse effects it has had on them and
18 others.

19 The first point that I want to make is
20 that the adults at the time -- people who were adults in
21 the relocation in 1953 -- the elders and how their thought
22 processes were affected by the relocation. It was
23 described in some detail yesterday, but I would like to

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 clarify it further.

2 They experienced -- all the elders or
3 that generation who were adults at the time were saddled
4 with mental burdens. They were told that wildlife
5 resources were much more plentiful. At the time we were
6 all depending -- at first at that time when we were told
7 of this issue we were convinced, or we told, that it was
8 all beneficial. Normally, we are not too fussy about the
9 geographical features of the land. If it has resources,
10 that was the main point.

11 We were told that it was cold, but it
12 was going to be a place where we could make a go of life.

13 It was to be somewhat better than conditions in Inukjuak.

14 I myself was not a mature adult at that
15 time, but I know that adults among us were given deep
16 thought to this whole project and there were families that
17 were split, wrenched apart by the whole thing at the time
18 of the relocation. Some of them, direct family relations,
19 were torn apart right at that time. But they were doing
20 it on the basis of trying to make improvements, to improve
21 the future and their circumstances of living.

22 Some refused to go on the basis of their
23 elder's decision to not go. For example, I myself was

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 prevented from going on the relocation because my elders
2 advised me or made the decision that -- I was influenced
3 by the decision of my elders.

4 Some of them refused because they felt
5 that they were able to make a living without going through
6 the relocation. The adults amongst us who left for the
7 relocation -- and here I am not talking about the younger
8 generation -- based their understanding on a better future.

9 A better future was on their minds and it was to be an
10 experiment which they could try out for two years. If
11 nothing went wrong during the course of the project, they
12 were told they could return after two years if they wanted.

13 This was made very clear. We all understood it.

14 But to look at the land, it seemed that
15 it was going to take a long time to truly settle into the
16 area. Perhaps, the younger generation could have made
17 something more permanent, but by the end of the first year
18 we knew it was going to be very difficult to adjust to
19 life in that new land.

20 The main consideration here was food
21 sources in the High Arctic. We know that their main
22 sources are marine mammals. Because it is very much a
23 seagoing place, the smell and flavour of the wildlife there

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 was very different from what was found in Inukjuak.

2 The first year was a long year already
3 for an adult who was relocated. They knew that towards
4 the end they were aware, very acutely aware, that they
5 could return, and it was on their mind already at the end
6 of the first year. Or, in their thought processes, they
7 were already mentally preparing themselves to state their
8 desire to return. It was already having a physical effect
9 on their physical wellbeing because of the isolation and
10 lack of communications.

11 If there was no easily available method
12 of communication, such as letter writing or radio, this
13 was already adversely affecting the people.

14 Here I am trying to restrict my comments
15 to the adults of the group and what was going on through
16 their minds during the course of the project.

17 As the years went by and the adults of
18 the group, the elders of the group, did not seem to be
19 settling in very well. Some started talking about their
20 desire to return even before two years was up, although
21 they understood that the two years was a time limit sort
22 of thing. Although they were adults, they were very well
23 capable of doing the work required to make a living. They

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 were not educated in the ways of the lay of the land in
2 the High Arctic. They did not have what we call
3 traditional knowledge of what resources and how to go about
4 making use of those resources.

5 When peopled mentioned their desire to
6 return, they were immediately refused. This blocked any
7 effort to return. The alternative to this whole thing
8 was that the next best thing would be to send their extended
9 families up to the High Arctic to join them.

10 This has affected the people of
11 Inukjuak, this item of sending for extended families and
12 sending them up to the High Arctic.

13 There, in Inukjuak, we were experiencing
14 more plentiful caribou. We knew that the elders were
15 physically affected by the project of relocation. The
16 fact of longing for their original homeland, the fact of
17 wanting to have freedom without restriction, longing for
18 food and longing for water. When we were thirsty, we were
19 thirsty. It is true that if you are used to a particular
20 species of wildlife or food you long for that if you no
21 longer have that available.

22 So, two years was a very long time for
23 people who had to go through these processes. For the

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 elders of the group, two years was very long. It was a
2 long time.

3 The third thing about longing is longing
4 for relatives, longing for grandchildren, their cousins,
5 longing and being burdened with this. This was described
6 yesterday, or previously.

7 I am describing the actual relocatees.
8 I am not yet describing the people left behind in Inukjuak,
9 but I am going to return to that.

10 I was made aware at that time, because
11 I served as leader or mayor of Inukjuak for over 20 years,
12 and I was one of the ones most informed about the problems
13 that the adults of the relocatees were experiencing because
14 I used to get letters occasionally. Those letters were
15 a source of information for me about what was going on.

16 The adults of the group did not speak
17 disparagingly of their new land, but there were two or
18 three people, Philipoosie who was in Grise Fiord, who was
19 the father-in-law of Nutaraq, Salluviniq and Johnny --
20 these were the three individuals who sent letters most
21 often.

22 At the same time in Inukjuak the wildlife
23 resources seemed to be getting much more plentiful and

StenoTran

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 much more readily accessible to the people who lived in
2 the Inukjuak area. Although previous years wildlife
3 resources were not always so plentiful in the area, we
4 felt that -- yes, they felt that they had a longing for
5 their relatives and their original surroundings. I told
6 them in reply that, yes, wildlife resources are getting
7 more plentiful and if you could return you would notice
8 that it is easier to make a living here than it was
9 previously.

10 The people that I am referring to never
11 wrote down absolutely everything that was on their minds,
12 so I do not know every burden that they were experiencing.

13 But I know the main ones. For example, they were
14 anticipating anxiously the option of being able to harvest
15 wildlife. They enjoyed doing that, as I did. None of
16 them were ever sitting around at home doing nothing.

17 Then, it turned out that very soon after
18 they established themselves in the new communities in the
19 High Arctic they started being imposed with restrictions
20 on harvest of wildlife. This had a very adverse affect
21 on the adults. Then, after many years elapsed and the
22 people who wanted to return attempted to return but were
23 told they could not do so and they were discouraged from

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 returning. This weakened their mental condition.

2 Perhaps there was a snag, or they had hit a snag. Perhaps
3 use the analogy of a rope snagged on something and it was
4 only by cutting the rope that the snag would be released.

5 So, it seemed like they were hackled by something that
6 was preventing them from making progress. Sometimes, if
7 we are not able to cut the rope, we lose what is tied down.

8 They were saddled with this problem and it had a very
9 adverse and non-beneficial effect on their lives.

10 Now, for those who were left behind in
11 Inukjuak, some of them were also affected adversely but
12 not as much as what was going on in the High Arctic,
13 considering the same factors.

14 Now, the adults that are in Inukjuak had
15 the freedom to use the wildlife resources. They were in
16 Inukjuak. They recognized all of the features of the land
17 and what was in it. There was nothing impeding them from
18 carrying on with life. They were saddled with a different
19 set of factors. The main thing on their minds was
20 separation from family members. What weighed heavily on
21 their minds was: When am I ever going to see my relatives
22 again? Would it be after the two years that were
23 mentioned?

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 They knew that their relatives were
2 going to come back after two years and, perhaps, what
3 weighed heavily on their minds was: Maybe some of our
4 relatives would not want to return. I was one of those.

5 These are my cousins and nephews and
6 aunts, the people that were relocated. As my mind matured
7 and as I became an adult myself my mind was concentrated
8 on the circumstances, that these are relatives in the High
9 Arctic were experiencing. I, myself, when I became an
10 adult, became saddled with the same burdens that the adults
11 were experiencing.

12 I know I am carrying on a bit too long
13 here, but I have to say what I have to say.

14 For those who were left behind in
15 Inukjuak, their biggest concern was longing for family,
16 longing for family members. When their certain family
17 members did not make it back, their physical wellbeing
18 was affected. They were weakened by the people, their
19 cousins. The adults were related to numerous people of
20 their generation back in Inukjuak.

21 Now, even though this was going on, they
22 tried to be strong. I don't think anybody every
23 deliberately set out to break down, although there were

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 many problems caused by the relocation to the High Arctic.
2 I thought we should try to be seeking out solutions to
3 the problems caused by the relocation. I wanted to find
4 out how these people were treated in their exile, to try
5 to find solutions to the problems caused by it.

6 Now, we know that they are emboldened
7 now to describe their experience of relocation. I am glad
8 they are doing it.

9 The second point I want to make here,
10 I am trying to describe the effects it had on the elders.
11 If you want to ask questions about that later, I can try
12 to answer them. But, the second point is about the
13 independence of these people.

14 The people that were relocated were very
15 young. They were young adults newly married and they were
16 quite capable. When they set out to the High Arctic as
17 young adults, when they eventually returned they came back
18 with no more than a suitcase in their hands -- nothing
19 more than a suitcase. They left behind all of their
20 essential belongings. They came back with only one
21 suitcase, perhaps a change of trousers or a change of
22 clothing, perhaps containing some papers. Some of them
23 came back under these circumstances, not all of them, but

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 some of them.

2 Their canoes, their snowmobiles, their
3 sleds -- essential equipment like that were left behind
4 -- their houses, their blankets. They paid for
5 themselves. They paid for their children. They left
6 behind their relatives and their attitude was, perhaps,
7 if they could find some way, somehow to return the remainder
8 of their family and belongings, perhaps a way could be
9 found to do that. This returnee would have to be
10 sheltered.

11 Now, the government said when they were
12 going to relocate these people, "If you want to return
13 after two years, you are going to be able to do that and
14 you are going to assisted fully on your return, on your
15 efforts to return." For those returnees, some of them were
16 returned by their employers, their airfare was covered
17 by their employers. Some people have returned through
18 that area, through that route or through those means.

19 We had to tackle these problems because
20 many people who returned had absolutely nothing because
21 they couldn't bring their essential equipment.

22 Things are very expensive in the Arctic.
23 Snowmobiles and equipment such as canoes are very

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 expensive in the Arctic. Sometimes many of these people
2 are simply ordinary people without any equipment and any
3 means for a long time after their return. It seemed that
4 the government was totally ignorant, totally unaware of
5 the circumstances of these people.

6 But we from Inukjuak informed the
7 government about the conditions of these people, that they
8 should get help. We ourselves were not equipped or
9 resourced to help these people because all we had were
10 barely enough resources to look after the local people.
11 We were not given any extra resources whatsoever to deal
12 with the problems associated with the returnees. The
13 relocation has many problems associated for both the
14 relocatees themselves and for the people they left behind.
15

16 There is pain in the heart caused by
17 this. It seems that we can't just let it sit there, the
18 pain. We have to try to tackle and come up with solutions.

19 These people who have returned with
20 nothing from the High Arctic, when they returned on their
21 own initiative because the government refused to have
22 anything to do with them and refused to return them, they
23 came back with a suitcase in their hands.

StenoTran

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Before they actually started returning,
2 because we knew eventually there was going to be returns,
3 that before they returned we told the government to provide
4 them with housing because we ourselves were getting
5 inadequate housing for the Inukjuak population ourselves.

6 When we asked them to provide housing, it took us many
7 years before any such thing was provided. There were many
8 problems associated with the relocation. It's not all
9 smooth, and not only to the relocatees themselves. I am
10 stating none of the people who returned went through
11 anything smooth.

12 I also want to say that I had a cousin
13 Jackoosie Iqaluk's older brother who was also related to
14 the people in the High Arctic, and I worked with him.

15 But I personally had more dealings with him than anybody
16 else. He was a man who had a very pleasing disposition.

17 There was nothing unpleasant about him. Both his younger
18 brothers were up in the High Arctic, his sister, his nieces
19 and nephews. It seemed that most of his relatives were
20 up in the High Arctic and I was the only one who could
21 really be near him.

22 Even then he also helped me and he helped
23 guide me and advise me. Although most of his relatives

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 were up in the High Arctic he never complained. He never
2 once whined or complained about the fact that his relatives
3 were all up in the High Arctic. Never having once
4 complained, he eventually died.

5 For the relatives that he had departed
6 from -- upon his death we had to inform his relatives who
7 were in the High Arctic. His death was quite sudden.
8 In five minutes he had been well and five minutes later
9 he was dead. Now we were going to have to inform his
10 relatives, his brothers and sisters. All of his relatives
11 were very far away. Although it is nothing strange to
12 have people directly related to each other and experiencing
13 a death in the family, it seemed that there was a deliberate
14 effort to disrupt the family relations. People never saw
15 each other again.

16 The government was responsible for this.
17 The government relocated them and they should be
18 responsible for solutions. They have to apologise for
19 something at least. They should at least compensate the
20 people for exchanging the major pieces of equipment they
21 had to leave behind, their canoes, their rifles, their
22 sleds -- this kind of equipment. Their housing that they
23 left behind cannot really be taken out, which is

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 unfortunate.

2 If the government does not compensate
3 for the loss of these things, the government is not in
4 the truth. They should also consider the disruption in
5 their lives and compensate them for the disruption and
6 broken lives that has resulted. The government should
7 be sincere about issuing an apology.

8 I am glad that it's finally getting some
9 attention while we are able to speak about it. This is
10 the main thing that you have had to hear because it affects
11 not only the High Arctic, but relatives that were left
12 behind.

13 If there is a question about that, I am
14 trying to be brief about it.

15 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

16 I am going to ask a question later, but Lizzie will be
17 the next speaker.

18 **LIZZIE AMAGOALIK:** (Translation)

19 Lazarusie Epoo is my uncle who has spoken about returning
20 and being in the High Arctic. I have been returned to
21 Inukjuak. I am Lizzie Amagoalik.

22 While he was on the subject of returning,
23 we returned in 1979, my husband and my children. My

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 children were very reluctant for the return because they
2 never grew up in Inukjuak, but we sort of forced them to
3 agree to it because they were our children. Although they
4 did not grow up there, we had to take them back when we
5 went back.

6 My husband wanted to return. He had to
7 go back to see his aunt because his aunt had returned to
8 Inukjuak, and we all had to -- I had to follow him because
9 we are a married couple.

10 I was deeply touched with pain when I
11 had to separate with my mother who was still in the High
12 Arctic.

13 When my husband and I started discussing
14 our possible return, my husband consulted with a government
15 official. He wanted them to pay for the return. He wanted
16 the government to pay for our return. He asked a
17 government official working out of Yellowknife.

18 Then, when he inquired, he called him
19 to our home and asked him about this. He was told, "No,
20 you cannot. You cannot do this." He even wanted to see
21 what sort of pocket money Jaybeddie had. That is how he
22 refused outright to assist in any way. He even told
23 Jaybeddie, "Now, you carve and earn the money to pay for

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 your return."

2 Then, my mother's recounting of how the
3 government had promised to return us became a pain in my
4 heart. My husband was told that, and so he started carving
5 to save money for airfare. There was me, my husband, my
6 three sons -- anyway, we were a family of seven. Our return
7 airfare was paid for -- this is a family of seven with
8 children -- we paid for our return that way.

9 Then, when we returned, we returned to
10 our cousins, our direct relatives, people that we grew
11 up with. But they didn't recognize us. Then, there was
12 a whole generation that had been born and grew up while
13 we were up there, did not even know us. To them, we were
14 strangers.

15 My uncle Lazarusie says there are
16 burdens attached to all this. When we were preparing to
17 go home, my youngest child, and because we were trying
18 to travel light, we did not have any money to pay for any
19 excess baggage, I packed a pillow into my suitcase for
20 my youngest child, because if we had any excess baggage
21 we would have to pay for it.

22 All my household articles, washing
23 machine -- we all wanted to stay clean, we never want to

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 be in unclean conditions for long -- all of my equipment
2 I simply left all behind because we couldn't pay for it,
3 and here I was having been relocated under government
4 sponsorship.

5 We had to pack a change of clothes. We
6 did not have anything to carry, a tea kettle, a cup, or
7 any other accessories such as that because we had to
8 restrict ourselves and not have any excess baggage.

9 Then, when we arrived we had to depend
10 on the generosity and the help of the people there. We
11 had to be provided with a small house. We were living
12 in a very small house. We were simply inside, simply
13 living inside.

14 It seemed that we should have been much
15 better off because we had been sent to a land of plenty
16 originally, remember?

17 The government official that my husband
18 inquired to was David Gilday. He is in Yellowknife.

19 Then, we experienced another burden
20 because our children did not grow up in Inukjuak and did
21 not recognize anybody. They had a desire to go back to
22 Resolute Bay, and here we were very poor. We didn't have
23 any money. We experienced many dead-ends because my

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 husband and I had no way to contact or get at the people
2 who were responsible for the original relocation to try
3 to seek solutions to our problems.

4 Our eldest child, his father saved up
5 enough money to go back to Resolute Bay to go see his
6 grandmother. Ever since the government originally
7 relocated us it seems that everything is becoming more
8 scarce. Because we try to work using what we know, and
9 because our cousins and other relatives did not recognize
10 us, because we spent so many years apart, and even though
11 some of them were employed in well-paying jobs they cannot
12 really relate to us because people call us, "You're not
13 from Inukjuak." People tell us that because they never
14 grew up with us. Sometimes arguments ensue.

15 Today, we have adequate housing, but
16 there is nothing inside because we cannot get jobs there.
17 Even today I have to scrounge around for some place to
18 wash our clothing. I am not relying to you. I am relating
19 an experience that I have experienced up to today.

20 I have never seen my parents, my younger
21 sisters, my other siblings. Sometimes I experience a
22 thinking-in-circles experience. My cousins are at home
23 in Inukjuak, contented, because we were

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 under -- originally, the government had done this to us.
2 When are they ever going to help us? This has been going
3 through my mind these days.

4 I have never heard of my friends and
5 family for years. This is unacceptable. This is painful.
6 My children are experiencing the same problems because
7 they also have a longing to go back to where they grew
8 up. My oldest child often tells me, "I wish I could go
9 in front of government and convince them that I should
10 be able to go and visit my grandmother." This is what
11 he often says. It should be possible. It should be
12 facilitated for families to get together occasionally.

13 People, perhaps, are going to add to what
14 I have just said, but that's all I have to say for now.

15 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

16 Thank you. Jaybeddie, the floor is yours.

17 **JAYBEDDIE AMAGOALIK:** My name is
18 Jaybeddie Amagoalik. I would like to make a supplementary
19 to Lizzie's comments. I will try and make it brief.

20 I would like to talk about the topic of
21 going back to the country. In 1953, we were relocated.
22 When we returned to Inukjuak, we went through very hard
23 times when we returned for these reasons: due to lack

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of education. It is very hard to find jobs as an ordinary
2 person without education, although when we are returning
3 to our original home place.

4 When I was going back to Inukjuak from
5 Resolute Bay some of my family I did not see them for well
6 over 13 years. When I first thought of going back to
7 Inukjuak, I wrote a letter to the Commissioner of the
8 Northwest Territories. His name is John Parker,
9 Commissioner Parker. He sent a government official, David
10 Gilday.

11 John Parker stated in his letter, "For
12 two years your airfare cannot be paid for when you are
13 returning. I know you are capable of working and I know
14 that you are capable of carving."

15 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Do you have the
16 letters, Jaybeddie?

17 **JAYBEDDIE AMAGOALIK:** I don't have them
18 with me. They are in Inukjuak.

19 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** You have them
20 at home?

21 **JAYBEDDIE AMAGOALIK:** Yes.

22 The government official, David Gilday,
23 went to Resolute Bay and interviewed me. He asked me,

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 "Do you have any money in your bank account? I have to
2 know how much you have in the bank account." I had to
3 let him know that I had \$3,000 savings in my bank account.
4 He asked me if I was selling my carvings to the Hudson's
5 Bay Company. He asked the Hudson's Bay Company if they
6 would be willing to buy my carvings. He said they cannot
7 pay for airplane tickets to return.

8 In spite of all of this, at that time,
9 I had enough money to pay for our plane tickets back.
10 At that time, tickets were not that expensive as today.
11 Therefore, we were able to return.

12 I am getting older and I am getting
13 weaker. I am still getting pain and concern over being
14 relocated, especially my wife. Mrs. Amagoalik has a mother
15 who lives in Resolute Bay, and sisters, younger sisters.
16 One of their younger sisters -- some of their sisters
17 are living in different communities, although they are
18 living in Canada. They are spread all over Canada. One
19 lives in Spence Bay. One lives in Sanikiluaq. One lives
20 in Pond Inlet. One lives in Inukjuak. Some live in
21 Resolute Bay. That is how it is.

22 I, myself, perhaps, I will just
23 elaborate more. Upon my return to Inukjuak, I left two

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 sons with a grandmother in Resolute Bay. I did not see
2 them for 13 years since I returned. No wonder I am missing
3 them.

4 Also upon my return to Inukjuak my sister
5 was living at that time who had five children. When I
6 heard that she had died I did not have enough money to
7 go to the funeral, and I cannot forget that, although I
8 really wanted to go to my sister's funeral, for my sister
9 had five children. Her children were taken by the white
10 people and one lives in Ottawa. Some live in Winnipeg.

11 I think there are two other children living in Winnipeg.

12 I did not see them for, perhaps, for 20 years.

13 These are one of the things that really
14 had a great impact on me. I realize that. I feel as though
15 they were stolen away from our family. I could have used
16 them on my own, but they were taken by the Qallunaat people.

17 It was like, "I'll take this one. I'll take this one."

18 And some people would take that person. It was if they
19 were properties. It seems like as if they were treated
20 like properties. That would never have happened if we
21 were never relocated.

22 When we returned to Inukjuak, I am now
23 a grandfather. I have my relatives scattered all over

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the place and I cannot move from the village. I would
2 really appreciate it if I could be paid to go see my
3 relatives.

4 I was very happy to come here so that
5 we could our relatives here, for I did not seen some of
6 these people for many, many years.

7 As I said, I was going to make myself
8 brief, so I will conclude for now. Thank you.

9 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)
10 Thank you, Jaybeddie.

11 Lizzie, did you want to make a further
12 comment?

13 **LIZZIE AMAGOALIK:** My comment is going
14 to be very brief. This had a great impact on me. It made
15 me depressed so badly that I become physically ill. It
16 was too heavy on me. My older sister, Simeonie's wife,
17 I really worry about her and I don't know how to go about
18 seeing her. My sister is the oldest one and she is not
19 very healthy. I constantly worry about here, so therefore
20 I do not want you to take what I am saying lightly.

21 I wanted to say that because I have a
22 great concern for her. I am very happy to see my older
23 sister. I would love to be able to see my older sister

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 with assistance of the government. With assistance of
2 the government, I would like to go and see her. Thank
3 you.

4 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Thank you,
5 Lizzie.

6 Elisapee, the floor is yours.

7 **ELISAPEE NUTARAQ:** Can you hear me? My
8 name is Elisapee Nutaraq who was relocated to Grise Fiord.
9

10 I did not make any comments. The people
11 who were older than me, what they say is the honest truth.

12 When my parents were relocated, I would
13 like to talk about my parents who have been relocated.
14 My father was Philipoosie Novalinga who is now deceased.
15 He died in 1987. My mother had died first, before my
16 father. Her name was Annie Amagoalik. Both of them died
17 in Grise Fiord.

18 When we were relocated, there were four
19 of us from our house. I was a child at that time, so
20 therefore I cannot really relate to what I can recall.
21 I had a brother named Paulasee. My sister-in-law's
22 previous husband, both of them who died in Grise Fiord.
23 I was the only family member who had returned to Inukjuak.

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Seeing I was leaving, I left my family up in the High
2 Arctic, although they were all buried in the High Arctic.

3 Also, I would like to make a point about
4 what we talked about in 1953, the year when we relocated.

5 I thought it was going to be impossible for me to talk
6 about it. But I cannot really recall the years we were
7 relocated.

8 But Lizzie and the rest are talking about
9 returning to Inukjuak. I wanted to make a few comments
10 about returning.

11 I grew up in Grise Fiord. I matured in
12 Grise Fiord and was capable of working when I was old enough
13 to work. So, I got a job because I was assisted. Although
14 I am not educated, I was able to get a job.

15 When Inukjuak had received education
16 facilities, that is the time we were relocated. When I
17 returned my peers were all educated. For those who were
18 not relocated, and I envy them for having a very good
19 education. If they were relocated, they would not have
20 an education like me because I'm not educated.

21 Although I am not educated, I worked and
22 had a job in Grise Fiord which I really appreciated when
23 I was still living in Grise Fiord. But in spite of all

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 that, with my job, my husband and I had to follow them
2 because they wanted to return to Inukjuak. I had no choice
3 but to return with them. I didn't really feel like going
4 back in some ways. I would just think about it, but I
5 did not talk about it. If my husband and I were not
6 married, I would have just stayed behind in the High Arctic
7 in Grise Fiord instead of returning to Inukjuak. I thought
8 Grise Fiord was the place of my homeland. I did not want
9 to leave it.

10 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

11 Do you want to stop for now?

12 She will continue when she is able to. For now, we will
13 go on to Jaypettie, the other Jaypettie Amagoalik. There
14 are two Jaybeddie Amagoaliks.

15 Jaypettie, if you want to make a comment,
16 go ahead.

17 **JAYPETTIE AMARUALIK:** My name is

18 Jaypettie Amarualik from Pond Inlet. I would like to talk
19 about our relocation and returning. I have few comments
20 to make about this topic.

21 The people who were relocated with me,
22 the people from Inukjuak, had missed -- I did not have
23 anything, like traditional food. I did not grow up eating

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 what they ate, so I did not yearn for food, since I'm from
2 Pond Inlet because I never knew what they ate, or what
3 kind of staples they had on the High Arctic.

4 Every spring, I knew a little bit about
5 the land. In wintertime when it gets dark, I was able
6 to travel by dog team in the dark, when I had a dog team.

7 However, I wanted to return to Pond Inlet because I was
8 yearning for a staple up there which was mostly mammals,
9 not migrating birds.

10 When we left further on, I left one of
11 my children. When I returned to Resolute Bay, my wife
12 wanted to return to Pond Inlet constantly. There were
13 other people who wanted to return, but they were denied.

14 I could not do anything or say anything about it. When
15 my wife had died, I looked for people whom I could approach
16 to ask whether I could return back to Pond Inlet. I looked
17 for a white person so that I could talk to them about
18 returning.

19 When we got a social worker, I approached
20 the social worker about me wanting to return. I was told
21 some people who returned from Grise Fiord, and they
22 returned back to Grise Fiord. I was told that I will get
23 homesick to Resolute Bay. So I was denied.

StenoTran

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Then, I started wondering where I can
2 get some money to return with. I don't think I will want
3 to go to Resolute, back to Resolute when I return to Pond
4 Inlet. I was told to pay my own plane fare, and I was
5 told that they cannot assist me with my plane ticket.
6 But they were able to help me with grocery money on welfare.
7 I had recently caught a polar bear and I got money for
8 the polar bear skin. I had five children. So I was able
9 to pay the plane ticket, plus myself, then we returned
10 to Pond Inlet.

11 I wanted to get close to Pond Inlet.
12 I didn't mind if I was dropped in Arctic Bay so I could
13 get to Pond Inlet. I was told if I want to go to Igloolik,
14 I could have drive my ski-doo to Igloolik.

15 My mother had sisters living in Igloolik
16 and they have relatives, three nephews, living in Igloolik.
17 I did not go with them. I don't know how they are. They
18 really don't know whether we are related or not.

19 This is the case. When I returned, I
20 had just my children. I had no wife. When I returned,
21 my children did not know anybody in Pond Inlet and they
22 did not know their peers. Their peers living in Pond Inlet
23 thought they were strangers. My son, who had been able

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to go out hunting and buy a ski-doo, but my son did not
2 know the land of Pond Inlet. This was quite bad, and this
3 was a problem when we returned. We were not able to get
4 close to our peers. That's how it was upon my return.

5 I know there is a little difference
6 between us here. They yearn for fish and people from
7 Inukjuak. They yearn for migrating birds. They are
8 telling you the truth. They are not the same kind of game
9 animals up there.

10 I will conclude for now. Thank you for
11 giving me the opportunity to speak.

12 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Thank you.
13 Elisapee did not finish, so I will give the floor to her.
14 Once she is done, after Johnny Epoo makes his comments,
15 I will have questions to ask.

16 At 11 we will start our in camera
17 session.

18 For those who would like to speak to the
19 Royal Commission before we go into our in camera session,
20 we will speak about this.

21 Elisapee.

22 **ELISAPEE NUTARAQ:** My name is Elisapee
23 Nutaraq. I now live in Inukjuak. I have never attended

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 such a meeting like this and I want to make myself clear.

2 I am sorry if I am not making myself
3 clear. Perhaps if I attend more meetings such as this,
4 I will be a better speaker.

5 As I was saying, we were planning to go
6 back home from Grise Fiord and the people I grew up with
7 -- I had to leave the people who I grew up with and it
8 was quite heavy on me.

9 My sister-in-law, Anna, Anna's
10 daughters we left behind up there and her children whom
11 we loved. We left our loved ones. It was very, very heavy
12 going back from Grise Fiord to Inukjuak.

13 I am just making this brief, although
14 I have so many things to say, but since we are pressed
15 for time I also wanted to point out to you about the fact
16 about return to Inukjuak. Although I have a lot of
17 relatives, I did not know my relatives. But I heard that
18 I had lots of relatives there, and cousins. I knew that
19 I had cousins living in Inukjuak and I knew that I had
20 aunts. My father's nieces and nephews lived in Inukjuak,
21 but I heard about those, but I have never seen them.

22 Upon my return it was if we were not
23 related. Lazarusie Epoo and his wife were very supportive

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to us. Even up to today, they are very supportive. So
2 I appreciate them very much for that.

3 Although we returned to our relatives,
4 we never knew our relatives living in Inukjuak. Upon our
5 return, I am starting to get to know my relatives, even
6 up to today, in Inukjuak. I am still learning of who my
7 relatives are.

8 As it turns out, we left a lot of
9 relatives living in Inukjuak, and this was governed by
10 the government. The government was responsible for those
11 and this had caused a lot of problems and distress.

12 At this time I have children who grew
13 up in Grise Fiord. They miss their friends living in Grise
14 Fiord. They really miss their friends living in Grise
15 Fiord. They cannot afford to visit friends living in Grise
16 Fiord, friends and family living in Grise Fiord. I want
17 you to know that I remember that.

18 Not every year, they should be assisted
19 in going to visit their relatives and family and friends
20 living in the High Arctic. Missing and yearning for
21 relatives, it's so hard. It's very heavy for me today.
22 When the people we left in 1988 we really miss them. I
23 yearn for the people we had missed. Sometimes I pace

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 around the house missing the people we left and I want
2 the government to remember this.

3 I will conclude. I know there are a lot
4 of people who would like to make a comment and we are pressed
5 for time. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to
6 speak.

7 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Thank you,
8 Elisapee. Johnny Epoo.

9 I am asking the people in the back to
10 please sit down and settle down. Just try and keep it
11 low. Thank you.

12 Johnny Epoo.

13 **JOHNNY EPOO:** Thank you. I am here on
14 behalf of the mayor of Inukjuak -- my name is Johnny
15 Epoo -- since he could not come.

16 One of the main points I am here, or the
17 reason why I am here, is on behalf of the services we provide
18 to the village or the community. Since the
19 village -- municipal counsellor, the people who were
20 relocated, although they were supposed to be returned,
21 when they finally returned nobody even paid attention to
22 them. They never even helped them, although we wanted
23 to give them appropriate housing. But our housing was

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 not appropriate, although we wanted to help them in every
2 way we can. It is impossible to help them out in every
3 way, for we lack in services, housing shortage, too. The
4 funding we receive from the Quebec government, there is
5 no other funding we receive from Quebec government, other
6 than Quebec government, even up to today.

7 The government who were responsible for
8 the relocation should be responsible for the return. They
9 should be assisting the people who have returned to the
10 homeland. They should be assisted by the government who
11 had relocated them.

12 I wanted you to know this and be made
13 aware of this.

14 The social services are very much in the
15 same boat as the municipal services, not just for the people
16 living in the High Arctic, there are people coming to
17 Inukjuak from different communities. Inukjuak is growing
18 in population. They don't pay attention to all these,
19 the population and some people who were relocated have
20 returned to our community. I know that it is not on
21 purpose.

22 It is not on purpose the way we are trying
23 to support them, since the government is so slow. The

StenoTran

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Quebec government is so slow every time we try to get
2 funding. The social services, and the workers and the
3 police and the nurses, and these kind of services, the
4 federal government is responsible for these services and
5 these services have never been increased.

6 I have quite a few things to say, but
7 some of them have already been covered here, and we are
8 pressed for time. Therefore, I do not wish to take too
9 long.

10 However, the younger people who are
11 adults who have recognized the people who have returned,
12 there was no problem between us for those of us who knew
13 each other when the people had returned from being
14 relocated. But our grandchildren and the younger people
15 did not recognize each other and they did not know each
16 other for quite some time.

17 Also, even some did not sleep all night
18 and they just paced around, and just walked around. They
19 did not understand each other. They were telling the
20 people who had returned that they were not from that region,
21 and all of us have gone through a hard time with this.
22 For those of us who were not relocated, we are trying to
23 give them support their return.

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 In spite of all these problems that were
2 encountered, our children and their children have to be
3 helped by the police. This would never have been the case
4 if they were never were relocated and we had Inuk policemen.

5 Although they did not spend their life
6 living in Inukjuak, the policemen did not want to arrest
7 some people, arrest the children of the people who have
8 been relocated, but they had no choice. A lot of these
9 problems had surfaced, although we are living in harmony
10 with them for we know them, but our children and their
11 children did not know each other. That is why a lot of
12 problems had surfaced and they did not know the fact that
13 they were related to each other. They did not even know
14 the fact that they were related with each other.

15 Even us adults and them did not have a
16 very good communication system when they were living up
17 there. So therefore a lot of problems had arose. The
18 communication system was inadequate so therefore we were
19 unable to keep in touch with each other and a lot of people
20 living in Inukjuak did not know the people who were
21 relocated when they returned.

22 This is self-explanatory. However, I
23 want to make one point. When I was going to school at

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the age of 15 they were relocated. When we first had our
2 teacher in Inukjuak for the first time, I have --

3 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)
4 What was the name of the teachers?

5 **JOHNNY EPOO:** I have seen documents and
6 I have heard from them, from the people of Inukjuak. The
7 very first teacher I heard that they did not get another
8 teacher, but this is entirely untrue. When the first
9 teacher arrived, and when they left, their education system
10 had continued.

11 I heard that when the teacher left there
12 was no other replacement teacher, so therefore the people
13 living in Inukjuak, education had deteriorated. But this
14 is entirely untrue.

15 I have not too much to say. You can see
16 the letter in English. I have given them to Jaybeddie.
17 So, therefore, you can see the document that I talked
18 about. Thank you.

19 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Thank you,
20 Johnny. I wanted to ask questions, but there are a few
21 people who would like to make a comment before I do ask
22 questions.

23 I will ask them to speak out. I do have

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 some questions, but perhaps after lunch...

2 Samwillie will go after.

3 **SAMWILLIE ELIJASIALUK:** I was relocated
4 to Grise Fiord in 1953. The things that I am going to
5 mention are the fact that we returned to Inukjuak.

6 As Elisapee was saying, in regards to
7 the return and our request to return they did not agree
8 to our request. They did not say that we did not want
9 to go back, but our request to be returned to Inukjuak,
10 as I said yesterday, for two hours, C.D. Howe used to be
11 in the community for two hours and the police used to
12 supervise us while we were there just to make sure that
13 we did not make any bad -- he used to tell us that our
14 community is really nice. He said, "Do not complain about
15 this new location to anyone on the C.D. Howe." The person
16 that we referred to as Sergeant in 1953, he was up there
17 in 1953, you can find out exactly what his name was on
18 the records. He was really against our returning back
19 to Inukjuak. He used to make -- he used to dictate to
20 us all the time. That is the way he was.

21 Another thing that I would like to
22 mention is the fact that we were refused our request to
23 return. These have complicated a lot of things. As

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Johnny was talking about, upon our return a lot of things
2 were different. Our parents, when they died, when they
3 were no longer there, since they were no longer there,
4 my sister Anna, my older brother, those we returned without
5 our mother because she had died. It was getting very hard
6 for us to stay up there when our mother had died and
7 Elizabeth's mother had died. But our younger brother
8 Larry did not want to move. We thought they were just
9 going to go with us when we returned. But he did not want
10 to leave behind his homeland, where he grew up.

11 They are going through the same things
12 as we have gone through. Our parents were never granted
13 their wish. Now, when we were able to afford it on our
14 own, we returned to Inukjuak.

15 Today, as I have been told, I'm not going
16 to mention names, but a young person had said, "What am
17 I? I don't know my relatives. I don't have a grandmother
18 here. What am I? I don't know my relatives. Maybe I
19 should just kill myself." A young person had said that
20 to me. But I told that certain person, "You shouldn't
21 do that. Try to live as much as you can." The reply was,
22 "I don't have any relatives. I don't want to live any
23 more." One of the young people has said that to me.

StenoTran

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I would like to make clear that the
2 homeland of the Inuit is very small. Montreal is a big
3 city. Ottawa is a big city. They can't recognize each
4 other. They don't even know who lives where and they
5 cannot say, "You are from that community, or from that
6 certain place." I even got a letter in regards to that
7 one. Anyone in Inuk --

8 As Johnny was saying, the young people
9 are saying, "You're from that certain place." Because
10 we all know each other, we know where we're from.

11 Another thing I want to make clear is
12 my parents went through a hard time. They were worried;
13 they were concerned. We, the younger generation, have
14 been touched. And our children are going through the
15 hardships again.

16 Whose fault is it? We know. We can
17 state that it was because of the issue of sovereignty.
18 A lot of Inuit are affected.

19 The government had, in their minds, even
20 if they die, as long as they have graves there, and we
21 have gone through a very hard time.

22 Our request to return, broken promises,
23 those have to be solved, fulfilled.

StenoTran

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Simeonie
2 Amagoalik.

3 **SIMEONIE AMAGOALIK:** My name is
4 Simeonie Amagoalik. In regard to the problem of return
5 and the problems associated, I want to make a brief
6 statement.

7 It has been said that when we were
8 relocated to the High Arctic there was a lot of weeping
9 and crying amongst the Inuit, our cousins, our brothers.
10 When our brothers and cousins returned back to their
11 original homeland, there is also a lot of crying because
12 we cannot all make it at once back to our original home.

13 My brother Jaybeddie said that he had
14 to leave some of his sons behind because returning has
15 such an expense associated to it. When our relatives
16 started returning, they saved up their own money. We buy
17 some of their equipment, trying to put help them put
18 together the money to finance their return. We buy some
19 of their stuff, their equipment, to help them finance their
20 return.

21 So, our relatives return -- departs from
22 us and our pocket money goes with them. Being departed
23 from by family members is a very heavy burden. There is

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 absolutely no consideration given to the fact that the
2 people who are left behind are also suffering the effects
3 of their family, relatives, returning. We are made poor
4 financially, plus we are made poor family relations-wise.

5 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Thank you,
6 Simeonie. Markoosie Patsauq.

7 **MARKOOSIE PATSAUQ:** About the
8 equipment, we left behind a lot of our equipment, for those
9 of us who did return. In 1988, we had a meeting to
10 determine what exactly we left behind. We did research
11 on this and had a substantial meeting because many people
12 left behind a very large number of things. We want to
13 make a claim about these to the government. We still have
14 not gotten any results from the government.

15 This involves not a great number of
16 people, but I have the written affidavits here about the
17 equipment that they catalogued that they left behind.
18 For example, myself, I had to leave behind a lot of
19 equipment when I made my own return. When I catalogued
20 them and listed the prices, I myself had lost about \$8,000
21 worth of equipment I had to leave behind.

22 So, when we returned, our equipment and
23 goods, we have to leave them behind. When we returned,

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 we returned to basically nothing because we leave all of
2 our means of livelihood back in the High Arctic.

3 Samwillie Elijasialuk has made a claim
4 of \$14,000. My late father has a claim of \$11,000. There
5 are several others.

6 Joseph Idlout, Jaybeddie Amagoalik,
7 Jackoosie Iqaluk, and they are individual claims, I would
8 like to give these to the Commission for their information.
9 This catalogues part of the stuff that we have left behind.

10

11 We will maintain our position because
12 we were relocated and when we returned we become a lot
13 poorer. We are going to insist on maintaining pressure
14 on government to compensate us for the equipment we left
15 behind. Thank you.

16 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Yes, you are
17 going to give it the Commissioners.

18 Allie, you wanted to speak on this issue?

19 **ALLIE SALLUVINIQ:** I am Allie
20 Salluviniq, originally from Inukjuak, now living in
21 Resolute Bay.

22 I would like to, first of all, talk about
23 buying. Resolute Bay mayor wanted me to take my hat off,

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 but I said no because I wanted to use it as an example
2 because the label on the hat signifies that the High Arctic
3 is now open for business, and we had a hand in establishing
4 it.

5 I want to thank the Commissioners for
6 giving us the opportunity to speak.

7 To return to the subject about buying
8 of equipment, when our relatives returned to their original
9 homeland, for example, my namesake, who is the father of
10 Markoosie Patsauq, they raised their own money by carving
11 with their hands. Because their own source of financing
12 was too inadequate, they sold their equipment. I, myself,
13 bought equipment off of them to help them finance their
14 return. My namesake, who was Markoosie Patsauq's father,
15 his wife said when I mentioned that I wanted to buy
16 equipment, she said, "But it's very expensive. The price
17 is very high." I told her, "It's okay. I am trying to
18 help you." I wanted to mention this.

19 I would like to say something further
20 later on, but that's it for now.

21 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** We are going
22 to have a closed meeting starting at 11. Perhaps Mr
23 Erasmus wants to make a statement on this.

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I think we
2 will have a short break now. What we will do is when we
3 return we will go into in camera. We will not be using
4 the equipment. We will be asking everyone to leave that
5 are not witnesses and relatives and friends of the people
6 who are going to be making the presentations to us.

7 The observers from the public and the
8 media and so forth, we will be asking to leave for now.

9 We are hoping to begin again the public
10 session at 2 o'clock. During this particular break,
11 between 11 and 2, we will try to have both the in camera
12 session and also try to have enough time to have a lunch
13 break before we return at 2 o'clock.

14 I think what we will do right now is
15 before we start the in camera meeting we will have a small
16 break, allow people to leave, stretch and have refreshments
17 and so forth. In a few minutes, five or ten minutes, we
18 will resume with an in camera meeting.

19 --- Luncheon recess at 11 a.m.

20 --- Upon resuming at 2:45 p.m.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** We are going
22 to resume the public hearings aspect that we had left off
23 at around 11 o'clock. We will go through now until we

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 are finished. We expect what remains of this afternoon
2 will be sufficient to finish the public portion of our
3 hearings.

4 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Thank you, Mr.
5 Erasmus. First, I want to tell the witnesses, so I will
6 speak in Inuktitut --

7 (Translation) The remaining people who
8 haven't spoken yet, you can have a chance to speak. Even
9 those who have come up and presented their testimony, you
10 still will have a chance, if you wish.

11 Would the remaining people who haven't
12 presented their testimonies give me their names through
13 Markoosie because sometimes I don't know who wishes to
14 speak, so it is better if you tell me, whoever wants to
15 be heard.

16 (English) I was saying that if they
17 wish to speak, they should come forward and present their
18 name to me and I will introduce them to the Commission.
19 Everybody is welcome to speak here.

20 Our first speaker is going to be
21 Markoosie Patsauq. He would like to talk a little bit
22 more about the letters and some of the incidents related
23 to the letters.

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 (Translation) In regard to the letters
2 that you found, could you clarify that further, or
3 elaborate on that?

4 **MARKOOSIE PATSAUQ:** The thing I
5 mentioned about the letters, we used to want to communicate
6 with our relatives and to let them know how we were. The
7 only means of communication was by letters with our
8 relatives. I wrote a letter to a friend of mine, to my
9 cousin in Inukjuak, and I gave that letter to the police.
10 Everything that had to be sent out had to go through the
11 police officer.

12 One incident, I gave my letter to the
13 police officer, on the following day when I went to the
14 dump, I say them, they had been torn up and I recognized
15 the letter. Right away, when I found the letter, I brought
16 that torn up letter to the police officer, which I found
17 in the garbage dump. Then, I had heard that that had
18 happened to the other people, and it had happened to me,
19 too, because the letter I had tried to send had been torn
20 up and thrown in the garbage. As I said earlier, it was
21 split in two -- it was torn in two. I recognized the
22 envelope and the letter. So, I went to the police officer
23 and asked him why they were thrown in the garbage, which

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I gave you yesterday, I said that to the officer. His
2 response was, "Maybe I dropped them. Maybe when I dropped
3 them, the cleaning lady threw it away in the garbage."
4 That is all he said. That was the answer he gave me.

5 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Who was the
6 letter to?

7 **MARKOOSIE PATSAUQ:** It was a letter to
8 Abellie Echallook, my cousin in Inukjuak. I gave that letter
9 to Doug Moody, the RCMP officer.

10 Before that, back in 1953, we were
11 relocated and the following year I went away to the
12 hospital. In the hospital I used to get letters maybe
13 at least once a month. I used to receive letters from
14 my parents. In some letters he indicated, "Did you receive
15 the money I sent you?" He had asked me that in his letters.
16 For almost three years, I was in the hospital. A lot
17 of times in his letter he asked me if I had received the
18 money that he sent me. Sometimes, there used to be \$2,
19 sometimes \$5. Some of them used to get to me. That was
20 not many times that I got the money through the mail.

21 I think there were four or five times
22 that when my father wrote me and he asked me in his letters
23 whether I got the money or not, that he had sent previously.

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I know -- I think the money he tried to send me was stolen
2 four or five times. The police officer was Ross Gibson.

3 I am sure he was given those letters.

4 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

5 I have one question. The other people that tried to send
6 letters, do you have any idea who the people were who found
7 torn up letters? Do any of you remember who else had found
8 letters that were in the garbage dump?

9 **MARKOOSIE PATSAUQ:** I know of
10 Samwillie. I don't know of any other people.

11 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Thank you.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** When you
13 received these letters, did you ever receive a cheque in
14 there that might have replaced any money that was taken?

15 **MARKOOSIE PATSAUQ:** There was no
16 cheques. In fact, cheques did not exist in those days
17 in the Arctic.

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

19 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)
20 Samwillie.

21 **SAMWILLIE ELIJASIALUK:** I will start
22 over. I have found letters which I should talk about,
23 In 1957, I went to Resolute Bay with Bob Pilot by dog team.

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 The officer in Resolute Bay was Doug Moody. I waited
2 in Resolute for over a month. They were gone for a month
3 on their vacation. While I was waiting for them to come
4 back, I found letters in the garbage dump. That letter
5 that I had written, I brought them with me to Resolute,
6 and I was on that trip to Resolute Bay. Back then, there
7 were no airplanes. The only means of transporting the
8 letters from Grise Fiord to Resolute was by dog team.
9 My mother had written a letter and sent pictures.

10 We brought those letters to Resolute Bay
11 by dog team. While I was in Resolute Bay we were scrounging
12 the garbage dump looking for some wood. I recognized an
13 envelope which was torn up. I recognized a picture. They
14 were torn up into small pieces. I was hurt in my heart
15 and I could just imagine my mother who had written a letter
16 and when I found that letter I did not save that letter
17 because they were all torn up to small pieces, although
18 the picture was not into small pieces, but still they were
19 torn up. I didn't save them.

20 In another incident, there used to be
21 letters opened up. I remember when the ship came, as I
22 said, when my mother got a letter she cried, saying that
23 my father had died. The letter had been opened up and

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 read.

2 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

3 Samwillie, can you recall exactly what was said in the
4 letters?

5 **SAMWILLIE ELIJASIALUK:** (Translation)

6 Marjorie Hinds, the teacher, one time in 1953 said that
7 this place is quite good, so you should come up here.

8 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

9 I wonder if any of you would clarify what the letters
10 contained.

11 **SAMWILLIE ELIJASIALUK:** (Translation)

12 We did not receive the letters regularly. Sometimes only
13 when the ship came did we receive letters. We have been
14 saying that we didn't write positively about the place.

15 Are we put here to starve? Because we were in a pretty
16 desolate place. So, we couldn't write positively about
17 the place. All we could say was, "We are lacking." That
18 is the only thing we could have said. Did I answer your
19 question?

20 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

21 You answered it okay. Would anyone else like to add
22 Simeonie regarding the letter writing? Perhaps Elisapee.

23 **ELISAPEE NUTARAQ:** (Translation) I

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 will speak. It is not concerning myself but my father's
2 writing of letters. When we went there in 1955 he used
3 to write every month, '55, '56, '57, '58 and '60. In these
4 years, he used to write monthly. He did not get answers.
5 He didn't know where his letters went. That's how it
6 was.

7 He would ask the officer referred to,
8 Ross Gibson, "Did you send the letters?", since he didn't
9 get the answers. The officer would reply, "Yes, I did
10 send them. They are probably in Ottawa by now." That
11 is all he answered.

12 He had written a letter and he did not
13 receive any answer. He write the next month trying to
14 hear from his brothers. That is what I know.

15 Then, in 1961, '62 I think that is when
16 he got his first reply. That is what I remember. That
17 is how it was with my father.

18 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Thank you,
19 Elisapee. Lazarusie, I would like to ask you, you
20 mentioned earlier about receiving letters this morning.
21 I wanted to ask, the letters that you received, are they
22 still in existence, and what did the letters contain that
23 were received from the High Arctic? Can you please try

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and explain?

2 **LAZARUSIE EPOO:** Yes. We did not
3 receive letters regularly. They were the only means of
4 communication. Perhaps in some years we did not receive
5 any letters. Perhaps it was once a year. It was not very
6 regular. It was from the elderly people that I received
7 letters from. From my peers, we would receive recorded
8 tapes and letters from them. They were not complaining
9 about the place they were. They would talk about the
10 animals, how it was dark. They would talk about the more
11 positive things, the younger ones. But the elderly people
12 would talk about their problems more.

13 I was later in Inukjuak and I received
14 letters then.

15 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)
16 In which years; can you specify which years?

17 **LAZARUSIE EPOO:** (Translation) Around
18 1967, '70. The writing of letters stopped when we started
19 receiving telephones. The letter writing was replaced
20 by telephones. I may have saved some letters, but I cannot
21 say I saved all of them. I may still have some of those
22 letters at home.

23 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Do you remember the letters written in 1957, or the letters
2 written from 1953?

3 **LAZARUSIE EPOO:** (Translation) We
4 remember, but before the relocation took place, they were
5 talking a positive place that was to be the destination.
6 In 1953 to 55, in between, I have not received a letter
7 personally. It was around 1956, near '60, I think a
8 recorded tape was the first thing I received. It was just
9 to let the others know back home, maybe they recorded these
10 tapes when they had their shelters, when they had their
11 houses. They did not mention any lack of shelter. That
12 was directed to me. The tape was directed to me.

13 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)
14 Thank you, Lazarusie.

15 Do you have any questions in regard to
16 the letters, or is it pretty well covered?

17 You wanted to speak to the subject, or
18 Elisapee, did you want to say something on another subject,
19 if the others have finished?

20 **MINNIE NUNGAQ:** (Translation) If the
21 others have finished, we want to speak as survivors.

22 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)
23 The subject is pretty well clear. Samwillie, do you have

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 something you want to add?

2 **SAMWILLIE ELIJASIALUK:** (Translation)

3 No, it seems pretty clear now that when we landed in Grise
4 Fiord, there were no shelters, no proper shelters, because
5 there was nothing, nothing to build or make a box, no wood.

6 I might not be speaking as much while we are here.

7 I wrote a document last year in July
8 1992. I wrote this document around June. I received a
9 reply to that document. I tried to mention that I was
10 from Grise Fiord. However, the response that I received,
11 or the letter that I received, said you were from Resolute,
12 and the letter said that I was from Resolute. The
13 government letter. There is no date on it. I would like
14 for the Commission to read this.

15 I am happy to have a chance to speak here.

16

17 I was not satisfied with the response.
18 They said that I was from Resolute Bay.

19 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

20 You were in the Armed Forces?

21 **SAMWILLIE ELIJASIALUK:** No, I was not.

22 I was not dropped off in Resolute; it was in Grise Fiord
23 instead. So I will hand this to the Commission. That

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 is all I want to say. Thank you.

2 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

3 Go ahead and pass it to the Commission.

4 I wanted to ask maybe Simeonie or one
5 of you can respond, or Lazarusie, just step back there.

6 Before 1953, the relocations we have
7 heard stories about, relocations taking place concerning
8 other Inuit before 1953, or in 1953. Simeonie?

9 **SIMEONIE AMAGOALIK:** (Translation) My
10 name is Simeonie Amagoalik. We first arrived there, we
11 started realizing that there were other people relocated
12 from Cape Dorset, were moved to Spence Bay. We thought,
13 when they said that they were going to relocate us, we
14 didn't expect that kind of a relocation. We were told
15 that we could come back home after two years after
16 relocation because Inukjuak people had boats. They had
17 peterheads and they lived in different places, different
18 outpost camps outside of the settlements. When they got
19 back to the settlements, they had lots of fox pelts and
20 they were able to buy some boats, and they went back to
21 their outpost camp to collect their furs again.

22 We expected to live like that when we
23 were relocated. We didn't know that we were going to move

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 there permanently. We figured that we would be home in
2 a few years, in a couple of years. That is how it was.

3 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

4 Thank you. I understand. I think we are now ready to
5 speak to the people who are survivors. Please introduce
6 yourself prior to your presentation.

7 **MINNIE NUNGAQ:** (Translation) I just
8 want to point out some things I remember. My father was
9 not able to attend the hearing.

10 My name is Minnie Nungaq. My mother did
11 not want to hear bad things. They followed my father's
12 older brother. My father followed them. I remember my
13 mother was very depressed and not happy, and now she cannot
14 be here.

15 My parents went back to Inukjuak, and
16 they left all of their children in the High Arctic. The
17 only child is Inukjuak and he is 23 years old now. He
18 does not want to see Inukjuak, but he is there and the
19 oldest son lives in Montreal, who has recently moved to
20 Yellowknife. I think there is only four of us who are
21 now living in Resolute Bay.

22 I can't think of any other place to go
23 to, so I am living up there being supportive to my

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 relatives. As long as I can remember, my mother had lived
2 up there in a very depressed state. Although I really
3 don't like living up there because it is dark 24 hours
4 a day, it is very cold, extremely cold, and even my children
5 do not wish to live up there, where not too many people
6 live up there and we don't know any other place to go to.
7 Therefore, we are just remaining there.

8 I wanted to hear my father talk about
9 his troubles, but he has troubles so much. He had a stroke
10 twice. No wonder a lot of people have started abusing
11 alcohol. Even my brother was killed due to alcohol when
12 they were drinking.

13 The sister, one of the sisters killed
14 themselves, and one of them was shot. I can only
15 talk -- not live up there for a long time because I wanted
16 to live there. Therefore, I didn't live there for so long,
17 so therefore I had to move. I couldn't hack living up
18 there, so I cannot talk too much about it for a long time.
19 It is very hard in my memory to talk about.

20 I will tell you again, I just want you
21 to know about the fact that my father was invited by his
22 older brother and when he moved up there he was very
23 depressed. Even up to today, he cannot adapt. His

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 grandchildren say that when they get older, because they
2 turn to bad things due to depression, he doesn't really
3 mind about these.

4 I just want you to know of the struggles
5 we had to endure up in the High Arctic. I will complete
6 for now.

7 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)
8 Thank you, Minnie. There are young people here. Please
9 be aware of the fact that there are some children who were
10 born in Resolute and Grise Fiord. The younger generation
11 from the original people that were relocated.

12 Who is next?

13 **ALLIE SALLUVINIQ:** I would like to talk
14 a little bit about the tuberculosis disease. Most of us
15 who had TB were responded to by the government. They
16 recently responded saying, "Yes, it's true." Most of all
17 the people who were relocated to the High Arctic had TB,
18 but Markoosie Patsauq, they already knew that Markoosie
19 Patsauq had TB prior to the relocation, and he was spitting
20 blood. When we were being relocated, he had to follow
21 for his parents were being relocated.

22 When we were living up there most of all
23 of us had caught the TB disease. My mother was dead.

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 I did not have a mother for over five years. Then my mother
2 had died.

3 I was the eldest of seven of us kids.

4 I had to take care of my younger brother who now lives
5 in Pond Inlet. I would abuse him. I just recently found
6 out and was told that I had missed my mother so much I
7 had to be responsible for my younger brother, and we were
8 hungry, we were cold because my father would be out hunting
9 looking for food.

10 I would hurt him physically. I found
11 out that I did it not on purpose. Just last month I called
12 him on the phone. I cried to him and explained to him
13 why I did those things because I was hurting inside.
14 Perhaps I will speak in English because I would like you
15 to understand.

16 I asked him if he could forgive me for
17 the way I used to treat him.

18 Without realizing they were my
19 relatives, I would ask them their name, and we told them
20 who we were and then we finally realized that, in fact,
21 we were relatives. I really want to find out who were
22 my relatives, and I see them for the first time. Jaybeddie
23 Amagoalik, now living in Inukjuak, who was relocated to

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Resolute Bay had grown up with me.

2 Back then it seemed like we were smiling
3 artificially and when we first saw each other when we came
4 to Ottawa we embraced and cried and said that he was my
5 long lost uncle.

6 I will stop for now.

7 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

8 Thank you. Please make your presentation.

9 **ELIZABETH ALLAKARIALLAK:**

10 Co-Chairman, and members of the committee. My name is
11 Elizabeth Allakariallak. The group of people you have
12 been listening to has been referred to as the "High Arctic
13 exiles". I prefer to think of myself as a survivor, a
14 survivor of a vicious, cruel, human experiment by an
15 uncaring federal government bureaucracy; a survivor of
16 screaming winds, empty stomachs and life in a Polar desert;
17 a survivor of a government so racist that it refused to
18 recognize my name and gave me a number.

19 I suppose it is easier to experiment on
20 creatures with numbers than to recognize that we were
21 humans with names and feelings. Other people will tell
22 you of the lies and deceit used to move our parents to
23 Resolute Bay. I want to tell you about the suffering of

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the children thrust into a cold-blooded experiment to test
2 the survival of adults.

3 In the 10 years from 1953 to 1962 I was
4 one of the approximately 27 female babies born to Resolute
5 families. Of those 27 babies who could be mothers in our
6 community today, one-third have died and one-third moved
7 away. With a 33 per cent rate in my birth decade you can
8 understand why I call myself a survivor.

9 For the male children the death rate is
10 now 27 per cent. Over one-quarter of them have died.

11 I was born in a small shack built near
12 the beach from scrap wood. There was no doctor or nurse
13 present. As a young girl, I carried water to that shack
14 for my mother.

15 I remember the excitement of waiting for
16 oranges found in the army garbage to thaw beside our
17 neighbours stove.

18 Mainly I remember being cold, going to
19 sleep frigid and waking to another cold day.

20 When I was six, I began walking over a
21 kilometre to school to learn English. For eight years,
22 the teachers called me stupid, but I am short-sighted and
23 couldn't see to the front of the classroom until I got

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 glasses at 14.

2 My mother and sisters taught me our Inuit
3 language. My father gave me deep belief in God, in spite
4 of being taken to hospital in Edmonton when I was 10.
5 He was there for three years and passed away after returning
6 home.

7 I went to residential school to take
8 grade 9 but left at the Christmas break to take a job to
9 help support my parents.

10 My father was ill. I was 15 years old
11 working full-time working at the Co-op store. I have been
12 working full-time since then paying taxes for 20 years
13 to a government that did not consider me suitable for a
14 name.

15 I often wonder what my life would have
16 been like if the bureaucrats had left us where we were.
17 Would I remember my father all alone pulling a sled to
18 the cemetery with a baby's coffin on it? Would my closest
19 friend have lost hope and taken her own life? How many
20 of the 33 per cent of the children who died might be with
21 us today?

22 People talk about recognition and
23 compensation. Then the federal government insults our

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 integrity, refusing to recognize our suffering, our
2 equality, as feeling human beings. If Resolute is such
3 a wonderful place to live, how come we don't have a
4 retirement home there for all the old RCMP officers who
5 harassed us through the years? Money can't heal a scarred
6 heart. It can't stop the tears of misers, and it can't
7 give us our childhood. It might give us some hope for
8 the future.

9 I hope that you here today can realize
10 that the federal government policy for the north and its
11 people has been practicing racism.

12 As I speak, not one Inuit resident of
13 Resolute is employed by the federal government. There
14 are federal jobs for others, but not for us. It was a
15 racist concept to send our families to the Arctic, and
16 criminal to conduct an experiment with our lives.

17 That racism is continued by poor health
18 care and education. It is one thing to write quality into
19 the Bill of Rights, but another to implement change in
20 the system.

21 If things are so equal, why are there
22 no Inuit doctors, lawyers, dentists and judges?

23 The fight for our rights will never

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 cease. I will always struggle for them and will pass the
2 torch to my children.

3 If you can accomplish nothing else,
4 please stop the system of racism. We have suffered your
5 ignorance long enough. Thank you.

6 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Thank you
7 Elizabeth. Bobbie, you may have the floor.

8 **BOBBY PATSUAQ:** Thank you, Mary. On
9 behalf of the second and third generation, I would like
10 to thank the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples for
11 giving us the time to tell our story.

12 The experiment failed from day one. At
13 the prime of their lives, my father, my mother, the
14 Salluviniq family, the Amagoalik family from Inukjuak and
15 those from the Pond Inlet members were approached by the
16 RCMP with the intention to relocate them to the High Arctic,
17 the so-called promised land.

18 This was the beginning of the horrible
19 fate awaiting them. As they boarded the C.D. Howe as
20 recorded on July 25, 1953, the grief of separation began.

21 When they reached the High Arctic, their
22 destination, Resolute Bay, my parents were dumped into
23 a grey world and left behind, not to hear again from their

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 families for a long time. If you can imagine with me,
2 picture in your mind, how my parents, along with these
3 few families that came with them from Inukjuak and Pond
4 Inlet, I would like to reflect with you how they struggled
5 in the desolation, struggling against the cold icy wind
6 piercing their skin, malnourished, weak, tired from the
7 long journey, as they scrambled to make shelter, and as
8 the young children, the young women, the new born huddled
9 together in the boulders as they huddled amongst the dog
10 team. It breaks my heart when I think back what happened.

11 As the RCMP went to its headquarters,
12 comfortably sat on his chair, probably put on a radio,
13 probably had a glass of rum, as these desperate people
14 struggled. They became the poor and the destitute. They
15 struggled, tried to help each other, while others sat
16 comfortably in their seats, alone and abandoned in this
17 desolate world. I can only imagine what my ataataapik
18 (little father) must have felt, along with his friends,
19 my brothers, and their fathers, heavy laden, isolated,
20 cut off from the world, the anguish they felt, the
21 disappointment they had, the broken hearts. I can only
22 imagine what they went through, with the brutal force of
23 the government, this cruelty to the Inuit people was going

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 on.

2 They were brutal, cruel and
3 cold-hearted. The RCMP always got his way.

4 I was born in 1960, September 27. My
5 birth certificate states I was born in Resolute Bay, but
6 according to my mother's words I was born aboard an aircraft
7 on our way to Greenland. My mother was in labour. There
8 were no medical facilities where I was born in Resolute.

9 So, they had to take my mother, probably with a nurse,
10 I guess, I would think, and take her to the nearest medical
11 centre in the region which happened to be in Greenland.

12 My mother said you were born high up in the sky.

13 The government also gave me a number
14 (E5-1903). I remember my mother giving it to me, that
15 little disk number. I kept it for awhile, but when I found
16 out what it was used for, I threw it away. But that number,
17 I cannot forget it.

18 The second generation, also the third
19 generation, I feel very lucky. Today, we try not to talk
20 about our life in Resolute or say we were born in Resolute
21 Bay. The reason being that for fear some prejudice might
22 arise against us.

23 Most of us feel we are very lucky, some

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of us, to have made it to our parents' homeland where no
2 one will decide where we will live. We also thank our
3 parents, our brothers, our sisters, our cousins, our uncles
4 for enduring so much suffering, shock, trauma,
5 disappointment and pain from this experiment, and to have
6 had the courage to move back to Inukjuak before we all
7 got married and decided to stay and not to go back to the
8 original homeland, Inukjuak.

9 For some of the second generation, they
10 miss the High Arctic. Anna Nungaq told you a few days
11 back that her son wants to go back to Grise Fiord. She
12 was devastated, but she had no choice. Her son was not
13 happy, no jobs and he missed his friends, the only home
14 he knew, so he had to go back. I am talking about Anna
15 Nungaq and her son.

16 We also would like to address those who
17 have died in Resolute and in Grise Fiord, who we have not
18 seen since childhood. And that fear of not seeing our
19 friends and loved ones, family members again lingers on
20 silently in our hearts and in our minds.

21 When my father told me the first time
22 that he was from Inukjuak, I never heard about Inukjuak.
23 The only home I knew was Resolute Bay. When my uncle

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 died, my father was determined more than ever to go back
2 to Inukjuak because we had more relatives living there.

3 So, he asked the government for financial assistance to
4 return to Inukjuak. His request was downright turned
5 down. They said, "We're sorry, we can't help you."

6 Disappointed, my father was, but he was determined to go
7 back home, so we sold everything we had, our possessions.

8 I remember selling all that I had, the only toys that
9 I had, so we started collecting money so that we could
10 go back to Inukjuak. I didn't want to go back, but I had
11 no choice. I was only 13 years old back then.

12 Our journey back home began, the first
13 time, in 1974. This coming May will mark the 19 years
14 since we moved back to Inukjuak from Resolute Bay. My
15 cousin is here. I haven't seen him for the past 18 years.

16 I still have cousins up there, up in Resolute Bay, whom
17 I haven't since childhood, since we left in 1974.

18 When we moved back to Inukjuak, I had
19 to make an adjustment to the community. It was difficult
20 the first year. That was the most difficult part of the
21 adjustment I had to make. I did not know the people.

22 I did not know my relatives. But my father and my mother,
23 I could see that they were finally feeling much better

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 when they reached their home after over 20 years of staying
2 up there at the High Arctic.

3 During that first year in Inukjuak, I
4 began to learn who I was related to, my relatives, and
5 at times it was difficult. My peers would ridicule me,
6 saying that I was not from Inukjuak. "Go back to
7 Resolute," they would say. I would ignore them because
8 I know and I saw how my mother was happy, so I endured
9 ridicule, shame, isolation, at times. But as the years
10 went by the people of Inukjuak realized what had been
11 happening, that this was not our doing, the relocation.

12 Today, the healing process is still
13 going on, and I have become close to those that used to
14 ridicule me. They are now my friends. They are sorry
15 for what they have done. I forgive them. I call Inukjuak
16 home, although my roots are up in Resolute. My roots were
17 tampered with by the government. But my home is in
18 Inukjuak.

19 So the healing process is still going
20 on. But, for some other young people, the second
21 generation, they miss their home up in the High Arctic,
22 especially those who had recently returned to Inukjuak
23 a few years ago. They are still confused. Their

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 identity, who are they, they will ask.

2 Anyhow, that is how it is to the second
3 generation and the third generation. I would like to thank
4 the Royal Commission for giving me this opportunity to
5 speak my mind on behalf of the second generation.

6 I would like to go on living and build
7 my life. I got married last year. I am happily married
8 to my wife. The healing process, my wife has a lot to
9 do with it. When I speak about what happened before, I
10 talk to her. I get comfort from her. When I kneel down
11 and pray to my Lord, he comforts me.

12 I have two daughters, two boys, which
13 are eagerly awaiting for me to go back home. I would like
14 to build my life with my friends, my cousins, because we
15 must go on living.

16 We would like to close this sorry chapter
17 of our lives and open a new one and begin a new life hand
18 in hand, side by side, and those up in Resolute and Grise
19 Fiord who want to stay, I wish them well. I cannot look
20 back. It is too painful. So, we must go on, close the
21 chapter of the shameful past the government inflicted on
22 to our lives.

23 I will arise with hope that the

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 government will respond in our favour. As a closing
2 remark, I would like to make a response, a reply, that
3 was made by Tom Siddon in the year of 1990, right after
4 the Hickling Report was published. He got up from his
5 seat in the House of Commons and stated that these people
6 went up there on a voluntary basis, and that these people
7 were better off after a few years. He is sadly and terribly
8 mistaken.

9 If that title, Honourable Member of
10 Parliament, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, if
11 that title is so, please, Mr. Tom Siddon, live up to that
12 title. Thank you.

13 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)
14 Thank you for your presentation, Bobby.

15 Martha, do you want to go first?

16 **MARTHA FLAHERTY:** (Translation) This is
17 Martha Flaherty. I was one of the relocatees to Grise
18 Fiord from Inukjuak. What the people of Resolute Bay were
19 saying, I used to pass by Resolute Bay -- when we went
20 to school in Churchill, we used to go through Resolute
21 Bay. I used to have a lot of sympathy for them, all of
22 them, especially the children. In Grise Fiord, there was
23 no booze back then. But the ones in Resolute Bay, they

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 had liquor there because there were a lot of Qallunaat
2 in Resolute. I knew they were affected by the alcohol.
3 It was not their intention, but the parents turned to
4 booze and their children were hurting. I don't blame their
5 parents. They have gone through a hard time, and they
6 used to turn to their kids and abuse them.

7 The Halunaks used to laugh at the Inuit
8 and give them something to drink at the same time. No
9 wonder the Inuit were not accustomed to drinking booze.
10 They didn't know how to handle it. The Inuit of Resolute
11 and others, not only in Resolute Bay, we have to start
12 opening. We have to start getting together. Although
13 we know we are related, it's hard. It is hurting too much.

14 I just wanted to bring those up, as in
15 my case I talked about myself yesterday, the hardship I
16 went through in regards to my father. I talked about my
17 father yesterday. It was very short what I talked about
18 yesterday, although there is a lot of details inside.

19 I did not speak about the fact that how
20 mistreated we were by the RCMP officials. I know police
21 officers had mistreated the Inuit people, especially the
22 women. I was a child then. I have ears and I have eyes.

23 I can see and hear, I was very articulate, but I won't

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 speak of what they did. I was very aware of that because
2 the Qallunaat people won't believe us unless we have
3 evidence.

4 Our mothers have been abused, I know
5 that. I am very happy about the fact that my mother is
6 now starting to open up and she can talk about it today,
7 and I really appreciate that.

8 I felt that I was unloved. I used to
9 walk away because I used to be so fearful of my dad, that's
10 why I used to go out for walks. He was a very hard man
11 and he had turned to me because of all the pain that he
12 was enduring and he used to abuse me. I even wanted him
13 to die. Honestly, I wanted him to die because I was so
14 tired of him. I just recently found out, after his death,
15 I found out why he did that, because he was hurting inside,
16 so that's why he turned to us. I am sorry for him. I
17 went to his grave and we went to pray on his gravesite.
18 I used to dream a lot about him because he used to be
19 so scary. I used to dream of him in a skeleton trying
20 to grab me, wearing a cloak.

21 My father, who is now deceased, I am very
22 sorry for him, and I know that he went through hardship
23 mentally and physically. Sometimes, I will get really

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 angry at social services and the Department of Indian
2 Affairs. They are trying to govern us without knowing
3 how we live, and they are still governing us, without
4 knowing how we live. Sometimes I think that that
5 department should be abolished. If that department is
6 not going to be abolished, I think that they should
7 reconsider, the government officials, the government
8 officials are making a lot of money and they are living
9 comfortably. They have nothing to be worried about. They
10 don't feel the pains and the struggles that we had to endure
11 of the people in the High Arctic. If they would like to
12 represent the Inuit people adequately, they should look
13 at the people more and the way they live and they should
14 start hiring native people as directors, and open their
15 eyes without being shy. If they are going to be
16 representing the Inuit people, and the aboriginal people
17 so that when they go out of Canada so that they could talk
18 proudly about their natives.

19 I would also like to point out a
20 different thing in English.

21 (English) The price the High Arctic
22 exiles have paid and continue to pay to this day cannot
23 be measured in dollars. But if I can provide comparison

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to human tragedies and price, I would like to remind the
2 Commissioners of our efforts in requesting a compensation
3 package several years ago for approximately \$10 million.

4 To date, we have not received a penny.

5 However, the tragic death of the 14 women
6 in Montreal resulted in immediate of \$10 million to address
7 the violence against women across Canada.

8 Do the High Arctic exiles not deserve
9 the same type of recognition so we can start the healing
10 process and rebuilding our lives and, without question,
11 through this healing and building process save many Inuit
12 lives?

13 Furthermore, in regards to
14 compensation, the Canadian government compensated the
15 Japanese for the suffering they endured as a result of
16 war, a war that was waged against our country, plus numerous
17 other groups. We are Canadians who suffered for Canadian
18 sovereignty. Do we not deserve the same recognition and
19 compensation as well? Aren't all the problems and issues
20 the government has created serious enough to deal with?

21

22 Thank you.

23 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Thank you, Martha.

2 Larry, would you like to make a comment?

3 **LARRY AUDLALUK:** (Translation) Thank
4 you. I was at the age of three when we were relocated
5 to Grise Fiord. If you don't mind, I would like to speak
6 in English so that you can understand me. I want you to
7 understand me very clearly, so that my fellow Canadians
8 can understand.

9 My name is Larry Audlaluk. I was three
10 years old -- if my fellow exiles do not mind, I will speak
11 English so that my fellow Canadians can understand what
12 I am saying.

13 I was three years old when we were moved
14 from Inukjuak. One of my first dramatic recollections
15 was my father's death when I was just three months short
16 of my fourth birthday. People were crying. This is going
17 to be really hard for me. I haven't said this yet.

18 Some of my earliest memories of my mother
19 were of her crying and my brother Samwillie telling her
20 to stop and let my father rest in peace. You see, she
21 had no one to console her for a long time. Almost a year
22 she cried a lot because of my father's passing, no one
23 to console her. Only one or two houses were available

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 in our little camp.

2 I remember also being in a tent, very
3 dark. Our walls were black, and years later I found out
4 they were buffalo hides. Mornings were very cold.

5 I remember also my mother trying to read
6 the Bible using a seal-oil lamp because we had no fuel
7 besides the seal fat, and that was also used for lighting
8 the inside our dark tent.

9 I still have my mother's old seal oil
10 lamps in my possession in her memory.

11 One of my earliest memories are also of
12 my mother and my uncle's wife, Anna, Annie Novalinga and
13 me coming along scouring the hills for valuable heather.

14 Often, both of them would walk easily six miles a day
15 return, scouring -- and when I see those hills today I
16 wonder how on earth they did it. They were very heavy
17 burlap bags to carry those ethers. My mother must have
18 been a very strong woman. Three bags she carried, and
19 the other woman only could carry two. Maybe she was so
20 desperate for us to survive and have heat. She must have
21 been quite powerful.

22 When I was growing up and started going
23 to school and I could read English and write English, I

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 used to ask my parents "why are we here? Since I was
2 growing up you always talk about Inukjuak, but we're not
3 in Inukjuak.

4 I grew up speaking two dialects -- Pond
5 Inlet dialect and my mother tongue dialect,
6 Inukjuamiutitut. I questioned "why are we up here?" The
7 only answer they used to give me, the only thing they knew,
8 was they were moved so they could have better life, there
9 would be plenty of game.

10 Then I started to do my own research on
11 my own when I was only about 18, and I was finding out
12 that my parents had been only told half-truth, if not an
13 outright lie. In fact, we were moved for the name of
14 sovereignty.

15 So I asked them, "were you told at all
16 that you were coming up Grise Fiord area to assert
17 sovereignty so that this will be Canada?". They didn't
18 even understand the word "sovereignty". They said, "we
19 were never told such a thing. In fact, I don't know what
20 you mean."

21 I wasn't really going to talk very much
22 about this, but I just have to say this. Deception was
23 used to move my mother and my father. My dad was promised

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 (native dialect) --plenty of game, and when he got there
2 it was so different, not what he heard. He just gave up
3 and died between eight and ten months later. Actually,
4 it was ten months later, because we were moved in September
5 and he died in July. All for this -- I will show you --
6 this piece of land (inaudible) so that we can proudly be
7 Canadians. For this piece of land (inaudible) I'm proud
8 to be Canadian. Why did you lie to us? (inaudible) I
9 can't go on. Thank you.

10 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Thank you,
11 Larry.

12 Paul, are you ready?

13 **PAUL AMAGOALIK:** My name is Paul
14 Amagoalik. I live in Resolute Bay. I was born on that
15 C.D. Howe ship on August 24, 1953, en route to Resolute
16 Bay and was named after the captain of that C.D. Howe ship.
17 His name was Paul Fournier. For that reason, I refuse
18 to call myself Pauloosie, as a real Inuk name, just to
19 keep a reminder that I was named after that captain, Paul.

20 When I was about two or three years old
21 I was sent down to Brandon, Manitoba, to some kind of a
22 sanatorium. They said I had TB. I don't know how long
23 I was there for, but I was probably back around maybe five

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 or six years old. So I was there for about two or three
2 years.

3 When I got back to Resolute I couldn't
4 understand where I was going because when I had left I
5 couldn't recall leaving, or maybe my brain was just
6 developing.

7 Finally, when I made it back to Resolute,
8 which I didn't know where it was, how I got up there, but
9 I remember being driven down to the village by the RCMP,
10 saying that I was going home. When he brought me down
11 there I didn't know anything about the North. It was cold,
12 lots of snow, and it was daylight, so it must have been
13 somewhere pretty close to spring.

14 At that time, as I was growing up in that
15 sanatorium for about two or three years I guess they only
16 spoke English there because that's how I got knowing how
17 to speak only English and not a word of Inuktitut. So
18 I had to start over again to learn a new language, and
19 it was hard for my aunts and relatives, because they could
20 hardly speak English. So there was a communication
21 problem at that age already with me.

22 I guess maybe when I was about five or
23 six, maybe six, I guess that's when they start school,

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 hey? Our school was two miles north from our village,
2 and we had to walk up there. I remember walking, sometimes
3 in the cold. Always in the cold. Finally they built a
4 school somewhere around 1961, 1962, in the Old Village
5 -- what we call the Old Village now -- to be taught English.

6 By that time I had pretty well conquered
7 the Inuktitut language back and almost forgot the English
8 language. So it was a see-saw battle in the languages.

9 There was a teacher there in the years 1962, 1963 and
10 1964 who was very determined to teach the young Inuit the
11 English way of life, I guess. In that situation we were
12 told not to speak Inuktitut in the school and if we did,
13 we would be punished. Anyways, I had most of the
14 strappings, I think.

15 Sometimes once I started understanding
16 his rules I made sure I didn't speak Inuktitut in school.

17 It was the beginners, kindergarten, that had the hardest,
18 because all they knew was Inuktitut.

19 To ask questions, asking the teacher
20 "what does he mean?", when that child asked what that
21 teacher was trying to say in Inuktitut, that poor child
22 would be warned or punished. Usually the second warning
23 would be immediate punishment. As a result, I can

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 understand English very well now. It was like a forced
2 education.

3 I used to help my parents, my
4 grand-parents, go to the dumps to help pick up food so
5 that we can have something to eat. There were two dumps,
6 one at South Camp, what we call the United States
7 wheelbarrow, and one at North Camp, where the Royal
8 Canadian Air Force was based. So we usually had a choice
9 of which dump to go check out to see which one had the
10 food in there, whatever could be eaten.

11 When I was a kid, that's in that area
12 at that time, at the same time me and my cousin and all
13 my friends after school, we used to run to Resolute Lake
14 where somebody mentioned earlier that the fish over there
15 are as big as sardines. But there were fish anyways.
16 I remember the biggest fish being caught there was maybe
17 11-1/2 inches. And that was big.

18 We used to fish there by chopping a hole
19 through the ice and do the jigging, because that was the
20 only way we could fish, by jigging. We'd catch as many
21 fish as we could before it gets too dark and we'd have
22 to go back home because we had no flashlights at that time.
23 That's my recollection of the beginning of my life in

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Resolute.

2 I'll just skip through my school years
3 and just bring you pretty well up-to-date as to what
4 Resolute is like now.

5 We feel that we inherited the troubles
6 caused by the government's ignorance and we had a hard
7 time trying to establish our community because there's
8 a lack of people. Sure there's lots to do, but somebody
9 else has to operate it, operation by meaning the councils,
10 the co-ops, the wild life.

11 Just to clarify that, right now as I
12 speak I'm with three organizations -- actually, four --
13 as a board member, with the Hunters and Trappers
14 Association, the Hamlet Council, Co-op Board, also Baffin
15 Region Inuit Association, just so that I could help create
16 a better life, better living conditions in Resolute,
17 because nobody else is going to do it for us.

18 The opportunities are there, but with
19 not enough people it's kind of hard to make those two ends
20 meet, especially when you have lots of relatives in that
21 community and trying to be within the law, the Canadian
22 law, we're not supposed to hire our relatives to work in
23 our organizations because it would cause conflict of

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 interest, whereas if we were in our own self-governed
2 situation, we could give the job to the people who need
3 it, regardless of who they are. If I know that my
4 brother needs a job, I'll try and help create it for him.
5 And if I see a friend in need of work, I'll try and see
6 where I can make it easier for him to find a job. And
7 if people start seeing me helping my relatives, they're
8 going to start thinking "this guy's only helping his
9 relatives", but I'm trying to help the whole North.

10 Anyways, employment is creatable but the
11 North is so hard to tame. When a government employee goes
12 to work up North, he's very well provided for. He's got
13 travel allowance, he's got isolation pay. They even give
14 him cold pay, you know, in case he freezes. Just in case
15 he freezes they give him cold pay. Whereas only the people
16 up North, the Inuit, have means of, what, family allowance,
17 welfare for the needy, but that's very, very limited as
18 can be.

19 And it's expensive to live up there.
20 Everything costs so much. We're so far away. But still
21 we get this jet service coming straight from Montreal.
22 It could come up there on a single day. Still they have
23 to make the price higher 'cause it's too far away. It

StenoTran

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 costs too much to go up there. So we're stuck with the
2 burden.

3 I have no intention of leaving Resolute,
4 since I grew up there. I feel for my relatives who want
5 to go back, who wish to go back. I have relatives in
6 northern Quebec. I only found that out when my parents
7 start telling me stories about where they used to live.
8 Sorry. I'm backtracking again.

9 Anyways, I intend to stay up there to
10 try to create a better living condition and try to make
11 life easier for my parents, for my brothers and sisters,
12 for my friends, because everybody I know, or everybody
13 in Resolute, I know them all, so they're all my friends.
14 So we have to help each other out in this condition because
15 nobody else, not even the government, wants to help us.

16 It's this beginning back down in the
17 1952-1953 era when my parents were told that they could
18 go back home after two years because they were just going
19 to go up there to do some trapping. It's that time that
20 was hard for them. They sure do deserve the recognition
21 of claiming the North from the Canadian government when
22 they were told that they were just going to go up there
23 for two years to better their lives.

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 Thank you.

2 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** There are
3 three more people. Larry, do you want to add a little
4 bit with regards to what was being said here?

5 **LARRY AUDLALUK:** Yes.

6 I'll try to be brief. This is going to
7 be more or less my closing remarks because I don't want
8 to take away too much of other people's opportunity to
9 speak.

10 Paul is very right when he's talking
11 about he has no intention of moving. Like I, from Grise
12 Fiord, having grown up, I have a little bit of a community
13 leadership there and I feel that I am welcomed back in
14 Grise Fiord, and I am quite content today, but the point
15 we've been trying to make across I'm sure you have a bit
16 of an awareness and the beginning and the price and the
17 pain we pay for.

18 This is what happens when people are
19 moved against their will, through deception. People,
20 Inuit are no exception, live anywhere they want to in this
21 great country of ours, this so-called great country of
22 ours, we're reminded, anywhere they want to, and there
23 are Inuit people who live in many different communities

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 of one family, scattered, but they're content because they
2 are where they are of their own free will. But for us it
3 was different, the beginners.

4 We went up there through -- obviously
5 it was a deception. We've known that -- I've known that
6 since I was 18. I don't know how much more I can make
7 an emphasis to our government of what we've been trying
8 to say.

9 We're not just trying to get money. Do
10 you hopefully will believe us now after these testimonies,
11 because we have finally been able to get all the survivors
12 in one place and talk about their story.

13 I want to especially at this time, if
14 Akpaliapik is here, to recognize him for making this start.
15 When he finally decided to go back to Pond Inlet he asked
16 the government to take him back. Like all of us, he was
17 refused, but he was able to make some kind of an
18 arrangement. He went down cheaper than any of those people
19 from Resolute who went to Inukjuak. I want to thank him
20 for having finally getting our stories known to our fellow
21 Canadians.

22 We have known for years that they were
23 wrong, but we just never knew what forum to use to make

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 our point across and make our story known. We have tried
2 for years and tried to lobby the government to take notice.

3 I want to start a healing process. It's time for me to
4 start the healing process.

5 You have heard when the people finally
6 got so desperate they moved back to Inukjuak like my
7 brothers and sisters, after years of trying, and when they
8 finally got back it was so different they felt like they
9 had no country. Do you know what it's like to feel like
10 you really don't have a sense of home? They tell you that
11 it's not good. So I have decided my children will not
12 know the pain I went through.

13 When I think about the issue of
14 sovereignty and knowing how my parents were used, it's
15 really painful. Though I'm proud to be a Canadian, but
16 I am not proud how they used this to assert sovereignty
17 for this part of the country. I really, really hope that
18 we will finally be heard.

19 We have contributed, but at what cost?
20 At what cost? You have seen some of the costs.

21 Thank you very much.

22 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:**

23 (Translation) Thank you, Larry. We're starting to come

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to the end. You would like to speak again, Allie? After
2 Minnie speaks there will be George and Allie. We'll go
3 in that order.

4 Minnie, you go first.

5 **MINNIE ALLAKARIALLAK:** (Translation)

6 I have a lot to say. As Minnie Allakariallak, this is
7 the first time I have ever attended such a meeting, and
8 I have a lot to say.

9 Something that made me very angry.

10 Well, lack of food and the cold. I didn't even think much
11 more of those, even though they were important. These
12 are my relatives. Andrew and Jackoosie are my brothers.
13 We used to be told by our father and we used to have him
14 lead us in prayer back in our old country.

15 We were told that when Qallunaat and
16 white people became much more populous, that there would
17 be a lot of deception going on, and this is what we were
18 told in our childhood. This is the biggest thing I have
19 on my mind, and I'm about to say it.

20 My husband and I struggled. My husband
21 Johnny and I. It was a big burden. And I have always
22 wanted to say this to the government and to the leadership
23 of the country. People who were responsible for

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 relocating the Inuit, when they were relocating us, never
2 told us what we were to do. They never explained to us.
3 They never bothered to tell us the truth about what we
4 could expect. They never give us any indication about
5 what to expect.

6 Those of us who are in Resolute, and
7 there's the 1955 group the 1953 group, when we in the second
8 group came we came and there was already a lot of deception
9 and lies and all sorts of bad things going on. They were
10 being deceived into being happy in an artificial manner,
11 not in the way God would have, and we've heard in the Bible
12 about how the serpent deceived Adam and Eve, so we've always
13 known that ever since we had knowledge of the Bible.

14 Because Inuit were not accustomed to
15 alcohol or alcohol use, they never had any idea about this
16 substance and how it was used or abused. This was the
17 most burdensome thing that we had to contend with when
18 we went there.

19 They thought first of all that it was
20 not such a big burden, and they tried to be happy with
21 it. They tried to enjoy it. They didn't think there was
22 anything wrong with it. This is the devil's property,
23 and God has said that drunkenness, riotous living, those

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 who practice these cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

2 This is what our Bible tells us.

3 God has said those who practice
4 drunkenness and riotous living cannot enter the kingdom
5 of God. And this is a concern that we always had because
6 in the Book of God we were warned against such things,
7 and this is what my husband and I were so burdened with,
8 because we feared God. We feared God more so in those
9 days, so we are all creations of God, Inuit or Qallunaat,
10 or whoever they may be.

11 When we came on the scene we noted right
12 away that they were practising a lifestyle that was quite
13 adverse and alcohol was the cause of many deaths because
14 many people became addicted to it and they could no longer
15 stop its abuse or its use. My husband and I received a
16 letter from Mary Panigusiq from Iqaluit about the fact
17 that Indians used to be given alcohol to see if they could
18 survive the effects of it. So we warned that Inuit were
19 going to be tested by this substance, alcohol, and that
20 they would do what they normally wouldn't do under its
21 influence.

22 This is what my husband and I were most
23 burdened with, more burdensome than any of the other

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 inadequacies that have been described about the cold, about
2 the lack of stones to pitch up our tents properly. There's
3 somebody, an adult, who came with us, a third adult, who
4 died there. And we were all weak. And it was no laughing
5 matter.

6 I used to try to stop these people from
7 abusing alcohol. I used to run after them. And I used
8 to be surrounded by dogs. And I tried to prevent my
9 children and my sons-in-law from abusing alcohol. This
10 is the greatest burden that I've had to carry, and my late
11 husband and I had to carry.

12 I want all those who hear that God is
13 against the abuse of alcohol. Those who practice drunken
14 and riotous living shall not see the Kingdom of God.
15 That's what our Bible says. This was my biggest burden.

16 My husband and I used to fear violence.
17 They were in shock -- our elders were in shock from the
18 effects of alcohol abuse. They used to be fleeing their
19 dreams.

20 Our mother could walk at the time, even
21 though she was blind. She groped and felt her way to flee
22 the effects of drunken people. This is the greatest burden
23 that I had to carry. All the descriptions of the other

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 burdens are pale in comparison to the effect that alcohol
2 had on our people.

3 So now you see how they were deceived
4 by all this. Now drunkenness and the widespreading abuse
5 of alcohol is much more cleaned up from its former days.

6 People lost their limbs, they lost their hands, they lost
7 their lives. There are a lot of broken lives resulting
8 from this, and Lazarusie and I share our grandmother and
9 my late husband acted as a father figure to these people.

10 Actually, he was an uncle, but he acted as a father figure.
11 But they could not come along with us when we were being
12 relocated because of the various separations that were
13 caused by the relocation.

14 Even though they never moved like we
15 were, they were, and I'm also related to Zebedee Nungak
16 because he is the son of my aunt and he has been many years
17 trying to struggle for justice for the Inuit people.

18 I was not going to mention alcohol abuse,
19 but I had to mention it since it was brought up. It has
20 ruined the lives of many people all over the world. This
21 is against the will of God. If your physical well-being,
22 while it last, you should not get drawn into alcohol abuse.

23 If we live right, perhaps we'll have a

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 chance of getting a final reward. I am the matriarch of
2 this group and Markoosie's parents were -- his father was
3 a younger brother of my late husband, Johnny. They are
4 orphans now. They don't have a mother and father.

5 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** Can you please
6 make your speech shorter?

7 **MINNIE ALLAKARIALAK:** (Translation).
8 Yes.

9 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** You can speak,
10 but make it shorter, please. I'm sorry to have to say
11 that.

12 **MINNIE ALLAKARIALAK:** (Translation).
13 Well, I've said what was most on my mind, so I think I
14 will stop there for now. My memory is getting short, but
15 I'm thankful that I've been given the opportunity to speak.
16 Thank you.

17 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)
18 Thank you. I know you don't want to stop, but you're
19 going to help me, because we have to end this.

20 **MINNIE ALLAKARIALAK::** (Translation)
21 Thank you very much for allowing me to speak.

22 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)
23 We have two more speakers before George. If they can make

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 their presentation short. Allie is first, and Susan.

2 **ALLIE SALLUVINIQ:** (Translation) My
3 name is Allie Salluviniq, from Resolute Bay.

4 I too have a lot to say, but because I
5 have to leave tomorrow morning I want to say all that --
6 we have just a bit more time, and I would like to point
7 at the map while I make my presentation. Can I go to the
8 map?

9 I took part in the land claims of the
10 Inuit. Tom Molloy did not believe that all these Arctic
11 islands had always been previously occupied. When we met
12 at Rankin Inlet on the issue of land claims, Simeonie
13 remembers that we should stop meeting.

14 I pointed out that he was not the boss
15 and that I wanted to talk to the boss, not to some minor
16 official. I threatened to leave and go back home, but
17 somebody else convinced me to stay. Then after the meeting
18 ended we returned home and Tom Malloy arrived.

19 He used to say that those Arctic islands
20 had never been occupied, that Inuit had never gone there
21 by dog team. So I said to him that my father and the others
22 and their friends had dog teamed all over these islands,
23 and before the Qallunaat were here there's evidence of

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 ancient dwellings, qarmait, and you can go and see them
2 if you care to make the trip. But perhaps he still doesn't
3 believe it.

4 My father kept saying after he had
5 married his second wife, who was Martha Iqaluk, who is
6 the sister of Jackoosie, he expressed the desire to return
7 to Inukjuak, but he said, and I heard him very clearly
8 talking to his wife, saying, look, dear, if I don't get
9 returned to Inukjuak by the government, perhaps we can
10 set up an outpost camp in an inoccupied place. He said
11 that, and now he's buried there.

12 On the day he was going to die he was
13 being evacuated to Montreal from the High Arctic, from
14 Resolute. He was flying this route south. It must have
15 been at the time the aircraft was in the vicinity of
16 Inukjuak that his breath gave out. He died when he had
17 reached home.

18 Yes, I would rather have that happen to
19 me. If I was going to die, I would have preferred that
20 it happened in familiar surroundings.

21 Thank you.

22 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

23 Susan.

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 **SUSAN SALLUVINIQ:** (Translation). I
2 am Susan Salluviniq, from Resolute Bay. I am the youngest
3 daughter of Joseph Idlout. I was one year old when we moved
4 from Pond Inlet to Resolute Bay.

5 We are the caretakers of the pains of
6 our parents, of the pains of our mothers and fathers, in
7 the separations of the families in the move to Resolute
8 and Grise Fiord.

9 My grandmother, after my grandfather
10 died, I don't quite remember the other one, but my second
11 grandmother who came with us in Resolute Bay, then my mother
12 died before my father died. When my mother died my
13 grandmother went to Gjoa Haven to live with our oldest
14 sister there.

15 Those of us who were younger, many of
16 us were told -- my younger son -- this is quite a burden
17 to have to carry, with the responsibility to take to search
18 out relatives. We have to really search out the relatives
19 and figure out our family relationships and roots.

20 We are the caretakers of the burdens and
21 pains of our fathers and mothers. We are saying what the
22 elders want and what the elders are seeking are basically
23 only two things, and they should be agreed to: Recognize

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 them, give them monetary compensation. Ten million
2 dollars is peanuts compared to the pain that they have
3 suffered. Agree to it. Agree to their request to have
4 this.

5 That's all I wanted to say.

6 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

7 Thank you, Susan.

8 Simeonie?

9 **SIMEONIE AMAGOALIK:** (Translation) I'm
10 going to try to make it very short.

11 Some of what we wanted to say about the
12 unravelling of family lines and family relationships I
13 can address at some later meeting, but there was something
14 I mentioned that was in the closed meeting that was
15 requested to be said in the open.

16 The government has not paid for a boat
17 that we lost in our relocation. I mentioned earlier it
18 was \$30,000. Now it's \$130,000 in value these days, taking
19 today's values.

20 We built shacks out of scrap wood. When
21 we were told that a certain building -- we were told that
22 it was a police building and Grise Fiord Police personnel.
23 Salluviniq and I built a building, with the police coming

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to supervise our work. We have never been paid for that.

2 And I mentioned earlier that we cleaned
3 up a place that was filled with human excrements. We
4 cleaned it up and we built it into a store. This has never
5 been paid for, but it was done at the instigation of the
6 police.

7 I used to do a lot of dog sled driving
8 and the police used to take along some other white people.
9 They used to catch polar bear. I used to have to build
10 igloos for them. When I finished the igloo they would
11 go in and drink their liquor and laugh, and these have
12 not been paid.

13 I have never been paid also for the work
14 that I did in taking people around by boat, at the
15 insistence of the police. Then when Resolute finally got
16 a school, the school was two miles away, and I used to
17 transport the students by dog team, the smaller ones.
18 I used to get drinking water ice for the teachers and
19 transport for their fuel needs by dog team. I worked at
20 this for many years and I was paid \$74 a month. This was
21 much too small. The government should pay attention to
22 that.

23 There's a lot of things that I was forced

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to do for either inadequate or no pay. Then the police
2 initiated many things they did for free, or by not paying
3 the people they asked to work. When people in the Police
4 in Grise Fiord killed muskox and I had to transport muskox
5 skins and I had to do it with Idlout, and at the insistence
6 of the Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay RCMP we were forced
7 to transport these skins with its heads attached, we were
8 never paid for this work.

9 Sometimes if we are required to work or
10 if we are asked to work, we should be paid properly. There
11 are many incidences where I was forced to work for no pay.

12 Thank you.

13 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

14 Thank you, Simeonie.

15 George Eckalook will be the last
16 speaker.

17 **GEORGE ECKALOOK:** (Translation).

18 Thank you, Mary. I'll try not to make it too long.

19 I will basically say thanks. I am
20 George Eckalook from Resolute Bay. Today our community
21 is an established community, and now I am the mayor of
22 Resolute Bay.

23 I would like to go back a little bit

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 before I express my thanks, though I thank the Commission
2 for giving us the extended assistance they have given us.

3 On behalf of my five sisters and my
4 mother and my family I want to thank you, and I have seen
5 many cousins, so this has made me feel much better.

6 Now I would like to go back a little bit
7 to what was said yesterday about housing. My sister Lizzie
8 mentioned about housing.

9 The shacks that we built out of scrap
10 wood, at that time I used to have to help carry the scraps
11 of wood to build those shelters. Those photographs of
12 the houses that you see are photographs that we brought
13 here. We used to add a little bit more every year and
14 eventually some of these became quite extensive buildings,
15 and they were quite nice actually in the end. Then the
16 government started providing rental housing and we had
17 to move into new locations and new houses.

18 We wanted to keep those buildings to
19 preserve the memory of how we struggled to make shelter
20 for ourselves. Only in 1975 we had to move the whole
21 community, perhaps to a distance of four miles from the
22 original location. And we had to move the community.
23 And our community had to be moved. We were living in

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 government houses at that time because the settlement was
2 right in line with the air strip and if ever an aircraft
3 accident took place, we were right in the way. So that
4 was the reason for why the community was moved.

5 When the co-op started having lumber
6 supplies for sale, some of these we bought. Although much
7 of it was scrap wood, we wanted to preserve these houses
8 but the government burnt them down without consulting us.
9 We wanted to preserve them as a symbol of how we tried
10 to shelter ourselves, because these buildings were added
11 to every year and they eventually started to be very nice.

12 Now the High Arctic is part of Canada
13 for sure. For this reason, in 1968 Queen Elizabeth made
14 a visit there. When she was there it was certain that
15 it was Canada. I wanted to mention that to the Commission.

16 All you have heard in these past four
17 days is all true, very true. I was nine years old when
18 my parents and family went through all these stresses and
19 burdens, but because I believe in the words of our elders,
20 I believe, and that's what I wanted to say. I hope it's
21 understood.

22 Now I want to thank the Commission and
23 the other Inuits. On behalf of the other Inuit I thank

StenoTran

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 the Commission. Resolute is now a community, and I have
2 been elected as the mayor. It's been several years as
3 mayor.

4 I would like to thank the Commission for
5 this and for helping us. We will continue to help the
6 Commission by letters and representing the people of
7 Resolute Bay. I want to thank you on behalf of them for
8 your efforts to assist them. I will tell them when I go
9 back -- I know they are watching by television, but I
10 personally have the responsibility to relay this message
11 to them.

12 I thank you for helping us. I have other
13 responsibilities too, so therefore I want to thank you
14 personally, Mary, and the Commission.

15 Now Zebedee Nungak, we thank him very
16 much for his tireless efforts in helping us. I thank all
17 the others that I won't name. Being in politics, that's
18 all I wanted to say. Mary, thank you.

19 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** (Translation)

20 Thank you, George, for your words of appreciation. I'm
21 sure the Commission appreciates your words. Zebedee will
22 have a say.

23 You all know that Zebedee has worked hard

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 and he has represented you and he has worked very hard.

2 It will be very appropriate for him to say the last word.

3 Go ahead, Zebedee.

4 **ZEBEDEE NUNGAK:** (Translation) Thank
5 you, Mary. I will try to make it brief and I want to inform
6 the interpreters what I will be saying to the witnesses
7 and if I will be here tomorrow to have a meeting, so don't
8 worry about not saying all the words I will be speaking
9 because I'm going to be speaking English.

10 (English) I would like to thank the
11 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples for having availed
12 the High Arctic relocatees of the opportunity to present
13 their evidence and their testimony on the issue that we
14 have spent four days on.

15 The Royal Commission is one of the few
16 independent forums left to aboriginal people in this
17 country where we can freely present our views. In this
18 case I can say without overstating the fact that it was
19 a God-send for the issue of the High Arctic relocation
20 because over the years, as the organizations representing
21 Inuit interests have promoted this issue and has strived
22 to get government attention to seek solutions to it, the
23 representatives and the relocatees themselves have been

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 able to convince anybody who heard them, anybody who gave
2 them an opportunity to tell their story, that their story
3 is right and what they say is the truth.

4 We have had example of where they were
5 able to convince an all-party non-partisan parliamentary
6 committee of the facts, even though they were given only
7 three hours to tell their story, and that committee which
8 we had up to that time raised our expectations believed
9 them and agreed that the Government of Canada should
10 apologize to these people for the way they have been
11 treated, that they should recognize this and thank their
12 contributions to Canada's sovereignty and the national
13 integrity, and that they should be compensated for all
14 the wrongs that they have suffered as a result.

15 In the face of such a committee, whom
16 we believe to be very powerful making these
17 recommendations, the government yet insisted that it had
18 done nothing wrong and has no reason to apologize. Yet
19 again we were forced to search out another forum where
20 the exiles could make their case.

21 The Canadian Human Rights Commission
22 commissioned a study where an eminent professor was sent
23 to all the widely spread communities in which these people

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 live and take direct testimony from the survivors. Again,
2 they basically agreed with the Inuit point of view that
3 they should get compensation.

4 Having had the supposedly powerful
5 agencies and groups and committees go to bat for the High
6 Arctic relocatees and yet still in 1993 not have a solution
7 acceptable to the suffering of survivors has been a point
8 of frustration. This hearing has been a historic
9 occasion, because for the first time you have heard the
10 High Arctic relocatees tell their full story although,
11 as we are saying in the closing remarks, there is much
12 more to be said, but at least the basic facts have been
13 established and you have heard them from the mouths of
14 the people who lived this ordeal.

15 It has been four days of testimony which
16 speaks for itself. The pain, the burden, the depression,
17 the suffering, the hardship, the cold, the hunger, the
18 material need, the breach of trust, the abuse, the neglect,
19 the isolation, the anguish, the broken hearts, the pathetic
20 state of lack of this and lack of that, the dark, the cold,
21 the insensitivity of the bureaucrats who handled this
22 dubious project, the broken promises, the broken lives,
23 the broken families, the broken sense of order.

StenoTran

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 We had these people meet as a group for
2 the first time in February 1986 in Iqaluit. It was a
3 meeting that cost over \$50,000. At the time we were able
4 to convince a certain minister of Indian Affairs to finance
5 part of the cost of that meeting, and we believed then
6 that if the exiles were given an opportunity to meet face
7 to face with the minister that has the legal responsibility
8 for the welfare of aboriginal people in Canada, it will
9 be simply a matter of time before justice was done and
10 compensation was provided for.

11 Yet still since that time we are
12 suffering the effects of denial. Every time we convene
13 a meeting of the representative of the exiles, a meeting
14 that consists of 10 to 12 people, we spend at least \$20,000.
15 This is because they live in communities that stretch
16 from the highest of the Arctic to the middle of Hudson
17 Bay.

18 We have done all this to no avail up to
19 date because the government has been very determined to
20 resist and has resisted simply acknowledging a historic
21 fact. We now leave these hearings and we look forward
22 to the time that you have set aside for academics and
23 researchers who have become very knowledgeable over the

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 years on this issue.

2 I expect that the testimony given in
3 those three days will corroborate and verify the testimony
4 that you have heard from the Inuit who spoke here in the
5 past four days.

6 We leave here with still a question in
7 our minds, an unanswered question: When will justice be
8 done? To what conclusion will this issue come? How long
9 will the country wait for its government to locate its
10 moral backbone to treat these people and right the wrongs
11 that they have suffered?

12 This is a question that I hope the Royal
13 Commission will help answer, and I am absolutely convinced
14 that the testimony you have heard will help you reach a
15 conclusion that will convince the government and the
16 country that these people are owed. You owe them. And
17 you have no right to resist and constrict the problem to
18 the first year or to the bad planning.

19 Again, I thank the Royal Commission for
20 what they have done to get this story receive public
21 exposure.

22 In closing, I would like to say that I
23 hope that when you issue your final report you will go

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 to bat as others have done and finally resolve this issue
2 to the satisfaction of not only the exiles but to the
3 Government of Canada and the people of Canada.

4 Thank you very much.

5 **FACILITATOR MARY SIMON:** I was just
6 going to say a couple of words before I turn it over to
7 the Royal Commission.

8 As a facilitator, I just want to thank
9 everybody for their co-operation, especially the
10 interpreters, who have been extremely important, and also
11 Zebedee's assistance in the interpretation. Without them
12 the dialogue would have been very difficult.

13 I know that this week has been extremely
14 difficult for the witnesses, and also for everybody else,
15 but it has been a real honour for me to facilitate this
16 very important special hearing. I'm very pleased that
17 the Royal Commission asked me to do this and that I was
18 able to help in the proceedings. So I will turn it over
19 to you.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** This has
21 been a very powerful event for the Royal Commission.

22 We have had a lot of hearings in many
23 parts of Canada, and we have had a lot of special

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 consultations also, but I don't really think that we've
2 experienced all in all any other event quite as moving
3 as this.

4 We heard a lot of very emotional
5 testimony. We've been in very large correctional
6 institutes and we've heard from people who have spent a
7 lot of time in different kinds of institutions, whether
8 it has been foster homes, group homes, youth detention
9 centres, prisons, and so forth. And we've heard a lot
10 of different type of victims, survivors, whether it has
11 been of neglect or sexual abuse or otherwise, but I don't
12 think we've ever quite heard in total a picture like this
13 before.

14 Even though some of the commissioners
15 have had an opportunity before to hear part of the story,
16 this is such a complete picture, and it provided us with
17 an opportunity to hear a much more comprehensive picture
18 of really what took place.

19 I really want to thank all the witnesses
20 who took time out from their lives to travel this long
21 journey. We know that many were not used to a setting
22 like this, and it took a lot of courage to think about
23 the pain, to remember, and then to go through the very

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 hard times that you went through here to make it very clear
2 to us what happened to you.

3 It was very, very hard to listen and not
4 to be convinced that you are obviously telling us your
5 own experience in your own words, and it is very much the
6 truth in your eyes that you have experienced.

7 These hearings were a response to a
8 suggestion from both the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada and
9 the Makivik Corporation. They came at a time when the
10 Royal Commission was already wondering what we should do
11 about the hearings that we had already had in Inukjuak.

12 While we were still thinking about that
13 the Government responded and stated that more or less it
14 was a closed book. So when the formal response came for
15 us to do something more, we agreed after considering what
16 would be the proper course of action for ourselves.

17 There will be a second leg to this, as
18 Zebedee just mentioned. In late June, starting on the
19 28th, we will be inviting other people, primarily academics
20 and researchers who have looked into this issue, have
21 looked into the files, have written reports for one reason
22 or another, and we will try to decipher why there are
23 differing opinions on the evidence they have found.

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 At some point after that we will be
2 coming out with a report on this particular issue. We
3 will try to do it fairly quickly so that there is a response
4 from us which the Government of Canada will have to address
5 relatively quickly. Obviously this issue has been around
6 long enough already.

7 Like Mary, I want to thank a number of
8 people. The witnesses, obviously, for having endured with
9 us and giving us the evidence they have. I also want to
10 thank Zebedee Nungak for the important role he played in
11 assisting us with the translation and so forth. His
12 assistance was very much appreciated by the commissioners.

13 In addition, I want to thank all the
14 other translators that have shared this week with us and
15 have helped us understand what was going on through their
16 skills in translating from one language to another.

17 It has been a very emotional week and
18 we understand how painful this still is for people, so
19 we really appreciate very much what was going on.

20 I want to also thank Mary Simon for the
21 excellent role she played as the go-between, the
22 facilitator. We felt that we needed someone to do this
23 type of particular job for us in this case. We don't

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 normally use a facilitator, but because we knew that the
2 language of preference and obviously in many cases it was
3 the language of daily use of many of our witnesses, we
4 felt we needed somebody who could first of all be known
5 to explicitly understand what people were saying, first
6 all.

7 In addition, we felt that since the
8 commissioners wanted to concentrate on listening and
9 hearing and understanding what people were saying, we felt
10 that if someone else played the role of facilitator in
11 asking most of the questions, that the commissioners could
12 really dedicate their time to trying to comprehend what
13 we were listening to.

14 It has been a very, very useful exercise.
15 Mary has done a wonderful job for us, and we're extremely
16 pleased with what she has done.

17 I'm going to now ask each of the
18 commissioners to in their own words make some closing
19 comments. We'll start with Mary, then we'll ask Paul to
20 proceed.

21 Mary Sillett.

22 **COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT:** I too would
23 like to join Georges in thanking everyone who travelled

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 for so many miles to be here. I know these days have been
2 very, very long. They've been very tiring for many of you.

3 I know that for some of you this is the
4 first time you publicly told your story, and for others
5 I guess you've told this story many, many times. I think
6 that when we first went to Inukjuak, Mr. Dussault, Mrs.
7 Wilson and I, and we heard about the High Arctic exile
8 issue, we were very, very moved. I think we thought about
9 it very, very hard at that time.

10 The presenters said you have to go back
11 and don't forget what we've said. So we've been discussing
12 this issue that long and I'm really grateful that we were
13 able, in co-operation with ITC and Pauktuutit to provide
14 a forum for Inuit to tell their side of the story.

15 For so many people of so many
16 generations, from people from Pond Inlet and Grise Fiord,
17 Inukjuak and Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, and I thank
18 you all for that.

19 I give particular thanks to Mary Simon.
20 She provided, like Georges said, a very valuable role
21 to this meeting. I would like to thank Zebedee very, very
22 much, and the translators and interpreters. But I also
23 have to thank ITC very, very much, because when we finally

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 made the decision to have this they wanted to make sure
2 that we did everything right so this could be a good
3 meeting, and for that I thank you.

4 (No translation)

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Paul.

6 **COMMISSIONER PAUL CHARTRAND:** It
7 certainly has been a memorable week. Who have we heard
8 from? We have heard from people who have been called
9 relocatees. We have heard from people who have been called
10 the High Arctic exiles. We have heard from people who
11 were called today by Elizabeth Allakariallak "survivors".

12 We certainly have heard directly from
13 what were called in the first day decent, hard-working,
14 God-fearing people. And what have we heard?

15 We have heard I think stories about what
16 happens when power is exercised in circumstances where
17 the usual demographic safeguards that are assumed to exist
18 are not there. Were there MPs in the 1950s to represent
19 the interests of these people? Were there lobbyists?
20 Were there judges? These are the safeguards that
21 Canadians today take for granted in the protection of their
22 own interests.

23 Mixed in, in addition to that, stories

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 which tell us what happens when paternalism is added to
2 the exercise of governmental power in these circumstances.

3 Those are the kinds of stories we have heard about.

4 We have heard of stories also that tell
5 us about involuntary removals, what happens when power
6 is exercised with paternalism to remove people. We have
7 heard stories that have told us what the social
8 consequences are in these circumstances.

9 There are still things to do for us on
10 this Commission. It's already been said. We still have
11 to hear those who have written about this most shameful
12 episode in Canadian history. There's no doubt about the
13 justice of your cause.

14 What will the Royal Commission on
15 Aboriginal Peoples do? I do not know, but I will urge
16 it to do what is right. I will go to bat and I think I
17 can do no better than to quote Titus Arnakallak who said
18 today: Let us close this sorry chapter of our lives.
19 Let us go forward. Let's close the sorry chapter of our
20 lives and open a new one.

21 Who will join him? I think Canada must
22 close this sorry chapter with honour, and I think Canada
23 must close this sorry chapter with a spirit of generosity.

StenoTran

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 This has indeed been a very significant
2 event of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. As
3 Zebedee Nungak said at the beginning of the session, we
4 have been able to give voice to the Inuit people by
5 listening.

6 So I finish by thanking all of you for
7 coming to this forum. I thank all the people who so ably
8 assisted us, in particular Mary Simon, the facilitator,
9 who did her usual excellent job, and Zebedee Nungak, a
10 most well known Canadian and most gifted linguist who put
11 his own personal twist on the interpretation and certainly
12 did give it a most memorable gloss.

13 Thank you very much.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Bertha.

15 **COMMISSIONER BERTHA WILSON:** No one who
16 has heard your story can fail to be outraged by the
17 injustice that has been done to you, or not be grieved
18 by the pain and suffering that you and your relatives have
19 been exposed to. And for what? This is the question which
20 only the government can answer.

21 Personally, I can think of no possible
22 justification for such a cruel and inhumane government
23 policy. I can only hope that these public hearings will

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 help to raise public awareness of this tragic episode in
2 the history of your people, and that the public in turn
3 will bring pressure to bear on the federal government to
4 make reparation to you and your families for all that you
5 have endured over the past 40 years.

6 Thank you very much for coming and
7 talking to us. I know it has not been easy for you, and
8 that it took a great deal of courage.

9 Thank you very much for that, and thank
10 you to all the people who helped to make these hearings
11 possible. I wish you all a safe journey back to your homes.

12 Thank you.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** René.

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

15 First of all, I would like to thank Mary
16 Simon for accepting a very difficult and delicate job.
17 Inter-cultural communication is the heart and centre of
18 the work of the Royal Commission.

19 I think, Mary, that you did a tremendous
20 job to help us to really get the most out of this historical
21 week.

22 Lorsque le gouvernement a créé la
23 Commission royale sur les peuples autochtones il a fait

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 le constat suivant, constat que malgré les efforts louables
2 du passé, malgré les programmes en place, malgré les sommes
3 investies, le problème autochtone, indien, inuit, métis,
4 demeure entier.

5 Personnellement, depuis 18 mois j'ai été
6 énormément touché par la gravité du problème et la
7 complexité des solutions à y apporter si on veut qu'elles
8 soient vraiment durables. Il s'agit, à mon avis, d'un
9 problème humain unique dans la société canadienne.

10 Je pense que les événements qui au cours
11 de cette semaine nous ont été relatés pour la première
12 fois, sinon dans tous les détails du moins de façon
13 substantielle, en font foi.

14 J'ai aussi beaucoup appris à propos de
15 la notion de guérison. Il s'agit là d'un concept difficile
16 à saisir pour les non-Autochtones. Dans ce sens-là je
17 pense que sur le plan de l'éducation publique cette
18 semaine, et je l'espère, apportera énormément de
19 compréhension à cette dimension de toute recherche de
20 solutions durables.

21 Je suis personnellement convaincu que
22 ce concept de guérison est fondamental et devra se situer
23 au coeur de toutes nos recommandations. C'est la raison

April 8, 1993**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 pour laquelle nous en aurons fait l'un des quatre éléments
2 clés de notre récent document de discussion qui vient,
3 au fond, des audiences publiques de la Commission. Nous
4 faisons écho dans ce document à ce que nous avons entendu
5 depuis un an dans les communautés à l'effet qu'on ne pourra
6 pas vraiment progresser si on n'associe pas de façon
7 centrale cette guérison personnelle et collective des
8 populations autochtones.

9 Je voudrais simplement en terminant dire
10 que la Commission a fait le pari de la rigueur, pari de
11 la rigueur pour arriver à une compréhension du problème
12 autochtone, arriver, cheminer avec les peuples autochtones
13 mais également avec le public canadien. La démarche que
14 nous avons entreprise à l'occasion de nos audiences
15 publiques générales à Inukjuak le 8 juin dernier devait
16 connaître un dénouement comme celui-ci.

17 Nous avons pendant longtemps examiné la
18 façon d'être le plus efficace. C'est la raison pour
19 laquelle entre autres nous avons demandé à Mary Simon
20 et à Roger Tassé de regarder l'ensemble du dossier, la
21 conclusion fondamentale de leur rapport et, au fond, on
22 le sentait bien, était que les Inuits concernés n'avaient
23 jamais eu l'occasion de faire valoir de façon équitable

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 leur point de vue. La démarche de cette semaine visait
2 à palier cette lacune considérable sur le plan de l'équité.

3 Toute solution future, toute
4 recommandation future de la Commission devra, à mon avis,
5 tenir compte des règles d'équité de notre société moderne.

6 Dans la même veine nous allons, à la fin du mois de juin,
7 poursuivre la deuxième étape de notre démarche et, par
8 la suite, comme Georges Erasmus l'a mentionné, nous allons
9 procéder le plus rapidement possible, mettant ensemble
10 à la fois ce que nous avons entendu cette semaine, ce que
11 nous aurons entendu lors de la dernière semaine du mois
12 de juin, nous allons procéder le plus rapidement possible
13 à faire des recommandations au gouvernement.

14 Je vous remercie d'être venus de si loin.

15 Comme ça a été mentionné, réunir toutes les personnes
16 concernées, on le voit par la dimension du territoire
17 exprimé par la carte, n'était pas une tâche facile. Nous
18 avons convenu de part et d'autre qu'Ottawa était le
19 meilleur endroit pour réunir les gens de toutes les
20 communautés.

21 J'ai été, pour un, et mes collègues M^{me}
22 Wilson et Mary Sillett, frappés par le fait que lorsque
23 nous étions à Inukjuak...nous comprenons la difficulté

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 des distances mais nous avons été frappés par le fait que
2 les médias n'étaient pas là. Ce n'est pas un blâme. Au
3 contraire, c'est simplement pour exprimer le fait que
4 souvent sur la route depuis un an nous avons été témoins,
5 nous avons entendu énormément de choses qui sur le plan
6 de l'éducation publique aurait eu intérêt à être rapportées
7 au grand public.

8 Cette semaine...avant de poursuivre la
9 deuxième étape de notre démarche et, par la suite, comme
10 Georges Erasmus l'a mentionné, nous allons procéder le
11 plus rapidement possible, mettant ensemble à la fois ce
12 que nous avons entendu cette semaine, ce que nous aurons
13 entendu lors de la dernière semaine du mois de juin. Nous
14 allons procéder le plus rapidement possible à faire des
15 recommandations au gouvernement.

16 Je vous remercie d'être venus de si loin.
17 Comme ça a été mentionné, réunir toutes les personnes
18 concernées, on le voit par la dimension du territoire
19 exprimé par la carte, n'était pas une tâche facile. Nous
20 avons convenu de part et d'autre qu'Ottawa était le
21 meilleur endroit pour réunir les gens de toutes les
22 communautés. J'ai été, pour un, et mes collègues M^{me}
23 Wilson et Mary Sillett, frappés par le fait que lorsque

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 nous étions à Inukjuak...nous comprenons la difficulté
2 des distances, mais nous avons été frappés par le fait
3 que les médias n'étaient pas là.

4 Ce n'est pas un blâme. Au contraire.

5 C'est simplement pour exprimer le fait que souvent sur
6 la route depuis un an nous avons été témoins, nous avons
7 entendu énormément de choses qui, sur le plan de
8 l'éducation publique, auraient intérêt à être rapportées
9 au grand public. Cette semaine visait entre autres de
10 la part de la Commission à réaliser cet objectif.

11 Je pense que l'objectif commun que nous
12 avons, la Commission et les Inuits, de permettre
13 l'audition de la version essentiellement orale de ceux
14 qui ont vécu cette situation de réinstallation en 1953
15 et 1955, je pense que cet objectif commun a été largement
16 atteint.

17 Nous allons procéder à la deuxième phase
18 du processus que nous avons engagé pour remettre un rapport
19 le plus rapidement possible. Entre-temps, je voudrais
20 souhaiter à tous un bon voyage de retour dans le nord du
21 Québec, de retour à Pond Inlet, de retour à Resolute Bay,
22 ou encore à Grise Fiord. Et sans doute que j'en passe.

23 Merci, et à la prochaine.

StenoTran

April 8, 1993

**Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples**

1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Earlier
2 today we started our in camera meeting. Those of us who
3 were involved in it were fully aware that when 2 o'clock
4 came we were not yet finished. We will conclude that,
5 beginning at 7:30. We will do that upstairs, at the next
6 level, in the McDonald Room. Just remember the first prime
7 minister of the country -- McDonald Room.

8 Before we go I would like to thank Rogers
9 Cable for having covered this live. One of the goals of
10 the Royal Commission is to try and educate the Canadian
11 public on issues that are important to aboriginal people.
12 This particular issue of the Arctic exiles we thought
13 was extremely important. So we are very, very pleased
14 with the fact that Rogers has covered us from the beginning
15 to the end of our public process.

16 In addition, this week we have had a lot
17 of media coverage of the testimony of the witnesses. Both
18 the written press and the electronic media have covered
19 us and covered the witnesses very, very well. I want to
20 thank them.

21 We're going to close with a prayer now.

22 I'll ask Lizzie to close the meeting with a prayer.

23 All stand, please.

April 8, 1993

Royal Commission on
Aboriginal Peoples

1

(Closing Prayer)