

COMMISSION ROYALE SUR
LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

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"for the record..."

STENOTRAN

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1 **Calgary, Alberta**

2 --- Upon commencing on Wednesday, May 26, 1993

3 at 8:53 a.m.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** This round
5 of hearings is our third round of hearings. The Royal
6 Commission began its hearings a little over a year ago.
7 After each set of hearings, what we have been doing is
8 developing some products which we use in the next round
9 of hearings. We hope that, with each set of hearings,
10 we are getting closer and closer to the solutions that
11 are in our mandate.

12 We have a very, very large mandate which
13 covers virtually all issues that Aboriginal people are
14 interested in and have worked on for quite some time.
15 It includes things like self-government, economic
16 development, education, culture, urban Aboriginal issues,
17 Métis questions, perspectives of youth, Elders, women --
18 virtually anything you can think of that is important to
19 Aboriginal people, including Canadian constitutional
20 changes, land claims, the Indian Act, Indian Affairs, and
21 on and on.

22 We began our hearings by coming to the
23 communities at the beginning with more or less an open

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1 sheet. We had done assessments of other inquiries and
2 other studies that had been done in the past.

3 The reason we are holding the hearings
4 is to have input into the solutions for the mandate
5 questions that we have. While we know that people tend
6 to try to put things in perspective and context, and
7 describe some of the problems, we encourage people to spend
8 the majority of their time, if possible, on what they would
9 like to see occur in the future -- the remedies, the
10 solutions, the ways in which the difficult problems would
11 be resolved.

12 In addition, while this is a Royal
13 Commission on Aboriginal people's issues, it is very, very
14 important that we get views from non-Aboriginal people.
15 We know very well that it is only going to be possible
16 to fulfill our mandate if we have both communities, the
17 non-Aboriginal community and the Aboriginal community,
18 satisfied with the recommendations we put forth so that
19 we will be anywhere near successful.

20 While in the early rounds of hearings
21 we were not getting a lot of non-Aboriginal presenters,
22 but primarily Aboriginal presenters, with the second round
23 that picked up a lot. We are expecting that overall in

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1 this set of hearings, with the known presenters, the
2 content will rise significantly.

3 In the last round of hearings which we
4 will hold in the fall, it will rise even more. We have
5 many non-Aboriginal organizations in Canada that have been
6 preparing for some time to present to us.

7 In addition to the public consultation
8 that we are doing, the Royal Commission is doing a fair
9 amount of research. We are trying to make sure that we
10 don't duplicate. The research we are doing is attempting
11 to fill the holes that exist now in the present research
12 that has been done. In some places there are larger holes
13 than in others. For instance, urban Aboriginal peoples,
14 Métis peoples -- there is not as much research in that
15 area; whereas, there is more on Treaty Indians or status
16 Indians.

17 In addition to our own research, some
18 time ago we created an Intervenor Fund, with \$8 million.
19 It was headed up by David Crombie. It is winding down
20 at the moment, and very soon it will be more or less shutting
21 its offices. The \$8 million we provided to this particular
22 fund was primarily to encourage people to do research,
23 to do consulting within their own constituencies, and to

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1 come up with long-term solutions.

2 We are starting to get the benefit of
3 that now in this round of hearings. Later in the Calgary
4 hearings here, we will be hearing from an organization
5 which received funding from the Intervenor Funding
6 Program. Across the country in this set of hearings we
7 are hearing from quite a few of those. Again, the bulk
8 of the people who received funding from the Intervenor
9 Funding Program will present to us in the fall.

10 We hope to put together a number of
11 different streams of sources of information. Our
12 research, the research from the Intervenor Funding
13 Program, the public participation at hearings, the Round
14 Tables, the National Round Tables, the Special
15 Consultations are all going to feed into the final
16 recommendations of the Royal Commission.

17 We hope to have our work done by late
18 1994, but it is very likely that we will have a number
19 of interim reports that we will be releasing throughout
20 this year on a number of subjects, one of them being the
21 situation that was created by moving the Inuit from
22 northern Quebec to the High Arctic. Another one will
23 probably be the land claims questions that have been dealt

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1 with to some extent. There are federal policies that have
2 been dealing with comprehensive claims and specific
3 claims, but there continues to be a lot of controversy
4 about the particular policy that is in place. So we hope
5 to come out with an interim report on that issue.

6 In addition, we are working on a number
7 of other documents. One of them is a document that will
8 deal with the aftermath of the constitutional round. What
9 now? What options are available? What can be done under
10 the present circumstance, and so forth? We are very close
11 to concluding that particular document. It will have to
12 go through translation, publication and so forth. It will
13 still be a few months down the road, but that is well under
14 way.

15 That is more or less where we are at.
16 Just to sum up again, what we hope to get from the hearings
17 is input from people in relation to the solutions. Every
18 time we begin our hearings, we try to remind people that
19 we have been on the road for quite a while. We have been
20 hearing people explain what the problems are.

21 The role of the Royal Commission is not
22 to try to come up with a definitive list of problems for
23 Aboriginal people. Our role is to try to seek the

3 We are not on the road trying to get a
4 list of problems. We started with them at the beginning.
5 What we are on the road for is to try to get people to
6 participate in the solutions. We really encourage people
7 to give us their best thoughts at this point. In addition,
8 we encourage people to take whatever time they think is
9 necessary, if they think of other things once our hearings
10 are over, to sit down with their organizations, whatever
11 they are, and give us any additional thoughts they might
12 think of later. It might well be that, once people have
13 participated in our hearings and have heard our questions,
14 they will be prompted to think of additional things that
15 they wish to comment about. We encourage that.

16 It can be done in a number of ways. We
17 accept written presentations. If people want to use our
18 800 line, they can use that. We will hold hearings later
19 in the fall for some people, but we are discouraging people
20 from thinking that they might present to us again, unless
21 it is absolutely necessary. The larger organizations we
22 expect will probably do that, but for most people we
23 encourage them to use a written form or tapes or phone

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1 conversations with us, or whatever.

2 With that I will see if Viola wants to
3 add anything.

4 Just to introduce, my name is Georges
5 Erasmus, as the name plate says. The Commissioner here
6 with me is Viola Robinson.

7 I am a Dene from northern Canada. Viola
8 is a Micmac. I was formerly the National Chief of the
9 Assembly of First Nations and also a Dene leader in the
10 north prior to that. Viola was the head of the Native
11 Council of Canada. She stepped down from that to become
12 a Commissioner. She had, prior to that for many, many
13 years, headed her provincial Aboriginal organization in
14 Nova Scotia.

15 In addition to Viola and myself, there
16 are a number of other Commissioners. I am a Co-Chair,
17 and the other Co-Chair is René Dussault. He is a judge
18 from Quebec, in the Appeal Court there. He has headed
19 up other Commissions at the Quebec level previously.

20 We also have a number of other lawyers.

21 Bertha Wilson, a former judge, was the first woman
22 appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada. She is also
23 heading up right now a study for the Canadian Bar

2 We also have another woman, Mary
3 Sillett. She is an Inuit, also a former Aboriginal leader.
4 She helped found and start and was the first President
5 of the Inuit Women's Association. When this Commission
6 was started, she was also a Vice-President of the National
7 Inuit Association, Inuit Tapirisat of Canada. She stepped
8 down from both positions to become a Commissioner.

12 Allan Blakeney, a former Premier of
13 Saskatchewan, was a Commissioner until five or six weeks
14 ago. He has since then stepped down. The process to
15 replace him has been under way since then, and we hope
16 to have a Commissioner fill that spot before too long.

21 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Good
22 morning, ladies and gentlemen.

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1 is Marlana Dolan from the Calgary Aboriginal Awareness
2 Society. She is going to do her presentation.

3 **MARLENA DOLAN, Calgary Aboriginal**
4 **Awareness Society:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

5 The Calgary Aboriginal Awareness
6 Society is a not-for-profit organization that takes
7 direction from an elected Board of Directors. The society
8 consists of a number of committees that represent
9 education, social issues, arts and culture, business and
10 all aspects of the Aboriginal community.

11 Our membership and Board of Directors
12 consist of both Native and non-Native people who represent
13 all walks of life.

14 The mandate of the Aboriginal Awareness
15 Society includes not only the Native people, but the entire
16 community at large. At this stage, I would like to read
17 our mandate.

18 The Calgary Aboriginal Awareness
19 Society exists primarily to promote goodwill and
20 understanding between Native and non-Native communities
21 and to develop awareness and foster co-operation between
22 Native and non-Native people. Activities to be undertaken
23 by the society and co-ordinating committees include, but

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1 are not restricted to: workshops, conferences, cultural
2 events and education forums.

3 I put together a small presentation that
4 I would like to read at this time.

5 The Calgary Aboriginal Awareness
6 Society exists primarily to promote understanding and
7 awareness between the Native and the non-Native
8 communities. Under this mandate the society undertakes
9 a week of events and lectures to enhance this mandate and
10 to provide a forum to promote goodwill and an opportunity
11 for the public to observe and share the culture of the
12 Native people.

13 This year we are celebrating our fifth
14 consecutive year in hosting Native Awareness Week. To
15 this date we have witnessed an increase in attendance to
16 the events and a positive response from both our sponsors
17 and the general public to the events that are staged
18 throughout the week.

19 The society has been successful in
20 fulfilling its mandate, and this success is measured by
21 the growth of the membership and the optimistic response
22 from the people involved in the organization and attending
23 the events.

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1 It was the obvious need for this kind
2 of sharing and awareness outlet that first inspired the
3 founders of the annual Native Awareness Week five years
4 ago. An accumulation of misconceptions and stereotypical
5 branding has manifested an ignorance of Native people and
6 elements of their culture. Native Awareness Week has
7 helped clarify some of these misconceptions by providing
8 opportunity for the community at large to get involved
9 and, in some situations, break the silence that has
10 perpetuated the obvious fear of the unknown culture.

11 Hollywood has been unfair to the Native
12 people by portraying a breed of savages that were not
13 deserving of respect and consideration, and these
14 misperceptions have intruded upon a relationship between
15 the Native people and the general population that could
16 have been positive and prosperous to both.

17 The history of the Native people of
18 Canada has been an arduous journey of continuous struggle.
19 The battle grounds for the warriors were no longer
20 restricted to defence but, rather, to the political foyer
21 that was thrust upon them by the arriving Europeans. From
22 discovery until the 20th century, the Native people have
23 been struggling for recognition as a nation, who are as

6 The paternalistic attitude of the
7 governing bodies throughout history has compromised much
8 of the value system that once bonded the nations of Canada.

21 As is witnessed in many Aboriginal
22 countries in the world, the Native people of Canada have
23 been colonized by an overpowering entity and forced to

8 The remnants from past history have
9 regrouped to strengthen themselves and have resurged the
10 traditional ways of old. What has existed underground
11 is now surfacing with a renewed exhilaration. Native
12 culture is alive and well and will prosper.

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1 not only the needs of the Native people but to promote
2 an understanding of their cultural heritage.

3 The declaration of the United Nations
4 of this year being the International Year of the World's
5 Indigenous People has sparked an interest in recognition
6 of Native people across Canada. Although there are no
7 special provisions for Native communities, there has been
8 a positive effect on the population to take notice of the
9 people that have been ignored for so long. Across Canada,
10 Native communities are celebrating in their own way a
11 recognition that is long overdue.

12 The events that are scheduled for Native
13 Awareness Week this year strongly reflect the message of
14 the society to get involved and explore the culture and
15 wisdom that our people offer to mankind. There is a desire
16 to learn and understand Native culture and tradition.
17 Perhaps there hasn't been the appropriate forum for
18 expressing and sharing the traditional ways and wisdom
19 of our generations.

20 One of the most successful of our
21 endeavours has been the fine art exhibition that goes into
22 its fourth year. It wasn't very many years ago that Native
23 artists were not exhibited at the galleries, and much of

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1 the art that was considered Native was a white imitation
2 that wrongly displayed our traditions and sacred objects.

3 The fine art exhibition has provided the
4 talented Native artists with an opportunity to be
5 recognized and accredited for their talent rather than
6 their image. The attendance to the art exhibition has
7 been overwhelming, and many of the artists go on to success
8 and recognition as artists who are respected in the art
9 community.

10 This year the theme for Native Awareness
11 Week is "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." With this theme
12 we are exhibiting art from all of those generations. From
13 yesterday we have the artists who have provided incentive
14 to today's contemporary artists and opened the doors to
15 acceptance as a Native artist. Tomorrow's artists are
16 uniquely represented by the exhibit of children's art at
17 the gallery level. Initially, Native art was not readily
18 acceptable at the gallery level; however, persistence by
19 Native artists to be recognized has opened the doors for
20 tomorrow.

21 Another exhibition that will be
22 displayed during Native Awareness Week is a show of
23 penitentiary artists entitled "Beyond Barriers."

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1 Incarceration shouldn't limit the talents of many young
2 artists who have been caught up in the system. This
3 exhibition serves well as an incentive to these artists
4 and provides a sense of pride that can't be stripped with
5 their street clothing.

6 The society has organized an event that
7 is inspiring to both the Native people as well as the
8 community at large. We will be bringing in Elders from
9 across Alberta to conduct an on-hands artifacts display
10 at the Glenbow Museum. Artifacts will be chosen by the
11 Elders to educate the school children as well as adults
12 on the nature of the objects and how they relate to the
13 culture of the specific tribes.

14 Like so much of our culture, many of
15 these artifacts are confiscated and then stored in a
16 basement somewhere. The history of the Native people has
17 not necessarily been accurately taught, and this
18 opportunity to portray the relevance of specific objects
19 can clarify cultural aspects of tribal communities.

20 As I look at the schedule of events for
21 Native Awareness Week which is scheduled from June 21 to
22 June 27, I see that a lot of our events are
23 education-oriented. This education is not only for our

4 We display these educational events to
5 educate people, to educate the general public on what the
6 Aboriginal community is all about.

Native Awareness Week has been very successful. Personally, I feel that, if it could be nationalized, we could have a better response and we could build a better relationship with the non-Native community, and regain some of the recognition that we had hundreds of years ago. It would be my recommendation to nationalize something like this.

23 I would like to introduce at this time

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1 the President of our organization, Mr. Tom Horvath, who
2 will perhaps say a couple of words.

3 **TOM HORVATH, President, Calgary**

4 **Aboriginal Awareness Society:** Good morning. My name is
5 Tom Horvath. I am currently the President of the Calgary
6 Aboriginal Awareness Society, and I thank Marlena for
7 introducing me. It is a pleasure to address the Commission
8 this morning.

9 The original intent of having an
10 Aboriginal Awareness Society, as Marlena stated, was to
11 create a greater understanding between the two
12 communities, to bridge the gap between the Aboriginal and
13 the non-Aboriginal communities, to provide a sense of
14 understanding of the traditions and values and to clear
15 up some of the misconceptions that non-Aboriginal people
16 have of the Aboriginal culture.

17 One of the things I always thought --
18 I am half Ojibway and half Hungarian, Ojibway from the
19 Sabaskong Band near Kenora, Ontario. I have sort of grown
20 up in both areas and have seen that a lot of the things
21 -- maybe "racism" is too strong a word, but misperceptions
22 -- sometimes lead to pre-conceptions which may lead to
23 racist and stereotypical beliefs.

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1 One of our goals is to clear up some of
2 these misconceptions and provide some accuracies about
3 Native culture and Native people. We know we are not
4 experts or anything, but we do try to provide some
5 opportunities. If people have questions, they call the
6 office. If people want to learn a little bit about the
7 different dances, we try to display them at different
8 events. If people want to know about Aboriginal
9 businesses, the fact that there are Aboriginal businesses
10 out there, we would like to provide that information to
11 them also.

12 As I said, it is clearing up
13 misconceptions that hopefully will one day lead to a better
14 understanding and more tolerance and understanding. We
15 don't plan to save the world or anything and eliminate
16 racism, but we are doing our best to promote the culture
17 and to promote understanding in this community.

18 What we would like to recommend to the
19 Commission is that events like this -- and you see them
20 popping up. Different universities are taking on their
21 own Native Awareness Week days. Different communities
22 are beginning to try to establish their own Native
23 Awareness Week days. The support from the corporate

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1 sector is encouraged, and the support from this Commission
2 and the Government of Canada is encouraged.

3 I would like to thank you for your time.

4 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
5 very much, Mr. Horvath.

6 Is there any discussion from the floor?

7 There are two mikes available if anyone wants to ask
8 questions of the presenter.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
10 for your presentations. Would you mind if we asked you
11 some questions.

12 Could you describe some more of the
13 events. You say, looking at the Calendar of Events, that
14 you notice that most of them are educational. Could you
15 describe what some of those are.

16 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Our Social Issues
17 Committee is putting on a lecture series for Tuesday and
18 Wednesday, called "The Native Way." They will be
19 discussing the pros and cons of self-government. One
20 lecture is called "The Native Way", and it is primarily
21 concerning how the Native people function within society,
22 in business and in the community as well as in the education
23 system.

7 Our Business Committee is doing an
8 eight-hour conference on how to do business with Aboriginal
9 people, both at the private business level and working
10 with Aboriginal people in the corporate sector.

17 The Arts and Culture Committee is doing
18 a Variety Night, both Friday and Saturday nights. We have
19 some successful playwrights who are putting on some plays.
20 We have some successful Native artists who sing and dance.

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1 high schools have an opportunity to learn to deal with
2 a lot of their problems, using drama. Then they have the
3 opportunity to put together a speech concerning the theme,
4 which is "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," and to present
5 their speech in front of their peers.

6 We put on a Native Film Festival through
7 the library and the National Film Board. This year it
8 runs for two nights, and we also have a special presentation
9 on Saturday for children's films.

10 On Saturday we also have a "Meet the
11 Artist" luncheon at the Glenbow Auditorium where the public
12 is invited to meet the artists and question them and talk
13 to them about their art and their aspirations.

14 Then our finale is a Native fashion show
15 and a picnic out at Nakoda Lodge where we will be displaying
16 Native fashions in all aspects of the theme. We have a
17 collection of fashions from yesterday, and today's
18 contemporary designers and, to represent tomorrow, we have
19 some teenagers from the high schools who have started into
20 the design area. They have some really good work that
21 they want to show.

22 That's about it for the week.

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

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1 of thing do you do to encourage non-Aboriginal people in
2 the actual events, besides being observers and
3 participating in a learning process? Do you involve them
4 in any kind of interactive activity?

5 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Yes. Fifty per cent of
6 our Board of Directors are non-Native people. Many of
7 our committees are non-Native people.

8 There is representation from the
9 non-Native community in most of the events. The
10 non-Natives do interact. If they attend these events,
11 they are obviously interested in some aspect of the Native
12 culture.

13 In the Teachers' Workshop that happens
14 next Tuesday, which is not part of the Week but is part
15 of the society's mandate, we invite teachers from across
16 the city of Calgary, Native and non-Native. They have
17 an opportunity to interact and to learn about the history
18 of the education of the Aboriginal people and to learn
19 more about how to deal with the personalities of the Native
20 people. The Teachers' Workshop is probably one of the
21 most successful events that we stage.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do you have
23 a display of written works -- books, publications by

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1 non-Native writers or books on Aboriginal people?

2 **MARLENA DOLAN:** I am not sure the
3 society is into publishing.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** No, I was
5 asking if you had a display of books on Aboriginal people,
6 either by Aboriginal people or about Aboriginal people.

7 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Actually, there is
8 another event that the Education Committee does, and it
9 is called "Writing the Circle." This year we are taking
10 women Aboriginal writers to junior high and high schools,
11 speaking about writing. They go from school to school
12 and give presentations, and offer a question and answer
13 period, to encourage not only the Native people but the
14 non-Native people to write, to put down their feelings,
15 to express themselves through writing.

16 We display all the Aboriginal newspapers
17 in our office, and we make available lists of books that
18 are available through the Public Library and bookstores.
19 We get many calls from schools requiring that kind of
20 information.

21 We are presently putting together a
22 Speakers Panel, because we get a lot of requests from
23 schools, community centres and churches to have people

3 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS: Do you have
4 a year-round office?

10 Since Native Awareness Week runs through
11 June, it is also the week where the high schools and junior
12 highs are writing exams. Many of the events that are
13 targeted to that group will be run early in the month or
14 next fall.

17 **MARLENA DOLAN:** We are funded from both
18 the federal and the provincial levels of government.
19 Probably the majority of our funding comes from sponsorship
20 from the corporate sector and the Arts Foundation --
21 different avenues of grants, Secretary of State. The
22 majority of the funding does come from the corporate
23 sector.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Are you
2 thinking of doing other events that would take place at
3 other times?

4 **MARLENA DOLAN:** We would like to, but
5 funding is always a barrier. We would like to do events
6 all year-round.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do you know
8 if there are other organizations anywhere that are
9 organized like you are?

10 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Actually, the Calgary
11 Aboriginal Awareness Society is quite unique in Canada.
12 We are the only city that actually puts on a Native
13 Awareness Week, where the whole week focuses on the Native
14 people. This is why it was my personal recommendation
15 that there should be a national week where the Aboriginal
16 people are given that particular week of the year to focus
17 on their culture, to share their culture, to inform the
18 non-Native community.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Are you
20 supported by the multicultural societies?

21 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Yes, we are actually.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I think Tom
23 mentioned there are dance displays.

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1 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Many of our ceremonies
2 are accompanied by dance displays. We don't like to focus
3 on being a tourist attraction, but we do like to share
4 those kinds of thing.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** So you have
6 ceremonies?

7 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Yes, we have opening
8 ceremonies and closing ceremonies. We have ceremonies
9 at the Art Exhibition opening. We have a mini pow-wow
10 at the Indian Cultural Survival School. We work in
11 conjunction with the Calgary Friendship Centre. We are
12 having an Elders' pow-wow.

13 Those are usually the events that bring
14 the public out, the curiosity. Once they are out there,
15 then we have the opportunity to mingle with them and to
16 share.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How many
18 staff do you have?

19 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Two.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** It sounds
21 like a pretty productive group.

22 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Yes, we work pretty
23 hard.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** When the
2 Week is coming closer, do you have to start having more
3 and more volunteers?

4 **MARLENA DOLAN:** We have a very
5 productive pool of volunteers, very dedicated volunteers.
6 We have one volunteer who solely puts on the Art
7 Exhibition. This year we have 45 artists. It takes a
8 lot of work to put together an exhibition like that.

9 A lot of our volunteers are non-Native
10 people who are interested in the culture and interested
11 in learning more about it. They work very hard for us.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How much
13 time does fund-raising take up?

14 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Most of our
15 fund-raising is done in the fall and in the early spring.
16 Most of our funds should be in place by the beginning
17 of March. So there are three or four months of heavy-duty
18 fund-raising.

19 What is happening is that our sponsors
20 are repeating every year. Mobil Oil sponsors our Art
21 Exhibition; this is the fourth year that they have solely
22 sponsored that Art Exhibition, and every year it gets a
23 little more expensive. More artists are interested in

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1 making a contribution and are getting involved.

2 A lot of the events are
3 project-specific. I am finding a lot of the corporate
4 sponsorships are really interested in doing educational
5 events.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is the art
7 on display for sale also?

8 **MARLENA DOLAN:** I suppose that is up to
9 the artist. At the gallery, no, it is not for sale there.
10 A lot of people do contact us at the office, and we put
11 them on to the artist or the gallery that represents them.

12 The "Beyond Barriers" art exhibition
13 that we are doing for the penitentiary artists will be
14 available for sale.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How far
16 afield do you go for your Aboriginal artists?

17 **MARLENA DOLAN:** All across Alberta.
18 Actually, some of the artists are Alberta-raised but
19 perhaps live in Vancouver. We have included some of those
20 artists. The eight artists for "Yesterday", the art work
21 was borrowed from the Indian Art Centre in Toronto. Then
22 we have 29 contemporary artists, and eight children.

23 So it's kind of a unique exhibition.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do you
2 consider yourselves a provincial organization? You are
3 talking about Alberta artists.

4 **MARLENA DOLAN:** What we try to do is
5 include all of the Native people. We are not necessarily
6 an urban Aboriginal organization. We like to include the
7 local reserves. Our invitation goes as far north as
8 Assumption. We had Elders at our Art Exhibition opening
9 from Assumption doing the opening prayer.

10 We try to include as many people as we
11 possibly can, who want to get involved.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How did you
13 go about selecting the Board? Was it at some kind of public
14 meeting, an annual meeting?

15 **MARLENA DOLAN:** We have an Annual
16 General Meeting and the Board is elected by the membership.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Can anybody
18 become a member?

19 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Oh, yes. It is
20 relatively inexpensive. For \$10 you can become a member
21 for a year.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is the
23 membership primarily Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal?

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1 **MARLENA DOLAN:** It is about 50 per cent
2 Aboriginal and 50 per cent non-Aboriginal.

3 One day during the week, on Wednesday,
4 there is an Agency Fair at City Hall. We set up a booth
5 and we give out information. This is where we get a lot
6 of our membership, just the general public who are
7 interested.

8 During the Winter Festival we put up a
9 display -- a couple of teepees. We had a local Native
10 woman making bannock over the campfire. We had the best
11 exhibition there. We had the biggest crowd. People are
12 interested; the interest is there. It is just getting
13 them more involved and perhaps finding all the funding
14 to stage the events.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do you have
16 any questions, Viola?

17 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Just a
18 couple.

19 Your membership on your Board, what kind
20 of people are you attracting to the Board membership?
21 Would they be from the corporate sector, from the
22 professional or business? Is it a mixture?

23 **MARLENA DOLAN:** It's quite a mixture,

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1 actually. We have Tom who works in the corporate sector,
2 Joan Cardinal-Shuber who is an artist, Doreen Spence who
3 is a nurse and also the President of the Plains Indian
4 Cultural Survival School. We have two representatives
5 from the Royal Bank, a woman that works for the Chamber
6 of Commerce. So it is very mixed. It is not just working
7 people.

8 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** How many
9 people would you say offhand are in the membership now?

10 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Our membership is about
11 450 at this time.

12 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** And all
13 Calgary-based people, I take it.

14 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Pretty well. There are
15 some exceptions, but most of them are within the vicinity
16 of Calgary.

17 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Do you
18 hold your meetings annually or quarterly?

19 **MARLENA DOLAN:** We have an Annual
20 General Meeting in September of every year.

21 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Are there
22 any in between?

23 **MARLENA DOLAN:** No.

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1 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** So you
2 just hold one meeting a year.

3 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Yes.

4 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** We were
5 in Lethbridge yesterday. In a lot of the major cities
6 across Canada we have heard about a lot of racism. We
7 have heard Aboriginal people come forward who have been
8 really complaining about attitudes toward Aboriginal
9 people.

10 I am just wondering -- how long did you
11 say this has been --

12 **MARLENA DOLAN:** This is the fifth year.

13 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** With the
14 work that this organization is doing, do you feel that
15 it is really making a difference in the attitude of
16 non-Aboriginal people?

17 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Oh, yes. One of the
18 reasons that I got involved personally with the society
19 is because I believe that this society has a potential
20 to make a difference without being political, without
21 fighting or arguing. Primarily we are there to educate
22 the people and provide opportunities to share our culture.

23 Yes, it has been very successful.

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1 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** What
2 initiated the thinking to start such an organization?
3 How did it come about?

4 **MARLENA DOLAN:** Tom could probably
5 answer that question better than I.

6 **TOM HORVATH:** Probably not, but I will
7 try.

8 It started about five years ago, and it
9 was a joint effort between the local Friendship Centre
10 and the Calgary Chamber of Commerce. They formed sort
11 of a partnership and decided that the Friendship Centre
12 would like to put on awareness-type events. They were
13 doing a Princess Pageant and a Fashion Show, and things
14 like that. The Chamber of Commerce wanted to bring in
15 guest speakers for its membership. This year they are
16 bringing in Senator Walter Twinn, I believe, for Native
17 Awareness Week, and they are putting on the "Doing Business
18 with Aboriginal People" Conference also.

19 So it originally began as a Native
20 Awareness Week sponsored by the Friendship Centre and the
21 Chamber of Commerce, which was really good because the
22 Chamber of Commerce was the initiation for our corporate
23 support which we survive on right now.

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1 Then, as it expanded, it got into the
2 whole week and then it got into a whole year, and now we
3 are doing things throughout the year. But we are still
4 focused on the week.

5 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** It
6 certainly is a model that could well be used in a lot of
7 the cities in Canada today. We would be interested in
8 getting any kind of material that you have on the organizing
9 and the work and subscription that you have.

10 Thank you.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
12 for coming forward.

13 We are going to break until one o'clock
14 now. The day before yesterday we tried to move up the
15 schedule. We were supposed to start at one o'clock. We
16 tried rescheduling a number of the presenters, and I guess
17 it has been a little difficult to get some of those people
18 on board.

19 Please go ahead.

20 **WAYNE STANLEY:** My name is Wayne
21 Stanley. I am currently the Co-Chair of the Business
22 Subcommittee of the Calgary Aboriginal Awareness Society.

23 There have been a number of comments

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1 about some of the stuff we are doing, and I thought I might
2 take a minute to provide some comment.

3 We are having a day-long conference
4 which we are essentially using to provide a practical
5 information-sharing opportunity, to make available
6 essentially to the non-Aboriginal business community in
7 Calgary information on opportunities that may exist to
8 investigate and possibly go farther than that in terms
9 of looking at joint venture opportunities, looking at what
10 business-related benefits may accrue to non-Aboriginal
11 business and to consider some of the programs and
12 opportunities that may be available.

13 I am struggling to think of all the
14 agenda, but three of the four topics relate to legal issues,
15 financing issues and a program on networking to provide
16 people with practical experience on how to make those
17 contacts and how to find key people in the community from
18 both sides. It is designed to be very practical, very
19 much a situation where people speak based on historical
20 success and through historical experience.

21 What we are trying to focus on is that
22 there are certain bottom-line related opportunities that,
23 if utilized, can provide an opportunity for perhaps the

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1 extra stimulation required to encourage economic
2 activities in the Aboriginal sector, both on and off
3 reserve, without which it is business as usual. The status
4 quo is that it is very difficult for businesses to operate.

5 Typically, from a developmental point
6 of view, we look at situations where there is either lack
7 of financing, lack of entrepreneurial or technical
8 business skills, lack of management skills which
9 historically have been some of the problems identified
10 as problems which limit opportunities for Aboriginal
11 people to participate more fully in the mainstream economy.

12 One of the things on a personal level
13 that I have noticed because of fairly extensive experience
14 in regional development and Aboriginal economic
15 development is that there is a wide level of interest in
16 Indian culture and business opportunities but very little
17 information on how to go about it. What we are trying
18 to do here is to specifically focus on the concept of joint
19 venturing and utilizing some of the financing programs
20 that are available through federal and provincial funding
21 organizations and even, to a certain extent, tax-related
22 opportunities that can provide a real bottom-line
23 opportunity for businesses to consider different types

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1 of investment.

2 Specifically, we are trying to show that
3 there are sources of concessionary financing, grants or
4 access to loan funds or venture capital that would not
5 otherwise be available to non-Aboriginal business.
6 Through the vehicle of a joint venture, there may be access
7 to a larger pool or a less expensive pool of money that
8 might make an investment decision skew toward utilization
9 of Aboriginal people on or off reserve.

10 Again on a personal level, my experience
11 has been that, while there is interest in doing this, the
12 practical reality of bringing together these projects and
13 actually getting the funding is difficult. If I may just
14 make an observation -- and I am not sure how appropriate
15 it is.

16 We find that there are a number of
17 government programs in existence that speak to general
18 policy issues of employment generation or stimulation of
19 economic development. But, by the time you actually
20 investigate them and take them through, there is a series
21 of limiting factors, whether policy or personal, that make
22 it extremely difficult to actually have success.

23 I can speak to one project we are working

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1 on right now with a local Indian band. It is a situation
2 where there is a real economic advantage for this
3 particular Indian band. It is a transportation-based
4 industry, and we are looking for opportunities for
5 essentially cost reductions relating to cost of fuel, as
6 one particular thing, but there are other opportunities
7 with respect to utilization of training funds as an
8 effective wage subsidy, utilizing available economic
9 development funds which the band has at its discretion
10 and full control, as well as access to financing through
11 programs like CADES or in the various venture capital
12 organizations.

13 Having said that, it is difficult to
14 structure a project to get the funds in place. But, even
15 more particular -- and this is a thing I feel very strongly
16 about. A lot of the work we have been doing with this
17 particular band is predicated upon tax opportunities which
18 may be available particularly to on-reserve Indian bands.

19 What we are finding is that, while the individual First
20 Nations speak to the ideas of self-determination and
21 control of First Nations, interpretation of laws,
22 particularly tax laws, are being made outside the First
23 Nation environment.

12 We find, in terms of trying to structure
13 projects which, on theory, may have an opportunity which
14 would cause a competitive advantage or just the basis for
15 an opportunity for job creation, in fact it is very
16 difficult to get a firm ruling on that, to design programs,
17 particularly when you are trying to bring in a non-Native
18 investor or entrepreneur. That uncertainty makes it very
19 difficult for them to commit to a project.

20 We are pushing ahead, and we think we
21 will be successful, but that gap between policy statements
22 and objectives and the reality of being able to actually
23 have the programs deliver what they say they do -- in fact,

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1 we find it is almost a perverse turning-around of the
2 objective. While they speak to one thing, our experience
3 in reality is quite different.

4 Again I can speak to a specific thing.
5 There was a reference to Walter Twinn. We structured
6 a joint venture engineering construction company, which
7 has now grown to be very successful here. We specifically
8 target an opportunity to provide technical engineering
9 and project management expertise to work with large oil
10 companies, to try to find a way to help them increase
11 opportunities for Aboriginal and regional economic
12 development opportunities.

13 We approached a program called Native
14 Economic Development Program. It took us two years to
15 get funding. We have heard from various sources that it
16 was one of the better projects they had ever seen in terms
17 of the matching of the skills and design of the project.

18 In the end, we got some moneys, but the restrictions placed
19 on that money were so onerous that, as a small company,
20 we ended up turning back fully \$750,000, half of which
21 was grant. It was just too difficult to spend the money.

22 We did two projects with a little band
23 up north that made about \$1.1 million. We turned about

One last thing that I find frustrating is in terms of dealing with a small new band up north. There is an organization called Canada-Alberta Agreement, the Northern Development Agreement. I speak to this point because it talks about some of the difficulties faced by Aboriginal people, both on-reserve groups and Aboriginal people throughout the region.

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1 unfair advantage over existing businesses. It's a
2 difficult policy and almost an ethical consideration.

3 On the other hand, when dealing with
4 Aboriginal economic development, there seem to be a number
5 of these little pitfalls or gaps that individual projects
6 or businessmen find themselves in, where they just don't
7 seem to fit into the support structures. It is
8 frustrating, and my experience has been that there are
9 many situations where the frustration of dealing with these
10 funding organizations is such that, after banging your
11 head against this bureaucratic wall, people just move away
12 from it and give up, and whatever opportunity was there
13 is lost.

14 Sorry to be so rambling, but I just
15 wanted to provide an additional comment to what Marlena
16 said and to talk about the specifics of our Business
17 Subcommittee meeting, and to try to demonstrate that there
18 is a lot of interest in the non-Aboriginal small business.

19 There has always been a strong level of interest at large
20 corporate levels, particularly with the oil business here
21 in town. But there is a high level of interest held at
22 personal levels, and often strong expressions of
23 willingness to work together if only for the problem of

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1 having information, on how to go about it and who to
2 contact.

3 In that regard, the Aboriginal Awareness
4 Society, and particularly their participation in Native
5 Awareness Week, is a very positive situation in town, where
6 it brings forward in a high-profile way an opportunity
7 for people who do have an interest to go out and see what
8 is available and then hopefully to take that interest to
9 the point of doing something more about it.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do you mind
11 if I ask you some questions?

12 **WAYNE STANLEY:** No.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Have you
14 ever been involved in any other government program to
15 assist business that is not related to Aboriginal people,
16 and have you found the same kind of difficulty?

17 **WAYNE STANLEY:** I spent the first 10
18 years of my working life in the government, first with
19 the Department of Regional Economic Expansion in the early
20 seventies, and then I spent seven years in the Foreign
21 Aid Program with CIDA. We did Regional Development
22 Canada, and part of our mandate there was not specifically
23 on Aboriginal people; in fact, it tended not to deal with

2 The CIDA work was very similar. From
3 the experience I learned there, the application here is
4 essentially the same dynamic of lack of resources, lack
5 of access to resources. The same characteristics that
6 often could be used to describe a development situation
7 in the Third World we are seeing here in the Aboriginal
8 element of Canadian society, particularly when you are
9 looking at the need for certain sources of funding, certain
10 technical expertise. The kinds of tools we used in the
11 international development experience would seem to me to
12 have some application here.

18 In fact, we did some work with the Peigan
19 Nation relating to the deliberations on the Oldman River
20 Dam. I was helping to do some economic development work.

21 I mentioned earlier the gap. We kept
22 finding that this particular Indian band -- and I am sure
23 there were similar experiences -- consistently fell in

6 We found that a lot of it came down to
7 the question of the Natural Resources Transfer Act in 1931,
8 where along with the BNA Act there was a separation of
9 jurisdictional responsibilities. What we found was that
10 in the particular area of on-reserve Indian economic
11 development there was a real finger-pointing situation.

19 So what you find in a typical development
20 project is that an Indian band would approach the federal
21 government, that being the normal way they would do
22 business, and would be told to go to Edmonton because it
23 was a provincial responsibility. They would go to

4 There was a specific case which really
5 demonstrates the situation. Southern Alberta is
6 dominated by irrigated agriculture. There is a
7 150-square-mile area that makes up the Peigan Indian
8 Reserve. From an agronomic point of view, it's exactly
9 the same as the land around. The land around is some of
10 the most prosperous agricultural land in Alberta, and the
11 land on the Indian reserve lies fallow, much as it has
12 for a long period of time.

13 Interestingly, any Albertan is eligible
14 for funding for irrigation capital works funding, up to
15 about 87 per cent of the cost of capital equipment.
16 Indians on reserve are not eligible for that same program
17 that any other Albertan would be. As a result, the
18 overwhelming cost of putting the capital in to develop
19 pipelines and pumping systems and so on has been too
20 expensive for the band to consider; whereas, all around
21 them Albertans are able to call on this financing program
22 to provide the basis for capitalizing their ability to
23 put the irrigation projects in.

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1 I mention this specific one because it
2 is water-related, and the elements of the discussion
3 relating to the Oldman River Dam were on title and water
4 rights, and things like that.

5 We did a number of things, looking at
6 utilities, education and adult education where there was
7 just, for the lack of a better word, a gap analysis because
8 of this huge gap that the band found itself in. It was
9 a consistent approach of the feds pointing the finger at
10 the province and the province pointing the finger back
11 at the feds, and nothing happening.

12 I have had some experience in different
13 programs, but on this particular analysis we found it to
14 be a dreadful situation of very unequal access to programs
15 and very much a -- "discrimination" may be too strong a
16 word. There was a practical limitation or restriction
17 on the ability of on-reserve Indian people to gain access
18 to these programs that were available to all other
19 Albertans.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Did the
21 Regional Economic Development funds that you were involved
22 with have the same kinds of restriction on somebody
23 starting a new business, where you couldn't get public

3 **WAYNE STANLEY:** I don't think so in that
4 case. There were several elements in that program. There
5 was a mainly capital program for what they called special
6 areas. There were 22 areas -- and this is taxing my old
7 brain. That was focused on cities and trying to make these
8 places development centres.

16 Having said that, I don't know that there
17 were any considerations given to whether an applicant was
18 Aboriginal or not. I don't believe there was. I don't
19 think there was any limitation, as well, for a new entrant.

20 In most of the cases you had, by region,
21 pretty much the same kinds of small business applying for
22 the same things. In Nova Scotia we must have had 15 or
23 20 little tobacco farms. There were limited economic

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1 assets in these remoter areas, so we had a lot of
2 woodworking projects and timber projects and sawmills.
3 That was just the nature of the game.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
5 That was very informative.

6 **JOAN CARDINAL-SHUBER:** Hi. My name is
7 Joan Cardinal-Shuber.

8 I have worked with the Calgary
9 Aboriginal Awareness Society for the last five years, since
10 I received a phone call from a dynamo named Maggie Mawri
11 who is presently in B.C. doing wonderful things.

12 As an artist and as a curator, I work
13 professionally at the Nichol Arts Museum here in Calgary.
14 As an artist who had gained recognition, I wanted to come
15 back here and do something in this community because I
16 saw so many artists not having a chance to exhibit their
17 work. They were not included in art exhibitions.

18 I was surprised to learn, when I quit
19 my job as a curator, that my Bachelor of Fine Art did not
20 make me an artist. I was a Native artist, which was
21 something else. I once wrote in a paper: Why should we
22 be exclusive because we have been excluded? I found out
23 that we indeed did have to do our own exhibitions in order

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1 to be taken seriously.

2 The Art Exhibition shows artists' work
3 for six weeks. There is a catalogue which properly
4 documents their work. They are paid a CARFAC fee according
5 to the National Standards Canadian Artist representation.
6 They are paid a fee for showing their work.

7 These artists, for the most part, have
8 only been allowed to show their work at trade shows or
9 three-day events, where they have to pay \$200 for a table.
10 Maybe they make some money and maybe they don't.

11 This exhibition gives them a chance to
12 dialogue with other artists. It is very important, that
13 communication aspect that takes place. They come from
14 all over Alberta. One of the artists we have shown --
15 and I am sure it is not just because of our exhibition.
16 Faye HeavyShield was included in the National Gallery
17 of Canada show recently.

18 What I really wanted to talk about up
19 here was the fact that what these artists need are heros.
20 Everybody needs heros. Last year we had a show called
21 "Meet a Mentor", and we brought in four national artists
22 -- Alex Janvier, Freda Deissing, Eddie Cobiness and Allen
23 Sapp -- so that the young artists could meet these people

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1 and they could be mentors for them.

2 I found out growing up that in the
3 textbooks there was nothing about Native people. I grew
4 up in an urban setting. I find that it is very important
5 for people to have heros.

6 We have a number of professional
7 organizations across the country that are starting to
8 publish. We have the En'oukwine Centre in Penticton under
9 Jeannette Armstrong who attended the University of
10 Victoria and came home to her community and started this
11 writing school. It has turned into a visual arts school
12 and performing arts.

13 We have a number of these things
14 happening, and I want to put out a challenge across the
15 country for people who have become involved professionally
16 to go back and work. I think so often, as professional
17 people, we are hooked into a national network and we
18 fast-track a lot. We make all kinds of decisions.

19 I understood this a lot more when I
20 attended the Beyond Survival Conference in Ottawa where
21 there were indigenous people from all over the world.
22 There we were, talking about issues and ideas that were
23 away beyond what was happening at the community level.

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1 That wasn't trickling back. We were fast-tracking, and
2 it wasn't getting back.

3 I think this art show involves so many
4 people, and it brings the community in. It demystifies
5 our art; it demystifies Native artists and allows people
6 to meet people and dialogue with them. It's kind of a
7 soft-sell of Native culture. It is not political, and
8 it allows that cross-over over these barriers of
9 misunderstanding.

10 I think that is one aspect that really
11 should be supported across the country, because art really
12 does transcend barriers.

13 I want to see more textbooks for kids.

14 I want to see more real elements of history included in
15 the writing. I would like to see more of that in the
16 educational curriculum, and I think we should demand it.

17 I suppose, when we start writing the textbooks and the
18 history more, that will be included, but I can't wait that
19 long.

20 Thanks very much.

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

22 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** We are
23 going to break until 11 o'clock this morning. We have

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1 one more person who wishes to speak.

2 **DAVE JANVIER:** My name is Dave Janvier,
3 and I am from Cold Lake First Nations. I am taking my
4 education over here.

5 What I am really concerned about is the
6 education in the urban and rural communities. With my
7 knowledge and the help of other people's knowledge I feel
8 that Indian Affairs is not giving us adequate funding for
9 education.

10 For myself personally, I approached
11 Indian Affairs, and they refused me for education. They
12 said I need a Grade 12 requirement. I did not receive
13 that Grade 12, and I am currently trying to upgrade my
14 education.

15 I feel that, as Native people, it
16 jeopardizes our treaty rights. I am not much of a speaker
17 for treaty rights and all these other issues that go along
18 with the political issues of our government of the Indian
19 communities. I come here mainly to listen, to try to
20 present myself to you people, and maybe I can learn
21 something here.

22 I don't know how far this Commission is
23 going to go to the federal government, but hopefully these

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1 little words that I say can go out and benefit our Indian
2 communities.

3 Where I am presently going to school,
4 they are thinking of reducing the funding and cutting off
5 the funding for adult upgrading. I need it. As an
6 individual, I need that education. Maybe others, too,
7 need it, because it is helpful.

8 I believe, once a Native person like
9 myself moves to the city here, we have struggles. I am
10 making that commitment. I will be finished pretty soon,
11 and I am going to be going back to my home reserve. I
12 am not really used to this city life, this hostile living
13 if I can put it that way.

14 I want to thank you people for listening
15 to me. Thanks.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
17 for coming forward. The point you make about funding for
18 upgrading and for post-secondary education has been made
19 to us numerous times. It is obvious that it is very, very
20 important.

21 We just spent two days in Lethbridge,
22 and the issues that kept coming up there centred a lot
23 around racism and the other big issue was education.

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1 Treaties also came up, but education seemed to be the major
2 issue.

3 We had a three-and-a-half-hour Round
4 Table with Aboriginal youth last night, and their concerns
5 very much reflected what you have said. If the
6 presentations we are hearing are correct, it just doesn't
7 seem to make a lot of sense. We heard about young people
8 not being allowed to go post-secondary experience, and
9 then they are put on the welfare lists. It actually costs
10 more to be on welfare than if they were in university,
11 so the government is not saving any money.

12 We are looking at those things to see
13 if that is true, and then we will make our assessments
14 and our recommendations.

15 We are going to take a major break now.
16 We expect that around 11 o'clock we will have enough people
17 here to resume the hearing. We will have a round table
18 on addictions, which we had rescheduled from a later time
19 period.

20 We will break now and reconvene at about
21 11 o'clock.

22 --- Short Recess at 10:15 a.m.

23 --- Upon resuming at 11:12 a.m.

3 My name is Joanne Three Suns, and I am
4 the Moderator.

5 On your agenda is a Round Table on
6 Addictions. Our first presenter is Matthew McGinnis from
7 Alpha House. Then we have Jody Goetz with the Métis
8 Association of Alberta, representing the youth.

9 At this time, I will hand it over to
10 Matthew to present his paper.

11 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS, Alpha House:** First,
12 I would like to say that Alpha House offers its presentation
13 respectfully and honestly, and we hope for a resolution
14 in the end that will be positive for all Native peoples.

Calgary Alpha House opened its doors in 1982 as a response to an overwhelming number of public inebriate on the streets of Calgary. We are a non-profit ADAC-funded agency, and we provide shelter, basic hygiene and safety for up to 51 persons a night. At the same time we are a 24-hour drop-in.

21 We also provide a non-medical detox
22 service which can accommodate sixteen men and four women.
23 Our women's detox recently opened in December 1992.

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1 We also provide counselling and
2 referrals to other agencies in the city.

3 Our service provides alternatives to the
4 drunk tank and hospitals. Our permanent lobby is in the
5 streets of Calgary. We deal with addictions on the front
6 line, where we see the nastier elements of addiction on
7 a daily basis.

8 Last year we admitted 36,000 people to
9 our facility. I think we have become a beacon of hope
10 to people on the street.

11 With respect to the Native population,
12 they make up 30 to 40 per cent of our numbers. That depends
13 on the time of year and also on the time of month. In
14 April 1993 we served 890 Natives.

15 The detox aspect of our facility tends
16 to receive much less use than our drop-in. The Native
17 population that we cater to tends to use our facility more
18 as an overnight shelter, whereas during the day they are
19 quite often roaming the streets of Calgary. They are very
20 severely afflicted with alcoholism at this point.

21 This problem we see as being a problem
22 for all society. We are not willing to suggest that it
23 is a Native issue or even to endorse that view. Forty

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1 per cent of our numbers are Native, and 60 per cent are
2 white -- 60 per cent. That tells us it's a problem that
3 isn't exclusive to one population.

4 It is clear that alcohol abuse is simply
5 a symptom of deeper complex issues. We are all aware that
6 there are problems ranging from loss of culture to
7 dependence upon a government, which dependence tends to
8 lead to alcoholism.

9 I don't want to spend too much time
10 identifying the problems because we all know what the
11 problems are. Within this range there are many
12 discouraging realities which require immediate
13 intervention. It is unfortunate that this Commission is
14 not going to come to a conclusion until 1994 because I
15 believe that the intervention is required right now. The
16 addictive aspect is a very serious -- very serious --
17 problem.

18 It is imperative that, if we are to see
19 any results, the approach we employ has to be holistic.
20 We have to realize that it is not just dealing with the
21 individual and their day-to-day problems, and it is not
22 just dealing with a society of people and the problems
23 they face. We have to encompass it all. We have to

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1 realize that the individual is a part of a larger group
2 that needs to be aware that they have to empower themselves
3 before the society will become empowered.

4 Some of the solutions that we have come
5 to agree upon are to try to incorporate some positive models
6 promoted through a strong, controlled medium. One of the
7 most positive models I know of is the Alkali Lake model.

8 I think it's a tremendous achievement by Native peoples.

9 I don't know of any other accomplishment that even closely
10 parallels it.

11 As far as using a strong, controlled
12 medium, I think the Native population
13 -- at this point we need to be aware that probably the
14 most powerful medium there is is the television. We are
15 moving now toward a society where we spend so much time
16 in front of the television. Especially people who can't
17 afford to do a lot of other activities tend to spend a
18 lot of time in front of the television. We are into a
19 time when reality will no longer be limited to leaving
20 your home. Reality will become something that you can
21 just pipe into by sitting in front of a television or in
22 front of your computer.

23 That's a strong medium, and I think at

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1 this point it would be prudent that the Natives jump on
2 the bandwagon and utilize that aspect of medium, use it
3 to educate society as a whole and to change negative
4 perceptions which lead to promoting negative stereotypes.

5 We know all this. Negative stereotypes are something
6 that, unfortunately, we are aware of. What we are looking
7 for are positive stereotypes.

8 You could establish even something
9 called NBC -- Native Broadcasting Corporation -- which
10 is national, not exclusive to reserves in northern Alberta
11 or in northern Canada, but all over Canada. Let's promote
12 a really positive model of what Native peoples can be.

13 The treatment aspect of dealing with
14 people who are severely afflicted with addiction -- and,
15 once again, we deal with a population that quite often
16 people see as being hopeless. They are so severely
17 afflicted that they no longer desire anything beyond the
18 comfort that they receive from alcohol. They are not
19 subject to material needs. Even in their own culture,
20 it might be quite confusing for some of the Natives that
21 we do it because on the reserve I don't know if pursuing
22 anything beyond basic needs is an option to them at this
23 point.

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1 Alpha House is a dismal setting, and we
2 only offer very basic needs because we don't want to provide
3 a home for people there. It is supposed to be a shelter,
4 but it seems that Native populations at times become
5 content with that sort of shelter. That suggests to me
6 that possibly the conditions on the reserve in some places
7 are not that much better.

8 The detox that we offer is not utilized
9 as much as we would like to see it utilized. Our numbers
10 hover around 50 per cent occupancy in our detox. Very
11 seldom can you walk into detox and see more than one or
12 two Natives in our detox. It is not that our detox isn't
13 open to Natives. Our detox is open to all, and our staff
14 is dedicated toward a service that tries to expedite people
15 out of that vicious cycle. That's our mandate.
16 Hopefully, we can help to move people out of a very vicious
17 dependent cycle.

18 Treatment, from our perspective, in
19 dealing with the severe situation that Native people are
20 enduring -- we believe that Native facilities in the city
21 should be exclusively Native, and that there needs to be
22 more detox facilities in the city or treatment centres
23 in the city, if we can't encourage segregation as far as

8 I know I am sounding very redundant here,
9 but this is such a broad area. I think the addiction aspect
10 of the problems of Natives is probably the primary problem
11 at this point. It is merely just a symptom, as I have
12 already expressed -- the most severe symptom I think.

13 There needs to be a greater presence of
14 community outreach workers within the urban setting.
15 There are some. I am aware of a couple, maybe two, in
16 Calgary. I don't know if they are very well-received by
17 the Natives who are on the streets of Calgary, who are
18 drinking in Calgary; I am not sure. But they seem to do
19 a really good job as far as bringing us clientele and
20 showing that they really care. They are truly the positive
21 models that are required as far as I am concerned. These
22 are the people who are actually on the street with the
23 Natives who are severely afflicted. They are actually

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1 down there with them.

2 These solutions have probably been heard
3 over and over, but I believe the focus needs to be on the
4 young and satisfying the needs of the sober Elders. It
5 seems that eventually the afflicted group in the middle
6 will benefit from this.

7 Once again, we need to focus on the
8 positives and, hopefully, those positives will slowly
9 eradicate the negative aspects.

10 In the two years that I have worked at
11 Alpha House, one of the things that continues to come up
12 is that sometimes we fear we are enabling the afflicted
13 street population in Calgary, the Natives, and that maybe
14 we contribute more to the problem than to the solution.

15 These fears usually quickly pass because we initiate
16 intervention, and that intervention helps us realize that
17 we have kept someone alive one more day so that they can
18 make a choice maybe the next day to be sober.

19 The same thing, I think, applies to this
20 Commission. If we see it as being a solution, by gathering
21 consensus, then I think we have missed the point here.
22 I think we need to realize that we need to offer the choice
23 to Native peoples to govern themselves now, not wait for

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1 the government to say when it is okay for them to do so.

2 I think the bottom line is empowerment.

3 Once again, I go back to those strong
4 models, strong leaders, sober-thinking minds who can
5 empower their people and reach their people at a level
6 where they are hurting the most, not make it the mission
7 to satisfy the needs of the more functional Natives but
8 to satisfy the needs of the least functional. I would
9 hope that this process doesn't become more of a problem
10 than a solution.

11 In the end, I think it is the people,
12 by governing themselves, that will eventually change the
13 government, rather than the government changing the
14 people.

15 Thank you very much.

16 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
17 you. At this time I will call on Jodie. She is with the
18 Métis Association of Alberta. Her presentation is about
19 the Youth Conference they had in March of this year at
20 the Marlboro Inn. A lot of issues were brought up at that
21 conference. At this time she is going to talk about that
22 conference from a youth perspective.

23 **JODIE GOETZ:** Hi. My name is Jodie

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1 Goetz, and I am here on behalf of the Youth Conference
2 '93.

3 I am going to talk about drugs and
4 alcohol also, but at this Youth Conference we had a number
5 of different workshops. In those workshops we had
6 speakers who tried teaching us self-esteem and works on
7 peer pressure, and so on. I have a sheet here, and it
8 is about peer pressure. It says: "Peer group influence:
9 any attitude, value or practice of one's age mates or
10 companions that is perceived as significant and which a
11 person eventually adopts because of low self-esteem;
12 concerns with affiliation; need to be accepted by others
13 and willingness to conform."

14 A lot of students these days, from my
15 perspective I feel some of them are driven or pressed into
16 trying drugs or alcohol. All or most of the crimes taking
17 place are to gain money. They range from children at the
18 age of 11 to about the age of 30 or higher who are doing
19 drugs, and some of these students and adults don't have
20 the money to get that fix or that drink, so they commit
21 crimes like armed robbery and so on.

22 I have 10 steps to help young people say
23 no to alcohol and other drugs:

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1 Talk with your child about alcohol and
2 other drugs. Parents can intervene to help change
3 mistaken ideas their children may have obtained from peers
4 and the media, such as everybody drinks. Challenge the
5 common myth. Clearly explain why young people should not
6 drink or take drugs.

7 Learn to listen to your child. Children
8 are more likely to communicate when they receive positive
9 verbal and non-verbal cues that show their parents are
10 listening.

11 Preface your child's comments to show
12 you understand. Watch your child's face and body
13 language. Give non-verbal support and encouragement.
14 Use the right tone of voice for the answer you are giving.
15 Use encouraging phrases to show your interest and to keep
16 the conversation going. Help your child feel good about
17 himself or herself. Self-regard is enhanced when parents
18 praise efforts as well as accomplishments.

19 Correct by criticizing the action rather
20 than the child.

21 Give lots of praise. Help children set
22 realistic goals. Don't compare your child's efforts with
23 others. Use "I" messages to take responsibility for your

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1 own negative feelings.

2 Give your children real responsibility.

3

4 Help your child develop strong values.

5 A strong value system can encourage the child to make
6 decisions based on facts rather than pressure from friends.

7 Be a good role model or example.

8 Parental drinking and drug-taking habits may strongly
9 influence children's perceptions about alcohol and other
10 drugs, including medicines.

11 Help your pre-teen deal with peer
12 pressure.

13 Children who have been taught to be
14 gentle and loving may need parental permission to
15 assertively say "no" to the negative peer pressure.

16 Teach your child to value individuality.

17 Explore the meaning of friendship with your child.

18 Encourage your child to practise saying "no." Make family
19 policies that help your child to say "no." It is helpful
20 when parents verbalize specific family rules against
21 alcohol and other drugs used by minors and the consequences
22 of breaking those rules.

23 Encourage healthy, creative activities,

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1 hobbies, school events and other activities which may
2 prevent children from experimenting with alcohol, tobacco
3 or other drugs out of boredom.

4 Team up with other parents. When
5 parents join together in support groups, they can take
6 steps that will reinforce the guidance they provide at
7 home.

8 Know what to do if you suspect a problem.
9 Parents can learn to recognize the telltale signs of
10 alcohol and drug abuse and even experimentation.

11 In the Youth Conference we found that
12 the number one reason for children and adults taking drugs
13 or alcohol, abusing either one, was because of boredom.

14 My group figured that, if things are set up -- some of
15 these children and adults don't have the money to pay for
16 other things such as swimming, baseball, hockey and so
17 on. So we figured if they designed some sort of program
18 for kids off the streets or kids with alcohol and drug
19 problems -- if they could design something that would take
20 them off the streets and use them as volunteers for things,
21 have programs set up to work with them, more youth-oriented
22 programs on drug and alcohol abuse at all community levels.

23 Overall, at the Youth Conference I went

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1 to, I had three workshops. I had Career Planning,
2 Education and Drug and Alcohol Abuse. The one that
3 interested me most was the Drug and Alcohol Abuse because
4 they involved us. We did an exercise in which I had to
5 depend on someone to hold me up. It made me feel good.
6 It made me want to stay there with these people.

7 Another exercise had me being pulled
8 apart by two groups. The only thing I wanted to do was
9 get out of there. I think that is how these people are
10 feeling.

11 Overall, I think the Youth Conference
12 worked a great deal. I know that for a fact, since I
13 attended.

14 That's about all I have to say. Thank
15 you.

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

18 At this time I would like to ask if the
19 Commissioners have any questions for these presenters.

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

21 Would you people mind if we asked you some questions?

22 I just want to make a few comments first
23 in relation to the first presentation from Alpha House.

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1 You mentioned Alkali Lake. We have come
2 in contact with a number of other places where similar
3 kinds of work is being done. One of the most prominent
4 ones is a sister community, another northern Shuswap
5 community, to Alkali Lake. It is very nearby it, and it
6 is Canim Lake. They have gone through exactly the same
7 kind of process, where they started with something like
8 100 per cent of the people who had problems with alcohol
9 or with alcoholics. They have completely turned it
10 around. It's an amazing success story.

11 We also found that the best systems seem
12 to be a combination of both modern therapy counselling
13 combined with traditional spiritualism, bringing in Elders
14 and having circles where Elders are involved, and so forth.
15 They seem to really work very, very well. They even work
16 in prisons.

17 We were told by people that had come in
18 contact with the law many times, who had tried AA programs
19 and had tried counselling with psychologists and
20 psychiatrists and so forth and had gone through treatment
21 programs that were run primarily by non-Native people,
22 that in the end what was the most useful to them was when
23 they were involved in a program where Aboriginal people

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1 had either modified the program or had created a new program
2 that was culturally relevant.

3 Your recommendation that there should
4 be more programs either on-reserve or off-reserve that
5 are run exclusively by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal
6 people is something we have run into a number of times.

7 It's a very, very good point.

8 The other point you make is about people
9 being in a dependent situation and whether it is a shelter
10 or a service agency on the front line and wondering if
11 they are actually aiding and abetting the continuance of
12 the situation. It is not surprising that you would think
13 that. Certainly we, as a Commission, have many times tried
14 to create the situation where there isn't a dependency
15 on us.

16 We are obviously not a government
17 department or a front line agency. People still come to
18 us, though, hoping that we might have some kind of
19 far-sighted approach to an issue. We are supposed to be
20 the one group around that has the time to coolly and
21 carefully look at these issues.

22 The approach we have taken to this and
23 the understanding we have and the way we were created was

7 The approach we have taken and the
8 understanding we have provided to governments is that,
9 if they want to act in any of the areas of our mandate,
10 they should. Nothing should hold them back. No
11 government should be able to come to you and tell you that,
12 because the Royal Commission has been created to look into
13 these issues, they can sit back and twiddle their thumbs.
14 That's not the understanding we have with them in any
15 of the areas, whether it is settling Métis land issues,
16 whether it is going up to northern Canada and signing an
17 agreement with the Inuit, like Nunavut that happened a
18 couple of days ago, or coming up with more programs for
19 social issues.

StenoTran

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1 promised the national Aboriginal organizations that they
2 wouldn't wait necessarily for the work of the Royal
3 Commission to move in any particular area that there was
4 a consensus amongst the national organizations that the
5 Commission would go ahead. The fear was that everything
6 would stop, that the pens would be put down and they would
7 say, "Now that the Royal Commission is there to study about
8 land or self-government, nothing will go ahead."

9 I just wanted to remind everyone that
10 the conditions we are working under is that government
11 and Aboriginal people, if they reach agreements in any
12 particular areas, should go ahead. They should be
13 creating new processes, and so forth.

14 You say that close to 36,000 people were
15 serviced in 1992-93. Could you explain that. Are you
16 talking about people who would just drop into your drop-in
17 centre during the day, in and out?

18 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** Yes, that is in
19 total. There is a high element of recidivism involved.

20 Our Native population has decreased in
21 the last five years substantially. At one time we were
22 hovering around 60, 70, sometimes 80 per cent Native.
23 A lot of these individuals have died off at this point.

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1 We have a list of people that we don't allow into our
2 facility because we are incapable of dealing with them.
3 Sometimes they are quite violent, and we don't use
4 physical intervention. We have a very humanitarian
5 approach to alcoholism and its manifestations.

6 Thirty to forty per cent -- it is people
7 who drop in for coffee. As I said, a lot of times it is
8 the same individuals. We see waves of individuals,
9 depending on the time of the year. Around Stampede time
10 we are filled to the rafters. It is an interesting place
11 to be during Stampede time.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is it
13 because more people come into the city or is it because
14 the people living in the city would take this time to party?

15 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** To be honest with
16 you, you need to go back to the reserve and get your cheque.
17 You get your cheque, and you come back into the city.
18 If you are someone who is afflicted with alcoholism, when
19 you get your cheque, you come back into the city.

20 Alpha House provides enough shelter and
21 enough safety and security to make it a realistic option
22 as far as a lifestyle. Why would you be anywhere else
23 when you can drink all day and just crash at night or during

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1 the day when you are too drunk, and then go back out and
2 do it again and again.

3 Once again, this is chronic alcoholism.

4 This isn't people who binge now and then. We are dealing
5 with mostly chronic people.

6 Mind you, we have a fair amount of people
7 who keep coming back to us. They are sober for a long
8 time and they make great strides and do really well. We
9 try to get them to tell us how they enjoyed their sobriety
10 or what were the difficulties during their periods of
11 sobriety.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What do they
13 tell you?

14 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** One of the biggest
15 things is boredom. I think it is on a continuum. It
16 starts at boredom and it goes all the way to sexual abuse.
17 Within that continuum there are so many issues that it
18 is really difficult to spew out every one.

19 Just not having anything to do, and quite
20 often people make their friends on the street or they come
21 back to Alpha House. We consider it to be some sort of
22 an omen. We say: If you come back into Alpha House as
23 an ex-client, you will drink again. That is not something

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1 that we suggest to an individual, but that is something
2 that has been proven true. Each time somebody comes back
3 to that mind set -- that mind set is so important that
4 we need to have safeguards to prevent that mind set from
5 returning.

6 One thing we have considered is that we
7 don't allow people who have endured long-term sobriety
8 back into our facility.

9 It is really quite an interesting place.
10 It's a sub-culture. These people who are there are
11 totally removed from society. Quite often a lot of these
12 guys don't even know who the Prime Minister is -- not that
13 that is such a big deal. Really it isn't. But they don't
14 even know the year, and that is discouraging.

15 At the same time -- for me to say they
16 are having fun is probably not a correct observation, but
17 they are living what seems to be a problem-free type of
18 life. It almost seems that sometimes the nomadic aspect
19 of the Native peoples is catered to by Alpha. They come
20 in and they wander around a lot. These are individuals
21 who haven't a grasp or don't have any notion or even care
22 about grasping the white man's aspect of society. These
23 are the ones that I feel would benefit best from the

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1 exclusive treatment facilities and then eventually, by
2 their own choice, integrate. Certainly it should be an
3 individual choice.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Do you have
5 any Native workers?

6 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** Yes, we do. Our
7 Director is of Native descent. We have had many Native
8 workers in the past.

9 We do require that anybody who works at
10 Alpha House have at least two years of sobriety under their
11 belt. We think that's a good safe margin. Mind you, even
12 after two years of sobriety, to be a sober thinker is
13 different from being sober. You can be very sick and not
14 drink. You can be without alcohol and still be just as
15 detrimental to people around you whom you are trying to
16 help and just as detrimental to yourself as you are when
17 you are on alcohol. Quite often the term "dry drunk" is
18 used.

19 We find that the way to alleviate that
20 sort of condition is to engage in a spiritual recovery
21 program which is, of course, a 12-step program that we
22 endorse at Alpha. But we are willing to consider anything
23 that works.

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1 I know that what we see isn't the most
2 severe or the most negative pole of addiction in the Native
3 culture. I think it is probably a few steps up, actually,
4 because we are ensuring that quite a few basic needs are
5 being met. In a lot of other places I don't know if the
6 basic needs are even being considered.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In the detox
8 programs that you run, is there any kind of recognition
9 of Aboriginal culture? Is there a different program for
10 Aboriginal people as opposed to non-Aboriginal, or is it
11 a universal program?

12 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** Our detox is very
13 lax. We don't have a real program, per se. It is more
14 just a place to come in and three to five days away from
15 that gruelling pace on the street. Three to five days
16 to rest and maybe think about changing your life.

17 In three to five days we can ensure that
18 alcohol is out of the system. If people are detoxed, they
19 are sober, but they are not sober-thinking. Their minds
20 are still very cloudy. They don't have anything to go
21 back out to. When they leave there, there is no vehicle,
22 even a physical vehicle, to bring them somewhere where
23 they are safe. If they go back to the reserve, in a lot

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1 of instances there is more havoc to deal with there than
2 there is on the street, so obviously the choice would be
3 to remain on the street.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** So you don't
5 have something like a 30-day treatment program.

6 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** No, we only refer.
7 Speaking specifically to the Native population, we make
8 our referrals quite often to Sunrise in Calgary. We make
9 referrals to Poundmaker's, we make referrals to Stoney
10 Medicine Lodge, and these all seem to be fairly successful.

11 Yet, they have had sobriety for a while
12 and then, when they come back into the urban setting, they
13 get dragged back down into it. It's not just me; everybody
14 is the same. That is the thing I think some people forget,
15 that there is no difference whatsoever. Everyone is the
16 same, and we all drink for the same reasons. They all
17 use drugs for the same reasons.

18 Maybe for the white man the
19 opportunities are greater so that to get out of that cycle
20 may be easier. But for the Natives, it is hard for them
21 to assimilate or it is hard for them to keep an eye on
22 a positive role model or a prosperous role model. They
23 feel so removed. They are disenfranchised people. Even

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1 the Alpha group are all even farther removed. It is hard
2 for them to find a real niche where they fit in -- and
3 it certainly doesn't exist in the urban setting.

4 I can't say that I have seen any examples
5 of harmony in the urban setting. I say the same for white
6 people. Quite often they don't have harmony either,
7 because they don't have any harmony in here. They don't
8 have any peace in their heart. Until you can find a way
9 to instill that peace in their hearts and to empower them
10 and to have a home in the heart they can go back to on
11 a continuous basis when things start to get a little tough,
12 we are not going to see success. It all comes from within;
13 it's not the changes from the government level.

14 I think we give too much credit to the
15 government. When has the government been good for
16 anybody, really, overall? I bet we can point out far more
17 negatives that the government is responsible for than
18 positives with respect to the Native condition. It's time
19 we realized that empowerment comes from within.

20 The greatest task of the mission needs
21 to be this empowerment, to evoke self-respect, to instill
22 self-esteem, to not be dependent upon government or be
23 dependent upon alcohol or dependent upon anybody else to

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1 make decisions or to be responsible for your outcome.

2 Actually, quite often the Natives in
3 Alpha House realize that. The apathy and acceptance of
4 their situation is very discouraging; it really is. They
5 realize that that is what has to happen, that it does come
6 from them.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Jodie, the
8 ideas that you brought forth -- could you leave us copies
9 of what you were reading from?

10 **JODIE GOETZ:** Yes.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** It is
12 interesting that between the two presentations both of
13 you have said that boredom seems to be the number one reason
14 that people get into drugs and alcohol.

15 Did you find in the workshop that you
16 were involved in that young people actually thought there
17 were ways for them to get away from being bored? Is it
18 that they are waiting for someone else to act, adults?

19 **JODIE GOETZ:** Most of them. Some of the
20 students that were in the workshop with me -- we separated
21 into three groups, and they all came up with boredom.
22 So we had to find a way to not be bored.

23 Most of the things in the city take money

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1 to do. If you want to join a baseball team, it costs money
2 to join a baseball team, soccer teams, basketball teams.
3 Even to go to a Leisure Centre or roller skating or
4 something, it costs money.

5 Most youths don't have that kind of money
6 to spend on things like that. So they figured that, if
7 they were going to stop doing drugs because of boredom,
8 they would have to find something else other than the
9 television. Most of them felt bored with watching
10 television and so on, so they went on to drugs or alcohol.

11 If a program were set up that didn't
12 involve money, I think it would take a lot of teens, adults,
13 even younger children, off drugs or alcohol.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What age
15 were involved in this?

16 **JODIE GOETZ:** In the Youth Conference?

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

18 **JODIE GOETZ:** In the group I was in, it
19 ranged from 11 up to 24.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Was there a
21 difference in the kinds of problems that 11 to 15 and
22 16-year-olds might get into?

23 **JODIE GOETZ:** There is a difference.

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1 In high school that is when they start teaching you about
2 drugs, alcohol, sex and all of that. In junior high and
3 elementary they don't teach you that kind of stuff.

4 The 11-year-olds compared to the 15 or
5 16-year-olds, their views were so different that it amazed
6 most of us.

7 If they even had speakers going to their
8 classrooms at school, telling them what the effects are
9 and side effects or how addictive they are and how they
10 can kill, it would have changed most of their aspects,
11 and probably most of them wouldn't have turned to drugs
12 or alcohol.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Why do you
14 say that? What gives you the impression that, had
15 something happened in junior high --

16 **JODIE GOETZ:** I am in high school. I
17 am in Grade 11. I am doing a Com course right now, and
18 we just had Mark Kozac in. He is with the 12-steps program.
19 He was talking to us about how, when he was in high school,
20 they never talked to him back then about drugs and what
21 they can do, or alcohol. He was telling us about how he
22 started alcohol and drugs at the age of nine. So he wasn't
23 well-educated.

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1 I have a little brother, and he is not
2 well-educated about this stuff either. He is 12 years
3 old. I try to tell him things about drugs or alcohol and
4 what they can do to you.

5 I think, if drugs and alcohol were
6 brought to an elementary level and if the kids there were
7 told what this can do to you and what happens when you
8 do drugs or alcohol, it would change their point of view
9 or what they would do instead of drugs or alcohol.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What kinds
11 of other thing were brought up? Were issues like AIDS
12 brought up?

13 **JODIE GOETZ:** Not a lot about AIDS and
14 sexual diseases in the workshop I did on drugs and alcohol.
15 There was some brought up about how you can get AIDS
16 through needles and stuff, but not a lot. It was mainly
17 about abusing drugs and alcohol.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Was there
19 any indication of how young people started to consume
20 alcohol and drugs?

21 **JODIE GOETZ:** The youngest incident I
22 know of is six years old.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Six?

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1 **JODIE GOETZ:** Six years old, yes. I
2 don't know who that was, but it was a speaker we had.
3 She had started at the age of six because of family
4 problems, not because of boredom. That's another issue,
5 family problems or sexual abuse or just abuse of any kind
6 that started her on drinking. She figured it would take
7 her away from the pain.

8 Although alcohol is a depressant, it
9 made her feel better. It made her feel that she had a
10 world of her own, I guess.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In the ideas
12 that were generated to deal with these issues, was there
13 any consideration of organizations for young people?

14 **JODIE GOETZ:** No. Most of the
15 considerations were to the older people. Not a lot of
16 young people are educated about drugs or alcohol or any
17 kind of abuse. Most programs are toward -- I guess you
18 have to go in on your own, and a lot of young Natives or
19 white children don't exactly know how to do this or they
20 are not educated enough to go through with doing this.

21 Most of their cases are older teens or
22 adults that they have set up for.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What I was

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1 trying to get at was: In thinking about the alternatives
2 to the boredom, one of the solutions might be to create
3 youth organizations that would organize events. Did that
4 come up that at all? **JODIE GOETZ:** We talked about
5 solutions, but we never really came up with any.

6 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** No?

7 **JODIE GOETZ:** No, because most
8 everything takes money. We figured a lot of volunteer
9 work would help, I guess -- pulling them off the streets.
10 If there were enough generous people,
11 there would be a stadium or a gymnasium built for them
12 to play basketball or indoor baseball, or something for
13 them. We didn't come up with a direct solution.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** If I could
15 go back, I was going to try to get an idea of the age of
16 people that you keep seeing. You know most of the people.
17 Does it seem to be a crowd going through and they are
18 just getting older, or are they getting replaced by younger
19 people? How young are the youngest people coming through
20 the shelter and detox?

21 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** You have to be 18 or
22 older to access our facility. We try to discourage young
23 people from getting into the cycle of using our shelter.

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1 We try to refer them elsewhere.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Are you
3 getting a lot of 18-year-olds?

4 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** No, we don't get a
5 lot of 18-year-olds.

6 On the street, if you start to assimilate
7 with the crowd called "skiddies" -- these people are on
8 Skid Row, and they are known as "skiddies" on the street.

9 If you start to assimilate with that group, there is no
10 power in it.

11 There is power on the street, still.
12 That population is a very powerless population, and most
13 people don't choose to assimilate with the Alpha House
14 population because they are on Skid Row. Unless you get
15 somebody who is very severely affected with alcohol and
16 is just so hopeless and doesn't really care and is very
17 apathetic and a victim of the depressive aspect of alcohol
18 -- over time, you get lethargic and all you care about
19 is your next drink. Young people are still a bit more
20 motivated to try to avoid that kind of place. As I said,
21 we discourage their participation at the House as best
22 we can.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What is the

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1 range of the age group?

2 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** I am not sure of the
3 actual statistics, but I would say the average would be
4 30 to 50, 55. Very few would go beyond 55. Actually,
5 the ones who go beyond 55 or the ones who reach 65 are
6 kind of heros. They come in and are really quite excited
7 and happy about the fact that they reached 65 and now they
8 get a cheque from the government.

9 Most of them are between 30 and 55.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Viola, do
11 you have any questions?

12 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I have a
13 few.

14 I was just wondering about Alpha House.
15 Are there many facilities that are similar, that deliver
16 the same kinds of services that you do in Calgary, or is
17 it the only one?

18 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** We extend our
19 service exclusively to people who are afflicted with
20 alcohol or drug addiction. There is a drop-in centre in
21 Calgary, the Calgary Drop-in Centre, and I believe they
22 can shelter 100 people overnight. If they have somebody
23 who is drunk, they will send them to us. They deal more

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1 with people who are suffering from psychiatric disorders.

2

3 As far as a facility that caters
4 exclusively to people with alcohol and drug addiction
5 problems, who are actively participating in the vicious
6 cycle, we are the only facility that deals with that.

7 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Did you
8 say that there are times when your facilities are not all
9 utilized?

10 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** Most times our detox
11 is less used than our drop-in facility.

12 There are so many various schools of
13 thought on this whole process. It's a fairly rare
14 facility; you won't find them in many places. Edmonton
15 has a similar facility called the George Beatty Centre,
16 but you won't find many facilities anywhere where you have
17 a drop-in that is aligned with a detox.

18 There are some problems. There are some
19 bugs that need to be worked out. We do our best to have
20 some sort of regulations and guidelines within our service
21 that prevent any abuses of the system.

22 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I was
23 interested in one of the recommendations. You talked

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1 about Alkali Lake. Alkali Lake is an Aboriginal
2 community, and there is a number of other communities who
3 are working toward healing themselves, as you say, through
4 their own ways. You mentioned that that should happen.

5 Were you suggesting that something like
6 that should happen in an urban situation like this?

7 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** I am saying that, if
8 we are unable to expedite those facilities or at least
9 implement those facilities on reserves, then we must work
10 with what we have and start to erect some of them within
11 the urban settings.

12 I think sometimes our Native populations
13 almost fear -- most people fear sobering up. That's the
14 greatest fear of an addict, coming into reality. Quite
15 often they fear going into the detox facility. I get the
16 impression -- and I certainly don't want to be quoted on
17 this -- that they fear being so alone. They are more alone
18 then than they are when they are out with the groups they
19 are in.

20 We don't encourage groups going in
21 together because there is very little efficacy in that
22 process. There is too much peer pressure, and it is
23 usually negative. They fear going into that institution

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1 where so many of our people at Alpha House are white --
2 and I am not saying we don't have a good rapport with Indians
3 because we really do. They recognize us as being people
4 who are maybe not like the public at large, but maybe a
5 little bit better.

6 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** The point
7 I am trying to get at here is: You say that these
8 communities that are working toward healing and sobriety,
9 like Alkali Lake -- are you saying that for the people
10 who are in the urban centre, who come there, there should
11 be communities like these that you could refer them to,
12 or are you saying that there should be a facility or some
13 institution of some sort in the urban centre that is a
14 parallel to those in the communities?

15 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** Yes, I am saying
16 that. I am saying that because with that we don't exclude
17 the possibility of integration.

18 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** What
19 would be the first steps of moving toward that? How could
20 it be done? Do you have any vision in your mind how
21 something like that could happen, say in Calgary?

22 **MATTHEW MCGINNIS:** There is a facility
23 called Native Aboriginal Services in Calgary, which is

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1 a facility that offers counselling for Natives who want
2 to overcome their addiction problems. It is not now a
3 residential program. I believe there needs to some form
4 of residential program that has qualified, not people who
5 are sober for one or two months, counselling. I am talking
6 about people who are sober for several years, who are
7 thinking sober and have a sober lifestyle to offer to people
8 who are seeking help, to be able to communicate a sober
9 way of thinking to people who are seeking help.

10 That is what I am saying -- some sort
11 of exclusively Native institution -- and I hate that word
12 "institution"; an exclusively Native venue, an exclusively
13 Native house, that can offer guidance that is strong,
14 guidance that is the right way, not a suggestion that today
15 is one way and tomorrow you can do it this way but a strong
16 suggestion of the right way, a beacon for the Native to
17 congregate within the urban setting. Almost like a church
18 -- and I hate to use a religious term, but something similar
19 to that, to empower. That is what churches are for, to
20 empower people to endure the problems of Monday through
21 Saturday.

22 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Jodie,
23 you say that this conference was just this year, just

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1 recently?

2 **JODIE GOETZ:** Yes.

3 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** And it
4 was in Calgary?

5 **JODIE GOETZ:** It was in Calgary, in the
6 Marlboro Inn, just off 16th.

7 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** And that
8 was for Aboriginal people or for everybody?

9 **JODIE GOETZ:** Aboriginal people.

10 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** It was an
11 Aboriginal Youth Conference.

12 **JODIE GOETZ:** Yes, Native Youth
13 Conference '93.

14 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** The
15 boredom that was expressed there as an excuse, I guess,
16 for using drugs or substance abuse, you say could be
17 substituted with recreational activities or whatever, and
18 that everything costs money.

19 When I was in Regina and Saskatoon a
20 couple of weeks ago -- and it seems to me the high schools
21 today do have facilities for sports and they do encourage
22 a lot of their students to enrol in sports activities.
23 They have gymnasiums and they have different teams within

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1 the schools themselves.

2 Why wouldn't that be working for these
3 students in these high schools, or whatever?

4 **JODIE GOETZ:** In our high schools we do
5 have teams, and these teams only run in school hours and
6 after school. They don't run for the rest of their lives.

7 I don't know; can you rephrase the
8 question?

9 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I was
10 wondering what was preventing Aboriginal students from
11 participating in sports activities in the schools.

12 **JODIE GOETZ:** More or less self-esteem.
13 There is a stereotype out there of the Natives, and it
14 brings down their self-esteem. They don't have the
15 self-esteem or anything to bring themselves to doing such
16 things as sports in school or sports of any kind.

17 Boredom is the main factor, but
18 self-esteem is up there also.

19 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Is it
20 because there is a lack of encouragement or support by
21 the coaches and people who are responsible for these sports
22 activities in the schools?

23 **JODIE GOETZ:** There is a lot of

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1 encouragement in our school. We have rather large teams.

2 I don't know about all other schools, but I guess it ranges
3 from school to school.

4 We don't have that many Aboriginals or
5 other races in our school. We have mainly black and white.

6 I guess it ranges from school to school. I couldn't
7 answer that question directly.

8 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** That's
9 all I have. Thank you.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
11 both for coming forward.

12 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** I would
13 like to call on Rosemary Brown. Rosemary is with the
14 Committee Against Racism. She is going to do a
15 presentation on this issue.

16 **ROSEMARY BROWN:** I want to thank the
17 Royal Commission for hearing our presentation.

18 The Committee Against Racism is a
19 volunteer organization which exists in Calgary, and we
20 act in solidarity with others in order to expose how racism
21 functions on the local and global levels and to eliminate
22 racist actions, policies and practices that deny people
23 their dignity and self-determination.

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1 We deal with a range of issues, but
2 decided soon after we started up in Calgary in 1979 that
3 solidarity with the struggles of First Nations peoples
4 was a fundamental component of anti-racist work, for white
5 Europeans founded this country upon the alienation of
6 Aboriginal lands and cultures: a process which continues
7 today.

8 I want to touch briefly on the issues
9 of education, the First Nations Chartered Lands Act, and
10 then I want to speak more extensively to the issue of the
11 Lubicon Lake Cree land claim.

12 Only recently have provincial education
13 departments and municipal school boards recognized the
14 racism inherent in school systems which did not reflect
15 Aboriginal values, incorporate Aboriginal history and
16 culture or establish mechanisms for dealing with the racist
17 incidents which Aboriginal students experience. The high
18 drop-out rate of First Nations students is testimony to
19 the above.

20 Positive steps taken to rectify the
21 failure of school systems to address the needs of First
22 Nations students have been taken and need to be expanded.
23 Examples are the Native Education Projects of the Public

6 Also endangered by these cutbacks are
7 institutions such as Plains Indian Cultural Survival
8 School, or PICSS, in Calgary. I am sure that others here
9 will be going into detail about the need for and the
10 operation of this institution, so I will be brief.

21 Members of the Committee Against Racism
22 are very familiar with PICSS. We have attended pow-wows
23 and graduation ceremonies at the school and have held many

Recent Calgary Board of Education cutbacks to funding for students over the age of 19 threaten the continued existence of PICSS, as obviously many of the students there are over the age of 19.

11 (1) ensure adequate funding for the
12 continuation and expansion of school board programs
13 designed to meet the needs of First Nations students; and

14 (2) ensure ongoing funding for
15 educational institutions controlled by First Nations
16 peoples, specifically the Plains Indian Cultural Survival
17 School in Calgary.

18 First Nations Chartered Lands Act:
19 Recently several well-respected Elders such as Maggie
20 Black Kettle, a member of the Siksika Nation and an
21 instructor at the Plains Indian Cultural Survival School,
22 spoke out very strongly against the First Nations Chartered
23 Lands Act, a piece of legislation now being considered.

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1

2

3 It is our understanding that this
4 legislation will empower Chiefs and Councils to request
5 that reserve lands be privatized and available for
6 mortgages and that similar U.S legislation led to the
7 breakup of reserves there and the removal of millions of
8 acres of land from Aboriginal control.

8

9 This legislation has been opposed by
10 individuals and organizations such as the Assembly of First
11 Nations because it represents a danger to First Nations
12 communities. It also reveals an essential conflict
13 between western and Aboriginal world views about how land
14 is to be held and treated. Passage of this legislation
15 will be but the latest example of institutional racism
16 and national oppression in this country.

16

17 Recommendation: That the proposed
18 First Nations Chartered Lands Act be scrapped.

18

19 Lubicon Lake Nation Land Claim: The
20 Committee Against Racism has worked in solidarity with
21 the Lubicon Lake Cree of northern Alberta since 1984.
22 Along with many others in this country, we have organized
23 educationals, written innumerable letters, protested,
24 raised funds, participated in the boycott of the 1988

5 For us, the struggle of the Lubicon is
6 a touchstone of federal government and Aboriginal
7 relations in Canada. It has become symbolic of centuries
8 of resource exploitation and land grabbing and the denial
9 of the right of First Nations peoples to
10 self-determination. Unlike struggles from the last
11 century or past decades however, this is one in which
12 non-Native Canadians living today are implicated. We act
13 in solidarity or we become complicit in the destruction
14 of First Nations communities.

StenoTran

4 Thanksgiving Weekend 1991: A youth of
5 16 years, a fine athlete, his parents' oldest son, was
6 buried in the cemetery at Little Buffalo. Against the
7 backdrop of the priest's words and the drumming which
8 resonated through the soil, the Lubicon community grieved
9 for this youth and for their other children, mothers,
10 fathers, grandchildren, grandparents, sisters, brothers,
11 cousins, nephews, nieces, aunts and uncles taken before
12 their time.

23 The absence of these Elders and youths

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1 spoke painfully to the ongoing social costs associated
2 with the destruction in the late 1970s and early 1980s
3 of the traditional Lubicon hunting, trapping and gathering
4 economy, and to year after year of government inaction
5 and duplicity in dealing fairly with the more than
6 50-year-old land claim of the Lubicon.

7 Over the next few days, during this New
8 Year period, I visited with several families in the
9 community. A common thread of many conversations was that
10 "it was hard to keep on waiting" for a settlement of the
11 land claim and that it needed to be settled before more
12 Elders died and before more youth lost hope for the future.

13 Imposed oil and gas development, and now
14 logging, on traditional lands have ruptured traditional
15 Lubicon ties to their land. As these ties shaped a variety
16 of roles and relationships within the Lubicon Lake Cree
17 society, the rupture of these ties became manifested in
18 significant changes in inter-related economic, social,
19 political and spiritual roles and relationships.

20 For example, families were transformed
21 from units of production, in which the economic activities
22 of women complemented those of men and in which women's
23 productive and reproductive roles were compatible, into

3 In general, women were no longer able
4 to contribute to the economic well-being of the family
5 through the production of goods for sale, et cetera, or
6 through the production of food and goods for the home.
7 Instead, because few jobs existed within the community,
8 women found themselves, with or without spouses,
9 attempting to meet family needs for food, clothing and
10 household goods on welfare budgets. Those who did find
11 jobs now worked outside the home and had to depend upon
12 and pay others to care for their children.

22 For most women, as wives, mothers and
23 Elders, these were negative changes. The number of family

7 Women's perceptions of this shift in
8 their way of life focused not so much upon role changes,
9 per se, however, but almost exclusively upon the dramatic
10 increase of alcohol abuse, especially among younger people
11 within the community since the opening of the road built
12 by the provincial government in 1979 and the destruction
13 of hunting, trapping and gathering as a way of life. They
14 also perceived that the young had lost respect for their
15 Elders, as the skill and wisdom associated with the Elders
16 was no longer needed for economic survival, that tensions
17 within the community had increased, that co-operation and
18 sharing traditional values had decreased, and that
19 monetary values were inserting themselves into the social
20 fabric.

StenoTran

11 In the summer of 1992 many women in
12 Little Buffalo came together to form the Lubicon Lake
13 Nation Women's Circle. In December 1992 they spoke in
14 Calgary. They said:

15 "The Women's circle was formed this summer because we
16 recognized the problems in the
17 community that had been created by
18 the land claims issue and we felt
19 it was time to do something about
20 it instead of waiting for the
21 government to wipe us out. The
22 government has done its part to
23 damage our community. We'll do

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1 our part to strengthen our
2 community. We wanted to get
3 involved and support the Chief.
4 We will not allow the government
5 to destroy the relations between
6 our families.

7 We ask all of you people, all our
8 supporters, to continue to
9 pressure your government to settle
10 the land claim justly so that our
11 people can be freed from this
12 stress and pressure. Then we will
13 be able to build the community the
14 way we want."

15 In March 1993 the Lubicon Settlement
16 Commission of Review submitted its final report. A copy
17 of this report has been attached to the brief which has
18 been given to you. The major finding of this Commission
19 was that the federal and provincial governments have not
20 acted in good faith. Furthermore, the report makes
21 several recommendations for the settlement of the Lubicon
22 Lake Nation land claim.

23 Many of these recommendations have been

4 Our recommendation is that the federal
5 government move immediately to settle the Lubicon Lake
6 Nation land claim on the basis of the recommendations of
7 the Lubicon Settlement Commission of Review.

9 MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS: Thank you
10 very much, Rosemary.

11 Do the Commissioners want to comment on
12 the presentation?

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I don't have
14 any questions. I just want to thank Rosemary for coming
15 forward and making this presentation.

16 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I just
17 thank you for making very straightforward recommendations.

18 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** It is
19 12:30. We will break for lunch and come back here at one
20 o'clock.

21 --- Luncheon Recess at 12:30 p.m.

22 --- Upon resuming at 1:10 p.m.

23 MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS: Good

2 On your agenda it says that Alderman
3 Barry Erskine was supposed to do the welcoming remarks.
4 He is unavailable at this time.

11 At this time I would like to ask Josie
12 to proceed with her presentation.

14 Joanne has already introduced me. My
15 name is Josie Oltrop. I work with the Calgary Native
16 Women's Shelter. I work as a crisis counsellor.

19 The Native women's part in society
20 encompassed all of life -- political, economic, social,
21 from birth to death, from growing food and governing the
22 people.

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1 Chiefs or had them removed from office if they did not
2 serve the people. It was that way because, from birth
3 to adulthood, no one could know more intimately what kind
4 of person she was, what qualities of heart and mind. But
5 the men also had their part in the choice because they
6 saw and understood as men.

7 In some nations the line of descent was
8 through the men, but the woman owned the food and the
9 shelter and all but the personal possessions of her man.
10 In most of the nations it was known and understood that
11 the women were the present and the future because, without
12 them, there could be no future for the nations. The
13 Creator's plan for human beings would end.

14 The women were the earth. They were
15 connected to the Earth Mother whose work was to govern
16 when all things were to be born, plants, animals and humans.
17 Fertility was her working element. The power of birth
18 was given to the woman. It was given by the Creator, and
19 it is an immutable law. It is a place of highest honour
20 and the reason why men should honour women.

21 But, equally, women must honour men.
22 If not, then everything is out of balance, and we have
23 nothing but pain.

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1 These are the first elements that must
2 be put back together or nothing can come right again.

3 The woman is the first teacher. Her
4 teachings begin when the child is in the womb and only
5 begins to diminish as the father and the grandparents and
6 others become the additional teachers.

7 The woman is the foundation on which
8 nations are built. She is the heart of her nation. If
9 that heart is weak, the people are weak. If her heart
10 is strong and her mind is clear, then the nation is strong
11 and knows its purpose. The woman is the centre of
12 everything.

13 The Cheyenne people have a saying that
14 no matter how strong our warriors or how good their weapons,
15 if the women's hearts are on the ground, then it is
16 finished. It is at this point where the line of life is
17 broken, and the instructions for the purpose and the
18 meaning of life cut off.

19 What had the Creator in mind when he or
20 she created women? It is that search that we must begin,
21 and we must work together to get it back. This is the
22 absolute first stage.

23 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank

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1 you. We will proceed now with Vicki English.

2 **VICKI ENGLISH:** Good afternoon, ladies
3 and gentlemen and Commissioners.

4 I am Vicki English-Currie, at present
5 a board member of the Native Women's Shelter in Calgary.

6 I am a doctoral student at the University of Calgary.

7 My paper is primarily on the issue of
8 Bill C-31.

9 The purpose of this paper is to discuss
10 and examine the social system which has determined the
11 lives of all Native people. Specific emphasis is on the
12 lives of Indian women. The equity and status of Native
13 women in Canada are significantly influenced by the Indian
14 Act. According to 1986 statistics, Native people
15 represent 2 per cent of Canada's population. Native women
16 comprise 52 per cent of the total Aboriginal population,
17 and they appear lowest on Canada's social stratification
18 rung.

19 Canadian society is stratified
20 according to class, race and gender, all dependent on one's
21 level of income, education and economic wealth.
22 Generally, classification causes grave problems for
23 minorities but primarily for Native women, who are the

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1 most disadvantaged in Canada.

2 Alberta Native women exemplify this
3 stratified society in terms of their low income, poor
4 education and limited political authority. Categorizing
5 and classifying groups has numerous ramifications, as this
6 limits growth, equality and change in the lives of the
7 affected individuals.

8 The research conducted for this paper
9 indicates that Bill C-31 and band membership codes have
10 called attention to legal discrimination and inequality
11 for Native women in Canada and the lack of pedagogical
12 responsibility and accountability. The bill has also
13 instilled awareness among Canadians of the government's
14 different laws that exist for Natives, those that exist
15 for non-Native people and the still different laws that
16 are especially prejudicial and discriminatory toward
17 Indian women.

18 Band membership codes don't only cause
19 a divergence among our people; they restrict original band
20 members from equal access to treaty rights.

21 Native women have struggled, and are
22 struggling, to overcome inequality with respect to
23 housing, land title, social problems, racism, poverty and

6 Through dialogue, these women have
7 indicated that they are becoming increasingly aware of
8 their rights and strengths, not only as human beings but
9 foremost as Native women. In spite of the gatekeepers,
10 75 per cent of all Alberta's formally educated Native
11 population are women. These women are setting concrete
12 goals by healing themselves from past incidents and turning
13 to education.

Native groups are ranked lower than most Canadian groups within the vertical stratified Canadian

Native people are in a class below Caucasians because they have a fiduciary relationship with the federal government of Canada. This relationship and ranking order have resulted in oppression and discrimination. The government's Indian policies have caused oppression by denying Native people their right to make choices and decisions concerning their lives and those of their children.

19 1. Monies must be made available to all
20 Native women so they may begin to re-write the history
21 of their ancestors which should counteract the materials
22 written by other sources and instill pride in our people.

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3. When Native women choose to leave the reserve for an education and a better way of life for them and their children, they receive less monies in programs and funding in comparison to their counterparts of non-Natives, immigrants and other Native women who choose to remain on the reserve.

16 We, as a treaty Indian population,
17 cannot fall once more under the auspices of the
18 government's assimilation policies. We recommend that
19 this Commission adhere to the mobility of our rights as
20 treaty Indian women.

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1 at the federal and band levels, is affecting their lives
2 and those of their children.

3 Thank you.

4 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
5 very much, Vicki. At this time we will proceed with Gerry
6 Manyfingers' presentation.

7 **GERRY MANYFINGERS:** I am a Blood Indian
8 woman from the Blood Indian Reserve in southern Alberta.
9 I am the Executive Director for the Native Women's Shelter
10 here in Calgary. I was involved with economic development
11 for 19 years, but I soon found out that our people had
12 to be healed before they could be successful business
13 people. That is why I am in the healing world right now.

14 I would like to give credit and
15 acknowledgement to Ruth Scalplock. Ruth Scalplock is the
16 President of the Native Women's Shelter Society. Ruth
17 used to work at Sheriff King Home here in the city and,
18 as a result of her work there, she found out that the Native
19 women's needs were not being met. Therefore, she started
20 a committee. We opened our door on March 10, just over
21 two months ago. We have a 25-bed shelter, and we are full
22 most of the time.

23 This is a presentation for the future,

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1 the future of the children and the women of our culture.
2 What does it hold? For us, in the changing times of our
3 people, we are taking more control of our lives. Our lives
4 are fresh, creative and wanting a better society of and
5 for our people. Our role in our world has been shifting
6 dramatically, particularly within the last few years.

7 Our dreams, our visions, are taking on
8 a new meaning and new responsibilities. These include
9 the increasing and promising roles for our children, our
10 education, our housing, our health, et cetera. The list
11 goes on.

12 We need to take control and assume
13 greater preventive measures rather than mainly reacting
14 to our situations. Too often the latter has been the
15 prevalent factor. The time for change rests in the
16 planning, not merely in the responding and dealing with
17 many problems of which we are all so aware. These are
18 well-known to all Aboriginal peoples and to this
19 Commission.

20 We are seeking a life of hope for our
21 children, a life of freedom from mental abuse, physical
22 abuse, drugs, racism, sexism -- and the list goes on there
23 also.

7 We are the mothers who are the core of
8 the family, from the traditional and spiritual ways, and
9 we pass on the culture and values to our children.

Native Counselling, the Executive
Director is a woman; Aboriginal Education at Mount Royal
College is a woman; the Friendship Centre, the Executive
Director is a woman; Treaty No. 7, Dr. Vivian Ayoungman
is a woman; Native Child Welfare -- there are many drug
and alcohol programs that are headed up by women.

21 The PICSS school here is run by a woman.

22 Native Employment and Aboriginal Job Finders.

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1 of our businesses here in town. We have several artists.
2 A group home is run by a woman and, of course, the shelter
3 was started by women.

4 We are the very soil, the fertile soil,
5 which makes, creates and nurtures our future. We are the
6 ones who can give our people a sense of security through
7 our homes and our environment -- a home meaning our family,
8 immediate and extended.

9 We are the ones who can and must
10 integrate ourselves, our families and our communities.
11 We are all part of each other and cannot be separated,
12 as has happened to a very large degree in the past. Our
13 very existence, our very role, dictates to us to change
14 to a life of brightness, hope, security and love.

15 We are learning a new awareness through
16 much healing in our own traditional ways, through our
17 Elders, and the future through our self-image as women.

18 There is still a great deal of anger and
19 rage over what has happened to our community as a result
20 of our past experiences living in a colonial and
21 colonial-related institutions, both by various religions
22 and/or governments. The time has passed, so we can look
23 to the tomorrows.

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1 In running the shelter, we really depend
2 on the Elders. It is almost like an extended family there.
3 The women come in with very many hurts. We do not isolate
4 the men. We have the men calling us at our shelter. So
5 we are going through a lot of healing, and we are trying
6 to do that in our own way by our own people.

7 We have listed a few things, our dreams.
8 We need the total freedom to plan for
9 our future.

10 We need to become active participants
11 in the discussions affecting our lives.

12 We need to set the cause for the future
13 in a manner which is meaningful to our people.

14 We need to involve our own people in our
15 own way with our own human resources.

16 We need, in addition, the resources of
17 our bodies on an unconditional basis so that we can learn
18 in our way without others telling us what we should or
19 cannot do for this and that reason.

20 We need to be trusted and we need to be
21 believed so that we know what is best for our people and
22 our families.

23 We need to eliminate the shelter, the

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1 violence of the past. This we can do with our own ways.

2 We have to be believed and be trusted.

3 We need the resources to involve the
4 total community in the decision-making process -- the true
5 grassroots process.

6 We need the resources to develop our own
7 preventive ways and approaches which will come from our
8 own people.

9 We need the assistance from others only
10 when we request certain ideas.

11 We need various Aboriginal
12 organizations to be administered totally by our people
13 so that it can be our way. We have many of our people
14 who can and who are willing to find alternative ways which
15 are essentially of a preventive manner.

16 These are our dreams, our visions.
17 These are our future. This will create a society in which
18 we can blend our tradition with the present and the
19 tomorrows.

20 Now that you have listened to our human
21 senses and true understanding of our future, we request
22 questions and also answers.

23 I would also like to mention a very

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1 active woman in the city of Calgary. Her name is Gloria
2 Manitopyes. We asked her if she would make a presentation
3 with the women's group, but she was already busy with a
4 study that she did on the Community Forum. We had a
5 Community Forum here in the city.

6 I understand she is going to do a
7 presentation later for the youth and health and that a
8 man will be giving the rest of her presentation.

9 Thank you.

10 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
11 very much, Gerri.

12 At this time the Commissioners will ask
13 any questions or make comments.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
15 very much for your presentations.

16 As you know, the Royal Commission's work
17 is geared to the future, not just tomorrow or the next
18 year or two, but it is probably going to be looking at
19 the future a long way off.

20 The first presentation talked about the
21 kind of role women played in the past, and then the other
22 two presentations talked about the kinds of role women
23 want to play in the future.

7 What is the ideal in the future of the
8 new institutions that are going to be created to balance
9 between men and women and how the power will be exercised?
10 What kind of institutions are you talking about?

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Basically,
17 you are saying that the key is the process and that the
18 process should include everyone.

20 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In relation
21 to Bill C-31 issues, how can we ask band member codes to
22 be rescinded just like that? If they have already gone
23 through a process where presumably the people in the

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1 reserves had an opportunity to discuss the band code and
2 then voted on it -- if I remember correctly, there has
3 to be a ratification of the community. Of course, the
4 question is that the band members who are not at the
5 community level, the ones who are not on reserve, don't
6 take part in that, and we have heard criticism about that.

7 To suggest just rescinding them all,
8 wouldn't that create a lot of havoc?

9 **VICKI ENGLISH:** I realize that it would
10 create a lot of havoc, and I realize that it is a very
11 strong recommendation to make.

12 In the research that has been done at
13 many band levels, the women are not entitled to much more
14 than a treaty card. It is not only the women that are
15 being affected; it's the total community, the total Native
16 population.

17 I feel that the Native population has
18 been divided because of this band membership code. At
19 one time, when you were a treaty Indian, that was it.
20 You were a treaty Indian, and you had treaty rights to
21 activities, to all lands, housing, education on the
22 reserve.

23 There are many Native women that are

4 I don't think the problems will stop
5 there. If the band membership codes had been all the same,
6 rather than different from one band to another, it may
7 have helped. But there has to be some kind of solution
8 because the women and the children are the ones that are
9 suffering -- the treaty Native women, the original treaty
10 band members. They are the ones who are losing, if they
11 don't have anywhere to go other than an urban centre.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** There have
15 been many different issues brought up in relation to Bill
16 C-31. In this case here, is the issue that you are focusing
17 on band membership codes because some band membership codes
18 exclude certain people? Is that the reason?

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1 With everybody having a different band
2 membership code, it is very difficult to feel that there
3 is justice.

4 I don't see any problem with the original
5 band member as the woman herself becoming reinstated as
6 she was an original band member.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You say
8 "women should become part of the decision-making process
9 and be given an equal opportunity and representation for
10 policy both at the federal and band level that affect our
11 lives and our children."

12 Is there anything more you want to add
13 to that? Is there anything specific that should be done
14 to guarantee that?

15 **VICKI ENGLISH:** I think, when we are
16 dealing with education of our children and women, it should
17 be something that women are able to have full participation
18 in. There are not very many women Chiefs or on the Councils
19 in Alberta. So many times the women don't know what is
20 happening at the band level. They don't know what is
21 happening with the education. They don't know what is
22 happening with the health services. Especially if you
23 are an urban person, you don't know what is happening until

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1 it has gone by.

2 Women do take care of the children and
3 women are in charge of the children. They do rear the
4 children and they do clothe them. Most of the women that
5 either live on-reserve or off-reserve are not legally
6 married. Many of them are unwed mothers. Many of them
7 are divorced or separated, so they have total
8 responsibility for the children and they should have total
9 responsibility for their education and for their health
10 services. Those areas should become part of women's
11 decisions and the policy-making process.

12 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In the last
13 paper, "Real or Fantasy" -- life free from mental abuse,
14 physical abuse, alcohol, drugs -- you come up with a lot
15 of ideas for a new future, a new tomorrow.

16 How do you see this being accomplished?
17 For instance, "We need total freedom to plan for the
18 future" -- what does that mean?

19 **GERRI MANYFINGERS:** I think we have to
20 go through a massive educational process to understand
21 the cycle of violence, what is happening to us. There
22 isn't one person who hasn't been mean to somebody, who
23 hasn't violated someone even if it is not terribly violent.

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1 We have to understand the cycle of violence and begin
2 healing.

3 That seems short, but it is a process.

4 I think, if we can begin this process very soon, our people
5 won't have the alcohol problem that we have now. We won't
6 have the education problem that we have, the housing
7 shortage, if some of our people would become healed. But,
8 first of all, they have to understand the cycle of violence.

9 We did a survey for the Royal Commission
10 and for the Native Women's Organization. I won't go
11 through the whole survey, but the five main issues to
12 Aboriginal women in this area -- we did 200 surveys. At
13 the top was violence against women; the next is education;
14 child abuse; employment for women; and child care. Those
15 are the categories.

16 We are still doing the surveys for
17 another week, and we will be submitting copies to you.

18 People in southern Alberta want to be
19 healed. They don't want to continue living in a hurt
20 society.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** It looks
22 like an interesting survey. You will give us the end
23 results of the final week?

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1 **GERRI MANYFINGERS:** Yes, we will give
2 you the end results and we will prepare a report to
3 accompany our stats.

4 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is this a
5 random survey?

6 **GERRI MANYFINGERS:** Yes.

7 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I want to
8 thank you for your presentations.

9 I notice that you say here that, in spite
10 of the gatekeeper, 75 per cent of Alberta's formally
11 educated Native population are women. How many would that
12 be? Seventy-five per cent of what total number? Is that
13 a large number of people?

14 **VICKI ENGLISH:** What I did was take the
15 graduates list from the Lethbridge University, the Calgary
16 University and Edmonton and calculated it into a
17 percentage. Those who have graduated as of 1992 are 75
18 per cent women. Most of them were non-matriculated adult
19 women.

20 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** So that
21 would be a fair number, I take it. We were in Lethbridge,
22 and I was very impressed with the number of Aboriginal
23 people who are going to university now, compared to years

3 You talk about Bill C-31, and we know
4 that Bill C-31 is the Indian Act. We have heard over and
5 over for the last two rounds in this third round -- we
6 went to an awful lot of communities, and we have heard
7 people being very upset about the Indian Act. Everybody
8 is saying, "Get rid of the Indian Act and get rid of the
9 Department of Indian Affairs. It hasn't done a lot of
10 things."

13 What do you think should be done about
14 that? Do you think the Indian Act is a fair instrument
15 to be an administration tool for Indian people in this
16 country?

23 I don't see the Indian Act as something

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1 that was ever developed to better Indian people, but as
2 a policy that would assimilate the Native people or do
3 away with our rights or do away with the treaties. The
4 two being separate, the treaties and the Indian Act, both
5 in parallel, I think we cannot do very much at this point
6 because people have to begin to understand what the Indian
7 Act and what the treaties are. Once we begin to use the
8 treaties to make policy, then the Indian Act can be done
9 away with and the treaties can be our policy.

10 We don't have anything right now. We
11 don't have a policy that we can turn to or a policy that
12 we can use as a blueprint for our lives or for our political
13 system. I think it is something that has destroyed and
14 divided our people and has caused us to become lame and
15 stragglers, and it will continue until we get rid of it.

16 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** We have
17 heard over and over again -- I went to Alberta during the
18 last round in the Treaty 8 area and yesterday we were in
19 Treaty 7, and we have heard a lot about treaties out here.
20 We understand from listening to the people that they
21 haven't really gotten anything from their treaties. "We
22 want our treaty rights to be portable; we want to carry
23 them with us."

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1 You really don't have much to carry
2 because nobody is implementing the rights in the treaties.

3 One of the things that I have heard also
4 in the Treaty 8 area was the fact that it is not the treaties
5 that are dividing the people but, rather, the Indian Act
6 policies.

7 What I am trying to get here is: For
8 self-government or for self-determination for Indian
9 people or Aboriginal people in this country and for women,
10 is recognition and implementation of treaties a solution?

11 **VICKI ENGLISH:** I don't think there is
12 any straight answer to the solutions until people begin
13 to understand what their treaties are and implement them
14 from their own perspective.

15 It is true that in western Canada we
16 value our treaties because our forefathers signed the
17 treaties that are international, and they cannot do away
18 with them. The Indian Act has, in fact, divided people.

19 It is not the treaties that have divided the people; it
20 is the Indian Act and the Indian policies from government
21 which are again coming back to do the same thing in that,
22 if you are a treaty Indian, you have to return to the reserve
23 for any kind of service or program.

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1 It is just their way of making sure that
2 we are kept stupid and uneducated.

3 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** The
4 membership code, too, is part of the Indian Act. Are you
5 saying that is going to determine who is a treaty Indian
6 or not? You can't be saying that.

7 **VICKI ENGLISH:** No, it's not going to
8 determine who is a treaty Indian. I think the women who
9 have lost their treaty status were original Native women.
10 That should have never happened. It was discriminatory
11 and it was legal.

12 But we do have white women who live on
13 the reserves and still retain their treaty status, while
14 there are some Native women who have lost their treaty
15 status and they live in poverty. I did some research,
16 and I found that a lot of the older women didn't want land,
17 didn't want housing; they just wanted to be with their
18 own people before they died. They just wanted to be on
19 the reserve where their people are, where they don't have
20 to look out of a highrise building in some low-cost area
21 and look at concrete walls. They were lonely, and they
22 were living in poverty.

23 I don't think this kind of thing is fair.

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1 I am not a Bill C-31, but I know, from doing a lot of
2 research, how these women have lived. I did not realize
3 that until I did the research. Once I carried out the
4 research, I realized that these women have the right, more
5 than white women, to live on the reserve, to return to
6 the reserve, especially when they get older, and to die
7 there and be buried there.

8 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I
9 understand all that. It just seems as though you are
10 telling me that, when women lost their status under the
11 Indian Act, they also lost their treaty status as well.

12 **VICKI ENGLISH:** Yes.

13 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I didn't
14 realize that. So the way to get around that is to amend
15 the Indian Act again? Is that what you are suggesting?
16 You said that the membership code should be rescinded.
17 So what do we do? That means amending the Indian Act
18 to me.

19 **VICKI ENGLISH:** The government did not
20 ask the Indian people if they wanted Bill C-31 to be passed.
21 They did it because the UN put pressure on them because
22 they were discriminatory against the Native people.

23 When they realized that some of the

6 Indian Affairs is now out of the picture,
7 and the Native people are fighting amongst themselves.
8 That is what has always happened. The games they have
9 played and the games they have put Native people through
10 are the same thing over and over again -- divide us and
11 conquer. And, while we are fighting, they are taking away
12 some of our other treaty rights.

15 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS: Thank you
16 very much for coming forward.

20 On your agenda, from 2:15 to 3:15, is
21 the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee. We are
22 going to ask them to come up to the table. There are four
23 of them: Al Giroux, Doug Vivier, Yvonne Meunier and Gloria

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1 Manitopyes.

2 **GLORIA MANITOPYES:** Good afternoon.

3 My name is Gloria Manitopyes.

4 I was going to start for Doug, but he
5 is here now.

6 **DOUG VIVIER:** Mr. Chairman and
7 Commissioner, I didn't realize our schedule was revised.
8 I thought we were going to start at 2:15 as per the
9 schedule.

10 Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen and
11 respected Elders. My name is Doug Vivier. I am Chairman
12 of the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee.

13 To my right is Allan Giroux. He will
14 be making presentations on education, housing, the police
15 and the justice system.

16 To my further right is Yvonne Meunier.
17 She will be making presentations regarding training and
18 employment, income maintenance and women's issues.

19 To our extreme right is Gloria
20 Manitopyes. She is our Committee Assistant, and she will
21 be making presentations on health and child welfare.

22 I will be addressing the preamble,
23 alcoholism and concluding remarks.

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1 I will begin, first of all, by explaining
2 that the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee, in
3 conjunction with the Calgary Native Friendship Centre and
4 with the Aboriginal community at large assembled a forum
5 from which we have drawn a lot of these conclusions. We
6 had input from all the Aboriginal communities and the front
7 line workers. I thought that was very unique in the city
8 of Calgary.

9 The Royal Commission on Aboriginal
10 Peoples was established in 1991 to review the wide range
11 of issues regarding Aboriginal peoples across Canada.
12 The goal of the Commission is to find ways to achieve
13 equality, dignity and full participation by Aboriginal
14 peoples in Canada's economic prosperity and political
15 life. The intent is to build a path of reconciliation,
16 a renewed relationship between Aboriginal peoples and
17 Canada that will benefit all Canadians.

18 The brief submitted by the Calgary
19 Aboriginal Affairs Committee in the City of Calgary will
20 target socio-economic issues which impact the Calgary
21 Aboriginal community. The Calgary Aboriginal Urban
22 Affairs Committee is authorized on behalf of Calgary City
23 Council to investigate areas of concern affecting

6 For the purpose of this report, the term
7 "Aboriginal person" refers to any individual of Aboriginal
8 ancestry, including North American Indians, Métis and
9 Inuit, mixed Aboriginal ancestry or Aboriginal and
10 non-Aboriginal ancestry.

23 Throughout the report, the importance

10 In recent years there has been a
11 resurgence of interest in the development of Aboriginal
12 identity and culture, particularly in light of the
13 recognition and affirmation of Aboriginal rights in the
14 Canada Act of 1982. From this Act, it is held as a legal
15 principle that Aboriginal rights flow from Aboriginal
16 occupation of this land prior to European arrival.

By virtue of this recognition,
Aboriginal people have a distinct legal status that is
unique and separates Aboriginal people from other Canadian
citizens. Fundamental to these rights is the right to
their identity as Aboriginal people. This also implies
a further right to self-determination, for it is through
self-determination that a people preserve their collective

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1 identity. The concept of self-determination is
2 integrally connected to the social, physical and mental
3 health of individuals and communities as a whole.

4 Aboriginal peoples' culture has adapted
5 to new times and new situations. Aboriginal values
6 determine how an Aboriginal person views the surrounding
7 world and the actions and reactions of others and of society
8 as a whole. Consequently, Aboriginal culture provides
9 rich and valuable resources to restore social and emotional
10 health.

11 The federal government has exclusive
12 jurisdiction for Indians and lands reserved for Indians
13 under the Constitution and treaties. The Calgary
14 Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee believes that the
15 federal government's trust responsibility should not
16 discriminate among Indian people, whether they live on
17 or off the reserve. This is also emphasized in the issues
18 concerning education and health.

19 In recent years more and more Aboriginal
20 people in Calgary are adapting and contributing in a
21 positive way economically, socially and culturally. They
22 are beginning to exercise healthy self-determination in
23 areas of social change and culture. This is demonstrated

6 This submission includes information
7 gathered from the Aboriginal Community Forum held on
8 January 21, 1993 at the Calgary Indian Friendship Centre.
9 CAUAC, in conjunction with the Calgary Native Friendship
10 Society, co-ordinated this forum to identify and prioritize
11 social issues affecting the Aboriginal community in
12 Calgary for the purpose of improving service delivery.
13 This forum provided the opportunity for Aboriginal people
14 to collectively identify issues.

20 Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask that,
21 after Allan, Yvonne and Gloria make their presentations,
22 we have some questions from the Commission.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** If you don't
2 mind, we will do all the presentations and then ask
3 questions at the end.

4 **DOUG VIVIER:** Fine.

5 **ALLAN GIROUX;** I can see everyone;
6 that's nice.

7 My name is Allan Giroux, and I will give
8 you a little background on myself.

9 I was born on a Native reserve in
10 northern Alberta, Driftpile, if anybody has heard of it.
11 Then I was displaced; I guess I was a DP. I was put into
12 an area alien to my upbringing, and that was Taber, Alberta.

13 I somehow moved my way up to Calgary and
14 situated myself. I have been a member of various Native
15 organizations within the city for approximately 15 years.

16 I am most recently with the Calgary Aboriginal Urban
17 Affairs Committee.

18 That is just a little background on
19 myself.

20 As Doug mentioned, I will be covering
21 three areas: education, housing and the criminal justice
22 system.

23 When I introduce the issues, I will be

4 To begin, I will cover education.

12 **Background Information:** The Committee
13 on Tolerance and Understanding chaired by Ron Ghitter in
14 1985 stated that the public education system is failing
15 Aboriginal students in its most basic mission: the
16 enhancement of self-esteem.

22 The Aboriginal Community Forum in
23 January 1993 identified the following needs:

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1 - further development of Native studies
2 and Native language programs, resources and cultural
3 programs in the school curriculum and libraries:

4 - the further development of
5 cross-cultural training for teachers;

6 - the active recruitment of Aboriginal
7 staff.

8 Our recommendations on Issue
9 No. 1 are:

10 - The Province of Alberta and the federal
11 government should recognize and respond to the needs of
12 Aboriginal students at all levels of the educational system
13 by making resources available so that Aboriginal
14 languages, culture and history are further developed in
15 the school curriculum.

16 - Aboriginal contributions to Canadian
17 culture and history should be actively incorporated into
18 the curriculum so that students at all levels of the
19 educational system develop an appreciation of Aboriginal
20 culture and history.

21 - Aboriginal people should be
22 represented at all administrative and teaching levels of
23 the school system.

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1 **Issue No. 2:** There has been continuous
2 erosion of programs and financial resources for the
3 Aboriginal students 18 years of age or older, who wish
4 to complete high school. As a result, these students
5 become very discouraged and many become dependent on social
6 assistance.

7 **Background Information:** The policies
8 of Alberta Family and Social Services concerning financial
9 support for students are unclear and restrictive. In
10 order to receive financial support from a high school
11 maintenance program to complete high school, students 18
12 years of age or older must receive social assistance or
13 be dependents of social assistant recipients prior to their
14 eighteenth birthday. A student must also have
15 successfully completed the preceding academic year.

16 Many Aboriginal youth may drop out of
17 school for a variety of social or economic reasons. Many
18 are struggling with personal and family problems but, at
19 the same time, they are sincere in their desire to complete
20 their schooling. More often than not, the appropriate
21 financial supports are not available to them.

22 In 1993 funding for the over-age
23 students at the Plains Indian Cultural Survival School,

6 Students over the age of 19 need the
7 specialized programs offered by PICSS if they are to
8 complete Grade 12. Unless alternative funds become
9 available, PICSS may have to close its doors, leaving the
10 disadvantaged further disadvantaged.

15 This case study is as follows:

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1 student was unsuccessful in obtaining any financial
2 support and eventually left Calgary.

3 So much for her education.

4 **Recommendations** on Issue No. 2 are:

5 - Alberta Family and Social Services
6 should expand the eligibility criteria of the high school
7 maintenance program in order to assist students 18 years
8 of age or older to complete a high school education.

9 - Provincial funding should be made
10 available to the Plains Indian Cultural Survival School
11 as well as future and existing schools of its kind.

12 **Issue No. 3:** The Department of Indian
13 and Northern Affairs does not provide treaty Indian
14 students with financial assistance for school fees and
15 supplies. This policy places an unnecessary burden on
16 students and their families and may negatively affect the
17 ability of students to meet curriculum expectations and
18 to participate in extra-curricular activities.

19 **Background Information:** The policy of
20 the Department of Indian Affairs states that "when Indian
21 families relocate to urban centres from the reserve, the
22 education of their children becomes a responsibility of
23 the provincial jurisdiction in which they establish

2 Recommendation:

7 **Issue No. 4:** To maintain a trust
8 relationship with Aboriginal people, the federal
9 government must restore its responsibility for Indian
10 education regardless of where Aboriginal students reside.

16 "The federal government has the primary
17 constitutional responsibility flowing from the
18 Constitution Act, 1867, section 91(24), 'Indians and lands
19 reserved for the Indians.'

23 - [the] third source of Federal

4 This was brought from the Assembly of
5 First Nations in 1992.

7 - The federal government should fully
8 restore and maintain its responsibility for Aboriginal
9 education.

11 If I had more time, I certainly would expand.

15 Under housing we will be covering two
16 issues.

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Background Information: The Portfolio Management Officer of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) expressed strong support for the development of subsidized housing for transient populations, welfare recipients and low-income families in the city. The City of Calgary Calhome Properties Ltd. has approximately 2,700 units and only a small number are occupied by Native people (B. Coulter, CMHC, Personal Communication, December 15, 1993). It was his quote.

Treaty 7 Housing has 37 units with an average waiting list of 200 to 250-plus (J. Bromley, TSHUA, Personal Communication, March 29, 1993). The waiting period for both housing services may span one month to several years, depending on the needs of the applicant

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1 and the availability of a unit.

2 According to the Native Women's Needs
3 Assessment in 1990, the primary practical problem
4 experienced by women is the search for accommodation.
5 Many women experience racism while attempting to locate
6 housing.

7 **Recommendations:**

8 - Subsidized housing programs should be
9 expanded so that the shelter needs of the Aboriginal
10 population are met. I think the numbers speak for
11 themselves in that respect.

12 **Issue No. 2:** The number of homeless
13 people among the Aboriginal population appears to be
14 increasing substantially.

15 **Background Information:** The numbers of
16 Aboriginal people who are homeless have become very
17 noticeable to the City of Calgary Outreach Offices. The
18 Native Liaison Program and the Family Aboriginal Health
19 Care Working Group have noticed these increases.

20 **Recommendation:**

21 - A task force on housing should be
22 established for the Aboriginal homeless. The mandate of
23 the task force should be to look at the level and nature

7 Women make up a much higher percentage
8 of Aboriginal people accused of crime, 30 per cent, than
9 non-Aboriginal people which is 20 per cent. This was
10 drafted from the Canadian Centre of Justice statistics
11 in 1993.

20 Regarding victimization, 6 per cent of
21 all victims of crime in Calgary were Aboriginal people,
22 about two and a half times higher than their occurrence
23 in the general population. Victimization was even more

4 When we look at these statistics, we can
5 only derive numbers from people that we have interviewed.
6 As the previous speaker mentioned, we like to move around,
7 so those numbers don't necessarily reflect the true
8 percentages. They are much higher.

13 Many Aboriginal offenders are intimidated by the whole
14 court process and will plead guilty to charges, not fully
15 understanding the implications of their actions. The
16 average offender cannot realistically afford bail or fines
17 and often ends up serving more jail time as a result.

The Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba, 1991, states:

"There are many reasons for the problems that Aboriginal people have with the justice system. Repeatedly, for example, we were told that one major problem

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1 which contributed to Aboriginal
2 over-representation in the justice
3 system was the socio-economic
4 conditions faced by Aboriginal
5 people throughout the province.
6 It is clear, in fact, that
7 Aboriginal people are the poorest
8 of the poor, and that fact
9 contributes to the
10 over-representation of Aboriginal
11 people in our courts."

12 The poorest of the poor. To define
13 that, we are a First World nation. Canada is one of the
14 very few countries that identify a Fourth World. That
15 Fourth World are Natives living in Third World conditions.
16 That's your poorest of the poor.

17 "For Aboriginal people, the essential
18 problem is that the Canadian system
19 of justice is an imposed and
20 foreign system. In order for a
21 society to accept a justice system
22 as part of its life and its
23 community, it must see the system

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1 and experience it as being a
2 positive influence working for the
3 society. Aboriginal people do not
4 [see this or experience it.]
5 When they do engage the legal system, or become engaged
6 by it, the manner in which their
7 problems are dealt with often is
8 out of tune with their unique
9 position as Aboriginal people. As
10 a result they come to mistrust the
11 Canadian legal system and will
12 avoid it when possible. Even when
13 they do have to deal with it, we
14 find that they simply minimize
15 their exposure to it. This can
16 take the form of inappropriate
17 guilty pleas, failure to attend
18 court appearances and a perpetual
19 passivity that manifests itself in
20 an apparent air of indifference
21 about what happens to them in
22 court."

23 They simply just don't care because they

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1 don't feel they get the respect, and why show respect if
2 you can't get it.

3 "The methods used by the Canadian legal
4 system to resolve conflicts,
5 particularly in the adversarial
6 system, are incompatible with
7 traditional Aboriginal culture and
8 methods of conflict resolution.
9 Additionally, courts are not
10 always a good forum for the
11 resolution of many of the conflicts
12 involving Aboriginal people and,
13 indeed, can be counter-productive.
14 This has to be considered along
15 with the fact that there is an
16 unwillingness by Aboriginal people
17 to utilize the justice system to
18 resolve personal legal problems as
19 they arise, particularly those of
20 a civil or family nature. Because
21 there are few, if any, alternatives
22 to the use of court in Aboriginal
23 communities, many such conflicts

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1 go unresolved."

2 Aboriginal people are unfamiliar with
3 the priorities and processes of the justice system and,
4 more important, are unfamiliar with their rights within
5 those processes. There is inadequate representation of
6 Aboriginal people among members of the judiciary and within
7 the legal profession.

8 **Recommendations:**

9 - The federal and provincial governments
10 should support Aboriginal people in establishing an
11 Aboriginal justice system in a manner that conforms to
12 the traditions and cultures of the Aboriginal community
13 and the rights of their people.

14 - The federal and provincial
15 governments should make funding available to the Native
16 Counselling Services programs for the development of an
17 educational program on the legal system of Aboriginal
18 people.

19 With that, I thank you for bearing with
20 me. Yvonne Meunier will be introducing her topics next.

21 **YVONNE MEUNIER:** Hi. My name is Yvonne
22 Meunier, and I am a Micmac Treaty Indian from New Brunswick.
23 I come from a little reserve called Red Bank of 400 people.

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1 I have lived here in Calgary for 10
2 years. I am remarried here. I have a son who is 18 years
3 old, who will be graduating from high school this year.
4 I guess it makes me a Calgarian because I have lived here
5 for 10 years and married here.

6 I sit on the Aboriginal Urban Affairs
7 Committee. This is my first term. I am employed at NESAs,
8 Native Employment Services. I am a career counsellor for
9 the Aboriginal Career and Employment Centre. I read and
10 write my language. I was a cultural teacher for many
11 years. I was also a Native Education counsellor in my
12 area of New Brunswick, and I represented three local
13 reserves. I was also very instrumental in putting a Micmac
14 dictionary together, and I taught the language.

15 While in New Brunswick, I sat on the
16 Native Women's Council. I was a Director for the Native
17 Women's Council. I went to the First Ministers'
18 Conference in Ottawa, fighting for equality rights for
19 Aboriginal women. We fought for that section 12(1)(b),
20 so that Aboriginal women would not be discriminated on
21 who they fell in love with and who they married.

22 I have been here in Calgary for 10 years.
23 I started out working at the Calgary Friendship Centre.

5 I then went on to work for Native
6 Outreach as an employment counsellor and then was promoted
7 as an Employment Readiness Co-ordinator.

16 I did some volunteer work with the youth
17 at the Bow River Correctional Centre, for these kids that
18 had been incarcerated. I would go there and help them
19 to construct resumés and to let them know about the
20 resources that were available in the community for them
21 when they came out.

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1 My topic is Training for Employment.

2 There is a need to make educational and

3 training opportunities accessible to Aboriginal people.

4 Native people have substantially lower levels of

5 educational attainment than those enjoyed by other

6 Albertans. In addition, the Native unemployment rate is

7 two and a half times higher than the rate for non-Natives.

8 Natives who are employed are over-represented in

9 unskilled and low-paying jobs and substantially

10 under-represented in the professions, management,

11 technical and scientific occupations. (Working Group on

12 Native Education, Training and Employment, 1987) In

13 addition, many Native people feel uncomfortable about

14 seeking employment and working in non-Native society.

15 (Native Needs Assessment, 1984).

Background Information: In 1986, the labour force participation rate for Alberta Aboriginal population was 60.5 per cent, compared to 72.6 per cent for the rest of the province. Those who are employed tend to be in low-skilled, low-paying jobs. As well, the unemployment rate for the Aboriginal persons is 23.0 per cent, compared to 9.7 per cent for the province. The highest unemployment rate is found among Aboriginal youth

2 In terms of education, 23.8 per cent of
3 the Aboriginal population in 1986 had less than a Grade
4 9 education; 45.2 per cent were educated to levels ranging
5 from Grade 9 to Grade 12; 28.1 per cent had post-secondary
6 education; and 2.9 per cent had a university degree. By
7 comparison, an estimated 9.9 per cent of Alberta's
8 non-Aboriginal population had less than a Grade 9
9 education; 39.1 per cent were educated ranging from Grade
10 9 to 12; 30.6 per cent had some post-secondary education;
11 and 10.5 per cent had a university degree.

18 **Recommendations:**

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6 - The Alberta government should expand
7 community level training initiatives.

12 That is my part for Employment and
13 Training.

20 My next topic is Women's Issues. I feel
21 this report is very brief and it really doesn't do justice
22 to all the women's issues that are out there. So bear
23 with me with what we do have. As a former speaker here

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1 said, we really didn't have all that much time. However,
2 what we do have is valid and good.

3 **Issue No. 1:** There is an urgent need
4 to reinstate the Family Life and Improvement Program (FLIP)
5 to promote healthier family functioning and diminish
6 family violence.

7 **Background Information:** The funding
8 for the FLIP program, Native Counselling Services of
9 Alberta in Calgary, was discontinued in 1991. This
10 program should be reinstated because clients benefited
11 from personal growth and the long-term improvements which
12 were felt within family and personal relationships.

13 **Recommendations:**

14 - The provincial and federal governments
15 should provide funding to reinstate the FLIP program.

16 **Issue No. 2:** Aboriginal women who are
17 single parents are economically and socially
18 disadvantaged.

19 **Background Information:** In 1989 the
20 Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
21 reported that single-parent families amongst status
22 Indians was double the frequency rate of single-parent
23 families in Canada. The report also indicated that in

6 Recommendations:

12 My next topic is Income Maintenance.

Background Information: In 1991, the issue of lack of Aboriginal representation on the Citizen's Appeal and Advisory Committee was discussed by the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee. Subsequently, it was recommended to the Minister of Alberta Family and Social Services that there be Aboriginal representation on the Citizen's Appeal and Advisory Committee. Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee is still waiting for

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1 the appointment.

2 The lack of Aboriginal representation
3 on the Appeal Committee is also an important issue of
4 concern to the Native Information Exchange Committee.
5 The Native Information Exchange Committee is an
6 inter-agency group comprised of representatives from
7 agencies who service a large Aboriginal clientele. Its
8 purpose is to share information in order to improve the
9 delivery of service to the Native communities in Calgary.

10 **Recommendation:**

11 - The provincial government should
12 appoint an Aboriginal representative to the Citizen's
13 Appeal and Advisory Committee at the earliest opportunity.

14 **Issue No. 2:** Many former social
15 assistance clients of the Department of Indian Affairs
16 and Northern Development report that the transfer of the
17 social assistance program to the Alberta Family and Social
18 Services has created more restrictive guidelines, reduced
19 benefits, and has resulted in a larger bureaucracy which
20 is insensitive to Native issues.

21 **Background Information:** The
22 Aboriginal Community Forum in January 1993 identified the
23 following concerns expressed by the participants:

5 - Staff in Supports for Independence
6 (SFI) Alberta Family and Social Services are not sensitive
7 to Native issues. They are rude and not patient with
8 Aboriginal clients who do not understand the provincial
9 system.

15 - Concerns were also raised around the
16 lack of accessibility to training and academic upgrading.
17 Concerns were that transportation needs were not being
18 met, i.e. bus tickets, bus passes, so that people could
19 go to their training, to their Life Skills Programs, to
20 their jobs. People who were looking for jobs did not have
21 any bus tickets and, therefore, Social Services was not
22 providing enough money for them.

StenoTran

5 - All levels of government should
6 recognize and support the newly-formed Calgary Aboriginal
7 Community Social Services Advisory Committee to Alberta
8 Family and Social Services.

10 **DOUG VIVIER:** Thank you. Gloria.

13 My name is Gloria Manitopyes. I am the
14 Native Committee Assistant for the Calgary Aboriginal
15 Urban Affairs Committee. I have been employed with the
16 City of Calgary as a Native Liaison Worker and as a Native
17 Committee Assistant for going on eight years. I have
18 worked with the Calgary Catholic School Board for one year,
19 and prior to that with the Saskatchewan Indian Federated
20 College for three years.

22 **Issue No. 1:** The health status of
23 Aboriginals is substantially poorer than that of the

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1 general Canadian population. Compounding this problem
2 is the fact that Aboriginals tend not to access community
3 and public health programs. Health care can be made more
4 accessible to Aboriginals through the development of
5 services that are planned, administered and delivered by
6 Aboriginals.

7 **Background Information:** Alberta
8 Health, in its document "Native Health Issues, Proposed
9 Principles and Goals, September 1990" states:
10 "The health status of Canada's Indian, and we presume
11 Native people, is substantially
12 poorer than that of the general
13 Canadian population. The factors
14 thought to contribute to this
15 situation include: widespread
16 poverty and unemployment,
17 relatively low levels of formal
18 education, inadequate and crowded
19 housing, inadequate water supply
20 and sewage disposal, limited
21 knowledge about health care,
22 alcohol abuse, addiction and
23 discrimination.

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1 As a result of cultural factors and a
2 relatively poor understanding of
3 urban health systems, Native
4 people tend not to access community
5 and public health programs.
6 Only a small number of non-Native
7 professionals have an
8 understanding of Native cultural
9 values and life circumstances.
10 These factors impede access by
11 Native people to the health system;
12 and once Native people have entered
13 the system as clients, the lack of
14 Native personnel impedes effective
15 communication and the provision of
16 quality health care. The
17 responsiveness of Native people to
18 health services is a critical
19 component of health care delivery;
20 it is limited when people do not
21 feel a sense of security and
22 comfort when dealing with the
23 health care system."

4 - a Health Liaison Program to assist
5 Native people in accessing quality services;
6 - cross-cultural awareness training for
7 health/hospital personnel and professionals -- for
8 example, physicians, optometrists, dentists, assistants,
9 receptionists, ambulance drivers, et cetera.

21 In 1991 the Calgary Community Health
22 Representative (CHR) Planning Group submitted a proposal
23 for a Calgary Aboriginal CHR Program. The Calgary CHR

6 The responsibilities of the CHR include:

7 - assisting the Aboriginal community to

8 identify the major risks to health;

9 - assisting the Aboriginal community to

10 utilize the preventive and treatment services of the health

11 care system; and

12 - assisting the health care system to

13 understand and respond to the unique language and cultural

14 needs of Native people.

16 - The federal and provincial governments
17 should establish funding for a CHR program in the city
18 of Calgary.

19 - Health and Welfare Canada should
20 establish an Aboriginal Medical Clinic or Health Liaison
21 Unit in the city of Calgary.

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2 - All levels of government should
3 enhance the knowledge and sensitivity of health care
4 providers with respect to Native customs and traditions.

11 **Background Information:** One of the
12 mandate objectives of the Alberta Indian Health Care
13 Commission is to assert the Treaty right to health care
14 as a responsibility of the Government of Canada (Indian
15 Association of Alberta, 1990).

17 - The federal government should
18 acknowledge and restore its responsibility for the health
19 of Aboriginal people.

22 **Background Information:** In 1987 a
23 report entitled "Special Initiatives: Self-Help

5 Recommendations:

10 - The Calgary Indian Friendship Centre
11 should be established as a self-help resource centre.
12 Funding should be provided by the provincial and federal
13 governments.

Issue No. 1: There is a need for the development of culturally sensitive preventive, supportive and treatment services for Aboriginal youth and their families. Aboriginal youth, due to a combination of social and cultural factors, face unique concerns and issues which mainstream services have failed to address.

StenoTran

10 Indian and Northern Affairs reported in
11 1989 that the Aboriginal population is growing rapidly,
12 and that the off-reserve Indian population is, and will
13 continue to be, younger than the Canadian population.
14 The 1986 Alberta Aboriginal population recorded 50 per
15 cent of its population in the 19-years-and-under category,
16 compared to 31 per cent for the Alberta population as a
17 whole. The growing trend toward urbanization of
18 Aboriginals and toward a high youth percentage of
19 Aboriginals will have an impact on the need for services
20 to Aboriginal youth.

StenoTran

3 Aboriginal youth are over-represented
4 in child welfare and youth probation services in Calgary,
5 particularly in child welfare where at least one-quarter
6 of the children in care are Aboriginal. According to the
7 report of the Task Force on the Criminal Justice System
8 and its Impact on the Indian and Métis People of Alberta,
9 most of the Aboriginal youth in the Young Offenders Centres
10 are products of the child welfare system. Many Aboriginal
11 children have experienced extreme emotional and
12 psychological distress due to their involvement with the
13 child welfare system. For many, the experience increases
14 their sense of alienation and confusion about their
15 personal and cultural identity (Johnson, 1983).

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2 Educational and employment institutions
3 have not provided relevant program opportunities. Poor
4 social conditions and inadequate opportunities increase
5 the likelihood that Aboriginal youth will become
6 susceptible to substance abuse, violence against both self
7 and others, conflict with the law, suicide or "accidental
8 death" (Warry, 1991).

9 The Report of the Aboriginal Justice
10 Inquiry of Manitoba, 1991, points out that Aboriginal
11 children must learn to accept their heritage as part of
12 themselves. It further states that Aboriginal peoples
13 have been weakened and thrown into social disorganization.
14 The child must face the negative feelings and confront
15 stereotypes created by this situation. At a time when
16 Aboriginal youth should be realizing their potential, far
17 too many are impaired and unable to take full advantage
18 of the opportunities available to them.

19 The social values of mainstream society
20 are expressed in educational and social institutions.
21 These values are often antithetical to the experience of
22 Aboriginal youth who need the opportunity to learn about
23 their own culture in order to create a greater feeling

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1 of self-worth.

2 **Recommendations:**

3 - The provincial funding of Native
4 Counselling Services should be increased in order to
5 establish a full-time youth co-ordinator, a life skills
6 and peer support program, and a stronger counselling
7 component.

8 - The federal and provincial governments
9 should provide funding for a Native youth safe house.
10 The safe house would be accessible to all Aboriginal youth
11 regardless of child welfare or offender status.

12 - The federal and provincial governments
13 should provide funding for preventive services such as
14 spiritual support and healing, Elders consultation,
15 cultural camps, wilderness programs, recreation programs,
16 single parent support groups, parenting and substance
17 abuse programs.

18 - The federal and provincial governments
19 should provide funding for an Aboriginal treatment
20 facility which would employ certified Aboriginal
21 psychotherapists and psychologists who would specialize
22 in addressing the emotional and psychological needs of
23 Aboriginal children and youth.

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1 - The federal and provincial governments
2 should ensure that cross-cultural training be provided
3 to non-Aboriginal persons who work with Aboriginal
4 children and youth.

5 **Issue No. 2:** There is a need for further
6 development of Native foster homes, Native adoptive homes,
7 Native group homes, Native receiving homes, and
8 therapeutic Native foster homes. Native children placed
9 in non-Native homes cannot experience Aboriginal culture
10 and lifestyle. These children often experience feelings
11 of hopelessness and loneliness, develop poor self-concepts
12 and frequently develop a rejection of their own cultural
13 background. Unresolved identity problems can lead to
14 further emotional damage and the need for extended
15 intervention with the child welfare system. This pattern
16 might have been prevented had appropriate placements been
17 available in the first instance.

18 **Background Information:** The Working
19 Committee on Native Child Welfare in 1987 for the Province
20 of Alberta expressed the following:

21 "It is also known that social systems
22 such as the child welfare and
23 criminal justice systems have had

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1 a significant impact on Native
2 people. These social systems have
3 been used to intervene in the lives
4 of Native families and children.
5 Unfortunately, the helping
6 systems have failed to a large
7 degree due to a lack of
8 understanding of the underlying
9 philosophy of Native culture and,
10 therefore, have added to the
11 confusion which already existed
12 respecting the identity problems
13 being experienced by Native
14 people.

15 The single most important theme, which
16 is woven throughout our report, is
17 the issue of transferring
18 authority and control to Native
19 communities for the delivery of
20 their own services within the
21 framework of fundamental Native
22 cultural traditions, values and
23 practices.

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1 Native people have, for many years,
2 expressed their concerns about the
3 effects of child welfare services
4 on their families and children.
5 In recent years, these concerns
6 have become a public issue. This
7 was one of the factors leading to
8 changes in the Child Welfare Act.
9 The consistent view from Native
10 people across the province is that
11 too many Native children are
12 removed from their families and
13 their communities by child welfare
14 workers. Once removed, Native
15 children too frequently are placed
16 into care of or adopted by
17 non-Native families. Native
18 children remain separated from
19 their families and communities
20 longer than other children in the
21 child welfare system, and
22 consequently they become estranged
23 from their people, their culture,

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1 and their identity. Native
2 children become victims rather
3 than beneficiaries of a system of
4 services that is supposed to look
5 out for their welfare.

6 Through community control, services for
7 Native children and their families
8 would be based in the Native
9 community and reflect local Native
10 customs and standards. Native
11 specific services can help reduce
12 the incidence of Native children
13 being removed and alienated from
14 their culture and identity. In
15 this way, services for Native
16 families and children can be more
17 effective than services which are
18 not Native specific."

19 **Recommendation:**

20 - The provincial and federal governments
21 should make available funds to establish Native group
22 homes, a Native receiving home, a Native Child Welfare
23 treatment agency, and a specialized Native adoption

2 **Issue No. 3:** Many Aboriginal children
3 with Child Welfare status are unaware that they have Indian
4 status and are, therefore, entitled to certain rights and
5 privileges. There is no process in place where this
6 information is mandatorily disclosed to them.

11 Recommendation:

17 DOUG VIVIER: Thank you very much,
18 Gloria.

19 We have one more topic, and that is the
20 topic of alcoholism. It is a very sensitive issue in our
21 community, and I think these very issues are being
22 addressed today. I will carry on with the alcoholism
23 issue.

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1 **Issue No. 1:** Aboriginal addiction
2 treatment programs are under-funded -- and that is a fact.

3 **Background Information:** Native
4 Alcoholism Services of Calgary, which provides outpatient
5 services, has recently lost provincial funding for an
6 administrative position. This program may have to operate
7 on a half-time basis for the last two months of this fiscal
8 year, February-March 1993. (Mr. B. Boone, Native
9 Alcoholism Services, Personal Communication, December
10 1992).

11 The Sunrise Residence, a residential
12 treatment centre, provides in-patient treatment services
13 to 20 adults on an ongoing basis over a 28-day period.
14 Sunrise is funded by the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse
15 Commission through the Alberta government. Although 80
16 per cent of the Sunrise clients are Treaty Indians, Health
17 and Welfare Canada denies requests for funding. In order
18 to manage on a very limited budget, Sunrise Residence
19 ceased operations from July to mid-September 1992 (C.
20 Thompson, Sunrise Residence Personal Communication,
21 December 17, 1992).

22 **Recommendation:**

23 - The federal and provincial governments

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1 should restore full funding to the Native Alcoholism
2 Services Program of Calgary and to the Sunrise Residence
3 so that both programs can provide services to meet the
4 needs of the client populations.

5 **Issue No. 2:** There is a shortage of
6 community-based, culturally appropriate substance abuse
7 treatment programs in the city of Calgary -- and I believe
8 that is true in each city all across Canada.

9 **Background Information:** Of the 23
10 alcohol and drug services listed in the Calgary Community
11 Service Directory, only three programs provide culturally
12 relevant services.

13 **Recommendation:**

14 - The provincial government should
15 expand the substance abuse programs that presently exist
16 to include a cultural component for Aboriginal clients.

17

18 That is a recommendation as well for the
19 federal government to act on some of the recommendations.

20 **Issue No. 3:** There is a need for
21 second-stage housing for Aboriginal people released from
22 a drug and alcohol treatment program. Many clients of
23 these programs do not have a permanent residence to return

4 **Background Information:** In 1991 the
5 Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee identified the
6 need for second-stage transitional housing for Native
7 people attempting to maintain their sobriety.

9 - The provincial and federal governments
10 should provide funding for the establishment of
11 transitional housing for Native people attempting to
12 maintain their sobriety.

```

18             Now for the conclusion that everyone is
19 waiting for.

```

StenoTran

12 Aboriginal self-government has been
13 presented with different perspectives by various groups
14 across the country. Self-government must be designed to
15 support the cultural identity and social needs of
16 Aboriginal peoples. To suggest at this time specific
17 structural changes in government is premature without
18 discussion by all members of the Aboriginal nations.

22 The federal government must restore --

23 I repeat: the federal government must restore -- and

10 With that, I would like to mention some
11 people who have been really helpful in our community:
12 Ramona Beatty, Richard Fallister, Gloria Manitopyes --
13 all the Aboriginal community in Calgary here, especially
14 those who are sitting on our committee.

17 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS: Now you know
18 why we asked you to come a little earlier.

19 I want to thank you for a really
20 excellent presentation. It is really a model of what we
21 would like a lot of other people to do. You identified
22 the issue, you gave us background on each area, you quoted
23 sources, and then you dealt with recommendations. This

2 I don't know how you got the message on
3 what we wanted, but you certainly did a really, really
4 good job. I want to thank you for the effort that went
5 into this.

7 A couple of times you used the term
8 "Aboriginal" in dealing with education and health. In
9 relation to health you were talking about a treaty right
10 to health and, likewise, in relation to education.

16 **ALLAN GIROUX:** I can answer that.

22 In respect to Aboriginal, it is very
23 broad. It encompasses anyone with Aboriginal ancestry

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1 -- indigenous ancestry.

2 I hope that answers the question.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I believe on
4 page 5 you say the federal government should fully restore
5 and maintain its responsibility for Aboriginal education.

6 In this case, when you say that, what
7 you are suggesting is that the federal government has
8 responsibility for all Aboriginal people; is that it?

9 **ALLAN GIROUX:** That's correct -- not in
10 respect of the Indian Act.

11 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I have one
12 other very minor question.

13 I wouldn't mind knowing a little bit more
14 about this FLIP program that was referred to, just a bit
15 of background about that program. I am not familiar with
16 it, so perhaps you could tell me a bit more about it.

17 **YVONNE MEUNIER:** That is with the Native
18 Counselling Services of Alberta. It is called the Family
19 Life Improvement Program.

20 I wasn't part of that program. However,
21 my interpretation of that program would be that they would
22 have groups of people or they would have workshops or
23 programs for people going into dysfunctional homes to

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1 assist, or it could be workshops on building self-esteem
2 and what have you.

3 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** That was a
4 provincially run program?

5 **YVONNE MEUNIER:** Yes, it was.

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

7 **ALLAN GIROUX:** As a supplementary to the
8 FLIP program, it was a networking of various family
9 members. It incorporated the criminal justice system,
10 individuals who were incarcerated. This program was set
11 up to help them, as well, to maintain that family link.

12 An example would be an individual in jail
13 who has children on the outside. Native Counselling
14 helped make that connection with them and maintain it.

15 When we say provincial, it was promoted
16 by the Native Counselling Services of Alberta but, due
17 to a lot of financial restraints and budgetary restraints,
18 that program couldn't be as effective as it would have
19 been if the funds had been provided. When we say
20 provincial, pockets of it due to the budget constraints.

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

22 **DOUG VIVIER:** Viola, did you have any
23 questions?

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1 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Just a
2 couple of small ones. One is dealing with housing.

3 Your recommendation is that a task force
4 on housing should be established for the Aboriginal
5 homeless. The housing situation here in Calgary is
6 federal and provincial; it is shared.

7 Do you know if that is continued?

8 **DOUG VIVIER:** The program through CMHC,
9 the federal participation, the funding has been cut
10 drastically for Aboriginal housing. That is primarily
11 for all Aboriginal peoples in the city of Calgary area.

12 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I just
13 wondered if it was cut completely. Did you hear anything
14 about it being cut completely?

15 **DOUG VIVIER:** No, it is not cut
16 completely. I think they got a 50 per cent cut across
17 the board with all Aboriginal agencies -- the Friendship
18 Centre, newspapers, communications. When there are
19 budget cuts, the federal government has no sense of
20 priority. We are getting \$5 billion in helicopters which
21 we don't need, and we are just wondering how far that could
22 go in social reform and education and in the health systems.

23 I think the government has to wake up

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1 and listen.

2 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** The other
3 question I have has to do with the provincial funding of
4 Native Counselling Services.

5 Is that the same Native Counselling
6 Services that was funded federally?

7 **YVONNE MEUNIER:** Yes, it is. You are
8 talking about Native Employment Services Association of
9 Alberta?

10 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** No,
11 Native Counselling Services. It was funded through the
12 Department of Justice years ago and it was co-shared by
13 the province and federal. I am wondering if that is the
14 same program you are talking about.

15 **ALLAN GIROUX:** Yes, it was initiated by
16 Chester Cunningham who actually put his house up to begin
17 with. Yes, that's the very same program.

18 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Is it
19 still funded federally?

20 **ALLAN GIROUX:** Very, very slimly. In
21 recent years, going back to when I was with them in 1986,
22 cuts were being made then. They are on a shoestring, so
23 how effective they can be within the judicial system --

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1 I take my hat off to them, given the cuts that have been
2 made to them and the programs that have been cut from them.
3 Again, FLIP is one of them.

4 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I want to
5 thank you as well for a very good presentation. I don't
6 have any other questions for you.

7 **DOUG VIVIER:** Mr. Chairman and Viola,
8 I would like to thank you.

9 I have just one brief comment when we
10 are talking about Aboriginals. The Métis people have been
11 excluded from all Aboriginal recommendations. They don't
12 have any education funding.

13 I believe they are coming up this
14 evening, so I won't take away from their presentation.

15 From the past Royal Commissions
16 throughout the years, I believe the government of the day
17 should be a little more sensitive to the Aboriginal issues
18 and they should be acting on the recommendations of the
19 past. They are stacking up and stacking up, and we would
20 like to see some very positive conclusions coming from
21 these hearings.

22 With that, I would like to thank you.

23 Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much.

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1 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
2 you, Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee.

3 We are going to break for 15 minutes.

4 After that, we will have the Calgary Chamber of Commerce
5 with Bob Brown, John Snow, Val Nielson, George Calliou
6 and Sandra Parsons.

7 --- Short Recess at 3:18 p.m.

8 --- Upon resuming at 3:38 p.m.

9 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** At this
10 time I would like to introduce the Calgary Chamber of
11 Commerce delegates.

12 Val Nielson, the President, will be
13 delegating who will be speaking in this part of the program.

14 **VALERIE NIELSON, President, Calgary**
15 **Chamber of Commerce:** Thank you very much. I would just
16 like to say, on behalf of the Calgary Chamber of Commerce,
17 how pleased we are to be here today. Also I would like
18 to commend the federal government for their initiative
19 in forming this Commission. We think it is extremely
20 positive, and we would like to commend you for that.

21 I would like to introduce the
22 individuals who are with me today from the Calgary Chamber
23 of Commerce. On my far left is Mr. John Snow, Jr. who

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1 is Vice-Chairman of our Aboriginal Opportunities
2 Committee. On my far right is Mr. Bob Brown who is a member
3 of the committee. Next to him is Mrs. Sandra Parsons who
4 is also a member. On my right is Mr. George Calliou who
5 is a member of our committee. George, I would like to
6 add, is also Past Chairman of our Aboriginal Opportunities
7 Committee.

8 For those of you who don't know, this
9 Chamber was basically the first Chamber of Commerce in
10 this country to form an Aboriginal Opportunities
11 Committee. It is a standing committee of the Calgary
12 Chamber of Commerce. We have at least 20 standing
13 committees, of which this is one. I would like to add
14 that it was originally formed in 1980 under the direction
15 of the now late Mr. Stan Waters who was well-known to all
16 of you in this community and actually well-known to all
17 Canadians.

18 The objectives at the time of the
19 formation of the committee were essentially two-fold.
20 These objectives are still the primary objectives of the
21 committee today: to recognize the importance of Native
22 people in our community; and a secondary objective is that
23 the Chamber would play an active role in helping the

2 Also I would like to add that during the
3 constitutional debates that we just came off last year
4 the Calgary Chamber of Commerce was one of the first
5 business organizations in this community to recognize the
6 inherent right to self-government of the Aboriginal
7 community.

14 I think most of you are aware of the fact
15 that for the past eight years the Chamber has put on in
16 May an annual Native Awareness Week. In 1988 this
17 committee was instrumental in organizing a city-wide
18 approach. Now in excess of 40 companies, organizations
19 and interest groups are committed to ensure this event's
20 success.

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1 highlight Native foods and art at that time.

2 Another major focus for this committee
3 has been the Partnership Program. In 1990 a partnership
4 was formalized between the Calgary Chamber of Commerce
5 and the Forest Lawn Community of Schools. This
6 partnership allowed committee members to share their life
7 experiences and skills in an attempt to assist students
8 in the transition into the working world or into
9 post-secondary education.

10 The Partnership has benefits for both
11 the adult and student participants. Committee members gain
12 a greater appreciation for the issues facing Aboriginal
13 youth, and the students gain new skills and increase their
14 self-confidence by having an opportunity to work side by
15 side with adults in a non-threatening environment.

16 This has been an extremely important
17 initiative for us. It is continuing, and I would like
18 to commend Sandra, one of the committee members, for all
19 the work she has done with this initiative. She has been
20 very instrumental in its success and is important for its
21 continuing success.

22 Right now the committee is in the process
23 of putting together a conference entitled "Doing Business

6 In that regard, I would like to conclude,
7 Mr. Chairman, by inviting you to address our Chamber
8 membership, perhaps at the conclusion of your meetings
9 with communities in the country. I am not sure what time
10 frame would be appropriate for you, but if you could let
11 us know, at your convenience, what time would be convenient
12 -- Mrs. Diane Pomelow is seated over there. Diane does
13 a great job in facilitating and helping me with this
14 particular committee and many other committees at the
15 Chamber. She would be more than pleased to arrange a date
16 at your convenience. It would be our pleasure and, indeed,
17 our honour to have you address our membership.

21

23 Thank you, Valerie.

Our report deals with two specific areas which we have had direct experience with: education and economic development. We believe that progress in these two areas is essential if the economic conditions of Native people in Canada are to improve. As well, education and economic development are two places where significant measurable and beneficial activities can begin without delay.

19 The second step is the improvement of
20 the educational and training standards of Native people
21 so that they can better compete in business. In short,
22 Canada cannot afford to waste the potential of its Native
23 population. Steps must be taken to narrow the education

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1 gap between Native and non-Native Canadians.

2 In terms of economic development for
3 Native Canadians, which we define as jobs for Native people
4 and business opportunities for Native entrepreneurs, we
5 believe it is important that the overall strategy include
6 an on-reserve infrastructure of Native-owned and operated
7 businesses both to stimulate economic growth and to bring
8 independence, self-confidence and a sense of
9 self-direction to the Native community.

10 The lack of technical expertise,
11 education and capital are continuing and major obstacles
12 to on-reserve development. This has resulted in
13 unacceptably high unemployment on reserves.

14 We recommend that government and
15 industry, in consultation with Native Canadians -- and
16 we emphasize the consultation aspect -- supplement
17 existing Native education and business training both on
18 and off reserves.

19 From the Calgary perspective, we believe
20 that economic development efforts should be concentrated
21 in four areas: tourism and trade; petroleum development
22 and training for Native Canadians; industry promotion of
23 scholarships and training; and financial and educational

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1 assistance in starting new businesses.

2 That, in essence, is a summary of the
3 key features of our report. I will now turn the floor
4 over to John Snow, Jr.

5 **JOHN SNOW, JR., Calgary Chamber of**
6 **Commerce:** Thank you, Chairman.

7 First of all, I would like to welcome
8 you to Calgary, and I would like to thank you for coming
9 to visit and to hear these very important messages that
10 the Native people of this part of the country have concerns
11 with. We hope your deliberations will be fruitful, and
12 we look forward to seeing positive action and positive
13 developments that can occur over the next short while and
14 bring greater enhancement to the quality of life for Native
15 people throughout this country.

16 I just want to speak to two key issues
17 before I turn the mike over to George Calliou, one of the
18 elder statesmen of our committee.

19 In writing the report, we felt that we
20 wanted to look at many things, but the two areas of focus
21 were economic development and education. I think what
22 we are saying here today is that the Chamber of Commerce
23 at Calgary provides a blueprint. They are involving the

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1 participation of Aboriginal people. The Aboriginal
2 Opportunities Committee is the only type of its kind in
3 the country. I think that is one step toward solutions
4 in this country. Maybe we can see something springing
5 up in Vancouver or Montreal or Toronto. But in forming
6 the AOC, Calgary has been a leader, and I would like to
7 thank the President of the Chamber. She has been very
8 helpful and very supportive of our efforts. She is here
9 today, Valerie Nielson. Also the members of the
10 committee. We have one of the largest committees.

11 I think establishing relations with the
12 Chamber of Commerce is important, and that can materialize
13 through participation in the Chamber of Commerce

14 The other component that we looked at
15 in the report was the need for education -- as Bob Brown
16 pointed out earlier, the need to educate non-Aboriginal
17 people about Aboriginal culture and customs and also the
18 need for Aboriginal people to gain skill and training so
19 that they can participate in work opportunities. So
20 education is a two-way street. The business community
21 needs to be educated but, at the same time, the Aboriginal
22 people, too, must have that opportunity for education.

23 Those were the two components that were

7 With that, we wanted to share that with
8 you. We wish you success in your compilation of documents
9 and the work you are doing here. I would like to thank
10 you for coming.

13 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Thank you very much.

18 One of the things I would say from a
19 personal perspective -- and I am sure it can be said from
20 a Chamber perspective -- is that it is important to pursue
21 the recommendations in a most efficient manner and also
22 in a manner that is beneficial to all Canadians, but also
23 beneficial to the Aboriginal community. For too long,

7 The educational format that you can
8 provide to Canadians as a whole about the input of Canadians
9 into the economy of Canada would be much appreciated.

20 The kind of education process that takes
21 place, just by the very existence of the committee, is
22 an important part of the community in Calgary.

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1 have had a longstanding relationship, a strong
2 relationship, with the Aboriginal community since its
3 early, early days. That was strengthened by the
4 participation of Aboriginal people in the Calgary
5 Stampede.

6 In 1979 the City of Calgary also
7 established what you heard earlier from, the Calgary
8 Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee.

9 So the City of Calgary and its various
10 institutions, including the University of Calgary, Mount
11 Royal College and so on, have had a very strong and
12 beneficial relationship and a committed relationship with
13 the Aboriginal community.

14 The message you are receiving from us
15 today is to carry our message to other people across the
16 country that that is the kind of the relationship that
17 should be pursued that is beneficial to all Canadians.
18 That is one dimension.

19 The other dimension is that kind of
20 education process that takes place with that kind of
21 relationship. It creates a better understanding as to
22 what terms like "Aboriginal self-government" mean. There
23 is some fear about what it means in the minds of the business

5 Sometimes both sides of the community,
6 the Aboriginal community and the business community, may
7 not take the time to appreciate each other and to understand
8 each other. I think we have been very lucky to have the
9 kind of support we have had here through the Calgary Chamber
10 of Commerce and the small role each of us on the committee
11 has played in providing support to the Aboriginal
12 community, whether business or issues like Aboriginal
13 self-government.

23 The other aspect that I wanted to

10 I think it is important to have those
11 senior business people who have become involved on Boards
12 of Directors of Chambers to become much more aware of the
13 Aboriginal community. Certainly, one way is the way we
14 are doing it here in Calgary.

18 At this time, Mr. Chairman, I would like
19 to ask Sandra Parsons to say a few words and, in particular,
20 to tell you a bit about the Partnership Program that
21 President Valerie Nielson alluded to.

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1 time today.

2 I guess what I would like to say in
3 particular is that I would like to thank the Chamber.
4 When they were looking at the issues to talk about today,
5 they chose two: economic development and education.

6 I have been working in the education
7 field for about five years with the Calgary Board of Ed
8 as a Native Liaison. Since our partnership has been in
9 place, we have seen tremendous benefits. The majority
10 of those benefits are for the students, but also for the
11 community and for the School Board. I, too, would like
12 to reiterate the recommendation that these kinds of
13 arrangement be looked at seriously for development in other
14 communities.

15 Thank you.

16 **VALERIE NIELSON:** Mr. Chairman, perhaps
17 in the time available I could make a few closing remarks,
18 and then I am sure you will have some questions.

19 As you have heard, the relationship that
20 the Aboriginal community has had in this city with the
21 business community, through the umbrella organization of
22 the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, has indeed been an
23 excellent one. As the Vice-Chairman has said, and I quite

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1 agree with him, it is an excellent role model for the
2 community generally in this country to follow.

3 In the time available I cannot give you
4 all the details about the excellent initiatives and work
5 that have come out of this committee over the years. We
6 have only been able to highlight a few of the things they
7 have done. If you would like more examples and more
8 information on the work that this fine committee has done,
9 we would be only too happy to provide this to you and perhaps
10 it could be disseminated to other organizations throughout
11 this country.

12 I would like to close by saying that,
13 if you would like more information, we are only too happy
14 to give you that. If this Chamber can help in any way
15 in your deliberations, we would be more than pleased to
16 do that as well.

17 I would like to thank you very much for
18 the opportunity to speak to you today, and I would like
19 to thank all the committee members as well for the fine
20 job they have done.

21 Thank you very much.

22 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
23 you, Calgary Chamber of Commerce. I would like to ask

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1 Georges and Viola if they have any comments.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I would like
3 to thank you for your presentation. I will keep your
4 invitation for the speaking engagement in mind.

5 The suggestion for more information
6 would be very, very welcome. It is an interesting story
7 you tell us because it is very unique. We don't hear this
8 type of story very often. Most times we hear people
9 complaining about the so-called unfair advantage that
10 Aboriginal people have, or whatever. We have had only
11 a few incidents where we have actually had very good
12 relationships that have been presented to us. There may
13 be many others in the country, but we have so far only
14 run into the occasional one.

15 One that comes to mind is Cornwall and
16 Akwesasne. They also have a good working relationship,
17 but there are many places where it is very lacking.

18 What would you say is the source of this?
19 Why here? Was it because of the Stampede?

20 **VALERIE NIELSON:** That is a very good
21 question. George has just nudged me and told me he wants
22 to answer that. I think he is going to tell you it wasn't
23 the Stampede.

5 The late Stan Waters became a good friend
6 of mine. His politics was extremely right-wing and
7 something I don't necessarily agree with but, at the same
8 time, he was an individual who was very community-minded.

Of course, the stereotypical image of Aboriginal people in many cities is that there is a lot of drunks. Rather than labouring on why Aboriginal people are drunks, he took the initiative to say, "As a leader in this community, I should try to do something about that."

21 In 1980 the Calgary community was
22 enjoying the economic boom of oil and gas development in
23 western Canada, and Calgary in particular was enjoying

5 He created a committee to address the
6 Aboriginal issue. The instructions he gave to the first
7 Chairman, Mr. Harold Milliken, was to investigate as to
8 what the Calgary Chamber of Commerce could do. That is
9 where the objectives of this organization came from.

17 With that kind of commitment -- and each
18 succeeding President has had no less commitment to the
19 issue of a better relationship and a better understanding
20 and providing employment and business opportunities for
21 Aboriginal people in the city of Calgary.

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4 I agree with absolutely everything that
5 George has said. It obviously started with the input of
6 Mr. Waters and his commitment. At the same time, Mr.
7 Milliken was the first Chairman.

13 I think George also summed it up when
14 he said it reflects what is different about this community
15 here. It's a strong volunteer spirit. In an Angus Reid
16 survey which was conducted here a couple of years ago,
17 the citizens of this city voted their city as the number
18 one place to live in Canada. This was a poll that was
19 conducted of citizens living in major municipalities
20 throughout this country, and Calgarians were the happiest
21 with the quality of life and with the lifestyle that they
22 had here.

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4 **GEORGE CALLIOU:** Just a quick to comment
5 to say that we don't want to paint a completely rosy
6 picture. There is a lot of positive things happening,
7 but there is still a lot more to be dealt with. Certainly,
8 that is the area we encourage the Commission to attend
9 to, not just in Calgary but nationally. Certainly the
10 members of the committee continue to be committed to
11 dealing with those still very unfortunate realities that
12 Aboriginal people face -- not just Aboriginal people, but
13 Calgarians and Albertans and Canadians as a whole.

18 Am I to draw from this that in most of
19 these ventures, joint ventures and so forth, the Chamber's
20 Opportunities Committee was somehow involved, including
21 things like Peace Hills Trust and the Samson Mall? Or
22 were you just showing these as examples of what has occurred
23 in the area?

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Which leads
3 me to the question I was going to ask. Are there genuine
4 businesses that were created through this particular
5 effort, either by encouragement or what have you?

16 Are there actual businesses that were
17 created by this committee, either as a secondary event
18 or by direct influence, or whatever?

StenoTran

2 The secondary benefits, of course -- and
3 it is difficult for us to blow our own horn. At the same
4 time, because of the educational element associated with
5 the committee and the forward nature of those members of
6 the committee, especially the Aboriginal people, business
7 leaders in the community get to better understand who we
8 are as individuals on the committee and, as a result of
9 that, have a better appreciation of who is coming to their
10 door in terms of business ventures.

22 Our benefit has been secondary in nature
23 as opposed to creating businesses specifically.

5 A group of my students have recently
6 created a small business because of the influence of the
7 Chamber. As a matter of fact, I think they are going to
8 be calling on some of the Chamber members for some
9 assistance very shortly.

14 Have there been any spin-offs for
15 Aboriginal people that you know of?

22 I think there have been many spin-offs
23 as a result of the recent boom for the juniors, as you

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1 are pointing out. I think there is more that can come
2 forward from that.

3 I just want to echo as well Sandra's
4 statement dealing with the youth. I think that is really
5 the future of this country. If we can provide opportunity
6 for that type of clientele, I think that is putting our
7 country in good measure.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Can you tell
9 me a little more about the Partnership Program?

10 **SANDRA PARSONS:** The partnership is
11 between a group of schools, junior and senior high schools.
12 Actually, there is a group of Native students that we
13 call "Walking Tall Native Youth," which was formed about
14 five years ago.

15 About three and a half years ago we went
16 into an informal partnership with the Chamber of Commerce
17 AOC to promote events and activities that would benefit
18 the Native students and that would utilize some of the
19 skills that the Chamber members had.

20 In 1990, I think, we formalized it. We
21 do such things as workshops on culture and self-esteem,
22 confidence-building, career planning. We have done
23 cultural retreats; we have had a Career Fair. We have

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1 done business tours, all designed to promote the leadership
2 and organization skill developments of Aboriginal students
3 and to encourage them to stay in school and to get their
4 education and consider different types of business and
5 career opportunities.

6 We have all sorts of ideas on how to
7 continue this relationship. As a matter of fact, recently
8 we have discussed enlarging the program so that we include
9 more Aboriginal students throughout the system. At this
10 point it is just one area of the city that is involved
11 in the partnership, but hopefully we will expand in the
12 future.

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

14 Those are the questions. I would like
15 to thank you for coming forward, and we encourage you to
16 continue the good work. We will look forward to the
17 information.

18 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** I would
19 like to call on Mr. Richard Saunders at this time to proceed
20 with his presentation.

21 **RICHARD SAUNDERS:** First of all, Mr.
22 Chairman, I would like to thank the Royal Commission on
23 Aboriginal Peoples for making it possible for individual

3 First of all, I should probably explain
4 who I am since I am here representing myself and no one
5 else. My name is Dick Saunders, and I have spent about
6 the last 20 to 25 years working either with Aboriginal
7 organizations or with parts of government that are
8 ostensibly there to help Aboriginal people with various
9 programs.

15 There is a very large number of serious
16 problems confronting Aboriginal people, and I am certain
17 the Commission has heard most of them. The ones that I
18 am not going to address today I don't in any way suggest
19 are less important. The ones I do want to look at are
20 some issues relating to treaty rights.

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8 It is a matter that has a lot of practical
9 implications every day of the week. As a non-Aboriginal
10 Albertan, I have treaty rights under Treaty 7. I have
11 the right to be a landowner in southern Alberta; I have
12 the right to benefit from the resource revenues which the
13 Government of Alberta obtains from the resources of this
14 province and which the federal government obtains. I have
15 never heard any Indian person question whether or not I
16 should continue to receive those benefits.

22 You know, this is not just some sort of
23 rhetorical problem that Indian leaders notice. It is a

3 "And there can be no doubt that over the years the rights
4 of Indians were often honoured in
5 the breach... We cannot recount
6 with much pride the treatment
7 accorded to the native people of
8 this country."

15 "In the course of Canadian history, a notion persists that
16 governments make promises to
17 induce natives to surrender their
18 lands and other rights and then
19 routinely break these promises,
20 frequently hiding behind legal
21 technicalities. The evidence
22 supporting this notion is
23 extensive."

5 What does it mean in practice? Let's
6 look at Alberta.

13 Yet, we consistently see health care being denied as a
14 treaty right by the federal government.

20 The Supreme Court has said that a treaty
21 right cannot be extinguished without the consent of the
22 Indians concerned. That means that a health care
23 entitlement could not end without agreement of the people

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1 who were losing the benefit of it. Yet, health benefits
2 are currently being cut across the country by the federal
3 government as a cost-saving activity.

4 The federal government has always orally
5 taken the position that health care was provided as a matter
6 of policy. They are now denying a treaty obligation in
7 writing.

8 In 1992 they published a booklet which
9 purported to be a statistical review of health conditions
10 of Indian people. If I may say so, it demonstrates the
11 prevalence of some pretty serious health problems that
12 are not being addressed. Yet, in a statistical review
13 that is available to the general public -- and I will table
14 it, Mr. Chairman -- they decide to get into a propaganda
15 war with the Chiefs. They say in this document:

16 "Some First Nations claim treaty rights to have health
17 services provided to their people.

18 The federal government holds that
19 no federal statutes or treaties
20 confer on Indians the right to free
21 health care provided by the federal
22 government. The stand of the
23 federal government is that its

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1 provision of health services to
2 status Indians is a matter of
3 custom and moral duty."

4 Well, it just simply isn't. I think
5 these problems become critical.

6 The government is now in the process of
7 looking at some major land claim settlements across the
8 country. They are in the process of finalizing agreement
9 with the Inuit people of the Eastern Arctic, Nunavut.
10 Other land claim settlements are at various stages of
11 negotiation. Some have recently been signed and are in
12 early implementation, such as James Bay and Northern
13 Quebec. There is one in the Maritimes which is in the
14 news today. Yet, there is consistent violation of the
15 terms of these agreements.

16 Let me give you a more specific example.

17 People say: Well, some of the treaties
18 are vague. They were negotiated with translators. They
19 were written using the legal concepts and in the language
20 of one party, so there is lots of room for dispute. General
21 terms were used -- blah, blah, blah. That's all very true.

22 The James Bay Agreement, for example,
23 was negotiated with teams of lawyers on both sides, and

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1 every "i" was dotted and every "t" was crossed.

2 After the Cree-Naskapi Act was passed
3 to give recognition to certain aspects of self-government
4 in the James Bay area -- and that Act was passed on the
5 understanding that a financial agreement would be made.

6 For two years the Cree Chiefs and the Naskapi Chief
7 negotiated with Indian Affairs to develop a funding
8 formula. They didn't want to have to go and argue about
9 budgets every year, so they thought it would be appropriate
10 to develop a funding formula which could last over a span
11 of years and which would provide for changes that you
12 wouldn't have to negotiate.

13 It would take into account seven
14 factors. It was geared to look at things like changes
15 in cost of living, changes in population, numbers of people
16 reinstated as a result of Bill C-31, extraneous cost
17 changes that affect the north particularly which are not
18 necessarily reflected in the overall cost of living, such
19 as transportation to remote areas, fuel costs and so forth.

20 There were about seven factors.

21 The thing took two years. It was
22 eventually negotiated and agreed upon.

23 During an Annual Assembly of the Grand

11 One would think that that would be the
12 end of the problem. We have a modern-day treaty. The
13 lawyers have gone over every word. It should be
14 enforceable. We shouldn't have to argue about it any more.
15 Right? Wrong!

23 One is left, as a non-Aboriginal person,

9 Well, it seems to me -- and, by the way,
10 to finish the James Bay story, the Commission made a finding
11 that the agreement was binding. We sought legal advice
12 from all over the place, and everybody agreed it was
13 binding. The government argued that Treasury Board hadn't
14 approved it and, legally, they have to.

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5 The long-term problem is: What do we
6 do about this? Why does it happen, and what do we do about
7 it?

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6 If one looks at the Supreme Court's
7 decisions of the last few years, however, particularly
8 since treaty rights have become entrenched in the
9 Constitution and therefore enforceable in courts, I think
10 the record of the Supreme Court has been quite good.

11 It used to be that, where treaty rights
12 and the rights of Native people generally were concerned,
13 the courts were part of the problem, not part of the
14 solution. But now that they have the currency they work
15 with, which is law, now that they have a constitutional
16 instrument making the treaties part of the Constitution,
17 part of the supreme law of the land, they are prepared
18 to enforce it. They have demonstrated that time and time
19 again, particularly at the Supreme Court level. Some of
20 the junior courts haven't quite heard about it yet. The
21 Supreme Court, I think, has conducted itself in a way that
22 is commendable.

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1 is that greater use should be made of the courts in
2 resolving these problems. The courts demand a certain level
3 of logic. They demand that one adheres to one's word.
4 They are not interested in political baloney as an answer;
5 they are not interested in the relativistic ethics of
6 bureaucrats. They are interested in what the agreement
7 was and whether or not it is being enforced.

8 The present court system is one that is
9 skewed against making itself useful to the individual
10 Aboriginal person. I won't go through everything I have
11 written here, because the Commission are not only good
12 listeners; they are good readers, too, and can read all
13 this without having to stay here all night and listen to
14 me talk about it.

15 I think we need to be able to
16 short-circuit the court system somewhat. If somebody is
17 charged with fishing without a licence, hunting without
18 a permit or out of season, or somebody is concerned that
19 their health care rights under a treaty are being ignored,
20 what happens in the present system, if they decide to
21 litigate?

22 They go to court, frequently the
23 provincial court. That is expensive and time-consuming

11 The person who needs the health care may
12 be dead. The guy who has been doing the fishing -- I
13 wouldn't want to smell the fish. It just isn't fast
14 enough. It costs too much money and it favours whoever
15 has the money. The Justice Department and the provincial
16 Attorneys General Departments all have plenty of money
17 and plenty of lawyers, and they can go on fighting you
18 forever.

23 I would suggest the Commission look at

8 In future, it might be a court which
9 could also hear appeals from tribal courts, but that is
10 something First Nations will have to determine for
11 themselves, I think. These are suggestions for
12 discussion.

21 In the case of many official bodies --
22 the Cree-Naskapi Commission, this Commission and others
23 -- they have made Order in Council appointments of people

3 A court like that, as I say, should have
4 original jurisdiction and, of course, for the sake of
5 consistency, there should be appeal from it to the Supreme
6 Court of Canada. I think it would be a court which would
7 develop a great deal of expertise in a new area.

13 There are a lot of cultural issues, a
14 lot of issues in which the custom of the community needs
15 to be taken into account. Rules of evidence need to be
16 somewhat different. The Supreme Court already listens
17 to oral testimony of Elders about matters of historic fact.

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1 Some details of that are included in my
2 written presentation.

3 The third thing I would like to conclude
4 with -- and I know that time is short -- is: What is all
5 of this going to cost?

6 If you haven't paid your landlord any
7 rent for 100 years and suddenly you have to, it's a big
8 bill. Make no mistake about it. If treaty rights that
9 are contemplated in the treaties and in current land claims
10 settlements were fully implemented, the cost would be in
11 the hundreds of billions. That is no reason not to do
12 it, but it is a reason to start coming up with some
13 innovative ideas on where we are going to find the money.

14 If I hadn't made any mortgage payments
15 for the past 100 years, I would certainly be looking for
16 some money right now. That is fundamentally what the
17 federal government has been doing.

18 I think we have to get the funding out
19 of the annual budgetary process. I don't think money that
20 is designed to discharge treaty obligations,
21 constitutional obligations, can be part of the budgeting
22 process year by year by year. When we are either fighting
23 the deficit as our number one priority or else we are the

4 I think we are going to have to look at
5 some sort of fund which is independent of the government's
6 fiscal activities, something in the nature of an endowment
7 fund -- a very big one -- that is under the control of
8 First Nations, probably collectively, and which is funded
9 from innovative sources.

I think the land base is one of the most important resources. It is the major part of present-day land claim settlements. It is something Canada still has plenty of, and it is something that is finite in a world where economic demands are infinite. It is a permanent resource, and I think any First Nation would be well advised to put a very high priority on land as part of a settlement.

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1 One hopes that land resources are permanent, not subject
2 to alienation.

3 I think we have to look at operating
4 funds also. If we are going to have decent health care
5 on reserves, if we are going to have decent education,
6 if we are going to have acceptable levels of economic
7 development opportunities, we are going to need an awful
8 lot more money than we now have. I think we have to look
9 at things that are utterly different.

10 For example, the federal government has
11 a great deal of land that isn't just trees and muskeg.
12 It has vast urban lands across the country, some of which
13 it is looking at unloading right now to help reduce the
14 deficit. Those are long-term, revenue-generating lands.
15 There are a few reserves in this country that have a
16 substantial chunk of urban land, and in every case that
17 is a serious revenue-generating resource.

18 I think, if I were the federal
19 government, I might be talking to First Nations and saying,
20 "Yes, I'm poor and, yes, I don't have any cash, but I
21 certainly have land. Some of it is in Toronto and some
22 of it is in Montreal and some of it is in Vancouver, and
23 some of it, frankly, is surplus." Let's look at some sort

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1 of inventory of federal lands that are serious
2 revenue-generating assets, and let's look at some way of
3 making the long-term revenues from those available to
4 discharging treaty rights.

5 Let's look at a percentage of new federal
6 resource revenues. It isn't only land that Aboriginal
7 people have shared with the rest of us; it is not only
8 land that is part of my treaty benefits. It is also the
9 revenues generated by the resources -- and we don't need
10 to look at robbing Ralph Klein's piggybank. I think what
11 we need to look at is future federal resource revenues,
12 and let's look at a percentage of those.

13 Some of these ideas may be quite wacky,
14 but I think they ought to be looked at because we have
15 to find the money somewhere.

16 We often hear federal politicians in
17 opposition, regardless of which party is in opposition,
18 decrying the government, regardless of which one it is,
19 because they say that many of the conditions faced by
20 Aboriginal people in their communities are Third World.

21 Yet, the resources that are made available to First
22 Nations communities have far more strings attached than
23 the resources we make available to Third World countries.

10 There have been many other suggestions,
11 too. People talk about a variety of things. I have heard
12 people at the community level talk about national
13 lotteries, and so on. There certainly are opportunities
14 for giving exclusive licensing rights in certain areas
15 to Aboriginal people and to their governments. There are
16 a lot of possibilities, and I think some serious economists
17 who have more time to spend on it than I do should do so
18 -- and soon.

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1 is likely to work, which is to facilitate the court system
2 so that it can better enforce treaties. You are not going
3 to have deputy ministers telling you that they are not
4 bound by a treaty if they are in the habit of having the
5 courts tell them that is not acceptable. Third, I think
6 a lot of work has to be done, and done quickly, on how
7 we are going to pay for this. It's time to pay the
8 mortgage. Where are we going to get the money?

9 I have some suggestions. I hope there
10 are some brighter lights in the economic field who will
11 have some better ones, but we have to start the discussion
12 somewhere.

13 Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would like to
14 say something about this Commission and its activities.

15 There has been some criticism from
16 people whom I respect that the Commission is moving too
17 slowly, that it is spending too much time on consultation
18 and is spending too much time listening to people like
19 myself, and that it should get busy and write a report
20 -- yesterday, if not sooner.

21 I realize that the members of the
22 Commission have a great deal of expertise and probably
23 could write an excellent report. They probably could have

5 I would like to add my voice to those
6 who have commended the Commission for taking the time to
7 listen to everybody who has something they wish to
8 contribute to this discussion. I think it's a worthwhile
9 process. Two heads are better than one, and many thousands
10 are better than two.

13 I think the next task is for people who support that
14 activity to see that something is done about implementing
15 it when it does occur.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
19 for coming forward. I think it was an absolutely excellent
20 presentation, and you have come up with some very, very
21 good ideas.

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1 and ways to generate funding is very, very sound advice.

2 I would like to encourage you to keep your thinking cap
3 on and, if you can think of anything else you want to advise
4 us on, please do so.

5 Viola, do you have any questions?

6 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I, too,
7 would like to thank you for your presentation. Your
8 recommendation is one which I think is certainly well
9 thought out -- not without problems, of course. I just
10 have one question, and you might want to think about it,
11 and that relates to your proposal of another court in
12 Canada.

13 For instance, if it were to make
14 decisions, how would they be protected from appeal to the
15 Supreme Court of Canada? What would be the relationship
16 between this court and the Supreme Court of Canada? Right
17 now there is only one court system in Canada, and that
18 is the highest court. If we were to put another court,
19 how would it validate the decisions that would be
20 enforceable?

21 **RICHARD SAUNDERS:** First of all, I think
22 I have to be realistic; I guess we all do. I don't think
23 we can look to a court system that ultimately is not

3 I have some confidence personally in the
4 kinds of decisions the Supreme Court has been making in
5 the past few years, and I doubt that it would overturn
6 very many good decisions.

16 I guess my suggestion is that the court
17 would be specialized. It would have some specialized
18 knowledge. Its experience would become specialized as
19 it went on, and you would short-circuit all of the other
20 levels of appeal before you got that far.

22 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
23 very much, Dick.

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1 At this time I would like to call on the
2 Siksika Nation, with Chief Crowfoot. He will be
3 accompanied by Joe Weasel Child who is the claims
4 researcher; Adrian Stimson, Tribal Management
5 Co-ordinator; and Fred Breaker who is a Councillor. His
6 portfolio is self-government and land claims management.

7 I will delegate Chief Strator Crowfoot
8 to do his presentation, and how he wants to work it out
9 is up to him.

10 **CHIEF STRATOR CROWFOOT, Siksika Nation:**

11 Good afternoon, Commissioners.

12 We only have my Councillor, Fred
13 Breaker, here and myself. The other two might come in
14 a bit later. If they do, they will sit up here with us.

15 First of all, we are a bit concerned with
16 the process of being here. We are concerned that the
17 agenda has been changed a couple of times. We were just
18 informed a couple of days ago that we were making a
19 presentation this afternoon. It concerns us because we
20 should be a bit more organized in how we deal with our
21 Aboriginal concerns, especially our concerns as a First
22 Nation.

23 However, notwithstanding that, we will

2 First of all, welcome to our territory,
3 the Blackfoot Confederacy territory. My nation is one
4 of the nations that belong to the Confederacy.

11 We feel we have to be looking toward the
12 future and finding different ways we can proceed that will
13 help us as a First Nation.

18 For instance, our tribe right now is in
19 the self-government process, as defined by the federal
20 government. However, we are not happy with the process,
21 with the outcome the guidelines may lead us into. We
22 are always trying to negotiate with the federal government
23 to get them to change their policies, to change their

4 Looking at our tribe, over the past 20
5 years we have been in the process of assuming as much
6 control as we could from the government. We felt that
7 there wasn't a future for our tribe if we let any non-Native
8 person or white man be in control of our future. That
9 has been our direction over the past several years. We
10 want the future of our people to be decided by ourselves.

The first thing that we must say to Canada is that, since we have signed treaty, it seems that from that day forward the government has taken different steps to dishonour that agreement and not to fulfill its obligations. We recently signed what is called an AFA Agreement, an Alternative Funding Arrangement Agreement, with Canada. It seems that they are forever trying to redefine that agreement so that it is going to benefit

4 Right now we have a five-year AFA, and
5 it seems that the funding comes from year to year. It
6 doesn't allow a First Nation enough time to plan.

16 Why does a First Nation who wants to do
17 something to progress and better itself for its people
18 and provide a better future for them -- why are these
19 obstacles always there? Why can't the federal government
20 be more flexible to look at each First Nation and to look
21 at what its track record is and see if that First Nation
22 can do it by itself?

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8 We are asking this Commission to look
9 at ways that Canada can work with First Nations, to allow
10 those that want to proceed ahead, to give them the
11 flexibility, to allow them to look at the policies globally
12 so that they can change them, not just say, "We can't do
13 that; the policies aren't in place for that yet." That
14 seems like a stalling tactic just to keep a First Nation
15 back.

20 With the failure of the Charlottetown
21 Accord, I think the government has become more entrenched
22 and has found it easier and has found more ways to say
23 "no" to us as we try to proceed to look for a better way

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1 for Siksika, for our people.

2 Another thing that we find very
3 distasteful, especially those who sign treaty across this
4 country, is that we cannot accept this melting pot concept
5 that the government has put in place. Respecting other
6 groups -- the non-status, the Métis, the Inuit and so forth
7 -- is fine. They have all their respective arguments as
8 to why they should receive their certain due from the
9 government. But, in our case, we have our treaties. We
10 have a legal document. We have an agreement there that
11 we think gives us special status, as we say
12 "citizens-plus;" yet, the government repeatedly
13 disregards that treaty.

14 What we are saying is that the Government
15 of Canada cannot treat each group together and have
16 policies for all of us. I think they have to have a policy
17 separately for treaty First Nations, to recognize those
18 obligations that stem from those treaties.

19 Another thing that we find disconcerting
20 is the government's approach to dealing with First Nations.

21 It seems that they set aside one department, the
22 Department of Indian Affairs, to deal with us. Our tribes
23 are involved in complex government services, and we cannot

2 We have asked the Deputy Minister
3 several times, at the time Harry Swain, to work with us,
4 to help us develop a global approach to dealing with a
5 First Nation, so that we can bring in other departments
6 -- CEIC, the Foreign Office, Manpower, Education, Tourism,
7 Justice, all the government departments that deal with
8 these special programs. Why can't they bring them all
9 together and work on a global policy to help a First Nation
10 really establish these areas and really provide the funding
11 necessary for them to develop.

18 If they continue to keep us in separate
19 tracks, our populations are growing fast; we all know that.

20 It seems that, if we don't approach this problem in a
21 very efficient manner, the future is going to be the same
22 as we have today. Our problem will be a lot worse because
23 our populations are growing. My tribe has increased its

2 We are asking you, as the Commissioners,
3 to look at different ways of approaching how government
4 deals with First Nations and how they can bring together
5 the resources on a global basis to work with us.

14 When we compare ourselves with the
15 average Canadian on a per-capita basis, we are far below
16 what is being expended by the Government of Canada. Why
17 is this? I would like to know because our people are having
18 a hard time at home. We have four and five families, in
19 some cases, in one house. That is unacceptable. That
20 wouldn't be acceptable in Calgary, so why is it acceptable
21 on the reserves?

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1 We are kind of wondering, with this Royal
2 Commission, what is really going to happen from here.
3 We have been involved before in different Commissions that
4 have come out to our reserve in the last four or five years.
5 We give our input, and we kind of wonder what is the next
6 step after that. Do we have to wait three, four or five
7 years before we see more changes, or any changes at all?

8 Today we have an opportunity to make a
9 difference for the next generation. If we don't act and
10 do what is necessary, if we don't work together, First
11 Nations and the governments of Canada, to solve this
12 problem that we have, it is going to continue to grow,
13 and we may have more Okas across this country. We don't
14 want to see that. We want to see ourselves as a First
15 Nation, the Siksika, being contributors to the society
16 that we call Canada, and we can be if we get the help we
17 are asking for at this time from the government.

18 At this time I would like to ask Fred
19 Breaker to make a few comments regarding our situation
20 with land claims and, as well, with the self-government
21 work we are involved in.

22 **FRED BREAKER, Siksika Nation:** Oki. My
23 name is Fred Breaker. I am a Councilman for Siksika.

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1 This is my third term.

2 I have sat with negotiators both on land
3 claims and self-government and, in some cases, in other
4 areas. I have heard all the promises that were given to
5 a lot of the First Nations. All the things that were said
6 have never come true, some of them.

7 For instance, we have been dealing in
8 land claims. We have been researching; we have been
9 digging around for our documents for over 30 years now.
10 Yet, every time we made a submission to the Claims
11 Commission, the majority of our claims were rejected.
12 Yet, we did more and more research, and more legal arguments
13 were done.

14 What we are trying to do is restore our
15 land base because our population is growing every year.
16 About 200,000 acres are left on the Siksika Nation Reserve
17 from all the lands that were taken by the CPR, that were
18 taken by irrigation companies. Almost half of our
19 reserve, 127,000 acres, was sold from under our feet in
20 1910; 26.5 square miles of land was unilaterally taken
21 by the federal government. This land was included into
22 the Banff National Park.

23 People laughed at us when we said, "We

4 All these lands that I talk about, we
5 are going to try to get them back, any way we see fit.
6 These are our lands. These lands belong to Siksika.

14 Why are we living in poverty? Why are
15 we living this way? Why are we given three houses a year
16 for 4,000 people? We are given three houses a year to
17 build on the reservation.

21 We get \$5 a year every year. That's a
22 complete negligence on the federal government's part.

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1 that we are sitting on right now -- some of those taxes
2 should be going to the Siksika Nation. I believe that.
3 I know that. This is what our Elders are saying. This
4 is what we are fighting for.

5 Yet, the government is saying that we
6 gave up everything, that we ceded and surrendered and gave
7 up everything except the little pockets of land that we
8 have now. That's not true. That was never the agreement.
9 That was never the understanding.

10 I think the federal government should
11 come forward and deal with us properly. Deal with us,
12 and let's get on with life. Let us prove to you that we
13 can, and I know we will if we are treated properly.

14 If the spirit and intent of those
15 treaties are taken seriously by the federal government,
16 and if we dealt with them on a nation-to-nation basis,
17 you wouldn't see the high rate of uneducated people on
18 reservations.

19 A lot of our people are struggling right
20 now. A lot of them are going outside the reserve to work,
21 to get housing, to get all the sorts of things that other
22 Canadians get.

23 I am not asking for a handout. I am

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1 saying that the federal government should treat with us
2 again. Let's finish that business, that unfinished
3 business in the treaties. I think that would resolve a
4 lot of these things that we have gone through.

5 I will give you one example. On our
6 reservation, with a population of 4,000, there is a small
7 town on the other side of the tracks. It is called Cluny.
8 In Cluny I think they have a population of less than 50.
9 They have a high school there. And a population of 4,000
10 on the reserve doesn't even have a high school, and they
11 say Indians are dropping out of high school.

12 We have a town near here, Strathmore.
13 About six brand new schools are being built. On whose
14 numbers? Our numbers, Siksika numbers. The last count
15 I had was six busloads of students who are going to school
16 in Strathmore.

17 In the town of Bisano they built a
18 hospital wing. On whose head count? Who did they use?
19 Blackfoot, Siksika Nation head count, 4,000 people.

20 These are the kinds of thing that we are
21 trying to correct. These are the kinds of thing that we
22 want to do ourselves. These are the kinds of thing that
23 we want to put on our reservation. We have been fighting

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1 a long time to get a high school on the reservation. We
2 have paid for our own hospital. For almost 80 years we
3 paid the doctors, nurses, whatever in that hospital, and
4 it was shut down in the late 1960s.

5 We paid for the building, Old Sun School,
6 out of band funds. The government never paid for that.
7 We paid for the people who were working -- the Indian
8 agents and all those other people that were working under
9 that Indian agent. We paid them. They had the best
10 houses.

11 We had electricity in, I think, 1930.
12 But who had the electricity? It was the Indian agents
13 and their workers. Electricity didn't come to the Siksika
14 Nation until the middle of 1960. Running water didn't
15 come until about 1960.

16 All these inconsistencies we are talking
17 about -- and I am not just talking. I lived through some
18 of those things.

19 This is the thing we are trying to
20 resolve on our reservation. A lot of people from different
21 reservations are telling us, "You're crazy to go into
22 things like these different initiatives." We go into them
23 because we feel that, if we do enough work and research,

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1 we might turn the tables around on the government. If
2 we can't, then we stop right there. We are not going to
3 break our own treaties -- no way! That is far from the
4 truth.

5 We get criticized for going into
6 different things, like the AFA. It is helping us a little
7 bit, but that is not the answer. As Chief Strator Crowfoot
8 said, these are just stepping-stones into the big picture
9 that we want to evolve into.

10 The sovereign will of our people was
11 never signed away, was never given away. The Indian Act
12 was thrust upon us. No Chief ever agreed under Siksika
13 Nation to go by the Indian Act. There was a lot of
14 assumption that was done when Indian government pursued
15 those policies -- underlying things like assimilation,
16 things that are in the Indian Act.

17 These are the kinds of thing that we want
18 to turn around. We want to get the government to say,
19 "Yes, we will help you out."

20 All of us need to work together as First
21 Nations. I think that is where our downfall is. We are
22 always fighting amongst each other.

23 There is a lot of things that the federal

8 These are the kinds of thing that I am
9 always thinking about. This is why we are doing what we
10 are doing back home. We are always trying to fight the
11 government, trying to make them see things our way. We
12 are trying to change the policies.

19 These are the kinds of thing that we
20 should fight for, to try to correct the things that were
21 done to us.

23 CHIEF STRATOR CROWFOOT: Thank you,

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1 Councillor Breaker.

2 I want to add a few more comments here.

3 I want to emphasize the point that our future, the way
4 I see it, as Chief for Siksika, is that we do not want
5 the interference of the white policies and white people
6 directing our lives -- referring to the Indian Act and
7 Indian Affairs itself. I think our people have proven
8 themselves over the years, that we are capable of doing
9 things better in handling our affairs than anybody else.
10 We see no future unless we are in control of it ourselves.

11 We are looking to the Commission to look
12 at ways and suggestions of helping First Nations who want
13 to pursue that route, to make it possible for them by
14 working with them.

15 Another thing I want to point out at this
16 time is that, as Fred mentioned, we are involved in a lot
17 of things. As Chief, I have been aware of what is going
18 on nationally. I became involved with certain things
19 because I felt that, if we weren't there to influence what
20 was going on, to make sure that our interests were
21 protected, then we would somehow lose out.

22 I think mention was made this morning,
23 or perhaps earlier in your discussions with people in

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1 southern Alberta, of the so-called First Nations Chartered
2 Lands Act, this governance legislation, taxation
3 legislation and so forth. I have been involved in a few
4 of these things, but I want to tell you and the people
5 here that that work is not going before Parliament this
6 sitting. There is a lot of things there that I believe
7 are beneficial, that we are looking at as Chief and Council
8 at Siksika, and we haven't decided yet if we are going
9 to pursue that route.

10 Referring to the Chartered Lands Act and
11 other things that are going on, there are certain things
12 in there that we want to look at that could be of benefit
13 to our tribe, but we in no way want to impose them on anybody
14 else. We are just looking at what is beneficial for us
15 at Siksika.

16 We feel that we have to look at the future
17 and look at ways of changing it. We just can't sit back
18 and let status quo come upon us. We feel that that is
19 what is going to happen to us if we just sit back and do
20 nothing. There isn't a future in that; there isn't a
21 future in status quo. We cannot let another generation
22 be lost through the inconsistencies of policy by
23 government.

13 What is going to happen is that other
14 programs that aren't funded by the federal government or
15 by the province are going to be shut down. The people
16 who can least afford to have training programs shut down
17 are going to have to pay the price, because there isn't
18 any direct funding for these programs from Indian Affairs
19 or from the province.

StenoTran

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1 Thank you.

2 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
3 for your presentation.

4 You made some brief reference to the
5 Chartered Lands Act and taxation, and so forth. You say
6 that this is not going forward in this sitting. Is that
7 very recent, because we have been led to believe that this
8 might, in fact, go through very quickly?

9 There were presentations by other
10 members of the Chiefs' Committee at some other sites that
11 were quite excited and eager and they thought this was
12 going to be done very, very quickly. Is this fairly
13 recent?

14 **CHIEF STRATOR CROWFOOT:** I had a meeting
15 last week, Georges, with the Chiefs who are involved in
16 this Chartered Lands Act. We looked at the situation
17 across Canada with First Nations and with the government
18 itself, with the elections coming up for a new Prime
19 Minister plus sometime in the fall a new election for a
20 new government. To date, we have not received a response
21 from the government on the Chartered Lands Act, formally.

22

23 So we are kind of surprised. How can

3 At this time we have asked the federal
4 government, the Deputy Minister and his staff, not to put
5 anything forward regarding the Chartered Lands Act,
6 regarding governance. In fact, there was never anything
7 about governance. I was involved in that process about
8 two years ago, but at that point in time I didn't like
9 the approach of government. I felt they were trying to
10 undermine the process and trying to put their ideas
11 forward. We split and went different ways. I submitted
12 a proposal to them, and then I said, "That's it; I am done
13 with the project," and I went on to something else.

18 This other legislation I know nothing
19 about, and I don't know where it is at.

22 **CHIEF STRATOR CROWFOOT:** To the
23 Chartered Lands Act. We have asked them not to put

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1 anything forward to the government at this time, that we
2 have more time to look at it and to talk to other First
3 Nations and to make sure that what goes forward, if it
4 goes forward, is going to be appropriate for those who
5 want to use it.

6 I want to emphasize that the title, in
7 fact, has changed. It is "First Nations Specific
8 Chartered Lands Act." Those First Nations who want to
9 use it may use it.

10 I also want to point out that at Siksika
11 that we haven't yet decided what we are going to do. There
12 are some principles in there that we have looked at that
13 we think would be beneficial to us in our self-government
14 process.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is this the
16 first time you have made a public statement that this has
17 more or less been put on hold for a while?

18 **CHIEF STRATOR CROWFOOT:** We made the
19 statement to Karen Webb at CBC Newsworld last week, and
20 I made the statement twice or three times now, probably.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I was quite
22 intrigued by the presentation on land claims. You told
23 us the size of the present reserve. Do you remember, by

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1 chance, what you started off with when you first got the
2 reserve, after the signing of treaty? What size did you
3 start out with?

4 **FRED BREAKER:** I think it was 375,000
5 acres, close to 400,000.

6 **CHIEF STRATOR CROWFOOT:** It's almost
7 400,000 acres, but that is not including our land claim
8 that we have at Castle Mountain. Right now we have 26
9 land claims in the process, and we have three that could
10 be resolved very quickly.

11 What we are finding is that the more we
12 research the more claims we find.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** You started
14 with 400,000 and you now have --

15 **CHIEF STRATOR CROWFOOT:** 176,000. One
16 land claim that we just kind of stumbled on was 12,374
17 acres that the government recognized that they have to
18 provide land for us. We will be increasing by 12,374 very
19 shortly. Then, depending on what happens with Castle
20 Mountain, it might be another 30,000 acres.

21 We have another land claim, in 1910, for
22 another 127,000 acres roughly.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How is that

22 In this particular area, the Treaty 7
23 area, what we have been hearing is that the predominant

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1 route that people want to go is the treaty route and that
2 some kind of relationship based on treaty should be
3 revitalized. We have heard that echoed many, many times
4 before.

5 Where is your community on that issue?

6 **CHIEF STRATOR CROWFOOT:** We support
7 that process. We would gladly be part of it if there is
8 any giving by the government. It seems right now that
9 they aren't really going to be giving on that.

10 Right now we are working in all areas.

11 Where we can take a step forward, we go after it.

12 We support the treaty-based process, of
13 course. That is one part of it, though. The other part
14 of it is that, once you have the treaty process in place,
15 how exactly is that going to work for you as a First Nation?

16 How can it help you achieve what you want to achieve?

17 Sure, we come from the same treaty. In
18 Treaty 7 there are five First Nations here, but each is
19 different. Each pursues things and does things
20 differently.

21 If we have that process given to us, we
22 will pursue it but, at the same time, we have to look at
23 -- having self-government is one thing, but how you

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1 administer it is completely different. That is what we
2 are focusing on, getting ourselves ready, so to speak.

3 We have taken over a lot of programs from
4 government. We have been criticized for it, and there
5 are all kinds of problems with it. What we have is gaining
6 experience in managing our programs, handling our own
7 affairs internally. As I said before, we have had a
8 balanced budget for 20 years. We aren't rich by any means,
9 but we aren't in debt either.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** If you have
11 any views later on the treaty issue which you want to share
12 with us, we would be pleased to hear.

13 **CHIEF STRATOR CROWFOOT:** As I said --
14 and Fred said it, too. We view what they call
15 self-government as a continuation of the treaty-making
16 process, defining what our government means, setting up
17 our government to have the adequate resources that we need.
18 That is how we see it, what they call the treaty-making
19 process -- not getting delegated authority, but
20 recognizing our sovereign integrity that we never gave
21 up with treaty.

22 In some respects, what is going on right
23 now at Siksika we view as part of the treaty-making process,

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1 a continuation of it -- defining what our government means,
2 setting it up.

3 I have heard talk about a third order
4 of government. That could be part of it, but recognizing
5 that in Canada there are different governments --
6 provincial, federal and First Nation governments.

7 Defining them, setting them up,
8 resourcing them and ensuring that they will work for the
9 benefit of their citizens.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
11 for coming forward.

12 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
13 very, Chief Crowfoot.

14 At this time I would like to call on Chief
15 Fred Fraser with Tsuu T'ina Bill C-31 band.

16 **CHIEF FRED FRASER:** First of all, I
17 would like to thank the Commission for allowing me to speak
18 and hear my brief. Also I would like to thank the people
19 who have helped me write it up and put it together. I
20 will read it to you. Most people have a copy.

21 My name is Chief Fred Fraser, as you
22 mentioned, and I am the Chief of the Tsuu T'ina Bill C-31
23 Band.

4 This historical equality amendment
5 creates a new category of Indian people, the Bill C-31
6 Indian, who are beginning to express their rights and
7 concerns.

13 Over the past 125 years many Tsuu T'ina
14 Nation citizens were affected by discriminatory
15 legislation which resulted in excommunication from our
16 Tsuu T'ina ancestry, heritage, culture and race and,
17 furthermore, exclusion from our inherent Treaty 7 rights.

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2 The immutable Laws of Nature govern our
3 right to Tsuu T'ina Nation citizenship and these Laws of
4 Nature are not subject to legislation and band membership
5 codes.

9 Reinstatement of "Indian status" is
10 meaningless without "Indian Band" membership.

Traditionally, First Nation bands subdivided for natural and political reasons. In keeping with tradition and also as an exercise of our claim to Tsuu T'ina race and citizenship, we have formed our own band called the Tsuu T'ina Bill C-31 Band, accompanied by our ancestral symbol which represents the people of the Tsuu T'ina Nation.

6 The Sarcee Band has stated "that they
7 are not opposed to the formation of new bands or new
8 reserves, so long as the present Sarcee Band's
9 jurisdictions and lands are not violated."

18 Rather than once again have the federal
19 government dictate our destiny, it is our intention and
20 commitment that our destiny will be guided by the Great
21 Spirit and our Ancestral Spirits.

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4 Discrimination has caused immeasurable
5 hardships and we have lived as outcasts on the outer fringe
6 of both societies, removed from our families and bands
7 and yet not accepted or assimilated into society.

14 Your time and interest to seriously
15 review and consider this matter is greatly appreciated.

18 This morning when I reached here, I heard
19 Mr. Erasmus mention that the Prime Minister was going to
20 promise that the stuff that was brought to the Commission
21 would be -- I don't know how you put it; it would be
22 respected, more or less. What we say to you would be
23 respected by the Prime Minister. He also promised that

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
8 for your presentation.

20 That was the point I was making.

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5 I am not sure that answers your question,
6 but that is what I was commenting on.

9 Because in 1985 the government passed
10 us a law which gave us the right to our cultural and
11 ancestral right -- and, as we know, this government today,
12 its promises aren't very good at all, as far as we are
13 concerned. We don't believe the government is going to
14 do anything. When they passed the law in 1985, they have
15 still done nothing to support us or to help us. Yet, the
16 Prime Minister stood up at that time and told all of Canada
17 and all of the world that there would be no bands or no
18 Aboriginal people that would go short of land or monies
19 for these people to repatriate.

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3 I am saying that the Prime Minister did
4 not do anything in 1985. He promised money, but we never
5 got it for the Bill C-31 Indians. Is this not serious
6 enough? We have made this land claim, and we don't believe
7 the government is going to give us anything or help us
8 in any way. All we can do is go back to our land and
9 guard it with shotguns. Then maybe the people who use
10 the land we claim, who walk on there and who walk their
11 dogs on there, will have to pay us the fee next March,
12 if the Federal Court does not come up with a proper answer
13 for our people.

19 Every ethnic human being that comes to
20 this country has an organization to represent them. We,
21 the Bill C-31 Indians, do not.

22 So I think this would be a serious enough
23 problem to take back to the Prime Minister or whoever it

4 We are sick and tired of the government
5 lying to us.

11 How might that affect you?

16 My answer to that was: That would be
17 the same thing they did to us to begin with. They threw
18 us into a foreign place, from where our people were into
19 the cities. Now, 125 years later, they are going to do
20 the same thing -- throw us back into another place where
21 we don't know the culture or the language. So we are going
22 to be hurt and kicked around again.

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1 other Aboriginal people from whom the government made us
2 separate with these laws and policies.

3 That is their plan. Our feeling is that
4 we don't want to go back.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How large a
6 membership does your group have?

7 **CHIEF FRED FRASER:** In the Bill C-31
8 Band there is approximately 250 members. That is a little
9 bit short of what it could be. We were saying 300 members.
10 That's a lot of people to go back on to a land base where
11 they have hardly enough land for themselves.

12 The government is doing us dirty again,
13 because we would not accept that. We would rather take
14 that land that nobody is walking on. The cows walk on
15 it. The horses have more rights than Aboriginal peoples
16 on the crown land. We feel that we will take that. That
17 is our own. It was ours to begin with.

18 What is a land claim to claim your own
19 land back? What is the process? I believe one should
20 just take it because the government is not going to listen
21 to us. That is what fears me, that the government is not
22 going to listen. That is what the government wants to
23 do, not to listen, so that we fight and cause problems.

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1 And they're doing it again. That's what the government
2 wants.

3 This Commission could help us very much,
4 I do believe.

5 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** How much
6 land is it that you are trying to get back in that particular
7 area?

8 **CHIEF FRED FRASER:** If you take it in
9 the ratio of how the treaties were set up -- I did have
10 some numbers at one time, but we keep having grandchildren.

11
12 For instance, for a family of five there
13 is a quarter section of land that is allowed in the Treaty
14 7 area. As I understand how it goes, a family of five
15 is allowed a quarter section.

16 We are looking at 250 people.

17 **CHIEF FRED FRASER:** You are talking
18 about the original treaty formula.

19 **CHIEF FRED FRASER:** Yes, and that is
20 what we would like to get back to, the treaty. I don't
21 believe that this government is going to do anything until
22 they see it as nation to nation.

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** When was the

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1 last time you tried to get any kind of serious recognition
2 from the federal government on this issue?

3 **CHIEF FRED FRASER:** I got a letter from
4 Tom Siddon last June saying that there is a law saying
5 that we can create new bands, but he also stated in there
6 that they had never had the money to do so, and that "it
7 is too bad that the Tsuu T'ina Nation does not share their
8 wealth and land with you people." That was his exact
9 words.

10 I approached the City two weeks ago to
11 ask them to support us in a letter or something saying
12 that this is who we are. Us writing letters to the federal
13 government, we are 3,200 miles away. They can just sit
14 there and laugh, and we sit here suffering.

15 If I go to the City, they don't want to
16 see Native people causing problems around this area. We
17 want to be a part of it. We really do. Yet, we are not
18 allowed to be a part of it.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** So the
20 original position that was taken by the Sarcee Band, that
21 they would stand aside and let you become a band so long
22 as their own interests were not affected -- is that still
23 the same position?

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1 **CHIEF FRED FRASER:** Yes. I also
2 suggested to the government that, if there was a lack of
3 federal land for us, we would accept transfer payments
4 to buy land from wherever we so decide, adjacent to the
5 land where originally came from, and turn that back into
6 Aboriginal land for our children's children; it would never
7 be sold.

8 Even though it sounds greedy for us, I
9 see lots of people doing that. That is why they came here,
10 to build it up for their generations. Why can't we do
11 that? All we want is our children to have something and
12 to enjoy the country as everybody else does.

13 I do believe that it is a serious enough
14 thing to take back because we are desperate. We all know
15 that it's our land now. We can't wait for the courts any
16 more. They won't even fund us, so what choice do we have
17 other than to go back to our land and try to make it there,
18 because we can't make it here on social services?

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

20 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** I have
21 just one question.

22 Right now you and your membership are
23 located in the city of Calgary?

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1 **CHIEF FRED FRASER:** My immediate family
2 have a camp west of here, five miles directly west of Bragg
3 Creek, and the rest of the members are in the city here.

4 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:**
5 Scattered about in the city.

6 **CHIEF FRED FRASER:** Scattered about,
7 and 88 per cent of them are on social services with no
8 way out.

9 What I suggested to the City is that they
10 could give us the old school that they are not using, and
11 the federal government could give us transfer payments
12 to hire the people who know how to talk our cultural
13 language, to teach us our cultural language -- to come
14 into the schools in the city, learn our culture in the
15 morning and learn the other culture in the afternoon.
16 Why wouldn't that work? That would give our people
17 something to do and to learn. That's not going to cost
18 very much money, but it has to be done. Something has
19 to be done for these people.

20 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank
21 you.

22 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
23 again for coming forward.

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1 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
2 very much, Chief Fred Fraser.

3 We are going to break for dinner now.
4 We will come back here at 7 o'clock. Thank you for your
5 presence.

6 --- Dinner Recess at 5:50 p.m.

7 --- Upon resuming at 7:10 p.m.

8 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** On your
9 agenda is a Métis Nation Panel. Representing the Métis
10 Nation, from Métis Nation Zone 3, Ephram Bouvier and Ralph
11 Goetz; for the Seniors, Alice Wylie and Nellie Raisbeck;
12 for the Youth, Mark Laycock and Joyce Lalonde; for Women's
13 Issues, Lorna Rankin and Cheryl L'Hirondelle; for Local
14 87, Gloria Contois and Lorille Chernon.

15 With that, I would ask Ephram Bouvier
16 to begin with this presentation.

17 **EPHRAM BOUVIER, Métis Nation of Alberta,**
18 **Zone Three:** Thank you very much.

19 Good evening, Commissioners, Elders,
20 members of the Métis Nation, and guests.

21 It is a great honour for the Métis Nation
22 of Alberta, Zone Three Regional Council, to present this
23 evening a brief which we have written up and which we feel

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1 is going to be beneficial to the Commission and to the
2 people at large.

3 There are a few things I would like to
4 talk about, which are not in the brief. That will come
5 a little later on.

6 First of all, I would like to talk about
7 education.

8 Easier access to funding for both youth
9 and adults, funding for schooling for elementary and high
10 school, should be available for all Aboriginal groups.
11 There are many high school kids that drop out of school
12 because their parents are too poor to buy proper clothing.

13 We see this in the Métis Nation. When
14 they go to school today, it costs us a lot of money, when
15 you have to start buying jackets that are \$200 to \$300
16 for Chicago Bulls jackets, and stuff like this. This is
17 where we have problems. We don't get any kind of funding.

18 The Métis people work for their money, and it's hard for
19 kids. This is why we feel there is such a drop-out rate.

20 A little later on we have some people
21 making presentations on youth and schooling. I will leave
22 the youth until they make their presentation, but we put
23 it in our brief so you would have it.

8 A little over a year ago, we came up with
9 an idea of working with Canada Employment and Immigration,
10 through section 25, that we do our own census in southern
11 Alberta. I want the Commission to know that in the little
12 communities surrounding Lethbridge and Medicine Hat there
13 are approximately 3 to 6 per cent Métis population in all
14 these small towns. This is what our census showed.

21 They are presently doing it in Rocky
22 Mountain, Red Deer and the Stetler area right now. In
23 Red Deer alone, as of today, they have counted 1,000 Métis

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1 people in Red Deer, where they were saying there was only
2 a couple hundred. So there is a lot of Métis people, not
3 only in Alberta but probably throughout Canada.

4 Employment is a major stumbling block
5 for the Métis people. The only jobs that we have are
6 under-paid and can't support families. Along with goes
7 the education. We have to focus on education more than
8 anything else.

9 It seems like, when we get our educated
10 people, we don't have the resources to pay them that the
11 oil companies can pay, that government can pay them, or
12 whoever. They are being taken from us. I personally feel
13 they are being used sometimes as tokens, to say: Yes, we
14 do have Aboriginals working within our organization.

15 I think, if we could be on a par with
16 some of these companies and have people working within
17 the Métis Nation, we can compete and have people working
18 for their own people, instead of going out.

19 Culture is a major part of the Métis
20 people. We are a very unique people. We are a mixture
21 of European and Native. Anybody who has any Aboriginal
22 ancestry is Métis. This is very unique. It is not only
23 the French and Native; it is the Scots, the English and

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1 any European who has been married to a Métis or crossed
2 paths with a Native or Métis. There is a lot of Métis
3 out there, so we don't just look at only the French and
4 the Aboriginals.

5 The Royal Commission has been going on
6 for some time. I have been able to be a part and listen
7 to some of the discussion. I think, when the Honourable
8 Brian Mulroney had stated there would be an Aboriginal
9 Commission put together to look at the issues of Aboriginal
10 people, he meant the Aboriginals to come and make
11 presentations to the Commission to go back with their
12 recommendations.

13 I listened to some of the briefs that
14 have been submitted by the Aboriginals, and I don't feel
15 sometimes that they are from the grassroots people. There
16 are non-Aboriginals out there drafting up the briefs to
17 send to the Royal Commission to be represented by the
18 Aboriginal people. Sometimes this really bothers me.

19 I feel that the Commission should be
20 listening to the grassroots people, to their concerns.
21 We don't need no big fancy words. We have been dealing
22 with big fancy words long enough and fancy briefs. We
23 don't need consultants to tell us what to do. We have

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1 been listening to them long enough. It is time that the
2 Aboriginal and Métis people started taking into their own
3 hands their own destiny.

4 I want to thank the Royal Commission for
5 listening to me on behalf of the Métis Nation of Southern
6 Alberta Regional Council. I want to thank you for allowing
7 me this time.

8 I will pass the mike over to my Director,
9 Ralph Goetz, if he has anything that he would like to add.
10 Thank you.

11 **RALPH GOETZ, Director, Métis Nation of**
12 **Alberta, Zone Three:** I think Ephram has said it all.
13 There is not much more I can add.

14 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
15 you.

16 We will now hear from Alice Wylie and
17 Nellie Raisbeck, for the Seniors.

18 **ALICE WYLIE:** Good evening. On behalf
19 of the Mawusow Seniors Club, I am grateful for this
20 opportunity to make this presentation.

21 In many ways, the needs of the Métis
22 Seniors are the same as the needs of all seniors. We have
23 a need for security, for respect, for dignity. We have

20 The definition of Métis is "mixed
21 blood." They were actually considered a mongrel race.
22 Just as a mongrel dog is not considered a valuable animal,
23 so it was that the Métis were treated as outcasts by both

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1 the white and the Native.

2 To be treated as an outcast in the land
3 of your birth is a wounding experience. Many of us coped
4 with this wounding by denying our heritage. This denial
5 has caused further wounding.

6 It is a very big step to go from denying
7 our heritage in order to protect ourselves to a stage where
8 we are gathering together to celebrate that same heritage,
9 but it is a step that must be taken, and we need help in
10 taking it.

11 Getting our seniors to gather together
12 is a special challenge to the few who believe in the
13 importance of this project. We are dealing with people
14 who have been shunned and insulted because they are Métis,
15 so it is not easy to get them to gather together to celebrate
16 the very condition that has so many hurtful memories.

17 Yet, the Métis, like every other
18 culture, has a right to be proud of their heritage. They
19 have a right to be proud of the great contribution that
20 their ancestors, both white and Native, made to the
21 founding and development of this great country.

22 Instead of suspicion and denial, we have
23 the right to stand up tall and straight and proclaim with

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1 confidence who we are. We are Métis.

2 As elders of our nation, we are striving
3 to set an example for the younger generations, an example
4 of tolerance, acceptance and pride in our heritage.

5 We seek the opportunity to gather
6 together with people of a common culture. It is important
7 to us that, when we reminisce, the listeners will nod their
8 heads and, "Yes, that is how it was. I remember."

9 We have a need for a building where our
10 seniors can live and socialize. We have a need for a home
11 that will provide nursing care to our sick and infirm.

12 We have a need of growing old in an
13 atmosphere of security, of friendship, of acceptance, of
14 dignity and respect.

15 These are the needs of all people. We
16 need help to meet them.

17 Thank you.

18 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** We will
19 move now to Women's Issues. Cheryl L'Hirondelle will make
20 the presentation.

21 **CHERYL L'HIRONDELLE, Métis Women of**
22 **Calgary:** On behalf of the Métis Women of Calgary, I am
23 pleased at this time to be making our first presentation

2 We have been in operation for almost two
3 years and have incorporated as The Métis Women of Calgary.

Our main objective is to provide a support group for the Métis women and their families in the city of Calgary and surrounding areas. After each monthly business meeting we operate as a support group for each other and for any and all interested Métis women in the Zone 3 area.

21 The Métis Women of Calgary was formed
22 out of a need perceived by many local women in the Calgary
23 area via telephone calls made to our local Métis Nation

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1 office.

2 We are also committed to raising our
3 profile within the Calgary community so that we may be
4 in contact other groups that deal with issues that are
5 women and Aboriginal related so that we may discover our
6 commonalities and create a more unified voice.

7 Besides our continued communication and
8 crisis management workshops, in the next year we will work
9 on creating and conducting a city-wide survey, both oral
10 and written, of Aboriginal women in Calgary, and will work
11 to stage events which will see respected and knowledgeable
12 people from our community made accessible via gatherings
13 and talks.

14 The focus of these talks is to make
15 available information to aid us in the recognition of our
16 unique and valuable history and culture within the fabric
17 of Canada.

18 Information such as Tracing Family
19 Trees, Métis History and unknown facts, books available
20 for a planned resource library, Contemporary Métis Women
21 Poets, and Films about the Métis are initial targeted
22 interests.

23 Since our inception we have been

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1 supported by funding from the Secretary of State - Women's
 2 Issues and by our own extensive fundraising devices and
 3 have recently re-applied in order to continue with our
 4 commitment to the Métis Women of Calgary and their
 5 families.

6 Our aim is to create, manage and grow
 7 with an active women's group that meets the needs of the
 8 Aboriginal women.

9 Concerns which we would like to make to
 10 the Royal Commission this evening, which directly affect
 11 the Calgary Métis community are:

12 1. The Status of Métis Women:

13 Issues which continue to face our
 14 community on a daily basis:

15 - Violence in the home and in the public
 16 eye;

17 - Drug and alcohol abuse;

18 - Support networks for family crisis and
 19 emergency situations;

20 - Day care -- access to Métis families
 21 with economic limitations

22 - Housing

23 - Continuing education and retraining

2 - Racism and related systemic devices,
3 such as stereotyping and discrimination which cause low
4 self-esteem and suicide.

6 2. Métis identity and history

18 Métis identity must be honoured so that
19 the systemic erasure of all our relations will stop and
20 we are enabled in the reinstatement of our culture,
21 languages, and rights as well as supported in re-creating
22 our families, networks and future directions.

StenoTran

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1 Thank you.

2 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
3 you, Cheryl. From Local 87, Gloria Contois is going to
4 do her presentation.

5 **GLORIA CONTOIS, Local 87 of the Métis**
6 **Nation:** Hi. I am very happy to be here on the part of
7 all the local people within the Métis Nation.

8 Local 87 of the Métis Nation of Alberta
9 was incorporated on August 12, 1987. Our mission
10 statement which was adopted by the membership is as
11 follows:

12 "Local #87 of the Métis Nation of Alberta
13 was founded for the express purpose of assisting our
14 members with community, social and economic endeavours
15 through our programs and services.

16 We firmly believe our primary focus is
17 the delivery of these programs and services for the benefit
18 of our members and families as well as contributing to
19 the Métis community at large.

20 We strive for equality with respect to
21 our funding programs. "You only get out of our programs
22 what you put into the programs," so we encourage our
23 membership to fully participate within our Local by

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1 assisting with our fundraising efforts as well as our
2 community projects, as we can only successfully achieve
3 our goals and objectives through a combined effort.

4 Our motto is to remain in Solidarity,
5 Honesty and Integrity."

6 Some of the issues we have are education
7 and training programs, funding for students taking
8 upgrading courses, for example the A.V.C. and Off-Site
9 Bead Project.

10 Right now we are working with the
11 Off-Site Bead Project for adult education at the Métis
12 Nation office.

13 Some of the problems forcing students
14 of Aboriginal and Métis descent in the areas described
15 above are:

16 In the education section such as
17 colleges and universities the fees for courses that our
18 people have to pay is out of reach because of the low-income
19 households they come from. In these areas the Local cannot
20 assist either because of their funds being derived from
21 bingos to assist as many families as they can on a smaller
22 amount of funding.

23 Also the student loans and grants aren't

Therefore, our recommendation to assist our Métis community in education is to make more funds and grants accessible for students wanting to continue in their specific fields in university and colleges and other educational institutions.

18 Our recommendation to this problem is
19 for the government to free up more training dollars, and
20 more leniency in the start of these programs would
21 eliminate the road blocks.

StenoTran

9 The solution to this problem would be
10 to have these government agencies allow these students
11 the funding to continue their educational endeavours.

On March 2, 1990 the Supreme Court of Canada had passed down a decision that the Métis people were a nation within Canada. Louis Riel was named the founding father of Manitoba on April 12, 1992, but the educational systems have not changed their teaching values toward Métis people, their history and their culture.

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1 our volunteers have a difficult time trying to access
2 government grants or other sources of funding to teach
3 our children the culture and history of our Métis ancestry.

4 Solutions to these problems would be for
5 the Government of Canada to help the Métis in their
6 endeavours to promote their history and culture, and also
7 for the Government of Canada to include the Métis in the
8 Canadian Constitution.

9 One last point: Louis Riel was not a
10 traitor, nor was he insane. We, the Métis community, want
11 Louis Riel to be exonerated of the crimes for which he
12 died. He fought for the rights of the Métis, treaty and
13 other nationalities. Because he was depicted in history
14 as a traitor and insane, we the Métis need his honour
15 exonerated so we can be a prouder people.

16 Thank you.

17 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank you
18 very much, Cheryl.

19 At this time I want to hand it over to
20 Mark Laycock. He will be speaking on behalf of the Métis
21 youth.

22 **MARK LAYCOCK, Youth Start Program:** My
23 name is Mark Laycock, and I am a Youth Worker with Child

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1 and Family Services. I also work with Joyce Lalonde who
2 is the Project Co-ordinator. We work out of the Métis
3 Nation of Alberta office.

4 We operate a Youth Start Program. Métis
5 Child and Family Services came into being in the fall of
6 1991 as a result of some community concerns as to whether
7 or not certain issues were being met on a social welfare
8 level regarding education with the youth in Calgary, Métis
9 and Indian youth particularly.

10 A Service Delivery Board was struck, and
11 that Board stands today. Ephram Bouvier is the
12 Chairperson of that Board locally here in Calgary for
13 Region 3. The Board is responsible to administer and
14 oversee the progress of the Youth Start Program and any
15 other programs that would be taking place under Métis Child
16 and Family Services as well. Currently, we only have one
17 program, that being the Youth Start Program, and I will
18 speak a little further to that now.

19 The Métis Child and Family Services
20 Youth Start Program is a project aimed at keeping Métis
21 and Indian youth in school. The youth are identified as
22 being potential early school leavers through the school
23 system by counsellors, and then they are referred to the

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1 Start Program which we operate.

2 The Start Program, with its two workers,
3 attempts to assist the youth in addressing problems that
4 they are experiencing which pose barriers to a productive
5 school atmosphere. Through a series of workshops and
6 initiatives, the students are encouraged to complete their
7 education.

8 The Program also established summer
9 employment with various organizations for the students,
10 to give them practical experience and, hopefully, to
11 provoke career aspirations with an emphasis on education.

12 Although successful, the program is
13 seeing increased demand as we are currently holding a
14 waiting list of approximately 24 students, with inquiries
15 weekly. This problem is only compounded with time, as
16 many of these youth will be lost and will indeed drop out
17 only to become another statistic and a burden to the social
18 welfare system or the continuing education system, or
19 whatever other service delivery agency they happen to seek
20 for survival.

21 Those who are lucky enough to get into
22 the Start Program face increased problems the longer they
23 wait. As time goes on, their problems become more serious

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1 and far more difficult to deal with. The waiting list
2 is not an accurate measure of the problem because many
3 students are missed at school, because schools don't
4 categorize according to race and this is a serious concern
5 of ours.

6 Also, we do not have the resources as
7 a Youth Start initiative to cover any more than the eight
8 or so schools that we are involved with at present in
9 Calgary. Currently there are 50 eligible schools alone
10 in the public school system, not including the separate
11 system. So we have been forced to limit ourselves to
12 basically dealing with the northeast area of the city of
13 Calgary.

14 Hopefully, if we are allowed to expand
15 the program, we will be in a position to broaden our scope
16 of effectiveness next year.

17 The program accepts youth that are 15
18 to 18 years of age. By the time many of these youth reach
19 the age of 15, they are already facing serious problems
20 at home or at school, such as alcohol, drugs, substance
21 abuse, both physical and emotional abuse, racism and
22 poverty, just to name a few. These problems don't go away
23 by sticking a child in a Youth Start Program for a year.

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1 Hopefully, we are able to empower and provide some of
2 the skills to these kids so that they can be more
3 self-determining in a positive way.

4 However, as a child grows older, his or
5 her problems change, and the needs of a 15 or 16-year-old
6 are quite different from those of a 17 or 18-year-old.
7 Herein lies another problem for the Start Program, as it
8 is funded annually and requires proposal submissions on
9 an annual basis. This task in itself is a serious
10 consumption of time for the project staff, something that
11 we would like to circumvent.

12 This process always casts doubt as to
13 whether or not the program will be around to help these
14 kids next year, and it would assist remarkably if the
15 funding could be approved over several years at a time.

16 In that way, we would be able to adopt a longer-term
17 curriculum and get away from a bandaid approach to the
18 problems that these kids are involved with.

19 The program becomes very involved in the
20 lives of the youth. The stability of secure funding for
21 the program has a very real impact on these kids. They
22 become cohesive with one another, like a family over time.

23 Many friendships are formed. The recreational

6 The 20 youth who have become involved
7 in the Start Program were, at the beginning of the program,
8 what we would refer to as "culturally sterile." Many of
9 them had no idea who we were or what the Métis Nation of
10 Alberta is. This underlines a serious problem with the
11 youth. When a youth must be desperate, must be facing
12 turmoil, that they must have upheaval in their lives, and
13 nearly be kicked out of school before they have exposure
14 to their culture and an organization such as the Métis
15 Nation of Alberta is disgraceful in our eyes.

23 The Youth Start Program is limited in

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1 its resources as well. If we were able to maintain a higher
2 profile in the community, we could avoid missing the youth
3 that aren't identified through the school system as they
4 may be able to identify with us first. Also, the families
5 experiencing cultural emptiness would be better served
6 to know that the Métis Nation of Alberta exists, and they
7 would be able to benefit from the other organizations
8 within the Métis Nation, such as Women's Group or the
9 Seniors' Group or Locals or other organizations that fall
10 under the Métis Nation's umbrella.

11 The corporate community has responded
12 fairly well with assistance to the Youth Start Program.
13 We have solicited assistance from various organizations
14 over the course of the year to help us with our recreational
15 activity. This, in itself, provides quite an ability to
16 motivate and reward effort and work that is well-deserved
17 by the youth.

18 Still many of the corporations are
19 unaware that we exist, and they are not aware of what we
20 are trying to achieve. By enlightening the corporate
21 community and the community at large, we will clearly help
22 shed light on the problems of the youth which are so often
23 reflected in the social issues of the day.

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1 Money for communication is required so
2 that our message can be heard.

3 The Youth Start Program is carrying the
4 load of several other needed services in the Calgary Métis
5 community. We, as youth workers, find ourselves
6 increasingly involved in intervention, in home support
7 services and other services as they are required by the
8 community.

9 Métis Child and Family Services in
10 Calgary is not in a position to operate other programs
11 at this particular time, mainly due to funding. It is
12 the intent of the Youth Start Program to inspire hopes,
13 dreams and goals into the lives of these young people.
14 Many have had this stolen from them. Not to cast aside
15 their future to misfortune and circumstance; rather, to
16 empower them with the skills, tools and knowledge to effect
17 their future with positive determination and a breath of
18 hope.

19 Thank you for your consideration.

20 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
21 you, Mark.

22 I want to ask Ephram if there are going
23 to be any more presentations.

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1 **EPHRAM BOUVIER:** As far as I am aware,
2 that's it for the presentations on behalf of the Métis
3 Nation Zone Three Regional Council.

4 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** I will ask
5 Georges or Viola if they have any comments or any discussion
6 to do with the Métis Nation. After that we will open the
7 floor for discussion.

8 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I would like
9 to thank you all for your presentations. I don't have
10 a lot of questions, just a few.

11 There was mention made about the need
12 to have the Métis mentioned in the Constitution. Of
13 course, the Métis are mentioned in section 35 already.

14 Was that a reference to the
15 interpretation of 91(24) perhaps? That was in the Local
16 87 presentation, I think.

17 **GLORIA CONTOIS:** Yes, it was.

18 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** That was
19 reference to 91(24).

20 In the presentation from the elders, you
21 made a reference to the same kinds of need as other elders,
22 and then you made mention of a need for a building where
23 seniors can live and socialize. Are you seeking a separate

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1 elders' building for Métis elders?

2 **ALICE WYLIE:** Yes, a drop-in centre
3 where the elders can gather together.

4 Many cultures have this already. They
5 have powerful lobby groups. It is a characteristic of
6 our Métis people that we do not gather together and become
7 a powerful lobby group. So getting something like this
8 is more difficult for us, and we need that extra help to
9 do this.

10 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In relation
11 to the Youth Start Program, you are working with both Métis
12 and Indian students?

13 **MARK LAYCOCK:** Yes, we do.

14 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What numbers
15 are involved?

16 **MARK LAYCOCK:** We don't specifically
17 break it down. We also deal with non-Aboriginal youth.
18 We aren't particular to Métis and Indian; however, that
19 is who we gear the program toward. We wouldn't turn
20 anybody away who was in need.

21 As to the numbers, are you referring to
22 the Métis as per Indian numbers?

23 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** No, the

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1 numbers of students. I was trying to get an idea of how
2 you get on the waiting list as opposed to --

3 **MARK LAYCOCK:** Our program will only
4 accommodate 20 individuals. However, we have contact with
5 many students outside of those 20 individuals as a result
6 of family situations. Quite often we have the brothers
7 and the sisters come along, so we impact quite a few more
8 than just the 20 that are officially in our program.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** When you get
10 on the program, you are on the program for a year; is that
11 it?

12 **MARK LAYCOCK:** It's a one-year program,
13 yes. It runs to the end of summer and starts in September,
14 hopefully, depending on how our funding comes up.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Why did you
16 stop at 20?

17 **MARK LAYCOCK:** We wanted to increase it.
18 We are looking for more. There is definitely a need there
19 for more. Typically speaking, we could see 40 easily.
20 The need is there for 40 at least but, unfortunately, the
21 way our funding goes we were cut back to 20 and two workers.
22 One of those workers also functions as program
23 co-ordinator. So the load is fairly high.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** What I am
2 trying to figure out is: Is it like a client list for
3 social workers? Social workers generally have a longer
4 list than 10 each.

5 **MARK LAYCOCK:** No, we are very in-depth.
6 We are very one-on-one with the individuals.

7 Primarily, they have to be identified
8 through the school system as being a potential drop-out.
9 There is a list of criteria, of things that usually happen
10 before they are referred to us. Then a school counsellor
11 will call us and say, "Do you have room in your program?",
12 and we will say, "No, but we do have a waiting list," and
13 we put them on the waiting list.

14 It rotates. We do have kids that move
15 through the program successfully and openings do arise.

16 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** I just
17 wanted to make a point in relation to some of the earlier
18 comments in the introduction. The point was made that
19 the Commission should be listening to grassroots people,
20 and that that is what the Commission was set up for.

21 We certainly believe that. That is why
22 this Commission is breaking all records of hearings. In
23 the first round of hearings we hit more communities than

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1 typically most royal commissions do in their whole life,
2 and are in the middle of our third round of hearings
3 already. We are going to more places than anyone else
4 has ever gone to.

5 When we go into a community, we are there
6 to hear from whoever wants to talk to us. We certainly
7 don't know of anybody making presentations on things that
8 they don't want to say. If they get assistance from
9 somebody to put together a proposal, that is their
10 business. We don't decide for them who is going to take
11 pen to hand.

12 Of the hearings that I have been in, I
13 certainly haven't seen anybody say anything that they
14 didn't seem to want to say.

15 We take the presentations at face value.
16 I don't know of any non-Natives writing for people. Most
17 of the presentations seem to be people themselves, perhaps
18 with a friend, making presentations. We really don't get
19 a lot of presentations that look like consultants have
20 actually been hired to do it.

21 We expect that in this round and in the
22 next round there will be a lot more presentations from
23 organizations. In those cases the presentations have been

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1 sponsored in some cases by funding from the Intervenor
2 Funding Program which we created. We handed out \$8 million
3 to organizations across the country, and we expect in those
4 cases that they would have hired people to make their
5 presentations. So the quality of those presentations
6 might be different from what people will do individually.

7 Certainly, it seems to me very clear that
8 people are telling us what they want.

9 I think I have gone through most of the
10 things I was interested in having elaborated.

11 We would be most interested in this
12 census that has been done. There was some mention of it
13 in Lethbridge yesterday by a Métis person there. It was
14 quite interesting. He suggested that, with the census
15 results, it meant that in many places there were more Métis
16 than there were treaty Indians in that area. He didn't
17 provide us with the information, so we don't know that
18 for a fact, but that is what he actually voiced at the
19 time.

20 We are most curious. We would like to
21 see the results when they are available. It would be very
22 useful.

23 Viola, do you have any questions?

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1 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** In the
2 presentation that was made by the Métis Women, you had
3 concerns that you would like to make to the Royal Commission
4 on the status of Métis women, and you have listed here
5 a number of issues that you are faced with on a daily basis
6 -- violence, drug and alcohol abuse. You have a number
7 of concerns raised here.

8 I am just wondering how are you dealing
9 with any of these things now, or how would you propose
10 to deal with them? Obviously, those problems do exist,
11 and I am just wondering what are you doing about them now
12 and what would you propose?

13 **CHERYL L'HIRONDELLE:** Some of the
14 things that we are doing on a local level are our support
15 groups that we have regularly, but the outreach that is
16 necessary to get to the community is not possible just
17 from what we're doing. We are doing our best. We are
18 getting our information out, but we really do need some
19 bigger help. We need the government to recognize that
20 these are issues that face all Métis people and that they
21 are not just on an isolated or local level.

22 We feel that the reason that a lot of
23 these issues are continuing to face us is because of the

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1 racism that still exists in the country and the
2 non-recognition that Métis people face in this country
3 with regard to our stake in the building of this nation.
4 We see it as very related.

5 What we are doing on a local level is
6 that we are meeting regularly. We invite women from the
7 community to come. We are setting up our own emergency
8 hotline for women who are in need in an emergency crisis
9 situation, who need babysitting or who need to talk to
10 somebody late at night or need to be routed into the
11 directions.

12 We are also looking for some sort of
13 infrastructure that could happen where it was for
14 Aboriginal people and by Aboriginal people, so that we
15 are not being told how to conduct our affairs from an
16 external source.

17 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Are you
18 using the existing services that are out there now, the
19 agencies? There are a number of Aboriginal services in
20 Calgary.

21 **CHERYL L'HIRONDELLE:** I will open that
22 up to some of my colleagues here.

23 **GLORIA CONTOIS:** We are a program that

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1 just got started within the past two years. As a meeting
2 base, we probably just started meeting at the new Métis
3 Nation offices.

4 We have gone to workshops. We have met
5 with other organizations like, say, Gerri Manyfingers'
6 Native home. We have met with her. We haven't had
7 opportunity to direct anybody that way, who needs that
8 much service yet. We are just there as a support group
9 for now, just to offer support to the rest of the women
10 who need support.

11 **CHERYL L'HIRONDELLE:** I think we also
12 need to learn about what all the other existing structures
13 are. That is jumping through red tape hoops and trying
14 to find out that information. We need that information
15 made available to us. We need resource documentation
16 telling us exactly what is out there on a local, regional
17 and national level.

18 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Do you
19 have a way of knowing, or do you know if the drop-out rate
20 is high amongst your students? Say, in Grade 8, 9 or 10,
21 are they dropping out of school?

22 **GLORIA CONTOIS:** Yes, it is. That is
23 what our Off-Site Bead Project is all about. We pick up

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1 women who are out of the school system for eight or ten
2 years, but we can only accommodate them on a percentage
3 basis, too, 20 per class. We are networking with A.V.C.
4 to get these women to training, to go on further for more
5 training -- not in jobs like doctors. We are training
6 them geared more to what is out there now in the work force.

7 **CHERYL L'HIRONDELLE:** We are dealing on
8 large level with women who, when they did drop out of
9 school, would have been at a very early age. They have
10 gone through having a family now. Any skills they have
11 are only pertaining toward the home. The only jobs that
12 are available are very base level jobs.

13 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** What
14 about right now? How are the elementary school and the
15 junior high students doing now in school?

16 **GLORIA CONTOIS:** As a women's group, we
17 are not working with younger kids. That is probably where
18 Mark comes in, with the younger children. We are working
19 with 18 up to, say, 47, 48, 50-year-old women, going back
20 to school to get training, to get more upgrading, to get
21 better jobs to take care of their families.

22 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Can
23 somebody answer my question about the younger ones?

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1 **EPHRAM BOUVIER:** I guess this is why we
2 have the Youth Start stay-in-school project going right
3 now with Mark Laycock, who made the presentation. I am
4 one of the Board members there.

5 When you start talking about 20 youths
6 -- and they were all here just a while ago. These are
7 the people that have gone through the cracks, and we are
8 losing them somewhere along the line.

9 The program has been in effect now going
10 on two years. In the first go-around we had 20 students
11 and 19 graduated. We lost one, and that one had to go
12 back to work to help support the family.

13 However, when we deal with 20 students
14 out of junior high, we're dealing with a lot more than
15 20 students. We're dealing with the families and there
16 could be six or seven members of that family. We're
17 dealing with counsellors, we're dealing with drug
18 addiction, we're dealing with alcohol abuse, we're dealing
19 with sexual abuse. All these things fall into there.
20 With one student, we can be dealing with 12 people. When
21 you take 20 times 12 and we're dealing with this many
22 people, that's a lot.

23 The criterion we set down when we started

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1 was that two counsellors will only have 10 students apiece
2 because we do not want to go into the social workers'
3 atmosphere where we are going to burn these people out.
4 They will be burnt out in the first year, and then they
5 are no good to us or anyone else, the students. We didn't
6 want them to burn out so, so this is one of the reasons
7 why we set out the criterion at 10 students per worker.

8 But they have a lot more because I see
9 Mark and Joyce dealing with students from the last term
10 that still come around the office and talk to them and
11 phone them. They have pagers and they are being called
12 two and three o'clock in the morning. When a youth gets
13 into trouble, instead of them sending them to a system
14 of being in jail overnight, they often get up and go and
15 pick them up and take them home or take them somewhere
16 that they do not have to go through the system. Maybe
17 this is what they need, a little bit of someone saying,
18 "Yes, we do care" at that time that could get them over
19 the hump.

20 We are losing a lot through the cracks,
21 although not as many as five or six years ago. A lot of
22 young people are dropping out at Grade 8 and Grade 9 because
23 they think they can go out and make the big fast dollars

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1 and live happily ever after. And it is not only with the
2 Aboriginals; it is with pretty well everybody. We are
3 really focused on the Métis and Aboriginal youth but, as
4 Mark said, we will take anybody in, whichever colour they
5 may be. We will not discriminate against anybody.

6 It is a very successful program, it is
7 a great program, and we have helped a lot of people through
8 this program.

9 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** That is
10 a provincially funded program?

11 **EPHRAM BOUVIER:** Federal It is funded
12 through Canada Employment.

13 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank
14 you.

15 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Before we
16 finish with the Métis Nation, is there anybody else that
17 came along with the Métis who wants to make a presentation
18 or ask a question or make a comment from the floor?

19 **MARNIE LANZ:** I would just like to make
20 a comment on behalf of the Métis Women of Calgary Society.

21

22 My name is Marnie Lanz. I am Community
23 Development Co-ordinator with the Métis nation of Alberta.

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1
2 The group was started as a result of the
3 many phone calls I received in the office. I went to Ephram
4 and he said, "Well, start your own women`s support group
5 then." What would happen was that, when I would refer
6 them to other Aboriginal groups that provided this service,
7 they would say, "Well, can't my own people help me?" This
8 is the reason we started our own group and this is the
9 reason we try not use the other groups. We still do refer
10 them or take them to the other resources that are available
11 there.

12 We had so many comments like "why can't
13 my Métis people help me? Why do I have to go to another
14 group?"

15 Does that answer your question now? You
16 had a question about that.

17 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you.
18 Does anyone else want to make a comment?

19 **DOUG VIVIER:** Georges, first of all, I
20 would like to thank you for all your past achievements
21 in working for the Aboriginal community in the past years,
22 and I know the Great Spirits are looking down on you for
23 guidance and you are giving them guidance. Personally,

3 I am a member of Local 87 of the Métis
4 Nation, and I have some concerns as well with respect to
5 the inclusion of the Métis peoples in the Canadian
6 Constitution. As Ephram put it, we may be mentioned, but
7 it is tokenism. I think we are the only Aboriginal people
8 who are not funded directly, for example for education
9 and health care system. This throws out many barriers
10 and burdens upon us.

17

20 With that, I would like to thank you very
21 much and I thank the Commission again.

22 CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS: Thank you
23 for your comment.

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1 Is there anyone else from the Métis
2 Nation out there who wants to make a comment?

3 **LORNA RANKIN:** Is there any funding
4 available for post-secondary education for the Métis
5 children? Is it possible to get some funding for
6 post-secondary education for the Métis children?

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** If you are
8 referring the question to us, we have been hearing very
9 clearly that there is not any. That is what we have been
10 told over and over. We have also been told very clearly,
11 as we have been told now and earlier, that there should
12 be. We have heard that for sure, very, very clearly.

13 Is there any closing comments anyone
14 wants to make?

15 **RALPH GOETZ:** I just wanted to answer
16 Viola's question when she asked if we knew what the drop-out
17 rate is within the Métis community.

18 We don't know. We have not really
19 checked into the schools that far. Our main idea is to
20 keep them in school. That is a study we should do to see
21 what the drop-out rate is in the Aboriginal community.

22 **MARK LAYCOCK:** I can address that to
23 some degree, too.

6 We can tell you with some degree of
7 certainty through informal surveys that the Métis and
8 Indian drop-out rate is much higher -- nearly 70 per cent
9 in some rural communities as well.

22 **EPHRAM BOUVIER:** I think one of the
23 things where we made a lot of progress in the last few

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1 years was within the school system.

2 One of the things I mentioned earlier
3 is our cultural differences, not only with the Métis but
4 with the Aboriginals. When we have kids coming off
5 reserves or Métis settlements into urban areas and going
6 to school, there is a totally different culture. On the
7 reserve or in the Métis community they can play and have
8 a lot of fun and have their coats wide open in the middle
9 of the winter, and it is acceptable on the reserve or in
10 the Métis community. But when you come into the city and
11 you see this, right away it is child neglect. They say
12 you are not looking after your child. But this is the
13 way they have been brought up.

14 Now I think we are starting to educate
15 the public and separate school boards that this is the
16 way of life out there. They have to accept our culture
17 if they want us to accept their culture. So we are educating
18 on both sides, and I think we are starting to come across
19 a little bit.

20 With regard to the drop-out rate, it's
21 hard to say because a lot of people do not want to identify
22 that they are Métis or Aboriginal. I don't really look
23 Métis, but we have been ridiculed when we were younger.

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1 A lot of people out there still don't want to admit that
2 they are of Aboriginal ancestry. These are the people
3 we have to educate because we have to be a strong nation.
4 If we are going to be a strong nation we need these people
5 behind us.

6 With that, on behalf of the groups, the
7 Métis Nation of Alberta, Zone 3 Regional Council, the
8 women's group, the youth group, we would like to thank
9 you for taking the time to listen to us tonight, and I
10 know we have been heard.

11 Good luck in the rest of your meetings
12 and your workshops. Thank you very much.

13 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
14 for coming tonight.

15 **COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON:** Thank
16 you.

17 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** Thank
18 you, Métis Nation.

19 We have another person who wants to be
20 part of the agenda. His name is Alvin Manitopyes. His
21 presentation relates to traditional use of provincial and
22 federal crown lands and protection of sacred sites. He
23 represents the Plains Cree people and AFN Environmental

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1 Committee.

2 **ALVIN MANITOPYES:** Greetings,
3 Chairman, Members of the Commission.

4 My name is Alvin Manitopyes, and I am
5 a proud mixture of Pusqua Nehiyou, Anishnawbe and
6 Assiniboine blood.

7 I have been involved in the
8 environmental movement for several years and have been
9 honoured with presenting one of the main indigenous
10 messages to the world leaders at the Earth Summit last
11 year.

12 I want to bring to the attention of this
13 Commission the need to protect sacred sites and to protect
14 our rights to spiritual freedom.

15 Historically, the mountains were never
16 negotiated in Treaty 4 and Treaty 6. The mountains are
17 considered very sacred by all original nations. All along
18 the foothills ceremonial leaders are spiritually guided
19 to conduct ceremonies at specific sites, some of which
20 are off-reserve, located on provincial and federal crown
21 lands.

22 Our Elders are being denied full access
23 to these site by the discretion of the Park

5 I would like to point out that we agreed
6 to share this land in an honourable manner. People have
7 immigrated to Canada to escape religious persecution; yet,
8 the spiritual rights of the original people are not being
9 respected. Unfortunately, those who claim to own the land
10 lack an understanding of our relationship to Mother Earth.

17 The present Green Plan is not addressing
18 our concerns at all. The governments need to enforce
19 policies on their agencies to respect our indigenous rights
20 to spiritual expression.

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1 consulted about the future of traditional homelands.

2 We require legal protection to protect
3 sacred areas from desecration.

4 The provincial and federal governments
5 should recognize and respect the rights of our people to
6 gather in ceremony, to gather herbal medicines, to possess
7 eagle feathers and other natural items, respect the
8 offerings left by our people, and respect the right of
9 our ceremonial people to freely cross the borders without
10 harassment by border officials.

11 This legislation can also include
12 patriation of sacred artifacts that are being displayed
13 for curiosity in the museums.

14 Finally, I feel that Canada needs to pass
15 laws similar to the American Indian Religious Freedom Act
16 in the United States.

17 Thank you for this time allowed for my
18 presentation.

19 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
20 for coming forward on this issue.

21 Could I ask you a question on the last
22 issue you brought up, the idea of having federal
23 legislation which is comparable to the U.S. in relation

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1 to the American Indian Religious Freedom Act. Why do you
2 think we need such an Act in Canada, with the Charter making
3 it very clear that all different religions are recognized
4 and can be freely entered into by people, and so forth?
5 What makes you feel that we need such legislation?

6 **ALVIN MANITOPYES:** It is very
7 unfortunate that legislation is required to protect
8 religious freedom of Aboriginal people. When you look
9 at the Declaration of the United Nations on Indigenous
10 People, the Working Group which will be meeting in Geneva
11 in July will be looking at accommodating these concerns
12 within that Declaration.

13 If you look at countries like the United
14 States and Canada who claim to be champions of human rights,
15 yet our rights are being violated. It's a real concern
16 that is being expressed by our Elders on both sides of
17 the border.

18 We have a culture that is presently
19 increasing and is being revitalized. There is a lot of
20 movement amongst young Aboriginal people.

21 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Is it not so
22 much the fact that the law and the Charter does not already
23 give us the religious freedom, but that what the

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1 legislation might do is bring extra attention to the fact
2 that we have Elders who travel with bundles and might want
3 to cross borders? Is that the idea?

4 **ALVIN MANITOPYES:** Yes. The Elders are
5 very concerned when they go to the borders and they get
6 harassed and there is desecration of their sacred items.
7 Also, I think there is a real need to have some legal
8 protection to respect the rights of these Elders.

9 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** In relation
10 to sacred sites, are you concerned that sacred sites are
11 being desecrated and destroyed, or is it the fact that
12 Elders and traditional people don't have access to
13 traditional sites, and this is what you are hoping the
14 legislation would do, or is it both?

15 **ALVIN MANITOPYES:** It is both. They
16 are inter-related, the sacred sites and also the rights
17 of our Elders to these sites. There is a need for these
18 agencies to recognize that they are tampering with our
19 religious freedom and that they are violating our rights
20 for spiritual expression. I can give you specifics, but
21 I think it requires a Task Force to look at it more closely.
22 There are many instances where this is occurring right
23 across Canada.

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1 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** Thank you
2 bringing up this issue. As I was telling you earlier,
3 it doesn't come up that often, and I am glad you brought
4 it up. Thank you.

5 **MODERATOR JOANNE THREE SUNS:** I want to
6 thank all the presenters. At this time, we will adjourn.

7 **CO-CHAIR GEORGES ERASMUS:** We will be
8 reconvening at 8:00 a.m., for interested parties.
9 --- Whereupon the Hearing adjourned at 8:05 p.m.
10 to resume on Thursday, May 27, 1993
11 at 8:00 a.m.