COMMISSION ROYALE SUR LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

ROYAL COMMISSION ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

LOCATION/ENDROIT: **CANIM LAKE BRITISH COLUMBIA**

DATE: **MONDAY, MARCH 8, 1993**

VOLUME: **1**

"for the record..."
STENOTRAN
1376 Kilborn Ave.
Ottawa 521-0703

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---Whereupon the hearing commenced at 2:15 p.m. on Monday, March 8, 1993.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: Good afternoon. My name is Edward John, the Grand Chief of Tl'azt'en Nation. I've been asked by the community of Canim Lake, this community, to action as moderator for the next day and a half. I am pleased to do so. It was requested about a month ago, five weeks ago that this session was proceeding and Charlene Belleau, on behalf of the community, approached me with a request and I heartily accepted.

I am surprised that the number of people that are former classmates of mine that I have known from my high school days in Prince George and I have had a chance to renew some of those acquaintances after 20 some odd years.

Before we proceed, I would like to call on elder Isadore Daniels to hope this session with a prayer. If you would stand, please.

(Opening prayer)

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: I would like next to call on Chief Antoine Archie for the welcoming

address.

ANTOINE ARCHIE, Chief of the Canim Lake Band: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to welcome you all here on behalf of my community, the Canim Lake Indian band. I would like to welcome you here for the next day and a half to participate in the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. We understand this here is the first event of such a nature that's taken place in any community and we are very proud to host it and I am certainly proud to be making the opening address on this.

Right now, I would like to introduce the Canim Lake Council members starting off with Jess Archie, Sheila Dick, Frank Pete, Martin Dixon. You've met our elder Ike Daniels and we have our staff here, our band manager, Alana Dixon, our social services worker, Art Ball, aboriginal rights worker, Elizabeth Pete, Dr. Mary Danaher, Gonzaga University, Dr. Bob Danaher, Gonzaga University.

With that, I would like to let this commission begin.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: Thank you very

much, Chief. Charlene Belleau.

CHARLENE BELLEAU: My name is Charlene Belleau. I would just like to welcome you here as well with Chief Archie and the rest of the band staff. I would like to introduce five people to you. Throughout the next day and a half of proceedings with the Royal Commission there are probably a lot of issues that will come up that will have an impact on yourselves, whether you have been to a residential school or whether you have not been to a residential school.

We would like to offer you our support, if you need a place to go and talk. Lena Paul, can you come up here to the front, please. Alana Dixon, Bob Emerick, Antoine Archie, Denise Archie, could you please just come to the front. I don't want you to just wave from where you are, because there's too many people.

These are individuals that throughout the next day and a half while we are going through the proceedings if issues come up for yourself around residential schools, we will be taking about sexual abuse, we will be talking about a lot of issues around residential school, if you have had a hard time and need someone to

talk to, please feel free. There are a couple of counselling rooms available upstairs and we would like to offer that service to you. Thank you.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: Thank you, Charlene. I would like to next to introduce to you members of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Firstly, I should, for the benefit of those who are not aware, this community of Canim Lake took the opportunity to invite the Royal Commission to their village here to listen to the stories from the people here and what they've gone through and what they've been working on in relation to matters that are now before you. The initiative was taken by the community themselves to invite members of the commission to their community.

I would like to introduce members of the commission one at a time: Viola Robinson is a Micmac. This lady to the left of my is a Micmac Indian born in Amherst, Nova Scotia. She attended the Micmac Indian Day School in Shubenacadie, and the Sacred Heart Academy in Meteghan before completing her formal education at the Maritime Business College in Halifax.

Ms Robinson entered native politics in

1975 when she was elected vice-president of the Non-Status and Metis Association of Nova Scotia. The following year she was elected president of the association, re-named the Native Council of Nova Scotia. In 1990 she became the President of the Native Council of Canada, a post she held until August 1991.

She has served on many boards of many different native organizations in Nova Scotia, including a term as chairperson of the Mikmakik Development Corporation. In 1990 she received an Honourary Doctorate of Laws Degree from Dalhousie University.

On the other table is Mary Sillett. Mary was born in Hopedale, Labrador and has extensive experience in aboriginal affairs dating back to the early 1970s. Her work experience includes executive and board positions with several Labrador community and regional organizations. Through those organizations, she gained invaluable experience in political, criminal justice, social and economic issues. She was instrumental in the groundwork leading to the creation of the Torngat Fish Producers Cooperative.

Ms Sillett relocated to Ottawa in 1981

to work as the Labrador member on the Inuit Committee on National Issues. She is a founding member of the National Inuit Women's Association, Pauktuutit, and served as its president for two terms. She also served as Vice-President of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada for four years.

In 1976 Ms Sillett completed her formal education, earning a bachelor of Social Work Degree from Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Ladies and gentlemen, Mary Sillett.

Next on my list, the honourable René Dussault, Co-Chair for the Royal Commission. René Dussault, Justice of the Quebec Court of Appeal, was born November -- perhaps I shouldn't say -- was born in Quebec City. He received his law degree from Laval University and a Ph.D from the London School of Economics. Mr. Dussault was a legal advisor to Quebec's Health and Welfare Inquiry Commission and lectured in law at Laval University from 1966 to 1970. He has served as special adviser to the Minister of Social Affairs in Quebec, as president of Quebec's Professions Board and as Quebec's Deputy Minister of Justice from 1970 to 1980. He held the Laskin

Chair in Public Law at Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto from 1983 to 1984. He taught at the Quebec National School of Public Administration from 1981 at the 1989, practised law and has been the author and co-author of several books on administrative law, including "Administrative Law: A Treatise."

Ladies and gentlemen, René Dussault.

Georges Erasmus, to many of you, probably requires no introduction. He is the former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations from 1985 to 1991. He was born in Fort Rae, Northwest Territories. All I can tell you is that he is little bit older than me.

In the early 1970s, he served as a field worker and a regional staff director for the Company of Young Canadians. He was president of the Dene Nation from 1976 to 1983, during which time he successfully led efforts to stop the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline. In 1983, he became the founding president of the Denedeh Development Corporation.

Mr. Erasmus serves as a board member on many organizations and foundations across Canada dedicated

to the advancement of human rights and ecological concerns, such as Energy Probe Research Foundation, World Wildlife Fund of Canada, Operation Dismantle and others. In 1985 Mr. Erasmus went to England on behalf of Indigenous Survival International and succeeded in convincing Greenpeace to drop an anti-fur campaign. He visited the Soviet Union in 1986 to study economic conditions of the indigenous people living in Siberia.

Mr. Erasmus is co-author of a book "Drumbeat: Anger and Renewal in Indian Country." In 1989 he received an honourable degree of Doctorate of Law from Queen's University. In 1987 he was appointed to the Order of Canada.

Ladies and gentlemen, Georges Erasmus.

Those are members of the commission who are here with you today and tomorrow, and will be listening very closely to the stories of the people here in this community and the issues that are before them.

With that, I would like to introduce both Mr. Dussault and Mr. Erasmus to make some opening remarks.

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: Thank you, Eddie, it's good to see you again and good to be back in

British Columbia again. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples was created in August of '91. It has a very large mandate. I will just very briefly summarize it for you.

The mandate of the Royal Commission can cover all social issues, all economic issues, youth issues, women's issues, elders' issues, political issues, the question of governance, self-government for some people, the constitution, treaties, Metis Nation issues, urban Aboriginal issues, the Indian Act, the Department of Indian Affairs, many, many things you can think of. Land claims, education, health, virtually everything that is important to aboriginal people, including justice issues and the whole question of whether or not aboriginal people should be running their own justice systems.

We started, as I said, in very late August of '91. Since then we have created an organization, we've launched our research, we've created an intervenor funding program of $8 million that assists anyone who wants to make presentations to us. We have been doing a lot of travelling. We have held hearings in over 70 different places in Canada in two complete rounds of hearings.

We have a number more of rounds before us, before we conclude the actual hearings that we are conducting. The hearings we conduct are open to everyone, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. It's not necessary for people to have a written submission before they present to us. We have tried to be an organization, a commission, that is solution oriented and so we have encouraged people to be involved in problem solving with us.

Everyone in this country that has followed Aboriginal issues has heard over and over again the problems that people have had whether it is in communities, whether it is in isolated communities or large cities nearby or on reserves or in large cities. What we think is needed and what we think we have been mandated to do is to search out with the Canadian people and Aboriginal people in this country the long-term solutions.

So our research is geared to that, the intervenor funding that we created is geared to that and the hearings we have conducted have been geared to that.

Everywhere we are gone, we have been told about the impact of residential schools. There probably has not been a hearing that we have conducted that has

not, at one point or another, provided an opportunity for someone that either has themselves experienced the residential school or else someone in their family has been involved in a resident school.

Ninety-nine per cent of the presentations that we heard have been negative. We have heard the odd presentation where there was positive experience, but the majority -- the overwhelming majority that people remember, at least, and wish to bring up with us -- is the negative impact of having gone through a residential school.

Inevitably, we are told about the loss of culture, the loss of language, the loss of parenting skills, the agony of being separated from family, from community -- even in the same residential school as other family members they were separated from their family members -- the many, many years of being away from home, the return home, the alienation, the need to reintegrate back into the community, the pain that people have experienced themselves, the way it was passed down. Many, many times these people that have been abused either sexually, physically or emotionally end up themselves

doing the same thing to other people, people that they love, people that are loved by them, and it's a very painful experience that we have been hearing.

In some communities they have wanted this to be a very major issue and a large part of the hearing is spent on this. But as the chief mentioned here, this indeed is the first occasion where virtually the whole event will be centred around the residential experience, the impact it's had on lives, but probably it's going to be the long-term impact.

Also, we want to get, along with the community and the people in this area, on with our lives. We want to talk about how do we remedy the situation. We want to hear from people with suggestions for the future, the healing that is necessary, how it can be done in a way in which it is beneficial for everyone so that the pain stops and growth and life in a positive way begins again.

It is with great pleasure that the commission accepted this special consultation to join with the community here of Canim Lake to provide today and tomorrow an in-depth look into the experience and also

to hear and to learn from some of the experiences of other residential school experiences in other parts of Canada.

We very much look forward to this, so with that I will pass this over to the other co-chair and we will get on very quickly with these special hearings. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER RENÉ DUSSAULT: Just a few words to say that the invitation we received from the Canim Lake community is very dear to our hearts. The mandate, as Georges Erasmus mentioned, the commission's mandate is very wide but there are issues that go to the heart of the living conditions of the people involved and certainly residential schools and their impact is one of them, if not the major issue, the most recurring one at least in Indian communities.

As any commission, we have undertaken a process of hearings. We are going to have four rounds of hearings to establish a dialogue. We publish a document between each round. We are going to publish a new document at the end of this month following round two and moving to round three.

Alongside of this very extensive public participation process, there is a huge massive research program that we started up. One item has to do with the residential school policy of the federal government. We are going to try to have a in-depth historical account of that policy, its impact, psycho-social impact, and also we are going to try to look at ways of redress and relief in order to enable people to turn the page and really move forward with their lives.

We know also that there is still a lot of public education to take place on this issue. We are aware that non-aboriginal people are not fully abreast of that policy, and the various consequences of the policy. People know that there were residential schools, that children have been there. What is not known as well is the purpose of it and of course it shed a light on the whole policy itself, the collective cultural and language impact that has flowed from that policy. Again, this invitation by Canim Lake enables this dossier really to get additional public education. We are very happy that the media could be present because we really feel that it is part of the role of the commission to get known

those things in order to be able to move toward a new relationship, a reconciliation that will enable partnership and positive feeling from both sides, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

We are really looking forward to what is going to happen in the next few hours, the next day and a half, and we thank you very much again for giving us this opportunity to meet with each and every one of you. I hope and I have no doubt that it will be a very successful event. Thank you.

I don't know if our two colleagues would like to say just a word of welcome.

COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT: I have not much to say, except thank you very much for this invitation. I think Georges and Mr. Dussault have said it all.

COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON: I agree.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: For those of you who may not have a copy of the agenda, very briefly the afternoon session there will be a presentation by the Assembly of First Nations, B.C. Vice-Chief Wendy Grant, followed by a coffee break, and then presentations by a number of non-Aboriginal peoples involved in issues like

this from 3:15 to about 4:15 and then a question and answer period. I know that members of the commission may want to ask questions of the presenters. Then we will be break for dinner around 5:00 p.m., at which time you have been invited to view the film called "Beyond the Shadows" at the Gonzaga building. I'm not sure exactly which direction but it's at the education centre. From my understanding, this film is from the First National Conference on Residential Schools. I'm not sure how long it is. You have an opportunity to take that in while they are setting up this hall here for dinner. The dinner speaker will be National Chief Ovide Mercredi from the Assembly of First Nations. A very special part of the session is an understanding of the psychological impact of institutionalization from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., and ending with the pipe ceremony.

There is one other point I wanted to bring to your attention. I was advised that there were approximately 150 delegates registered as observers. Many people may have come with a view to making presentations to the commission. The community here invited the Royal Commission to hear from one specific

community on how it is handling this particular issue, the impacts of residential schools, and they've invited representations from First Nations throughout the province, many of whom have sent delegates for you to essential take a look at what one community is doing in this province in addressing the residential school issues in its community with a view hopefully that you might be able to take something back to your communities that would help you deal with these issues in your communities. At least, that's the way I've been advised that this day and a half session has been structured. If you get an opportunity during the coffee break or during the dinner break to grab a hold of any one of the commissioners if you wish to talk to them, you are of course welcome to do so.

With that, I would like to call on the B.C. Vice-Chief Wendy Grant. She will be providing an historical overview of the residential school system in British Columbia. With that, I would like to call on Wendy.

WENDY GRANT, Assembly of First Nations Vice-Chief: Thank you, respected elders, honoured people

of the Cariboo-Chilcotin, commissioners, I would like to start by thanking Chief Archie and the people of the Canim Lake First Nation for having the courage and strength to invite the Royal Commission and opening up your territory and allowing us to come in and present on this such sensitive issue.

As Chief John has said, I have been asked to do an overview of B.C.'s Indian residential schools, their origins and policy, their objectives and their impacts.

Prior to Confederation, during the colonial period in mainland British Columbia and Vancouver Island, the major denominations of the Christian church sent missionaries to the furthest corners of First Nations territories. William Duncan went to Metlaktala, the Reverend Doolan went to Kincolith, J.B. McCullagh went to Aiyansh. Wherever they went, they opened missions and schools. Father Charles Pandosy went to the Okanagan, Thomas Crosby went to Nanaimo, and the Reverend Garrett established himself at Songhees.

During the 1860s -- a period of great upheaval and epidemic diseases brought by white

people -- the goal of the missionaries was offensive, but it was primarily aimed at recruiting Aboriginal people to their faiths.

After Confederation, when the legislative responsibility for Indians west of the Rockies was transferred to Ottawa, a new purpose was found for Christian Missions and Schools, and what began in the years following 1871 was a long period of direct and deliberate cultural genocide.

The word "genocide" should never be used loosely or irresponsibly, so in a moment, I will refer directly to the architects of Canada's residential schools' strategy, and what they had to say for themselves about what they were doing.

First, however, I would like to state that nowhere in Canada was the instrument of the residential school used against Aboriginal culture more intensely than in British Columbia.

Between 1880 and 1970, between one-fifth and one-quarter of all the residential schools in Canada were in operation in British Columbia. Most of the residential schools in B.C. were operated by the Catholic

religious order known as the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. While some schools closed and others opened over the years 1880 to 1970, there were between 10 and 20 residential schools in operation in any given year through these decades. In any given year, there were as many as 1,500 children interned in those schools from virtually every one of British Columbia's First Nations.

I say "interned" because that's what was happening. These places were internment camps. Nothing less. It's high time that Canada -- a country that boasts about its human rights record -- faces the facts about what Indian residential schools were really all about.

Canada's post-Confederation federal Indian policy was quite clearly described by Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent-General for Indian Affairs from 1913 to 1932. He was fond of saying how much he wanted to "get rid of the Indian problem." This is how Scott described Canada's Indian policy:

"Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question, and no

Indian Department."

One of the main instruments Canada used to execute its policy was the institution of residential schools. And we should not forget where it was that Ottawa found the weapon of the residential school in its war on Aboriginal culture.

The origin of Canada's residential schools' policy lies in an initiative begun by Ulysses S. Grant, general in the United States Army and later their president. He described his initiative as policy of "aggressive civilization" against First Nations after the wars against the Indians in the American west.

In 1879, a Canadian Indian department official, Nicholas Flood Davin, was sent to review Grant's policy. Its primary feature was the industrial school system operated by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Davin was impressed and submitted a report to Superintendent-General Lawrence Vankoughnet, which was accepted, detailing how a parallel policy should be implemented in the Canadian west.

The point of Indian "industrial" schools, Davin clearly stated, was that the beginning of

the assault on Aboriginal cultural was "to take away their simple Indian mythology."

The policy was up and running in the fiscal year 1883-84 with the construction of residential schools at Qu'Apelle and High River (Roman Catholic) and Battleford (Anglican).

The policy was controversial from the start because of the forced removal of Indian children from their families, often by withholding food rations to parents reeling from the effects of smallpox, and hunger due to the depletion of the buffalo.

In 1889, Canada's Indian Commissioner, Hayter Reed, said this:

"Every effort should be directed against anything calculated to keep fresh in the memories of children habits and associations which is one of the main objects of industrial institutions to obliterate."

By the 1880s, in British Columbia, federally-funded residential schools, operated under strict guidelines by the churches, were already in operation at Fort Simpson, Nanaimo, Victoria, Saint

Mary's, Kincolith and Metlaktala. By the turn of the 20th century, more schools were established at Clayoquot, Alert Bay, Alberni, St. Joseph's, Coqualeetza and Squamish.

At the time, B.C. Indian Commission I.W. Powell, made plain the function of B.C. residential schools: "Barbarism can only be cured by education," he said. And Canada's Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs noted, in his annual report for 1887, that the schools were succeeding in their objective, which he described as "the emancipation of the Indian from his inherent superstition and gross ignorance."

All along, the evidence shows that the church was well aware of its role in this policy, and its complicity.

Father Carion, principal of the Kamloops Industrial School, wrote in 1896:

"We keep constantly before their mind the object which the government has in view in carrying on the industrial schools, which is to civilize the Indians, make them good, useful and law-abiding members of society."

There can be no doubt that the Canadian government, and the churches that carried out Ottawa's objectives in the schools, were fully intent on using the schools to destroy Aboriginal culture. This was done by force, and the penalties for resisting were harsh. In 1927 Father Nicholas Coocola describes this incident at the residential school at Lejac, near what is now called Fraser Lake:

"The mounted police have forced the Stoney Creek (Indians) to send back their children to the school at their own expense and fined them $8 each with threats... Maybe the Moricetown children will have to be brought in the same way."

Harsh penalties were also brought to bear against the children themselves. Father Carion at Kamloops wrote in 1899:

"At times, the wild nature of the Indians reasserts itself. Six boys deserted one evening last March, and were brought back only three days after. In such cases, severe measures have to be resorted to."

One of the primary methods of destroying Aboriginal culture was the direct assault on Aboriginal languages.

It is not good enough to pass off the punishments meted out to children who spoke their languages amongst themselves -- whipping them, beating them, or shaving them bald -- as simply misguided efforts in an attempt to teach them English so they would get along in the world of white people. This was what the Superintendent said of the enforced "English-only" policy in 1895:

> "So long as he keeps his native tongue, so long will he remain a community apart. If it were possible to gather in all the Indian children and retain them for a certain period, there would be produced a generation of English-speaking Indians, accustomed to the ways of civilized life...and the Indian problem would be solved."

Again, the churches, serving Ottawa's policy for the price of its per-capita funding for Indian

students, took up the challenge enthusiastically. This is what Sister Mary Placide said at Christo School in Clayoquot, in 1902:

"Their mother tongue has been entirely eradicated and English is spoken by all the children in the school."

Father E.C. Bellot describes the effect of the English-only policy at Squamish Mission School by 1937:

"Only a generation has elapsed and from an ignorant and wild tribe, we find one educated and speaking English better than they speak their own language."

This policy continued from one century to another. And as late as the 1950s, almost one-sixth of B.C.'s entire Aboriginal population was interned in the residential school system.

By the 1960s, the churches that operated the schools for the Canadian government in British Columbia had received in excess of $6.6 million in per-capita funding for their efforts.

Enforced internment remained government

policy, even when day schools and integrated schools were an option for Indian parents. When a group of Songhees parents, who are located south of Vancouver Island, attempted to send their children to Craigflower School, they were threatened: if they did not return their children to the federal institutions, their family allowance cheques would be cut off.

Even under the later policy of integrating native and non-native children, the role the provincial government assumed differed from the federal government only in form, but little in function.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, thousands of Indian children were apprehended from their home communities and forcibly integrated into public schools. Instead of the churches obtaining the per-capita grants for interning Indian children, the provincial government became the beneficiary of federal funds for the so-called "education" of Indian children.

Even today, one-quarter of all children in B.C. living in the care of the Social Services Ministry are Aboriginal children.

In British Columbia, there has been a

renewed awareness of the abuses suffered by Indian children in residential schools. Recent revelations have focused attention on the effects the residential schools have had on the dignity and integrity of Aboriginal communities.

These revelations have centred on acts of abuse committed by clergy against Indian children, acts that many British Columbians greet with a sense of disbelief.

But it was that same disbelief that was expressed by a Provincial Court Judge in 1985, when Salvation Army officer William Gareth Evans was acquitted on charges of sexually abusing young Gitskan boys at a religious school camp. The judge said a minister of the church simply wouldn't lie.

In January, 1988, that same minister, William Gareth Evans, was convicted of sexually molesting 16 Nisga'a boys during the time he spent as a teacher in the Nisga'a village of Canyon City.

Then in April of 1988, Derek Clarke, the former dormitory supervisor at St. George's residential school in Lytton, was convicted of sexually terrorizing Indian boys at that institution for more than a decade.

The judge who convicted Clarke said the man was guilty of at least 140 sexual assaults, and the number could be as high as 700.

In May 1989, the Catholic Oblate Harold McIntee pleaded guilty to 17 counts of sexual assault against Indian boys interned at St. Joseph's Mission.

Then in April of 1991, Oblate Glen Doughty pleaded guilty to four counts of gross indecency committed against Indian children at the same residential school.

But what shocked British Columbians the most was case against Bishop Hubert O'Connor. The bishop, even though he admitted to having sexual relations with girls interned at St. Joseph's, remains a man of the cloth. He was charged with rape and indecent assault, and three months ago, the courts dismissed the case against him on the grounds that the Crown failed to disclose evidence to the defence. The Attorney General is reviewing the case, but the turmoil created by the way the O'Connor case was handled might take years to subside.

Reports of abuse and mistreatment at residential schools are not recent. The so-called

"hidden" legacy of residential schools has been a fairly public legacy for some time.

As far back as September, 1886, the Montreal Gazette reported general resistance by parents to having their children taken away from them because of reports of abuse, particularly the physical abuse of a boy whose identity is reported only as "Charlie No. 20." The St. Peter's Band Council made strenuous protests about the behaviour of Reverend J.H. Fairlie who admitted to sexual intimacy with female pupils at Rupert's Land School, where some of the young girls were also found with marks on their bodies weeks after being strapped.

Reports of widespread negligence appear throughout the Indian Affairs Department documents, citing "wretched conditions", "really dangerous" buildings, severe fire hazards, chronic sickness and disease, and in one case a doctors' report on prairie schools suggesting that conditions were so bad that one could be led to think that they were deliberately designed to incubate and spread disease.

According to a schools' branch memo in 1902:

"Returns from the industrial schools show that up to the 30th June last, there had been 2,752 pupils admitted and of these, 1,700 had been discharged. Of the latter number, 506 are known to be dead; 249 lost sight of; 139 in bad health; 86 transferred to other schools; 121 turned out badly and 599 said to be doing well."

The schools are closed in B.C. now, but their legacy lives on in the suicide, despair, family breakdown, violence and suffering that is the certain outcome of a systematic war on Aboriginal family life that lasted more than a century.

What kind of an impact could anyone expect, when succeeding generations of children are removed from their homes, taken away from their parents, and taught that their families back home are savage and pagan and barbaric?

What happens to a child when he is returned to his family and he no longer speaks their language, and they embody everything that the priests taught him was wrong about his people?

What happens to a community when generation after generation of its children are removed and then returned, years later, full of hatred and confusion?

How do children interned in residential schools grow up to become healthy parents?

Finding the answers will not be easy, but they must be found. There is no point in pretending that the answers will not demand substantial effort in government policy.

With that, I would like to present to you on December the 16th, 1992 the First Nations leaders in B.C. called for specific action. It came from a presentation that was made by Charlene Belleau to the chiefs as they met to discuss the treaty process in British Columbia and I want to read to you and ask that this be recorded with your papers.

It starts out that the staying of charges against Bishop Hubert O'Connor is a travesty of justice which heightened the anger and deepened the feelings of betrayal in First Nations communities in B.C.

At an emotional session of the B.C. First

Nations Summit, chiefs and leader expressed outrage at the mishandling of the case, and at the continuing traumatic effects of the Indian residential school system on many First nations people and their communities. The representatives of most major tribunal councils in B.C. acknowledged a number of issues and endorsed specific actions to be dealt with as soon as possible.

The First Nations Summit expresses its full support for the Aboriginal women involved as complainants and witnesses in this case. They deserve admiration for their courage in coming forward so that charges could be laid against O'Connor and we stand with them, thankful for their strength.

These women and their families have expressed immense anguish related to the case only to have an inconclusive prosecution. This amounts to being victimized and traumatized not once, but twice: first by the residential school system and then by the failure of the justice system to deliver a fair hearing.

Therefore, the silent tortures that continue in our communities must be dealt with immediately. The federal government, the provincial government and

the churches at the highest level must recognize and accept their responsibility and end their continued silence and denial. They must also provide the necessary financial resources to allow First Nations to address these problems. This must include funding for legal and emotional support to the First Nations women involved and to others who suffer from B.C. residential schools.

There must be positive action by the churches. The commitment to resources must be serious and long-term. In other words, a serious approach is needed to deal with the long-term effects for the many women and men in similar situations in our communities right across this province. They need therapy, treatment and training; they need understanding and compassion.

The First Nations Summit also demands an independent public inquiry into the Indian residential school system.

Over the next two days, you will hear from Aboriginal people directly about how they have survived residential schools. You will hear about the desperate need for communities to heal themselves. You will no doubt hear about the apologies that the churches

have recently offered and the measure they proposed for the purposes of reconciliation.

We must carefully assess the nature, scope and intent of Canada's residential school strategy. We must carefully assess the role of the church. We must listen carefully to the survivors. We must thoroughly review the options available to Aboriginal people for restitution and redress. We must carefully consider how it might be possible to achieve justice after all that has been wrought by residential schools. That is what First Nations in B.C. have committed themselves to do over the next year. In time, that is what all Canadians from all walks of life must also prepare themselves to do.

In closing, I would like to thank each and every one of you as commissioners for the time and effort that you are spending on all of the issues. I thank you.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: Thank you, Wendy. At this point the agenda calls for a short coffee break. I want to let you know that immediately after the coffee break we will be hearing from the RCMP General Investigation Services Constable Grinstead; a gentlemen,

by the name of Grant Hartley involved in the matters at St. Joseph's Training School for Boys in Alfred, Ontario, and there have been some recent developments in that particular instance; and Richard Rogers, a lawyer involved in the Mount Cashel Orphanage in Newfoundland.

We will deal with that immediately right after coffee break. We will take about 10 minutes.

---Short recess at 3:05 p.m.

---Upon resuming at 3:25 p.m.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: Welcome back. The next portion of this agenda, the session involves a presentation from a non-Aboriginal perspective by individuals who have been involved in matters relating to the prosecution or involvement in the prosecution of individuals involved with matters such as sexual abuse.

Before we get into that presentation, a number of you were requesting copies of presentations which have been submitted or given to the commission here, particularly a copy of Wendy Grant's presentation. Copies of that are being made now and I understand will be available sometime either later on today or tomorrow. I am not sure how many people know that particular story

about the history of residential schools in British Columbia, a story which needs to be told and understood.

The next portion of the agenda involves the presentations which I referred to earlier. We have with us this afternoon Constable Bob Grinstead of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. He is originally from Toronto, Ontario. He worked a number of years in the Northwest Territories, 15 years in British Columbia and recently transferred back to Ontario. In the six years that he was in British Columbia, he was involved as a plain-clothes officer in matters involving sexual assaults. He was the officer involved in investigating the complaints involving the former Bishop O'Connor from which charges were laid. This gentlemen here is Constable Bob Grinstead.

Over to my left the gentlemen in the middle is Grant Hartley, from Ottawa, Ontario. He has been a taxi for 36 years and he tells me he is still a taxi driver. He was one of four individuals who originally founded the Ottawa Taxi Driver's Association. He is a past president of the local of the Canadian Union of Operating Engineers and General Workers, President of Ottawa Taxi Driver's Association for 24 years

intermittently.

He has some training in matters relating to insurance, a number of years, and he presently is a Co-Chairman and the Ottawa Co-ordinator for the St. Joseph's and St. John's Training School for Boys Help Line. He was previously involved in other positions as a treasurer and the co-ordinator of St. Joseph's and St. John's Training Schools for Boys Help Line and formerly an executive board member of the Canadian Child Abuse Foundation. Mr. Hartley,

The third individual on the panel this afternoon is Richard Rogers, a lawyer with Williams, Rowbottham, McKay and Marshall, St. John's, Newfoundland. He has a degree from Memorial University in 1985 in psychology and political science. He has a law degree from the University of New Brunswick in 1988. He has been practising as a private lawyer since 1989. He is currently an agent with the Crown Attorney's Office involved in matters relating to criminal law and civil litigation, including personal injuries. He's been busy with matters relating to law and concentrates his efforts there.

Those are the three individuals who will

be making presentations to you this afternoon from various perspectives regarding the issues before you. Each of them have about a 15-minute time limit. With that, I would like to commence with Constable Bob Grinstead.

BOB GRINSTEAD, R.C.M.P. General Investigation Services: Thank you, very much. It's nice to be back to an area that I sort of consider home. The air and the water are a little cleaner than in Toronto.

I am happy to be given the opportunity to talk to you today and I am going to give you an historical account of how the police investigation began into the St. Joseph's Mission School. I think it might help to understand where I come from, so far as I did grow up in suburbia of Toronto, don't remember having ever met a native person in my life before I joined the Mounted Police at the age of 19.

My first posting was in Hay River, Northwest Territories. I am sure Mr. Erasmus would probably know what Hay River was like. I was immediately confronted with policing natives, Aboriginal people.

In the years since then, I have been to

a number of different communities policing in Mount Currie, Pemberton and in Williams Lake actually for 12 years. It did not take me very long to discover the problems that exist in a lot of these communities, the severe alcohol and drug abuse, the high incidence of suicide and violence, and some of the other social problems.

I did not really have any answers though as to why the Aboriginal peoples of Canada had all of these problems. It was not until I began to investigate this case specifically of St. Joseph's Mission that I began to get some of the answers.

I should take you back to about December of 1987. It was at that time that I received a number of disclosures of sexual assault from Alkali Lake. I knew the history of Alkali Lake. They had a huge alcohol problem prior to that time and that they had worked very hard in trying to reach sobriety and were really very successful, and a lot of you will know the history of how that occurred. I think it was probably a very natural transition that once the community got a handle on the alcohol problem and they maintained their sobriety that all of the underlying problems such as sexual abuse and

other things finally started to surface because the cover of alcoholism had been taken off and all of a sudden people began to disclose that they were victims of sexual assault.

I received quite a number of allegations and they involved things like fathers assaulting their children, step-children, sisters, brothers. I would say all told there were probably about 30 allegations that I had to sift through. The result was that there were four Alkali Lake males charged with a number of sexual assaults and they were all dealt with by the court system. It was as a result or during that investigation that one of these men surfaced that he had been sexual assaulted at the St. Joseph's Mission School by a priest.

The investigation into the school itself began in early 1988. I knew from the outset that it was going to be a very sensitive investigation because -- well, there are a lot of reasons why sexual assault investigations are sensitive in the first place, but this one of course involved the church and the Aboriginal peoples of Canada are tied in very closely with specifically the Catholic Church. You've heard about that history earlier.

There was also the problem of this inherent mistrust of the police and you also heard earlier that a lot of times when the children ran away from the schools that it was the Mounties that were dragging them back kicking and screaming and I suppose that we were in that way tied into "the system". There were the usual feelings of guilt and embarrassment and so on that come with assaults of a sexual nature and also the fact that so many of these people had kept this secret and hadn't told family members, had not told anyone for so long, in some cases 25 years.

So it was very personally painful for them and in a lot of cases because of the way that I had to conduct the investigation they had no prior warning that I was coming to talk to them and so often I would show up at a place like Canim Lake or other places and simply ask to speak to a certain person who had been named as a possible victim and I would sit down with them and explain to them why I was there to see them and, of course, it became a very emotional situation for them and myself in that I, upon hearing a lot of these allegations, felt inadequate myself and so often the men were crying and

all of a sudden a lot of these painful memories were coming back in waves and we were alone sitting in a room. At some point I had to get up and walk away. Often these men didn't want anyone else to know, so then it was difficult. Was I justified in going to see perhaps a band councillor and alerting them to the fact that I have some concerns about the person that I have just spoken to about their emotional state? Well, these are small communities, as you all know, and things are talked about and a lot of these men wanted these things to remain a secret and they didn't want their names to become public in the communities or in the press.

Most had not told their families. A number of them thought that they were the only ones that were victims of assault. They did not know there were these vast numbers of other people that had encountered the same sorts of problem.

On the other hand, I did talk to many people who went to the school who said, "Yeah, it was pretty common knowledge. We could see the priest prowling the dorm at night." I was told that a lot of the boys used to wear bathing suits to bed, tied up so that if the priest

came to their bedside that they'd have some sort of protection, or that they would make sure that they would fall asleep on their stomachs and often the priest was watched as he was prowling the dorm.

In total there were in the neighbourhood, I think I counted up about 26 communities that were affected specifically by the St. Joseph's Residential School: Kluskus, Quesnel, Bridge River, Alexandria, Ulkatcho, Nazko, Toosey, Seton Lake, Anahim Lake, Stoney, Pavilion, Bonaparte, Redstone, Anahim, Williams Lake, Fountain, Anderson Lake, Mount Currie, Squamish, Soda Creek, Deep Creek, Canim Lake, Alkali Lake, Dog Creek, Canoe Creek and some students from Kamloops as well.

As I began to talk to these men, I began to realise just how huge an area the St. Joseph's Mission serviced. It involved a fair bit the travelling around to these different communities.

I realized at the beginning that I was going to require the cooperation of the native people, the victims themselves, and the Aboriginal bands, because when I went to see the victims they would say to me things

like, "Yes, I was a victim, but I also know two or three other boys that were a victim." So I would take down the other names -- the two or three names that they provided and told them that, "Look, when I go to see these other people I am going to talk to them in a very general way and I'm not going to tell them that you are the one that provided the name." I felt I had to do it that way, otherwise we could wind up with people upset with one another.

As I had the third and the fourth and the fifth and the sixth victims, my list of potential victims grew larger and larger and larger, because everyone that I saw gave me two or three names, so the project became much bigger than I had initially thought.

The other thing that I noticed is that the people that I was dealing with primarily as victims were on parole for sexual assault, were on probation for sexual assault had been convicted in the past of sexual assault, or were in jail for sexual assault. In fact, of the first 10 victims that I identified, seven of them had become offenders themselves. I haven't actually looked -- I did not in the end look at and add up how many

had become offenders themselves, but I'm sure that there were quite a few more.

I just want to talk briefly about the kinds of offences that we are dealing with here, specifically with regards to Father McIntee. In the end, 31 men told me that they were a victim of sexual assault at the hands of Father McIntee. Not all of these men were represented in the criminal courts. He was eventually charged with 17 counts, 17 victims and pled guilty to those 17 counts. But you should know that there were many more victims, but they either chose not to have their assault dealt with by way of the criminal court system, or for legal reasons the Crown decided not to proceed with a charge involving that offence. So there were a total of 17 charges as a result.

But I, by no means, got an opportunity to talk to everyone that went to the school. At any given time there were 300 children going to the school, so it would virtually take me years to try to track down everyone that went to the school. One of the other things that I did notice as I was trying to find people is that a lot of them were dead, and we are talking about people that

would have been in their late 30s and early 40s and it seemed to me to be a disproportionate number of men primarily that had met early deaths.

All of the assaults that I am talking about when I am discussing Father McIntee were assaults that took place at the mission school during the years 1958 through about 1964-65. There were a number of other victims that were identified in other communities in B.C. as the investigation grew. All of the assaults took place either in the dormitory, or he would take the boys up to his private room on the fourth floor of the school and the majority of the offences involved boys seven years old to 15 years old and it was mutual masturbation and fondling incidents.

Some of the boys were assaulted once, some of them multiple times, 30 plus times, so often that some of the men couldn't remember a specific number. It was interesting that some of the boys -- they are now men -- thought that they were identified as a potential victim through the confessional. They would go in and speak to Father McIntee during confessional and then that night they would be paid a visit. Of course, they couldn't

turn around and talk in the confessional about what had happened because, once again, it was Father McIntee who was in the confessional.

For the most part, it was expressed to me that the boys who were assaulted were the quiet, shy and vulnerable, the homesick; those kinds of boys who were probably not going to speak out during the assaults and would probably not speak out at all.

One of the victims I can tell you was asked to provide other names of boys and he felt that if he did this, then he himself wouldn't be victimized any more. So he did. He provided the names of some other boys and then watched as they were abused and he wasn't abused any more. But that kind of a situation only adds to the pain that he's now experiencing, not only the pain of the sexual abuse but all of the guilt feelings that go along with handing over other victims to the priest.

The investigation revealed that Father McIntee had gone on to abuse children during the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and right into the late 1980s in the communities of Ucluelet, Terrace, Duncan, Kitsault, Smithers and Prince George. The majority of his victims

were Aboriginal persons, boys. I think if I remember correctly, there were two or three Caucasian boys. One of the victims was assaulted in the church rectory within about a week of having been released from the psychiatric hospital after attempting suicide.

One of the victims had been in the past sexually assaulted by another person and went to Father McIntee because he had no one else to turn to. So he approached the priest for counselling and some comfort and the priest put his arm around the boy and took him into his room and took his pants down and masturbated him.

Eventually, I talked to a fellow who told me that, yes, he was the victim of Father McIntee, but he was also a victim of Brother Doughty. Now, that came as a bit of a surprise that there were would be a second individual at this school in the same time frame that would be also be abusing boys. I began to look into that and in the end identified seven victims and Brother Doughty was charged eventually with four counts. All, once again, were males between the ages of approximately 12 and 15 and several of these boys were also victims of Father McIntee, so they were assaulted by both.

There were two other Brothers at the mission who were also identified as having abused -- sexual offences -- but they, for a variety of reasons, were never charged. Each had one victim only and those cases were also fondling.

Of course, there's the case of Bishop O'Connor, which I could probably talk about for a long time. But that's probably a situation that I should avoid being that it's presently before the courts -- the appeal courts.

When doing the investigation, I took the approach that I would go to see as many people as I could, and I told you that certain people had been identified as victims and others-- well, I had lists from the different bands of the boys who went to the school and so I would try to get around to the specific reserves where I knew that there were potential victims and talk to them. But I didn't want to try and convince any of them that they should become involved in the court process.

I thought I could best approach it from an educational standpoint, explain to them what the investigation involved, that there were others who had

come forward, and give them an opportunity to disclose. If they weren't comfortable talking to me, that was fine. I had to respect that decision. As I said, there were people who identified themselves as victims, but chose not to have it dealt with through the court system. I think that's fine. I don't think anybody should force them or try to convince them or coerce them into proceeding or having their name surface.

I don't think that we can underestimate, by any means, the impact that these assaults had on the victims. I talked to you before about how seven of the first 10 victims became offenders themselves. Most said that it had a huge impact on their sexual lives. They struggled with wondering whether they were gay, whether they would ever be able to marry and have children, had difficulties in relationships, alcohol, drugs, and some expressed thoughts of suicide.

I did have occasion go to D'Arcy which is on Anderson Lake. I had a list of six boys that went to the school that I wanted to talk to and I found one person of the six. The other five were dead and had died somehow either an alcohol or violent-related death. I

don't know whether there's any correlation or not, but it certainly struck me at that point that an awful lot of the people that I am looking for are not around any more.

Also, there were a large number of people that were identified as probably victims. In other words, "Go and see him because I saw the priest go to his bed and I heard the boy crying and I used to watch and I know that he's victim." Ultimately it turns out that that person that I am looking for has committed suicide. That seemed to happen an awful lot. Once again, I am not drawing any direct connection but it leaves one wondering.

In Alkali Lake I was looking for 23 people and seven were dead.

Of course, during the investigation I not only heard allegations of sexual abuse, but other sorts of abuses as well and you've heard some of them today and I'm sure some of you will be aware of the boys that run away and are picked up by the RCMP and brought back and their heads are shaved; boys forced to wear dresses, girls made to wear flour sacks with a hole cut out for the arms and head; bed wetting. You were punished by having to

walk around outside carrying your mattress with the urine stain on it; rotten food; strappings, with conveyor belt straps, for speaking their Indian language and for a variety of different reasons and there were suggestions that some of the nuns at St. Joseph's were also very abusive so far as physical assaults.

I limited my investigation to the incidents of sexual assault, primarily because of the statute of limitations and that sort of thing when it comes to other assaults.

I know I did talk to one girl who is very upset, still has a memory of sneaking up to the fourth floor. The fourth floor is where the priests' and the brothers' residences were and she and another girl crept up the stairs and saw a nun coming out of one of the priests rooms crying and holding her clothes in a bundle in front of her.

One boy told me that one of the dorm supervisors was often having sex in the supervisor's room and that all the boys would be able to hear what was going on in the room next to them because it was only separated with a glass partition.

I found that there were some definite common threads that ran through all of the victims in the case. They all felt that they were affected sexually in some way, that it affected relationships, low self-esteem, guilt, anger. I think that we have to remember we are talking about boys that were assaulted at a very vulnerable age when they were just becoming sexually aware and obviously confused at not only the sexual contact but the fact that it was a member of the church.

We have identified four offenders in the one residential school between 1958 and 1967 and I wonder whether that is coincidence. I wonder, is the St. Joseph's Mission School unique? Are there a lot of native communities that are still struggling with alcohol and drug abuse and a lot of the painful experiences that they may have had in other residential schools are still buried under the surface? I suspect that is probably the case, from what I've heard.

As I said, from the beginning -- and I've probably used up all of all of my time -- I didn't know anything about Aboriginal people when I first started policing. I now think that as a result of talking to

virtually hundreds of Aboriginal people, teachers and other people that worked at the school and the priests themselves that I have a better appreciation for why native communities have the problems that they do today.

I think that the fact that we've had three or four or five generations of native people go through the residential school system and we've heard about the loss of parenting skills, language, culture, those kinds of things, personally, I think it's had a huge impact on the native communities.

I think that the focus should be on healing and recovery. I know that Canim Lake has taken huge steps in that direction and I applaud them for that. I just hope that, in the end, the native Aboriginal people can overcome what happened to them at the residential school.

Thank you for the opportunity to come today.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: Thank you, constable. I would like next to call on Grant Hartley of St. Joseph's Training School for Boys in Alfred, Ontario. Mr. Hartley.

GRANT HARTLEY, St. Joseph's School for Boys: First of all, I would like to extend compliments to Constable Bob Grinstead. I thought he was talking about Alfred, and I say that with the utmost of sincerity. Everything that he has described is on paper and documented.

I was in Alfred for two and a half years during which time I ran away between nine and 11 times. Often times we were caught by the other boys in the bigger division, brought back to the school and head shaved, severely strapped, and often times -- well, three of the times that I had run away I was picked up by the OPP because I got too far away and you would tell the OPP constable, such as he described previously, and the constable would come back and tell the Brother director, Brother George, what you had told him and Brother George would say, "Oh, well, you know these boys are compulsive liars, thieves," and everything else.

Unlike the residential schools, most of the boys in Alfred were sent there by the juvenile courts for an array of several charges, anywhere from petty theft to incorrigibility and truancy. I personally was sent

there for all three, the last time I was classified as incorrigible and sent to Alfred. That was the beginning of my nightmare. I was both physically and sexually assaulted on numerous occasions. I ran away from there the last time, be it either the ninth on the eleventh time, successfully got away joined the air force. After I was 18 the air force found out that I was classified at large and honourably released me, thus ruining a career or a possible career because I got very good reports from them.

In 1958 I went to Archbishop Lemieux in Ottawa. I asked for an audience with him. The fellow that was in his office wearing the long white robe with the red sash, I don't what you would call him, third secretary, 17th secretary, whatever the case might be, wanted to know why I was there and I told him and he ordered me off of the property. I said, "No, I'm not leaving until I see Archbishop Lemieux." He phoned the police. When the police came, he yelled at me that I was trying to darken the steps of the Catholic Church and I was banned from the property forever and the police took me outside and told me, "If you come back and you insist, I'll have to charge you." Who wants to be charged?

I let it lie again until 1964 when Dr. Morton Shulman who was a member of the provincial legislature brought it to the floor of the house and I thought this is great, you see, we are going to get this thing dealt with. I called him, I spoke to him, and again it was buried.

In 1958, the provincial government of the day ordered a Mr. Sinclair to investigate the allegations of physical and sexual abuse at Alfred and there was about a 300 page report, of which I have the complete document at home. It takes a lot of time to get the complete document. They give it to you piecemeal hoping to satisfy you. In it are the specific charges of physical and sexual abuse that was ongoing at Alfred. They ordered them to quit administering corporal punishment in 1961. That's in the document. They never did, they continued on.

Everything that Constable Bob has described has happened at St. Joseph's. As a result of that and being frustrated time and time again over the years and not being able to be believed and not being able to get it out, I thought that it was a dead dog. And then

Mount Cashel owned up. When Mount Cashel opened up, a chap by the name of David McCann and a chap by the name of Darcy Henton who is a Toronto Star reporter, were sitting in a restaurant in Toronto and Darcy said to David, he said, "Can you believe this, what happened at Mount Cashel?" David said, "I not only can believe it. I can tell you the other hell hole in this world," and David related his story about St. Joseph's.

As a result of that, both he and David took off to the province of Ontario archives and dug out the Sinclair report which was buried by the Deputy Minister, D.W. Graham, of that particular day. Darcy just couldn't believe what he was reading. It was far, far more horrific than Mount Cashel.

As a result, he wrote a by-line, submitted it to his editor, I understand, according to what Darcy told me, that the editor couldn't print it because he didn't believe it. So when Darcy produced all his documents they had the lawyers come in apparently and check it over and gave the Toronto Star the okay a few weeks later to print that story. As a result of that story, I had a friend at The Citizen who is a reporter by the

names of Charles Lewis who phoned me and said that he'd like to talk to me and he showed me the Toronto Star clip and he said, "Is any of that true?" I said, "It's all true." He said, "I know you were in Alfred, why didn't you talk before about this?" I said, "I've talked many times about it, but if you are not going to be believed, you don't talk no more."

The following day, which was March 30th, 1990 he printed my story. As a result of my story and David's story, we both got together, had a talk and decided that we would organize. David in his past life was great on the bureaucratic road path and I was great in the organizational skills, so between the two of us we built a pretty good organization, unincorporated, of presently 653 members. But up until June 24, 1992 it was approximately 323 members.

As a result of our beginning, the first thing we did was we called on the government for counselling for victims and the Peterson government immediately gave it. At the same time, the Peterson government ordered a woman by the name of Joanne Campbell to review the safeguards of children's residential programs. As a

result of that, and I attribute this to Help Line because it was Help Line who initiated and motivated this to be done and, as far as I'm concerned, it's one of the greatest accolades that our organization recognizes.

The next thing that happened during the period was that we not only got organized but we got a top-notch legal firm to work with us in trying to select a convener to bring all the parties to the mediation table because we weren't interested in suing for money. When you lodge a civil litigation, you are going after dollars. I don't believe there's a court in the world that would say to a person who is being sued, "You have to reeducate that man." It's a case of dollars.

We had made up a list of needs and an assessment of needs and wants from the membership. The membership told us they wanted to learn to read and write. The membership told us they wanted to have a vocational rehab item, re-education and educational upgrading. They wanted medical and dental coverage for the damage that was done to them physically. They needed counselling. Well, we got counselling, loads of it.

The fifth item on the agenda, of course,

was compensation, dollars. We organized a group. We asked several people to convene a meeting between all the parties: The Ontario government, the two Archdiocese, Ottawa and Toronto, and the two brothers, Ottawa and Toronto. Toronto never joined us, They came in speculatively as spectators to feel it out and their lawyers, as far as I'm concerned, gave them bad advice and many of the lawyers at the table also told them that they were getting bad advice. As a result, we have a contract worth $13 plus million. Since June 24 when this contract was signed, and this contract takes into consideration a wide scope of awards, it has an award from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board of Ontario, it has an award from the Ottawa Brothers for pain and suffering, there's contributions by both archdiocese in regard to our opportunity funds. It covers counselling, literacy training, everything we asked for. We are extremely proud of that.

During the term of negotiations, the people at the table from all parties, other than Help Line, asked for a survey report or an analysis to be done on St. Joseph's and St. John's survivors of child abuse and

their assessments of needs. That was completed and it was very shocking, primarily because it didn't satisfy the participants at the table as to what they expected to be turned out. They expected to be exonerated by this survey, instead a larger hole was dug.

I'd like to read one part of that survey's team report. This is before this was done, but it all matches.

"In our first face-to-face meeting with the men, we were struck by the paradox they embodied. They were indeed men, the majority of whom presented as survivors of an arduous life. This was indicated through obvious physical features such as missing teeth, scars, nervous mannerisms, evident discomfort in walking and sitting, and faces aged well beyond their years. As well, their very postures emanated tension, hostility and distrust. During one-to-one interviews this aggressive stance was moderated as lack of self-esteem, fear

and the shame of disclosure became evident. Revealed to us --

And this is something that everybody forgets -- "Revealed to us was the wounded boy inside each man, uncomprehending and desperate to be heard."

The second thing I would like to read you is out of this survey:

"Nights were remembered with tormented images of being awakened by a Brother, to be coerced into sexual acts, ordered to stand up all night and beaten if you fell asleep. In the dead of winter, made to put on shorts, go outside and clear the skating rink with a toothbrush.

That hell hole was run not with care, understanding or instruction. It was run with fear, intimidation and cruelty. The literature indicates that traumatic physical and psychological injury in childhood may have later physical and psychosomatic manifestations in adulthood. These include sleep

disturbances, nightmares, neuroses, phobias and increased anxieties."

When we hold a general meeting and we sit at a table, which is on a level playing field such as this, I sometimes wonder how I managed to maintain my sanity. We have an enormous amount of people that are completely illiterate. In the last two months, I have done 31 applications for pain and suffering and counselling which are 27 pages long, 21 questions and seven or eight extra pages for adding in comments where there wasn't room on the question. They are all illiterate. We were told by the judge, "You're going to get an education. You're going to be sent to Alfred where you get a good education." I'm sorry, that wasn't so.

In regard to the Help Line reconciliation model agreement, just Thursday past I was given a complete report in draft on the process that took place for the two years that we sat at a mediation table, once a month, sometimes twice a month, sometimes two days back to back. This process -- this is only a draft form, but it will be available and become part of the public domain in a very short period of time. There are just

a few changes that are going to be made.

I read it over the weekend and it's hard to believe that we put that much work and effort in. Whether it's going to become a reality or not, remains to be seen. The present participants that belong to the reconciliation implementation process committee now want to use the funds that are contained within the agreement for purposes other than what they are designed for. I have talked to my lawyer in great length over it. I believe if they use the funds for anything other than what is designated in the articles contained in the agreement, that's a breach of contract, and I intend to take them to task, and having read the minutes of the last two or three RPIC meetings, although they haven't adopted that which was suggested, just the mere fact that it was suggested should have been pointed out that that would be a breach of contract. We are going to further discuss this, but I wanted to say that.

Thank you very, very much for your time, and thank you, Bob.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: Thank you, Grant. I would like next to call on Richard Rogers.

RICHARD ROGERS, Mount Cashel Orphanage: Thank you, chief, members of the commission, ladies and gentlemen. I wish to thank all of you for hearing us today, particularly for the invitation that's been extended to me to come to British Columbia. This is my first trip here and in the few days that I have already been here, I have seen an incredible number of similarities between Newfoundland and British Columbia. The first being that they are coastal provinces. Secondly, I note that many of the peoples that I have seen and spoken to live off the land and many of the people in Newfoundland still subsist through the fisheries and through the hunting and through their own planting because Newfoundland is still very much a very rural community province.

I have also been touched by the friendliness that the people have shown to me and to other members. I thank you for that now.

Grant has told you that one of the things that brought open in his Ontario scenario was a discussion about Mount Cashel. Mount Cashel was an orphanage in St. John's Newfoundland -- I use the word "was" because it no longer exists. At the turn of the century, it was

created and constructed by a Catholic lay order known as the Irish Christian Brothers of Canada.

The purpose of the orphanage was to encourage not only the christian upbringing of young men but also to provide that parenting that was missing from their lives. Many of the young men were placed in the orphanage as a result of a death of one or both parents. Commonly a death of a parent occurred either through tuberculosis or through a death in the fishery.

Many times, I think as is understood, with large Catholic families it may come a point where an illness by one of the parents prevents them from adequately looking after the children. In most cases, the young men were sent to the orphanage.

An inquiry on Mount Cashel was started in 1989 in Newfoundland. It dealt with the abuse that occurred there both physical and sexual. The only reason why this particular inquiry was held was the result of, I suppose, the courage of the young men that attended this institution and coupled with the media. This was a perfect example of how the media, through responsible reporting, was able to place pressure upon the government in power

to open up and reinvestigate the horrors that were known to the government back in 1975 and 1976.

This is a short story I'll read you which was written and placed in a local publication in St. John's on April 2, 1989. It will give you the complete, I suppose, feel for what Mount Cashel stood for at that time.

"In late 1976, a man by the name of "Dax" --"

They called him "Dax" to preserve his identity. "-- decided he had had enough of life at the Mount Cashel orphanage. He hurled a pepsi can through the glass which protected the fire alarm system in the main hall, finished the job with his foot and was permanently expelled from the orphanage.

`I busted up the unit for the alarm system...and then left. I took off. I bailed out of there...The only way to get out of there was to get thrown out,' he recalls.

Two weeks ago "Dax" (not his real name)...gave a written statement to the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary --"

That would be the local police.

"-- detailing how he had been sexually abused by three

different Christian Brothers during his three-year stay at the orphanage.

In December, 1975, when Dax was 10 years old, he gave the same statement to police at his mother's house on Duckworth Street.

When Dax walked through the doors of the Mount Cashel orphanage in 1973, he was a tough, cocky eight year old. He remembers that he `always had to be into something' at the orphanage, snooping around the building in places he wasn't supposed to be, picking fights and fearlessly `answering back' the Christian Brothers. He still laughs when he remembers fainting as an alter boy during a service at the Mount Cashel chapel because he had taken a swig of communion wine before the service and had tied the belt on his robe too tightly.

But when he remembers the sexual abuse and beatings he suffered as a boy at the orphanage, the 25-year-old man is left shaking, soaked in sweat.

Soon after he arrived at Mount Cashel, Dax experienced his first sexual encounter with Brother [A] who was in charge of one of the dormitories. He can recall sitting in the TV room at the orphanage and being called over by Brother [A] who was sitting in a chair. Brother [A] took Dax's hand and pushed it into one of the pockets of his robe. He had his pants unbuckled underneath his robe and he placed Dax's hand on his penis.

`I would try to pull my hand clear, but he would have his there to hold it on top of mine, feeling him up. Probably if someone turned around and looked he would tell them to watch television or probably grab them and hug them and rub their heard...He'd put one in and he'd grab my hand and shove it in this way and hold it down around his penis and that.'

Some nights Brother [A] would allow Brother [B] to tuck in the boys in his dormitory. Before

they went to sleep, the boys on the bottom bunks would kneel on their pillows on the floor and the boys on the top bunks would kneel on their beds, and they would take turns saying the rosary, a different mystery every night. After prayers, when the lights were out, Brother [B] would move from one bunk to the next rubbing the boys bodies, pushing his hands beneath their pyjamas and fondling them.

After several months at the orphanage, Dax was moved to another dormitory away from his younger brother --"

Which we found was a common process of separating the boys so that they wouldn't have any family support.

"One morning, the brothers met when they were washing up for breakfast at the long row of sinks and mirrors in the hall between the two dormitories. Dax's younger brother told him he had been sexually molested by

Brother [B]. Dax recalls that he immediately went with his brother and reported the complaint to Brother [A]. The Brother `smacked my face off;' slapping the young boy in the face five or six times, saying `what business is it of yours.'

Dax later recalls seeing Brother [A] with his robe hiked up around his waist and his pants down trying to have sexual intercourse with a blond-haired boy in the study room in the basement at Mount Cashel.

Dax was also approached sexually by Brother [C] after he discovered Brother [C] and an older boy masturbating each other in the shower room next to the pool. He believes Brother [C] saw him stick his head inside the shower room door. A couple of days later, Brother [C] asked Dax to come with him to examine the progress of the pool renovations."

I could go on and on with this story

because at the inquiry, which lasted from 1989 to 1990 and 150 days, there were over 30 boys which came forth to give their description of the abuse that they suffered. What remained consistent with that and what I've heard here is that, number one, the abuse occurred at the hands of a lay order and that was a group of persons which respected -- supposedly respected -- Christianity and the people that followed those Christian ideals.

That is not to say that all of the particular people involved with the Irish Christian Brothers were of the same abnormal behaviour and criminal activity. But what we did discover through the inquiry was this activity was known and the police had commenced a police investigation and nothing was done, it was covered up.

In 1989, again through the pressure of the media, the government had no option but to once more re-evaluate what had happened in 1975 and '76. And through the inquiry, and with over 200 witnesses and again not unlike an environment here before and audience and television, it was discovered that, on grand scale a failure to provide the protection and the care for those

children, had occurred.

The blame had to rest with a number of organizations. Firstly, the government, the provincial government, which was responsible for the care of these wards, as they became to be known. Additionally, fault also rested with the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary whereby through police investigations they were aware of what had happened, but no prosecutions had taken place although they had removed two of the Brothers and sent them away to another portion of Canada for counselling.

Additionally, we found that fault also rested with the Irish Christian Brothers themselves because they knew of these particular atrocities and they were also involved in this cover-up in removing the Brothers. The biggest failure we found was that it was their belief that they had immediately dealt with the problem. They said, "Well, the offenders were taken out and removed." But the single most important group, the victims, were completely ignored. If they provided any problems to the Brothers that were still there, they were immediately removed or expelled from the school. That's how they were dealt with.

As a lawyer, my job is to try to bring, once and for all, in some sort of venue, be it court or through a negotiating table, the problems to a head. So far our practice has been to use the court, the Supreme Court of Newfoundland. We have commenced a number of civil actions.

Eight of these particular Brothers have already been found guilty through criminal trials. Two pleaded guilty, six were found guilty, one of them is currently appealing. Another lay person, who was a support staff, was also found guilty through criminal trial.

Ideally, this provides for us great support because it shows that in a closed system beyond a reasonable doubt has been met, that is the Crown attorneys have proven, with the assistance of the investigators, the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, that there is no doubt that these activities occurred and these men were found guilty of it.

The next step is to take those guilty findings and institute them into the civil action that we have started. To date, we have not been able to

effectively tie up any of these cases. We are still in the middle of them. However, I think it's quite clear, and I agree with Grant that there are certain limitations that courts can provide for us. They can't specifically tell somebody to do something. But what they have to do is measure damages in the form of a dollar.

In order for us to prove damages, it's going to be necessary not only for us but as well as any other persons here that were involved with this local nightmare that the damages have to be proven. It's quite easy to make the suggestion in the allegations that, yes, I was a victim. But it's going to take a group effort on the part of all of the victims that attended these schools in British Columbia. When I say a "group effort", I mean that all the people are going to have to try and understand that if they join together for a common purpose and a common cause, that they will be a more effective and powerful unit.

It has been easy for us in Newfoundland to deal with Mount Cashel because it is a very homogeneous group and a number which we can actually put some sort of figure to. However, here my understanding is -- and

I have to thank Wendy for providing me with a great background on the residential school problem -- that the numbers involved may never be known and the only way that the victims will ever be known is if they come forth.

I think it's important that the victims of these residential schools come forth. It's going to be important for some sort of group to be set up so that they will know where to go. Not only are they going to have to be opened up to some sort of communication, there's also going to have to be set up from the start counselling services because of reliving these memories. My understanding is that many of these people would be adults now. In most cases, we found that the victims of sexual and physical abuse will suppress the damage that they've suffered and it might be a triggering event, it could be a very simple conversation that will bring forth the memories in a sudden flood and there has to be counselling brought forth immediately to help these people.

Additionally, if you are looking at terms of damages, fortunately for us, many of our victims are still at a stage in their life where counselling and money and the ability to retrain and re-educate can make

a difference. Many of them are still in their late 20s and early 30s, so there is still hope with them with respect to perhaps changing their lives around. If I am correct in assuming that many of the victims of these residential schools are in the older category, I still don't think that the effect that's been perpetrated on them and the damages should be tempered at all.

The group, when it goes forth and provides its assessment and what it should demand of the government and from any other defendant or from any other parties that were involved in this nightmare, it's going to be important to stand up and suggest that we must be compensated for the negligence that was perpetrated upon us. It is not acceptable to suggest that because a person might be in the twilight of their years that monies have to be reduced. Give that person the ability to decide what they want to do with that. Let that person decide if they want to try and make what's left of their life comfortable or to pass it on to their children or grandchildren.

My understanding from speaking with other members involved with this local situation is that

many of their children too have suffered the evil cycle. So there's going to have to be some sort of program set up for not only the immediate victims but the secondary victims.

I realize that this Royal Commission is going to deal with an incredible amount of information dealing with a large number of particular issues. But I don't think that anybody has ever attempted to minimize the suffering that victims of sexual or physical abuse have been victim to. It is a taboo area which is slowly becoming much more open. To date, we've found that there's been unprecedented numbers of victims coming forth dealing with incidences which have occurred, 15, 20, 30, 40 years ago, that they feel justice must now have to come forth. That is proper. To keep quiet is not acceptable, because to keep quiet will encourage this kind of activity in the future. Many of these victims we found prefer to remain anonymous. But their strength will increase as they realize that they are not the only victims.

The public is going to have to be very tolerant and they are going to have to be very understanding, particularly of the families. A victim

may have been quiet for 20 years and never have told his or her spouse or children and some day if that has to come forth, the families are going to have to be the first persons to support them. Even though I would suggest that the government, the religious orders and all the other institutions that have been involved in these ordeals be responsible, it is also an area where the families also have to be supportive. I'm very happy to see that there is such a strong support in the native community here in B.C. and I think that will be half the battle to support one another in a community and spiritual nature.

Again, I see an incredible number of similarities between Newfoundland and the native community in B.C., a very large family, people who have similar beliefs, also a group that has suffered greatly at the hands of authority.

I don't think there's much more I can add, except that I, and I suppose the other members that have presented here, can be available for questioning now before the commission as well as after to individual peoples.

I'm very happy that I was able to

provide, in a very short presentation, the similarities between what has happened in Newfoundland and what has happened here.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: Thank you, Richard. We have until 5 o'clock to take questions and hopefully there will be answers provided to the questions. We have roughly 25 minutes.

Again, at 5:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. there will be the presentation of the video "Beyond the Shadows" in the Gonzaga building just across the parking lot. At 5:30 p.m. we will have the community dinner being put on by the people of the community of Canim Lake.

We've heard this afternoon what I think is probably indescribable to many of us to try to put into some summary what you have heard. The presentation by Vice-Chief Wendy Grant and the presentation by her on the policy framework, the policies of governments and the execution of that policy by churches and the impacts on a broad scale in British Columbia.

The particular story of one school, St. Joseph's Mission School, and the investigation by Constable Bob Grinstead and specific examples of the

numbers of people who became victims, the early deaths, the suicides, the alcoholism, the shame in the communities, the people that deal with it. His suggestion focused on healing and recovery; and Grant's personal story and the tragedy that we hear of what happened to him and his involvement in an initiative to seek redress and to have governments and groups who are involved behind those particular training institutions to address the needs of survivors.

The situation in Mount Cashel of course is a very public story brought forward by an inquiry and the matters involving how compensation is pursued following on the heels of criminal prosecution.

In a brief, I have tried to capture what was said by the four individuals. We have 20 minutes for those four presenters to be asked questions. If we have time, maybe there are questions from the floor as well. But we will give the opportunity to the commissioners to ask the questions. In any event, you will have the opportunity to talk to these people here. If you have any specific questions that you want to ask any one of these individuals, they will be here during the evening,

as I understand, and some of them may be here tomorrow, so take advantage of the opportunity.

With that I would like to call on members of the commission to proceed. Georges.

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: I have some questions for the panellists here now, but I would like to start with a question to Wendy Grant. Wendy, in your presentation you gave us a historical overview of the relationship between church and the state. Who do you believe is the most to blame for what has occurred? Was it the government that just instructed the churches to carry out their will and the churches were just carrying out the orders? Or was there, you believe, a relationship of some kind of equality there and did the churches involved actually believe on their own that this was in fact the right thing to do and whether it was government policy or not, the church was very closely involved? Or is it the former? Or was it the church just carrying out the instructions of the state?

WENDY GRANT: I believe that it's both. I don't think either the church or the state can get away from any responsibility. I think they did it jointly,

and I think they both understood completely what they were doing and they did it together for the assimilation of the savage Aboriginal people into the dominant society. I think they did it with their eyes wide-open, they knew exactly what they were doing and they continue to do up until today.

As I listened to the presentations, I appreciate very much what happened to the gentlemen from Ontario, but it also hit me while I was listening to him that, within the short period of time that emerged what the church was doing not only with the boys in Ontario but in Mount Cashel, they were able to within a very short period of time, come up with the kinds of support because the dominant society again looks at that and feels a need to do something.

So even today we still have the same attitude, Georges, and I think the church and the government are showing it very clearly. When the invitation was sent to certain churches, they wouldn't come here. I think that both of them are responsible and both of them need to be brought to task.

I hope that the commission -- one thing

that I didn't mention in my presentation is as the First Nations of British Columbia move towards trying to jointly do something as First Nations, one of the things that we would like to have into your records are the historical records of the government, the federal government: the number of schools, the number of students, the names of students, and all of those kinds of records we need desperately because we are working right now on initiatives and those would be of great service to us.

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: Elsewhere, when we have questioned people on the role of the churches, we were told that, yes, the odd situation you had a bad, you know, school, told people not to speak the language, et cetera, but that the overwhelming majority in fact were supportive of Aboriginal languages. Missionaries came in, learned to speak the language, found a written way of writing the language, ran schools in it. In fact, said mass in the language, were encouraging the language along and that the schools where the language was not taught was the minority. What's the experience here in British Columbia in that score?

WENDY GRANT: I can't agree with that

comment. I believe it's the other way. Those who encouraged the language and the use of the language are in a minority. The issue of them learning how to write, from my research and my understanding were the people at the top so that they could understand when they went in when they were meeting with the leaders what was being discussed. It was not encouraged in any manner that I know.

More particularly, growing up as I did with a father who went through the system, and a grandfather who went through, he didn't teach the language to his son and he cries to this day and he's 94 years old, and you go and ask him why I don't speak the language and he will still cry and tell you the abuse he went through he didn't want to see his children go through. This was at Coqualeetza in Vancouver. I know by going through the province that you will here hear those stories right through the province. I believe it was a minority. I don't think it was encouraged at all.

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: Constable Grinstead, the investigation that you were involved in here started to reveal more and more boys that had been

molested and assaulted. You found that many of the young men you were looking for -- formerly young men -- should be men in their 30s and so forth actually didn't exist any more, they had one way or another met death.

Did you happen to ask the victims that were alive whether or not -- as a point of order, did you start to ask people if they were thinking of suicide, or did that just come out naturally? What I am wondering is this. If a survey was done of all known victims, how many actually then started thinking of suicide, or was it a personal disclosure to you without prompting that it was such a strong internal urging that they actually started to bring forth this information without asking for it?

BOB GRINSTEAD: It was more of a personal disclosure. I didn't make it a point of asking each one of them if they had had thoughts of suicide. But during some of the interviews that subject certainly came out. It came up.

I know on a couple of occasions specifically it came up because we were discussing friends that had had committed suicide as well, and these people

were attributing it directly to-- now this is their surmising. These victims are surmising that the reasons for their friends committing suicide was because of the fact that they had been sexually abused as well. I couldn't come up with numbers for you because I didn't ask that specific question each time that I sat down with a victim.

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: You said it's hard to judge how many actually were molested and assaulted because, of course, you didn't talk to everybody. Were there names of people that you were given to possibly track down that might still be alive that you didn't follow through with?

BOB GRINSTEAD: Yes. There are some people that just simply I couldn't find.

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: Are these large numbers?

BOB GRINSTEAD: I don't know for certain at this point just how many people I did interview, how many men I interviewed. I would suggest that it would be more than 100, approaching 200, in that neighbourhood, but by no means did I talk to a quarter of the people that

went to the school during that era, I'm sure of it, because I know that there was a large number of students at the school. It would have been almost an impossible task, you would have had to have had a task force of some kind trying to track people down.

I know I had to make phone calls in some cases to other provinces to contact some of the people. That was difficult as well because it did happen that on some occasions I was making phone calls, and several, to try and track people down in different provinces and finally got them on the phone. Now I have to, on the telephone, explain to them why it is that I've contacted them. So now I'm dealing with people that are crying on other end of the telephone line.

The logistics of that, dealing with so many people, travelling to different provinces, made it very difficult to contact everyone and to do it the way I would have liked to. There are a vast number of people that went to this school that I have not spoken to.

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: As Wendy Grant was pointing out, there were many residential schools in British Columbia. Did you try to do a random sampling

of some of the children, the people that went through some of the other residential schools just to see if there was common knowledge, or if there were victims in other schools?

BOB GRINSTEAD: I didn't. Although I did, during the years that I was investigating a case, hear of a couple of other schools that were surfacing problems. But those schools weren't within my jurisdiction and the victims would have to report it to a police agency in their jurisdiction. I'm not sure to this day whether in fact there are other allegations that are now being investigated. But I was made aware away of two other schools.

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: Is there enough information you think there that other detachments should at least take a look see in their area to see if there were in fact victims?

BOB GRINSTEAD: It was my understanding, at least in one case, that it was being followed up. I didn't have enough specific information as to how extensively they were looking into it. I certainly haven't heard anything since, so perhaps it was

investigated but there was no need to carry the investigation further. I'm just not aware of that.

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: Thank you.

In the Alfred school situation, Grant, did your organization that you created of former residents, was there any kind of questionnaire or organized control to kind of figure out whether or not in fact suicide and the residency there correlated? If I remember correctly, I think I read somewhere that a number of the former residents in fact had committed suicide or otherwise, there was some --

GRANT HARTLEY: It's in the analysis of this survey. However, the survey is pretty close to two years old. As a result of that, we've had a good many that have committed suicide. When I say a "good many", I'm talking between five and nine that have committed suicide, one as recently as two and a half months ago.

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: So you are saying it's still going on?

GRANT HARTLEY: The suicides are because they are having a lot of trouble dealing with the problems related to sexual abuse and the clergy and the

church, yes.

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: Does your survey actually give you a number of people that have committed suicide?

GRANT HARTLEY: I don't think it gives you a specific number. I'm not even sure if it's in this particular survey, but I know -- and I don't think this is the one I'm talking about.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: Is that information provided in the report itself, or some of that information?

GRANT HARTLEY: No, I think it's in one of the other surveys. I think it makes reference to it in here, but I think there's another survey taken about a year ago which I believe I have on file which I could forward to the commission, if you wish, giving you specific numbers.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: I'm just being mindful of the time here. I believe Wendy also had a couple of questions. I'm not sure whether you are finished, Georges?

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: I just have

one more.

In Newfoundland, what was the findings in relation to the orphans that had gone through Mount Cashel and the taking of their lives in suicide?

RICHARD ROGERS: The general finding by the commission, and I'll say it in a general sense, is that there had to be greater accountability through both the police, Department of Social Services, and any people that were employed in a child care-giving role.

The statutes now in Newfoundland are pretty strict, forcing any adult with a knowledge of potential sexual or child abuse that they must report it. There will be no fear of any backlash, if anybody does decide to report this and as a result now the Department of Social Services and the local police force have been absolutely flooded with complaints and allegations. Now mind you, some of these are probably fictitious, but in the majority they are not.

What it has created is a situation where the government has had to expand its resources to deal with the problem. I don't think the problem has gotten any bigger. I think it's always been there and now it's

simply becoming much more open.

With respect to suicide, there have been suicides among the young men. Without going into specific details, because I would be divulging solicitor-client privileged information, I can say in a general sense that many of the young men did not have very favourable lifestyles or promising futures ahead; that, as a result of abuse that they suffered, many of them still have a hard road to follow.

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER RENÉ DUSSAULT: My first question I will address to both Wendy Grant and Bob Grinstead. It has to do with the situation of Aboriginal people and, more generally, what we've heard about Mount Cashel and Alfred. Obviously, in St. Joseph's Mission, Alfred and Mount Cashel, there were cases of abuse of powers and authority, and the same kind of abuses, physical and sexual abuses.

We know that the reason for why this happened is bigger and it's more widespread with Aboriginal peoples because of the policy that started very early to take out children from their family and send them to

residential schools and there are various reasons in Mount Cashel they were without their parents and this was an orphanage.

My question is, do you feel that the addition of that policy, that the purpose of the policy is -- do you feel that it is adding to the situation of abuse of powers and authority? What I want to say is, in your investigation, for example, Constable Grinstead, did it surface issues of this being done because people were Aboriginal people, or was there something additional from what you heard from Alfred and Mount Cashel?

The commission knows that we have to come up with recommendations to avoid those bad policies in other areas from coming up again and have to be reflections that prevent that at the start. When we deal with the specific cases, do you feel that it had to do with the situation of people as being Aboriginal people, or did it have to do only with the fact that children were sent to those institutions and then these abuses occurred?

Is there a link between the two? Is it adding to the situation that young people live through in Newfoundland or in Ontario or elsewhere in Canada?

BOB GRINSTEAD: I would venture to say that if it was an all-white school that the sexual assaults would still have occurred, that the offenders were there and that they took advantage of the situation of having young children present.

However, it was expressed to me by a number of the victims that they felt that some of the people at the residential school were specifically trying to prevent them from speaking their native language and to remove their native culture from them. So that would perhaps be the only difference is that in the opinion of the people I spoke to, or number of them that went there, they felt as if the residential school was trying to turn them into nice little white children.

COMMISSIONER RENÉ DUSSAULT: But you didn't come across cases where the fact that Aboriginal people were looked at as people who had to integrate and assimilate that that would have been an additional factor for the abuse occurring?

BOB GRINSTEAD: It appeared.

COMMISSIONER RENÉ DUSSAULT: Did you come across instances where these additional factors were

part of the situation that were brought to you?

BOB GRINSTEAD: Well, they were in addition to the actual criminal offences, the sexual assaults, the feeling that certain people at the school were trying to take their culture and their language away from them.

COMMISSIONER RENÉ DUSSAULT: Was there a link with the sexual or physical abuses? Was it seen by some of the victims?

BOB GRINSTEAD: There was a link when it came to physical assaults with their native culture and language, yes. I couldn't really say that there was a link between the sexual assaults and the fact that they were native children. As I said, I'm sure that had they been white children the sexual offences would have occurred as well. Certainly, it was expressed to me, not only by victims of sexual assault but by victims of physical violence, that a lot of it was as a result of them speaking their native language and their culture and that they were punished for those reasons.

RENÉ DUSSAULT: In the cases that were prosecuted, they were cases dealing only with physical

assault, or was it all linked with sexual assault?

BOB GRINSTEAD: They were all sexual assaults that were prosecuted.

COMMISSIONER RENÉ DUSSAULT: The last question. You said that at least seven of the people involved were themselves offenders and that there was a link between having been a victim and becoming offenders. Is this an observation that flows from some of the cases? Could you expand on that because there is a lot that is said to us about the direct link between becoming a victim and passing it over to the next generation and so on.

BOB GRINSTEAD: I spent six years investigating -- primarily investigating sexual assaults. Probably 80 per cent of my time was investigating sexual assaults. That's something that I found occurring time and time again. If you were a victim of sexual assault as a young child, then that had a serious impact on your sexuality and your sexual life in later years. So often we as police doing interviews we will find out that the young girl is the victim of sexual assault and it turns out that her mother was also a victim when you talk to the mother; that if the man was a victim of sexual assault

he often goes on to offend.

I can tell you and I think I described the model, and what I did is as this investigation surfaced more and more victims, I began to plot them on a chart because I was losing track of them just on paper, so I created a chart and each person who was a victim was represented by a circle with their name in it. Then as I had more victims and as I looked into it further, I realized that so many of these victims were also offenders. So then I was required to draw a line from those victims to their victims and so I had this expanding chart.

In fact, some of the victims' children have now offended as adolescents, so we now have -- what is that -- a fourth rung to the ladder, for lack of a better term.

It is still happening today, the ripple effect, and I'm sure that until the proper counselling is looked after and the people treated and a healing process started, it's just going to continue.

COMMISSIONER RENÉ DUSSAULT: A very last question exactly on this. Did you find the same conclusion in Alfred and Mount Cashel where those young

boys they had passed it over to their own children, or is there something different?

GRANT HARTLEY: We have had several of the victims charged during the course of our existence with sexual assault and sexual molesting of their own children.

Although, perhaps because of my background, I don't accept the medical words that if you were assaulted you will assault. I think-- well maybe I shouldn't challenge the powers that be, but I have a hard time dealing with that, I'm sorry, because I don't believe it. But we have a large segment of similarities in the same instances, yes.

COMMISSIONER RENÉ DUSSAULT: Thank you. Is it the same at Mount Cashel?

RICHARD ROGERS: Many of the young boys indicated at the inquiry that not only did they fear that they were themselves becoming abusers in their adult life, but the abuse that they received as children they were also abusing children in the orphanage as well. So the children were actually starting to physically and sexually abuse other children in the orphanage, so it started right

away. They didn't even have to wait until adult life to start that, as Bob said, ripple effect. They were into it right away.

BOB GRINSTEAD: That's something I didn't touch on, but I found the same thing that some of the older boys were then in turn turning around and abusing some of the younger boys; it was a learned behaviour.

GRANT HARTLEY: That also happened in Alfred in the dormitories.

COMMISSIONER RENÉ DUSSAULT: Thank you, John.

COMMISSIONER MARY SILLETT: Wherever we have gone, we have heard people say that they need a inquiry or they've called or recommended to have an inquiry into this issue. I am wondering, based on your experiences, what would you say are the advantages and disadvantages of having an inquiry?

RICHARD ROGERS: The disadvantages of having an inquiry into sexual abuse, particularly in an institution is that if out of the result of the inquiry there is going to be criminal prosecutions, it's the very first thing a defence lawyer is going to put his hand onto

and scream that his client cannot get a proper defence because he's virtually been found guilty by reason of the inquiry. Timing is of the essence.

The police should be allowed to do their criminal investigation first. Let the prosecutions go through the court. Once that has been done, then take that information, commence the inquiry and then start pointing the finger at where the downfalls occurred.

Inquiries are incredibly helpful and efficient because a trial itself will only look at certain issues of problems. An inquiry has a more global effect, it has the ability to subpoena an unlimited number of witnesses and draw upon incredible resources and particularly has the ability to, as we see here, draw from the strength and the knowledge of the public. That sort of thing is not allowable in a trial.

My opinion on inquiries into this area, or any other area, are that they are very helpful and I don't that think they should ever stop, even if the general complaint is that they're very expensive. The outcome and the suggestions and results of inquiries are determined to try and help prevent any future financial or physical

loss.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: Thank you, Richard. Viola.

COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON: I just want to raise one question. I'm just wondering, Mr. Hartley, I was quite appalled at the kinds of support that you were able to raise and to generate, and I guess the media did give you some attention there. I guess to get the kind of support and to get the interest of the public and to be able to -- you had your membership and as a result you got a contract for $13 million that addressed a wide scope of awards, just about practically everything that you asked for, and in a considerably, I would say, short length of time considering that residential schools have been since the early 1800s. We have been hearing the kinds of problem that's been raised by Aboriginal people from one end of Canada to the other. What does it take to get the kinds of support of the public for a national crisis situation such as the residential schools problems that we have here?

You were able to do that so quickly and so effectively that you have gotten all kinds of things,

the kinds of things that we have been looking for, but we can't seem to raise the consciousness of the public that is needed to support the kinds of things that we were asking for. Could you give us a little bit of insight on that?

GRANT HARTLEY: I could answer your question in about four ways and I think I will.

First of all, the Ontario Provincial Police would not go out and solicit names from other members. They said that that could be proven as coercion or conspiracy.

The second thing that we did, which was most important, was that we held demonstrations with ex-victims and we did it in spots such as St. Michael's Church in Toronto, the Canadian Catholic Bishops' offices in Ottawa. This was my job to do the organizing and I would allow no speaking in the line-up whatsoever. I figured that the only way that we could upset the church and get the news media on our side was to be quiet and have but one spokesman on the line. When we were in Toronto, we were joined by the Canadian Coalition of Concerned Catholics, about 40 or 50 of them joined us in

the line and one of the ushers at St. Michael's slammed the gate upon her shin and broke the skin, then wanted to charge her, but the policeman saw what happened, knew that we were quiet, and threatened to charge the usher if the lady would lay a complaint and he ran inside the church.

Never did we have a demonstration where there was any yelling, screaming or other than one spokesman on the line. We let the silence do the talking for us. If somebody came up and pushed us, it was my job to see that the person who was pushed did not push back. When you're dealing with people who are full of extreme anger that's difficult to do. But the guys believed in me.

The third -- and this is the bomb -- the third reason why we were so successful in our endeavours was we guaranteed, once the mediation table was put together, that we would no longer call for a public inquiry. As long as all participants stayed at the table, we would not demonstrate nor call for a public inquiry.

So the two things that were most important to achieve our goals was silence, which we

dreaded doing because we've had to stay silent all these years, and I'm talking in my case close to 40 years, and no public inquiry. We achieved the goals that 97 per cent -- and I repeat that -- 97 per cent of our membership ratified this agreement. It was remarkable. I hope that addresses your questions.

COMMISSIONER VIOLA ROBINSON: Thank you.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: Thank you. We are a bit behind our schedule. These are issues that really ought not to have any time limit on them. They are huge issues, very sensitive issues and ones that require further probing, further analysis, further discussion and further questions to get to some of the answers that are needed. I am mindful that when I suggest that we have a time schedule. I realize that we've been given an agenda by the organizers with certain time limits and it's my responsibility to try to best meet that timetable.

We have, as I mentioned, dinner at 5:30. That will last until about 7 o'clock. The guest speaker at this dinner is Grand Chief, National Chief Ovide

Mercredi.

I would like to conclude this portion of the session this afternoon by thanking the four presenters, the four speakers: Wendy and Richard and Grant and Bob. I think you've drawn a picture which is of immense magnitude and which is yet unfolding. That picture is one that requires further deliberation, further analysis and I thank you very much for taking the time to make your presentations and to answer the very difficult questions that were raised.

I have a couple of announcements to make to you. Those of you who are used to cellular telephones, there may be messages here for you, check the message board. I'm not sure where the message board is. Check with the registration desk for messages, there are some messages there.

The dinner will be in here and it will have to be set up. They don't have a lot of time. Please do not leave any of your personal belongings here because they will be moving everything in here, so the television crews and the cameras and your cords and everything else, please move those as well. That will be appreciated if

you would help.

You've heard today some very sensitive information on issues that have been brought to you. Please be sensitive to the people who have raised these issues. Some of these issues are very difficult to deal with, so when you are talking to others please be mindful of that. Thank you very much.

---Upon recessing for dinner 5:20 p.m.

---Upon resuming at 6:35 p.m.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: May I have your attention, please. Just to remind you, we have a presentation from the National Chief, Ovide Mercredi.

There is a healing circle or a sharing circle later on. I don't have that that particular part of the agenda with me. Maggie Hodgson will be facilitating some discussions later on on an with an individual and that individual's family members, immediate family members, and other relations.

For this particular session, I would like first to begin with the introductions of the guests who are at the head table. At the far right, you have already been introduced to Mary Sillett, a member of the

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Sitting next to her, Georges Erasmus, co-chair for the commission. Sitting next to George is Nicolle Wycotte representing the youth of this village. Next to Nicolle is the National Chief Ovide Mercredi. From British Columbia is our Vice-Chief Wendy Grant, Co-Chair for the Royal Commission, René Dussault, and a member of the commission, Viola Robinson.

I would like to, on your behalf as well, thank the youth who served all of us our dinners and our coffees or tea or whatever we are drinking. I think they did a very good job

(Applause)

As well, all the people we don't see out here, the cooks and the other people who were involved in the preparation of the food, I wish to thank them on your behalf for their preparation.

I was sitting here earlier this afternoon and I was thinking to myself that it would be interesting to find out how many here went to residential school or had a brother or sister, mother or grandfather or grandmother who went to residential school. Let's see,

hands up. Well, let's do it the other way: how many don't have anybody who went to residential schools? It's all the white people. I guess it just shows they didn't go to an Indian residential school.

I was saying earlier, as well, it was nice to meet some acquaintances or friends that I had not seen since high school. It wasn't that long ago, but Arnold Sellars, I have not seen him since probably 1968, 1969, a long time. Arthur Paul, Percy Archie. I saw Percy earlier, he was running around with his camera. Freddie Johnson. The tallest Shuswap I had ever known was Freddie Johnson. I still don't know Brad's name. He is here somewhere. Francis Johnson. Right there he is. Elizabeth Pete.

There are others here that I ran into in the last couple of days that are from this area that I haven't seen in a long time. It's my first trip to Canim Lake. I have driven by on the highway many years. I have been wondering, it would be interesting to go to Canim Lake one day and here I am.

I would like to introduce to you the keynote speaker for tonight. National Chief Ovide

Mercredi was elected as National Chief in June of 1991. Most recently he was involved in the negotiations with the federal and provincial governments in their attempts to amend the Constitution of Canada. These discussions and negotiations ultimately led to the Charlottetown Accord, as we know it, in August of 1992.

Ovide was born and raised in Grand Rapids, Manitoba. He went to school in Grand Rapids and The Pas. He went to residential school in The Pas as a resident student -- I guess you can't really be anything but a resident in a residential school. Somehow I must have missed something that he told me. In 1979 he received the law degree from the University of Manitoba. Prior to his election as the National Chief in June 1991 he was the Vice-Chief under Georges Erasmus, then the National Chief, and he was representing the First Nations from Manitoba. Ovide now lives in Ottawa. The head office of the -- well, it's not the head office, it's a branch office. The real head office is in Akwesasne, as I understand, representing the interests of First Nations peoples across this country.

I would like to welcome our National

Chief, chief political spokesman for the First Nations people across this country, Ovide Mercredi.

OVIDE MERCREDI, Assembly of First Nations Grand Chief: I want to begin by thanking Ed for the introduction. I am glad he left out some improvisations that he was told to do by my good friend here, the Vice-Chief of British Columbia, Wendy Grant.

I want to recognize the elder who made the opening prayer, Isadore Daniels, and the chief of Canim Lake, Chief Archie, for setting up this important event. I want to thank all his councillors and all his people here for ensuring that this organized event to draw attention to the important issue of abuse experienced by our people is heard across the country, but also by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Affairs.

I want to recognize also the former Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Georges Erasmus, who is now the Co-Chair of the Royal Commission, René Dussault who is a Co-Chair as well.

I asked earlier from a friend of mine what I should speak about and the advice I received was to talk about healing. When you talk about healing, you

can't forget the women in our community, so I want to make sure that I also acknowledge Viola Robinson, who is also on the commission, and Mary Sillett and, of course, the young person who is sitting with me, Nicolle, who's representing the youth of this community.

I was telling Wendy earlier that I am very nervous today. I'm not normally that nervous before I speak, but I think it has to do with the topic itself which is very emotional but also very stressful.

When you deal with the pain that people have because of abuse that they have experienced, it's difficult to understand it, and in some cases even those who have experienced it do not comprehend the pain that they experienced. When we deal with this issue of abuse of our people, we should not narrow it to something called residential schools, although that experience has had a great impact on our people's lives.

The real issue in terms of our experience of abuse is racism in Canada, which has it's origins in the history of this country. When we look at the history or policy as it relates to residential schools, you will know what I mean when I say that we are dealing with a

larger problem called racism in our country.

You take, for example, in 1913 when an Indian agent made the federal government's policy clear, he stated, and I quote:

"It is considered by many that the ultimate destiny of the Indian will be to lose his identity as an Indian, so that he will take his place fairly and evenly beside his white brother."

The underlying assumption of that statement is that, so long as we remain distinct, so long as we remain as Indian people, we will never be equal to white society and that the only way in which we are going to achieve equality in Canada, according to this policy, is to abandon everything that is Indian and to embrace everything that is not.

He carried on by saying that:

"It is only by systematically building from one generation to another that this can be accomplished."

So they realized early in the process of assimilation that they had to engage us, generation

after generation, in these policies of assimilation. They realized that they could not destroy a culture in one sitting, in one generation, that it would take a concentrated effort over many generations to achieve.

When you consider, later on in the history of residential schools, the actions of Parliament, you will appreciate that laws were passed not to recognize who we are as a people, not to respect who we are as a people, but to make sure that we as a people were undermined by the authorities that were supposed to act in our best interests. Laws were passed by the Parliament of Canada to make sure that Indian parents had no authority over their children while the children were in residential schools. In essence, what the Parliament of Canada did is that it turned over to the churches, the Christian churches of this country, the full custody of Indian children while they were in their schools, and many of you know that from personal experience.

In 1957 the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, a religious order of priests and lay Brothers, operated 44 Indian residential schools across Canada. In that year, in 1957, they convened a meeting of their teachers

and principals and superintendents of their schools for a one-week orientation to teach them the policy to guide them in their instructions of Indian students. The whole purpose of that workshop was to make sure that the principals and the teachers understood the policy that was being deployed by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. For example, and I quote from the workshop report itself, the following:

"Contrary to the layman's opinion, educating Canadian Indians means much more than simply teaching them the three Rs or whatever is the basic curriculum in the schools of each province. Most of the Indian pupils attending federal schools have started life in a cultural channel quite at variance with that of the majority of Canadians. In order to prepare them for integration, the school must literally switch them from the minority stream into that of the nation abroad. In technical terms, Indian education is first and foremost an `acculturation'

responsibility."

That statement was further elaborated by laying out step by step the process for acculturating Indian students and the following prescription was stated at that conference in order for the acculturation, the assimilation to be successful and thorough.

First, they said, "For each child, the teacher must establish the kind of Indian and non-Indian enculteration received before entering the school." In other words, first determine how "Indian" they are before you set up a course of studies.

Secondly, they said, "During the first year or years of instruction arrange for the child to pick up the substance of what the non-Indian child has received at home and his community." See, the assumption was being made that our children did not learn the proper values, the proper norms in their home communities by their parents and that they had to be retaught, reeducated so that they would be on the same level of understanding, the same standard of knowledge as non-Indian children across Canada.

The third prescription for assimilation

was as follows. "From there, carry on with the regular curriculum, with the child usually one or more school grades behind his non-Indian friend of the same chronological age."

They carried on by saying, as part four of their program, "Isolate the child as much as possible from his native background, ideally 24 hours a day and 12 months in the year, to prevent `exposure' to Indian culture."

These are not my words. These are not the words of an Indian leader. These are not words of a man or a person that's in grievance, these are statements in their policy for teaching Indian children as early as 1953.

Finally, they said, "Upon graduation, when the Indian person goes through the system and they graduate from the residential schools, integrate the young trans-cultured Indian in a non-Indian community, following him or her through until he or she is permanently settled away from his community of origin."

These are the statements that were made on behalf of the Government of Canada by one religious

order that had the authority to exact the kind of education they thought necessary to fulfil whatever responsibilities they felt towards Indian students.

They concluded in their statement by saying:

"The Canadian problem in Indian education is not primarily one of schooling Indian children the way other Canadian children are schooled, but of changing the persevering Indian community into a Canadian community. When Indian children will not help but grow up to be culturally Canadian, then the average Canadian school will meet their educational needs."

The educational system was designed to destroy our culture. Their objective was to ensure that we did not remain Indians and that we were assimilated completely to act as a member of the majority society in every respect. This was considered by those in authority within the government and the church as the essential requirement for educating Indian people.

So think about it. What does that tell

us as Indian people? How much value does that place on our culture, our values? How much importance and weight does that give to the continuity of our society? That is nothing short of racism.

That is what we are battling with even today when you consider the exposé of sexual abuse in non-Indian schools across Canada and the quick action of the provincial governments in two instances to make sure that non-Indian people receive the compensation they deserved, the counselling that they needed. But here we are still looking for a forum for a public inquiry, still waiting for the government to respond in the same way that they did for their own people.

What do you call that? We call it, in my language, racism, short and simple. There is no other explanation, none that can be given.

So what are we to do as a people? How long do we carry on with appeals for action? When will it end? Will we have to go on bended knee to the federal government before they will act in a way that they will do for their people when problems come to their attention regarding their people?

Healing will not happen as long as our people are angry, and our people will be angry as long as the government does not respond to its responsibilities, and our people will remain angry as long as the church denies its responsibilities. Healing for us will be a shared responsibility. This is the only course of action open to the Canadian people, their governments and ourselves to work together to heal the wounds that have been committed by these policies based on racial superiority.

We have called upon the government in the past to do a number of things with respect to this issue. We have asked them to set up resources so that people can have the services they need to deal with the wounds that they experienced. We've called upon the Canadian government to do a proper inquiry so that there is full understanding of the issue and that from that inquiry a set of recommends can be developed for the government to implement.

I sat here for a while this afternoon, and I am one of these people that has lost his confidence in a justice system. I believe that the justice system

operates on a double standard when it comes to our people. I have lost confidence in the justice system. But I was listening here this afternoon to Constable Bob Grinstead, and I said to myself, there is still hope as long as people like him fulfil their responsibilities impartially, professionally and they do it in a public interest, then there's hope for the justice system.

I'm glad I came here because for myself it's very important I think that the leaders do not become too sceptical in terms of the Canadian institutions, but we have tried our best to persuade the Canadian government to respond in a way in which we want it with respect to the issue of residential schools and they have they have always ignored our demands for reform and action.

It is easy to give up, it is easy to feel sceptical that somehow your needs are not as important as they are for other Canadians, that somehow your problems are secondary, of a secondary interest to the Canadian government. That is the problem that we have as a people and it's part of our sense of victimization, it's part of our psychology of grievance. It has been part of our history for too long and we have to find ways of expelling

it. We have to find ways of getting rid of this sense of grievance.

That is why I am glad I came here. The people here in Canim Lake, they are not waiting for the Government of Canada, they are not waiting for the churches. They recognize the needs right now in their community and they are trying to address it in the best way they can. I don't just say good luck to them. I congratulate them because that is the kind of leadership that is required across the country by all First Nations.

People have to stand up to this problem of sexual abuse in their communities. We have to make the effort to heal ourselves with or without government interest and support.

But the problem that I see with a singular approach like that by our people only without a concurrent commitment and a concurrent responsibility by the Canadian people and their governments is that we are not dealing with the fundamental issue of racism in Canada. We are once again working in isolation of each other. We are once again trying to solve the problem

without the help of our so-called white brothers and sisters. We are being left to act independently for self preservation. And who can blame us for trying?

In the words of one of the elders, it doesn't work for us at the national level. There cannot be any recovery for the Indian people until Canadians also become part of the solution and that Canadian governments become part of the solution. This I think is our challenge. That is why the people of Canim Lake have the Royal Commission here because they are trying to influence the Royal Commission to make recommendations to the government for the government to do something.

The people here have done what they can with their limited resources. But this issue is very complicated. It cannot be resolved just by community resources alone. It cannot be healed just by spirituality by itself. This issue that we face in our communities is so complex that it requires the intervention, in some cases, of professional assistance that can only be available when people are trained and qualified to provide that kind of assistance like counselling and other services that psychiatrists and psychologists provide

This community has developed a plan of action and one of those plans of action is to find a way of dealing with the wounds by using traditional methods of healing as well as contemporary methods of healing that exist in Canadian society.

We have recommendations too at the national level and what the Canadian government should do. First off, we need a public inquiry, a national inquiry, so that we can have the full understanding of the problem, the full scope of the problem and its full impact on our people from place to place.

We also have recommended to the Canadian government that they act now rather than later in terms of providing resources to people who are going through the healing journey as individuals or as communities. We have also recommended that the churches -- all the churches -- drop their strategy of denial in terms of their responsibility, that they accept not just by simple apology, which is inadequate, but that they accept their responsibility in terms of healing the wounds that have been committed by the church itself.

We have also recommended that there is

a need to identify different ways of helping people, that one should not stop with one method that might work with one individual or a few individuals, that we should try to find models of healing that can be applied from place to place, from community to community, and that we need resources from the federal government to be able to do that, and we have recommended that this be done as well.

This issue is very heavy. This issue of abuse in our communities is a big problem, not just for this community but across the First Nations communities in Canada. Many of our young people have lost hope in terms of the future. They have given up, and too many of them are taking their lives for that reason. We have, as Indian people, a responsibility to the next generation. We have to focus on them because it may be too late for our generation, but even then we must try to heal as well. But we have to make sure that the next generation has opportunities we never had, without the obstacles that we experienced.

One of these obstacles we experienced as Indian people, the greatest one and the most fundamental problem is racism. We have been taught in the educational

institutions of this country to devalue our humanity. We have been taught by the educational institutions of Canada to see ourselves as inferior human beings, and for a time we accepted that. For a time our people felt inadequate for being Indian and for a time our people felt they didn't want to be Indian. But that is 10 years ago and since then we have been on the road of recovery. We have been trying to shed these skins of racism that have been planted on our bodies because of the educational system and because of our experience when we try to become, as other people say, Canadians, because we have never been accepted as equals on an individual basis. When we go into white society and we are rejected and not embraced. We are challenged even with respect to our collective rights. We are told, when we try to exercise our collective rights, "Why don't you just be like the rest of us? Why don't you just be like the rest of us Canadians?" But we know what that means. It means pain and it means rejection. That's what it means for our people as individuals. When they try to survive and try to excel in white society, racism stands in the way of their individual process.

That's why in the past 10 years we have been focusing more on trying to recover our collective rights because the presumption that we make now is that if we don't recover as a people, individual rights will never matter for us because in the minds of the dominant society individual rights is just another name, it's just another name for what we experienced in the residential schools. It means abandon your Indianness and come and join us.

Here in British Columbia, you take one issue alone and that's the issue of the fishery in this province. What are the Indian people being told who are exercising their collective right to the fish? Abandon the food fishery. Be like the rest of us, like the Canadians. Get a licence and enjoy your fishing rights on that basis.

What does that to say to you? It says the very same thing that we are trying to uncover with the residential schools. It's the very same principle. It's the same racism that we experienced in the schools, only it's being put to us in a different form. It's being put to us in terms of our access to resources.

So there cannot be healing for us unless there is healing for Canada. The Canadian people have to own up to their responsibility too. They have to do what they can to deal with the racism our people have experienced for far too long. They have to recover, too. It is not just us that has a responsibility. They have the same responsibility as we do. And it's time. It's time that they atoned to our people.

In this year, in 1993, a year that was declared by the United Nations as the year for indigenous people, I think it's time for all of us collectively as First Nations and as Canadians to begin to combat racism, to set is aside as the greatest evil that has befallen the human race. We see the evidence of that not just here in Canada but overseas, because there cannot be any explanation for the warfare that exists across the ocean than simple racism between human societies.

So how do we change attitudes, if the Canadian government does not take its responsibility seriously? How do we change Canadian attitudes, if their governments are not even going to help us in terms of the healing that we want to perform in our communities? I

don't know the answer. But all I know is this, that we can do as a people whatever we can to recover and we will, and we will maybe in two or three generations, but unless we deal with the fundamental evil in society which is racism, we will always, always have that obstacle when we try to co-exist, when we try to relate to other people in Canada.

I am not overstating the case, absolutely not. I am not overstating the impact of racism in our lives. Take a look at it in other ways, in terms of our policies made in Canada affecting our people.

Look at what happened to Davis Inlet? See how the people were relocated simply because they were disposable. They were dispensable simply because they were Indian. Look at my community of Grand Rapids, a beautiful community that was destroyed by Manitoba Hydro and you look at the same problem in northern Ontario and in northern Quebec with respect to hydro developments.

Why is it possible for provincial governments to violate our human rights? It's possible because we are devalued as a people, simply because we are not respected as being equal to them and it is easy

to violate the person that you consider subordinate to you. It is easy to violate a person that you consider sub-human and that's been our experience in residential schools. That is why many young people have experienced sexual abuse, simply because they were devalued as human beings, devalued as Indian people.

So we are on the right path as Indian people by tackling this issue of residential schools, by dealing with it as an issue of racism. We are on the right path and it's up to the Canadian society to catch up with us.

(Applause)

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: I thank you very much, Ovide, for those remarks. I would like next to call on Nicolle Wycotte. She has a presentation to make and some comments as well. Nicolle.

NICOLLE WYCOTTE: My name is Nicolle Wycotte. I'm 15 years old. I attend the Peter Skeen Ogden Secondary School. On behalf of the youth and the community of Canim Lake, I would like to thank you, Ovide Mercredi, for your support with the residential school experience and as a token of our appreciation we would like to give

you this painting.

(Applause)

OVIDE MERCREDI: I used to wonder why Georges liked being National Chief, but after travelling around to a few communities I began to understand why. I want to thank you, Nicolle, and the people of your community for this presentation.

It's usually the message that I give, but today I didn't do it. It's about the unity of the human race. Here you have the yellow, the white, the red and the black all connected into one tree of life. In fact, I think you have something to say about that now, don't you?

NICOLLE WYCOTTE: There's a little poem that was on the back. The medicine wheel as it inspires my life and as I understand is the endless circle and cycle of life. It is never static, all joined together in its centre. The primary colours represent races, the directions, elements and qualities. I apologize to native elders as I have taken poetic licence and relate to those colours in my way and of course not always is it so.

Red represents east, spring, fire,

emotion, rebirth; yellow represents south, summer, earth, physical and growth; blue and black represent west, fall, water, intellect, and introspection; white represents north, winter, air, spirit and wisdom.

This is from Virginia Pettman who is sitting there.

(Applause)

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: Thank you, Nicolle, for your presentation. We have another portion of today's events that will be taking place and I think Maggie Hodgson is here. She will be facilitating the next two hours.

Before we break this portion, I want to leave you with one thought about knowing and understanding and mourning our losses and our hurts, but also to celebrate our victories however small they may be. Some of those victories come from within us, they come from within our communities and I see that being demonstrated here in this community. When I talk about victories I mean it.

Today I ran into a couple of friends of mine I had not seen in some time and they told me that they had gone to the residential school and had been

subjected to abuse. After many, many years of dealing with these problems, they finally recognized the source of the problem and that they were dealing with it and were on their way to understanding who they are as human beings. To me when I see this community and those two individuals, it is huge victory.

The tables are going to be taken out and the chairs will have to be moved into a circle. That will take a few minutes. If you have any way that you can help by moving some of the things, it would be appreciated.

---Short recess at 7:25 p.m.

---Upon resuming at 7:55 p.m.

MODERATOR EDWARD JOHN: I want to be very brief. My role in this is simply to introduce some of the people who are here in the circle tonight.

Firstly, I would like to introduce to you Maggie Hodgson. Maggie, the lady in the blue, will facilitate the circle tonight. Maggie is a Carrier woman from Nadleh, which is in the Carrier-Sakhani territory. She is a grandmother, great grandmother and she has worked in the human services field for 22 years and this fall in November was granted an honourary Doctorate of Laws

Degree from the University of Alberta. She has been the director of Nechi for 10 years. She is the chairperson.

Among the many other achievements she has, she's the chairperson of the special Section on Indigenous People for the World Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse programs from Lausanne Switzerland. She is a member of the first Canadian board of directors of the new Canadian Sector on Substance Abuse. This appointment is made by the Prime Minister's Office.

Maggie initiated and was instrumental in the campaign across Canada for the declaration of a National Addictions Awareness Week as proclaimed by the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

She has been the leader in developmental areas such as Employee Assistance programs for native bands and organizations, a national Native Training Development program, a Native Specific Family Violence Training package.

She is the co-author of a book on child sexual abuse entitled, "The Spirit Weeps" and also wrote a chapter for "Healing Voices", another publication.

She will be facilitating this particular

evening session today.

Dave Belleau is a Shuswap from the Alkali Lake Band and has lived there most of his life. He graduated from Prince George College with his high school diploma. He completed his second year at the University of Lethbridge, Alberta. Dave plans to get his degree in psychology and work with his people.

Recently, he graduated from Nechi's accredited training program and has become a member of the staff as a trainer.

Prior to coming to Nechi, Dave has travelled across Canada and the United States presenting his community's success story, "The Honour of All", the story about Alkali Lake that many of us or probably all of us know about.

His experience, skills and knowledge has also been enhanced by Tony Martens training in regards to incest and child sexual abuse. He has great respect and honour for his native people's cultural and tradition beliefs. Dave speaks his language fluently and sings with his hand drum group from Alkali.

He and his wife Marilyn and their five

children live in Edmonton. Dave's dream is for his native people's wellness and healing across this land. With him are four of his children surrounding him.

Steve Belleau is a member of the Alkali Lake Band and is also a member of the Shuswap Nation. He attended the St. Joseph's Mission for six and a half years, attended Alkali Lake school and later returned to St. Joseph's Mission. He graduated from Columneeze Senior High School.

In 1978, Dave decided to enlist with the RCM Police and it took two and a half years before he was accepted. He graduated from the RCMP academy in Regina, Saskatchewan and was posted in Williams Lake for eight years.

In 1989, Steve was transferred to the Chase Detachment and I understand he is still there working out of that particular detachment. He has done a lot of seminars and workshops with the three bands in the Chase area in matters relating to alcohol and drugs, suicide, child sexual abuse, child neglect, and so on. He attends schools upon request and is available on request to do speaking engagements.

He has also travelled across the United States and this country to speak on matters relating to residential schools. He has travelled to Germany for an international conference on alcohol and drugs.

He, like his brothers, respects and honours his native people's cultural and traditional beliefs. He speaks his language fluently and attends the many various ceremonies such as the Sweat Lodge Pipe Ceremonies and sings with the Alkali Lake Hand Drummers.

His wife Charlene and two boys, Shane and James, all reside in Chase. Steve dreams that one day all our native people will be united and will work together. He looks forward to his retirement from the police force in seven years.

Jeannie Dick, the lady to the left and Josephine Johnson to the right, another sister of these two gentlemen and the rest you have met, Charlene Belleau's husband, Steve, and members of the commission and the National Chief and now I turn this over to Maggie Hodgson.

MAGGIE HODGSON, Executive-Director, Nechi Institute of Alberta: Thank you, Ed. I would like

to thank the elders of the Canim Lake community for welcoming us.

We are going to start by having a Sweet Grass Ceremony because the topic that we are going to be discussing is a difficult topic and particularly for people that are in the process of healing.

With that, I would like to ask Dave to do the Sweet Grass Ceremony while the Alkali Lake drummers drum for us as we are blessing ourselves and purifying ourselves to prepare that we might be kind with our body and mind our and spirit, with each other and with other people.

Dave, if you could start.

(Sweet Grass Ceremony)

MAGGIE HODGSON: The process that we are going to be using tonight is a process of being given an opportunity to talk about a family healing and a family committed to healing. I'm sure that the commissioners have heard from many families who are locked in pain and can't see past that pain. Ovide talked today about the necessity of us moving on, regardless of whether the government keeps up with other, regardless of whether the

Canadian people are committed to supporting the process of healing. The fact is that it has already started and this family is but one example of how that healing has manifested itself.

This afternoon I heard them talk about Newfoundland and Alfred, Ontario where you had a generational impact. Here we have a generational impact. We also have a family that's, I think in a very beautiful way, being able to reincorporate and reintroduce culture into healing and married both the western approaches and the traditional approaches into the healing. This circle is not intended to be a therapeutic circle. It's a circle that's intended to provide an opportunity for the family to share some of their experiences, their response to experiences, their feelings and then their healing process.

We are going to start off with Dave Belleau. I have a personal relationship with Dave. Dave and I work together at Nechi. Our organization and interpersonally our organization is committed to the native employee assistance process and so Dave, I thank you, for honouring me by allowing me to be with you and

your family tonight.

If you wouldn't mind starting, Dave now, please. Thank you.

DAVE BELLEAU: Thank you. As I was listening to Ovide's comments this evening, I couldn't help but shut down for about 10 seconds, I guess, like a reality crept back in like when things begin to happen for me way back then.

I wondered all these years, you know, ever since my children have grown up when I would let them know my secret. My secret being that I went through the residential school, a secret that is something that I'm not proud of, however, it is something that I survived.

I'm so grateful that I am asked here this evening and respectfully state to the elders of Canim Lake, I thank you and the leaders, the chief and the councillors, I thank you and the many chiefs that are here and the many people, I thank you.

One time I could not say these things. One time I could not even begin making statements that are positive and true. One time when I was quite a young

boy like my son Billy here, my head used to never lift up like this. It was like this, licked, beaten.

I entered the system, the residential schools, in 1951 and I spent nine years there. Nine years. I learned a sub-culture. I learned how to live a substandard way of living. I learned how to live underground. I learned a few words of my other brothers the Shuswap and the Carrier brothers and the Douglas Indian's language in order to understand them to survive. And many of these brothers today are still brothers because they have lived with me in the system and we know one another. Every time I drive down highway 97 and I have to go by that St. Joseph's Mission there's an irksome feeling that comes into my bones.

However, today something's happened with Dave. Something has come about with my being. Something has pulled my up onto the surface and today I am beginning to live.

For many years I have lived in rage and anger, despair, loneliness, even I brought that on my children and they felt that. After being sober for seven years I was still carrying that thing and I never knew

it was happening.

It took a lot of help. See, Dave doesn't want help. Dave didn't know how to ask for help. However, with my wife urging me on to go out and seek help, I slowly went out and asked for help. I started talking with other men with similar problems that I have of silence. You see, in residential school you were taught silence. You had to be very quiet. You don't make a noise. You stay in line. You don't say a thing. Even if it's 20 below outside and you are waiting to go in the kitchen, you don't even whimper. That's the kind of life that we lived, me and my many brothers.

Today, it doesn't have to be like that. Today, I feel honoured that Dave is a human being. Today, I feel honoured when Ovide states it, you know, that we are taking a stand in a positive way to hear our voices throughout the land.

The biggest weapon I have with me is my heart and the spirit that flows strength into my heart so I can speak the language of my people of pain. Every time I look in the eyes of a child way over land I see a little Dave. I see Billy. I see David. I see Rene.

I see Caroline. The more I see the grief in these little children's eyes, the harder I want to work for them.

I think somebody asked my one time when am I going to stop doing this kind of work. I said when the last child has stopped crying in my people because the residential school had strapped me to almost near submission. I remember getting strapped the first time when I was nine years old. Just the look of power and control in that man's eyes. Just remembering it I just made myself squealing like heck, you know. That was an experience.

Today I wonder, take that experience and have the sweet grass and the sage absorb it and take it up with the creator and so my children don't have to go through that. These are the people that the system is going to have to bear with, these people sitting here with me. It will never, never, ever go back. Never.

All the shame that I felt, all the guilt, the abandonment, the rejection, are in that sweet grass and my sage. All the strength my main brothers give me are in that sage and that sweet grass. All the screams, the nightmares that I remember, are in the prayers.

It's really hard to live in this world pretending. It's really hard to be pretending all my life, smiling and happy, really happy. A lot of people say, "Oh, in residential school our kids always smile." I call that the smile of fear. You have to smile. That's the smile of fear. I became one of them. For the longest time I didn't have a real smile, I didn't have a real laugh, but today now I laugh and I cry and it feels really good.

I needed to choose to turn my life around. I needed to be real Dave. There's a little guy inside of me that wants to be free that has been kept within the walls of this callousness that I had in part of the system.

I know who this man is today. I am the best friend that I could ever have to this man. Every time I trouble this man it's really grateful for life connected like the sweet grass, formed in truth.

A counsellor one time asked Dave, "Why do you lie? Why do you go on lying?" You see, because lying means not living your life pretending, being jealous. I used to be jealous of people. I used to have that venom

of jealousy. Why do people have these things? All these are parts of lies, like becoming an alcoholic, becoming a gambler and I needed to deal with all these addictions, to deal with my gambling addiction and to deal with my alcoholism. Then the lies slowly lifted up. Then I can talk with my loved ones here. I can say things to them. I don't have to protect myself from these people any more. I hear my daughter. I hear my sons. Before I used to be just surviving the past -- surviving the past. Every time they wanted something, I just never hear them. Today I hear them. I hear Billy. I hear David. I hear Rene and Caroline, because I dare. I dare to explore the unknown. I dare to look inside here. I dare not criticize my brothers and sisters out there. They are already hurting, why should I do more damage? I needed to look inside this man.

That's one the scariest things I ever did was to look inside Dave. Once I'd done it I was on my way. Today I have a relationship with my wife that's so beautiful. I have a relationship with my children that's so beautiful. It's life, it's life.

Once I started to go to therapy

sessions -- you know, going to therapy is not for people that are going crazy, you know, it's not there. Just because you go to a psychologist doesn't mean you're crazy. A psychologist only guides you along exploring the unknown inside, so that's what I've done. I have been doing that now for the last three years and it's a lot of fun. I start to know who this man is. I start to know how to talk with my sons, my daughter. I start to reach out to other people, to many different people.

A lot of times I have that fear, a lot of times I wonder about the proper protocol of uncertain lands, but I remember the creator has challenged that protocol through things that are proper when I came to a different land. Yet in my healing inside it's ongoing. I was asked one time, "Dave do you quit drinking for ever?" I tell them, "No, I just quit just for today, just one day. When are you going to quit your therapy? Oh, I don't know, maybe tomorrow, maybe next week."

I see for the future for my people as our leaders like Ovide sees is to create that hope, to continue to create that hope. I was listening to him say, just when we are going to have it made, the government

will pull something from under us. Just when I was in university second year and I was going to go back for some more secondary education, it was pulled from under us and I tripped and fell. There goes my whole residential school syndrome comes back, you know, maybe I'm not good enough. But then I stand up again.

Post-secondary education has to be in there in order to qualify for a person that's getting well. I can have all the therapy in the world, but I need something to do like my psychology or whatever I was going to do for these people to continue. We can't just get well and have nothing. Like Ovide says, we need the resources. We need the resources and I continue to wait. I've been waiting since 1986 post-secondary. But I am determined. I'm a determined man. It's like Ovide says, no matter what happens, whether we get resources or no resources from the government, I'm going to continue to work with my people in every way I can and to continue to encourage my children here and continue to work with my brothers and sisters.

See, I never knew my brothers and sisters. I never knew that. I was a stranger to

Josephine. I was a stranger to Steve and I was a stranger to Jeannie. I never knew them because in residential school we weren't allowed to talk to one another. But today I love them. I love them, because they are always in here wherever I travel. Whenever I come back home, I'm at home with my Shuswap. I'm at home with my native brothers and sisters. Whenever I look into a small child's eyes away over land, there's my people, there's the creator. That's the way I look.

I could talk about residential school blow by blow by blow but nothing can be ever done. What needs to happen with Dave is to heal from that. A person says, "Are you seeking revenge when you talk about residential school?" I am not. It's not my way of getting well seeking revenge. I am the only person that can get me well. I am the only person that can make that choice. I am the only person that can go in the way of my people.

I'm so happy that I still have my language. I guess in honour I would like to talk to my people in my Shuswap language because if it wasn't for them I could never have been where I am.

(Indian dialect -- no translation)

Like Ovide said, they have tried everything to take our language, but they have never done that. I have continued to speak my language. My mother and grandfather spoke the language, I'm so grateful for them. In healing from this pain not to recoil, not to struck out, not to blame but to be gentle.

I worked with my anger over the last couple of years and it's really neat. My best coaches are right here sitting beside me. They know today when I get angry that I am not mad at them. They know when they hear my voice go up that they know really I am not mad at them. I have changed my tone of voice for these four beautiful people that I have with me today. I'm grateful that they're here with me

I think that's about all I need to share right now.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Dave, just if you could, when Ovide talked tonight about we need the resources. What kind of resources from the western perspective have you accessed for your healing? What kind of ceremonies and native rituals have you been part of?

How long have you been part of those rituals in terms of your healing in terms of the native spirituality? Because I think that some of those things you take for granted that they constantly talk about resources, resources and resources and some of them are monetary but some of them aren't, like going to Freddie's sweat is not money. If you could say that in as short a way as possible because of the need to getting around to the other people.

DAVE BELLEAU: Well, for one thing the sweat lodge being one of the first part where I do sweats and also fasting and going to the mountains. These are some of the resources that help in my healing.

MAGGIE HODGSON: How long after you were sober did you start that?

DAVE BELLEAU: Around 1983, about 10 years ago.

MAGGIE HODGSON: And you are sober for 10 years?

DAVE BELLEAU: Seven years, maybe five years.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Five years before you moved back into the native culture?

DAVE BELLEAU: Yes.

MAGGIE HODGSON: What kind of western resources have you accessed in terms of healing?

DAVE BELLEAU: Going to therapists, taking in many workshops like child sexual abuse conferences, learning from the western ways of doing how they do the thing, and also of course Nechi training and learning other ways from other people, different ceremonies again, sitting with other elders across the land.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Did you go for treatment?

DAVE BELLEAU: Oh, yes, I did. I went for treatment twice.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Where?

DAVE BELLEAU: Once in Kamloops and once at VLAS in Victoria.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Were they native facilities or non-native?

DAVE BELLEAU: They were non-native. When I first went out for treatment there was hardly any resources then.

MAGGIE HODGSON: So you are one of the old timers then?

DAVE BELLEAU: Well, yeah, I guess so.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Thanks, Dave.

Josephine, would you like to share a little bit about your experience, but mostly about your healing and what kinds of things you've done for healing yourself from residential school and with your family?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: When I was 10 years old when I went to that residential school in 1945. I stayed there for six years and that was a miserable six years, I would say, kind of lonely. I didn't know what I was getting into when I went there. I know when I look back to it now, it took me a while to think about how I got there in the first place in the residential school because when I came out of there it seemed like I wanted to leave everything behind, you know, when I get out of there.

Then I had to think back there for a while on how did I get there and I remember that my mom and dad hired a car -- I don't know whose car it was -- to bring us there and go to that residential school. I never did

forget the day when they drove off and left me there.

The best thing I had to do first was to find somebody that I knew that was there already that I could talk with because when I got there I mostly just didn't know English at all. I only know mostly Shuswap. I just said yes and no, and it was not even a proper yes, it was yeah; it wasn't no, it was naw.

That's all I knew when I got there and I had a tough time there for quite a while because I was forever getting punished. I was always yakking away in Shuswap and I didn't know, nobody told me first time when I got there that you weren't supposed to speak Shuswap and there I was always getting in there and the ones I ran into first they were just as bad as I was. They were just having problems with their language too and I was having the same thing.

Then I stayed there for six years and it was the time when the children that went there had to be there until they were 16, and once you were 16 you were just kicked out of there, no matter what. Even if you just went as far as grade 7 or grade 5 or whatever, as long as you were 16 you had to be out of there. So I was

16 and I had to get out of there. I went home from there. But while I was there, I went through sometimes when I think about it now, I was just there and this one time there were some of my friends at home I got a good licking from one of nuns there and from the day right today I don't know for what for. I still ask myself, what in the hell did I get licked that bad for? I was getting slapped around and everything and I could hear that nun's rosaries making a hell of racket in there and knocking me all over the place and from the day I still wondered, I wonder what was that for. I guess you had itchy fingers or something or nothing else to do and I just happen to come by and she and worked it off on me. I don't know. I often wonder about that too.

I had a hard time. I was there one time we got punished because we were all throwing away our -- I know one morning when I was there, we all got punished. We were in a long line up in the dining areas because we were all throwing away our porridge. They must have made it in the evening and served it for breakfast next morning and it was fermenting. You could see all the bubbles coming and they were serving it to us and they

were trying to make us eat it. I think we had some people got slapped around there to, some children got slapped around because they wouldn't eat it and we were already dumping it in a big can outside and they said it was a waste of food but who would eat that anyway.

But it was a lot of times it happened like that. We were forced to eat food that it wasn't even fit to eat. But we had to do it because they said it was a gift from God that we prayed over it and then we had to eat it. Sometimes I think about it now. I used to work in the kitchen area. Sometimes we used to have leftovers from the Fathers and Brothers dining room tables and the Sisters and the nuns dining area. If they have left over potatoes they put it in all in one thing and then they put it in pots and that's for the children's meal next day, left over stuff from the priests and nuns, whatever if was liver or bacon or eggs they just dumped it in one pot and make soup out of it or something.

Sometimes I think about it and I was thinking, how did they get away with all this stuff? I was thinking now for the kids if they got caught by the government maybe they could have done something, I don't

know, but it was some of my hard times.

I'm the older sister of Dave.

MAGGIE HODGSON: But when were you in residential school?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: I got in there in 1945.

MAGGIE HODGSON: And you left in '51?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: Left, yeah.

MAGGIE HODGSON: So you left the year Dave started?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: I just got out and he went in. I was just coming to think about that.

After when I went home, I used to have fun. My mom used to sometimes show me Dave's letters in print, his first letters, and I thought he might have been okay. The way his letters were it looked like it was okay. But through the years that went on --

MAGGIE HODGSON: After you left residential school, what did you do?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: I found a job. First job I could find was a cooking job for the truckers, Hudson Brothers.

MAGGIE HODGSON: So you used some of what you learnt because you worked in the kitchen?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: Yeah, that's where I learned mostly my cooking, in the kitchen and I got out of there and the first job I found was a cooking job and I took it.

MAGGIE HODGSON: After you left residential school, did you ever develop a drinking problem?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: Yeah, I developed a lot of drinking problem.

MAGGIE HODGSON: How long did you drink?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: About 20 to 25 years of drinking, heavy drinking.

MAGGIE HODGSON: When did you stop drinking?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: I stopped drinking in 1977 or '78, I don't remember, something like that. I started native dancing in '78, so it must have been before that.

MAGGIE HODGSON: So you quit drinking in about '77?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: Yeah, I've been sober now for 16 years.

MAGGIE HODGSON: After you moved into recovery, what kinds of things did you do to get well?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: First thing I did was when I sobered up was I start going to AA meetings and that was about -- I used to go to AA meetings. After being sober there for about 11 years and then I decided I wasn't getting enough. I was starting missing something in my life that something could be better for me. I started searching and I started looking. I might as well, you know, I wasn't getting enough with just AA, so I decided to go to Paul Meagher's lodge and a treatment centre, so I went there and after that, got out of there and I got into Nechi's program of training to be a drug and alcohol counsellor. That's bettered my life, and then I knew what I had to do. I went to training for personal training. I went there. People told me about the workshop that did something to find what makes you tick, they said.

I went there and that's where I really found who I was. After losing myself in all that 25 years of drinking then I found out where I was at then and from

then I've been doing good.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Have you gone to therapy besides going to AA and treatment?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: No, that's what I've been thinking about.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Right on. Never too late, Josephine.

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: I thought I was too old.

MAGGIE HODGSON: The other thing is, how long have you been involved in terms of ceremonies, the Shuswap ceremonies?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: Ever since they started. I guess ever since I started dancing.

MAGGIE HODGSON: How old were you when you started dancing?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: I don't remember. I started in '78.

MAGGIE HODGSON: In '78 after you were sober?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: I've been dancing since. I've been a traditional dancer.

MAGGIE HODGSON: If you are not too old to do that, Josephine, you're not old to go to therapy.

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: That's what helps me stay sober. That's what keeps me going.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Your dancing?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: My dancing.

MAGGIE HODGSON: I'll tell you a secret. White people pay therapists $85 an hour to do bioenergetics, and they go like that and you, you go dancing and you don't pay anything and you get well and let your pain out through your feet, so you've got the vehicle right there.

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: I know because sometimes when I'm feeling kind of, you know, down heel like, I always tell my husband -- sometimes I just tell him I feel like a pow-wow. I feel like going to a pow-wow just to get back my energy and get back into living, I guess.

MAGGIE HODGSON: So you are in therapy, just go dancing.

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: I don't need therapy, I just need dancing.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Thank you very much, Josephine.

One of the things that was asked of the people from Alfred this afternoon was the issue of suicide. Did you ever think about suicide when you were drinking?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: Maybe if I kept on drinking, I wouldn't need to think about suicide. I was already dying, quite seriously.

MAGGIE HODGSON: From drinking?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: Yeah.

MAGGIE HODGSON: So you never ever attempted suicide?

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: Maybe I was too drunk even to think about it.

MAGGIE HODGSON: That's what I always love about you, Josephine, your beautiful sense of humour.

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON: I was too busy drinking to think about of all this.

MAGGIE HODGSON: How about you, Dave. Did you think of suicide? Did you ever attempt suicide?

DAVE BELLEAU: I think my sister said it. On and off I used to think, but I think I was too

chicken because when I was riding freight trains when they were going 90 miles an hour across human desert and very soon I wanted to jump off and I wanted to live. So, no, realistically, I don't think I wanted to hurt myself. Because you got to remember after coming out of residential school, I'm on a survival mode. When you are on a survival mode, that's enough energy to keep you going. Somebody, forget to tell you hey, you're out of residential school, you don't need to keep on surviving. So why should I want to commit suicide when I'm still trying to survive on a freight train? The creator give me all of this, I'll never do it again.

No, I think I was on a survival mode, so to answer that question, no, I wasn't ever --

MAGGIE HODGSON: I was just curious about that. Jeannie, next.

JEANNIE DICK: I would like to thank my family for being here today, and my brothers and my sister, my nephews and my niece, my sister-in-law and Maggie and the rest that's in the circle here.

I was asked a couple of weeks ago to join this circle to share with you the impact of the residential

school. For myself, I'm Shuswap. I've been sober now for 12 years. I've been in therapy now for over five years and I've been in intense therapy for the last three years. I've a psychologist that I go see. I'm a survivor. I'm an alcoholic. I'm a drug addict. I have all kinds of addictions. I have all kinds of survival skills that I am still working on, like Dave says.

I went in residential school when I was six years old. I remember my mom and dad leaving me and my dad holding me tight. He didn't want to let me go. I'm very close to my dad today. I stayed in that residential school for 10 years. I hurt there. There was no love there. There was no caring there, nobody to hug you when you cried, all they done was slap you over, don't you cry, you're not supposed to cry. Whip me when I talked to my younger brother. That's my brother, for God's sakes. We were not supposed to talk to these people.

My sister here, I don't really know her that well, and my brother. I'm getting to know them now, but there's no bonding in our family, there's just a thread holding us together. So this is what I've been working

on. I've been working on myself, working on my sobriety.

I sobered up in 1980, New Year's Day, and I've been sober since then. I was really scared what I sobered up because that was my way of dealing with daily problems. I had a lot of problems. I'm one of those people that wanted to commit suicide. Many times I just about succeeded, about three times, but I didn't make it. My daughter's here. I tried to commit suicide with her standing on the ledge eight feet long in Toronto, standing on a patio, going to jump over with her; she was just a little baby.

That's how sick you get when you are an alcoholic.

When I came home I seen my reserve and people smiling, people were happy. I was in the city for 12 years. When I came home I was a stranger. I feel like a stranger yet in my community. I learned to live and survive in the city by myself. When I came home from Toronto, it was the best thing I ever done for myself. I was so proud, I wouldn't even phone. Charlene managed to get a hold of me somehow. I don't know how the hell she got a hold of me, because that city is big.

In 1981-82 we started going to training. I was scared, but I wanted to get better. I had it in my heart that I wanted to get better. This is enough -- enough is enough, I had it. That's what I said. I don't want to die. I have my girl. I got to live for my girl. So I said, I got to do something. I got to do something with my life, what can I do? The we started having workshops in Alkali and I made a commitment that I'm going to go to all these workshops and I'm going to learn as much as I can.

The most important thing I had to learn was to learn about myself. What made Jeannie tick? What made Jeannie do what she does? How come she was so angry? Why was she in such a rage? So much bitterness. I started working on myself and the most healing tool that I had was my tears. I cried and I cried and I cried and my heart started softening up; it wasn't hard any more, it was not like a rock any more. I started feeling. I started understanding what people talk about about feelings.

People used to call me down and I used to just smile. Call me down right to the ground and I

would just smile and it wouldn't even bother me. I started seeing that Jeannie could change, that I had to make the changes, that I had to make the choices of the changes that I had to make in my life. I had to do the work, nobody could do the work for me. I shared. I shared my life and I shared all the things about what happened to me. It's not very pretty. It's not a story with flowers and everything in it. I shared it all and I'm still sharing it.

I always wonder where those two years went when I went to the residential school. There's two years in there that I lost and what I believe myself, I went in shock when I went in the residential school, because I remember coming too one day and I was in grade 2. What happened to grade 1? Grade 2 they told me I had graduated. I didn't even know. It's locked in my younger days that I don't even know. I didn't even know my parents at all. Only time we seen them was two months of the year and when we seen them they were just like strangers to me. I didn't even know them. I couldn't talk to them. I couldn't relate to them. Even my family, my brothers and sisters, I could couldn't even talk to them either because

we never seen each other.

So I went through a lot of workshops. I went to many seminars. I've seen a lot of elders. I've a lot of teachers today.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Traditional teachers?

JEANNIE DICK: Traditional teachers that have taken time to sit down with me and listen to me and also for myself to learn and listen. That is one of my tools, to be able to listen to other people and learn from them and learn from their experiences.

Today, I'm a counsellor. I work in a treatment centre, in a family treatment centre. We have families that come in every six weeks and these families that come in are in trauma, devastation, and horror when they come in there and these are people that I deal with. They are angry. They are very angry, enraged. These are people that I can relate to what I went through, what they have gone through. I work with them and I work with them and I get them to believe in themselves and that's the bud of the flower is to believe. A lot of our people cannot believe in themselves, so they cannot grow and blossom. So when we come they come in to the centre, we

work on them, get them to believe that they're good people, they are not somebody to be walked on. Let's stand up and hold our head up high and be proud.

It really hurts my heart, especially for those children, little children, they're coming in and you can see the devastation on those children's faces. They have gone through a lot, the little ones. They learn how to survive like what we have. We are survivors like the little ones today.

The biggest issue that these families come in is parenting. Parenting is the hardest for these families, because a lot of those families that come in there come from residential school. In the residential school, they do not teach you parenting skills, how to look after your children.

MAGGIE HODGSON: But they do teach you parenting skills, not necessarily healthy parent skills. They teach you parenting skills.

JEANNIE DICK: We learn how to be violent. We watched them how they whip us and we treat our children the same way. We whip our children how we have been whipped.

My husband and I today we travel whenever we can and we share our stories together as a couple. We talk about what we go through as a couple, as a family, as a relationship. What goes on between both of us. How he was raised in an alcoholic family and the same as myself, adult child of an alcoholic. All the symptoms of myself and what I carry are what I have to change to positive not into the negative. I still go that way once in a while in my life.

I am really glad this conference is on here. It's showing me that we are starting to do something and that there is hope for our people. In the native prophesies, one of the prophecies says that elders are going to be standing up in the west and that's when the native people are going to be healing themselves, and I believe that. I believe it's coming. The day has come. For myself, I don't feel any bitterness towards the residential school today like my brother is. I'm healing myself. I'm going to make something of myself.

I said to myself, way back in '82-83 that I will not ever crawl for anybody again, never. Anybody said anything to me, I'd hang my head like right now.

I remember when I seen a priest one day, I was over -- we had our school over a residential school -- imagine we had our treatment centre over there. This priest came in and I hung my head right away and that's just natural, it's just the impact they had on me. I felt like that little girl again. That little girl is always ready to stand up straight and march around, a little soldier, you just naturally act the way you are supposed to act in front of these persons and that's what I had done. I'm a grown person and here I was still had an impact.

It is the same with non-native people. I really had to work with that. I am really glad I went to the VLAS centre in Victoria, Victoria Life Enrichment Centre. There it's a mixed clients, non-native, and whoever wants to go there and there were about three of us natives there. I'm really glad I went there because that's where I worked on myself with the impact I had with non-native people. I thought they were all the same and I realized that they were not, they were not the same. It was just the people that were there at the time that was dealing all this hurt towards me. Today, I've got a lot of non-native friends all over the country, all over

Canada and down in the States. We've travelled all over and I've made a lot of friends

It's one day at a time, like Dave says. One day at a time to heal yourself. For me, I pray that I will never, ever touch that bottle again. I pray that I will never touch drugs again because I like my life today. I'm happy, and I don't have any worries of where I'm going to sleep tonight. I don't have to go down the street and panhandle, "You got a quarter? You got a quarter for me?" I used to be one of those people in Toronto. That's where I came back up. I went right down the bottom of the barrel and floated up to the top.

MAGGIE HODGSON: I have this picture in my mind. Thank you, Jeannie.

Steven, my friend.

STEVE BELLEAU: I was thinking about this conference when Charlene said, "Can you come and be a guest speaker here with the Royal Commission?" I said, "It's the same name as my work here, `royal' commission." It sounds pretty important.

Myself, you four, I think you should really look at this as a really big problem among our native

people because it's no longer a joke. We've had enough suffering and it's time that we do something about it. As for myself being in a residential school for six and a half years, I learned to survive. I was a thief when I was in the mission, now I'm Mountie, believe it or not.

I remember my friends Art and Percy. We grew up there in the residential school and my sister here was talking about leftovers from the priests and Brothers' dining room, and probably my friend Bill knows about too, and we used to have grease stains on our shirts. We used to steal the toast so we could have some breakfast. But that's the way we survived and we learned.

We even had the code of silence in there, believe it or not. Whenever something happens, we didn't tell on anybody. We honoured each other Carrier, Chilcotin, Shuswap, and even some Okanagan. We respected each other. I respected everybody.

I was one of the fortunate ones that I wasn't abused, Because I learned how to survive. I'm A survivor of these residential school. like my brothers and sisters, we never knew each other. My biggest oldest

brother was living just one floor below me and I bet you I only seen him only at meal times and even then I was not able to talk with him. I was not allowed to talk with these people.

Like we said, our bonding, our family is just hanging on by a thread and that's it. One of these days we are going to be a real close family and I'm sure we are living far apart my brother Dave is in Alberta and I'm in the city of Chase, where there's a lot of work. But my two sisters here are in Williams Lake and my youngest brother is at home.

Those are the things that I really miss was the close bonding with my family. Even with my own family sometimes I forget. I forget sometimes that my two sons and my daughter I have to learn how to say, "I love you, James. I love you, Shane. I love you, Gale." Things like that. Nobody ever told me that when I was in a residential school. They said, "Line up. Wash your hair. Take a shower." That's all I heard. And yet I accepted that and that's something that was really something I had to do was accept something from somebody we trusted.

MAGGIE HODGSON: How have you learned how to say, "I love you", Steve?

STEVE BELLEAU: I'm still far away from that. I said that to my sister once and my wife ones, but again, I have that shield in front of me, that I'm careful. I don't want to be hurt again. When my mom and dad was taken away from me when I was a kid, I don't want that to happen again. That's why I'm really careful with anybody.

Another thing too, ladies and gentlemen, I hide behind humour. I have feelings that I don't express though. When I went in a Mountie school, we had to learn how not to express our feelings and I think I did it really well and sometimes I think I sort of used that with my family.

Just the other day I sat with my kids and there was noise and everything like that. I don't like noise and for one time I let that happen. Our little granddaughter -- calling her granddaughter makes me sound old -- is making noise in the house there and I let it happen and I said, "I wish you'd have another one now." And it felt good. It felt good to hear that baby cry.

It really felt good, it made me feel young again. It made me feel like that's what I'm missing, youth. I lost my youth. I had to learn to be an adult at the age of six, seven, eight. I had to learn to survive at that age.

A lot of kids in my school talks asked me when did you leave home. I told them I left when I was six years old. You might as well say I did, because I was in residential school all that time. I went home. I didn't like it there because, like my sister here said, our parents were just like strangers to me. I wanted to go back to the residential school. Why? Because I was learning to survive on my own. I learned how to cope with what was going around me.

People are my work. Today I went up to Williams Lake and I got really upset for some reason or another, but when I was driving back, I turned on a video that I always listen to its a pow-wow tape and I just listened to it. I didn't close my eyes, I was driving. I was listening to what those were people saying. Well, I didn't understand it, but it seems like I could understand what they were saying. And I was thinking about it, this is okay, this is part of my job, I'll accept it, why should

I get upset for somebody else? That's not my problem. That's my life that I have to look after. I'm not going to worry about theirs. When I thought of that, I start thinking about the residential school again. Why am I reacting about for somebody's problem? I'm worried about it. Why am I worrying? Because I'm thinking back again. When I was in residential school, I used to worry that I am going to be late for church, or late for school, or things like that.

Those are things that came up in my mind. I'll back-up a bit here. One time when we were at the residential school, Christmas time, 25 below zero, cold. I guess it's cold when it's 25 below zero. We were all excited. We were going to go home for Christmas, far out man, everybody would shake hands. We are going to go. And this one little partner of mine was really excited about going home for Christmas. You know what happened? Without no feeling or anything, the Brother came out and said, "You're not going home this Christmas." What are you going to say, you're only eight years old? He stood there and he cried and he cried and I told him, "I'll bring you back something." I never seen him again. What

happened is they took him to Kamloops. They moved him somewhere else. Never seen him again.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Wasn't the witnessing of violence like that just as hard as being a recipient of the violence?

STEVE BELLEAU: Yeah, it was really -- I think for me it was something I had to accept because it seemed like it was part of living is the violence. Like I remember that. That's why I said, I'm going to bring this guy something because he was always one that was always being picked on, he's the softy and everybody is going to pick on him.

What happened at that same time we were going home for Christmas, we were going in a bus and half ways to Alkali we broke down. It's so humiliating. Instead of getting another bus, they phoned back to the residential school and said, "Bring the cattle truck. We broke down." That's how we went home. We went home in a cattle truck. I tell you, that is something I will never forget. The little guys that were beside me, it's cold and frozen, but yet we were going to make it home for Christmas, darn rights we are. But I will never forget

that driver's face. I will never. The reason I will not forget is because every time I look I see that little white thing right here, right here, right there, and him smiling and he said, "Get in, we are going to take you home." That was the most humiliating time that I ever had in my life in the residential school. That's why I felt so small.

I'm so embarrassed sometimes and when I see somebody with a white collar I get really angry. But that's going to have to be by passed. I want to live my life. I want to continue. Why should I let somebody else hurt my feelings?

To this day, I've been with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police now for 13 years. The people I work with, our people that come out of that place have been abused physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. A lot of those people when I used to pick them up from the streets as a drunk, I used to talk to them. Half the time they don't even know what I'm saying, but still I talk to them. Because I know I'm going to see them tomorrow, and those are the people we have to work with. Those are the people that we are caring about.

A lot of people, chiefs, councillors that are sitting here, how many times have you gone down the tracks to look for people? No. I've been down there. I know how they live, you don't. That's why I say, you are going to have to start caring about our people. I did my part, I went down to see how they lived and I tell you it's a pity. It's probably the same way in Toronto in the tracks, in Vancouver in the skids. Those are the people that have been forgotten. A lot of times I talk to people in the streets and they say, "My people don't care for me no more." That's probably true. The other excuse probably is that they have been abused -- sexually abused in a residential school, or elsewhere.

I've been blamed for assaulting a person while I'm on duty. I've been assaulted, but I didn't lay a complaint. I did, but it was stayed because of our court system. Why? Because I was native? I always wonder about that. Things like that happen, happen to me. I'm a native RCMP member. I'm trying to work with our native people, but yet they still turn against me.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Kind of like being caught in between?

STEVE BELLEAU: I am caught in between. I'm not "kind of" caught in between. I am caught in between. I find it difficult. You know, some people they tell me we are 100 per cent behind you. We will support you with everything and then I come up with a problem, they are not there. When I transferred out of Williams Lake that was the best thing that ever happened to me. Because working with my people was very difficult, very difficult. When I talked to people applying to the RCMP force I always tell them, "Do not go home. That is the worse thing you will ever do." That's what I say. I know because I experienced that. When I moved to Chase, B.C., it's just been a total difference. It's been a turnaround for me now and now I'm working positive instead of negative.

It's like my friend J.D. Billy down there who helps me quite a bit and I help him, we have been doing a lot of workshops together and I'm getting to know people through him and all that stuff, and through the elders.

MAGGIE HODGSON: How long have you been in recovery?

STEVE BELLEAU: Fourteen years. I've been sober for 13 years.

MAGGIE HODGSON: So you just sobered and came to Nechi then.

STEVE BELLEAU: Yes, I did.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Holy man, we shouldn't have let you in the door.

STEVE BELLEAU: It's okay. It's something that I am really proud of that I accomplished was to be sober and to be a policeman, too. I tell you it's tough. Because when you finish work you got to find something to do like everybody else.

MAGGIE HODGSON: So what do you do?

STEVE BELLEAU: I either go hit the golf course or I go play hockey. I have to replace that.

MAGGIE HODGSON: So you are a golf fiend?

STEVE BELLEAU: Yes.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Don is, too.

STEVE BELLEAU: But that is something I always look into. But I never forget the people up here in Williams Lake, Canim Lake. I'll never forget these people and some of these people that I know very well across the river up towards and Anahim and Riske Creek. People

that I worked with and was associated with, those are the ones that I really appreciate. Some on the other side over there like Lila Gunn. I think she was there and Joan Chendles. These are the people that I was associated with in working.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Have you ever been to treatment?

STEVE BELLEAU: Yes, I did. I went to VLAS. That's where I learned to associate with non-natives and it was something that I -- it took me a while to get into the group, like I had to see how they react first.

That's the same thing that happens today. When I moved to Chase I had see how they are first.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Check things out?

STEVE BELLEAU: Can you take a joke? Do you have a sense of humour, you know, things like.

I work with a good bunch of guys down there and the same with Williams Lake. I was very close to some of them.

MAGGIE HODGSON: How about in traditional practices? How long have you been involved

in traditional practices?

STEVE BELLEAU: Tough questions.

MAGGIE HODGSON: You're used to giving the questions not the answers.

STEVE BELLEAU: I know, but I get them from the book, though.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Approximately?

STEVE BELLEAU: I've been drumming and singing with the Alkali Drummers for about six, seven years.

MAGGIE HODGSON: So three or four years after you moved into recovery?

STEVE BELLEAU: Yes.

The other thing is, I'm still learning my culture. I'm still trying to grasp -- everybody talks about the medicine wheel. You probably heard about the medicine wheel and all that. Nobody nodded. The medicine wheel that's something that's really interesting for me. Like my friend Freddie, every time he talks about it, I really make sure I try and listen and remember that, but that's something I'm still absorbing. It's something we have to continue to learn and teach our children, as

mentioned this evening, because that is something we are slowly getting back because we have lost it during the residential stages of our lives.

The other thing that I've done is that I go to the sweat lodge more than once.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Are you giving Dave a rub?

STEVE BELLEAU: That's something I enjoy. I go to the sweat lodge with my friends along with some of our regular members of the police force. We went into the sweat lodge together and we enjoyed it because it's an experience and when you learn a new experience you want to do it again and again.

MAGGIE HODGSON: It's healing.

STEVE BELLEAU: Yes, and the bonding is closer together because you feel so comfortable with each other and being in the sweat lodge and singing that is something that makes you feel proud again.

MAGGIE HODGSON: To be an Indian.

STEVE BELLEAU: But that's something we have to really look at. It's not just here, it's across Canada.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Thanks, Steve.

STEVE BELLEAU: I'm not finished.

MAGGIE HODGSON: How long are you going to be? We are half an hour overdue here. Have you got a one-liner for us, or are you going to pout?

STEVE BELLEAU: Not on TV.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Caroline, would you like to share what it's been like being involved in a family in recovery, particulary being Dave's daughter and being in recovery yourself?

CAROLINE BELLEAU: About my dad?

MAGGIE HODGSON: Yourself, your dad, your family. Whatever you want to and you don't have to say a lot if you don't want to, just whatever you are comfortable with.

CAROLINE BELLEAU: I found it isn't really that stable when I was little bit younger. I guess I was some kind of screwed up. I didn't even hardly know my dad when I was a little girl and my brothers and I weren't that close either. My mom and dad would get mad off and on or else they'd get sad for no reason.

MAGGIE HODGSON: They would get mad at

each other or you?

CAROLINE BELLEAU: No, at us. For the longest time I guess we weren't really that close a family and we had a pretty tough time. I don't know, these past years has been pretty good though, we are getting closer than we ever have. Me and my mom and dad they explained to me how their lives were and how in a way it affects us. **MAGGIE HODGSON:** How has your dad's anger affected you?

CAROLINE BELLEAU: It made me wonder what I did wrong.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Kind of like your Aunt Josephine getting that licking and wondering what she got the licking for?

CAROLINE BELLEAU: Yeah, exactly. These past years since we've been talking a lot, we have been sharing each other's feeling we've got a little bit more closer and my brothers too are a little bit closer than we were before.

Like my Auntie Charlene says, we've been through hell and back and we are still standing strong.

MAGGIE HODGSON: That's right.

CAROLINE BELLEAU: That's all I'd like to say.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Are there any things that you have done for yourself, Caroline? You're back in school now?

CAROLINE BELLEAU: Yeah. I am supposed to be teaching art, too.

MAGGIE HODGSON: You are teaching art?

CAROLINE BELLEAU: Yeah, I love art. I find it best to express my feelings in my art work. I am aiming for my goals. I didn't used to have any goals and now I do.

MAGGIE HODGSON: So you're an artist. I'll have to remember that. We have different things where we need art done for our centres, so it's a good thing to know.

Is there anything else that you would like to tell the commissioners?

CAROLINE BELLEAU: No, not really.

MAGGIE HODGSON: I do have to say you're really brave, Caroline. I know you're quite shy so it has taken a lot of courage. When you have yappy people

like your aunts and uncles it's kind of hard to be as courageous. So I really admire you.

How about you, Rene? I know it's been a long, hard day. Is there anything you want to share with the commissioners?

RENE BELLEAU: I don't know.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Where do you go to school, Rene? It's a native alternative school. Are you in therapy with your family? Do you go for counselling periodically?

RENE BELLEAU: We go about twice or three times a week or something like that and we spend to four or five minutes.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Is there anything else you want to share with the commissioners?

RENE BELLEAU: No.

MAGGIE HODGSON: How about you, David?

DAVID BELLEAU: Well, just all the changes that have been done for our family have been good because it's better than what we've had before, what we've had to deal with. Now our family is getting better and going to counselling. We've been learning how to learn

about ourselves and how to communicate with each other and I've learned more about myself and how to cope with my anger and to be more communicative with my brothers and sister. So just learning about what has happened before to my dad, like going to the residential school how it affected him and how it has affected us, the changes that he had before going there, not knowing his other family members and more about them.

So now everything mostly for me has been good, because I know more about myself and things that make me more happy and to respect myself and all my other family members and how my dad has affected us since his drinking and going to the residential school.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Is there anything else you would like to share?

DAVID BELLEAU: I know more about my family and I'm glad to be with them and all the things will get more better for us. The good things are fine for us in the future.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Thanks for having so much courage. You have a tremendous amount of courage for your age. I never would have been able to do what

you guys have done, especially at your age.

We saved the best for last. If you're not sleeping, the rest of us aren't. So your name is Billy.

BILLY BELLEAU: Yeah. Are you Dave's baby? No, you're not, there's another one younger than you?

BILLY BELLEAU: I'm the second youngest.

MAGGIE HODGSON: Would you like to tell the commissioners anything, Billy?

BILLY BELLEAU: I'm nervous.

MAGGIE HODGSON: It's okay. Just take your time. It's okay if you are nervous. God gave us tears to heal ourselves.

Caroline, do you want to stand behind him and put a hand on his shoulder. You're kind of like a mother to him.

If you don't want to talk, that's fine, my boy. This is far too scary. It's a lot to ask of a little guy anyway, and it's more than okay. If you want to say anything to the commissioners after, you can talk

to them in private. They would be willing to listen to you. Thank you very much for having the courage to even join us in the circle, Billy, because it took a lot of courage to do that.

I know we are past the time. Is there any questions that the commissioners have of the family, or any comments?

CO-CHAIR GEORGE ERASMUS: I wouldn't mind somebody talking a little bit about what they mean when they say "I'm a survivor. I learned survival skills. At six I quit being a child and I'm an adult." What are we saying. What point is being made?

STEVE BELLEAU: I guess that was me that was saying I was a survivor and learned to be an adult early. It's because I learned to grow up by myself even though I was living with 250 guys or maybe less, but yet we were still in our own little worlds when they were there. Still thinking of home, and all this time we had to learn to survive individually. We had to do our own thing ourselves. Nobody is going to help you in there. Everybody's got their own thing. That's why for myself, I had to learn the hard way. I had to work my way up there

to say I'm going to stay there. I had to survive through hard times, through the lickings that everybody had or everybody got every now and then. That is something we call for me I survived that because a lot of times I used to come out of that room with hands red almost right up to here from the straps. I tell you, I made a mistake one time and said, "Thank you," and I got 10 more.

But yet they just enjoyed things like that. When you hear them swinging and hitting on the legs while you are getting it across the hands, I tell you, you had to learn to hide that pain. I've seen some of my friends come out of that room with cuts on their arms and they still show it today.

We had to survive pain. We had to survive starvation. That's why I was saying earlier that we had to learn to steal in there. We had to learn how to survive there, that's the way it was, and to be a survivor you had to struggle and fight for what was yours. What little possession you had in that residential school you treasured. I had my mom's picture one time and it got ripped up, I tell you lose a lot when you lose that. That's what I call surviving in there. I learned to say, "This

is mine. I will not share with anybody." especially my mom's picture when somebody tore it or burned it up.

Usually when I come into situations like this I can share and I can show my emotion because I'm human. I can cry. It's like my little nephew there, Billy. I can cry, but I will not show my emotions with these things sitting there. I will not do that. That's for me to share with my family,. If I am going to cry, I will, but not with these things sitting there.

And again, I'm really proud of these four young people that have the courage to come and sit in front of you people. That's family bonding and I hope it does that to you when you get home as you learn to bring that family back together. That family loving, that family tie, has got to be tied together again because it's really tough when your family is going all directions. Like I said before, we are living all over the country but yet we stay in close communications because I know where they are. I know how they are doing. We are successful because we wanted to. My brother working in Nechi and myself and my sister working in the treatment centre and myself being a police officer. I think we were successful in struggling

and fighting.

It was mentioned this evening of racism, but that's another thing to deal with. That's why I think we say we are survivors.

MAGGIE HODGSON: What he is talking about the inconveniencing, where you are taught to steal or you learn how to steal and learn the 10 commandments during the day, when you learn how to smile and you hate that man that's hitting you, you hate their guts, that's survival. When you learn how to put your feelings to sleep, denying your own humanity, that's survival.

JEANNIE DICK: I learned how to survive being a mother at six years old. I had to become an adult right away and I learned adult skills. Because of my parent's alcoholism, my mom and dad, I had to become a mother right away and learn her skills to take care of the family. I was washing clothes and washing dishes and washing floors when I was six, seven, eight, nine years old. I was already a parent and taking care of my parents but enraged about it because my parents are supposed to be taking care of me. So I was surviving that way.

I had to create my environment to

survive, or else if I didn't learn how to cook when I was young I believe my brothers and sister, or my brothers would have probably gone hungry and I had to learn quickly. Like my brother says learning how to steal and lie and cheat and to con people out of a few cents. I had to learn to be a con artist right away. That's how I survived. To survive all the abuse, mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically, to survive all that trauma that I had gone through, I believe I'm a survivor. I've been able to come out of it and some people don't come out of it and that's where suicide comes in. People that I deal with today are people on the edge, a lot of them.

DAVE BELLEAU: Lying in bed in the dorm dark at night not wanting to die. Learning to breathe rhythmically, scared, helpless in bed without the warmth of your mother's arms around you and your father's presence, that's survival. To survive without parenting, to survive one day at a time for nine years, dying little by little every day, using the other way of staying alive, the subculture that I learned. Today I have to cut off that subculture and start living and start saying, "I love you, George." That's living, not surviving, leaning to

live.

MAGGIE HODGSON: I would like to close with a prayer. I would like to especially thank you for having as much courage as you did to come here, Billy, even to join us and support us for the evening.

I would like to close with a prayer and I would like us to stand and hold bands, please.

There will be a pipe ceremony to close the evening which will start right away after the prayer.

(Prayer)

(Closing pipe ceremony)

FRED JOHNSON: There is something I want to say before I say my prayer. I always wanted to say this in front of commissioners.

I always remember 1914 when the first commissioners came round and our old chief said, "We've waited for you for so long", not knowing that these commissioners were going to take his land away from them, and I don't mean to say that these commissioners are going to do anything, but I always think about that when I hear the word "commissioner".

Our old chief was asked questions. They

asked him, "How many horses do you have? How many cattle do you have? How many chickens do you have? How much land have you got for all these animals?" Then our chief pointed out the land and in the end that land was taken away. Now we only have 9,000 acres of land left and that's reserve land.

I hope these commissioners here use this information in a good way. It was only 1914 when we were discovered. That's why we still have these ways. It has come back really strong. I encourage those of you who travel as commissioners to hear the people because for so long our people have been hurting. I encourage the leaders, especially the chiefs, to think about the grassroots people. I encourage Mercredi not to forget those of us who are isolated. It wasn't too long ago when we were discovered in this area, yet our pains have been great and I think you have heard those stories today.

I encourage you to put these words into good use. What you have heard today was all the truth. What you will hear tomorrow is all the truth. That is what is needed for us to speak the truth. When we share with you these things we can't lie. I encourage again

our leaders, I encourage you not to forget the people. No matter how high a chief you are our people at the grassroots level are never heard of.

Again I want to thank you for being here with these people here in Canim Lake.

I always remember those words our old chief said, "We've waited for you to come for so long and we welcome you here." These are the words that the old chief told these commissioners in 1914. So from here I hope this path changes for all of us. It's not really too often that we can share our sacred items like this and for whatever reasons we are sharing this with you, I think it's time for change. It's coming to that time when we are going to be ready and our people are going to be able to stand up.

I just want to say a prayer.

(prayer)

---Whereupon the hearing adjourned at 11:00 p.m. to reconvene at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 9, 1993.