

IPPERWASH PUBLIC INQUIRY

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE FORUM

Draft Version Only

Held at:

Forest, Ontario

October 14th, 2004

Day 2 of 2

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--- Upon commencing at 9:17 a.m.

(CEREMONIAL SINGERS PERFORM)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Good morning. Everybody had a good rest last night? I'll tell you, the second time the fire alarm went off I did everything to that alarm clock you can possibly think. I finally woke up.

I'd like to welcome each one of you. I've just been informed that the Stoney Point singers are on their way. I guess the time change just threw everybody out so we're going to wait for a few minutes and then what we're going to be doing is we're going to be asking the Kettle -- Kettle Point singers to start off and if the Stoney Point singers come here on time, we'll ask them and then we'll have the Blue Wolf do the song this morning for us again.

I was -- I was fortunate to be part of historical development in our country with the -- many of my brother across -- brothers and sisters across Canada and that was a time when we were negotiating for recognition in the constitution of Canada.

And many of you will have remembered seeing the televised negotiations, First Ministers' conferences on constitutional affair, Aboriginal affairs.

And in one (1) of the -- I think it was on the second morning that the Prime Minister, before the meeting was opened, and David Hennequin (phonetic) was the national Chief and we had elders there and they were performing an opening at that particular time.

And the Prime Minister opened up and asked the national Chief, Are we going to pray every morning? And the national Chief, when his elders talked to him responded, Mr. Prime Minister, we're going to pray every morning.

I thought that was a very key -- critical moment in the lives of our people because our leaders and our elders stood up at that particular time and pinpointed to the Prime Minister and the leaders of this country, there's nothing more else important to the aboriginal people to begin the day by opening prayers and when you hear the drummers as they sing, it's the prayers that they provide for the group and we thank them for that.

And, you know, I often think about it as we -- as we talk to each other that -- I often think it's a good way to start the day. It's a good way to begin the day and having a prayer -- prayers to be shared by these people that have committed their lives to be part of it.

I just wanted to share that with you. You might be sitting here wondering, well, how long is this going to go on? I just want to share with you there is nothing more important to our people than to be able to start off the day right.

We'll get -- we'll finish whatever we're doing today and we'll finish in a -- in a time that -- in an orderly time. So I just wanted you to bear with us. We're going to be asking the singer -- the drummers to begin shortly. We're going to wait for a few more minutes and if you need to have coffee -- some coffee down here with us, my goodness.

I just want to acknowledge a friend of mine who just came in, Chris McCormick (phonetic). Chris McCormick is the president of the AIAI, one (1) of our political organizations in Ontario. He's the president of it. Thank you very much for joining us, Chris. We appreciate it.

Okay. We're just going to wait for a few more minutes and then we'll start and then once -- once we start and once the Stoney Point drummers come in, we will accommodate them at that time. So get your coffee and stretch out a minute.

--- Upon recessing at 9:19 a.m.

--- Upon resuming at 9:35 a.m.

MR. WALLY MACKAY: I wonder if we could all take our seats, we would like to begin.

The drums that you see all go through a process before they begin and early this morning the drummers come in and they -- they have smoked their pipe and they have smudged and this is what the Stoney Pointers have to do first, so for people that you -- who have not seen them, this is the -- this is the protocol that they go through as they begin their day.

They're going to do their smudge and then they're going to do an opening -- a -- not an official opening song, but a song to start things off and then we'll call the meeting to order to start off at that time. I'm going to be asking them to do the opening song, we'll go to the Kettle Point and then we'll go to the Blue Wolf as a third drum. Okay?

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Sing songs now. We'll go to the Stoney Point and then to Kettle and then to the Blue Wolf. Stoney Point?

(CEREMONIAL SINGERS PERFORM)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much. Emery Shawanoo will do us the honour and then we're going to have a prayer by Virginia Henry (phonetic). Emery...?

MR. EMERY SHAWANOO: I don't know. I don't like -- I don't want people see when I'm -- who's speaking and -- and who I am, so I'm going to get in the centre here. This -- this Nugamo (phonetic) Anishnaabe remember one (1) time when I was young and I went to high school and we had Native Studies, learning all about how to be Nishnaabe and in my heart I -- I said I wish I had a -- a Mishowmiss (phonetic) grandfather. Both of my grandfathers had passed on; I never got to know who they were.

But this one (1) fella that I called Uncle, he came by that evening and he said, Hey, I was just thinking today, don't call me Uncle, called me Grandpa, so he was my grandpa and the song that I'm going to sing, he told me about this song. It's about the sun, Gezis (phonetic).

I'll face this way because the sun comes from the east. When our people have our prayers, well I cannot explain the feeling that we have when we rise up in the morning and the sun comes up and we offer our thanks to the Creator.

(SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE)

MR. EMERY SHAWANOO: And after I sing this, we'll ask Virginia from Saugeen to pray in our Anishnaabe Mowen (phonetic).

(ELDER EMERY SHAWANOO SONG)

MR. EMERY SHAWANOO: And we're talking about the sun, how that the sun gives us light and how the sun hangs and we're singing about the One who looks after us.

(SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE)

MR. EMERY SHAWANOO: He'll take care of us. Nsigeeshga (phonetic) every day he'll help us.
(SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE)

MS. VIRGINIA HENRY: I'm kind of stuck for words right now. I wanted to be here with -- with you people and a way was made today and I got a ride. My friends here, Bonnie and Caroline and Emery.

People ask me where I live. Where do you live now? Every time I meet somebody he says, Where do you live now? I don't know who I am, but I'm -- I'm like a gypsy, I guess. At the time of this happening I lived in Forest and we got to know Dudley pretty good. He used to stop at our house. (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE)

And he says (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE) and he'd have a cup of tea and chat for a little while. Then he'd be gone. But I remember, maybe it was near the end of -- when they went to the Park, maybe two (2) weeks before, I saw him and he says, Where are you going? He says, I'm going home, he says. He didn't only go to the Park but he'd gone to the spirit world. And he knows today that he's -- he knows what's taking place.

I think a lot of memories flash back because I used to go to the Park, too because one (1) day when my family come running in the house. They said something's happened and I think of these boys and I'm going -- I didn't want to say this, but I have to say it because maybe I won't have a chance to say it again.

And I'm going to pray and be thankful that we are alive today, in our language, pray for all the

Anishnaabe people and all the lawyers and everybody else involved with this forum today.

(PRAYER IN NATIVE LANGUAGE)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much.

You may be seated. Thank you very much to the singers and to the prayers and to the song this morning and we're going to have our presenters this morning.

I will do a brief summary of today's -- yesterday's events, but I'll do that later on to -- to bring people up to speed. If you were not here with us yesterday, this forum has a -- a focus and that is to educate the Commissioner and the Commission Staff and the party lawyers to Inquiry and I would ask you not to speak to the matters of the Inquiry, what happened here and the subject of the Inquiry.

That means that you can't get up and ask the Commissioner, How -- how are you going to rule on such and such a thing, and -- and the lawyers are not to talk about things that have happened in the Hearing or anything like that. So this has a focus towards educating -- putting on the table -- some of the richness of our culture and our traditions.

Yesterday -- I read the newspaper this morning and they already had the things that you said on the newspaper all about the herbs and things like that and so that was very interesting to see that.

This morning, we're going to have Leroy be our opening presenter. I've known Leroy for a number of years and I'm grateful that he is here with us to be able to share some of his knowledge and experience with us. Leroy's a member of the Small Robes Band of the Blood Indian tribe of the Blackfoot Confederacy in Alberta. Leroy's a retired professor of Native American Studies at the University of Lethbridge. Leroy now acts as a consultant for many First Nation communities.

In -- in 2003, Leroy was the recipient of the -- of the National Aboriginal Awards for Education. Thank you very much for being here, Leroy, and you -- and you -- you know, you don't have to rush, just take all the time you need. We'll through -- go through the whole

agenda throughout the course of the day.

LEROY LITTLE BEAR: Thank you very much, Wally. (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE)

I said my Blackfoot name is Low Horn (phonetic). I'm from the Small Robes Band of the Kainai First Nation, sometimes referred to as the Blood Tribe in southern Alberta. We're from the Blackfoot Confederacy and I -- I want to acknowledge and, you know, say that I've very honoured to be amongst you and that I was invited to come and share thoughts with you.

I want to especially acknowledge the fact that we're in Anishnaabe country and I have great respect for -- for your land and for your people. I had said I'm from Blackfoot Country, but now I do have an ID problem because ever since Canada went metric, we couldn't say "Blackfoot" anymore...

(LAUGHTER)

LEROY LITTLE BEAR: ...and as Blackmetre doesn't sound very good, you know, and I also -- also -- but, when I do have my ID problems, I usually get on Air Canada to remind myself that I'm -- that I'm a Plains Indian.

What I would like to do this morning in the time I have to share with you, is to try and explain, probably in a very academic sense, what we heard our elders saying yesterday. Okay?

And, you know, I want to direct my -- most of my presentation to the Commission, to the lawyers, to -- to non -- non-Indians -- non-First Nations people. What I'm -- I am going to say, I know that my Anishnaabe brothers and sisters will understand. It's just that we're going to be probably putting it in terms that they may have or may not have heard, but basically what the elders were trying to say, you will find that as we go through, you'll probably say, Oh yeah, I've heard that before or a light might come on and so forth.

But the whole idea is to try and bring about understanding, comprehensive of our different ways.

We're going to try and bring -- have a cross-cultural experience. Now, I will start out general -- in very

general terms and then I'll increasingly get specific. If we have time, I might give you a little bit of history to add on to what Susan had presented yesterday. Okay?

Let me -- let me start off by giving you a statistical figure that'll probably shock you a little bit, but it's -- it's the beginning to make the statement that basically says, don't underestimate the difference. Okay?

Because so -- so often, we're asked as First Nations people, Why can't you guys just be like us? You know? Why can't you just be like us? Well, we ask the same question, Why can't they be like us? You know?

Well, I'm going to -- let me throw out this figure.

In the official Oxford English Dictionary, there's probably somewhere between eight (8) to nine hundred thousand (900,000) words. It hasn't reached a million yet, you know? If somebody wants to go count, you know, I'll let you. You know? But it's somewhere around eight (8) to nine hundred thousand (900,000) words. Okay?

And you're considered a good English speaker the more of those -- the more of the inventory of those eight (8) to nine hundred thousand (900,000) words that you can carry around in your hard drive, you know?

Well, let me -- you know -- this is true -- this is true, I'm sure in Anishnaabe. It's true in Netitapee (phonetic). Very similar, you know. Our Anishnaabe brothers and Blackfoot, you know, we have similar language and so on. But the actual study was -- was done in Navajo, okay? You know the -- the verb, "to be" -- you know, the verb, "to be" in English, okay? The verb, "to be". The best translation for it in Navajo -- did you know that you can conjugate the verb, "to be" in Navajo three hundred and fifty-two thousand (352,000) different ways? Think about that. Three hundred and fifty-two thousand (352,000) different ways you can conjugate the verb, "to be".

In other words, it takes three (3) Navajo verbs to surpass all of the Oxford English Dictionary. Begin to think about -- begin to think about the knowledge contained in that language, okay? In other words, English don't come anywhere near, you know?

Well, I thought I'd start off with that to get you thinking. I passed out a piece of paper that you can loosely follow, but I won't -- you know, I'll probably speak a little bit more specifically to it first. But my purpose is to try and do a comparative notion because most of us never stop and reflect on the philosophy, the paradigms that underlie our language, our actions. In other words, we never question them, but yet that language -- those paradigms -- lead us down a garden path. In other words, certain pathways.

We become colonized by those paradigms. We become, you know -- you know, we end up being subjected to the paradigms contained in the language. Okay? But most of us never stop and think about it. We never question it. See? If I were to ask anybody, Can you explain, you know, the paradigms behind our, you know, behind our culture, I don't think most of us can do it. We've never been asked to do it.

And I've asked many people and I haven't gotten a good answer at the first try. Only after they've thought about it have they been able to come -- oh yeah, okay. I'm beginning to see what it's all about.

Well, let me do the first general comparison. Okay? In -- in the western way of thinking -- and let me just put over here, First Nation -- okay? This is the more general picture. In western thought, everything is very linear and the linear thinking, you know, flows one (1) way. Okay? It's not both ways, it's one (1) way. In First Nations thinking, let me use the circle as an example. It's a very holistic way of thinking.

This linear way of thinking over here can easily be broken down to, and probably be the best example -- Wally was referring to it when he was talking about time -- Indian time -- and so forth. It's -- probably the best example of linear thinking is time. The notion of time is a very good example of it. What happens with this linear thinking is -- this line -- we break it down into nice neat little units. Whether those units are minutes, days, years and so on. See?

We break it down into nice neat little units and what happens is, you know, this -- this time flow is passing at least -- and you -- you all probably

have your own way of picturing time in a western sense, but in my mind, when I'm picturing western time, I'm standing still and there's this river of time kind of going past me and I'm facing upstream. You know?

But I picture myself as standing at the bottom of a waterfall and -- I -- but I can't quite see over the waterfall, which means that I can't tell what the future is. But still I have to go to talk about foreseeable future. And of course, past is back here, down -- downstream and so on. See? And where I'm at is, of course, a forever changing -- forever changing presence because the flow of the river is going by me all the time. See?

Well, you can play around with that notion. You can play around with that notion a little bit. For instance, what would happen -- what would be all the implications or ramifications if you were to turn -- simply turn around and face downstream? Okay? And if our system was based on looking downstream rather than looking upstream, you'd have lots of differences. See?

You -- you know, we'd have a whole different way of looking at things. Or, if any of you have ever read Kurt Vonnegut Jr. -- you know, he had written a book a number of years ago called, Slaughterhouse Five, you know.

Do you remember the characters in Slaughterhouse Five? I can't remember his name, but he became unstuck in time and what happened was, rather than -- rather than the river moving, the water or time was still and he was moving up and down the time line and so in the story -- his name was Billy Pilgrim, yeah and --- he became unstuck in time. He moved up and down the time line, but it stuck to the linear notion of time.

In other words, you can play around with it, but as we use it, you know, time moves -- you know -- we -- we're standing still. We're standing by the river and we've just broken it to nice neat little units over here.

And if we'd been brought up in a -- an industrial Christian tradition, usually these blocks of time, whether they're minutes, hours, or days, we get -- you know -- we get brainwashed into feeling guilty if we don't do anything useful during a unit of time as it goes

by.

And as Wally was pointing out, we start talking about making up time, wasting time, and so forth.

Okay? Well, over here -- over here we have a very different way of looking at time. And the thing is, it's a very sophisticated way. It's a very sophisticated notion about time over here and I'll -- I'll explain that.

I'm speaking from a Blackfoot point of view, okay? Now, it might be argued this might not be true for a Anishnaabe or for Haudenosaunee and so on, you know. But, I have talked to lots of people across the country, you know, elders and so on. There might be some idiosyncratic differences from First Nation to First Nations, but generally the -- the ideas are pretty well the same. Okay?

Let me explain the Indian time that Wally was talking about yesterday. Okay? Here, we have -- we have a -- as I was saying -- a very sophisticated way of looking at time. Let me say in Blackfoot, we say -- if I can mark over here to say Huntnook Huntnook (phonetic), meaning right now, you know, right now. In other words, the present. And I can say tomorrow (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE) and I say the day after tomorrow (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE) and I can work backwards, I can say (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE) yesterday, (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE) day before yesterday.

And we stop there, okay, we stop there. Not because we can't count beyond two (2), but because, in fact, in Blackfoot I'm -- you know I'm sure it's true in Anishnaabe, in fact, in Blackfoot you can count to infinity, you know.

There comes a point, you say, well, what's the point, you know. Counting to infinity, eh? You can count to infinity, you know. Maybe at tenth trillion number it might take me all day to say it, but still, you know, you can count to infinity in Blackfoot and in many other native languages.

But what happens is, in other words, two (2) days is enough, okay, to make the point. The thing is, anything beyond the two (2) days what we would consider future, present and past, in English once you get beyond the two (2) days all of these notions about --

you know, future, past and present amalgamate and the best you can say is it just is, okay? It just is.

That's the reason why, you know, if you try to make an appointment with an Indian, they'll say, yeah, two o'clock, okay. Let's meet at two o'clock. But if I'm not at -- if I -- if I'm not there at two o'clock, that means I'm over at my uncles over there. If you don't see the dog over there at my uncles, that means I'm over at grandmas, you know?

In other words, yeah, we say we're going to meet at such and such -- then we start to put a whole bunch of caveats, you know, a whole bunch of reasons that we may not be and I'll further explain the reason for that thing.

So, that's -- you know -- now, this operates at one (1) level. When I'm -- when I'm saying that we're very sophisticated about our notions of time, this operates and it might be at this level that we talk about the notion of Indian time which usually is referred to as always being late, but it can also mean, hey, being ahead of time and so forth.

You know, in other words, a lot of times I get asked to go speak at a conference. Two (2) years, you know, into the future. Usually I tell them yes, but call me up about a week before, I'll know better, you know.

And -- you know -- you see, well the thing is, this notion kind of, yeah, maybe brings about this notion about time, you know. I can tell you a different type of story than Wally gave you yesterday.

This old guy, well let me give you a little bit of background. This old guy was, you know, inching on a hundred (100) -- he might have been a hundred (100) or so.

But, you know, on the plains -- on the plains, we hear about buffalo jumps, okay, as a way of the -- you know, the Plains Indians, hunting buffalo before the horse was reintroduced and the thing was, you know, if you're out on the plains, hey, you know, it's not like Mac stores at every corner, you could -- don't always find a cliff conveniently by, you know.

So the thing is -- the thing is, hey, we hunt buffalo any which way but loose, you know.

Sometimes we chase them into gumbos and sloughs and get them stuck somehow.

You know, the buffalo jump was just one (1) method. You know, but it was not the only method. Well this old guy was being asked, how old are you, by these young guys. How old are you, Jim? He was big, tall, old, tall lanky guy. His nickname was Long Jim.

And he says, Long Jim, how old are you? When were you born? And he wouldn't pay too much attention to them, because for him, time just is, you know. And he eventually mumbled in Blackfoot, Oh well, they wouldn't understand. And he -- he told him, You want to know when I was born? Well, do you remember the last time we got the buffalo stuck? I was born the Wednesday before.

(LAUGHTER)

LEROY LITTLE BEAR: So, now, the thing is, there's another concept of time that is -- that is operational, simultaneously to this two (2) day notion and that is, yesterday there was the -- there was the presentation on the medicine wheel.

Well, probably the majority of medicine wheels are found in Blackfoot country and generally, these medicine wheels, you know, they have the centre and they have all these spokes and so on, on them and so forth. Usually they will -- the spokes number, in most cases, about twenty-eight (28). Why the twenty-eight (28)? That's the twenty-eight (28) day cycle of the moon. It's also the twenty-eight (28) day cycle of our moms and so on. Okay?

You know, in other words, those are intimately connected and so on. And, you know it -- you know -- it's respect for and recognition of where life really comes from. But, these spokes are usually aligned with solstices. Okay? They're usually aligned with certain stars and so on.

Well, this -- this medicine wheel, in other words, just continuously turns. It never stops. Okay? It just continuously turns and these alignments, they're just continuous phasing. When an alignment takes place, it means certain things are supposed to happen.

Okay? Certain things are supposed to take place. In other words, we start preparing for the alignment coming, the alignment occurs, the ceremonies or whatever else take place and so on. Okay?

So, this notion about -- now, when it comes to the medicine wheel notion of time, which is kind of -- I refer to as -- our cosmic clock, that -- you know -- we're very exact. In other words, no Indian time there. We're very exact. Okay?

And, you know -- so, this notion of a continuous phasing and this notion about the -- about the two (2) days, you know about the two (2) days working, those are working simultaneously together, you know? Operating at the same time, you know? You know, if you're not used to that, you'd find that, hey, you don't know if you're coming or going because of these different clocks working and so forth, but in other words, you have to be, you know -- you know -- it occupies lots of memory space trying to synchronize these things and I'll talk some more about synchronization.

But, coming back to this, okay? Next step I want to talk about here is, this one is very specialized. I'll just put special over here, but it always results in specialization. This one results in being a generalist, you know -- being a generalist over here. Why? Well, over here, because of the linearity, it also results in singularity. Okay?

We always have one (1) right -- one (1) right answer, one (1) right way to do it, you know? And so on. You know? One (1) true God and so forth, you know? Always results in singularity.

The singularity results in specialization.

In other words, if I were to walk downtown over here in Forest or any place else, and I asked a person -- just stopped a person on the street -- who are you? What are you? Guess what the kind of answer I'll get? I'm a lawyer. I'm a priest. I'm a plumber with pipe dreams, maybe. And on down the lane -- down the line, I'm a -- yeah, I'm a teacher. You see.

In other words, your specialization has become such an important part that we use it in a western sense, to identify -- you know, our speciality identifies who we are, you see.

Over here, in -- you know, in the Indian world, being a generalist is -- is what is to be emulated. In other words, if you can think about a -- a jack of all trades, master of none type of thing, you know, that's -- that's the notion and I'll explain why that is so, okay?

But in -- in Native America generalist is really at the foundations of social organization and in some cases, knowledge and so forth.

Here we're very specialized, okay. This also results in product, product. And I'll explain a little bit more about product. Over here it's always process, okay? It's always process.

Here on the western side, we don't care how we do it, okay? In other words, if I was a corporate executive and I had something in mind, I tell them, I don't care how you guys do it, you engineers or whoever, just give me this product, okay? How you do it don't matter, right?

Here the process always counts. In other words, how you do it is the important thing, okay? And, you know, we're seeing it here with our drums and so forth, with our prayers and so forth. How you do it is the important thing.

It's always the process. Lots of protocol is involved in this, okay? Here we just worry about the end product. We don't care how we do it, it's the end product that counts.

Guess what? Corporations, whenever they run into problems, reorganize, reorganize, you know, because we've got products to -- to turn out.

Over here, hey, over here, reorganization doesn't occur very often because it's the process that is important, okay?

Now, let me -- let me be a little bit more specific. This is kind of the general picture. I'll start to break it down a little bit more for you, especially this side. And what I will do is after I've finished that, I'll relate it to the whole notion about land and how the notion of land comes into that -- to this picture and arises out of this.

If we were to take the -- this holistic notion, okay, what it would result in -- what it would

result in is what I refer to as constant, you know, constant flux, okay?

Let me try and picture in a very, you know, unartistic way, when we talk about art, I always say who the hell is art, you know? Let me try and picture, you know, on a two (2) dimensional basis, how I picture the notion of constant flux.

You know, if I just made scratch marks all over, you know, and so on, here and you can apply this -- these scratch mark, this constant flux picture to the cosmos if you want to, or you can apply it to, our earth, you know, our immediate surroundings.

But if you can picture this deal, this as kind of a spider web network, a three (3) dimensional kind of spiral-geodesic type of a spider web network, that's forever moving, combining, re-combining, changing, transforming and so forth. You know, just continuing to mix all the time and so on, that's the picture of constant flux, okay?

Well, when we're talking -- when we're talking about generalists, okay, you can begin to see why generalists, because in the Native mind, there are all these forces. There are all these objects, waves, energy waves, and so forth that are forever changing, combining, recombining, you know, transforming, decomposing and so forth, you know?

And if we look around -- if we were able to take a -- a holistic view, even of Forest, hey, you'll find there's constant movement going on, you know, of people, cars, you know, and what have you. You know, the birds all -- are flying all over the place. In other words, that constant flux is forever changing and so forth. Okay?

Now, we -- you know, what happens then is out of this flux, certain beliefs -- certain things start to arise out of it. In other words, one (1) of the things that arises out of this is that everything is animate. Okay? Everything is animate. In Blackfoot -- and I'm sure in Anishnaabe -- there's nothing inanimate.

Okay? Everything is animate.

Now, in English -- in English I can count on one (1) hand what's animate. You and I are animate, right? Okay? Those animals out there are animate,

right? We all agree, but are those trees out there animate? Well, at that point we start to waver a little bit. Some of us might say yes and most of us probably would say no. And -- but the real test is -- which is a rather subjective test -- is do you talk to your plants? Okay? And if you do, you probably don't tell too many people.

(LAUGHTER)

LEROY LITTLE BEAR: Okay? But in Blackfoot, I definitely talk to those trees and so on, except I haven't been able to talk to these trees here because they only understand Anishnaabe, you know? They don't understand Blackfoot. See -- and I always jokingly say, Well, say if another Blackfoot speaker heard me talking to the trees, you know, that person would never think I was ready for the crazy house. I jokingly say he'd probably come and join the conversation, you know?

So -- but the rock definitely is inanimate. In English, the rock definitely is inanimate, but in Blackfoot the rock is as animate as those animals.

It's as animate as you and I. It's as animate as those trees, and so on. So, I can even talk to the rock and my language allows me to talk to the rock and like I said, nobody would think I was out of this world for speaking to those rocks. That's why we really took up to pet rocks, you know, when that was in -- that was in fad, you know, and so on.

So -- so what arises out of this constant flux is that everything is animate, okay? It's an animate world for us, okay? Because everything is animate, okay, like you and I, well we always accord ourselves spirit -- that we have spirit. Sometimes we call it soul and so on, but because those rocks -- and like us -- have -- are all animate, everything has spirit. Okay? Everything has spirit. And that's where, you know, lots -- lots of people try to accord the notion of religion to First Nations people, to Indians, and so on. We're not about religion, we're about spirit, you know? We're about spirit.

Those spirits are there and they're in everything, okay? Now, if we were to come back to this notion about flux, what it is, is that this flux consists

of energy waves. And it's the energy waves that have the spirit. It the energy waves that know, talking about knowledge. You and I are simply a particular combination of energy waves. We're just a combination of energy waves. Once the energy waves kind of dissipate, in other words, if they start to break up and dissipate, well, I guess that's when we pass away, you know, we're no more because that particular combination is not there.

If you're, you know, you can think about it in a Rubik's Cube notion. You know, you can make a whole bunch of different combination on a Rubik's Cube, but if you mark them, so on, only certain things, you know, so on. But if you make one (1) turn, hey, you've got a whole new combination, see.

And if that combination were to represent you, and the Creator came along and turned it, or you know, a coyote came along and turned it, you know, you would be no more, see.

So we're a combination of energy waves and consequently, you know, what we could -- refer to as spirit are really those energy waves, you know.

Now because of this flux notion, again, drawing back on that flux notion, everything is related, okay, everything is related. It's all about -- it's all about relationships.

Relationships are very important, and you can easily see, coming back to this flux notion, that everything over here is interrelated, okay. Just like on a spider web, you know, you can go from any point to another point, you know. You might not make it in a straight line, but you can get to any point, you know, from any other point on the spider web. Everything is interrelated.

Now, I'll come back to the notion of relationship to explain a little bit more about the notion of land and so on, but you heard it yesterday from our elders, and so on, talking about all my relations, okay. Well all my relations do not refer to human beings, and in fact human beings are very low down on the scale, and so on.

All my relations speak to all those other beings, all those other animal beings with spirit, and so on. In other words, those trees, those rocks, they're

all my relations, okay. So this notion is very important, okay.

Another very important part of Native thinking results in renewal, okay. We have lots of renewal ceremonies. Renewal is very important. Why? Well, if we come back to the flux notion, okay, and let's say out in the cosmos we're one (1) little dot over here, okay. We're one (1) little dot in the cosmos.

We human beings on this earth are rather, you know, somewhat arrogant about our awareness and we tend to think that we're the only awarenesses in all of these cosmos and so forth. Well you know, if you were to look at the big picture you will find that our solar system, our earth is part of the solar system, the solar system is part of this universe and part of the galaxy, the Milky Way. And the galaxy, the Milky Way Galaxy is almost like a spiral, you know, with arms on it, spiralling.

You know, we're at the edge of one (1) of the spiral arms of the Milky Way. Our -- our earth, our sun, is very, you know, very typical. There's nothing special about it compared to other stars and so forth, you know. But yet, we -- you know, from this small speck on the earth think -- you know, we're it. You know?

So, but the thing is, what happens -- what happens is because of this flux occurring, forever changing and so on, what happens in the native mind is that we try to stand back, we try to stand back and try to take as much of -- you know, as broad a view as we can take.

Consequently the holistic thinking, yeah? We try to stand back and take as much of -- as big a picture as we can take of the earth, the skies and so on. Why do we do that?

We do that because in this forever changing flux, okay, we're looking for regularity. We're looking for regular patterns, you know? The sun rising, the moon rising, you know, day and night, the even -- even migration of animals. All those are examples of regularity, you know. Regularity occurring, okay?

We try to look for regular patterns. We then use those regular patterns for reference points, okay? We use them for reference points, okay? So the

thing is, but because the larger flux notion, okay -- we're just a small dot and there's things going over here, waves and energy waves changing, combining, transforming, hey, you know, things may change.

So in other words, in the native mind, we're all -- we always got the door open that something different may occur, okay? The door is always open. In other words, certainty is not part of the picture, okay?

The only thing that's constant is you know -- inconstancy, you know? In other words, things change all the time.

Let me quickly tell you about -- you've all seen or most of you might have seen Jurassic Park, the movie back -- was it in the 70's so on. One time we asked these elders -- at one time the -- just like we human beings today, are the rulers of the earth, or we think we are, they -- the dinosaurs used to run the show, you know, way back.

How come they disappeared? You know, what's your story about that? Well, the short answer they gave us was, maybe they didn't do their renewal ceremonies. Okay? And I thought they were kidding, you know, and I thought about it for a while, but it makes lots of sense because if you're looking for regularity, for regular patterns, then why our renewals ceremonies occur and we have so many of them is, we as humans play our part in bringing about the regularity.

In other words, this reality that we see today, you know, is a regular pattern, is a regularity but if the flux were to change, the conditions for our continuing existence will disappear.

In other words, that might be what we'd call the end of the world, whereas, you know, the earth ain't going to disappear, the sun ain't going to disappear. It's just that we're going to become extinct, you know?

And -- but -- so, in order for us to continue to survive we try to recreate those conditions that make for this present reality.

So when we're singing these songs, when we're having -- you know pow-wows all over the place, all over the place, guess what we're doing for the non-Indian world? We're keeping this reality. And you guys are not

taking -- are not -- are not participating, okay?

We're doing it, okay? These drums. The important thing about drums is that -- you know people refer to it as the heartbeat of our mother the earth, but one of the things that drums do and the beat that you hear is they keep us planted firmly on the ground, you know?

Drums -- drums keep you connected to the earth. Well, the thing is, that renewal -- that renewal is so that this particular spot that we may know that -- you know makes for this present reality, is, you know, maintained through renewal ceremonies.

Consequently the notion of renewal being very important in the native thinking. Now, of course, when we're talking about renewal, all of this -- all of that -- that's what's occurring of course happens on the land, okay?

And land becomes very important, because that's where all of this for at least for our immediate -- you know, in our immediate presence, it happens on the land, okay? So land becomes very important.

And, of course, a lot of this notion from constant flux -- from constant flux down to animate, spirit, everything, all my relations, renewal notion, land, of course, language is important and we mention a little bit about language.

Let me talk some more about language, okay? Let me talk a little bit about English and show you what English does to us, okay?

In English, one of the things it does to us and it -- we don't even realize it, is that English is a binary language. It's dichotomist, you know? And that dichotomist notion results in what I refer to as polarized thinking.

Polarized thinking -- examples of polarized thinking are, of course, day and night, saint and sinner, good and bad or good and evil -- you know, black and white, and on down the line. Animate and inanimate and so forth, you know.

Everything is put in this dichotomist notion, see? Let me play around with you guys a little bit as I do with my classes. I say, let me put up good and evil up here, right? And I'll throw a word out to

you guys and tell me what side of the dichotomy it fits in. Ready?

Widgets. Oh well, you haven't had any experience with widgets. But, you know, pardon -- pardon the thing, I do not mean to be disrespectful, but let me throw out the next word, okay? It's for purpose of making the point.

Sex. Good or bad? Okay? Well, you're like all previous audiences. People -- when they hear that -- people kind of move around a little bit in our seats and so on and eventually, of course, it's good, you know.

Well, let me tell you a little bit more about that. When we have a dichotomy like this, and something like sex, okay? Especially for those of us that have been brought up in -- you know, kind of fundamentalist or religious, you know, Christian upbringing, how many of us grew up -- you know, grew up being told that sex was a sin? Which means it's on this side, okay? It's on the evil side.

But then we get married later in life and all of a sudden sex is part of the sacred institution of marriage. How does that happen?

Because -- because in the dichotomy this boundary is watertight. You can't be a saint and a sinner at the same time. Okay? You're either/or. See?

Well, what happens is, of course, there's a rite of passage that transcends the boundary so, in other words, from the sinful side we go through a wedding, especially in church -- especially in church. If we get married in church, it becomes sacred. See?

Well, we might have a rite of passage for sex, but do we have a rite of passage for many other things? Have we had a rite of passage for racism? Talking about racism, you know, the thing is, in western thinking -- it might be a surprise for you, but in western thinking, it's -- I would say, as much as that it's inherent. Why? Well because -- because of this watertight division, okay?

And, when we talk about things like black and white, well of course, black is associated with the evil side -- with the bad side -- and white with the good side. Okay? Especially from Christian beliefs and so

on. See?

And we -- you know, just -- just in our thinking, you know, we wrestle around with, hey, you know, how do I do this? You know? How do I do this? But, because of the dichotomous thinking, it's almost inherent. And it's something that we're going to have to develop a -- you know -- a rite of passage for. See? We haven't done that, you know, we haven't done that.

And in -- in law, okay, for the lawyers, you know, what about guilty and not guilty. See? In other words, you're either/or. See? And in court, there's no such a thing as being able to mitigate the guilt, you know. You can mitigate sentences, but when it comes to guilt, hey, you're either guilty or not guilty. See? And there's no -- you know -- there's a watertight boundary between those two, you know, notions.

See, in western -- I mean in Native ways of thinking, hey, you know, somebody might be good and be evil at the same time. You know, nobody's an angel all the time. In every person -- you know, there's a little bit of saint and sinner in every person, but, you know, in western thinking it's either/or. It's always either/or.

Now, I can give you many examples of those. In science, for instance, in western science in subatomic physics -- quantum physics, you know -- they talk about -- they talk about in terms of particle and wave as the dichotomy and they have not -- you know -- sometimes they talk about waves, sometimes they talk about particles, but the primary leaning, you know, the preference, is to talk about sub -- you know -- in subatomic physics in terms of particles.

Well, the fact that we're talking about subatomic particles is the reason why we've got these big scientific toys we call particle accelerators. See? Would we have particle accelerators if we thought about -- if we thought about it in terms of waves? I don't think so. See?

So, in other words, the very way we think, the very language that we use, as I said, brings us down, you know, certain pathways and our technology and so forth, you know -- you know -- reflects that. So, language is very important.

Another important aspect of the English languages is that it's all noun -- it's very noun oriented. Okay? It's all about noun.

In Blackfoot and other native languages it's all about -- again, about process. I'll refrain from saying that Anishnaabe is -- or Blackfoot is verb oriented because even the word "verb" is a noun; it's supposed to be talking about action. Even the word "verb" is a noun.

And what do we do, see, we're not -- and, you know, we're not making value judgments, we're just pointing out differences. Here, noun is kind of like a -- when we talk about a noun what it is, it's kind of like a cut up box, an empty box.

And then as we go along we start to fill the box in with different experiences and consequently a number of different meanings for a particular word, a particular noun. And the thing is, you know, this -- this noun is very good for categorizations, just like dichotomy. It's very good for categorizations and so forth, classification, et cetera. Okay?

Well, native languages are much more process oriented. And as we have mentioned, you begin to see why process orientation occurs because of this notion of constant movement, constant flux occurring, you see.

Now, you would be surprised if I were to tell you, but it's true, that in Blackfoot and I'm sure you can do that in Anishnaabe, try it one of these days, I can speak Blackfoot all day without saying a noun.

I can speak all day without saying a noun; okay? In English that's an impossibility. See? Now, why is that so? Well, as I was saying at the beginning, earlier that, you know, I'm a good English speaker if I am, you know, if I know a large inventory we call vocabulary of words; okay?

I'm a good Blackfoot speaker not for an inventory or a large vocabulary, I don't have to worry about that. I'm a good Blackfoot speaker if I'm skilful at making combinations; okay?

Think about the flux, why combinations are important. But people don't believe me but it's true that when I'm speaking Blackfoot I make up the language as I go. I don't carry around a big inventory of

Blackfoot words. I make it up. I make up the language as I go.

How is that so? Well, that's because and my best way of illustrating it is, we've all seen periodic tables of the elements, even though this might not be quite accurate, but when we're talking about things like I can take sodium, you know, in the elements, combine it with chlorine, what do I get, so on; okay?

So the chemists have fun, you know, making all these combinations and potions and so forth; you know. It's a -- it's a game of combinations. Okay? Well, if you can picture it in that manner in Blackfoot what I do is I have -- I have a periodic table of primary sounds -- primary sounds; okay?

And as things happen all these primary sounds are geared towards action. Are geared towards a process; you see. And as I -- as I -- as I -- as things are happening I'm making combinations over here in my mind.

So, in other words, if I'm a good Blackfoot speaker I'm very skilful at making combinations; you see. And it is though as something is happening it's -- you know, it's almost as though I'm running alongside the happening describing what's going on, you see? I'm forever describing what's happening, see?

So language can become very, very important with regard to how you think about things and so forth. Let me jump over to and talk about land. How does -- how does all this relate to the notion of land, okay?

Well, you will recall we said everything is animate, you know. Everything has spirit. All my relations, okay? All my relations. The notion of renewal, you know.

The notion of renewal and so forth. In other words, let's say in any territory -- in other words, in any aboriginal territory, our people say this -- you know, this is where -- with -- through our creation stories, this is the place where we've been given this land by our creator.

We've been -- you know, we put it in terms of being the caretakers. We've been given the

responsibility to be caretakers. But what happens is, that notion about the flux is forever operating over here, okay?

It's happening throughout and I, as the individual or as the human, I'm only part of that happening. In other words, I'm not separate from it. I'm part of it, okay? So I'm -- I'm participating in all this thing, all this happening occurring in my territory.

In other words, what I'm skilful, what I know is all the relational patterns that occur in this territory. Outside of that territory I make no claims, okay? In other words, my language, Blackfoot, is no good in Anishnaabe territory because I don't know all of the relational patterns that occur. I probably have to live here a long time to begin to appreciate it.

But in Blackfoot territory, I do know the patterns, see? So, we always get told, when you go someplace to another territory, don't come over there saying, hey, this is how us Blackfoot, you know, do it, you know? Hey, you don't begin to know the pattern and so on.

You might know what goes on in Blackfoot territory, but in somebody else's territory, you don't. Your language is based on this relational network that occurs, okay? This relational network that occurs, okay?

Well, do you know the relational network in another territory?

Therefore we make no claims beyond our traditional territories. We do not say, as -- as is done in English, that English is the language that's good all over the world, you know. We make no such claims.

Blackfoot is only good in Blackfoot territory. That's what it's made for, see?

Now, the thing is -- the thing is, if we were to come back to the notion about land, okay? The -- all of these relational networks and so on, everyone of them having spirit and so forth.

Let me -- let me come back to the two (2) day notion over here, all right? To the two (2) day notion. In the Court systems, even in spite of the limited recognition in Court cases like Dalgamuk about traditional -- you know, oral histories being recognized as -- that's good evidence, still a large part of the

judicial world don't pay much attention to that.

And part of it is to say it's because -- and -- well, how can you, today, remember something that happened five hundred (500) years ago, okay, if it's not written down? All right? How can you remember it? Well, let me tell you how we remember it. I'm over here two (2) days, okay?

In other words, because of this two (2) day notion, my ancestors, okay, are never more than two (2) days away from me. Okay? Their stories are only two (2) days old. They're always fresh in my mind. See? They're always fresh in my mind because they're never more than two (2) days away from me. See?

So, yeah, if I were to begin to change a story, hey, there's going to be another of my brothers and sisters that's going to tell me, Hey, that's not the way it happened, you know, because they also have -- have heard the story. See?

So, in other words, from this two (2) day notion, you can begin to see beyond the two (2) days. My ancestors are never more than two (2) days away from me.

Okay? If everything is my -- is all my relations, if they're still animate -- maybe in spirit form now -- well, then we begin to see why our elders are talking about those burial grounds. Okay? They talk about those burial grounds.

My ancestors -- yeah -- they might have been gone for, you know, ten (10) years and so forth. Hey, they're always only two (2) days away from me. See?

That's why they're never forgotten. They're always part of the ceremony. We always call on them and so forth. See? Whereas, in a linear notion of time, see -- well, yeah -- you know -- it's hard to think about -- to think about that in a linear notion of time -- you know -- ten (10) years, a hundred (100) years and so forth.

So, in our way, history -- Susan was talking about history -- history is only two (2) days old. Okay? A very different notion about -- a very different notion about history.

Let me give you a little bit of history from a western point of view, okay, which hopefully will, you know, add to this presentation and so forth. I could say a lot more but I'm -- I'm respectful about the time,

okay? You'll notice I have no time on my hand.

(LAUGHTER)

LEROY LITTLE BEAR: Most people -- most people, as was mentioned, think that history over here in North America began, you know, when Columbo -- I mean Columbus -- I wonder if he was wearing a trench coat -- you know, 1492. Well, there was something more important about 1492 than just Columbus' arrival, okay? There was something a lot more important. In -- Columbus arrived, what, October the 12th, something like that -- you know, in other words, a couple -- a day or so ago.

I don't know why we celebrate Columbus Day, he never came to North America. He -- you know -- he was in the Caribbeans, but he never touched foot on the mainland. But, in -- he came in October. In May -- I mean, probably a little bit further back -- February, March of 1492, was the closure of the Spanish Inquisitions.

What were the Spanish Inquisitions? The Spanish Inquisitions were an ethnic cleansing exercise. We think -- we've heard about ethnic cleansing; that's what they were. With a lot of religious -- Christian religion, you know.

In other words, with papal sanction, in fact, because the Spanish Catholics pushed, you know, the Moors and the Jews, wanted to push them back out across the Mediterranean, you know, where they came from.

And, you know, 1492 was about the time they said, okay, they're not a threat any more, you know.

Speaking of the Moors and the Muslims and so on, they're not a threat any more.

So, they, you know, that's why we're talking about closure of Fort -- you know, the Spanish Inquisitions in the fall of 1491, Spring of 1492. Why did that happen? Well, it happened because sometime even further back around the year 500, okay, thereabouts. Might have been plus or minus, St. Augusta -- person we know as St. Augusta had written himself, you know, he had put it on his computer a little -- a little thing he was trying to -- he was trying to reconcile something because in the Bible it says "Thou shall not kill"; okay?

And he was trying to, you know, reconcile something in his mind so he put it down on his computer and he says, "it is not a sin to conduct holy wars on infidels"; okay? It's not a sin to conduct holy wars on infidels. Well, he kind of forget about that but somebody, you know, about five hundred (500) years later, somewhere a little bit past the thousand year mark, 1050, 1040, somewhere in there another Pope, a Pope, discovered this on the old hard drive, you know, and came across this and guess what came from it? The holy wars, you know. Richard the Lion Hearted we all hear about. In other words, the Crusades started to occur, you see.

And consequently that whole notion about conducting holy wars on infidels started to occur, that's why we have the rule in Kelvin's Case for some of you lawyers are familiar with the rule in Kelvin's Case, you know, when a Christian country conquers another Christian country the conquered Christian country does not lose its sovereignty.

But if a Christian country conquers a non-Christian country the Christian country's laws immediately apply; okay? All those are outgrowths of "it's not a sin to conduct holy wars on infidels"; okay.

Well, in 1492 the Pope, you know, with the sanction of the Pope, you know, closure of the -- closure of the Spanish Inquisitions, in the fall of -- of 1492 with Columbus, guess what? They run into more infidels when they came here.

In other words, you could see them, you know, pray to that very triumphant God is on our side and so forth, you know, et cetera. You know, God gave us this blessing and so forth.

And lo and behold a few months later they run into more infidels. Well, I don't have to go into the deep history about the Spanish -- you know the Spanish and so forth what they did out there in the jungles and so forth, you know, making announcements to the Indians. Come forth, if you don't that's a reason for us to conduct wars on you and so forth.

Well, because of the -- because of the rivalry -- competition between the then broken away, you know, that they had just separated England from the church there was now a rivalry between the Church of

England and England for that matter, and, you know, the Spanish Catholic world. In other world the Catholics and so forth.

Well, in so many words, you know, there were debates about whether there were -- Indians were humans or not, you know, in the Americas. But in the final analysis, in so many words, the -- the British told the Spanish, you guys are hypocrites.

Spanish, you know, what do you mean we're hypocrites? And he says well, look, you profess to -- you know, go by all the Christian beliefs and look at the way you're treating the Indians. We're going to treat the Indians differently. We're going to treat them as nations and as equals, okay?

Guess why there's all these treaties, you know, where the British were. That's why there's all these treaties, see? They were treating us as nations and so forth, yeah.

And so the history over here starts out with that notion of nation -- you know, nation to nation relationships and so forth. That history continued till about the 1850's -- about the 1850's plus or minus 1850 when the discovery of iron ore was, you know, was treaded upon over here in the northern Great Lakes.

Prior to that, the Indians were equals, nation to nation. They were the suppliers in the economy, in the fur trade, you know. We did well. We were -- we were the suppliers, okay? And Britain did not want to do anything with us, you know, disturb us in our way of living, because we were the suppliers, see?

Consequently why in the Royal Proclamation it says, those Indian nations with whom we are connected, you know, says all of the land that hasn't been sold to me still belongs to them, so forth, see?

Part of that thinking also -- also affected the -- the Jay Treaty because they wanted us to continue to have access to the fur bearing animals, you know, on the south side of the border and so forth.

So, the thing was with the discovery of the iron ore, all of a sudden we don't need the Indians any more to exploit iron ore. We needed them in the fur trade, but not in the iron ore.

So therefore a new policy occurred and

that was, let's get the Indians out of the way, you know.

And the treaty process continued, but really the treaty process was to get the Indians out of the way because now by this time the Americans were rushing westward, you know, with their railroad. They were looking for passages over there in the Rockies and in one of his sober moments, you know, our Prime Minister McDonald -- you know, in one of his sober moments woke up, you know, with a little bit -- with a hangover and says, hey, we got to do something because those Americans are crossing across. We got to race westward, too.

And so they did. And so consequently why they signed all these treaties and they did them so fast, you know, if you can fast forward the -- the film, they did it so fast. They didn't even title them -- the treaties, they just numbered them, one (1), two (2), three (3), four (4), five (5), six (6), seven (7) up the line, you know.

And it stopped at the Rocky Mountains, you know, because British Columbia was recognized then as an independent colony, just like Newfoundland was considered an independent colony, see?

So, the thing was, you know, from the British notion, it was let's get the Indians out of the way. But their thinking was we need a peace treaty with the Indians because we want to be able to build our railroad without the Indians having a one (1) track mind, you know.

You know, in other words not disturb the railroad building, okay? So, that was kind of like the background -- you know, to the history about these treaties and so forth, especially in the west and so on.

And we -- we tend to forget -- we tend to forget just like we never stop and reflect on the philosophy, the paradigms that affect us that we use, you know, for our everyday answers, our everyday notions and so forth.

Well, we forget about that history. We forget about that history that was -- that was, you know, done. Part of that -- part of that history carries with it one of the biggest lies, you know, one of the biggest lies taught in law school; okay? Taught in law school, might come as a surprise to the lawyers, it came as a

surprise to me and that is that the Crown owns everything; okay?

Just like in science, like in archeology, we tend to opt for the simplest answer. In archeology, the simplest answer is that the Indians came through the Bering Straits, so that that theory has been kept alive and so on.

When, in reality, there's no good archeological evidence for it; okay? Most of the archeological evidence is much further south. Which, in fact, compliments our creation stories. In the Blackfoot creation stories the creation came from the south and went northward; okay?

But I use that as an example to say, hey, you know, there's no good, you know, evidence for the Bering Strait theory. Well, the thing is, you know, in law we do the same thing. We opt for the easiest answer and the easiest answer was common law and this notion about the Crown owning everything is one of the -- one of those easy answers.

When in reality, we never stop to say -- think about the fact that the Crown wears two (2) hats; okay. It always wears **two (2)** hats.

It wears a hat as a single personality; okay, so the Queen, you know, Queen Elizabeth is, you know, as an individual, as a human individual can own property. The Queen can own property but, like everybody else, she has to pay taxes on that property and so on.

But the other hat she wears is, of course, as a symbol of, as the representative of the nation state, you see? At the nation state level, as a sovereign, they can't own land. Sovereigns don't own land. They've got sovereignty yes, but ownership of land, no, because when you talk about title, title always implies that there's a higher authority that can protect and enforce the person that has the title, to enforce that person's interest, you see.

Well, when it comes to sovereigns there is no higher authority. What happens when sovereigns don't agree with each other, they go to war, you know. So, in other words, it's just gentleman's agreement that sovereigns get along; okay?

We talk about international law but, for

instance, as has happened to Canada if the United States wants to overrun us, they can do it any day they want, okay? And they've challenged us and who was it that a few weeks ago was challenging us on the Islands of the North, you know, up north, you know. The Americans were challenging us, you know, saying oh, this is -- you know, this northern passage is no man's land, you know.

So, international law which is the law that sovereigns operate on, you know, basically are gentlemen's agreements just to keep law and order and it's, kind of, saying well, I'll respect -- I'll respect your boundaries and so forth and so on.

But ownership of land, no. No. Sovereigns don't own land. Sovereigns have sovereignty. See?

And so now in all of the things that, you know, in this history combined with -- you know, combined with -- the Native thinking about land and how we relate to the land, you start to see why there's so much -- you know, there's so much misunderstanding.

Well, I see light at the end of the tunnel from -- from all of this. In -- in a recent support -- Supreme Court case -- it's not so recent, it's almost ten (10) years old now -- R. V. Vanderpeet case, okay? In R. V. Vanderpeet, it states:

"The purpose of Section 35,"

Which is the Constitutional Section recognizing aboriginal and treaty rights in the Canadian Constitution, it states:

"The purpose of Section 35, is to provide a framework to reconcile Crown sovereignty with the fact that aboriginal people were here first with their own practices, customs, societies, et cetera."

In other words, he's basically saying -- you know, the court case is basically saying, it's to reconcile Crown sovereignty with aboriginal sovereignty.

Okay? So, in other words, our Supreme Court, the Canadian Supreme Court, has opened the door to this reconciliation. See? In other words, that section is in there, in the -- in the Constitution, and the -- the Supreme Court has said, the purpose of that section is

for reconciliation. Okay?

So, I see light at the end of the door and these kind of sessions are, for me, the grassroots -- the grassroots operation of working towards that reconciliation.

Let me tell you a little bit -- let me just end by -- by -- the American -- you know our American -- our attention to the American -- our American campaign between the George Bush and John Kerry and I was telling one (1) of my friends the other day, I heard this down there on the American side.

George Bush was starting to worry as he is and he should be because he's kind of starting to lose on these debates, you know, a little bit and he was worried about it, so he -- he went in and knocked on God's door and said, Can you help me, you know, I'm -- you know, what do I need to do, you know, to really -- you know -- to bring back -- to bring up my chances again and God told him, Well, I'm a little bit too busy, you know. I'm a little bit too busy right now. I don't have time for that, but I'll send you the three (3) wisest presidents -- the three (3) wisest presidents to give you some advice.

So, the first one was George Washington and George Washington's advice was, to simply always tell the truth, you know. Just tell the truth.

The next wise president that was sent was Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Jefferson told George Bush, you know, You'll never get into trouble if you just stick to the Constitution. Just always follow that Constitution, you know.

And the third president was Lincoln. And Lincoln told him, Hey, you know, don't worry so much. You know, take it easy. Go to the theatre.

(LAUGHTER)

LEROY LITTLE BEAR: So, with that, maybe I can, you know, finish over here. I can go on and on, you know. I can tell you just a -- maybe a couple of quick stories about, you know, lawyers. You know, once you get them going, they never stop and it reminds me of -- it reminds me of a -- and academic conference -- when

you go to these academic conferences and people read word for word a hundred (100) page presentation, you know, which gets to be dry and monotone and so on.

And that was what was happening at this one (1) meeting and slow but sure everybody starts to leave and go get coffee and so on and then pretty soon there was only one (1) person listening to the presenter and he heard him out, you know, and he -- you know -- so the presenter thanked him for, you know, for listening and, you know, hanging in there with him and the guy says, No, no that's all right. That's okay, I'm the next speaker.

(LAUGHTER)

LEROY LITTLE BEAR: And one (1) of my favourite stories about lawyers -- and I'll stop there -- is this Uncle Scrooge -- this Scrooge, you know, knew he was going to pass away, had lots of money and so on -- bags of money with him and so on, and he went and hired the -- he went and got the -- sent notices to a doctor, a priest and a lawyer and brought them over to his home, because he knew he was going to pass away.

And he gave them each a bag of money, you know, all of this money in three (3) bags and told them, Look I know -- I know that they say you can't take your riches and money to Heaven, but I'm going to try, you know. Once I pass away, I want you to be at the funeral and as they're lowering the casket, I want you to throw the bags of money in after me.

So, sure enough, they showed up at the funeral and they threw in the bags and so on and after the funeral was over they were standing back there behind everybody else and so on and the priest basically said, You know, I have to confess, you know, he was the one with the guilty pangs, you know. He says, Geez, I didn't -- you know -- I wanted to let you know, I didn't throw all of the money back in there. I took some back, you know, I held some back for our church building fund. And I couldn't -- couldn't think of wasting all that money.

And the doctor says, Oh, you know, I'm not the only one, you know. I did the same thing for the -- you know -- for our new clinic. And the lawyer got

pissed off at the other two (2) and says, Gee, shame on you guys, you know, he was depending on us. We were his last, you know, trustees and so on, you know. He was depending on us. You should have done like I did, you know. I threw in a check for the full amount.

(LAUGHTER)

LEROY LITTLE BEAR: Thank you very much, Wally.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much, Leroy, for that presentation. Very well informed and always a pleasure to listen to you.

Questions or comments or do you want to ask -- anything that you'd like to ask Leroy to further comment on? Just raise your hand. Yes, over here, first, and then we're going to -- use this one.

MR. ANTHONY ROSS: Leroy, my name is Anthony Ross and I just wanted to know from you, how did you get the white on the good side and the black on the bad side?

(LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE)

MR. ANTHONY ROSS: And -- and when you're finished with that, I want you to tell me, how am I going to get my people to give white people a rite of passage over to our good side.

(LAUGHTER)

LEROY LITTLE BEAR: Very good question. The reason -- the reason, I guess, we came up with that is because in the -- in the Christian teachings -- and you can go all the way back to the biblical stories and so forth. You know, we're all familiar with Cain and Abel, you know, in the -- in the stories and you know, if you're LDS -- you know, belief -- and so on, Latter Day Saints -- you know, sometimes known as Mormons -- they refer to a Kneefie (phonetic) and a Layman (phonetic) and

so on.

And you know, the whole notion about -- you know, the Mormons are a good example because Layman and his descendants ended up getting dark skins and the dark skin was a form of punishment for doing something wrong. And because Kneefie never did anything wrong, just like in the Cain and Abel story, Abel and so on was the good guy, but Cain was the bad guy, the notion of, you know, dark skin was associated with -- and was considered to be -- a punishment for wrongdoings.

And along the -- along the -- when we're talking about social values, in other words, making valued judgments and so on, good and evil, black -- like when we're talking about black and white, in Christian beliefs, you know, we always associate the devil, sin and so on happening in the dark and so on.

And, you know, in native beliefs -- in native beliefs, in fact, we conduct a lot of our ceremonies in the dark and in complete darkness because that's where new life comes in, yeah? That's where new life comes in.

But it's that -- it's those beliefs, whether they're social values and so on or kind of from biblical history that this notion of dark skin, you know, black, being associated with the bad side.

MR. ANTHONY ROSS: Well you sorted have answered, because you haven't told me yet about the rite of passage now that we've gotten over the -- the stereotypical thinking.

LEROY LITTLE BEAR: Well, the thing is -- the thing is, in -- you know, I couldn't answer for -- for your people, but I can answer for mine and that is in -- in Blackfoot thinking, we do not have this dichotomist thinking. We don't have it. We have a multi-dimensional thinking and all you have to do is go back to this notion about the flux notion, okay?

In other words, we are forever combining things and so forth. So if anything -- if we wanted to represent our way of thinking on a two (2) dimensional basis, it's very multi-dimensional and so on.

So in other words, in fact, in our stories, we have -- we have stories about the twin coming back home and when non-Indians, Europeans, came to our

country, we -- we accepted them as our brothers, you know.

We accepted them as our brothers. They were going to be one of us and so forth. You know -- so the thing is, if you -- if there is dichotomist thinking, then a rite of passage has to be developed.

So far I'm saying we haven't done that. But it's not a problem in native thinking, because we don't think in that dichotomist sense.

MR. PETER ROSENTHAL: Peter Rosenthal speaking, hi. You've spoken about the land and about the concept of Crown ownership of land and the dubious concept of Crown ownership of land.

And other people have told us about a different concept of land that First Nations people have.

So could you tell us a bit more about that concept, though, and in particular when people speak about returning to all land, are they thinking of it as individual plots of land that individuals would own in the same way as western thinking or is there a more communal notion of the land for the people?

LEROY LITTLE BEAR: Very good question. The -- there's no such a thing as individual ownership, okay? There might be cases where, because of clan systems, and I think that was mentioned yesterday, that certain -- certain clans, but still the clan is a collective, have -- you know, it's -- it's respect from the other clans that they have certain burial places, certain places where they gather their medicine, certain places where they hunt and so forth.

But out on the plains, no. There was no such a thing as individual ownership, okay? Individual notions of, I own this piece of land to the exclusion of everybody else, no. It was communally owned, you know?

And everybody had the same type of interest and so on.

Let me -- let me explain and I think this might throw a little bit more light on it, what title means, okay.

What is title? Because people -- aboriginal people -- because they're struggling to try and explain what they're talking about Euro legal paradigmatic ways, we struggle with that, so we end up

starting to adopt English words such as aboriginal title, okay?

Title -- title is no more than evidence of a right to use, okay? It's not ownership. It's not ownership. It's a right to use the land, okay.

And what it -- what it is, is the higher authority, in this case the Crown, is going to come and protect your right to use the land, okay?

Now, the thing is, the question then becomes is: what evidence do you have to use the land, okay? Well in the Euro legal system, what do we do? Hey, I've got my title. You know, this piece of paper is my evidence, okay?

This is my evidence of a right to use the land, okay?

In the native world, what is your right, what is your evidence of a right to use the land? Well, it's time immemorial and it's -- it's that time immemorial notion is coupled with the idea that this is where all -- we conduct their ceremonies, you know?

This is where we sing our songs. This is where all our stories are, okay? If you go in Indian country, over here at -- you know, at the local reserves here, along my -- you know, on my Blackfoot territory, hey, we've got stories about every place.

In other words, our stories, our ceremonies, that's how we mark our territory, see? Throughout the territory there's places and we go there and conduct ceremonies and so forth, okay?

So what is our evidence of a right to use? It's our stories, it's our songs, it's our -- you know, ceremonies. That's how we conduct -- compare to, you know, the notion of a paper saying here's my evidence of a right to use, okay?

Let me -- I forgot to mention this and I'm glad you brought this up. Again, a little bit of history. A little bit of history with the notion about the right to use, okay?

If you go back two thousand (2,000) years, back to Great Britain, what you will find was whole bunch of tribal kingdoms, you know, in Great Britain.

And the thing was, those tribal kingdoms survived here and there. They might have differences

between the kingdoms and so forth, but there came a time when there was lots of -- you know, lots of problems occurring between all the tribal kingdoms.

And because of inter-marriages between -- between the -- you know, nobility, okay, from the -- across the channel on to the main -- mainland and over onto the island Great Britain, one of the -- one of the people from over there called their relatives over there.

You know, the Normans, and told them, why don't you come over and put some order over here, you know? And we always think about it in western history as the Norman invasion but really there was by invitation, you know, that the Normans came over.

And they imposed their system. That's what Thomas Jefferson refers as a Norman Yoke. You know, we were freedom loving Saxons and those Normans came over and -- you know, put their -- imposed their system on us, see?

But in the two thousand (2,000) year history, which relates back to this notion about Crown ownership, the -- what was happening, you know, it's not said in so many words, but this is really the effect of it, is that the -- there were these people if you want to call them nobles or whatever coming over to some peasants who were farming the land or were -- were using it for pasture.

Came over there and told them, you know, you guys, you know -- are using this land and so forth. But it's not safe. Anybody can come in, you know, invade you people and so forth.

How about if we protect you? How about if we protect you so that you'd have safe use of the land. If anybody's going to invade you, we'll come and -- we'll come and protect you, but you have to pay us a fee for that service. Okay?

So, what developed out of that was this whole notion of use and protection. So, the notion of use and protection became very much a part of the English British law with regard to land. And, so again, the examples of that notion of use and protection is, you know, in the Royal Proclamation, you know. Those Indian nations with whom we are connected. See?

In other words, we are the -- you know,

the proclamation says, and are under our protection. See? Because when the British came over, they were signing what was known as Treaties of Commonwealth. Okay? In other words, treaties of mutual benefit. See?

All those treaties were treaties of Commonwealth and so when they used the word, you know, "use", it's in that notion that there's going to be somebody that was going to be protected.

So, in other words, the British were, you know, without us really understanding what was going on, their notion was that you guys can use the land. We're going to come and protect you. See? Which, you know, at that time, we need -- we didn't need them, but you know.

But that notion of use and protection, see, which now is built into the notion of title, because title is no more than some evidence -- some evidence of a right to use. See? So that's what it's about.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Any other comment or question?

MR. ANTHONY ROSS: On that point, my information is that this whole idea of English title is a little more than a piece of paper. It's a combination to two (2) things.

Number 1 is the right to title, which is a piece of paper and the right to possession vested in the same person. Now, how does that relate to the concept of aboriginal title and use and protection?

LEROY LITTLE BEAR: In -- when we're talking about use and -- use and possession, you cannot -- you cannot possess the land, you know, realistically, so what -- what was -- what was the custom in British law? What did they call it? Seizin (phonetic), for some of you lawyers. Was it seizin where we take -- we take a piece of dirt, you know, and transfer it over to somebody else. You know, and that -- that implied -- that implied actual possession. See? So -- but, in reality you cannot really possess the land. You can use it. See? You can use it, but you can't possess it. All you can do is do it symbolically.

Now, from Native thinking, we're -- you know we're very realistic. We're very realistic. Coming back to this notion about flux and so forth, human beings are a very small part of the picture, you know? And the

thing is, yes, we do -- we do use the land, but we also respect the use of the land of all those other beings out there.

So, in other words, our land use notion is combined with the land use notion of those bears out there -- of those birds out there. And -- so, when we're going to -- when we're talking about surrender of land -- surrender of title, that's an impossibility.

Why is it an impossibility? Well, because we all -- we only have a very small interest in the land.

Those animals and those rocks out there have a bigger interest in the land, so if we're going to have transfer, we're going to have to go and consult those deer, and so on. You know, we're going to have to ask the bear for their permission. See? And those -- I don't think those bears and deer and birds have given their permission for the transfer. Yeah.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments. Yeah, Emery...?

ELDER EMERY SHAWANOO: I just want to share from my research, it was my great-great-grandfather and he was the last hereditary chief, Isaac Shawanoo the first and when the Indian missionary -- Indian Agent came to Kettle Point, this is their writing, they wanted to survey the lands of Kettle Point and Stony Point.

And the chief refused because in his mind, he could not understand why certain ones want ownership of the land, when it was given to us to use for what we need it for.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments?

At this time, I want to thank Leroy for being with us here. I know he's a very -- has a very, very busy schedule and he -- he had agreed to be with us at this particular forum and his contribution is very immense and get us thinking in terms of what he has presented.

And I hope that you take his presentation and -- and think it through so that those words they come alive into our -- into our lives.

At this time, Leroy, I want to thank you on behalf of the forum and the people here. I'd like to present you at this -- as a token of our appreciation for

your time. Miijwetch.

(GIFT PRESENTATION)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much. There is -- where -- where do we have it? Okay we have on a table there yesterday's presentation by Marcia. There are copies over there. Some people have asked for copies of the Indian time and the snail. There's some copies over there, just for your information. Take with you -- as you go along.

We're going to be breaking for lunch shortly and then right after lunch, we're going to hear from Elder Merle at this -- at that time.

But before you -- but before we all take off, the food is not set yet, but I'm going to just tell you a little story and a lot of these things come to my mind when -- when Leroy is telling us all the things about the First Nations and how they look at things.

The story takes place a long, long time ago about a people that were prisoners in a country that they could never call their homeland.

But they were given an instruction that if they travelled to that other place over there, that would be their homeland there, and they would have land for themselves and for their generations.

So they made the tract and started with a very large number of them. And along the way they met a lot of different people. They had wars along the way. But they knew that they were heading towards a certain direction.

Now along the way, one (1) of the nations that they came through, the king of that nation heard about what these people have done along their way, how they have swept over countries and nations and along their way that they're coming through.

So he decided that he didn't want to lose his kingdom. He didn't want to lose his country or anything of that nature. So he went to call upon a priest, a man of God, and asked him, you know, send arm - - send gifts to him. And said to him, what I would like you as king to do, is to put a curse on these people --

on these people, so that they will not be able to conquer.

The man of God, you know, look at what the -- the entourage said to him and he said to him, let me go and talk to the high power. Let me talk to him and see what he would have me do.

And he came back to them and says, go back to the king and tell him this. I cannot come and do that. They -- God does not permit me to do that.

So he sends -- sends more princes and rulers and says, go and talk to this man of God, see what he would do for me. And they did the same thing and finally he concurs that he would go and talk to the king personally.

And on the way -- on the way, he's riding a donkey -- he's riding a donkey and this man of God, you know, is riding a donkey to go and see the king. And then the donkey begins to see a spirit in front of him and he -- the donkey -- would not go forward. And so the man of God, the owner of the donkey, starts to beat at the donkey and after he had given him a good beating, saddles him up again and starts to prod him along and -- and the donkey sees the spirit again. And he -- the donkey tries to move to the side and the owner starts to give him another good beating -- another thrashing.

And the third time this happens, the donkey turns around and talks to the owner and says, Haven't I been good to you all these years? Haven't I taken you all over the place where you have -- now, you -- what do you do when I don't want to take you to that place? You give me a good beating. What have I done so wrong? And he continues to beat his donkey up.

I tell you that story because I think the owner of the donkey was wrong. Now, relate to what Leroy just said to us. If the donkey rider, was an aboriginal person, what would he have done? You know? He'd have stroked that donkey, start to talk to him and ask him questions. That's what happened in that story -- that's what would have happened if it was a First Nations person.

You know, that -- that story actually happened. You know, for people that go to church and

read your bible, if you turn to Numbers in Chapter 22, you'll read the story of Balaam. Now you'll know the rest of the story.

(LAUGHTER)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Lunch is going to be served very shortly. If you need those papers -- a stretch we'll call -- when it's ready we'll call for the setting of the plate. Bonnie, I'd like to ask you who's going to set the plate?

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Okay, that's fine. We'll just call. When it's ready, we'll let you know. Thank you.

--- Upon recessing at 12:03 p.m.

--- Upon resuming at 1:07 p.m.

(CEREMONIAL SINGERS PERFORM)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much. If we could all take our places I'd appreciate that. We'll get into the afternoon's presentations. If we can have all the delegates come in from the corridor and outside and we will begin this afternoon's presentations.

What we're going to try and do this afternoon is that looking at time wise that hopefully that by 3:00, 3:30 we would have -- or concluded the afternoon session so that people could be on their way.

What we don't want to do is take away from the time of the presentations. There's going to be very interesting presentations being made at this -- at this time.

I am very pleased to have an elder with us, Merle Assance-Beedie. Merle is an elder who works with the Union of Ontario Indians and their Council of elders. Merle speaks Ojibwe fluently and remains closely connected to her Christian Island upbringing.

Merle is a founding member of the Native

Women and Wellness Conference East and has served on the planning committee of this annual conference since its inception. I'd like to thank Merle for joining us and you have the time to present, Merle. Thank you very much.

ELDER MERLE ASSANCE-BEATTIE: Boozoo.
(NATIVE LANGUAGE SPOKEN). I'm really proud to tell you that I'm related to all Otters. And I come from Christian Island. It's a beautiful little place in southern Georgian Bay and my whole world view comes from that place, from that time as a child growing up in a place where we knew no other way of life except the one we were born into.

Our directions were not north, south, east or west. It was gegake (phonetic), gamine (phonetic), wequedon (phonetic) and neyashing (phonetic). That was the name of our -- the **four (4)** corners of our island.

And I grew up in a family very traditional in -- in beliefs. Our grandfather was the hereditary chief and on both sides of my grandfather's side, Grandfather William Philip Assance was Chief of the -- hereditary chief of the Ojibwe nation Otter Clan. And my grandfather on my mother's side was Chief Okimawadge (phonetic) from the Potawatomi Nation that had relocated to our area through the boundaries between the -- between Canada and the United States were formed.

And so our family grew up quite different than many other families which brings me to today. Many of our islander people had long forgotten many of their ways and family roots out through all the -- of the Christian teachings that -- that happened in our community. But our family continued -- struggled through those times and I can remember our way of life as being an ideal way of life up until age **six (6)** I guess.

During those formative years our family really enjoyed an idyllic way of life. So much so that I can recall those times as times that sustained our family throughout the years following our residential school experience.

My sister, Sheila, and I went to **four (4)** residential schools. One being Mount Elvin Muncy, Shingwak (phonetic) and Chappleau (phonetic) and Mohawk

Institute. So I've had quite a -- a history of -- I have had an eventful life, let us say.

Each decade of my life has been full of horrors that are hard to describe sometimes and those events take me to different places today that I talk about, about those times, especially with the residential school experience. I'm being called on to -- to talk about them and help others begin their healing and so on.

But that's not what my topic is about today. I would like to share with you some of the very strong oral traditions that our family had and up until 1916 when the elected system came into our community our family had the really unique and wonderful tradition of carrying on a way of life that is almost no more.

And when it became time when my grandfather and my family couldn't fulfil the duties that they were born into, we talked about them a lot and they were passed on to us.

And I will share with you how that used to happen. As little children, the first winter, the first snowfall we would be so excited that we knew that storytelling was going to begin.

And the -- thank you, I'm going to sit down as well. I'm a little shaky. Our -- our family knew that storytelling was going to be. And our Great-Uncle Alec, we would watch for him. And all day long we would -- we would be so excited waiting for him.

And, towards the end of the day, we'd be looking out the window and you know how the frost sticks on the windows and -- because our house wasn't insulated, it used to get those beautiful Jack Frosty look on the windows.

And we'd scrape the window like this and stand on the baseboard of the -- of the -- along the wall there and reach up to the windows to watch to see if he was coming down the road yet.

And we'd do that pretty well all day long until somebody would suddenly announce, he's coming, he's coming. And we'd see Great-Uncle Alec coming down the road pushing himself on a cane, his coat flapping in the wind, his fur hat with the fur ear muffs -- ear flaps floating around up there.

And we'd watch for him to come into the -- into our yard and we'd watch him walk down the road and into our yard. And it seemed like he would take the longest time to brush the snow off his feet in the -- in the back room.

And then he'd finally be in our kitchen. And everybody would be seated around the -- around the -- around the kitchen. Chairs had been already set up and some neighbours would be there. All our family would be there.

And we children, we'd find some place to sit. Some of us up the stairway and the wood stove would be packed full of wood with a pile of wood beside it burning away and on the kitchen table would be a coal oil lamp ready to be lit when it got too dark.

And also there would be either a pie or a cake or cookies on that wooden table. And everything would be so warm and -- and cosy and Uncle Alec would take his place at the head of the table and he would begin to tell stories.

He told stories about our clan which was the Otter clan and it's a sub-clan of the Greater Martin Clan. And told us our responsibilities as a -- as a family. He told us responsibilities as women. He told us responsibilities of the boys. And what they were to become as men.

And he would tell us who we were to marry. Who we were not to marry, what we were to eat, how we were to behave. All of those things that -- all of those things that we needed in life to learn and he told story after story with always -- always a moral teaching in it.

And those times, I long for those times again. It was when I have memory flashbacks of good times, that's what comes to mind. And our family enjoyed so much of that kind of cosy and warm and happy wonderful times.

And we observed all sorts of things. The seasonal things. I recall when we were very little pupup (phonetic) we would call my grandfather pupup, he would tell us when the spawning was happening.

He'd say, Okay children, you're not allowed to go swimming or play down by the water because

being on an island our home was so close to the water. And he said -- he would say, you're not allowed to go and play down there right now.

And we would watch the fish from a distance and the water would be white with, it looked like rapids, like this just all along the shoreline just full of fish spawning.

And in the evening we would look outside our bedroom window in the moonlight and we'd see the water just moving and the clapping of fish all night long. To hear that and feel that and see that is so wonderful and over time my mother and my grandfather and dad -- eventually pupup would say, okay, children, you can go swimming now.

And we would go down and -- down by the water and play along the shoreline and be zillions and zillions of little minnows floating, swimming all over the place. We would chase them and they would chase us.

And those are the kind of memories I have.

And I regret that not everyone has those kind of memories. And we were told how wonderful that creation was and how beautiful arrangement that the creator had given us.

And we knew, because my grandmother and my grandfather, all of us, helped with the fishing. And our father and our grandfather fished for a living. They soaked their nets in cedar water and they offered tobacco when they went fishing and our families fished in family groups and neighbours would also be included in that -- in that activity.

And pupup used to say that fish held council every morning just at dawn. Just -- just before the sun came up they hold council all together. And some of the fish volunteered to give up their life that day so that we could eat.

And that was the arrangement that the Creator arranged for us as human beings that that -- that animal, that that fish willingly and voluntarily gave up its life so that we might live.

So we -- we treated everything with respect and offered that -- offered that tobacco and also offered the cedar water in the nets when we went -- when

they went fishing. And we were never without fish. We were never without food.

And a speaker yesterday talked about the - the Great Depression years and our community didn't experience the same want that other communities experienced because it was -- we were so self-contained there and self-sufficient and we helped one another.

When we look back on those times, it was a really ideal community. So much so that those of us who lived through that time speak of it today as having lived through a bit of Shangrila, if you like.

And where neighbour helped neighbours. Where people really, truly cared and shared for one another. And we didn't know what it was like to have -- we didn't know what abuse was because we had never experienced anything bad from our family, our -- I'm sure we were scolded. But I don't recall ever being in any way hurt by my -- my parents.

There was so much abundance of caring and loving that those were the times that I believe all children should be able to experience.

Now, that changed for us when dad died during the war years. He was in the armed forces and he passed away. And at age **six (6)** I went to a residential school.

I can only describe to you the changes that I noticed, even as a **six (6)** year old, going from Christian Island, a place where I knew no other way of life except what was in front of me and I used to think that the horizon beyond our island was there for only our enjoyment.

That that horizon, beautiful horizon, the Creator created just for us. And to know that there was a life beyond our island was such a shock. And when we travelled by train from -- from our community to Toronto to Union Station and on to London, the Union Station, I'll tell you, was such a shock to all of us.

Even at **six (6)** years old, I recall witnessing the rudeness of people and the disrespect that they showed to one another and I recall sitting in those big, hard benches watching the amount of people there and being -- seeing things for the first time and witnessing

other -- other people and how they behaved.

And maybe I'm -- I'm -- I don't want to go into the residential school story so maybe I'll -- I'll go and talk about the -- the clan system and how we knew it -- what relevance it has to our lives back then and what it has relevance to our life today.

The Martin Clan is the clan that I belong to. It's part of the -- the Minks, the Beaver, the Otter.

All of those kind of little animals that make up that -- that -- that particular clan. And we volunteered to take on the newcomers.

How did we know they were coming? We knew about the newcomers and we knew that at some point, at some time, we were going to meet people from a different race because we were all created in the -- we were all created in the spirit world.

And we knew of one another and we were given the same instructions. We were given the same everything. And we knew at some point we were going to meet these ones and we were -- they were going to come and we were going to adopt them into our clan system.

So ours was the clan that was going to do this. And our clan teachings were -- told us that we were to share everything and that we were going to live a way of life that was going to be different but we were going to be sharing the way of kindness that we knew came from the Creator.

And the Creator's name is Gsha lininado (phonetic). Gsha (phonetic) meaning "kind" and lininado (phonetic) meaning "spirit". And I know the western literature writes about Gitchie Manito and I guess it's the non-native way of not being able to say Gsha lininado (phonetic).

K'cha Gsha lininado (phonetic) means Great kind spirit. So that's how we refer to our Creator K'cha gsha lininado.

And we knew that this way of life was going to be very kind and those ones who were coming would be wearing, we would hope that they would be wearing a face of kindness too and that didn't happen. As -- it's all in the history records.

And our family, because of the hereditary chief line on both sides of our -- our family, our family on the Assance side was signatories to **seven (7)** treaties since the beginning of treaty signing. Beginning in the United States and with that history the family has, also comes a history or oral tradition.

Of knowing that when our grandfathers signed those treaties there was an intention that kindness be reciprocated because we were doing it in kindness and because that is -- was part of our way of life and that was the Creator's name, all of those things that were associated with kindness went into that.

And our family knew that today that is what is outstanding in our treaties is that -- that is what is owed to us is that act of kindness. It has not been reciprocated. And grandfather pupup used to say, (NATIVE LANGUAGE SPOKEN). Wait for kindness, watch for that kindness. Once it becomes reciprocated, once it comes -- returns to you then you know everything is going to make right again because that's what is owing to us and watch for it.

So when I see these things happening, especially this forum where we are learning about one another and trying to understand one another's ways, I believe that that time is coming where the time is here, where we will make an effort to understand one another's ways even more so.

Because it means, not only survival for us Anishnaabe people and all native peoples but it means the survival of all peoples because that's the missing part of the whole equation.

When there was no reason for us to go away from this land but I hear from the elders and the teachers and the spiritual leaders that there must have been a reason why that migration happened, maybe we long -- maybe we long forgot their reason and their instructions from the Creator and they were sent here to hear from us. To relearn what their purpose is.

And that's -- that's the -- that's the -- that's the kind of oral message that used to come out of those stories Uncle Alec used to talk about and our grandfather talked about over and over and over again

until it was embedded in your heart.

And which brings me to the -- to the subject of heart. I know Wally mentioned heart a few times and all the speakers mentioned heart in their talk.

I would like to share with you what our family remembers what that is.

When the newcomers came here there's a -- in the history books it is talked about that when the explorers came here they asked the native people what the name of this country was.

And we all see on television that heritage clip on what the word Canada and how it came to be when they were asked and we said Kanata and it's supposed to mean in Iroquois "the village" or everything in the village and that's what the history books say that it's everything in the village.

Well, there's another version of that. And it comes this way. When -- when the visitors came the people who they first met were people from the Algonquin speaking nations who were fishing on the St. Lawrence River.

And it was Jacques Cartier who asked -- asked them what is the name of this country? What is the name of this land? And the reply was "kenada" (phonetic).

"Kanada". "K" means land in our language. "kena" means everyone and everything. "da" means heart.

The actual name of our country is "kenada", everything has heart. Everyone has heart.

And what is the evidence that supports that, the lawyers here are thinking? I'll tell you that it's in our language and the very strength of our oral teachings come from there and our beliefs and our -- our -- the strength of our grandfather teachings.

Our grandfather teachings are respect, kindness, love, humility, bravery, wisdom. In the language, respect is mendenamoey (phonetic). Bravery is akdewin (phonetic). Love is saged dewen (phonetic). Kindness is gasheywadsewen (phonetic).

All of those words have the "de" word in it. Akdewin (phonetic), bravery. Truth debwewin (phonetic). Respect mendenamoey. Saged dewen, kindness.

Love, sagedewin (phonetic) all of those words have that "de" word in it.

So this not only means everything that our language has has that heart word in it. Just about every word in our language has a derivative of that heart word in it.

And kena (phonetic) everything, land. All plant life, all tree life, all animal life, all human life has heart. That's what the name of this beautiful country we live in comes from, heart.

Can you imagine had we met the new visitors with this information, ready to come into the Martin Clan, into our trade system, what a different life it would be today for us. We'd be sharing a different history. We'd be sharing a better way of life than we're enjoying today.

We would not be in -- in the kind of situation that we are in now. But this has also been prophesied by -- by people generations ago. Many generations ago because they knew the newcomers were coming.

And it was prophesied then that there would be a second coming together of our peoples. It first happened five hundred (500) years ago. And the second -- the prophesies say that the second coming together of our people will happen at some point and it's happening today.

We are being asked to share what we know to the non-native peoples of the world more and more and more. Leroy has mentioned his travels. Others have talked about their travels being called on to go everywhere.

They are asked to come to share their knowledge about our way of life. Yes, there is a missing chapter in everyone's education. There is a missing chapter and it's our native way of life, our native beliefs, our native understanding of history, our native world view.

The scientific facts that come out of our -- our -- our teachings about the whole universe, our medicines, our way of doctoring one another, our survival, the techniques that we've -- we've used to

survive.

I can tell you stories about what we had to do to survive in the residential school system. Maybe I'll just tell you one short story that may help grip your heart so that you can feel. And that's something that we all need to do is to be able to feel.

And that is so important is the feeling because how we feel is how we behave and how we act out.

So I hope that today after our time together these last **two (2)** days, I hope from now on that we start to learn and act in kindness to one another and feel that kindness towards one another because how we feel is how we act.

And we need not fear one another because it was expected that we would be able to do that at some point in time.

The story I'm going to tell you is my second. Each of the residential schools -- schools that I went to brought about its own horrors and some good things and some bad things.

The good things that came out of those experiences were the lifelong friendships that I developed there. The bonding that happened with perfect strange little girls and boys. The bonding that together -- together we can meet and share in the quiet way some of the things that happened to us much like Clifford talks about his -- his days in wars -- in wartimes and the -- and the relationships and the friendships he built in those -- in those -- during those times.

My story comes from the time I spent in Chapleau (phonetic) and you can imagine what it was like for little girl who -- who was born in southern Ontario into that beautiful, idyllic way of life and family being suddenly thrust into community of strangers, in a residential school that was about five (5) miles away from town in -- in a wilderness setting.

And this was my second residential school so I had pretty well had already been oriented to that control and abuse from the first one.

I mention these because it was the first of all -- well, it was not the worst of all the things that happened to me but it sticks in my mind quite a lot.

Sometimes the flashbacks I get are -- are from through

those times.

They would lock us out of the school. I was barely eight (8) years old and they would lock out of the school when the school day was over and winters up there are pretty cold. Forty-five (45), forty (40) below zero (0) and colder sometimes and we were so inadequately dressed.

We would stand in little circles or big circles depending on how many of us were outside to try and keep warm and we little kids would be sheltered in the centre and the older girls would hold -- would -- would stand on the outside to keep some body heat to keep us warm.

And we would take turns standing in the middle so that we -- we'd feel a little bit of warmth from our bodies and even as small as I was, I remember taking my turn on the outside of the circle so that others could stay warm until the doors were opened and we were -- we were allowed to go back into the building.

I remember those times because of an incident that happened there. Quite -- I get emotional even when I talk about it today, and I've told this story hundreds of times.

But we -- I challenged that we were used as guinea pigs to perfect the tuberculosis serum and it was -- the way -- the reason why I know that is because I became a nurse later on and I know how research is done and we were given inoculations in different parts of our body.

Our arms, our buttocks, our backs and different doses and we were separated into -- into different lines of people who were going to get what, and I remember I got mine in my back and my sister Sheila, got hers in her arms and we started to swell up the next day. We could hardly move.

Sheila's arms were out like this from swelling up. My back was so bad, swollen and inflamed I couldn't sit or stand and we were crying.

And we -- we slept in a dormitory maybe twice the size of this room, with beds all up and down, little wee girls all over the place and off to the -- in much the same location as this doorway we had a -- a

place where we went for the lavatory.

And we were put to bed and we were all crying and I remember I couldn't keep the weight of the nightgown on me because it was rubbing against my swollen back and my sister whose arms were just out like this from being swollen helped me off with my nightie, even though she was in pain as well and crying, she helped me off with my nightie so that I could get some relief from -- from the weight of the gown on my back.

And we went to bed that night. It -- it's the most horrible sound you can think of. I -- we went to sleep to the sound of children, to all of us, moaning and groaning and crying from the pain of all of that was happening to us.

And sometime maybe very close to morning I -- I woke needing -- knowing I needed water. I was so parched dry. And I got out of bed and I staggered to the lavatory and there was a row of sinks there that we washed with, of course, and a row of toilets.

And our supervisor used to take the faucets off the -- off the taps because as little girls we probably played with the water. I don't know. But all the taps were removed at night so we couldn't get a drink out of -- out of the tap.

So there was only the toilet to drink out of and I didn't want to do that because it seemed awfully dirty to me to do that. So it was a time of where the toilets had those water receptacles over the toilet and you pulled the chain and flushed the toilet that way.

So in my childish mind I thought, well, maybe the water will be a little cleaner up there. So I climbed up that partition to the top of that and sat on the edge of the partition and held on real tight.

I put my head into that water. It was scummy and scaly and dirty but I went like this and cleared all the scum away and I drank that water and it was so -- felt so much better and I -- my whole face was inside the water and it felt so good.

And then I couldn't get back down. I was too weak to get back down so I just hung there and it was so close to the time when the supervisor came to wake us up and she came.

She saw me up there on the partition and all I recall her saying was, oh my dear, what is the matter? And that's all I remember. I must have let go and she must have caught me and about four o'clock that next day, I woke, because I must have been unconscious and I woke to the -- the dormitory was full of nurses taking care of us.

The Chapleau (phonetic) hospital must have dispatched nurses to our -- to our school to look after a dormitory full of sick little girls.

To this day, whenever I have a Mantoux test for tuberculosis it looks like I have full blown case of TB from those times. I don't know how much -- how much of the serum they put into me but it -- my -- it alarms my doctor or the doctors whenever I have that test done and they want to put me in isolation right away because it looks like I'm a walking TB case.

That's one story that I share with you just to have you hear the experience of what happened to us in residential school system and why some of us have come out of there so bitter and angry.

And when I do my talk on residential schools sometimes, what I -- I share is that while we were there with no supervision or very little at times, what we learned there was how to lie, how to cheat, how to steal, how to get away with authority and that's what we came home to the communities with. That was our education in the residential school.

What I'm doing today is astonishing to me because I do not have an education. It's an absolute marvel to listen to Leroy and that academic mind. It's wonderful to sit in this room full of people who have gone to school and learned from that -- to fill that mind with -- with all of that knowledge.

And I think this is why I tell this story especially about residential school or that one (1) experience is that to help you try and feel what it was like for a little girl to be in a strange place, trying to cope and now I find myself doing this.

It's almost like a contradiction sometimes when I see -- I've lived lives that is so extraordinary in itself. In one (1) sense, I have all these beautiful

traditional values and beliefs and principles that -- that were instilled in me as a little child that helped me through all that terrible time.

And I don't have any academic background to help me but what I'm doing is, I'm absolutely surprised that I am able to do what I do today with no education, with very little education and to unlearn all of the things that we learned at residential school has been an education in itself, to unlearn all those things has been quite a trip.

And I --I -- I've been told by the other elders, by elders to keep on telling my story because I tell it with no anger and with no bitterness and I tell it factually and yes, I've gone through an awful lot of healing, and that healing happened quite -- quite a different way, too.

The -- what helped was our culture, returning back to our circle, talking circles, coming back to our drum, talk -- coming back to all of the traditional things that I knew were good.

I'm going to stop there because I can get carried away and I've gone pretty well off topic what I was going to talk about, too, so please forgive me.

I'll answer any questions you may have at this time.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much, Merle, for your stories there. It's very interesting to look at some of the things and the word that she shared with us. It's very interesting.

Do you have any questions or comments you'd like to ask Merle?

MS. TINA GEORGE: My -- can you hear? I can't hear myself. My name's Tina George and I heard that word that you said, the word is tuberculosis?

ELDER MERLE ASSANCE-BEATTIE: Hmm hmm.

MS. TINA GEORGE: Yes. I like to bring to your attention that there is someone in this room like you who, if they were to get a TB shot or test, they would show the same as you and this young person is sitting right here. He's my son, Dale. He was born in 1978.

It's a hard thing for a woman to have a

baby and when she finds out that the place where you went to the hospital to have care and it tears your heart when someone comes to you and says that they gave your child TB and I -- as far as I know went on until 1978, when this young lad here was born.

At that time I was very tired. I believe if I let my anger come out, I would have received an answer or at least someone could have told me, I'm sorry, ma'am, for giving your child TB.

And I found out that, well, I didn't know who to blame, whether I could blame the doctor, whether I could blame the hospital, or whether I could blame the government.

But I was told that they gave my little baby an adult dose which, in turn, gave him TB. They gave it to him in his groin, it turned into a boil, it got infected, it had to be lanced and they -- after that, they had to take out his glands here.

And that was in 1978. And to stand here today I wish I had broken a couple of windows. I wish I had smashed a couple of heads, because I might have got someone to say, I'm sorry, ma'am. But in situations like that, a person can't hang on to their head all the time and that's why people are driven to do such things that people do.

And that as far as I know from 1978 that no tuberculosis shots were ever administered to any native babies. Then I was told that was the law. That's all I have to say.

MS. MERLE ASSANCE-BEATTIE: Thank you very much. You know my telling my story sometimes, I'm able to help others bring about and talk about different things that have happened in their lives.

That should not have happened to you -- should not have happened to you. And what happened to us as little children should not have happened to us as well.

It was unsafe, it was unjust, really. It was not right and many, many things happen to us that is beyond our control, beyond our -- our -- it -- it's really -- it's really not a good place to be. It's not a good place to be but you know one thing I have found out

in my long journey to the feeling of wellness is the ability to forgive.

And I did that without knowing why I was doing it at the time but I realized it was a turning point in my own healing was to be able to forgive.

And I was haunted by memories of the last residential school I went to at the Mohawk Institute in Brantford and I was haunted by all those memories there.

And I started to go back there to visit, even while the school was still open and the last visit I -- I went over a period of time and I was even nursing at the time, so you can imagine the -- the double dilemma I was in.

Here I'm in -- working in a field that's health and here I have all these haunting, terrible memories of something that happened. So I used to travel back there to try and figure out what was it -- what was it, what did happen?

And it did happen that I -- I came to terms with some of the events that -- that -- that I experienced and the last visit I had there the principal was still living there in the Manse and I had business at Six Nations so I made a detour and went up to the school with a friend. She also had business at the -- at the Six Nations Drug and Alcohol Abuse Program she was working on.

And I talked her into stopping in there. And the principal and his wife were living in the Manse and it's a long laneway and the Manse is to the side. And they saw us driving up slowly and she was outside and so she waved us into her drive.

And the principal I was shocked to see was in a wheelchair with a oxygen tank. And he had lost a tremendous amount of weight and he hardly looked recognisable to me because he was such an immense man as I recall the -- at school he was obese.

And I visited with them for maybe two (2) hours that afternoon. They served tea and cookies and we did some reminiscing and when we got up to leave I felt such great pity for Mr. Zimmerman his name was, and we called him Skin as a nickname because he used -- when he strapped us he took the skin off our hands.

And I was moved to such pity for him and when I left -- before I left I gave him a hug and a kiss on the cheek and I silently said, "I forgive you". And I meant it. I forgave him for brutalizing us. For being the monster he was. And for all the torture that he put us through.

And I walked away having a sense of peace. Peace of mind and I never had those haunting dreams again after that. It was a forgiveness that happened.

And I think that's what we all have to do as well in this relationship building that we're doing, is to be able to forgive one another and to help one another. And that spirit of kindness that is inherent in all of us native people to this day, despite everything that has happened to all of us and each and every one of us across the country has a story to tell.

Yet, we still extend our hand out as we are today in kindness to say, can we help you. Can we help you understand? That is what our message is today and that's what my message is. Miijwetch for listening.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much, Merle. And thank you for those stories that you have told us. Certainly something that we'll always remember. On behalf of the forum, I'd like to thank you. We'd like you to accept this token gift of our appreciation. (NATIVE LANGUAGE SPOKEN).

(GIFT PRESENTATION)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Our next presenter, our final presenter for this afternoon, is Bruce Elijah. Bruce is from Oneida of the Thames First Nation and he's a member of the Wolf Clan. Bruce is a highly respected advocate and teacher of the traditions, language and spirituality.

He has travelled the world, addressed high ranking political leaders including the United Nations in Geneva. Bruce has also served as intervener and negotiator for the Kahnasetake during the Oka crisis.

Bruce Elijah...?

BRUCE ELIJAH: Thank you.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

BRUCE ELIJAH: (NATIVE LANGUAGE SPOKEN)
My name is Kalihwakelu it means one who interprets. And in growing up with that I took it in many different ways of what that could mean and what it means today.

I come from a matriarchy society which is -- goes back to the beginning of time. We're talking about time. And when we're able to do that we can go back to when the Creator was making the land.

It's another question, the land, who owns the land? Well, I'm going to tell you who owns the land.

There are many teachings in our culture of -- of what the land means. And we could use today's terminologies and we can all define what land is.

And some of us will give a teaching of what that land means. Some of us will put a dollar sign on it. Many of us will put a dollar sign on it. Many of us will say, we don't have land. Many of us will say, we used to have land.

And so -- but everyone of us has a mother; right, that's why you're here. Whether she's alive or whether she's still around it's that that is your mother.

And -- and I would assume that each and every one of you there -- you love your mother.

And so very simple thing is that, how many of you would sell your mother? That's what the land means to us. That's why we say, Mother Earth.

There is not one (1) inch of this land has ever been sold, has ever been given away. Not **one (1)** inch. And I'll give you a quick teaching on how illegal that is and how wrong it is, that even in the UN you cannot ever be a sovereign nation. You cannot ever be, because as long as there's people like me that live on this land, it will never be because I own this land.

And it's not just a little community. It's not just the postage stamp reservation. It's from one end of the ocean to the other. From the North Pole to the South Pole. Could you imagine the Creator how

good he was to place people who we every -- from the north to the south we all refer to the land as our mother; isn't that something?

And I want to say to the **four (4)** colours of men that the Creator gave each and every colour of man his ways of how the best that they can be to live in those areas that was given to them by the Creator. The best that they can be.

So that there shouldn't be any question in any one of us whatever race of who we are is that what is our destiny because you're supposed to know it, because I know what mine is.

And just because you lost yours, don't think for a moment that you're going to take anything from me because you have yours. You have your governments. You have your beliefs. You have your churches. You have your gods. And you have your land.

But it's not here. You did not bring any land over. And so the reason I placed the tobacco on the drum, each drum will have probably a different teaching.

There's someone that gave them that drum. There's someone that gave a teaching on that drum.

The people who sit around that drum has to know what that teaching is. And will live by it. And I was so privileged and honoured to be a part of the delegation in 1977 at the UN in Geneva, Switzerland when it was addressed to the Indigenous of the Americas. Wow, that was really something to see.

I was part of the person that developed the creation of that to happen. The early stages of it.

And my thing of how I got involved with that -- was that what is the UN? We could spend a couple of days thinking about that one.

Then I come to believe and I come to understand that we are a people -- the people that I've come from, that gave democracy to the world. We created it because our laws are the Creator's laws. They're not man made laws.

When they're man made laws is that that's where you go to school to be a lawyer because all it is is words; that's all it is, words.

And they will change from here and

tomorrow it will change again. Whatever that terminology, whatever that word was that was in favour for our people, it will change tomorrow, let me tell you. It will change.

But when you use the natural law you can't change that. We drink the water, we all do. Did you know that water is female? Did you know that the water has a constitution? It's amazing. We could spend weeks for me to explain to you what water is, because water is life. Because that's where you come from is a drop.

That's where your beginning is. It's amazing; eh? And yet it's the most highly commodity of anything today that we're so fastly destroying this water. When I heard in the prophesies that there will come a day when a litre or a gallon or a pint of water is going to be more -- worth more than gasoline or the petrol that put in your car.

I would say to you, you're crazy. And today, I'm crazy because it is. It already is. So all of the events of what has happened is -- is we have the water that Canada wants to sell to the United States.

There's **two (2)** pipelines. One in Quebec and the other one on the outside of -- in Manitoba. It's already set. The pipelines are there. It's just a matter of a few miles to put it together.

When you change the flow of nature then you will begin to destroy who you are. They say it eats you from inside. And we'll see that. We're going to witness that.

As she was saying was that she seen this man who was this big who was dangerous and who was mean and, you know, to amount to a little bit of nothing in a wheelchair. When anybody and everybody today doesn't live according to those teachings to those natural laws, you will become sick. And you will know the wrongs that you have committed. The lies that you have promoted is going to come back at you.

That's in each and every one of us. And so I want to say that in 1977 I had an opportunity to witness the drum come into the UN. And the buildings in the UN, if you've ever been there, almost creates an echo.

So when the drums came in they was booming. The buildings were vibrating. It was very moving. As we are here when the drum beats then we are moved somehow. Whether it's the first time for us, yet there's something in that song. There's something in that drum that, kind of, moves you.

You, kind of, feel it in here. Maybe it leaves a big vacuum or maybe it wakes something up inside of you because in all of our cultures we did have a drum of some sort, but many of us have lost that.

But we have maintained. We have survived and we know what the teachings of the drum is. And the late Philip Deer (phonetic) Muskogee Creek who was -- his people were on a trail of tears is some Okema, Oklahoma. He gave the speech at the UN and he said, When I take my drum and when I sing, he says, to creation, to honour creation, he says, if I take my drum to Central America, to South America, the peoples of those lands will know who I am.

If I take my drum and I go to India, Africa, Russia, China, to any of the islands in the Caribbeans and to many of the islands in Malaysia in those regions, he says, the people of those lands will know who I am because the drumbeat for all of those peoples, those indigenous peoples wherever they come from, represents the heartbeat of Mother Earth.

So, Philip said at that time, so he says, when we are speakers and protectors of all of the creatures of our lands, the four-legged ones, the winged ones, those ones that crawl about, those ones that swim in the water, we have been given the responsibility to protect them so they don't become extinct.

And it's true these songs and it's true these drums that we honour that creation and that life. So it deals with the past, back to the beginning of time.

It brings us up to the present and it sure gives us an indicator of what we have to do for the future, the seven (7) generations ahead because I have a dream.

I have a vision of the **seven (7)** generations from here. And my people will grow in numbers as we have in the past and we will take back our land. Many of us we have a choice of whether to share

with that or not. I personally don't.

And so that is the dream. And that is the vision and so what I have done is I've started my own school so we can educate our young people because the standards of the Canadian laws in teaching our people is based on lies.

Because if it was based on truth we would not be sitting here. Your judicial system is failing. Your police is failing because the only thing that we know of policing is power and control.

The world knows what "Gestapo" means. We have witnessed it. I went to those death camps and you could smell it. But you know what, put all the world wars put together, that's how much our people, even more, sacrificed their lives.

You don't talk about that in the history books. There's approximately 15 million people east of the Mississippi five hundred (500) years ago, what happened to them?

Your churches, your governments and your military did away with our people. More than all the world wars put together, that has never been addressed. Now, we've got proof to prove that. When I say these things, I'm not making it up.

I can prove it. There's thousands of our people were loaded on ships to go back to Europe because they seen a Utopia. And the men were the protectors and the providers. And as I say, they loaded up our men and sent them back over there with the promises of meeting with the Barons and meeting with the Kings and meeting with the royalties.

And they never came back. As early as the '50s, of the **three (3)** residential schools that I know of in British Columbia, forty thousand (40,000) women, young women, never came home. Forty thousand (40,000). In Bella Coola in 1952 they numbered forty-two thousand (42,000) people. In 1952.

And your people came and sent smallpox blankets and watched from the mountaintop with the doctors sitting there with the serum and it hasn't stopped.

It has not stopped. I've done a lot of

the research because I want to understand when I sit with you. I want to understand the origin of your existence.

I want to understand what is it that you believe in. I want to understand where you take it upon yourself to destroy our people.

And I come to understand. This particular belt, we are a people, we don't write our history down on paper because that can burn tomorrow. And we can make some new ones up and we can change the history or the stories that's in the paper.

But with the wampum belt, if you was to look at it, it's made from fresh water seashells. This particular belt, we have many treaties, we have many agreements with our nations.

Prior to the coming of any settlers, there are many treaties that we have amongst ourselves. And the square at each end represents the people of this lands, the Ojibwe, the Anishnaabe people.

And then we are at the other end. And there's **three (3)** rows of white beads, symbolism of honour, symbolism of respect, symbolism of -- of that goodness of who we are as a people and that we conduct our ceremonies and our rituals.

And there's an agreement that was made between our peoples and your peoples of this land that we would help and support each other in time of need, whether your family would be hungry, whether you family would be in need of.

Whatever those needs are, then we would sit down and we would talk about that as to how we would assist each other. And so the people of Stoney Point came to our Council a few years back and said, we need your assistance. We need you help.

We want to take back our land. So when they came to us for assistance the first thing that we always do is that you have to be specific in terms of how you want that help to be. They said, to help you to negotiate because my people are the greatest of negotiators from the beginning of time.

They would not be no United States if it wasn't for my people; do you know that? You wouldn't be here if it wasn't for my people. And every crisis that

has happened since then, we were called on. We've been called on.

And so I come from a very proud nation of people. We call ourselves the people of onyota'a:ka, people of the standing stone. And I come from that lineage.

On my grandfather's side it's the governance of hereditary system. I've never gone to church. I'm not a Christian. I've never did any of voting, elective system. Never done that. And we were forbidden to marry out of our nations and so I'm a full blood.

I speak many different dialects of our peoples. So I carry that traditions on. And so when we were asked a few years ago if we would honour the agreements that our peoples made many hundreds of years ago of how we can co-exist, you know that story about, that all of the other Indian nations fought with the Iroquois, how many of you believe that?

It never was because if you listen to your teachings, you are honourable people. So are we. It is forbidden for us to take anyone else's life. Boy they did a good job, eh? Because a lot of our people think that, yeah, we're warlike people. We're terrible people. We're awful people. How could it be if we follow these teachings? How could that be?

There are many belts. We have a belt between us and the Creator. We have a treaty with the Creator. Wow. The governments of the worlds today don't have a treaty with the Creator or their god. We do.

And so that makes us unique, you know. In every day and every moment of my life as I feel good about who I am. I can be standing in the middle of the street downtown in Chicago and downtown New York amongst millions and millions of people and I'm happy because I know who I am.

And I'll tell you next of how that happened. This is the next one. This is the one that was mentioned yesterday the guswhenta. The **two (2)** row wampum. This was the one that was made with the Dutch first, and later on was made with the French, and later on was made with the English, and later on was made with

the United States.

This came about not as a result of that we needed a treaty between us and you. This is something that all of you who are studying law, did you know that in the treaty we have the first and the last interpretation of any treaty; did you know that?

Look it up. Because it's in there. Because we didn't ask for those treaties. Those treaties were made to undermine what was the really intent. There was a plan to take control of the natural resources. Those treaties weren't done because out of good faith. We thought it was because we have a different interpretation when you say, land.

We have a different interpretation when we say the Creator or God. Up to a few years ago I always thought that God was one for everyone. Not today. You have your gods and we have our Creator. It's **two (2)** different people because our Creator is good.

We can't be the same. And so the **two (2)** paths is what we call the River of Life and it was after many years of study, we didn't do it overnight, they come to find out in the -- through the visions and through the dreams and through the prophecies as was mentioned yesterday, is that today, what time -- what's today? Thursday. Today is Thursday? Today is the last day at the Cayuga Longhouse in Six Nation that we have the recital of the prophecies.

So we know what's going to happen in **fifty (50)** years from now. We know what's going to happen a hundred years from now. We know it's coming. We know what your plan is because it's all been prophesied.

And those people that do the recital of the prophecies, they don't read. It's not written down.

It's a memory of. It's amazing because I can recite to you the constitution -- our constitution. It'll take about a week and I don't need to read anything because you know why? Because I am the constitution. I breath and I live of my ancestors.

So, I'm kind of, a dangerous being. I think in your police intelligence my name is in there some place because I speak to the truth. And I don't need a gun. I don't need to threaten anybody. I don't

need to scare anybody because all I do is do my prayers.

As was done with many of these people is that they had a sweat lodge. They had a ceremony. A sunrise ceremony and we promote that. And that's what I do. I have no fear of no man.

I've been asked to come to Africa. Been asked many times to sit at the UN and I do have a seat at the UN. But I want to come home and share the teachings of my people that we haven't lost who we are. Went dormant there a few years but we haven't lost it.

We need to bring it back. And it isn't going to be that we're going to pick up arms and we're going to have a military and have a coup, it isn't going to be that. What we want to show the world is that through the beauty of who we are, through the wonderful teachings of who the Creator is to us, is that nature will come back.

And we can see it now, nature. We've seen the biggest fires that there is. We've seen what the wind can do and for whatever reason I have some friends down in Seminole country and I called them down and I says, are yous all right?

And they said, oh yeah. Nothing happens to us because we pray everyday. We give our thanksgiving every day. And so do we. Seen the powers of what nature can do. And it's really good to be able to. You know that clapping that we do at the end of each speaker, do you know that we're not supposed to clap in our teachings?

Do you want to know why? I'm going to tell you why and you take this home with you. It is told to us that there will be a light thunder, our grandfathers, the thunder beings, Gus son guy adeas, is going to come from the west from the setting sun. Be very quiet. You will hear distinct thunder and it will be the warning when the next change is going to happen.

And so our people are supposed to be listening for that thunder, that particular thunder. And when we hear it we will gather and we will go to our sacred grounds while the earth cleanses.

I'm waiting for that thunder. Maybe I'll see it, I hope I do. And so we're not supposed to clap

our hand because maybe at that moment while we're clapping our hand maybe that thunder is happening at that time.

Because the things that I say and the things I share with you isn't coming from my wanting to say or do, it's what the ancestors have given to me. So, if you want to honour our ancestors, take some tobacco and put it in the water, put it in a river, put it on Mother Earth.

And if you want to acknowledge me, you can go like this. If it rattles loud enough you know that'll be your applause. And I want to tell you something. In all of the places I have travelled throughout this world, the biggest honour that I can ever receive is when I get the elders and the grandpas and grandmas and they nod their head. It's far more than the clapping of the hand or standing ovation.

And believe me, I've had that when I made a presentation to the UN. Had over twenty-thousand (20,000) people, reminding them of what our responsibilities are.

So I say to you whatever your belief is, whatever race that you are, is that creation gave you the best teachings that there ever would be and I ask you that you try to live by it, the best way that you know how and the most honourable way that you can.

The other day in the weeks I was asked to come, I say, how do I do this? How can I do this because sometimes I'm going into a forum where there's a conflict and, you know, you don't have time to -- to be Mr. Nice Guy.

So what I had asked Jodie-Lynn was that -- I says, could you make some tobacco ties and I was asking a while ago, I says, did I ask you that? Because there's so many things that I do I -- I sometimes -- I forget. I assume.

So she was telling me that her and her parents sat up half the night and made some tobacco ties of the **four (4)** colours of -- of the **four (4)** directions.

Do we have that?

So I'm going to ask her to pass it out and I want to ask you to take one of those tobacco ties

because we use it for we want to communicate with the Creator, with creation.

And I want you to think for a moment and hold on to it, maybe for **twenty-four (24)** hours and as you put it on the earth or you put it in the water, I want you to think of one thing that you need to do in your life that's going to make you a better person.

I want you to try that. And so I remember in my healing journeys of what I had to go through is that I had to have all of them, **forty (40)** of each. And so you're supposed to hold on to one for **twenty-four (24)** hours.

And in that time, is that if you do it for a hundred and sixty (160) days, you cannot get upset. You cannot get angry. You cannot raise your voice to anybody. You've got to think of something nice to say and you've got to think of something nice to think about that you would like to say to your loved ones.

And so back then I had to do that many times because mine is coming out of anger. Mine is coming out of frustration. Mine is coming out of going to courts and this is funny, I mean, it's kind of funny, you know, do you know the judicial system is -- I've got to hire a lawyer before I can come before the judge.

And I have never -- I have -- the few times that I had to come before the judge, I have never gotten a lawyer.

And the judge says to me, you can't come into my court without legal representation. Who's your representation? I say, it's me. I'm it. Because I'm not a liar or is that a lawyer, something like that. Close to it. And -- and so I'm going to tell you the truth.

And then, of course, when they did that, you know, he want me to put my hand on a Bible I says, I can't do that because it's not my ways because that bible is based on lies. Has done nothing but tormented my people.

If you take the Old Testament and New Testament, if you was -- those of you who are Christians, if you live by it you would be good people. But those are the people that we sit with, eh? You know, the

greatest abuses are clergy people. Wow. Who do you trust?

So I live in that time but I will say this, is that there's nobody in our family is ever going to go to a residential school again. Wow. There's nobody in my family that the CAS is going to take my children.

Did you know that? I won the first case in the early '70s without a lawyer to get my daughter back. Judge Jenais (phonetic) and, you know, oh, we argued.

But that's another time. And during the Oka crisis our lawyer at that time, we got a lawyer for that one, you know, but we get a lawyer for a legal -- you know what, it's the legalities of what we can say. The lawyer never tells us what to say. There's no lawyer in the world that can tell me how I should think or how I should say.

There is none. There will never be one. I fear no man and I fear no system. And I walk on this earth on my Mother Earth there's no one that can tell me other than my own people of how I'm going to live and how I walk on this land.

And so we talk about laws and we talk about treaties and we talk about court system, we are a people that still follow, that pre-dates the courts of Canada today. We are, as long as we walk on this land, that supercedes the Supreme Court of Canada.

Okay, let's take it to the UN. Did you know that in order for you to be recognized in the UN you've got to have a language, you've got to have a governance. You've got to have a belief and you've got to have a land base.

And the English language is not from Canada. The governments -- the governance of what Canada is to be is a commonwealth which is a branch of the British, so they can't be. Cannot be a country, a sovereign country of its own. It can never be in the UN.

But guess what? We're the ones that formed the UN. Did you know that? Before the UN it was the League of Nations. They took our motto. Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson. Did you

know that George Washington sat with Onondagas for **fourteen (14)** years to learn how the constitution -- our constitution works.

They were marvelled at how many thousands and thousands of people that can live in peace and harmony. And that's what they wanted. He even learned how to speak onondaga; did you know that? They did not have a two (2) day session. He moved in to learn the process.

And so we gave him an Indian name. You know what his name is? And all the presidents that will follow we call them village destroyers. You know what that means? "One who destroys communities". Guess what the prime minister's name is? Because that's what it is. It's the legacy that we live.

And that's the truth. That is the truth. And so we developed this school which teaches total immersion and what's it based on? It's based on our teachings. It's based on our culture. It's based on our clans. It's based on to have those **four (4)** things, to have a name, to have a clan, to speak our language so we can carry on the ceremonies and to have the governance and to say that this is the land that I come from.

We have every right to be sitting in the UN. I got all kinds of stories to tell you of why this world is coming to its fast end because we -- I can tell you. I can tell you what's going to happen.

And I don't want to be a part of that system that destroys because our teachings is based on living. Our teaching is based on promotion. Our teaching is based on the continuation of to provide and to protect the land that is given to us.

And it's amazing because you can go from one end across the country and if we was to sit down, even though we have different languages and we have different dialects, is that when we refer to the Mother Earth; it's the same thing. It's the same thing.

And many of our medicine people will spend a lot of time on a vision quest and fasting. Sundance, pipe carriers. There's a lot of rituals that we go through. And in my travels I've done that.

I was even asked -- many of the things

that I can prove to you of why I'm not making this up is that I managed to get into the Vatican library in 1981. I had our -- our helpers come to us, it was **five (5)** of us. One was from Hawaii. One was from South Dakota. One was from BC the other one was from Hopi (phonetic) land and the other one was from the East Coast, I think -- trying to remember which nation it is and myself.

And it was asked if we want -- if I wanted -- if we wanted to meet with the Pope. Of course, all of my other friends, they said, oh yeah, wouldn't that be an honour to meet with the Pope.

And I says, no thank you. Not me. I've got better things to do than to meet with the -- with that. Here's a thing, could you imagine ever having a Pope who's a female; that would change the world. I come from a matriarchy society, you know. That would be something.

The -- did you get the colour codes. The black, it's the lowest. Look at their -- look at their colour codes. Black, Brown, monks, Cardinals who are red. And the Pope wears white.

We live in a system that is colour-code. Wow. It's amazing. And there's nobody in that system that are women. They're, sort of, out there some place.

Yet, for us, they're right at the -- in the middle. They are the centre of the universe. They are the centre of who we are. So, that's who we are. And these ways will continue.

Many of you sitting here, whatever your position is within the police, with the policing, with the government, with the laws, with the lawyers is that time and time again, you're going to see this.

Because as mentioned, Leroy sit there, was the treaties, we have all of the treaties. Guess how much of those treaties have been honoured. Not one (1).

But we do. You know, we polish it at this end, you know. And every time they're going to sit with us, this is going to come up.

Is that that river of life when it talks about is that one -- on your ship that you came across, you brought booze with you called the mind changer, you brought your black book with you called the Bible. You

brought your Magna Carta, governance based on destruction, wars, diseases.

And you did not bring any land over. So, you have your Christmas, you have your Easter, you have your Thanksgiving, you have your schools because when you first -- the first of the Jesuits that came over, they did not find any kind of institutions, could you believe that?

If I was to say to you that I come from a community that is a lawless community what would you say to that? I remember the Chief of Police in London back a few years ago he says, oh my god, he says, you don't want our services? I said, no.

Six (6) months later, he says, they'll be chaos in your community. Don't call us when there is. So we never called him for **six (6)** months. He called us and he says, do you want to talk with us? I said, no.

Because all of what was happening in our community was brought in from the outside. We can live without the police because our warriors and our peoples will protect our people.

It's not a threat. It's a promise. We can survive. Because to live in a lawless community is what it means. Let me -- let me put the scare out of you. Is that what it means is that if you understand the teachings of what it is to be good, you don't need anybody to -- to come and tell you right or wrong because you're going to do it.

We do home visits and we sit with the elders and we sit with the mothers and we sit with the young people and we sit with -- and that's not to say that there isn't. There isn't -- we don't have any problems but we're working on it, to improve on it, to have that safe community.

And so, you know, we -- we can live side by side. And I just want to add to that is that why there's -- there's three (3) is that we honour, we respect and we trust, hopefully each other when we sit at the table.

But you cannot legislate any laws over us nor can we, to you. You -- you live in your ship that you came over with and we have our canoe. And we can go

down that river of life in a good way because not come together. So therefore I will never be a Canadian Indian.

I cannot -- you cannot take that away from me. You cannot de-nationalize anybody, any human being.

You cannot do that. And the only way that can happen is if I was to give up my ways, my teachings and my ancestry. And forfeit of who's going to protect this land. I can't do that. I cannot do that. I will never do that as long as I live.

And I have taken care of my grandparents, I've taken care of my parents, I've taken care of my children and I'm taking care of my grandchildren. Teaching them how to be honest. Teaching them of the world that we live in, of who destroys the land, who builds these institutions and the reasons why. I tell them the truth.

And I thought because that was a scare tactic back then, you know, because the educators said, oh no, you're going to teach terrorism amongst our people. And I thought about that and I was thinking, how can that be any worse than what it is that has happened to our people? Oh, do we know what terrorism is.

But what I have learned -- what I have learned is that if you teach the people the truth they will take it upon themselves to use it in a good way. Wow. And you know what, my children and my grandchildren they pray every morning and **two (2)** or **three (3)** times a day for all of mankind with all of the turmoils and all of the problems that's -- that's happening throughout the world, that's what my children are doing and my grandchildren.

And one of the things that was told to us was that you need to work on forgiveness. I got a little ways to go on that one yet. You know, but I'm willing to do that. I'm willing to work on forgiveness. I'm still working on it, as you can see.

But I want to tell you something, I will never ever forget what my people have suffered for this.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

ELDER BRUCE ELIJAH: I'm not saying that I'm not against education because I think education is a tool that can be used -- I was saying that I'm not against education because education is a tool that can be used in -- it's been used for negative reasons for too long. We need to use it in a good way.

Education of the -- of -- of the world that we live in has been interpreted from one point of view and it has been used, as I say, the words can be changed tomorrow to mean something else.

The words, you know, in talking today of any -- studying theology in the English language is -- is such a brand new language. It's only a few hundred years old. As my brother from out west said, you know -- you know how our words can mean so much.

I will say this is that a lot of the education today, the people who write a lot of books and -- you know, our -- our -- is based on a theory. Everything is a theory. I want to say and I want to say to you that our teachings and our beliefs is based on knowledge.

We have the knowledge. Ho.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much for the presentation. I'd like to ask Jodiee, you have the gift for the presenter. Thank you very much, Bruce, for -- for your time with us. I'd like to present you with this gift for being with us this afternoon. (NATIVE LANGUAGE SPOKEN)

(GIFT PRESENTATION)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: We're going into the closings. I'm going to have Lorraine explain something to you that we're going to do. I asked the -- they're going to prepare a place here. We're going to be asking the drummers to close the ceremony shortly.

But I just want to -- in the-- in any forum we come to part --a conclusion. We say it differently sometimes and we say, what did you hear? And I have had the opportunity to facilitate major conferences, gatherings, where there's good debates and I

-- I remember making a summary of the -- of the discussions.

I don't if people know Jomas Cocoman (phonetic) has been the chief from one of the First Nations down here. And I decide -- and I took something that he said and, I explain, this is what I heard.

And as I was providing a brief summary he walked up to the mike and said, Mr. Chairman, that's not what I said. And so, I said to Jomas Cocoman, well this is what I heard.

And you going -- you heard a lot of things in the last -- in the last few days. And I hope that what you heard, you'll be able to use a lot of it. We can't have -- we can't say take everything.

I hope what you heard a lot most of it comes from the heart. And I hope you will take that to the heart and remember when you're dealing with issues and say, how -- how did they look at that. I hope you'll take that into mind.

And briefly I'm going to ask Lorraine to explain something for -- for you here.

LORRAINE GEORGE: Miijwetch, Wally. I first of all like to say, miijwetch to all the -- all the presenters, our -- our elders and all the presenters and all the participants and I would just like to offer my -- my comments very briefly and thank Commissioner Linden for this -- for this opportunity of bringing everyone together for education and understanding.

It's been a -- it's been a very -- very good two (2) day session. I was very pleased to see all the -- all the participation and that leads up to -- on behalf of the Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation, Chief and Council and administration and the community, we're going to close -- before the drums close, we're going to close with what we call a giveaway.

And briefly, the reason for a giveaway is to acknowledge that coming together, acknowledge that participation, acknowledge the receiving of the words and the understanding and the educational aspects as well as the giving of the words for knowledge and for understanding of who we are as -- as aboriginal people.

So I believe Catherine is putting out the

-- the blanket we -- we always put our gifts on a blanket on -- on mother earth and offer out those -- those gifts in that way.

And as I say, they're -- they're small tokens of -- of appreciation but they're taking a part of this conference, this seminar, this forum with you as well as the -- the gratitude for participating and bringing yourself to this forum and taking whatever it is, that is meant for you to take from the forum.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

LORRAINE GEORGE: So, this giveaway, we would ask first that any elders present who have not been already acknowledged with a gift would come forward first and the -- you just approach the blanket and receive whatever it is that you are -- you are drawn to, to receive.

After we -- after all the other elders then we would ask Commissioner Linden and the Commission staff to come forward and -- and receive a gift. And after they're done, then we would ask all the parties and their lawyers to come forward and take a gift and then last would be all the other participants representing the -- the communities and -- and the people that are drawn together in those communities.

I think I can safely say there's been a wealth of knowledge and understanding that has been shared and I know I'm going to leave with much more than what I came with. Miijwetch.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Before we do that, we're going to giveaway -- Commissioner, say a few words in closing and we're going to have a song after.

COMMISSIONER SIDNEY LINDEN: Thank you very much. I don't have a great deal to say that hasn't already been said, but I think I should say it in any event.

I would like to thank the elders who came here, particularly those who made presentations, for sharing with us some of your knowledge and your wisdom and your stories.

I know some of them were difficult for you

to tell but we certainly appreciate it.

I would like to thank all the presenters as well. I'd like to thank the drummers for sharing with us this important part of your tradition and your culture.

I would like to thank the community of Forest for hosting us, the Mayor is here, or was here. I would like to thank you very much for your hospitality in Kimble Hall. We're not finished with Kimble Hall yet. We're going back. But we've been welcomed here and I'd like to thank you for that.

I'd like to thank all of the parties. Most of the parties have been represented here over the course of two (2) days, mostly by lawyers but I'd like to particularly thank the Chief Coroner who was here yesterday and I'd also like to thank Commissioner Gwen Boniface who's been here for the whole two (2) days.

I'd like to thank Wally for the excellent job you've done in facilitating at very short notice, and I know you had some help from our staff, but I know you did a great deal of work and I'd like to thank you.

I'd like to thank Katherine and Don Worme and Nye Thomas of our staff who worked very hard as well. And Noelle Spotton and Jodiee-Lynn Waddilove who are here as well.

And finally, I'd like to thank all of you who came and participated, everyone. It wasn't always an easy forum but I believe that we did accomplish what we set out to do.

There will be no findings of fact, as we've said, it's been a learning experience. I do believe it has increased our awareness and our sensitivity to aboriginal culture and tradition and I'd like to thank everybody very much for all the assistance that you've given us.

And there's a hidden agenda, slightly hidden agenda, to this Inquiry and that is to contribute in some way to the healing process and I believe, and I hope, that this forum has in some way contributed to the healing process as well.

A version of this forum will be posted on our website very shortly. And finally, the last thing I

want to say is the evidentiary Hearings will continue on Monday morning at 10:30 in Kimble Hall. Thank you.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much, Mr. Commissioner. Mr. Commissioner, thank you very much for the opportunity to be able to get together. It's a learning experience for all.

But there's also another process that's taking place here and that this forum has been part of it and that's a healing journey that we're all on here. And I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the courage that it takes to do something like this and you're to be commended and your staff to be commended for that.

And you will see that now before we close that the three (3) drums have come together. That the people that sit at the drums have come together to sing us a song as we leave today and it is an evidence of the healing journey, something that we take to heart very closely and cherish very much.

Thank you very much and Lorraine will call on the people for the giveaway.

LORRAINE GEORGE: Thanks again, Wally.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

LORRAINE GEORGE: Just checking protocol here. We all have many teachings. I would ask, again, as I say, all the elders first that have not already been acknowledged. I would ask that you -- you come forward and -- and accept a gift. Any elder or if you want to acknowledge yourself as an elder. Any of our senior people and that's ...

Katherine, it's been suggested that perhaps we could take them and give them out to -- to overcome that little bit of awkwardness. Is that something that you can have some help with?

We always have solutions to our -- our cultural differences.

As I said before, we'll do all the elders first. For those who are -- are assisting, we'll do all the elders first, the Commissioner and his staff, the parties and their legal representatives and all others.

And again, the giveaway is on behalf of the Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation, the community as represented by the -- by the leadership and it's been a great privilege and -- and honour to be a small part of this -- this -- this event.

(GIVEAWAY)

LORRAINE GEORGE: While the blanket is going around, I will acknowledge that the gifts that are on the blanket were all made by various community members.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't have a drum though. Okay, I like to sing this song because I'm so thankful for being here. Surely, we have learned a lot and I love to stand with my native people. This is a short one.

(SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE)

(PRAYER BY SPEAKER)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Miijwetch.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: If I could just ask people with cameras and things, you're asked not to take pictures. If you have a movie camera, okay?

Very soon we're going to be doing the closing -- the drums are going to be doing the closing song at this time and we'd like to rise and you can hold on to your gifts, acknowledging.

ELDER THOMAS WHITE: I'm back, ladies and gentlemen. Oh no. I just wanted to explain the song that we're going to be singing here. And it's going to take me about an hour, okay, so -- I'm just kidding again.

The song that we're singing here was passed on to us by one of our elders back home. He

passed on and he asked me -- he told me, he was a very good friend of mine, worked with him all the time.

And he said whenever you feel it's appropriate that other people hear or sing this song, by all means sing it for the people because it's a very special song. It's a miijwetch song. Thank you song, to your spirits, the drums.

And this is -- this was his way of saying -- thanking everybody. I just wanted you to know that this song sang Chi-migwetch from the drums to all of us, to you, so this is the song that we'll be singing here. Miijwetch.

(CLOSING - CEREMONIAL SINGERS PERFORM)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: The forum is now adjourned. Have a safe journey at home and thank you for being with us. Chi-migwetch.

Just to -- and -- and let the people know that you have participate here, the sessions have been recorded and they're going to make copies available. If you want to know how to get a copy of it, just contact the gentleman over there. He'll give you a card that -- where you can order for a copy of the proceedings. Thank you.

--- Upon adjourning at 3:44 p.m.

Certified Correct

Wendy Warnock
Court Reporter

