

CONNIE DIETER:

Yeah, my name is Connie Dieter and I'm Ms. Dieter and we have been asked to maybe speak to a little bit about our father's visions for the National Indian Brotherhood. And hopefully contribute in some way to the discussion that's going on here. I've been very fortunate, we've been very fortunate actually and I encourage you to try and get a copy of this. My sister Pat did a biography of my father and the work that he did in his lifetime which covered the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, his involvement, the involvement with the NIB, how it all started. Right down to, you know, near the end of days of his life... his organizational skills and what not and I thought it would be very helpful to sort of you know go through it. As I was going through it I'm going, geez my dad did an awful lot and he really did and he also, I thought, and of course not without the support of my mother who was there, who encouraged him to remain and think Indian. I think if anything what he wanted to convey and probably speak to and don't forget that in his time, this was in the 1960s and what not, was that he believed that Indian people had a commitment to self-determination.

He also believed that Indian people had the capacity, the capability to do that to make their own decisions. I'll just read you bits and pieces of which I thought were, to give you some sort of idea, he... my sister maintains that his leadership was really sort of forged in the fact that my father was a descendant, we are descendants of two treaty chiefs, Gabriel 'Coney' and Chief 'Okanees', my grandfather was his grandson, Chief 'Okanees?' grandson and lived with him as up until he was 12 in a Buffalo culture

lifestyle, the tee-pee and all of that, it wasn't until Chief 'Okanees' died that they settled back on the reserve.

So my grandfather was very much was raised in a traditional lifestyle and he understood what was expected of him and also the fact that how do I put this? Yeah, except my mom and they were respectful of the idea of Indian leadership serving the people as opposed to having...

...now buzz words now, but at that time, these were important. The other thing he spoke to is that, I guess you could say that Walter became the first successful leader to organize Indian people on a national basis. And he used the commonality of being a status Indian whether you were treaty, whether you were non-treaty as being something that would bring them together.

He also felt and I'm sure you all heard the story that originally it was the Indian and Eskimo Association and Stan Daniels and my father decided that given that First Nations people had a fiduciary responsibility with the Queen. That they had to really at this point start taking separate, separate paths, so in 1968 they split and my father became the first founding chief.

After that, they went out and it actually started from the Federation, my father was the first to arrange funding, he got, he somehow convinced the federal government in ARDA

which is an Agriculture program to fund Indian Provincial Organizations on reserve and they were the first in Saskatchewan. We were the first in Saskatchewan to receive funding from the federal government to organize. As a result of that some of his workers they went out and organized and helped I think in Manitoba. FSIN lent them money, this is all in here, so I really encourage you to get a copy of it.

You can probably, it's on loan, you can probably get it at, I'll give you my sister's number, phone number, and you probably get it from her directly, but the other way you can borrow it through the library, any inter-library loan, her master's thesis is on file, so you should be able to do that. It hasn't been published I hope it will get published at some time, because all of this information is put in there. I think it's important for First Nations people to know their history as well and why they formed and what happened. Anyway he influenced, he was the first to receive federal government funding to organize Indian people into a pragmatic political lobby group. Dieter organized Indian communities in Saskatchewan and selectively in other parts of Canada into taking charge of their own lives to formulating tangible agendas to self-determination.

He firmly identified how Indian people were affected by generations of the entrenched neo-colonial attitudes held by Indian Affairs' bureaucrats and how this attitude was in his view their greatest obstacle. My mother was telling me yesterday of how he use to go into Indian Affairs' offices and in those days, they would let, I'll let you tell, you tell them...

INEZ DIETER:

About what?

CONNIE DIETER:

When he hopped over the...

INEZ DIETER:

Oh yeah, yeah, he didn't like the Indians being barred from seeing Indian Affairs officials. There use to be a little gate, a little door and he use to just want to see somebody and he had to report to the secretary and he didn't like that to go through all this red tape, so he just jumped over that and went ahead and banged on the door and got in.

CONNIE DIETER:

And I guess that's probably been his strategy through all of this. I'll just leave this here and I'll talk. He felt self-determination for Indian people as being key. He also saw our involvement in any sort of consultation about Aboriginal issues as also being a part of that process and if you remember he was there during the 69 White Paper policy and all of that. When he was first President, I think, of the National Indian Brotherhood, Lester Pearson wouldn't meet with him, you know, it's kind of amazing that, and the other thing that he was probably wanted to work very hard was to try and get the old guard out of the offices in Ottawa. So he was really sort of challenging the bureaucrats in Ottawa at that time and wanted to see some changes.

He wanted economic development, he thought that was a major concern and also a major, but at the point, at the time that he started I think it was just getting people organized. I remember hearing from John Tootoosis stories about how he would send them out on field work, you know, to get and in some of these communities there wasn't a chief for like 20, 30 years. I mean, Indian Affairs had done such a number that he even began organizing locally to get someone to go out there and start talking about running for chief and council and stuff. That was, and they didn't have any money, so he would send enough money, I think, the first year they got \$10,000.00 and he hired 3 staff. The \$10,000.00 he would send them out to reserves to organize, he would give them enough money to get out there and then they would have to find their own way home, so that's how his organizational skills were.

And the other thing was that several times when the early organization was starting to run out of money and the payroll wasn't met, he mortgaged his home, his personal home three times to do that. You don't see that very often, I don't know someone would do that, have that commitment.

The other thing, I don't know how he felt, but actually she mortgaged their home for... 3 times to make sure the early organization began and she wants me to read this part. Walter Dieter was not a prolific writer or strong orator, there were few documents that carried his name as an author, his strength however was in his ability to make Indian people believe in themselves and their own self-determination. His basic strategy was to

empower Indian individuals and to inspire them with the belief that changes for Indian people were possible if they worked together and stood by one another. Many individuals were inspired over cups of coffee in small groups or one on one by his determination that changes had to be made and that Indian people were not to be kept powerless any longer. His legacy was to create a distinct context for contemporary Indian leadership exemplified in the use of forums which connected Indian people to mainstream Canada.

I just want to say one final thing that he, near the end of his life, he and John Tootoosis were both Senators for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians. There were allegations, he was also appointed to the board of I don't know? Oh what the hell, he was appointed to the board of Synco and he also had a business degree, not a business degree, he had a business diploma. So he knew bookkeeping, he knew all these sort of things and he could see that there was some problems happening at Synco. He and John Tootoosis actually were two of the Senators that asked, started asking the questions, we need accountability by our Indian leadership, we need to have strong accountability in place. Actually Wally who was my dad's grandson recalled the time when he went to the Synco offices and Wally, my father was concerned about his personal safety. He had told Wally, "if I come out and there's someone", wait, anyway he was personally threatened by what had happened at these offices and he was concerned that there was going to be some retaliation. Actually he told my nephew Wally who happened to have a gun, everybody has a gun, on the rez right? If I come out or if I don't come out, come in and get me. That was his thoughts, because you know at the time there was... and the only

ones that actually stood up to this, okay... his last political fight had him join with John Tootosis in an attempt to limit the powers of the very Indian leadership they had established.

He was appointed as Vice-President of a company set up by the Federation, anyway that I was talking about and... Dieter had, had, training as bookkeeper in his early years, a skill unknown to many of the other Synco board of directors, he was not expected by the Federation Executive to be active in a daily operation of the firm. Dieter was unhappy with the financial statement presented to him and had become aware of a number of company improprieties. Dieter was also troubled by the operation of the company and the increased elitism that the current, not this current, but that current Indian government was encouraging by strengthening the office of band chief. The concerns and respect for band members is slowly being routed in the name of Indian government. This was in 1993 he made this statement, Dieter discussed the matter with his fellow Senators of the Federation and together they decided to confront an individual while Dieter also pressed for an investigation.

The organization that Dieter had developed was based on the notion that Indian leaders would continue to value the traditional ideals of being a chief. A chief in the Cree tradition was one who selfishly gave to the people and who put his people first. Under the traditional form of Indian government the bands were a smaller unit to the larger Cree nation in which the people had a democratic approach to leadership and issues. He was saying at that time, there was some traditional notions of Cree government to reflect the

monarch system with the chief serving as kings to the bands that would perceive as independent nations. Those... Dieter felt that the new style of government proposed by was not based on Indian traditions. Okay now, anyway, there was a great deal of political pressure on Dieter and John Tootoosis, my dad was 72, John Tootoosis was 80 at the time were trying to get an investigation going into this particular financial problems they had here in Saskatchewan at one point. So he was, I don't know if he had any solutions, but he certainly was aware that creating this sense of Indian elitism around Indian government structures was damaging and one that we should put in place, we should put safeguards in place.

The one other thing I want to make mention too, is that my father was very respectful of women, he was the only chief at that time that spoke on behalf of those women that were losing their rights under section 91-24 and he probably did it because he had 5 daughters and a great mother. But he also believed that women should be involved in the process. He, I would venture to say that he would probably propose having women becoming more involved for instance in the economic development initiatives that are being handed out by First Nations organizations. I, for one, would like to see how much of that money is actually going to women, how much of an influence a woman has within her own community to do economic development things. And to perhaps have a place until we're at a state or we're ready to have more Indian women become involved in the processes to set aside some seats or to set aside some places on the commission to ensure that women's voices are included.



Actually in one of his fund raising and his means of denouncing the White Paper Policy. He had figured that the wives of the MP's probably belonged to this and its University of Women's Group. So he went and spoke to them and told them about what Indian people were doing, what they wanted to do and that he had hoped that they'd understanding again, the women's power, that perhaps they could reach them through that way, so do you want to add more, Mom?

INEZ DIETER:

My understanding of this meeting is to bring about changes for the, and I saw something there about the urban, that's the part I'm interested in. There should be more emphasis placed on the urban, because I think about lot of native people, First Nations are migrating to cities for reasons, for specific reasons, education, employment and what have you.

But also there's, they go through struggles, lot of racism, I myself experienced racism yesterday. I want to bring it up because I felt so, I was in a store with my grandson and I left my grandson in the car and then I was waiting for my granddaughter and she was shopping and I happen to go into the store to look at some stuff. I came out and went to see my grandson and he was doing okay so I made another trip and as I was leaving this man, one of the clerks came up to me, walked beside me, he said I saw you take something and put it in your pocket and then you went to the car. And I thought, you know I'm deaf, I'm hard of hearing. I couldn't hear, and I tried to figure did this man say I'm stealing, you know. Oh, I was so offended, so I went right back and I went straight

to the manager and I stated my case and I'm a traditional woman and my children are all educated and I didn't think it was right he treated me this way. So I'm going through, that was enough, I talked to my girls and they were offended, they told me to take it to a lawyer so that's where I'm at right now.

But I'm going to say that I understand that a lot of Native people face harassment and there's nobody there to really take their concerns, I went to Human Rights and what could Human Rights do? You know, they didn't do very much, the only alternative was to go to the lawyer, so I don't know, he was going to talk to the manager to see what happened, but I felt so, I felt as if my, I felt as if, as a native person, I didn't feel right and I felt that I did the right thing as a native person you know we can't let this happen. We can't let this happen to Indian women and that's what I felt very strong. I just wanted to share this.

But I want to say we need women's organizations, we need a kokom and mishom's political forum in the cities which we don't. Because there's so many people that like me now I'm from Peepeekisis and not being from there, I'm originally from Red Pheasant and that's mostly, it's home to me. So I go there quite a bit and then going to Peepeekisis it's not the same for me, you know. I'm speaking in terms of traditional ways, traditional ways, like the other speaker was talking about his traditional ways, I practice too. I find that, I feel very comfortable going to my own area but that's just bringing that about because the tie, what we are forgetting as native people, the ones on the reserve, sure it's nice that they have the reserve it's good. But we have reasons that's why we move to

urban centers and that's what one of the reasons that I'm bringing, that's why I don't reside on Peepeekisis as I'd like to. Because I want to feel free and open and speak and I don't consider Regina as my home, my home base. But I remain because of my children, my grandchildren, my great grandchildren, but this area there's a lot of I'd say there's more women like me in this state that would love to see something happening on in the cities for our benefit to help us out. Because we've been, I wouldn't say, like we're being abandoned once we move to the city, you know, we're kind of isolated and that's how I feel.

CONNIE DIETER:

I just want to leave you with a quote that my dad had made in a statement this is just after he, do you remember when they went around? Indian Affairs had the Indian Act meetings where they were going across Canada, well, my dad was doing that as well. The last meeting was scheduled on April 28<sup>th</sup> and my sister, his youngest was killed in a car accident on the 25<sup>th</sup>, so he wasn't able to attend that meeting but he did make a statement I think that sort of captured all of it.

He said, I'm almost prepared to throw this Indian problem of ours out and just look after my family. I know I neglected them for cause but for the untimely death of my baby girl ?Darla?, she was very dark skinned and fiercely proud of being an Indian and extremely interested in what I was trying to do. She tried to give me a message for she had what we all want for our children, the right to live and on our ancestry in an urban situation. Although I'm not able to be with you in this time of a... arena of decision making I would

like to ask people today not to make any decisions. But to ask for more time to meet until we've all learned the great traditions of the Great Spirit and are able to share in a truly humble kinship of the friendship of National Indians. He couldn't get a plane out for the funeral, but anyway, as a leader I'd like to say to you honorable brothers let us be able to listen to all people, the young and the old and gather the suggestions guided by our pride of race and cultural heritage. Let no man be better than one and by the same token let no man be lesser than his brother. That was in 1969. So, as I said, I can't give this to you, it's my mother's copy and she will, she won't let it go.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Can I just ask that I know we will get a copy the last quote of it, the last part of it if we can get it photocopied. Stuart, we need to get a copy of this, but right now I'd really appreciate, she just read a statement that was made by her late father that is so moving for me I would like to have a copy of it immediately. If you just could photocopy that.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

I don't think there's any words to describe my appreciation for you, for taking the time to come forward and share with us what your father's ideals were. I don't think they're any different now than they would have been in 1969 for a number of people in trying to ensure that we capture what the intent was. I mean we've clearly gone off the path in a number of areas and we need to come back to that and I think it's pretty fundamental to both those values we have as Aboriginal people that are common right across the country

and try to find a way of creating that organization that captures it.

And so I was interested in a couple of things and that's you said he used the commonality of being status to bring people together whether they were Treaty or non-treaty. And that really helped me to understand what the thinking was then because, I've done as much reading as I can but had never really found the answer when we get down to that part of the starting to pull it apart, so I really thank you.

The idea of women and having them involved and this is something that comes up over and over and how do we do that in a respectful way? And ensure that the voice of women and youth and elders are captured and that's really a part of the questions that we ask when we go out. So, you know we have a web site so I would appreciate if may you would give some thought to it and send us some of your ideas of how that can be done. You know the Council of Women right now, I don't think they even have the full vote on the Executive as it sits, I think the only ones who have a full vote are the elders, but I think we could put our heads together we can come up with something.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Okay, great, and we appreciate anything, we also have this list of questions that, we've been handing out, if you want to grab that, but the web site, if you go to the web site, we'd appreciate it. The other area, the urban is another huge issue and I have been reminded over and over as we do this, that each individual still holds very, very tightly to

their nationhood and that they do not want these service organizations over riding that. So we need to find a way of insuring that we capture that within this re-organization and renewal and there have been some suggestions, I don't think you were here when I was talking about their... in another region they were talking about trying to set up some MOUs now with service organizations that are delivering. Maybe this is where your idea of having specific women's groups under the umbrella of the organization to insure that nationhood is connected. So any ideas you have on that too just go and send them forward. I'm really moved by your presentation, I'm really thankful that you waited in order to do that.

CONNIE DIETER:

I'm glad that Marion called us, we are actually are very honored to be here to share our father's thoughts Thank you.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Thank you.

INEZ DIETER:

I just want to thank Henry, he was with Walter all those years, yeah. And I appreciate it.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

I got involved nationally in the 70s and John Tootosis is a guy, one of the people I considered a mentor. Walter Dieter, I've read of him, I've met him, just incredible leader

in Canada, there were a few others like him in different provinces, B.C. and so on and they were... But what was, I want to add one more thing in terms of my tribute to you two, is that I think is very fitting that at the end of the day that we have two very powerful women in their right coming here to carry on the work that your father carried on. It's a, he did see the equality of people. Women and men and conveyed that and the words, your words and your words and your enthusiasm for this are incredible. If I had a question and I'm not necessarily looking for an answer right now. But I know the stability of the...you know we have our differences of opinion, but I know the stability of the FSIN, I know it's got stability. I know of another organization and it's, goes right back to 1956, well I know another organization that was created in 1956 that has the same kind of stability today and that's the Nisga'a nation. They were founded on the same principles, they don't spend a lot of time talking about their tradition, because they are the tradition but they've used contemporary... beginning in the 50s they used contemporary balance to bring that forward all the way to today and they're as powerful today as they were then.

I know other organizations that were powerful in the 50s and 60s, but have not, they're not powerful today. Because they missed that continuity and that balance that you were talking about that you quoted from your father there in that book or your sister as she put it in there. So I just want you to think about that, because I think more needs to be said about that, because what we want to try in the AFN renewal is try to capture what it took and it takes more than just, you know, it takes a lot for that to be continued, it takes a lot. And we do have these questions, we do and want to keep on with this and I think reading

that book, getting that book and working with it will be very helpful. I just want to bring that to you and if you had any further thoughts on that we would be interested, but apart from that, this is a very high honor, I really appreciate it.

CONNIE DIETER:

I'll give my sister a call to see whether or not I can leave, but actually it's my mom's copy.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

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No, don't, I'm going to say don't leave it.

CONNIE DIETER:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

Don't leave it, we will get a copy, give us the contacts, but it's so easy to do and then you'll have trouble getting it, no, we'll find a way to get one.

CONNIE DIETER:

Thank you.



JOE CROWE:

Yes its nice to see you too and sitting beside my (native tongue). Its more or less a spiritual right. Like my fellow (inaudible talking off mike) there's a lot of respect involved in that. We have our fellow (inaudible) who is in a home in Meadow Lake and he sent his greeting down to me and to him. But he's so busy I just could not get a hold of him, but however I think we are about to adopt another one aren't we? Yeah and he's a very spiritual man as well.

However I will get onto what material might be a contributing whatever, contribution to the AFN renewal committee. (Native tongue) I'm just going to be very brief' I'm not going to go back and say who I was and what I achieved and all that. We've heard all that damn, to me that okay, its not relevant to our renewal commission thing. We want something done, I believe with my (native tongue) here, he's got a lot of experience in Indian country and Indian political, in a political area.

We heard ramblings on, I was this, I was that, I was sitting there too, got frustrated, but whatever. Before the white man came, we had no need for jails, we had no need for methods of incarceration. I guess that's what brought into the justice system I keep on harping on that, I belong to I don't know, Lord knows how many justice things there are in our area. Just recently I was absorbed in Kahkewisataw justice system again and then there's the Aboriginal justice initiatives that are... I don't know they're chasing after me, but they're always in contact with me.

We've lost our parenting skills through the residential school system. Our sovereignty is, its in confusion, we don't know what the hell sovereignty is now. But however the treaty... wait a minute, wait till I go back, about 4 years ago I was absorbed with the Ochapowace band and their battle for taxation. I don't know different times like, but about 4 or 5 years ago they called me in, well in fact in Yorkton here the lawyers put me up 3 nights, because we went to a... whatever it was a court battle in Melville. I made my statements there, the judge asked me "are you a Canadian?" I said "no I'm not". He asked me why? I belong to something they call...

JOE CROWE:

A few years ago I guess there was a guy they called Trudeau and some people wanted to try and talk and stumbled over treaty and all that type of thing, Trudeau listened and I guess he said come back and tell me who you are. Maybe you remember that, I don't know, but however. Aboriginal people are the Métis and I'm going to explain this later as quick as I can, the Indian Act Indians and the Treaty Indians, they're put into this one big boiling pot here called the Aboriginal people, David Ahenakew is one of my best friends and I support him regardless. Those people that are accusing him and stuff like that, that man has something in here. He said and he affirmed and confirmed my belief in we as people that have treaties he said we've got to get out of that boiling, that big mix of pot of Indians or whatever.

We have to identify ourselves and we have special identity, treaty people we've got to identify ourselves and get us out of that big pot, because we have special identification. Now we're always addressing the Indian act geez that pisses me off. I've got to do a little bit of reading from quotation, he knows that I follow the written word, he knows. From the records of the federal, provincial arbitration unsettled accounts, arbitration, Indian claims, Robinson treaties, volume 5 entered in the Department of Indian Affairs, January 12, 1897. The Honorable J.J. Kearns, QC, Solicitor General for Canada. We contend that these treaties are governed by international rather than super... rather than municipal laws, he said that. Nobody disputed him. They were made with the tribes under the authority of the sovereign and the face of a Nation who pledged to deal with these annuities. The Crown is a trustee in those matters.

I've got a book at home and it's about that thick, revised and amended Indian Acts, the white man still don't know who the hell we are. They amend and they whatever the Indian Act. Now in one of those amendments or revisions this is 1951, 1951 Section 11 or whatever it is, it deals with registration is the Indian act, subject to Section 12 a person is entitled to be registered if that person, there's a lot of blah, blahs in there on 26<sup>th</sup> day of May, 1874 was for the purpose of an Act providing for the organization of the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada for the management of Indian and Ordinance Act. It says all that, you probably... and it also says further down is a member of a band for whose use and benefit in common lands have been set aside or since the 26<sup>th</sup> day of May, 1874 has been agreed by treaty to be set apart two little letters stuck together

'or' 'or' that has been declared by the governor in council to be a band for the purposes of this act. That tells me something, there are two different kinds of Indians. One is an Indian Act Indian, the other is a Treaty Indian. It defines that quite clearly here and of course this has been revised.

I will read you a declaration by the late Walter Gordon, he has studied the Indian Act or the treaties. Those four lawyers that I made an attempt at this meeting in Regina with regards to (Native name) Taxation whatever they were facing. Before I said anything they asked me because I was invited, they asked me, Joe, have you got something to say here, you were invited here? I said "yes" but before I say anything I'm going to ask the floor (Native band) band members, and whatever, and those 4 lawyers, one of them was an Indian, one of them was an International lawyer, I asked them the status of treaty 4, what is it's status? I said, because there are many types of treaties, different kinds of treaties and also there are different kinds of sovereign, sovereignties, different degrees of sovereignties. They said they all agreed, 3 of them were Canadian lawyers, I've got to elaborate on them 3 Canadian lawyers as well and this international lawyer. There's a difference between a Canadian lawyer and an international lawyer, they're different, they all agree and said treaty 4 has international status. Okay having said that, having heard them say that, okay in the event that we come up with something our First Nation or whatever we call ourselves today now, we have organizations.

By the way I passed a picture yesterday I brought it up at the, the other day on Monday, a picture Sol was not in that picture, but he mentioned my presence there. My picture is in

that, I mean I'm in that picture there when we first and I am the only remaining chief that formulated the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians back in 1956. I'm the only remaining chief of that time. And the purpose of that formulation was that there will be a pressure group for the treaty people to take our concerns to wherever our concerns were destined to be. I'm still involved in that, I did not have to be, I was a foreman here in the city of Yorkton after I was a chief in 1955 I did not like that position, so I come into the workforce. I was pursuing there's the big eyes coming in there, I was pursuing a paper called, what the hell do you call it now?

Anyway I had two years as an apprentice in construction, I was going for my journeymen when the Indians of (native band) brought me in by acclamation, we didn't want to go back to where there was no roads in the winter to where there was no power. But the old people like Noel he really elaborated on that shit, I went through that too. I went through all those ceremonies but my wife was enjoying the whatever the outside world power washer, dryer, television, what not. We did not have that on (native name). But then we left all those things and went home to be a chief, to be with our Indian people, because the elders instructed that I should be and I've been involved in all this long time and I guess I sometimes don't want to be.

But however I ran across this person Walter Gordon, we've talked many times treaty issues here is what he had to say. "The Indian Act does not comply with the Treaty in any respect", remember I said the treaty has international status keep that in mind. The Indian Act is a federal legislation which can be amended, revised or all together be done

away with at the whim of parliamentarians without the consent of the Indians which it recognizes. The Minister of Indian Affairs only has powers to administer the Indian Act, because the Minister of Indian Affairs is a Canadian legislative thing, it belongs to Canada not international.

The Minister of Indian Affairs is not empowered to deal with the treaty in reference to treaty 4, all rules and regulations in the Indian Act which the Minister may authorize applied to Indian or Reserves cannot be applied to treaty Indians or treaty reserves. AFN Renewal Commission, I'd like to emphasize that. Indian Act rules and regulations can only be applied to those Indians as Indian reserves who do not have a treaty with the Crown. Status Indians and Status reserves can only be governed by the Indian Act, I believe that. The Act in a sense prohibits treaty making process left open in the treaty for late comers adherent to treaty no. 4 by the Minister of Indian Affairs usurping the role of creating Indian and Indian Reserve under the Act, the treaty process is not an Indian Act process, treaties are sovereign, nation to nation. That is why I say, that is why I say, I need to address this renewal commission now.

There's a study, a study on treaties and agreements and other constructive arrangements between States and Indigenous populations. Final report by Mr. Miguel Alphonso Martinez, by the way when I said Martinez, I lived in Mexico for a while, I was in Los Angeles for a while. I did a lot of studies on treaties.

I have a universal declaration of human rights here, I have that, you must have that too,

whatever. I also have a copy of the United Nations draft declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples. I have that and this was passed, it was passed already, I received that statement already, it was passed. By the way this was forwarded to me by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations.

And, I hate like hell to say finally but I guess this, I got lots, I got lots of whatever they call that? Now our treaties are under attack politically and in all areas. The study on the treaty arrangements and constructive, study on agreements and other constructive arrangements between the States and the Indigenous populations by this report. There is paragraph 110 which confirms this study. In the course of history, of course, there is a lot of things prior to 110, prior to paragraph 110 lots of very interesting stuff. It says in the course of history the new comers then nevertheless attempted to divest indigenous peoples as pointed out above that in these preceding pages.

Divest as pointed out of their sovereign attributes especially jurisdiction over their lands. Take like, what the hell is happening now? That lands act now. Look at the threat if we read between the lines. Our treaty says as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the river flows, here now we're being faced with a Lands Act, is it or something? And those people that are in third party whatever with the federal government now, that Lands Act will kick in and I'm telling you the sun better quit shining, the grass better quit flowing, the river better quit.

What happened to those promises? What happened? Divest in individual, I mean,

indigenous peoples have pointed out of their sovereign attributes especially jurisdiction over their lands, recognition of their forms of societal organization and their status as subjects of international law. I think that, what is happening to us people here? There's something we have the Indian Act, we've got the treaties, us people are the most, what the heck do you call it? We don't know what direction we're in, what direction we're trying to follow, us as treaty people. The Indian Act is a governing body that should correctly be applied to non-Treaty people, that should be applied to those people that are in that bowl, whatever they call them, Aboriginal people in that bowl. That's where the Indian Act should be applied, like David Ahenakew said "let's get the hell out of there because we have special status, treaty status". That is what I expect from the AFN Renewal Commission. The Treaty people be recognized.

The reason why, one of the reasons why I was one of the signers for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians at that time, now it's called Nation. Was under the direction of our elders and my fellow chiefs at that time, that the Federation be a pressure group, somebody was saying this morning, I don't know who was trying to mumble themselves through explanations, but to be recognized through something, something, first of all there was Union of Saskatchewan Indian Nation and then us now, FSIN now. Each reserve is autonomous, each treaty First Nation is autonomous. Something like, what now we see called the, is it United Nations, whatever they are trying to call themselves? Yeah, and then eventually through the AFN, eventually now.

Each reserve does not have a written constitution, but they do have a constitution, they



have. The treaty in black and white spells that out in the matter of jurisdiction, I guess, and the old people have told me and the leaders some of them were my fellow leaders and stuff, they told me not, about jurisdiction, Canadian law. Treaty addresses that, if a person from the treaty area, this is our interpretation, by the way I've got a glove on that interpretation commits an offence outside the reserve and the treaty or whoever wrote that out said in the land so ceded and returns back to the reserve, they, does my own words, the foreign justice system or Canada Justice system. Canada Justice System comes as far as the reserve and says we want Joe Crow, he committed an offence in our area.

So now I will have to say this, treaty 4 says there is 4 councillors, which is the spiritual, which has a spiritual element in there, east, south, west and north. Spiritual element is they address number 4 even the golfers address that. But however there is that councillor that looks after the east part, east border and then the other councillor south, the other councillor west, the other councillor the north. The old people have told me an increase, increase, what the Queen's men had said this land that you are going to take you will not be bothered, that's your land. (Indian words) that's your land.

The Indians actually did not agree, but by treaty remember I said if it wasn't for the treaties the white man wouldn't have that right to be in here, the Indians said yeah (Indian words) the white men, those are our relatives, let them, alright, us we'll take this land, under spiritual reasons or whatever.

So these 4 councillors following the spiritual way, the spiritual whatever, of the treaties are there patrolling that reserve, the police only come up. In the meantime one of these patrollers come across the police and say “what are you doing here? come here, we can’t go in there, it’s your reserve, why?” Because Joe Crowe committed an offence in our area over there, we want you to go to the chief tell ‘em about this’, we want Joe Crowe to come to answer to that offence. So he goes and tells the chief “okay go on and get Joe”, so they bring Joe Crowe to the border and then from there he’s taken to address that offence in Canada or that foreign country. Extradition, it’s simple as that. Whose law? Not Canadian law in (Native place), no, (native name) law.

So I’d like the AFN Renewal Commission to study those things to, maybe they’ve got no business to address anything or what but at least to look at those things. At least, because our organizations, the Alberta whatever organization they have? Manitoba organization, but in this we have the FSIN. So we sure need, we sure need someone to bring us back into that treaty perspective, because we are confused, our leadership are confused.

I get phone calls in my homes, they talk about chiefs that are confused, they call them green horn chiefs and stuff like that now, being frustrated, look at our taxes. We’re not supposed to be taxed on reserve really, but then again as soon as we get off the reserve we’ve got to pay some taxes.

Portability, why is treaty 4 in what is called Manitoba, treaty 4 territory, inside Manitoba goes into the southern part of Saskatchewan into Alberta? Treaty 4 territory. Our treaty

4 is portable in any of that treaty area there. Portable, our treaty rights are portable. And for our resources we never gave them up spiritually, what was not written in the treaties still belongs to those people under treaty 4. Resources the old people have said “only the depths of the plow only the depths of the plow” they said we cannot give the ground underneath there, underneath 4 inches. Why? Because of their spiritual beliefs and stuff. We cannot give away the home of our relatives, who were their relatives? Our relatives, as we exist right now, the bear, the coyote, the rabbit, they belong to the Great Spirit, all those living things. So they could not give away that home and yet and yet these resources were being raked by foreign people.

So anyway, I missed out of a few things there that I thought that I'd share the concerns of our people and that was one of the reasons why the old people have encouraged me to join in with this FSIN. I was heartily, whatever with the AFN, but the AFN deals with the treaties, the non-treaty people and the Métis people. I don't know how it's going to do? If it has any international affiliations or whatever? I don't know that, I've got to have that explanation as old I am, I don't know where it's going to come from? But at least this was the purpose of me being involved in our Indian organizations, I lost a lifetime out there and I'd of had lots of money in my pocket retired, no, I'm stuck. I'm glad to be stuck, because I don't know what time it was my grandson? Grandpa we're going to take you home, we've come to get you now, I said no, yet I have this obligation for us, our people. My responsibility I've been laughed out of meetings, I've been snickered out of meetings, but I'm still here, people still hello Joe, how you doing? I'm not looking for recognition, I'm looking for the spiritual and political recognition of us

people, First Nations or something like that.

And I'm going to tell you one thing now, this is the last thing, it's going to be a little bit now. I was at the meeting in Saskatoon and that guy from Queen's University in Kingston, big, high professor standing there, the Indians, the treaties, have municipal or whatever, municipal or whatever have, what they call that? yeah, status and they haven't got international you know, he said that. I was in New Zealand, I was talking treaties with the Maori, Maori people, there's a big fight, I don't know what the hell they all that? In New Brunswick they took me down there about them big crabs whatever they call them? I told them go international, don't go to the federal thing. If you have a treaty then it has international status, go into the international.

There was warriors there, it was scary, they had little strips of hair this way and it was all shaved, walking around with rifles. I just forget the name of? Burnt Church, and Canadian helicopters flying around us, RCMP were there off the reserve, cars, two of them at a time, these guys were practicing their sovereignty. I went with Lawrence, chief, vice-chief Lawrence Joseph, we went there, we seen that, we got something, we have something and yet we're not practicing that. What the hell is wrong with us? But I commend AFN, but they better know what the hell they're doing too? They better know, because otherwise there's a lot of time wasted, I'm bull shitting here and I don't know how much dollars one minute cost here? I could sit here and talk about how I was raised up, you betcha I was raised by this one and that one. Guided by elders and stuff, I was

too.

I'm aware of the spirituality of us people, but I'm not going to elaborate on that, you people have that too, not only me. You get that strength, you get that knowledge, our grandfathers, that's what I said right here, our grandmothers and our grandfathers, (Indian words) speaks for us. Our Creator. One time in Saskatoon, we had the treaty and the spiritual leaders there, that first day, elders were there and they were talking of their spiritual and then I said mother earth, we don't own that, we don't own Mother Earth, we don't, holy shit, pardon me. One of the elders jumped on me, don't say those things, I don't want you to say those things, because a white man will take advantage of that. What the heck is wrong with you? An elder told me that. We don't own Mother Earth, Him up there owns Mother Earth, but wait a minute, the next day we were talking treaty, the treaty says a family of 5 one square mile or whatever makes me responsible to a 128 acres, that's man's law. I brought that up the next day, we've got to before we say something we've got to watch, what the hell we're saying, we've got to have a bat behind us.

So, I think there were a couple of very important things that I wanted to bring up but I forgot, there's a lot of things that I, but at my age, I'm not old, I'm just a young kid on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June, about a week ago or so, I just turned 77 and I'm glad. Yesterday morning when they brought in those feathers, those flags, standing there, how much I love my friends, how much I love my relatives, they contribute to me, my brother-in-law here, contribute and got a big impact on my life too. I'm older than him, but still he's there.

He helps me too politically, spiritually, them feathers there, spiritual way, (Indian words) my friends, (Indian words) my great grandchildren. (Indian words).

He left us on this land here, gave us that spiritual life, physical life, this is our land here (Indian words) He said “you use this land here I’ll provide everything, Mother Earth, will look after all that”, provide you with mothers, fathers, relatives. I thought of all those things, when those feathers were going like this, sure I attended those ceremonies and I know how to sing and all that, it is up to us, it’s up to you, guys, now. That thing they call responsibility (Indian words) right in there, right in there, the best to each and everyone of you.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Thank you, thank you very much. (Not speaking into the mike)

WILLIE LITTLECHILD:

Well, I just had a very quick look at your questions and perhaps I will restrict myself very limited to the international perspective. And as I say I could more adequately prepare for a later submission, but I have been working at the international level since 1977 which really gives me an opportunity to now look back over some 2 ½ decades as to where we started internationally and where we are today. I'm very encouraged to say that in retrospect when I look at the advances we've made at the international arena.

We've actually been very, very successful as Indigenous peoples, I can give you many, many examples as to where I think we've succeeded. Now that doesn't mean our work is complete, by any means, it's actually perhaps some times only the beginning because we are starting to make inner roads internationally. In particular at the United Nations and at the OAS the Organization of American States. Also at the ILO, the International Labor Organization, because those are for us as Indigenous peoples in Canada very important international forum among others but the 3 main ones. I think there are for example areas we're missing. One in particular we're missing by a large shot and I'll come back to that. Because I know you want to focus more on how as I understand it we can renew the Assembly of First Nations to be more representative and more active in terms of advancing our rights and interests.

One of the ways that I think AFN could be and this is just thinking on top of my head. On reflection the improved is... it's influence in the international area. I say that from two

perspectives, one is that we have an unique opportunity in Canada as indigenous peoples to be real effective leaders in the international community. Likewise the government of Canada I believe has a tremendous opportunity to be a world leader in advancing the rights of Indigenous peoples, but they aren't doing it. That's where I see a very strong and positive role for AFN to play to encourage and where necessary push Canada very aggressively to live up to the image they say they have. They say they're the human rights promoters of the world, but at the same time they are the human rights violators of Indigenous peoples rights. In that way I think we need to, as a national body, be more forceful, I think, in causing Canada to take a look at itself. Are they really the human rights defenders that they proclaim they are? Are we really the number one country in the world to live? Because that's the message they are portraying in the international community.

Now I know and you know that when Indigenous statistics are factored into the national statistics, Canada's picture in the international arena is not as bright as it thinks it is. In fact, it drops by a large margin. So I think not to be too negative here I think we have circumstances that are ripe for the Assembly of First Nations as a National body and the government of Canada as a member of the UN family for examples in working together to really advance Indigenous rights around the world. That's the unique opportunity we have and we're not seizing on it I don't think. Sometimes we do to a limited extent or maybe for a short time but in the long haul, we could really be effective for example in the advancement and promotion of treaty rights of Indigenous peoples. Because we have experience, we have good practices or best practices sometimes that we could use to encourage the rest of the world where Indigenous peoples have less of a chance than we do to help them in improving their lives for example. I know we have a



lot of work to do at home and I'm not trying to downplay that by any means. I'm just trying to look at your situation as a commission in the renewal overlook... to be helpful in a way and that's one area that I think we could really, really be more effective if we were to have an aggressive aspect of the AFN to the international promotion, so that's one.

Having said that, you have a question on demographics and I sit as a member of United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues. Last year we took a theme for our work at the meeting to focus attention on children and youth. And this year we focused our attention on Indigenous women. When you look at those two parts of our demographics, I think it varies, but interestingly enough around the world globally in Indigenous situations. That's the majority of our people both children and youth, I think the statistic we came out with for example is there are 180 million Indigenous children, that's a lot of children and sometimes their circumstances and situations are completely overlooked. Nobody deals with that.

We found out last year by looking at Indigenous children and youth issues at the U.N. This year as I say we looked at Indigenous women, so the demographics are not different elsewhere as they are in Canada. That's why I really believe we've got a real opportunity here to lead the world and I heard the Prime Minister for example, say he wants to put Canada back on the international agenda and this is one way definitely that he could do that, the country could do that and we could do that. We would help ourselves and we would help others I think, if we were as an organization to be more reflective on the international arena.

And let me give you another, just another perspective and if I recall correctly the National Indian

Brotherhood, the predecessor to AFN. Used to have NGO status at the United Nations and a non governmental organization status. Now you can check the record, but I'm not sure, I was informed at one time that it lost it's NGO status at the U.N. because it didn't file reports. The U.N. requires that an NGO file reports every 4 years, but recently the Assembly of First Nations may have gotten it's NGO status again at the U.N. Now that's a very, very important status to have at the United Nations and if it's true that the AFN has NGO status then boy by all means our leadership should use that at the U.N. Because there are certain levels of the United Nations, many levels at least at the highest levels only an NGO could speak, only an NGO could take the floor to address the United Nations. If AFN has that status, boy we should be using it full tilt by all means, that would be my sort of a humble suggestion if I may make one, even a recommendation because I'm not sure of the details behind that. You would have to or I would have to perhaps research a little bit more, if in fact it does, it has regained it's NGO status and if it has to utilize it to the fullest hilt.

Because the standards that are being set internationally, if they're better than Canada's standards why wouldn't we aspire to that standard to improve the lives of our people. In particular the children, the youth and the women as I mentioned, but also from the perspective of governance. Where there's international standards whether it's an international law or a customary international law that can assist us, why are we not using that? So that would be my, anyway those are just a couple of perspectives and comments, I would make off the top of my head. Lastly the United Nations is really beginning to seriously look at treaties again, international treaties of Indigenous peoples with states, Indigenous peoples with themselves, among themselves, states with states, Indigenous people as third parties.

That's one element, the other element is free prior and informed consent as a legal concept, which I believe is a very strong treaty principle in Canada, and North America at least. We have a lot to offer in that area, we have a lot to contribute with that particular concept as to inform the international community, what does that mean? Free prior and informed consent? Well, our treaties were based on mutual consent for example, and there are sometimes bad experiences we could rely on to change things around to make it more positive. For example violations of treaties unilaterally by states, state parties, well, that's a bad example, they shouldn't be encouraging that to other countries. I think they should be encouraging the nation to nation relationship that's partnership that requires consent by both sides before any unilateral or any changes are being pondered. But anyway those are, there's some upcoming work where I see AFN could be really influential in the international arena and at the same time help us domestically. So, maybe some rambling, but questions if you want to ask any questions.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

Thank you very much for introducing those topics there, those are important topics, and some of the themes that you've been working at the international level. Our, ...could be helpful if they were focused here too, so what I want to do is. One of the comments you made was that one of the reasons that AFN might find be more active in the international level would be to help Indigenous people else where improve their lives.

I've done work in southeast Asia and I've... and circumstances there are a lot different than here for Indigenous people, in the rain forest as you well know and I've also been involved in some

conferences that have included Indigenous peoples from around the world. I've always thought that, well, when you compare our lives to theirs, that if there was a real value for the Assembly of First Nations to be involved at the international level would be to help them, not that there aren't issues here. But we're working on those, but they...for their lives and some of them are pretty desperate, very, very reactionary government.

So part of the Renewal could be that re-focus, you know, I mean if we're going to be involved and to be very clear about that focus, do you think that? I mean a lot of your theme here is helping other people and that's what Canada is always supposed to be famous for, right? Do you think that would be a valid recommendation that notwithstanding what our status right now what it is whether it's NGO or whatever. But that would be a very valid aspect of the Assembly of First Nations to be there to help other Indigenous people, perhaps to help ourselves in certain situations but really to help any other. Do you want to expand on that a little bit?

**WILLIE LITTLECHILD:**

Yes, when the, as I understand it the government of Canada for example sits down to designate certain amounts of money for foreign aid or to assist other countries. Sometimes, I understand they flow that money through NGO's, so if let's say the Indigenous people in a part of Latin America as an example, want help, they may apply to CIDA in Canada, CIDA will then assign an NGO to go and help them and in fact give that NGO money to go and help them. The problem is that never have as far as I know, Indigenous organizations been given that same support to go and help Indigenous peoples. In other words Indigenous to Indigenous assistance

that's government supported just like other non Indigenous NGO's are getting money and in some cases they haven't really helped unfortunately. They've, as I understand it sometimes cause some harm in those Indigenous territories. They, because they didn't know the people or didn't know the cultures, so.

Recently there has been more and more calls by Indigenous peoples for help from other Indigenous peoples not non-Indigenous NGO's to come into the territory for a while and help and leave again. So I think there's an opportunity there to use the existing foreign aid system for example to help Indigenous peoples from our experiences. If I can use one example, I know there are many as you just reflected yourself from your experience, there are new territories where oil and gas is beginning to be developed in Indigenous territories. Well they have no experience in that area, whereas some parts of North America, the tribes, have experience in that area. Now what better group...

**WILLIE LITTLECHILD:**

... that is, so, I think there are existing mechanisms we can use to really be helpful and again it's not by any means overlook the domestic situation. But as I say I'm only looking at the international perspective and I really believe that's one area where we could assist our brothers and sisters who are calling for that help.

**COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:**

Just quickly Wendy I'll bring you up to date. Willie took this opportunity to introduce one

aspect and that's the international perspective. He's very involved in that and has been for years and he's also, we've made him aware that treaty 4, is that right? Treaty 4, Fort Qu'appele in the fall and that if he wanted to do an expanded presentation on this and also his experience nationally in Canada that might be an opportunity that may end up being a two day session rather than one? I don't know whether that will happen? The question that he also asked, I don't have the answer to and maybe we don't have is whether or not the AFN has NGO status? At one time the NIB may have had and may have lost it and that there may be, it could be the AFN has now got it? But I don't have the answer to that and we'll have to find that out, because it may be relevant to some of the work that... and some of the focus in the future. So, are you familiar with?

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

No, as far as I knew we didn't. The last that I'd heard but that's a while ago too.

WILLIE LITTLECHILD:

That's why I wasn't sure either and we need to do a little homework on that part of it, so we that know, if in fact it has regained its NGO status that's a tremendous opportunity I think for AFN to utilize and be very influential internationally.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Well, I know that the international agendas and the National Chief is putting a lot of energy into,

you know, we're going to be co-committee with Argentina on the Summit of the Americas. I know that's all taking place, but I know that the National Chief has really elevated the kind of work that we are going to do in the international arena. In fact they did make a presentation just two, less than two months ago at the United Nations, so that's a good point and we'll certainly look into it immediately on where the status is as far as the NGO, but as far as I knew we weren't.

**Unidentified male speaker:**

I didn't have any other questions.

**Unidentified female speaker:**

I was interested in Willie and, in whether the government has an opinion of Indian people getting together with other Indian people in the Americas? That's the first thing and whether they see any threat there or do they genuinely think we can help? The other question is, is there a database somewhere of the Central South American Indian people that we can have access to or is there one developed or built up or anything?

**WILLIE LITTLECHILD:**

Actually let me start backwards with your last question and as I worked more recently at the U.N. looking at the situation of Indigenous peoples around the world, that's one of the weaknesses we have. There is no good information, there's no good snapshot of the status of Indigenous peoples for example the status of Indigenous peoples' health. What is the snapshot? What is the snapshot of education? Where do we stand in education globally as Indigenous peoples? There are not good desegregated data, so we're embarking on that to try and really get a

good handle on information like that.

But in Latin America specifically it may be ahead of other regions because of the world bank, the world bank has done some work on desegregated data in Latin America through their lending agencies. So the world bank might be a good reference point for assistance in that to get a good.... at least their data and it's recent, it may be the best that's available. UNESCO as an organization also has recently done some work on children, so there's some data available there. But the first point I would look at as far as Latin America would be the world bank and how much data they have? That's one... sorry, what was the other?

Unidentified female speaker:

Indian helping Indians.

WILLIE LITTLECHILD:

Oh, the attitude of Canada, I think is very positive. And I say that because the deputy, the current deputy Minister of Indian Affairs for example, has gone to I believe Central America to look at situations down there and was very excited on his return about finding ways that we could be helpful in that area, in the area of Indigenous to Indigenous Aid. And I know that it's only one department that's Indian Affairs, but based on that I would think that even Foreign Affairs would be because they work together in those areas to be supportive, very supportive of those kinds of initiatives. I'm not sure they would see it as a threat? I hope they see it as an opportunity to really... I don't want to use the word help but an opportunity where it's made



available through their resources for us to help each other out. I don't, I didn't sense any threats or disagreement in terms of the concept, I thought there was more encouragement and a positive attitude towards that rather than a negative.

**Unidentified female speaker:**

For instance Meadow Lake Tribal Council working in Chiapas ? No problem there?

**WILLIE LITTLECHILD:**

Well, Chiapas itself is a problem and by that I mean the Indigenous peoples in Chiapas prefer and have demanded in fact that only Indigenous people come there. Because I know for example the Canadian government sent a delegation, sort of diplomatic delegation down to try and assist and they couldn't even get across the border, they weren't allowed. But if there was an Indigenous person in that delegation they were welcome to go in. And the problem as I say is because it's an armed region, it's an armed territory and they express quite openly that they would only deal with Indigenous peoples, so I think that itself presents an opportunity.

**COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:**

Willie, you know that presentation earlier by Sol Sanderson and one of the suggestions he was making is that the AFN really go back to implementing their political agenda. As opposed to what he sees as the administration, administrative program delivery takes up probably 75-80% of any agenda in the political agendas as kind of relegated from. He was suggesting that we

actually go to a number of Secretariats, I didn't get the last one, but he talked political, judicial, treaty, economic and international. He had one more, did anybody get the other one? Anyway what I'm asking is if I'm hearing what you're saying right? Is this something you're saying the AFN should really look at going into this international arena in a more meaningful way. And probably supporting the idea of setting up a secretariat that has that kind of ability to maneuver and do the work that needs to be done internationally, is that correct, is that what I'm hearing?

WILLIE LITTLECHILD:

Well, I'm not familiar with what Sol presented to you however, if just the way you described it was the presentation that he made I would be very supportive of it. I would throw out a caution though and the caution is that to be more politically active to me sometimes means you're going to have a rights based approach. You're going to have to advocate for the promotion, the enhancement and strengthening of rights, indigenous rights. Whether it's based on the ILO convention, whether it's based on a UN declaration or the OAS declaration. Those rights have to be promoted and enhanced and strengthened. If that's what he means by more politically? Then I really, really support that because the caution I will give you is if you go that way you're going to meet resistance and the first line of resistance will be the Canadian government itself. They do not like a rights based approach in fact will resist a rights based approach, but the reality it is, is that both the OAS and ILO and the UN, that's what they deal with is rights. They don't hesitate about going there as a country, government of Canada advocating rights, but if it's Indigenous peoples promoting their own rights, then they resist that, but I don't shy away from it, I say meet it head on.

Because again we have an opportunity to work together there and that's what's not been happening. So I hope I'm reading Sol's.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

I think that he was suggesting and we as a Commission have to sit down and sort this out, but the way we're structured right now where and we did have an overhead that shows the structure. We're looked at and perceived as being deliverers of programs for the government. And what he's suggesting is we switch and go to the political agenda by, we still I think? Would be looking at those but from a perspective of a secretariat that looks after international, a secretariat the way we are now we're really a bureaucracy is what I think he was saying. So to kind of shift it around we may still be doing a lot of that but its kind of the... you know perception is reality.

So the perception that we're really structured to accommodate that rights based agenda without the government really knowing that it's a rights based agenda and really going for the political arena at that level. So your secretariats would be able to do that, they still would probably be able to do the administration program thing. But it's more to ensure that people see that we are taking care of that business and we hear over and over about the treaty and making sure that the treaties are interpreted in the way they were meant to and it hasn't been getting enough attention. So I think when we look at the secretariats as laid out, hopefully we'll be able to capture that kind of you know opinion that people have about how the AFN should be structured. So that's really where I'm coming from and trying to get deeper into that. So, I'm hoping that Sol does a

little more work and brings back a little more of what he's looking at with that and if you wouldn't mind as Neil said you know on the international side if you've got some really solid suggestions on how that would play out in the structure of the organization.

**WILLIE LITTLECHILD:**

This is sort of my first reflection on it and I will reflect on it a lot more now that I've been here and seen you work so that I can try and make a positive contribution. Because I really think that sometimes we've left, well, I believe we have left the international agenda, we have neglected it to our detriment, let me put it that way.

**COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:**

One thing further not to necessarily dwell on it, but I think part... sorry, part of what Sol was getting at, if you look at our recent confederacy in Saskatoon a lot of the business was administrative, lot of time spent with administrative stuff. As well and that in other words, let's, I think the way he put it was 85% administrative, 15% political, that might have been something along those lines. So how do we actually get the political agenda going in the AFN again? And of course how would that translate? So he had these secretariats that would deal with these delivery areas and then but to me as part of the Renewal Commission how do we make that actually function and work? So that the Annual Assemblies and Confederacies if that's what we end up with are actually working on a political agenda as opposed to an administrative one. And that's going to be a big challenge. His one idea was secretariats might help do that, but that also depends on the discipline of leaders coming there and making it a political forum on issues,

could be international, could be all kinds of things. So, you know, how does that get translated? And we don't have the answer for that but that's where Sol was going with that.

**WILLIE LITTLECHILD:**

One of the other if I may just jump on that a little bit Neil and I apologize to interrupt. The notion of a third order of government that had been advocated for some time is that still a direction that AFN ought to pursue? And if it is we talked at one time about in the current parliament building the library, where the old library was, because it's a circular building its very conducive to an Indigenous parliament, our third order of government having their assemblies right in that meeting place. Was a thought that had been advanced at one point, but it didn't get pursued any more than that. From a political presence, perspective I guess away from the administrative perception that we have now. And it's true I've heard it called, what was it? Something about an Indian Affairs, a glorified Indian Affairs department, is what AFN has been labeled by some. So and unfortunately maybe because it might have been programmed oriented in... way too much, I'm not criticizing of it myself because I'm in no position to criticize any of the work they do because they do good work as well.

But on the political side if you're going to pursue that third order of government and have a place, a home right within parliament that would really speak loud words in my mind to the world, where Canada has finally accepted Indigenous peoples with open arms in terms of instead of two founding nations concept so.

**Unidentified male speaker:**

On my behalf I just want to thank you very much for coming over at Marion's request and taking the time to introduce this topic. I'm glad you did. Wendy.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

I apologize for not being here when you made your, still haven't made our presentation at FSIN, because they're way behind schedule. So I think they're probably just going to leave and we're back anyway on September 15<sup>th</sup>. So hopefully and I must say that we've have some really good presentations at this session, really, really good and I've appreciated everybody's time. I know that the perception a lot of times is that the room should be full, but I don't think so, I think a lot of times the best ideas come when it's just dialogue that happens back and forth and we've had the opportunity to do that with this session. I'm really appreciative of those people who've taking their time to come over, so thank you.

WILLIE LITTLECHILD:

(Not speaking into the mike) because I thought of it just now and I thank you Wendy for the observation because I agree I would want to blow the dust off the chapter in RCAP on international matters. Because I think that would be very helpful as well because I think we need to take advantage of a lot of the past good work that has been done, but didn't get anywhere, just blow the dust off that because I know that they had an international focus as a part of their commission and that might be very helpful as well, so thank you.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Thank you very much.

JACOB PETE:

My name is Jacob Pete, I'm from the Little Pine First Nations. In terms of where I come from, my background is quite varied, I was one of the first regular members RCMP in the 60's and also the first Indian chief of police. So that's my background and also I've attended law school as well and did all those things that you're supposed to do.

But I'm a businessman, the other thing too in terms of political, my political involvement, I was with... I worked for Walter Dieter, one of the 4 that worked for Walter Dieter, Noel Starblanket and I was one of the authors of the... against the 1969 White Paper. I basically, I guess we wrote the speeches for all the associations that... there was 4 of us, Noel Starblanket, Keith Millar, Jacob Pete and Jack (?Emmes?). So that was my input into the Indian game and also I was the provincial organizer for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians in the earlier 70's and then I went into business, I'm a businessman.

The reason I'm here, basically is to identify a number of key areas that I think that need to be open. There's definitely conflict of interest in areas of law, you have the provincial and federal government, you're dealing with companies that have a product and... but also when it comes to trying to take a position that you can sell to a First Nations group, you get into real problem. There's a definite conflict of law there. Like they're saying "no, no we have jurisdiction on those reserves and we do sell there" I'm saying you may have in the past, but what's happening is that the First Nations are taking a position that...hey, that's your little sanctity, they're an enclave within the provincial law and I



support that position. The fact that First Nations, other First Nations should be able to do business with other First Nations. I've done that and make a relatively good living.

What I am in terms of business, is I'm vice-president of the best environmental group out of Edmonton, but my area is Manitoba. I sell environmental products and also my... the products that I sell are culturally oriented, this product that I sell is an agricultural product, but improves Mother Earth and that's the reason I've got it. I went after it, I have the rights for all of Manitoba, I have distributors.

Also the other thing I have is I'm in the water business as well. I'm in the Mountain Spring water business and I have the distributor for all of Saskatchewan and I will have sub-distributors as for the regions. But I also market in BC, I also market in Alberta and also market in the Territories and Yukon.

So in terms of how I do business, I try to get First Nations people into business, but the difficulty that we're running into is, all these sectorial programs that are set up by the Indian associations, Indian Affairs, federally and provincially. You run into major problems, if you're a private individual, you're going to have problems arranging financing. That to me is a real critical issue, like most of the programs are set aside to target community owned companies. Well I'm not a community owned company, I'm private entrepreneur, a private individual, so I don't see that as a... those programs I don't see as a resource. I think that needs to be addressed as well to allow private entrepreneurs access to does types of monies to be able to create training opportunities to

be able to create employment, to be able to get some type of a business preference for our First Nations.

Also when you're dealing with First Nations and First Nations companies, they're totally critical of you, you've got to be twice than a white man. I go into situations like that, being aware of that. So I need to spend a lot of time at meetings like this, voicing what I'm trying to do. There's a number of us that are in this game. Unfortunately my buddy was supposed to be arriving in... he called at 10 o'clock from Edmonton... Saskatoon and we were supposed to drive all night to get here, so, but he didn't show up by 1 o'clock I left to come down here to get a chance to say something to... a chance to mix with the politicians to say some of the problems I'm running into.

Also I'm totally aware of the political issues that our First Nations are going after, I'm also aware of those things that former Chief Starblanket was talking about in terms of the traditions and culture, I've gone there.

In business I need to be cognizant of the fact that I have traditional roots, but at the same time I got to keep my business life separate from those traditional roots. What I've done is I take a different perspective on that, if you take a look at the treat signing in the prairies. Chief Big Bear was a holdout of the treaties and he was labeled a radical, he was not a radical, he was having his sweats, he was having his prayer sessions, he was in fact... consulting with the spirits, spirit world. Our people have that ability to be able to talk to the spirit world, that was our gift that was given to us as part of our custom. A lot of people are going back to that as well, we need to reinforce our culture. I myself do

those things also that Noel was talking about. Next week I'm going to dance at a Sundance for 4 days, I've fasted. I've done all those traditional things at the same time of trying to keep a perspective in terms of what my business life's all about and what my tradition life's all about.

I really appreciate the fact that chief, former chief Sanderson was talking about also the former League of Nations, I've read that stuff, I've gone back and looked at how the American Constitution was derived at. The concepts that are buried in the American Constitution are derived from the League of nations... which is they had... there was no border, we were all over the place, they were active out here in Canada too. Back in 30's they were out here as well organizing, so.

I am happy to hear, what I'm hearing here today, I'm quite happy with that. Also in terms of our traditional culture, I've practiced this Aboriginal or First Nations justice for the last pretty well 40 years too. Also what I've done is I've gone beyond the, beyond just reading, I've consulted my elders, I've consulted my... the spiritual world as well. In terms of how do we do... I spent 4 days with the elders talking to me away from everybody else, we're not allowed to have tape recorders, we're not allowed to write things down. It was just people talking, if it's a gift that you're going to be given you'll understand it. I was quite fortunate to be able to go to that session.

Also apply most of those concepts in business, I take everybody at face value, their good people. I'm also involved in the political field as... background, I was pretty heavy with the PC party, so I've also worked at the Ottawa level, I've worked in the provincial level.

Even this liquor thing that Henry talked about I'm the guy that got him that liquor licence. No... no I called for a special meeting, I called inspectors, I called the liquor commission, they were having a golf tournament that Friday and what I did was I had the liquor commission people meet at 10 o'clock Thursday they'll be able to deliver that permit to Henry here so. But it was... I had four days, but I delivered, those are some that work in the reality, work how the system operates?

I've worked at the Ottawa level like I said, worked provincially and also in terms of where I do business, I do business in BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan, Yukon and Northwest Territories. I was director of education for the Yukon for a group and I was CEO for a number of companies in the Northwest Territories. So I'm coming from a different perspective. Basically what I'm looking at is the conflicted laws and I think I see merit in terms of doing trade agreements between First Nations. So a guy could move around and be able to deal with people in the states and I'm looking at the four corners down in the states right now, I'm looking at Wyoming and I'm looking at Nevada in terms of where can I sell my water?

Our water fortunately is the best in western Canada, it was checked over by the Institute of Alternative Medicine at the University of Calgary, came up on top and the (? Acadia?) Wellness center also recommends that it be used. So I'm offering.... other First Nations, I'm trying to keep away from white guys. I approached one guy to become my partner in Saskatchewan he wants to buy me out, reality. I said "no I'm not for sale" I'm going to get First Nations involved in this game one way or the other.

But I appreciate the fact that I was given a few minutes, I ran into Henry last night in the hallway and he says geez why don't you come and talk to us. Like those things that a lot of people, different people are doing I really admire Noel Starblanket, Noel and I go back for along time, we went to residential school together. Same with Sol, I've seen... know Sol for 40 years and I really appreciate what he's doing in terms of what he's doing to be able to reinforce our First Nations. I think there needs to be a lot of that.

In terms of this leadership bashing too, that's a real critical point for every place, I run into that all the time. There has to be a process to resolve our own internal problems, there has to be a process to deal with our leadership, our leadership needs to be respected, they have to be able to live in a respectful setting. There has to be some type of long term pension for these guys, some guys spend all their lives within or for their political movement and then they get nothing. Our chiefs work for us for 30 years, they lose the election, 30 years, 30 days down the road, their cars' getting repossessed, 45 days they're on welfare. Something must happen. I really appreciate the fact that he's... he raised our should be paid, they have to be paid for what they do.

The administration, the political side really comes into play as well, if you want to do business with a chief or a group of chiefs you have to chase... go where their meeting. In Alberta its pretty tough that could be one day in Edmonton the next day its in Calgary or if you get to Calgary the guys gone to Lethbridge you got to go down there too.

My colleague and I we do sales and this guy says this is where we got to be if you want to sell. We've got to get be known by the chief and council they got to trust us. If they don't trust we can't do any sales. Like most of the time I've run into this colleague of mine, I'm heading from Edmonton to Saskatoon to do something on Saskatoon and I ran into at 2:30 in the morning at the truck stop. He's got all his security and safety supplies in the back of his van and he's heading some place to make an installation. And heading back down to Swift Current the next day, it's a challenging world.

Like I say, the only thing that I'm concerned about is the way the I guess the conflict of law is a very difficult area for me. Like I've had to deal with it and the way I deal with it was basically I go to the council and I get them to invite me on a business preference basis, that deals with that issue, but it's a cumbersome process. We've gone to I guess a 132 bands to get that letter, its tough. But its still, its probably something out of the realm of the political activity, but its an area that needs to be pointed out. Because I think its going to get more critical as more of our people get into business.

As far as the business concern, like I say its, we have to work with each other. I'd rather deal with a First Nations company than a white company. My colleagues are very uptight about some of the things I say, like I say I own the, I'm vice-president of the company, but I cover Manitoba.

But I also worked out, negotiated first right of refusal rights on every Indian reserve in western Canada. At the last sales meeting I really got into a lot of problem, th guy says

what are doing selling in my territory? Hey! That Indian land is not your territory, they invited me to do business there, you weren't going to get the business anyway. It's a different twist with... and also in terms of like I say business is one thing and also the other thing is the Indian business also understanding what's happening in the background also helps you quite a bit because that's where... you're dealing with business people, businesspeople have a lot of problems with First Nations. They don't say it, but, you take this guy out for lunch and he takes 2 drinks and he says you Indians all alike, you get handouts here, handouts there... it got to be able to be in position to defend that. Two days later make a phone call and they come back and say I'm sorry I said that. I says that's fine, its okay lets do business, I twist that around to my advantage as well if they do that.

Anyways if you want to ask me any questions shoot. Just say you want to make a brief, just a brief presentation here.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

As far as the AFN, do see them becoming involved in trying to facilitate trade agreements, is that what I'm hearing you saying?

JACOB PETE:

Yeah, I think there needs to be trade agreements between our First Nations and also private entrepreneurs. Its just... I think a different way of doing business. I think there was discussion of that before as well in terms of Noel and also chief Sanderson.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Yeah that's what I was going to say, so you're supporting the idea that had been presented on getting a secretariat that looks at economics.

JACOB PETE:

Yeah.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Okay.

JACOB PETE:

Yeah and I support that definitely.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Okay.

JACOB PETE:

But also its difficult when you're trying to find out who's in business and its... people are very protective of what they're trying to sell and also we're running into some problems... where you're looking for Indian entrepreneurs. There's data banks within the



governments and the governments won't give you that. Like we know that there's 245 Aboriginal businesses in Edmonton, we had a heck of a time getting that. The only reason I got those facilitated one of their economic development conferences, I volunteered to get into, to get that information.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Okay thanks.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

Well actually that was my main question to is whether you saw a political role for there, I know that Phil, the current national chief, I'm not so sure about this term, but certainly in the previous he was in, he was very much involved with Aboriginal businessmen trying to do what he could from that level in that area. So I think that you're recommendation is a good one and you know its an area that certainly is political, its something that he would have to choose from his priorities, but I think that its worth considering, so I want to thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER HENRY DELORME:

Yeah under the same consideration is the... like Indian businesses, I remember back in the 80's when I had all my bush pushed on my farm, I couldn't get an Indian person, he was willing to come and work for me, but there was no place to bond him accordingly. So

that has to be looked at to in that same fashion that they're capable of doing it, but they just don't have that bond, that bond situation. And that's similar with any building contracts they have, they can't bid on a big hotel or a big hospital like Fort Qu'Appelle, because they couldn't get bonded.

JACOB PETE:

Thank you Henry, you also... take down to something I'm involved in, I'm involved with a company called Asset Capital Management out of Edmonton. What we did on Friday was we just got permission from CMHC to work with some group to build 50 houses initially in Edmonton or Saskatchewan and 50 and 50, but I think we could be authorized up to 1500. My role in that is putting the deal together with the First Nations, also what we've done is the difficulty with down payments and bonding and everything else Asset Capital Management is owned by National Bonding. Which is a large group as well in Edmonton, we do municipal bonds from 10 million and up. Also with Asset Capital we also do the residential and commercial market, commercial mortgages.

We provide the down payment for the people through a charitable trust organization, it's a new development that's happening in Canada, we're the first in Canada to get that. We've got these guys to build 1500 houses in San Francisco last year, the charitable organization that we're in, I'm involved with. So that's... I think that should be offered to First Nations across Canada too, anybody who wants to deal with us fine. Take a look at us... Asset Capital Management Group in Edmonton, we have a web-site and take a look at it, anybody that wants to come, first come, first served.

That's one of the things I'm promoting here, I've met with one of the tribal councils and I hope they take it, because it won't last long, we're allowed 50 houses and you ask me how do I make my money on that? I place the mortgages.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Thank you very much, thank you for waiting so long.

MR. TED QUEWEZANCE:

Okay, first of all I would like to say good morning, yeah, good morning to everybody. First of all as an individual, I've been brought up in a political system, as my grandparents, former leaders. I've been in the political system for about 28 years. I've watched it as far back as I remember. I guess one of the major issues that I've experienced and I still live in my community. You know we talk about our culture, we talk about our traditions, we talk about our customs. Everybody talks about them, we talk about respect, we talk about integrity of our communities and you know it all goes back to what is the role and responsibility and responsibility of elders? What is the role and responsibility of young people? What is the role and responsibility of families in your communities? And that's a question that's very important. What is the role? Just within your own family you start and that definition really is not in our family systems.

Now if you don't have those issues, those values about your culture, your traditions and customs within your community or within your family on the role and responsibility like we got an issue. It starts right at home, like you understand we have like the residential school issue. Today we've got a third of our community that are Roman Catholics, a third of them, Evangelist, Anglican and there seems to be a wage war of whose right or wrong in our communities and that's a very, and that's a fact and the issue is nobody wants to talk about it.

Then you go to the political, you know, the political, you talk about the healing process within our communities, within our families and you're promoting it, talking it and that's a very important area is healing in our communities. You know, everybody could say it, but do you practice it and do you live it? The respect of the culture and traditions and customs I respect it so much I don't dare talk about it in public and today a lot of our customs and traditions are being made public, on the news, through camera, through special programs. But you go to the political within our communities it all goes back to responsibility and it's a very hard thing. How do you change 3 or 4 to 5 generations of people in regards to the whole issue of responsibility, change, change is the hardest thing in any community. And the big issue in any community today, years ago it was about, it was about family values, if somebody breached them they were disciplined by the community. Today those values aren't there anymore. And it's a total lack of disrespect for the whole political system of not understanding their own political system.

It goes right up the ladder from community to our Tribal Councils to our regional organization right up to the AFN. Now in the total criticism that's happening to our leaders within our communities its there on a daily basis even within our regional organizations, even at the national level. We've left our traditional way of doing things, of the way we use to have meetings. Now it's jump from our family values to personalities and it's going strong, its more or less we're buying into the federal political system, like myself as a candidate for the Liberal party of Canada in this election. You know, who am I to talk about values and customs and traditions and here I am in a foreign system, but that's contemporary times in regards to the process. So those are,

that's sort of my introduction and the Renewal Commission of getting ideas, what works best? There's always discussion in regards to what we do, we always talk about organizing by treaty areas, the big issue is representation.

Do we organize by treaty areas? Do we organize by province? And it's a major question and I don't tend to know the answer.

But I want to talk, like, I got a written presentation here and I would like to read it to you and also do an add on at the end of it. It's a system that I've been in ever since I've got into the political system in my community when I was 20 years old.

The First Nations including our community Keeseekoose Saulteaux Nation conclude that the treaties with the Crown in the right of England that's key, that's very important. The Keeseekoose peoples in our community and the Saulteaux Nation have inherent rights granted by the Creator and the inherent rights come from the reality of what inherent right is. The Keeseekoose First Nations government is based on our customs, our traditions and also our practices. Which at this point in time is very vague, because of some of the intro that I done in regards to the mixed understanding of our traditions and our practices.

Keeseekoose is a band, it's a community and a political unit of the First Nations of the Saulteaux Nation of one political unit of the Saulteaux Nation. Keeseekoose is a member of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. In Keeseekoose, the Keeseekoose government and leaders have direct access at all levels of the organizations, every First Nations community has access to the organization. However the Tribal Council and the

FSI are corporate entities that create Boards of Directors in our institutions. Under, and what that does it undermines the political status of the chiefs, also undermines in regards to participation within the Boards or the Commissions.

These corporate entities are created under provincial law and jurisdiction and this is the same for the AFN. However our First Nation government and leaders do not have direct access to properly represent the communities' interests. The Federation of Nations known as FSIN and the Assembly of First Nations known as the AFN were created in order for our First Nations communities that's what those organizations were created for, for our First Nations governments to have political access to them and to implement and this is key to implement the political agenda.

To date Tribal Councils, the FSIN and the AFN agenda only includes the administrative agenda and that's very key. It's no different in our First Nations community, chiefs and councils are totally involved in administrative of their community, administration of their community and they're not elected for that. The First Nations political agenda has to be implemented at all levels and that has to include the sovereignty of our nations, of our communities as sovereignty of the political relations. It has to include the governments of our Nation, it has to have full inclusion in regards to jurisdiction in laws of our nations. Judicial relations, treaty and treaty implementation, the treaties and the implementation.

Inherent rights and title, you could have the inherent rights and title, but you've got to add on the word implementation on to that. The economies of our communities that

include trade and commerce, lands and resources base, our population, we have to have our membership and citizenship of our own communities of our nations. We talk about international also, international relations, physical relations and with that the political organization, the political organization of a nations by community like the Tribal Council, the FSIN and AFN must provide for implementation of the political agenda. And that is a First Nations political agenda. That's why the AFN was set up, was to look after the political interest of First Nations communities which is very key and important. New AFN governing structures and new institutions are needed in order to accommodate the new political relations and treaty alliances that we do have between the First Nations community governments and also the implementations of First Nations issues with Canada, the treaty relations.

There has to be new international relations with government, government to government. So that's sort of my written text, but you know it all comes down to very, very simple forms in regards to, you know, there's all kinds of critics out there and it's the easiest thing to do is criticize and I grew up in the system. I've heard old men talk about treaties, I've heard old men talk about customs, traditions. And the key message I want to give here, what is the role and responsibility of communities? What is the role and responsibility of Tribal Councils? What is the role and responsibility of regional organizations? And the key one what are you going around for, what is the role of the AFN? Is it put there to set up a bureaucracy? Is it put there to be a political voice for communities? And everybody here has the answer to that, but how do we implement? We cannot forget the feds whatever government is there, its the federal responsibility in



regards to the relationship of our treaties in our area, within Treaty 4.

So in brief that's a very short presentation and I come here as an individual that worked at all levels. I don't come here to criticize the different 3 levels of government, the AFN, the Tribal and the community, the regional and community, the 3 levels of government are not working together in regards to our systematic process from the bottom up and that direction has to come right from the community level to the regional up to the AFN. So with that, those are my comments I share with you. Thank you.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Are you going to let us have a copy of that? Okay, because I was writing frantically and then I thought my hand is getting sore. But I want to pick up on one point that you've brought up, I think your main point is about the access of the individual communities to the organization itself.

If I understood you correctly the way the FSIN is set up that is able to happen even though the corporate structure of it, kind of alienates the chiefs to a degree.

MR. TED QUEWEZANCE:

The access to the AFN, the access to the FSIN politically, there's all kinds of political

access to the organization, but from a community perspective, I'm talking about an ordinary citizen, as an individual, there is access there also.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

To the corporate entities.

TED QUEWEZANCE:

Through the corporate entities.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Okay. So could you see this being transformed into how the AFN operates? Because one of the big criticism as I agree with you, easy to criticize, we're all good to do that, but one of the criticisms I think that's legitimate and it's been there for years, it's been in there when I was there and even before. The communication, the understanding, the information flow is not there for the communities. Therefore it translates into the communities not feeling that the organization is really representing them. So, how do you see that? Or have you put any thought into that, making that more effective for the individual nations within the organization itself without undermining the authority of the chiefs or what the regions or the individual nations say are their structure.

TED QUEWEZANCE:

Well, it all comes down to responsibility in regards to communication, AFN give all the communications what's happening, same with the regional organization, same with the tribal councils, now whose responsibility to communicate that to their ordinary citizen? It falls right back on leadership, that's their responsibility and their citizens it's their responsibility also to understand what's happening. And you talk about access to any community, any ordinary citizen, you get somebody with, has different political difference, their attitude is I don't know what's going on? They really do want to know what's going on, because it gets back to personal, and that's the key message you want to give here is role and responsibility. You know we could point fingers all we want, but nobody ever wants to point back to themselves and that's the message I want to give to the Renewal Commission here. And that's very important is responsibility and it starts with you as an individual to, within your and also to your family. A family responsibility and the community responsibility, you know, we could talk till we're blue in the face all we want, but if that responsibility is not implemented and practiced and it goes back to your customs and your traditions and that's what I talk about is being responsible. You could pretend to be responsible all you want at the AFN how responsible, how responsible are you within your community? That's the message you want to give. Even within your regional organization you know, you can't go around fooling people all your doing is fooling yourself. And that's sort of the message that I want to give.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

Thank you Mr. Chairman, thank you very much, Ted for taking the time to prepare a written presentation and for coming in to talk to us about it. I'd like to just pursue a little bit, the points you're making and some of the questions that Wendy was asking.

And I'll start this way, let's assume that there are 2 kinds of organizations, there's a community organization that could be a corporation, it could be chief and council, it could be health delivery service. But let's say that's a community organization they're going to deliver services for community members and community members they have direct access to it, okay. But now there's another organization, let's say there's another category of organizations and that's umbrella organizations. So, a tribal council would be an umbrella organization, because it has it's one step away from the community, the FSIN could be an umbrella organization, the AFN could be an umbrella organization, okay. So it seems to me what you're, I want to be clear on what you're saying here, are you, one of your main points is that a community member who has access to community organizations should also have access, direct access to an umbrella organization like the Tribal Council or the FSIN or like a PTO or to the AFN? Is that...

TED QUEWEZANCE:

The political access will look after the access to the organization, the leadership of the community has the access to the regional organization, the Tribal Council and the AFN.

I'm not saying just ordinary citizens.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

Okay, so there is a, an umbrella organization is created than the leadership of a particular level has access, but not necessarily the community, is that what you're saying?

MR. TED QUEWEZANCE:

Yes.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

Okay.

MR. TED QUEWEZANCE:

What I'm saying here is political leadership, what is the role and responsibility of political leadership? Say I'm chief of Keeseekoosewun what is my role and responsibility as a chief of that community? I also have a role at the regional level, also have a role at the Assembly of First Nations level and it's my responsibility to go back and report to the

regional organization also to the community, that's the access I talk about politically.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

Okay, let me turn that around then, so then one of your concerns if I'm hearing you right is that the communications aren't necessarily coming from the umbrella organization down to the leadership and therefore to the people. Is that what you're saying? Okay, so there's a need to be more aware of the responsibilities at each of the, as you move down from the higher umbrella organizations to the community, that's what you're saying, that needs to be clarified in greater detail.

MR. TED QUEWEZANCE:

There is roles and responsibilities to affect all those systems, but that role and responsibility of who is supposed to do that is not happening.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

Okay.

MR. TED QUEWEZANCE:

All the procedures, what I talk about are all there. But it's the whole implementation.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

So the effectiveness of the AFN may be diminished or not understood if things they are communicating aren't making their way into the community leadership and the people.

MR. TED QUEWEZANCE:

Well, in real life, why do you get criticized? Because you don't know what's going on or what's happening or you don't understand the structures, that's the reality of it all.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

Okay. All right, so you're talking about processes, partly about structure and partly about process.

MR. TED QUEWEZANCE:

You could have the best structure you want, but it's the people who work in those structures that make it happen and that's what's lacking right now. And that's right from the community level right up to the national level and the Canadian governing system it's

the same thing, its not happening. Our involvement in the Saskatchewan government process and I'm talking about the provincial government and the federal government it's all politics and it's all bureaucratic. You got politicians dealing with administrators at Indian Affairs.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

Okay, alright, that's helpful, thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER HENRY DELORME:

On the employee side I agree with you, there should be some form of, or civil servant or something like that, I agree that the chiefs and their councillors are too much involved with the day to day business when they should be looking at the business side. Can you elaborate on that a bit?

MR. TED QUEWEZANCE:

Well it's the separation of administration and political. I'll tell you something the only reason why we have our politicians involved in administrative process is for the simple reason is there's no salaries for chiefs and headmen. If we had salaries for chiefs and headmen you wouldn't have to get anything out of administration to pay them, so salaries



for chiefs and for headmen. I think here in Saskatchewan we've been fighting it for what, as far back as I remember and still today we haven't gotten salaries and that was guaranteed under the treaties. But we've got to separate the political from the administration, but you can't do that if you haven't got dollars for your politicians to operate.

COMMISSIONER HENRY DELORME:

The other question is the delegated authority and knowing the Federation and the AFN they aren't, I don't consider them second governments or third government level whatever. How does that delegated authority fit into the system? As we know you as a chief you delegated your authority to the Federation to go and talk for you.

MR. TED QUEWEZANCE:

The delegated authority is a former chief, if I delegate my authority to FSIN, I have the highest respect that they're going to represent me properly and it's the same at the Assembly of First Nations level. The delegated authority is fine, but it's that role and responsibility of that delegation that you give to the Federation or the AFN has to come back and report back from the delegation of authority.

SOL SANDERSON:

Well good morning to all of you. I was invited to participate giving my experience. I was first selected in the Federation in 1956 when I was 15 years old, the only other one alive today is Senator Joe Crowe who is sitting here with me. People that were around that time. That's been a long haul, but at an early age as a boy I was told don't be impatient a hundred years of political development is like one year in your lifetime. So I've experienced it and so I spent 40 years altogether in politics both First Nations politics and Liberal politics, still involved in Liberal politics, I thought I would see a bunch of red shirts here today. Ted looks good in red. (Laughing)

well, we made changes in the prairies, but I don't know about Ontario, we lost Ontario I think.

Okay, what I want to focus on is the basically the political strategy of the First Nations across Canada. By the way, if you've ever wondered where that term First Nations came from, I coined that in the early 80s when we were disputing in our forum about our positions on the agenda that we wanted to advance respecting the constitution. I couldn't get our people to talk sovereignty, our own leaders were afraid to say sovereignty, except Neil in your territory where James Gosnell had no hesitation about speaking about sovereignty. Other than him, very few spoke of sovereignty and that's been the trend till about 5 years ago amongst our leaders and if we don't advance our positions respecting

sovereignty, then it doesn't mean much to advance anything else. And if we don't have functioning governments implementing that sovereignty, we can forget our culture and language ...

... thing and organizations I was heavily involved in the ones in the AFN and internationally. Things have moved a long ways from when I first got started. There is much more funding to work with, but we re-direct all that funds towards administrative initiatives and there's very little spent on the political cost of operating our governing systems.

We still tend to think across Canada as a national organization being one that functions as an entity that is not a form of government at... as Confederation of Nations or a Federation of Nations. I was reading your history book, the organization of our people. You need to go back a little further than what you have in the document, because what you will find when you go back, we had a North-America Confederation of 54 nations. It was the president of the U.S. around that time that decided to dismantle that confederation, it was a powerful, powerful confederation of nations and it was reduced to the 6 Nations Confederacy that is out east now.

So with respect to the maturity of our developments politically, it was there throughout North America. We just completed a Cree Nation, the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Cree Nations Gathering last August and the next one is coming up in August at Cross Lake, Manitoba.

We traced our trade and commerce activity prior to contact with non-Indians and it goes from all the way up here to the borders of New Mexico. We had trade alliances, we had peace alliances and some of those treaties were renewed by the Cree Nations Confederacy about 3 years ago.

So in Canada here we have, had a debate respecting Canada's policies impacting on First Nations. I examined those policies the 1830 detribalization policy that was put in place by the Empires of Spain, France and England with the objectives of liquidation, termination, assimilation, integration, civilization. Thus the fundamental basis for all Canadian law today in Canada and especially the Indian Act. That policy was reinforced in 1947 and refined in 1947 through what they called a plan to liquidate Canada's Indian problems within 25 years. That was a very specific strategy and the 1830 detribalization policy was very effective in that it was aimed at destroying the family units of our societies and our families and our communities.

Why did they aim at the family units? It was because our nations, our governments are built on the family unit, whether we govern through the clan system or the kinship system. Both relied heavily on the strength of the family unit, so they effectively implemented policies and strategies to destroy the family units and you look around today in your families and your communities, it's very evident right across Canada.

And following the 1947 plan to liquidate Canada's Indian problems within 25 years came

the 69 White Paper and some of you will remember the struggles we had and the political strategies we organized to have that stopped. But you will also remember that Trudeau said will table it for now, but we guarantee you that within 25 years you will be implementing it. So, the latest strategy then is the 1980 Buffalo Jump and that's what we have been reacting to up to now by communities, by organizations and that is very destructive in terms of the approach that we were pushing. That Buffalo Jump calls for fiscal arrangements now by band, by tribal council, by FSIN, AFN to have to apply provincial laws and policies implement provincial jurisdiction for Indians on and off reserve and where on reserve jurisdiction.

You remember the debate we had in the NIB/AFN leading into the constitutional talks. I chaired a B group that was the Treaty group and the rest were all constitutional group in A group. Today everybody could be in the B group including the Inuit, but we have now the modern day treaties and the numbered treaties that we have in this province and this territory. There's never been a full debate and discussion respecting treaty relations in the AFN that I can remember. It was always difficult to try and advance the Treaty agenda at the AFN tables and the various forums.

Now the reality is that there are various forms of treaties, there's the international treaties and the domestic treaties, fundamental difference being that the international treaties are treaties where nations make treaties and the parties to treaties are required to ratify the provisions of those treaties for implementation through their jurisdiction law and

government. We're at that stage here in this area, where we need to do that collectively and why do I say collectively? Its because the numbered treaty from 1 to 11 was considered one major treaty between the Crown and First Nations and when you take all the articles of the numbered treaties from 1 to 11 that's a mighty powerful treaty. And it's up to us to organize ourselves in terms of treaty alliances by treaty area and between Treaty area. But even more than that we need to examine how we relate to the modern day treaty implementation strategies, they're very silent in those territories. Neil here from one of those territories now and I was in your territory 25 years ago and went through the ceremonies with the leaders and the elders there and learned about your agenda and what you were looking to do in your territory then.

What we have now is new schedules of law for Indians, Métis and Inuit across Canada that I was promoting back in the AFN/NIB days, everybody was very critical of it along with the issue of sovereignty. So we now have various forms of law legislated federally impacting on our First Nations by community and by nation across Canada while we sit here in the Prairies with still no legislation federally to implement the numbered treaties. That's politics, that's a political agenda and it was very expensive personally to have to take a stand on these matters internally and externally and the matter of taking a stand on sovereignty is not easy, not an easy one but it had to be done, it still has to be done.

The AFN then is a forum where you bring together the nations of Canada and I coined the term "First Nations" to bring our people around to thinking of sovereignty. Knowing

that we have sovereignty and also to bring the non-Indian community around to thinking of the fact of sovereignty exists with our people, peoples and our communities. The time has now come where we refine that terminology to whatever nation we speak of and we respect that and recognize that through protocol and our traditional forms of relating to each other. I think that we could advance the sovereignty relations and the Treaty relations if we were to host a series of sovereignty for across Canada that involves the Federal, Provincial and First Nations leaders and the legal community along with our elders. Let's get on with implementing something that is going to resolve the many issues that you're having to address.

I also examine the current framework that governs our relationships now since 1982 and we have the inherent rights that we speak of here that others speak of as Aboriginal Rights. Our elders have told us to stay away from the term Aboriginal because it wasn't a term that was legally defined, it was the political term used in the 1830 detribalization policy initiative and successive governments after that.

When I look at the process that's needed for implementation, I don't feel that it's a responsibility of one specific community or chief and council or the members of that community to address these matters. We need to have a strategy politically that provides for the implementation strategies that are required by community and at the various levels that we have in place now. Respecting the fact that we need to implement sovereignty of our nations and the inherent rights and powers of our nations or for governing. It's the year 2004, we saw about 150 million dollars

being spent in processes in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta that I think could have been spent on helping to develop the constitutions by community and helping develop the laws that are needed to implement our jurisdiction by community.

When we look at that framework that deals with the inherent rights that we have our Aboriginal Rights and Title, there has been a misconception about Treaty relations in Saskatchewan as the treaties impact on inherent rights. We can give you a list of those inherent rights and you can go down the list and you'll find that the majority of them were not on the table for negotiation. We reserve them by treating making here and the rest are recognized by treaty and even those that were confirmed and negotiated by treaty they weren't extinguished. But the Crown offered our people at the time of treaty was that we would continue with our way of life and everything we had at that time we would keep and everything else would be added on, on top of that. So when you hear the concept of First Nations' title here underlying all crown title, that's one of the non-Indian concepts of how they deal with it.

When we looked at Treaty Relations between ourselves and as First Nations funding is needed for that, but going back to the First Nations' powers for inherent rights and powers for governing. We need to also formally address the financing of First Nations governments and that's at every level. I set up a First Nations forum that specializes on First Nations policy and research and development and we examine the financing of governments by municipality, federal, provincial governments and today you don't have to win a 649 lottery. It cost over a million dollars to maintain one MP in Parliament



today and in Saskatchewan you are looking at 5 or 6 MLA provincially, which is another 6, 7 hundred thousand per MLA to maintain them in office even if they are in opposition. They don't even have to be in government, they could be in opposition and then we have a municipal leaders being paid, we have the AFN, FSIN tribal council leaders being paid and we still don't have salaries and expenses and travel for the chiefs and councils, yet everybody wants to conduct their business with those chiefs and councils directly.

The feds, we're now dealing with 33 federal departments and agencies federally and provincially we are dealing with 27 provincial departments and agencies. They're all expected, our chiefs are expected to respond to all those departments and agencies. On top of that we have the municipalities and the private sector knocking on their door and then you go to the other side of the chart you would find the AFN, FSIN and tribal councils wanting the chiefs' attention and the councils' attention and business to be dealt with there. Somewhere along this process, the chiefs and councils are suppose to get their internal affairs addressed. That's the picture that I see, that I see the director generals how much are they making, Wendy? A director general...

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

A director general would be... that's regional director general from 150 to 200 thousand a year.

SOL SANDERSON:

Yeah, now you see, when we went around to our own people looking at what chiefs should be paid, the average they suggested was \$35,000.00 per chief. We said look the director generals get at that time \$125,000.00 starting, so we'll up that chiefs salary now to \$150, but the head man should be around \$85 to \$90 thousand per year. That's not unreasonable and in terms of functioning of governments we don't have executive management funds available to our chiefs and our structures for managing and governing. That's a key area, because you're talking boards and commissions and committees and senior and middle management staff that are needed in your operation and that has to be addressed. Because 10 years ago when we examined that the non-Indian was adding \$350,000.00 for every million dollars they managed and we don't get a nickel, we don't see a nickel of that.

The whole area of financing of First Nations government has to be seriously addressed and it's a farce to be debating for example politically that 7 billion dollar fund for Aboriginals across Canada. Today you know, we should be talking 30, 35 million, billion, not 7 billion and where do we get it from. It's easy to identify, the social union cost Canada over 6 hundred billion now, the initial agreement was 530 billion and that's a direct transfer of federal revenue to provinces and territories and our population is included in that transfer. So why not take off the top 15 to 20 billion annually to go directly to First Nations, how? Through our own First Nations social safety net so that those supplementary money flowing directly.

So there is a need to initiate strategies politically that implement the 1982 framework that's in place now, the inherent rights, the treaties, the Royal Proclamation, the Constitution Act of 1982. We need new institutions, we need new structures of government, and as you see the Prime Minister implemented a matter that we advanced in the leadership, prior to the leadership convention in the Liberal Party. The need to put in place a Secretariat in the P.M.O. Why? Because we pointed it out that the political agenda impacting on Canada's First Nations relations was not being addressed. We didn't want to be embroiled in the process of Aboriginal Affairs, because it's at our expense and we called for new national policies that would have First Nations national policies separate from Metis national policies and they already have a whole range of Inuit national policies including Inuit national law. So we need something similar and in looking at strategy for implementation then, I'll leave you with a document that shows the relationship as we find it in our work and here's the Buffalo Jump that's being implemented. The AFN bought into that process a few years ago to implement that strategy and I couldn't see us buying into that. Because what that does, it takes away from here, the only thing that would be implemented then is that part we have federal government relations and we fall under the jurisdiction of the feds or the province.

The current framework provides for sovereignty treaty relations that recognizes the equality of what? The equality of government jurisdictional law in courts and that's what our treaties provide for here. So when I talk about equality of government, jurisdictional law in courts, I'm talking about First Nations government, federal government, provincial

government, First Nations jurisdiction, Federal jurisdiction, provincial jurisdiction, First Nations' courts, federal courts, provincial courts, First Nations law, federal law, provincial law. It's here, it's there. Now the inherent rights and powers are recognized and we asked the Prime Minister to include the recognition of our powers.

As I see it Section 91 under the BNA act recognizes provincial powers, federal powers, Section 92 recognizes provincial powers, Section 35 recognizes First Nations powers. So why are we sitting and waiting, you see, why aren't we implementing that political agenda and this framework recognizes all of the inherent rights and treaties and treaty rights. So, it does something else though, it recognizes the relationships, the political relations, the treaty relations, the judicial relations, the economic relations for our own economy, judicial relations with our own justice system, fiscal relations like I was pointing out we need fiscal relations. International relations along with bi-lateral relations and a number of the First Nations have bought in to the tripartita relationship where the province and the feds and their governments are involved in negotiations. So that's their business. But I see those new institutions being required federally, not with just within AFN and when we look at that strategy then I would see the AFN putting in place new institutions that provide for Secretariats. A political Secretariat, a Treaty Secretariat, Fiscal Secretariat, Judicial Secretariats, International Secretariat and an Economic Secretariat, that's about all AFN needs. I don't see it becoming a large bureaucracy, I see it functioning as a form of a UN model that's got a confederation or a federation of nations that are First Nations.

When we look at defining the inherent rights or Aboriginal Rights, I think that's best done through our own respective charters of our nations, through our own languages and our own definitions. We can't continue to allow the courts and the non-Indian governing systems to define those for us. We've got to quit reacting in terms of the functioning then of the process, this document will highlight for you what I said is identified, okay, on that page and this is a process for a First Nation.

We done also an analysis on what type of institutions are needed federally and like I said we talked with Paul Martin about it, in terms of implementing a strategy that would include him chairing a senior cabinet committee of government with us, the Secretariat and the PMO. But I still would like to see a federal ministry of state of federal First Nations relations, because I don't see changes coming by having to do it within the Department of Indian Affairs and that process. You have to go outside the systems at least that's my 40 years of experience even in AFN or FSIN and internally, because most of the resistance if you want change comes from the internal resistance.

So when we look at the functions of that Federal First Nations relations department, I know they include those 6 functions. The political relations, the treaty relations, judicial relations, economic relations, fiscal relations and international relations. I don't see it doing much more than that, but we nail down clearly what the federal obligations are through a set of new federal law respecting legislating First Nations Education Act, First Nations Health Act, the First Nations Social Development Act. That would then clearly establish their jurisdiction and their fiscal legal responsibility for those areas and there

would be similar pieces of legislation and under the comprehensive modern day treaty agreements, some of that legislation exists already in various forms implementing those agreements. But we don't have similar legislation here federally impacting on our area, so even if Nault was successful in passing his suite of legislation the only real area it would affect would be our area, our territories. It wouldn't have affected any of those that have their legislation in place under the ?Nis'ga? Agreement, Indian Métis, Yukon Agreement, the James Bay Agreement and so on.

In terms of the international community, I think there is no question it's here, its in our backyard, but we don't have an agenda to deal with it and when we look at the global communication, global technology, global politics, global economics and so on. That those issues are here in our backyard, so what is our international strategy? What is our international position?

We hosted the World Assembly of First Nations here in Saskatchewan in the early 80s and we brought in the leaders from all the different sectors and had round table talks on education, health, politics, treaties and so on. They weren't elected leaders, they were leaders in those fields that we brought in and that talent is out there, that expertise is out there amongst our own people, but what do we do instead? We set up institutions and we don't support them, we go out and we support non-Indian institutions that buy in to promoting this type of an agenda, the Buffalo Jump, the federal agenda, the provincial agendas. We expect to get results that are favorable we are not going to get them until

we have our institutions complying with their mandates and directives, so that they are implementing inherent rights, treaty rights, respecting jurisdiction of our governments and our nations and that's missing. And you know I've preached that all my life and paid one hell of a price for it personally. But I'm here today to try and advance it, I think we need to have an agenda that advances our cause by 50 years into the new millennium. We can't continue with an agenda that takes us back 50 years and not advance our cause into the new millennium.

So without going into any other detail, I think that from my own personal experience in AFN, we need to be able to curtail the destruction of our own people and our leaders at every level. We're buying into the non-Indian agenda of finding ways to discredit our leadership and it was shameful to see the Indian bashing that was going on with respect to our leaders over the last number of years by our own people. I think it's time that our own people took responsibility for their duties that are associated with inherent rights in all areas, personally and individually I mean and collectively. If we don't do that then what the previous speaker spoke of we're going to continue to go down that road.

But I don't see any efforts really to get the agenda focused on the sovereignty of our nations and the jurisdiction and the governments of our nations, there's isolated efforts across the country and we're asking those groups to advance their cause individually or collectively in their area. But we don't have the forum that allows for the kind of debate we need on these issues politically and I think our leaders are getting a little discontented with the administrative agendas. I was to the AFN agenda in Saskatoon was to go and

see somebody, but I looked at the AFN agenda, pretty elementary, no political agenda. That's the same with the Federation, the same with Tribal councils.

I was just wondering when I was asked to come to participate and do my presentation personally, I'm not representing anybody I come from the Chakastapaysin First Nation, it's a Cree community, we lost our band a hundred years ago, so a total fraud by government officials. I'm working personally right now with 25 bands in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta that lost their band status and their membership and their lands since signing Treaty and working with them to get reinstated. They have no money to work with, but they have people in the urban centers and they're called squatters on other reserves or placements on other reserves, they're not welcome anywhere they don't have homes like you can call home in your own reserves and your own bands. So that matter has to be dealt with, but there is no political support for that type of initiative now. We use to have it, we use to work at it, but that's just not there anymore.

On the matter of dealing with personalities, I think it's time that we as nations collectively at every level had a process of dealing with that issue. We run to the courts, we run to the RCMP, we run to all the authorities outside of our areas of jurisdiction and we never have to really deal with the issue. So we hold our own leaders like my experience was I wasn't charged, because I'd done any criminal offence, committed any criminal offence. I was charged, but they were all political charges and some of our own leaders from the AFN were involved in the process and that has to stop and we didn't even have any way of appealing into the AFN process. We were totally shut out of it, yet



it effected the agenda we were speaking to. I was representing the sovereignty agenda and the treaty agenda, so they didn't stop me, it hasn't stopped me as you can see, but it certainly lent a lot to discredit me in terms of the eyes of my own people and our own organizations. It was to the point where you had to go somewhere else in the country to find a damn job, you couldn't get a job in your own band or your own organization. It's such that even today, it's the first time I've participated in AFN processes since then. You know, that's how bad it is and if we're so damn weak we can't organize something to deal with that matter then we're really in trouble. If we are going to slop off things like this to non-Indian courts and non-Indian jurisdiction and not have the rights of our people recognized internally and dealt with through our jurisdiction and our institutions through our own justice system that reflects our traditional processes. I think that all this effort will be for not, pardon, for not.

I don't say that with any bitterness or anger I was taught at a very young age by my parents that bitterness and anger doesn't take you anywhere. You've got to have positive energy and I hope that you hear a lot of positive things and the odd negative thing, I don't consider that being negative, it's an experience I had and I think others are going to have it, others have had it. We said back then they get by us they're going to go at other leaders and that's what's happening right now. They're picking off a lot of our leaders one by one. Who am I talking about, I'm talking about the non-Indian governments.

When I investigated other policemen for 5 ½ years, when I investigated the people involved in the actual activity behind the scenes, I found our own people in AFN, I found

our own people in the Liberal Party, our own people in the NDP and the PC, the Reform what we call the Sask Party is it? And behind them were the politicians, so that's a matter you're going to have to address somehow otherwise you are going to lose a lot of our own people that can contribute to the evolution that we speak of.

But I think the protocols are key in the AFN and the form of those protocols take are important. The other reason I coined the term First Nation for your information is that, Henry, as you know you're neighbor to the south at White Bear, they have members in their band and their community from Assiniboine, Sioux, Saulteaux and Cree. So you couldn't go in there and say White Bear Band of the Cree Nation, you know, we have to look at some terminology that accommodates the interest of our people.

So, I see the need to promote the changes publicly and I think again, I would recommend strongly that the series of forum be held on the issue of sovereignty. That sovereignty debate would take place not just impacting on First Nations sovereignty, it would be Canada's sovereignty respecting the federal, provincial governments and the U.S. is ahead of us in their area. I think we can learn from them, that's what I saw happen there, the churches, the courts, the tribal state federal courts and the leaders politically, tribal, federal, state leaders got together and they organized a series of sovereignty forums and they were able to debate the issues based on their jurisdiction being respected and recognized. For example, the child care, child and family services in this province and Manitoba, I know it they're expected to incorporate under provincial law, the agency and they are expected to implement provincial law impacting on child and family services.

And when they signed the agreement the chief is the one that takes the liability for it and nobody else not even the agency, then when the child is apprehended the court has legal custody of the child and if anything happens then who gets it? The chief.

Now in the tribal system in the U.S. what they did is they legislate it through tribal law, their own child and family service legislation and the first thing they done was legislated the rights of the child, then the parents, the family and the community. And for a while there was a jurisdictional dispute between the state courts and the tribal courts and congress said enough is enough. So they passed a piece of legislation federally requiring that the federal court and legal system and the state courts and legal systems had to recognize the jurisdiction of the tribal law and governing child and family services. So that ended the jurisdictional disputes, the legal disputes and the fiscal disputes.

I want to close off by saying that we examined the Canada international agreements they have respecting the protection the standards of living for the Canadians living in Greece, Italy and Spain and other countries and the rights of Canadians. They have what they call the Social Security Agreements between Canada and Italy, Canada and Greece and so on and what are those agreements for? Those agreements are to provide for the portability of Canadian rights respecting Canadian Citizenship and citizens and to guarantee the standard of living for those Canadians even though they are in those countries they still benefit from Canadian pension plans and all the other benefits that are here to supplement the cost of living. So we have a situation where we're dealing with Indians that they fall off the edge of the reserve and they lose all their rights and their status and their services.

If we need to complement the treaties we have across the country and why not have a Canada First Nations Social Security Agreement that provides for the portability of our inherent rights and treaty rights and guarantees a standard of living for our people not just in Canada, but internationally as well. I think those types of instruments you have to examine and see what works and those that don't work you can discard. You may even want to go in to examine the current things that are working for the ?Nis'ga?, the James Bay Cree and so on. Like in terms of the James Bay Cree they consider that treaty as I was told at the Cree Nations Gathering there that they hosted a couple of years ago. A treaty between Quebec and Canada, not between the Crees and Canada, but when you look at the implementation strategies and take a look at the negotiations on the resource revenue sharing for Forestry and Hydro between James Bay Cree and Quebec that's a good agreement for them, you know. It's not covering everything that everybody wants, but that type of example I think should be looked at and we have to push for our own justice system. We can't have First Nations government and laws and jurisdiction if we have to run to the white man's courts to implement and force those things, no way it's going to work, so thanks for your time, you're getting hungry, I know. I'm getting dry in the mouth.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Thank you very much. A lot to digest and I'm glad we've got a tape recorder, So that we

can return to those, because I certainly didn't capture it all in my notes but a couple of points that I wanted to just kind of go a little deeper with you. About protocols in the AFN being important and I think I heard you say that we should really look at the U.N. model and how they're structured with after you talked about the Secretariats, political, I only had 5 of them. But you talked about the U.N. model in effect we are taking a look at that I believe, Stuart is that one of the works that we've had instructed as to look at? Because you're not the first one who said take a look at the U.N. model, the very first session we did in Vancouver it was suggested there that we take a look at the U.N. model and how that works?

SOL SANDERSON:

Besides those another one you may want to look at the non-aligned nations model.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

The what?

SOL SANDERSON:

The non-aligned nations, there's a 120 countries that belong to the non-aligned nations forum, look at their model and there's the one for the Americas as well.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Okay. Just small things within that, because I think you were here earlier when I was talking about the people and the portability of rights is really what we are talking about, when we go into the urban areas. The organizations that are service delivery in that, I heard what you said about the sovereignty agenda as opposed to the administrative and program delivery agenda. But the fact of the matter is and especially in the urban areas the service delivery and the social safety net you referred to earlier and preparing for that is really important in trying for those individuals within the big cities themselves. What do you think about the issue of portability of rights and having actual MOU within the structure of the AFN addressed along the same lines as the idea there's been many treaties signed and there's 3 areas I note and then the modern day treaties. But you know I look at this relationship and this is just something that I started to come through in looking at what the possibilities are.

We talk about the respect and the dignity and the cultural values and then the kind of disparities and the actions we have happening within the organizational meetings themselves. Do you think there's a possibility in this whole model to look at actual having treaties amongst ourselves? As opposed to treaties looking at those treaties first with Canada and British Columbia and I'm talking in my particular area. Would that in your mind start to move us more to the idea of looking at ourselves as sovereign nations? When we acknowledge that, to me, the most important relationship I have is with you as

another First Nation and I thank you for coining that phrase. We still have difficulty in our community the older people in our community don't want to take the name First Nations only because they say we have to actually start living that, because we're still Indian act bands. I won't go into that whole detail but. So the whole idea of MOUs does that capture anything? When you talk about protocols and looking at, you've got another word here that I'm sorry, I, maybe I didn't write it down and then the idea of the portability, well, that's the idea of the portability rights, but what about the idea of treaties amongst ourselves?

SOL SANDERSON:

That's only if they relate in terms of keeping peace amongst ourselves and forming those alliances for various purposes including economic opportunities. But we also have what we call the neutral grounds for resolving disputes and when you look at (Native name) outside of Saskatoon, that's what that was, you see. When you look at Walter's territory there, there was neutral grounds set side there by the nations, those neutral grounds were for the purpose of resolving disputes.

But if you look historically at AFN this, disputes were resolved by attacking personalities. I'm still taking the spears and the daggers and the arrows out of my back you know and I didn't mind that because I got an early start in leadership and knew it would happen. Because we have no other way of dealing with it at that level and when we look at the process then, yeah we had our own treaties amongst ourselves. We need

to go back to something like that, it's important that we do. And that treaty has to include the protocol respecting with mutual respect of our nations and our relationships that would be a result of that treaty. I don't why we dropped it out, in fact it was outlawed by Canada's laws and policies.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

So you can see that if we went to that kind of model it would be something that would be acceptable to the treaty nations as they are now, because what we are doing is actually dividing, not dividing, actually going to the next step of once again physically making those treaties amongst ourselves.

SOL SANDERSON:

When you look at the urban centers, the urban settings in Saskatchewan here and again you can take a look at the late 60s early 70s experiences with tribes in the U.S. when congress appropriated major funds to the tribes and to the Indians over there. They had all these organizations spring up over night in the urban centers and funds were going to those organizations and agencies rather than to the tribal governments to offset the costs of their members living in wherever. Here in Saskatchewan we have over 400 organizations and agencies right now receiving funds for urban Indians you know why not re-direct that, so that Henry I think you were asking about delegated ...



...from their offices, so anybody that walked in for legal services, health services, education, social services, housing you name it. The first call that was made was to that office. If the funding was there then they identified it there. It was the Prince Albert urban service center. That model is there and it worked, it was very effective.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Who to contact to get an outline of that?

SOL SANDERSON:

Sol Sanderson.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

You got one for us.

SOL SANDERSON:

I'll ask him. But the work that we did is here. The areas that I talked about for those

relationships there all... I'll leave you a copy, I'll have to go out and get a copy from the car.

**Unidentified male speaker:**

Thank you very much Sol, its good to see you again and to go over some of these issues, they are long standing issues. Some of them we've resolved since the 19...the late 1970's, but there's still some were still working on, but its good to see you still holding forth on them.

Wendy's raised some important points, I've got 2 I'd like to pursue. One of them...I've...there's a lady did a study of not just First Nations but other indigenous communities around the world and non-indigenous organizations. She's come up with 7 principles, but one of the principles says that you will not have true governance, you will not have self governance if you don't have a dispute, a way to resolve disputes, if you don't have some sort of a dispute resolution mechanism.

You identified when you talked about the personalities issue, because you know there's where we... some of the things that can work, but when we start to deal with personalities rather than the issues we run into trouble. So then you talked about judicial system and justice system, but what I would like to just hear you talk about a little more is whether you're talking, when you talk about the personality side or where personalities come into it. Whether you're dealing with a grievance process or an appeal process or a complaint process or... you know you talk about a judicial side and then you have this side. What

would the difference be? So are you advocating that we need a grievance process, something where you might have had an opportunity to express yourself and have a...you know get a fair hearing through grievance appeal or complaint as opposed to judicial. Is there a difference there? Or do we need both? I guess that's the question I'm asking.

SOL SANDERSON:

We need both in terms of the processes because one process is dealing with the actual law and jurisdiction and that's the judicial process. We had processes of tribunals, where people have the opportunity to deal with what you call appeals. But the tribunals went further than just dealing with the appeal, the tribunal went further of bringing the parties together and helping to try to resolve the issue. That's what we done. That's how we handled it traditionally.

**Unidentified male speaker:**

Should a you know that kind of a process be an aspect of the AFN that deals with some of that? You know if we're talking about creating you know a kind of revising, renewing, if that was a weakness in the past, is that something that might be a recommendation?

SOL SANDERSON:

That's one of the weaknesses I see and the UN for example in terms of their processes of

handling the disputes between nations and even personalities, like Mandela and others like that, internationally. When they have their tribunal, they can deal with those types of issues, but they also go further and if there's a violation of that right respecting any laws that are passed by the nation and impact on those rights negatively that tribunal can still deal with them. They, whatever decision they come up with they still have to take it back to those respective governments to deal with and change their laws if they have too, recognizing those rights.

We need a process, we need a process if we're going to have a forum like a modified UN or a confederacy, I prefer the confederacy that's what we had prior to the non-Indians coming here. That confederacy model I've talked about that we had years and years ago, that was 54 nations throughout North America that formed that confederacy. We had the processes to deal with those matters. But I think if we dealt with the political agenda properly we wouldn't have the personal attacks we see happening.

But when you go to the meetings 85% of the agenda is administrative and 15% is political if that, might be you're lucky if you get 10% on the agenda being political. Then all your smoking sessions outside the forum is political, no.

**Unidentified male speaker:**

One other quick question on the term what did First Nation mean when you were dealing with it back in the 80's there? Like you know when you coined it?

SOL SANDERSON:

I was attempting to find a way of our people to express sovereignty and deal with sovereignty without having to use the term itself. Because when I say that, when I used to sit at the NIB or AFN table you know even the one next to me would pass me notes criticizing my terminology when I used sovereignty you know. Suggesting not that our people wouldn't buy it, but the non-Indian government representatives or ministers wouldn't buy it, well it wasn't an argument for me. I wanted to coin a terminology that would get our people thinking sovereignty.

COMMISSIONER NEIL STERRITT:

Okay, so some of the things that Noel brought up and some of the things were hearing and some of the dilemma frankly with the...kind of the...some of the dilemma we face with the confederacy is the difference between say in...look at BC my community or the when I was tribal council leader we had 7 First Nations. Because that's the definition in the AFN constitution, we had 7 First nations who belonged to the Gixsan Nation.

So First Nation has this, for some it means the nation, for others it means the what is called an Indian Act band. So we're faced with that today, the connotation was sovereignty that's what you meant, but if we follow some of the reasoning that Noel was going down there. Where do you see that dilemma between say nation, Cree nation and

the First Nations that make up the Cree Nation even crossing provincial boundaries, how do you see that?

SOL SANDERSON:

Well I see the...that's what I was saying that it gets, its time to address the very thing we're talking about publically and politically in our communities. Like if I was to make a change I would say that the (native name) band of the Cree Nation, so you got to say (Native name) band of the Cree Nation, that's where I come from. Its important you identify that, because we have (Native name) members who have membership in the band or the community based on our membership code and the criteria governing our membership code.

But they also have citizenship rights as citizens of the Cree Nation. If we're talking seriously about implementing the inherent rights of the Cree's then we should have legislation that implements those inherent rights. All the Cree Nation's communities or bands. So its time we started to address the terminology that was the original terminology you know. I'd like to see us even get away from the term band.

**Unidentified male speaker:**

Absolutely, I agree with that, but here's the dilemma, one of the biggest challenges, one of the problems we've...in my experience, especially in the last 10 years working with communities and working with umbrella organizations, I talked about the difference a

little earlier. Is if you're not clear on what you're...who or what your members are, you'll spend all day long arguing in a confederacy or at assembly, a general assembly or in a tribal council meeting about who can do what? Because we haven't been clear on the membership, so we're very clear right now, because of the term First Nation. We know that the membership of the AFN is 633 First Nations.

When we have confederacies, there's confusion about who is a member at a confederacy. That will always be you know and sometimes in some other umbrella organizations when they're very unclear about who their members are and you spend all our time arguing about whether you can be there or not be there.

So if the AFN is going to move to some other entity, open it up, where does this...what is your thoughts on the definition?

SOL SANDERSON:

I see the definition being refined by the tribes and again I don't like that terminology. But by the tribes in each area. There's movement right now, like the Dene who had their forth or fifth gathering, of the Dene Nation. The Cree's now who are in the ninth gathering of the Cree Nation's gathering. The Anishinabe I think about the 15<sup>th</sup> one or 14<sup>th</sup> one. So what we're witnessing is the nations coming together and forming their original status as nations and putting those agendas together.

Yeah they cross not only provincial lines, they cross treaty boundaries, they cross tribal council boundaries and so on. But I see the evolution of our nations happening, it's a slow pace and it's a pace that could be stepped up if the resources were there. But there just not there, so that the... the confederacy I found became a confusing terminology at the AFN level, because everybody thought a confederacy was like a federation of nations. But the confederacy was a... the definition there wasn't even clear, because people wanted then the confederacy to be represented by certain individuals that were selected from the different regions. So there was no clarity on the concept of the confederacy within the AFN.

Historically the confederacy of nations was exactly that, it was a confederacy of our First Nations, of our Indian Nations. But that debate didn't happen you see, we kept going back to the old comfortable entities of the corporate entities of the NIB or whatever, you see. Of course that was dictated largely by the fact that the feds had conditions on funding.

I got a question for you if I could ask it before you ask anymore questions?

**Unidentified male speaker:**

Well I have no more questions, Henry may? But I just want to thank you very much for responding for your presentation and also for your response to our questions, but I think Henry might have one?



COMMISSIONER HENRY DELORME:

Ask you a question and...

SOL SANDERSON:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER HENRY DELORME:

I see a conflict taking place right now. AFN has this renewal process and the Minister of Indian Affairs has a renewal process with our tribal councils. Are you communicating with those tribal council reps and those leaders, because they're the same people?

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

We haven't been, I'm aware of it because I was involved heavily at the beginning of it. I know that there are (cough) coming on a regular basis to the political gatherings in our region anyway. But as far as our commission having regular dialogue with them, no we haven't been

SOL SANDERSON:

Because I see mixed signals going out. The feds through INAC is conducting a renewal process with the tribal councils and the AFN is doing another renewal process.

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Well the tribal councils is defined under the federal... description, is deliver your service plain and simple. What's happened is an evolution of a lot the tribal councils to be more political advocates. So we could have more dialogue with them, but then we're in that, for me personally, I mean I haven't talked to the commission and there certainly will. But the idea of what they're talking about and this is where could get on a very personal level start to try and really figure these things through. Because the people within the government whether we agree with it or not, the funding agents of this are saying that its strictly a program delivery and not to be anything else.

I think that Nault, I don't think I know Nault was looking to free up the money from tribal councils to put into economic development which is why that whole review started. He's not there anymore and I haven't spoken to anybody... last few weeks. But I don't know that the direction of it as changed or not?

SOL SANDERSON:

I don't think it has. Its still a review of the money connected with... provided for the

purpose to delivering services. Obviously that's not, when I was the leader that's not what I did. We had delivered some services, but basically it was a political organization.

**NOEL STARBLANKET:**

I ask it because it'll be worth your time to take and examine how they were effectively dismantling the Congress of American Indians who promoted sovereignty. Replaced them with the tribal here... organization... with a government dictated agenda and funding arrangements and that's what they're using the tribal councils for here now in Canada. If we don't have the tribal councils dealing with the sovereignty issue and the political agenda then again you create one hell of a mess in the community. That's all I can say about it, because you're talking about the same people, you're talking about the positions, like I looked at the positions and they provide for consulting services for governance and consulting services for economics and in... All those key executive management positions that are required in our First Nations governing structures.

I just raise it because I see it as a major problem and if you don't deal with it in the AFN renewal process, again you leave a very key area out of whatever structure you come up with it.

**Unidentified male speaker:**

Okay thank you, thanks Noel for bringing all the issues up that we started with many years ago. In '72 I came on the scene and Sol was around, I think I was going to school in Saskatoon you were there too going to school, your wife was going to school. Suddenly

there we are on the political side, give you an example of (?MARAVAL?) When I got back in 72 they put me on, I said....an advisory board chairman to the priests and everything else. Well that is fine, we've toddled around for about 6 months till we start getting more political and got in touch with Sol and they came there and we bring Indian Affairs in... and I guess this is where the Indian input or Indian authorizations start taking shape. We had the power to do it and I was chairman, I remember we had Indian Affairs there, but I had given the thought that I'll just ask the people what do they want?

Every time Indian Affairs would stand up "you can't do that" I'd cut him off and say "this is not your agenda you just stay put too" we start asking questions. That was when Indian started taking authority, then we went from advisory to education authority. Because I needed power and the chiefs changed the structure to include all the chiefs so that they could make instant authority from their band they were talking for. They're a delegated authority, they come up and talk for their people. So that's how (?MARAVAL?) came about and we thank you for that, so you came along way since then.

I guess the dispute area, the reaction area, we have to stop reacting and I agree with you, we've been reacting to much. The same with the dispute, we have to have an mechanism that can neutralize any dispute we have. At Cowessess on our election act we have an outside, well we have treaty 4 looking after our election appeals, which doesn't include the people of Cowessess. But has a general hearing on it and it went very good.

I guess I also agree that Indian people have to the bull by the horn and start taking authority, I believe our Indian chiefs and our Indian people have laid dormant for so many years. Now is the time to move up. I remember when I became chief I thought I was going to get put in jail, I created an Indian... Sol was around that time, an Indian licence to sell liquor. That was our custom, so we wrote it and away we went and sold liquor. I was always worried that I was going get put in jail and they threatened and everything, but we went and they never did lay charge on us. That's what we did we took authority by the hand, we've always had that authority, so that's where we should continue to go into, the sovereignty area. So thank you Sol for coming down, we appreciate it.

Unidentified male speaker:

Thank you again...

COMMISSION CO-CHAIR WENDY GRANT-JOHN:

Can you get us a copy of that and the...where was it? Prince Albert urban services center.

Thank you.

NOEL STARBLANKET:

I was called by Marion Meadmore Ironquill on the weekend and we've been in ceremony all weekend, so I was unable to phone her until yesterday and or the day before yesterday and discovered she was on her way here. So I ran to her at the meeting yesterday and she invited me to come here.

Previously I know that an attempt had been made to contact former National Chiefs and at the time I, because of the situation of our organization I requested certain reimbursements to the corporation and that was not forthcoming. So it kind of came to an impasse there, however upon the Secretariat calling me again, I decided alright I'll go. Unfortunately we had another FSIN chiefs assembly in Prince Albert at the time and we encountered a severe blizzard, a snow storm and was unable to get out of Saskatchewan, I wanted to go. When Marion invited me here on the weekend and again yesterday I said that I would come.

Yeah, that Treaty 4 First Nations acts as a spokesperson advocate for the Treaty peoples and the 34 First Nations in southern Saskatchewan and south eastern Alberta and southwestern Manitoba. 27 in Saskatchewan and 7 in Manitoba. What is a fledgling organization it, I think, departs from the hybrid organization of political advocacy and programs services. Which most, if not all of our present organizations engage at the moment, so we are strictly a Treaty advocate and I of course have served under the tutelage of my father who was a chief for some 17 years. I remember growing up at his

knee on the reserve which is just about 1 hour west of here by coal oil lamplight reading the Treaties to him and at a very tender age. I was first able to write taking notes for he and other leaders who were meeting to discuss treaty in various communities in southern Saskatchewan.

Also at that time there were no such things as per diems and largess for Indian organizations to travel from the government, they traveled entirely on their own money. They took up collections to pay for the gas for the people that traveled from their own community and very democratically whichever community hosted that gathering, became the chairperson of that meeting. So there were many chairpersons, not just one. While today I'm elected in a political context of modern day First Nations politics. It still harkens back to that era when they had a chairperson, a spokesperson.

So, we try to I guess in a little different perspective talk about the Treaty context from the point of view of the old people who remember the treaty who are old enough to remember their grandfathers and great grandfathers who signed that treaty in 1874. So from that perspective we try to advocate a modern interpretation of the treaty and it becomes very difficult because basically it was done at that time in the Cree language and the Saulteaux language, the Assiniboine language. So try to reflect what they talked about in those days, basically it was a spiritual commitment made by the elders to advocate for their children as many of the elders would say for children yet unborn and that contemplated the likes of me and others who were then unborn.

So from that context we try to think about what those old people meant and try to interpret it to today, so that's I guess kind of things we were talking about when we talk about Treaty 4 First Nations. Separate apart from the political mainstream context and separate and apart from the existing First Nations or Indian political organizations. So that's Treaty 4, we try and represent the 34 Treaty 4 First Nations and all of the things that they do and talk about. It becomes difficult because on one hand we talk about sovereignty and nationhood and treaty and on the other we take government money try to distribute programs and services for our First Nations people in the communities. So we're somewhere in between there trying to, trying not to criticize any political organizations, but yet at the same time trying to advocate on behalf of what those old people talk about in 1874. So that's the context in which the Treaty 4 organization exists.

So on behalf of those people then the Treaty 4 First Nations, the elders and children and youth and women of Treaty 4, I would like to welcome you to these communities this part of geography. I'm heartened to hear of your respect for the way that leadership of this organization of our people here tend to try and to support each and though we have differences and debates such as we had yesterday. You don't see people very often getting up in a huff and walking out and leaving organizations. So the political sophistication I guess in that sense has always been there amongst our people and we're fortunate in that where somewhat isolated being in the kind of center of inland Canada that we've been able to maintain that kind of balance.

For me personally the last 20 years has been a period, from my days of political



interaction and activity at the, I started out as a very young chief in my community. I went from there into what was then the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians as a vice-chief and various portfolios within that organization everything from health to communications, to rights and treaties. I guess Canada is the whole gambit in terms of ...the issues that our people face.

Then of course in 1976 to the National Indian Brotherhood at the age of 29 and we encountered.... I still have a little cartoon which I put in my bathroom which is where I think it should be. Depicting the political fortunes of the likes of Jean Chretien and Doug Buchanan and Warren Allmand and others. Depicted in a tee-pee with a revolving door in which various ministers were going through the revolving door. I think during that period of time that I was involved there in no less than 5 ministers of Indian Affairs, so that was the revolving door, Ministers of Indian Affairs.

But I have many memories, ah, I'm doing a little more than welcome here, so I hope you don't mind? So in those years of course they were the humble beginnings, the Walter Deiter first you know there had been books written about his activity and how he began the development of a national advocacy for our people. And then, I'm going to throw something at you here which I have been thinking about. I guess I have the distinction of being intimately and intricately involved at the National level in very many ways. I thought of a little anecdote here, before I was coming up, what am I going to say to these people, I'm the only First Nation person in the country that has been hired by two different National Chiefs and fired by two other different National Chiefs. Walter Deiter

hired me, George Manual fired me and Matthew Coon-Come hired me and Phil Fontaine fired me so. But in my own development too I've grown still sophisticated.... I bear no grudges those are the political fortunes and that's what happens in politics I don't hold any grudges about those kinds of things that's the way politics work, so that's quite alright.

I do thank the AFN for the kind of things that they allowed me to do the short time that I was there. One of the things that allowed me to do is to enhance my own spirituality, my own spiritual light. In the last twenty years, like I grew up with my grandparents and they taught me a lot about sundances and we're in sundance season right now and beginning tomorrow morning at 7 a.m. I will be walking with an elder in one of our communities, the beginning of a 4 day preparation for a sundance doing that at 7 a.m. tomorrow morning for 4 days.

The last twenty years of my life has been spent in those kind of ceremonies and what that has allowed me to do is something that I had not done previously because I grew up in a residential school for 10 years of my life. I grew up with hearing Christian teachings, I grew up hearing white people's political organizational contexts and that for me was a learning experience. But equally as importantly I had before that learned about spirituality from my grandparents and at a very tender age I was picking medicines with my grandparents and last year for the first time, it has taken me 50 years to go back and pick medicines. I was picking medicines in northern Alberta for the with elders for the first time in 50 years. That's how long it has taken me, my evolution of my political

spiritual development.

So those kinds of things, but equally as important I have learned many things and in particular you know the Judea Christian teachings about the different roles of men and women. One of the things I learned at any early age was about, from my grandparents, was about the powers of women and all that entailed at the spiritual level and I had never made that connection until the last twenty years. All of those years in politics, while I had it in my heart the desire to want to respect the women's organizations, native women's organization and indeed I did try and respect them.

Because I remember when the government, the federal government was talking about changing the Indian Act, to change that 12-1-b the Jeanette Corbiere-Labelle case and all of those times. I had together with some political advisers gone to the Indian register, Indian women, I forget the name of the other organization, but we talked about women's rights and the spirituality of women's rights. I confessed at not knowing much about the spirituality at that time at that age, but I went away and we hovered and discussed the issue. I remember talking to elders and asking them about it and they advised me that I would have to make a decision about how I would approach the women's organizations and leadership at that time. So the next day I went back and I supported personally, privately and publicly the change to the Indian Act respecting women's rights. Not much is know about that and not much is footnoted about that in history today, but that's a fact and unfortunately many of these women are gone now, Mary Two-Axe Early and Jenny ??? and others, but they will tell you that I supported them personally.

Immediately upon doing that of course all of the male political leadership alienated me and ostracized me, which was very difficult and very hurtful at that time. As it turned out it would not be the only time that I would be alienated and ostracized by male political leaders. But since then as I have been mentored by spiritual elders of different nations, for example that unity ride that I did last year for 49 days on a horse from Vernon, B.C. to Sioux Valley, Manitoba. We went into many different communities and many different nations and we prayed, ate, visited and talked with many different nations and that to me was probably one of the most important things I've ever done. Not just from a point of view of spirituality, but from a point of spirituality and I think that's where we've lost a lot of our understandings and a lot of our abilities as nations within this country is the loss of that spirituality. Because we operate in a white man's context as political organizations, we don't operate in a spiritual context and you'll see such as we have had in Saskatoon at the last Confederacy the kind of tough strident hard nose persons of our leadership. Which our elders very quickly gathered and said that is not the way we do things and it should not be the way to do things and that has been one of our losses of our peoples and I think that we must gain some of that back.

As I was telling you on that ride, I rode with people of many different nations and we rode on the trails of our ancestors way back in the 1870, 90s and early 1900's. We sang and we prayed, all day every day for 49 days and that was a most enlightening experience I've ever had in my entire life. It taught me a lot of things about myself, has developed me personally and immediately following that ride of course, well, close to the end of it I

went to Edmonton, only to see the person who had hired me defeated in an election. Surprisingly you know I was quite prepared for that, mentally and secondarily because I was confident in my own person, in my own spirituality. I didn't suffer huge losses and grief, what people go through with trauma when they lose an election. I was quite alright with it. I was even prepared to be fired and when I was I didn't suffer from it, because I was very confident in my own spirituality though I suffered financially and physically. I had suffered myself, so no one else could hurt me.

Immediately following the AFN election I went back to the ride, finished the last week with them and ended up in Sioux Valley at a pow-wow. Immediately following that pow-wow or in the middle of the pow-wow I drove to Northern Montana fast. I'm a diabetic and I have to eat regular, but as a diabetic... mentoring and direction and supervision of elders, I fast for 4 days without any ill effects. Which told me and will tell you and others about the powers of spirituality and the powers of the Creator, the spirit world and the powers of the individual human being. I've learned about those things in the last twenty years and that has been my life and last September after that fast I came back home, I live in my community now and I have the dirt on my car to prove it, it's been raining a few days here out in this area.

I have a ceremonial room, I have a sweat lodge in the bush beside my house and though I am not, I'm still learning about this, so I don't conduct any of those kinds of ceremonies I do bring in elders sometime to teach me. So I'm spending a lot of my time doing that then and to me like I know it would be difficult for you people in your different nations to

try to maybe fully understand it as we do. But you have your own ceremonies as we do and you follow them in the way that you know how, so I'm sure we understand at that level.

But to me that's where our forefathers came from, whether in British Columbia, Ontario or Saskatchewan and we have to recapture some of that and bring it into our modern day political context if we can. That might prove a bit difficult, but I think we have to make an effort. When we do that, you know, we talk a lot about respect and all those kinds of words and then you see the events that have happened for example in Saskatoon. That's somewhat disheartening, but fortunately we have people who are older and wiser that are able to advise us on those kind of a thing, so I think we have to capture that kind of stuff.

Other than that, like I've seen the, throughout the decades, the evolution of our organizations as I said back from the humble beginnings. I remember the first office of the NIB in Ottawa, it was just around the corner from the old Indian Affairs office on Kent Street in Ottawa. I went by there, I think it was last year I had saw that office, it's now confectionary store, it's just a little apartment right on the street and that was the first NIB office in Ottawa. Previous to that of course it was in Winnipeg then they decide to move it.

I had one employee, Keith ??? I remember and from there of course they developed to where when I came in, of course we had big offices coincidentally enough connected in the same building with the Liberal Party of Canada, it wasn't planned, it just happened

that way. But they were I think on the third, third or fourth floor, we were on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor at 102 Bank. But then it evolved of course into larger and more staff and all that sort of thing.

But when people talk to me about the AFN you know, the numerous people that they have there, I was there when they were cutting back and I listen to everyone complaining and crying and criticizing and objecting to all the cut backs that have happened. And how, you know 50 to 70 people could not do the work that they had to do, because they had to cut back and I remember a staff of 10 or 15 doing the work of those 75 people back in 1970's. I just kind of shook my head and I said do you know what's wrong with you people, we did, at that time we didn't have terms of reference, we didn't say we work from 9 to 5, we didn't have unions. We didn't have you know any of those kinds of things we just worked and we worked hard and we spent hours, nights and weekends.

I remember one of the staff members saying Starblanket got on a plane 6 o'clock after a meeting in Whitehorse or Yellowknife traveling to Vancouver going on a red eye from Vancouver to Toronto, getting into Ottawa throwing out some laundry, getting new, change of clothing and traveling to the Maritimes for a meeting that next day. That's how we traveled and we didn't have air miles, so we didn't have any rewards, our only reward, coincidentally I ran into a young fellow who is working in our building. Whom you people will meet, he's Mi'kmaq from Conne River, he's a dentist working with one of our local people there, Dr. Ron Martin and Dr. Martin a couple of weeks ago introduced me to him. He said he's from Conne River and I said Conne River, I know

where that is, because I've been to Conne River. He said you're the only person I've ever met in Canada that knows where Conne River that is my own community. I asked him how is Jerry Wetzel and how is Marion John and all this, he was surprised that I knew these people.

Well, I told him I traveled out and we traveled into these communities that the Innu of Labrador and I remember taking in some briefcases and tape recorders thinking we were going to record a meeting. Denis Nicholas and I and of course there was no power, the meeting was in a clearing in the bush and we were yet to meet these people, these Innu people. We couldn't record, we didn't have any batteries in the recorder, so that was the end of that and then we had tents they said you know where are the hotels? We were accustomed to staying in hotels. So there's your hotel it was a tent, that was where we were going to sleep that night. Then of course later on too when we asked where are we going to eat? And they said there's the river, here's the fishing pole, go and get your own supper, so that was, even at that time in the 70s that was how we were developing.

Of course I had run into various elders and people who continued to advise me throughout the country in those years and one of the people I was extremely happy to meet was Chief Robert Smallwood. Who had taken a group of people from his community in Hobbema and moved into the mountains and into the wilderness. Because of all the negative things that were happening in the community, drinking, drugs and all of the other human sins that were being committed in those communities.



So I met with him and his advisers and his helpers and they talked to me and he conducted ceremonies with us, the pipe and other things. When we, he said he wanted help to get some help for his people, because basically they were living in tents and teepees and in the bush and what have you and if you could get some, wondered if we would help him? I said we would, we would do everything we could to help him, whereupon that was in 1980. I told him we would find some money and we bring he and his helpers to the First National All Chiefs Conference in April 1980 at the end of April, the beginning of May in Ottawa. He brought his people and he spoke entirely in Cree to the chiefs and he said I remember people laughing, he said I'm so happy, I'm so grateful that like he calls me his grandson. That my grandson was able to be able to find some money to bring me and my people here, he said, to speak with my fellow chiefs to ask them for help. He said that I'm so happy I could go up and kiss him, of course, all the Cree people laughed, because it was a very humorous thing. But we did eventually get some help for he and his community and of course needless to say those same statistics exist in many of our communities still to this day.

I had the great pleasure of meeting one of his grandchildren a couple of years ago at a pow-wow in, and I had a watch with my great grandfather on it and Chief Starblanket and when I told him that, I ask, he told me where he was from and I asked him if he knew Keith Robert Smallboy and said that was my grandfather. So I took my watch off and gave it to him and said this is my great grandfather, I would like you to have this. So he took it, and he said you must come up and visit us again sometime and I never had the occasion, but I would really like to visit with them and engage in the things we do as

Cree people.

But those are some of the kind of memories that I have, the first All Chiefs Conference which was the beginning of the evolution from the fledgling organization to being more representative, more responsive, more democratic to the leadership.

I guess that kind of comes to the question of today, where are we today in terms of our representation? I remember having themes of NIB conferences about representivity and at that time Greg Nicholas who was heading up the Union of New Brunswick Indians, now Judge Nicholas, being very articulate and vehement about the representation on the Executive Council of the National Indian Brotherhood. Being one president from each provincial and territorial organization and not to dilute that, that quota or that representation, because though they are small communities, small organizations, they were very vocal and they wanted to continue to have their equal voice represented at that table. I was fine with that, I didn't have any trouble, others did, because they wanted representation by population and that became a contiguous issue.

Along with that of course were discussions about evolving from a chiefs' organizational representation of chiefs and organizational representation to the present day mandate of AFN/NIB. I remember discussions, Neil, you might have been around some of them at that time with tongue and cheek often talked about the AFN and BFN and CFN and all that sort of thing and those were contiguous times too. Again the evolution of our politics.

Today where... like we had a discussion yesterday about the women's secretariat within the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. In particular some leaders were saying well women have an equal opportunity to run and to be elected and to represent communities as well as men and so I cannot support a woman's commission within the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians. But on the other side of that coin is also yes we must defer to those people who have that special perspective on women's issues, women's rights and all that and give them that opportunity to represent that point of view.

Unfortunately, like one of the women chiefs came up to me and said what do you think about this? And I said well unfortunately we are imbued with a majority of male political leaders, we are also imbued with Judea Christian mentality of politics and everything we do in modern day, Indian politics, is imbued with all of that context. I was asked, how so? Well, I said, as Indians we take Sundays off, that's Judea Christian you know, in our spirituality, there's no one day for rest, you know we do, but we sometimes fall into that line of thinking.

But as we have evolved of course I see the two contexts, the one being what is representation by population? Do we go by say from evolution to chiefs or leaders being represented by a chiefs conference and selecting our leadership from that context? Or do we go to total population on and off reserve? And we look at the experience of the Indian Association of Alberta and the many points of view on that. I remember when that took place, because I was there at the time, not right in Alberta. But I watched it

very closely when Harold Cardinal took the Indian Association of Alberta from representation of chiefs and councillors to a total population representation. Slowly the Indian Association went out of existence and a lot of people said it was because of that, well that's perhaps over simplifying it and putting it too simply that alone in itself by itself is not the reason for the demise of the Indian Association of Alberta. It may possibly have been one reason, but it was not the only reason, there are other reasons in Alberta for why that happened.

So we have to try to understand, you know what representation by population means? Does it denigrate from our respect for the leadership of the communities who are elected by their own community members whether it's off reserve or on reserve? Which is a further ...question to all of this. But basically it's a respect for the leadership for the chiefs elected by their communities, it's their process and we chose to respect the leadership of those communities, coming from the communities, to the tribal councils, to the Federation for example, provincial organization in our case to the national, so that the respect for the leadership from that very level.

That's a very noble kind of concept. But in today's context we have many what they call grass roots people who are begging the question, you know, we're often saying well these are the 'elitist?', sexist whatever 'ism?' people want to apply to it, those criticisms are there. So, hence the call for change and the AFN Renewal Commission, how do we do it? Do we go representation by population? Do we go off reserve? On reserve? Or a combination of all of that, you know? what will that do? ...

... and I can see the need and the clamor for representation, especially by urban people and our First Nations people and the many problems that they face in those communities. I do see the need to address many of the issues that they face.

Our community at home was for many, many years been allowing our people to vote from urban communities. So all this stuff as it's playing out is kind of old (inaudible) to us and we said we decided this a long time ago, it's not an issue with us. With others it's becoming a very important issue today, so those kind of things.

But I guess from my own evolution, like yesterday we had some serious problems in our political organization, advocacy for Treaty 4 and led a discussion with the chiefs after a long day yesterday we asked them to stay with us and talk with us about some of the issues. Of course we all, we talked about political advocacy for our Treaty vis-a-vie and in context with accountability and all of those mechanisms that are being called for right now by various political entities and all of those are important.

But at the same time you know with the federal election looming as it is and the polls and the pundits saying what they're saying about various positions of the parties. Basically they are pretty much all the same whether it's the NDP here in Saskatchewan or Harper's Conservatives in Ottawa or Martin's Liberals, pretty basically you know all the same

from our point of view. Not one of them is making much more headway in respect for our Treaty position or our Treaty rights than any other party. So they are pretty much painted with the same brush whether it's tax immunity here in Saskatchewan from PST, to Martin's or Chretien's or Nault's or whose ever legislation it was the...of legislation on governance.

To the Conservatives lack of Aboriginal policy, you know, one, if they're not pro-active in trying to voice the legislation upon us they're silent. So anyway it's, you know, 6 and one half dozen of the other sort of things.

So I think I've played with those political parties, I dare say I played with all of them expect possibly the BQ or the Green Party or some of those other non players. But pretty much the 3 major parties in many, many campaigns over the years and the decades and I've seen it all. Basically you can argue with anybody, an Indian Liberal or an Indian Conservative or an Indian NDPer, but essentially when it comes on to it, who do they represent? The represent their own people, so I guess what all this has to do with is who do we represent? And what do we represent? Do we represent people in our communities? Do we represent people in the urban centers? Do we represent Treaty Rights? Aboriginal Rights wherever you come from? Do we represent fiscally the need for programs and services in our communities? Do we set up different organizations to do different things? Do we set up an Indian BQ if you want, which advocates for sovereignty, but within that context of the House of Commons in the Parliament of Canada. Do we advocate for service and program delivery? Do we have separate service

organizations? I've call for that, for decades now, a separation of the politics at the administration and the technical. That we should have service organizations and that should be their mandate, their mandate exclusively and those lines should be very, very carefully drawn, so that they know what their mandate is.

I met with the Child and Family Service Organization in the last few months, they were afraid of the Indian politics that would go on from the Federation on down to the Tribal Council to Treaty 4 and they were afraid to meet with me. It took me several months to get a meeting with them and I sat down with them and I said look "I respect and I recognize your ability to develop service here you're technically empowered, you're motivated, you have a sense of devotion and dedication in the community for the issues that your working with and you have the mandate". Go to it. I will not interfere with you with what you have to do, but at the same time I ask you to respect what I represent and that is the political advocacy for treaty. That if you screw up on advocacy for children's rights or whatever from a treaty perspective I will let you know. And, so I said, "do we understand each other" and they said yes we do. So that was how I understood it, most of my life, I guess and I've always tried to separate that and unfortunately it becomes a, when the lines are not clear, we often cut across those lines as political organizations. Because basically we don't have the money, secondly we're still maturing politically, we're not yet at a sophisticated, totally sophisticated level of political maturity, we're still going there, some communities are, some organizations are, more than others, but we're still evolving to that.

But, yeah, but more importantly, I guess it comes down to being able to allow those kind of developments to being able to advocate too on behalf of the things that we believe in. For me, you know, I watch elections, I watch the evolution of the organization, I don't become as intimately, you know, as entrenched or whatever at the level of politics that I was. But I still watch or log on to the web site of the AFN, I constantly read about these things that are happening around the country and I'm part of a news group that lets me know about all the political happenings in our communities across the country so I'm in touch with all of those kinds of things. I keep that intellectually in my own mind, so I'm very much aware of everything that's going on.

I'm a little more, I guess laid back now days and watch, but I still continue to harbour great interest, everything that you do. And I commend you for working on the changes that you are attempting to gather information about. I look forward to making a more prepared representation to you when you come to Treaty 4 (cough) But for now I started out as a welcome speech, but it evolved into telling you about some of the experiences that I have had and I could share a lot more I guess when the time comes, I guess more in detail about some of the developments. So, with that I want to get back to the meeting to, over there, or thank you for taking the time...