



Indigenous Peoples' Oral Histories of the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range (CLAWR), 1972-1994

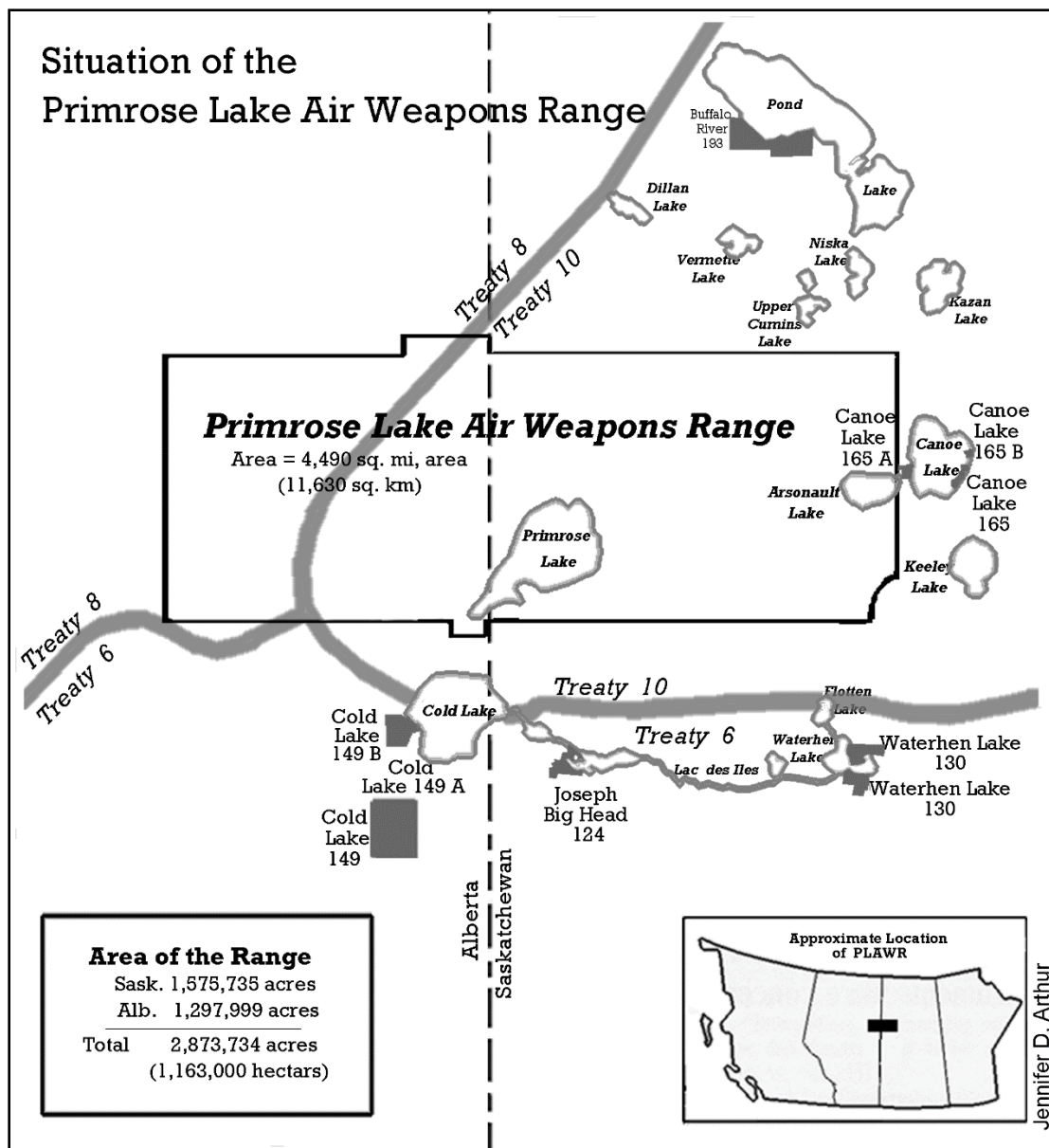
Preliminary Report

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Location of Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range, showing Treaty boundaries and nearby First Nations reserves. Based on data in "Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range," 1 *Indian Claims Commission Proceedings* (1994), 14; 4 *ICCP* (1996), 57.

Indigenous Peoples and the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range (CLAWR): An Overview to 2001

P. Whitney Lackenbauer

On 19 April 1951, Defence Minister Brooke Claxton informed the House of Commons that the RCAF would establish a new bombing and gunnery range, roughly centred on Primrose Lake, that would “stretch about 115 miles from east to west and 40 miles from south to north” totalling almost 4490 square miles. The government and air force officials had secretly appraised several locations and identified an expanse of “unoccupied” Crown lands east of Lac la Biche, Alberta, straddling the provincial border with Saskatchewan along the 55th parallel. It consisted of dense boreal forest and muskeg: a terrain that resembled the approaches over Europe and Siberia from which any probable Soviet attack would come. Early appraisals noted that the proposed air weapons range would affect natural resource exploitation, commercial fishing, and an estimated seventy-five trap lines. There were no settlements in the area, but compensation would be paid to anyone whose “property rights in trap lines, etc.,” were affected.¹ The military would have to work out compensation accordingly, but both provinces quickly agreed in principle to a twenty-year lease. Finalizing the agreements with the governments of Alberta and Saskatchewan for the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range (CLAWR) would take another two years, but in the meantime National Defence focussed its energies on settling the individual compensation claims.

The range boundaries were laid out deliberately to avoid Indian reserves, but federal officials recognized that First Nations and Métis trappers and fishermen had interests in the affected area.² Dene Sou̓n’line peoples occupied the northern boreal forests from Hudson Bay, to Great Slave Lake, and south to Cold Lake, hunting wood bison and moose in a seasonal cycle. The Cold Lake First Nations were the southernmost Dene group, their traditional territory roughly centred on Primrose Lake.³ The Woodland Cree, who acted as middlemen in the Hudson Bay fur trade by that time, expanded their activities westward and also hunted, trapped, and fished in the region. The Canoe Lake Cree subsisted over a territory that extended west of Canoe Lake, including the McCusker and Arsenault Lake areas. For their part, the Plains Métis pursued a similar lifestyle and often cohabited with First Nations within this region, with the Métis settlements of Jans Bay and Cole Bay near the Canoe Lake reserve and the Métis settlements of St. Georges Hill and Michel Village near the Cold Lake reserve.⁴

The Dene and Cree signed numbered treaties to secure assurances that their way of life would be unaffected as the Canadian government prepared the way for settlement and resource development. In the fall of 1876, the Dene negotiated Treaty 6, which confirmed that:

Her Majesty further agrees with Her said Indians that they, the said Indians, shall have the right to pursue their avocations of hunting and fishing throughout the tract surrendered as hereinbefore described, subject to such regulations as may from time to time be made by Her Government of Her Dominion of Canada, and saving and excepting such tracts as may from time to time be required or taken up for settlement, mining, lumbering or other purposes by Her said Government of the Dominion of Canada, or by any of the subjects thereof duly authorized therefor by the said Government.

During the proceedings at Fort Pitt, the treaty commissioner assured the Dene that they could count on the Crown's "bounty and benevolence" to augment their wealth while "retaining their old mode of living." Similarly, when the Canoe Lake Cree signed Treaty 10 in 1906, the commissioner reassured that "the treaty would not lead to any forced interference with their mode of life" and would protect their hunting and fishing privileges. A provision also stipulated that they would be free to pursue their traditional hunting, fishing and trapping on unoccupied lands throughout the region. The commissioner did not anticipate any major changes that would affect hunting and trapping in the treaty area, and he expected "that the great majority of the Indians will continue in these pursuits as a means of subsistence."⁵

After signing these treaties, these peoples "continued to trap and fish and trade their furs," historian Helen Buckley has explained, "and with the addition of treaty money and the annual ceremony at which it was dispersed, life went on as before until after World War II."⁶ Their concept of territory did not end at the reserve boundaries, as did non-Indian concepts of "Indian land," but extended into adjacent traditional territories. Early in the twentieth century, Indian agents reported that the Cold Lake Chipewyan were "industrious" in their traditional pursuits, were generally self-supporting, and "were good hunters and trappers" who also subsisted in large measure on fish from Cold Lake. Their three reserves, situated on the frontier where the prairie met the forest, were surveyed in 1904. The Canoe Lake Cree also took up three allotments of reserve land, alongside the lake bearing their name, early in the century. A few members of both bands took up farming and Indian agents made much of every agricultural activity in their annual reports, but the main occupations remained hunting, fishing and trapping.⁷

The collective memories of the Cold Lake and Canoe Lake communities emphasize how traditional pursuits and self-sufficiency pre-dated the creation of the CLAWR. Chief Mary Francois of Cold Lake later reflected on how her people had found physical, cultural and spiritual sustenance in the Primrose Lake area. "Hunting, fishing and trapping, picking berries, and gathering roots were normal activities that we depend on for our survival," she explained. "Everything we need, we needed for good living was there for us: plenty of moose, fish, and wild berries. The income from trapping and fishing was used to sustain our families, our farms, and our way of life." In Cold Lake oral histories, the Great Depression and early postwar era is not characterized as a time of scarcity and suffering, but as a time of plenty. Similarly, Canoe Lake Cree elders speak of a "rich and bountiful" land teeming with animals and fish that had provided livelihoods for "generations and generations," wherein people made "a lot of money" and enjoyed an "excellent" living. Families spent much of the year out on the land, and their communal relationships and identities were centred on this special place. Indigenous oral histories depict an idyllic landscape entwined with social, physical and cultural relationships, a source of strength and unending resources that was eventually destroyed by military occupation. These perspectives contrast with scholarly literature that describes the decades preceding the 1950s as difficult ones in which unstable fur prices, a structurally unsound commercial fishing industry, and provincial encroachments on treaty harvesting rights heaped "crisis upon crisis" on trapping and fishing communities.⁸

The administration of land and resources in Alberta and Saskatchewan underwent salient transformations during the 1930s. A constitutional amendment transferred the control of natural resources to the prairie provinces and reaffirmed Indian treaty rights on Crown lands. Section 12 of the *Natural Resource Transfer Agreement, 1930 (NRTA)* stipulated that, subject to game laws, "the said Indians shall have the right, which the Province hereby assures to them, of hunting, trapping and fishing game and fish for food at all seasons of the year on all unoccupied Crown lands and on any other lands to which the said Indians may have a right of access."⁹ Other developments proved more invasive. During the interwar years,

some non-Natives moved northward and began to compete for resources. Beginning in 1939, Alberta and Saskatchewan introduced registered fishing and trapping licenses to rationalize conservation efforts around Primrose and Cold Lakes. The new regulations ensured that the vast majority of commercial fishers were northern residents (mainly First Nations and Métis), but they began to reconfigure commercial activities and patterns. By creating a new legal regime wherein First Nations people had to purchase their rights to trap lines, the system - in theory - challenged “the customary flexibility of Native trapping and the reliance on family and group rather than individual efforts” by limiting the geography of trapping.¹⁰ Many Indians in the region held licenses, and in practice young men and women often used their parents and grandparents’ equipment and sold fish and furs under their permits. Others continued to catch and sell without official authorization, as their ancestors had done for centuries, generally without recrimination through to the early 1950s. The legal distinction between those with registered rights and those without, however, became significant when the military took control of the CLAWR and determined who would qualify for compensation.¹¹

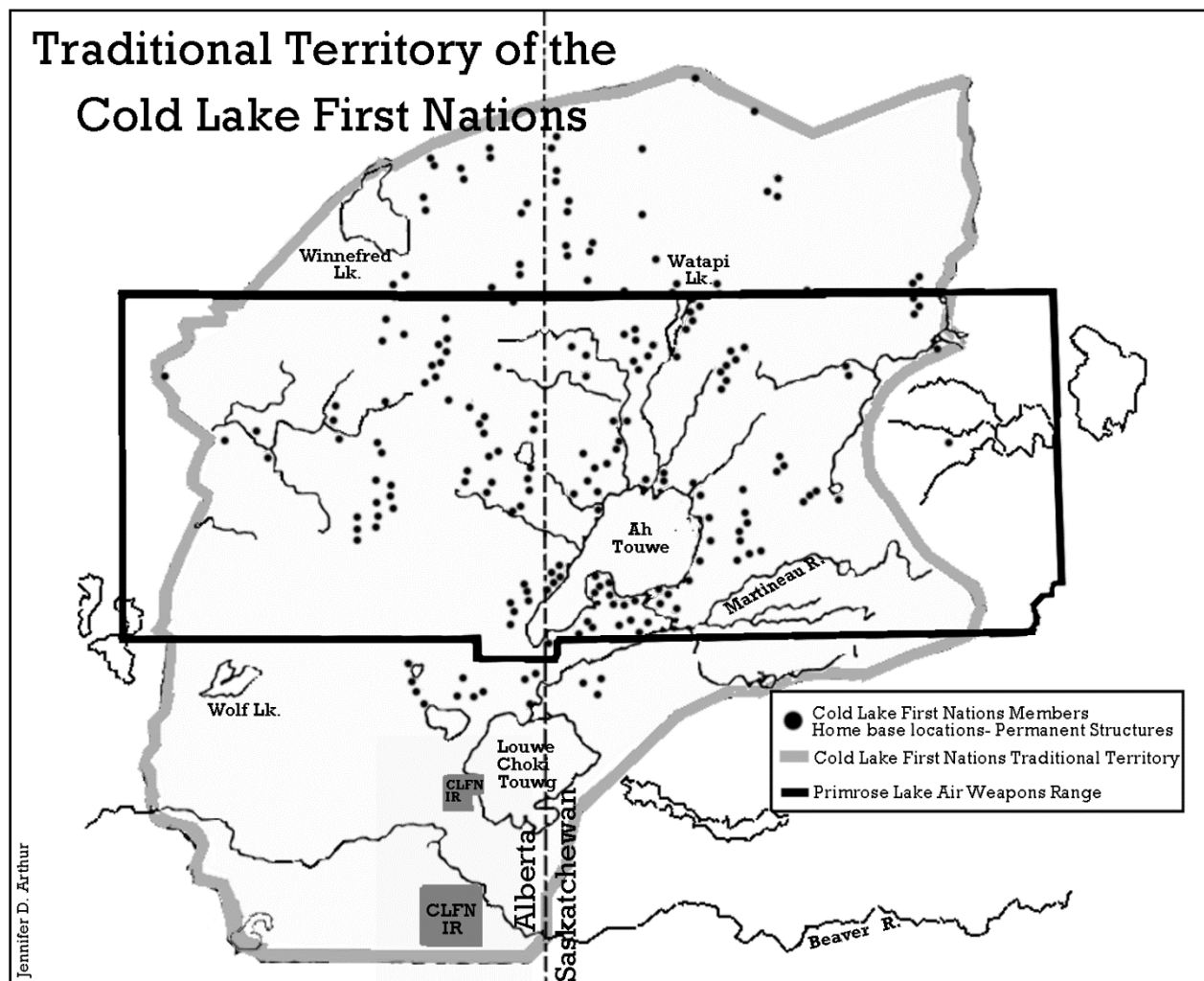
The First Nations that would be affected by the massive training and testing area only learned about the RCAF’s plans in the newspapers and, when they did, took immediate steps to protect their treaty rights. The Indian Association of Alberta (IAA), formed by First Nations and Métis leaders in 1939, expressed initial concern during a mid-June 1951 meeting. The IAA had begun to focus its energies on northern issues, and the potential impacts of the range dovetailed with this emphasis. Indian Affairs quickly learned that compensating and rehabilitating First Nations trappers would be a major issue, and began to query their government counterparts accordingly. The provinces explained that the Department of National Defence (DND) would be responsible for compensation and, assuming their typical role of representing the First Nations’ position within the federal government, senior Indian Affairs officials probed National Defence to discern what they could expect.¹²

DND and the Department of Transport, who once again agreed to assist with negotiations, faced a daunting task in determining who held legal rights to the “unoccupied” Crown lands they were taking up. Various groups affected by the proposal vociferously opposed plans from the onset. Both Indian and non-Indian representatives from the commercial fishing industry at Primrose Lake organized a committee and lobbied Ottawa to have the range moved. DND officials responded that displaced fishers could be “profitably employed” at the Cold Lake RCAF Station “during its construction and afterwards.” The fishers did not agree and demanded ample compensation (equivalent to fifteen years income) to allow them to take up farming. This far exceeded DND’s projections, particularly after the Department of Justice determined that fishers were not legally entitled to compensation. The military accepted its responsibility nonetheless, but the complexities of dealing with several parties delayed final settlements with fishers and non-Indian trappers for several years.¹³

First Nations trappers and bands pressed their claims concurrently, tapping into political networks. In October 1951, John Laurie, the longstanding secretary of the IAA, explained to the local member of parliament that trapping and hunting remained the economic mainstay for the Cold Lake bands, and that once the range was gone no other trap lines would be available. “Besides the severe shock of learning another mode of life,” he forecast, the First Nations people would “suffer terrible poverty” without meaningful action. Their paltry trust funds demanded “a very large sum” to avert socio-economic disaster – an expense warranted because it was “also a costly process to upset the lives of our people, costly in human souls and bodies as well as in money.” Laurie appealed for specific compensation to re-establish young band members as farmers. J.M. Dechêne, the Arthabaska MP, forwarded the IAA’s concerns to DND

but he reminded Laurie of the larger context. “You understand fully that preparations for the threat of war which has been and is still so eminent must be made,” he explained, and the huge sums of money for training and weaponry “must necessarily inconvenience some people” as it would the taxpayers who would be called upon to spend five billion dollars over the next three years.¹⁴

Figure 1: Cold Lake First Nations structures and PLAWR boundaries, 1950s. Source: “Discussion Paper for Consideration by the Government of Alberta,” 2 June 1997, 6, 23.



Dechêne also realized that specific information regarding compensation remained sketchy in Ottawa. Bureaucrats struggled to develop a coherent policy based on fragmented evidence. Indian Affairs representatives met with DND field staff, who agreed to compensate Indians and provided their preliminary lists compiled from provincial game and trap line records. IAB promptly checked these and interviewed each trapper to determine what the loss of access would mean on a case-by-case basis. They found the original compensation lists to be limited, and drew up new lists that included other heads of families and dependents who depended on the tract for their livelihoods. The IAB determined that more than one hundred treaty Indian families relied on the range for subsistence.¹⁵

In late 1951, Indian Affairs field staff concluded that individuals from five bands were directly affected. The the Canoe Lake band in Saskatchewan and the Cold Lake band in Alberta faced the heaviest impacts. Between three and ten families in the Goodfish Lake, Beaver Lake, and Heart Lake bands would be affected. First Nations families would be forced to leave behind cabins, traps and equipment when the range was closed. IAB headquarters estimated that regional First Nations annually earned \$66,340 in trapping income, \$35,905 from commercial fishing, and consumed about \$123,500 in fish, meat and hides from the range. They successfully lobbied the military to include this last variable in the compensation formula, although this unique treaty “right” applied only to First Nations claimants. Indian Affairs argued that DND should compensate the bands for either five or ten years: the former to the three bands whose way of life would be only partially disrupted, and the latter to the Cold and Canoe Lake bands, who had no alternative trapping or hunting grounds and would be dislocated from their primary income-generating and subsistence activities (see figure 2). In total, the IAB claimed more than \$2.3 million in compensation for the First Nations, not including monies for the “larger problem of rehabilitation. If defence officials “had been labouring under the misapprehension that the land selected for an Air Weapons Range was a useless, deserted piece of country,” the IAB supervisor in Saskatchewan noted in March 1952, these compensation figures served as an ample corrective.¹⁶

Figure 2: Department of Citizenship and Immigration Proposed Compensation Claim, April 1952

Cold Lake and Canoe Lake Bands: 10 years loss of income (no or practically no alternative trap lines available) plus actual cost of improvements.

Heart Lake, Beaver Lake and Goodfish Lake Bands: 5 years loss of income (alternative trap lines available) plus actual cost of improvements.

<i>Band</i>	<i>Population Affected</i>	<i>Equipment</i>	<i>Fish, Fur & Game</i>	<i>Total</i>
Cold Lake	349	\$31 525	\$1 697 250	\$1 728 775
Canoe Lake	117	5555	525 875	531 430
Goodfish Lake	21	1000	26 600	27 600
Heart Lake	14	500	22 150	22 650
Beaver Lake	22	1400	19 189	20 589
Totals	523	\$39 980	\$2 291 064	\$2 331 044

Source: McKay to DM, DCI, 23 Apr 1952, NAC, RG 10, v.7334, f.1/20-9-5 pt.1.

This was a much more attenuated and expensive relationship than the military’s representatives were prepared to accept. Transport negotiators accepted the IAB’s annual compensation figures, but found the proposition exorbitant. They proposed one year’s trapping income: the same as non-Indians. “It seems to me that this operation should be done much more cheaply,” DND deputy minister C.M. Drury noted. “We have incurred nothing like this kind of expense in respect of white trappers elsewhere.” Internally, officials decided that two and a half years compensation would be reasonable, factoring in “special treatment” for First Nations.¹⁷ For the moment, however, DND representations were content to focus on negotiations with other interest groups.

In the spring of 1952, construction crews began work on the airport site just west of Grand Centre and everyone anticipated that the range would be occupied shortly. The affected bands were uncertain about their fate but seemed to support the project in principle. Assistant Indian agent Bill Tunstead played a

pivotal liaison role with the Canoe Lake Cree, and harboured no special sympathies for the military – he had settled in the North to evade war service. He found the band “quite favourable and agreeable” towards the range, given the national interests at stake, so long as it was returned when the air force no longer needed it. Senior IAB officials agreed, but anticipated that the range would expand rather than contract in the foreseeable future. Cold Lake band members also seemed to share a “strong sense” that giving up their access to the lands would be for the “good of the country.” Elder Eva Grandbois later explained that the First Nations “agreed for the Air Force to put a bombing range in there, to be trained and tested ... because it was a good sign. It was good for the Air Force to protect Canada, that's where the Indians' ideas were. So they gave in...”¹⁸ By contrast, Indian Affairs had difficulty securing DND's support for compensation.

For more than two years, Indian Affairs failed to even get a response to their proposal. This owed to protracted leasing negotiations between DND and Saskatchewan and to the bewildering number of federal and provincial departments involved. To cut through this confounding haze, DND asked Indian Affairs to join the negotiations in the fall of 1952. Laval Fortier, the deputy minister at the Department of Citizenship and Immigration (responsible for Indian Affairs from 1950-65), agreed “to negotiate with and on behalf of the Indians concerned.” Indian Affairs faced an uphill battle, given DND's belief that proposed compensation figures were “grossly excessive.” The military refused to concede that the CLAWR would completely depreciate First Nations' rights – or even that the local Indian bands had any long-term rights to the land. The treaties only provided for activities on Crown lands until they were “taken up,” which was evidently happening. Why should the military pay compensation akin to taking reserve lands, especially if the First Nations' rights were “relatively nebulous”? DND officials were not convinced that Indian Affairs was fairly representing their legal obligations, thought that the IAB might be passing off its own responsibilities for rehabilitation.¹⁹

Negotiations with non-Indian trappers and fishermen also proceeded. Fishermen asked for fifteen-years of average income, but Transport and DND offered three to claimants with a legal right to fish, trap or fur farm within the range: officials refused to consider compensation for individuals without licenses. This carefully delimited approach assured that the claims did not swell to unmanageable proportions, and a similar arrangement was proposed for non-Indian trappers.²⁰ Because negotiations with Indian Affairs proceeded separately, and military representatives were reluctant to prejudice their negotiations with non-Indigenous Canadians, the pace was influenced accordingly.

The long delay made local bands increasingly uneasy. “We know, of course, that the fishing and hunting grounds which are included in the airfield taken by the Federal Government did not belong to us,” Chief Jean Piwapiskus of Canoe Lake wrote to Fortier in February 1953, “but as these lands adjoined the Reserve, we used to go there to fish and kill fur-bearing animals. We earned our living particularly in those places. Now that we can no longer go there, we are going to have a harder time making a living.” He requested specific government help for his band: exclusive fishing rights at a nearby lake outside of the range, more land and meadows to raise stock on the reserve, machinery to clear land for gardens and agriculture, money for a farm instructor, and the restocking of lakes. The chief was under no delusions that this transformation could transpire overnight:

In spite of all that help the Government could provide us, it would require many years before those means would bring us sufficient income. For that reason, we are counting on assistance from the Government. The future does not look bright, as fishing is decreasing every year, fur is becoming more and more scarce and prices are low, while the population is increasing. For that reason, we want to try to earn our living by developing the lands we

have. We cannot expect to be kept by the Government, while doing nothing. But until now, we had not thought it necessary to farm and raise animals. It is therefore not surprising that many will regret their old method of providing for themselves. But little by little, they will see the use and necessity of doing like the white people, who do not have large lakes nor hunting grounds and nevertheless succeed in rearing their families. We are counting on you to help us. If you have any suggestions to offer us, we shall be grateful.²¹

He later reaffirmed through the IAA that the band wanted immediate compensation but that they “should be permitted to develop their own initiative and responsibility.” First Nations trappers and band leaders met with regional officials over the following year and expressed frustration with the pervasive uncertainty. Several requested that Indian Affairs – which had internal access to the federal bureaucracy – “act on their behalf until final settlement was reached.” Senior IAB officials obliged; they had already committed to DND that they would play such a role.²²

Indian Affairs officials knew they had to contemplate long-term rehabilitation to sustain the bands at a reasonable quality of life. This program would have to reflect a broader welfare policy aimed at fostering First Nations’ self-reliance not through “harsh admonishment” but through “physically, socially and economically” feasible initiatives.²³ Exactly what tangible steps could be taken, however, remained unclear. Admittedly, the Branch had “not had too much experience in rehabilitating Indians to this extent and not much precedent to go by,” and the superintendent of the IAB Welfare Service H.M. Jones asked his field staff to help devise a plan in April 1952. He faced divergent opinions. Alberta regional supervisor George Gooderham anticipated that cattle raising and mixed farming at Cold Lake would reap material rewards in a few years. By contrast, Saskatchewan supervisor J.P. Ostrander was unenthusiastic about similar prospects at Canoe Lake given a dismal track record in farming, the unsuitability of the reserve lands, and what he considered First Nations’ unfavourable “nature” when it came to agriculture. “I am a little prejudiced in this regard,” Ostrander admitted, “because of having seen so much public money wasted fifteen, twenty, and twenty-five years ago by buying cattle for Indians who had no interest in them and refused to take an interest...” He did not want a capital fund set up to provide permanent relief for band members, “thereby promoting pauperism,” nor did he “like to be a party to spending Government funds on a project which is sure to fail.” In his view, even fishing and trapping were doomed, given resource limitation and band population growth.²⁴

Caught between these polarized replies, Jones cautioned that rehabilitation plans would demand “considerable thought and study.” He saw “one fundamental difference between past experiments of this nature and the present case.” In the past they had offered farming to the First Nations men as “an alternative to their preferred method of making a livelihood while the preferred method was still available to them.” He suggested that they now they had no choice but to give up hunting and trapping. Until compensation monies arrived, however, any rehabilitation programs remained theoretical. DND had still not replied to the IAB’s ten-year compensation proposal in early 1954, and local First Nations communities worried that their access for trapping, wild meat, and fish would be cut off at a moment’s notice.²⁵

These fears were warranted. By mid-summer 1954, airfield engineers had completed a forty-two mile access road through muske and dense bush, tying the remote range to the Cold Lake station. Regional Indigenous residents, who had pursued their traditional activities with little outside interference since signing the treaties, suddenly found much of their traditional territory closed to them. “Although the possibility of anyone in the area being hit by one of the missiles [wa]s very remote,” H.M. Jones explained, the military would not take any chances. There were no fences surrounding the range, only local

announcements that this landscape now constituted a danger area. These new boundaries had immediate repercussions. Anyone caught crossing the range would now be considered a trespasser under the *National Defence Act*. Individuals who had long transited the area to visit relatives and friends now faced exponentially longer journeys.²⁶ Displaced trappers could hardly resume their traditional livelihoods in nearby areas that were already over-utilized. Consequently, Cold Lake and Canoe Lake band members were increasingly confined to their small reserves. To borrow the words of author Hugh Brody, they were “progressively restricted to the edges, and even to pockets at the edges, of the territory” that they had always considered theirs. The economies of the Cold Lake Dene and Canoe Lake Cree communities collapsed almost immediately.²⁷

That fall, the IAB learned from the local member of parliament that the range had been closed. After visiting with First Nations living near the range, Dechêne passed along complaints that the Government of Canada had “been negligent in not protecting their interests.” Senior officials urged DND to take immediate action, citing the acute need for money in the communities and alleging neglect. Chief Abraham Scanie at Cold Lake stressed that the situation on his reserve was dire, their crops had failed, and there were few employment prospects that winter. The band asked Indian Affairs to secure them alternate work or to provide “direct relief.” His band, like that at Canoe Lake, had no alternatives. Dechêne confirmed that conditions were desperate, and advocated immediate action. “These people have no vote,” he reminded DND in mid-November, “but we are responsible for their welfare.”²⁸

Although a comprehensive compensation package was far from settled, a first “interim” payment was in the works. In mid-October 1954, the Minister of National Defence agreed to pay Indians displaced by the range \$39,980 for equipment losses, as well as \$235,799 (one year’s lost income) to affected First Nations communities. The cheque was cut in early 1955. In anticipation, the IAB asked local merchants to supply goods to First Nations families on credit, allowing the government to reduce its relief expenditures. Only the compensation for lost equipment was distributed to individual First Nations men that winter, and the superintendent of welfare administered the money representing lost income through a special trust fund. While negotiations with non-Indian fishermen and trappers continued, IAB officials accepted DND’s position that it would be “inappropriate to endeavour to discuss a definitive settlement in respect to the Indians.” In the meantime, they received another “interim compensation payment” of \$235,799 the next fall.²⁹

The IAB faced conflicting pressures regarding the money. On the one hand, it was obliged to encourage First Nations men to use the compensation wisely. Field officers interviewed the recipients to discern their rehabilitation plans, and generally found them reasonable. Some band leaders also promoted prudence, and initial developments transpired according to IAB intent without excessive intrusion. This was fortuitous because, on the other hand, officials recognized that they held a nebulous legal position in the whole arrangement and had limited administrative capacities.³⁰ Furthermore, several officials feared that too much Branch involvement might create an unwelcome dependency relationship. Large-scale rehabilitation would require supervision, but the Alberta supervisor R.F. Battle cautioned against over-control:

These people have been accustomed to making their own living and I would be reluctant to see a program introduced that would shift the responsibility from their shoulders to this Department. They will be bewildered for some time and if they are forced to constantly turn to officials of the Department every time they are required to make a decision the frustration will set these people back many years. We must avoid the mistakes that occurred

on other reserves in Alberta where the Indians were required to adjust themselves from a hunting and trapping to a ranching and farming economy.³¹

Any rehabilitation programs would take time, and overly paternalistic management could not induce self-sufficiency. Nevertheless, Indian Affairs officials knew they would be held accountable if things did not progress, and that they would be criticized if they did too little - or too much.

Indian Affairs officials were hesitant to distribute the 1954 and 1955 compensation money to local First Nations claimants or to initiate any rehabilitation projects on the Canoe and Cold Lake reserves until they knew how much money they would receive in total. DND refused to commit to a final figure while it dealt with outstanding Métis and “White” claimants, and the “interim” payments sat in a central trust fund.³² After more than a year of lost access, however, the chiefs and councils of the affected bands began to insist that money be distributed to their cash-starved members. This compelled Indian Affairs to act; after all, the Government of Canada had allocated it as compensation. In February 1956, Chief John Iron and the Canoe Lake band decided to distribute 75% of the money to twenty-eight trappers directly displaced by the range, and 25% to eighteen other trappers now increasingly crowded in their existing blocks. Several individuals who attended the meeting later suggested that they had been promised “annual payments” for the duration of the twenty-year lease, but DND officials made no such commitment. Regardless, the band members began to receive monthly cheques of \$25 - comparable to the average welfare allowance for a small family, but not enough to “encourage lack of initiative on their part.” At a claimant’s request, the Indian agent provided vouchers to “purchase household furnishings, food, clothing and equipment with which to pursue their livelihood.” The chief and council at Cold Lake also voted to distribute the money to individuals on a monthly basis, which they expected to continue for five to ten years. By 1957, however, the account was all but depleted.³³

At Cold Lake, Indian Affairs field staff conjured plans for mixed farming and stock raising in particular, but early optimism soon faded into disillusionment. Few Cold Lake residents were full-time farmers before the range was established and the community lacked the experience to create a viable, agricultural economy. Most officials agreed that they would require outside expertise and guidance. In mid-1956, farming assistant G.C. Findlay determined that the reserve could support mixed farming and some band members could reap sustainable returns over the long-term, but he emphasized that landbreaking and seeding practices on the reserve needed to be aligned or integrated with those outside of its boundaries. For most local Indigenous people, he presumed that farming would be seen just as “a change in department policy and they will only have worn out machinery to show for their efforts.”³⁴

The rehabilitation prospects at Canoe Lake differed. The reserve lands were unsuited to agriculture, and the band’s overwhelming dependence on fishing and trapping, coupled with its isolated location, left the IAB struggling to devise alternative economic options. For the most part, the Cree continued to hunt and trap as a primary livelihood in the confined territory now accessible to them. With band consent, the IAB used part of the compensation to buy expanded commercial fishing rights at Keeley (Brule) and Canoe Lakes, and secured a higher moose hunting quota through the province. A few Canoe Lake residents pursued farming and gardening on a limited basis. Nevertheless, officials knew these combined measures were not sustainable. Local initiatives were avowedly “experimental” and *ad hoc*, and no coherent plan for community-level rehabilitation took shape.³⁵

Lacking resources and sufficient creativity, Indian Affairs field staff also felt that their hands were tied. They expressed chronic frustration with choices that local people made, but could not compel

individuals to spend their compensation in a particular way. Fur supervisor R.I. Eklund asserted that rehabilitation could only succeed if the Branch kept “a very firm hand on the spending and adhere[d] to a planned policy, “but his advice to the Cold Lake Indians to deposit their money in a bank proved “wishful thinking” in most cases. Local officials argued that the rampant “squandering” of compensation reinforced the need for Indian Affairs to get involved to curb the meddling of “local residents, church officials, merchants and politicians,”³⁶ but the Government of Canada had no legal basis to do so.

At Cold Lake, the situation had political repercussions. “Chief and council resigned or were forced to resign,” Eklund explained, “and there were several instances of violence in the form of fist fights etc.” The community divided over whether the money should be kept in the trust fund or distributed to individuals. Some people just wanted their cut, band member Amable Scanie later lamented, and “don’t want to share with anybody else.” This disjointedness, compounded by neighbouring non-Indian claims for their slice of the pie, “caused undue stress” on field personnel and precluded a collective approach to economic development. Merchants, who had loaned money or extended credit to band members in anticipation of the settlement, hounded politicians and Indian Affairs when they did not get paid, adding to the administrative confusion.³⁷

For the most part, attempts at agricultural were a dismal failure. In early 1957, the superintendent of welfare decided that the branch would make no further representations to DND for money, “at least until there is some assurance that the money would be put to good use,”³⁸ but then reversed this position almost immediately. Defence officials quickly dispelled the notion that they had agreed to anything akin to “annual payments”; they had never agreed with Indian Affairs’ timelines or its ten-year compensation proposal. DND deputy minister F.D. Millar adopted an increasingly hard line during discussions, even on points that had been readily adopted in the past, such what he now called “excessively high” values used to calculate compensation for domestic fish and game consumption. The proposed basis for DND’s legal compensation was to “effect, as far as practically possible, a fair and equitable” compensation settlement between First Nations, “Whites,” and Métis, not to rehabilitate First Nations communities. If Indian Affairs wanted more money, they could appeal to parliament for a special allowance.³⁹

Métis compensation proved particularly problematic. When the lease agreements were drafted, the Saskatchewan government highlighted that a large number of Métis relied on fur and fish industries and, because they did not fall under federal jurisdiction or the *Indian Act*, the province would be responsible for social assistance and rehabilitation programs. These considerations factored into provincial compensation. The federal government conducted its negotiations with Métis fishermen, trappers and fur farmers along the same lines as other non-Indians who received up to three years net earnings for the “business disturbance.” When Métis claimants in the Canoe Lake area began to compare their compensation, equality and fairness issues quickly emerged. The average settlement for a Métis trapper or fishermen represented only *thirteen* percent of that paid to treaty Indians, mostly because they could not claim compensation for lost domestic consumption. Why had the Métis received less money than their treaty Indian neighbours, the Saskatchewan government asked? “In our opinion, there is very little, if any, difference between the Indian and the Métis people,” the deputy minister of Natural Resources queried. “They look alike, they live alike, they act alike and they make their living in exactly the same way.” The only difference was that the Indians had Treaty cards, and this hardly seemed a reason to differentiate over compensation.⁴⁰ Any discrimination seemed unfair to provincial authorities, who for self-interested reasons knew that if the Métis compensation was inadequate they would have to pick up the tab.

Transport officials who visited the area found that most Métis trappers and fishermen in northern Saskatchewan refused or returned their compensation cheques.⁴¹ What “real” difference justified the considerable difference in compensation? Indian Affairs officials advised their field officers not to divulge any information to non-Indians because it might precipitate an unwanted discussion about treaty rights. For the IAB, treaty Indian status meant special considerations. Representatives of the Canoe Lake Métis Association felt otherwise, and lobbied provincial and federal politicians to address what they saw as unfair discrimination. They found an ally in John Harrison, the member of parliament for Meadow Lake, who gathered from his discussions with Transport officials that the high payments made to the Indians resulted from bureaucratic confusion, not intent. He also learned that Treasury Board officials were “very unhappy at the exceeding liberal compensation arranged for the Indians by the Indian Department,” particularly at Canoe Lake where fishing had been largely unaffected. The Board did not want to assume additional responsibility for non-treaty groups with comparable experiences. Harrison took strong exception to their logic:

Here’s where I had the battle with them this afternoon, and over the point that the Indians had been paid well because it interfered with their whole livelihood and way of life, but that the Métis and others had not been nearly so much interfered with because they had other interests and a different way of life than the Indians – in short, they had not lost as much as the Indians and were not entitled to as much compensation. I certainly took issue with this because anyone with first-hand knowledge knows that the way of life of the Indian and the Métis is identical in that area I suggested that I bring an Indian and a Métis down here from Canoe Lake, and I would guarantee that they would not know which was which. This is something that I will have to convince the Minister of National Defence of if I am to obtain anything like an equitable settlement.⁴²

He succeeded in convincing DND that the Métis, while Canadian citizens, were more similar to the First Nations than to non-Indigenous Canadians. Accordingly, Treasury Board authorized *ex gratia* compensation in May 1957 that doubled the average Métis settlement to \$850.⁴³

While DND tried to bring the Métis up to a respectable level compared to treaty Indians, the IAB pushed for even more compensation. As the CLAWR trust fund shrank, Indian Affairs was forced to cover monthly payments and support local farming initiatives using its welfare budget. In 1958, the Branch was besieged by demands from the Indian Association of Alberta, Indian bands who saw the Métis getting additional money, local businesspeople claiming restitution for unpaid Indian accounts, and regional staff trying to cope with faltering economic schemes. The Cold Lake band passed a flurry of resolutions in February, demanding a “livelihood for a livelihood,” higher annual compensation, equal payments to all band members, and special provisions for the elderly. They held that non-Indigenous trappers, who only visited the range sporadically, received compensation based on three years income. Why not the First Nations, who had “occupied the area from time immemorial” and stayed there for most of the year, hunting, trapping, fishing, haying, logging, picking berries, and even gardening? “Whereas we lost everything for the common good and Defence of Canada,” another resolution lamented, and while the federal government was “generous with moneys when helping the Poor Countries of Asia (Colombo Plan) [and] when helping Hungarian Refugees,” the Cold Lake band argued that its members had received little for their plight. “Charity should begin at home,” they pleaded, “and Justice should never be forgotten.” Some band members now threatened to reoccupy the range, “regardless of the risks involved.” After all, if one side reneged on its promises, why should the other be bound to theirs? While careful to avoid promises they could not keep, Indian Affairs officials agreed that at least one more annual payment was warranted.⁴⁴

The matter reached the House of Commons in late summer. J.W. Pickersgill, the former Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, questioned if his successor Ellen Fairclough had settled “the Cold Lake business.” He admitted that he left her with “a terrible mess, ... because the Minister of National Defence was not showing the generosity towards the Indians which I thought he should show and we never were able to reach a settlement.” He knew it was a complicated issue, but reasoned that “where an injury is done to an Indian trap line or an Indian’s trapping rights the department seeks compensation from the person responsible for the injury,” where a person or a government. Fairclough agreed in principle and delegated the matter to the civil servants in her department, who pleaded to DND that “one would not expect that two years income would be adequate compensation to a person forced to give up his way of life and compelled to seek a new vocation for which he had little inclination and no training.” Defence officials remained adamant that they had already paid “generous compensation” and discharged their duties to the Indians. According to F.R. Millar’s calculations, the existing compensation equated to “\$978 for every man, woman and child [in the five Indian bands], or approximately \$3,900 for each income-earning male.” These amounts exceeded government net spending on rehabilitation programs like the Veteran’s Land Act or Veterans Vocational Training, as well as average compensation paid to Métis and non-Indigenous Canadians with similar interests in the range. In short, Defence officials argued that they had already paid much more *per capita* to First Nations than to any other group and, in Ottawa’s division of responsibilities, First Nations welfare and rehabilitation fell under Indian Affairs’ mandate, not DND’s.⁴⁵

Frustrated by his inability to proceed frontally, IAB Director H.M. Jones tried to flank the military. In late 1958, he appealed directly to the Treasury Board to double the compensation. National Defence cut him off at the Cabinet level. While Indian Affairs’ submission chronicled developments leading to the impasse, the military crafted a rebuttal rooted in perceived principles and policy, alleged IAB excesses, and the rhetoric of discharged legal obligations. “The claims assume that the way of life has been disturbed to a greater extent than is evidenced locally,” the DND submission noted derisively, and “the rights, for which the monetary claims are made, have, in some instances, but token worth in practice.” The military’s position was bolstered by the apparent “wealth” of the treaty Indian claimants, which was “particularly offensive” to the Métis who shared “equally in the returns from the forest and stream” but had received a smaller settlement. The Métis would logically demand more money if the military doled out “still more favourable treatment” to local First Nations, placing DND in an untenable position. If Indians Affairs felt that it had additional responsibility to the First Nations owing to their “special status,” DND insisted that it should provide for it in their budget estimates and “defend it as a matter of policy.” The majority of Cabinet ministers concurred that Indian and non-Indian compensation schemes should be kept at relative parity and Treasury Board rejected the IAB’s claim.⁴⁶

Jones conceded defeat, and told his staff that they would need to “salvage the situation” using internal resources. Fortunately for the IAB and the bands, deputy minister Laval Fortier stepped in and recast his department’s position more rigorously and emphatically. The government’s legal and moral obligations were not as clear cut as DND suggested, and Fortier’s supplementary submission refuted (or at least problematized) the military’s arguments. Based on her deputy minister’s assessment, Minister Fairclough urged Cabinet to reconsider the Treasury Board decision, stressing that the Indians’ lives had been “totally depreciated” and that the *status quo* would “lead to endless recriminations reflecting unfavourably on the government.” More viscerally, she noted that “the Indians have had a raw deal on this matter,” and she wanted to look after their interests.⁴⁷

Moral obligations were distinct from legal rights. The Department of Justice decided in early 1960 that the Indians had no legal rights to special compensation on the basis of the *Natural Resources Transfer Agreements*. After the range was created and the lands were “occupied,” the bands’ legally enforceable rights to hunt and fish for food had ceased.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, DND officials recognized that only a compromise would stop Indian Affairs’ perpetual badgering. Although they had adamantly refused to pay more money based on “the accepted principles of compensation for disturbance,” Defence officials conceded that one more payment might be acceptable in principle. Upping the total First Nations compensation would make it even more disproportionate compared to non-Indian cases, but this solution would be more equitable in the number of years paid. Officials knew that the Métis would construe an additional payment as “preferential treatment” and this would lead inevitably to more claims. Nevertheless, they would compromise if this “extinguished,” once and for all, the contention that their compensation to the treaty Indians was inadequate.⁴⁹

Indian Affairs also had to compromise and acknowledge that this payment would release DND from any further claims. The final compensation would be about \$750,000; far short of the \$2.3 million that the IAB had originally anticipated. Jones was disappointed. “After this long delay and prolonged negotiations,” he lamented, his department was “expected to arrange with the Indians ... [the] acceptance of an offer, the adequacy of which ... will be questioned by both the Indians and persons who are interested in the question of their removal from the area.” The First Nations had been deprived of their livelihood, waited too long for their money, and rehabilitation planning had proven impossible. Jones considered it a “raw deal,” but he was consoled that “everything humanely possible was done at the administrative level to arrange a just and reasonable settlement on their behalf.”⁵⁰ Faced with an all or nothing proposition, Indian Affairs had little choice but to consent to the military’s final offer.

Although Indian Affairs had won a final skirmish for additional compensation, it had lost the war over rehabilitation. There was little likelihood that federal officials outside of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration would have entertained indefinite payments of the magnitude envisioned by the IAB given the prevailing interpretations of Indian rights. In this particular case, had DND not met its legal obligations to the satisfaction of Cabinet? Had it not compensated First Nations for three years of domestic fish, meat and fur consumption, a premium not available to any other group? On an individual basis, had First Nations claimants not received much higher average payments than non-Native and Métis claimants? Nevertheless, this arguments found little empathy in First Nations communities.

Before Treasury Board would authorize the last compensation payment, Indian Affairs had to obtain written consent from the five bands involved. Accordingly, the Alberta supervisor and the local superintendent discussed the proposal with the Cold Lake band in mid-September 1960. It was presented as a *fait accompli*, the result of intensive negotiations between DND and Indian Affairs. The money would be turned over to the band members “with no strings,” but before any cheques were distributed they would have to “agree that this is final – the end.” When interpreter Ernest Ennow reminded the supervisor that you need “both parties” to make an agreement, he was told that they could either accept the amount proposed “or it is all finished.” Ironically, this message bore striking resemblance to the ultimatum that Indian Affairs had received from DND. A dejected Ed Grandbois stated that they had “waited so long now and I am willing to sign releases as the land is not any use to us now.” Dominic Jacko suggested to officials that they had been “promised at least five payments,” but the meeting learned that the military never intended this. Furthermore, officials tried to explain that the number of payments was irrelevant – the actual amount of money was foremost – and this new proposal was not an annual payment but a final settlement.

“Let’s understand that this is the final payment you can’t come back next year and ask for more,” band member Simon Martin clarified. The supervisor affirmed this was correct.⁵¹ As some oral histories reveal, some band members do not recall that this was intended as a final payment.

There is no dispute, however, Cold Lake band held a meeting and decided to accept the government’s proposal. “We need the money in the worst way,” Chief Pierre Metchewais explained, “so when we take the vote we should support the agreement.” The document that the band members had to sign to receive compensation clearly stipulated that this was a “last and final payment” and signatories pledged to “agree to make no further claim on the government of Canada for loss of rights” in the range. It was translated into Cree in hopes that everyone would understand its provisions.⁵² Ernest Ennow later described the event:

I said that, don’t touch it; well, Indian Affairs says: Well, okay, this is what we have to offer you. Take it or leave it, sort of thing. So a lot of the people were so frustrated from all this impasse of waiting that they were willing to grab anything. Not all, but a few went, okay, you sign here, and you’ll get your cheque. So then the line-up began. One or two signed. Then the line-up got a little longer. And this is not what – for three years I had worked on this. This is not what I wanted. I walked out. I wasn’t involved anyway. I didn’t have a cheque there. So everything I tried to do, to me went down the drain, so I walked out.⁵³

In the end, all seventy-nine trappers present marked or signed the form. Whether they understood the full implications or not, they needed the money - and signing the form was the only way to get it.

A parallel meeting held at Canoe Lake produced a similar outcome. After considerable discussion in Cree, the band council passed a resolution agreeing “to accept our share” of the payments “as a final and complete settlement.” It added that “the amount specified is a fair and reasonable payment.” A majority of the trappers attended and unanimously agreed to the payment offer and signed releases. Like their counterparts at Cold Lake, they faced a “practical compulsion” to accept whatever they could get.⁵⁴

Figure 3: Actual Compensation Payments, 1955-61

<i>Band</i>	<i>Families (1955)</i>	<i>Pop. (1955)</i>	<i>Improve- ments</i>	<i>Annual Income Payments</i>			<i>Total Payments</i>
				<i>1955</i>	<i>1956</i>	<i>1961</i>	
Cold Lake	89	377	\$31 525	\$169 725	\$169 725	\$169 725	\$540 700
Canoe Lake	29	94	5555	51 244	51 244	51 244	159 227
Beaver Lake	9	17	1400	7860	7860	7860	24 980
Heart Lake	5	16	500	4330	4330	4330	13 490
Goodfish Lk	3	14	1000	2660	2660	2660	8 980
Totals	134	518	\$39 980	\$235 799	\$235 799	\$235 799	\$747 377

Source: OSCAR/IAA, “The Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range,” October 1983, 8, in ICC, box 3, f.2108-5-1-17, folder 5.

When individuals received their cheques in January 1961, they were asked to sign “quit claims” proclaiming that the money represented “full and final settlement of my claim for compensation arising from the establishment of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range.” Most signed or marked the release

forms, received their money, and were encouraged to undertake a “personal rehabilitation program.”⁵⁵ A few Indians apparently refused to sign the forms, including Canoe Lake councillor Leon Iron, who later explained in the land claims context:

The people around me told me I would not receive anything if I did not cooperate. Everyone was so poor. When they saw the cheques they were desperate. We saw the money, we were desperate. But I was scared when I was told it would be the final payment and I also read the contents of the release. I refused to sign. I advised the Chief we should not sign, and he agreed with me. But he was under intense pressure to cooperate.... The people were afraid. They stated that we would not receive anything if we did not cooperate. They did not understand the quitclaim. They thought it was a receipt for a cheque.⁵⁶

He cashed his cheque like the others, but he continued to press for more compensation during the 1960s.

In several of the oral historians contained in this volume, signatories alleged that they did not understand what they were signing. Whatever the case, the Indian Claims Commission later questioned the legality (and morality) of the government seeking a self-serving release from the Indians without giving them a “realistic alternative.” In short, whether the band members understood what they were signing, the commissioners concluded that the process still breached the government’s fiduciary obligations, and that people should never have been asked to sign a quit claim.⁵⁷

At the time, the additional payment had a domino affect and aroused complaints from Métis claimants. In the early 1960s, representatives from Beauval, Canoe Narrows, Jans Bay, Cole Bay, and other Métis settlements demanded more equitable compensation. The Canoe Lake Métis Association retained a lawyer to plead their case, stressing the government’s moral obligations. Officials noted that 110 Métis had already signed full releases and had no legal claim, but like their Indian “relatives” they had hunted and fished on the range area so “moral claims” could justify another payment. In 1962, DND distributed a final *ex gratia* payment of \$107,800 to 112 Métis, bringing their average compensation to \$1604 – equal to the average non-Indigenous compensation amount, but still far below the First Nations figures. Again the Métis signed waivers releasing the government from further claims, and some later claimed to have misunderstood these documents.⁵⁸

When news of these “secret” payments circulated back to the First Nations communities, it again fed expectations of additional compensation. Canoe Lake Chief John Iron wanted to know “why we treaty Indians didn’t get any money, because the half-breeds got theirs and also the Beaval [*sic*] people,” and asked Indian Affairs to get them their money. He was told that they had already accepted their final payments and agreed to relinquish all future claims. Concerns lingered nonetheless that they had been treated unfairly and received less money than the Métis. Although this assertion was not based on actual compensation figures, the perception of inequity continued to feed resentment. The government emphasized that it had settled with the bands and the Métis, but claimants continued to press the federal government for further compensation through the 1960s. Councillor Leon Iron repeated that Canoe Lake residents had no wage-earning opportunities now that the trapping and fishing was gone, and that had only “surrender[ed] our rights” on the understanding that “we would get compensation for the land as long as it was being used” as a firing range. Indian Affairs forwarded further claims to DND, and even suggested at one point that it had never guaranteed all legitimate Indian claims were settled, but the military refused to negotiate any further.⁵⁹

The impacts of the range on neighbouring Aboriginal communities were multifaceted, and in some cases catastrophic. Some First Nations men found temporary employment constructing the air force base,

and a few longer-term jobs working there, but the corresponding inflow of money into the community did not compensate for the loss of trapping and fishing income.⁶⁰ “Jobs were offered to those who wanted to work on the Cold Lake Air Base, but they had no training,” Jose Azila explained in his assessment of community development at Cold Lake. “They were not accustomed to being on clock time for everything. Their philosophy of life was entirely different; they worked when they felt like it; they had no time limit to go to sleep or to get up; they ate when they were hungry. Nevertheless, some of them accepted work on the Base, but, one by one, they quit.” The cultural chasm between the air force and Indigenous communities was too wide, despite their geographical proximity. By 1969, only two men from the Cold Lake reserve worked at CFB Cold Lake, and by 1974 only one.⁶¹ In other ways, DND tried to cooperate with the bands without disrupting air training operations. From 1958 onward, for example, they allowed limited First Nations hunting and fishing access to the CLAWR, particularly during holiday seasons. Indian fishermen landed impressive returns during these periods, but most complained it was not enough.⁶² The freedom they had enjoyed prior to the creation of the range had vanished.

As oral histories in this volume reveal, elders later testified to the Indian Claims Commission that the inevitable introduction of welfare after the last compensation cheques were spent had devastating implications for their communities. Chief Leon Iron of Canoe Lake explained that his peoples’ “initiative was killed,” leading to shame and embarrassment. “I was used to earning my own living, not receiving welfare.” Similarly, the loss of access to traditional food sources forced dependence on outside goods and further eroded their subsistence economy. Cold Lake member Eva Grandbois explained that her people no longer had access to their traditional “Indian bank” – the land –and thus had no other option but to collect relief.⁶³ For its part, the IAB provided further assistance to the Canoe and Cold Lake bands from its community and economic development budgets, but it ended up paying out much more welfare than development money. “[T]he scale of welfare assistance has been increased as a means of alleviating the immediate problem,” the Minister’s special assistant Len Marchand told the Canoe Lake chief in October 1965, “and the department is attempting the long-term solution by the establishment of a new approach centred around the community itself.” Nothing happened quickly, and both reserves fell deeper into dependency. In the late 1960s, the landmark Hawthorne Report observed that the per capita income at Cold Lake was a mere \$165, 88% of males were unemployed for more than six months of the year, and 89.3% of households were dependent upon welfare. The statistics at Canoe Lake were not much better.⁶⁴

The negative impacts extended beyond the material realm. “Eventually, people turned to alcohol,” Canoe Lake elder Leon Iron explained. “Young men who used to hunt, fish, had nothing to do, so they started drinking. It was the first indication of community decay, and a major symptom of the damage inflicted on us. Once the land was gone, we no longer had anything to do.”⁶⁵ Elders’ testimonies also suggest that the loss of the lands had gendered and generational impacts, and community spirit “died.” “The traditional means of livelihood [at Cold Lake was] gone, and having been stung by false government agreement,” a Cold Lake resident reported to the National Indian Council in 1965. “A man’s prowess once measured by his hunting and trapping skill, has now all but disappeared.”⁶⁶ Traditional gender roles were directly challenged by the emergent welfare society. Cold Lake elder Allan Jacob later reflected:

To me [my father] was a hero. I looked up to this man - all five-foot five of him. Loved him dearly. That was his simple symbol of manhood, going up north, doing what he did. Even with less experience than other hunters and trappers, he was still doing okay. He was a man's man. But after they took that away from him, things fell apart.

He will forgive me if I say that he got further and further into the alcohol problem. The family fell apart.... This is an illustration that Primrose Lake was everything that the people needed to practise livelihood, to be a man ... My father had cattle and little by little the cattle disappeared. The implements that he had bought, they also disappeared, and nothing is left of his homestead now.⁶⁷

Furthermore, women lost access to medicinal herbs and berries, and children were cut off from the land and the imperative or opportunity to learn traditional skills. Longstanding family roles and partnerships dissolved.⁶⁸

There is no doubt that the establishment of the CLAWR disrupted traditional rhythms of Indigenous life and values. Furthermore, the rehabilitation programs on the reserves failed.⁶⁹ Although other Indigenous groups in northern Saskatchewan and Alberta also faced difficult socio-economic situations in the late 1950s and 60s when the traditional trapping economy collapsed,⁷⁰ Dene, Cree, and Métis communities near the CLAWR had a focal point for their individual and collective angst. The loss of trapping, hunting and fishing rights affected the various groups with varying severity, but they developed a shared sense that the loss of access to their traditional territory reduced opportunities for food harvesting and commercial activities. As the oral histories in this volume affirm, elders recalled summers on the land close off for the range that were marked by a pervasive spirit of kinship, sharing, harmony, respect, self-esteem, and self-sufficiency. After First Nations lose access to the range, communities became more divided internally, morale collapsed, dependency became entrenched. Self-destructive patterns ensued. In its detailed assessment of the Cold Lake and Canoe Lake claims, the Indian Claims Commission concluded that, within a single generation, “self-reliant and productive group[s] of people became largely dependent upon welfare payments. The cumulative impact [of the CLAWR’s creation] was to destroy the communit[ies] as ... functioning social and economic unit[s].”⁷¹ Oral histories and the archival record leave little doubt that this was the case. When the RCAF established the range, local Indigenous people lost access to an important outlet to express their identities. After all, even when the fur trade ceased to return sufficient profits to sustain families, it still afforded trappers a way to “protest that use[d] the white man’s welfare ... to continue a traditional way of life.”⁷² With no access to established trapping and hunting areas, people lost this too.

Initiating First Nations Land Claims related to the CLAWR, 1970s-80s

In the 1970s, the federal government adopted a new policy in which it would negotiate “specific claims” stemming from lawful obligations regarding the administration of land and other Indian assets and to the fulfillment of Indian treaties.⁷³ Like early treaties, land claim negotiations would take place on the federal government’s terms. Government officials in an Office of Native Claims decided which claims were accepted and rejected. Critics suggest that this placed “Indian affairs in a clear conflict of interest as funding agent, defence counsel, judge and jury,”⁷⁴ but this change meant that bands could draw upon Crown monies to research historic claims in government archives, amass oral histories, and hire lawyers to develop submissions.

In the early 1970s, the military’s twenty-year leases with the provincial governments for the CLAWR were due to expire and the parties sat down to renegotiate. Indigenous voices asserted that the leases promised to return the land at the end of the term. Indian Affairs appeared sympathetic to their plight, but the agreements contained no such promise. It seemed unjust that the provinces would be getting more money, however, while the people actually displaced by the range would not. The Cold Lake, Canoe Lake,

Peter Pond Lake, and Waterhen Lake bands, with the support of the Indian Association of Alberta and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, retained lawyers and began to research a land claim, but their access to the “heavily restricted” Indian Affairs records was limited. This left their documentary history somewhat thin, but they felt that it demonstrated an outstanding legal obligation on the part of the Crown. In April 1975, they submitted their joint “Primrose Lake Bombing Range Claim” to the government.⁷⁵

The bands based their argument for an additional financial settlement on three principles. First, they asserted that the “quit claims” were not properly interpreted, were the products of coercion, and thus did not terminate their rights in the CLAWR. Second, they believed that they had not been adequately compensated for their loss of rights and livelihood on an individual or a collective basis. Some people, they suggested, had not been involved in any compensation scheme. Third, they alleged that the federal government had failed to fulfill its “trustee responsibilities at the time of the negotiation in the 50’s and therefore the Federal Government has a responsibility today to make good past misdeeds.” The claim concluded that these points represented a “betrayal of trust.”⁷⁶ Additional compensation for the loss of access to the range could also facilitate future development. “From a working point of view,” Lou Lockhart, the legal counsel for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians explained at a 1975 meeting with DND and DIAND officials, “the immediate concern from the bands ... is to get on with improving their economic and social status through jobs, employment and economic royalties.”⁷⁷

Before the end of the year, the Minister of Indian Affairs rejected their claim because it did not fall within “the strictly legal criteria by which claims can now be considered.” While the Canoe and Cold Lake bands would continue to pursue their claim nonetheless, they also sought greater access to the PLAWR for hunting, fishing, trapping, and lumbering. By 1977, they managed to negotiate short-term access arrangements with the RCAF that evolved into more regular fishing, trapping and hunting during statutory holiday seasons organized cooperatively by air force officers and Saskatchewan Indian and Métis leaders.⁷⁸

Through the 1970s, the bands also continued to quietly pursue their main compensation claim. Most of the Indian Affairs documentation remained classified and thus unavailable to them, but the First Nations took local steps to build their case. From 1972-74, the Indian Association of Alberta treaty research group interviewed Cold Lake trappers and formally recorded their statements on the socio-economic impacts of the PLAWR. Transcripts of these interviews appear in section one of this volume.

In 1977, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians Nations (FSIN), representing the Canoe Lake band, retained law student Delia Opekokew to assess their claim. Following a series of six meetings with Canoe and Cold Lake band members, she noted that they remained frustrated. She came away dejected:

In assessing the factual and legal situation at the time, I was deeply affected by the inability of the band members to properly advance their concerns in the matter, procedurally. They were frustrated and hurt that they had never been properly compensated, that their source of livelihood had been reduced without any alternative economic development provisions, and that the lands were still being used. They related their concerns to me in Cree. The Chief at the time, Chief John Iron, who also was the Chief during the 1950’s, only spoke Cree, and the persons directly affected spoke Cree except for one person who spoke both English and Cree. Because I was originally from the community, I spoke Cree, and yet I was frustrated because I could not properly convey to them their options for action. By the end of the summer, it was my opinion that they had grounds to take legal action, and/or to request an inquiry. Both recommendations were difficult to translate. The Chief ... did not pursue my recommendation because he did not appear to understand me and he did not

appear to have the total confidence in my recommendations as others were recommending negotiations. However, at this time, the FSIN was boycotting the [Office of Native Claims], and there was no other route for the settlement of a claim.

The Canoe Lake band was advised to conduct economic impact and feasibility studies, but they lacked the “skilled resources” to do so.⁷⁹ While the informal agreements with DND secured limited access to the range, the land claim remained a work-in-progress while band leaders focused their attention on short-term employment opportunities related to oil developments.⁸⁰

The CLAWR entered the national spotlight in the early 1980s when the Government of Canada signed an umbrella agreement with the U.S. that permitted cruise missile testing in Canadian aerospace. This state-of-the-art nuclear delivery system would be tested on the CLAWR. This northern landscape, selected because it most resembled Soviet terrain, was well suited to trials of a surreptitious weapon designed to skim the earth, underneath enemy radar cover, to deliver its payloads. Pacifist and media antennae tracked the issue, however, and the ensuing debate emphasized the plight of local residents directly affected by military activities. In *The Nuclear North*, Carole Giangrande depicted Indigenous peoples (and particularly the Métis) as the quintessential victims of Canada’s military-industrial complex. The new weapon was “mysterious and unknown” to them, she reported, and was a threat to their traditional ways of life. Cruise missiles not only threatened to destabilize the international system, but their actual testing perpetuated a grievous injustice on trapping and fishing communities who were denied access to lands “illegally taken from them.” Local First Nations and Métis leadership wrote letters to politicians and federal departments, seizing the opportunity to push their claims, and local band members and peace activists demonstrated at the range boundary during the summer of 1984, drawing national media attention to their cause.⁸¹

This growing interest also brought new momentum to Indigenous claims related to the CLAWR, and the Canoe Lake band resolved to renew their “land claim or litigation to achieve just compensation for all damage” caused by the creation of the weapons range. Band lawyer Delia Opekokew interviewed elders about their experiences in June 1985, the transcripts of which appear in section two of this volume. “I was impressed by the sincerity of their beliefs, and determination to see this matter through,” she later reflected. “It was as if some of the older members were determinedly staying alive in order to see this thing through. They had been wronged and they want justice.” The local bands re-submitted their specific claim, but Indian Affairs again rejected it for failing to establish any legal abrogation of treaty rights. This left the First Nations with the courts as their only recourse to pursue their outstanding grievances at that time.⁸²

During this period, land claims consultants hired by First Nations also continued to conduct interviews with elders. For example, land claims consultant Tony Mandamin interviewed Cold Lake elder Ernest Ennow in June 1990, which is reproduced in section 3.

Initiating Métis Land Claims related to the CLAWR, 1970s-80s

Vye Bouvier, in an article on “The Metis People versus the Bombing Range” written for the Métis magazine *Newbreed Journal* in 1983, provided an essential overview of Métis claims related to the CLAWR. “It is the validity of extinguishment of the aboriginal rights of the Northwestern Saskatchewan Metis which is in dispute in the battle over the Primrose Bombing Range between the people of the area and the DND,” Bouvier asserted. “Having signed away its legal rights, the province is powerless to negotiate with the federal government for the Metis of the area. As recent documents show, present day

government officials cannot fathom the issue of unextinguished aboriginal rights brought up by the Métis whenever the Primrose Bombing Range is discussed.” His summary of Métis perspectives on the establishment of the range noted how the Government of Canada paid compensation in 1957 and 1962 to trappers and fishers of Jans Bay, Cole Bay, and Beauval, but overlooked three Dene settlements on the northern border of the range as well as the villages of Île-à-la-Crosse and Buffalo Narrows, located thirty to sixty miles from the CLAWR.⁸³

Bouvier chronicled how Métis from the region proposed their first committee to pursue claims to the CLAWR in early 1974, in anticipation of upcoming federal-provincial negotiations on amendments to the 1953 agreement. Led by Lawrence Yew, a Northern Municipal Council (NMC) councillor who was originally from Jans Bay and whose father had signed a release form in connection with the CLAWR, the first meeting was held in Jans Bay on 9 March 1974. Two representatives from each village of Cole Bay, Jans Bay, and Beauval served on the committee, and twenty-two residents of Jans Bay and Cold Bay attended. The NMC granted \$2500 to the Primrose Air Weapons Range Negotiating Committee “to act as spokesman and to study and determine the type of agreement that we should arrive at regarding the “bombing range.” In turn, it used the funding to hold interviews (which I have been unable to locate as of 31 March 2021) and area meetings and to prepare position papers. Over the next two years, legal counsel Myron Kuziak and freelance researcher Larry Sanders supported the committee in preparing briefs, letters, statements, and research reports to lay the groundwork for future discussions on Métis claims. As Bouvier summarized,

A brief on Native Land Claims, prepared in 1974 by Kuziak, discussed the validity of the “agreement” between the Métis and the federal government. The validity of the agreement could be attacked on several grounds, “all on the underlying basis that there never were any true agreements... on the essential terms necessary to constitute valid agreements. One ground is that the Native signatories to the agreement did not understand or know the true character of the agreements. The true character of same was signing away or releasing of their aboriginal rights, both on behalf of themselves and their children and grandchildren for the payment of a minimal sum of money.” Another ground was that “... there may also be a case of fraudulent misrepresentation against the Dominion Government because of the actual assertion made to many of the Native signatories by government representatives and officials that the Primrose Air Weapons Range agreement would only deprive the Native Peoples of their rights in and to the area for only ten years or so... It is clear from the Agreements that the compensation was to preclude claims by heirs of the Native signatories. This demonstrates that the Government had considered the long term or permanent nature of the loss, while the Natives were never so informed and in fact informed to the contrary.”

The following year, the Northern Municipal Council produced a position paper laying out their initial bargaining position, suggesting that the Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan had inherited responsibilities for Indigenous claims when they assumed control of Crown lands in 1930. It also insisted that “for the government to argue against a review of compensation today on strictly legal grounds...is to use the law, and a European or foreign law at that, as a shield to hide behind to avoid confronting the equitable nature of Métis claims.” The Primrose Air Weapons Range Negotiating Committee briefed these arguments during the federal-provincial government negotiations in late spring, requesting input into the revised “agreement” being negotiated for the CLAWR and requesting an “Economic Development Fund” to support Métis in the area. Bouvier noted that “the brief concluded with an integral assumption that the Native people of the area, by right of unextinguished aboriginal title, still have legitimate rights to the

resources and land of the air weapons range.” The Métis were not included in subsequent negotiations that led to a five-year federal-provincial agreement, however, and the proposed developed funding did not come to fruition. Accordingly, the Negotiating Committee stopped working on the air weapons range issue in 1977.

In January 1981, with another round of federal-provincial negotiations impending, the Métis formed another Primrose Air Weapons Range Committee consisted of two people from each of the six villages bordering the air weapons range. Lawrence Yew, who now worked for the Department of Northern Saskatchewan (DNS) as the Special Advisor to Local Governments, again played a formative role. The committee received a \$10,000 grant from DNS to conduct hearings in the villages closest to the air weapons range so that it could “research and develop a position that reflects the objectives of the area’s Métis residents, so that they will benefit directly from any future agreement.” Bouvier recorded the minutes of meetings held six villages in the spring and summer of 1981, which I have yet to locate. He suggests that these “revealed nothing that the 1974-76 Negotiating Committee had not come across,” but that:

recent events had, however, forced the St. Georges Hill and Michel Village people to ask for more compensation. The crash of an airforce jet near the northern boundary of the CLAWR started a fire which spread beyond the range. Several trappers from St. Georges Hill and Michel Village suffered losses of up to \$4000 in cabins and equipment. Their trap-lines were also ruined. A letter was sent to Doug Anguish, NDP—MP, and he in turn sent a letter to National Defense Minister Gilles Lamontagne. These trappers have yet to be remunerated.

The brief produced after these community meetings, which the Primrose Air Weapons Range Committee officially adopted at a 4 September 1981 meeting, demanded that Métis have:

- Access to the fur, fish and timber of the area;
- A share in the royalties the provincial government receives for the loss of revenue from the use of resources in the CLAWR;
- A share in the future royalties the government may receive from the extraction of potential gas and oil deposits in the area;
- To ask for our land back (ie, aboriginal rights)

Lew invited the local member of parliament, member of the legislative assembly of Saskatchewan, an inter-governmental affairs representative, and a DND official to attend a meeting to discuss these Métis demands, but none of the government officials replied to his letter. Bouvier notes that “the committee folded when it ran out of funds and did not get to present their position to government.” Again, the Métis claim to the CLAWR was left in abeyance.

I have been unable to locate transcripts of the oral history interviews conducted by the Primrose Air Weapons Range Negotiating Committees in 1974-75 or 1981. Efforts could be made to determine whether they still exist through the Saskatchewan Métis Nation.

The Indian Claims Commission

The First Nations affected by the creation of the CLAWR found a new venue to plead their case in the 1990s. In the aftermath of Meech Lake and Oka, the federal government created an independent Indian Claims Commission (ICC) to investigate specific claims that had been rejected by the federal government. The first claims it agreed to review were those of the Cold and Canoe Lake First Nations. The ICC adopted

a broad mandate, reviewed more than 6600 pages of documents, and held community sessions to ensure First Nations participation. Elders told stories of an idyllic life shattered by neglect and betrayal when the range was created, of the government's pithy approach to compensation and rehabilitation, and of the dysfunctional communities it produced. Transcripts of these interviews appear as sections four and five in this volume, and extracts from the Cold Lake First Nations witnesses' testimonies are included in section seven.

The ICC concluded that although Canada had the right to take up land under the treaties "from time to time," it had breached its treaty obligations to the bands by "taking up such a large tract of land so abruptly, decimating the economy of the Canoe Lake and Cold Lake people, and destroying their way of life." Furthermore, Indian Affairs had "failed in its duty to represent and inform" the Indians and had irresponsibly abandoned economic rehabilitation. Compensation was inadequate, and even if the government's failure was "less deliberate than misguided or perhaps negligent," it had "dreadful consequences."⁸⁴ The ICC thus recommended that the government accept the claims for negotiation. Its decision was not binding, but placed the onus on DND and INAC to proceed.

Although the Crown did not recognize outstanding legal liability, Cabinet decided to negotiate a settlement. In March 1995, the Ministers of Indian Affairs and National Defence announced that they would deal with Cold Lake and Canoe Lake Cree First Nation grievances as special cases outside of the specific claims process, "due to the unusually severe impacts" the range had on these communities.⁸⁵ There were other considerations. If the military helped to resolve the First Nations' grievances, it would lessen their inclination to interfere with air force training operations. Furthermore, given the ICC's findings, the claimants would likely resume their earlier court cases - at taxpayers' expense. Although legal appraisals suggested that the government had a strong case, a judgment in favour of the First Nations would be a damning precedent. Furthermore, a negotiated solution also fit with the Liberals' "Red Book" promise to improve the claims process, "interpret the treaties in contemporary terms," and promote self-reliance.⁸⁶

The Canoe and Cold Lake First Nations negotiated separately with the federal government, with both prioritizing social and economic development as their key goals. Federal and Canoe Lake Cree representatives met in early 1995 and quickly reached an agreement in principle. The government did not accept that its 1961 compensation payments were inadequate, but it negotiated "remedial measures" for the community as a whole. Canoe Lake voters overwhelmingly supported a final settlement reached in early 1997 that included access to the range for traditional and commercial purposes at pre-arranged times, \$13 million to the First Nation, and preferential treatment to band members for economic opportunities associated with the base. Although disagreements over compensation delayed a similar settlement with the Cold Lake First Nations, their final agreement with the Government of Canada secured \$26 million for community-directed development, 5000 acres of additional reserve land, controlled access to the range, and preferential employment opportunities. "Four Wing Cold Lake has developed a positive and respectful relationship with Cold Lake First Nations and wishes to continue this important relationship with its neighbour," the Defence Minister told Cold Lake Chief Joyce Metchewais and other dignitaries at the signing ceremony in July 2002. The military established a community liaison office and a Joint Advisory Committee to co-manage range activities, institutionalizing its vision of "shared space" and peaceful coexistence.⁸⁷

Other Aboriginal communities and individuals also claimed that the PLAWR adversely affected their livelihoods and violated their rights.⁸⁸ During the 1990s, the federal government refused to enter into

negotiations with several First Nations who asserted rights to the CLAWR,⁸⁹ but members of these communities could still challenge military control independently. For example, military police apprehended two members of the Buffalo River Dene, Harry Catarat and James Albert Sylvestre, for “illegally” hunting moose on the range in the autumn of 1994. They were charged with trespassing under the *Defence Controlled Area Regulations* and the *National Defence Act*, and with unlawful hunting under the *Saskatchewan Wildlife Act*. When the case was tried in the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan three years later, the defendants argued that the charges were a violation of their Treaty 10 hunting rights, and that the 1930 *Natural Resource Transfer Agreement* allowed them to hunt. They added several Charter arguments, drawing upon a recent spate of Supreme Court decisions that provided for “distinctive culture tests,” more liberal readings of treaty rights, and the acceptance of oral tradition as legal “fact.”⁹⁰

In August 1998, Judge Jeremy Nightingale acquitted both Dene men on the grounds that they had been exercising their treaty right and practicing activities pivotal to preserving their culture. Nightingale emphasized the spiritual significance of Wapiti Lake, where Catarat and Sylvestre had been hunting, to the Buffalo River people. His decision concluded that the CLAWR leases did not evince a “clear and plain intent” to extinguish hunting rights and Dene oral histories remembered the treaties as land *sharing* agreements with non-Natives. The air force used the skies for training, but the land itself was not put to “visible, incompatible land use” and therefore their hunting right continued. The judge denied that the military could justifiably infringe on this right: even had he “found that such justification existed when the twenty year Range lease was signed in the Cold War context of 1954, that justification is ... gone with the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union.”⁹¹ In Nightingale’s opinion, treaty rights were paramount to national defence and security claims in the post-Cold War era. The military’s legitimacy had purportedly disappeared. The provincial government was ordered to pay each defendant \$500 damages for confiscating their moose meat, and the Buffalo Narrows community rejoiced.

The federal government appealed the decision, and the Court of Queen’s Bench overturned Judge Nightingale’s decision. Catarat and Sylvestre then turned to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal, but it upheld the Court of Queen’s Bench decision and denied that the Dene hunters had access rights to the CLAWR.⁹² The finding suggested that First Nations people in communities like Buffalo River could still legally enter the range for customary and commercial purposes, but only under controlled access negotiated with military and provincial authorities.

Métis and non-status Indian interests in the range had complicated decision-making in the 1960s, and their representatives also pushed for more adequate compensation based on Aboriginal rights to the PLAWR. These claims perpetuated a peculiar twist in the compensation debate. First Nation land claimants argued that they had received insufficient compensation, but Métis communities complained that they received much *less* than Treaty Indians. The Métis claimed discrimination because they were paid the equivalent of Whites and not granted more favourable treatment like the Indians. Section 35(2) of the *Constitution Act, 1982* affirmed Métis and non-status Indian rights as “Aboriginal people,” so “unequal” compensation seemed contentious. But what did their status mean in terms of “treaty rights” and Crown fiduciary obligations?⁹³ One northern Saskatchewan family took their case to the courts. Ambrose Maurice, a Métis from Sapwagamik, “led an Aboriginal lifestyle inherited from generations of Aboriginal forefathers,” and supported his family since 1940 through logging, hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering. Like other Métis, he had lost access to traditional areas and his rights to a conservation block when the CLAWR was closed, and wanted additional compensation because the government allegedly breached its fiduciary responsibilities. Other Métis representatives sought a negotiated solution outside of the land

claims process: one spokesperson suggested that they wanted more than \$30 million for economic development and individual compensation.⁹⁴

This report does not cover developments with respect to the CLAWR since 2001, which are best accessed through ADM(IE) files which were not available to me pursuant to this contract.

Notes

¹ House of Commons, *Debates*, 19 Apr 1951, 2173-74. For background see LAC, RG 10, v.6341, f.736-1 pt.1; "Canadian Forces Base, Cold Lake, Alberta," c1960s, DHH 112.3H1.009 (D279); D. Black, "Combat at Cold Lake," *Legion Magazine* (Sep/Oct 2002).

² Tanner to Drury, 13 Mar 1951; Drury to DM, DoT, 14 Jun 1951, LAC, RG 10, v.6341, f.736-1 pt.1; Ashdon to D/ARM/Air, 28 Aug 1951, LAC, RG 24, v.11975, f.54-132; Assistant Chief, Lands Branch, DoT to Conn, 19 Dec 1951, LAC, RG 10, v.7334, f.1/20-9-5 pt.1.

³ Their oral tradition says that they are indigenous to the Hahtué – or "Goose Lake" – area. Scholars say they moved into the boreal forest in the late eighteenth century. *I ICCP*, 10 fn 5, 68; W. Heber, "Customary Use: Dene Treaty Rights and The Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range," in *Sacred Lands* eds. J. Oakes et al (Edmonton, 1998), 152-53; J.G.E. Smith, "Chipewyan," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, v.13: *Plains* ed. R.J. DeMallie (Washington, 2001), 272-3; B.C. Gillespie, "Changes in Territory and Technology of the Chipewyan," *Arctic Anthropology* 13/1 (1976), 6-11.

⁴ Vye Bouvier, "The Metis People versus the Bombing Range," *Newbreed Journal* (April 1983), 26; A. Ray, *Indians in the Fur Trade* (Toronto, 1974), 19-23, 51-71, 184; Heber, "Customary Use"; J.G.E. Smith, "Western Woods Cree," in *Handbook*, 256-9, 264-5; J.S.H. Brown, "History of the Canadian Plains Until 1870," in *Ibid*, 306-7; Diane Paulette Payment, "Plains Métis," in *Ibid*, 661. Borrowing from R.K. Hitchcock and M. Bieseke, "subsistence" is intended to refer not only to "resource dependence that is primarily outside the cash sector of the economy" but also to part of a "complex system of obligation, distribution, and exchange" crucial to both foragers and market-oriented producers in diversified indigenous production systems. P.P. Schweitzer et al, eds., *Hunters and Gatherers in the Modern World* (New York, 2000), 6-7.

⁵ *I ICCP*, 16-18; 65-68; J.L. Taylor, "Treaty Six (1876)" (Ottawa, 1985); K.S. Coates and W.R. Morrison, "Treaty Ten (1906)" (Ottawa, 1986). See also A.J. Ray et al, *Bounty and Benevolence: A History of Saskatchewan Treaties* (Montreal, 2000), 180-85, 201-2 and A.G. Gulig, "In Whose Interest? Government-Indian Relations in Northern Saskatchewan and Wisconsin, 1900-1940" (Ph.D., University of Saskatchewan, 1997), 17-18, 42-62.

⁶ Buckley, *Wooden Ploughs*, 37. On southern bands, see J. Tobias, "Canada's Subjugation of the Plains Cree" and S. Carter, "Two Acres and a Cow" both in *Sweet Promises* ed. J.R. Miller (Toronto, 1991), 212-40, 353-77.

⁷ This emphasis was typical, given the departmental priority for farming. See *DIA Annual Reports*, 1901, 175-78; 1902, 162-65; 1903, 154-57; 1904, 173-77; 1905, 164-67; 1906, 135-38; 1907, 133-37; 1909, 138-41; 1910, 144-49; 1912, 144-48; 1913, 169-70; 1915, 74; 1916, 46-7; 1917, 65-66; 1918, 27-8; 1919, 35, 82-3; 1923, 29, 62-3; 1924, 52-3; 1925, 56-7; 1926, 60-1; 1927, 56-7; 1933, 42-3, 48-9; 1937, 48-9; 1938, 204-5; 1940, 235-6; 1941, 197; 1942, 147; D.G. Wetherell and I. Kmet, *Alberta's North: A History* (Edmonton, 2000) 308-9, 363-87. For a more general perspective on the post-1870 fur trade see A.J. Ray, *The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age* (Toronto, 1990) and K. Abel, *Drum Songs: Glimpses of Dene History* (Montreal, 1993). On agriculture, see Carter, *Lost Harvests* and B. Dawson, "The Roots of Agriculture," *Prairie Forum* 28/1 (2003), 99-116. Government officials encouraged these activities because they allowed the First Nations and Métis to maintain themselves without drawing relief.

⁸ Chief Francois quoted in *I ICCP*, 69. See also 68-71 and various oral testimonies on ICC PLAWR computer disk "Cold Lake Dec 92 & Feb 3"; *I ICCP*, 18-21; C. Metchewais, ICC, PLAWR records, Cold Lake transcripts, v.6, 668-75. In general, see Wetherell, *Alberta's North*, 8-9, 119, 363-92; F.L. Barron, *Walking in Indian Moccasins* (Vancouver, 1997), 147-9; Ray, *Canadian Fur Trade*, 47, 203-4, 208.

⁹ R. Irwin, "'A Clear Intention to Effect Such a Modification': The NRTA and Treaty Hunting and Fishing Rights," *Native Studies Review* 13/2 (2000), 47-89. See also F. Tough, "Introduction to Documents: Indian Hunting Rights, Natural Resources Transfer Agreements and Legal Opinions from the Department of Justice," *Native Studies Review* 10/2 (1995), 121-67 and Gulig, "Whose Interest?," 203-35.

¹⁰ Wetherell, *Alberta's North*, 308; I. Martial, testimony, Cold Lake, 17 Dec 1992, ICC disk Cold Lake Dec 92 & Feb 3, f.2108-5-1-20, printed p.350; C. Blackman, testimony, 1 Feb 1993, on *ibid*, p.569-70. On this process more generally, see Gulig, "In Whose Interest?" and D.M. Quiring, *CCF Colonialism in Northern Saskatchewan* (Vancouver, 2004).

¹¹ See *1 ICCP*, 21, 72-74; Barron, *Walking in Indian Moccasins*, 148-55; "News from Alberta," *The Native Voice* (Jul 1948), 13. Superintendent Stan Knapp later explained that Indian Affairs paid the \$10 trap line registration fees to Saskatchewan for the Indians. ICC interview, Toronto, 22 Apr 1993, ICC disk, f.930422CL, PLAWR records, box 10.

¹² Drees, "History of the IAA," 221-22; H. Dempsey, "Bombing Range Tests Cost Native Traplines," *Native Voice* (May 1951), 3; Eklund to Jones, 25 Jun 1951; Churchman, 23 Jul 1951, LAC, RG 10, v.7334, f.1/20-9-5 pt.1.

¹³ Watts to Ashdown, 21 Aug 1951, and reply, 28 Aug 1951, LAC, RG 24, v.11975, f.54-132; R. Banting, "Cold Lake Air Weapons Range," Sep 1976, 7-9 (copy provided by DND). The high rates of commercial fishing on lakes further north, however, reaffirmed that Primrose Lake area seemed most appropriate.

¹⁴ Laurie to Dechêne, 13 Oct 1951; reply, 16 Oct 1951, LAC, RG 10, RG 10, v.7334, f.1/20-9-5 pt.1; H. Dempsey, "The History of the Indian Association," *Kainai News*, 15 Jun 1970, 10-11; L.M. Drees, *The Indian Association of Alberta: A History of Political Action* (Vancouver, 2002).

¹⁵ Jones to Director, IAB, 16 Oct 1951, 6 Nov 1951; Gooderham to MacKay, 31 Oct 1951; Jones to Ostrander and Gooderham, 3 Dec 1951, LAC, RG 10, v.7334, f.1/20-9-5 pt.1; Office of Specific Claims and Research of the Indian Association of Alberta (OSCAR/IAA), "The Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range: Final Report to the Indian Association of Alberta," Oct 1983, 4, 6, in ICC, Box 3, f.2108-5-1-17, folder 5.

¹⁶ Ostrander to IAB, 22 Feb 1952, 25 Mar 1952; Harris to Chevrier, 4 Dec 1951, 8 May 1952; MacKay to DM, DCI, 23 Apr 1952, LAC, RG 10, v.7334, f.1/20-9-5 pt.1; Drury to Fortier, 14 Dec 1954, and reply, 14 Jan 1955, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, file 1/20-9-5, pt.2.

¹⁷ Drury to Campbell, 21 Mar 1953; Drury to MND, 1 Apr 1953, ICC PLAWR I doc. 392-3. See also *ibid* doc. 472, 478-9, and for a later comment on the lack of precedent for any Canadian rehabilitation program of this magnitude, see Miller to IAB, 29 Mar 1957, doc.1004-5.

¹⁸ *1 ICCP*, 24-6; Tunstead to Davis, 1 Feb 1952; Jones to Ostrander, 29 Feb 1952, LAC, RG 10, v.7334, f.1/20-9-5 pt.1; Document Summary, Addendum I, Interviews with Canoe Lake Band Members, recorded Jun 13, 1985 by D. Opekowek, 3, ICC, PLAWR – Canoe Lake, box 1 (appendices A-C); E. Grandbois, testimony, Cold Lake, 16 Dec 1992, ICC disk Cold Lake Dec 92 & Feb 3, f.2108-5-1-20, printed page 328; see also *1 ICCP*, 78.

¹⁹ Drury to MND, 1 Apr 1953, ICC PLAWR I doc.393; Fortier to Drury, 3 Nov 1952; Drury to Campbell, 21 Mar 1953; Campbell to Drury, 2 Jul 1953, cited in *1 ICCP*, 29, 81-82. Cabinet authorized the leases on 12 Jun 1953. See LAC, RG 2, series 2, v.1871, and T.B. 452588, 24 Jun 1953, LAC, RG 2, series 1, v.1894, P.C. 1953-17/978.

²⁰ Asst DM, Department of Natural Resources, Saskatchewan to Ostrander, 12 Feb 1952, ICC PLAWR I doc.301; Murphy to Campbell, 21 Jun 1952, *ibid* doc. 355. On CCF policies see Quiring, *CCF Colonialism*, 99-147.

²¹ Piwapiskus to Fortier, 8 Feb 1953, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt. 2.

²² Excerpt from Minutes of IAA General Meeting, 9-10 Jun 1954, LAC, RG 10, v.7334, f.1/20-9-5 pt.1; Tunstead to Conn, 30 Dec 1953, *ibid*, cited in *1 ICCP*, 29-30.

²³ H. Shewell, "Origins of Contemporary Indian Social Welfare in the Canadian Liberal State: An Historical Case Study in Social Policy, 1873-1965" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1995), 426.

²⁴ Jones to Director, IAB, 1 Apr 1952; Ostrander to Jones, 4 Mar 1952, LAC, RG 10, v.7334, f.1/20-9-5, pt.1. The Indian "nature" argument has been challenged in its nineteenth century iteration by Sarah Carter in *Lost Harvests*.

²⁵ Jones to Ostrander, 29 Feb 1952, LAC, RG 10, vols. 7334, f.1/20-9-5 pt.1; Fortier to Drury, 15 Feb 1954; Brown to Wilson, 26 Mar 1954; Jones to DM, DCI, 9 Aug 1954; Ostrander to Eklund, 16 Aug 1954; Brown to DM, DND, 23 Aug 1954, *ibid* pt.2. See also *1 ICCP*, 57.

²⁶ Jones to Ostrander, 29 Feb 1952, LAC, RG 10, v.7334, f.1/20-9-5 pt.1; Jones to DM, DCI, 17 Sep 1954, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt.2. See also extracts from Lew Lockhart's interviews with elders at Dillon and Joseph Bighead in ICC, PLAWR inquiry, Cold Lake FN, box 10, f.2108-5-1-20.

²⁷ H. Brody, *Maps and Dreams* (Vancouver, 1981), 97; Robertson to Jones, 12 Aug 1954, cited in *1 ICCP*, 75.

²⁸ Fortier to Drury, 29 Sep 1954; Eklund to Battle, 4 Oct 1954, 10 Nov 1954; Jones to DM, DCI, 14 Oct 1954; Chipewyan BCR, Cold Lake, 16 Nov 1954, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt.2; Dechêne to DM, DND, 14 Dec 1954, ICC PLAWR I doc.509.

²⁹ Pickersgill to Campney, 25 Oct 1954; Jones to Chief Treasury Officer, DCI, 19 Nov 1954; Battle to Jones, 1 Dec 1954; Drury to DM, DCI, 3 Jan 1955, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt.2; Treasury Board doc.478149, 27 Oct

1954, LAC, RG 55, v.20545; Fortier to Drury, 30 Jun 1955; Pickersgill to Campney, 9 Jul 1955; Treasury Board doc.490634, 2 Sep 1955, LAC, RG 55, series A-2, v.202, board book.

³⁰ Tunstead to Jones, 1 Feb 1955; Ostrander to Jones, 26 May 1955, LAC, RG 10, 7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt.2; Jones to Battle, 7 Jun 1955, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.3; Eklund to Battle, 9 Feb 1955, 27 Apr 1955, ICC PLAWR I doc.550-54, 614-16. See also D. Esse, examination of A. Scanie, Edmonton, 10 Jan 1991, Federal Court T-2026-89, copy in ICC, box 3, f.2108-5-1-17, folder 9, 53.

³¹ Battle to Director, IAB, 16 Feb 55, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt.2.

³² After countless meetings and “extreme difficulty,” commercial fishermen and non-Indian trappers accepted *ex gratia* payments in late 1955. Their average individual settlement of \$1,000 was much lower per capita than that already paid to Indian Affairs and, correspondingly, Ottawa officials were worried that any display of further generosity towards the Indians would reopen claims by other groups and elicit cries of unfair discrimination. Banting, “Cold Lake Air Weapons Range,” Sep 1976, 9-10; Millar to Superintendent of Properties, 21 Jul 1955, ICC, PLAWR Inquiry II, doc.157.

³³ *I ICCP*, 31-6, 83-9; Ostrander to Jones, 8 Jun 1955; Bell, Minutes of Meeting, and Canoe Lake BCR, 29 Feb 1956; Jones to Conn, 9 Mar 1956, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt.4. The voucher system was based upon the Veteran’s Land Act model, and was not designed to constrain Indian behaviour. See Knapp interview, 22 Apr 1993, p.923. Contrast with *I ICCP*, 36, 84.

³⁴ Battle to Jones, 16 Feb 1955; Eklund to Battle, 15 Sep 1955, 4 Oct 1955; Knapp to Battle, 11 Aug 1955; reply, 24 Oct 1955; Knapp, Quarterly Report, 1 Mar 1956; Findlay to Battle, 30 May 1956, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt.2-4; *I ICCP*, 106-12.

³⁵ *I ICCP*, 56-62; Tunstead to Jones, 1 Feb 1955; Jones to Savage, 4 Feb 1955; Jones to Ostrander, 6 Oct 1955; Jones to Brown, 10 Feb 1956; Ostrander to Jones, 28 Feb 1956; Canoe Lake BCR, 29 Feb 1956; Ostrander to Bell, 23 Mar 1956; Bell to Jones, 27 Apr 1956, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt.2-4.

³⁶ Knapp to Battle, 11 Aug 1955, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt.3; Gavigan to Jones, 15 Apr 1957 and Jones to Conn, 18 Apr 1957, ICC docs. 1019-20, quoted in *I ICCP*, 36. For a critical opinion on Indian spending habits and White exploitation, see Savage to Director, IAB, 28 Jan 1955, LAC, RG 10, v. 7335, f. 1/20-9-5 pt. 2.

³⁷ Eklund to Battle, 27 Apr 1955, 13 Apr 1956, 1 Feb 1957, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt.2, 4-5; Esse examination of Scanie, 53-4; “Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range: Summary of Correspondence Regarding Advances Made by Merchants,” 22 Dec 1955, and Battle re: Credit for Indians, 28 Dec 1955, ICC PLAWR I doc.823-7, 831.

³⁸ Conn to Superintendent of Welfare, 10 Dec 1956, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt.5; Gordon to Battle, 18 Jan 1957, ICC PLAWR I doc.960-61. In “worthy cases,” rehabilitation assistance was still provided from the IAB welfare vote.

³⁹ Knapp, Kjenner and Eklund, 7 Feb 1957, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5; Millar to Johns, 22 Feb 1957; Millar to file, 29 Mar 1957, ICC PLAWR I doc.987, 1004.

⁴⁰ Rental Agreement for Weapons Range, Province of Saskatchewan, 4-6; Churchman, 27 Mar 1956, *ibid* doc. 370-2, 884.

⁴¹ In late 1957, DND estimated the average individual settlement for the “White” group (101 claims) at \$1730; for the Treaty Indians (152 claims) \$4650; and for the Métis at Canoe Lake (32 claimants) \$370 and at Beauval (80 claimants) \$324. Millar to Johns, 5 Feb 1957, ICC doc.973-5. These were huge discrepancies unfavourable to the Métis.

⁴² Harrison to Maurice, 22 Jan 1957, ICC PLAWR I doc. 964-7. Emphasis on original. See also Ostrander to Jones, 25 Jul 1956, LAC, RG 10, v.7335, f.1/20-9-5 pt.4 (ICC 917); *I ICCP*, 38-9; Churchman to Miller, 19 Nov 1956, ICC PLAWR I doc. 945-6; Banting, “Cold Lake Air Weapons Range,” 7.

⁴³ TB 518026, PC 1957-1/694, 27 May 1957, LAC, RG 2, series 1, v.1943.

⁴⁴ “The Trust Account, 1954-60” in *I ICCP*, 35; Minutes of LeGoff Band Meeting, 10 Feb 1958; Conn to Superintendent of Welfare, IAB, 19 Feb 1958, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.6. See also Battle’s rebuttals to IAB, 26 May 1958, *ibid*.

⁴⁵ *Hansard*, 28 Aug 1958, 4255; Fortier to Miller, 15 Oct 1958, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.7; Millar to Fortier, 30 Sep 1958, ICC PLAWR II doc.194-95; Millar to Johns, 5 Feb 1957, ICC PLAWR I doc.973-5.

⁴⁶ Jones to DM, DCI, 23 Oct 1958; Fortier to Fairclough, 13 Nov 1958, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.7; “Memorandum re Compensation of Treaty Indians for Diminution of Rights Associated with Lands now Utilized for the [PLAWR],” Dec 1958, DND f.54-C49 v.13, ICC PLAWR doc.1218; MacNeill to Minister, Treasury Board, 10

Dec 1958; Fleming to Cabinet, 5 Jan 1959, LAC, RG 55, f.904; Cabinet Minutes, 14 Apr 1959, LAC, RG 2, v 2744, f. 20 Mar-30 Apr 1959.

⁴⁷ Jones to DM, DCI, 27 Jan 1959; Jones to Conn, 27 Jan 1959; Fortier to Fairclough, 24 Jan 1959; Fortier to Halliday, 24 Feb 1959; Jones to Halliday, 18 Mar 1959; Fairclough marginalia on Davidson to Minister, DCI, 29 Jul 1960, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.7; Fairclough to Cabinet, 10 Mar 1959; Fortier to Watters, 20 Jul 1959, LAC, RG 55, v.94, f.904.

⁴⁸ Deputy Attorney General to Secy, Treasury Board, 2 Feb 1960, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.7; *1 ICCP*, 42-3.

⁴⁹ Fortier to Watters, 25 Jul 1959, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.7; Johns to MacDonald, 18 Jul 1960; Davis to MacDonald and Steele, 19 Jul 1960, LAC, RG 55, f.904.

⁵⁰ Steele to Davidson, 22 Jul 1960, 16 Aug 1960; Jones to DM, DCI, 11 Aug 1960, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.7; Davis to MacDonald, 8 Aug 1960, LAC, RG 55, f.904.

⁵¹ Jones to Hunter, 26 Aug 1960; Hunter, Minutes of Band Meeting, Cold Lake, 14 Sep 1960; Hunter to IAB, 19 Sep 1960, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.7.

⁵² *Ibid.* See also the various testimonies on ICC disk Cold Lake Dec 92 & Feb 3, f.2108-5-1-20.

⁵³ Transcript of interview, T. Mandamin and E. Ennow, Cold Lake, 7 Jun 1990, ICC, box 3, f.2108-5-1-17, folder 11. See also Ennow quote (which is inserted in an improper context) in *1 ICCP*, 102.

⁵⁴ Chief and Council, Canoe Lake Band to IAB, DCI, 14 Sep 1960, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.7. See also *1 ICCP*, 45-8; Harkness and Fairclough to Treasury Board, 25 Nov 1960, LAC, RG 2, f.29 Dec 1960. A portion of the band also signed a “preliminary agreement” document accepting the settlement as final.

⁵⁵ Davidson to Steele, 27 Sep 1960, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.7; OSCAR/IAA, “Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range,” Oct 1983, 11; *1 ICCP*, 45-6, 49-52, 99-102.

⁵⁶ L. Iron interview in Document Summary, Addendum I, Interviews with Canoe Lake Band Members, recorded Jun 13, 1985 by D. Opekokew, 8, ICC, PLAWR – Canoe Lake, box 1 (appendices A-C).

⁵⁷ See *1 ICCP*, 48-52, 99-102, 144-6. On contentions and problems with the final distribution and “quit claim” process, see OSCAR/IAA, “Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range,” Oct 1983, 12; Knapp to Regional Supervisor – Alberta, 6 Feb 1961; Hunter to Regional Supervisor – Alberta, 20 Feb 1961, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.8.

⁵⁸ Hartt to MacDonald, ICC PLAWR I doc.1608-11; Armstrong to Secy, Treasury Board, 29 Jun 1961, *ibid* doc.1651-3; Armstrong to Davidson, 10 Feb 1961, *ibid* doc.1592-3; Conn to Chief, Economic Development Division, 17 Feb 1961, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.8; “Defence Expenditures - General - Compensation for Area Rights – Confidential, 1957-62,” J.G. Diefenbaker Archives, MG 01/VI/R/110/(170.2 Conf.), row 4, v.3, 46987-47021. See also A.C. Cadieux in *Hansard*, 12 Apr 1965, which argues that the Métis compensation was insufficient compared to the Indians.

⁵⁹ Iron to IAB, 23 Aug 1962, and reply, 28 Aug 1962; Innes to Regional Supervisor – Saskatchewan, 17 Dec 1962; Iron to Bell, DCI, 30 Jan 1963; Cadieux to Cadieux, ICC PLAWR I doc.1677-8, 1686, 1693, 1715. See also OSCAR/IAA, “The Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range,” 13 and INAC f.1/20-9-5 pt.9.

⁶⁰ On construction and employment at the base see A. Janvier, testimony, Cold Lake, 16 Dec 1992, ICC disk Cold Lake Dec 92 & Feb 3, f.2108-5-1-20, printed p.302; T. Grandbois, testimony, 16 Dec 1992, *ibid* p.328; L. Janvier, testimony, Cold Lake, 1 Feb 1993, *ibid* p.588, 591; M. Metchewas, testimony, Cold Lake, 3 Feb 1993, *ibid*, p.664; Esse examination of Scanie, 10 Jan 1991, 90.

⁶¹ J.H. Ariza, “Community Development Experiences in the Chipewyan Community of Cold Lake, Alberta” (M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1974), 59-60.

⁶² Long to Fortier, 22 Jul 1960, LAC, RG 55, f.904; Slack to DP, DND, 13 Jan 1969, ICC PLAWR I doc.1753-4; P. Muskego, testimony, 14 Dec 1992, p.7; I. Martial, testimony, 17 Dec 1992, *ibid* p.357; Esse examination of Scanie, 10 Jan 1991, 45, 78, 89.

⁶³ Iron and Grandbois quoted in *1 ICCP*, 54, 70; see Grandbois’ powerful testimony on the land, treaties, and the traditional economy at Cold Lake, 16 Dec 1992, on ICC disk Cold Lake Dec 92 & Feb 3, f.2108-5-1-20, p.334-42.

⁶⁴ Marand to Iron, 22 Oct 1965, INAC f.1.20-9-5 pt.9, ICC doc. 1733; O. Opekokew interview, cited in *1 ICCP*, 62-3. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND), *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada* (Ottawa, 1966), Table xi, 93; Table Xii, 95; table xvi, 116.

⁶⁵ L. Iron, Canoe Lake Transcript, v.2, cited in *1 ICCP*, 63. On alcoholism in the communities, see also *1 ICCP*, 119; Testimonies of C. Metchewas, 2 Feb 1993; M. Metchewas, 3 Feb 1993; and E. Grandbois, 16 Dec 1992, Cold Lake, ICC disk Cold Lake Dec 92 & Feb 3, f.2108-5-1-20.

⁶⁶ National Indian Council News Bulletin, Oct 1965, 7, ICC PLAWR I doc.1730.

⁶⁷ Allan Jacob, Cold Lake Transcript, v.6, 786-87, quoted in *1 ICCP*, 118-19.

⁶⁸ Buckley, *Wooden Ploughs*, 72; Knapp, Kjenner and Eklund, 7 Feb 1957, LAC, RG 10, v.7336, f.1/20-9-5 pt.5; Grandbois testimony, 16 Dec 1992, ICC disk printed p.336; Dominic Piche, *ibid*, 17 Dec 1992, p.365. On changes in family structure in northern Saskatchewan Native communities, see Barron, *Walking in Indian Moccasins*, 165.

⁶⁹ Gordon to Battle, 18 Jan 1957, ICC, PLAWR I doc.960-1.

⁷⁰ D.M. Quiring, *CCF Colonialism in Northern Saskatchewan* (Vancouver, 2004), 253.

⁷¹ *1 ICCP*, 64, 120.

⁷² Sharp, "Trapping and Welfare."

⁷³ DIAND, *Outstanding Business: A Native Claims Policy* (Ottawa, 1982). There is a vast literature on land claims. For useful introductions, see R.C. Daniel, "A History of Native Claims Processes in Canada, 1867-1979" (Ottawa, 1980) and K.Coates, ed., *Aboriginal Land Claims in Canada*.

⁷⁴ RCAP, *For Seven Generations*. See also D. McNab, *Circles of Time* (Waterloo, 1999), 12-15.

⁷⁵ Tully to Vergette, 17 May 1972; O'Connell to Cadieux, 8 May 1970, and reply, 21 May 1970, ICC, PLAWR I doc.1770-73, 1786. On issues and discussions during this period, see the records held by the ICC, as well as transcripts of elders' testimonies, such as John Janvier and Marcel Piche, 3 Feb 1993, ICC disk Cold Lake Dec 92 & feb 3, f.2108-5-1-20, printed pp.662, 675.

⁷⁶ Minutes of Meeting between DND and IAA representatives, 30 Jan 1975; "Primrose Lake Bombing Range Claim," Apr 1975, ICC, PLAWR I doc. 1805-16, 1824-27; OSCAR/IAA, "The Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range," Oct 1983, 15, in ICC, Box 3, f.2108-5-1-17, folder 5.

⁷⁷ Minutes of Primrose Bombing Range Meeting, 23 May 1976; R. Blackman, 26; L. Lockhart, 29, 53-4; H. Metchatis, 37; H. Cardinal, 44-5, ICC PLAWR II, doc.369-430.

⁷⁸ Knapp to Hartley, 24 Oct 1975; Buchanan to Price, 4 Dec 1975, ICC, PLAWR II, doc.442, 455; Meeting of PLAWR Committee, 10 Oct 1975; Meeting to Discuss Access to the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range, 7 Nov 1975; MacNeil to Harper, 12 Nov 1975; Baba to Cardinal, 22 Oct 1976, ICC PLAWR I doc.1950-62, 1965-75, 2021; OSCAR/IAA, "The Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range," 14.

⁷⁹ Document Summary, Addendum I, Interviews with Canoe Lake Band Members, recorded Jun 13, 1985 by D. Opekokew, 2, ICC, PLAWR – Canoe Lake, box 1 (appendices A-C). See also ICC, PLAWR I, doc.1981-2018.

⁸⁰ See M. Metchewas, Cold Lake, 3 Feb 1993, ICC disk Cold Lake Dec 92 & feb 3, f.2108-5-1-20, p.670.

⁸¹ C. Giangrande, *The Nuclear North* (Toronto, 1983), 7, 44-62; D. Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 4th ed. (Toronto, 1999), 265; C.A. Cannizzo, "Cruise controversy," *Calgary Herald*, 22 Apr 1982; "Northerners deserve a say on test flights," *Globe and Mail*, 6 Nov 1985.

⁸² Canoe Lake BCR, 27 May 1985; Document Summary, Addendum I, Interviews with Canoe Lake Band Members, recorded Jun 13, 1985 by D. Opekokew, 2, ICC, PLAWR – Canoe Lake, box 1 (appendices A-C). In 1987, INAC rejected a Canoe Lake request for test funding. The Cold Lake band commenced legal proceedings against the Crown in the Federal Court in 1989, seeking \$30 million in compensation for alleged breaches of treaty, fiduciary and statutory obligations. See Federal Court of Canada, trial division, f.T-2026-89, 20 Dec 1990, ICC, PLAWR I Inquiry, box 3 Cold Lake FN, f. 2108-5-1-17, f.8. In 1987, Indian Affairs rejected the Canoe Lake band's request for test case funding for a similar suit.

⁸³ This section is based upon Vye Bouvier, "The Metis People versus the Bombing Range," (c.1983), copy in possession of the author (which can be provided upon request).

⁸⁴ *1 ICCP*, vii-xxxii, 12, 151, 187-205; ICC, PLAWR Inquiry-Cold Lake, box 10, Cold Lake transcripts 1-1040; PLAWR Inquiry – Canoe Lake, box 3, f. "Canoe Lake – Hearing Transcripts, pp.1-420."

⁸⁵ "Federal Government to Negotiate with Cold Lake and Canoe Lake First Nations," INAC press release 1-9449, 1 Mar 1995; Irwin to Prentice, 2 Mar 1995, reprinted in [1995] *3 ICCP*, 319-20; "Government willing to negotiate land claim," *Canadian Press Newswire*, 1 Mar 1995. In the early 1990s, the federal government clarified its policy on "other claims" that fall "within the spirit of the comprehensive and specific claims policies," but do not meet the strict criteria for acceptance under these categories. Canada, *Federal Policy for the Settlement of Native Claims* (Ottawa, Mar 1993), 29.

⁸⁶ *Creating Opportunity: The Liberal Plan for Canada* (Ottawa, 1993), 97-103.

⁸⁷ "Bands given compensation for loss of hunting ground," *Canadian Press Newswire*, 2 Mar 1995; "Saskatchewan Metis optimistic over weapons range compensation talks," *Ibid*, 19 Mar 2001; P.C. 1997-1317, 17 Sep 1997; "Grievance on Creation of Cold Lake Air Weapons Range Settled," INAC press release 2-02168, 12 Jul 2002; Bob Kennedy, "Cold Lake First Nation to Vote on Historic Settlement Agreement," *Kahtou News*, 10/11 (Nov 2001), 17-8; interview, LCol (ret'd) Ron Guidinger, 22 Feb 2002; "Cold Lake: ICCs First Inquiry Reaches Successful

Conclusion,” *Landmark* (ICC) 5/3 (2002), 1-3. The Canoe Lake vote carried with 270 for, 59 against, 4 rejected. Traditional and commercial activities included trapping; harvesting fish, berries, wild mushrooms, and natural medicines; cultivating and harvesting wild rice; and collecting materials for crafts.

⁸⁸ For example, several women, who were reinstated in the Cold Lake First Nation under Bill C-31 (1985), filed lawsuits against the band and Indian Affairs arguing that they were denied full participation in band affairs - including the CLAWR deliberations. These women found it ironic that, while the Cold Lake First Nation included them in compensation figures submitted to the federal government, they were deprived of any benefits flowing from the settlement. S. Ruttan, “Justice on Indian status eludes women,” *Edmonton Journal*, 1 Mar 1997; J. Danylchuk, “Native bill continues to rankle,” *Ibid*, 6 Jun 1997.

⁸⁹ The Joseph Bighead, Flying Dust, Buffalo River, and Waterhen Lake First Nations faced more moderate impacts, and in these cases the ICC concluded that the government had not breached treaty *per se*, but it determined that Canada breached “its fiduciary duty by failing to ensure that First Nations people were compensated for lost commercial harvesting rights” and thus should negotiate specific claims. PLAWR II Report, (1994) 4 ICCP, 82. The government did not agree. Nault to Fontaine, 27 Mar 2002. Copy available on the ICC website.

⁹⁰ *R. v. Harry Catarat and James Albert Sylvestre*, Saskatchewan Provincial Court, Buffalo Narrows, 26 Aug 1998; *R. v. Van der Peet*, [1996] 9 W.W.R. 1 (S.C.C.); *R. v. Badger*, [1996] 2 C.N.L.R.; and *Delgamuukw v. B.C.*, [1997] 3 S.C.R. See also W. Heber, “Customary Use: Dene Treaty Rights and The Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range,” in *Sacred Lands: Aboriginal World Views, Claims, and Conflicts* eds. J. Oakes et al (Edmonton, 1998), 151-6; R. Irwin, “‘A Clear Intention to Effect Such a Modification’: The NRTA and Treaty Hunting and Fishing Rights,” *Native Studies Review* 13/2 (2000), 47-89, and B. Calliou, “The Imposition of State Laws and the Creation of Various Hunting Rights for Aboriginal Peoples of the Treaty 8 Territory,” *Lobstick* 1/1 (1999-2000), 151-93.

⁹¹ Judgment, *R. v. Harry Catarat and James Albert Sylvestre*, 26 Aug 1998, 23, 26, 45-9, 63-4.

⁹² After Harry Catarat passed away, James Sylvestre applied for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court which refused to hear the case. F.M. Casgrain, *Focus on Aboriginal Law* (Jun 2001), 1; “Top Court Refuses to Hear Case of Native Fined for Hunting on Weapons Range,” *Canadian Press Newswire*, 18 Apr 2002.

⁹³ On Métis claims and identities, see D.N. Sprague, “Metis Land Claims” in *Aboriginal Land Claims* ed. Coates, 195-213 and J. Sawchuk, “Negotiating an Identity: Métis Political Organizations, the Canadian Government, and Competing Concepts of Aboriginality,” *American Indian Quarterly* 25/1 (2001), 73-92.

⁹⁴ Statement of Claim, *Ambrose Maurice et al v. R., MIAND, MND, Attorney General of Canada, and Indian Claims Commission of Canada*, Federal Court Trial Division, May 1996; “Saskatchewan Metis Optimistic Over Weapons Range Talks,” *Canadian Press Newswire*, 19 Mar 2001. The Supreme Court of Canada’s decisions in *R. v. Powley* and *R. v. Blais* (Sep 2003) offered a liberal interpretation of Métis hunting rights akin to those of status Indians.

1. Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Research of the Indian Association of Alberta Oral Histories, 1972-1974

1.1 Harry Janvier interview, Cold Lake, 22 April 1974

NAME: Harry Janvier

LOCATION: Cold Lake Reserve

INTERVIEWED BY: [Richard Lightning]

TRANSCRIBED BY: Charlie Blackman

DATE OF INTERVIEW: April 22, 1974

Harry: My name is Harry Janvier. I am 74 years old. I come from Cold Lake Reserve. There has been a lot of changes made since the treaties were made. When the government came to make the treaty, he told us that all he wanted to buy was the trees, grass, and 6 inches of the top soil. The government did not come to buy the wild animals, birds and fishes. Since that time everything is changing when these promises were made the government said "as long as the river flows and the sun shines these promises will never be broken. He did not say one month, one day or one year but forever. Now the government is the one that broke his promise as he sells the animals and fish alive, by selling licenses for hunting and fishing. In the treaty promises, he promised us a medicine package and hospitalization. Also in these promises he promised us schools to teach our children.

In our treaties there was no mention of minerals. The only thing the government wanted was the trees, grass, and 6 inches of the top soil on our land. Before the treaties were made the land belonged to us, the treaty Indians, and I still think this land belongs to us. When the deal was made the government promised to give us a farm instructor to teach us about farm management. He also promised us a redcoat policeman to protect us. And also he gave us a priest, and told us when we had troubles we would have someone to confide in. This land we had taken for our own reserves we were not allowed to sell, and were free to work and live on this land as we pleased. I don't think it is right for a person or persons to be taken of the band list without the consent of the whole band. But I do believe, that when a treaty Indian woman marries a whiteman, she should become a non-treaty. And when a white woman or non-treaty marries a treaty Indian, she should become a treaty Indian. When the treaties were made they did not mention the borders, as far as I know the treaty Indians were free to go anywhere in America and were allowed to hunt, fish and trap. ... Not that bad, but today I see it that the whiteman has taken every-thing away from us. To me there is no stronger term of agreement when you use the sun in making a promise. Today if the sun disappeared we would just drop dead. Everything would die, if there was no water man could not survive. The three things they promised, they are the people who broke them. Even the younger generation can tell you that nowadays the leaders only look after themselves. They don't think of the future. Now a hunter or a fisherman is afraid to go hunting and fishing because they are intimidated by game officials. Why is it then that everything the

Indian was promised, the whiteman is making himself rich with those materials. In the meantime we are very poor, we are given whatever is useless.

Richard Lightning: How can the Indian people of today protect or look into these matters?

Harry Janvier: They don't bother about it today. They should get together and unite, just like the provinces. The provinces didn't buy our land, they done it through injustice. If an Indian is out hunting, he is charged with some offence. The whiteman is not ashamed to claim all of this country as his own. He has sold our food you know yourself that American hunters come here and pay \$150.00 for a hunting permit just to take home a head of the animal. If an Indian person kills an animal, only the bones are left, the rest of the meat is prepared for food in order to make a living. Every summer you see a whiteman angling for fish, if an Indian places nets in the water already there is a law which will restrict him. He was told "if you catch a trout you put it back into the lake. The man told the warden he would not because he was going to eat them. That is the way it is, even the minerals underground they are making money out of them. Take a look for yourself, Edmonton the homes in that city. But for the Indian if what Her Majesty promised us had been carried out, we Indians would not have to work, we would be well off.

Richard Lightning: Did the Indians really understand the treaty when it was first introduced to them?

Harry Janvier: I think they pretended that they understood it, but I also think that it confused them very much. I can't swear to that. During that time money and food didn't necessarily mean that much to the Indian. Because the life style from hunting and trapping is what they enjoyed most. That reason why I say that is because when the treaty money was issued some men were ashamed to go and accept the money. The women received the money but they left it where they were sitting when they left. That is how the people told the story. Also there was plenty of meat and bacon brought there, but that was also left there because the Indians didn't like domestic beef. It was like a person who is not used to eating a certain kind of food, that is what happened. It was buffalo meat, moose meat and other animals which was their main diet. They ate beaver, muskrat, ducks and fish.

Richard Lightning: Why was it that the Indians were borrowing children while they were accepting money?

Harry Janvier: I never heard that, I couldn't comment on it. But many people have discussed that when the payment was made, a chief was paid \$50.00 and a councillor was paid \$25.00, then the people received \$12.00. About three years later, they were told that the money would be reduced for future use when people were finding it difficult to make a living, like today. They took half, the Chief received \$25.00, a councillor \$12.00 and the rest of the people received \$5.00, that is what the elders told us.

Richard Lightning: Before the treaty was made here, there were treaties already made in eastern Canada, were the Indians aware of that?

Harry Janvier: I don't know I cannot say anything on that, but it must have been known. I don't know who was the first to receive treaty.

Richard Lightning: Do you recall any name of a Commissioner who was present at the negotiations of the treaty?

Harry Janvier: I think one was Morris.

Richard Lightning: How about the interpreter

Harry Janvier: He was a Metis, what was his name?

Richard Lightning: It wasn't Erasmus?

Harry Janvier: Who? Yes that is the name. The name of one of the commissioners I just cannot remember just now.

Richard Lightning: Do you remember any of the Indian Chiefs names?

Harry Janvier: The one for our part of the country here was KINOSAYO, another was Antoine I can't remember other names. There was one named Joe Graval he was part whiteman. There were others, one was Mayo who was from the north. Some were also from Frog Lake and Long Lake, I think his name was Kehewin.

Richard Lightning: The next question is regarding the disappearance of the buffalo, the Indian livelihood before the treaty and other things regarding the Indian?

Harry Janvier: I heard some of it, the people from this part here always moved about as they hunted, they went southward to kill the buffalo, but gradually the buffalo herds were reduced in great numbers, the whiteman were hunting them, just so they could sell them. It is said that the buffalo left to go towards the east of the country. Then the Metis people hunted them, so they again came westward, I'm not sure where they died off. The same thing happened to the bush buffalo.

Richard Lightning: Did the Indians of long ago ever experience any hunger?

Harry Janvier: I think they were faced with hunger many times, most of the time. It has been told that the Indians many years ago died of starvation. Long ago the Indians were nomadic, they didn't have permanent homes, I am now talking about the Chipewyan Indian. The men would get ready in the morning and then they would start out for the day. If they found a shelter the men stopped and began to hunt. The following morning when the brightest star shone in the sky the woman would pack up and proceed to follow their husbands to the next camp. That is how they made their livelihood, that was during the summer. They didn't know where to go, that is why they died of starvation, meat was the only food source. Also one should keep in mind that it is surprising to know how the Indian lived and on what long ago, but he existed. They also knew Manitou before the Whiteman came here and they knew that they had spiritual contact. That is why they made the Sundance lodge and they worshipped in it. When the white-man arrived they tried to stop it, so they could put their religion to use. It is amazing how the Indian existed long ago.

Richard Lightning: Did the priest help the Indian?

Harry Janvier: I'm not sure of that, long ago the priest was very useful. He didn't go around asking for money. I have a picture of one here, who was here long ago before I was born, he was here until he was very old. That time he travelled on foot from here to Cold Lake to visit the people who were sick. He never asked for money, but he would buy things for the sick as he visited them. I saw him myself. I'm not trying to condemn the priest because I pray myself and believe in it, but the whiteman has really cheated. Now it seems like that after they have led us so far astray, it looks like there is a change back to the Indian way of life. the Indian used to worship and was able to receive help through Manitou.

Richard Lightning: Did the Indian request anything from the Queen's Commissioners?

Harry Janvier: I never heard if they asked for anything. But what they promised was that the Queen would be like a mother to the Indians. Even if there was a battle just outside the reserve, the Indians would not have to serve. They would be protected by the Red Coats (N.W.M.P.) That is what the commissioners told the Chiefs. But if an Indian wanted to, he could volunteer. When I was Chief there was a man from the government travelling the reserves informing the people of the armed services. He was travelling with a doctor for examining the volunteers. I told him that the treaty which was made with the Indians stated that they were not to go serve in the army. However it was up to the individual if he wanted to volunteer.

Richard Lightning: Thank you for talking to me.

1.2 Charlie Blackman interview, Cold Lake, 14 May 1974

Name: Charlie Blackman

Location: Cold Lake

Interviewed by: Louie Rain

Transcribed by: Louie Rain

Date Interviewed: May 14, 1974

Age: 68

Interview was taken by Louie Rain. My name is Louie Rain and I'm interviewing Charlie Blackman from Cold Lake, Alberta.

Louie: O.K. First you state your name, age, and place you're from.

Charlie: My name is Charlie Blackman and I'm from Cold Lake. I'm 68 years old. Of What has been said, I will elaborate some things too regarding the first signing of the treaty (6). I have heard in many places that I have been, and I've heard a lot the time the elders assembled at Duck Lake, Sask. Elders were called up from many parts of the country. The expression the elders gave then was the same as to what we have been saying. And they could not have lied, especially that many people in assembly. Of all the le that had spoken have stressed the same facts as it is.

When the first sign-ing of the treaty, the Queen's representative, not herself. She had sent her government official to come and negotiate on her behalf. They had said: we've been sent by her Majesty to come and negotiate. What the Queen had said will be said here. We didn't come here to buy everything from you (Indians). What we want is, Land six inches deep, trees, and grass. That's all we came to buy from you. Anything that you lived from will still be yours. These are all belongs to you. We're not concerned about these. And never mentioned any minerals that are under the ground to have bought these. These will all be yours. And the lakes too he never mentioned if he wanted those too. And the mountains. It is never known if he had bought them. And we own these mountains yet. We have to consider that we still own them. We own all this land yet. And we still do. And anything that is under the ground, oil, and all the minerals, we should be asked first if they're going to drill for oil. But we're not being considered of those things. They just went ahead. And we've never been considered that we should be part owners of everything. And he had promised that as long as the sun shines and the rivers flow, these agreements will never be broken. If you select a good chief, of all the good things I have given you, if the chief is no good, then I did harm to you. This is what he had said. And today it looks as though he was right. Everything that we lived from, we shouldn't be preserved from there. We should be asked first, about our livelihood. We too should be considered. We were told we couldn't sell meat. That was to be our own use. But today the white man sells the meat, and sells them alive too. He sells fishing permits-in the fall he sells hunting licenses to hunt and from this concept he has sold the game animals alive also. And yet we're not allowed to do that. So, as far as I'm concerned, I'm deadly against that. It doesn't matter what consequences I encounter. Even if I have to go to jail, I'll go to jail, if I'm caught killing game animals for my survival. Simply, I still believe I have the rights to hunt anywhere, even if I have to go to jail for it. When I'm released, I can do it all over again because I'll still think I have the rights. Perhaps they'll leave me alone some day. And we should pursue the same thinking together, my friends. We were never told in the treaty there would be such provinces as Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba as they are now. If we find ways to make a living throughout the country was our own discretion. We could go anywhere to hunt. And this is what I wanted. In the future our children, if we don't do things right today, our children are going to be affected deeply. They'll be poor. Our forefathers were prudent in the olden days. They've lived in harmony. But today we are being pressured. Therefore, we are poor. The children might say we don't try hard enough to fight for our rights. This is why now we should try our utmost. Together as a whole, pull towards to the betterment of our children. That is why I'd be very glad if we could work together, not to do things differently. As we are here who's different - as I'm Chipewyan, does that make any difference? What is the difference? I'm talking in Cree, there is no difference. What we could to is to walk side by side as one on the earth. I think this is the only way we could save our children's future. This is what I wanted to elaborate on. And I can't add anything further. Grass, trees, and the land six inches deep was what he had come to negotiate for. Nothing else, nothing. This is what I've often been told. And further to that, I've heard elders express it this way. Even though I wasn't smart enough then, but I've listened to a certain extent. As I've heard, the elders stressed the same way and same things, not otherwise. Therefore, that's no lie. This I've wanted to tell.

Louie: Is that all?

Charlie: Yes, and what my uncle had just said here. A white man takes a woman off the reserve. He is willing to support that woman and then he'll keep her and support her. He can't expect us to feed him and the woman. That's not right. If he can support her he can take her out or off the reserve. And on the contrary, where an Indian marries a white woman, she would automatically become a registered treaty. And I have not heard if schools and hospitals were promised, and what we were told at the signing of the treaty was when the payment we get, they've received \$12.00 to each person. A chief gets \$25.00 and no he got \$50.00 and a councillor got \$25.00. But they've reduced those payments to half. A chief gets \$25.00 and a councillor gets \$15.00 and we common people get \$5.00 each. There then in the future, schools, hospitals that we could use from the money that was cut to be used towards these. That's how I've heard. This is what I wanted to tell. I am very glad that we have to help one another. Today you've heard me tell the things that he had requested. He didn't buy many things. Perhaps you'd tell these things to other people, as time goes on, that he didn't buy very much from us (Indians).

Louie: I thank you very much.

1.3 Ted Skani interview, Cold Lake, 18 February 1974

Name: Ted Skani

Location: Cold Lake Reserve

Interviewed by: Louie Rain

Transcribed by: Louie Rain

Date: February 18, 1974

Re: Treaty #6 Questions

Louie: First of all I will ask you your name, your age and how you had participated with reserve matters and also if you could recall of what you have heard in the past about our Treaty #6. And how you would like to see for the future of the children that are growing up?

T.S.: I'm from Cold Lake, which is Legoff. My name is Ted Skani and I'm a Chipewyan. Today this man has come to us here at Charley Blackman's place where us elders have come together to talk about the past. What he has come to ask us is which I myself didn't actually see. It is only through what I have heard, as this friend of ours has already said. This is similar as to what I have heard. The Queen's men came to negotiate with Indian people and had promised and also asked what he wanted.

Wild animals, fish, and all those fur-bearing animals, these he didn't mention that he came to buy. My grandfather used to say what the negotiator wanted was land, timber and grass. All these three things are all I want to buy from you. Only one foot of the ground is all I ask, anything below that I don't want, only the surface of the ground, and one foot under. But today it looks as though we are sitting on those things. This is how we feel here as we sat around here

today. I felt this way myself. I cannot tell any further just what I have heard. Today whenever a person wants to go to the bush, he has to see a game warden first, as they are the ones who are making those policies. When the Queen came to make treaty with Indians, she didn't say a game warden will be there to watch you. I never heard it would be like this.

As I was getting to adulthood, I began to hear there were wardens here and there, but today now as soon as you go some place, there's a game warden right there. Whatever their laws are, an Indian has to follow them. This is what they are doing. This is all I could tell today here. This is the way I see things nowadays. This is all I could tell you.

Louie: Perhaps I will ask you a few questions. Like water or a lake, was there any mention if the lakes were surrendered?

T.S.: It was never mentioned to give those away. There was only three things he wanted. The other things are yours. Other than that, there was none that was mentioned.

Louie: And how about the mountains. Was there any mention if the mountains were included in the treaty?

T.S.: (No). Nothing was mentioned, only three things he mentioned. Other than that, there was none. As far as I know, I never heard anything about mountains.

Louie: Schools were promised to us, was it?

T.S.: I guess they did. I think they did say that. Like what our friend here has said. The Governor had said. I will give you a farming instructor. You will have an Indian agent. You will have a policeman. If there's anything that you want or want to know, the Indian agent is there to see. He is to take our messages back and forth for us. This is our grandfather's saying that I'm telling. We didn't see those things ourselves. And today; right now if we are in Saskatchewan or here in Alberta, we can't do as we please. We're not our own bosses. We have to do what federal government and game wardens have to say. Even today, they talk about parks. When people made treaty, they didn't say they were going to have parks, but today now in Saskatchewan, they have a park in the northern part. Even a treaty Indian is not allowed to hunt there. One of my boys was out travelling that way. This was just yesterday. They were chased back to Alberta because they couldn't hunt in Saskatchewan if they are Alberta residents. It'll be the same thing in Alberta too. This is why I'm saying this to you. The game wardens are getting to be too bossy.

Three years ago I went to Buck Lake near Lac La Biche, Alberta and Beaver Lake. There was this halfbreed who said to me I have to obtain a permit now in order to kill a rabbit. How important is it to have a permit to kill a rabbit? This is what I'm saying. It is good to meet and hear what others have to say even though my talk here won't be used as such [meaning on the radio]. But I'm saying this so you will hear what I have to say. Land, bush country and trapping area - an Indian made a living on hunting and trapping. Today there is nothing. We still wish we could have an area where we could hunt and trap in order to live. But there's nothing we could do because everything is hard for us to get nowadays. Wherever I go, there is a registered line that is owned by a white man and he doesn't want Indians to pick berries, to hunt or anything on that line. It is to blame the game wardens. All these registered lines, it's their idea to sell these

trap lines to one another. They don't bother to ask Indians if they would want traplines. They would sooner have a white man to have those to rich people just to have and hold by the white people. So Indians would have none.

Louie: When the government came to negotiate with the Indians, he told them, "I don't want to take away your livelihood and culture. This is yours to keep." This is what it says in some parts on papers.

T.S.: (Yes). This is what it says. This is what I heard.

1.4 Dominic Jacko interview, Cold Lake, 18 February 1974

Name: Dominic Jacko

Location: Charlie Blackman's Place, Cold Lake

Interviewed by: Louis Rain

Transcribed by: Louis Rain

Date Interviewed: February 18, 1974

(Comments from interviewer: When I arrived at where the gathering took place, there were several elders waiting for my arrival, and then I proceeded to explain the purpose of my going around taking those types of elders' interviews. I may mention, too, I have realized some of those elders may have had their interviews taken already, but nevertheless, I took their interviews anyway).

Louie: First of all, I'll ask you what is your name and how old are you?

Dominic: I'm 75 years old and I have two names, Janvier and Jacko - that's my grandfather's name, Jacko - first name Dominic. I use Dominic Jacko which is a good name.

Louie: Where are you from?

Dominic: Right here, Legoff.

Louie: What I want to ask you is about Treaty #6. What information have you heard regarding this treaty? The first negotiations that were made with the old people, what were the promises that were made to them and how have they been treated in the past? What is your opinion, could you tell us here?

Dominic: For a while they were treated according to what was promised, I'd presume. As to what those elders have said, what they've already told is true. Like this moose, an animal like that our grandfathers didn't give those up. They never gave up whatever sustenance they had. The negotiator took the hand of those people and said, I am asking only three things (my brothers). This is how the white men betrayed the Indians. Right up to date we are still being cheated by the white man. They used the term "brother". This game animal, there will be a game

warden, a fish warden to safeguard these fish and game for you. This man had a spear-shaped stick-like thing which he put in the ground as he said this to the people. To signify as if the meat was on that stick, he said you can cut the meat piece by piece as you need it. In order to preserve it, you shall have these wardens to protect the game food for you. As there will be a lot of white people that will be coming, today we have witnessed that event, as there are a lot of white people now. Ever since then, we have been cheated by the white man for the last fifty years. The things he said he would do for us have not been fulfilled. As he has said, as long as the sun goes, as long as the river flows, I will take care of you as I would treat my own children. I will take good care of you, he had said. When they made that first treaty, he gave the Indian people \$12.00 each. He told them you will put this money in trust fund. From there, he gave them \$5.00 ever since. But today, everything is not right. The white man has deceived the Indian people all along, even today. Over the last fifty years or more, which I wouldn't know. From the start, the white people and Indians got along very well. The reason for his was the white people knew this land belonged to the Indian people [this whole Canada]. Indians own this land and therefore the whites knew this. Our grandfathers and the white got along pretty well. But today it's not like that anymore. I am very glad for what you people are trying to do. It is very good that you are approaching the elders about these things. I only hope that you achieve what you are doing by doing this research. May we be looked upon from above and be able to accomplish the things that you are searching for. May we be given blessing and guidance to accomplish these things that you are doing. An Indian was given a cult from the start, as to how to worship the Great Spirit. But now, today, you hardly know if that still exists. We have been harmed and cheated in many ways.

This is the reason why I'm so grateful to see how you are approaching the old people. As you are aware, you have known about these things by hearsay.

When the first treaty was made, my mother was present and listened. She used to tell me a lot. I've heard her telling these stories, as the saying goes, as long as the sun shines, and rivers run. This is what they used to ensure or secure the promises that were made to us. What these elders have said is true. They are telling the truth. As I've said, in the olden days, they whites and Indians were friends. But now, as it is, there's no more of that. The young people and the white people are after the Indians as it looks now. They are understanding each other. The Indian is gradually helping the white man, even though the whites are overruling the Indian. A young Indian would rather go with the white man, even though he knows the white people don't like him. Why is it he's doing this? helping like that? I've heard white people say I help out a lot of Indians. This is not right. Just keep trying what you're doing.

Louie: As what you've understood, the lakes weren't given up, moun-tains, things like that?

Dominic: Nothing, only three things I came to deal with you brothers. This is what he had said, only three things, land timber and grass, only one foot deep and below that is yours. A farmer doesn't need one whole foot deep to cultivate the ground, maybe only 6 inches is what he needs. But they said it was only one foot deep.

Louie: You haven't heard if anything that's under the ground was given, such as oil, coal and etc?

Dominic: This is what I meant. There was no mention of those things that were sold.

Louie: How about the species under the water (fish)?

Dominic: All my animals will be coloured, such as a cow and so on. All the wild animals are yours to keep, game animals, fish, and fowl. These were ours in the first place. But today we don't own these things anymore. He has taken away everything from us. Today we don't have these things, we have nothing. Even today we have lost our trapping area. We used to own this area where they have made a bombing range. If you people could help us to have that back, we would appreciate it. We have lost everything. An Indian has nothing. He doesn't even have a road. One time an Indian was a proud nation. He had pride and dignity. Today he has been degraded, deprived of things he loved so much. Today he is nothing. He has nothing in the sight of the white man. It seemed only yesteryear we were self-supporting tribe. We used to make a good living by trapping and hunting. Today the old have been given a lot of money. In the olden days, old people were issued rations. My mother used to get them too, very little. Today we are receiving pension, children are getting their family allowance. In the old days, we had none of these. We made living by working. We trapped in the bush. But now everything has been destroyed by the white people. Some people here still have some traplines. The game warden has no business to bother with Indians. Game wardens and fish warden were given to us to use and to help us, to protect us. Nowadays, we can't do that. He's been after the Indians now. What's going on now.

I got caught with selling fish one time. There were five of us, 660 fish. I really argued with the magistrate until finally he said, "Well, Jacko, we have been arguing too much. I will only fine you \$15.2" I've lost the fish. We lost them.

That's all I could tell you.

1.5 Dominic Jacko, 22 November 1972, Cold Lake

9:30 A.M.

(There was no question. He just started talking.)

You are doing the right thing, but there is not many old people now, they are pretty well all gone. So as you can see there is more white people, than us, but for my part you are doing the right thing. So also you may have some misfortunes, or misunderstandings on your work, but hoping you can pull through with it. But we can ask the Good Lord to give you a helping hand. In the first treaty that was made to the Indian people, he has said, my dear cousins, any living animal that lives here, I do not buy from you, my mother said, she was there when the first treaty was made. I do not want to buy any animal, for my animal will have spots on their bodies. But today they do not keep their promise, for they cheated us. But they said, my dear cousins, as long as the

sun shines and the river runs, will there be any changes made. But today I do not see the promises that were made. When the Indian and white made treaty and were working together, they were like blood-brothers. But the whiteman knew that he was owning Canada right along. He'd treat them right. Even my- self, I've seen it happen, when I was child. When we would see some- one wearing boots, me and my brother would run home. I've seen the first whiteman that come up this way. They would come through Frog Lake, and he would ask, for something. But the Indian were scared of him, maybe because he was white, I don't know. The whiteman has not eaten for three days, so finally he came to our reserve. But he stayed and made friends. If you people who working on this may have trouble, but with the help of God you will [succeed]. It is going to be difficult, cause there is too many white people, and some of our children mix in with the whites. What the Indian had, they took from us, now we have nothing. Take like fish, moose and any other game, they took from us, we have nothing. I even had a trap line they took me, we lived well while we were trapping, but now nothing. You people who are working on this, I hope you can get some results. You will have to work hard on it. Today I have spoken to Harold Cardinal, and told him I was not against the resource they are working on. But at the time of the first treaty, people never drank any fire-water, and that they got along with each other. A long time ago the whiteman and Indian got to be friends, but now it seems they are fighting each other. Today the old people, who were friends have died, and now the young generation are also friends, but in a different way. They are helping each other, not towards the treaty rights. Today the whiteman comes and live on our reserves. Everything has changed.

1.6 Dominic Jacko, 27 November 1972, Cold Lake

12:00

Cold Lake

(There was no question asked. He just started talking.)

Since the day liquor came, I started to drink, and yet today I still drink. I cannot seem to quit, but yet in my mind I try to quit but liquor controls me. My dear people, liquor is very strong this is what is bringing us down. Years ago our forefathers did not drink but today, we Indian people, we are suffering and it is break-ing our lives to pieces. As I said, I still drink, but if you want me to help you on this research, that you people are working on, I had told Mr. Cardinal, the conference you are to have, about this research, you are going to have a heck of a time cause liquor might be involved. As I said, liquor is quite a temptation to everyone. The people should have their meetings here on the reserve, not in the City of Edmonton because as I have mentioned, they might drink and the meeting will not go right. Liquor is very bad, so if you young people could leave it alone. You can see, deaths are caused by drinking liquor, so you can see, it does not help anybody but only brings sorrow. If any of you go business deals or any meetings all you people do is drink, you should try and control yourselves. That is why I do not go to any doings, cause I'm liable to drink. I did not want to go to the conference cause I'm scared of myself. But now I will try to go and be with you, but I hope there will be no liquor or

drinking. I have forgotten to mention that the Indian people only sold 2 feet from the surface, so the whiteman can farm the land. We own the mineral rights. That is all I can say for now.

1.7 Dominic Jacko and Alexander Metchewais, 22 November 1972, Cold Lake

Name: Dominic Jacko

Location: Cold Lake

Interviewed by: Louie P. Crier and Cyril Muskego

Transcribed by: Joe Redcrow

TAPE NO. I

November 22, 1972

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: Cold Lake, Alberta

People Present:

Alexander Metchewais

Beaver Crossing

Phone 248-2194

Dominic Jacko

Beaver Crossing

Phone 248-2240

Dominic - Topic: Time when hardly any whitemen in this territory

This is the right move. There are not many Indians that are acting as Indians. The whiteman and Indians were friends. Reason for this the British Government know they have the Canadian land from the Indians. The time when the treaty was signed the Indians did not show the animals and fish. The government animals were going to be branded. This would belong to the government. The Indian animals have no brand. I am my brother when we first saw the whiteman in this continent. Him and his father were going astray from the campsite when they found footprints which indicates the footprints of shoes. Later they saw this whiteman. He was hungry, not eating for several days. He was on foot and he had a packsack containing money like today. This

whiteman stayed overnight in a spruce timber. He kept on going northward. He was at what is now Le Goff. He stayed five days at our home. My brother took him out on a team of horses towards the east where he bought a homestead.

Alex Metchewais - The former elderly people

There was a special Indian by the name of Wikuskokesano. He was the first person that sold the land to the government. He was paid a large sum of money. No one knows how much, but there was a big box containing the money. This box that contained money was given to the Catholic missionaries. When the land was sold the other Indians did not agree. This particular Indian made the deal privately.

This person left with the missionary down to the east coast. That is where he made the agreement. Indians found out later that it was he who sold the land. After he got home his brother-in-law was mad at him. That was when the money went to the catholic missionaries. They got the money instead of the Indians.

Alex Metchewais - This is about a person named (Chachaiswkais - means - look up).

This Indian also went down to the east (coast). When he came back he had forty head of horses formerly owned by the North West Mounted Police and also buggies. He also got paid for the land (Canadian Land). The first Indian who sold the land got paid with money, the Indian got paid with horses.

When he got back the people (Indians) disagreed with what he got for the land so he got scared of his people. He returned his horses and buggies to the government, where he got them. He did not get repaid.

Dominic Jacko - Alcohol

I have been using alcohol up to date. I can't really stop. At one of the previous meetings with Indian Association of Alberta, I have seen and talked to Harold Cardinal. People don't agree and I don't agree to have meeting in the cities. We should have these meetings in our reserves.

I forgot one thing, when our ancestors sold the land to the British Government, they sold only the land to the British Government, they sold only the surface (approximately 24 inches).

Note: Dominic and Alex - what they know from their ancestor or old history of the old people, they did not sell the animals, minerals under ground or surface and also fish.

Alex - Wikuskokesano and wife didn't have any but Chachaiskais (Chief) was the first Chief to be given the Frog Lake Reserve. He had a large family. He was my great grandfather. Some of his family are living at Frog Lake at present time and at Le Goff (Cold Lake Reserve).

1.8 Harry Janvier, [c. November 1972?], Beaver Crossing

Name: Harry Janvier

Beaver Crossing

Age: 72

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Phone 248-2246

Harry - Well dear friends, what I'm going to put on this tape, who ever hears this and where ever you are. How much I learned in my life time and you all know, since the beginning before the white people came to our country. The Indian people, our ancestors, have survived although they didn't have [metal] tools that they now have, and its plain to see that we are protected by the Great Spirit and he can still look after us. Lets not forget him.

The white people came to this country and they soon began to populate. The Queen has to protect the Indians from getting pushed around. They made an agreement with the Indians or us and there, what she promised the Indians, who were present at the time who have told me about it later. She has promised us quite a lot of things, land and other things. This agreement was made between the Government and Indians of Treaty No. 6.

When they were making treaty with the Queens Government, it took many days. Everytime the Indians make a decision, the Government's man get up and tell the people, points his finger towards the sun and says, "I'm not telling you this for only to-day. This, what we agreed upon is not only for today and tomorrow but as long as the world exists, as long as the sun shines and the river flows, no two-legged man will be able to break this agreement. To me it was a strong agreement made cause the sun still shines.

To me, while the sun still shines, we will survive, cause if the sun stops shining, everything will stop growing, everything that is on this world will die and disappear and water the same. This is how the Government made the agreement with the Indians.

I can name some people who told me this. My dad told me some of this too but I was [too] young at the time. Still I must have heard and understood some. I've travelled alot going to meetings, as I was once a leader for this Band. I've went to many big meetings such as in Saskatchewan.

I was still young then, when I went to North Battleford meetings. I can name three old chiefs who were there that made this treaty. There were many but I will name three.

1. Yayamam - known as Andrew Zimmer from Sweet Grass Reserve, Saskatchewan, He was Chief til he died.

2. In [Chipewyan] Language No Arm known as Chief John Horse, Frog Lake, Alberta.

3. Chief Joe Tailor of Onion Lake, Saskatchewan

They had a meeting with the Queens men and made a strong deal. The Chiefs gave the surface land. [How] deep? I cannot tell whether one foot or two feet deep. They did not give the Government what the Indians are living on such as game animals and fish in the water which the Indians use for food.

Now to-day with under ground minerals, game animals and fish the Government is getting rich.

Very soon the Government will make us pay for this. This is what they are working on. They will [treat] us like white people.

The new government now are working against our treaty rights with the white paper. All you who hear this think about it, my people.

I don't know more than anyone else but I've work for the Indian people since I was young. I am not saying this for myself but I talk alot for our younger generation in the future.

What the queen has promised us will be pushed aside and then we will have to follow their law. The Indians will have to live like white people. That is what they are after.

Now, the white people haven't done anything about the sun and river so they can't do too much to us. We are still looked after by the Great Spirit who put us in this world will still protect us even though we can't help ourselves.

The government has over run us, now the treaty people don't count anymore. All these news papers and everything else don;t talk about treaty people. The treaty people have no power anymore.

If ever they broke our treaty, we don't know what will happen to our children and grandchildren if they took our good reserve land away. They haven't got as good a land as ours and if this happens, how will our children survive.

They haven't bought all our land yet, we still own our reserves. Just because she gives us five dollars, doesn't mean he owns everything. All the Indians across Canada still own this land. (Reserve) This was given to them.

If we all pull together and work together the Great Spirit will not let us go.

[Translated by Cyril Muskego]

Harry Janvier - Bombing Range

What I'm going to talk about is this land, on which we were making our living by trapping and fishing, taken away from us by Department of National Defence. Not only us here in Cold Lake but lots of other Indians surrounding the range.

We were told at the time it started, that it was for twenty years. When the twenty years came up, it will either be closed won or make another arrangement. For the first twenty years, we were told that we will be compensated for all the time they were using the range.

When the surveyed the bombing range, it was 100 x 100 miles each way.

[Correction by Cyril Muskego]

It is 40 x 80 - 40 x 40 in Alberta

40 x 40 in Saskatchewan]

It is twenty years now since that time when they took over the range.

We could have dealt with this again now but the leader we have now don't care much about it. When we first made a deal twenty years ago, I was involved in this.

Now the people don't know what to do and have nothing to do so they are living on welfare. When the range was open to us, nobody was getting relief and making a good living by trapping and fishing. Now there is no way a person can make a living by trapping and fishing. That is why I said this.

We were paid three times and then they closed the deal with us. At the time the deal was made, we were told we were to be compensated every year. Now that twenty years is up, we are supposed to make another deal or they open the range to us, but nobody is thinking about it or cares.

Translated by Cyril Muskego

1.9 Rosalie Andrew, c.November 1972, Cold Lake

Name: Mrs. Rosalie Andrew

Location: Cold Lake

Interviewed by: Charlie Blackman

Transcribed by: C. Blackman & J. Deranger

C.B.: How old are you?

R.A.: No number of years. I don't know. When the priests fixed the papers at the Church, they mixed them up so I'm not sure. I was told that I was a little past 5 years old when they had the rebellion at Frog Lake. I got my pension by guessing what my age was.

C.B.: What is your name?

R.A.: Rosalie. Father LeGoff said my name meant a rose.

C.B.: Where were you born?

R.A.: I was born around here. My father said I was born around Ft. Pitt. I was baptized here at LeGoff, Alberta.

C.B.: Have the treaties been lived up to by the government?

R.A.: No. I don't think the government has kept all the promises.

C.B.: What was promised in the treaty concerning hunting, fishing and trapping?

R.A.: When they made the treaty with the treaty Indians, they were free to hunt, trap and fish anywhere they were. There were no boundaries whatsoever.

C.B.: What was promised in the treaty concerning medical services?

R.A.: They promised us a medicine chest and later hospitalization as times changed.

C.B.: What was promised in the treaty concerning education?

R.A.: When we first made the treaty, the government held back \$7.00 a head to pay for our education. At first they paid us \$12.00 per person, and then they decreased it to \$5.00 per person per year.

C.B.: If the land was surrendered in the treaty, were the mountains included? If not, why were they not surrendered? If the land was surrendered, were the surface rights surrendered only or did the surrender include mineral rights?

R.A.: No, the mountains were not included. When the Treaty Indians surrendered their land, all they sold were the surface soil, trees, and grass. They did not sell their minerals, gas, oil and anything under the soil.

C.B.: Before the signing of the treaty, who owned this land? What is the definition of "Indian title"?

R.A.: Before we, the treaty Indians of Canada, sold our land, we were the only ones who owned it, our forefathers, our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

C.B.: Many reserve lands have been surrendered since the signing of the treaties. How do the people feel about these reserve surrenders?

R.A.: Since the treaties were signed, there have been many portions of our land surrendered, and I feel that this land is still ours.

C.B.: Do the people want to preserve for themselves and for their children and grandchildren the "Indian way of life?"

R.A.: Yes. I am very interested in keeping our Indian way of life, so I'm helping my people, by my stories to introduce our history in our Treaty Indian schools.

C.B.: Many men, women and children have been taken off the band lists. How do the people feel about this (is it fair or not)?

R.A.: I do believe that before the government takes any Treaty Indian off the Treaty Band list, the Chief and councillors should be the ones to make the decision as it was long time ago.

C.B.: What about women marrying non-Indians? Should they lose some or all of their treaty rights?

R.A.: Long time ago when a treaty Indian woman married a non-treaty Indian, she became a non-treaty. She was given \$50.00 for ten years and during this period, if she became a widow,

she had a choice to come back and become a treaty Indian again. Her children never became treaty Indians at any time. No, I think they should not lose their treaty rights when a treaty woman marries a non-treaty Indian or a white man. She herself should remain a treaty Indian. When a treaty Indian man marries a non-treaty or a white woman, I think she should become a treaty Indian.

1.10 Harry Janvier, c.November 1972, Cold Lake

Name: Harry Janvier

Location: Cold Lake

Interviewed by: Louie P. Crier and Cyril Muskego

Transcribed by: Joe Redcrow

Harry Janvier Cold Lake

Answer: I will use my mind, and where the standings we are on. I do not say that I know alot more than anyone else, but it is just that, from what I have heard from the older people, I will talk about.

Interviewer: If you want to tell it in your own language you can, but when you finish you can say it in Cree. There will be many people who will listen to you when you talk.

Answer: When I was young, I got into some business and went around where they had meetings. Listen to our forefathers, on how the Queen and the Indian people made the treaty. So I will relate to you about their country called Canada, the Indian land. Only the Indians lived here, before the whiteman ever set foot here. No one knows how the Indian people made their living. There was no iron of any sort that they owned. They did not even have no homes and had no clothes either. They lived the same, and we should know that they were not dropped here. There was someone else looking after them. So we know that God had provided them with food and that he gave this country to the Indian people, where we are living now. He had put some things under the earth to live with, and he had put things on earth to make a living with. Underneath the water, he had put things so the Indian could live on. Now all these things that God had given to the Indian people, today the whiteman takes away and destroys. Everything that God had given to us. He still owns today. We should think about these happenings. Not until the whiteman came, and gave a lot of different objects and things to the Indian people. Till finally the Queen wanted to make the treaty with the Indians. It is right they made the treaty with the people, our people used to say, the treaty #6. How many days they had meetings, talking about the treaty. The Queen's official every time he thought, was to be a deal, he would get up. He said, my dear cousins this deal we are to make, is not for today only but for always. As long as the sun shines and the river flows, there will be no two legged person that will break this deal, and it will be kept till [all] eternity. I did not learn this, just by hearing and I have seen my elders that were in the first meeting with the Queen. I will tell their names, that were there, a man from

Saktchowasik, his name was Yayanam. He was the first [chief] after the treaty was made, and he died as a chief. Kiskipton, from Frog Lake, I have heard, tell many a times of the treaty that were made. Another man from Onion Lake Joe Taylor was his name, which I've heard also mention the first treaty. That is why I don't think they should lie about it, and I seen it in the book of how the treaty was made. They also said, any big game animals are not to be sold, because it was the only food that the Indians had. Any living creature that lives underneath the lake, the Queen did not buy from us. The land, that is good for farming, was only sold, 2 feet from the surface. The grass and timber was also included. But today we can all see, that even our food they take away from us. Our native country, that the Creator had given to the Indian people, is only beginning to be used by the white people, to make money and get rich. All the progress that is set through out the country, came from our native land. Yet today the white man is not ashamed, to take, or break for what is left for us, from our forefathers.

The Indian people had taken a small [proportion] of the land, to keep and to hold, which we called reserves. But the way they look at it, it was given from the government, for which only the Queen had passed the deal to the Indian people. So we have to think about this situation and which I am glad that these people, came and let us talk about the first treaty that was made. We should not be ashamed to fight for our own rights, because we were the first human race that lived in this Continent. The whiteman does not own the country, it was our land. He only gives us \$5.00 a year, but today the whiteman is rich from it, and we people do not have anything at all. If they break up the reserves, where will our children and grandchildren go, nobody knows. They will go into different directions, or maybe they will all vanish and there will be no more Indian people anywhere. That is what I think, and all the people who are going to be [listening]. I think a lot about these happenings every day, of what the future will look like. Even today an Indian never you see in the newspaper. Indian people are taken as second class or even lower. The Metis are a little higher than us, that I cannot understand. It really looks as though we are going to be put away but we cannot let ourselves go without a struggle. God has put us here, and we have to ask him to give us strength, for that is our only solution. He is the only one who can change the minds of anyone, for he has created everyone. The government does not own or run our minds, only God. The whiteman is not any better than anyone of us. Some of our people today who has the education, pulls toward the whiteman's way, in making money.

Interviewer: We were talking about this on my way to your dad's place to here. These two people were talking about the Cold Lake area, using trap lines areas, and also using the bombing areas, and I was asking him, if he had [any] comments to these effects.

Answer: When the Air force came and set a deal with us, there was many of us, who came. But the main one who came and made the agreement with us has said. The lease will be to, only 20 years. When the lease ends at 20 years, maybe there will be an extension to be made on the bombing range. As long as it is used before it expires, you will be receiving monies from the government. But according to the deal we only got 2 payments. We were cheated on it. The people asked the Indian Agent to help them make the deal, but as you know the Indian Agent should look after, and help the people living on the reserves. That is why we did not sign any agreements. We had put our hopes and trust in the Indian Agent to make a proper statement, that

is why they put us in the wrong side. Yet today they are using it, and we are [losing] our trap lines. I tell our chief and council about this, but they do not seem to know anything about it.

1.11 Alex Metchewais, 22 November 1972, Cold Lake

Location: Cold Lake

Interviewed by: Louie P. Crier and Cyril Musekgo

Transcribed by Joe Redcrow

Alex Metchewais November 22, 1972 9:30 a.m.

Interviewer: I will ask Alex Metchewais to say a ceremonial prayer to ask the Lord, that he will give us strength and hope, that we make, and come in progress for the work that we are doing.

Alex: Our Father, Almighty Father, gave us strong minds and he had given us strong minds to use, and lives to live with, and may we use our benefits for what he has given us on this earth. May we see the light for which we are blind, to see. For you are the Saviour of the earth, and can rule anything on the earth, even us. Anything you say [can] come truth, as we are asking for is coming strong on us. You own us. Oh, Father, may the grace and blessing be upon us to give more power in our ways of life. Help us oh, Lord, because the white man, is really on top of us, and help us not to lose our minds, for we ask you the help which we need. Give us more knowledge and wisdom to know what we are to do, for you are the one only can do and say, that will come true. We alone cannot pull our load, but with your helping hand, we can pull our loads easier, we ask of you to do this for us. May the people who are working for us, be bestowed upon your blessing, so they can come through with what they are working for. May you understand what we are and listen to our troubles, so we can get more of what we are to do.

Interviewer: Why you are asked to come here, I will tell you. Anything I relate does not agree with you, they will tell you where I have been mistaken a word to you. The first treaty that was made, between the Indian people and the Queen, is what we are looking for. What deal they had made, and all the stories that was passed on to us. Why these deals went wrong and why it happened. This treaty that the Queen made to our forefathers. The actual treaty that was made, is not exactly, written down the way they had made it. Often you can [see] whatever the whiteman feels he can write and change this treaty whenever he wants to. So now, today, you old people who has seen the past, can relate their stories, for when they tell their stories, them are the true stories. That is why, they are looking for the true and rightful treaty that as made to the Indian people. To write it down in paper so we can tell, about our truthful treaty in later years to come. To held and cherish, and also be proud of our ancestors deal in making treaty. So that the young generation can read, and in time too, when they come upon some understanding of our treaty rights, they can go and look and find it cause it was put a way. Where also too, that it will protect then in any way. Like some young people when you tell them something, they really listen. They are the ones who know what the treaty is all about, and will some day pass it on to their children. That is why we are asking you to tell of what you know of the first treaty. The one treaty 6, and

all the reserves we will be going to see people, asking them to tell of what you know of the first treaty. They will listen and write it down, and will prescribe it on a story book, where all your stories will be, and also your pictures will be in it. In the future years to come, when our children have a misunderstanding towards our treaty rights they will find your truthful story, and say that this was the true treaty that was made, between the Indians and the Queen. Sometimes people do not quite understand things, but it is not hard to find out, what he does not understand. The whiteman is not going to use this, the Queen is not going to use this. It is us, treaty Indians, who is going to use this, and our children, grandchildren, great grandchildren who will be using the treaty rights. This, I had just said, and where the government is concerned, he sends his agents, and whenever they feel and like, that's the way they write and change the treaty rights. That is why, these stories are being taken, so the way the whiteman describes the treaty rights, and the true stories that are told by you people will be liked. Every word that has been said, like the country, and all the mineral rights. Hunting, fishing, even water. That some day, water will be worth a lot more than oil, and oil, what a car uses. The government already looking into this, cause he sees that there is a shortage of water in places. Anything that was not written down, in the treaty rights, like moose, elk, was also sold with the land. That is what is written in our treaty rights. The agreement that was made to the treaty, was broken and that all the animals, were sold with the land, that is what they had written down. All the Indians that made the treaty, has said they did not sell any animals. So the Queen agreed, that she said to the, [as] long as [there] are animals roaming around you can hunt. Even, there is the last of one, animal, you can kill it. They were told. But today things has changed, because the whiteman forgets his promise to the treaty. So now they are all after us, to try and forget the treaty and do away our rights, Like these children they are using them on us, I know it is not right to say this. But actually we do not know how the whiteman is using us. Today, you hear the young generation say, what good is it doing us, we may as well forget it. We should never forget it, cause this land is ours, it is so precious to us. There will never be the day, the whiteman will end his payments to us, the old people used to say. For that is where the [white got] rich and has a good standing. You are asked to tell your stories, with a good heart and in a good natured way. You will not be the only ones who will tell their stories, so you can relate to us from the time you heard from, and the stories your grandfather and grandmother told or heard them talk about. One good word may come in use one of these days, one we can keep, and also our children. The travels we are making now won't be the last, we will still come cause we want to do it the right way. We are not the only ones who are working on this, there is others. We even should have brought, maps, indicating the way the reserves were shaped. Your reserves how big they are, even the reserves that were lost, they will dig into them at Edmonton, in Ottawa, or even possibly in England. The Queen had made the treaty with the Indian so most likely she could have brought some documents, about the treaty rights to England. In the near future whatever you say, in your stories, will be written down, exactly the same in English, so will the others who will tell their stories.

Interviewer: Did you understand what I have just said?

Answer: No, not quite.

Interviewer: I will just give you some of the outline of this work. We have to get all the people to be aware of us. Today is 23rd of the month and every word you say will go on tape, and also the time and where we are. Every word, time, and place and people who will speak, will all go into the office. Everything I say will be in tape although this old man does not understand what I am saying. The interpreter who will listen to this tape, will not miss any word, they will write it down on paper.

Alex Metchewais November 22, 1972 Cold Lake 9:30

(There was no question asked. He just started talking.)

The first time they sold the land, we hear about, from our fore- fathers. The one who sold it was, a man by the name of Winaskoksiyan on the treaty number 6. It happened that there was a priest involved and the Hudson Bay manager who spoke Cree. The Indian people gathered and had a big meeting, discussing the land which they were asked to sell. The priest interpreted to Winaskoksiyan and he was the only one, who sold the land, for he did even ask his followers. He was the chief, and he was taken to England. The priest and the Hudson Bay manager went along, to interpret his selling the land to the Queen.

When he had made the deal and come back, he was given some money the chief Winaskoksiyan. When he arrived back home, he gave the money to the priest to keep, but unfortunately his brother-in-law killed him. But when he got killed no one knows where the money went to. But if he received the money, it should be in the files in Ottawa. But later on when his brother-in-law killed him, they found out that he truly sold the land, treaty No. 6. He came from the bush Indians, he was not from the prairie, (the chief, Winaskoksiyan). That is what I have heard from my uncle Joyan for he was a chief. Another one by the name of Mistikos known as Little Stick from Mistikos Kawahsik. They had seen and known. Winaskoksiyan the chief was not yet very big, the one that sold the land. The lands that he has sold must be in the file. Like the whiteman, he must have written whatever he liked, cause the chief did not understand anything about it. Maybe the interpreter did not interpret the rightly make it understandable. That could be understood and read. That is why the documents of the deal could have been written incorrectly, cause the [chief] did not know what he was getting into to. Just like myself, I never went to school, but from listening this is how come I know these things. This is what I have heard, and many more of the people will tell their stories similar to mine.

(There was no question asked. He just started talking.)

The time they made the agreement, my brother was the chief. At that time we had 2 payments, and the third payment did not come. So my brother and 5 others went to Edmonton to try and find out what happened. But we got paid after that, but there was still some money left, and it went back to the government or we do not really know. There were government officials who flew in from Ottawa. That last time they came there were 3 of them. We had a meeting with the white people where the bombing location area is now. We had the meeting till 6 o'clock and there were only 5 of us left. There is one who died from this bunch and he is the only one who would have anything to say. His name was St. Pierre. There was some white people who had trap lines and they got paid in a big chunk of money. There was this white who spoke quite a bit but

the government official told him, I did not come to see you. I came to see the [Chipewyan] people who own this land. The people who got paid for their trap lines, received about seven thous-and dollars a piece, so they got more than any of us. Some of us received from two - three thousand apiece, for the trap lines. The cree language you first used in telling your story, could you relate that now in your own tongue, and he will take it in tape.

(There was no question asked. He just started talking.)

I will talk about another thing, which our forefathers had related. There was an Indian called Jasjakskwes from Frog Lake, which was given to him. The old man was called up to Ottawa, and when he got there they promised him 40 heads of horses because he was the chief from Frog Lake. They gave him one of the police horses and it was a very beautiful horse. When he came home, the people were very disappointed, because he sold the land for the horses. So he had to go back and give the horse back. That was the last of that horses was seen cause maybe that was the only payment they got for the land. This is what I've heard from my fathers grandfather.

Interviewer: What about Jasjakskwes, did he have any children?

Answer: Jasjakskwes had lots of children. He died about 1912 and he was quite old. He was the chief from Frog Lake and that is where his great grandchildren are now. On the north side of the reserve, Opaskiyakewiyan lived there. There was three reserves combined together on the Frog Lake reserve. The length of the reserve is 16 miles long but I do not know how wide it is. The people from Frog Lake reserve, own nearly all the lake. The people are in one, for they went together at Frog Lake.

1.12 Alexander Metchewais, 18 February 1974, Cold Lake

Name: Alexander Metchewais

Location: Charlie Blackman's, Cold Lake

Interviewed by: Louis Rain

Transcribed by: Louis Rain

Date Interviewed: February 18, 1974

Louie: I'll ask you first of all your name and how old you are and the place you're from:

A.M.: I'm Alexander Metchewais. I have been here about fifty-three (53) years. This is where I have been ever since on this reserve. I have attended quite a few meetings such as All Chiefs' Conferences. The reason why I go to these is I am concerned about the young people and at the same time, trying to understand what the Indian people are doing. And as I have heard the old people said. The reason I'm saying this is because no matter where you, a person will always find something that is good, traditions that are good and also find something that could be useful. This is where a young person could get a lot of ideas. But then again a lot of these people don't attempt to follow these. First of all I will say in regard to the old treaty. Our relative that just

spoke here a minute ago, as he talked about the treaty. He is my father-in-law from Saskatchewan. I have heard similar to what he had said.

This Sweetgrass never sold the land and he could never have done this alone whereas a person alone could never accomplish too much that would be effective. The fact I'm saying this, when there's two, five or ten people, those ten people would have much more power to do something than just one person alone. This is the area where our forefathers made the mistake for the fact they didn't understand English. But today as the elders have said, you have the understanding now which is true, but you must not forget the elders. Even an old lady, don't neglect her for she might have something that could be very useful. She probably would remind people of a lot of things.

Why I'm saying this, a lot of our young people have the understanding therefore he is easily led to do otherwise, because he understands the white man and his tactics or his ways. He would rather pull that way. When Sweetgrass was induced to give this land, when the deal was made, he went with a trader and a priest to interpret for him, simply because he didn't understand one word of English. Here he took one trader and a priest because apparently they all talked Cree. They interpreted for him, and they got back, Sweetgrass. Sweetgrass' relatives were quite upset for what he did to go and give or sell this land. This is what was said he did. After about ten days, he died of unnatural causes, which apparently was caused by one of his brother-in-laws. Because they didn't like what he did. That's how Sweetgrass left this world.

The money he brought back with him, he had left that money with the priest and that is not known where it is, although he never made any notations of that money to who it belonged to. That money was lost. This is what I have heard.

Why I'm saying this I will name two. I'm not hesitant to name those old man (Mis-sis-stik-qwan) (Bighead). He was a chief a long time at Bighead Reserve in Saskatchewan. He was given one of the first reserves that were established. That was my grandfather, this Bear. He was my grandfather. My father-in-law who just spoke, that was his father. They've heard this and besides, they were one of those that would listen closely on anything that is being said. They would rather listen than to try and get into such as if there's a game going on. I have seen those old people. It must have been about sixty years ago since they've died. It's been about over fifty years since my grandfather, the Bear, left this earth. He was my close relation, not a distant relative, but a very close relative. He was my grandfather, this old man Bear. And also Bighead were my grandfathers. These were the people I used to hear talked about those things. They would tell these stories to the people. When I was small I was one of those kids that like to listen to everything. I guess that's why I'm telling you these things and today as we are sitting here, as you are approaching these elders. It is very good that you are doing this. These are all my relatives that have spoken already and I am speaking now. I would appreciate very much if you could put these interviews out so the people could hear them all over and the things you are doing. Even though I will say we are not the only ones that know about these things, although we have passed over seventy years of age. Still it would be nice. That's all I can say for now as there are more people here who could say some more on this.

Louie: I'd like to ask you the questions that I have asked those others here like this hunting, education and about the mountains and how the Queen promised those things to the people. Have you seen if these promises have been kept as it should have been or has she failed to stand up to these promises?

A.M.: The promises she had made. She made them sound good then but today these promises are not in existence. Like this topic we have been talking about; about game animals and other things too. She hasn't done any of these things that she had promised to the Indian people, because it can be plainly seen that what the Indian was promised was never done. It bothers him 'cause the Indian has kept those things in his head. As an example she was told and she never lived up to these things. It is from this reason the Indian people never forgot what they were promised. They didn't tell us these things. I myself never heard her to promise these things but there were a lot of old people that heard her. This information we're telling now was passed on to us. When these old people said, hunting or game animals were never sold, that is the truth as far as I'm concerned. Because I have been attending those big conferences for the last four years and before that I have paid attention to what was being said in the meetings - all those meetings that were being held in Saskatchewan. Right today I still remember what was said then. Simmer and up to Frog Lake. He was one-armed. His son is here today.

That's all.

2. Delia Opekokew Interviews with Canoe Lake Band Members, 1985

Interviews with Canoe Lake Band Members, recorded 13 June 1985 by Delia Opekokew

BACKGROUND

During the summer of 1977, between my second and third year of law school, I was retained by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) to study and assess the Canoe Lake Band's claim relating to the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range. At the time, I attended at least five meetings at the Canoe Lake Band, and one meeting at the Cold Lake Band in Alberta. The persons directly affected were still concerned about the lack of proper compensation, lack of economic rehabilitation, and the continued use of the land as an air weapons range as they had believed that the land would revert back to their use in twenty years time from the date of its appropriation. In fact the activity in 1977 had been initiated by pressure from the Canoe Lake members to the FSIN because they were disappointed when the air weapons range did not revert back to their use in 1973 and 1974. They had requested that the FSIN represent their interests.

In assessing the factual and legal situation at the time, I was deeply affected by the inability of the band members to properly advance their concerns in the matter, procedurally. They were frustrated and hurt that they had never been properly compensated, that their source of livelihood had been reduced without any alternative economic development provisions, and that the lands were still being used. They related their concerns to me in Cree. The Chief at the time, Chief John Iron, who also was the Chief during the 1950's, only spoke Cree, and the persons directly affected spoke Cree except for one person who spoke both English and Cree. Because I was originally from the community, I spoke Cree, and yet I was frustrated because I could not properly convey to them their options for action. By the end of the summer, it was my opinion that they had grounds to take legal action, and/or to request an inquiry. Both recommendations were difficult to translate. The Chief, now deceased, did not pursue my recommendations because he did not appear to understand me and he did not appear to have the total confidence in my recommendations as others were recommending negotiations. However, at the time, the FSIN was boycotting the ONC [Office of Native Claims], and there was no other route for the settlement of a claim. When I left, my brother, Norman, took over the work. They organized some meetings with the Department of National defense, and, I believe, were advised that the band should conduct economic impact and feasibility studies on alternative economic uses. They were not able to do so because of lack of skilled resources. [emphasis added]

In spite of these setbacks, the people continued to pressure for action in numerous ways. They wrote letters to their M.P., and each of the M.P.'s for the Battleford-Meadow Lake constituency from the 1950's to the present must have files on this matter, to the Department of National Defence, the Department of Indian Affairs in Meadow Lake, Regina, and Ottawa, to the FSIN, to myself and whoever would be willing to listen. In May or June, 1984, they demonstrated at the

border of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range at which time they read a statement stating that they would continue their lobby for recognition of their rights to the land. This statement appeared on the CBC National News.

In or about January of this year [1985], the Chief and council requested my assistance again.

On June 13, 1985, I interviewed those people who were available, about their recollections of the events surrounding the establishment of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range. I was impressed by the sincerity of their beliefs, and determination to see this matter through. It was as if some of the older members were determinedly staying alive in order to see this thing through. They had been wronged and they want justice.

The Chief and council had arranged for me to meet with some of the members who had been the actual hunters, trappers, and fishermen who had lost their traditional lands to the bombing range. Seven men were interviewed ranging in age from their late 50's to their late 70's. The interviews were conducted in Cree except for one person who had a fairly good understanding of English. The tapes of the interviews have been preserved.

RELEVANT BACKGROUND FACTS TO INTERVIEWS

a) BILL TUNSTEAD - An Indian Affairs official who appeared to be their main informant at the time as he spoke Cree. They initially knew him as Bill Smith, who had married George Morin's sister, in Ile-a-la-Crosse. He was one of a group of men who had settled in the North to evade war service. He later resumed his real name and presumably joined the Department. He is still alive, retired and blind, in Vancouver. His daughter cares for him.

b) NAPOLEON JOHNSON - A provincial officer with the Department of Northern Services. A Metis from Ile-a-la-Crosse, he spoke Cree.

c) CHIEF JOHN IRON - The Chief of the Canoe Lake band in the 1950's and again in the 1970's. It was at his house on or about the fall or winter of 1954 that the first meeting was held by the Department of Indian Affairs officials with the band members to advise them of the land being appropriated for the air weapons range. He believed that his people had not been properly compensated and that the land would revert back up to his dying days in the mid 1970's. He did not speak English.

d) CHIEF JOHNNY IRON - The Chief during the 1960's when the members signed the quitclaims. He also did not speak English. He was the Chief in between the other Chief John Iron's era. His son, Frank Iron, was a chief in the 1970's and 1980's. His other son, Thomas Iron, is now the present Chief of the Canoe Lake Band. Both Frank and Tom speak English.

INTERVIEWS WITH INDIVIDUALS

a) MARIUS ATHANASE IRON - His key role at the time, was as a guide to Bill Tunstead, who conducted the survey of the cabins at Arsenault Lake. He repeatedly expressed his frustration over the use of English at the meetings today and his inability to understand. However, he expressed a strong view about his clear understanding of the events in the 1950's because the

officials spoke in Cree or had people interpreting and because he had the opportunity to travel with Bill Tunstead privately and had extensive discussions with him. He guided Bill Tunstead presumably with a winter sled and a horse or horses because that was the mode of transportation at the time.

i) UNDERSTANDING OF THE ARRANGEMENT

"I want to restate that they told us at the first meeting."

"If you let us borrow the land, if you consent, in exchange, we will compensate you and that money should really help you. So we thought the money will really help and since they are going to borrow it only, it will not be so serious.

"The officials first told us at the meeting that we will borrow the land for five or ten years or up to a maximum of twenty years. When the twenty year period occurs, we will put it back, give it back, but we will pay you while we use it. I always remember it clearly because they said it to us in perfect Cree. The interpreter was Jarvis (Gervais). So it has happened that the twenty years had passed but I never stopped talking about the promise that it would be returned back to us. [emphasis added].

"After this meeting, I guided Bill Tunstead to survey the cabins so they would know who to compensate for the equipment. He took me to the location and he requested that I guide him to survey the people's cabins on site. That was my first actual experience about it. He wrote (ie surveyed) all the cabins as to which cabin belonged to who, he did it from one location, he stayed on the ice, as there was no road. He only got out at one place because I had made a trail for him. It was after he had finished recording the cabins that we talked. He stated that we are only borrowing the land but we will pay you every year for the use and later we will return it to you. That should be either in 5 or 10 years or up to a maximum of 20 years time."

ii) QUITCLAIMS - "After the first meeting. there were no other meetings. Later we were told that we should sign something before we received our compensation. We did not understand that we were agreeing that these cheques would be our final payments. A person usually signs something before you are given something which still happens. You are required to sign your "X" mark before you are given a cheque.

"There were some who were afraid to sign but we were at a disadvantage because we were told we would not receive the money unless we signed. The Chief spoke to us and those who disagreed were pressured into changing their minds. Then we agreed but it was because of the cheques. We just did not believe that the third payment was our final payment."

iii) USE OF COMPENSATION

"I purchased cattle, furniture, food, and I put the rest into a saving account. I still have a stove."

iv) ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

"Once the land for the range was taken, we tried to continue our traditional lifestyle. However, we were in competition with other users of the land. To the north of us, the Ile-a-la-Crosse Metis

were already harvesting that area, the Beauval Metis were harvesting the east, and finally the Waterhen Indian people had always harvested to the south of us. Our exclusive traditional lands were those now appropriated for the Range.

“When we requested alternative assistance, the Department of Indian Affairs would promise to find us jobs. Many people left on their own to find work. They were usually unsuccessful. When they did find work, the wages were so small - about \$2.00 per day. We would start work at 7:00 a.m. and finish at 6:00 p.m.. If you missed even ten minutes, a deduction was made.

“People really tried. I remember the old Chief and another person going to Beauval to sell moccasins. They only had one horse for their transportation so they had to take turns riding the horse. One would ride the horse for a distance, then tie the horse to a tree and continue on foot. The person walking behind would finally reach it then he would get his turn to ride, and they would alternate in that manner until they reached their destination.”

B) LEON IRON - He is one of the youngest of the hunters, trappers, and fishermen who were directly affected and possibly the best educated. He has been employed as a janitor at the Canoe Lake elementary school almost since it was first built in the early 1960's. There had been no school on the reserve until then and students had attended residential school in Beauval. Leon Iron speaks English and can read and write and is about the only one who can do so among the people directly affected.

He was a councillor at the time of the last payments in 1960. He refused to sign the quit claim. He wrote letters of complaint to the Department of Indian Affairs. He has copies of the replies. His interview was concise, self-explanatory and consequently is reproduced herein. [emphasis added.]

i) ON THE IMPACT OF THE AIR WEAPONS RANGE TO THEIR LIFESTYLE

He noticed changes immediately. “As soon as our compensation ran out, we tried to trap, hunt and fish elsewhere. But we only had these two lakes - Keeley and Canoe. We had to go on welfare. We had never had welfare. We had never depended on the government to feed us. We made our own living. We trained the young men to start hunting, trapping, fishing - to harvest the resources at a young age. As soon as the young men were eligible for their fishing license, they fished. As soon as we received our final payments, welfare came in. It killed us. Canoe Lake people changed. Their initiative was killed. We were promised a sawmill but only three and sometimes four men were hired. Even so, the government boasted about replacing the bombing range land with a sawmill. The government cannot ever replace the land with four men being employed at the sawmill. Because we all made our living from the land taken away. Why we miss that land so much is because it is resource rich, for fish, moose, trapping. For making a living, it is the best land. That is what I said in my letter to the government. The other land in the north, east and south of here is mostly muskeg, it is lacking in resources. They took the best land.

“When they first brought welfare I remember being so embarrassed to get it. I was so used to earning my own living that I was ashamed to take the welfare. We received the welfare right after the money ran out from the bombing range. We then had a meeting to request that they

assist us economically to replace the land taken away. We used to fish in the summer. Which would have been about 1960 or 1962. We met with the people from Cold Lake. We must have started to hold meetings right after the last payment because it was in conflict with what we understood.

“We were embarrassed about the welfare. I remember receiving \$15.00 for a month. I was ashamed. I was not used to receiving something for nothing.”

ii) THE INTERVALS BETWEEN COMPENSATION PAYMENTS FROM 1955 TO 1957, AND 1957 TO 1960

"I remember we did not do anything as we were relying on the promise of compensation. We did not do anything as we expected to be compensated every year. Eventually, we were told that would be the final payment. Then we started to organize because all the people said, “They have broken their promise”, that we should be paid for the time the land is to be used which is about twenty years not just three payments. Then they brought the quit-claims.”

iii) QUITCLAIMS

“We just did not believe that the third payment was to be the last payment.

“The people around me told me I would not receive anything if I did not cooperate. Everyone was so poor. When they saw the cheques they were desperate. We saw the money, we were desperate. But I was scared when I was told it would be the final payment, and I also read I the contents of the release. I refused to sign. I advised the Chief we should not sign, and he agreed with me. But he was under intense pressure to cooperate.

“I was doing the interpreting up to then but when the significance of the quitclaim came up, Jarvis (Gervais) took over the interpreting. He was from Battleford.

“The people were afraid. They stated that we would not receive anything if we did not cooperate. They did not understand the quitclaim. They thought it was a receipt for a cheque.

“Someone must have forged my name on the quitclaim because I did get my cheque.”*

iv) ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES

“I transferred my economic activity to the Keeley Lake area when the land was closed in the bombing range in the 1950’s. But the land was soon exhausted. We were also taken to the Prince Albert National Park to trap in the spring of 1954 or 1955. We had used our compensation payments to purchase motors, horses, etc. so it went fast.

“Once people realized that the hunting and fishing was at an end, they started to go elsewhere for work. They were trained to be self-sufficient, not to be dependent. Their parents had trained them to work for their living. They really tried but no matter how often they went, they could not find jobs. So they would return. We suffered. We should not be ashamed to admit it. We really suffered after the land was taken away. It was clear that our misfortunes stemmed from the loss of the land. We just did not have any room left to hunt, fish and trap.”

v) GOVERNMENT'S NEGLIGENCE

“We really saw changes for the worst. It was so unfair. On the one side, we had a government being advised by the best lawyers. On the other side, you had a group of Indians who could not understand English. They call that a deal. That they negotiated but they did not. They spoke for the Chief and council. They put words in their mouths. The Chief and council did not understand. On their side, they had the best lawyers. They should be embarrassed, and ashamed of their treatment. It was like taking away from children. It looks like that.

“No matter how much we tried to make a living from another way of life, we could not do it on our own. The government did not establish anything to replace our loss. We would complain and complain. They would do something small to appease us. But these efforts were so minor and halfhearted that it did not help. Just like the sawmill. They told me in their letter that it was an alternative to the loss of the land. But there were only four people employed there. What about the rest? They had no work. Eventually people started to drink. Young men who use to hunt and fish had nothing to do. So they started to drink. It was the first indication of the community decay. That was one major symptom of the damage done to us. We no longer had anything to do once the land was gone. We were used to work.”

C) JOSEPH IRON - He is one of the oldest men I interviewed. He speaks some English but is primarily comfortable with the French and Cree languages. He attended a seminary which theology course he did not complete. He is still very active in the Roman Catholic Church. He was one of the main organizers of a bus trip that members took to Fort Simpson, North West Territories during the papal visit last year.

i) Records

He has kept some receipts of the purchases he made with his compensation. He also has copies of some letters written by the old Chief to the Government of Canada complaining about the lack of compensation. His receipts are a good indication of their effort to use their compensation responsibly. Goods purchased include a canoe, nets, gun, a horse and groceries.

ii) Survey

“At the time when they took Athanase to guide for the survey, they did not do a good job. My partner at the time was Joseph Couilleneur who happened to be in Arsenault Lake at the time. He was interviewed by the officials and consequently received a better compensation package than myself. I was not interviewed because I happened to be here in Canoe Lake at the time even though Joseph was my partner and we were affected similarly. Those who happened to be in Arsenault Lake during the survey were compensated more than those who happened not to be there.”

iii) The Meeting at the Old Chiefs' House

“I was a councillor along with Alexander Iron as there were only two councillors at the time. We met with officials and they told us that the land would be used for five years definitely, ten years

or twenty years or as long as we needed it. You will be compensated all along. That was the promise given. All of us who were eventually compensated were at the meeting.”

iv) Quitclaims

“People did not understand the meaning of the quitclaims. It’s only recently that I can understand English because I hear it so often. We had a long discussion but we were confused and frightened as we had nothing by then. We had lost the use of our land for over 5 years and we could not adjust to another lifestyle. We told each other that if we do not sign we will not receive the cheques. We frightened each other. So we signed our little crosses, ie “X” as our signatures. The quitclaims were put together with the cheques so that many thought the quitclaims were receipts.

I, (D.O.) asked how the officials explained the conflict between their promise for perpetual compensation at the first meeting and the payments in the 1960 meeting. He said, “They did not as they were different officials.”

“We continued to oppose the effect of the releases or quitclaims. Some of us travelled to Cold Lake to a meeting to discuss the issue.”

V) Alternative Economic Endeavours

“We have lost the majority of our traditional land. At least three-quarters of our land has been lost to the bombing range. We tried to hunt in other areas but we were overcrowded as other hunters and trappers had been using the area to the north, east and south of us. Our area had always been to the west of us which was taken by the bombing range. Eventually the pulp and paper business cleared the southern portion and there were no resources.

‘By the late 1950’s and early 1960’s, I travelled elsewhere to seek work. I took my family from about 1959 over a three-year period to pick sugar beets in Alberta. We all worked from sun-up to sun-down but we did not make any money. Other times, I looked for work in Beauval or worked in the harvests. We tried and tried to make a living. We were industrious. We were used to making our own living but we failed.

(d) EMILE IRON - He is one of the older men affected by the bombing range. He is retired.

(i) Final Harvest

“At the meeting at the old chief’s house, we were advised of the land being taken for a bombing range. We were told that we would be allowed to return for a final harvest. We went to Arsenault Lake, McCusker Lake, and the Dog’s Park areas mostly to trap for beavers. We were to do a final harvest and then we were to be compensated for our loss of the land. We were promised the compensation.”

(ii) Economic Profile

“We were advised by the Department officials to keep a record of our harvests and equipment used. We did not provide the full details. We were always afraid of the government wildlife officers. So we only gave information on a portion of our harvest. For instance, in one year one

family would kill about ten deer but we only told them that we killed four deer. They told us to give them true figures but we were suspicious and did not trust that they would not use the information against us. We did provide true figures on the commercial fur and fish we harvested from trapping, and the number of traps and nets used. We hid the figures in the hunting and fishing we produced for food. At the time we mostly got our food from the wild, and it was only basic staples mostly tea and sugar that we got from the stores. All our meat, fish and fruit was from the wild. Our shoes and other clothing were made from hides.

“They advised us that we would be compensated proportionate to the amount of resources we harvested from the land in question. The Department officials did not do much research beyond the survey on trapping. People like Jonas Lariviere and Gilbert Iron were not fully compensated because they did not report their hunting and fishing for food. Many people were not questioned properly in their use of the land. There was only one person, Bill Tunstead, conducting the research. Those who happened to be at Arsenault Lake during the visit ultimately received more compensation and those who were not there did not receive any or as much.”

(iii) Interim Period

“At the meeting at the Chief's house we were told we would be compensated. We waited for the compensation. We did not have any other meetings until the last meeting in 1960 because we believed that they would follow through.”

“Most of our economic activity came to a standstill during the period of 1954 and for the rest of the 1950's. We did a little trapping, hunting and fishing to the south, east and North of the reserve. Essentially, the last harvest of 1954 was the last of our hunting and fishing on a full-time basis. I did try to hunt and fish in Keeley Lake and to the North of the reserve but we did not harvest the amount we used to harvest from the bombing range land to the west of us. Now we have exhausted our resources. No one traps because it is useless. There are so many of us competing in a small area.”

(iv) Last Payment

“One day they arrived with the cheques and advised us that these were the last payments. They told us if you do not sign, there will be no payment. We did not understand. I did not understand as I did not go beyond grade 2. We were given cheques for a large amount which was about \$2,000.00 each. We discussed the releases or receipt. We were confused. We told each other that if we do not sign we will not receive the cheques. We were very poor and needed the money. The officials at the 1960 meeting were different from those who were at the first meeting at the old Chief's house. When we complained about the releases they said we had no recourse because we had signed the releases.”

“He hired a lawyer from Regina. He took our money which we collected in a hat outside the Church. We collected about \$250.00 which he took. We never heard from him again.”

(v) Social Impact

“We did not realize there would be such an impact for the worst as we thought we would be compensated each year. It created a break in our relations with our children.”

(e) JULES OPEKOKEH - He is 79 years old and is still very healthy and active. He is also a former councillor and was involved in the organization meetings with the Cold Lake members to agitate for compensation. He learned to drive a car after his 65th birthday and now travels extensively in the north. He does not speak English.

(i) Last Harvest

“I travelled with my partner, Theodore Iron, by horse and we trapped in the area of Arsenault Lake and McCusker Lake. He left in a rush because of a fear of bombing.”

(ii) Survey

“I had a cabin which was not included in the survey and I was not compensated for it.”

(iii) Traditional Usage

“The people of Canoe Lake have traditionally used the land now occupied by the bombing range to support themselves. They knew the land well. They had names for all the different areas, lakes and rivers. The older people taught us when we were young to hunt, trap, and fish from that area. He mentioned some old people who included Jonas Lariviere's mother who saw a government official on the land when she was younger. She died about the mid-1960's when she was 100 years old so the events would have taken place in the earlier part of the 20th century. They told the official that the land and resources belonged to them, that their fathers had used the land and as young women had assisted their parents to live off the land. People from Canoe Lake always used the land for harvesting.”

(iv) Compensation

“At the meeting at the old Chief's house, we were promised that in exchange for their borrowing of the land we would be compensated for a period of 5 years, 10 years or twenty years. No matter how long it was used we would be compensated.”

(v) Quitclaim

“We were told that if we did not sign we would not receive the cheques. Paul Iron did not sign a release.”

(vi) Economic Alternatives

“With my compensation, I purchased cattle, horses, outboard motors and a boat, and chickens. I was trying to farm. I kept cattle until the 1970's and the horses until very recently. In the 1950's I travelled to the south to work in farms and other labour jobs. I would leave my wife and children on the reserve and I was able to send them some goods. At one time when there was nothing to do here in the spring, I walked about 100 miles to the south where I got a job.”

(f) JOE OPEKOKEW - He is a councillor and the education officer in the reserve. He is one of the younger men who was directly affected as he was hunting, trapping and fishing already.

(i) Last Harvest

“We fished right until November, 1954. We were then told to leave immediately because they were going to start bombing. We were given two notices by Alexander Iron who was a councillor, but we ignored the first one. One the second warning he said the bombs would be dropped. We rushed out, travelling at night.”

3. Ernest Ennow Interview, 7 June 1990, Cold Lake

TRANSCRIPTION OF CASSETTE TAPE INTERVIEW

BETWEEN:

TONY MANDAMIN

-and-

ERNEST ENNOW

HELD AT

COLD LAKE FIRST NATIONS BAND HALL

Cold Lake, Alberta

June 7, 1990

(TRANSCRIPTION OF CASSETTE TAPE OF INTERVIEW HELD AT COLD LAKE FIRST NATIONS BAND HALL, COLD LAKE, ALBERTA, JUNE 7, 1990 BETWEEN TONY MANDAMIN AND ERNEST ENNOW.

Q MR. MANDAMIN: Can you give us your name?

A MR. ENNOW: Ernest Ennow.

Q When were you born?

A I was born April the 13th, 1929.

Q What was the name of your parents?

A My father passed away when I was very young. I was raised by my grandfather, J.B. Ennow. Oh, he was more father to me than my original father.

Q Your grandmother's name?

A My grandmother was Philisene.

Q And your mother?

A My mother was Charlotte Piche, she was. She married a Piche shortly after my dad passed away, so --

Q So she's a Piche now?

A Yeah. She was. She passed on.

Q Did you have any brothers or sisters?

A I had four sisters.

Q M-hm. Their names?

A There's Sarah, Maryanne, Genevieve and Wilhelmina. I was the only boy in the family.

Q Okay. Where do you live, sir?

A Where do I live now?

Q Yes.

A I live with some people on the reserve here. I don't have my own home.

Q That's on the Cold Lake Reserve?

A The Legoffe reserve.

Q Did you ever live up in the Primrose Lake area?

A Yes, I have, for quite a few years.

Q Okay. Can you remember when you first went to Primrose? How old were you?

A I went at quite an early age. I first remember going into Primrose Lake air weapons range at about seven years old. I went to school in a convent in Onion Lake. When I was seven years old, I had T.B., and in those days, they didn't have no sanitariums or anything, so I was dismissed, rather than be in contact with the other children.

So I went up north on the trap line with my grandfather because I would say that it was our winter home. That was our second home.

Q When you went up there, was it just you and your grandfather or was there a bunch of you went along?

A No, my whole family moved up there, my grandmother and the children.

Q How many other children were there?

A Well, there was Wilhelmina and Genevieve.

Q How old were they then?

A I would say two and three.

Q And you were seven?

A Yeah, seven.

Q When you were still a child up there, what would you do? Like, what would a day be like?

A Pardon me?

Q What would a day be like at Primrose when you were a child?

A Like I say, it was a home away from home. This was where our grandparents took us for -- that's where we lived. That's where we, you know, hunted and trapped. We hunted and killed all the caribou. This was where we got our meat.

Q What area was that?

A I was in Alberta.

Q On the Alberta side?

A Yes. Just on the Saskatchewan/Alberta boundaries.

Q Was it North of Primrose or was it --

A Yes. Northwest of Primrose.

Q Okay. Was it within what's now the bombing range or was it north of that?

A Half of the registered line that my grandfather owned was in the air weapons range, and the other half was out, according to the map. Their stamping grounds covered a lot more than that, his original stamping grounds, because he was originally up there before the meridians or anything came.

Q When you say before the meridians came, would that be before Alberta and Saskatchewan became provinces?

A Yes, long before that. And probably his father before.

Q Is that area traditional to the Chipewyans?

A Yes, it always has been.

Q How far back do you think they go?

A I would say since time immemorial. That was where they wintered. I suppose before the coming of the white man they were probably nomadic to a certain degree, and in the wintertime they went into the Primrose air weapons range.

Q What about the summers, before the reserve?

A Summers, and they came back south on the prairies, especially after the Treaties were signed and the reserves were formed.

Q So they would winter in the Primrose range, and then they would summer out in the prairies?

A Yes, mostly, yeah. Most families were the same.

Q This reserve, they tell me that earlier it used to be prairies instead of being trees.

A Yes, this is what I understand.

Q Did you get involved in trapping yourself?

A Yes, I worked. That was my --

Q Like, how old were you when you started regularly working in trapping?

A Well, like, I say, I first went up there when I was seven years old, and this was only for one winter that I went up there, the air weapons -- what's now the air weapons range. So the following year, I went back to school. Then I left school when I was 15.

Q What grade did you reach?

A Grade 7.

Q Grade 7? What school was it?

A St. Anthony's in Onion Lake.

Q Onion Lake?

A Yeah. Right after I left school, like everybody else was going, we had to go trapping. That was the only thing at the time, trapping and hunting. So I helped my grandfather. That was a daily chore. I had to learn because I was going with him.

We had cattle up on the farm, but we always got someone to look after that, or sometimes the old lady would stay with the children, and the old man and I would go.

Later on in the winter, the old lady would move in with us, you know, it was back and forth. But we had to have somebody to --

Q Watch the livestock?

A The livestock, yes.

Q Did you do any fishing?

A No, I didn't do any fishing myself. No, we didn't have the right to. See, Alberta trappers didn't have the right to fish in Saskatchewan, not with Primrose, anyway. I fished with other people, but I never was a licence holder.

Q So you didn't hold a licence, but you worked as a fisherman?

A I worked as a fisherman, yes.

Q Okay. When did you start working as a fisherman?

A Oh, I would say maybe when I was probably about 17, until the Air Force took over in '53.

Q So that would be --

A And I fished every year, well, mostly with Amable Scanie for many years.

Q What kind of livelihood did your grandfather make from trapping? Was it a big cash livelihood or was it enough to get by?

A Oh, enough to get by. I would say he didn't get rich at it, but the only reason I suppose he moved up there for the winter was because there was nothing here in the summertime.

So like, what I'm trying to establish here is there was a way of life in the wintertime that's different from what there was on the prairies here, so you had to move up north in order to survive, sort of a thing. Because it was better up there. You had all the meat, and whatever fur you got, you brought out and you bought your supplies.

Q About the time of the range being established, were you still trapping with your grandfather? Was he still alive, sir?

A Yes, right up until the very last spring.

Q Can you remember the first time you heard about talk of a bombing range?

A Yes, there was talk about it. We were informed that we had to give up that way of life for the common good of the country. In other words, they were taking away our livelihood, and that was for the common good of the whole of Canada. Being citizens of the country, this was discussed on many occasions, by the people, a lot of them opposed to it.

I think the Indian people, amongst themselves, understood, in a sense, what the government was trying to get across to them; that it was for the common good of the whole country. As citizens of the country, they eventually took it for granted that it was their duty --

Q To go along with it?

A -- to go along with it, in other words. Secondly, they didn't have much choice to expropriate it anyways, I would say, in a sense.

Q M-hm. Do you remember talking to anyone or seeing anyone talking about the bombing range in those early days before everybody was excluded?

A I didn't really get involved. I was under my grandfather's wings when all the first negotiation started. I didn't have much say until maybe -- I'm not really aware of what really happened in the first when all these meetings and that were taking place. I was just a nobody.

How I really got involved was later on I started to act as an interpreter, and I was chosen as a representative by the people, myself along with Nora Machatis.

Q When would that be about?

A This was probably in about '57, '58, around there.

Q Okay. Before that, you really weren't much involved with it at all?

A Not directly, no.

Q When you worked with Amable Scanie, you were fishing at Primrose Lake, were you?

A Yes, we were fishing for others.

Q Okay, but you didn't have a licence yourself?

A No, I didn't have it. I just worked like that.

Q When the issue --

A Well, it's like this. It's quite a long story. We kind of -- our farm kind of deteriorated after we lost the right to trap because the money that my grandfather was making off the trap line, he turned it back into the farm, a small farm that we had. When we lost that trapping rights, we couldn't carry on with the farm so it went back to --

Q You didn't have the cash to keep it going?

A We didn't have any to keep it going, because the money was coming off the trap line. Somehow he saved enough to carry on to put in a crop or whatever, but we couldn't carry on after, so it went back to grass. So then after my grandfather passed away, then I got working with Amable Scanie and that became my home.

Q But going back, were you fishing with Amable Scanie before the trap line was -- or before the trappers were excluded from the range?

A Yes, I was.

Q Were you fishing at that time in Primrose Lake?

A Yes, I fished with Amable.

Q And that was from, you said earlier, about the age of 17 onwards?

A Yeah, probably right around there, yes. Well, there again, we didn't make a fortune at it, but you made a good living.

Q What kind of money --

A I was not working -- I wouldn't say that I was working for a daily wage, not with Amable, because he took me in as one of the family. So there again, I thought it was my duty to help the best way I knew how to make his home a better place for myself as well as his family.

Q But he was fishing a little differently from the others. He was running his own outfit at Primrose, wasn't he?

A Yes, he was fishing on his own.

Q Like, he would hire people to work?

A Yeah, he hired me. I was working for a wage, in a sense. And he hired other people. I'm sure where he had other people working with us that he was paying wages to them. But I, being part of the family, was quite different. He bought me whatever I needed, and he put the bread and butter on the table.

Q It was more like a family member than an employee or business partner?

A M-hm.

Q Okay. When the compensation was being paid the first times in the first couple of years, did you ever receive anything?

A No, I never did get anything because, like I said, I was not a registered trapper. I always trapped with my grandfather who had -- you know, he had the registered line.

Q But you didn't get anything out of trapping?

A No, I didn't.

Q And did you get anything --

A Except what my grandfather got was like mine because I was a family member.

Q Yes. What about from fishing, did you get any compensation from working at fishing?

A No, not at all, I didn't get.

Q Did you do any domestic fishing, like fish for food?

A Well, in the fall when we would go to Primrose before we -- in the wintertime, see, dogs was quite scarce, except for sometimes game was pretty scarce. I used to come out from our area to come and fish in Primrose, domestic fish for dog feed and also for ourselves. I didn't need a licence for that because it was open.

Q Any of the fishing that you did, did that get taken back to the reserve as well?

A I suppose if we had them at the time. We never left any behind. I cannot really say that we didn't do it to bring home. We didn't fish over there to bring home over here.

Q What about moose meat and that? Did they hunt to bring food back to the reserves?

A Oh yes. Everything was -- if we had excess, we shared with everyone along the way, because my grandfather, he was a great hunter of caribou. There was a lot of caribou right in our area, and he always got more than what we needed. So we shared with our neighbours, the trappers in our area, as well as everyone else along the way. It was tradition to share what you had.

Q Yes. Did you bring any large amounts of meat back to the reserve, like dried meat?

A Yes, on some occasions.

Q During the summers, would you hunt up in the Primrose area?

A Oh, yes. More so in the, I'll tell you what, like in the fall during haying time when all the able bodied men would get together and they were putting up hay or harvesting. The older people, the older men, the older ladies would go up to Primrose air weapons range and go hunting and provide meat for the ones back home.

Q For the work crews?

A For the workers. There as old ladies that went along to cure the meat. Berries were very abundant, and they brought back berries for the people and they shared with everybody that was working because everybody worked as a community. Like haying time, harvest time, they just went from one home to another. There was no such a thing as wages. Everybody would just help one another.

But the meat, the old people would get all together, the older men that couldn't work, they went hunting. The old ladies went picking berries. They were providing for the ones that were working. This was mostly in what now is the air weapons range.

Q When you started to first get involved, what was happening? There was, as I understand it, a payment for equipment. Your grandfather got some payment for equipment?

A Yes, the first payment -- we were made to understand that the very first payment was for your equipment and your shacks or what have you. There were equipment payments there, and everything that you were leaving behind. We didn't take nothing because they said, you're going to be paid for it anyway.

However, when we were informed that we weren't going back over there, they said to me, you won't need them, leave everything. Our traps, we didn't even take our traps with us. We just pulled our traps out of the water and hung it up in the trees. As far as I know, they're still there. Because we were informed, and we had no other use for it, and we were going to be paid for it anyway.

Q So when were you leaving the stuff in the trees? What time of year was that?

A This was in the spring when everybody else comes out.

Q So that was about the time they were muskrat and beaver trapping?

A Yes, that's true.

Q Now, the second and third payments were done by kind of purchase orders, but Indian Affairs kept the money; is that correct?

A Yeah.

Q Now, what do you remember about your grandfather receiving any money? You yourself didn't get anything.

A He was told that he could purchase anything. He has a certain amount. He was given that amount he could spend for -- he could go ahead. He would get a voucher.

Q Where did he get the voucher from?

A From Indian Affairs.

Q Where?

A St. Paul, I think they were running it through the local -- at that time, a farm inspector.

Q Do you remember what the farm inspector's name was?

A Gee, I haven't seen it so many times. I don't know. I don't even -- can't really recall who was there at the time.

Q But he was told a certain amount --

A He was told the amount that each man could spend. That's the way I understand it.

Q Then he would get a voucher when he wanted to buy something?

A Yeah.

Q Then he would go buy it and give the voucher?

A That's true. You either brought that to the dealer, or whatever the case would be, and got your purchase order right there.

Q Okay. Now, during that time you weren't too much involved in any of the meetings or that>

A No, not now, not directly.

Q When did you first get involved?

A I got involved maybe before the time the payment was made.

Q Can you remember how it started?

A Like I said before, I got involved because I acted as an interpreter, and they kind of formed a committee. They formed a committee, and I was chosen as a spokesman, a representative of the trappers or of the Band, as a whole. I, along with Harry Janvier was the Chief at the time. It was kind of a board. There was Nora Machatis. There was three that were really active.

We met with the people from time to time to let them know what we were doing. This is when we started writing letters to the Department; and everything we did we had to go through Indian Affairs. We didn't go directly through DND.

We were led to believe that Indian Affairs has always been the big white father. They're supposed to be looking after us. This was a traditional belief, I guess, ever since Treaties. So any negotiations we had, we had to go through Indian Affairs, and they relayed our complaints or whatever.

Q So when you worked on this, who were you dealing with at Indian Affairs?

A Stan Knapp, I believe, was the head man that I recall at that time.

Q Okay.

(Discussion off the record.)

Q MR. MANDAMIN: Can you remember the names of the Indians Affairs people you were dealing with when the committee first formed?

A The Indian Affairs people?

Q Yes.

A Stan Knapp was the name of the number one man in St. Paul at the time.

Q Do you remember if Ecklund was around in those days?

A Ecklund I had no personal dealings with, but I knew him when he was talking with trappers and that. But I was not involved with him, not directly.

Q When he was talking with the trappers, that was earlier, when the range was first being set up?

A Yes, I was not involved in it at that time.

Q Can you remember what he was saying to the trappers, that you heard?

A Well, I think the original deal -- and this has always been emphasized -- that the Air Force had asked for that land for 20 years, and that after the 20 years, the land was to revert back to the original trappers, and if the Air Force still were going to occupy it after 20 years there was supposed to be further negotiations as to how to compensate the people.

Q Okay. Do you remember that from listening to Eckland talking?

A No. I remember this from what I gathered from the trappers and the older people.

Q Talking amongst themselves?

A Talking amongst themselves as to the promises that they were given. And I understand also that everything was oral. Nothing was put on paper.

Q When this committee formed with Chief Harry Janvier, yourself and Nora Machatis, why was the committee formed? What was the reason?

A The reason why was they stopped payments on this. The 20 years had passed, and it seemed like there was nothing further being done.

Q When you say they stopped payments, when was that?

A That was after, I think, the third payment.

Q The third payment or the second? Well, third if you're counting the traps.

A Yeah.

Q And then two years?

A Yeah.

Q Okay.

A There was quite a bit of time elapsed.

Q How were people getting by them? They weren't trapping anymore.

A They weren't trapping anymore, and it was very difficult time because the payments for their trap lines also stopped. Some of them tried their hand at farming or ranching, what have you, with the original payments.

When the payments were stopped, they couldn't carry on any longer, so they started selling off their -- in order to live, they sold off their machinery for maybe half price what they paid for it. Eventually, everything went.

Q Is this about the time you said your grandfather wasn't farming after a while? Is this about the same time?

A Well, yes, this was about the same time.

Q Were there some people that were able to stay in farming?

A Very few, very few that stayed. There was some that had farmed got by without, you know, without using the trapline. Maybe one or two, I would say.

But after those payments were stopped, it seemed like everything came to a standstill because -- see, I think the emphasis here, when the original deal was made, they were made to understand that their livelihood was taken away and they would have to try something else, another form of livelihood. This is what they were -- in other words, they were trying to turn them into farmers and ranchers from trappers overnight with a few dollars that was handed to them, without any training whatsoever.

Being ignorant to this new way of life, a lot of the people couldn't make a go of it. Well, my grandfather always farmed on a small scale, even before this, even while he was trapping, like I said.

Q M-hm. How big was his farm?

A We got to 100 acres, that's all. But I remember when I was kid he always had 40 or 50 acres, and that was mostly for cattle feed, horse feed.

Q Not for cash?

A Not to bring to the elevator or anything. Some, very little, but it was most used for feed.

Q What did the committee do? How would you do things?

A Well, there again, through Indian Affairs. We had direct dealings with Indian Affairs, and we were representing the people. To me, the emphasis here was they wanted to get another form of livelihood since they had to give up their livelihood. In other words, a livelihood for a livelihood. They would not be happy, they would not feel compensated until this occurred.

Q Now, when you say that, where did that come from? Did the committee think this up or were there meetings with people?

A As a committee, we didn't think up anything. We were representing people. Maybe the wording the committee did, but everything we did came from the people as a whole community, the whole reserve.

So the emphasis here again was they wanted a livelihood for a livelihood that they had to give up, and they would not feel compensated until this occurred. And this still stand today.

Q How did the people sort of tell the committee what to do? Were there meetings? Would there be discussions?

A Yeah, there would be discussions. There would be meetings. We would come to meetings. From what we gathered from the meetings, we wrote letters that, there again, we had to go through Indian Affairs, whether it was DND or directly to Indian Affairs, we all went through the small office, you know. How far it went from there, to this day I don't know. Finally, we did write letters directly to DND.

Q Was it to DND or was it to a higher up in Indian Affairs?

A A higher up in Indian Affairs. Well, Indian Affairs was always involved.

Q Was there any letter that was kind of special that kind of said everything?

A Yes. We worked on one letter that I remember. It took us months, maybe up to a year as to the wording, and we wanted to get this down pat. That was before we got the last payment.

Q How did you prepare that letter? How was it written up or who did the writing?

A We went to our local priest. We didn't use his ideas. He just worded it for us, and that's where he would help. He would come back to us, we would sit down and we'd study it, and any time we felt that this is not what the people were saying, we'd change it. The committee, along with this priest, we changed it to what we wanted, not what the priest wanted. He was just helping us along for the wording.

Q What was the name of the priest?

A Father Calvais. He did this on his own time. So did I and Nora. Like I said, I never got a cent of compensation.

Q That letter, you said you worked on it for months, maybe even a year. Do you think that that letter -- when you finished, were you satisfied that that letter said what the people were saying?

A Yes. We came back to the people, and we explained exactly what we put in the letter. We even got the okay to go forward because everybody seemed satisfied.

Q They approved of that letter?

A They approved it.

Q That was in the meeting?

A This was in the meeting. The committee always came to the meeting. We, as a committee, as representatives of the Band, never did anything without the people. We didn't go and write letters and forward them on our own. Any letters that we wrote, we presented to the public. We explained what the letter was saying. If they wanted any changes, we made the changes before we forwarded it.

Q Who signed that letter?

A The Chief. Harry.

Q Harry Janvier?

A Harry Janvier signed the letter.

Q After that letter was sent, what happened?

A Things started to move a little bit. We had them enough that something had to be done. So we were told that there would be another payment made.

Q Was anybody else getting active in trying to see that the Indians were getting paid? Do you remember anybody else talking about the Indians getting their payments, the Indian Association or the merchants?

A The Indian Association are representatives of all the people in Alberta.

Q M-hm. Were they involved at that time when you had the committee going?

A Yes, to a certain extent, because the Indian Association was approached to represent the people of Cold Lake. They wanted support from the Association as to dealing with the government to get all their money.

At that time. The Indian Association had a lawyer. Her name was Ruth Gorman. She met, I think -- or at least I can recall on two occasions, with the people.

Q Now, when were her meetings? Were they before the first payments when arrangements were set up?

A I think before -- I only recall after the committee was formed, before the final payment. This is when she got involved.

Q But what did she do?

A As a lawyer for the Indian Association, she related to the government what we were asking.

Q But she wasn't your lawyer, she was the Indian Association's lawyer?

A No. But as members of the Indian Association, she represented us in that way. Not directly for the Cold Lake Band.

Q But you didn't hire her as a lawyer?

A No, we didn't hire her. But I think she took it upon herself as her duty because a lot of the members of the Cold Lake First Nations were members of the Indian Association of Alberta. We were part of the Indian Association of Alberta.

Q Was she involved when the talk of the third payment came involved?

A Maybe indirectly, only through dealings with the Indian Association.

Q But she wasn't at any of the meetings when Indian Affairs came to talk about the third payment?

A Not to my knowledge, no.

Q Talk about the third payment and how it happened.

A We got a letter stating that there would be another payment made. I don't really recall what was in the letter. I just don't even remember seeing that letter. But word got around that there was another payment coming. They were going to come across with another payment, whether it was final or not.

They called it an agreement, but I personally opposed it right away because I said, how can it be an agreement, they never approached us? Indian Affairs just said: Look, here's 'X' number of dollars and you're getting it and you're agreeing to it. How can we agree to something we were not involved in in any way? It wasn't an agreement. I mean, to me an agreement is you and I have to sit down and agree to something. We talk about it. But it didn't happen that way.

They said: Okay, here. Here is what you are getting, and this is the agreement that we're making, the agreement they're making with you, not with the people from Cold Lake. But I mean, to this day I cannot see how they could call it an agreement when they never approached us, never sat down with us to come to an amount or how long it was going to carry on. They just said: Okay, here, we have a list of the trappers. And so and so, we have him down for 'X' number of dollars, and so on. They had the whole list there all written out already. They come up and said: Okay here, take it or leave it. This is not exactly the words they used, but: Here, here is your payment. Here's what you were asking for.

I stood up at the time, I remember. I tried to tell the people, don't touch it, it's not an agreement. How could they call it an agreement when they never came to us? It's a very one-sided agreement, if it is. I said, don't take it. And I said, the amount is very minute. Let's not touch it until we know what we're doing. It was Indian Affairs that were saying this: Here, here's what you're getting.

Q How did they present it? Did they say: Here's the money. If you don't want it, we'll try and get some more? Or did they say: Here's the money, and not say anything about the future?

A They didn't say -- to my recollection, they didn't say anything about a future. They come up with -- I think on every occasion I can remember, and in their letters I didn't even know what it meant at the time -- they were called "interim payments." A year or something later I found out what "interim" was. It's like a down payment, right?

Q M-hm.

A Interim is like temporary. They give you so much now, that's interim, was the word. To me, there's an inkling there that there's further payment. This was just interim.

Q Yes. How did they describe that last payment?

A When I said that, don't touch it; well, Indian Affairs says: Well, okay, this is what we have to offer you. Take it or leave it, sort of a thing.

So a lot of the people were so frustrated from all this impasse of waiting that they were willing to grab anything. Not all, but a few went, okay, you sign here, and you'll get your cheque.

So then the line-up began. One or two signed. Pretty soon the line-up got a little longer, a little longer. And this is not what -- for three years I worked on this. This is not what I wanted. I walked out. I wasn't involved anyway. I didn't have a cheque there. So everything I tried to do, to me went down the drain, so I walked out.

Q Those people that first signed, why did they sign?

A They signed because they were desperate enough they wanted the dollar now.

Q When they were desperate. How do you mean they were desperate?

A Well, I think the frustration from waiting so long for this payment to come along.

Q Was that because there was a period of time when there was no payments?

A Possibly.

Q That's the one you're referring to?

A Yeah, when the last -- or from the waiting period from the second and third payment. There was so much time elapsed that someone got grabby and said, okay. There were even statements that said -- oh, shucks, I don't want to mention any names -- someone got up and said, if you give me \$100 today, I'll take it.

Q Someone said that?

A Someone said that. So he signed. Then somebody else signed.

Q Do you remember any other statements that were made?

A Okay, it's here, let's take it. We might not get any if we let this go, or statements like this. Pretty soon there was a bigger line-up there.

To me, three years that I had strived and worked so hard for went down the drain right there and then, so I walked out. I gave up and headed for the nearest bar.

Q But do you remember that meeting, the payment was made sometime afterwards, not at that meeting?

A Not at that meeting.

Q Do you remember the time of the payment when the cheques were actually given out? Were you around at all then?

A I was in the area, but not --

Q You weren't getting any cheques?

A I wasn't getting any. I didn't get anything anyway. I think I got \$50 from one man.

Q Somebody shared it?

A Somebody shared it, yeah. He said, I know you worked hard for this, and he gave me 50 bucks. That was all the payment I got. But that was the payment I got.

Q That was for the committee work, though?

A Yeah, for the committee work.

Q But as far as any settlement on the compensation for your being out there in Primrose or out fishing you got nothing?

A No, I never got nothing out of it. My name is not even mentioned.

Q Was your grandfather still alive then?

A Yes, he was.

Q Did he sign, do you remember?

A I think after everybody else did.

Q The people where earlier on they signed because they were desperate, or grabby as you described it, they were going to take anything; what about the people later on? Did they give different reasons?

A Well, there was others. There was some that refused to sign, maybe a handful. They were not happy, and seeing what everybody else was getting, eventually they followed in, in order that they thought, well, this is the only way we are going to get anything out of it. So eventually, you know, they were dragged along into the rat race or whatever, if you want to call it that. It might have been only two or three that got grabby and --

Q And that started it?

A That started the whole thing. And right away -- I personally remember this -- Indian Affairs, oh, right here, sign right here. They were so happy, the two or three that were turned. To me, they were kind of turn of events, us like, you know.

Q The Indian Affairs?

A No, our own people. The one other guy --

Q How were the Indian Affairs doing? What were they doing? Did they stop -- like, when the first few people were going to sign, did they read out anything that they were signing? Did they give them -- or were these people who could read for themselves to read what they were signing? The first two or three people that signed.

A I don't think they could.

Q They were signing some kind of paper, were they?

A They were signing some kind of paper saying that they were willing to --

Q But when you say --

A Okay, your cheques are here. You have to sign here in order to get it.

Q But did Indian Affairs say: I'll read what you're signing, and read it to them?

A Not to my recollection, no.

Q [Were] they saying -- what were they doing? Describe what they did, like, what you saw and remember.

A Okay. Your cheques are, or maybe we have your cheques. They're either at the bank or we can bring them to the bank, or we can give them direct to you. But you have to sign this in order to get that cheque, or they wouldn't.

Q Did you hear them say, signing this says this is the last cheque you will get? Is that what they were saying to them?

A No, I don't remember that, no.

Q You're just saying they were just saying: Sign here and you'll get your cheque?

A Yeah, sign here, and you'll get your cheque. Your cheque is ready now. Sign here. Your cheque is waiting for you, but you have to sign. We're wasting time here. Your cheque is waiting for you over there.

Q And that's what went on?

A Yeah, they wanted to get it over with as soon as possible. And as soon as two or three signed, they were not paying any attention to what I was saying anymore. They turned to those that were willing to sign.

Q Indian Affairs weren't paying attention. They weren't listening to you?

A Yeah, they weren't listening to us. They were paying more attention to the ones that signed. Okay, how many more want to sign? Okay, right here. So the line-up started over there. Do you see my point? Do you see what I'm trying to say?

Q I see your point. Okay. Well, thank you.

A You're welcome. I'm sure that everything I've said I would swear this I didn't make up, because to me, if there was going to be any further payments, as there were before, I would still be left out anyway because I was not regarded as a trapper.

What I had originally -- was thinking was that eventually after my grandfather was gone, his trap line, with being the only boy in my family, it would automatically revert to me. I could have, to this day, maybe make my living over there. This is how I feel.

Q Do you have a trap line now?

A No.

MR. MANDAMIN: Okay.

4. Testimonies, Members of the Cold Lake First Nations, 10 January 1991

IN THE FEDERAL COURT OF CANADA
TRIAL DIVISION

No. T-2026-89

BETWEEN:

The COLD LAKE FIRST NATIONS, and HARVEY SCANIE, VICTOR MACHATIS,
FRANCIS SCANIE, JUDY NEST, BERNICE MARTIAL, MARY FRANCOIS, and
CELESTINE GRANDBOIS on behalf of themselves and all the members of the COLD LAKE
FIRST NATIONS

Plaintiffs

- and -

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN IN RIGHT OF CANADA

Defendant

EXAMINATION DEBENE ESSE

AMABLE SCANIE

Edmonton, Alberta

January 10, 1991

APPEARANCES:

D.S. Dean, Esq. Court Appointed Examiner

Tony Mandamin, Esq. For the Plaintiffs

K.N. Lambrecht, Esq. For the Defendant

L.D. Sperling, CSR(A) Court Reporter

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OPENING REMARKS

FEDERAL COURT OF CANADA COURT FILE NO. T-2026-89.

THE COLD LAKE FIRST NATIONS et al v. H.M.T.Q.

(EXAMINATION COMMENCED 10:55 A.M., JANUARY 10, 1991).

MR. MOORE: Start time 10:55 a.m.

MR. DEAN: My name is Don Dean. I'm a barrister and solicitor and a member of the Law Society of Alberta. I'm the Don Dean named as the examiner in the Order dated 20th day of December, 9 1990, filed on Court File Number T-2026-89 in the Federal Court of Canada Trial Division. We are proceeding pursuant to that Order to take the oral examination, cross-examination and re-examination of Mr. Amable Scanie witnessed on behalf of the Plaintiffs.

It is Thursday, January the 10th, 1991. This examination is taking place in the boardroom of the law offices of Molstad Gilbert Barristers and Solicitors, Number 700, 10104-103rd 19 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta.

At present are Mr. Tony Mandamin, counsel for the Plaintiffs; Mr. Kirk Lambrecht, counsel for Her Majesty The Queen in Right of Canada; the court reporter or clerk, Len Sperling; and video operator, Scott Moore; as well as the witness, Mr. Amable Scanie.

I will ask Mr. Peter Duckett, barrister and solicitor, to first of all administer the oath to myself.

MR. DUCKETT: My name is Peter Duckett. I'm a barrister and solicitor practicing and authorized to practice in the Law Society of Alberta.

Mr. Dean, will you take the Bible in your right hand. You shall, according to the best of your skill and knowledge, truly and faithfully and without partiality to any or either of the parties in this matter, take the examinations and depositions of all and every witness and witnesses produced and examined by virtue of the order appointing you. So help you God.

MR. DEAN: I will.

MR. DUCKETT: Thank you.

MR. DEAN: Please state your name.

MR. SPERLING: Len Sperling.

MR. DEAN: You shall truly and faithfully and without partiality to any or either of the parties in this matter, take down, transcribe and engross the depositions of all and every witness or witnesses produced before and examined by the Examiner named in the Order appointing him, as far forth as you are directed and employed by the said Examiner to take, write down, transcribe and engross the said depositions. So help you God.

MR. SPERLING: I will.

MR. DEAN: Please state your name.

MR. MOORE: Scott Moore.

MR. DEAN: You shall truly and faithfully and without partiality to any or either of the parties in this matter, take down, transcribe and engross the depositions of all and every witness or witnesses produced before and examined by the Examiner named in the Order appointing him, as far forth as you are directed and employed by the said Examiner to take, write down, transcribe and engross the said depositions. So help you God.

MR. MOORE: I will.

MR. DEAN: Please state your name for the record.

MR. SCANIE: Amable Scanie.

MR. DEAN: I'd like you to hold the Bible in your right hand, please. You are true answers to make to all such questions as shall be asked you, without favour or affection to either party and therein you shall speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. So help you God.

MR. SCANIE: I do.

MR. DEAN: Thank you. First of all, I'll introduce Mr. Tony Mandamin who is counsel for the plaintiffs in this matter, and Mr. Lambrecht who is counsel for the Defendant, Her Majesty The Queen.

I should advise at the outset that counsel has agreed not to require that opposing counsel object to any question, answer or document on the record. It being understood that those objections are reserved and to be placed before the Trial Judge.

(Discussion off the record.)

MR. MOORE: Start time 11:05 a.m.

MR. MANDAMIN: This is Tony Mandamin speaking. I will be conducting the direct examination in this matter. As a first step, I wish to deal with the matter of the exhibits. Firstly, I'm tendering as Exhibit A, a topographical map with Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range drawn in.

Secondly, I will tender as an Exhibit B an authorization signed by Amable Scanie dated January 10th, 1991.

Thirdly, I will tender Exhibit C which consists of four photocopied pages containing signatures. If we can at this stage have those entered in on the record.

EXHIBIT NO. A:

TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP WITH PRIMROSE LAKE AIR WEAPONS RANGE DRAWN IN.

EXHIBIT NO. B:

AUTHORIZATION BY AMABLE SCANIE DATED JANUARY 10, 1991.

EXHIBIT NO. C:

FOUR PHOTOCOPIED PAGES CONTAINING SIGNATURES.

AMABLE SCANIE EXAMINED BY MR. MANDAMIN

Q MR. MANDAMIN: Mr. Scanie, what is the date of your birth?

A February 17, 1918 -- 1917.

Q And where were you born?

A Cold Lake First Nation.

Q And where is that located?

A I don't know.

Q Describe it?

A There is no such a thing as a hospital them days. I might have been born under the trees someplace.

Q Do you know or could you tell us where Cold Lake First Nations is?

A Yes.

Q Please do?

A It's about 180 miles northeast of Edmonton next border to the Saskatchewan border.

Q And that is in the Province of Alberta?

A Yeah.

Q Could you tell us what the names of your parents were?

A Well, to tell the truth by hearing somebody tell me my mother's name -- I never seen my mother. My mother died when I was a baby. Only a year old when my mother died in 1918 of the flu. I never seen mom. Somebody told me that her name was Sarah. That's all I know. What was her last name, I don't know either because. But I've seen my dad and one of my sisters and one of my brothers and one half sister.

Q What were their names?

A My oldest brother was Abraham Scanie. My other full sister, her name was Fullaman (phonetic), Mrs. Daniel Piche.

Q That is her name now?

A That was her name when I remember her, and my other half sister was Marion (phon.), that was Mrs. Francis Manoose, and my grandparents, I never seen either one of them, either side.

Q Was there anybody else who you would describe as a close family member back in those days?

A I only had three close cousins that I knew of. It's Alfred Nanabell (phonetic), Boniface Andrew, and Mary -- Mary, I don't know what her last name was. She is Mrs. Anderson. She lives in the city here someplace. She was married a Metis.

Q Can you tell us where you lived when you were growing up?

A I live in Cold Lake area all my life that I know of. I never moved out.

Q Where exactly in that area did you live?

A In Cold Lake Indian Reserve.

Q Where is the reserve relative to the Primrose, the area they call the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Testing Range?

A It's right next -- it's not too far in between Primrose air weapons. It would only be about 30 miles between the two lakes that I knew of, and that's the area I was born and raised and lived off of that land at both places between Cold Lake and Primrose.

Q When you say "both places", where was the other place?

A Primrose.

Q Okay.

A That was before the range took over. That was, really to tell the truth, that was my second home.

Q Tell us about life in the Primrose area. How long would you stay in the Primrose area?

A I move in the fall. I stay there until about 14th of May usually. Every winter that I remember of before the bombing range took the land away from us.

Q And that would be every winter you said?

A Pretty well every winter, but I come out for Christmas for about two weeks.

Q How old were you when you first went into the Primrose Range?

A When I first went in there, I was about 14 years old. I went in there with my adopted parents. Their name was Narcisse Marten, the old man that raised me, and the old lady her name is Genevieve. That's the people that raised me because I didn't have no other parents to go to. I was adopted to them right away after my mother died so. That was the only parents I had. I never was raised with my daughter or my brothers or anybody else until I grew up like that.

Q What can you remember in the earliest days when you went out to the Primrose area? You said you were 14 at that time?

A All I remember is the old man he used to go trapping every year and I went with him. I was the only child of theirs so I went with him all the time. He done trapping, hunting, he made food for the summer, and we spent most of our life through the winter, every winter anyway, we spent there. And during the summer we stayed home.

Q And where would home be?

A It would be in Cold Lake Reserve.

Q There are three Cold Lake reserves. Which one would this be?

A The one on the south from the lake. What is it, 149B1 and what is the other one.

Q What do they call it, the people call it, up in Cold Lake? How do they refer to it?

A They used to call it LaGoff before they changed the name. I think it goes by the mission. The priest his name I think LaGoff, I think his name was LaGoff, and I think that's what they used for a long time that I remember of, and they changed it to Cold Lake. Now they call it Cold Lake First Nation.

Q Did they have names for the other reserves?

A They call it English Bay all I know. They always call it English Bay. That's right by west end of the lake, eh, Cold Lake.

Q Right.

A So they put part of the reserve over there so they can use the lake for fishing, for their own use, part of the reserve.

Q What about the third reserve?

A The third reserve that was -- the third one that was belong to the mission. The one right by next to town, that was belong to the mission, and the mission traded that piece of land for the land on LaGoff. They build the mission on the church and stuff like that. For the same size as the land here they traded to the mission so they make church. You seen the church where the church is standing, that's what they traded it for with a priest. So the reserve bought that land off the priest not too long ago. So both place belong to reserve now. So all the priest has rights in that place I think is about five acres of land where the mission is. That's how it started that third reserve.

Q Going back to your early days in Primrose Lake when your adopted father went into the Primrose Lake area, where would he go?

A We went on the northeast of the lake of Primrose Lake.

Q You went northeast of Primrose Lake?

A Yeah.

Q Was there anymore of a description that you can give?

A Well, if there was a map here, maybe I can describe the area.

Q Okay, I'm showing you what is labelled Exhibit A and this is Primrose Lake?

A I know, yeah. It will be in this area.

Q Was there any other lake nearby?

A No, small lakes. We went way down here and there used to be a little lake. I don't know if I can spot it now or not. Little White Fish, they call it Little White Fish. That's where the old man used to fish, trap all the time, and that was old man's trap line, and that's where we went for until I got married, I went with him.

Q Did he have any buildings or any structures there?

A Yeah, he had a couple of buildings there. About 30 miles from the lake there was another little lake here. He had a shack there. We had a building there. We used to live there. From there, we go further up and then we had another building quite a ways up in that area.

Q Could you put an 'X' where the first building --

A I can't very well tell exactly where it is.

Q Could you put an 'X' where the general area was?

A It's got to be in this area. This might have been that little lake what I'm talking about. It was pretty good size. There was another one -- there was two side by side here, but two look like there's only one there. Maybe the other one was smaller. Maybe it's hard to see.

I'm pretty sure this area right here where the old man used to go trapping. From there he went way up in this area quite a ways from there. We walked that place about three days to get to the end of the trap line, I remember, so that must be quite a ways.

Q From the first cabin how far was it to the second cabin?

A It must have been about a day and a half of walk to get there.

Q And how far would you travel in about that time?

A Tough going, you can't go not much more than 15 or 20 miles a day. That would be a long day. So you can tell how far it is. It's not that far, but it seems like it's a long ways. It's not like today.

Q Okay, so you would say it was about a day and a half to travel to the other cabin?

A To the other cabin, yeah.

Q Would you camp overnight?

A Yeah, we have to camp outside to get there once.

Q And in a day's travel in that country, you would go about 15 to 20 miles?

A You see, we work in the same times so we're not travelling all the time. You see we are setting traps, we are setting snares for game.

Q So you are not travelling steady?

A We are not travelling steady. We stop and go, we stop and go, eh. When you are trapping, you can't travel all the time. You've got to stop. If it looks good, you have got to set your traps and keep going.

Q How far would you think it was to the other cabin allowing for the stopping and going?

A It might have been around 30 miles, 35 miles or so like that. It will take a day and a half to get there anyway the way we were working because maybe we'll stop 15, 20 minutes in one place and then we moved again, you know.

Q When you first went into the range during the course of the year, what time of the year would it be?

A When the range took over?

Q No, when you went into the Primrose Lake area, what time of the year would it be, what month?

A In November usually. Sometimes the first week in November or second week in November we move in there.

Q Would there be snow on the ground or would it be clear?

A Sometimes there is no snow. We go in there with horses, with wagons.

Q And who would go in? Who would be travelling with you?

A It's a lot of other people. That area where we were there was old Grandbois, old Ben Grandbois and Philippe Grandbois and old man Blackfox. I forgot his first name. It's quite a few years back. I can't remember all the names either. His name is old Blackfox anyway. Then there was Larian Fransway. There was a lot of people that go in there, different areas, eh. They don't all go in that one place. There was people right by this river here. You see, this river coming out of Primrose Lake? There was people that used to camp right there in this area.

Q Perhaps you could make a little circle.

A People used to stay there and this area where I told you where we used to live it was a fellow by the name of old Blackfox. He used to live right by the lake here, and he traps this area. These people here they trap this area, put it this way.

Q So old Blackfox would be to the southeast?

A He works in southeast this way and we work in this way.

Q So you would be going to the northeast?

A And old Ben Grandbois I think he used to have a trap line in this area. We worked this way and he works this way.

Q So he would work east?

A Yeah. He works more towards Canoe Lake area, this here. That's the people that used to meet with Canoe Lake people many times these here, old Ben, old Ben Grandbois and old Philippe. The Canoe Lake people they used to come from that area, see. And a lot of times they come in here, and they come and -- get a lot of times they trade stuff for stuff, eh, people are hard to get, you know, like tea, sugar, lard and flour and stuff like that. They run short, they come down, and they get stuff from other people like that. You see these people from here they have got a better storage to get stuff in our area than they have. There was a lot of these same people come in here and they trade. I think they trade maybe a few furs and stuff like that. I don't think they charge anything. They just trade. I think that's how they did work it.

Q What about at the time when you went in, did the people travel together?

A They travelled together going in, but they split up after they get over there. They go to their own areas.

Q How many people would be travelling in about that time?

A Five, six outfits, sometimes there is only two outfits together and the next two outfits together again. You see, that's how they travelled. They don't all go in one day. If they happen to be all in one time, sometimes there is six outfits going in together.

Q All told do you have any idea how many people would be going in about that time of year?

A It's pretty hard for me to say it right offhand because there is a lot of other people going the other side of the lake. You see on the west side of the lake.

Q Yes.

A There is a lot of other people they go to Watapi Lake. I don't know where that Watapi Lake is. Can you see Watapi Lake from here any place? It shouldn't be too far over that way. You see, a lot of people go in that area.

A When the people left the reserve, how many would leave the reserve?

Q You see there is quite a few, quite a few. It's pretty hard for me to tell you right offhand because a lot of them people they have been dead for years that I remember that day used to go in there. I can't remember all of them.

Q Would you say half the reserve would travel up to the Primrose Lake area?

A Pretty well half. The only people that used to stay home it's the younger people that used to look after animals. Like people got cattle and horses and they stay home. There is quite a few of them like that, they stay home. Like us, we didn't have nobody to leave behind, so old man got a Metis guy and he used to look after our place for us through the winter. He didn't pay him either. He just gave him a place to stay and he look after our animals and stuff like that at home. I don't remember paying him.

Q Perhaps we could take a brief adjournment at this time.

MR. MOORE: Stop time 11:30.

(Discussion off the record.)

MR. MOORE: Start time 11:32.

Q MR. MANDAMIN: What type of Indians came from Cold Lake?

A Where they come from?

Q What kind of Indians are they?

A Chipewyan.

Q Of the people who were on the reserve, were they all Chipewyans?

A Not very well. There is few families that move in from -- they are Treaty Indians but they move in from different reserves. I think they come from Saskatchewan. How they got mixed up.

Q What kind of Indians were they?

A They are Cree Indians.

Q What would the numbers be of each? Who would be more?

A Just like Matchewais, that family of Matchewais like I told you before, that old Alphonse Matchewais.

Q Yes.

A And that's the dad of Alex Matchewais and Pierre Matchewais. He had two sons. I don't think he had any daughters that I know of.

Q These would be people that married into the reserve?

A Yeah, they got married into the reserve. That's how -- I think the old man himself was married into the reserve.

Q And that's how he came to move there?

A That's how he came to move in us, how he got to move in, I'm pretty sure. I think they got -- the older Chief and Council, they gave him a right of way to stay. That's how he got in to stay.

Q The people who were there from the start, they would be the -- which group would that be?

A You mean the Chipewyans?

Q The Chipewyans or the Cree?

A The Chipewyans was the first.

Q And the people who used to go to Primrose, who would they be?

A They were all Chipewyans, pretty well all Chipewyans. You see, the first, very first time you didn't ask me this question, but I'll tell you. You see, we are Treaty Indians, but we belong to Saskatchewan Indian Affairs at one time. We didn't belong to Alberta side. You see, we live on the border and our Indian agents, they come from Saskatchewan. That's where we belong to and that's how we got to belong to Saskatchewan trapping, all that area. Primrose is in Saskatchewan, okay. So they can't stop us from going in there all the time because we belong to Indian Affairs in Saskatchewan. Very first time. Then I don't remember the day, the year or anything like this when they switch over to when they transferred us over to Alberta Indian Affairs. I don't remember that part. You see a lot of things I don't remember, eh, because you keep track on paper, you remember everything what happened. But me, I never went to school. So I have to remember in my head. If I don't -- there is things I'll forget in the long run. Okay, you look back 50 years, 50, 60 years back, by God, that's hard to remember sometimes.

Q Going back to when the people would go into Primrose Lake in November, what would they do when they first got in there?

A They would get set up for -- they would get the cabins ready so that they live good through the winter. That's the first thing they will do.

Q Then what will they do?

A They will get their wood piled up and stuff like that so they don't have to fool around with wood and stuff like that. So that's the first thing they do. Maybe do that maybe two weeks, two or three weeks before they get go in the bush and start trapping.

Q So they would collect wood?

A Yeah.

Q And what else would they do while they were getting ready for the winter?

A They would get their cabins all set up so they would stay warm.

Q And anything else besides that, besides wood and fixing up the cabins?

A Most of the time they go hunting and get the meat ready and if it's cold enough to keep meat and stuff like that.

Q Would they store the meat or would they just get enough to use right then?

A They don't get more than what they need at the time because the game is more handier over there than it is around home. If you are running down, you can always get one.

Q What kind of game?

A Moose, caribou, deer, stuff like that.

Q Would they hunt any small game?

A If they are trapping, if they get beavers, they use beavers for meat, rats.

Q Rats, what would that be?

A Muskrat. Rabbits, stuff like that. They use that for food.

Q Besides the meat, would there be any other kind of food they would gather?

A Not from the bush. Berries if they get there early enough.

Q What kind of berries?

A Cranberries. Cranberries are something that will keep. You can freeze them. Even if it thaws out, yet it will keep. Not like other berries. Cranberries will stand a lot of punishment unlike blueberries and stuff. Saskatoons and stuff like that, if they freeze once they are no more good unless you use them right away before it thaws out. Put them in hot water, the berries are all right. But if you keep them after they thaw out, you have got to throw it out. No more good. They are not like cranberries.

Q After the two weeks of fixing up and preparing for the trapping season, what activities did people do, what did they start doing?

A They start moving in the bush and they start trapping.

Q What would they be trapping?

A Well, coyotes, foxes, stuff like that.

Q What other kind of animals besides those two?

A Right offhand there, that's the only thing they go for is like long furs, just like foxes, coyotes, timber wolves, stuff like that. But the beavers and the rats, they leave that for later, towards spring they use that. They kill them. As I say, they go after rats, muskrats, around in March until about the 14th of May, and then they close us down because after that the fur is no good.

Q What about beavers, when do they go after them?

A They go after them same time they go after rats, but the beavers are harder to get so they wait until the water opens up more. When the water opens up, they are much easier to get. So maybe about two weeks at the most in the spring you can go after beavers. The beavers are hard to get in wintertime.

Q Are there any other fur animals that they would hunt for or trap?

A You see just like moose hides, deer hides, caribou hides, they tan them and they use that for moccasins, mitts. They even make jackets out of it. Stuff like that they make out of that. And they tan them and they keep them for the summer, in the summertime they even make beaded moccasins, beaded gloves and stuff like that. They turn around and sell them. They use that for living, too.

Q What would your adopted mother be doing during this time?

A He will be, most of the time he will be -- he will help us. When he stays home, she go snare rabbits if we haven't -- just like for dog food or something like that, you go kill rabbits to feed our dogs. Our working dogs have got to be fed, too, eh. Anything that's too many, we'll use it for our dogs, so that's what she would be doing. And the same time she would go maybe trap a few weasels and squirrels around a camp. She's always doing something. She works almost like a man.

Q When you first went in there when you were 14, how old were your --

A My parents were pretty old already. They must have been in their 40s.

Q Who would look after the food and cooking and that type of thing?

A She does, she does. She does most of it.

Q And when someone travelled to the other cabin, who would go and who would stay?

A We would all go. We would all travel together. The old lady don't stay home, she goes with us. We leave her behind, it would be too long. When we work from the camp, around the camp, then she stayed home. But if we are going to move from one camp to the other, she go along with us.

Q What would cause you to move from one camp to the other?

A You see, we go trapping over there, too, that's why we moved over there. Sometimes we stay there two weeks and then come back to this other camp and just working in between these two camps. I think that's how everybody works, too. Everybody else I think they work the same way as we do. Sometimes you go visit your neighbours, they are not even home there. Sometimes they will be gone for three or four days. Sometimes you spend a night there, nobody there, you've got to go back. A lot of times we go visit, we try to visit our neighbours, like old man Grandbois and old Blackfox, they are not too far. Some Saturdays we go over there, we are going to spend Sundays with them. Sometimes we couldn't find nobody. Sometimes again they are there. We spend a couple of days with them and then we go back. That's how people work.

Q What animals would you have with you?

A Mostly the dogs in the bush, dogs. That's what we used, dogs.

Q How many dogs usually would you have?

A It all depends. There is three of us. We used to have two teams.

Q How many dogs to a team?

A Four, four or five.

Q When you say teams, what do you mean?

A We hook four together so we have two teams. You see, we call it, that's a team.

Q Yes, and they would be pulling what?

A They would be pulling toboggan with the stuff.

Q And the old lady never walks, she always sitting in the toboggan and dogs?

A Me, I'll have a load with me.

Q What kind of load, what would be on the load?

A Whatever, our bedding and our food and stuff like that, it would all in that one load and I moved that myself. And the old man and the old lady went with the other team. He looks after the old lady when he moved. Sometimes the dogs, they get kind of funny, too, eh. You see, you don't drive them like horses. You just hook them up and you've got to talk to them and they work by gee, haw, stuff like that. Which way to go, which way to turn.

Q You mentioned going up there in the early times with horses, horse and wagons. Did you have horses up there?

A Them horses, they go back. You see, the guy that looks after home, he comes, bring us up to the end and then all these horse go back home for the winter. And when we are ready to go home for Christmas, they come and meet us over there.

Q Where would you meet?

A Meet again the same place, just about the same place where I showed you. Right there where old Blackfox camp. They usually come there and they all travel together.

Q And that Blackfox camp was on the east side of Primrose Lake?

A That's where we meet. Yeah. And other camps like that. This camp here, that's Muskego camp. They used to call that Muskego camp.

Q That's on the south side of the lake?

A Yeah, southeast of the lake, too.

Q Southeast of Primrose Lake?

A Yeah. That's where most of them meet there. Whoever work from different angle from there and they all meet there.

Q By the time you were leaving at Christmas, at the Christmas season, what would have been done? What would have been accomplished on the trapline?

A You mean fur and stuff like that?

Q That's right.

A Yeah, there would be fur. Sometimes you hit it lucky, you have a bunch of fur. Sometimes you hit it tough luck, you have hardly anything. It's just like a gamble when you are out trapping. You don't catch them, what are you going to do? If you haven't catch them, that's all it is. And if you are lucky, you have got a lot of game. One trip you go out there, maybe you've got six foxes in one day. Maybe next day again you go out there, you've got nothing. Again next day you go up there maybe you got one or two. You see, that's the way it works. You are not too sure you get anything when you are out there in the bush trapping, eh.

Q What kind of value would it be? How much would it be worth? Say at Christmastime, what would you expect in an average year?

A There is a lot of times, I remember old man sell his fur. In the two months we were out there, sometimes he make 17, \$1800. That's that much fur he brings out in two months. And again another time you can come out with \$3,000. Another time you've only got a thousand. You see that's how it works. It not always work the same way.

Q So a poor year you would be looking at maybe a thousand?

A Yeah.

Q For those two months?

A Yeah.

Q And a good year maybe 3,000?

A In a good year maybe sometimes 3,000, 2,000, 200 -- 2,500 maybe sometimes. It works that way. It's not always work the same. It's -- you go out and set a snare for a coyote, you don't know he's going to come through there. You are just taking that chance. If he comes, you've got him. If he doesn't, your snare would be hanging there maybe all day. You don't get nothing out of it.

Q Do you recall any furs that were more valuable than others?

A Well, different, just like foxes there is different. There is red fox and then there is a cross fox and there is a black fox and a silver fox. There is four different grades of foxes, but coyotes are not that way. Coyotes are all the same. Again, timber wolves, there are some gray wolves and there are some black wolves. But I don't remember the price of them, but the foxes, red fox it wasn't as high as a cross fox, and the cross fox is not as good as a silver fox, and the silver is not quite as good as a black fox either. The black fox was the highest grade fox. You come all the way from 700 to sometimes \$1100 one hide them black fox, they are worth. And silver is something like about 5, \$600. But black fox, they go as high as 11 and 1200 a hide. But you don't get too many of them. Maybe once in two years you'll get one, them black fox.

Q What about silver fox, how often?

A Silver fox is pretty well the same. They are not so easy -- there is not that many either. But red fox there is a lot of them. And cross fox, there is a lot of them.

Q And how much about would they be worth, do you remember?

A The red fox, they run all the way from 50 to \$150. You see all different size. There is some small fox and there is a big one and with a good fur. The bigger they are the better. And with the fur, it goes by the fur, the better fur, the better price. You see, they grade them. When they buy them, they grade them.

Q What about the cross fox, price-wise?

A The cross fox, it's the same thing. The cross fox, they run about around \$200 for a good one. From there, lower. They grade them as the fur, too.

Q And when you would get red foxes, what kind of numbers would you be looking at in an average year?

A You mean how many we get in a year?

Q Yes.

A Or the price?

Q How many would you get in a year?

A Sometimes you hit it lucky, you'll get quite a few of them. It's pretty hard to say right offhand how many. There is times when we come out sometimes we've got about 15 hides, sometimes we have 20 hides. That's in the first two months. The second the winter gets tougher after Christmas. You see, like the way it is now. It's cold and it's tough, eh. It's the same thing over there. The winter gets tough, the game don't move quite as much either. So the longer winter it is, it seems like it's harder. They still get -- there is something I missed out. Minks was good fur, too. Minks and link. The link always bring 3, \$400, good link.

Q How much would you expect to catch in a winter?

A The link is easy to get if there is any. If there is any link at all in the country, old man used to get them every time and knows how to get them. They are a good valuable fur, the price.

Q Do you remember what they were worth?

A They are worth all the way from 100 to 3, \$400? It don't go like thousands. Not like a black fox, but the average, the price usually stay up pretty good for them.

Q What about the mink?

A The mink is the same thing. 40 to \$50 a mink. A mink is not a very big animal, eh. They are good. So weasels, they go all the way from 50 to 3, \$4. Sometimes you get a whole bunch of them.

Q How many would a whole bunch would be?

A 3, 400 a winter.

Q You mentioned earlier squirrels?

A Squirrels, yes. The squirrels, they didn't start buying them for long time. Finally, they make a fur out of it and they start buying them. They are easy to get. There are lots of them. There is hundreds of them. You can get 100 to a day easy if you got a good day.

Q And what kind of prices would a squirrel be?

A The squirrels, they start off pretty cheap at the start. I think they were 15 cents to start with. And as the year went by, I'm pretty sure towards the end \$1.15 a hide and you'd get 100 of them, you are making a pretty good day's wages. There is no hard work either. It's not like coyotes and fox. Coyotes and fox this time of the year, if you catch them, you are going have a hell of a time to bring them home. They are frozen solid and they are heavy and if you haven't got your dog team with you, if you pack one home a day, you are a very lucky man. Them coyotes are not small either, you know. And it takes three, four days to thaw them out. Then you've got to skin them and dry the hide. It's a trick for everything, you know.

Q Besides trapping and hunting, what else would be done up there?

A There is fishing. That fishing didn't start for a long time, though. I don't quite remember but way back in the '30s, I think in about '36 or '37 they started buying fish.

Q And were you involved in fishing yourself?

A I didn't start fishing on my own right away. I started fishing with the white people. I didn't know how to fish in the first place. That's the very first time. I went to work with a guy by Sinclair. His name was Sinclair. I used to work for him on a farm during the summer. So he got to be a fisherman so I got to working with him. I worked with him for about eight years and then I went on my own. That's when the fishing there was getting to be good. So we fished only a certain amount of time. They give the limit. So many thousand pounds you can take out of one lake, you see. Maybe 150,000 pounds of fish in one lake. Sometimes that's caught in three, four days and it's all over with. And then they go to a different lake, we go by Cold Lake and Cold Lake is the same thing. Sometimes again there is no fish, you fish for a long, long time.

Q And that's because the limit isn't reached?

A Yeah, you've got to catch the limit. If the limit is not caught, the lake is open until the limit is caught.

Q What lakes was the fishing carried on?

A We used to fish between Cold Lake and Primrose. And when the fishing was all over, we always go back to trapping.

Q What time of the year would you be fishing at Primrose?

A We fish in the fall sometimes before Christmas maybe for a couple of weeks, and then in the summertime again they opened the lake for so many pounds and same thing as Cold Lake. They opened it in the wintertime. Sometimes they open Cold Lake twice a year though in the wintertime, once in the fall this time of the year or later in March, so they put limits on them. When I start fishing, then we used to come out and do our fishing first and then if there is any trapping in the spring, we go back trapping rats and beavers in the spring. That's how I work it.

Q So Primrose you would fish sometimes before Christmas in the winter?

A Yeah. Sometimes early before Christmas. They fish there maybe sometimes a couple of weeks until they catch the limit. But there is a lot of fish in that lake and it don't take long to catch the limit. Sometimes two weeks, sometimes one week.

Q And after you finished fishing, then what would you do?

A Then we go to the bush, until they open Cold Lake, and then we come back and fish again in Cold Lake. So that's what we've always been doing.

Q And after Cold Lake -- what time would Cold Lake open?

A Sometimes in March. Most of the time it's always open in March, late in March. When we finished that and then we go back in the bush until the trapping is all over in May.

Q Between the two lakes, which one was the better for fishing?

A Some years Cold Lake was good. And again some years Cold Lake was hard to get fish out of, very hard because that's a deep lake. Sometimes the fish don't go into the deep water, sometimes in the shallow water, sometimes they go way out in the deep lake and they don't allow us to go out. They just give us a limit, so far limit from the shore. So we can't go beyond that. So sometimes the limit it takes long time before you get the limit.

Q What was your own preference for fishing?

Q Well, we move all over the place. We don't catch nothing here, we try someplace else. We keep --

Q But between the two lakes which one?

A Was the best lake?

Q Yes.

A Really the best lake was Primrose for fishing.

Q Why would you say that?

A I don't know. The difference in the lake. There is more fish in there. You see, there is two part lake like you see this here. You see, this here this part of the lake here, it's a deep lake. That's a real deep lake.

Q That's the lower part?

A Yeah. And this is a shallower lake. You can't use deep nets in these. Real shallow lake and there is a lot of fish in that. This year, deep lake, you've got to have different type of a nets to use and that. Deep net and you can't use that same nets over here because this lake is shallow.

Q The north part of the lake is shallow?

A Yeah.

Q And the southern extension of the lake is deep?

A It's deep, yeah.

Q And it's easier to catch fish in the north end; is that correct?

A Yeah, and they are bigger fish, too.

Q Did you always fish -- or I'm sorry. Did you always trap with your adopted parents?

A Not all the time, not after I got married and I went on my own.

Q When did the change happen?

A I got married in 1940. I think it's in '42 I went on my own.

Q Where did you trap then?

A You see, something happened up in that area that we have to share the trap lines. Some people had bigger trap lines than the other. And my dad had a long trap line in this area here.

Q That would be straight north from Primrose Lake?

A Yeah. Northwest. He had a long trap line and the rangers, they told him that he has to share or they are going to cut him off, some of it. So he talked to me, can you take that part of that trap line over. He says we'll take the north part, you take the south part. So that's what he did with me. So I had that trap line of my own then. By that time, these old people were too old to go out in the bush anymore. So old Simon Martin, you know him, the old guy, he had that. He used that trap line for a long time. That was his uncle's.

Q So the old couple, their nephew took over trapping bear and you took over half of your father's trap line?

A Yeah.

Q When you -- you said they when you were talking about they trapped the north half. Did your father trap alone or was he with someone?

A No, he was with my stepmother. There was just two of them.

Q And yourself, did you trap alone or with someone?

A I trapped alone. I stayed there by myself. I didn't take my family over there.

Q Where was your family?

A My family stayed home. We had a place of our own by that time. Not the same place where I lived but we live in Cold Lake that small reserve.

A That's the one on the south end of Cold Lake?

Q Yeah, right by town there, that little reserve. We had a place there and that's where my family stayed. And while you were trapping, who would make up your family?

Q Well, they lived close to their dad. Their dad wasn't a trapper, so the old people they lived, but we had our own little place there by the old folks, my father-in-law, and that's where most of the time, that's where she stayed with my family and the kids.

Q Any children?

A We had three.

Q And what would she do while you were out on the trap line?

A They didn't do too much, I don't think. All they did was look after the kids, I guess.

Q How would they get by as far as food?

A There is quite a few times I come back and bring some food back, me, and sometimes I bring some fur back, buy them some food and go back again. A lot of times I come back for over a couple of days or so. Sometimes I come back.

Q When you brought back meat, what type of meat would you bring back?

A Moose meat, moose meat, caribou, sometimes deer meat.

Q Did you bring back meat only for your family?

A Food, not only for family. The old folks got part of it and a lot of it she give it away to her aunties and stuff like that. You see, people share them days, not like today. People share. If they know their aunties and uncles and stuff, people like that, if they know they have got no meat, we share, we share the meat like that.

Q And you said the old people, that was your adopted parents?

A No. You see, by that time they were getting pension. They were on their own.

Q So who would you be sharing with when you referred to them?

A I share on her parents' side.

Q On her parents' side?

A Yeah. It's quite a few of them, uncles and aunties and brothers and sisters.

Q Did anybody else bring back food?

A Most of the people they do that with other people, too, other parents. You know, sometimes a lot of guys bring -- somebody kill maybe two or three moose up in the bush and they send word for somebody to pick it up and they share it all up together. The people that stays home all the time, they share. That's how it worked.

Q Was there people on the reserve --

A There is no charges or nothing. They just shared up. Maybe a hind quarter, maybe part of the front quarter. If you need meat, come and get it.

Q Would this sharing, would that be just part of the reserve?

A No, the whole reserve mostly all share all the time. People get along good them days. No money, they loved one another and they shared, all the time shared. Nowadays, if you haven't got a greenback in your pocket, you have got no friends no more. At home it's same thing now. Your next neighbour ain't going to help you if you ain't got no dollar bill. But them days were different. People helped one another.

Q On the reserve what time of year would you be staying there, back when you were with your adopted parents?

A When I was with my adopted parents, we get out from trapping, we stay home -- I stay home most of the summer, but the old people always going someplace, hunting or going out visiting or out picking berries, if there is any berries at all. They are always gone, the old people. We had a little farm there just for feed and I used to do that with horses during the summer. We don't sell no crop or anything, we just use that for feed for cattle and horses. We didn't farm for sale and stuff like that.

Q So where would cash money come from?

A The cash, the money that we bring, that's what we put it into that little farm. We use that same money to put a little crop in.

Q Which money is that you are talking about?

A The money that we make up in the bush, trapping and things like that.

Q Did you make any money from the farm?

A No, we just use that for feed. Maybe it did bring a few dollars if we sell a cow or something like this. Make a good animal out of it, but I mean to sell grain to make money, no, we never farmed like that. Not at that time when I was with the old people. But when I went on my own, when I start trapping and farming on my own, I farm pretty big and I sell a lot of grain, but I didn't get rich at it.

Q When you say you farmed pretty big, how big was your operation?

A My operation was about 400 acres. That's under cultivation.

Q And what would you have?

A I had wheat, barley and oats.

Q And how would your farm operation operate?

A With tractors. I got pretty big after I got on my own. I was worth quite a bit of money at one time. I had livestock. I had about 80 head of cattle, cows with bulls, a couple of bulls. In the fall I had about 160 head with the calves and stuff. You see, all the calves usually go. The only thing we keep is the best heifer calves, you know.

Q In around 1950s --

A That's way in the '50s.

Q In about 1950s, while the trapping was still going on.

A Although I had a farm, I still went trapping in the winter, in the spring, and I fished during the same time. I fish in the summer too. I drop everything and go fishing. When it's time to make a dollar, I go for it.

Q Perhaps this would be a good time to take a break.

MR. MOORE: Stop time 12:15.

(Examination adjourned 12:15 p.m.)

(Examination resumed 1:25 p.m.)

MR. MOORE: Start time 1:25 p.m.

MR. DEAN: Sir, you acknowledge that you are still oath? You understand that we are resuming now and that you are still under oath?

A Yes.

Q MR. MANDAMIN: Mr. Scanie, I'd like to take you back to the point where you were talking about fishing at Primrose Lake. What kind of fishing did you do in the 1950s just before the Air Weapons Range was established? What was your usual fishing activity?

A Commercial fishing.

Q And how did you do that?

A Well, some years I done good and some years I didn't do that good. You mean money-wise?

Q The whole of your activity. Did you use one net or did you use more nets?

A No, I see there is so many nets went out to a licence, maybe you got 600 yards and that's for a licence. Sometimes they used three licences. That's 18 nets.

Q And how would you do it? How would you handle 18 nets?

A Just the way it was supposed to be handled.

Q Would you fish alone by yourself?

A No, no, no. You have got to have either three guys or four guys with me.

Q And how would you work?

A Pay them so much a day.

Q What kind of money would you pay them?

A I paid them \$25 a day, and board.

Q And this would be out at Primrose Lake?

A Yeah.

Q What kind of income did you get from that?

A Pretty fair. I called it pretty fair. Sometimes we would fish for two weeks. Let's see, either 12 days, two weeks or 12 days we fish in there. We came out of there between 3,000 and \$4,000 clear out of that place after everything was paid. After the men was paid and the gas bill was paid

and the food bill was paid we came out of there clear with --- sometimes we came out of there with 3800, sometimes 4,000 in 10 or 12 days of fishing.

Q That would be fishing where?

A Primrose Lake, and that's where the -- that's the lake we lost from the bombing range.

Q You mentioned a gas bill, what was that for?

A For cars, trucks. For trucks. We used trucks then. We started with horses, that was before the bombing range though. We used horses for fishing. But there is only only two of us fishing then. But when we got bigger, we used two outfits to fish with.

Q When you said there was just two --

A That's when the bombing range took over we only get 10, 12 days of fishing. That's when we used trucks. Before that we used horses. But the limit was so slow then, when we fished with horses we didn't make quite that much. We make \$100 a day at the most, me and my partner, Ernest.

Q What was your partner's name?

A Ernest Eno (phon). We fished together for about 40 years.

Q Were you using trucks just before the Primrose ---

A The bombing range took over, yeah. We begin to start using the trucks then.

Q And what kind of income were you getting then?

A About the same amount. Like there were only two of us fishing then so we didn't quite make that much. We make 2,000, 2,500. You see, we didn't pay no money out because between me and him work together. But we worked under all my outfit.

Q You would be the one who would hold the licences then?

A Yeah, he just helped me, see.

Q What about the trapping season after Christmas, what kind of income would you get from that?

A Well, all told, right from after Christmas to spring breakup, I come out of there sometimes 2 or 3,000.

Q That's when you were running your own trap line?

A Yeah. I figure it's more not all told with the meat I brought out for my family to live with but we share up on reserve. The meat that we came out with in that three months, three, four months, it's worth just as much as I almost come out with the cash, if it was paid by cash. I got about four moose out of there, and I figure in them years the value of the meat out of that one moose it's worth \$250 anyway. At that time everything was cheap. But if it was today, you couldn't buy a

moose for \$500 today. You couldn't, for the price of the meat. But them days, I figure the most we had was 250. From 200 to 250. It all depends on the size. So the meat, the value of the meat that I brought out, it must be a thousand dollars to \$2,000 worth of [meat] that I brought out. So you total that with my money that I come out with, it's maybe worth \$4,000 that one half of that winter.

Q Did you do anything with the hides from the meat?

A Yeah. The hides were tanned and my wife used to make beaded moccasins out of it and she told them and she made money out of that. And we use that same hides for living, too, during the summer, lots of it.

Q Do you recall the time you first heard about talk of a bombing range?

A Yes. I was fishing at the time. Indian Affairs sent a guy over to talk to each trappers and fishermans. They give us a notice this was our last year of trapping. The bombing range is going to take over. He take the value of the equipment we had over there, like traps, camps, how much it's worth to me, like each person, eh. So they put that down on paper but I don't keep track of it, they were the ones that kept track of it.

And he said -- he asked me how much money do you think it's worth, the traps you've got out in the bush? I said the traps and the snares I've got out in the bush, the traps and the snares alone is worth a thousand dollars roughly. I guess that. At that time things were cheap, eh. And my camp, I had two camps. I said that should be worth something, too. So he totalled all together. I don't remember what he gave me but, what he put down on the paper. I haven't got that in my head. I forget how much he put down, you know, roughly. You see, that's too far back and I don't remember exact what he did total for me. That's something I couldn't very well swear up and down to say that was what he offered me.

Q Where did you meet him?

A I met him in Primrose Lake fishing camp. He was out there checking with individual fishermans, the Indians, like us. I think he went to the white people, too, that lives over there. Some people there had been trapping there and fishing there all their lives and they live right there, and that's their home. They have got to live there all year round. They bought off too. They had to move out of there. I think they were checking with them, too, at the same time.

Q Do you remember what the name of the person is?

A I forgot the name of the guy. I never seen him before and I never knew him anyway. Even today if I were to see him, I wouldn't know him anyway. I only seen him that time. I seen him maybe three or four hours that day and I never seen him again.

Q What else can you recall about talk before the range started? Not talk, but events happening?

A Well, there is quite a bit of talk start going about we are going to lose our trapping area. A lot of people start talking about that. They didn't like the idea. I didn't like the idea either because I love that place. That's where I raised my family from. That's where I was raised from. So it's

pretty hard. Just like you are getting kicked out of your own house. That's like somebody buy you out and gone, you go down the road. It looks that way to me. A lot of people said the same thing, but there is nothing we can do about it.

Q Do you remember meeting with other Government people? The only one that come to us on the reserve is Indian Affairs, the guys that's working for the Indians, the Indian Affairs. I'm pretty sure his name was Eckland, the guy that was Indians Affairs at the time.

Q Do you remember what he did?

A I think that's the guy that talked to National Defence. They deal with National Defence. We didn't deal with them. They are the people that dealt right through. I don't know exactly -- to tell you the truth, I don't know what kind of a deal they made. Maybe they made a hell of a lot bigger deal than what they give us. I don't know. That part I can't tell you. I don't know nothing. One day they told us -- no, the beginning when they first paid us, they wouldn't even give us cash. You see, Indians are crazy. They said, you can't give them cash. They says, they will just play with it. So we'll give them purchase orders. We'll make them buy what they need. Then they will make better use of it. You see, they treat us just like a kid. Like we don't know how to make a living ourselves. That's how they treated us at the beginning. So I don't remember what they give me first time. I think it was -- I wasn't too sure. Someplace around 1700. That's what they allowed me, but I didn't see it. I didn't see it in the cash. The only thing they told us there we can't buy no vehicles.

Q Who told you?

A The Indian Affairs. They told us we can't use that same money to buy vehicles. A lot of people argue about it. They say, what's the difference to you, it's not your money. It's been given to us, we can use it the way we want, can't we? No, he says, you can't do it anyway. You can buy tractor or you can buy horses, something that you can use. You can buy cattle or whatever, but you can't buy a vehicle. So that's what they did with us very first time. So the dealers, they boost up their price on their stuff, too, because we haven't got cash, we can't jew them down. We would just give them a piece of paper. The Government man paid for it, I guess, so we got our stuff and that was it. We never seen that money at all the first time. It went on like that maybe a couple or two years later and they come up with these bigger money.

Q When you said the dealers boosted up their prices, what do you mean?

A We haven't got the cash to deal with them the proper way. So if the thing is worth \$100, if they put their prices \$200, there is no way we can jew them down because we haven't got the cash to deal with them. Somebody else paid for our stuff. See what I mean? That's what I meant. If the thing was worth \$100, maybe they boost it up \$200 for all I know. What are you going to do? All you've got is a piece of paper to buy a thing with.

Q Where did you get the piece of paper?

A We get it from Indian Affairs, purchase orders.

Q Where were they, like physically?

A They were on a piece of paper.

Q No, I meant where was the Indian Affairs person? Where did he live or where did he have his office?

A The office was in St. Paul, but we have one man there all the time. They call it farmer instructor, we used to call him that, and he lives on the reserve. But nothing goes through his hand, any part of that. And that guy I was talking about, he's the guy that comes down and they give you these purchase order. It's that much money you've got to spend? So you take that to the dealers and you deal with them, put it on a bill, and you bring it back to us, we'll pay for it and that's how they dealt with us. They treated us just like a bunch of kids that don't know nothing.

Q What did you do, what did you get during that time?

A We got appliance for the house. We had fridge and we got our house hooked up with the power. We didn't have the power then, so it was about \$600 for our power.

Q Was that with the purchase orders?

A Yeah. Then we bought fridge, deep freeze. In fact, I've still got that deep freeze at home. I'm still using it and it still works just as good as the day I bought it and that's way back in '61, '62. You got the date on that when they first give us something? You've got it marked?

Q Did you get that by purchase order or did you use cash?

A Yeah, I paid purchase order.

Q How long did the business with the purchase orders go on? Did you just get one purchase order or did you have several of them?

A Well, if you didn't spend all of what you had coming, you would get another one for something else until the money was spent.

Q About how long was that?

A It didn't take very long. You know how the money goes. If you are going to spend it, you are going to spend a hell of a pile of money in a little while. That purchase order, if you want to buy something, it was gone in one day. The same thing as everything else.

Q Do you remember any meetings or negotiations about the Primrose range?

A Well, this Indian Affairs, they used to come down and talk to the Chiefs about this bombing range, but I don't recall whatever happened there. A lot of times I wasn't even there to listen to the meetings.

Q Who was the Chief then?

A The very first time when they started dealing, my brother was the Chief. That's Abraham Scanie. He was the Chief at the time, at the beginning. But before everything was settled they

had another election and my brother was voted out. So then the next payment he wasn't a Chief, he didn't have nothing to do with it. A guy by the name of Peter Matchewais was the Chief.

Q What do you know about what your brother was doing at that time?

A The way my brother told the people, this money that they got the first time that they used for purchase order, he says, let's don't touch that money. Let's put it in trust fund. We use interest out of it. Put the whole thing in a trust fund. We'll use it for the band. But a lot of these trappers wouldn't do it that way. They says, no, I have to get my share. I don't want to share with anybody else. I didn't argue with that. I agreed with what my brother said. I thought it was a good idea. I thought this money will take us a long ways if we put it like the way my brother said it. But a lot of people don't want it that way. They want their share right now, so they wouldn't go along with him. More on the other side, less on my brother's side, so it went the other way. That's how they got this money.

Q When there were people getting money, was everyone in the band getting money?

A No, just the trappers and fishermans. They got it individually whatever they had coming. They didn't get it all the same amount either.

Q Do you know why the amounts were different?

A I don't know exactly, but the way I can see it, maybe all the trappers -- you see some trappers, they don't fish, just straight trapping, and they don't make quite as much as the fisherman and trapping combination? Me, I done both of it all the way through ever since I can remember. But a lot of them didn't. Straight trapping or straight fisherman. They go fishing, they come back out and that's it, they don't trap. You understand what I mean?

Q Yes.

A So I think they got less on account of that.

Q The people who didn't get anything, were they --

A Just like the people that didn't fish at all or trap at all didn't get nothing, they didn't get any part of it. You see, that's why my brother put it that way. Like he wants everybody to get a share out of it, but they wouldn't agree with it so it went the other way.

Q Were there some people who fished or trapped who you are aware of didn't get anything?

A It's pretty well everybody got it, whoever was a trapper.

Q Any when you say "trapper", do you remember holding a registered trap line?

A Yeah, yeah.

Q If somebody trapped who wasn't a registered trapper?

A I don't think they got anything. You see, really you got to have registered trap lines before you can trap anyway. You have to have a licence for trapping.

Q What about, for instance, the fisherman who worked in your outfit?

A Just like the guys that I hired, they didn't get nothing either. The only ones is licence holders, if I hired licence holders, then they get a share out of that. There is quite a few of them got share like that. But they have to be a licence holder. You see, like Ernest fished with me for 40 years over there but he never did hold a licence, so we tried to fight for him but he couldn't get anything because he wasn't a licence holder.

Q So that was the person you called Ernest Eno (phon.) earlier on?

A And he's the guy he knows lots about this.

Q Do you remember any meetings among the band about the bombing range and compensation?

A That's the only one I told you when my brother meet with people, that's the only I remember. I don't recall if they had anymore meetings, too much more of that after. The newer Chief after my brother got out, he had couple of meetings with the people, I think. But the way he put it, he wants the money right away quick.

Q Now, at that time when they were having those meetings, were you still getting those purchase orders or were they gone?

A No, no, they were talking about getting cash now at that time. They were beginning to talk about they were going to get -- they are going to hand out the cash whoever has money coming out of that bombing range. It's going to be straight cash now.

Q And about when was that?

A I don't remember what year it was, but it's supposed to be the last payment for the 20 years that they promised to hold the land for. That's something I remember. They said 20 years at the most they are going to hold the land for. And when they paid us off, I figured they paid us for 20 years. After 20 years, I figured we're going to restart new again from there. That's how I took it at first, but there was no deal made with paper or anything. So nothing has been done too much about it.

Q I'm showing you a paper that's labelled Exhibit C. It's got a list of signatures on it. Just look over the paper and tell me if you recognize it at all. Do you remember ever seeing a paper like that before?

A I don't remember, but I see a lot of it my signature is on it.

Q Aside from recognizing your signature, do you remember that paper at all?

Q I don't remember it at all, but it must have been because a lot of it is my signature, a lot of these old people they couldn't sign their names the way it looks. There is an 'X' there and I signed as a witness for them.

Q Is that what it is?

A It looks like it to me.

Q Okay. There is one place here where on page 3 under the heading of -- there is no heading for the column, but under page 3, it says Scanie and then down below it says 192 and there is what appears to be, let's see --

A That's my treaty number.

Q Is that your treaty number, 192?

A Yeah. That's a treaty number. That's all treaty numbers here. That's what it is. These numbers here. 192 is my treaty number.

Q And there is no 'X' beside that signature?

A That's strictly my signature there, but I don't remember that. You see, like I told you, I don't remember at all if -- all these witnesses I signed I don't remember, but I must have did it because that's my signature. That's too far back. That's over 40 years. It's hard to remember.

Q There is some typing on the top of this. Can you tell me, are you able to read that?

A No. You have to read it for me.

Q You can't read it?

A No.

Q How much schooling did you have?

A I didn't have hardly any. Maybe about two years of schooling, that's all I had in all my years. All I know I understand enough when I travel and enough to sign my name and a few things that I know on the road that I can make out what it meant. That's how I do my travelling. But for reading and to write, I can't do it.

Q Do you remember ever signing any papers over this Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range?

A The only one that I remember to sign is when they released the money to us, when they released the money to me what I had. Whatever they offered me, I signed for that money, but I didn't sign nothing else that I remember of.

Q What did you understand you were signing for?

A It's just like signing a receipt that I got the money. They hand me the cash.

Q And did anyone say anything to you about what you were signing?

A Yeah, they told me sign this here. Your money is in the bank. You can take your money anytime after you sign this.

Q Was it --

A The money was released to me. That's Mr. Eckland.

Q And where was this?

A He was there at the bank with the people and I was there at the time.

Q At the bank. Which bank was that?

A Credit Union, Grand Centre.

Q Do you remember about what time that was? Were there other people besides Eckland and you there?

A There was a whole slough of them ahead of me. I didn't like the idea, that's why I didn't come in right away. I wanted to fight that case myself. I wanted to get the lawyer. I want to get the lawyer to work for us to get that thing straight but the Chief wouldn't agree with me.

Q Why was that?

A Huh?

Q Why was that?

A I don't know, but he wouldn't agree. He was hungry for that money. He wanted to grab that money right away. That's the way I look at it anyway.

Q Do you recall when you were --

A There was three days before we got the money. The money was there already in Grand Centre bank, the money was put in there. And Monday it's open for the people to come in there to get the money. So I started off on Friday night, I met a few people, I talked to them. There was quite a few that I talked to, they agree with it. I said we shouldn't touch that money. I said we should just leave it and get a lawyer, get somebody to work for us so that things will turn out ahead in the future. So there was about ten older people than I was, they agreed with it. So we talked about it again Saturday. So the old people told me that we'll meet the Chief on Sunday, we'll talk to him, we'll talk to him the way I think you've got a good idea.

So on Sunday afternoon we met the Chief and that's when he told me you shut up, you don't know a damn thing, you are just a kid anyway. He just about pointed his finger in my eye. And he was the Chief. He was supposed to represent all the Indians on that same reserve so I can't go beyond him. I can't do anything because once he told me that.

And 20 years later they said you were right. I said, it's too late now. I said you should have taken my word that time. 20 years is gone. What are you going to do now? How are you going to fight it back?

Q Back when it happened, did you know any lawyers?

A I don't know any one of them but my brother knew a lawyer in St. Paul. He said we could go to him, but the Chief wouldn't agree with it. He told me -- another thing he told me, if we start talking too much, we might not even get nothing. I said, if we don't get nothing, at least we have got our land anyway. That's when he pointed at me and he says you just shut up and keep your mouth shut, you don't know nothing anyway, he said. So then I had to damn well shut up because I can't do nothing anyways. I wasn't even on the Council. If I was on the Council, I had

a little power, it would have been different, but I didn't. Other people agree with me, but there is nothing we can do beyond the Chief.

So then we had to go to -- Monday morning we had to go to the bank and all these hungry guys went first. I was the last one. I didn't want to go in even. I was sitting in the truck outside. I didn't like the idea. I didn't want even feel like going in there. There was a couple of times a guy come and get me. You better go sign for your money so you'll get it. I just sat there. I was the very last one to go and sign for that. I didn't even touch it. I just left it there. Me and the wife went home. How are we going to use it? How are we going to spend it? We sat there and figured it out how we can make use of it. I think we sat for about two weeks every day, every night we talk about it. How are we going to use it? How are we going to do it? How are we going to use it? We couldn't figure it out to place it right.

Q How much money was it?

A Huh?

Q How much money was there?

A There was 5400. I think 5485 or something like that. I wasn't too sure, them cents, I don't remember. We sat and sat and sat. At first we said, let's buy a brand new truck. The hell with it, we'll let everything else go. No, that wouldn't work either. If we bought a brand new truck, it's going to take all our money and we ain't going to have nothing on the outside of that. So I said that wouldn't work either.

I said we'll put it this way. We'll buy second-hand truck and we'll buy a tractor, a few things like this, whatever we need in the house. Maybe we'll buy a TV, things like this for the kids. So we finally got a place for every dollar, and we strung it out. We got a place for everything and when we pick it up, we spend it. That's how we used ours.

But a lot of people, they took all that money that same night, I bet you before I touch that money that was in the bank for two weeks that I waited to figure out what we were going to do with it, the people they already spend their money and they have got nothing left. That's what happened with me at the time.

Q That 5400, do you figure that was about what you were making in a year?

A The money that I got, I figured that's about that much money that I make in one year. So I didn't get nothing for that 19 years that they took the land for. That's the way I look at it. That's the way I figured it out after.

Q That it was one year's income?

A That it was one year's income, that's what they gave me. But for the 19 years I lost out on it. The reason why I mentioned the lawyer, after 20 years I figure we have a good chance maybe we'll get something again. That's why I mentioned that lawyer but the people wouldn't agree with it.

Q You said the people, that was the meeting with the Chief?

A Yeah. Now, it's 40 years went by. Now, I'm trying to tell you what happened in them years. Half of it I already forgot. It's too bad though, come to think of it. If the people would agree with me and if the Chief would agree with me at the time, maybe there wouldn't be no problem. We could have been still getting help. One thing I passed. I should have put that a long ways ahead. When my brother, when he was the Chief, either put that money in a trust fund or we'll go after the Government so they will give us so much every two, three years or five years, whatever. We'll make deal with the Government so we'll get something every five years or three years. That's what he mentioned, too, and the people wouldn't agree with that either. There was big mistake. If they would have went with my brother for five years agreement, as long as they have it holding that land, they could help us every five years, if they would agree, if the paper was signed like my brother said. That's something I passed. I should have mentioned that when my brother was the Chief.

Q What was life like for the Cold Lake people after the bombing range was established?

A Was taken over?

Q Yes.

A I'll tell you another story. They spoil a lot of good people when the Government give that land away for us. They start giving out relief where there is no need of. They should give us something else to do, put us to work or something, it might have been better. But when they started dishing out relief, they ruin hundreds of good men and good young girls that could able to work. They just ruined them, eh. They are no good no more. None of them is any good. Now they are getting to be old that way. You see, they are waiting for handout. I never waited for a handout. I worked for my living. I worked to raise my kids. That's the way it should have been. Everybody should have been that way. But, no, the Government started handing out. That's something that really hurts me. It didn't hurt my family because my family, I learn them how to work and they are all working yet. But there is a lot of good people that's gone to the dogs on account of that. That's too bad.

Q Going back to that 5400, do you think that was a fair amount for what you gave up from having to stay out of the range? Why not?

A It was not enough. I should have got that every year it may have been all right. Then I would be satisfied with.

Q What about, was it enough for one year?

A It was enough for one year, yeah.

Q That would be all of your hunting and your trapping and your fishing?

A Fishing. It will pay for one year, yeah.

Q What about the hunting you would do. Would it cover that as well?

A Pretty well, yeah, pretty well. You see, we lost our hunting, too, on account of that. We have got no place to go hunting anymore. We have got rights to hunt, but there is no place to hunt

because the bombing range got our best hunting grounds. Now if we have to go hunting, we have to go way down to the mountains maybe 6, 700 miles west of our home, way out to go get meat and God knows if you are going to get any. Sometimes you travel two weeks over there and you don't get nothing. And we used to leave in the morning, sometimes we come back the next day we have got a couple of moose.

Q Where were you going when you'd come back the next day?

A Coming home on the reserve.

Q You would be hunting in Primrose area?

A Yeah.

Q Would the people go there at all in the summertime?

A Not anymore.

Q But in those days?

A In the summer, sure, a lot of people they used to live there during the summer. They were making their living over there. They would take their net over there. They would camp by the lake. They are happy over there. They set a net. They have got fresh fish to eat. They go hunting. They make dry meat and stuff like that, something that will keep. They smoke fish so it don't spoil. A lot of people stay there damn near all summer. They just come out for a little while and they go back. They're happy over there.

Q Maybe if we can take a stop here.

MR. MOORE: Stop time 2:15.

(Examination adjourned 2:15 p.m.)

(Examination resumed 2:23 p.m.)

MR. MOORE: Start time 2:23.

Q MR. MANDAMIN: Mr. Scanie, I want to take you back to some of what you were telling earlier. You mentioned when you were fishing with Ernest Eno, when the two of you were together alone and you were making about \$2,000. And at another point you mentioned when you were trapping before Christmas you would make between a thousand and \$3,000?

A Yes.

Q And I can't recall what the amount was after Christmas. The other thing you had mentioned was that you figured the moose meat was about -- that a moose, the value of the meat that you would take home would be about \$250.

A Yes.

Q I just want to be sure. Would all of that come up to the \$5400 you got on that settlement?

A I figured out it would be pretty close like that, yeah. But I total the meat in there. It's not only the cash that I made during the whole winter. The total that the meat that you got I priced with what total I make, see. So I figured I make pretty close to that amount.

Q Would that be 5400 or would the meat be in addition to 5400?

A I figured that should be included in there.

Q The next thing I would like to ask you about, was there any people that you remember in the Cold Lake Band who were involved in negotiations with Indian Affairs? Were there any band members who were active in the associations?

A The only one I remember it's old late Harry Janvier, he talked quite a bit for the people. He was an old Chief. He was a Chief for many years, but the people respected him and case like that happen he used to talk for people quite a bit. He tried to tell the people how to go about it, but I don't think they went along with him too good either. I think when Indian Affairs deal with National Defence, I think he had something to do there, too. Had something to say with Indian Affairs I think quite a bit, in that area.

Q Do you remember if any of the people had any dealings with National Defence?

A Not directly.

Q Who would they deal with?

A Everything went through Indian Affairs. Directly, I don't think anybody ever did make a deal with National Defence at all, period. I think it all went through Indian Affairs, through Indian Affairs' hands.

Q Is there anyone who is alive today amongst members of the band who was quite involved in trying to reach a settlement on this matter?

A Well, the only one it really worked with the people at the time it was Ernest Eno and Nora Matchatis. If I'm not mistaken, old Harry, they went through with and they talked to old Harry quite a bit with that and there was another one there who was a priest there and they work on a lot of papers together, these three, the priest, Ernest Eno, and Nora Matchatis. And I think old Harry must have been involved in there too someplace, I was pretty sure of that. If you want to get directly from that, Ernest, he's the guy to go to.

Q How do you know Ernest was involved?

A Because I know it was. Because he was -- when Indian Affairs come and talk to the people, Ernest was interpreter for them, lots of it. And Nora Matchatis and him were together interpreter and trying to -- I think they work on papers with the priest and that together. So if you want to get down to that, Ernest Eno is the guy to go to.

Q Do you remember --

A I think he remembers everything pretty good. Ernest has got pretty good head and he's educated more than I did. He knows, he writes and read and talks good English and all that.

You've met him before. And Ernest, he will be the guy to go to. He'll explain you more, something I didn't know, he'll explain it to you more.

Q Do you remember any meetings recently where the band decided to do something about their claim?

A Just lately, not too long ago here. They were talking about it all the time, but I didn't think they put their foot down right away. The only thing that I know, the last couple of years they start talking about it quite a bit.

Q I'm showing you Exhibit B that's called Authorization.

A Oh, yeah.

Q Do you recognize that paper?

A Yeah.

Q Now, let me read just a part to you. The middle paragraph says, "For greater certainty, the Chief and Council at the time the litigation was commenced in Federal Court, Action T-2026-89 on September 28th, 1989, was Harvey Scanie, Victor Matchatis, Francis Scanie, Judy Nest, Bernice Martial, Mary Francois and Celestine Grandbois, who sued on behalf of themselves and all the members of the Cold Lake First Nations." Do you recognize the names of those people?

A Yes. I know them all.

Q Are they members of the Cold Lake Band?

A Yes.

Q All of them?

A Yeah.

Q And in September of 1989 were they the Chief and Council of the band?

A No. Just Bernice yeah, at the time, yeah.

Q Back then?

A Yeah. Harvey was the Chief, yeah. They were in the Council at the time, but most of them are out now. Only Bernice came back in the Council.

Q So there has been a change in Council since last September?

A Yeah.

Q Since September 1990?

A Yeah. We got the new Chief in the name of Chief Blackman. Marcel Piche. Mary Francois got back in. Bernice is in there, Jerry Grandbois --- no, Jerry Herman in there. And Alex Charland is in there now.

Q Do you remember if there --

A There is another girl that got in --

Q Might it be Judy Nest?

A No. Judy got out, stayed out. It's one of the Janviers. I just can't think of her first name right offhand.

Q Just going back, do you remember if the Chief and Council met with the band members before starting this lawsuit?

A You mean in --

Q- At Cold Lake?

A The Council you just mentioned before?

Q Yes, the old Council there.

A The old Council, yeah.

Q And what happened at that meeting?

A I don't really remember what happened but they decided to get a lawyer and they are going to try to get something back from the bombing range.

Q Okay, those are my -- that concludes my direct examination.

MR. DEAN: Okay, Mr. Scanie, Mr. Lambrecht is going to be asking you questions. He's going to shut the machine off for a moment so he can exchange chairs, all right.

A Yeah.

MR. MOORE: Stop time 2:35.

(Examination adjourned 2:35 p.m.)

(Examination resumed 2:40 p.m.)

MR. MOORE: Start time 2:40 p.m.

Q MR. LAMBRECHT: Mr. Scanie, my name is Kirk Lambrecht.

A Yes.

Q Do you understand I'm a lawyer with the Government of Canada?

A Yes. Tony was telling me we are supposed to meet a lawyer here today.

Q That's me.

A Yeah.

Q I represent Government of Canada, do you understand that?

A Yes.

Q Okay. I'm here to cross-examine you at this time.

A Yes.

Q All right. Now, my friend told you or asked you if the band had a recent meeting and you said that the band decided to hire a lawyer and do something about it. Do you remember that?

A Lately?

Q Yes.

A Yes, yeah.

Q Do you know what the band did?

A I don't exactly recall exactly what they did, but for sure I got, they got Tony working with them and they had another lawyer with him one day, he came to Cold Lake, but I don't know the guy. What was that guy's name now, the one that came with you, Tony?

Q That's okay, Mr. Scanie.

A Okay.

Q Do you know whether or not the band sued the Government over this issue?

A Not that I know of yet.

Q Okay.

A As far as -- maybe they are working up to it, but I don't know. I never heard of it yet anyway.

Q Do you know what I mean when I use the word "sued"?

A Yes.

Q What do you think that means?

A That means you are suing somebody for something they didn't do right or something like that. Is that what it means?

Q Do you understand that it means to start an action in court?

A Yes.

Q To start something happening in court?

A Yes.

Q And you don't know whether or not the band has started something in court over this?

A Not that I know of.

Q All right. I'm going to show you this paper which is Exhibit B. Is that your signature at the bottom of that paper? Is that your signature at the bottom of that paper?

A You mean the names?

Q Yes.

A You see, I can't read it so I can't tell you.

Q Okay, may I see the paper for a moment. I understand you can't read but do you recognize your signature there?

A Yes, yes.

Q I'd like to ask you, when did you sign this?

A This here?

Q Yes. Was it very long ago?

A No, not too long ago.

Q All right. Did anyone read it to you before you signed it?

A Yes, Tony had read it for me.

Q And what did you understand it to mean?

A I understand, it sounded good to me the way it's put down on the paper the way he read it for me, so I agreed to sign it.

Q What do you think it is?

A I think it's -- the way it sounded to me, like you telling me it's going to go through court or something like that, right?

Q Well, I'm not sure what you think it might be, Mr. Scanie, and that's why I'm asking.

A That's what I think. It's going to go through --- they are going to sue the Government. That's how I understand it.

Q Okay. And is that all, or do you understand -- do you think it's more than that? I just want to ask you -- let me rephrase this question. Is that all that you understand it to mean?

A The way I understand it, if it come through, if we can win that case, maybe I can get help again.

Q Okay. Now, let me ask you about a couple of things that you've testified about earlier today.

A Yeah.

Q All right. Do any members of the Cold Lake First Nations Band that you know of fish today, like in these years, these modern years?

A Commercial fishing and stuff like that?

Q Any kind of fishing.

A I know there is a few guys, they fish for their own, but this commercial fishing it went out of business.

Q When was that?

A It went out of business altogether. Hardly anybody fishing commercial fishing anymore.

Q Do you remember when commercial fishing went out of business?

A Oh, a couple of years ago. It's only maybe three, four white guys that are fishing, commercial fishing. That's the only ones I know. The Indians, they don't bother with it anymore.

Q Is that because the price of fish is so poor?

A There is no money in it anymore. They have got no place to sell it.

Q Now, when there was commercial fishing before it was closed or before everybody stopped, did any members of the Cold Lake First Nations Band fish?

A Yes.

Q Where did they fish?

A Cold Lake, Primrose Lake, Moose lake, Muriel Lake. When the season is open for commercial fishing in those lakes we all went. I went myself. For many years I went.

Q Are those lakes all in the weapons area?

A Not them, not Cold Lake, and the Primrose is the only one in bombing range and then there is -- there is other lakes up north but I never fish in them. It's only the lake I fish in bombing range, it was Primrose Lake and Mosquito Lake.

Q All right.

A And this Mosquito Lake is on the Alberta side but I had commercial fishing from the Alberta side so I went fishing over there, too.

Q You told me that after the range was created that you never took any relief. Do you remember that?

A To go back fishing, Primrose?

Q No. Do you remember when the weapons range was created?

A Yes.

Q What did you do for a living after the range was created?

A I went farming.

Q Where did you farm?

A At home and on Cold Lake First Nation reserve.

Q Was your farm on the reserve?

A Yes.

Q Did you do anything else?

A Yes. I raised cattle.

Q Yes.

A In the spare time I drove trucks for reserve.

Q Did you fish?

A Driving trucks.

Q No, did you fish at all?

A Yeah, I fish in between commercial fishing, but we fish in Primrose Lake during Christmas holidays. They give us to go in there to fish during Christmas holidays in bombing range, but that's just during the holidays. We go in there two days before Christmas, we have to come out the first of the month. We have got to be clear out of that place.

Q All right. So even after the weapons range was created, you still fished on Primrose Lake?

A Yeah, for 10 days or 12 days or whatever.

Q Now, what about the other lakes, like Cold Lake? Did you continue to fish on Cold Lake?

A Yes, I did fish for -- I haven't fished now for maybe 10 years or 12 years now, but I fished when I could be able to fish. But my health wasn't too good so I had to retire. It was at the age where I can't work anymore anyway so I retired. But the fishing, it's not worth nothing anymore.

Q All right.

A Not today anyway.

Q Would you look at this map again for me, please?

A Yes.

Q Do you see that the weapons range has been drawn on this map in a black pen?

A This here?

Q Right.

A Yes.

Q Do any members of the Cold Lake First Nations Band trap outside of that area?

A Yes. My uncle used to trap up in this area.

Q All right. And you are pointing to an area south of Primrose Lake and outside --

A That's in Alberta, that's in Alberta side. That's the only one my uncle had a trap line there. I don't know who has got it now. He retired, too, and he don't trap anymore. But I understand he turned it over to one of his grandsons, but I don't know which one it is. That's the only trapping land there that I know that from Cold Lake First Nation trap. Outside of that, I never heard of anybody trap at all any place else. Of course, there is no place else to go. But that's the only one that's is open and that's the only one that was trapped. Any in between here, that's no trapping land is here so.

Q After the weapons range was created, did you apply for a trapping licence in some other area?

A No. You couldn't get one if you wanted to.

Q Why not?

A There is no room. There is no place. For us people there is no place. You have to go so far away if we have to. You might have to go to Northwest Territories. I don't want to go that far to go trapping. That's the only -- you see, there is nothing around here for us anymore. Nothing at all. There is no trapping, nothing left for us. It's all closed. You see, any further than this it's people up there that got that, people in the north. So we haven't got no place to go. No place at all.

Q You are saying that other people have trap lines in the area but that they keep them. Is that what you're saying?

A Yeah, they won't let her go. No, they won't sell it. I trap right inside the reserve.

Q You do?

A Yeah, I did when I was able to trap, but I don't anymore. But I did trap right on the reserve. I trapped rats, coyotes, stuff like that. But I done that right at home. It's on that same reserve, inside the reserve. But outside of that you couldn't find nothing.

Q Does that continue today? Do people trap today?

A No, nobody bothers with it anymore.

Q Why not?

A Because there is nothing there anymore. There is no rats at all left on the reserve either. A lot of coyotes but the coyotes aren't worth nothing anymore so people leave them alone. It's not worth killing them. Does that answer your question?

A Yes. I'm going to ask you if you know of anyone in the band that trapped at all after the Air Weapons Range was created?

A Not outside of that what I showed you there. My uncle used to trap there. That's the only one I know that had a trap line.

Q All right. Now, how many trap lines were there inside the weapons range, do you know?

A I can't recall for how many trap lines but there was lots. I tell you, right around that Primrose Lake area, there is people all around this lake trapping all around this area. Even these white people were in there. But we get along with these white people because we know them for years and we don't mix our traps together. But wherever my line ends, it's mine; wherever his is, it's his. That's the way people work.

Q And that's the way trap lines work, I understand?

A That's the way the trap line was worked, yeah.

Q Was there Metis people in the area?

A No. Not that I know of.

Q All right. Now, when the range was created, you told us that the first payment that was received was purchase orders?

A Yeah.

Q Can you tell us about the next payment, please?

A Net?

Q The next one, the second one?

A The next one, the next one they gave us cash.

Q And how much was that, do you recall?

A The last payment I got for myself I was 54, but for the money that they paid to the trappers, I don't really know how much it was. Myself anyway, to know exactly how much money they spent on the people, I don't know that part.

Q No, but how many payments did you get?

A I only got one. One, that last one in cash, I only got one.

Q So after the purchase orders, you only got one cash payment?

A Yeah, and that was the last one.

Q At any time, did you ever understand that you were getting money for the last time?

A Well, yeah, I heard something like it. But the way I understood it, they were paying us for 20 years. You see, they promised us they are going to hold the land for 20 years. So I figure they are going to pay us that last payment for 20 years. That's what I understood. That's how I understood it.

Q Well, do you ever remember releasing the Government in return for money? Like, giving up your rights in return for money? Your answer is no? You will have to say something because we are making a record.

A No.

Q Okay. Thank you. Now, the last time that you received money you told me that you sat in the truck and you were the last one into the bank where the money was kept?

A Yes.

Q All right. At that time, did you ever sign, witness people signing for their money?

A Not that I remember of.

Q You told me that your brother wanted to put the money in trust?

A Yes.

Q And that 20 years later people told you that you were right?

A Yes.

Q Who told you that?

A The band itself, the band members that were there, trappers.

Q Did anyone of the Chief and Council tell you that?

A Not the Chief and Council. The Chief that was there at the time by 20 years was up, he was dead and gone.

Q That's the Chief that nearly poked you in the eye?

A Yeah. But it's a guy that -- a fellow by the name of Charlie Blackman, he is still alive. He's an old man.

Q Yes.

A He's the guy that told me you were right when you said we should have got a lawyer. You had the right idea. He mentioned that not too long ago, and the guy died here about two months ago. His name is Larry Janvier. He said the same. You said something right for people that time, and I haven't got no witness because he's gone.

Q So at the time you told the Chief to hire a lawyer?

A Yes.

Q And the Chief would not?

A No. I didn't really come out and say get a lawyer and hire a lawyer and that's it. We should get a lawyer work for us and that's when he wouldn't agree with me. I ask him three times and the

last time I asked him, that's the time he just about poked me in the eye with his finger. So I left him alone. There is no use talking to him when he wouldn't agree with me.

Q I'd just like to take a moment and look over my notes if I might.

A Okay.

MR. DEAN: Do you want us to stop the machinery?

MR. LAMBRECHT: Perhaps that might be appropriate.

MR. MOORE: Stop time 3:00.

(Examination adjourned 3:00 p.m.)

(Examination resumed 3:15 p.m.)

MR. MOORE: Start time 3:15.

Q MR. LAMBRECHT: Mr. Scanie.

A Yes.

Q After you received your last payment, would you tell me, please, how you made your living and what you did in the years after that?

A I did start farming and raised cattle, and in between time I drove trucks for the reserve, for the Cold Lake Band, for the Cold Lake First Nation. I drove trucks, logging truck for about ten years. It's in between my work. And I drove water truck on the reserve for eight years, the same time that I had been working for myself the same time. That's the living I made out.

Q Did you farm before the weapons range?

A Yeah, I farmed a little bit. I didn't farm that much though. I farmed just enough for feed for cattle, so I don't have to buy grain for them. I always did have cattle. Even I used to go trapping, I used to have -- my wife stayed home with the boys and they looked after cattle when I was out in the bush trapping.

Q So how did your farming go after the range was created?

A I made a living on it, but I couldn't make nothing out of it. The only money that was coming in good that was out of cattle. But from the farm, farming there is not much money in straight grain farming. If it wasn't for cattle, straight farming is not worth nothing.

Q How much cattle did you keep?

A I kept as high as 80 head of cows.

Q How many calves would they bear?

A The average, a calf each, every year. Unless you have a little trouble, sometimes you lose a calf or two, you know.

Q How many years did you farm?

A I farmed for quite a few years but now – you've got me cornered there. I can't answer you how many a year. 15 or 20 years anyway, easy.

Q Was that 15 or 20 after the range?

A Yeah. And I farmed a little bit before that, too, for feed.

Q Okay. Did you ever get a commercial licence for fishing after the range was created?

A Yeah, on Alberta side I did, yeah.

Q And did that pay you much money?

A Not too much. Yeah, it did pay at times. At times again you couldn't make nothing out of it.

Q Was that like the situation before the range was created?

A The range was best fishing lake.

Q You told us that you started to use trucks to fish in Primrose Lake. Do you remember that?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did you use those trucks to fish there at Christmastime after the range was created?

A Yeah.

Q And you were allowed to fish for about 10 days, you say?

A 10 or 12 days. We go in there two days before Christmas. We come out on New Year's Day. It must have been eight, ten days.

Q And did you have employees at that time?

A Yeah.

Q Okay. Is that the time that you fished with about 18 nets?

A Yeah, we run more than that when we had -- when we went in there for short time we ran more than that. We ran about 30 nets.

Q Okay. So after the range was created you were still able to make about 3 to \$4,000 clear?

A Yeah.

Q After all of your expenses were paid?

A Yeah.

Q And that's for fishing in Primrose Lake?

A Just fishing alone, yeah.

Q And that's in Primrose Lake?

A Yeah. That's just one reason or one year during the holidays, Christmas holidays, that's the only time we could even go in there. Not only me, a lot of white fishermen go in there, too. Guys from Saskatchewan, they hold licence in Primrose Lake. They go in there, too.

Q Now, what did your children do after the range was created?

A My boys?

Q Yes.

A That's a long story. They went to school. One turned to be a machinist. My oldest, he got to be a machinist, and my second oldest went welder, to be a welder, and the third one heavy equipment operator. And my two girls, they go to work, secretaries at the base and sometimes at the reserve.

Q Did other people on the reserve take relief?

A What's that?

Q Did other people on the reserve take relief?

A Oh, yes, a lot of them.

Q Did that come from the Government of Alberta?

A It must be, it's got to be, I guess.

Q When did that start?

A That started shortly after bombing range started. That went heavy then. Before that day used to get a little bit. You know, people were -- they were in a bind, like people get sick or something like that. They help them out but they don't help them as much as they do now.

Q After the range was created, did either you or your sons do any more hunting?

A Not over there.

Q Where did you go?

A Up the mountains, but nine out of ten days you don't get anything there. You are too far away. If we're lucky, sometimes we get a moose. If we're not lucky, sometimes we can travel for two weeks, we don't get nothing. But we still love hunting so we always did go.

Q So you never went to any of the other areas around the range?

A We can't go to the range. You can't go in there to hunt.

Q What about the area outside of the range?

A Outside of that, in between here, we go in there once in a while and if you are lucky enough to get, very seldom you are lucky enough to get a moose.

Q You are pointing to the area between Cold Lake and Primrose Lake?

A Yeah, this area here. You see, we had a lumber camp in this area. It will be in this area, we had a logging camp there. I used to drive a truck. I used to haul lumber out of there. At times I get a moose in between there when I was hauling lumber, but I wasn't hunting. I just carried my rifle, sometimes I was lucky enough to see a moose, I'd get him. Sometimes I'd take her to the camp and just leave it to the camp and they would make use of it there. Sometimes I bring it home. You see, I lost my wife and I can't look after a bunch of meat like that anymore. What little I get, it's enough for me to carry me through. That's all the meat I keep. I just shared with my family or neighbours and that's it. But straight hunting, no, I never go and hunt and take a rifle and walk in the bush, I never did that after bombing range was closed. Drive down the road hunting, we don't call that very much of a hunter. Drive around in a road, hunting, you are lucky you see a moose and you shoot him. You call that hunting, but we don't call that hunting. When you dress up in the red and walk in the bush and carry your rifle, that's what we call hunting.

Q Could you have gone hunting in the bush if you wanted to?

A I guess I could have, but it's not much room there so you can't go very far there. Not like before.

Q What do you mean there is not much room?

A There is not much room for hunting.

Q In between Cold Lake and Primrose Lake?

A There is not much room there.

Q What about the other areas?

A Of course there is bombing range road and people are going all the time, trucks going back and forth in there. Bombing range guys, guys that are airmen. They are driving back and forth. You see, you get on top of the hill, you park there for a while, you see 20 cars going by both ways going back and forth. You can't hunt on that road.

Q Could you have gone into the bush away from the road to hunt?

A There is not much game there so it's hardly any hunting left over there.

Q Where is over there?

A Over there in between the bombing range and Cold Lake, there is not much room. There is no -- hardly find a game there. Just like they know they all run in that range, you couldn't go in there to get them. So we're stuck. If you go across this line on foot, the range notices somebody is in there right now.

Q I'm sorry, Mr. Scanie, I didn't understand you. Could you repeat that, please?

A This here, if we go hunting and if I walk across that line, the head person in the bombing range, they will know right now there is somebody in there. They spot -- they know right now as

soon as you go across that line. You can't sneak in there. They will be flying around, they'll find you over there. So you can't go across that line. You can't go in there across that line with a gun. You see, it's just like during the Christmas holidays when we used to go fishing other there, we had to leave our guns at home. We can't carry guns in there. They wouldn't allow us to go in there with guns. If they find a gun in our trucks, get out of here, you are not going to stay there with the guns.

Q Was anyone that went into the range ever injured by unexploded bombs?

A No.

Q To your knowledge?

A No. But they mentioned it. If you spot something that don't look right to you, stay away from it. Don't even bother coming close to it or don't touch nothing. So I never heard of anybody got hurt or anything.

Q Do you know whether or not the jets fly over the range very much?

A Not during the fishing time because they are out for holidays.

Q What about at other times, do you know whether the jets fly around very much?

A Oh, yeah, they are flying all the time. As long as they are not on holidays, they are flying every day up in that area, all the time.

Q And are they flying low?

A They are fairly low. I don't know how low it is, but I can't recall too much or nothing because I don't go in that bombing range at all. When they are flying, you can't go in there.

Q Can you hear them from outside of the range?

A Sure, I can see them because I live right by bombing range. I mean, right by the airport. When they take off, they fly over my house every day, hundreds of them. They come in, they fly over my house. When they take off, they fly over my house. I see hundreds and hundreds of them.

Q I'm sorry, I interrupted you. Go ahead.

A So I finally got used to it. I don't even hear them anymore. Bang and I know what it is, it don't bother me anymore because I hear them all the time.

Q Do you think that they might scare the game inside of the range?

A I don't know. Maybe they get used to them, too, I don't know. Maybe they get used to it, unless the bomb fall beside them, they probably make them run for a ways, but where can they go? They can't go no place.

Q All right. Well, thank you, Mr. Scanie. I don't have any other questions for you.

A Okay.

Q Thank you very much.

A Do you agree with my answers? Are you satisfied with my answers?

Q Yes, sir, I'm satisfied you answered the questions that I asked you.

MR. DEAN: Do you have any re-examination, Mr. Mandamin?

A Huh?

MR. DEAN: I'm just asking Mr. Mandamin if he wants to ask any more questions.

MR. MANDAMIN: Some re-direct.

MR. DEAN: Can you do it from there?

RE-DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. MANDAMIN:

Q MR. MANDAMIN: Mr. Scanie.

A Yes.

Q At the time that there was a meeting in Cold Lake when they talked about suing the Government, what did they decide? Did they decide to wait a bit or did they decide to go ahead and talk to a lawyer, or did they decide to go ahead and sue the Government?

A I think they were deciding to go ahead with it but they didn't say when. Not that I recall of.

Q Do you know what starts a lawsuit? When you sue somebody, do you know what starts it? Like, what do you think starts it?

A I haven't got a word for it.

Q That isn't something you are familiar with. Have you ever sued anybody?

A Not that I -- no, I never sue anybody for nothing that I remember of.

Q Back at that time when the band meeting was held, you were there, were you?

A I was there listening, yeah.

Q And when they decided to go ahead, did you agree that it should go ahead or did you disagree?

A I agreed. I had no choice but agree.

Q Why you had no choice?

A Because I like to get something if they come through with it. If they can win their case, I could maybe get something again.

MR. MANDAMIN: Okay, those are my questions.

MR. DEAN: Anything arising?

MR. LAMBRECHT: No.

MR. DEAN: That concludes your examination. Thank you, Mr. Scanie.

A Okay.

MR. MOORE: Stop time 3:35.

(Examination adjourned 3:35 p.m.)

(Examination resumed 3:45 p.m.)

MR. MOORE: Start time 3:45.

MR. DEAN: Just from our discussion off the record with counsel we've agreed to have the original videotape marked as Exhibit D in these proceedings; is that correct?

MR. MANDAMIN: That's correct.

MR. LAMBRECHT: That is correct.

EXHIBIT NO. D:

ORIGINAL VIDEO TAPE OF PROCEEDING

DATED JANUARY 10, 1991.

MR. MOORE: Stop time 3:45.

(Examination adjourned 3:45 p.m.)

WHICH WAS ALL THE EVIDENCE GIVEN ON THIS EXAMINATION

Certified a correct transcript,

J. G. MOORE & ASSOCIATES LTD.

Leonard D. Sperling CSR(A)

Court Reporter

Edmonton, Alberta January 25, 1991

Our file: 44.91

5. Cold Lake First Nations Witnesses' Testimonies to the Indian Claims Commission, 14-17 December 1992

5.1 Cold Lake, Alberta, December 14, 1992

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Before we begin I would like to call this session to order and introduce Counsellor Armand Loth.

Counsellor?

MR. LOTH: Thank you. Good morning everyone and welcome to Cold Lake First Nations' hearing on the Primrose Lake Claim. Before we begin, I would like to introduce Vic Matchatis, our Elder. He'll be opening with our Elder's prayer.

Would we all rise, please.

(Elder's prayer)

MR. MATCHATIS: Thank you.

MR. LOTH: Okay. At this time, I would like to introduce the Chief of the Cold Lake First Nations, Chief Mary Francois. She will be giving an opening statement here.

MS. MARY FRANCOIS: Good morning, Elders, ladies and gentlemen, visitors and First Nations members. Today is a very special day for the people of Cold Lake First Nations. We are now being provided an opportunity to state our claim concerning the Primrose Air Weapons Range to the Indian Claims Commission. We have long awaited this day with such anticipation of having our voices heard. For many years our Elders, who you see sitting with us today, have made their living off the land known as the Primrose Air Weapons Range.

The traditional territory of the Cold Lake First Nations include this area which we refer to as "Hathtuwey" in our language. Prior to the Department of National Defense occupation, the Chippewyan people were self-sufficient in practising their traditional way of life in the Primrose area; this means the hunting, fishing, trapping, picking berries, and gathering roots were normal activities that we depend on for our survival. Everything we need, we needed for good living was there for us: Plenty of moose, fish, and wild berries. The income from trapping and fishing was used to sustain our families, our farms, and our way of life. A lot of our Elders recall the memorial days they spent in the Primrose Lake area. I will only summarize some of the things that I have been taught by our Elders, and I sincerely hope that I can do some justice to what I learned.

The community spirit was at its peak and self-esteem was at an all-time high. The fierce sense of pride and dependence was shared by all. We shared everything. The people were living in harmony with the environment and with each other. Everyone referred to each other as brother and sister, aunt and uncle, grandmother and grandfather, and rarely were first names used. Respect and kindness was shown to all and received by all.

We did not need welfare. We took care of ourselves. Physically, we were challenged by the harsh climate, and as a result people learned how to work in harmony with the elements. There was no such thing as colds those days because everyone was healthy. We had roots and plants for medicines which could cure whatever ailment we had.

Through our sense of community each family had traditional areas for hunting and trapping and even for gathering food. There were no disputes over land because everyone knew where each other's trap line was and respected each other's areas. We even shared our hunting and trapping area with other people who could not find game in their traditional area. This way, no one went hungry.

The purpose of the Indian Claims Commission Inquiry is to hear personal accounts for the life that was there at the Primrose Lake area. It is vital that those of you who can recall where, when, who, and how life was lived during the time of occupation, that you relay those experiences to this inquiry.

The outcome gathering was a direct effect on the future of Cold Lake First Nations. To [ensure] a successful outcome of our claim, it is important that those of you who were present during the time of the signing of the Quit Claim may even be able to provide information that would help us in some small way.

These four days have been set aside for initial hearing of the Indian Claims Commission. A commission of inquiry will be taking place on December 14, 1992. It could be that the outcome would result in further hearings. This is important that we all hear with open hearts and minds. We must now show the respect and kindness to each other that we once knew.

The council asks all the members to please keep in mind this is not a band meeting but rather a hearing. It is important that we have your cooperation and participation so that during the process of interviewing witnesses there must be no disruptions for the Elders, for they will need full concentration on their memories. On behalf of the Cold Lake Council and membership, I would like to welcome the representatives of the Indian Claims Commissions to our community, and I thank you all for being here this morning.

MR. LOTH: Thank you, Mary. I would like to introduce the rest of the council for the members that are here that haven't met yet.

Starting on my left at the far end is Councillor Linda Matchatis, next to her is Councillor Ivan Janvier, and the next one is Councillor Lorraine Janvier, and to my far right we have Councillor Sam Minoose and Councillor Gordon Muskego. Thank you.

Over to you.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you, Councillor, and thank you, Chief.

Let me just open the proceedings with some introductory comments. Chief Francois, Councillors of the Cold Lake First Nation, Elders, members and guests, legal counsel, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Harry LaForme and I am the Chief Commissioner of the Indian Claims Commission.

Let me begin by expressing our appreciation for the opening ceremony conducted by an Elder of this community, Victor Matchatis. In the language of my own First Nation, which is Mississaugas Ojibway, we say "chee megwetch," many thanks.

I also wish to express our gratitude for the honour of being received into the territory of the Cold Lake First Nation and for the welcome we have received from Chief Mary Francois. I'm going to deviate just a little bit and proceed to something that is a custom from my people back home.

I would like to leave you with a small gift of tobacco and sweet grass, it's our custom, that's our gift and thanks for allowing us to -- invited to your territory and to be here.

On behalf of my fellow Commissioners here today, Mr. Prentice -- Jim Prentice on my left, Q.C. from Calgary -- a lawyer from Calgary, and First Vice Chief Dan Bellegarde of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians on my right, and on behalf of the other Commissioners and staff of the Indian Claims Commission, I would like to state for the record that we are honoured to be here today to take the information of people from Cold Lake about their specific claim.

This claim is based on events surrounding the creation of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range, occupying some forty-five hundred square miles in Alberta and Saskatchewan. Most of those events occurred thirty and forty years ago. The Cold Lake First Nation, together with other First Nations, submitted the basic claim to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in 1975. That claim was rejected soon afterward and has been continuously rejected both through the specific claims process and in court proceedings ever since.

It is part of the Indian Claims Commission's mandate to conduct an inquiry into the rejection of claims. Such an inquiry was formally requested by the Cold Lake First Nations and the Commissioners were in a position in October of this year to agree to that request. We are an independent commission of inquiry, exercising our mandate pursuant to an order in council and pursuant to the Federal Inquiries Act. The purpose of this inquiry is to investigate the claim and to make recommendations to the Cold Lake First Nation and to the government of Canada as to whether, in the opinion of the Indian Claims Commission, the claim is a valid one. These proceedings which begin today will continue through Thursday of this week, and we expect to resume in the first week of February of 1993. What we learn here will be an important part of a comprehensive information gathering process. In addition to the information we receive from the community, we will also be examining documents we will obtain from the community and from government. We will also be conducting any other research that we consider to be necessary for the preparation for our report.

This is a new commission and the type of inquiry that we are conducting here today is This is a new commission and the type of inquiry that we are conducting here today isa new process. These proceedings here in Cold Lake are the first of their kind ever. For us, this is an historic occasion. No matter how many inquiries we conduct, no matter how many First Nations we are privileged to visit, this day in Cold Lake will always be the first of what we hope will be many days in many places.

We thank this community for that opportunity. Again, chee megwetch -- many thanks.

At this point we are ready to begin our hearing process, and I would like to call upon the legal counsel to the Indian Claims Commission, Mr. Bill Henderson, to address some preliminary issues.

Mr. Henderson.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chief Commissioner LaForme, Commissioner Prentice, Commissioner Bellegarde, I am sure that I speak for all of the lawyers who are present here today when I say that we wish to join in your statements expressing our thanks for the welcome we've received in the community, from Chief Francois, and from members of the community itself, and in expressing our gratitude to Elder Victor Matchatis for the prayer he has offered on our behalf today.

For the record, I appear as counsel to the Indian Claims Commission and I'm joined by Mr. Ron Maurice, who is associate counsel to the Commission. In attendance for the Cold Lake First Nation today are Mr. Leonard-- also known as Tony-- Mandamin of Edmonton and Mr. Brian Crane of Ottawa. In attendance for the government of Canada are Mr. Bob Winogron of the Department of Justice in Ottawa; Mr. Francois Daigle, the Department of Justice in Ottawa; Mr. Bruce Becker, Department of Justice, Vancouver; Mr. Bruce Hilchey, Department of Justice, Vancouver. They are assisted by Mr. Allan Tallman who is with the Claims Directorate West, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, also based in Vancouver.

Here in uniform today are Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Watkin of the office of the Judge Advocate General, Department of National Defense. And attending with him as observers are Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Trinca, Department of National Defense, Ottawa, and Captain Jan Thompson of Canadian Forces based Cold Lake. I understand another observer who is with us today from the province of Alberta is Mr. Neil Reddekopp.

I believe I've acknowledged the presence of those who have travelled from afar to attend today. If I have made any omissions, perhaps I could be given the opportunity to correct it after the break.

In order to begin the formal documentary record of this inquiry, I would like to give notice at this time, Mr. Chairman, that the following documents will be presented to the panel in due course: First, the Commission under the Great Seal of Canada, empowering the Indian Claims Commission and you as Commissioners to conduct this inquiry pursuant to the Inquiries Act;

Second, the formal request of the Cold Lake First Nation for this inquiry to be conducted;

Third, the original 1975 Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range, specific claim, as presented to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in that year;

Fourth, documents relevant to the rejection of that claim by the government of Canada insofar as it represents the claim of the Cold Lake First Nation;

And finally, five, letters signed by the Chief Commissioner in October of this year giving notice to the First Nation and to the government of Canada of this inquiry.

We will be preparing a brief of these documents for consideration of counsel and presenting that brief for formal acceptance at a later date. And I do not anticipate any objection in that regard.

The formal record of the information you will be receiving from community members will be created in a manner which, to my knowledge, has never been used before but which will, I believe, serve the interests of all concerned in the best possible way. And at this point, I would like to acknowledge my debt to counsel for all parties in this matter for their agreement to proceed.

Much of the information will be presented to you in the Chippewayan language. For the convenience of all present, we have arranged for simultaneous translation to be available through devices like this. That translation is being conducted at a booth behind me by community members, both from English to Chippewayan when the testimony is given in English, and from Chippewayan to English when the testimony is given in Chippewayan.

The formal transcript of these proceedings, however, will not be prepared from that simultaneous translation, it will be recorded for reference only, but it will not form part, nor will it form the basis of the formal record. The original questions, translation of questions, and responses are being separately recorded and it is from this master tape -- in effect what you hear coming over these speakers at this time -- it is from this master tape that the interpreters will prepare the official translation at a later date and that will be transcribed as the formal transcript and record of these proceedings.

Witnesses will not be sworn, nor will they be asked to affirm their evidence on oath. All questions will be directed to the witnesses by me or by Mr. Maurice on behalf of the Commission. Should other counsel wish additional questions to be posed, these will be presented to Commission counsel for that purpose. Of course, Commissioners may intervene with their own questions at any time and there is no -- there will be no cross examination of witnesses.

And I should indicate that the agreement to proceed in this manner is subject to change if that appears to be desirable. It's not an inflexible rule but if it becomes apparent that another method of proceeding will best assist the Commission in receiving information, then we will ask for further direction from the panel at that time.

Counsel for the government of Canada have asked for the opportunity to present further questions at a later date if such interrogatories or questions become desirable or necessary as this inquiry progresses and as we all learn more about the Primrose Lake Claim. I have indicated to them that this opportunity will be afforded although the form and the manner in which it is to be available will, again, be subject to the direction of this panel.

Mr. Chairman, you and your fellow Commissioners have the power to prescribe appropriate procedures for the conduct of this inquiry. You have taken the position that you are not bound by any formal rules of evidence, and all counsel have again agreed that we proceed on that basis. As the Chief Commissioner noted earlier, this is a unique type of commission and many of the procedures we have agreed to adopt for the purpose of these proceedings are also new. Therefore, the agreement of counsel to which I have referred is subject to the general caution that

other procedures or variations on those I have described may be suggested to the panel as we proceed. If counsel cannot agree on such procedural matters and make a joint recommendation to you, Commissioners, you will be asked for a ruling.

Again, I wish to express my appreciation to all counsel for the general spirit of cooperation which has attended our preliminary discussion of these matters, and I trust that the agreements we have made so far will meet with the approval of the Commissioners.

The community has asked that the Commission make a ruling that witnesses not be photographed while they are giving their evidence. The concern is that the movement of still photographers -- and of course everyone will note that there are some stationary video cameras set up -- the concern is that the movement of still photographers and the glare of flash guns -- flash units might prove to be distracting or disruptive. And I ask, Mr. Chairman, that the panel give such a direction at this time.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: No photographs will be taken of the people giving their testimony?

MR. HENDERSON: That's the request, Mr. Chairman. There is a qualification that, as I have indicated, there will be a point at which each witness concludes testimony and an opportunity for counsel to deliberate over further questions, and I believe the community is amenable to our Commission photographer perhaps taking some photographs during that interval. Subject to that exception, that's the ruling being requested.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Subject to any comments or any concerns by anyone else, then, we would make that order.

MR. HENDERSON: The further request that we have, Mr. Chairman, is that no tape recording or other sound recording of these proceedings be made except, of course, such as that officially arranged for by the Commission and forming the basis of an integral part of these proceedings.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: That would be further ordered, and I would ask anyone to refrain from recording the testimony and the statements being made by the witnesses.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Subject to any submissions that other counsel may wish to make at this time or to any questions that the panel may have, I believe that this deals with the preliminary issues that the panel wished to have addressed before proceeding with testimony.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Before I ask my fellow Commissioners if they have any questions, the only matter that I would like to take up at this moment is, for the record, does counsel agree that those agreements that were made and the discussions that were made as related by Mr. Henderson are agreed to?

Okay. Thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do we have any questions Mr. Prentice? Do you have any questions, Mr. Bellegarde?

Okay. Thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: That being the case, Mr. Chairman, I believe our agenda calls for a short break at this point before we begin to call upon the first witnesses.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay. And if that's okay, we have -- I think we have-- I would like to take one question from Councillor Loth and then we will break for ten minutes.

MR. LOTH: I was just going to acknowledge someone. I want to acknowledge the past leaders of this community that have started the process and have come to this hearing. I just want to thank them for that. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you very much. Now we will break for ten minutes.

---A recess was taken.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: At this time, I will turn it over to our counsel, Bill Henderson. Bill?

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Our first group of witnesses have taken their seats at the table opposite the panel. In a practice run which was conducted in the community by some of our staff and community members earlier, this was the procedure that was followed and it seems to be quite satisfactory: That the Elders appear in groups, be seated in groups, and of course will give their testimony individually. I've discussed that with all counsel, and we have all agreed that that would be acceptable if that's acceptable to the panel, sir.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: That will be fine.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We're now at the stage to begin receiving evidence. Immediately prior to doing so, however, I believe Mr. Mandamin wishes to make a few remarks. And I've been asked to convey two thoughts to everyone sitting near a microphone. The first is that I apparently spoke just a little too quickly for the people doing the simultaneous translation, so if people could use my rate of speech as a standard and then speak more slowly, that will assist the people who are doing a very difficult job. And also I am advised of what is, I think, common sense for all concerned: That if we use simpler words rather than polysyllabic words, the translator's job will also be facilitated.

So with those observations, Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I'll call upon Mr. Mandamin to make a few remarks.

MR. MANDAMIN: Thank you, Mr. Henderson.

Mr. Chairman, the first panel of witnesses on behalf of Cold Lake First Nations are: On the far right, on your left, would be Ernest Ennow; beside him is Pierre Muskego; next is Genevieve Andrews; and then finally, Lionel Francois, one of the interpreters, is sitting beside Mrs. Andrews; and finally, Benjamin Francois. One of the Elders, the oldest man in the community, Charlie Blackman, is sitting up close. He will be testifying later. The order in which we propose to present these witnesses to you is to start with Pierre Muskego. Secondly, Benjamin -- now, Mr. Muskego speaks English and can give his testimony in English. The second witness we would have is Benjamin Francois, who will be speaking in Chippewayan. When the questions are asked to him, Lionel Francois will repeat the question in Chippewayan, Mr. Francois will answer in Chippewayan, and you can use the simultaneous interpretation to follow. Genevieve Andrews and Ernest Ennow will both be speaking in English. All are essentially going to tell you their experiences in terms of life in the Primrose Range and the events that occurred when the range was closed. You will appreciate that they are recalling events of some forty years ago and more. And finally, the last speaker, Mr. Ernest Ennow, was an interpreter, not during the early stages in 1955, but the later stages in 1957 on through 1960.

Once this process starts we don't propose to interrupt it, and so I will confine my remarks to this stage only. Any other questions I'll relay via Mr. Henderson. I turn it over to Mr. Henderson. I give you Mr. Pierre Muskego.

MR. HENDERSON: With your permission, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Yes, by all means, go ahead, Bill.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Muskego, we are preparing a written record of the testimony that's being given today, so I am going to just spell your name out and make sure I have it correct.

If I may, it's Pierre Muskego -- M-U-S-K-E-G-O?

MR. MUSKEGO: Right.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you. And may I ask your age, sir?

MR. MUSKEGO: Pardon?

MR. HENDERSON: May I ask your age, please?

MR. MUSKEGO: I am seventy-two.

MR. HENDERSON: And you're a member of the Cold Lake First Nation?

MR. MUSKEGO: I have been but I transferred into Saskatchewan.

MR. HENDERSON: And where do you live now, please, sir?

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, I'm living in Dilling, Saskatchewan.

MR. HENDERSON: And could you tell the Commissioners where you lived in 1950?

MR. MUSKEGO: I lived in Cold Lake Reserve here.

MR. HENDERSON: And were you engaged in harvesting activities in what is now the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range?

MR. MUSKEGO: Prior to that compensation paid out, I have been a trapper, a logger, and fishing out of there. But the time that I have missed one year before they shut down. I didn't pay my license, and that's where I lost -- I lost my claim on it. It was fish and wildlife.

MR. HENDERSON: I understand, sir, you attended school in Onion Lake in Saskatchewan?

MR. MUSKEGO: Right. MR. HENDERSON: Until what year?

MR. MUSKEGO: 1936.

MR. HENDERSON: And after you left school, what was your principal activity there?

MR. MUSKEGO: I went right back in the old ways. My parents, my grandfather, were trappers and we had a home up north. So when I came back -- that same year, I was up north at Primrose.

MR. HENDERSON: And when you say your family had a history of trapping up north, would that be in an area which includes what is now the Air Weapons Range?

MR. MUSKEGO: Yes. That was a home. That was our second home out there. That was -- in the first place, our people used to stay up in Primrose until they got this reservation here. So when they got this reservation, well, they come here in summer but then they're up north in winter. Most every one of them had moved back in winter as soon as the snow falls.

MR. HENDERSON: When you refer to the reservation, that's the Cold Lake Reservation?

MR. MUSKEGO: Right, that's the Cold Lake Reservation here.

MR. HENDERSON: How long, to your knowledge, was your family, parents, grandparents, et cetera, involved in the lifestyle you're describing?

MR. MUSKEGO: This is -- I don't know how many generations back, but they were living around the Cold Lake area -- I mean not the Cold Lake, the Primrose Lake area. And as I recall, their families -- there's about three, four families that live together around different areas of that -- at Primrose Lake.

So they had lived there before -- rather long, I think, before my time, all the people -- generations. They lived up north at Primrose Lake, that's where they lived. But when the reserve was made, well, then they were -- they had to come back here in the summertime.

MR. HENDERSON: When the people, as I understand it, in the wintertime were up north, what sort of shelter or homes would they occupy?

MR. MUSKEGO: They had log cabins. Well, that's all we had even here on the reserve anyway, the log cabins.

MR. HENDERSON: Could you describe for the panel the nature of trapping as you engaged in it?

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, as I recall, once we leave here in the fall -- well, the old man, of course, has his own trap line. He goes out two, three days; he does his trapping. But I wasn't involved in that trapping, I was just a small child. And we were living near the lake there, so we had fishing from the lake. There was all kinds of fish in there at the time. And of course the old man does hunting, moose, caribou, and he brings meat in there, and they put a -- they built a log shelter for the meat and they have something like a deep freeze -- a natural deep freeze for the winter. They get their meat in there for the winter and they get fish from the lake, and we live. That's the Indian way of life for the Indians that live from the north -- I mean from the bush country.

MR. HENDERSON: As you grew older, did you pursue trapping or fishing yourself?

MR. MUSKEGO: I did after I come out of the residential school. I live up back north there and it's a home. It's a feeling that it's a home down there where I can live without any problem at all.

MR. HENDERSON: I understood you to say that you did have a trapping license at one point?

MR. MUSKEGO: We had trapping licenses, everyone that -- I mean, they started giving those trapping licenses, we had to pay for it. It wasn't much, only a dollar anyway or something like that, and we kept -- every year then we have to buy that before we go back. That's -- we were trapping to sell our fur.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you recall the first year that you got a trap line, a registered trap line or a license?

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, in Saskatchewan there were no registered lines. I remember a few years I been up there that they made into blocks -- block areas where the closest resident, the one that reside up there -- like, you know, they have cabins, there's trappers in there that made blocks and then they -- that's where they -- that was for the muskrat and beaver and this and that. But I don't recall the first year that I bought my license. No, I don't recall that.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you recall the last year that you had a license?

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, the last year that I didn't buy, that's the only time that I know that I didn't -- I lost out on it.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Sir, another question. Lost out? Lost out on a license, is that what you said?

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, that's not lost out. Actually, that was -- they stopped -- they stopped selling licenses and then they were giving compensation for the livelihood over there. And the ones that didn't get their license the year before was left out, I was one of them. And that's what I mean by that.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay.

MR. HENDERSON: If I may assist, Mr. Chairman, I believe Mr. Muskego is indicating that he lost out on compensation because he did not have a license at the time the weapons range was created. Am I correct, sir?

MR. MUSKEGO: Pardon?

MR. HENDERSON: I believe you're indicating to the panel that you lost out on compensation because you did not have a license at the time the Weapons Range was created.

MR. MUSKEGO: Right.

MR. HENDERSON: What was your principal support prior to 1950 -- principal means of support or livelihood?

MR. Muskego: Well, my principal part of 1950 was I followed whatever we done in here. We always get together and go north and do some trapping, fishing -- well, fishing and hunting out there. We lived the old way of life. The old way of life means that we -- we go up there even before any trapping opens -- like, you know, we don't go there for trapping, we go down there for hunting. And the old people down there will get a moose and they'll make dry meat -- you know, they'll dry all their meat and they'll stash it in there so no animals will get it, you see, but it's already dried so it's for winter supply. We go down there before we even go for trapping in the fall. So when we get over there, well, we have something to go back to. That's the old Indian way of life and that's the way we lived. So I can't recall any other way, but -- that's a routine thing for us.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have a fishing license at any point?

MR. MUSKEGO: I had fishing license pretty well -- in Saskatchewan, Alberta. I mean, I've had it pretty well all over. I have been doing some fishing pretty well all over. Like, you know, as commercial fishing, I have help here and there, like, you know, and I have to hold that.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember when you first acquired a fishing license?

MR. MUSKEGO: No, I don't recall how young or how old I was. It was way back.

MR. HENDERSON: At what point -- if you stopped having a fishing license, do you remember at what point that stopped?

MR. MUSKEGO: That was a time for Saskatchewan, a time -- I didn't get my license --they wouldn't give me no more license after that, even as a helper, to go into Saskatchewan, fishing in Primrose Lake, commercial fishing.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you ever sell furs or fish using someone else's license?

MR. MUSKEGO: I did not. I didn't have to because we could have got license here too, anyway. So we were always enabled to be in the right -- we -- it's easy to acquire license. We get it from the reserve here if we need it.

MR. HENDERSON: Were there any other harvesting activities that generated income for you at that time apart from selling fur or fish?

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, to recall that is -- we have done pretty well. I had lived in the depression years, in 1930s -- 1935 and 1939, there was hardly any money in this part of the country and we had to do pretty well anything that we could to get a few dollars out of. I have done a lot of

brushing for the farmers here, the settlers that come down; cut trees down and do the things so that I am able to live. And most of the people here have done that. See, we didn't wait for no hand-out, that's -- we were happy, healthy people.

MR. HENDERSON: In addition to selling furs and fish, did you sell hides or any other products? Meat or --?

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, this is the way our life was -- if my dad was alive -- we all lived together. He is the one that used to sell it. I get something and I would just pass it on to him, and then he is the one that sells it. And then, you know, we make use of it all together.

MR. HENDERSON: Were the fish and the game that you harvested in the area shared with other people?

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, we have done a lot of sharing. This is another thing that the Indian is -- has been in the olden days is they share what they had. There was no holding back. There was no price put on anything. They can share to the needy people. So therefore, they are not begging. They will be given to make it easy for one another. That was the way of life. MR. HENDERSON: During the forties and the very early fifties, did you engage in any farming activity at all?

MR. MUSKEGO: I have -- I have not done any. I've helped the farmers over here. I've helped, you know, digging rocks or doing jobs on the farm, but I have never engaged on my own to start on my own on the land here on the Reserve.

MR. HENDERSON: I'm going to turn to some questions now, sir, about the creation of the Air Weapons Range. Do you recall how you first heard that there was going to be an Air Weapons Range?

MR. MUSKEGO: I know that's what we -- we -- we heard it through the Indian Affairs, the Indian government and the National Defense -- the government out there. They want --- they found a suitable place here that they were going to use for Air Weapons Range. So they start talking about it. I know I was always involved with sitting down with the old people, and they were talking about it and they said, "How is it going to be that they are going to take our land away?" This is what they were saying, take our land away, up there. Of course, the Indian Affairs there said to them, they said, "It's not your land, the government is going to make use of it, but unable to make you give it up for nothing." They said, "They will give you compensation for it so you can start life down here on the Reserve."

MR. HENDERSON: Did you participate in any discussions about compensation?

MR. MUSKEGO: No, this is not what I -- I was not involved in that. Once they started that, well, they had a different council or something and they managed their own way, the way they distributed whatever they can get out of the place.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you yourself receive any compensation?

MR. MUSKEGO: No, I did not.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have any discussions with government officials or with Chief in Council about that?

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, I did. We -- there were a few of us that didn't get it, and so we got together at the council meetings and -- they made it easy for us so as we don't argue with them. They told us then at the time, they said, "You people that didn't get the compensation," they said, "you'll be getting help from the government and Indian Affairs. You'll get new houses and you'll be getting help from them whereas the ones that got compensation will be -- after they get compensated, they will look at it that they didn't make any use of it." He says, "They will be running short and you'll be well away." This is what the council had said at the time and there's where I figured they were -- it don't make very much difference to me if I'm going to get me a new house and things that I can use from the Indian Affairs over here.

MR. HENDERSON: Were you a member of council during that period at all?

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, sometime or other -- now I can't recall the time, but I was in the council for the Band here. I had a family of my own, but my wife died. I left home -- my children had been taken over by the welfare people. They said, "You can't look after them by yourself anyway," they said. So to go -- and I left the place. Since that time, since '63, I've roamed around the country, all over the country, working for the big lumber mills, commercial fishing, all over, wherever I can find something to do. And I never did come back. I worked for the railroad as well. I never did come back here until I was fifty-five years old, which would be 1975. About twelve years I've been out on the -- living off -- out --.

MR. HENDERSON: Since the time the Weapons Range was created, have you ever hunted or fished or trapped in there?

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, the time Air Weapons Range -- the base was built, I was there. I was there building -- helped building, you know, as a labourer in construction at the base.

MR. HENDERSON: In terms of the land that you used to use on the Saskatchewan side, I believe, did you ever go back there or hunt or fish or trap there again?

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, we did. My brother had a commercial fishing in Primrose, so I helped him back with it. I've been up in there. I went back to where I -- to where we used to be -- sneak out with the ski-doo and travel all over the place.

MR. HENDERSON: Was that area within the Air Weapons Range?

MR. MUSKEGO: It was in the Air Weapons Range but it was at Christmastime. They opened it up for the holiday season.

MR. HENDERSON: And was that true of the fishing in Primrose Lake as well?

MR. MUSKEGO: Yeah, that's where we've been fishing -- the commercial fishing.

MR. HENDERSON: Those are the questions that I would have for you, Mr. Muskego.

If there is any other information that you would like to give the Commissioners, please do so at this time; anything that you would like to say that I have not asked you about, any information about your experience or your knowledge about the claim that you would like to give the Commission, please feel free to do so.

MR. MUSKEGO: Well, this is the idea -- the thing that I understood when they called me down is that recall what -- why they -- you feel it's your land. Well, I still feel it's my land, although I did not get nothing out of it, I've been just pushed out, but the feeling has been there because I was raised there. I was raised in Primrose as well as in here -- as a younger -- a young, growing boy. And to be really honest about me, well, I know all parts -- pretty well all parts of Primrose Lake on that east end up there north -- northeast, southeast, and all of that place, that's where I -- we used to go there at all times. We can go there in July, we can go there in August. We did not have to wait for the opening of that trapping. We make a living through that.

MR. HENDERSON: My associate has reminded me of one area that I did not explore. You indicated that you did not have a trapping license in the year or so before the Air Weapons Range was created. Do you recall why you had let the license lapse at that time?

MR. MUSKEGO: Yes. I had a family, I was -- I had a young family and I supported them in the lumber camp. That's where I was for the last two or three years. I worked in the lumber camp up -- that's up -- still in the same way up north. I supported my family and I was at the -- in the lumber camps and I didn't go north. And that's how come they squeezed me out of there. Although I have asked to be recognized as a trapper, but they told me it only goes by that -- holding the license -- buying the license.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you consider yourself to be a trapper?

MR. MUSKEGO: I have been and I still am.

MR. HENDERSON: Those are my questions, Mr. Chairman. We have, of course, adopted a protocol that if other counsel wish to suggest a question to be raised with Mr. Muskego, we'll take this opportunity now.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Before I ask the other Commissioners if they have any questions, I would just like to ask Mr. Muskego: If you could have carried on hunting, trapping, and fishing in that traditional territory, would you have remained there rather than go all over Canada to do some of the other things that you

[Editor's note: Page numbering in the documents that I was provided by the Indian Claims Commission jump from 10 to 290. I am seeking to verify whether this represents a block of missing pages / testimonies.]

5.2 Cold Lake, Alberta, December 16, 1992

---Upon commencing.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Good morning. I would like to welcome everybody back to the third day on this Primrose Lake Hearings. We've had some long days here. I'd like to open with a prayer from Alex Janvier. If you would all stand, please.

(Elder's prayer)

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you, Alex.

MR. LOTH/INTERPRETER: Yesterday, when we were done, we met with our lawyer, Tony, and we said the things that these elders are saying, if they speak their language, their words will be stronger. That is why today, those people who are speaking, our witnesses, if they can speak their language, it will be a lot stronger and better if we did this way. That's what we said yesterday.

Now, before dinner, the CBC television crew will be here at eleven o'clock or thereabouts. We want them to come in here for a little while, but if you don't feel that you want them here, it's up to you people. If they could come in here for about ten minutes to take some pictures, that's what we are asking. We'll let you know when they get here before they go back. That's all I want to say, thank you.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you, Armand. For those of you that have the agenda and witness list in front of you, obviously as you've noticed over the last couple of days, none of this is cast in stone, and we submit them as a guide as to what we hope we can accomplish over the course of the day. So far, we haven't managed to hit any of the allotted times, and I don't expect this to be any different today, or probably tomorrow. What I hope that we can do is -- now, it's almost ten o'clock. What I would like to do is go until about ten, adjourn for ten or fifteen minutes, adjourn again at twelve- thirty, and then reconvene at two. And then perhaps we can go until five -- or, sorry, eleven, and take a break.

Okay, before we get into the evidence for today, the testimony, I'd like to make a couple of comments. First and foremost, we're halfway through this session of hearings, and it's been a wonderful experience. The hospitality and the generosity that the people of Cold Lake have shown us is second to none. We've enjoyed it very much and very much appreciate it. I would like to, at this time, pay particular thanks to the translators who are doing a marvellous job. Their assistance is greatly appreciated, and as well, to the cooks who undoubtedly must find it a bit taxing, given the way we've been juggling the schedule around. So I'd like to pay particular thanks to them at this time as well.

So with that, what I would like to do at this time is call on Mr. Henderson to call his first witness. MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our first witness this morning is Mr. Charlie Blackman. Good morning, sir.

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Good morning.

MR. HENDERSON: Sir, you are, I understand, eighty-seven years old?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: I am past eighty-seven.

MR. HENDERSON: Past eighty-seven. And you reside here at Cold Lake?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Yes, I've lived here all my life, ever since I was born.

MR. HENDERSON: And before the bombing range, did you spend time in Primrose Lake area?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Could you repeat that question?

MR. HENDERSON: Before the bombing range was created, did you spend time in Primrose Lake?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Yes. Yes, I would like to say a few words.

INTERPRETER: Excuse me, but he would like to tell a story first.

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: I would like to say a few words. I would like to say thank you. This is the first time we've had white people sitting with us to listen to us, thank you. This is the first time we have had something like this ever since I was born. I would like to thank them, thank you again. If they are going to help us and if things happen well, for our benefit, then it will be good because we are poor people these days. A lot of my people are here today, and I am thankful, and this is the first time since I was a child that I see many white people here to sit with us and listen to what we have to say. Thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, sir. I know you've heard the Chairman express our own pleasure and privilege at being here at Cold Lake. I wonder, sir, if you could tell the Commissioners now what life was like with your community and in your family before the bombing range.

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Before the bombing range, people had a good living, they lived well. Ever since I could remember, I would travel with my dad -- I think I was about seven years old then -- and at that time, we went looking for food. Whatever my dad did, I did because this is how I was taught to fend for ourselves. To go hunting for whatever we could get for food for survival is what we did. We didn't make much money.

We used to make some money from trapping. And when we came home for Christmas, we would sell our furs, then we had lots of money. People would make quite a bit.

I don't remember everything because I'm getting very old, so I can't tell all.

My dad trapped during the winter and in the spring. With the money he made, he would buy pigs, chickens, cows and other animals, horses, so we could live for the summer. After trapping, and the summer came, my dad would farm, and I used to help him even though I was still small. I used to drive the four-horse team to farm with him, and I would steer the horses while he would work alongside.

The money was used for the summer months, and the local stores would give us credit and we were treated very well by them.

My dad, when his grain would grow in the fall, he would harvest before the trapping trip. We used to take sent three wagonloads of grain to St. Paul and sell it there. We would use one load of grain for flour and the mill would make flour for him, and that's what we used.

And when fall came around, he had a lot of hay made because we had cattle and horses. Once the hay was made, we would head for Primrose.

I was always with my father. I watched how he trapped and how he hunted and knew all of his skills so I became just as good as he was to be able to do this. We'd stay there until Christmas and then we would come back. He would sell his furs and he would buy horses from certain people. They would herd the horses to the Reserve around that time to sell. He bought some very good horses and harnesses, and that's what we used. He also bought saddles and other supplies so he was never without. My dad had never begged for anything in his life and he always worked for us and we had plenty to eat. In the summertime if we did not have any meat, he would kill a cow, and that's what we lived on. And in the fall, he would go hunting for moose. When he killed a moose, my mother would fix the hides and make leather food. And then out of that, she would make us mitts and moccasins for the winter months.

With the money my dad made from grain farming, he bought a combine and a tractor. And he would go about the Reserve harvesting everybody's grain with that. Pretty soon, not long after that, my uncle, Edward Thomas, and my dad bought another combine, and they went around combining for other people. Not too long after, they sold their combine to a white man. They bought a vehicle with the money they received. It was a Model-T Ford that they bought. When my dad used to drive his car, he used to say, "I am going very, very fast," because he was proud of his car. He never played with the money he received. He always bought things that were useful to him.

For as long as he lived, we would go trapping in the fall and come back at Christmas, back after Easter, and we would trap for muskrat. We used to wade around in the water -- I was not in a wheelchair at the time -- I never thought I would be in a wheelchair at the time. A lot of times, I would wade in knee-deep water and get the traps. That is the reason now, I think, I am suffering in my legs today. It's okay, the way the Creator has decided for me at this time is the way I expect to be now.

It doesn't matter to me even if I may be poor today. My dad was never like that, he always had everything for us, like pigs and chickens, cows, horses, and all that could be expected on a farm, including machinery, like a baler, a hay rake, and all he used for his land.

And my dad was never without anything nor did he beg for anything until he got old and sick, then he passed away. From then on, I was responsible for my own livelihood. I still have a very good home where I live today. One time, I had a home that burned to the ground with all its contents. I never had a thing left, but if you see my home now, you would say I have a really nice place. This is how I live today. Everything that I speak about today -- I may not remember

everything because I am old and I cannot do the things I used to. I am old and I don't always remember everything. We really did have a good life. We had a garden, potatoes. Everything we grew there, we'd use during the winter. My dad and I lived out in the bush. I had the same trap line as my dad. We always had furs hanging in our cabin, a lot of furs. You are here today to ask us questions, to be able to use us in a way you will be able to understand us. I am glad to see all my relatives here. I hope you can be satisfied and I thank you if you can use the information to help us. If I am asked to speak again later, I will do so. As long as I can remember, I will tell you. We never begged for our living, there was no welfare. If we didn't provide for ourselves, then there was no other way. Nobody could help us except ourselves. We may have been poor in other people's eyes, but we never thought we were poor. But since more white people came -- we had a lot of cattle and horses, but little by little they would steal our livestock, and finally we had nothing. I remember that my father used to look for his horses and would go as far as Lloydminster and that's where he would find his horses. When the white people came, there was no market for cattle, so because of that we had a lot of cattle.

My mother and my brother were the ones that kept our home and livestock while we went up north. They fed the livestock all winter, and the horses. In the fall time, everybody used to help one another get wood. Today, we use electricity. Not then, there was no electricity at the time so everyone would pitch in to cut wood and deliver it to every household, and that was how everyone made it through the winter. Everybody got wood. The women would stay home to look after the home and livestock. Even though I may not remember everything, if I am asked to speak again the next time, I will. MR. HENDERSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Blackman. I know you have made a special effort on Monday morning to be here when we started and that you've sat patiently as long as you could to take your turn to speak to the Commission.

As I said earlier -- and I'm sure I speak for the Commissioners -- we're greatly honoured that you have made that effort. I know that you've very generously offered to come back and give more information, and it may be that when we're back in February, the Commissioners would appreciate an opportunity to hear from you again. I was going to say that if you are tired now, we do not have to ask questions. We can do that another time.

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: I am tired, but all those people sitting there look so good to me sitting here.

I may not have known too much, but I was a councillor for sixteen years on this reserve. But today, I don't think I can be a councillor again. But I had a good life, and a happy one. I never wanted for anything. And today, my grandchildren stay with me and they keep me, and I am happy. It is eleven years since my wife left me, since she passed away. My grandchildren look after me, so I am still at home with them. Thank you. If I can remember, I will tell you more.

Do you understand all I have said? If they ask me anything on the map, I would not be able to do that. I will talk to you again sometime.

I couldn't tell you on the map exactly where was what, but if I was there, I would be able to tell you. That's all I'll say for now. Maybe I'll talk to you again later.

My dad and I made a lot of money when we were trapping. In one year, we would make at least five to six thousand dollars from our fur sales. Today, there are no furs. Today, so many of our young people depend only on welfare because they have no choice. For me, I live on a pension because I am an old man. If I wasn't old, I wouldn't have to depend on that.

To all you beautiful people sitting here, thank you for your help and give us your help by telling the government what is happening here. We are poor, that is why you are here. I hope this is not in vain, don't come here for nothing. That is all I'm going to say. You can ask me whatever you want now.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you again, sir. The life that you have described at Primrose Lake and at Cold Lake was also the life that your father lived. Did your grandfather live in the same area as well?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: I don't know. When I was small, my grandfather went blind, so I don't know for sure. My grandfather was blind for a long time, and my grandmother used to canoe around in a birch bark canoe looking for muskrats and ducks, and that's how she fed my grandfather. That's how they lived. We never lived by begging but today we are poor because we have no other means, so I hope you will be able to help us. When you accomplish this, I will thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: Sir, the normal year that you describe, the cycle of the seasons would be that you could make money, have cash, from fishing and trapping in the winter, then run up credit in the summer even though you had a good farm. Is that right?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: There was no problem getting credit. When we sold our furs or fish, then all our bills were paid and whatever was left over, we bought our supplies, like horses, harnesses, and everything that was of use to us. That's what we did in the summer. The summer was also no problem. If we were short, we would dig senega roots and sell it. We had ducks to fall back on, too, so we had no problems.

There were no white people, I remember. I remember one time by Ardmore, two white people lived there. One's name was Jack Mattheson and one was Ben. One used to ride an oxen, and he used to come and visit us. He used to sing at the top of his voice as he approached our house. Sometimes, he would stay with us two or three days, then he would leave. He'd jump back on his oxen and he would leave.

MR. HENDERSON: When they brought in the block or the registered trap line system in 1945, you had a registered trap line; did you sir?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Yes. A long time ago, you didn't need a registered trap line. But I did own one.

MR. HENDERSON: And did you have a commercial fishing license as well?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Yes, I fished -- not my dad, but I did. My boys, two of them, when they grew up, helped me. Whenever I needed help, they helped me.

MR. HENDERSON: And when they opened the bombing range, you did receive compensation for your trap line?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Yes, I received some. I was told to write my name, and I got a cheque. I remember that.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you ever have a chance to negotiate with anybody or make an agreement to how much compensation you would receive?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: No, I never made a deal.

MR. HENDERSON: Could you tell the Commissioners, please, sir, how life changed for you and your family and your community after the bombing range opened?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Since the closing of the Primrose Range, we are poorer and poorer until today. At least when we had our livelihood before the bombing range came, we would leave and have a good life. Summer and winter was a good life. Nobody helped us. The government never gave us money. The only money we saw from the government was our treaty money for five dollars.

MR. HENDERSON: Sir, those are the basic questions that I have. Again, if there is anything else that you would like to tell the Commissioners, we would certainly give you every opportunity to do so.

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: I will tell you more if I remember. We were never poor before, with farming and hunting and trapping. I used four horses with my dad, and that's how we trapped. My dad would hold the plough and I would drive the horses day after day. And that's how we lived.

MR. HENDERSON: After the bombing range opened, there were some trap lines, perhaps outside the range, that were taken over by other people? Do you remember that, sir? I understand there were no trap lines left inside the range. Were there other trap lines that were taken over by other people -- outside, I believe?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Maybe some, I don't know. After the bombing range was closed, I don't know of anybody that had a trap line. Once in a while around here, a few animals were caught, but that's all. Since the trap line was closed, we have become lazy, so that's what we are doing now. We have nothing else today. We just live. We don't know what to do with ourselves.

At one time, the government used to give us a few livestock and machinery. It's not like that now. We have no means -- we have absolutely no means, no even a garden. We have to buy all our groceries. Before, we raised everything. Not today. We have to buy everything with money that's given to us. Whatever we wanted, we had to do ourselves, not like today.

MR. HENDERSON: Again, sir, I am very grateful. We were aware before we came here that very few people even from World War II would be here to talk to us.

Did you want to translate that, Lionel?

We were aware that there were very few people left who were trapping in this area during World War II. We're very grateful, yes. The opportunity to talk to someone who was trapping at Primrose Lake before [World War II] is a rare opportunity for us.

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: One time, my wife, while she stayed behind, snared rabbits. There was lots of rabbits. She sold so many rabbits she bought a team of horses. She got five cents for each hide. I guess she killed quite a bit [in] order to buy a team of horses.

MR. HENDERSON: Perhaps at this time, Mr. Chairman, we should give the Commissioners an opportunity to ask any questions they might have.

Again, thank you very much, sir.

The Chairman and other Commissioners may have some questions.

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: I'll tell you if I can remember.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you, Mr. Blackman. Just a couple of questions. First: Why did you stop your trap lines? Why did he stop working his trap lines?

MR. BLACKMAN: I didn't quite but because of the bombing range, we were told not to go back. All our supplies, traps and everything, was destroyed over there.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Mr. Blackman, who told you?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: I don't remember. wasn't really -- I couldn't really hear.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Was it a white man?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Yes, it was a white man. He was the Indian agent who told us it was going to be closed. We didn't think that they were going to close it. I guess that's what happened.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Now, Mr. Blackman, after they told you, did you ever believe you would go back there?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: No. We were told not to go back there when it was closed to us. I have never gone back there because of that. I have cabins there, my supplies yet. They must be all rotten by now.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Those are all my questions. Is Mr. Blackman willing to take questions from --?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Yes, whoever wants, they can ask, it's okay. I'm still alive here. As long as I'm alive, you can ask away.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Mr. Blackman, when you fished in Primrose Lake with your two sons, did you catch lots of fish and did you sell them commercially?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Yes, I did make lots of money. I made money.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you, Mr. Blackman.

The Primrose area was so much a part of your life, so important to the way that you lived, and yet they took it away.

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: I was not happy. There was all kinds of homes all around the lake, on the shore. Everybody lived beside each other, and everyone was happy. Nobody was mad at each other, and everybody got along. Nobody bothered each other.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Second part of the question: Why was it that there was not more resistance from the treaty Indian people who used that area?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: We didn't say anything about it. The white people were the ones that had their last say in everything, and we never got a chance to say anything. They did whatever they wanted to do.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you, sir. There are no more questions, Mr. Blackman. Do you have anything more you would like to tell us?

MR. BLACKMAN/INTERPRETER: Yes, if I remember later, if they ask me, I will tell them. It's okay if you don't ask me any more questions. I am tired sitting here, I am not a child any more. will not say not too much now. If I was a child, I would be running around. I can just sit in this wheelchair. I never thought I'd be sitting in a chair like this -- like when I was younger.

In Primrose, I used to run after dog teams. I was young, but not now. We had a good dog team. I can't even walk now from over here to over there. I won't be able to run behind any more dog teams. We had good dog teams, very good dog teams.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Mr. Blackman, we're very honoured that you spoke to us today. We thank you very, very much, and we're very privileged. Thank you. Rather than have someone start and then break halfway through, we'll just break now. And then we'll come back at eleven and then we'll start over and then just take it right through. Adjourned for fifteen minutes.

---A recess was taken.

---Upon resuming.

MR. HENDERSON: Our next witness this morning is Mr. Louis Janvier.

Good morning, Mr. Janvier. The first few questions I would like to ask you are just so that the Commissioners have an idea of your age and where you lived, and then we'll [ask] you to tell us your story if you would, please. Your age, I understand, is sixty-eight?

MR. JANVIER: The day before yesterday, I was sixty-eight.

MR. HENDERSON: The day before yesterday?

MR. JANVIER: Yeah, I was sixty-eight.

MR. HENDERSON: We're a couple of days late, but happy birthday. And you live here at Cold Lake?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: And during the period before there was a bombing range, you also lived and worked up in Primrose Lake?

MR. JANVIER: I was in Primrose Lake all my life.

MR. HENDERSON: Could you tell us about how your life was then, please?

MR. JANVIER: Well, since I was a little boy – I'm going to use my language.

MR. HENDERSON: Absolutely. Please do.

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Before I went up north, I used to live with my Grandfather Alexis. My grandmother was sick, and they brought me there. She was very sick. My dad told me to stay with my grandfather and grandmother because she was sick, and to help them.

I stayed with my grandfather and my grandmother. It wasn't too long after that that she died. But during that time that my grandmother was still alive, she used a moose hide bag to keep her money in. Sometimes she had four dollars in there. At that time, that was lots of money back then. My grandmother said to me, "Now they are going to take me," meaning she was ready for her death. My grandmother also said, "When I die, you take this four dollars, give it to your grandfather." And they put her in the wagon and took her away. I was about seven or eight years old then.

When they put my grandmother in the wagon, she was holding my hand. She said, "Don't forget to give your grandfather that money after I die." So they took my grandmother away, and when they brought her back, they brought her body back to us. And then when they brought the body back, I told my grandfather, "Come here. My grandmother had told me, 'You give you this money to your grandfather, this four dollars.'" My grandfather took the money out of the bag and he cried. So that's how I gave the money to my grandfather, because my grandmother had told me to do this.

I stayed with my grandfather after that. And during that time, my grandfather had been the Second Chief. His father had been the First Chief. He was the one that was there when the treaty was signed, "For as long as the sun shines and the rivers flow and the grass grows." He had shaken the hand of government official. And from that time forward, I lived with my grandfather.

One day, people were getting ready to back to their hunting and trapping grounds. My grandfather had made me a slingshot, so I carried a lot of pebbles. I didn't waste these pebbles. At the time, I didn't have a gun so I used the slingshot. I was still a young boy, and I followed and would trap for squirrels with everyone. If not that, I would travel with my brother. Eventually, my brother left. One time, I fell through the ice; it was really, really cold, about fifty or sixty below zero. I got out fast because my mitts, they were made out of moose hide, they kept

sticking to the ice. And that way, I was able to get out of the water fast. Although it was not far to the cabin, all my clothes were frozen on me. I tried running, but I had a hard time. As time went by and I continued my livelihood, I became an adult and I married and my children were with me. When I started having children, I used to get up early. I have always been an early riser, so it was no problem to me. Even if it was past midnight, I would walk and walk to my trap line. Either by horses, by dog packs, or dog sleds, that's how we travelled to our trap lines. I started raising a family while I was on my trap line.

Sometimes, if there was too much snow and hard to get to the trap line, we stayed in the camp. I had a camp at Primrose Lake, that's where I stayed. I stayed at my trap line until the season was over in the spring, then I went for muskrats. After I finished trapping muskrats, I came back to Cold Lake on May 14th when I sold all my pelts. I bought groceries for my family; and since I didn't have a home, I built a log house not too far away from the church, not far from here. After I built the cabin, I mudded the cracks with mud.

During the summer, I worked for white people. There was no welfare then, and I had a large family. Early in the mornings, I would go hunting for ducks and other animals for food even though there wasn't much. When there were white people around, I would pick rocks for them. Every evening, I would get eggs and potatoes and bring them home to my family.

One day I went to Primrose Lake with one of my grandfathers, my Grandfather Bedzilie, Edouard Tellkalehou. We would go all over and check his trap lines, then we would come home around Christmastime, and we would do this all the time. My grandfather would send me back between Christmas and New Year's. It was easy for me so I didn't mind at all.

Now, we are talking about Primrose Range. There has always been people living there, even during the time of my grandfather, who was the First Chief. That's where they said he died there, but I don't know exactly what place. My grandfather, the one I stayed with when my grandmother died, was the Second Chief then. I worked at whatever job I could get, stooking, rock picking, thrashing. Sometimes I would be thrashing for at least twenty- seven days at a time. All summer long, I would work. Then in the fall, we would buy groceries and supplies and go back to our trap lines.

All summer, we would get ready, picking berries and other things. We really had a good life then. Nobody was poor then, not like today. It seems like it's getting worse.

I used to go by plane to the trap lines. I would give the pilot instructions to pick me up in the spring, and he would, of course, and I paid him. I had a lot of pelts. Things were not expensive then, so it was nice.

But today, things are so expensive we have a hard time keeping up. Ten dollars was a lot of money then. You could buy a lot of things with that. It is not good now.

The land that is there, when my grandfather made a deal, the treaties, was for as long as the sun shines and the rivers flow and the grass grows. "They will never break that," he said. And he shook the hand of the government official. My grandfather the Second Chief told me this, the

way his father had told he when he was the Chief. That is how everyone was brought into the treaties. All this, my Grandfather Alexis told me.

Now things don't seem that way. You can see it is not the same. All people are having a hard time now. When we went to our trap lines, everybody got along. They were so happy to be together and see one another. They had a place called Hon'ka or Suckerville at Primrose Lake and they would be so happy. From there, they would go their separate way to their trap lines, some northward or whatever. And they would meet again at Hon'ka or Suckerville village and shake hands. They would arrive by dogs or horses, and everybody helped one another there.

When it was getting to be fall, all the people would help one another to make hay. Sometimes, there was about four or five teams side by side cutting hay while others raked and hauled by hayricks. In the evenings, when their work was done, they were so happy to be with one another that they had hand games. It was very beautiful, what I remember.

There is quite a bit I may not remember. But what I do remember, I can still tell stories about. My Grandfather Alexis told me that his dad told him about how the treaties were made. He said, "My grandson, when my dad was getting old" -- he had seven sons. Out of the seven sons, my Grandfather Alexis was chosen to be the leader -- the one I was staying with. At that time, whoever was his son or daughter was chosen to be the leader, but today it is different. Things are different and not all that great for us now. This is why we are the way we are today.

Eventually, the bombing range was closed to us but things weren't as they are today. I hardly come to the band office now. The way I think is I prefer to look after my own family. I never did bother the band office for help of any sort. I have thirteen children. I never said I wanted any help, I was too tired.

I am very happy to be here to see you people facing me. What I told you was the truth.

The way the trap lines were taken -- I was not always present at any meetings, but I know a little bit about it. Every twenty years, I heard at a band meeting at the band hall that that was said. Twenty years was the length of time that the bombing range was loaned to them. After twenty years, if the land continued to be used, we were supposed to get paid again. That was the agreement made at the time. That didn't happen even then. That was the way that we were treated.

The payment that we received, we were told that it was for equipment. We all received a voucher. To us, that was ridiculous, it was worthless. We had no choice so we took it. The next time we received payment, we used it to buy horses, seed for our fields, things we needed like tractors and other equipment that was necessary for farming. That's what we used. Everybody started farming then, but the machinery started to get expensive, so everybody eventually left it alone. We don't even put potatoes in the ground any more. We have no means any more.

I really miss the land. It may not be for me now sitting here, but we have a lot of young people now. I am not worried about money. If we could get back that land, I am sure that there are trees on that land. They could make lumber and make themselves a good home out of it. That's why I really miss that land. This is as far as I will tell you for now.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Janvier. One of the questions the Commissioners are curious about -- and perhaps you can answer it -- is why the reserves are down here on the prairie and not up in Primrose Lake?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: My grandfather, the Second Chief, said that all this land right from Ardmore to the Saskatchewan border going northwards toward Primrose Lake was reserve land. That's what my Grandfather Alexis said. Most of that land was taken away from us. It was a very large area of land near here, and that was reserve land. That's what Alexis said to me.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you very much. When you were living in the Primrose area, you said that you built a house next to the church?

MR. JANVIER: Yeah, I do, we had a house.

MR. HENDERSON: And that was at the area the people--?

MR. JANVIER: I was on the Alberta side.

MR. HENDERSON: I'm sorry?

MR. JANVIER: I was on the Alberta side.

MR. HENDERSON: And that was in the area that we've called Suckerville or -- and I wonder -- the area that people have referred to as Suckerville, is that where your house was?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: No, that's not the place. It's way north where the trap line was.

MR. JANVIER: But most of the time, we stay up there.

MR. HENDERSON: Could you show the Commissioners on the map where your trap line was?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes, I can tell them.

MR. JANVIER: That's their route here. It comes all the way through. It's some place not too far of here. It's a little lake, must be around here. It's about around here. There's a lake -- it's a long lake here, and there's another lake here. I used to go in with grandfather, went for a lake on this side. But where I really stayed was right here in Primrose. I don't know what they called that lake where I stayed all the time. Some place around -- but there's two little lakes here. Two lakes like this here on the way. Long Lake, they call it.

MR. HENDERSON: There's a couple shown here.

MR. JANVIER: Yeah, could be the one there, too. There's a Willow Lake on this side. They call it Willow Lake on this side. That one there, it's got a lake on -- it's got two lakes, too, the other one.

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: There were two little lakes by each other. One was called Long Lake and one was called Willow Lake in Chippewyan. Dominic Jacko had his trap line there, too. Past MR. HENDERSON: You had a cabin here?

MR. JANVIER: Right in here, up here some place.

MR. HENDERSON: Then it would be three hours?

MR. JANVIER: It's one good day from there.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you.

I hope correctly, for the record, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Janvier has indicated an area on the west side of Primrose Lake up along the Shaver River, and perhaps a day's travel up there, there was a cabin. And the trapping would then be north and west of the cabin. Is that -- I think I understood that correctly.

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: I worked all around that area all of the time because my grandfather needed my help. I was also with my father, who I was registered with. Ever since I was married, I worked mostly with my Grandfather Bedzilie.

MR. HENDERSON: Was that trap line eventually registered in your name?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: No, when I had inquired, I was told that since I had been trapping since I was a child I was automatically registered with my father, so they had left it as it was.

MR. HENDERSON: I just wanted to ask a few more questions about Suckerville. You did spend some time there during the year?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Lots of time. I lived there a lot of times.

MR. HENDERSON: And as we understand, there was a church there?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: There had been a church there, but I didn't see it myself. I believe?

MR. HENDERSON: And there was also a store run by a man named Lardon, I believe?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes, Jim Lardon had a store there. Sometimes Charlie Moore sold some merchandise there. There was a lot of people then. Today, there is hardly any of them alive, not many of those old people alive today.

MR. HENDERSON: How often would the store be open? Would it just be open for a few months, when people were there?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: It was open all the time, even in the middle of the night. Time was not important at that time. You just went there at any time, and they would open it up for you. If you needed something, they just gave it to you and that was it. We didn't follow the time at that time. We just followed the sun.

MR. HENDERSON: Would the people be there running the store in the summertime as well?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: I'd come back here and I worked. I did just about everything, digging senega roots. In the fall, we'd hunt ducks. I'd fill a sack full of ducks.

The store was open all year-round, all summer, at all times. That's where Jim Lardon's home was so he never closed.

MR. HENDERSON: I was just waiting for the translation.

Did Mr. Lardon or Mr. Moore buy furs as well?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes, they did. They did buy furs.

MR. HENDERSON: And as I understand it, most people would come out and sell their furs. Who would they sell most of their furs to?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: When I brought my furs, I had to go by plane. He would buy all of my furs. He would pay for my way in the spring, and I would sell all of my furs to him.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you. Did you have a commercial fishing license as well?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: No, I helped others but not for myself. Sometimes I helped people like George Marshall and white people.

MR. HENDERSON: When you helped other people, could you make good money doing that, fishing?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes, I was paid well.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember who it was who told you that they were going to put in a bombing range and you couldn't go back to Primrose Lake?

MR. JANVIER: I found out from my people here that live on the reserve but not from the white people. We got payment by voucher once, but my people were the only ones I heard it from.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember the name of the – I'm sorry, were you going to translate something else?

Do you remember the name of the person who used to give you vouchers?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: No, I don't remember. I don't remember what day. I was not preoccupied with past events, so I don't know. With the voucher, we bought farm machinery like tractors, horses, and other machinery, wagons, harnesses.

MR. HENDERSON: You said that many people bought farm equipment and wagons and thrashers and tractors and that sort of thing. Were people able to keep that equipment for a long time and use it?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes, a lot of people used them.

MR. HENDERSON: When you were getting compensation, did you have a chance to sit down and talk to somebody from the government, to say this is the deal that we're going to make, to negotiate an agreement?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Everything just happened, I didn't know anything about it. The only time I knew was I heard it from the council at the hall.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you ever have a chance to sit down with someone from the government or go to a meeting with the government where people would say, "We don't get money from trapping or fishing any more. What are we going to do in the winter now, or how will we replace that money," about changing the way of life?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: No, I have never sat down with anyone.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Janvier, those are my questions. There may be some other questions.

There are some other questions. The Commissioners will have some.

MR. HENDERSON: One of the questions I've been asked to put forward is this: When there was the meeting at the dance hall that you told us about, the old dance hall, somebody said that the land, if it was leased again after twenty years, there would be more payment. Do you remember who made that statement, who told you that?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Abraham Scanning, was the Chief at that time and he told us that the twenty-year lease would be renewed.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember who the government person was at that meeting?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: No, I don't remember. There were so many different people there. It may have been Mr. Knapp.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you. You also mentioned there was a time when you helped white people who were fishing. Were these people fishing in the Primrose Lake area?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Was that before or after the bombing range?

MR. JANVIER: Before the bombing range.

MR. HENDERSON: Before? Thank you.

Did you also see white people trapping around Primrose Lake?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: No.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you see any [Métis] people trapping in that area?

MR. JANVIER: Maybe some. There may have been a few.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you very much sir. Those are my questions.

Mr. Chairman, the Commissioners may have a few questions.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Yes, good morning, Mr. Janvier. Thank you for coming. Just a couple of questions. Do you recall getting a cheque in 1960?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes, I do remember.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do you remember signing a paper?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: I don't remember. I was never told to sign.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Were there words on the piece of paper that you saw? Were there any words on it?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: No.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Did anybody tell you what you were signing?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes, I did sign my name, but I was not told for what.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Did anyone tell you at that time what you were there for?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: yes, they said they were closing the land so that is why I was there.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you.

Mr. Prentice, Commissioner Bellegarde, do you have any questions of Mr. Janvier?

Okay. There are no other questions.

Do you have anything further that you would like to tell us?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: I don't remember a lot but I did go every year, just about sixty years ago. It will be Christmas if I had to tell all.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Mr. Janvier, Commissioner Bellegarde has a question.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you, Chief Commissioner. This one relates to Mr. Matchatis' statements from yesterday about that white man that came to the trap lines with his briefcase and stayed for three or four days then left, saying that you couldn't be here any more. Do you remember if he came to visit, Mr. Janvier?

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: I heard about it but I was in the Alberta side. I heard he was at Hon'ka or Suckerville.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you very much, Mr. Janvier, for coming here and helping us out, teaching us a little bit about yourself and your life, and in the process, helping us a great deal in our job. We very much appreciate your patience with us and for answering our questions. Thank you, and you can be excused.

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: I was very happy to hear about this hearing, but I would be more happy to get our land back because the treaties that my grandfather signed had said it was never to be broken.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay, Mr. Henderson, will you call your next witness, please?

MR. HENDERSON: With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to turn the Council chair over to Mr. Maurice at this time.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: That's fine.

MR. MAURICE: The next witness will be Angelina Janvier.

Hello, Mrs. Janvier.

MRS. JANVIER: Hello.

MR. MAURICE: I'd like to just spell your name for the record. It's J-A-N-V-I-E-R; is that correct?

MRS. JANVIER: I don't know how to write.

MR. MAURICE: And how old are you, Mrs. Janvier?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Seventy-four years old, seventy-four years old.

MR. MAURICE: And where are you currently residing?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: I am living here now, of course, in my home.

MR. MAURICE: And around the time that the Primrose Bombing Range was created, where did you live then?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: I used to live in Primrose from time to time with my husband. I didn't live there all the time.

MR. MAURICE: Prior to the bombing range being established, can you tell us what life was like in the Primrose range or around Primrose Lake?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Everyone lived well. People hunted everything. In winter, musk rats, beaver pelts, everything they hunted for. I know that's the only way we made our living in the bush.

MR. MAURICE: When did you first go into the range?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: I didn't live there all the time. I had many children. I lived at home with my kids. My husband hunted for beaver pelts.

MR. MAURICE: Was your husband a registered trapper?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: Did he do anything else to make a living?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: He did many things, my husband. He was always working. We had many children. He built homes, laid block, everything. He was a carpenter. As well, he worked at the airport a long time ago when they built the airport.

MR. MAURICE: Just for that time before the range was established before 1952, your husband was a registered trapper. Was he also doing any commercial fishing?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes, he used to fish with some people. He used to fish with Sam Wachapese in Primrose around this time.

MR. MAURICE: Did he have his own license or did he sell fish through Sam Wachapese?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes, he did have his own license. Sam Wachapese had his own license, too, I believe.

MR. MAURICE: What other types of things would you do to make a living prior to 1952?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Before it was closed -- do you mean summer or winter?

MR. MAURICE: Either one, it's all the same.

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: My husband worked for an American. He lived in St. Albert for four years. My husband had a good job then. He travelled to the United States, bringing dog sled teams down there this time of year. He was gone for about three or four months to the States. He lived there and drove dog teams. He always had a good job. He always worked, but I always stayed home with my big family.

MR. MAURICE: When your husband went to the United States with these sled dogs, was that before or after the range was created?

MRS. JANVIER: That was before the range was closed to us.

MR. MAURICE: Sorry, was that before?

MRS. JANVIER:(Nodded head affirmatively)

MR. MAURICE: Yes, okay.

When was the first time you heard about the bombing range being established?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Before I heard anything, it was said that the range was being closed. People were getting paid, he said. I really didn't have much to do with this. Only my husband was involved in this, so I really can't say when it was.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember some of the things your husband told you about the agreement or about how many years they would get paid, how long the lease was?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: I wasn't told myself, but he was told. For twenty years, he said, the bombing range would be leased out. It's been a long time since then.

MR. MAURICE: How was life prior to 1952? Did you make a good living then?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: I didn't have to make a living for myself because my husband was always working. Things were good. Finally, he began receiving a pension; our children were growing up.

MR. MAURICE: And how did you make a living after the range came in?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: It wasn't me, but my husband was always working. He got a job any place. The land was very useful to people around Primrose Lake and north to Watapi Lake. My husband had a trap line there. They also fished over there once a year. There was much fish taken there. He had a cabin at Wapiti Lake and I lived there with him for one year.

MR. MAURICE: After the range was established, you said your husband used to travel to find work. Where did he go and what kind of work did he find?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: When they were building houses, he put in foundations and worked as a carpenter on the houses. He worked at Goodfish Lake and Saddle Lake. Here at Beaver Crossing, he worked for Jake Josvanger on a farm in the summer. MR. MAURICE: Do you remember if your husband ever received any compensation for his trapping and fishing rights?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes. We received payment twice the time they gave out money. For our trap line, he was paid.

MR. MAURICE: Did he receive any money or compensation for his fishing?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: No, there was nothing for fishing.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember how much your husband was paid?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: No, I don't know how much he got paid, I'm not sure.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember your husband ever talking about signing a release to receive a cheque?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: No, I never spoke to him about such things, to sign or anything. I never heard. I never saw anything nor was I involved in any of these things.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember ever being able to buy anything with the compensation your husband received?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: He bought horses and cattle, I believe. Whatever was useful, like wagons and so on, we got those.

MR. MAURICE: Did you do any farming after this compensation was received?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes, put in a crop of cereal grain after he received compensation.

MR. MAURICE: Did your husband sell this cereal grain anywhere?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: And what kind of a living did you make from farming?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: It was all right. He sold the grain. He wasn't farming all the time.

MR. MAURICE: When did you farm until? When did you stop farming?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: He couldn't work any more -- he had no machinery so he didn't work any more. When he started receiving a pension, he didn't feel like working any more.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember how many years you farmed?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: He didn't always work on the farm. When he had to put the grain in, he put it in.

MR. MAURICE: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the Primrose Bombing Range, about the way life was then, any other information you have at all that you would like to tell the Commissioners today?

MRS. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: They were always over there using the land; they lived off the land. Summer and fall, people would travel over there, hunt moose. People thought only of being there before the white man came, when there were very few people around.

MR. MAURICE: Thank you very much, Mrs. Janvier, those are all the questions that I have.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I have one question, Mrs. Janvier. First, let me thank you for coming here. The first question that I have -- and perhaps the only one -- is could you tell us the name of your husband, please?

MRS. JANVIER: Hilaire Janvier.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Could you spell the first name? Could somebody spell the first name for us?

FROM THE FLOOR: H-E-L- -- it's -- H-E-L-L-A-R-E

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Sorry, but could we do that just one more time, please?

FROM THE FLOOR: H-I-L-A-I-R-E.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I have no other questions, Mrs. Janvier, but perhaps some of the other Commissioners do. Commissioner Bellegarde, no questions. Commissioner Prentice? No.

We don't have any further questions and unless you have anything further you would like to say to us, I want to say on behalf of the Commission how pleased we are and thankful that you would take the time to help us out the way you have. We want to thank you for sharing the memories of your wonderful life, it's very helpful to us. Thank you.

Now, I think it's twelve-fifteen. Do you want to start another witness, Tony, or--?

MR. MANDAMIN: That would be my suggestion.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: We'll break now and adjourn these hearings and reconvene at one forty-five, quarter to two.

--Recess at 12:15 p.m.

--Upon resuming at 1:45 p.m.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay, Mr. Maurice would you call your next witness, please?

MR. MAURICE: The next witness is Sarah Loft. Good afternoon, Mrs. Loft.

MRS. LOFT: Good afternoon. Good afternoon, everybody, ladies and gentlemen, people of the reserve.

Well, as far as Primrose is concerned, I can't say too much as I was not -- I never went trapping or fishing myself. But I always had -- when my grandfather brought me up from 1936 when we lost our father, my grandmother took us in his care. Five of us kids left. So him -- previous to that, he was a hunter and a trapper all these years up in Primrose. And thankfully, he didn't want us kids to be all split up so he took the five of us together and he raised us, but we spent most of our time in the convent, of course, which was ten months a year. We only had about a month and a half home with them. So from there on, when we went back to school, they went back north, Primrose, and my grandfather used to stay up in Primrose until Christmas, which I think most of the trappers had done anyway, as I remember. They all used to come back with Christmas, for Christmas, and everybody was happy to meet one another after these two long months of trapping, and they'd come back. Whoever made the most money or killed a moose would put up a feast.

I remember the days we used to go to these feasts and people were happy. Whether they made money or not, they were still happy people, friendly. Well, I spent most of my days in the convent, as I said, but 1941 and '42 -- 1940 was when I was discharged from the convent. So 1941 and '42 were the two winters that I was -- as a girl, a young girl, I went up north with my grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. J.B. Ennow, the Ennow that Ernest was talking about there.

I went north with them, and I had one little sister who had a touch of TB that they were going to send away to Fort Qu'Appelle for -- to cure her or something. My grandfather said, "I'm not sending her to Fort Qu'Appelle, I'll take her north. I'll cure her myself with the wild food that we'll have," with -- you know, don't eat like school, like we had in school.

So anyway, we went up north, just her and I as kids. And we stayed up north until Christmas. And that year, I remember they were buying rabbits, rabbit skins, so my grandmother told us, "If you kids help" -- like in that shack where we lived, to dry the skins, skin rabbits and all that stuff which we did, we were willingly helping her with fixing up these hides, drying them. So by Christmas, thankfully, we made enough to buy us a radio, which we needed up north, with a great big pack of battery. You know these old-time radios? Well, we earned that anyway. Boy, and that meant something great for me.

Anyway, that was fine, so that when we went back north after Christmas, we stayed right till the end of February. And those two long months, I'll never forget until today. We never saw a soul,

but we had this radio. And every Sunday, we'd listen to these soldiers overseas talking so that -- because there was a couple of boys gone from the reserve and we thought maybe we'd hear them. So we used to sit and listen to this; and I thought, in those days, little things like that was a great pleasure.

And anyway, 1941 passed. We came back. My grandfather, as he did always, we used to have a little farm. He ran the tractors, he was some kind of a mechanic anyway, fixing up tractors and stuff for our neighbours around Beaver Dam. So we did all right for the summer.

Ernest and my grandmother used to dig senega roots, which meant a lot to us, because we'd get a little money for it. And our mother was married two years after my dad died. She lived in, where I live now, English Bay. Never see our mother unless we were gone for the Cold Lake sports, which was about two days, and there we'd have a chance to see mother, so that was a great pleasure for us again there.

That's it. Then we're gone back to school again, so the old people would be getting ready to go back north as they did. And they weren't even our parents, our grandpa and grandma, and we were about the only ones that ever got visitors at the school. My grandparents used to make sure that they came to see us for Christmas, I remember that. And then we'd never see them until they came back in June, the end of June.

So this kept on, and grandpa and grandma were still doing their trapping deal, I guess. And in 1943, grandpa went to work with the American, where Hilaire Janvier was working, so he was up there for that winter.

1944 was -- he went trapping again. But that year I was getting married, 1944 January, so my grandfather said, "Well, if you're going to get married, I'm going back north." So he left, he didn't even stay for my wedding. Anyway, I got married in '44. Fine.

So that winter -- in those years, '44, '45, '46, in those years there used to be work for the men all the time along the Martino River, over there north of Cold Lake. And these boys, there was hardly any boys idling around the reserve. They all worked, everybody went to work. Some had horses, some had none, but they went out cutting. People were living good, even along that river. Now, I suppose, it's a bombing range.

Anyway, we lived up there every winter, where there was a job. Well, my husband himself was raised by Laurien Francois. He raised that family because their father died when they were all little. So he was the father of this Laurien Francois, was the Loft --- the father of the Loft. They had two houses, one up on each hill, and that's where my son now resides, that place where he stayed, built himself a house there. And he lives there.

That's where my husband was raised up by his father. His father died 1934, I think. I don't remember him really because, as I said, we never went to Cold Lake. When we came back, we stayed away down south. We were lucky if we had seen Cold Lake once in the summer.

So anyway, in 1947 -- by that time, I had two kids. My grandfather took us away up north to his trap line and we stayed there. I had two little girls, they were just little then, and we stayed that

'47 winter. Then we came back, the same thing again, stayed with my grandfather's farm and so did my husband. It was at English Bay where we got the farm.

And 1948, the same thing, we went back north with grandpa. And from there, 1948 was the last time I was in the bush with grandpa and grandma and my husband. From there on, all he did was fishing, fishing with Laurien Francois. He was with him every time he went north, so me, I stayed home with the kids all winter, me and my mother-in-law because we had cattle, and somebody had to be home. And we had two houses to look after, so we had two places to watch cattle. So we watched, we stayed home and kept the cattle.

But one thing I'll say, Primrose Lake was everybody's home -- a home away from home because we had a cabin up there. Now, if I went up there again, I'm sure that thing is gone. But just the same, that little spot where our house was, I still think that's my home.

That was the happiest life that we ever had was in the north, where you don't hear things. It didn't even bother me at all just as long as my kids were alive, that's all I cared. We had three meals a day. And especially when we were with my grandfather we had moose meat, caribou meat -- you name it, it was there, that wild meat that we had.

And now we're -- I don't think since Laurien Francois died, I don't know how many times I ate moose meat. He was the one that really -- that helped me raise my family because we were just living next-door. If one shot a duck, next house we'd holler at them, while we lived that far -- holler at each other, "Come over for dinner". Now they're all gone, but they made their living from Primrose too, that Laurien Francois and his wife. So we had to stay home there. So we were just like one family, although we were in two houses, because that's the way it had been. We were in two houses, but still we were just one family. So it was really a great, great loss.

And for that payment, in 1954, yes, in August, my husband had TB, so he was sent to the Council in Edmonton. And one day, some official from St. Paul, the Indian agent --- I don't even remember who it was -- Mr. Knapp, I think, came and he said, "You have a cheque in the bank. What do you want to do with it?" he said to me. Now, of course, I was never the boss, it was always the man. So I told him, I said, "I'll have to go and ask and see what my husband wants me to do with that money." So there was two of them. Charlie Blackman was -- Charlie Minoose was in there, too, so Charlie Minoose's wife and I got together, talked together, and we decided to go and see the men in the hospital to see what we could do with that money.

So we went, we got the Council, talked about this money with our husbands. She went one place, I went another. In those years, they were all -- eighteen months, my husband was in there, never to get out of his room. That was the kind of TB hospital they had in those years. That's in '54, '55. He came back in January of '56.

But anyway, he said, "You can get a small" -- we had a big log house which his father had made. And we used to live in this log house and talk about the wood we used to use although we had to have a great big heater in order to keep the upstairs warm and the floor, on where we used to live. It wasn't partitions and all that, was one big room, the log house. Anyway, he said, "You

can get a small house built for yourself with that money.” It was twenty-eight hundred, I remember.

So he told me that. That’s why I made him sign his name on this paper that they gave me to bring -- give me authorization to, what to do with that money.

So Mrs. Minoose did the same, and we came back. I went to see -- we went to see Mr. Knapp and we gave him this, and I told him. He told me to get a house built. And that’s all I told him, so sure enough, that -- this was in January, so that coming spring, that coming summer in 1955 -- and that money, I guess, was in the bank all this time. I couldn’t get nothing out of it, nothing. It was only Indian Affairs that looked after that money.

And all we were living on was a little, one hundred forty-seven dollars a month I was getting. But my kids were in local schools so that was okay. That hundred and forty-seven dollars was lots for me. I used to get credit at the store.

Anyway, that money -- that coming fall, they started -- gee whiz, in four days, I moved into a new house, imagine. But for me, it was heaven, a brand new house, and I didn't even know what they put in between -- I guess they had put sawdust, and they didn't even put in insulation, but that was a twenty-eight hundred dollar house anyway.

For the first year, it was fine, it was okay, it was warm. But after about three or four years, after all that sawdust must have dried up and all fell down, then we were living in between two boards, and we never did get a new house all those years.

And then when my husband was back from the hospital, he started on his fishing again. He fished every time Primrose opened, he was there. Cold Lake opened, he was there. Marie Lake opened, he was there. He was quite a great fisherman, him, so we never starved.

MR. MAURICE: Going back to 1944 when you said you first got married, you mentioned that your grandparents and yourself and your husband would go up into the bush. Were you primarily trapping at that time?

MRS. LOFT: Yes, he went with Laurien Francois. As I said, he was never home. It was only my mother-in-law and I with his daughter; one of them was out of school by that time, so she stayed with us. Three of us stayed home alone, and I always had one of the Beaverfoot boys staying with me to help us feed the cattle.

MR. MAURICE: And you mentioned later on you started to fish. Was that on a commercial fishing license?

MRS. LOFT: Pardon?

MR. MAURICE: You mentioned something about fishing. At one point, you started to fish; is that correct?

MRS. LOFT: I was one year at Primrose because they had to have my license. And after that, it was only in Cold Lake that I used to get license. When they gave out those licenses for the one, the trappers and the main fishermen, my husband never even got any license from there,

although he was Laurien Francois's helper. He was always brought in as a helper. And he never failed to go fishing with his brother, Laurien Francois. He fished there for many years. That was the only means, ways of living for us.

MR. MAURICE: Did your husband also do some trapping? Was he also a trapper, your husband?

MRS. LOFT: Well, he went up north with my grandfather, as I said. When they would go together like that -- when they come back, well, he has to work with him. So when they come back, they share whatever they make, that's the way it had to work with us. The same thing with Laurien, he helped Laurien, he'd get half of whatever they made.

MR. MAURICE: So did he have his own trap line or did he help somebody else?

MRS. LOFT: He didn't. He always was with -- mind you, his father was a great trapper. But he - - in those days, as we said, you never had lines or any license business like that. It's just that -- because he was little, Laurien took over his uncle's trap line, I suppose. That's where they went all the time, all those years.

MR. MAURICE: Could you show us on the map where your husband would have trapped and fished?

MRS. LOFT: Where he went with grandpa?

MR. MAURICE: Yes.

MRS. LOFT: Yes. That's a name in Chippewayan for that little lake, "san con twazie." I was asking somebody, I said, "How would I say that in English?" Well, all those little lakes around there all had Chippewayan names only. And naturally, I didn't know about -- because I went to school, I didn't see all those lakes. But all these big lakes, I knew the names. I was pretty good at geography or history.

MR. MAURICE: Did you and your husband continue to go up there until 1952?

MRS. LOFT: Well, he did, I didn't. I had kids, so I stayed home.

MR. MAURICE: So it was inside the area or outside?

MRS. LOFT: Well, if it was with my grandfather, it would be on that line there. They did trapping on that line, up to that little lake. That's where they build the new shack, that's 1952 when they shut down, so I never went back with them for thirty years.

MR. MAURICE: So part of it was inside, part of it was out, okay.

MRS. LOFT: And where he went with his brother would be -- Charles Camp, they called it, I don't know what -- as I say, I know all the Chippewayan names. But in English, I don't know.

MR. MAURICE: Thank you.

What did you and your husband do to make a living after the range was established?

MRS. LOFT: Oh, my husband worked at everything, for farmers. And he farmed himself with the help of my grandfather, had a tractor; he came to break up the land for my husband. We still have that land, but I don't think Armand is keeping any crop on it, but he's still got it fenced.

MR. MAURICE: You mentioned that your husband had received twenty- eight hundred dollars. Was that one payment?

MRS. LOFT: That twenty-eight hundred? Well, that's all I ever known of was that building that I got out of it. But the rest, he was back -- he was back from the hospital, so -- as I said, I never bothered with those payments or anything.

MR. MAURICE: How did you find it—I'm sorry, go ahead.

MRS. LOFT: I mean those last payments, I never had nothing to do with it because he was back for the business part.

MR. MAURICE: Do you know if he had received the final payment? People talked about signing a quit claim or a release to receive a final payment. Do you know if your husband had received that money?

MRS. LOFT: Only once I remembered when they were having a meeting in Primrose, he was there. I didn't go. When he came back he told me, he said, "Well, in twenty years, I guess we'll see that little shack I had built, that's when they're going to let us in again," he had said. I couldn't figure out what --.

MR. MAURICE: What did your husband tell you about compensation during that twenty-year period that you couldn't go on the land?

MRS. LOFT: Well, I guess he had heard himself that -- when he went to that meeting, that they told him -- they were telling whoever was there talking to them about this, told him that it is leased for twenty years, just like it sounded. Like, in twenty years, they're going to get Primrose back. So that's what we thought all about. I thought about that all the time, that that's the way they made the deal. Of course, I never had nothing to do with the men's businesses, so -- especially the Chief, it was up to the Chief to be talking about that; wouldn't they in those years, the Chief with the trappers. I don't know what kind of a deal was made because I wasn't there.

MR. MAURICE: Did your husband ever talk about how many payments he would receive?

MRS. LOFT: Yeah. After that twenty-eight hundred, I think he got four hundred and fifty once. And the last time, I don't know how much he got.

MR. MAURICE: Did he think--.

MRS. LOFT: It wasn't very much anyway.

MR. MAURICE: Did he think that was adequate compensation? Did he feel that was part of the deal? Did he know that he would get three payments or did he expect more?

MRS. LOFT: He never talked too much about it, about that. But as I said, he only worked for his brother all the time, well, we had to go by what Mr. Francois used to say, so he went along with him all the time, with whatever was planned or --.

MR. MAURICE: Mrs. Loft, what was your husband's name? I don't know if I caught it.

MRS. LOFT: Francis Loft.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember, around the time of that final payment, whether your husband did get that payment?

MRS. LOFT: I'm sure he did, yeah. I don't quite remember the amount. The amount, I don't know. I only knew about the first one, as I said, because I got a house built out of it. The rest was just -- the payments the people got was just peanuts, I think.

MR. MAURICE: I noticed from the map that part of area where your husband used to trap was outside of the range, on the north side of the range. Can you tell me whether your husband ever considered going back into that area to trap?

MRS. LOFT: Yes, he did with Simon Nest once. That was in '58 or '59. But he went with him to the other side of Lac la Biche by Winefred Lake way, they went out there this way. Well, even that time, they had to sneak around. I don't know what they were sneaking around for, they had to sneak although that wasn't in the bombing range.

MR. MAURICE: Is it possible that they had to sneak through the range to get there?

MRS. LOFT: No, they didn't go through the range. They went from Winefred Lake right onto that muddy lake or whatever that name is -- Tagotwax in Chippewayan.

I was asking Ernest just now about that muddy lake. He said it was -- well, that little lake was -- the rivers came, there was about three or four rivers coming, running into that area, into this muskeg, and they'd formed just water on top, about that much on top of mud. So this is why they called it mud lake, I guess. It's just water on top of mud, it means.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember how long it took your husband to get up to that part of the trap line that lay on the north side?

MRS. LOFT: I wouldn't know, they went by dog packs.

MR. MAURICE: There's only one more question.

MRS. LOFT: That's walking.

MR. MAURICE: That's on foot.

MRS. LOFT: Yeah, him and Simon. Well, Simon knows all that area because -- well he's a late uncle -- because he trapped many years out there with my grandfather, which was his uncle. Simon Nest was his name.

MR. MAURICE: Did your husband continue to go up there year after year?

MRS. LOTH: No, no.

MR. MAURICE: Why is that?

MRS. LOTH: Because it was too far. And besides -- well, they didn't buy no fur -- he used to be able to get muskrats and stuff right around our place. We had a buyer in Cold Lake -- old Mr. Clark was his name -- and buy wood. That was his main job to us, hauling wood to town, that was his main -- when we ran out of sugar or something, right away, he's gone for a load of wood, bring it to town, sell it. And at that time, sugar didn't cost too much. So there, we had sugar for the rest -- until the weekend, and that kept on.

MR. MAURICE: You also mentioned that there was a lot of work for the men around the Martino River. That was cutting, you said?

MRS. LOTH: Ties, they used to cut.

MR. MAURICE: Okay, what were those for?

MRS. LOTH: They were used for the railroad, wasn't it, I think. And then later on, my grandfather was -- brought his sawing machines up there, then they started on the lumber. And he used to haul -- my husband used to haul lumber. All winter, we stayed there.

MR. MAURICE: How many years did that go on?

MRS. LOTH: About two or three years.

MR. MAURICE: That was before the range came in?

MRS. LOTH: Let me see. Yeah, that was after the range, after that.

MR. MAURICE: Those are all the questions I have Mrs. Loft, thank you very much.

Any other questions from -- I believe our Commissioners may have a couple more questions for you. Thank you.

MRS. LOFT: You're welcome.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you for coming, Mrs. Loft. I don't know that anyone asked you your age when we started. Do you mind telling us what your age is?

MRS. LOFT: Sweet sixty-seven.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Sweet sixty-seven.

MRS. LOFT: Kind of sour now.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I was just ready to agree with you. Sweet sixty-seven sounds right.

Mrs. Loft, I want to go back. Early on, you mentioned something about when you and your sister, I believe you said, left the convent?

MRS. LOFT: That's after I left the convent.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: After you did. And you said that your sister had TB?

MRS. LOFT: Yes, she a touch of TB, so my grandpa-- the principal at school, which was a priest, of course, they were going to send her away to Fort Qu'Appelle. And my grandfather said, "Instead of sending her away that far, I'm going to take her north, feed her wild food, I'll cure her," which he did.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: He did cure her?

MRS. LOFT: Uh-huh.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Good. Did that happen often? Like, I mean do you know a lot of that kind of thing that was going on? Rather than go to a hospital, they would take Indian medicine or --?

MRS. LOFT: Oh yes, because Indians had their own medicines, herbs and stuff like that.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Did a lot of that--?

MRS. LOFT: I know that my sister -- there was an old lady, her name was Mrs. Martineau -- Old Martineau, which used to be an Indian agent here, so wife used to make Indian medicine for the Indians. And she made medicine for my sister, and we took that up north, a bunch of-- I don't know what it was -- roots, anyway, that my grandmother had to cook for her. Cherry roots, I think, wild cherry roots -- and with rat root, I know she drank that a lot for -- well, what Mrs. Martineau had given her. She used all that up, and then when we came back the next summer when it was time for her to go back to school, she had to go -- I forget who it was took her for an x-ray, my grandmother, I suppose -- it was only her that looked after us -- took her for an x-ray and her x-ray came back to Bonnyville, and they told her she had no more TB showing on her lung. So then, they send her back to school.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: And she would have been up there in the winter months; is that right? From November to January or something? Is that when she would have been up there, your sister?

MRS. LOFT: When she had that, when she was told she had TB, we stayed up north with my grandfather all through the winter. That's '41.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: One other thing that you mentioned, Mrs. Loft, was the -- I want to try to get you to remember a little bit more about what Mr. Knapp said to you when he mentioned the twenty-eight hundred dollars that you had in the bank. Do you recall if he ever told you why there was twenty-eight hundred dollars in the bank?

MRS. LOFT: Well, I heard through other people saying that people are getting paid for their trap for Primrose, for the use of Primrose for that bombing range. That's all I ever heard. I'm sorry today that I never went to those meetings. I could have heard, you know, but--.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: And Mr. Knapp didn't tell you anything more --

MRS. LOFT: No.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: -- other than you had --?

MRS. LOFT: Just said -- I just had to go by other people. I was kind of surprised myself when I heard that we got this twenty-eight hundred because my grandfather, J.B. Ennow, was the one that was a trapper's license holder.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Right. And your husband did not have a trapper's license?

MRS. LOFT: No, he just had the -- what we get on the reserve here. But in those years, of course, nobody -- they never asked you questions where -- like now, if I had any muskrat hides, I'd go to Pierceland but I couldn't even use my treaty card or widow card or nothing. I'd have to get one of the Cree Indians to sell it for me.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do you know back in that period whether or not anybody else had houses built for them, or were other people getting money from Indian Affairs to have houses built?

MRS. LOFT: I think that's the same time as Mary Marten had got a house built for her. That was similar to mine, too. It was just a lumber shack.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Those were the only ones that you remember?

MRS. LOFT: That was the only one that I can remember.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay. Just a couple more -- and these are more about life than anything else. I was wondering -- it sounds to me like when you were younger and as a young lady and travelling with your grandparents and spending time in the Primrose Lake area that sounds to be a fairly enjoyable life. Was it?

MRS. LOFT: Yes, it was the best life. It was the best place to raise your family, too, up in the sticks, I would think.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: When you compare your life to that of your children, how is it for your children?

MRS. LOFT: Well, the two that were with me all that time that I was up north, they were glad, they were happy. Even now one of them is here and she remembers -- she says, I remember when I used to go with grandma to the water hole, even to the water hole, we had to go down the hill. I guess there was to be so many rabbits -- she was only about three, not quite four, and she used to go with my grandmother to go and pick those rabbits, going down to the water hole, that little trail going down the water hole.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: And after the bombing range and they closed Primrose to your people, was life for the young people then -- was it as enjoyable, or was it a harder life and less enjoyable afterwards?

MRS. LOFT: Well, in those years for me, it was -- I didn't find it hard because I had a hard-working man that made sure we had food on the table.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Was that harder to do after?

MRS. LOFT: We lived right by the lake. We lived in Cold Lake, and we always -- whatsoever -- had fish. We didn't need a deep freeze either. I had a nature deep freeze there, mother nature's deep freeze. We lived near a mossy place and we used to dig out the moss until there's ice, so we kept our fish and meat. And when Laurien would kill a moose, we'd keep meat there so we had something to eat in that muskeg all the time. And I can't lie because he's sitting right here, he's seen it too.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Now, there's been some talk by some of the other people about alcohol and where -- do you remember during the period when you were going up north, before the bombing range, was there any alcohol or was there any problems like that?

MRS. LOFT: Not that I know of.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: What about after? Did that become a problem then for a lot of people, do you know?

MRS. LOFT: Well, it was -- in those days, people didn't care as long as they went to Primrose -- gone to do whatever way they could make a living, that's all that mattered.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: And after the bombing range, that changed?

MRS. LOFT: After that got changed, of course, it all shut down. But Mr. Francois, the one that looked after us, always went hunting towards May Lake -- I don't know if it's a bombing range or what. He always went anyway and got some moose or there was -- even deers were plentiful around our place. So we had wild meat all the time.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you very much, Mrs. Loft. Those are all of the questions that I have. It may be that the other two Commissioners have something to say.

First, I'll ask Mr. Bellegarde if he does.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you. This is a general interest question. Who operated the convent that you went to?

MRS. LOFT: Who operated it? How would I know? I didn't know nobody but the principals. Well, when I got to school the first year, it was a Father Portier was his name. And then after that, it was Father -- what was his name -- Father Pratt was there.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Was it a boarding school rather than a convent?

MRS. LOFT: It was a boarding school.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Okay.

MRS. LOFT: And before I got out of school, it was Father Pascal -- was his name. And I went as far as grade eight, and we passed grade eight, we didn't have no grade nine teacher. That's in '41 -- '40, the year that I left. We didn't have a grade nine teacher so we had to make our grade eight

two years. Twice I went to grade eight, but we got grade nine subjects from Lloydminster -- a few subjects from Lloydminster that we had to do.

There was four of us. There was Henry Matchatis, myself, and Eric Carlson and Edna Carlson, there was four of us. But those two Carlsons are still living there in Saddle Lake. I see them once in awhile -- her anyway, the girl.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: The other question deals with the family groupings in the trap lines.

You mentioned that your grandfather was there, your father perhaps -- or your uncle rather -- and others. Would a trap line set out like in family groups cover one area of the trapping range, for instance? How was it set out that you would be sharing the work of the trap line? Or would they have their own lines? Are there families working whole areas within the trapping area?

MRS. LOFT: I don't quite understand you. I'm sorry, but I'm deaf on this side. This is the side that I use.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: In terms of trapping areas, you mentioned that your grandfather was there, and also your uncle and others. Were they part of a family group that trapped a certain area in the Primrose range?

MRS. LOFT: Yes. Well, my grandfather was away up north. And the other family, the Laurien Francois part was on this side of Primrose -- but on the Saskatchewan side, I think. My grandfather was in the Alberta side.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you. Commissioner Prentice?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Mrs. Loft, when you spent time with J.B. Ennow in Primrose at the camp, what would you and your sister do during the days? What sort of jobs would you do?

MRS. LOFT: Me, I did nothing but cook and have supper ready for them when they come back from looking at their snares and traps, and we'd go out and pick some pitch gum, which I loved - - spruce gum. We had nothing else to do, us. But when they came back and brought the squirrels, I had to have grandma skin them and dry them.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And would you -- did your grandparents travel into Suckerville on Primrose Lake, did they ever go in there? Did you go with them?

MRS. LOFT: No. I had to stay home with my grandmother because we always -- she always -- as far as I remember, she always had dried meat and stuff to look after. And that's quite a ways, that Suckerville they're talking about there. My grandfather was -- he always had a good team of dogs, so he'd go on the dog team. He'd be gone for about three days, come back with whatever we needed -- I'd write down whatever we needed at the shack, so that was okay. That was fine.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: How did you travel up to the cabin? Did you go by dog team?

MRS. LOFT: Yes. Well, we'd ride the dog team, each our turn, me and my little sister. She was about six at that time. But of course when we're going home like that, we had to stop often, like to make a fire and have tea or banat lunch, whatever, and it was really good, especially the syrup. Roger's syrup was the main desert we ever had.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: How long would it take you to go from English Bay up to the cabin?

MRS. LOFT: From English Bay, one day --how?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: By dog team?

MRS. LOFT: By dog team -- well, my grandfather had good dog teams. From English Bay to Suckerville, it wouldn't take him long. Before dinner -- if he left at eight o'clock in the morning, he'd be in Suckerville by eight, I would say. But from there on, there to his trap line, another two days, two whole days.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: You've never been back there?

MRS. LOFT: What?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: You've never been back to the cabin?

MRS. LOFT: No, I've never. After 1948, I never went back.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Thank you very much.

MRS. LOFT: You're welcome.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Mrs. Loft, I think we have perhaps one more question from Mr. Maurice.

MR. MAURICE: Just to clarify, Mrs. Loft, you mentioned that your husband didn't hold a registered trap line or commercial fishing license; is that correct?

MRS. LOFT: He got the fishing license.

MR. MAURICE: Oh, he did have a fishing license.

MRS. LOFT: Yes, but not the trapper's.

MR. MAURICE: Do you recall what the compensation was paid for?

MRS. LOFT: I don't know, that's what I said, I don't know. But I thought it was for the fishing because he did more fishing than trapping that I know of. That was the two years we were with grandpa up north. And the times that he went with the other brother fur trapping -- of course, his dad was a great trapper as I hear. He had a trap line some place there -- well, in those days it wasn't trap lines. People went everywhere, anywhere they wanted -- to trap. But they said he was one of the best hunters or the best trappers. I'm staying with a woman right now that knows more about me -- of the old people -- than I do myself because she was brought up here. And the other night when I was telling her about this, you know, she said, "Before Christmas when everybody

would go back north,” she said, “we used to be such an unhappy, lonesome people.” That’s her father and her mother and sisters and brothers were all raised here, across the creek here.

And she said, “I can recall how people used to go north in the first part of November and we used to be so anxious for Christmas to come because we know that the people are going to be back.” And then she said, “They have money, everybody would have nice horses, new harnesses, and everybody was happy,” she said.

She said, “Even me,” she said, “I can recall that.” And she said we used to be happy ourselves seeing that the people are happy on the reserve. And she said, “Whenever the -- somebody put up a feast,” she said, “I was there with them, too.”

She’s real blonde and she sure doesn’t think she’s a white woman. Mrs. Wheeler is her name, everybody knows her. So I’m staying with her right now because she just had an operation on her ear and she’s not feeling well, and she always took me as a sister until today, she does, some way or another.

My mother’s sister was married to one of her brothers, and this is how we got so close. But anyway she’s -- she has a brother still living, he’s ninety-one years old. He’s in Cattle Prairie right now. He was here about a month ago -- well, three weeks ago.

He would remember everything, him, about how -- because he grew up here. All these young guys are like Charlie there, I’m sure they knew him, they all -- John Blackman said he remembers him and how they all grew up together.

MR. MAURICE: Thank you very much, Mrs. Loft.

MRS. LOFT: You're welcome.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Mrs. Loft, may we just say thank you very much. We’ve enjoyed what you’ve had to tell us. It sounds very exciting. You’ve made it a real treat for us to hear your history and some of the things that you did, and you’ve educated us, and we want to thank you for that. We want to thank you for taking the time to come and help us with what our job is. And I want to also say that, when you said, “sweet sixty-seven,” for you, that’s right, it is “sweet sixty-seven.” So thank you very much.

MRS LOFT: Well, I’ll thank all of you too for coming for trying to help us switch with success - - we do something for our kids, our boys, our grandchildren. At least if they have something to show that their parents, grandparents, were trappers. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Mr. Maurice, can you call your next witness, please?

MR. MAURICE: Thank you, Mr. LaForme. The next witness is Jim Janvier.

Hello, Mr. Janvier. Before you begin, could you tell us how old you are, sir?

MR. JANVIER: First of all, I’d like to say, Chairman and all the Commissioners, and all the visitors from various places to listen to our stories, a very pleasure for me to say -- what I would

like to say is a story in my young days right today. Dear friends, I hope you all listen to each other nice and take care of ourselves, and I hope these stories will come out straight.

And I'm seventy-one, my name is Jim Janvier. Now, do you want me to start my story?

MR. MAURICE: Sure. You can tell us a little bit about what life was like back in Primrose before the bombing range came in.

MR. JANVIER: Well I'd have to go further than that if you want to hear a good story -- that is, a while back, even before my time for what I know. Dad used to tell me a lot of stories even before I started trapping. He said he was a trapper. He did some fishing, but not commercial. And it was a free-for-all country.

We went to Primrose, like he said himself, and different places to trap. He said it is very nice. He says we used to make a lot of money. Everybody was happy, the water was clear, the snow was good because in them days if you drink any snow water and you weren't scared to be poisoned -- as well as snow water.

Now, as I grewed up, since I remember, there was no such a thing as trap lines or you didn't have to have a permit to sell your fur. We travelled to different places. I remember once we was north of Saskatchewan, I was only about -- I'd say maybe seven yearsold -- we travelled up there with the wagon.

That was in the fall, early in the fall. It was rough road, and there was about four families that went up there. I remember the two families' names was Matchatis family and the McPeters family. So we stayed up there, and they started to build the shacks -- I'd say maybe sixty to seventy miles north of Big Island -- they call that Big Head reserve, that's north-east of there. They started building shacks all together -- there was about four families -- and they all scattered around from there.

They would trap in different areas, but they would all come back in the evenings -- bring in some furring animals and whatnot. And we stayed up there for a long time because it's too far to come out and sell what you want to sell. If you're short of something, the only thing they were ever worried about is tobacco, if you were short of tobacco. Other than that it was okay because they took enough stuff with them. They figured out how much they could spend. They rationed the flour at times, they rationed different things at times, so they could get along with it.

And in the springtime -- well, just before Christmas, first of all, just before Christmas, I remember my dad and the other members of the family came up from there to come out and get some more grub. I don't think we came out at Christmas out of there that year. We spent Christmas up there because it was too far to travel back.

But when we were up there, at home, we always had a few horse head, I remember, and a few cattle, maybe two or three milk cows and whatnot, and a few chickens, I remember. But there was always somebody staying back to look after these things.

I had a brother, he was eight years older than I was. He was left home as well with this other -- whoever it was with him to look after this stuff.

So after we came back from there, well, we went out further than that from there in the spring to go ratting. And dad and mom left the wagon and myself, and there was -- we had a three -- three other friends with us from Big Island Lake. There were three Indians. And so I had my brother with us, there was, let's see, four -- seven of us altogether. So with the two horses we had, we said well, let's pack these two horses, we walk along these other lakes, camp anywhere. So we did, trapped a lot of rats, came back again. The other member, the other three guys came home. They packed home and we had the horses, the team of horses out there. That was the spring, time to come back.

I still remember that day, it was 15th of May, I would say 15th of May. It was nice and green, the leaves were nice and green. So we were staying in the shack, so that's it. We were getting ready for morning. We all got ready that evening, ready to take off early in the morning, coming back home.

So morning came. Dad was going up to open the door, the door used to open out, and here he was having a time to open it -- there was about a foot and a half of snow that morning. He said, "You know what -- 15th of May. we can't go home today. That snow's got to melt first." Because the wagon wheels -- you know what it's like, they pick up all that snow and there's no way you could travel. So we had to wait for a whole day. The snow went away that day, though, that was the 15th of May.

And we came back. It took us probably two days from Big Island Lake -- and it's a good day from here down there at that time, in the long days, to come back home.

Them were the good old days because I was free for all and we got all we wanted to eat -- it wasn't nothing but sweets. They had these few biscuits at that time. When I got biscuits, I thought that was a great thing. There's no such things as chocolates or whatnot in them days, but biscuits they had.

And when we did get home, after dad sold the fur, he'd buy the grub and he'd buy a little bit of grain wherever he could get it -- down with the farm. He always had a little farm. Four horses was what we used. And my brothers were there. My one brother helped quite a little. He was eight years older than I was.

Then after that, we went north and to the east -- west of Primrose. They call the road Pêche Road. The lakes chained up there all the way. I remember when we went up there, it was called Lost Man Lake. You see there, it's called Loose Lake, it's supposed to be Lost Man Lake.

So dad said, "Here's where we settle," he said, there's a big log house in there, log shack somebody had lived in. He says, "We'll fix it up and we'll live here." And he had a man to stay at our place, to look after our place again, a man called Pronteau. He had a family. He said, "Well, you want to winter here, look after the stuff?" He said sure.

He took us up there, and we had one extra horse -- that was dad's travelling horse in the north. He made a big toboggan -- driving a single horse, he went different places trapping, comes back in the evening. And we had a little bit of grain that he took with him. The horse used to go out and paw for his feed, comes back for his grain, never leaves the place.

I remember the time dad got lost. It was the first time I ever seen my dad got lost because -- I guess because it was Lost Man Lake. This other friend that took us was the one that went with him. He didn't know much about trapping. He went hunting to get some moose.

So me and mom was home alone, we had to look after these horses and they were kind of -- the horses were kind of touchy and we had a heck of a time, me and mom. Anyway, somehow we managed, and mom said, "They must be lost because they didn't take no lunch, they weren't going to be long."

So we waited that night, and mom sat up and made tea ready, everything, and nobody came home. So that morning, I ran to the lake to see if they were coming somewhere. Finally, I see them coming, two of them coming home. And one guy just barely made it home. He was hungry, exhausted. And they told us the story.

He said, "Do you know what we ate?" All they had was rifles. Dad said they have no choice, he said, "I had to shoot that partridge for something to eat." He knew what would be left of that partridge after it shot it with the rifle. But they ate everything. He said, "This guy here," he said, "he cleaned everything right up," he said. He even ate the guts, he was so hungry, you know. So that was the survival. Anyway, we stayed there. This guy came home with the team of horses, and we stayed there for the winter again.

Just before Christmas, we were still there. There, we seen a bunch of dog team coming from the lake -- north. There was about four dog teams -- that was Peche's outfit. When they got to our camp, well, they all came in there and had something to eat. They all rested there for long time, they said, "Well, we're going home for Christmas." So dad said, "We're going home too if that guy comes and get us." That was a long ways north in the winter time. Finally, they did come home.

Everybody was happy, they were all packed up heavy with lots of fur. So we came home for Christmas, we had our Christmas. And everybody was putting on some -- well, we used to go to different places. This guy said, "Well, let's go have something to eat up here," and they all invite each other, had a great time. Dances in the homes, fiddle dances, I still remember that. That's how I got to learn my jigging.

Anyway, we went back after that. After New Year's, we went back in. We did come back again that spring, so dad said, "Well, we're not going too far this time." He said, "I'm going to go out to May Lake, that's not too far north. I'm going to make a shack there."

So the rancher comes up, brought a bunch of cattle from south and got a ranch just a couple of miles away from home. My brother then was fifteen. So he hired my brother, fifteen dollars a month. That was a lot of money, fifteen dollars a month, for all the work he had to do.

Then dad said, "Well, I guess we'll have to go north." After everything was done in the summer, like spring work, all that, dad said, "I'm going to go out and build a shack while it's still nice." We went up there in the summer -- it wasn't too far -- the road was kind of rough, it wasn't too far, though. We built up a nice shack, barn, came back home, started working -- and haying time.

And we had a nice big garden they always put on; we had all kinds of vegetables in the spring -- or in the fall.

We had our own milk, cream. We didn't need no separator. Anything we would like to eat -- all the wild meat we wanted, we didn't have to buy meat. Because every dollar was a lot of money.

So then, as it goes on, I start trapping with my dad, and I was getting old enough -- I missed there for a little while. I had to go to school when I was about ten years old. I was five miles away from home. I went to school, I travelled by dog team, single horse, saddle horse, and even walked in the spring -- in the summertime.

And dad and mom made sure that I got there in time for school, and they know just about what time I should have got home. Because if I get home late, then I really get it because I had to do some work before I can go out and play again because every kid had to work if he had a chance. Then he has time to play after.

We had respect for our parents at that time. Other than that, if we didn't, we know what we were going to get. So anyway, I went to school -- I believe it was two years. Mom had to stay home then. Dad used to go out with my brothers, my other brother -- trap, came back, and start the same thing, little farm, this and that. And that little farm we had, after thrashing in the fall -- there's a guy that had a thrashing machine, only one guy I remember that got the first thrashing machine was McPeters. And everybody used to chip in, put in their horses and racks together and they'd keep mowing. They would give --- this guy with the thrashing machine, they'd give him the grain in trade instead of cash. And the others, well, they all helped.

And, two years after I went to school -- well, I had to keep working. So anyway, dad said, "You should go to residential school." I quit that school here about two years, then I was about fifteen. He said, "You should go to residential school." I says all right, so I went to Bloquills. They came and got us in some open truck. We all had to crawl in there. We got down there pretty dirty by that time because there was no gravel roads at that time. You could see how the dust would fly on our faces. We had a heck of a time to clean our faces when we got there, we didn't know.

Anyway, I went there for two years. And my education went as far as grade six. So then dad said -- he says, "Well, I want some help. I'm getting a little old now and your brothers can't help me. Your one brother's got to work out and the other brother, well, he kind of roams around, like some other time he's due." He's usually one that kind of roams around that likes to be on his own, I suppose. So anyway, I had to stay home. That's when I quit my school.

Then, from there on, we trapped at May Lake, that's where our trap line was. Wasn't a registered trap line, it was a free-for-all trapping, and we didn't need no permit at that time for a while yet. We used to go and sell -- I remember dad used to sell fur to a man called Ray Hall or Jake Josvanger or Mr. Brady when he first built that store. And there's another guy, a Hudson Bay and old Reshore they called him in Cold Lake. They were the fur buyers in Old Clark.

But usually, my dad used to deal with Ray Halls or Josvangers. He used to get credit in the fall -- like everybody said, they used to get good credit because they weren't scared to give it to them because they were getting their money -- anyway.

That's how a lot of times -- at the small farms at that time, they used to go down there and say, "Here, we'd like to get a few bushels of wheat." And these -- some of these storekeepers, they used to out and finance them for some grain. I remember that a few times that they had to finance them for grain. I don't know, maybe some others, but we did anyway. And the grain that dad used to sell in the fall wasn't too much. But dad took some grain or wheat to Bonnyville -- at that time, they had the flour mill already. He said, "I'm going down there to grind some flour." You know, trade for wheat and bring back what we could get, so he left with a load of grain, took him a whole day to get there. And he came back the next night. He had ten hundred-pound flour bags of flour. And mom said, "How about the other stuff like rolled oats and stuff that will come out of it?"

He said, "No, they just told me, 'We'll trade you for the flour instead of waiting to grind this and whatnot.'" And dad said, "Okay, I'll take the flour." And he did. But that ten hundred was a lot of flour, that was a lot of flour.

But people say they were friendly and they would give when they needed help. You didn't have to buy the stuff from your friends. They'd come there -- dad used to say to them, "Don't say I borrow, just say I want to get some." He said, "It's no use borrowing it because you want to get some, just ask for it." He says, "If we've got it, we'll give it to you. We'll go down there and ask the same thing," you know. So that was the way we lived.

We had a neighbour there by the name of Mr. Misteries -- Pierre Misteries and he was just one close neighbour. We had a lot of other neighbours as well, but there was a lot of help -- we helped each other on that. He was a pretty good farmer himself. As the time go by, finally, they had to get the permits to sell their fur. And then, getting permits to sell fur, they had to have permits.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Excuse me, Mr. Janvier. Do you happen to know about when that was? Like the period of time, the year that -- can you recall when that year was that they started getting the permits or had to?

MR. JANVIER: Permits? I'd say sometime in the forties. I can't recall the year, sometime in the forties, somewhere in there.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: No, no, that's okay. I didn't mean to interrupt, but sometimes the dates are really important for us to know how -- when we sort out whether or not those grids and everything up there fall into place because some of that is a little foggy in our minds up here.

I'm sorry to interrupt.

MR. JANVIER: That's okay. That's nice to ask that question, that just reminds me of the year probably -- but then I can't recall -- sometime in the forties.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay.

MR. JANVIER: Finally, they said, Well, we'll have to register our lines. Then I was a pretty grown-up man by that time -- that was quite a few years we were trapping that back and forth, coming back here and there. So we had to register the trap lines.

“Well,” dad said, “we’ll have to register this line then.” I guess he was one of the first ones that went up there to register a trap line. He had a full registered trap line that was the size of, I believe, four by six miles, that is. And we said -- so the brother said, “What are we going to do?” He said, “We, as a registered trapper, could have probably one with you, co-trapper.” I says, “Since there is a lot of room back in the north, let’s put the trap line up there.” Because we used to travel up there, too -- I forgot this part.

While we were trapping there, the brothers and I used to go further up north -- called north of Canoe Lake. That’s east of Primrose. We used to go trapping there -- loose trappers -- we knew that area.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Again, just for my own clarification, when you had to register your trap lines, did you -- how was that done? Did you just pick out the trap line that you wanted or the one that you were working and then the government gave you some kind of license to trap that particular area?

MR. JANVIER: When my dad first registered the trap line, he said, “This is the area I want because I’ve trapped here for years.” So they give him that trap line.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay.

MR. JANVIER: When we were asked -- we went out to ask for a trap line, this registered trap line, and he said, “Where would you like your registered trap line?” Well, we had more or less first choice in that area.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Where did you go to do this?

MR. JANVIER: In Cold Lake. Cold Lake at the Forestry--.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay.

MR. JANVIER: Fish and Wildlife, that is.

Anyway, so we choose these places. Like the two brothers and my cousin says, “All right, let’s double up on these trap lines.” So me and the brother double up on one, my cousin and my other brother double up on the other one. We were neighbours up in that area, so we start trapping up in there, and dad stayed at May Lake. And a lot of times I stayed with him as well because it didn’t matter anyway. Finally, dad passed away in ‘48.

So I said, “I’m not going to let that trap line go, my dad’s.” So I says, “Do you know what I’m going to do? I’m going to take this trap line, my dad’s, and let you have my trap line. You can own that trap line.” I was telling that to my brother. I said, “You can take that trap line, I’ll take dad’s trap line.” So I re-registered the trap line, so I got my dad’s trap line so my brother took over the whole trap line, the registered trap line back there -- in the bombing range, that is -- now what they call their weapons range, I guess.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: And was that easy to do? Was that really easy to do? Did nobody give you a hard time?

MR. JANVIER: I didn't have no trouble because they said, "That's your dad?" I said, "Yes, I trapped with him for years since I was a kid until I got this registered trap line, but now he's passed away." I said, "I think I'm entitled to get it." For generations -- we wanted to keep that as generation trap line. They said fine, okay, if your dad -- if you think your dad would have agreed? I said yes because he would have -- it didn't matter, and I lived with mom. I was single. I lived with mom alone.

Anyway, when I got that registered trap line, I used to travel back and forth with my brothers as well, way back there. But we would always come back to that same May Lake. We had to have a shack there, used to go there in the winter. We'd do the same thing, we'd come back for Christmas and whatnot and do this. As the time changed, every little thing is changing, like the price of stuff was going down, the fur was going down a little bit. And the stuff, the price of stuff in the stores was getting a little higher. It was kind of -- but we managed to live.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: This was in the late forties?

MR. JANVIER: This is after '48.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: After '48. So we're getting close to this bombing range thing happening?

MR. JANVIER: Right. So as the time goes, in 19 -- when was it -- '50, I believe, when I first heard about some air weapons range, bombing range -- they said there's going to be a bombing range here.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Who told you that, Mr. Janvier? Who told you that?

MR. JANVIER: Oh, well, my brothers. My brothers, they knew about that. They had to know about this because they had the registered trap line up there.

I said, how come? Well he said, "We have to have something here for protection, you know." But he said, "I don't know how it's going to come about." So we stayed around to see what was going on. They said, well, they were going to start building an airport up here. Now, they're going to lease this registered trap line.

I said, "How are they going to do that?" I asked brothers, "How are they going to do that?" Well, they said, "They're going to lease for twenty years, lease it for twenty years."

I said, "Well, do you think you're going to be able to come back in twenty years' time and be a good trapping yet?" Well, he said, "I don't think so. I don't think so because," he said, "if it's going to be a bombing range," he said, "there's going to be a lot of things that's going to be destroyed up there." But he said, "We hope to get enough money for that lease for the twenty years." This is what they heard.

Finally, the payments started coming in.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I'm sorry again, but this is what your brothers had heard and they were telling you this?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay.

MR. JANVIER: Because they had to tell me all the stories because I was more or less -- I had the registered trap line. I said, "Well, it looks like I'm going to lose out on my payments." I said, "You guys get it all now." He says it didn't matter, I said, "I still got the trap line," you know. I still got the trap line outside the bombing range, just next to the bombing range, that's where May Lake is.

So, they said, "Twenty years, there's going to be a twenty-year lease." I said, "How much are you guys getting?"

They said, "We don't know yet."

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I'm sorry, what did they say? What were they getting?

MR. JANVIER: My brothers said-- I asked them, "What are you guys going to get? Did you hear?" They said, "No, we're not sure yet," you know.

So I said, "How are you going to manage in twenty years?" That was my question to them, "How are you going to manage a twenty-year lease," I said, "if you don't get enough for the twenty years?"

"Well," he says -- they -- after all, I guess they went to meetings -- well, I was to one meeting, but I didn't really follow it up. But they told me that they were going to get so much for their traps and stuff, for their equipment, the first payment.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember how much?

MR. JANVIER: There were different payments. This is why still today I can't figure out why they didn't get equal money because everybody had a different payment --- different -- some of them had probably four or five hundred and the others got a little more and the others got less or whatever.

MR. MAURICE: Did you yourself receive money? Did you receive compensation?

MR. JANVIER: No, I wasn't getting nothing because I still had this trap line.

MR. MAURICE: So you didn't receive anything?

MR. JANVIER: No, I didn't receive because I was out of that registered trap line. I took this other registered trap line -- because I'm out of the bombing area.

MR. MAURICE: Could you show us on the map where your trap line was located, please?

MR. JANVIER: Now? I've still got this trap line, I guess I could.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do you still have it?

MR. JANVIER: Oh, yes. I was going to come to that. First part, where I registered, that's away up in here near the bombing range -- Point Lake -- Lost Man. See, they call it Loose Man. It's supposed to be Lost Man. And this area up here, that's where we trapped, in this area.

MR. MAURICE: This is your father's line?

MR. JANVIER: No, no. This is where the registered trap line is -- first place. Now, my trap line now is here. You see, I'm just a little ways from the bombing range. That's why I never got compensation because I'd given up this for my brother, taking this over.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: So I guess Mr. Janvier has indicated that his trap line was outside of the boundary to the south of the bombing range boundaries.

And you're saying to us that you still have and still operate that trap line; is that correct?

MR. JANVIER: I've still got the same trap line, yes.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: And you suggested that perhaps you didn't get any compensation for the simple reason that your trap line is outside of the bombing range area.

MR. JANVIER: Yes, because I've given up the registered trap line in the bombing range to my brother. But I still have the trap line. I could have sold it more than once, but I said no. I want to keep the trap line for my generation if they can still keep it. And now, I got beat out of that. My land's supposed to be full size, and I only got two by three instead of four by six.

MR. MAURICE: When was it cut down?

MR. JANVIER: I didn't know that until about four or five years after I registered because I never thought of it. Come to the map, I said, "How come?" I went down to the Forestry, I said, "How come my land is so small now?" "Oh well," he said, "there was a mistake made there."

I said, "Mistake or no mistake, I want my full trap line."

He says, "We can't help it, but if we can enlarge it somehow, we would."

But I said, "There's no way you're going to take that." I said, "I'm going in -- if I come to that place, I'm going to trap in here because," I said, "we're the first ones registered on that line."

He said, "Well, it's up to you, if you only get along with the other trapper."

I said, "Well, he better because we had the first choice."

MR. MAURICE: Did you continue to trap on that line, then, after the creation of the bombing range?

MR. JANVIER: Well, a few times. Since I first start going down, we would just go out there. Sometimes, I used to pack out there in the springtime -- went on the saddle horse just to go out there and see -- well, you got a few rats. But lately, I haven't been trapping much because it wasn't worth it. I told the Forestry, I said, it's not much use killing off stuff, but I'm hanging on that trap line -- it didn't matter what -- because it's not worth killing anything. I said -- right now,

if you kill a beaver, it's not even worthwhile skinning for the price. So therefore, we're just hanging onto that trap line.

Now I've got a co-partner that's one of my boys. He's going to stay with the trap line. He says, "Dad, don't give it up." He says, "I'm not going to give it up." He says, "If you happen to be gone, I want to take over." So that's why I wanted to get that trap line, this generation, to keep it -- so we've got a place to go.

We used to go out there in the summertime, pick berries. And people from here used to go out there hunting at May Lake, they know that place real good. I know a lot of people might not believe me her, but it is true from what I know. And now, I got that far -- like I said, I don't see why all these registered trappers never got the equal payment because I think they had lines, they made just as much money as any others did. I don't see why they shouldn't have the equal payment.

I think the biggest pay that was given out here was six thousand dollars to one guy; I heard that was the biggest pay. So that wasn't even paid for a whole year for what he would have got in one year.

MR. MAURICE: How many years' payment was that? Was that all three years?

MR. JANVIER: All three years, the whole three payments. As far as I know, he got the most at six thousand dollars because I know the guys that knew that he got that six thousand. I guess he got the most and the others got less.

So I don't see why they didn't get equal money. I mean they should have had even money. Even some of the fishermen made, that what I hear -- some guys made three or four thousand dollars in just two or three days or something like that. So it makes a difference.

MR. MAURICE: Did you ever attend any meetings where the Department of National Defence or Indian Affairs representatives --.

MR. JANVIER: I had gone to the one but I didn't really pay attention too much. But I know at one time the Indian Affairs -- and I know who all -- the chief and a guy from the National Defence was there, I know that. He was sitting there to listen to us.

MR. MAURICE: Was this prior to the range being established or after?

MR. JANVIER: Yeah, at that time. Just about-- just before that time, I think.

MR. MAURICE: Do you recall what was being discussed at that meeting?

MR. JANVIER: I couldn't recall that really. Like I said, if I was involved init, I would have been right in there. But the brothers might have knew and all that.

MR. MAURICE: I'm curious what happened to the family farm. You mentioned that your father was farming for a period of time and that you had one of the first thrashing machines. What happened to that farm? Did anyone take it over?

MR. JANVIER: As the time goes, a lot of people said the same thing, like as long as we're trapping and making a few dollars, to come back with and keep this farm operating. This is how the operation went. As the time goes, we're losing all that money, and the -- all the machinery was going down the drain because we couldn't afford them, we had no other way to afford them.

MR. MAURICE: Were you yourself farming or was your brother farming after your dad passed away?

MR. JANVIER: We -- I had a little farm, yes. I still got about eighty-- eighty acres of cultivation -- that's cultivated, but I never farmed that lately. I have to hire somebody to do that now.

MR. MAURICE: Those are all the questions I have, sir. Thank you verymuch.

Were there any questions? Do you recall how much income you were earning from your trap line before the range was established?

MR. JANVIER: The income?

MR. MAURICE: Yes.

MR. JANVIER: Well, it varies, it varies. You used to go out there -- well, it just depends how long we would go out. We would go out when we had a chance. I had a dog team of my own and -- well, anyway, we made enough to make a good living on.

MR. MAURICE: And how did that income compare with your income after the range was established?

MR. JANVIER: My income after?

MR. MAURICE: Did it generally stay the same, did it increase, did it go down?

MR. JANVIER: At times the fur was higher at that time. If the fur was higher, then we'd make a little more. And other times, the fur would drop and we'd lose a little more. But usually, averages -- the fur trapping was pretty near average every year.

MR. MAURICE: Do you still trap for a living?

MR. JANVIER: No, I don't trap for a living. You can't make living on trapping any more for the price of the fur at any time.

MR. MAURICE: So you stopped because of the price of fur?

MR. JANVIER: Yeah, the fur prices don't do nothing.

MR. MAURICE: Do you recall when you stopped trapping?

MR. JANVIER: Well, I still got the trap line. We still go up there once in a while when we get a chance. We still get what we get, a little bit. We do a lot of hunting in that area.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. But you stopped trapping on a regular basis then?

MR. JANVIER: Stopped?

MR. MAURICE: You've stopped trapping on a regular basis now?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, for the time being.

MR. MAURICE: But you say your son may take it over eventually?

MR. JANVIER: Yeah, we just have to go get a few animals and because there's not even -- there's no chickens left or rabbits any more -- and as well, the drinking water is bad. You can't trust your water any more like you used to. That's the thing.

MR. MAURICE: Thank you, Mr. Janvier.

Those are all the questions I have. Perhaps the Commissioners may have some more.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay. I don't have any questions. One of the things that I was going to suggest, though, is that perhaps some of the other Commissioners do at this time -- but one of the things -- you're in a very unique situation and we would like to consider that a little bit more. It may be that when we come back, there may be some other questions we'd like to ask you, so I hope you would consider making yourself available for when we come back next month. Perhaps perhaps we could do this again.

But at this time, maybe what I'll do is ask the other Commissioners if they have some questions for you. The day is drawing closely to a close and there are other people that we want to get to and give them an opportunity to speak. But in the meantime, we'll see if there are any other questions.

Commissioner Prentice, do you have any questions?

Commissioner Bellegarde?

There are no questions. One of the things I would like to say, though, before I excuse you is that you're obviously a wealth of knowledge. You've had experiences in both the bombing range area and now outside of it and you're also in the unique position of having something to pass on and perhaps keeping those skills and the knowledge of what existed prior to that bombing range alive. And for that, you should feel very satisfied, and I hope that works for you.

MR. JANVIER: Well, why I'm doing this, I have a couple of boys. Of course, they're not -- I can't say they're trappers, but I think they go out and make a living now if they had to. They could survive if I put them in the bush. That's how I trained them, you know. I know they could shoot their rabbits and snare their rabbits, I know that much. And they can shoot their wild animals as well. I tried to learn them how to survive. And this is the thing -- this is why I want to keep this alive for generations to come.

I told them, I says we have to live like this. In times to come, we just might have to do this, you never know.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: You never know, and I think you're to be commended and you should feel very satisfied.

MR. JANVIER: Of course, you've got no more rabbits there, hardly anything.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Well, I for one am delighted that somebody still has a trap line and may be able to do something with that, so--.

MR. JANVIER: It would be lots more -- and other concerns that I have, but I'm not saying it now. Like you said, there's other concerns I have about this here business.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Well, perhaps we can talk about them when we return.

MR. JANVIER: Yeah. It bothers me so much because I'd like to see my friends survive in this reserve as well. I don't like to see them die off.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Well, as I say, you're to be commended for that.

So I think at this time, what we need to do is take a ten-minute break. But before we do that, I want to thank you very much for you taking the trouble and the time to relate the information that you have within you to us and educating us, and I know we've talked a lot outside. We'll, I'm sure, have the opportunity to talk again. The knowledge that you have is very important to us in the job that we have to do, and I want to thank you very, very much for sharing some of that with us. And hopefully, we can do it again later.

MR. JANVIER: You're very welcome, sir. Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you. We'll take a ten-minute recess -- and I mean ten minutes.

---Recess.

---Upon resuming

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Mr. Henderson, can I ask you to call the next witnesses, please?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Our last two witnesses for today will be Mr. and Mrs. Grandbois, Mr. Toby Grandbois and Mrs. Eva Grandbois, who will give their evidence in turn. If it's acceptable to the witnesses, I'll ask Mr. Grandbois questions first.

Good afternoon, Mr. Grandbois.

Can I ask you, please, your age, sir?

MR. GRANDBOIS: My age? Seventy-one.

MR. HENDERSON: Seventy one. Thank you.

And before the bombing range, were you trapping in the Primrose Lake area?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes, yes. I was trapping.

MR. HENDERSON: Could you tell us what your life was like then and how the community was organized?

MR. GRANDBOIS: I was a trapper all right. And when I first started, my dad and his dad was a trapper, too. And my dad, they buried him over there, in Primrose Lake. That's where I come from, Primrose Lake, that's my home, right there.

That's how I start trapping with my dad. I was very young when I started. I must have been about nine or ten years old.

Most of the time we were in the bush in the wintertime. We'd come out sometime in May, that's how we made a living. And when this white man started coming in and start talking about his bombing range -- but I never seen anybody going around until that fellow -- that they were going to give us money or anything.

Anyway, at that time when this started, I was the one that was in that meeting at that time about the bombing range -- I was at that meeting. Twenty year's lease, in twenty year's time, we were supposed to be getting paid and some money -- or we get the land back or the money, that's what they promised us. That's how they made a deal, I think. I'm pretty sure that's the way I understood, that's how it started. I was there.

MR. HENDERSON: When you were trapping regularly before the bombing range was created, did you ever buy supplies from the store?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, well, in the first place, we didn't need a license in the first place, but we start buying it on account of we got nothing. You can't trap, so we went out to buy a license to trap. We got no choice then. We had to buy a license. In the first place, we didn't need it. But what would I do? I had to go trapping. Otherwise, they'd take a --.

MR. HENDERSON: When you bought the license, did you get a registered trap line?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, I got a registered trap line.

MR. HENDERSON: And what area was that in of the bombing range?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Close to Canoe Lake, Section Seventy-three, I think it was.

MR. HENDERSON: Section Seventy-three. And would that be in Saskatchewan?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you.

What sort of animals would you trap and what sort of other hunting would you do when you were out on the trap line?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Well, I go hunting. Anything what I can catch to eat, rabbit, chickens. I didn't have to buy no meat. I didn't take no meat when I go up north. What I'd take was a slab of bacon or stuff, what we need. I never took no meat up north. It was staples. There's a lot of steak in the bush there, I never took any. I know I'm going to get something when I get up there. We took no meat. That was my meat over there.

And my welfare was over there in the bush, too. I remember that. I had welfare over there, not here. There was nothing here. That's how we made a living. All these Indians up here, they made a living out of Primrose Lake. That's our home up there.

MR. HENDERSON: Would you, when you went up onto the trap line, would you take kerosene for lanterns or anything like that? Would you take kerosene for lanterns or gasoline or anything like that?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, we didn't know what gasoline or radios, lard or grease -- we didn't have any such thing as a gas lamp.

MR. HENDERSON: And when you hunted meat, how would you store it if you were going to cache it or save it for later? How would that be done?

MR. GRANDBOIS: About how we use the meat? Well, we dry it up. We used mostly dry meat - and keep it fresh. It doesn't spoil then.

MR. HENDERSON: I remember a few moments ago Mrs. Loft was saying that you could also get under the moss into areas where there was still ice?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, I know that. But anyway, in the wintertime you can keep meat. In the summertime, we would usually put them in the moss and keep it.

MR. HENDERSON: That was something you would use in the summer to keep things cool.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you do any farming at all when you were down in the southern --?

MR. GRANDBOIS: I had done a little farming but it wasn't worth it, so I never bothered too much.

MR. HENDERSON: How large -- how many acres would you have down here?

MR. GRANDBOIS: I had about ten acres, just enough for the horses to feed. That's all I had, I didn't make any money with it or try and sell the grain or anything, just for feed, horse feed.

MR. HENDERSON: Would you use the horses when you were going back and forth?

MR. GRANDBOIS: We used to have a dog team when we went up north. Around here, we used to have a team of horses.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have cabins out on the trap line?

MR. GRANDBOIS: What?

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have cabins?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes, we had two cabins.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you have any idea of --.

FROM THE FLOOR: Will you excuse me. I was wondering if Toby could say it in Chippewayan because the translator would like it. It's easier for him to say it out in English.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Absolutely.

MR. GRANDBOIS: I can talk maybe -- maybe a little better.

MR. HENDERSON: It's no problem for us if you would be happier to speak in Chippewayan.

MR. GRANDBOIS: I'm kind of hard of hearing, it's going to make it a little hard for me.

MR. HENDERSON: Well, I can certainly try to speak up so you can hear me. If you would rather answer in Chippewayan, we have a translator right here, so it's no problem, we can understand.

Can you tell the Commissioners, please, when you first heard that there was going to be a bombing range?

MR. GRANDBOIS: When I heard the bombing range? I was there. I was the one that was there at the meeting. Me and my old lady, we were listening to the speaker talking.

MR. HENDERSON: And where was that?

MR. GRANDBOIS: For twenty years.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember where that meeting was held?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes, at Suckerville. We used to call it Suckerville overthere.

MR. HENDERSON: And that was -- somebody from the government came in?

MR. GRANDBOIS: That was in a fish plant where we had the meeting.

MR. HENDERSON: There was a fish plant at Suckerville?;

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Did someone from the government come in?

MR. GRANDBOIS: There was some government -- but I forgot their name. Eckland, I think his name was.

MR. HENDERSON: And as I understand it, he said there would be a bombing range for twenty years and you would get the land back or --

MR. GRANDBOIS: Get paid, that was how I understood it.

MR. HENDERSON: -- or get paid again.

MR. GRANDBOIS: That's what I understood.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember how much money you were paid for your trap line?

MR. GRANDBOIS: The first time, I got five hundred for my equipment. That's all I got.

MR. HENDERSON: And were there payments after that?

MR. GRANDBOIS: At the time there was that purchase order, I didn't get too much. I got about eighteen hundred, something like that, I'm not too sure. That was the purchase order, that's all it was. That's how we bought stuff.

MR. HENDERSON: And was there a second payment with purchase orders?

MR. GRANDBOIS: What?

MR. HENDERSON: Was there another payment with purchase orders after that?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Well, there was that cash payment later on -- I don't know how long after. We got that quit claim, you call that. You had to sign a paper -- if you wanted your cheque, you sign your name here, otherwise you don't get your cheque. There's only me that sign our name. That's the only way to get our cheque. We had no choice, we had to sign our name to get our cheque.

MR. HENDERSON: Did anyone explain to you what you were signing?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No. I don't know what we were signing for, but just told to sign here, then you would get your cheque.

MR. HENDERSON: Did anybody tell you -- I'm sorry.

MR. GRANDBOIS: No.

MR. HENDERSON: Did anybody tell you that there wouldn't be any more payments after that?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No.

MR. HENDERSON: Those are the main questions that I have, sir.

Could you tell us how your life changed or how your family's life changed after the bombing range was created?

MR. GRANDBOIS: My life changed? My life changed, I've been working right along here and there -- a farmer, brushing, picking rocks, thrashing, stooking -- you name it, I used to work it all. When I first started at the airport up here, I worked one whole summer for a dollar twenty-five an hour. I worked all summer in the airport.

MR. HENDERSON: At the airport when they were building it?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes. That's how I made a living since.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have a commercial fishing license, too?

MR. GRANDBOIS: What?

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have a commercial fishing license?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, I never did. All I had was a trapping license.

MR. HENDERSON: Excuse me just a moment, please. If I may, sir, I'm just going to come around and show you a document. And perhaps you can tell me if this is the one that you signed at that time. I'll come around there.

MR. GRANDBOIS: That's my signature all right, this one.

MR. HENDERSON: For the record, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Grandbois has identified the document and his signature on it, and he indicated to me that the mark above his name was made by his father at the same time.

Do you remember what that document looked like when you signed it? Does it look familiar to you now?

MR. GRANDBOIS: It was just a blank paper. There was nothing written anything or -- there was nothing, "just sign here," that's all I did.

MR. HENDERSON: If I understand what you're saying correctly, you signed a blank piece of paper and you were told to sign this or you don't get your cheque?

MR. GRANDBOIS: That's all I did.

MR. HENDERSON: And did anyone tell you anything else at that time?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember where that meeting was held when you signed that paper?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Where?

MR. HENDERSON: Where was the meeting held when you signed that paper?

MR. GRANDBOIS: It was signed in a bank in Grand Centre.

MR. HENDERSON: In a bank?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: In Grand Centre.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes, that's where we signed this paper before we got the cheque. I have to sign this or I get nothing. That's how they made the deal with us. We had no choice.

MR. HENDERSON: Was there a large number of people there at that time?

MR. GRANDBOIS: They let us go in one by one, not crowded like that. Just one by one, when your turn come, you come in. Otherwise you --.

MR. HENDERSON: So your father would have gone in before you? But you weren't there when he signed it?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember who the government person was that was there?

MR. GRANDBOIS: I don't remember too much about it. It was quite a while -- no, I know there was one Indian Affairs, I know that one.

MR. HENDERSON: One person from Indian Affairs, but you don't recall who it was?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you. Do you remember if you signed any other documents?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No.

MR. HENDERSON: Have you been able to do any trapping since the bombing range was created?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, after that I never did too much. There's no place else to go -- unless I sneak into the bombing range, but I never did that. If I go in there, they said they would shoot me, that's what they said. That's what they told the Indians in the first place.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Excuse me, they said they would shoot you if you went in there?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, that's what they told us.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Who told you that?

MR. GRANDBOIS: One of those Air Force guys. What would happen if you go in there on a bombing run, they shoot you. That was the answer we got.

MR. HENDERSON: Those are my questions, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure the Commissioners might have one or two arising out of that.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I think we might.

First of all, let me thank you very much for taking the time to come and help us out here. A question that I have is -- you remember the meeting in Suckerville in the fish plant. Do you remember how many people were there?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No. A few -- I couldn't name them all.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Names don't matter right now. But were there band members and trappers?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, trappers. White men trappers there, too.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: There were white men trappers there as well.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay. Were these trappers that trapped in the same area, in the bombing range area?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, they got their own lines so nobody was fighting them at that time.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Did you know them?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Well, a lot of white people trap there, too. I don't know them, all their names. I've forgot them all.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: That's okay. Were there any [Métis]?

MR. GRANDBOIS: What?

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Were there any [Métis]? Were there any [Métis] people in there, in the meeting?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Indians?

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: [Métis] people.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Not that I know of. I don't know. Yeah, could have been, too, because there was some trappers and --.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Were there government people there?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah. Eckland was there.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Eckland was.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: At least him. And they told you, if I'm not mistaken, that -- did they tell you what the deal was going to be? Is that what they were there to do, tell you what the deal was?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, they told us that we were going to get paid for so long. And then twenty years' time, we was going to get another payment or else we got that land back. That's what they said. That's the way I understood.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: And so you thought that you were going to be stopped from trapping for maybe twenty years?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Did you think that you would go back in after twenty years?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, we figured we were going to go back in twenty years' time.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: And in the meantime, during that twenty -year period, did you think that you were going to get paid for not trapping?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah. We figured in twenty years' time, we figured, we were going to get paid. It's twenty years' time now.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do you remember any meetings prior or before Suckerville?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, I never. There was only one meeting I went to, that one.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Now, you were a trapper from the time you were a little boy.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Was your father a trapper as well?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, my father was a great trapper.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: And you were well known.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, well known.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay. And yet, being a well known trapper, nobody from the government before this meeting in Suckerville ever talked to you about the kind of money you made?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, no. Nobody talked about my money, what we made. Nobody said anything.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Did anybody come and ask you about how many traps you had or --?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No. They told us -- now I remember. In Cold Lake, in a hotel, upstairs, we -
-taking names for equipment claims. That's where we got the five hundred dollars for that.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: So this was after Suckerville?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, it was before that. That was the first payment, the five hundred dollars.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I see. That's when they were asking you how many traps you had?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, yeah. That's the time they started that.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: One, this is kind of a general question. I take it that you really loved being a trapper. That was a life that you really enjoyed.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah. That was my life.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Afterwards, you said you did a number of things. Did that include farming?

MR. GRANDBOIS: A little bit, not much.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Just for the record, Mr. Grandbois, was it better for you -- let's just see if we can take an example. Two years before the bombing range, you made a good living, I take it.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay. Was that living better than after the bombing range?

MR. GRANDBOIS: It wasn't. It was better in the bush. You don't have to wait for the welfare then at that time, so it was better. But I used to get a little welfare, it wasn't much, less than a hundred a month with my family. Very little.

I remember one time I got a purchase order for six dollars for one month. And you're a man that lives with his family for six dollars a month? That's what I got one time.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do you still miss it, Mr. Grandbois? Do you still miss going up to the bush?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes. I still miss that bush, right to today. I wish I was up there. I'd be better off than sitting at home doing nothing. My mind is over there all the time. Not here, over there. That's how my mind works right now, how good it was in the bush. That's how I was raised over there in the bush. That was my life.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Thank you, sir. I'll just ask the other Commissioners if they have any questions they would like to ask you, if you don't mind.

Commissioner Prentice?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Yes, sir. Your father trapped in the same area, up near Canoe Lake?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes. We worked the same place, the same line, me and my dad.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And had your father's father trapped there also?

MR. GRANDBOIS: It must have been before us. My dad was just born when his dad died. He was buried in Primrose, and he didn't know his dad, my dad. He must have been travelling, they buried him in Primrose, otherwise they would be burying him up here some place. He must have been trapping up there, living up there.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And when you were a small boy, did your family have a home down here at this place as well as a cabin up at Primrose?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Our home was over there, not here. We got no home up here, we lived over there in the bush.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: So you didn't live here at all?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: When did you first come to live here?

MR. GRANDBOIS: After they took over the bombing range, we damn well had to get out of there. Otherwise we would be shot.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And in those days when you lived at Primrose, where did you buy your supplies and things?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Well, here and there when I worked, that's how I got my supplies.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Did you use the store that was at Suckerville?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And you said that you did not have a commercial fishing license.

MR. GRANDBOIS: No.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: But did you fish?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Just my dad had. Once, one winter we start fishing, it was closed, so we didn't fish any more after.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Did you fish a lot as a boy with your father?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, we did a lot of fishing with somebody hiring me while I fished with them. Wages -- I used to work for wages, fishing wages.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: That was also part of how you made your income?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, that's how I used to do that. Otherwise, I don't fish over there, I just go into the bush and cut ties for ten cents a tie.

That was a good life, too, that. I used to stay in the bush there cutting ties. There was no such a thing as a cross-cut. All we had was one cross-cut, me and my cousin. All winter long, we used one cross-cut and ties, that's how we used to make our living, too.

And there were a lot of ways at that time to make a living. A lot of ways. And now you can't get a living without --you can't get a job now. As long as you're not trained, you won't get no job now.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Was there a burial ground up on Primrose?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah, there's a burial ground where my father is buried.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And where would that be located?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Just across from Suckerville there. There's a big point there. Maybe the Air Force knows where it would be about. I can find the place yet.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Commissioner Bellegarde?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you.

Your people and your family have burial grounds on Primrose, in the Primrose Lake area. Did anyone ever talk to you about protecting those burial grounds or perhaps even moving gravesites?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Not me. Nobody told me anything about it.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: They just told you can't come in there or we'll shoot you?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Did anybody, in your recollection, ever go into the bombing range and were they ever arrested or detained or shot?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, not that I heard of. Not that I know of.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: But some people did go in.

MR. GRANDBOIS: I know some people went in.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: But never got caught.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Never got caught.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Or else they would have been shot.

MR. GRANDBOIS: I never tried to go in there.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Your father and your grandfather trapped up there for many, many years. Do you recall either of them saying anything about that area being part of a Treaty Reserve for the Cold Lake First Nation?

MR. GRANDBOIS: For that, I don't know myself. On that, nobody mentioned or anything. I don't know -- I heard some words about the Primrose area -- it used to be reserve as far as there.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Mr. Henderson, do you have any follow-up questions or does anyone else have any questions?

MR. HENDERSON: Just one other area that I would ask about. Mr. Grandbois, when you were trapping and the prices were good and the furs were good, where did you sell your fur?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Where did I sell my fur? Oh, maybe Roy Hall or Hudson Bay or a fur buyer, Hudson's Bay mostly.

MR. HENDERSON: And where was the Hudson's Bay located?

MR. GRANDBOIS: There's one up here not very far. There used to be one in Cold Lake.

MR. HENDERSON: There was one in Cold Lake -- there was one just off from the reserve?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Just at the top of the hill there, just before you -- not far here, just before you cut in the road, top of the hill there.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have credit there in the summer?

MR. GRANDBOIS: What?

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have credit there in the summer?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yeah. We usually would get credit.

MR. HENDERSON: Was that a regular thing?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Whatever you need. The stuff wasn't too much at that time, maybe ten cents for a package of tobacco, cigarettes ten cents, box of snuff fifteen cents. Now, a box of snuff is five fifty-five. In them days, it was fifteen cents. And cigarettes that I smoke were twenty-five cents. In them days, stuff was cheap. With one dollar, you could live home one month with one dollar, a whole month.

MR. HENDERSON: The reason I was asking about the Hudson's Bay store --- I'm sorry.

MR. GRANDBOIS: I remember I used to go eating at the cafe and have a damn good meal for twenty-five cents or twenty cents. Nowadays, you can't eat for twenty cents. They'll just kick you out if you have twenty cents.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: At least they won't shoot you.

MR. GRANDBOIS: They might shoot you too, the way the white men are now.

MR. HENDERSON: Just one last question I was going to ask--.

MR. GRANDBOIS: In them days, there's no law. There would be no white man left in Primrose at that time because there was no law, I'm pretty sure of that.

MR. HENDERSON: I think we understand that point. Just one last question, if I may. What happened to the Hudson's Bay store that used to be over here?

MR. GRANDBOIS: What?

MR. HENDERSON: What happened to the Hudson's Bay store that used to be just off the edge of the reserve here?

MR. GRANDBOIS: One of them was burned down, and one of them was later shut down. Hudson Bay went broke, I guess.

MR. HENDERSON: Was that very long after?

MR. GRANDBOIS: They didn't make much money on the Indian. They used to pile the fur -- make a row about that high, about four feet high, they used to pile fur --- to the top. It was during the time we usually got -- loader at that time. It was a good deal, that one. That's how the government -- that's how the Hudson's Bay went rich.

MR. HENDERSON: And are you saying, sir, that when you stopped bringing the fur, they closed the store?

MR. GRANDBOIS: That's what my dad used to tell me. Every place where you go, there was a sign, Hudson Bay land, around this place here. At that time.

MR. HENDERSON: Those are my questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, sir.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Unless you have anything more to add, Mr. Grandbois, then --.

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, I have nothing to add. Ask any of your questions -- if you have anything to ask, ask me.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: We may just do that now. But before I excuse you, what I'd like to do at this time is just to allow Mr. Henderson to introduce your wife, I believe, and we'll take it from there, and we'll excuse you together later on. Mr. Henderson?

MR. HENDERSON: Mrs. Grandbois, good afternoon.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Good afternoon.

MR. HENDERSON: May I ask how old you are now?

MRS. GRANDBOIS: I was born on November 25th, 1925.

MR. HENDERSON: That would make you just sixty-seven.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Sweet sixty-seven, she said. And the other person was going to say, O sixty-seven, Bingo!

MR. HENDERSON: We still have room for a graceful sixty-seven.

I understand you were born on Big Island in the Primrose Lake area?

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Yes. How did you find that out?

MR. HENDERSON: Well, this is a Commission of Inquiry.

Perhaps it would be better if you told me the story, if you could do that, please.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Yes. I was born in Big Island, as I was told.

MR. HENDERSON: Could you tell us what your family life was like then?

MRS. GRANDBOIS: My family's life was a life of hunting, trapping, and fishing. Wherever they'd go, it was a free country for us, a free land. Wherever they go, where they could survive, they trapped. So this is where they were when I was born. Before Christmas they brought me back, as they told me. I was baptized over here at St. Raphael.

And then I was raised down in Primrose. I'm telling you I was four year old. I came back over here. We had a log house, my dad had built a log house -- I believe he had built it. We lived there.

And by the church, there was a day school where kids went to school, so I was sent to day school when I was four years old until I was six years old. But my dad went back and forth to Primrose for hunting, trapping, fishing, and brought back everything what he killed in order for us to survive. After I was six years old, they shut down the school that was here, the day school.

What did they do to us? Me and my sister were playing on the grounds over here. They stole us off the grounds, and we were brought to residential school in Onion Lake where I was in jail for

nine years -- so-called "in jail" because we were treated rough. That was the hardest days I ever took. But as I grew older, I knew better. I started fighting back.

When I was thirteen -- coming fourteen, I believe it was, past our grade eight, but we couldn't go any higher than grade eight -- as the one woman said over here, yes, she's right. So we took training for sewing, cooking, janitor, or what you could think of. I took that for two years.

As we were being treated rough, the little ones were being treated rough, I started fighting back for my rights. So I was kicked out of the school in 1939. I was not quite fifteen yet -- I was fifteen.

From there on, I went with my dad, with my folks, to Primrose. According to the history of the people we have heard, I was raised by my grandmother. My grandmother was blind. She had told us the history of years, about our forefathers. And time immemorial, this is our grounds and this is our land. This is where we survive, off land, and this is our bank -- Indian bank, not these banks that's here I'm talking about, where you put money away. There's an Indian bank, that is where we get our monies from.

We go back and forth from here to Primrose in order for us to survive. Even before our time, even before Columbus, even before the Queen was here, before they make treaties, this is our land and it is our country. This is where we lived in order for us to survive. What are they doing with this place now? They're destroying it.

The timber that's there, we made good use of it. Of any kind of a timber that's in there, such as birch, pines -- we make log houses with pines, barns. Birch, we make canoes with it. We make baskets with it. And for our storage for our fridge, which we call fridge over here -- not with electricity, we had no electricity. We used bitch lights. I might as well say it out right because that's the way we had called it. We made storage bins in the muskeg.

The older people, our fathers killed moose, deer, caribou. The woman, they tanned these hides in order for them to store stuff in there for the winter, and they put this away in the bins. Most of these people lived out there as we lived out there, throughout the winter, throughout the summer, most of us. We picked berries and we stored it away -- not in jars, in the baskets.

We fish. And we make smoked fish as we make dried meat and pemmican. We store it all away for the winter -- same thing with fish. Any kind of fish that we'd catch, we used it all. Such as mariahs -- it's just like halibut. We used the skin, we don't throw it away. We use it for our windows. Caribou hides, deer hides, what we could think is bright enough. We used that for windows. Birds, ducks. They had dogs to hunt ducks, they didn't need guns all the time to hunt ducks. They stored all these things away. Pemmican. They used the feathers to make blankets with. They skin it, they used even that for blankets. Its pouch -- if you made grease, they put that grease into its pouch, store that away, as I just finished telling you for a light, for a bitch light. Of any kind of an oil that you could get out of species, they store everything away in order for us to survive.

There's more than that yet to come. As I lived with my dad in the bush, we had no cross-cut saw. I had no sweet saw, no power saw. I had to chop wood. Some times I chop wood, me and my

brother, three days -- it would last about a week -- in order for us, me and my dad, three of us to go way in the bush for us to be trapping and hunting for the family. And my dad goes alone away for moose or for trapping. As he is coming back, if he shoots a moose, if it's late, he tells us, he shouts out the directions.

We hook up the dog team and we just go, late or no -- late or not late. Even at one o'clock in the morning, we used to go in order for us to survive, in order for the wolves not to get at any meat of what we kill.

We suffered through these lands and yet we didn't consider it that way. At times, we take it the hard way, but yet this was our life. This is the way we were brought up, and that is the way we are still until today. I'm still that way. I don't depend on anybody in order for me to survive, in order for me to get money. I have to depend on my own as my dad had taught me.

And all the things my dad taught me, until today I still remember. It wasn't a very easy task, but we still went through with it because this was the only way that we lived, this was our livelihood. This was -- this Primrose Lake is the most important land that they have taken away from us. This was an Indian bank. We don't need to put money away in a bank over there to be waiting for us. The money is waiting for us in Primrose Lake. That's our bank. This is where we get our money, and we make plenty of it, too.

Even before our time, our forefathers lived there. Before the Queen. Before Columbus. This is our land, and this our country, and this is our bank. We live by land, we live off land, and we're still living on it. Even how hard it's going to be for me, the way I think, they have to give us back our land because this land belongs to us. I am really serious regarding this Primrose because this is the only survival that we had.

After they leased our land, what happened? What did they do to us? Either they told us that we can't go back or -- what did they do to us over here? What's becoming of our families over here? They poisoned us by them bringing us back to this reserve over here. They poisoned us through liquor and drugs. Before, there was no drugs and there was no liquor over there. We intend to what we were supposed to be doing when we were in the bush. You would not never hardly seen an Indian drunk on the streets. They were in the bush all the time. As we were.

Until I was married, even how big we are -- how old we are -- even though we were eighteen years old, seventeen years old, we still were not the boss of ourselves. Our parents are the boss of us. We have to do as what our parents said. If a person asks us in hand, they just give us away this way for marriage. This is what happened with me. At first I was sorry, what happened with me, but now I don't feel sorry about anything. I experienced, myself, a lot about everything and what has happened with me. We had our own trap line in Section Seventy-three. We walked this road from here to Primrose by horseback, horse packs, dog packs. Those that had teams helped each other. We helped one another. And as we get over there, at Primrose, if it's time for us to harvest, as we're going along towards -- heading towards Township Seventy-three, on the way down, we set traps, we set snares. By the time we get over, the week, we come back and pick up all our furs. We lived this life all through our lives.

And as I was talking about timber and all these things, all the herbs that are in there we even used. We did not come back and forth to see the doctor. We used the herbs of what we know in order to cure each other, to heal each other. We did not need no doctor. And this is all destroyed. There's even medicine for cancer, it's up there. They're destroying it. There's even medicine for meningitis, they're destroying it. It's up there. They don't know.

And why shall we give up our tradition? To my part, I wouldn't even give in if they give me a million dollars, I wouldn't show them what kind of a medicine -- medicine for cancer or meningitis -- because I know what they're going to do with it. John Doe will make a lot of money with it, and us will be sitting in the corner watching them.

Ever since we leased that land, it's a great loss for us. It's pitiful. All what we have learned from our forefathers, all what I have learned from my grandmother, we lost it all. When the Queen came to make treaty with the Indians, most of our people were in Primrose, according to what I hear. Primrose has been given to us, for us to survive on, this is our land. From Primrose right down to Beaver Dam, as they call it Beaver Dam now. The Queen did not take our rights away from us. The Queen gave us our rights for us to hunt, trap and fish as far as the sun is still up and the rivers flow and the green grass grow. If she wanted us out of that area, out of that Primrose, she would have got that land back away from us and sent us back to this Cold Lake area. But she didn't. She gave it to us -- she gave it because it was ours, it's still ours, and that's the way I still feel about it. This is our land.

And as according to her, what my husband just said, that we were -- the first time we negotiated, the people negotiated for the lease -- I was there, too. But what did they ask for? For the lease.

They ask the people only for the service, service of that land. From air to air -- weapon training and testing, that's all that they ask for, nothing else. They did not ask the people for the resources. They did not ask the people for timber, to destroy that timber and to take oil out of there, they did not ask the people for that, just for training.

And what are they doing to it now? They're taking oil, timber, everything what you could think of, building roads in there. And we are back here with your poor, looking at them as they are making money, but where's our money now? Where's that twenty years' lease that they promised us? Where is it?

I had a big argument regarding where all these things, all the quit claims, because they would not let the people know what they were doing. They did not let the people know it was a quit claim. Until I read the paper that it was a quit claim -- I started arguing, I had a big argument. They got each person, each individual person, one by one into the office in order for them to sign, to put their signature in there, in order for them to get cheques. Even there, they fool the people. I even argued right there, I was kicked out of there because I had too much -- I had a big mouth, I guess.

But I was fighting for my people because they did not know what they were doing. But they had no choice to take that money because we had no other choices. We were living poor over here.

Did they look at us at that time? No. But when the money came, yeah, they were right there ready for them to grab the money -- I'm arguing over the money.

Did the government or Mr. Eckland or Mr. Knapp, did they ever help us out to go up north? Did they give us money to buy our horses? To buy our dog teams? To buy our equipment? To buy our groceries, for us to go up north? No. But when they found out that money was coming in, they were right there, ready to grab the money.

But they never helped a single family for us to go up north, to stay up north. The only social assistance that we got was the old people. Seventy-five years old -- a person had to be seventy-five years old before they got any rations. One of them was my grandmother. That was one of the rations that we got, a slab of bacon, five pounds sugar, a pound of tea, and about three pounds of beans and rice. They got a net. They got blankets -- one blanket. They got a print. That's all what they had to give.

And what did they do with these blankets? The men that hunted, they got tents, too. The men that hunted, they make parkas with that, with the tents and with the blankets. In order for us -- for them to keep warm in the winter as they were hunting and trapping. In order for the family to survive, they had to have good clothing, both the hunters and the trappers.

It's not very easy for me to be talking about everything according to what I'm trying to say in here. But I'm trying to talk about everything, of what I know, of what they did with us, and about the quit claim fooling the Indians, as they had fooled the Indians in the first place with the treaties. But Queen Victoria had given us this Primrose Lake right down to Beaver Dam for us to survive. She did not take our rights away.

You that's sitting in there, you haven't got no witnesses, but I've got a witness regarding to everything, and a good witness. And that witness didn't sell on us yet. The rivers didn't dry up yet nor the grass didn't burn down either. The sun is still up, that's our witness.

I want this land back because this is our livelihood. This was our life. This is the way we survived it. This is the way we trained our kids. Nowadays, how many kids know their culture? How many kids know how to survive? Not many. Not many are these kids know how to make fire outside, nor to cook for themselves outside.

What are they doing to us? Why are they doing this to us? What reason do they have to take all our rights away from us? Of all the fur that we bring back, before Christmas when we come back, we've got lots of money. We celebrate one whole week right down to New Year's. From one house to the other, we celebrated. They danced all night long right through to New Year's. People had enough money in order for them to do all these things.

Nowadays, there's nothing. There's nothing going on in here. There's no jobs for anybody, for them to go to work with. Would the government give us that money each Christmas? The money that we used to bring back from our banks, from Primrose, the furs that we brought back from Primrose, would the government give us that money each year like this? No. Then why is he doing this to us? Will the government give us groceries now? No. Will the government give us something to travel on? No. We have to earn these things the hard way.

We have learned the hard way and we will be the same as we are yet. We will still survive. You put a white man in the bush and an Indian in the bush, an Indian will survive but the white man will not survive, not unless they're trained.

It's a big loss, a real big loss, when we agreed about the lease. But we did not agree about the resources nor any kind of timber. We just agreed for the Air Force to put a bombing range in there, to be trained and tested.

The Indians agreed because it was a good sign. It was good for the Air Force to protect Canada, that's where the Indians' ideas were. So they gave in, but they leased it out for twenty years. Five year payment, and the rest was compensation until twenty years' lease. After twenty years, if they don't need it any more, any longer, they promised they would give the land back to the Indians or they will negotiate that again and pay us again.

It's forty years now. We want our back pay and then some if they don't want to give it back to us, or else you give us our land back. I would prefer to have the land back because in the future our little ones will be on the land. This place that they gave us over here, seven miles square. Do you think the government is going to make a farmer out of an Indian? They can't make an Indian to be a farmer because we were raised in the bush. We weren't raised to be trained to be a farmer. The first payments that we had for our equipment, it wasn't even enough of what they gave us. We got a big loss in there ourselves.

And how many of them got big money out of it? Most of these people didn't hardly have any cash and yet they got big money. We are the ones that got the big loss. There's quite a few of them in here that's been trapping all their life, because they did not pay for the license two years, they lost out. Those that got two years' license, them, they got big money. For what? Of all the traps and snares that we lost in the bush, they'll never give it back to us to now. They'll never give us back that money.

Year after year, time immemorial, that bank is there and it will still be there. It's not there for us because the white man took over, and it's still their bank. This belongs to us.

I'm crying out because of the future. They're mistreating us. They gave us the roughest deal that they could.

Mr. Eckland. And there was another guy that was at Primrose. They went over there in order to see what the Indians investigating them might as well see. Until they came down to my dad's place, start asking my dad a lot of questions. I was just right there. "If it's about Primrose, you just get the hell out of here and walk the road." He was kicked out of there, kicked out of my dad's place.

"This land is ours and it's going to stay ours. It's not yours, just stay out of here." He was kicked out. And these are the guys -- these are the people, Mr. Knapp, Mr. Hunter, these are the ones that fooled the people. They didn't even tell the people what they were doing with them. They make them sign their signatures on a blank sheet of paper.

They had a quit claim written down, the people didn't know what it was.

I argued right there, too. I had a big argument with Mr. Hunter. I had a big argument with Mr. Knapp, "You don't have to stick your nose in here any longer," they told me. "Yeah," I said, "I'll stick my nose in there as long as I live because I know what the hell I'm doing. What you're doing in here is wrong." I could never forget the words of what I had said to them. They really fooled the people on the quit claim.

They didn't let the people know what they were doing. All the monies that they took -- there's lots of monies in there that they took for themselves. They didn't tell the people how much money that has been paid for the compensation. They didn't let the people know how much money was given out to each individual person.

We actually have a rotten deal. And why? These white people that were in to Primrose. Why only them got the full amount? Why were they the only ones that got paid full when we were there even before them? When they arrive in Primrose, the Indians put them up, fed them and clothed them until they could do things for themselves.

Then what happens? They start killing off minks -- catching minks, foxes. They had ranches. And then they cleaned that out. I could still name them all, those white people that were out there.

Two Norwegians drowned out there in the summertime. And another time, another person was killed by a white man.

And all these burials are over there. That's our land and that's our burial ground. That's Primrose. This is where we survive. We depended on Primrose. There was hardly anybody on this reserve because we depended on Primrose more. The sort of people live year-round, some of them. They even cut hay over there, getting ready for the winter. There we stored everything for the winter in case hard times came.

There's lots more that I have to talk about regarding to everything, as to what I know. But I was raised by my grandmother. Although while my grandmother was living, my dad took care of her, but she was the one that raised me. And she was the one that told the history about everything -- regarding to everything.

Yes, we were the ones that's hunting and trapping. We are the main ones out there that's hunting, year after year, ever since I was a kid, until today. I still didn't give up my rights. I still hunt, I still trap, and I still fish until today. That's all that I'm living for.

I don't go in the store and buy meat nor eggs -- sometimes I'll buy eggs, but not very often. I live only on wildlife, wild meat. That's all that I live on. Until today, I'm still that way. But now we're getting over the hill. We're getting there that we can't hardly do anything for ourselves. Our mind is still young, we're still working and yet we can't get them to think about what we used to do.

But our boys, our children, are there because he taught them how to hunt. He taught them how to trap. He taught them how to depend on themselves, not to depend on us. These things, this

culture that I'm talking about, the schools should be teaching all this. But what do we have? There's hardly anything done about culture. We're even losing our language.

In 1984, I went back to university, which I had no business. I went back to university, to school, because lots of our young generation are drop-outs. "Why is that old lady going to school with her university?" "She's that old." That's the kind of a mind that I have, in order for them to go back to school. I went to university for one year, but they did not want to sponsor me any longer. I really wanted to go back to learn more, but I didn't because I had nobody to sponsor me. But I experienced myself a lot, a lot through that school. I took college one month and I went back to university in Regina.

I was trained as an alcohol counsellor in 1975. Ever since then, I have been working for alcoholics because I am an alcoholic myself.

As I just finished telling you, after they took the bombing range away from us, they poisoned us. But I was smart enough to quit – it's twenty-one years. I took training and I am a counsellor, lecturing people. In order for them not to get behind my back, it's according to Hoyle I have led my life.

This Primrose, I am still interested in it. I can never forget it because this is an Indian bank and this is how we have survived. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you Mrs. Grandbois. I have just a few questions if you don't mind helping me with them.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Yes?

MR. HENDERSON: The first one relates back to what Mr. Grandbois was saying when I was asking about the Hudson's Bay Company. There was one just off the reserve here and one in Cold Lake, and I wasn't clear on which one burned down and which one closed down.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: This one over here.

MR. HENDERSON: This one burned down?

MRS. GRANDBOIS: This one over here.

MR. HENDERSON: And do you remember when that would have been?

MRS. GRANDBOIS: I was small at that time. I would say about five, six -- they moved it to Cold Lake.

MR. HENDERSON: I see. This one burned down and they built a new one in Cold Lake, and then that one closed later?

MRS. GRANDBOIS: It was closed later.

MR. HENDERSON: And that was after the bombing range?

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Before.

MR. HENDERSON: Before the bombing range started.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Okay, thank you.

You also mentioned that you were at a meeting that I think Mr. Eckland and Mr. Knapp were at and you got into an argument with them? I believe you said you saw people there lined up to get the money, and you got into an argument with them. And I was wondering, who you meant by "they" or who were "they" who were lined up to get the money?

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Mr. Hunter. I was arguing with Mr. Hunter and Mr. Knapp.

MR. HENDERSON: I'm sorry. Mr. Hunter and Mr. Knapp.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: And if I remember correctly -- and please correct me if I'm wrong -- you got into an argument because they were lined up to get the money?

MRS. GRANDBOIS: No, I argued with Mr. Hunter, as you would yourselves -- if you get suspicious about something, what would you think about it, what would you say about it if you get suspicious about anything? Well, that's just the way the Indians were. They got suspicious because they were getting individual persons for them to sign their signature in order for them to get their cheques, so this is where I had the big argument. So they kicked me out of there.

Later, they make my husband sign in order for him to get the cheque. But what did they do to us? They make him pay for bills right in that credit union. And where did the money go, this is what I would like to find out. Where did the money go? Because we were dealing with Jake Josvanger at that time.

MR. HENDERSON: I'm sorry, I didn't get that.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Jake. His name is Jake Beavercrossing.

That money was supposed to go to him. He told me he never got that money, so we had to pay it back again. This is what they are doing with the Indians. And they never told us it was a quit claim. They denied everything to the people. They fool the people in any way at all, this is what happened. And the blank paper that we're talking about, there was only a blank paper. There was no statement on it. That's according to what all what the other people say, even him -- nothing but a blank paper that they sign that they put their Joe Henry on in order for them to get that cheque. Other than that, they weren't going to get it.

MR. HENDERSON: Was that what made you suspicious?

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Yes. Well, the people got suspicious regarding to all these things. The people got suspicious regarding to all these things, to what was happening. They never hardly had any meetings regarding to these things except only once. We had a big argument with Mr. Hunter -- maybe earlier it was a person that talked about it -- just regarding the first payment, with cash. That one.

The people got themselves what they needed. They bought horses, tractors, disks, and harrows. They bought things that what they think they would use in order for them to survive. But what we got out it -- the next year, they gave us purchase order. And this is where the big argument is -- the meeting was about. We had a big argument right there. "The money that was given to us is not your money, that's the people's money."

At the time, when we came back from Primrose and we made money, did you argue what we did with our money at that time? No. That's the answer they got from me. Then why are you arguing over these? Why are you fooling the people and having a quit claim and everything and giving them purchase order? We are not as stupid as you think we are. These are the answers they got out of me.

But they still get the purchase order. We had a big loss then because people -- things that they don't want to buy, they got, and they sold them back in order for them to get money. You see what they do with the Indians? If they would have left us alone as according to how we were, maybe things would have been better. If they would have left us alone with that Primrose until today, everything would have been okay.

Because that land belongs to us. All the resources that's being taken off now, that's our resources. That timber that they are destroying now, that's our timber. We gave only six -- twelve inches on top of the ground to the Queen, not down below. We did not make a deal with the National Defence, the Air Force, for any resources or any timber to be taken out.

And what are they doing to that land now? They're destroying it. It's destroyed with fire and now with machinery and now with oil.

Why do you want to destroy all these things, take all that out of the ground? We are not the ones that's going to suffer with it. You are the ones that's going to suffer with it later on. An Indian will survive but the white man will not survive. Once you've got all these things polluted, you've got all these things dried out, how are you guys going to live?

These things we are thinking of ourselves. Why are you destroying us, why are you destroying the land? This is our land. And this is our land, Primrose. We want it back. And we want our back pay back. If they did not promise us that twenty years, maybe things would have been different, but they promised the people. This is where the trouble is. If they didn't promise, we wouldn't be here today fighting over this, trying to find out things --- what happened. There's lots of things that happened, plenty of it.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you very much, Mrs. Grandbois. Those are all the questions that I and the other counsel here have.

Mr. Chairman, if the Commissioners have some questions, they'll certainly take an opportunity. Thank you again.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: You're welcome.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I think the message was pretty complete, it doesn't leave me with any questions, and I thank you for that. I don't know if Dan has any.

I can only say in conclusion that, like the others, I on behalf of the Commission want to thank you for what is a true education and valuable for us. It assists us greatly in the task that we have, the job that we have to do. Your contribution is enormous in terms of what we need and what we can take back with us, and you can be assured that the words that you've given us are not lost on us and have been taken down and will be considered very seriously.

You and your husband describe a life very seriously that many of us would dream to live, and be able to live. You're fortunate that you did it, and of course, not so fortunate that you can't do it any longer. And for that, I think we sense your sadness, particularly Mr. Grandbois, in comments that he made.

Ma'am, you're without question a true fighter, and I guess maybe even before the bombing range people would have said you're a warrior, so I think you can take a lot of pride in that. And Mr. Grandbois, I'm sorry that you still think in terms of -- your mind is still on the bush at all times and I'm sad for you that you can't be there.

But thank you. Both of you are a credit to your community and we're absolutely thrilled and honoured that you could come and share your stories with us. Thank you very much, and you can be excused.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Excuse me.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Yes, ma'am.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: You want to carry our message.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: We have it.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: If you are to carry our message, you will tell Mr. Mulroney that we want our land back and we want our back pay.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Loud and clear.

MRS. GRANDBOIS: Thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, may I suggest adjournment for the day and reconvene at nine-thirty?

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: That concludes the witnesses for today, and that's all the time that we have. What we'll do now at this time is adjourn for the day. We'll reconvene at nine-thirty tomorrow.

At this time, this session of our hearings is adjourned. Thank you.

---Whereupon the proceedings were adjourned, to be reconvened at 9:30 a.m. on December 17th, 1992.

5.3 Cold Lake, Alberta, December 17, 1992

---Upon commencing.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I hope everyone knows this is our last day here for this part of our sittings in Cold Lake. It is not the conclusion, however. And as I understand it, we will be back on February 1st and we will hear from other members of the community.

For those of you who may not be here at the end when we depart, there are a few things that I would like to say at this time.

First and foremost, I want to thank you as sincerely as I possibly can on behalf of myself and the Commission, for you providing us with the opportunity to be here, to visit your community, to share in your history, to share your memories with us, to share your experiences with us. I can tell you we were very moved by everything that we've heard and, I suspect, will continue to hear.

The parts of your lives that you relate to us are very special to us, they're very meaningful to us, and I can only tell you that your words won't go unheard. They will be heard. We are not here simply to listen to you and to document it. We're here to listen to you and to consider very seriously what you have to say, to take what you have to say and help us, guide us, let us make our decisions and do the job that we have to do with you in mind. And that's what we're here for. That's what we came for.

At the same time, I want to say that you have welcomed us in a manner which I don't think we could have imagined before we got here. You've been very, very kind to us, you've been generous to us, and I think we'll all go away from here feeling a special attachment to the Cold Lake community and the people in it. We've really appreciated this opportunity.

We feel very special that you shared it with us, and I think we can say that if -- as we indicated at the outset, this is the first opportunity for us. This was the first time for us to go forward and do the job that we were asked to do, and you were the first community that we had the privilege to do that with. And I can tell you, if other communities that we visit are the same as this, then our job will be one of the most special jobs that anyone could have. To be able to come into communities like this and to be welcomed in the fashion that we have been, and treated in the manner that we have been treated, it's special, and it won't be forgotten. And for that, I want to thank you.

We'll get on to our next witness. But first, I would like to turn the microphone over to Armand.

MR. LOTH: Thank you. Good morning.

We'll start off with a prayer from an elder here. Alec Janvier.

(Elder's prayer)

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you, Alec.

MR. LOTH/INTERPRETER: We will inform you, after dinner, that February 1st, the Commission will return. This is what I want to inform you about.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you, Armand. Just for those of you who are participating here, we have a list of four witnesses that we would like to get through today. We have a bit of a matter to try to deal with, and that is that we have to do the best we can within a limited period of time. The community has many things planned for this day, and they start early this afternoon. And we, of course, do not want to interfere with any of that, so we'll carry through until noon or shortly after noon to try to get as many witnesses as we can in during that period, and at that time, we will adjourn to February 1st, 1993, when we will reconvene these hearings.

S, with that, I will ask Mr. Henderson to call the first witness, please.

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The first witness this morning is Mr. Moise Janvier.

Good morning, Mr. Janvier.

MR. JANVIER: Hi, good morning.

MR. HENDERSON: Good morning. I wonder if you could the Commissioners, please, how old you are.

MR. JANVIER: I am seventy-seven.

MR. HENDERSON: Seventy-seven, thank you. And you live at Cold Lake?

MR. JANVIER: I'm from Cold Lake, yes.

MR. HENDERSON: And in the period around 1950, did you spend a lot of time at Primrose Lake?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, I spent most of my time up there.

MR. HENDERSON: Could you tell the Commissioners what life was like at that time for you and your family and for the community?

MR. JANVIER: Well at that time, it was kind of hard -- it wasn't too hard. That's all we had to do. We had to work for our living, we don't get nothing from the welfare, nothing them days. We just have to do it for ourselves. It wasn't too easy, but we made it. That's all through trapping and fishing. We lost all that land. We can't go fishing any more, not even trapping or hunting, nothing.

We want our pay back for it. They run that place for twenty years. It's many years past twenty years now, so we want something for that again.

Maybe somebody else remember those -- it's been many years now, I think, at my age. But still, somebody should know. Like Nora said, we should hear something about it. Her husband was one of them guys fishing and trapping. And this lady here, too.

How about we let somebody else say something about it, I'm not a very good talker. I'm short-winded.

MR. HENDERSON: That's fine, sir. Would it be easier if I just asked you short questions?

MR. JANVIER: Yeah, that's fine, go ahead.

MR. HENDERSON: All right. And of course, I'm just reminding all the people who are going to be witnesses, if you'd be more comfortable speaking in Chippewyan, we have the translation available right here, so please feel free to do so.

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: I'll speak a little bit of Chippewyan although there may not be too many Dene here. If you want me to tell a story, I will.

MR. JANVIER: Well, I'll say a few words because there's lots of younger people now forgetting their language.

MR. JANVIER/INTERPRETER: Us people, we speak Chippewyan, and we cannot lose our language. There are a lot of our people not here with us today, and today our grandchildren don't know their language. They are headed for hard times. If we ask and ask with all our thoughts, only then we may be able to turn events around. At least, us, we are being looked after in a home and we get pensions. But what about our grandchildren? We have to ask for them and fight for them now.

We're sitting independent with nothing. Therefore we need to think that the government will help us. That's all I'm going to say.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, sir. When you were a young man, did you live out on a trap line with your family?

MR. JANVIER: No. There's times before my family most of the time.

MR. HENDERSON: And did you do commercial fishing?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: And were you a commercial fisherman at the time they put in the bombing range?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: I'm sorry, was there something else you wanted to say there?

MR. JANVIER: No, that was in Primrose Lake. That's the only lake I used to fish with.

MR. HENDERSON: And did you have a commercial fishing license?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have a registered trap line at that time?

MR. JANVIER: No, it was our own. The treaty Indians, we have our own lines. We didn't have to pay for it. It was on our own land anyway.

MR. HENDERSON: And when they made the bombing range, did you get any compensation?

MR. JANVIER: We got a little bit.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you know what that was for?

MR. JANVIER: To get us away from there, I guess. Those are fishing rights, trapping, hunting. Now, they're going to agree -- use for twenty years, if it's more, we're going to pay you more. And now it's over twenty years. Now, we want our pay again. The land's still there, but we couldn't get in there now.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember -- I know this is almost forty years ago now, do you remember attending any meetings with government people to talk about compensation?

MR. JANVIER: I used to go to some meetings there, trappers' meeting and fishermen's meeting. There's different times, we went to Prince Albert for that. I went, too. And they've been saying something about it, but it was more to -- there were more in Alberta now.

MR. HENDERSON: You actually went over to Prince Albert to some meetings?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, about two times -- two or three times.

MR. HENDERSON: Was that with a group of fishermen that you belonged to

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember who you met over there? Do you remember who you met with in Prince Albert?

MR. JANVIER: No, I don't remember, no. It's a long time ago.

MR. HENDERSON: Were you involved in the last compensation payment where they asked you to sign a paper?

MR. JANVIER: No, I didn't have any.

MR. HENDERSON: You didn't get that one?

MR. JANVIER: No.

MR. HENDERSON: Could you tell the Commissioners how you see life in the community has changed as a result of the bombing range?

MR. JANVIER: It's no good for us. We've got no place to go. It's a nice fishing lake there, we can't even go there now. Hunting ground, trapping, it's no good for us, but now I can't do it anyway, but the younger generation would.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you do any farming?

MR. JANVIER: Yeah, I had a little farm over here.

MR. HENDERSON: How many acres?

MR. JANVIER: Oh, I don't know, about sixty some acres.

MR. HENDERSON: And did you farm that back in 1950 as well?

MR. [JANVIER]: I done a little bit. For feed, horses to feed -- some pigs, I raised my own.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have anything left over to sell in town or to other people?

MR. JANVIER: No, I didn't have much left to sell. If I do, it was next to nothing if I sell it. Everything was cheap then. Sell a car for ten dollars, there's no money in that. Maybe somebody else would have something to say about it.

MR. HENDERSON: There may be a few more questions, sir, if you don't mind.

MR. JANVIER: Go ahead.

MR. HENDERSON: Was it regular when you weren't fishing, when you were doing the farming, to run up a bit of credit at the store?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, some. But I paid it back. I charged my grub stake, like, at the store. We had the store -- there was a house there, but nothing there now. It was Jake Josvanger, supplied us with grub. In the falltime, same thing, he supplied us with grub, guns, or traps, whatever.

MR. HENDERSON: Then how would you clear the credit?

MR. JANVIER: Well, when we got the fur, we paid him back. It keep us going. His wife took over, she died too. His brother took over, somehow maybe he quit. It's just a building there, the store building are farming now. And that was about the end of Jake, I think. Any more questions?

MR. HENDERSON: Actually sir, I just wanted to give you the opportunity. I know we haven't had a chance to ask you about everything that you might want to tell the Commissioners. If there's something else you'd like to say, please do so now.

MR. JANVIER: That's all I can say for now. There's more, but it would take a long time to do all that.

MR. HENDERSON: I appreciate that. Thank you very much for answering the questions.

MR. JANVIER: Thank you, too.

MR. HENDERSON: I should say the Commissioners might have a few questions as well, if you could stay with us just a few more moments. Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you very much, Mr. Janvier, for taking the time to come and visit with us.

Did you spend any time, before the bombing range, in the Primrose Lake area?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: What was that, for two or three months a year?

MR. JANVIER: No, somewhere in May -- April or May.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: This was for fishing?

MR. JANVIER: Both, trapping and fishing.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Trapping and fishing. And your family before that did the same thing?

MR. JANVIER: I didn't have family then. I had -- but then I got married. She stayed at home here.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: What about your father?

MR. JANVIER: He died. My parents are died. They used to be up there, too ---worked for their living, too.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Were many people from your band or from your community, were they buried in that area, do you know, in the Primrose Lake area?

MR. JANVIER: None that were there, no. They're all down here.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I see. I just want to ask you one or two questions again about the meeting in Prince Albert. I know that was a long time ago.

MR. JANVIER: That's a long time, yes.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do you know if there were government people there?

MR. JANVIER: There's got to be some.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: You don't know from where, though?

MR. JANVIER: I don't know from where.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I see. And do you remember what was talked about there?

MR. JANVIER: They were talking about mostly trapping and fishing, hunting.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do you remember what period that was in, what year?

MR. JANVIER: What year? Somewhere in the forties, I think.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: In the forties, late forties?

MR. JANVIER: I don't know what year forties, but--.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: And they were talking about how much they were going to pay you for your traps?

MR. JANVIER: They said everything. I haven't got it yet. We got the first pay, and that was it. We want our second pay. We're all away. The grandchildren now, they got nothing. If now, the place was open, they would go there, fishing or trapping -- or hunt.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: If that Primrose area was open now, do you think some of the young people would go back and fish and trap there?

MR. JANVIER: I don't know hardly think so. Since the Air Force got it, I figure it's too dangerous to be in there. I believe it. They're bombing all over. They won't stop for you when they start bombing there.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you, Mr. Janvier, those are my questions. These other two gentlemen may have a question for you, so if you will be patient. Commissioner Prentice?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Mr. Janvier, you were a commercial fisherman in those years?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And would you sell the fish -- to who?

MR. JANVIER: I would sell the fish to some Saskatchewan fish board. We didn't like the deal so good, so we sold it any place we wanted to. We'd freeze it sometimes, and we'd sell it better.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And you would do that fishing in the winter months?

MR. JANVIER: Winter, yes, some summer, too.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And freeze the fish? And they would buy them as frozen?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, after they froze it all right. And summer fishing was different.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Did more of your money come from the fishing or from the fur trapping?

MR. JANVIER: Both.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: About the same amount?

MR. JANVIER: Yeah, well. We'd have to wait for it. Sometime we get it in June, July, our final pay.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Tell me how you would do the commercial fishing in the winter. How did that work?

MR. JANVIER: Oh, that works not too bad. We sold fish to the buyers in Saskatchewan, and we didn't like that too well, so we sold it -- sell it to Alberta. And we got paid right then. But in Saskatchewan, it was very different. They collect the money for their time first -- the left over, they give it to us. It was just like we were just working for them workers. I don't know whether it's the government or the workers, I don't know.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Did you fish alone?

MR. JANVIER: Not very well. It's too hard work to fish alone.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: So how many men would work together fishing?

MR. JANVIER: We were allowed ten nets to a license. If you've got twenty nets, you've got to have another permit. You've got to get somebody else to --.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: You would put the nets out overnight or for the day?

MR. JANVIER: No. You can change the nets sometime. When they get wet, put the dry one in. Lots of work, lots of ice at Primrose. It'd take a long time to punch one hole.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: How many people would fish together?

MR. JANVIER: You can get your helpers and help them -- help one another. It was a good way for some of us. We didn't have the money to hire, just make our own money to do our own living.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And would there be one man who had a commercial fishing license and then other workers who would help him?

MR. JANVIER: Yeah, you could hire another fisherman, holding license. I don't know what kind of a law that was, they couldn't let nobody else without holding a license on the lake. I don't know what kind of deal was that.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: How much fish would you catch in those months?

MR. JANVIER: How much fish did we get? It all depends on the luck. If we're lucky, we catch lots of fish. If not, we can't catch enough.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Okay, thank you very much. I appreciate your helping me.

MR. JANVIER: You're welcome.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Commissioner Bellegarde?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you, Chief Commissioner.

Good morning, Mr. Janvier. I have three questions you. The first one deals with the treaty right to hunt, fish, and trap. You said that it was the treaty right of the Indian people to hunt, fish, and trap in Primrose and that they shouldn't have to pay for licenses to do what is theirs by history and by treaty. Do you recall if that land was considered to be treaty land belonging to the Cold Lake First Nation?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, as long as I remember, that was a Indian's country, like. Like the summer and winter -- and they do some fishing in the summer, that's their country.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Have you ever heard or have been told about something, an agreement between the federal and provincial governments called a Natural Resources Transfer Agreement?

MR. JANVIER: No, I don't think so. I don't remember it.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: The next question also deals with trapping. Did you, when you were first paid compensation, in your words, to stay away from Primrose --

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: -- were you offered any other trap lines or other areas in which to trap?

MR. JANVIER: No.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: You were just -- said, "Stay away, here's some money, you're out of here"?

MR. JANVIER: That was it.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: When you were paid your first compensation, you said it would be for twenty years, that after twenty years you would be paid additional money. Do you remember who made that promise to you?

MR. JANVIER: I don't remember that either. But we got paid for twenty, and they still use the land, we're going to get more pay. And now, they're right on now, we can't push them out of there now. So we want our paid yet.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Was that Indian Affairs or National Defence?

MR. JANVIER: I don't know, really. Some air people anyway.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Air Force people?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chief Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Are there any questions, any further questions, Mr. Henderson?

Mr. Janvier, we would like to thank you. The Commission would like to thank you for you taking the time to come and educate us, to tell us your story and tell us how you feel, and we appreciate that very much. We thank you, and appreciate, as I say, very much that you took the trouble to come and visit with us. Thank you. You can be excused, sir.

Okay, Mr. Henderson, would you call your next witness, please?

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, with your permission, Mr. Maurice will continue for a few moments.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: That's fine.

MR. MAURICE: Mr. Chairman, the next witness is Isobel [Martial].

Good morning, Mrs. Martial.

MRS. MARTIAL: Good morning.

MR. MAURICE: I'm just going to spell your name, and you can confirm whether that's the correct spelling. It's Isobel [Martial] -- M-A-R-T-I-A-L.

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: Can you tell us how old you are now?

MRS. MARTIAL: Sixty-eight.

MR. MAURICE: And where are you living right now?

MRS. MARTIAL: Pardon?

MR. MAURICE: Where do you live today? Where do you reside?

MRS. MARTIAL: Legough, first station.

MR. MAURICE: Just before the creation of the Air Force -- or pardon me, the air weapons range, where did you live then?

MRS. MARTIAL: We used to go to Primrose every year.

MR. MAURICE: Did you or your family make a living from the Primrose area?

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: Could you tell us how you did that?

MRS. MARTIAL: Well, in the first place, our transportation was by horses and by dog team. I lived with my dad. Since 1940, I started going off with my dad to Primrose, where he's got a trap line.

MR. MAURICE: Did your--?

MRS. MARTIAL: And then--.

MR. MAURICE: I'm sorry, go ahead.

MRS. MARTIAL: I did the trapping and I did the fishing. And everybody-- and everybody that are living, there were trappers, most of them were trappers, but they had all trap lines. The ones that were trappers, that had traps -- you know, they had log houses all around that Primrose. I could even name all who were there, who the white people were there. They did the trapping and they did the fishing. So on my part, I did the fishing and the trapping. What we used to kill, my dad used to sell them. I don't know where they sell them.

MR. MAURICE: When you first started going up to Primrose Lake with your father, did your entire family go up?

MRS. MARTIAL: Family, yes, my brothers and sisters.

MR. MAURICE: And at what time of year would you go up to Primrose Lake?

MRS. MARTIAL: We used to go to Primrose first part of October and we stayed there until December. Some people, they used to come back for church. Some people, they used to stay up there. And from there, we used to go back in January. And then we stayed there, as I said, to church. The season would be open until the first part of May.

MR. MAURICE: Did your entire family -- sorry, okay.

You mentioned that you trapped, hunted and fished; is that correct?

MRS. MARTIAL: I did, yes. I did trapping and hunt -- fishing.

MR. MAURICE: Did your whole family do that?

MRS. MARTIAL: No. Well, the ones that are older, just like me and my brother and sister, were the only ones that used to help my dad to hunt and fish.

MR. MAURICE: How about your mother?

MRS. MARTIAL: My mother, she was a sick woman.

MR. MAURICE: Did you eventually go out and do some hunting, trapping, and fishing on your own after you left your family?

MRS. MARTIAL: Well after-- after I stayed with my dad, in 1941, I got married, but I didn't stay with my husband long. In 1943, he died. And from there, I started staying with my dad again. That's why we used to go fishing and trapping.

And then, in 1948, I got married again, to a trapper. His name is Joseph Martial. And the old man, he used to call him "Martial Black Fox." He had a trap line that could say-- that place where we used to go, they call it North Bay. That's way at the end of the lake. That's where we used --- we went for trapping and fishing. I went with my old man then.

MR. MAURICE: Why did they call your husband "Martial Black Fox"?

MRS. MARTIAL: That's not my husband, that's my father-in-law.

MR. MAURICE: Okay, sorry.

MRS. MARTIAL: They called him "Black Fox" because he was a good hunter, and I guess he used to kill lots of black foxes. And they didn't know his last name. So they called him "Black Fox" because he killed lots of black foxes, I guess. And now, after he died, we find out his real name was Martial Petit.

And then, we used to go hunting out there, fishing, and we'd get quite a few -- we used to bring quite a few fur, and we did ice fishing. And in springtime, we hunt for muskrats. The fishing, we use it for our own use. And they used to kill lots of moose, which we used to make dry meat -- dry fish -- and they used that for all winter. Most of the time, the people used to make dried meat and dried fish, and when we'd get over there, they used to hunt for these chickens. Spruce chickens, they used to call them. And rabbits and moose. Whatever we could get to eat, we used to live on that for winter.

MR. MAURICE: Mrs. Martial, what was your father's name?

MRS. MARTIAL: Teddy [Scanie]. His name is Thaddeus, but in the short way, they call him Teddy [Scanie].

MR. MAURICE: And your husband, Joseph, you mentioned he was a trapper and a fisherman?

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: Did he have a registered trap line?

MRS. MARTIAL: He went with his dad.

MR. MAURICE: Did he sell furs under his dad's trapping license, then?

MRS. MARTIAL: No. What he used to get, we sell it ourselves. Because I believe there was no license in 1940, and there was not many white people. Only after -- I can't say what year, but the white people start to come in, game warden and -- and for the fishing, I don't know.

But anyway, there was no white people, maybe one or two. And so when the game warden came in, they started giving us license which cost two dollars for the season and five dollars for the commercial fishing.

MR. MAURICE: When these rules came in that you had to purchase a license for trapping or fishing, did your husband ever get one of those licenses?

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes, he did.

MR. MAURICE: Was it for trapping?

MRS. MARTIAL: For trapping.

MR. MAURICE: And did he also have a commercial fishing license?

MRS. MARTIAL: No. He just had-- we went fishing only for our own use.

MR. MAURICE: Just prior to the creating of the bombing range, did your husband still hold a valid trapping license?

MRS. MARTIAL: Hold it, you said?

MR. MAURICE: Yes, did he have a license in 1952?

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: Do you recall when it was, the first time that you heard about the bombing range coming in?

MRS. MARTIAL: That, we didn't really--you know, we were never notified ahead, nothing. They did their own dealings. The chief or whoever was there, Mr. Knapp, they did their own dealings with the Air Force. So nobody ever knew what was coming. How they make a deal, we

don't know because they never mentioned about money, how much money they were going to pay.

MR. MAURICE: Did you go north with your husband when he went out to trap?

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: Do you ever remember anyone from Indian Affairs coming to visit your husband?

MRS. MARTIAL: No.

MR. MAURICE: Or look [at] his trap line?

MRS. MARTIAL: No.

MR. MAURICE: No one ever did?

MRS. MARTIAL: Oh, I remember when I was staying with my dad, there was two guys that came up to my dad's camp, and these guys they brought a map showing it to my dad. So my dad told him, "Who make that map? Was it the government or you?"

So they didn't say nothing. So after all they didn't say nothing, my dad chased them away never to bother us after.

MR. MAURICE: Now, the area that your husband was trapping, did everyone around the surrounding area know that was your trap line?

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: Your husband's trap line?

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: And you had been -- how long, do you imagine, that you had been on that line, that trap line?

MRS. MARTIAL: Well, I said I started off in 1940. And in 1948, I stayed with my husband until they shut -- until they took that Primrose away.

MR. MAURICE: So you and your husband heard about the bombing range from other people in the community?

MRS. MARTIAL: Well, I can't say that we heard it, but everything was all of a sudden because them, they make the deals, whatever they wanted to do with us, they make it silently so nobody knew. Hardly anybody knew what was going on until they told us that the cheques are ready for the people, the trappers.

MR. MAURICE: When was that, what year would that be, do you recall?

MRS. MARTIAL: I didn't really know, maybe '52 or '53. And then, as I said, they make a deal in their own way. When they call for the people for their -- to get paid, the first payment we had

was across -- you know, there was a dance hall there. That's where we got the first payment. Each trapper, for their equipment, they got four hundred and nineteen dollars. That's what my old man got.

MR. MAURICE: Did he receive any payment for his trapping rights?

MRS. MARTIAL: Pardon?

MR. MAURICE: Did he receive any payments for his trapping rights?

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: How did he receive that? Was that cash, cheque?

MRS. MARTIAL: And after that, after we got that four hundred nineteen dollars, they told us -- I don't know how long that took, I don't know, a year -- I don't know. But anyway, they told us to go to -- which we used to call "farmer instructor." That's where -- I don't know who was staying there -- maybe Mr. Knapp, I don't know.

But anyway, we went down there and they were told that their -- they played with money or something like that, they didn't use the money right. So they got purchase orders, which no money was written on it, just like a bill, you know. They told them you could buy things with this purchase order. So my old man bought a team of horses, a wagon and a harness and a few furnitures. So that time, all these things were very cheap. The horses were fifty dollars, twenty-five dollars. The highest was a hundred and twenty, horses. And the wagon itself, I don't know how much he paid for it.

MR. MAURICE: What did he think about using these purchase orders?

MRS. MARTIAL: What do I think? It makes you --you know, the way it makes you shy because it's not money. You got horses -- you buy horses with it, which we don't even know how much, it cost -- how much they make, how much we're getting with that purchase order.

MR. MAURICE: So if you had money, would you be able to get a better deal on equipment and horses?

MRS. MARTIAL: We could have, yes because we could have known how much we were spending. But with that purchase order, we didn't know how much we were spending and how much was coming. We didn't know. And then after that, about a-- I don't know how long that one took, too, for that, for the final payment.

And the people were told to go to this credit union, the trapper's loan. When we got there, they were told to go each, one by one. So, I told my old man, "I'm going to follow you," I don't care what they did to you -- to me.

So I went behind him when he was called. I went behind him, I hid away in there. Once I got in there, they couldn't do nothing to me. So as we were walking in, Mr. Knapp was there. Some others were sitting. And Mr. Knapp told him, "Joe, you come and sign your name." And Joe said, "I can't sign my name, but I'll make -- I'll put a cross." So he did.

And they told him, if you sign your name, that's the only time you're going to get your cheque.

MR. MAURICE: Did anybody explain what this was, what he was signing?

MRS. MARTIAL: No, not one of them spoke up after he told Joe that -- to sign his name, that's the only time he's going to get his cheque. Not one of them spoke, I didn't hear any one of them.

MR. MAURICE: What did your husband think he was signing?

MRS. MARTIAL: Well, they told him he's going to get his cheque. And on that cheque, we look -- I look at it, it was twenty-seven hundred dollars. And that was it.

MR. MAURICE: Was he told what would happen if he didn't sign?

MRS. MARTIAL: Well, nobody mentioned about it. They didn't tell him that he wouldn't get it. Nobody spoke. I never heard anybody talking.

MR. MAURICE: Did you or Joseph -- were you or Joseph able to read?

MRS. MARTIAL: To leave?

MR. MAURICE: To read English?

MRS. MARTIAL: Reading?

MR. MAURICE: Yes.

MRS. MARTIAL: I did the reading. Him, he didn't go to school, I don't think -- maybe two years. But me, I went to school, residential school in Onion Lake, which I stayed nine years and I was in grade seven. So I could read and write. I still could do that.

MR. MAURICE: I'd like to show you a piece of paper with some names and some signatures on it and ask you if you can identify it.

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes. Right here.

MR. MAURICE: Did you ever see this page?

MRS. MARTIAL: This page. This was the only one I see it.

MR. MAURICE: So you never saw the first page?

MRS. MARTIAL: No, no.

MR. MAURICE: This writing at the top, here.

MRS. MARTIAL: No, I've never seen it. This is the only one.

MR. MAURICE: Thank you.

For the record, Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Martial has identified Exhibit A, I believe.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Exhibit 1.

MR. MAURICE: Exhibit 1, pardon me. And she has noted that she never saw the first page of this document. She did identify her husband's mark on page two.

Do you remember how many years it had been since receiving a payment prior to that final one?

MRS. MARTIAL: How many years, did you say?

MR. MAURICE: Yes. How many years did you go without receiving any payment, up until that final payment?

MRS. MARTIAL: Well, we never got no payments after. Nothing.

MR. MAURICE: I'm thinking of the time around the time when your husband was at the bank signing to receive the final payment. How many years prior to that day was the last payment that you received?

MRS. MARTIAL: That's what I was -- I don't remember that because it was quite a while, I think.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember -- sorry, go ahead.

MRS. MARTIAL: After we got the purchase orders, the thing -- I don't know how many years or months, I don't know -- until we got that, the last payment.

MR. MAURICE: How were you making a living up to that time -- during that time when there was no payments?

MRS. MARTIAL: We make a living by farming, which we had bought horses, cows, chickens. We had thirty-eight acres of field, so that was good for a few years.

MR. MAURICE: Why did you stop farming?

MRS. MARTIAL: Pardon?

MR. MAURICE: Why did you stop farming?

MRS. MARTIAL: Stop? My old man got sick, he had cancer.

MR. MAURICE: Do you recall what year that would have been?

MRS. MARTIAL: Pardon?

MR. MAURICE: What year?

MRS. MARTIAL: I can't tell you the years back, you know, because it was quite a while. They took him to Edmonton, so I was left behind feeding my children and feeding the horses and the cows, and finally I had to give up because nobody helped me to do the farming, and my boys at that time, they were quite -- they were not old enough to work, so I had to sell the cows, the horses. That's how --.

MR. MAURICE: Do you recall a time when your purchase orders ran out, when your credit ran out?

MRS. MARTIAL: When my credit ran out, I had to work -- I had to work. As I was saying, my old man was sick, and I left the kids with my older daughter. I went commercial fishing in Cold Lake. That's from 1958 -- I went commercial fishing when the season is open only.

And then, in part-time work -- no, after the commercial fishing, I couldn't do any -- I couldn't work any longer. In '83, I had a heart attack. But before '83, I started working for the band office.

And not much wages at first, thirty dollars a week, at first when I started working. After that, it raised a little bit. The final that I got was four hundred dollars and forty-four dollars, I think. That's the highest I ever make, wages.

But at that time, I worked eight years, and I used to put money, a little bit in the bank. When I finished, in -- when I got sick before -- no, before I got sick, I wanted to buy a vehicle with my money. Which I had seven hundred dollars in the bank, that's how I collected, you know, by year. So for eight years I'd been doing that.

But anyway, I had seven hundred dollars so I wanted to buy a car. Not to drive it, you know, but I depended on my girls, which were grown-up, so I bought a car which cost me six hundred dollars. It was a -- it's an old man that put his car away. We knew that old man. So he told us, "I'll give you" -- no, "You give me six hundred dollars, you can have that car." It was -- it wasn't automatic, standard. We bought a car. I first bought a car -- standard. So that was it.

And from there, when that car wasn't good, I keep on trading. Finally, not too long ago, I got a new truck. I just financed a truck because we had no other way of travelling. So I bought a new truck. I still got the new truck.

MR. MAURICE: Going back to 1958 when you first started doing some commercial fishing, did you use the income from commercial fishing to help your farming operation?

MRS. MARTIAL: No, I don't think.

MR. MAURICE: Did you make much income from the farming operation on its own?

MRS. MARTIAL: From the farming?

MR. MAURICE: Yes.

MRS. MARTIAL: Not very much, because, as I said, my old man was out there. I don't think we sold very much grain and I don't think -- just about what we could use for the horses. It was only oats that we used to farm, for the horses.

MR. MAURICE: I only have one more question, and it's about the terms of the agreement for the air weapons range. I'm wondering if you were ever told what some of those terms were? How long it would be, how much compensation you would be paid, things like that.

MRS. MARTIAL: When were -- yes, we were told that every twenty years we would get paid. As I say, we didn't know that they leased the land. Maybe they just sold it, we don't know.

Maybe they just lease it, we don't know. But anyway, as I heard my own way, they told us every twenty years you get paid.

MR. MAURICE: Every twenty years you would get paid?

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: During that twenty-year period, do you remember how much you would get paid?

MRS. MARTIAL: We don't know. As I said, everything was in silence when they first made the arrangement. Everything was silent. They didn't come -- they didn't come to the table and put the papers, what they were going to do. How much money was coming, we didn't know. And how much -- how they were going to pay us, we didn't know because we didn't see the money, what was coming to us.

Only the other day, I seen how much money was coming to us. That's the only time -- this is 1992, and that one over there was 1952 or '53. They didn't put any papers -- or nobody -- nobody mentioned anything that's going to happen to us. They make their own deals.

MR. MAURICE: Did anyone from Indian Affairs or the Department of National Defence ever sit down with your husband and ask him how much money he earned from trapping?

MRS. MARTIAL: No, nothing. We never used to see Mr. Knapp before. Only when the money came in, they all gathered together, which we used to call "farm instructor". That's the only time we seen his face.

MR. MAURICE: Do you recall how much your husband would have made, roughly, every year prior to 1952?

MRS. MARTIAL: My husband never worked. I mean he worked but on a farm. But as I say, we never used to sell very much of the grain.

MR. MAURICE: But through his trapping activities before 1952?

MRS. MARTIAL: Yeah, he did-- I remember now, he did the school busing on the horses, but I don't know how many years it lasted. He used to pick up all the kids. That was our first bus, the team of horses with a caboose. That's what he work on, but not too long. I don't know how many years it lasted.

MR. MAURICE: I was wondering about the time, around 1952, just prior to the range coming in, do you recall how much your husband would have made from trapping at that time?

MRS. MARTIAL: At that time, they used to make good money but -- you know, as I say, it went on. The fur wasn't too high. The only fur, the only fur that was high was muskrat, squirrels, beavers. That's all.

MR. MAURICE: When you first started to do commercial fishing in 1958, can you tell us what kind of money you made?

MRS. MARTIAL: I didn't make very much, because we were only allowed one net for five dollars. Didn't do very much, but I did a living all right. Which we could be living at home, a little bit of money I used to bring home.

MR. MAURICE: How many years did you go up to Primrose Lake?

MRS. MARTIAL: Primrose?

MR. MAURICE: Was it Primrose Lake, sorry?

MRS. MARTIAL: I did the commercial fishing in Cold Lake.

MR. MAURICE: In Cold Lake.

MRS. MARTIAL: That was 1958.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. And how many years did you go in there?

MRS. MARTIAL: From '58 to '83 because I got sick.

MR. MAURICE: Did you know other people who used to do commercial fishing?

MRS. MARTIAL: I used to fish with Philip Grandbois, Larry Grandbois, and Solomon Piche. We did that commercial fishing on the old man -- Philip Grandbois' horses.

MR. MAURICE: Now, after the range was established, do you recall anybody doing any trapping outside of the range?

MRS. MARTIAL: No, nothing.

MR. MAURICE: Those are all the questions I have, Mrs. Martial, thank you very much.

Perhaps the Commissioners may have a few more?

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you, Mrs. Martial. And thank you very much for taking the time to come and help us. I have a couple of questions.

The first one that I'm very curious about it is, did you ever get your driver's license?

MRS. MARTIAL: I didn't get any driver's license.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: You have a truck now and you don't drive it?

MRS. MARTIAL: I don't drive. My daughters.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I see.

MRS. MARTIAL: I paid a hundred and seventy-five for my granddaughter and for my daughter to drive my truck.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay. I just have a couple of questions, Mrs. Martial, and I'm going to try to go back. You mentioned at one point that two guys, were they white men that brought a map to your father?

MRS. MARTIAL: It's two white men, but I don't remember who they were. We didn't even have time to ask them their names, nothing.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay.

MRS. MARTIAL: But they brought a map.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do you remember when that was?

MRS. MARTIAL: What year?

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Yes.

MRS. MARTIAL: It could be in the forties, '45 or '46.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay. But it was before the range, the bombing range?

MRS. MARTIAL: Before.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Yes, before.

The other question I have is, if you can remember and help me with, is the purchase orders, that period in the purchase orders.

Could you explain to me how that worked? You would go in and get, anytime you wanted, or did you get just one purchase order or how did it work?

MRS. MARTIAL: They had only one purchase order.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay.

MRS. MARTIAL: I didn't see no money written, they'd just pass it on. You could get what you want -- buy what you want with this.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Anywhere?

MRS. MARTIAL: Anywhere, I guess, that's why he bought horses.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay, and then you'd take this purchase order around, is that what happened? You'd take it around to the stores or to the merchants and just buy things with it?

MRS. MARTIAL: Not to the merchants. Just to the ones that were going to buy horses and a wagon. I don't even know where we got the wagon -- I think it's from the farmers. It wasn't a new one.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do you remember if this purchase order said anything on it or could you read anything on it?

MRS. MARTIAL: I could read, but I didn't really look at that purchase order. My old man handled that purchase order, that's why I didn't know how it was written.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: But you do know that you couldn't take it into the merchants, like the stores or anything like that?

MRS. MARTIAL: Maybe they could have, but we didn't.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Oh, I see. And you only got one?

MRS. MARTIAL: We only got one.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: And now, just finally.

You identified your husband Joe's signature or his mark on that piece of paper. Do you remember, when you looked at that, were there any other names already signed in on that piece of paper?

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay. The question I have is, who else was in there? There's a name on this next to your husband's mark by the name of -- and I don't know how to pronounce this -- Amable?

MRS. MARTIAL: [Amable Scanie].

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: [Amable Scanie]. Who was that, do you remember?

MRS. MARTIAL: That's one of my cousins.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Was [Amable Scanie] in the room?

MRS. MARTIAL: I can't say he was in the room, and I can't -- because I didn't see anybody. You know, they were behind a table like this, they were sitting there behind a table like this, in a row. Mr. Knapp was sitting there, he was the one that told Joe to sign, to make a -- to sign his name.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: He would hand the paper over and say, "Sign your name there, Joe, and you'll get your cheque"?

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes. And the rest, there were about three or four sitting, but I didn't see -- as I say, they didn't want no woman in there. And I sneak in there. I didn't even have time to see who was there -- I knew there were about three or four sitting with Mr. Knapp. But I did see -- I don't think I seen [Amable Scanie] signing that. I don't think so.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do you know if anybody ever talked about [Amable Scanie] being in that room or being around at that time?

MRS. MARTIAL: No.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Well, it's a little over thirty years later, and I can tell you that the information you've given us, I'm glad you snuck in that room thirty years ago. I have no more questions. Perhaps some of the other Commissioners do. Commissioner Bellegarde, do you have a question?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you.

Good morning, Mrs. Martial.

MRS. MARTIAL: Good morning.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: I get a strong feeling that the Indian people who trapped in Primrose and fished there felt that the land belonged to them of course, but they also felt that in fact they were leasing the land. And it was theirs to lease, and they said, "Yes, we will lease this land for twenty years." But in fact, it was the provincial government that was leasing that land to the Department of National Defence.

How do you feel about that? Do you think it was your land that you were leasing?

MRS. MARTIAL: Well, ever since 1940 -- that land, the people that stayed all their lives -- I don't know how many years they were trapping and fishing, but all these peoples, they used to go to Primrose Lake, build a house, just like a stall, all around that place, all along the lake. The trappers, they used to go back every year for fishing and trapping, hunting.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: So in your opinion, it was a permanent settlement then? It was occupied land, occupied by the Indian people. They had homes and they had everything else that constitutes -- makes up a community in Primrose Lake. It was a permanent community.

MRS. MARTIAL: Yes.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thanks.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Commissioner Prentice?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: How many children did you raise, Mrs. Martial?

MRS. MARTIAL: I had twelve. I got eight delivered, three boys and five girls.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And how many grandchildren do you have now?

MRS. MARTIAL: Thirty four.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Do you have any great-grandchildren yet?

MRS. MARTIAL: Five.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Your father's home was at North Bay, you said, and that's a bay on the north side of Primrose Lake?

MRS. MARTIAL: That one is my father-in-law. But my father, Teddy Scanie, used to live on the west side, and my father-in-law lived north-east, that's where we -- I called it North Bay.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And where did you live with your husband?

MRS. MARTIAL: At that North Bay out there.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: North Bay. There was a church up there at the community on Primrose Lake; is that right?

MRS. MARTIAL: That one, I barely remember it because we were kids, but my dad was fishing -- I barely remember it. That was in '29 or '28, I don't know. But I barely remember it.

There was a church for Christmas, and my dad was fishing, so we couldn't go to church here, I guess, so we had the church there.

And a priest came, and the people gathered in that little church. They put flooring for the pine trees -- the pine trees were the flooring. And that priest, when he finished saying mass, he gave us a little package of candies, not too much. And all this time, that priest was Father Testeau.

When I was -- when I went to school in '33, that Father Testeau was in that residential school in Onion Lake. That's why he told us that story, it was him that had a church in Primrose. Only once.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: When you were fishing from 1958 until 1983 at Cold Lake for one week in the winter, were there both men and women fishing or were you one of the only women who was fishing?

MRS. MARTIAL: There is some other women.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: I see. Thank you very much for your help.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do we have any other questions, Mr. Maurice?

MR. MAURICE: Yes, there's one brief question. Your cousin, [Amable Scanie], is he still alive today?

MRS. MARTIAL: No, he died.

MR. MAURICE: Okay, thank you.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: When did that happen, Mrs. Martial? When did he die, do you remember?

MRS. MARTIAL: Not too long ago. Maybe -- I don't know how many years. It's not too long ago.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Okay. Is that it for the questions? Mrs. Martial, on behalf of the Commission, I want to thank you very, very much for taking the time, as I say, to come here to educate us, to help us more importantly. You've been a big help. I want to say what you've told us has been very, very interesting. You are a remarkable lady. I hope that all of the things that you've done, a good part of them, have been fun for you and have demonstrated some good times.

I would, however, before I excuse you, like to say one other thing. It's not too late to get your driver's license.

Thank you, you can be excused.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, just to put an item on the record, I understand that there was, in the course of federal court proceedings, an examination, *de bene esse*, for the preservation of the evidence of Mr. [Amable Scanie]. And I believe that a transcript of that will be available to the Commission. And I also understand there is a video of that examination which is in the custody of the court at this time, and I believe Mr. Mandamin is going to make some effort to have that released, and I hope the Commission will have an opportunity to see that in February.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: That's good. Thanks very much, Mr. Henderson.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Mr. Chairman, I'm going to give way to my elder, Mr. Henderson.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: You are? Does he know that?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: I thought he knew that.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Before we call the next witness, I'd like to take a ten- minute break, and let's try to make it ten minutes given that the community has other things they want to do this afternoon. Thank you. Adjourn for ten minutes.

---Recess.

---Upon resuming.

MR. MAURICE: Good morning, Mrs. Minoose.

MRS. MINOOSE: Good morning. What's his name?

MR. MAURICE: My name is Ron Maurice.

Mrs. Minoose, could you tell us how old you are, please?

MRS. MINOOSE: Seventy-nine.

MR. MAURICE: Did you live at Primrose Lake at any time during your life?

MRS. MINOOSE/INTERPRETER: Yes, I grew up there because I didn't go to school. Just about everybody else went to school -- ones that spoke before me, I mean. I can't speak English because I didn't go to school.

Where I grew up, in the winter and summer alike, my grandparents always lived there. I lived on duck, fish, and moose. No sweet stuff for me.

I grew up very well in that area. And from that moment on, I left my grandmother and then I stayed with my mother because my father had passed away. My mother had a lot of cattle, so I worked. It was hard, hard work.

Finally, when I grew up, my mother gave me away to a man who was a fisherman and a trapper. And then my mother gave me away to a man who was a fisherman and trapper. Sometimes we made a lot of money, but I can't tell you how much. Sometimes it was lean, and we didn't have very much.

Every winter, I would be pulling nets and I would walk for miles for trapping, about seventy-five miles. Twice I went that distance.

Later, when I started having children, I raised them just about by myself. There were four of them. I stood alongside my man to work, we made a little money, and we never lived on welfare. They used to give out relief to some, and I would ask for some, but I was always told there was nothing. Already at that time, I was not treated equally.

I asked that my little house be repaired but was turned down. I was never treated equally so for that reason, I do not want to speak that much. I know I am not treated equally living here, but I don't say anything about it and don't have a grudge against anyone about it. When the time comes, I will be thinking and feeling sorry for that I may have treated someone in a begrudging or angry way, and I let it go and I don't talk about it or am angry about it.

After my husband passed away, I had nothing. That is when I began to receive relief. I started to receive an old-age pension.

I fished a lot. Every year, I fished and worked hard. I hardly ever talk about it but I did work hard. As many women there are here, no one worked as hard as I did. I stood alongside the men all the time. They looked after their little children, not me. I stood by my man all through the years we worked for our livelihood. No one would give it to us, so of course, we looked for our livelihood. There was no relief then.

When my dad died, too.

Today, everybody gets relief to live on. We were five of us, three boys. We never received not one penny for help when dad was killed. I used to wash floors or clothes for sugar or flour or other food for my brothers and sisters. I kept a lot of cows and horses.

When I was fourteen years old, I worked very hard, getting wood and hay. I would cut wood for my old grandfather. I never thought it was hard at the time, but now the I can remember, that was how I lived. I used to envy others when I saw they were doing well, so that was the reason I always tried hard to be independent. Today, it is not like that. I am getting old and I can hardly talk anymore.

My son had a fishing license which he paid for and fished in Primrose. I also had a fishing license which was paid -- and trapping. My husband too had his every year. I didn't stay long with my parents. I was raised by my grandmother. You should know my Grandmother Matchatis.

That's how I lived in the past. Today, I don't know, I don't go around visiting others. Since I was a little girl, I have worked hard until I was given away to my husband. My mother gave me away

to marry a complete stranger. Now, I wouldn't live at Legough. I love it in Cold Lake. I think that's about all, this is all, here.

MR. MAURICE: After the bombing range was closed, what was it like?

MRS. MINOOSE/INTERPRETER: I'm not quite sure how things were. That's what I mean. I looked for my livelihood every way I could. I made leather for sewing, for which I got paid, and that is how I made my living for food. I would also sell moose hide and of snaring rabbits and fishing. These were important. The rest, I don't know. Now presently, I couldn't take care of myself the way I used to.

It wouldn't matter if I was bludgeoned to death because I feel useless. Life is not good today because too many of us are very poor. I fished again later, every Christmas holiday for about three or four years. We went up there even if the lake was closed. Even there, we made a lot of money. It was just like someone saying "here" because we had so much money from fishing. People used to be envious of us because we used to catch so much fish. White and Dene people alike used to fish around us, but we would end up catching the most. That's what happened. I used to think St. Peter was my dad, he was priceless. Later, I felt guilty for thinking that way. That was the reason people were envious, I could still catch a lot of fish even today. That is how I lived.

The Great Spirit fed me always, that's how I lived. Sometimes, I would go for meat to someone else, but I always managed picking berries and worked for myself because I didn't have that many children. I'd sell berries and buy food. I never had any other means until I started to receive my pension. Only then it became a little better since my husband.

I was raised very well by my grandmother. I was raised in Primrose even in the summertime. We didn't come back here; we stayed at Hon'ka or Suckerville in the summer even if there was no one around. I am telling you what I can remember. I was raised well among people -- I was raised by myself although my mom and dad were around. When I started having children, it was the same. I looked for means to feed my family. Before yesterday, I sold a pair of mukluks for seventy-five dollars, and maybe another one today.

That's what I do now. I don't go to the bar or go around talking about others. I am happy to see my people. If you are going to ask more questions, go ahead.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mrs. Minoose.

I just have one question, and it's whether you were compensated for your fishing.

MRS. MINOOSE/INTERPRETER: We did fishing on the Saskatchewan side, so that's where we received some cheques and we did get bonuses past Pierceland. I don't know that, but I remember that my husband and son did get a lot of money. We did get it, but how much, I don't know. He bought a lot of things, but I wasn't told how much. We never used it for alcohol; we bought a lot of things with it, cows and equipment.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you very much, Mrs. Minoose. Those are all the questions I have.

Mr. Chairman?

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: I have no questions, but perhaps some of the other Commissioners have.

Mr. Bellegarde? No questions?

May we say to you, Mrs. Minoose, thank you very much for taking the time and the effort to come and speak with us today. You have been very helpful, and for that we thank you. You've taught us a bit about yourself which is very important.

And for that we thank you, and thank you for your time. You can be excused.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Mr. Henderson, you're going to take us down the home stretch; are you?

Mr. Mandamin, ready?

All right, Mr. Henderson, would you call the next witness, please?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The next witness, and our last one for this session, would be Mr. Dominic Piche.

Good morning, Mr. Piche. I wonder if I may ask you how old you are?

MR. PICHE: Seventy-seven.

MR. HENDERSON: Seventy-seven, thank you.

And do you live at Cold Lake now?

MR. PICHE: Cold Lake First Nation.

MR. HENDERSON: And before the bombing range, did you spend time in the Primrose Lake area?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes, I used to live there.

MR. HENDERSON: I understand that you trapped with your grandfather?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Could you tell the Commissioners, please, what your life was like during that time, and with your family and for your community?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: I remember, of course, a long time ago, about seventy years. I remember from that time.

Back then, I can remember staying in the bush with my grandparents from both sides; my father's father and my mother's father. I stayed with my mother's father many times over, there in Saskatchewan. In the fall, we'd hunt for fox. We'd get credit at the store and then we'd leave. When the beaver pelts were prepared, around Christmastime, we'd come back and would pay up

our bills at the store. I remember it very well. It was very cold back then, not like today. It was cold. Even if it was sixty below, people would sleep outside along the trail.

People were content, they were happy. That's the way I remember it. People didn't have any problems. We hunted -- we had meat and food we hunted for. That was the only way, because there was nothing else. The only way to make money was with beaver pelts. Finally, there was commercial fishing. It's a long story when you're talking about the old days.

In the old days, people got along together. Even without money, people helped each other. You didn't ask to get paid. Everyone helped each other. Everyone was happy then, not like today. I remember we travelled by horses and dog teams. When the Chippewayans made something, they made snowshoes. They also made toboggans. That's as much as I remember that Chippewayans made for travel. Another form of travel was canoes made of birch bark. These were the things Chippewayans made for travel: Snowshoes, toboggans, and canoes. This, I remember well.

As for beaver pelts, some people were so good at hunting and preparing pelts that they made a lot of money. Come springtime, we traded at the store for supplies to last year-round. There were no jobs and very few white men.

Finally, word got around that the land was going to be taken away. They were talking about the Air Force. I saw it written in the newspaper that the land was being taken away, they said. About three years later, 1952, was the last time we harvested beaver pelts there. There was also a lot of money made by those who were fishing. I too used to fish all the time. Sometimes, there were none, but if you looked for the fish you would find them. Before the white man came, a long time ago, everything was fine, how people made a living. When the white man came to our land in greater numbers, they pushed us aside and they said they would close things down. When I think back, there was nothing closed down for us. We didn't need to buy a hunting license; we didn't pay for anything that I can remember. When the white man came on our land, we began to pay for our licenses.

At that time, many people began fishing on the Saskatchewan side of Primrose Lake. People fished also on the Alberta side of Primrose Lake. In those old days, people made a living off the land and they lived well. They didn't want for anything. Suddenly, they were taking away our land, and our people would be paid off. Indian Affairs knew this so they went ahead of the people. They knew how much money we were going to receive. Of those people who got compensation, they weren't paid very much money. I myself remember receiving three thousand dollars. I got another small payment -- it wasn't that much. The Indian agent began giving people goods on vouchers. They were holding the money, we didn't know. They made us buy things with vouchers.

Then, when they began giving compensation, we were told they had cheques for us, that there were cheques in Grand Centre for the people. People began going there to pick them up. There were Indian Affairs people sitting there where the cheques were. We were told to sign our names before we would be issued cheques. We were told it was the final pay and to sign for our cheques, but we didn't know what they meant at the time. So we signed our names before we got

our cheques. They didn't tell us what we were signing. We were only told it was for the final pay. We signed over our names and they distributed our cheques.

If you have any questions for me, it is your right to ask me. I'll tell you what I remember.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you very much, sir. I do have some questions for you.

I'd like to start again back with your life on the trap line when that was a good lifestyle for you. You indicated that you would come out at Christmas and sell furs. I'm curious about what sort of furs you sold at Christmastime.

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Not beaver but fox, mink, lynx. They weren't buying squirrels at that time. Only later, they began buying squirrels.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, I'm a little slower in getting back to you because I'm listening to a translation of what you said.

Then again, you would come out in the spring at the end of the trapping season, and what furs would you bring with you then?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: In the spring, we brought back muskrat furs and some winter beaver pelts. When we sold our furs, we would buy supplies for the summer. Things were not expensive in the old days. A hundred-pound sack of flour cost two dollars fifty cents, I remember. Four or five sacks of flour would last you all year. Tea, lard, and ammunition was also bought.

MR. HENDERSON: And during the summer, would you do any farming?

MR. PICHE: A long time ago, there were no farms. Only a few people there were farming. When I was about five or six years old, my dad started farming, ploughing with horses. I remember that.

MR. HENDERSON: Were the horses used to go back and forth to the Primrose area?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes, we used it. We used horses to go back and forth.

MR. HENDERSON: I wonder if you could describe -- or would it easier to show us on the map the area where you trapped?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: I'd be glad to.

MR. PICHE: My grandfather used to come here.

MR. HENDERSON: That's at the top of-- I believe it's Watapi Lake, yes. And from your cabin, you would trap --?

MR. PICHE: I used to go this way, but there's no lake that I see here. I used to go quite a ways. It'd take us about three days to go out on the trap line.

MR. HENDERSON: And would you be trapping south of this line as well, down this way?

MR. PICHE: Yeah. Well, not very well, but we trapped here. We used to come here -- some place down here. My grandfather used to build a cabin here, two or three cabin here. And from there, we used to go out, we used a dog team. We used a tent or else we camped outside, I remember that.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you sir, you can sit down again if you want.

Just for the record, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Piche has indicated an area on the map around Watapi Lake, which is just on the northern boundary of what is now the bombing range area. And he's indicated that there was a cabin what looked to be four miles south of the lake and two or three cabins north and east of the lake, which was the area of his grandfather's trap line.

Was that trap line eventually registered?

MR. PICHE: Yeah.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you also -- during the fall, was there a big hunt in the fall?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes, they used to hunt early in the fall. Around September, the older men would hunt. They would prepare food for the winter, dried meat, all kinds of things, including berries.

MR. HENDERSON: What kinds of berries would be gathered in this area?

MR. PICHE: Cranberries.

MR. HENDERSON: Would they be stored for the winter as well?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes, they were used during the winter. There were ducks as well. Many ducks were killed, and fish, too. They were hung on a stick. Much of this was brought back for the winter.

MR. HENDERSON: Would those fish be smoked first or dried?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: No, those are cached away, but never smoked

MR. HENDERSON: Did you also engage in commercial fishing, sir?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes, I was surely a fisherman.

MR. HENDERSON: And where did you do your commercial fishing?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Over there, where the lake was shallow towards the north from Suckersville. Around the narrows, that's where we used to fish.

MR. HENDERSON: The north end of Primrose?

INTERPRETER: Yes.

MR. PICHE: Around the narrows, that's where we used to fish.

MR. HENDERSON: North of Suckerville, thank you sir. Was that a prime source of cash as well?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes, we made good money from it.

MR. HENDERSON: I'd like to ask, sir, when you first heard about the range being created. I believe you said you first read it in the newspaper and then you met with an Indian agent. Do you remember who the Indian agent was?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: The Indian agent's name was not in it.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you subsequently meet with the Indian agent or anyone else to talk about the range and compensation?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: No, we never heard of anything. When they realized there was money coming, then the Indian agent started pressuring the people.

MR. HENDERSON: And when you received compensation, did you get a chance to negotiate how much payment you would receive to make a deal -- before he got it, at any time.

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Only the Indian agent was in charge of everything. People didn't have hearings like this, that I've heard of.

MR. HENDERSON: Did anyone come to discuss with you how much money you were making from fishing or from trapping or how much compensation you would get?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes, they were asking people questions. Where did we have our claims, what things were worth, how many traps we had. They were going around us asking questions. I gather it was the Indian agent.

MR. HENDERSON: And you indicated, after the first payment, you would have to get a purchase order to spend your own money?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes, it was with purchase order.

MR. HENDERSON: If you wanted to buy something, I think the Commissioners would like to know how that worked. Would you talk to the merchant and then go and get the purchase order and then bring it back? How would you do your shopping if you wanted to buy something with the purchase order?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: The merchant from whom we'd be buying supplies would write out a bill first. He said it would cost this much. We'd bring the bill to the farm instructor's house.

MR. HENDERSON: And when the agency received that bill, would they give you the purchase order or would they send it to the merchant?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: No, I would leave the bill there with the Indian agent. The merchant would collect his money for my supplies there. That's how it worked.

MR. HENDERSON: That was translated as buyer -- I suppose that means the seller or the store owner?

INTERPRETER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: When you received the final payment, that was not a purchase order, that was a cheque?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: It was a cheque.

MR. HENDERSON: And do you remember meeting with some people from Indian Affairs at that time to get the cheque in Grand Centre?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Government people were sitting there, but I only remember the Indian agent and his officials.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember who they were, their names?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: No, I don't remember their names.

MR. HENDERSON: You do remember that you were asked to sign something in order to get that cheque?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember what you were told about the document you were asked to sign? Did anybody explain it to you?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: No, they didn't say what it was for. You had to sign your name before you got your cheque. We were in a hurry to sign our names so we could get our cheques. We had no meetings about it, there were no questions asked. We signed our names and they distributed our cheques.

MR. HENDERSON: And you did get a cheque on that occasion? At that time, you got a cheque that day?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Right then and there.

MR. HENDERSON: I guess if I can just speak to the Chairman a moment, we have a bit of an anomaly here. We have the list which we assume is the one that everybody signed. Mr. Piche's name is here, but there is no signature beside it. Perhaps I can show that to Mr. Piche. And if he has any recollection, we'll ask what it is.

I'm just going to ask you, sir, if this was the list that you remember being shown or asked to sign.

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: It didn't look like this, the paper.

MR. PICHE: It's not the same.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Piche advises, Mr. Chairman, that this does not look the same as the piece of paper he was shown. Do you remember, sir, if there were any other names on the piece of paper that you did sign?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: I wasn't watching for that. It seemed like it was only a single piece of paper, like this one piece of paper. There was no list of names. They made you sign a sheet of paper and they gave you your cheque.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you.

If I can just speak to the Chairman again for a moment, there are individual quit claims which many of the people were asked to and did sign. It's quite likely that that's the document that Mr. Piche may have been shown. Just so that the Commissioners are aware that there were different documents kicking around at different times.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Could you maybe try to see if there were other words on the document or anything like that? If he did sign another one, was there words on it or anything

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Piche, the document that you did sign, do you remember any of the words that were on there or anything anybody told you about it?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: I saw it, but I don't remember. I wasn't told what it was for.

MR. HENDERSON: When you said, sir, that you didn't know what the final payment meant, does that mean you expected further compensation, further negotiation at some point?

INTERPRETER: Could you repeat that?

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Piche said earlier that he didn't understand what was meant by the term "final payment." Does that mean, Mr. Piche, that you expected further payment or further negotiation at some time after that?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: No, they didn't tell us that. They didn't say anything about that. We were told at first it was for twenty years.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, sir. Would you like to tell the Commissioners anything about how the creation of the bombing range affected your family or your community, how your life is different afterwards and how you feel about that?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: It's not right at all. In the fall, we can't do anything. There's nothing. Eventually, everyone was on welfare. We are restricted to living on the reserve. There is nothing else for us. MR. HENDERSON: Just one other question. In terms of the trap line that you showed us on the map earlier, parts of it are north of the bombing range; is that correct?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes, I've shown on the map.

MR. HENDERSON: And when the range was closed, was there any way to get up to that area without going across the bombing range?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: I've never been back there again.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you ever trap anywhere else again after 1952?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Only in the reserve boundaries, as I said.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you very much, sir. Those are the questions that I have. There may be some other questions to come, but I am very grateful for the assistance you've given us.

Mr. Chairman?

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thanks.

Thank you very much, Mr. Piche, for taking the time to come and help us today.

One question that I have is, in the north, when you trapped up there before the bombing range, did you ever get any Indian medicine from up there?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: People had medicines, of course. The old people knew about their medicines. If you cut yourself, someone would make medicine to cure you, medicine from the bush.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Do you know whether or not band members, when they died, were buried up there?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: It was before my time, so I don't know.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: But did it happen?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes, there are people buried there. Here and there, but not many.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: After 1952, did you ever think that you would be trapping again?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: I always thought about it.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you, sir.

I'll ask Commissioner Prentice if you have any questions? No questions?

Commissioner Bellegarde?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Mr. Piche, do you think the compensation paid to you for your trapping equipment, materials, cabins was fair?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: No, it was not fair, but we didn't have any say in it. The white man was the authority and you couldn't argue with them.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Do you remember seventy years back when you trapped with your grandfather, do you remember anything about the possibility or where the treaty Indian people from the Cold Lake First Nation owned that land? Because you trapped right across the Primrose range and down into the Cold Lake and fished as well, were there any stories or beliefs that that was treaty Indian land and belonged to the Indians?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes, it was our land -- our land by birthright. There was no boundary recognized until Saskatchewan was formed into a province. We've always travelled back and forth. Our grandfathers have always travelled there.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: One last question, and it deals with the trapping lines themselves.

You trapped outside what is now the range; you trapped inside what is now the range. In your compensation, did anyone ever offer you other trap lines outside the range as it now stands?

INTERPRETER: They're trying to identify the area. He doesn't really understand the question. He doesn't know how to answer it.

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: No, I wasn't told anything. They didn't tell us they would find other land for us.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: They took away your trap lines inside the range and gave you money. Did they ever offer you other trap lines because you were paying a license. Did they ever offer any trap lines any place else to replace the ones you lost from inside the range?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: It was never offered, anything. No one ever said anything. Nobody even indicated they would look for other alternative trap lines for anyone, including myself.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Any further questions, Mr. Henderson? One more?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman, just a few final ones.

When you were trapping in the old days, where did you sell your furs?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Only in Cold Lake, there was a Hudson's Bay store in Cold Lake. There was one store at Beaver Crossing, but that was before my time. I only sold my furs in Cold Lake.

MR. HENDERSON: And later when you were trapping on the reserve, was that store still open?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Hudson Bay was burned in Cold Lake.

MR. HENDERSON: When you were just trapping on the reserve, could you make a living doing that?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Yes, I used to make a good living.

MR. HENDERSON: Could you do as well [as] you had before up on the bombing range? Could you do as well trapping on the reserve as you had before, up north on the--?

MR. PICHE/INTERPRETER: Trapping was better on the bombing range.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, sir. Those are all the questions that we have. I'm sure that if there is anything we haven't asked you that you would like to tell the Commissioners, they would like you to take this opportunity to do it.

MR. PICHE: It's kind of hard to remember everything. When I'm at home, I remember lots. But in a place like this, you forget. What I should say, I forget.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: You've done very well, Mr. Piche.

MR. PICHE: We made a good living before -- way back. Of course, that's all we have, trapping and commercial fishing in the wintertime. Otherwise, there was no other income. There was no welfare, no pension, nothing. We never heard nothing about that before. Only away after, they started to give out welfare, I know that.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you very much, sir. On behalf of the Commission, I would like to again thank you for taking the time and giving us the opportunity to hear you.

I want to say that you have taught us a lot that is valuable for us. And for that, we are very grateful. We certainly appreciate it. It is very valuable, as I say, to us and we sincerely take to heart everything that you've told us, and we'll consider it very carefully.

Thank you, sir.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, while this may have seemed like the home stretch, we are of course not at the finish line. At best, we have done our first lap at Cold Lake. And I'm sure I speak for all here to say that we're very privileged to have done this and are looking very much forward to coming back in February and hearing from other community members and other evidence that we will have here.

And at this point, I would ask, sir, that you adjourn these proceedings until February 1st.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Well, there's a couple of items here on the agenda. I don't know, does Commissioner Francois want to say anything before we officially adjourn it? Or we'll adjourn the hearings first and then have some closing remarks?

MR. HENDERSON: No, I think it would be appropriate to complete the agenda, sir.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Chief Francois?

CHIEF FRANCOIS: Good afternoon, everyone. I will close this meeting that we have had since Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

We wish to again express our thanks to the Indian Claim Commission's visit to our community to listen to our people.

You have heard the Cold Lake First Nation's witnesses own heartfelt feelings about Primrose Lake. You have heard how important Primrose Lake has been to the Chippewayan people.

We have others who have yet to speak. We look forward to your return on February 1st so the others can also testify. I especially would like to thank the elders that gave their testimony to this inquiry.

Also on behalf of the Council, I would like to express our sincerest appreciation to all the bank members that worked very hard to make this possible. And again, I would like to wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy, prosperous New Year.

I thank you all very much for you to be here with us last week and this week. Thankyou all.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you, Chief.

Let me say one more time -- and for those that have heard it already, I must say, that I can't say this enough. As a first opportunity for us to attend a hearing and listen to the people that actually lived through these experiences, this was exceptional on our part. And to be in this community as the first step, in what is undoubtedly going to be a long journey for us, is indeed a pleasure.

I too want to thank all of the elders that took the time and the trouble to come before us. I especially want to say that what they have told us is truly an education. It is knowledge that we will have in our minds forever. It's information that, if nothing else, we can teach our children and they can teach their children.

I'm extremely proud to have had the opportunity to be here. I can't thank the people of Cold Lake enough for the warm reception, the hospitality, the pleasure that they've given us to have this opportunity.

I want to thank especially the translators who have done just an extraordinary job, all of the people who have operated the machinery, and the people in the kitchens. It's just all been remarkable, and I can't think of a better way to start our holidays like everyone else. If every year could begin the holidays like this, it would be a pleasure, and I hope that the New Year is prosperous and is very enjoyable for everybody in this community, and I hope it brings much success.

I want to thank you personally, but I also want to give my fellow Commissioners an opportunity to say something if they wish.

Jim?

Dan?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you very much, Chief Commissioner LaForme.

I am from the Little Black Bear First Nation in southern Saskatchewan from the Anishinabe tribe, and I am extremely pleased to be here.

I work with, as a member of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, with the Dene people from the Athabasca region. And to come here amongst other Dene people and to see the same kind of strength of character amongst a tribe is a good thing to see.

You have spoken with emotion, with a strong belief in what is right and just. Your history has been explained to us, but also your hopes for the future have been explained to us, and I sincerely hope that the time spent here will have a good result for yourselves, for your community, and for your people in the future.

So on behalf of my own First Nation and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, and of the Commission itself, I wish to thank you. I wish to wish you all good health, continued health, and a happy and productive year in 1993 and I will see you again in February. Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER LaFORME: Thank you, Chief Commissioner.

This has been a very moving experience for me to have come and to have heard about the past and about what has happened at Primrose, what has taken place in your community since that time. It has meant a great deal for me to hear from the elders, to hear about those days, and to hear about the hopes that you have for your future and your children.

This Commission is engaged in a very historic process. I'm very proud to be here and to serve with the people that are on this Commission. And in particular, I'm very proud to be here in this community, taking part in what is a very important first step in dealing with the specific claims in Canada which have gone unanswered for many years.

The poster of our Commission, which you see in this hall, talks about fairness in claims negotiation. Fairness is the important hallmark of this Commission, and I hope that each of us, as we go through our lives, has the opportunity and reflects back upon this historic process.

Each of you have been a very, very important part of that. And as this Commission goes on to be an important part of Canadian history and an important part of dealing with the injustices of the past, each of you will have participated in a very meaningful way in that Commission.

This first hearing is very, very important to us, to this Commission, and I would like to thank all of you for participating and for making it a great success. And it has been a very great pleasure to be here; and for me, it has been a very special and moving experience. Thank you.

That said, these hearings are adjourned until February 1st, 1993. Thank you all

---Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned, to be reconvened on February 1st, 1993.

6. Cold Lake First Nations Witnesses' Testimonies to the Indian Claims Commission, 1-3 February 1993

6.1 February 1, 1993

---WHEREUPON THE HEARING COMMENCED

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Before we get into the continuation of this portion of our Inquiry, I believe the Chief has a few opening comments she would like to make, and I believe your custom is that before you get into any of that we call upon an Elder to open the session.

Armand, do you want to do that?

MR. ARMAND LOTH: If you would all stand up, we will have Elder Charlie Blackman say a prayer here for us.

ELDER CHARLIE BLACKMAN: (Elder's Prayer)

MR. ARMAND LOTH: We are going to have an opening statement by Chief Mary Francois, so, Chief, if you are ready, you can start.

CHIEF MARY FRANCOIS: Good morning, Elders, community members, visiting First Nations and the Indian Claims Commissioners.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome all of you to this Inquiry into our land claim to the Primrose Lake area, better known to us as Hathtuwey.

In the first hearing we heard the emotional and moving descriptions of the hardships that the people faced as a result of the loss of the Primrose Lake traditional territory. At the December Inquiry we heard only some of the witnesses, and today we will hear the remaining people who lived at Primrose Lake.

It is very difficult to describe to this Inquiry the full impact on the community as a result of being denied our traditional lands. The traditional fabric of our community was torn apart at the seams. The pride, self-sufficiency and independence is no longer strong, as it was when we lived and made our living at Hathtuwey. From a community that prided itself on total cooperation and sharing, we now have more welfare and unemployment than was ever seen by these people.

The way of life that saw these people dependent on the bountiful resources that Hathtuwey had to offer -- big game, berries, fur and roots for our medicines -- was our means of survival. The reason we are here this week is to give testimony as to what Hathtuwey means to the people of Cold Lake First Nations. We are here to see if there is justice in this country and to find out if the federal government is serious about addressing land claims, as they promised in 1990, when this Commission was created in the light of the conflicts of time.

With that, I again welcome all the commissioners, and I wish you all listen with your minds and hearts to what my people have to say.

I thank you all.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: That being completed, I want to now officially note that this portion of our Inquiry -- and I say a portion of our Inquiry because I may not have left you with the information that this will only form a part of the record that this Commission will examine in order to make its recommendations to government. Obviously, listening to people who experienced what gives rise to your land claim is, of course, a very important component of it. There are other interested parties in this who we will have to gather information from as well. There are also some experts that we will need to listen to and to gather some information and some guidance from them. Then, when we put it all together, that will form the basis of the recommendations that we will be making to government.

I would like to now, then, open this session -- the continuation of the Cold Lake Inquiry -- and ask for some opening comments from Commission counsel, Bill Henderson.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The community information portion of this Inquiry, which began here in December and which is continuing today, is subject to agreements as to procedure, which I believe still obtain. We have indications that perhaps the total ban on photographing witnesses, which was requested at the beginning of these proceedings on December 14th, may be relaxed a bit in light of some of the media who may be attending within the next few days, and I expect, Mr. Chairman, that you will be giving appropriate direction on those matters in due course.

That said, we are still proceeding as we had before, and before calling the first witness, I believe, Mr. Winogron who, on behalf of the Government of Canada, wishes to alert the panel to some of the discussions which have gone on to this point amongst Counsel. And he has a very brief statement to make, if you could entertain that at this time.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Mr. Winogron.

MR. ROBERT WINOGRON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Henderson.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, counsel for the First Nation, Messrs. Mandamin and Crane and ourself have been, at this stage, been unable to completely agree on the issues before the Commission. In addition, there have been a number of points which the parties disagree on. In the consultation conference in this matter, the parties were assured that if agreement between the parties was not achieved, we would be able to obtain a ruling from the Commission.

I have outlined the positions on each point of disagreement, and I have provided a proposed list of issues in a letter dated January 27, 1993. In that letter I also asked the Commission to make a ruling on these matters, and subsequently in a conversation between all counsel the previous Friday some progress was made in terms of the matters in dispute, although the central issue of the proposed list of issues remains unresolved. This morning I was provided with a proposed list of issues by counsel, and we are going to carefully consider those issues, and it may well be that we reach agreement on those points. If the parties, however, are not able to reach agreement prior to the end of this session, we will be renewing our request for a ruling on the two matters.

It should be noted that we are requesting a list of the issues to comply with procedural fairness principles which stated previously that the list of issues should not be inflexible, and that if the Commission sees fit to deal with an issue which is not on the list, then with notice the parties would be free to address the additional matters, if any. Without a list of issues, the parties -- it is our position -- are at a disadvantage in knowing which witnesses and documents to marshal and

which matters to address in submissions and which questions should be properly addressed to the witnesses.

This is the first matter before the Commission, and as has been eloquently stated by Mr. Henderson, the procedure for dealing with claims generally has not been followed so that community evidence could be taken in an expeditious fashion. It is, therefore, even more important to crystalize the actual issues in this matter since the steps proposed to identify the issues have been rearranged.

Thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I take it, then, that counsel is continuing to work on that final submission. Your request, then, is that if, in fact, before this portion of the Inquiry concludes -- this community portion of it -- that you may be asking for a ruling?

MR. WINOGRON: That is precisely my position. We are optimistic that we can resolve all the points, but --

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: All of us are confident that you will do that. Thank you.

Mr. Henderson, do you have our first witness?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I would just add that this is not -- in terms of the list of issues, to make the record clear, or as clear as I can make it -- this is not a matter of which the commissioners as such have been previously apprised, so I believe Mr. Winogron wishes that that be treated as notice for the moment that discussions amongst counsel have been going on. Those discussions are continuing, and I would like to simply reiterate what has been discussed, or certainly what has been advanced on behalf of the Commission to ensure that the panel is comfortable with it, that counsel's agreement as to the issues is not intended to be binding on the Commission, that is, their agreement provides a guideline, or a road map, if you wish, to navigate. The procedures and the process by which the Commission is conducting its Inquiry certainly, I think, is of concern to all involved in the process, especially the panel; that no one be taken unfairly by surprise; that everyone be given a fair opportunity to address issues which the commissioners themselves may ultimately be dealing with. I think that the agreements of counsel to the extent that these can be reached also assist the Commission in identifying issues and dealing with them and allocating such evidence as there is.

It is perfectly true that we have not been able to follow what would be the ideal path for the purposes of conducting this Inquiry, which is the first. It is equally true that we are still making our way along that path and that not all of the information or documents that we would otherwise regard as preliminary to this stage of the proceedings have yet been received, and counsel, of course, are continuing to address that issue as well.

So, within the framework of those comments, I will continue as Commission counsel to deal with my colleagues, and I am confident, I think, that those factors which have guided me in these discussions will continue to be observed and will ultimately result in a useful conclusion.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I can just comment for the benefit, if I may, on behalf my colleagues up here. We will certainly appreciate very much your attempts and the attempts of all counsel to guide us in what you term as issues and what kind of information we may need to gather to make our recommendations and how to focus that information.

However, I can assure you that while we will look at that very favourably, we do want it understood -- and I think it is understood -- that that would be nothing more than a guide and one that we would consider very carefully and consider very seriously.

I think you stated, and I certainly am in agreement with any kind of a comment which suggests that we are not certainly bound by whatever you put forward to us as the issues that we have to look at, but submissions in that regard and whatever you may agree on with respect to those issues, as I have said, would be of great assistance, and we would consider them, obviously, very carefully, and unless there was some compelling reason to do otherwise, probably not deviate from that.

However, those are decisions that we may not have to make at this point and would certainly, if the time arises where the parties have some difficulty with that, then obviously we would be prepared to sit down. I can tell you right now, though, that we are not going to be prepared to sit down unless we have some advance notice and some advance literature outlining whatever those issues are so that we can consider them very carefully and not have to rush through anything like that. So, we would be looking for some information in advance and a clear outline of what the arguments would be, and we will consider it at that time. But, as Mr. Winogron has indicated, now is not necessarily the time.

If that is concluded, is there anything else to add in that regard? If not, then can we call the first witness?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I think, in fairness, Mr. Winogron and I have both addressed that question, and it may be that we have done all the justice we could to it at this stage, but at the same time, if Mr. Mandamin has anything to add, I think we should extend him the opportunity as well.

MR.. MANDAMIN: As Mr. Winogron has indicated, counsel are continuing to discuss the matter, and hopefully we can come to an agreed statement of issues as a guideline for the Commission. If that comes to an impasse, then I will certainly want to involve Mr. Brian Crane, who will be here in a later part of the week.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Mandamin and Mr. Winogron for your assistance in that matter. I think we can safely assume that the panel need not hear about it again, at least until Wednesday and perhaps never.

That being the case, we can proceed with our first witness today, and that is Mr. John Blackman, please.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I'm sorry, I have to interfere at this point. I am not picking up anything. Are you getting anything? Okay, my apologies, but I was not receiving anything through the interpretation. I have to apologize, but I would ask that the witness start over, please.

MR. JOHN BLACKMAN: I can't really do justice to my ability to speak. I have a problem breathing, but I will begin.

The way it was in the yesteryears, and since I was a child, I was deaf, but according to my ability to remember, I will tell you, I can best remember since I was about thirteen years old. However,

the way I observed, even though I am a deaf man, those were the conditions that I made my life in this world, just by observing. So, I am going to tell you about my father. He survived through the Primrose area. Every fall, when the moose are on the run, he always went hunting. When the meat was prepared, he would come back here and begin to prepare for the winter to go trapping, up to Christmas time, and he would be gone for that time, between fall and Christmas. At Christmas he would return, and he would bring back things that we would make and use for our livelihood. After Christmas, he would go back to Primrose until Easter. He would leave us behind. Us, myself especially, used to keep the animals. We had a large herd of animals -- cows and horses. So, I stayed home and kept the animals.

When he would return, whatever he brought back that is what we lived on.

Then after many years, I began to make my own livelihood myself. My father told me: If you get married and begin to live by yourself, with the help of this woman, you will be able to make your own livelihood. I didn't really want to think that way, but he said it so often I eventually got married, but I still kept the animals. Every winter, I did the same thing over and over, because we did well, we lived well back here.

Then, I wanted to go north. I thought I would go with my father. I was going to find out how he makes his living out there in Primrose. I didn't really like the area or that kind of livelihood, but I thought that one day in the future this would fall on me, and I would make that kind of living, too. Then, when my father passed away and I became alone, I went to Primrose on my own. I did this back and forth for some time, this hunting that we do.

We were advised that we would lose our trap lines. When I heard that news -- even though I am deaf, I figured out that's what they said. I was advised that we were going to receive some money. When the time came, I did receive some money -- one thousand five hundred dollars. If they didn't tell me, it was close. I would still have been going back and forth, but because I am deaf I wouldn't have known that it was shut down. Maybe I could have been bombed out there and nobody would know. Because I was advised not to go back, I quit going back there.

After that, I received the same amount again the second time around. After that -- after a lot of meetings -- somebody told me that I was going to receive money again, but I was going to have to write my name down before I received the cheque. That's what I was told.

I started to think about it. My dad had advised me: In the future, when a white person -- whatever other people -- if he [wants] to make a deal with you, unless you understand it absolutely, do not write your name. I started to think that way, and I was advised that this is the last time I was going

to receive this money.

There was one old man, Benoit Grandbois (phonetic), he was there ahead of me. I came up to him. I wanted to see what his opinion was. When it came to him, he asked how long the signature was going to be honoured for. He was told, "For twenty years. After twenty years, you'll get the land back." He says, "You'll be able to go back." He says, "There will be no question, you'll be able to go back to your trap lines after twenty years." That's what he was told. He didn't quite agree. A lot of people had already signed their name. He said, "Unless you are absolutely sure that it's twenty years that you are going to write your name down for, if that's the truth, then I will sign. Then, after twenty years, it's our land, so we are going to go back after twenty years." He made his cross right in front of me, after a long time, and then it came to me.

He said, "Sign your name here."

"How long am I signing my name for?"

"You're signing your name for twenty years."

"Are you sure you have written down on paper that you can assure me that this is only for twenty years?"

"Yes." I was assured that it was only for twenty years and after twenty years I will be able to go back to Primrose. Then I remembered what my father had said. I remembered all of my father's advice, but I was guaranteed verbally that I would be able to go back in twenty years. On that reason I have signed my name.

I used to have a trapper license. I was made to surrender my trapper's license at that point. When twenty years were up, nobody ever went back to Primrose. Nobody seemed to know what was happening. We could have gone back there, but nobody moved, and twenty years passed. Now it's forty years, and we were never advised that we were going to sit around for twenty years guaranteed.

I wrote my name for twenty years. My name was on that paper for twenty years. Because I was not allowed to go back after twenty years, I want the compensation they were talking about. All those people, as long as the bombing range is there, there is help coming to me and the people here. If they don't want to give the land back, I want compensation as promised.

What more can I add to something that is already talked about. Those Primrose people made their living. There is absolute truth in it. There are graves to prove that people have always been there. Wherever somebody died, that's where he was buried.

As long as Primrose is the way it is, that we have no control over it, we will always expect compensation and help.

This is all I am going to say. What I want is not too much in consideration. I am thinking of all the people -- able bodied people -- that used to be able to go to Primrose, because those are the ones I am speaking for. For myself it's not that important, but I am speaking for the people -- the able bodied and the generations after. That's my thought.

I don't have strength to add more to it. When a man has a livelihood, he has no right to lose it. We have never lost our livelihood up to now. When the land was closed -- Primrose was closed -- we tried to make farming on a small scale; tried to make a go of it. Even that is no longer possible. I am now more or less a beggar.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Blackman. I know you have, perhaps, some trouble with your lungs, and it's difficult to talk a long time. I wonder if you could answer a few more questions?

I wonder if I could start, sir, just by asking how old you are?

MR. BLACKMAN: Eighty-five years. I am close to [eighty-five].

MR. HENDERSON: As I understand it, your brother is Mr. Charlie Blackman, who we heard from earlier?

MR. BLACKMAN: (Nodding, "yes".)

MR. HENDERSON: When you were trapping in the Primrose area, you said you had a trapping license. Was that on the Alberta side?

MR. BLACKMAN: The Alberta side.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you also have a fishing license?

MR. BLACKMAN: I fished without a fishing license. We never had to use one of those at that time.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Excuse me, Mr. Henderson, I don't think the record has shown what the answer was to Charlie Blackman as to whether or not that was his brother. I know there was a nod, "yes", but there was nothing on the record.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The record should show that Mr. John Blackman did indicate that Charlie Blackman is his brother.

The meeting you attended, or the time you attended when you had the discussion about your signature being good for twenty years, could you tell us again, please, who was there at that time?

MR. BLACKMAN: I cannot really recall. Eckland was there and Knapp. Those two -- I am not quite sure, but those are the names that come back to me.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember which of those said that -- or if it was them - which of them said that it was a twenty-year signature?

MR. BLACKMAN: I was told for twenty years -- I am not sure who told me. I wrote my name in English. I didn't make a cross.

MR. HENDERSON: I believe you also did some farming before the bombing range was created.

MR. BLACKMAN: Yes, I farmed. After the bombing range was closed, I turned to farming, and I had lots of cattle. The way I farmed, I still have those papers.

MR. HENDERSON: Could you make as good a living farming after the bombing range was created as you could trapping and fishing before?

MR. BLACKMAN: Yes. Not too much, but I made a decent living. I never made big money. I had cattle and then I tried to make a living in all possible ways. I never made big money as a result of my efforts, but in those days it was a lot easier to make a bit of money, even though you had a small farm, because we only used horses for farming.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, sir. I think those are the questions that I have. It

may be that some of the lawyers wish to ask something in addition -- but they don't. Mr. Chairman, perhaps the commissioners have some questions for this witness?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Yes, I have one or two. Is that okay?

MR. BLACKMAN: I came here to be questioned. I don't mind.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Perfect. Mr. Blackman, can you speak, read or write English?

MR. BLACKMAN: I know a little bit. Those high words, I absolutely don't understand it. I speak a little bit of English, naturally, whatever I can understand. I don't really understand English that well. I am deaf, so I can't really learn that well.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: How about reading English?

MR. BLACKMAN: Just a little bit. It's impossible for me to read everything. Writing in English -- I read it, but I don't even understand what I am reading anyway. In our language -- in the Chippewayan language -- I use the syllabics to write, and I write better. What I write down, if you want to see it, I can show it to you afterwards.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Was there an interpreter present when he signed in 1961?

MR. BLACKMAN: The only person that was there was the person who advised me, but we didn't have counsel at that point. If he had had anything written down, I would have kept the evidence from that time. I am not that literate because I am deaf. I went to school, but I didn't make much use of it because I was deaf, so I didn't pick up as much as other children.

If I was literate, that paper would be here. I would present that paper here today.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: When he was told at the signing by either Mr. Knapp or Mr. Eckland, did they speak to him in Chippewayan?

MR. BLACKMAN: Only in English. All the transaction was only in English. There was no one who spoke our language. In those days even white people never tried to speak our language, so there was no one telling me anything in my language.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: When they spoke to you in English, you knew that they were telling you that that was only for twenty years?

MR. BLACKMAN: Yes. They said twenty years; exactly twenty years, and that after twenty years the land would go back to us. I said, "Are you sure you have written this down on paper." He said, "It's all fixed. Don't worry, after twenty years you'll get it back."

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Mr. Blackman, when you asked them what was in there and are they sure it was for twenty years, did you speak to them in English or Chippewayan?

MR. BLACKMAN: In English. However, I am not sure if it was any sort of legal type of communication in English that I was guaranteed at that time. I am not lying to you. I am relating exactly what I was told at that time. Although I was deaf, this is the best I could do under that kind of circumstance.

I made my livelihood by my own means and by my own impressions on this world, because of being deaf. So, what happened there is exactly the way I say it is.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you.

After 1961 did you ever have any occasion to speak to any government officials or anybody about farming or another way of life?

MR. BLACKMAN: No, I have never had any communication at all. White neighbours were the only people whose advice I took, and they also helped me out in that I learned farming from the white settlers around the reserve. My white neighbours.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Mr. Blackman, did you ever go to council and ask them to help you out? The band council?

MR. BLACKMAN: Once in a while, maybe for seed grain, if I am short, I think I could get help. Then I would go to them, and only then I would come, because I would never ask another human being otherwise. Only when I am short of seed grain, it's only then I came for help. In the fall, if I grew the grain well, then I would return the same amount. If it is good, good grain, then it will be useful for seeding the next year.

One time I brought the grain back in the fall and they told me to forget about it. I made my own living on a team of horses. It's not big; a little over fifty acres that I farmed on horses, so it's not big farming.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, thank you. I am going to ask my colleagues if they have any questions.

Commissioner Prentice, do you have any questions?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Mr. Blackman, did you have a cabin at Primrose Lake?

MR. BLACKMAN: Yes, I had a house when I would come back this way. I was told not to take my traps or anything that I owned. I hung it up in safety. There used to be fires that would take place. I tried to put it in a place where the fires wouldn't get to it, because I suspected the bombing would cause fires. So, I put it in the best safety way I could.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Did your trap lines, Mr. Blackman, run north from Primrose Lake? Which area did you trap in?

MR. BLACKMAN: From Primrose straight west for twenty-five miles west of Primrose.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Commissioner Bellegarde, do you have any questions?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Good morning, Mr. Blackman.

This deals with the compensation payments themselves. You received one thousand five hundred dollars from the first payment. Do you remember what that payment was for?

MR. BLACKMAN: I was told it was for the trap lines, in lieu of the trap line, the traps, my house, whatever I left behind. I was told I was going to lose these. As a result of that, I suspect that was what the one thousand five hundred dollars was about.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you. Now the second payment was also for one thousand five hundred dollars. Do you remember what that was for?

MR. BLACKMAN: I wasn't really advised what it was for. I was just told in general that we were going to receive money for the trap lines. That was the only information I had. Nobody specifically said it was for this or that.

I was suspecting I was going to get one thousand five hundred dollars every year. We only received it three times, and I was told it was the final payment on the third payment.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: One last question, sir. How big of a family did you support on your fifty acre farm that you had, and your trapping as well?

MR. BLACKMAN: I am not sure. I had one older. The first one was called Ann. The next one was called Melanie and then Baptiste (phonetic). I only had three children.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, Mr. Henderson, are there any more questions? Do counsel have any other questions they want to put?

MR. HENDERSON: There do not appear to be, Mr. Chairman.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Mr. Blackman, those are all the questions that we have. Do you have anything you would like to add, anything more you would like to say?

MR. BLACKMAN: All these white people started to surround us and boss us around for the fish and wild life. They had no business over us. Even the game warden -- it was none of their business. We never had a use for -- we would ask for a game warden if we needed one of those type of people. He was never to boss us around or touch anything that belonged to us, including the trap lines and fish and wildlife. That was all ours. They had no business being the boss of it, and yet today they completely control everything.

Whichever way they could destroy our livelihood, this is what white people seem to be doing today.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Just one final question, Mr. Blackman. How long have the Chippewayan people been living in the Primrose Lake area, do you know?

MR. BLACKMAN: I cannot tell you how many years the Chippewayans have lived there. I have never been told all the stories. One old man said that his grandfather -- this old man was old already then -- he said his grandfather was in Primrose. It's not the first time that people made a living there. There are deep tracks to Primrose because it has been travelled upon back and forth for many, many years when somebody went trapping. Everybody would be mixed. Nobody ever bothered saying: This is my trap line. Everybody would mingle and work together, and if somebody killed a moose or whatever, they would be glad. Nobody ever argued or fought over territory. Nobody said: This is my area. People were glad to live together and cooperate and live harmoniously. There were no arguments who was the owner of this trap line or that area. Nobody ever chased you away, even though I may have been on somebody's area.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. Those are all the questions that we have.

Mr. Blackman, we want to thank you very, very much on behalf of the Commission for taking the time to come and help us today.

MR. BLACKMAN: I came here to get a thanks.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You have our thanks, but more importantly, this information is very important to us.

MR. BLACKMAN: Even if the government was sitting here with me today, I wouldn't be shy to talk to them, because this is my land right here, too.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you very much, Mr. Blackman, you can go.

MR. BLACKMAN: Thank you very much for releasing me. I'm free again.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, Mr. Henderson, can we have the next witness, please.

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the next witness this morning is Mr. Edward Grandbois. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Maurice will carry on as counsel for the morning.

MR. MAURICE: Good morning, Mr. Grandbois.

I am wondering if you could tell the commissioners in your own words how you and your family made your living prior to the bombing range being created.

MR. EDWARD GRANDBOIS: Am I going to tell a story? Yes. I am going to speak only in Chippewayan.

The first time I got money, that's what I am going to talk about. The first time we got money -- this is what we were told. This is what I am going to be talking about.

The first time that the white people came to us, we were told about the bombing range from Alberta and Saskatchewan side. We were told we were going to get paid for the supplies that we left at the bombing range, because they were going to take that land. That's what we were told, and that's how we got our money.

Whenever we get our land back, we'll tell you about it. Now, we are waiting, and all our equipment and everything -- that's what we had gotten the money for.

We are going to be told when the land is going to be taken, and we received compensation for that. Now, I guess all this time they have made the bombing range, and then they asked for a meeting again, and they told us we were going to get compensation again. They told us they were going to pay us so we wouldn't be going back to the bombing range any more.

But we went back again one more time, and then we had another meeting again. "We're going to pay you again." The trappers and the fishermen, both alike, we got paid again, and then the land was taken away from us. We were told we couldn't go back there again, unless we were asked again. They were going to drop bombs there, and we were scared to go back, so we never did go back.

When we got paid, we were paid for twenty years, we were told, and we were going to get compensation again in twenty years time. At that time we'll get another compensation, but today we are still waiting for that payment. We are too scared to go back to the bombing range right now, and we are still waiting for our compensation.

These people that are here with us, we want to know what they are going to tell us today.

This is as far as I am going to say what I am. Thank you very much for being here.

MR. MAURICE: Thank you, Mr. Grandbois. I am wondering if I could ask you a few questions. Could you tell us, first of all, if you had any registered trapping license or commercial fishing license?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes, I had a license there for fishing and trapping.

MR. MAURICE: When the government first came to tell you about the bombing range, do you recall who it was that came to tell you about this?

MR. GRANDBOIS: A guy from Saskatchewan named Eckland, and a farmer's instructor sat with us, Kejener. At that time, Dr. Hill (phonetic) was the Superintendent of Indian Affairs.

MR. MAURICE: When they mentioned that you would receive twenty years compensation and then you would get more afterwards, how did they determine how much compensation you were to receive?

MR. GRANDBOIS: It has been about thirty years since I received money. The first time that we had gotten paid, we were told it was going to be twenty years and then we were going to get some more compensation. Either that or we were going to get the land back. That's what we were told.

MR. MAURICE: Did Mr. Kejener or Mr. Eckland ever sit down with you and say, "Let's negotiate how much compensation you will receive"?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes, they sat with us, and they had a paper -- Kejener had a paper and Eckland had a paper -- but we have never seen anything since then.

MR. MAURICE: Did they come out and watch you trapping and fishing to determine how much you caught?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, no. We were over there by ourselves. The ones that looked after us was from Alberta and Saskatchewan

MR. MAURICE: You mention that they had a piece of paper with them. Did you ever negotiate the amount you would receive? Did you agree that that was the proper amount?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, we never got anything. They were the ones that made the negotiations. We never made a deal with them, the way they thought, that's how they wrote it, and that's the way we got paid. They were the ones that made the negotiations amongst themselves. They had the forms and they took it with them, and we never saw it again. We were supposed to be told after twenty years, and we're still waiting.

MR. MAURICE: Mr. Grandbois, do you remember how much you received in the first payment?

MR. GRANDBOIS: For the equipment? I received seven hundred dollars. We all received seven hundred dollars.

MR. MAURICE: Did you also receive another compensation payment for your trapping and fishing rights, not including the equipment?

MR. GRANDBOIS: We got one payment.

MR. MAURICE: Did you ever receive any compensation by -- what do they call them now -- purchase orders, or chits, where you would sign a piece of paper and receive equipment for it?

MR. GRANDBOIS: We got a cheque for the equipment the first time. The next payment was for the land. We got a voucher, and bought whatever we wanted with it, and we never heard any more about it.

MR. MAURICE: For that payment that you received in vouchers for the land, how much did you receive for that?

MR. GRANDBOIS: The payment that we got for the land, I received two thousand four hundred dollars, but I don't know if we all got the same amount.

MR. MAURICE: Mr. Grandbois, do you think that that payment you received for the land was equal to what you would earn if you were on the land itself doing the trapping and fishing?

MR. GRANDBOIS: That money that I received, the two thousand four hundred dollars, whatever we wanted, we bought and that was it.

MR. MAURICE: Maybe I will try and rephrase the question. The two thousand four hundred dollars, was that equal to about the same amount you would earn in one year trapping and fishing?

MR. GRANDBOIS: I bought one tractor out of that two thousand four hundred dollars. The rest I got somebody to plow my land, and that's where all the rest of that money went.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Mr. Maurice, maybe you could ask him how much he made in a year trapping back then.

MR. MAURICE: Sure, okay.

MR. GRANDBOIS: I can't recall how much. We never kept track of how much we made. We made quite a bit in one year. We'd leave in November and on May 15th we'd come back here, but to say how much money we made, we don't know, because we never kept track.

MR. MAURICE: Do you think you made more than two thousand four hundred dollars every year?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes. We had fish and we had all kinds of furs. We sold those. It was very expensive.

MR. MAURICE: Do you recall when the last time that you received compensation was?

MR. GRANDBOIS: About thirty years ago. One of our relatives used to keep a paper, but he passed away, so we don't know exactly how many years. He had it on a paper. Charlie Minoose was the one that had the paper. He passed away, so we don't really know exactly how many years, but I would say it would be about thirty years now.

MR. MAURICE: Could you tell us a little bit about what happened when you received that final payment? Was there a meeting where you discussed this with the government?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, no. They were dropping bombs in the land over there, so we never went back over there, and it's still the same today. We don't have any news; we never get any news, and we have been here -- nobody's told us anything about it again. We are too scared to go back to that land, so we stay here.

MR. MAURICE: Do you ever remember signing a piece of paper to receive that last compensation payment?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, I don't remember. I may have signed my name today, but I always forget about it. I don't know how to read. I can get some letters in the mail, and I just throw them in the garbage, because I can't read.

MR. MAURICE: Mr. Chairman, I am going to show Mr. Grandbois a picture of a -- or a document here.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I think that's already in as Exhibit I, is it not?

MR. MAURICE: That's correct.

Mr. Grandbois, do you recognize your name on this?

MR. GRANDBOIS: I know my name, but my eyes are poor. I can't see.

MR. MAURICE: Mr. Chairman, for the record, Mr. Grandbois cannot identify it because he has poor vision.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay.

MR. MAURICE: Going back to the final payment that you received, do you remember if you or any of the other band members got together to talk about the final compensation?

MR. GRANDBOIS: We might have had a meeting. We were given a promise. We were not to go back over there until today. Now that these people are here, we don't know what's going to happen to us. We were promised that we were going to get paid. I would be happy to see a payment again. Either that or we are going to get our land back.

MR. MAURICE: When you received that last payment, did you believe that you would receive more additional payments after that?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes, that's what they promised us. Either that or give our land back. A lot of people are poor here. If we got payment again --. I have a lot of grandchildren. A lot of us sitting here have a lot of grandchildren. For the future, the ones that are here, they can live with it; they can buy things with it. Now we're all sitting here poor.

MR. MAURICE: After the bombing range came in, Mr. Grandbois, could you tell us how you made your living then?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Before the bombing range, we were all over the place. We had no problem; we were in the bushes. We took all our family over there. We would stay there all winter. I was little then, maybe twelve years old. I remember that very well. My grandfather and my dad - that's how I lived. I remember that very well.

MR. MAURICE: Mr. Grandbois, how did you make your living after the bombing range, after you could not go into that area any longer?

MR. GRANDBOIS: We lived very poorly. We used to stay in the bushes, but we were scared. If we didn't have a license for fishing, we were scared. We would go to court for it. The little hunting we did around here -- the way people say: That's my land, that's my land; so we couldn't very well go hunting anywhere at all in this country. So, we don't know how we are going to live from now on.

I am hoping that these people that are here for us today, that they are going to do something for us. I thank them for being here and listening to us. They know how we live here.

MR. MAURICE: Thank you very much for your patience, Mr. Grandbois.

Those are all the questions I have. Perhaps counsel may have a few more. No? Mr. Chairman?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you, Mr. Grandbois.

Do you know anything about your treaty?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Treaty rights -- my number? Yes, I heard the ones that are older than me -- I think it was '36. Yes, I know a little bit of treaty. We were told that we were going to be taken care of forever. If we go hunting, the other people are always telling us: That's my land, that's my land; so we just stay here on the reserve.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: How old are you, Mr. Grandbois?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Eighty-six years old in June.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I have no further questions. Commissioner Bellegarde, do you have any? Commissioner Prentice?

Any further questions from counsel?

We have no further questions, but we would like to thank Mr. Grandbois.

MR. GRANDBOIS: I, too, thank you. I hope that you make some kind of arrangements for us so that we may be able to get some compensation again. I am really happy that you're here. I asked the Creator.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you, Mr. Grandbois, and can we just say to you that your coming here and helping us is very important to us.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes, okay. Thanks.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You have been a big help, and thank you, Mr. Grandbois. You can go.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Are we going to wait for another year from now on? I know we are going to have a hard time again. Within seven years, we are all going to have a hard time, the whole of Canada. We are going to see it. We have a lot of kids; we don't know what we are going to be living on. We have a lot of children without a dad. I don't know how we're going to manage. I hope you will be able to come to some kind of a compromise pretty quick. They have a chief and councillors. They can make some kind of negotiations. I hope it will be very soon that we will be hearing some good news.

I won't shut up, if I keep going here. Thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Well, thank you, Mr. Grandbois, and can we just say to you that your coming here and helping us is very important to us.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Well, you have been a big help, and thank you, Mr. Grandbois. You can go.

Mr. Henderson, what is your wish? We can start into another witness at this time and then break at twelve-thirty or whatever.

MR. HENDERSON: We have been averaging this morning about forty-five minutes per witness, Mr. Chairman. It's twelve o'clock now. I can smell the lunch that has been prepared for everybody. It's just about ready itself. If you wish, perhaps, we could proceed for half an hour and then adjourn, regardless, for lunch, or we could adjourn now and proceed then with the next witness.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I think what I would prefer to do is, if we start with a witness, I would like to finish with the witness.

Mr. Mandamin, have you got a guess at how long the next witness will be?

MR. MANDAMIN: I would think we would run a similar length of time. One of the Elders here has indicated that he would prefer to eat.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Eat first?

MR. MANDAMIN: Yes, to build up his strength.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, I think what we'll do is we will break now. We will reconvene at one-thirty, and I think that we ought to make an effort to reconvene at one-thirty and one-thirty sharp. So, we will adjourn until one-thirty. Thank you.

---ADJOURNED FOR LUNCH BREAK

---UPON RESUMING AT 1:30 P.M.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Good afternoon, Mrs. Charland (phonetic).

MR. MAURICE: Before we begin, could you tell us how old you are, please?

MRS. CHARLAND: I'm seventy-three.

MR. MAURICE: Maybe you would like to tell the commissioners how you and your family made your living before the bombing range was established in 1952.

MRS. CHARLAND: Before--?

MR. MAURICE: That's right, before 1952.

MRS. CHARLAND: We used to go and trap at Primrose Lake, and my husband used to buy a license. We stayed there all winter long. For Christmas we would come back, and then we would go back again and stayed 'till spring time.

MR. MAURICE: Did you do any commercial fishing in that area as well?

MRS. CHARLAND: No, just my husband would go fishing.

MR. MAURICE: So, he did both trapping and fishing, then?

MRS. CHARLAND: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: I see. What was your husband's name?

MRS. CHARLAND: Daniel Charland.

MR. MAURICE: Is there anything that you could tell us about this compensation, what was promised with relation to the bombing range by the government. If you would like to speak in Chippewyan, please feel free to; whatever you are most comfortable with.

MRS. CHARLAND: When Primrose was closed to us, we had no place else to go; nothing to do. In the summertime, we used to dig sinic (phonetic) roots. That's what we lived on. Sometimes we used to work for French people. Either that, or if there were some berries, where the airport is right now, that's where we used to pick berries and dig sinic roots for our living. Now, today, we have nothing there. The whole place is closed off from us.

MR. MAURICE: Did you or your husband ever attend any meetings where the government discussed how long they would use the land for and how much compensation would be paid?

MRS. CHARLAND: No, we never had a meeting in front of us. Everything was done without our knowledge. Primrose was given away without our knowledge at all. The chief and council, they might have known something about it. Only when compensation was paid -- distributed. My

husband was given a cheque for four hundred dollars. After that, we got another two hundred dollar cheque, and that's all we could see.

We were told we could make credit at Brosseau's (phonetic) store in Bonnyville, and we used to buy things on credit there. My husband bought some stuff from a garage. That's all I could see.

MR. MAURICE: After the range was established, how did you and your husband make your living?

MRS. CHARLAND: We would just go fishing for ourselves and dig sinic root. We worked for our own self; put some garden in for the summer. Then we worked for the Frenchman. Never get no relief, nothing; no family allowance, nothing.

MR. MAURICE: How often did you go fishing:

MRS. CHARLAND: All summer long.

MR. MAURICE: Where did you do your fishing at then?

MRS. CHARLAND: We just used ourselves.

MR. MAURICE: Sorry, which lake did you fish in?

MRS. CHARLAND: Cold Lake.

MR. MAURICE: Cold Lake. Okay. Did you make the same type of living after the range was established?

MRS. CHARLAND: We used to look for our own living. We used to haul wood to town. We made moccasins. I used to make deer hides. Sewing.

MR. MAURICE: Mrs. Charland, is there anything else that you can remember about how long compensation was supposed to be paid and those types of things that the government promised? Can you remember anything about that?

MRS. CHARLAND: They said they were going to pay in twenty years time. That's all we could hear.

MR. MAURICE: What did you think would happen after that twenty years was over?

MRS. CHARLAND: It's over twenty years now. It's about forty -- over forty years.

MR. MAURICE: After the twenty years ended, did you expect to be able to go back onto the land, or did you expect to receive compensation?

MRS. CHARLAND: We never got paid after that. We got a little bit of pay, that's all. They never mentioned about anything like that.

MR. MAURICE: Thank you very much, Mrs. Charland. Those are all the questions I have. Perhaps counsel may have some?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you very much, Mr. Maurice.

Good afternoon. Mrs. Charland, you said that you were told that it would only be for twenty years.

MRS. CHARLAND: Yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Who told you that?

MRS. CHARLAND: That Mr. Chretien (phonetic) was there looking for the Indians. How do you say -- Indian agent? He told us to get paid over twenty years. We never seen no councillors and the chief at the time. We just seen Chretien.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Were you there when the Indian agent actually told you this?

MRS. CHARLAND: Yes. I was with my husband.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You said -- well, disregard that. There is another area I would like to ask you some questions about.

Do you have any children now, Mrs. Charland?

MRS. CHARLAND: I've just got two girls living. That's all.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: How have they made their living? How have your children -- how do they live; how do they make their living?

MRS. CHARLAND: They all stay alone. One of them was married in England, but they came back to Edmonton.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: So, they don't live around here?

MRS. CHARLAND: No.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I see.

MRS. CHARLAND: One of them is living in Cold Lake.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I don't have any more questions, Mrs. Charland, but maybe some of the other commissioners do. Commissioner Bellegarde, do you have any questions? No. Mr. Prentice? No.

We do not have any more questions. If you have anything else that you would like to tell us, please do so. Do you?

MRS. CHARLAND I haven't got anything to say.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you. It was very kind of you to take the time to come and speak to us like this. What you have to tell us is very important, and it's very helpful, and for that we thank you very much. Thank you, Mrs. Charland.

MRS. CHARLAND: Thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, Mr. Maurice, the next witness, please.

MR. MAURICE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The next witness is Victoria Piche (phonetic). Good afternoon, Mrs. Piche.

Could you tell us how old you are, please?

MRS. VICTORIA PICHE: Sixty-seven. I'll be sixty-eight in August.

MR. MAURICE: Okay.

MRS. PICHE: I'd like to talk about it. I have to, I guess, because I lost my husband. It'll be coming three years this spring. I was with him along all the way.

The first time, after I left school, well, I met him and married him in 1944. He was already trapping before I married him. After we got married, I went with him up north to Watapi Lake. I stayed with him the whole winter up there. At Christmas time in the year 1944, there was commercial fishing, which he always did before, I guess, with his brothers. So, we went fishing during Christmas. I fished with him. Wherever he went, I went along the first year.

Then, the second year, I had a little baby, so I stayed until she was old enough to bring her north. She was still in mossback (phonetic). We went up north, way to the Watapi Lake in the bombing lands.

So, we stayed there. From there I would like to speak in Chippewa, so everybody knows what I said.

From there on -- whoever is doing the translation -- from there we went to Watapi Lake. From there north, we stayed there all season long. We did fishing, and we were there all the time together. From then it was spring time, so we went to Primrose. We stayed there for muskrat until May 15th. Then there was fishing. The trap lines were closed by that time, so we stayed there for a little while, then we would come home.

Whatever we made from furs, we would go to the Hudson Bay and we would sell them there and make a deal. We would pay all our credit, and whatever we used for the summer, we'd buy food and everything for the summer. Then we would stay at his mother's place. We had four horses. He used to use that for plowing. He used to plant wheat there, and we'd stay all summer.

Then, from there in the fall, we'd get credit again at the Hudson Bay, then the same thing over again; we'd go up north. Same thing, over and over. Go north, hitch up the horses and go trapping. The same thing.

Later I had two little girls. The oldest is here with me. That's Mary Francois. She was big enough -- two years; over three years. So, I had two up north; both of them.

I stayed up with my husband trapping. I go with him most of the time, getting squirrels, whatever, trapping lynx, minks, squirrels, foxes; all whatever. Beaver, if you wanted.

So, come back home again. We used to make good. After, when I had more children, my mother and dad used to babysit and kept them, going back north to Watapi. So, all these people that once were in Watapi, lived around that lake -- the first entering the lake was Delmer Huptdal (phonetic). The second were John Reid, Maurice Genevieve, his sons Paul Genevieve, Noel; Maurice's wife. The next were Dominic Piche, Solomon Piche, old James Genevieve and my husband's mom, Katherine Piche, Frank Piche. We used to be all gathered there. Then we would go to our own trap lines.

There was Ezra Nest. His two boys were next to us. On this side of the lake was Rosie and Sam Muskego and, finally, at the end of the lake, Valerie Noel and his wife and family. That's all that surrounded the Watapi Lake. I know these people have been for years up there.

After, we heard that they were going to take our land of hunting grounds away. That spring we heard that and came down. It was the last year. They told my husband that it was the last year for him.

So, later, they were going to pay us. I remember once I was with him, we had four hundred dollars, when I was with him. The second time, I wasn't there. I didn't know. He said he got paid anyway. In this case, well I could say now that it was that much, because what a man says, you know, I couldn't go to him and say how much is this and that. So, anyway, he got paid.

What I was thinking today, like, his report should be is to name all the people that got paid. Their names should be on there and how much. I don't know how much is the last; I think it was four hundred dollars.

Well, my children started school, so I stayed home. One day my husband said: I got to do something and go to work someplace -- not around here, I couldn't get a job, so I've got to leave you to stay with the children. So, I did. He was gone. He was in a logging camp, because he had a good job. He stayed there for three years. He sent me money. I was doing fine. I had a garden where I was staying. Now I had good gardens in two places. So, I stayed home and made my own living. I even do now. When I want to fish, I fish all the time; go hunting, snare.

One day, he wrote to me and said: Well, if you can come and bring our family to me, you might as well come on the train. I'll send you some more money. He had a big motor, thirty-five horsepower. He said I could sell it back and get all the money I can. He said to just take our clothes and get on the train. So, I went on the train and got there.

We stayed there with him for nine years. He was there three years before me, and when I got there I made six years myself. I was working at two schools to make our living, and my children -- most of the girls -- parted to follow their own way, make their own living. Some were in school yet, the youngest ones.

I came back home. I never got welfare, never. I asked for it. I even had a first leg broken. The other one broke. Nine months I was in a wheelchair. I asked for welfare: No, you can't have it. They said: Your husband is able to work. He had arthritis; he was never well. We had a tough life.

So, I thought, if the welfare can't help me, I'll stand and make my own living. I never went to welfare. What I got is: No, you can't get help, because your husband's on disabled. So, I toughed it out 'till I was sixty-three. I guess they found out themselves that I was sixty-three years old and one day I got one thousand five hundred dollars back pay. I made use of it. I didn't spend it for this and that.

That year I went to Ontario. My son-in-law had died. I went up there when I got that one thousand five hundred dollars. Then I came back. It was in April when my son-in-law died. In June my husband died, so I still have tough times. We really miss Primrose, because it broke lots of us. We had to tough it out. It's not very easy for us for making our own living at a time when they took that Primrose away from us. That was our living. That's where we had children and had plenty to eat. There was lots of fish and meat and whatever. We came home, we still made our own living as we were in Primrose Lake, but it was tougher when we lost our land up there. We miss it. I miss it right now, too.

In this case, maybe some of us think that they could have their land back. I didn't know, but for myself, I am thinking: Who is going to have to travel, who is going to do it for me, with all those bomb buildings that they have over there. We can't bring it back. I wish that nothing destroys there. Sure, maybe we can help each other or our sons or our grandchildren. But, it's a lot of change for us. We can't break that, so we would like to have --.

In twenty years they promised us they were going to surely pay us back. I heard that, but I didn't know who is this guy or what's [his] name. Of course my husband did all the talking. But, anyway they told us -- me and my husband; I was standing beside him -- that we wouldn't lose nothing; we'll get paid back in twenty years. My husband said before he died -- he used to mention that -- in twenty years there is nothing come. Now it is double -- forty years now -- since they told us that.

For commercial and things like that to be on Primrose Lake fishing, they said that there are some things under the water that could explode or something. We would just take chances, you see. So, I don't know.

It is up to you that you come and see and to listen to us. I know we went through tough times and we miss Primrose trapping lines, and how we raised our children. I lost one little girl up north. I took the plane back with her the next day. She was an eleven year old child when I lost her. There were three of them up north, and I lost one. Not too bad.

In this case, I don't know if I have anything else. I know that we say we've got to pay for our way back, start all over. I lost all my place -- everything -- furnitures and all everything, and I would have to have it back. I lost, I don't how much.

So, anyways, if I could only have back whatever and pay back my people here. If somebody thinks ahead of doing something for their children and grandchildren, we would be all right. We would manage some way or another.

So, in this case, all my ways about my own trapping, I miss it; we all miss it. That's why this fall I stayed two months in a tent, after snow, fishing, before Cold Lake froze. I went up there. A lot of people know I am still tough. They say: Are you froze or are you cold? No. I was very glad, just like I was living well. I stayed two months and came back in November, before Christmas; the end of November. I had a stove, lantern, all my groceries, fish there. Nothing wrong to stay in a tent. It might be wrong, but after that I was sick when I came in a warm place, because I got used to the cold. I came in and didn't feel good; got kind of sick all the time. I can't work; not strong. I don't know. It must be that cold air, that fresh air. It was good. Come home in a warm place and took sick.

Well, for these people, all of my brothers, sisters and whoever, uncles and all, they are here for you to help them and all of us here; that's why we came.

So, I have nothing --. I went through tough times. After my husband -- all the people quit after May 15th. The game warden, he came to our old shack here in Cold Lake, at this log house and he said: Solomon, do you want to work for me, or do you want to work for yourself. You have no job. He said: Okay. He took that job. He went back to Primrose to the same place over there because it was too full of muskrats. There were too many. So, he went with him and went there for about two weeks. Of all the muskrats, he trapped double. He made nine hundred dollars. The game warden or whatever, well, he got half and half, so he made nine hundred dollars. So, he came back from there and never went up again.

It has taken from him that trapping life. So relatives -- all of them here --

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Mrs. Piche, was your husband's name Solomon. Is that what you said?

MRS. PICHE: Solomon Piche. Peter Herman is the one who -- further than Watapi -- he's here. That's the one that is up north, too. Peter Herman and his wife and family.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Would you be willing, Mrs. Piche, to answer some questions that counsel may want to -- our legal counsel -- may want to ask?

MRS. PICHE: Yes, they could ask me a few questions, if they would like to.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Sure. Thank you.

Please.

MR. MAURICE: Your husband, Solomon, did he have a registered trap line?

MRS. PICHE: Oh, yes. Like, when we'd go down, that game warden, as everybody passed Primrose, they gave him a permit of some kind to trap; eight dollars. I remember that, eight dollars it cost.

MR. MAURICE: I'm sorry, it cost him eight dollars for the license. Is that right?

MRS. PICHE: It was a license, I guess. He used to keep it in his pocket. I never bossed my husband. I put him as the head boss all the time. Me, I do my house, or whatever, but I liked trapping, too.

MR. MAURICE: And he was also doing some commercial fishing, then?

MRS. PICHE: Commercial?

MR. MAURICE: Commercial fishing.

MRS. PICHE: We do -- I do with a grabwash (phonetic). J.B. -- we used to be always together, like, come down for commercial.

MR. MAURICE: You mentioned Watapi Lake. Could you show us on the map where that is?

MRS. PICHE: Watapi Lake, I know.

MR. MAURICE: Okay.

MRS. PICHE: I could read. I'll show you.

MR. MAURICE: Okay.

(Off mike discussion. Witness indicating areas on map.)

MRS. PICHE: I wish I had a pair of glasses. I know where it is. It's somewhere up here. We used to live right at the end of the lake, right at the north end, right about here. There's another little lake here.

MR. MAURICE: Where would your husband's trap lines have been located?

MRS. PICHE: Right on that little lake.

MR. MAURICE: Between these two lakes?

MRS. PICHE: Yes, between these two lakes. Sometimes he'd go, hardly on horses. Just go to Watapi. That's where there's lots of fish. We used to live on fish.

MR. MAURICE: For the record, Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Piche has identified Watapi Lake, which is spelled W-A-T-A-P-I, and another lake, Nipin Lake, N_I_P_I_N, and indicated that her

husband's trap line was located in between the north end of Watapi and this Nipin Lake which would presumably mean that a portion of the trap line would be inside the range and a portion would be outside of it, to the north end.

Did you ever have an opportunity to go back into that area after the range was closed?

MRS. PICHE: No, because it was a bombing range. We couldn't. There were machines working there all summer and the next fall there were bombing planes going and helicopters. We don't know. We were not allowed to go back in there. We couldn't help it. So, everybody did, I guess. How could we go back in that kind of danger place.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. Can you remember how much your husband used to make every year from his fishing and trapping?

MRS. PICHE: Well, he used to make good worthwhile to pay off his debts and Hudson Bay and whatever he wanted to get for living. He bought me three cows when we couldn't go back to the bombing range.

MR. MAURICE: And do you --

MRS. PICHE: That was for me, but I wasn't boss, so somebody sold it -- sold them and bugged up my life for that. Otherwise, I could have had enough cattle to start another way of living. I am sorry that I lost that three cattle.

MR. MAURICE: I just wanted to clarify one other matter, and I believe you talked about it a little bit. I would like to know how you and your husband made a living after the bombing range was closed here.

MRS. PICHE: After the bombing range was closed, we just lived making a garden. We lived on fish, a little hunting in the summer; in every way. We went brushing at white peoples' dairies. We used to go pick berries in the fall and in the summer, blueberries. We had a team of horses. We would bring our children wherever we wanted to make our living. We used to go way up to Saskatchewan to dig sinic roots -- everything. In every way; by snaring rabbits.

I'd go myself, or the old man goes his way and I'd go my way to pick up the children. I was never a lazy woman, looking at TV. Right now, I don't have a look at TV. I tried by best to make my living. Now, I'm going down. I'm not that fast. With a broken leg, I can't do nothing. I am still good in the house cleaning and things like that. So, that's what I am doing. I keep my home.

I've got a pension. I live on my pension.

MR. MAURICE: I see.

MRS. PICHE: Nobody bosses me. My (inaudible). I am doing all right by myself, but it's okay. I am not ashamed talking, when I start telling you all this -- all night, too. If somebody asks me questions, I'll say it's true, yes.

MR. MAURICE: Your husband, did he find work around Cold Lake?

MRS. PICHE: Not after he got a pension, or disabled. Before he got his pension and disabled, he worked to buy our groceries, clothing, whatever. So, after he got his disable and took sick, well he can't because he's not allowed, after he got his pension, he couldn't work. He used to go every year fire fighting. He used to make good money.

The last year, before, he went fire fighting and then that spring in April he passed away. He did lots for me to make my living. When he was trapping, he used to make good. He used to trap every spring around our place at those little lakes. He used to go here and there, trap muskrat and makes a little money, besides his pension. I've still got all his traps, snares, stretchers, everything. For fishing, I've got his jigger and whatever. I've still got it, in case my sons would use it. I don't want to give it away. Keep it.

So, that's all I can say. I hope everybody would be glad to get whatever they're going to pay. It would be nice for us, because we're not rich. See, our land -- we've got nothing to work on. They are having hard times here. They've had losses here; they are having a hard, tough life. They don't hardly sleep sometimes worrying about this. Sometimes, maybe, they're thinking too much.

They stay here all day long, trying to --. You guys have to help us, if you could.

No team, no horses here, no dogs to travel on, no harness or anything, no way of putting up hay, no horses, nothing; no cows.

You think, how could we travel to go back to Primrose. I don't think one would do. Youngsters, they don't know what to do. They are not taught. I feel sorry for my new generations that they can't learn how to snare. They don't even know how to set a net. These young boys of sixteen, eighteen, they don't know how to make a living. How do you think they'll manage to go back to Primrose? I don't think so.

They've got to spend so many dollars to go back and break that land; what they did to us. Took away our land. Our trappers. They took lots of things out of our stomach -- what we were living on.

So, in this case, I couldn't say anything. I'm not sorry that my old parents never --. My mother used to be a smart woman. She taught me. My mother taught me to make my own, go on my own. It's not for white ways, but for my own Indian life, I am not sorry. I can do anything for my living as long as I live. I know my ways. I am old enough to know my ways, to make my own living.

I ask my little granddaughters, my children -- I taught them. Now, they're making their own; they're starting what I showed them. They know it now; they make their own clothes. They can sew.

So, that's all I can tell you.

MR. MAURICE: Mrs. Piche, I have just one more question.

MRS. PICHE: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: Do you recall if your husband ever signed a quit claim, or some other type of piece of paper to receive his final compensation payment?

MRS. PICHE: Well, he just told me -- just by talking -- he said himself that in twenty years' time they are going surely have paid again, if the land in Primrose is okay. They promised, he said, that they're going to pay again in twenty years. Lots of people waited for that day. Where is it? They don't say nothing.

MR. MAURICE: So, did you husband, then, believe that he would always receive another payment?

MRS. PICHE: He did. Four hundred. I think it was in the hall here. There used to be an old hall. I think that's where people got the first payment. That's [where] we got it. There was quite a few people that came here.

But, the second one, I wasn't with him. I never paid attention. He must have got quite a bit because he bought a brand new wagon, a team of horses with harness, and he paid his store bills at Art (inaudible) at (inaudible) Crossing. That's where we were dealing. He spent quite a bit, but he never tells me what he gets. He gets something, he never comes home without nothing -- at least groceries -- for me, or if I asked him for clothing.

MR. MAURICE: Those are all the questions I have. Thank you very much, Mrs. Piche.

MRS. PICHE: Yes, thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you, Mrs. Piche.

I don't know whether any of the other commissioners have any questions, if you are still able to answer them for us. I certainly don't.

Commissioner Bellegarde has a question he would like to ask, okay?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Good afternoon, Mrs. Piche.

This one deals with the game warden who asked Solomon Piche to work for him in trapping out an area around Primrose Lake. Is that correct? Can you tell me that story again? And he got one half of what he earned?

MRS. PICHE: Well, it's not only me that knows that game warden. He used to have a place by the lake, going north by Primrose Lake. There used to be a Canadian flag then. Every trapper that lives up north did -- my brother-in-law, Dominic, I know my mother-in-law. We used a pass, or whatever, a license and stopped there 'till we go through. I don't know if these other people mentioned about that, but it's true. Without a permit we'd never pass it, unless years before me. Maybe they just passed through. The game warden used to give a license out before we went back up north trapping.

She knows, too. She used to go through and get a permit.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Okay, you got the permit, but did the game warden ask Solomon Piche to work for him, to trap an area out?

MRS. PICHE: He went with him.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: I see.

MRS. PICHE: He was up north.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: And they made one thousand eight hundred dollars from fur, and Solomon got half of that?

MRS. PICHE: Yes, nine hundred dollars. He got nine hundred dollars.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Was this after or before the bombing range came into being?

MRS. PICHE: Just when everybody pulled out, that same spring, when everybody came out of the trap line. That same time.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, thank you.

Commissioner Prentice? No questions. Any final questions from counsel?

Mrs. Piche, we don't have any more questions, but we want to thank you very much. What you have come here and told us today has been very helpful to us. We thank you for taking the time and the trouble. What people like yourself have to say to us, we can't tell you enough how important that is to the job that we have to do. We appreciate it very much, and thank you.

MRS. PICHE: Well, thanks to you, too.

MR. MAURICE: Actually, before we finish, I would like to ask one last question. Do you recall what the game warden's name was?

MRS. PICHE: I don't know what his name was. Just his face, when he came to where we were. He used to walk by, but I don't know where he would be now. It's a long time ago.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember where he was from?

MRS. PICHE: No.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. Thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thanks, Mrs. Piche, again.

Now, what I would like to do before we call our next witness, is I would like to take ten minutes -- a very strict ten minutes -- and then we'll get into our next witness.

Mr. Maurice, I would like for us to meet in our office, okay? So, we will adjourn for ten minutes, please.

---ADJOURNED FOR TEN MINUTE RECESS

---UPON RESUMING

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Mr. Maurice, do you have another witness?

MR. MAURICE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the next witness is Hazel Jacko (phonetic).

Good afternoon, Mrs. Jacko. Could you tell the commissioners how old you are, please?

MRS. JACKO: My name is Hazel Jacko. I was born at Primrose Lake December 9, 1929.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I'm sorry, could we move the microphone over a little bit?

Continue.

MR. MAURICE: Mrs. Jacko, could you tell us how you and your family made a living in the Primrose area before it was made into a bombing range?

MRS. JACKO: As I said, I was born there, and my dad had big buildings there to be living there for the winter -- fishing up there and trapping. After my father had died in 1934 -- July 10, 1934 - - then my mother could not look after us, so she put us at the residential school, where I was from '37 to '44. When I came back, I stayed with my brother or my sister; they were older than me.

I knew people who came from Primrose. They were so happy to come back from the north because they had furs and whatever they made from up north.

Then I got married in 1949 to Gregory Jacko. He was a trapper, too. I went up there with him to trap with him for a few months, and then it snowed in so we had to get out of there. We came back then. The commercial fishing was in Primrose, so I had to work at the fish plant. After that, well, I started to have children so I didn't go back and forth up there, but he did. My husband was there. He was hired to buy fish at Primrose from a different person who couldn't be up there from summer and winter. He bought fish from us. His name was Charlie Pinsky (phonetic). He was a merchant from Cold Lake.

I know it's valuable up there, because there was a good living there, I know.

Another thing I would like to say is that the depth of the water is really not so deep, so you can know where to go fishing and catch lots of fish. Cold Lake is so deep, you can do as you please with it. When you go trapping for muskrat, the Primrose muskrat are so big and thick, they are worth lots of money. But around here, it's just like a paper -- paper rats they call it anyway, so it's not worth to do.

That's all I have to say, I guess.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember if your husband ever received any compensation payments?

MRS. JACKO: You'll have to talk louder, I don't hear that much.

MR. MAURICE: Okay, sorry. Did your husband receive any compensation payments that you can recall?

MRS. JACKO: He got compensation, I know, but it wasn't very much. The first cheque he got, he said it was two hundred dollars. The next one, well, it wasn't a cheque, it was just a voucher.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember what the compensation was for? Was it for some fishing or trapping rights?

MRS. JACKO: Well, he was just on a trap line. He had a trap line himself, too. So, it must have been for the trap line.

MR. MAURICE: Was he also a commercial fisherman?

MRS. JACKO: Yes, he was.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember the compensation amount that was paid? Was that more or less equal to what your husband would have earned hunting and trapping, or in fishing, sorry?

MRS. JACKO: Well, I don't ask that much questions, but that's what I said. He just got that cheque at first and then the other one, I don't know.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember if your husband ever signed a quit claim, or some other piece of paper?

MRS. JACKO: I wasn't with him. Maybe he did sign, but I had little ones, so I don't know. I had no way to go any place, so I stayed home where it was warm, with the children.

MR. MAURICE: How did you make your living after the range cut you off from those lands?

MRS. JACKO: Well, the air force came and they were making a base at the airport, and he tried to get in there. I don't know how long he tried, maybe for a couple of years. Then he started working at the airport in 1958 until 1965 when he got hurt on his hip. He worked year-round.

MR. MAURICE: Did you ever do any -- let's say -- agriculture, farming after the range?

MRS. JACKO: No. He just tried to work around odd jobs, that's all, wherever he could get a few dollars here and there to keep us going.

MR. MAURICE: Generally speaking, would you say that you made roughly the same living after the range was created than before?

MRS. JACKO: No. It was better up there at the north -- the living up there. I could even see it now. If I was there, I would be making money. I am divorced from him; I never lived with him from 1977.

MR. MAURICE: Those are all the questions I have Mrs. Jacko. Thank you very much.

Does counsel have any questions?

Mr. Chairman?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you.

Good afternoon, Mrs. Jacko . I don't know whether this question was asked and you answered it, but could you tell us your husband's name, please?

MRS. JACKO: Gregory Jacko.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Now, you mentioned that your husband worked until he was injured, and I got the impression from your answer -- did he work in the air force base?

MRS. JACKO: Yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: And how long did he work there?

MRS. JACKO: He worked from '58 until '65.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: If you can answer this, did a lot of people from the reserve work on the base, do you know?

MRS. JACKO: That one I cannot answer. He was trying to find work, and he would go up there every morning and couldn't succeed for, maybe, about two years. At last he got on the airport, and he worked then until he got hurt.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you know of any others that tried to work there as well, any other people from the band?

MRS. JACKO: Maybe Henry Matchatis was working there at that time.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you have any idea what your husband did while he was on the base?

MRS. JACKO: No.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. Those are all the questions I have, Mrs. Jacko. I don't know if the other commissioners have any. Would you be willing to answer some more questions?

MRS. JACKO: I can't hear. I don't know what he --

Yes, okay.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Bellegarde has some questions I think he would like to ask you. None? Okay. Commissioner Prentice, do you have any questions. Any further questions from counsel?

MR. MAURICE: No, thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. Mrs. Jacko, we have no further questions to ask you, but if there is something that you feel, as a result of these questions, that you would like to add, or anything that you would like to tell the Commission, we would be happy to hear it.

MRS. JACKO: Well, I don't want to add any, and I don't want to talk too long because I've got such a bad cold, and I lose my voice. So, I made it shorter.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Short and sweet.

Well, thank you, Mrs. Jacko. We appreciate you coming out and helping us like this, especially having a cold and all, and we hope that you will go and take of that cold. We appreciate it. We can't tell you enough how important what you have [to say it] to us and to the work that we have to do, so we appreciate very much you taking the time and trouble to come here and help us like this. Thank you.

MRS. JACKO: Thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You are excused.

Okay, you can proceed, counsel and call your next witness, please.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The next witness this afternoon is Mr. Lazarre Janvier. Good afternoon, sir.

MR. LAZARRE JANVIER: I don't know what you are going to ask me first, or where to start.

MR. HENDERSON: Well, perhaps you could tell us what life was like for you before the bombing range was created.

MR. JANVIER: Well, before the bombing range, life was good, for Indians anyway. But, maybe it was no good for a white man and that's why they took it away.

As far as that goes, I didn't do much fishing. The only time I fished was after they took the bombing range and closed Primrose. I was hired there from old Jordan Marshall. I worked for him. I didn't hold no license or anything. But I did a lot of trapping. I done trapping in Sandy River, up north; that's south of Winniford Lake (phonetic).

I made a good living on that, and I had something to show when I was there. But after they took the bombing range, I didn't have no show. I had to go out all the time and work. I worked for the reserve and I was a councillor, and then I worked at the base, hauling concrete blocks and cement from Grand Centre. I hauled all them concrete blocks for the hangars.

I quit that and I went packing ties at Lagoshe Siding (phonetic) here. With Charlie Standmills and Andy I packed ties here for about two years. Before that, I started trapping when I was young. I worked on a ranch down by Marwayne. I worked there nineteen years at that ranch.

From there, when I got married, I started trapping and working here too. Whatever I could find, that's what I did. But it was not the same as trapping, because I was used to trapping, and I knew what to do. But these new jobs, they didn't seem to work too good for me.

I am still working right now, although I'm not getting younger. I'm only seventy-eight years old. I am still working out. Before Christmas, I brushed two hundred acres of brush, down by west of Lac La Biche. Now, after I quit that, I moved west of Edmonton, and I got a job there feeding cattle. I come from Edmonton this morning, so I have to go back after I finish here.

The only thing that I've seen -- all this work that I did -- that trapping was a good life. You didn't have to buy meat; you didn't have to buy fish. All you had to buy was flour and lard, tea and sugar, when you were trapping. But in those days, you'd go to a store in the summertime, when we haven't got nothing and no way to make money, we went to the store, Josh Langer's (phonetic) and old Brady -- he'd just give it us, give you all the stuff you want, all summer. In the fall, we'd go back trapping and we'd pay for that -- all the bills we had. And we used to have some money left over.

Then we would buy horses, a few cows. Everybody had cattle here in this reserve.

They made a good living out of that trap line. But, ever since the bombing range came on, everything went haywire. So, I don't know what to think. I don't even believe myself what I am saying here, because they won't take my word anyway, because I am an Indian. If I was a white man and I said something, they would take my word, but they never take an Indian's word.

So, this is the reason why I am going to make it short, and that's it. That's as far as I'm going.

MR. HENDERSON: I know you have come a long way from Edmonton, the morning. Do you mind if we ask you a few more questions?

MR. JANVIER: Sure.

MR. HENDERSON: You said that you had worked out ranching for about nineteen years.

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: Had you grown up in the Primrose Lake area, or in this area, before you went ranching?

MR. JANVIER: I was born right here in this reserve.

MR. HENDERSON: And your family, were they trappers as well?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Then you came back, after you got married, and started trapping yourself?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: How old would you have been then, or what year would that have been, please?

MR. JANVIER: Oh, gosh, I don't know. It would be fifty-five years ever since I got married, so --.

MR. HENDERSON: That's 1939, 1940?

MR. JANVIER: About that.

MR. HENDERSON: When the range was created, did you get compensation for your fishing?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, I got some, but not half as much as I spent up there for traps. I didn't even get my guns out of that shack. They told me, this equipment that you've got up there, it's one hundred dollars. So that's what I got to start with.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have a cabin there as well?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, right along Sandy River.

MR. HENDERSON: Did anyone from the government meet with you to say: What did you leave behind; this is what we are going to compensate you for?

MR. JANVIER: Nope. They didn't ask too many questions. I don't know who started this. I don't know whether it was the chief or the air base. I don't know who started it. But as soon as they said they were getting the money, they didn't think first what to do, I guess. They just pushed you right in there. That's the way it looked to me.

MR. HENDERSON: After you were compensated for your guns and traps and your cabin or whatever, if that's what the compensation was for, did you get more money after that?

MR. JANVIER: Nope. I got some more, but quite a while after.

MR. HENDERSON: After the range was created, you said that you had to go out to work again, and I assume that means you had to go well away from Cold Lake.

MR. JANVIER: Yes. I don't hardly stay, and the people can tell you. I'm always out somewhere.

MR. HENDERSON: And you did that because that's where you get your employment?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: You worked at the base for a while?

MR. JANVIER: I worked at the base for I don't know how many years; until we finished the hangars; until we finished hauling the concrete blocks and cement and bricks.

MR. HENDERSON: Were there a lot of people from the community who worked at the base at that time?

MR. JANVIER: There were quite a few.

MR. HENDERSON: How did you get the job there yourself?

MR. JANVIER: I was driving a truck for a guy there, by the name of Ernie Johnson. He was from Slave Lake.

MR. HENDERSON: Did he have a contract to work there?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: I see.

MR. JANVIER: I didn't get paid from the base. I got paid from that guy that I was driving the truck for.

MR. HENDERSON: I suppose I should indicate, Mr. Chairman, if I can show Exhibit I to Mr. Janvier, and just ask him if he can identify this document.

I'll just come around there for a moment, if I may, sir.

(Off mike discussion)

I am just showing you, Mr. Janvier, a document which is Exhibit I, and I will ask you first if you recognize that document at all, and secondly, if you recognize your name?

MR. JANVIER: That is it.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you recognize your signature beside the name as it is typed there?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember seeing this document or signing it? Do you remember how that came about?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, I know how it came about. They just pushed at us a slip of paper and said: Sign your name. Really, to tell the truth, they forced us to sign our name, because they just pushed that paper to you.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember who "they" were? Do you remember the individuals involved?

MR. JANVIER: I don't remember who they were.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you remember, Mr. Janvier, whether -- was there writing on the paper that you signed? Do you remember all the writing or the words that were on the paper?

MR. JANVIER: I don't read or write.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You don't. Okay. Now, did anybody explain to you the document?

MR. JANVIER: No. All they done was push that paper to me and said: Sign your name.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. Carry on, Mr. Henderson.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think you've asked all the further questions I have. There may be some others from other counsel. Apparently not, Mr. Chairman. For my part, Mr. Janvier, I would like to thank you for coming all this way today, and I can assure you that you have been a great help to me as counsel, and it may that the commissioners have a few questions themselves for you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you, Mr. Henderson, and thank you, Mr. Janvier, for, as Mr. Henderson said, coming a long way to help us out, and believe me you are being of help to us.

You indicated at one time that you were on council.

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Can you tell us when that was, do you remember?

MR. JANVIER: I don't remember what year that was.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Was it after the range?

MR. JANVIER: That was at the range.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: How long were you on council?

MR. JANVIER: Oh, for about four or five years.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Four or five years. During that time that you were on council, did you or your council -- was the idea of the range and what was happening as a result of the range, was that ever --

MR. JANVIER: I don't think anybody thought about it. They promised that they would rearrange after twenty years.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: What was going to be rearranged after twenty years?

MR. JANVIER: The bombing range.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: That you were going to get the bombing range back, or that you were going to renegotiate the lease?

MR. JANVIER: Renegotiate, I guess.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Did you talk about that while you were on council, with council?

MR. JANVIER: No. I wasn't in the office very long, or every day.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. When you were on council, did you ever talk about any kind of economic development, or any kind of projects -- employment projects - that were going to be on the reserve?

MR. JANVIER: What I was doing myself was working on the ranch and farming. That's what I was doing.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Was council -- did they ever see a problem happening in the community, that people were not working?

MR. JANVIER: You could see a lot of that.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Did any of those people come to your council and ask what you were going to do about it?

MR. JANVIER: Well, even me; I never asked them what they were going to do about it. [They] are there to look after us.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Yes.

MR. JANVIER: The councillors and the chief, if we are stuck, they are supposed to help us, but they didn't. This year, the first year this year, I got four hundred fifty dollars for propane. That's the help I got, and I thanked them very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you ever remember having any kinds of negotiations or conversation with Indian Affairs about jobs on the reserve?

MR. JANVIER: We did, but when we was on that, we had pretty near everybody working here on the farm.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: No, this was after the range.

MR. JANVIER: Yeah.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: When did the farming start to be of --

MR. JANVIER: Well, it started years ago. The old people, they used to use horses and everything to plow and farm.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: But after a while, the farms didn't support families anymore, did they?

MR. JANVIER: No.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: When did that happen?

MR. JANVIER: That happened about a few years ago.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: To your knowledge, did Indian Affairs or the government help the band or the band council to make sure that farming was a good way to make a living?

MR. JANVIER: It was a good way, I guess, if a fella would only keep stuck with it. Keep changing chiefs and councillors. Some didn't like to work, I guess, that's why they sold the whole thing, all the cattle.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Were you aware, when you had been provided that money, that you weren't going to be able to go into the area and trap and hunt any longer -- into the bombing range area, the Primrose Lake area? When you were told that you weren't going to be back there, do you recall ever being told that you were going to be helped with finding another way to make a living?

MR. JANVIER: No.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: That was never told to you?

MR. JANVIER: No. Maybe some other people were told, but not me, because I don't stay around here very much, as I said. I go out working, and I'm seventy-eight years old and I'm still working.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I understand that, yes. I hope when I'm seventy-eight I'm still working, too.

Did you at one point get to -- when you went out to work, like you are now living and working down in Edmonton, I take it, did you find that you had to go away to work, or were there enough jobs in this area?

MR. JANVIER: I'm getting a pension, and they wouldn't give me a job.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Who won't?

MR. JANVIER: The band.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: What about around --

MR. JANVIER: I tried a few times. That's the reason why they let me go when I was working on the ranch.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: But what about in Grand Centre and places like that, and some of the business around the area, do you --?

MR. JANVIER: Well, the trouble I got there, around the area here, I don't read or write.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Oh, I see.

MR. JANVIER: I learned this. I stole this language from a white man, a guy I worked with on the ranch. That's one thing I stole from a white man.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: How did he feel about that?

MR. JANVIER: Pretty good. I believe I got ahead of him.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you, Mr. Janvier. I don't have any more questions. I don't know if the other commissioners do. No.

Commissioner Prentice, do you have any questions?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Yes, thank you very much.

You worked at the base for a while, during construction, I guess.

MR. JANVIER: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Were there many Native people that worked then during construction?

MR. JANVIER: There were quite a few working, but I don't know what they were doing. I was on my job, so I didn't --.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Did many of the Native People stay working at the base after construction finished?

MR. JANVIER: Oh, there were a few, I guess.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Mr. Henderson showed you the document which had your name on it and your signature.

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Could we show that document to the witness again, please.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Of course.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Mr. Janvier, when you signed this document, it was presented to you and you were, as I understood what you told us, you were required to sign this and no one explained it to you. Is that right?

MR. JANVIER: No. As I said, all they did is told me to sign my name and pushed that paper to me. So, I signed my name.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Okay.

MR. JANVIER: If I was reading, maybe it would be different.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Did someone show you the front page of this document?

MR. JANVIER: No.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: No one explained to you what it says on the front page?

MR. JANVIER: They never explained nothing. There are a lot of old people here, too, they don't read or write, and I'll bet you they've done the same thing with them, too.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Why did you think that they were making you sign it at that time?

MR. JANVIER: Just because of that little money that they gave us. That's the reason why I thought maybe that's why I signed my name.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Did you think, yourself, that that would be the end of it or that there would be more compensation?

MR. JANVIER: Not after they said that they were going to make a rearrangement in twenty years' time.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Okay. Thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: As a result of that, Mr. Janvier, I don't know if counsel has any further questions that they might want to ask. None?

Okay, is there anything further you would like to tell us, Mr. Janvier? We have no further questions, but if you feel like there is more that you would like to tell us or anything in addition to what you might have already said, we would be happy to hear from you.

MR. JANVIER: Well, there's only one thing I'll say. Us Indians, if a white man can put us in a bag, they'll tie the bag and forget about us. That's about all I can say.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. Since I am not a white man, you can feel free to say --

MR. JANVIER: Damn good thing that a few Indians came, too.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Mr. Janvier, thank you for coming all that way to provide us with the information that you have. We appreciate that. People like yourself are very important to the work that we do, and your coming here and providing us with that information has been most helpful. For that we thank you, particularly the distance that you came to do that. We want to let you know that we appreciate that very much. So thank you.

MR. JANVIER: Well, thank Tony, too, for putting me today, because I told him about it, you know.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Well, we appreciate it. Thank you, sir.

MR. JANVIER: Thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, it may be that we started a little late today and that we are finishing a little early. I understand that we don't have another witness ready to proceed immediately.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, well that's fine.

MR. HENDERSON: That being the case, I have been speaking with Mr. Mandamin, and perhaps we'll be able to give more information to everyone about the number of remaining witnesses and scheduling earlier in the morning. Perhaps, if I might suggest that if we tried for a nine-thirty start tomorrow morning, I am sure we will have enough witnesses to fill the panel's day. We can proceed from there.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. In that case, then, what we'll do is we will adjourn for the day. We will reconvene at nine-thirty tomorrow morning. Before we adjourn, however, I just want to thank the witnesses that were here today for, as I have said over and over again, taking the trouble and the time to come and share your experiences and help us out in the manner that you have.

We will adjourn now until nine-thirty tomorrow morning. Thank you all very much.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, the Elder, I believe, would like to conclude in the traditional fashion by offering a prayer.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Fine.

ELDER: (Elder's prayer)

---WHEREUPON THE HEARING WAS ADJOURNED FOR THE DAY, TO BE RESUMED AT 9:30 A.M. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1993

6.2 February 2, 1993

---HEARING RESUMED AT 9:30 A.M. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1993

ELDER: I would like to say good morning to everybody, first of all. I wish everybody a good day today. I am from the Waterhen Reserve, and I am happy to be amongst you people here. Your hospitality has been really great. I really appreciate that.

With that, I am going to say a prayer, but I am going to do it in my language, the Cree language.
(Elder's Prayer)

MR. ARMAND LOTH: Thank you very much for the opening prayer.

I guess we can leave it up to the counsel to get started now for the proceedings.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you. We will reconvene the session now. Mr. Maurice, do you have the next witness?

MR. MAURICE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the next witness is Genevieve Janvier.

Good morning, Mrs. Janvier. Could you tell us a little bit about what life was like prior to the bombing range coming in; how you and your family made your living?

MRS. GENEVIEVE JANVIER: Bear with me, because I never talked in public like this before, and I'm not too familiar with speaking in public like this. It's the first time I'm here, and if I seem I can't speak my mind, bear with me, please.

I was born in 1929, and I remember as a child my parents had a home by Primrose Lake. The little I remember of it, I had a brother born while we had a cabin and living there. My brother was born there, and the greatest thing that I remember of it -- not too much of it -- but my aunt told me -- she took me to her next house -- and she told me that a rabbit was going to bring a baby to my mother. I used to look for these rabbit tracks, and I used to hate that rabbit because I wanted to stay a baby. Anyway, he was born there and that's just about the only thing I can remember of that time I was there.

Then, I remember that was where we grew up until I started school. In the winter months that's where we used to go, up north. Then, I went to a residential school, and that was in the late thirties. I don't remember, because we were at home only for the summer months, and then go back to school for the next ten months. So, I don't really remember too much of it.

When I left school, it wasn't because I wanted to leave school. It was the death of my mother then, and I had to stay home for a while. Then I got married. I got married on January 7th of 1947 to the people that I didn't know too much. From living out here and then going up north with these people right shortly after we got married.

I remember when we passed near Cold Lake, with my father-in-law, they got some groceries. It wasn't too much of anything. I remember it was flour and just the necessities. They bought a little bit of meat. I was thinking: How are we going to live, if that's all they're going to buy.

Anyway, he starting shooting things on the road, like grouse, chickens, rabbits and they cooked that. I know she bought some beef -- a little bit -- and pork, not that that was going to be for all our travellings. I didn't think too much of it, because I thought I was going to starve out there.

But, the little I knew, we made our way through the Primrose Lake. We stopped here and there to camp. Well, my father-in-law knew the people that lived out there, such as these people that lived there year round, these white people. They camped there, and I remember the next place we stopped was in Suckerville.

Then we went to the place where he had his cabin, and that's right across the Primrose Lake. The place was called in Chippewayan, Burnt Island, but they say it in Chippewayan. We got there, and it was sort of lonely for me, because it was just--. It was a beautiful cabin.

I remember, when we got back there, they got up real early in the morning and they packed up their lunch. I remember, they were sitting by the stove; it was still dark -- the old lady and the old man. Of course, they weren't that old then. I was watching them, they both made a separate lunch for themselves, and they both had a little pack-sack, and they left. It was still dark.

Anyway, during the day time, the man I was married to used to trap muskrats around the lake, I think. Then in the day time, he used to go out shooting squirrels. I didn't know nothing about bush life at that time. I was very new to everything, but what surprised me most on that is they have all kinds of meat when we got back to that place. They had caribou meat, moose meat, fish of every kind; muskrats and even dry meat. They had made a sort of a log; that was their deep freeze, I guess. Pounded meat. Well, they had all varieties of different meat.

I remember my mother-in-law brought in some dried meat, and I was thinking: How do they get those things out here. How do they do this and all that.

Anyway, I remember then, it was really no struggle for food. They had all kinds of varieties of meat.

We got back this way; they had to bring horses back this way, I think. So, we came back, and I think my old man used look after the horses back here for his parents. The only time he goes back is to pick them up at Easter time. Before Easter, he goes back and gets them. But, in the meantime, we were back here.

But, one thing I remember, I used to look forward to their coming home, because they used to have plenty of furs, whatever they were hunting, whatever they were trapping. I knew they had enough money. They used to buy me things. I used to look forward to their coming home anyways.

As years went by, I started to have children one year after another. I started losing my sight. At first, my husband used to go out with his parents, but then as I started having children -- they

were only a year apart, three of them in a row -- he knew that I was getting blind, and he wouldn't leave me then.

My children were naughty and very hyper, so it was sort of hard for me, especially when you are blind, with little ones like that; three, two and one. Anyway, he kind of stayed around me. Off and on, if I had somebody to stay with me, then he used to go out. He used to go and stay up north with his parents.

But, during that time, I remember we used to look forward to their coming back from up north, because at Christmas time, if they used to come back at Christmas, they used to bring us a big box full of groceries. That was our food hamper. And clothes for my kids.

In the fall time, they still go up north, whether to make hay or for their horses; and hunting, That's where they seem to prepare for their winter stay, I guess. Right after the first of November, people were quite much with the church then, so they never used to leave 'till after the second of November. Then they all go up north and come in only at Christmas time. That's what I mean that we used to look forward for their coming back, because that's when I used to get clothing and food for my children. Even my children, they used to count how many nights until grandpa and grandma are coming home. They used to ask me that. They really used to look forward for that because, even though I didn't go up there, well, my husband and me we got enough from them anyway. They used to bring us enough food back. Right after Christmas, again, they did the same thing, go back. Easter they did the same thing.

Again, they used to buy us a bunch of things, like groceries and wild meat. Again, I used to look forward for Easter, of their coming back.

A few years I spent with my children and look forward for this, for Easter and Christmas. When they went up north, I knew then that they never came home without anything. If they did, it was very seldom. They even used to bring me berries in birch bark. They used to make baskets out of birch bark. They would sew it up and my mother-in-law used to bring me cranberries, or whatever. That used to keep a long time, because cranberries don't spoil.

After that, they weren't going up north any more; after they got paid for their trap line. I knew then, they were sort of lost. They used to work around here, maybe brushing or whatever they could do for their livelihood, to live from day to day.

MR. MAURICE: Mrs. Janvier, do you mind if I ask you a few questions?

MRS. JANVIER: Sure.

MR. MAURICE: Thank you.

When you say that people used to go up north in the winter, how many people from Cold Lake would generally leave to go into the north?

MRS. JANVIER: How many people?

MR. MAURICE: Yes.

MRS. JANVIER: You mean out of my family?

MR. MAURICE: I am thinking more in terms of the whole community. Was it most of the community? Say, half?

MRS. JANVIER: Yes, most of the people went up north, yes.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. Now, you also mentioned that you used to get a variety of meat from that area. Did you ever have to buy meat back before the range was created?

MRS. JANVIER: Very little. I got enough from my in-laws.

MR. MAURICE: So, your in-laws used to share with you, then?

MRS. JANVIER: A lot.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. What would happen when you had extra meat on hand, if ever?

MRS. JANVIER: Well, they made sure that my mother-in-law used to dry up the meat. It didn't spoil, but if I had extra, well that had to go first, because we didn't have no freezer or anything to keep meat, unless they kept it in a well in those days.

MR. MAURICE: Now, after the range was created, what was the meat and fish supply like then?

MRS. JANVIER: What's that?

MR. MAURICE: After the range was created in 1952, what was your meat and fish supply like?

MRS. JANVIER: They still used to go out. Like I say, they weren't the type of people that stayed home. They had to go out. They lived off the land.

MR. MAURICE: So, you were still able to continue to survive off the land, after the range?

MRS. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: Did you have to purchase more meat after, or was it roughly the same kind of catch as in the past?

MRS. JANVIER: Well, we had to live on whatever we had. The thing that helped me, too, was that like I said I went blind early in my young days as my little ones were small. I started receiving a blind pension in 1953, in June, the time Queen Elizabeth was crowned. I remember that. So, with that little amount of help, and then my in-laws helping into my family and pitching in, we managed to survive; poor, but we made it.

MR. MAURICE: You mention that your husband also looked after some horses. What were those horses used for?

MRS. JANVIER: Well, that was my in-laws, that's what they used.

MR. MAURICE: Okay.

MRS. JANVIER: It wasn't his, but he used to get them, like I said, before Easter. Then he used go out with them, as I said. But, when he knew I was getting blind and had a handful of children --.

MR. MAURICE: Did you ever do any farming or ranching, either before or after the range was created?

MRS. JANVIER: No.

MR. MAURICE: Now, after the range was created, was there any other work around Cold Lake that could be done?

MRS. JANVIER: Well, I think he worked here and there at whatever he could do. I know he worked at the base when they were building up that airport.

MR. MAURICE: How long did that type of employment last?

MRS. JANVIER: What's that?

MR. MAURICE: How long did that employment last at the air force base?

MRS. JANVIER: Um, let's see. Well, '52 until at least about -- I can't really remember because I was a person that lived for my family only, for my little ones, and I was never too much out and I was interested more in my family than being out. I didn't know too much about the outside world. Therefore, I couldn't tell you.

MR. MAURICE: Now, did you and your husband ever consider going into farming?

MRS. JANVIER: No.

MR. MAURICE: Did --.

MRS. JANVIER: Well, after my in-laws and my brothers-in-law starting getting trap line money, or whatever they called it, we didn't get any. But they were sharing some with us. They bought us a cow, and I remember there was a time we had seven cows and horses, but that was through their help, though. They donated some to us.

MR. MAURICE: What happened to the cows? What happened to that?

MRS. JANVIER: The cows?

MR. MAURICE: Yes.

MRS. JANVIER: That again, too, I don't remember too much of it.

MR. MAURICE: Okay.

MRS. JANVIER: It's like I say, I mind own business. I stayed on my side of--.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. Do you remember if your husband was ever paid any compensation?

MRS. JANVIER: No.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. One last question, Mrs. Janvier. How old are you, please?

MRS. JANVIER: How old I am?

MR. MAURICE: Please.

MRS. JANVIER: I'll be sixty-five next year.

MR. MAURICE: Thank you very much. Those are all the questions I have.

Sorry, just clarify, did you say that there was no compensation paid?

MRS. JANVIER: Not to my family; not to my husband.

MR. MAURICE: All right, thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: That's all the questions from counsel? Okay. I myself do not have any questions, Mrs. Janvier, but perhaps some of the other commissioners do. Commissioner Prentice?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Thank you, Mrs. Janvier.

Your husband did not receive any compensation?

MRS. JANVIER: No.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Why was that?

MRS. JANVIER: Because the people that got compensation, they had to pay for their trap line license, they used to say. Like I say, he had to stay behind because of me. A lot of times he went with his parents and they had to pay for a license. Well, there was a time that he had to stay home with me. I was getting blind, and he didn't have a license at the time. All those that paid their license to go into the trap line got their compensation, I think, if that's what they call it -- trap line money.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Was your husband a commercial fisherman also?

MRS. JANVIER: He did help, yes.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: There was no compensation for that either?

MRS. JANVIER: No.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Did you talk about that with your husband? How did you feel about the fact that you did not receive compensation?

MRS. JANVIER: Well, it didn't bother me that much because, like I said, I wasn't too interested in the outside world. I didn't know too much of anything. I was mostly around home and looking after my own kids the best way I could.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: How many children did you raise, Mrs. Janvier?

MRS. JANVIER: I had eleven children.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Eleven?

MRS. JANVIER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Thank you very much. I appreciate your help.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Commissioner Bellegarde, do you have any questions? No questions. Does counsel have any further questions?

MR. MAURICE: No, sir.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Mrs. Janvier, we have no further questions, however, if there is anything further that you would like to add, we would certainly be pleased to listen to it. Is there anything further that you would like to say?

MRS. JANVIER: Not really. That's the first time I am in the public like this, and I am not familiar with anything. I am still in my own little world, so I'll just stay there and whatever. If I was any help to you people, I didn't really know what it was all about.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Well, we can tell you that we very much appreciate you coming out here and sharing with us some of your experiences. You are very helpful to us, and what you have to say is very important to us. For you to take the trouble and the time to come and share some of your history with us is very much appreciated, and we can't thank you enough for that. So, Mrs. Janvier, thank you very much, and you can be excused.

MRS. JANVIER: You're welcome.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Counsel, do you have the next witness?

MR. MAURICE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the next witness is Scholastic Scanny (phonetic). I hope I pronounced that correctly.

Good morning, Mrs. Scanny. I wonder if you could tell the commissioners today how you and your family made your living prior to the bombing range being established?

MRS. SCHOLASTIC SCANNY: Well, first of all, I will say I was born in 1928.

Good morning everybody. It's nice to be here to see all of you come down to listen to us. Thank you for that.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you for helping us out. Would you prefer Mr. Maurice to just ask you some questions?

MRS. SCANNY: No, I could tell.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay.

MRS. SCANNY: I could talk.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: All right.

MRS. SCANNY: I could talk in my language.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Which ever is easiest, or which ever you would prefer. You go right ahead.

MRS. SCANNY: Well, I think in my language. It will be mixed because, you know.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: That's okay. You just make yourself comfortable and just tell us what you feel like telling us, and we'll take it from there.

Go ahead.

MRS. SCANNY: A long time ago, when I was a child, my father used to go north, but as we had many stock, my mother and I used to stay home. At the time of school age, I went to boarding school in St. Paul, Alberta, for ten months. I used to remain there for ten months, and my mother would be single-handedly alone. She used to get outside help, one of my relatives, cousins. Then my father would go north. From there, when I was in school, I have less knowledge of what was really going on while I was at the school.

In 1950 I got married. I married a trapper. They had no farms; they were truly trappers -- trapper families. That's what he excelled in, and I married into that family.

In 1951 I went for the first time on a team of horses. We travelled with a team of horses north, and this was my first. It was so different for me then. There was such a vast difference being a farm girl and becoming a trapper's wife. In 1951 we went north together, and I was beginning to retrain for the first time in that kind of livelihood, because my knowledge of the north was nil. So, my mother-in-law taught me very well, and my father-in-law also helped me very well. They were beginning to teach me very well as I was staying with them.

We always travelled on horses. When we arrived there at Poplar Tree Point, west, there was an old house there, five miles west. They were snaring for squirrels. We used to walk together. For my first experience I was learning how to snare squirrels, where there were plenty of squirrels. In the morning there would be maybe six or seven hanging from that one lean-to pole. We would

tum back to camp and we would skin them. I was learning that, too; how skin a squirrel, and the same thing with the muskrats.

With muskrats we were making meat. We were drying the muskrats out and making meat. In the west, I was waiting for him. He said: I shot a deer, so I was waiting for him. I kind of disbelieved him. He says: Look out there. The hind quarter was hanging, and only then I believed him.

When you are young, we used to play tricks on one another. Of course, he thought he was fooling me, so I thought he was lying. He says: Look. Naturally I started to cut it up. My meat was all cut up and looked like a battered up sheet of cloth. But, I began to be better and better at it.

When Christmas was about to come, we started to head out in this direction to observe the religious rights. When we returned, after the religious rights were finished, everybody would come and congregate. They used to bring so much furs, and there was so much money going around.

People made lots of money with it. Furs of all kinds; beaver, fox, coyote, squirrels, weasel, muskrat. Those kinds of furs. They would go to the dealers; Art Jocelyn, Dick Desmarais. The buying would take place, and there would be lots of money. People used to make lots of money, and there was plenty of meat -- all sorts.

My father-in-law killed a lot of moose, so we had plenty of meat. I used to bring some to my father as well -- share some with my father. My father-in-law used to kill a bunch of moose. The game wardens were always pestering us, so we used to bring them at night. We used to share some with my father and also keep some for our own use.

That's how we lived; that's how I lived with my husband in Primrose.

When the religious rights were observed, then they would go north again. We'd buy flour, lard, tobacco, salt, sugar. Only condiments were bought. Over there, meat was plenty, so we only brought necessary store goods, because we had plenty of the other things in the north.

From there, I began to have children and I used to wait for my man then. I started to have many children, and they were small. You can't pack a bunch of small kids around to the north, so I used to stay with my father and mother while waiting for my man.

From there, they used to bring back moose meat, and he used to give me a bunch of money for my livelihood.

While I was with my parents, I used to help with the stock by feeding the stock. I didn't stay too long at boarding school. When my brother died, I was fourteen. My father took me back, and I remained at home until I married this man.

My man got paid once, a purchase order once. He bought horses and cattle. He bought a few things, but only by means of purchase order. That I remember well. I only remember him getting paid once. He was the only buyer, because it was in his name. I didn't try for anything for household goods, but it didn't matter. He bought a team of horses and wagons. He also bought a tractor. That was our mode of travel, so that allowed us to go for berries and hunting in the summer.

The people from way back, the people of this reserve, they lived very, very well.

Some have made a great fortune with furs. They made fortunes. The real trappers, I remember them. They had more money; they made a lot of money. I know them.

My father also made a lot of money, although he was a farmer. In between farming seasons, he went to the north. As a result of that we lived very well, when I was a young girl. We lived well. When I married, as long as Primrose was there, as long as my man was going back and forth, we never went hungry.

When it was closed, lots of times we sat in hunger, because there was hardly enough to go around and nothing to make a livelihood with. We started to get relief, but it was a small amount. I went to the farm instructor, he gave me thirty-seven dollars. But in those days, we could fend quite well with thirty-seven dollars because the kids were small. I bought as much as I could. It's not like today. Welfare is larger today, but things are too expensive on the outside. Although we are getting good help from welfare, it's too expensive. It's not the same as what it was like yesterday and what it is like today. There is a big, big difference.

I will recall back to when my brother died. I wish I would have stayed in school, instead of quitting then, but in those days at sixteen years old they released you from those schools. There was no such thing as high school in those days. If we were to have high school in those days, today by education we could have been making a living by means of an education. It would have started then. It didn't happen to us. Those that were in school in my time, they know exactly what I am talking about. At sixteen, we were just released. That's the way it was.

My man, he tried farming when they closed the bombing range. He tried farming; he tried everything in his power to try to make a living. Locally he went after furs as long as there was a price for it, he went for furs. He got cattle and horses, but not too many; chickens, hogs. We used have these different kind of farm animals. That's how we raised our children.

Then my children started to go and fend for themselves, snaring for rabbits. As a result, we were starting to live well and the kids started to hunt. Then our food was plenty again. We'd just have to get flour, lard, only those kinds of store goods; the bare necessities. That's how I made my living and that's how I raised my family. I have many children.

I had ten children and I lost some with miscarriages. Three years ago, I lost David Scanny, but I still have nine left. I have thirty-five grandchildren.

Next year I will be sixty-five then, too.

I think I have just about talked to the end of my story. I don't know what else I can speak of. I have just about covered my story, as the way I think.

MR. MAURICE: Thank you very much, Mrs. Scanny. You have been very thorough, so I only have a couple of questions for you.

First of all, you mention that your father made a decent living doing some farming and that he also went up north during the winter. What type of things was he doing up north?

MRS. SCANNY: Trapping, moose meat, you know, things like that.

MR. MAURICE: Okay.

MRS. SCANNY: We always had plenty.

MR. MAURICE: Did he bring back a lot of meat, then, as a result of that trapping activity up there?

MRS. SCANNY: Yes, he brought back a lot of meat and money up there with fur of all kinds.

MR. MAURICE: Now, the money that he made, did that not also help support his farming activities as well?

MRS. SCANNY: Yes, mostly on the farm. He made butter; he made everything.

MR. MAURICE: Now, after the range was created, your father, like the rest of the community, couldn't go up into the north country any more. How did your father make out with his farming after that time?

MRS. SCANNY: We still had a farm and a lot of cattle and a lot of horses, and all kinds of livestock; chickens, even turkeys -- wild ones and tame ones and things like that. We had everything -- pigs.

MR. MAURICE: Going back to just before the range was created, do you remember how you first heard about it?

MRS. SCANNY: Well, I heard that it was leased for twenty years and within twenty years something should be done about it. That's how I heard about it. People should even get paid or, you know. It goes on and on; that's how I hear about it.

MR. MAURICE: Did you and your husband ever talk about this?

MRS. SCANNY: No, we just lived together and raised children. We didn't talk about anything.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. Those are all the questions I have. Perhaps counsel may have some. What was the name of your husband, Mrs. Scanny?

MRS. SCANNY: Dominic Scanny.

MR. MAURICE: What were his parents' names?

MRS. SCANNY: Teddy Scanny, and Corine Scanny was my mother-in-law. My father-in-law is Teddy.

MR. MAURICE: Your parents were--?

MRS. SCANNY: Harry Janvier and Mary Janvier.

MR. MAURICE: Did your husband have a registered trap line?

MRS. SCANNY: I don't really know about what was registered and whatever it means, but he had traps, he had a trapper's license and this and that; fishing license. He had all that.

MR. MAURICE: The compensation that was paid, you mentioned there was one payment. Was that in the form of cash, or purchase orders?

MRS. SCANNY: Purchase orders, this is why I didn't get--. We didn't know how to act about it, so I didn't get nothing for in the house, which I would have liked to do, but in those days he did all his shopping for the wagon and the horses. Just a team of horses; harness, things like that. That's what he got.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember what year that would have been, that he received that compensation?

MRS. SCANNY: My boy would have been --. My boys were about thirteen, fourteen. My oldest ones would have been about thirteen or fourteen. In that year; it's just a rough guess.

MR. MAURICE: What year would that be about?

MRS. SCANNY: Well, my oldest boy is forty-two and my other one will be forty, so

MR. MAURICE: So, it would be about 1960, 1961 in that area?

MRS. SCANNY: About that time. It would be about that time.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember your husband ever signing any type of piece of paper or quit claim or release for his trapping?

MRS. SCANNY: No, I don't remember those things. Like I said before, we never used to speak about things like that.

MR. MAURICE: And your husband never received any cash payments at all?

MRS. SCANNY: Well, this was different again, when we received cash payments. It was for the oil. Me, I got everything not long ago. So, that would be for the oil.

MR. MAURICE: For the, sorry, what -- oil?

MRS. SCANNY: Yes, I think so. I don't really remember.

MR. MAURICE: What oil is this?

MRS. SCANNY: I know I received one thousand seven hundred dollars. It's after -- we didn't live together. I don't know how many years we were separated, but I was raising the children, so they gave me one thousand seven hundred dollars for my children. But I don't know if it was for Primrose. It's not clear at all. Him and I, we don't live together. I received that much. My husband was a trapper, and I was raising the children. He had his own home; I had my own home.

MR. MAURICE: All right, thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Any further questions from counsel?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Mrs. Scanny, you talked a lot about the days that the trapping had occurred, and you talked about how much money people made and then you talked about afterwards, about the farming and how it got a lot different. How soon after the bombing, and when the trapping ceased, how long did you carry on the farming operation, do you know?

MRS. SCANNY: Well, we did have the farm all the time, but 'till we separated, everything drained out on account of alcohol. That was it. We both drifted away from each other.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You say this was on account of alcohol. When the trapping was going on, when that was your lifestyle, was there a problem with alcohol then?

MRS. SCANNY: Nothing.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: So, when you say on account of alcohol, is it that your husband starting drinking?

MRS. SCANNY: I can't blame only my husband. I drank too. I can't hide nothing.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Oh, no. That's fine. Did this start to happen after the trapping was all closed down?

MRS. SCANNY: Yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you know, or are you able to tell us whether or not that was happening in the entire community?

MRS. SCANNY: I don't know. I mostly stayed home.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you have any idea why this started to happen? Why the drinking started to happen? I mean, was it because there was no opportunity to go back and trap?

MRS. SCANNY: Yes, there was nothing to do, see. This kept people away from things like that; going back and coming in. That's a nice big job; going back and going in and out like that. You've got something to do. You are working. It's a big job going back and forth like that on a team of horses and things like that.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: It sounds like it was a job that you liked, as well.

MRS. SCANNY: Well, once I got used to going from a farm girl to a trapper's wife, well I began to like this north. Even today I like being up there.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You would like to go back if you could?

MRS. SCANNY: Well, I don't want to go back now. There's nothing to go back for. There's no price in fur. Why should I go back there?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I take it, though, that if you had had a choice, I mean if the bombing range had not gone in, would you and your husband like to have continued with the trapping?

MRS. SCANNY: I don't know. My husband's dead.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: But would you have liked to, though? I mean, did it bother you that they stopped you from trapping?

MRS. SCANNY: No, it didn't bother me because when I started to have children, my home was my home. I never went back there, but those few years that I stayed up there with husband, I liked the idea of staying there and learning a lot of things.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Would you have liked for your children to have had the opportunity to do that as well? Do you think they would have been interested?

MRS. SCANNY: Some of my children go up north.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do they?

MRS. SCANNY: Yes, the oldest ones. Like I said, my old boys.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Even with your children now -- was working around here, did it become difficult and were there any jobs for everybody? What was that situation like?

MRS. SCANNY: It's hard for jobs, especially now. So, I don't really know about my children. I just live by myself out there, with one boy, George. I have one adopted son there. I've got two boys down there, living with me. One of my daughters lives with me -- her two little kids.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Just a little bit again about the period of time in which you started hearing about the range being closed and this twenty year lease, do you know how you heard that or from who?

MRS. SCANNY: I can't say from who, but over the years I hear it from here and there.

My father was a chief and this and that. I was not allowed to listen. Neither was my mother, so we can't catch anything. All the time, of course, we never used to come to meetings. We are not allowed.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You never heard of any meetings or anything with government or anything like that, did you?

MRS. SCANNY: No.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. Those are all of my questions, Mrs. Scanny, but perhaps the other commissioners may like to ask you some questions.

Commissioner Bellegarde?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you.

Good morning, Mrs. Scanny. So, the first time you cut up a hind quarter of moose meat it came out like crumpled paper, eh?

MRS. SCANNY: It looked like a lace -- a big lace.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: You mentioned as well that the game wardens pestered you when you were hunting and bringing the meat home and sharing it amongst your people.

MRS. SCANNY: Yes.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: How did they do that?

MRS. SCANNY: I think already they were after people, because I remember my husband and I used to sneak the meat across on a team of horses on the coldest nights -- sixty-eight below. Me and my husband, we used to take turns dragging the horses across.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Did anyone ever tell these game wardens about treaty right to hunt, fish and trap in that territory? Do you remember anything about that?

MRS. SCANNY: No. Someone must have told them. I heard over and over in meetings how that nobody should stop us from that.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: You were forced almost to act like criminals in feeding yourselves and your families.

MRS. SCANNY: Well, we had to. Now, I don't know, but more and more and more you have to. You get in trouble with hunting and fishing. I hear many times that the nets were taken out.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: At that time?

MRS. SCANNY: At that time and even now.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Even now.

MRS. SCANNY: Yes, I hear things like that, but I don't ask further questions, but I just hear it. Like I said, I have ears.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Very good. Thank you, Mrs. Scanny.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Commissioner Prentice?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Mrs. Scanny, did your husband sign a document of some kind when he received the compensation?

MRS. SCANNY: I cannot say, because I was not present with him. I was home, so I cannot say what he did. This I cannot tell you, because I haven't seen it, and he never talked about it.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: I see. So, you don't remember if anyone ever explained to him what compensation he was receiving and why?

MRS. SCANNY: No.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Okay.

MRS. SCANNY: I don't know nothing about it, and I'll never know, because he's gone.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Your cabin was at Poplar Tree Point?

MRS. SCANNY: Pardon?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: You said earlier that it was Poplar Tree Point that the cabin was at?

MRS. SCANNY: Yes, by the lake.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: That's on the lake, is it?

MRS. SCANNY: You can see the lake where we used to live. Further up, about seven miles, that's where we used to go to get fur, like squirrels and things like that; minks and all that.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: And was Poplar Tree Point near the village that was there?

MRS. SCANNY: It's not too far from Suckerville, I think they call it. On Sundays we used to go down here to Suckerville and meet their friends from all over; our families. We'd meet there, laugh all day, even when you had to head home; play cards for fun, you know, and this and that.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: That was at Suckerville, and there was a church there, too, wasn't there?

MRS. SCANNY: I don't know. I never went to church there, but people I know said it, but I don't know nothing about a church there.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Are there further questions? Do you have anything else you'd like to tell us, Mrs. Scanny?

MRS. SCANNY: I guess I've said it all, I think.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: If you did, we want to thank you for that. You sound like you have some wonderful memories there, and I think I speak for all of us when I say that it is sad that they weren't able to continue for you and that life wasn't as pleasant later on.

However, we are delighted and very pleased that you could come and share with us some of your experiences and provide us with some information that's very important to us and to the work that we have to do. So, we appreciate very much you taking the time and trouble to come here and enlighten us and help us with our job. Thank you very much.

MRS. SCANNY: You're welcome.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Counsel, I think what we'll do now is break for ten minutes and then reconvene. So, why don't we try to be back at eleven-fifteen. Okay?

The session stands adjourned.

---SHORT RECESS

---UPON RESUMING

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do we have the next witness?

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The next witness we have this morning is Mr. Charlie Metchewas (phonetic). Good morning, Mr. Metchewas.

MR. CHARLIE METCHEWAS: Good morning.

MR. HENDERSON: I understand, sir, that you are now sixty-four years old.

MR. METCHEWAS: That's right.

MR. HENDERSON: Fifty years ago, when they were creating the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range, I understand that you were in the services at that time.

MR. METCHEWAS: I was in the service, but I did participate in some of the action in the trapping and fishing area. But, I would like to begin with a statement here I would like to mention before we carry on.

MR. HENDERSON: Please go ahead, sir.

MR. METCHEWAS: Okay, I am Charlie Metchewas, a band member of the Cold Lake First Nations, born in 1928 on the reserve. This would make me sixty-four years old.

In 1931, I was sent to school with my sister in Blue Quills in St. Paul in a residential school, due to the fact that we got hit by a tornado that destroyed our home. That was one of the reasons why I had to go to the residential school.

At the age of thirteen, I completed my grade eight and was terminated from school. I had no further education to work for or to go to, because high schools were very limited and the funding just wasn't available.

I had no choice but to come back to the farm, and I remained in 1942 and helped my dad on the home farm to care for livestock and help with the farming. That's about what I did in 1942.

In 1943 I first ventured up north to the Primrose Lake area. My dad took me up there to do some commercial fishing. Also, we did trapping that year for the winter months. Then we did muskrat

trapping in the spring. So, that just about completes 1943. This is pretty well how I broke into the north.

In 1944 I went up with my grandfather and stayed in the trapper's cabin up there between the junction of Martino River and the Muskeg River. That was the allotment for his trapping area, and he shared his trap line with me and educated me in the trapping area and taught me a lot of the northern life and the way of life in the north. I spent the whole winter with him.

That same spring I spent the spring trapping rats with my dad in the same area -- the Martino River area. We trapped muskrat and he also taught me how to trap rats, skin the rats, scratch them and skin them and what have you. That was pretty well what I did in 1944. It was pretty much the same in '45, '46 and right up to about 1948.

There was a lot of activity up in the Primrose Lake area at that time. What Primrose had to offer -- what there was in Primrose -- when I say people, I mean the band members and the people that were allowed to be up in that area -- were trapping, fishing, hunting, logging, recreation for the holidays in the summer, and also for materials that they can pick like birch bark to build their canoes. I helped my grandad build a canoe. Snowshoes, baskets for food storage, toboggans and we also made moose hide for dog harness. That's what Primrose had to offer the people, which was plentiful. They made a successful living out of it, and it was very enjoyable. It was a pleasant way of life.

In addition to that, Primrose had other things to offer in other areas, like aviation. We had airplanes flying back and forth to transport trappers to and from locations where you can't get in with a horse and sleigh. Also, the creditors who did our supplying for us for our trap lines; to get our grubstake and our trapping supplies.

There was the Hudson Bay; they benefited by it. Josh Langer's general store from Beaver Crossing, Brady's general store, Phil Clark in Cold Lake, Charlie Pinsky, and there were a couple of other general merchants that supplied food and material for the trappers. So, they benefited from the Primrose Lake area.

There was also logging industry, where there was work available, where there was logging operations with these contractors. There was Tom Allard, Dick Hatch, Olsen, Arnold, Loby Lumber Company. They had logging camps up there which employed some of the local boys to do contract work on piece work, labour work, time work, hourly work or whatever, but there was money to be made. So, there was pretty well a choice what you wanted to do.

And out of these logging operations as well, it wasn't all in terms of cash, you could take lumber in trade, and you could also take posts or rails. You always came back with something that you could use on the farm.

The fishing part, there was also the commercial fishing industry and also domestic. You could fish for your own use and also commercial. That was available for the people.

What the Primrose Lake area meant to the people of this area and the neighbouring communities and other reserves from the beginning of my time, it was always mentioned and discussed in this area -- everyone you talked to: How did you make out this year; how was your year this year and what did you do? It was always something to do with the Primrose Lake area. It was their livelihood and survival. It was a living that they got out of the Primrose Lake area.

They had the freedom of trapping, hunting, a means of survival. There was never ever any food or any carcasses or animals wasted. Anything that was killed was used; the hides, the carcasses, even the bone structure was used.

That was the people's livelihood. That's what they got out of Primrose. They went over there in the fall of the year. I know my grandfather was a born trapper and, as far as I was concerned, he was a professional trapper. He trapped up there in the Primrose Lake area all his life. He would go up in July and prepare camp for the winter. He would cut hay, stack the hay in preparation for someone who was going to bring him up there so the horses had some feed. In order to keep a horse up there, they had hay. So, they did this all by hand with scythe and a hand rake. They made, maybe, a tonne of hay.

Also, the ladyfolks were doing berry picking, dehydrating berries, preparing for the winter months, storing food, making their birch bark baskets and also the lacing from the roots to lace their baskets with. This was all done in the fall of the year, while they were up there.

So, then came the hunting season and, of course, the menfolk went out hunting; killed their moose, dehydrated their moose, stored their food and then they came back after that was done. So, that was the preparation there for about, maybe, a month to six weeks. Then they came back after the hunting and came back here for what they called the Indian summer. They would come back here and put everything away at their home here; lock up their doors and prepare to leave for the winter.

Later on, in maybe mid-October or whenever winter set in, that's when they went back up north to do their trapping. So, if you want to go trapping this year; okay go trapping.

What my dad did was, he would go trapping one year -- fully -- but then the next year he wouldn't, just to let the animals build up again. So, he would go fishing. So, he would kind of split the two areas between fishing and trapping.

Then, after, they're gone up north; they do their trapping, come back at Christmas. They bring their furs and come home for the Christmas festive season. There were celebrations, feasts. You could go to almost every house -- any house -- there was a feast; you were fed. There was plenty of food. There was good relationship; everybody spoke to one another, told stories, told jokes, played cards. You visited -- it was kind of a rotation -- you just visited anyone that you wanted to visit. They had real good relationships.

Of course, this happened during the Christmas season and then right after Christmas, of course, everybody goes back up north again. At that point, there was very, very little liquor involved. There was no liquor at all, because the government was very strict about liquor on reserve at that time. We did make a batch of brew -- I did, too, but that was maybe just a one-night thing. However, from there on there was none.

The people went back up north and trapped from the first, after the New Year, right until the spring when the pelts started to discolour. There is a change of colour sometime in February or March -- March, I believe is when the coats first start to discolour. Then the finer furs, like, I'm talking about the beaver, the rats, they come into their prime about in April, and that's when the rat season and beaver season open. So, there is a line there and you have to change that. So you go and trap your rats -- your muskrats -- 'till, oh, I'd say, about the middle of April. That's their mating season, of course, and then they discolour as well. Then they become their summer colours, of course, and we have to shut everything down and everybody comes home for the

summer. But, by this time, they've made enough money and got enough furs to carry on their living for the summer. That's what they lived on.

I know my grandfather brought all his pelts, turned them over to McGillvary; I believe he was the Hudson Bay Manager at that time at the Hudson Bay in Cold Lake -- I think his name was McGillvary, and then old Leslie Hill was after. He would turn over his furs and McGillvary was the banker. My grandad never got no pay in full. He could, if he wanted to, but he left it there and McGillvary acted as a banker and also a merchant, a supplier and grocery man. That's what he lived on. Any time he wanted groceries, he had a line of credit there.

So, again, there's May and June and July and then, of course, you start all over again. So, this is the way the cycle went in the trapping area.

Now, I'll just skip that for a while and go into the fishing -- into the commercial fishing.

There's quite a few of the members here who got into private enterprises, their own fishing operations. Some had a lot of fishing nets and did real well in the commercial fishing. They made their living, made a tremendous amount of money. Also, they could get their domestic out of it, they could get their own use. That was the fishing part of it. Of course, there were quotas there, too, that they had to abide by.

Then, the logging. There was always a logging camp going where you could, if you decided you needed some lumber, you could go and work for.

That's about as --. I know I am missing a lot here. I may have to skip and come back a little bit.

This went on until about 1948. In 1947, or I believe in 1948 was the first time that I ever heard -- it was discussed between my uncle and my dad -- when my uncle came to the house and told my dad, he said: You know, I believe we're going to lose our trapping rights. My dad asked why, well he says: I just got word today, there's word circulating around that they're going to build a bombing range, an air weapons range, and we're going to have to surrender our rights.

Of course, that's the first I heard about it, but at that point, they started having meetings. They had meetings up at the Cold Lake dance hall. They had open meetings; there were non-Natives and Natives as well. They were mixed. I think the meetings were just pertaining to public opinions, individual opinions; what they expected, if this should happen.

At that time the laws were, if you were under twenty-one years of age, you had no voice and no vote. So you were not considered to be in attendance at any of these negotiations or any adult meetings. Like, I was twenty years old in 1948, I went to a couple of the sessions at Cold Lake, listened, but I couldn't voice any opinion; I couldn't say nothing, because I was under age.

At that time, too -- I was listening to some of the ladyfolk here -- I think at that time, too, the law, the rules were, the ladyfolks were sort of a -- should I say a minority, should I say that they were not allowed, like they were sort of exempt. It was strictly the man's word. The ladyfolk didn't attend these meetings. That's why I was listening here for a couple of days, now, when the ladyfolks were having a problem to try and identify exactly what happened at that time, because they were not present at those meetings and the hearings. I am sure -- I stand to be corrected -- that the ladyfolk at that time did not have a voice either. So, it was really a sort of an Elders' decision, like my dad and his age group. When they made that final decision, that was it, so we just had to pretty well follow the plan.

When they proceeded with these meetings about the air weapons range, I myself at that point was thinking for myself: Well, since we're going to lose, there's not much point in me sticking around, so I've got to venture elsewhere.

So, what I did then, I worked in construction for a couple of years. Went to the Spray Dam (phonetic), ran the caterpillar for, oh, part of the summer; went to (inaudible) and after a couple of years of that, I decided it wasn't what I really wanted. I wanted an education, but I didn't have the money or a place to go. So, what I did, I joined the armed forces in 1952.

I think I made the right move. It educated me a little further, and I got to see the world and communicate with the outside world. It helped me along.

In the meantime, while I left, all this was taking place. So, I really can't tell you anything in detail -- the time and dates of what happened. I know, I did sign; my signature is on one of those papers where my dad said: Well, you have to sign.

Stan Knapp was the Indian agent at that time in St. Paul. He was there with the list, so I was pretty well -- dad said I had to sign, so I signed. But, I never did get any money. I just turned everything over to my dad, because there was no point. The amount of money that I got was, well, I couldn't stick around for it. It was just not feasible for me.

But during the time that I was working up in the north, in the Primrose area doing fishing and trapping and logging, what have you, I averaged an income of, say, around about maybe three thousand dollars a winter. So, that was the average income, and that's from, say, October 'till the later part in June.

Also, like I say, I'm going to skip. I'm going to go back a little bit.

This logging operation, when I say it employed a lot of locals, when they were done logging up north -- the ties; I'm talking about ties, now, railroad ties. There were a lot of railroad ties that came out of the north country. There were locals hired to drift these ties down the river. At the mouth of the river, they were -- I forget what they called it. They would bank them in one big long line and then bring them across the lake. So, when they would bring them across the lake, they would dock them over here in the town site, and a lot of local members would say: Well, let's go for it. They would go down there and they'd peel ties. They would bring these ties out of the water. That was employment for the summer. This went on for, well, every year that I was around.

So, that north country really served the neighbouring communities. It really did.

After, let's see. Well, after I came back, of course, the air base was all built, and everything was pretty well confirmed; no more fishing, no more trapping and no more logging up north. We were out of the bombing range area. They had built the beds and the gate and guards and security and what have you to restrict entrance to the bombing range completely.

I was only here for about a year, and then I left and went to trade school. I went to Calgary for a few years, Calgary Tech. But, I noticed a vast difference when I came back in 1955. It was really uprooted. It was so mixed up. The members, the people in the local area were totally in the dark. They didn't know what to do. I don't know how to explain that.

The mine was still up in that area, but they can't go because there's a gate there; they can't go there no more. You would actually be shot or go to jail, one or the other.

It did really hurt a lot of people. They got frustrated. Relationships started to --. There was a little bitterness in the area, and it really got bad to work. It was really terrible here for a while. It just turned everything around from good to bad. That's been going on forty years now.

I have noticed in the last little while things -- the situation, the atmosphere is starting to change a bit. The younger generation have a different view. I think they are looking in different areas. They are starting to forget about the bombing range, now because there's no hope that they'll ever go back there.

This is where there is another problem. When you're looking to go in some direction and the intent is there, but there is no movement, how can you get there when you don't have any funding or money, or anything to operate with?

I know there are a lot of young people here who have asked me several times to come and train them to be in apprenticeship as a mechanic or welder and stuff like that, which I had. I've got seven journeymen tradespeople here on the reserve, but when you don't have the money to do these things, it's rather difficult, and there are a lot of quality people here -- the younger people. They're willing to go in that direction, but they just don't have the money to work with.

So, losing the bombing range rights really set this community back right to the ground. It really did. We were a very, very proud community. This reserve was a very respectful reserve. We were, I would say, above average. A lot of the individuals had livestock. They had gardens; they had homes. It was happy go lucky. We had good recreation here. We had good ball teams. We had good rodeos. Now we don't have that. We have no money coming in since we lost the bombing range. When we had the bombing range, when the guys came in, everybody had time, they had money to live with. So, we had good recreation. We had treaties here one week at a time; danced for a whole week. Didn't have to work; danced the whole week. Played ball; soccer, rodeos, hand games, Indian dances. Now we can't do that because we don't have no money. We have nothing to turn to. It really hurts.

Like I mentioned, I said on losing the bombing range, there was a tremendous amount of frustration within the community. As a result, alcohol became a problem; the crime rate increased; there were conflicts among the members and in relationships in the surrounding neighbourhood; unbalanced feelings toward one another. When we had celebrations or any recreational activity here, we had outsiders come in; just loaded in this outside area over here. Some people came from Lloydminster, Marwayne, St. Paul, and Meadow Lake came here to share their days with us.

But when alcohol became a problem and the crime rate increased, it kind of scared our neighbouring communities away. They kind of hesitate to come here. But now it's starting to shape up again. It's starting to look a little different.

We had a real good, beautiful New Year's dance here. This hall was just full. Before that, we had a round dance and it was full. So, it's starting to look a little better. We are starting to communicate, talk to one another. It's a little different atmosphere now, but for a while there it was unbearable.

Because of that sudden change and the transition, it is very hard to make a sudden adjustment over night. You can't build a Cadillac out of a Pontiac overnight. I think Johnny Cash tried it and it didn't work. Did you ever hear his song?

To get the Primrose system out of the members has taken a long, long while, and to get us adjusted to today's society -- it's getting there, but the next problem is the funding, the money.

There is another thing that I noticed. Before, when the trapping and fishing was going on in the forties and before, the government -- the federal government -- had assisted the farmers.

Whoever wanted to farm were given horses -- not everybody. I think there were five per year, or something like that -- five families, or something. They would get horses and harness and cattle and building supplies to get them started, to get them established.

When this bombing range -- after the settlement, when they got paid, this was nullified. That was cut out. There is no more of that, so we don't get no more help in that direction.

So, we are pretty well everybody on his own now, and it's still a problem. I certainly hope that we can go in some direction that we can get compensation for what we've lost.

I really don't know what else to say here. Okay, maybe I could just stop here for now. Just let me refresh my memory, so I'll be open for questions.

MR. HENDERSON: Fine, thank you, sir. I certainly do have some questions. You obviously have a wealth of experience to give us.

I would like to just start right back when you were a young man when you were on a farm here at Cold Lake, and that was the time before you started going up trapping and fishing. Was your family on that farm full time, year-round at that time?

MR. METCHEWAS: No. I looked after the livestock in the winter months. That's the first year after I came out of school. My dad, well he goes up north. He's gone up north every year. He was gone, so I looked after the livestock at home. That was mainly my work during the winter months.

MR. HENDERSON: You indicated that your grandfather had also been up in the Primrose Lake area; that he was, I think you said, a professional trapper all of his life?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, that was his profession, right.

MR. HENDERSON: I wonder if we can get some sort of time estimate on that. Do you know, for example when your grandfather died, or how old he was then when he would have started up in that area?

MR. METCHEWAS: I don't know when he started, but he deceased in 1965 at the age of ninety-two. That's when he passed on, yes.

MR. HENDERSON: I'm sorry, somebody said: What's his name?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: What was your grandfather's name?

MR. METCHEWAS: Oh, Okay. Alphonse Metchewas.

MR. HENDERSON: And your father's name was --?

MR. METCHEWAS: Pierre, Pierre Metchewas.

MR. HENDERSON: If your grandfather had been there the greater part of his life, what did his father do? Did the family have any tradition of what your great grandfather or your great great grandfather did, or where they came from, or what they did?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, he never did fully tell me exactly what he father or grandfather ever did. I don't know because, like I say, I went to boarding school for ten years. I was away from the family home for ten months of the year, then when I did come back I was only here for a short term and then I was gone again. So, I didn't really get the history or his history, but I know his dad was a trapper as well up in, I think, north of the Green Lake area in the Saskatchewan area.

MR. HENDERSON: The area where you were trapping when you started to trap is up around Muskeg Lake, is it?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes. That was when my grandfather shared his trap line me. It was on the Johnson or the Martino River and the Muskeg River, on the Saskatchewan side. After a year or so, I think it was about '46, I had my own -- let's see, just a minute here -- I got my own trapping license and my fishing license. That would 1944-45. Later on I was allotted a trap line up in the Muskeg Lake area to share with Boniface St. Andrew. Him and I shared the same trapping area in the Muskeg Lake and Muskeg River area.

MR. HENDERSON: The trapping area that you shared, that would be a little further north and east of where your father's line had been?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, right, about twenty miles east of there, north east, yes.

MR. HENDERSON: You gave a good deal of information about the resources in the Primrose Lake area; the birch bark for canoes, the roots for making various types of laces and binding. I think you mentioned medicines; logs and logging, that sort of thing. Were those resources available in the Cold Lake area, around the reserves?

MR. METCHEWAS: Here on the reserve?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes.

MR. METCHEWAS: No, not that plentiful, no.

MR. HENDERSON: Is there some reason -- we've heard a great deal of evidence about the resources that were available up there -- is there a difference between this area and that area that everything was so plentiful, around Primrose Lake and the Primrose Lake area?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, yes, there was plenty there for just about anybody, for everybody. There was plenty of furs, plenty of good money to be made in fishing. There were several logging camps in different parts of the bombing range, the Primrose Lake area, I should say.

MR. HENDERSON: During the summer you would work in some of the logging camps, after the trapping season?

MR. METCHEWAS: Not me, no. We had a small family farm at home -- a big farm at that time was classed as, maybe, a hundred acres, but we were farming about sixty or seventy acres at that time, with horses and a small tractor. That's what we did during the summer months. We also had cattle, too; thirty or forty head of cattle.

MR. HENDERSON: Would other people, during the summer if they weren't farming, work in the logging camps, or was that a winter operation?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, during the summer months, like I said, when they were drifting ties up on the south shore here at Cold Lake, that employed a lot of locals here for peeling ties and loading ties up on railroad cars here at the Legough Junction here, at the station. That employed a lot of people there for the summer. If you wanted to work.

MR. HENDERSON: What kind of wood would be used for making the ties?

MR. METCHEWAS: Usually spruce, spruce trees, spruce logs.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember what kind of money a person could make, or what work was involved to earn that money in ties?

MR. METCHEWAS: If you took it as -- I'm talking about the first year we went up, we took a contract on to take eleven cents a log, or one railroad tie, that's eight feet long. Now, the dimensions didn't matter, but we took eleven cents a log; that's to cut, trim, buck cut, skid and haul to the skidway, to the mill site, for eleven cents a tie. That's what my dad contracted for.

MR. HENDERSON: What sort of distance would the skidding be. Obviously, you've cut in different areas, but on average, how far would you have to skid these logs after they were bucked and trimmed?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, it depends on the length of time the mill was located there. If it's a new site where the logs are right in the immediate area, that's where you make good money, but once the mill's been there for two years, of course, the logs become distant, and then you don't make the money. But, I can't put a figure on that. There were days that we got, you know, a hundred logs and other days we made one hundred and fifty, other days we didn't get, you know. Sometimes, you got some bigger ones, you had to wrestle with a little more than the smaller ones.

MR. HENDERSON: And there would be a different gang working in the mill that actually did the peeling and the squaring?

MR. METCHEWAS: I didn't get that.

MR. HENDERSON: Would there be other people working at the mill, for example, who did the peeling and the squaring for the ties?

MR. METCHEWAS: Oh, yeah. I worked in the mill. There are other people working in the mill, some training to be sawyers. I learned to saw, too, but I never did get an interest in it. But I did work in the mill.

MR. HENDERSON: I see you have all your fingers.

MR. METCHEWAS: Right.

MR. HENDERSON: The business of cutting these ties, drifting ties as you say, did that business last after the range was created for very long?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, after the range took over, that was just shut off completely. MR. HENDERSON: And the mill was closed down?

MR. METCHEWAS: There was nothing.

MR. HENDERSON: Is there just one mill that we're talking about at Cold Lake, or were there several?

MR. METCHEWAS: Oh, no. There were several mills. At one three or four year span there was Allard's, Pollard's and Hatch's on the same river area, in the same sixty mile stretch.

MR. HENDERSON: And they all closed.

MR. METCHEWAS: Oh, yeah, yeah.

MR. HENDERSON: You did attend -- at least stand at the door -- of some of the meetings at the Cold Lake dance hall, when they were talking about compensation and that sort of thing?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yeah, right, right. I think on three different occasions I went there -- well, my dad went there, and I just more or less drove for him. We had an old truck.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember who the government people were at those meetings, or what they said?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, I don't remember. I know Stan Knapp, the Indian agent, was there on one occasion, and then this Eckland -- I forget his first name. He was more or less -- he spearheaded the head of it all. But, the other people I didn't know.

MR. HENDERSON: When you indicated that you didn't get any compensation yourself, I wasn't sure what you meant there. Did you actually get some compensation and in turn sign it over to your father?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, yes, I did. I got compensated, but I just turned it over to my dad.

MR. HENDERSON: I know that the commissioners have looked at a document that has some signatures on it. We have referred to it as Exhibit I, and it has your name here with the Treaty Number Two-forty, would that be --?

MR. METCHEWAS: That's right.

MR. HENDERSON: This particular one doesn't have your signature on it, but it's possible you signed another document. There were two or three of them running around.

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, right. I think I signed the first one, but the last one I wasn't even here. I was overseas in Europe at that time serving with the armed forces. When I did come back, there was a spell that I was here for the summer, and then I went to Calgary Tech. I was there for a period of time.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember how the compensation was arranged? Did they send you a cheque and you sent it to back, or did you just leave instructions to give it to your father.

MR. METCHEWAS: No, I didn't follow up on it at all. I just gave them a power of attorney to look after my end of it.

MR. HENDERSON: I'm sorry, you gave someone the power of attorney?

MR. METCHEWAS: My dad.

MR. HENDERSON: Oh. Do you remember the amount that was involved at all for your own compensation?

MR. METCHEWAS: If my memory serves me right, I think it was around five hundred dollars for each payment.

MR. HENDERSON: That would be for traps and other things?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, for equipment that was left up there. I don't know what the other details were. I never did read it; never did see it.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have a cabin up on Muskeg Lake or in that area?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, I didn't. Like I said, I shared cabins with my grandfather and Boniface St. Andrew and I shared accommodations up there with his family.

MR. HENDERSON: The other question, or the area that I wanted to ask you about, you indicated that there used to be sort of an agricultural support program, where people could get -- at least some people -- could get some horses and some building supplies and some harness and that sort of thing, and that was before the bombing range was created?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yeah, right.

MR. HENDERSON: That might be three, four or five families a year, as I recall?

MR. METCHEWAS: I think there was --. I really can't pinpoint exactly how many. I think there was about two or three families; three or four families a year, but I just can't remember. There wasn't a lot.

MR. HENDERSON: That was some sort of program that was administered by the Department of Indian Affairs?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, right.

MR. HENDERSON: After the bombing range was created, that stopped.

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, as far as I know, it did, yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Well, those are certainly the areas that I wanted to ask a few more questions about, based on what you said earlier. I am sure that the commissioners may have something to add and, of course, if you think of something that you had meant to say, or that we have reminded you of that you would like to say, of course, you are free to do that as well.

Mr. Chairman, I think if the commissioners have some questions, I'm concluded for the moment.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Are there any other questions from counsel? Okay.

Well, thank you, Mr. Metchewas, for coming here and helping us out like this. I do have some questions.

I think the first one I have is: In 1952 you said you joined the armed forces. Which armed forces, was that Canadian armed forces?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, the Canadian armed forces. That was during the Korean conflict. I enlisted to go to Korea.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Did you go to Korea?

MR. METCHEWAS: No. They drafted the Twenty-seven Brigade in Germany at the Berlin crisis, so that's where I ended up.

MR. HENDERSON: How long were you there -- were you in the armed forces?

MR. METCHEWAS: Just three years; just one term.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: So, in 1955, that's when you say you came back and that's when you saw the big difference in the community.

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, right.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: In 1961, I gather, somewhere in that area, there was a quit claim and that was the document you indicated that you signed, and Mr. Henderson indicated that there was two or three floating around. Did the one that you signed -- or were you aware that there was more than one document?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, the way it was explained to me and put across to me was that, just hearing from my dad, he mentioned -- my father -- he mentioned that they were bargaining, negotiating on the terms -- I think it was a twenty-year span -- and they would get compensated for so much money to try and establish themselves in another form of lifestyle; whether they wanted to be a farmer or a dairy farmer, or whatever.

There was mention -- the one meeting I attended it was mentioned there that there would be a possibility that they would review this periodically, but it didn't indicate just how often. But, there was mention. Some of the members that were on the floor had requested that they have a twenty-year package where, at the end of twenty years, they would review it, and if there was any other negotiations to made, they would be drafted up then.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you recall when that was?

MR. METCHEWAS: I beg your pardon?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you recall when that was?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, that was in '48 or 1949, somewhere in there. I just can't recall. The time and dates are so very close.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Sure, it was a long time ago.

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you recall who was actually -- were government people there, speaking?

MR. METCHEWAS: Oh, yes, there were government people there.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Now, you indicated that you thought one of them was -- or, why don't you tell me. Who was the government person there?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, the one that I seen from that particular group later on, and spoke to him later on, was Eckland. I forget his first name, but he was the only person that I --.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: And he would have been at that meeting. Now, when people were asking for this twenty-year re-look at this thing, did he respond to that? Do you remember what was said by him as a result of that?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, I didn't hear the tail end of that. That was the request from the members that were on the floor. I heard one or two of them making the same statement, making the same request.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Right. But, you don't recall whether or not there was any response to that request?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, no, no.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. I would like to get back to that document. The one that we call Exhibit I here has it indicated on there that you were in Edmonton; or it says Edmonton. I don't know whether it means that you were in Edmonton or what, but next to your name --. Have you ever seen anything like that, this document?

MR. METCHEWAS: No.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Can I ask, Mr. Henderson -- could you show it to Mr. Metchewas?

So, you don't recall signing that?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, no.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: That word, Edmonton, there, would that indicate that you were -- is that an attempt to indicate that you were in Edmonton at the time?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, right.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. If you would, could you turn to page one.

MR. METCHEWAS: Where does it say one here?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: It's got some writing, some declaration at the top. It starts, "We, undersigned..." Is that the first page, Bill?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, it is.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. Does that look anything like the document you signed?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, I didn't look at the heading, but the rest of it looks familiar, yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: When you signed that document, where did you sign it?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, where my name was.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: No, no, which was the location of where that document was presented to you and you signed?

MR. METCHEWAS: You mean where?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Yes, did somebody hand you that document?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, I believe it was right here in the band hall here.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: And who handed you the document and ask you to sign it?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, it was in front of Stan Knapp.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: So, Stan Knapp was there.

MR. METCHEWAS: He was the Indian agent at that time from --. Oh, correct me. Just a minute here, I am getting a little confused here.

I believe Stan Knapp was there and also Eckland. I think they were both there.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Did you have any discussion with them about what you were signing?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, no, because I was already heading in a different direction, and I just left everything to my dad.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: What did you think you were signing?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, it was a lease, that's what I was thinking, a term of a lease; a twenty-year lease. At that time we would either renegotiate and get fully compensated and make other provisions for a different livelihood or lifestyle, which ever direction you were going. That's what I was thinking about, yeah.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. That will be fine. You can return that to Mr. Henderson.

Were you aware that in 1970 there was an actual renewal between the Government of Alberta and the federal government of that bombing range lease up there? Did you know anything about that in 1970?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, no.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Had you heard anything about that?

MR. METCHEWAS: Never heard a thing about it. Just waited to hear, you know, I was hoping to hear from the head office here at our office if there were any proceedings, we would be notified or informed about it. We never did. I never did, anyway.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Did you live here at the time? Were you living on the reserve in 1970?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, I was in Edmonton.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You were. Okay.

I just want to back up a little bit. Do you ever recall hearing anything or discussing with your father or grandfather or anybody about the Primrose territory being Indian territory? I mean, what was the belief of the people?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, what I have heard, my grandfather mentioned that the Primrose -- well, not only the Primrose, but the country -- was given to the Native members of this country -- that right, that freedom -- was given by the Maker, the Creator, for them to use. Now, I don't know what happened in the transaction of the treaties; I don't follow that part of it, because it's out of my jurisdiction.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you know anything about the treaty at all?

MR. METCHEWAS: Not too much; just what I hear. I don't read up on it at all.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Well, had you heard, or do you recall, when you were young that your right to trap in that area was protected by your treaty? Does that --?

MR. METCHEWAS: Oh, that part, yeah. I don't know what section or what paragraph it's in, but I do; just from what I've heard. I've never read it.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: To your knowledge, the people that were in that area would you say that that was their view as well, that their right to be there was protected by the treaty?

MR. METCHEWAS: Exactly, exactly. That was their livelihood and it was there for them.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: In terms of the farming, do you recall in and around 1960 or perhaps the late fifties, was there ever any indication to people from this community, or were you aware of any kind of arrangement that said that your people were going to be provided another way of life to make up for the loss of the trapping?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, I did hear that. Right, I did hear that.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. Could you elaborate? Could you tell me what you heard, do you remember?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, I think I just indicated moments ago that what I did hear was that they would review periodically and see what progress they were making in a different direction, but it never did happen. Maybe, four or five years from now, they would say: Okay, Pierre, how are you making out since you lost the bombing range. But nothing like that ever did happen. They never came to me and asked me: How are you doing.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: No one ever came to you. Do you know of anybody that anybody did come to? I mean, did the government speak to anybody, or talk to anybody?

MR. METCHEWAS: No. I never, never heard of anybody. That was it; that was shut off right there as far as I'm concerned. I've never spoken to anybody. No one ever approached me, and I've never heard of anyone coming to this area to see or to investigate or to check to see how the people are surviving, how they were operating.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you think that if the band had had any help back in that period that it would have been of assistance?

MR. METCHEWAS: Just a minute, now, eh. If --?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: In other words, let's say --.

MR. METCHEWAS: Just a minute, let's try that again.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: If the government actually, in your view, if part of the deal was that you were supposed to be trained and provided other ways to make a living to make up for the trapping, is it your belief that if that had happened, if they had actually held up that part of the bargain, that it would have assisted community?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, I think it would have, yeah. It certainly would have, yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Was it your view; did you ever believe that those people would get back into the Primrose area and carry on trapping again some day?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, times have changed. If they got that back in twenty years, got that bombing range back in twenty years, for one thing it would be awfully foolish to take it back for the safety. It wouldn't be safe up there.

Since then, now the gas and oil exploration have moved in, the population started to increase in that area. The respect of the hunters and trappers is not here no more. You hear of accidental

shootings there every so often. We had one here last summer. You could be in danger if you took it back and tried to go back on. Somebody would shoot you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You also talked, Mr. Metchewas, about when you came back to the community you noticed a difference. Is it your opinion that this difference occurred as a result of their loss of those hunting and fishing rights in that area?

MR. METCHEWAS: Exactly, exactly. I support that one hundred percent.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: What did you see, when you came back? What did you see with your people?

MR. METCHEWAS: You could tell by the Elders in group sessions. The atmosphere had changed. The laughter and jokes and festivities and gatherings were starting to peter out.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Did you notice whether alcohol was a problem, or anything?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, yes, it was coming on then. It was coming on.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Now, do you know of any efforts on the part of the band, perhaps by the council, or anyone, to get some help from government, to try to get some economic development programs going during that period, like right around the late fifties, early sixties. Do you know of anything like that?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, I don't, because I wasn't here. I just lost communication with the administration here.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Finally, do you think if the assistance was there today that this community could improve, even greater than it is? If the assistance from government and the participation of government, to go back to that agreement -- if that was part of the agreement to assist this community in finding other ways of economic development projects, do you think if that assistance was there, even today, that that would greatly enhance the opportunities of this community?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, it would. It would help. On the other hand, you must remember, too, that you've got a complete change of lifestyle. Now, to make that adjustment, if you put a handful of money here, the change of that lifestyle varies. One guy is going to make use of it, and the other one is not. So, if they would have carried on assisting the members on yearly terms, and train the people; help them; assist them on their farms to try to get adjusted to a new way of life, yes, I would say that would be beneficial. But, to give them a whole bunch of money and say: Here's ten thousand dollars, that's yours; do whatever you want with it, well, I don't think that would be the answer. But, I would say certainly training and gradual assistance would change that lifestyle, and I am sure the members would get adjusted a lot sooner.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, thank you, Mr. Metchewas. Those are all of my questions.

Commissioner Bellegarde, do you have any questions?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Good morning, Mr. Metchewas.

What was the name of your unit that you were with, with the Canadian armed forces?

MR. METCHEWAS: The 2nd of February 1951.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: No, your unit name.

MR. METCHEW AS: I beg your pardon?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: What unit were you with?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, I was with the Princess Patricia Light Infantry, with the airborne regiment. They transferred me out of there, and I went to the Royal Edmonton Regiment, but then I got transferred to the Twenty-fifth Brigade because the Princess Patricia Light Infantry were a Brigade with the Korean conflict, and the Twenty-seventh Brigade, that was the Royal Edmonton Regiment, and were with the Twenty-seventh Brigade in Europe, and that's where I got pulled off the draft and sent over to Europe.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: You were too tough for the airborne regiment. MR.

METCHEWAS: I really went in for that, but, I don't know, I guess they thought

I was NCO material. They sent me to school and I went and took some courses. I became a sergeant. I was a sergeant when I came out, when I got discharged. I attended quite a few courses. It educated me, and I did very well.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Did you ever try to find work at the Cold Lake air base, when it was under construction?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, no. My intention, when I got out of the service was to get into the RCMP, which I did. I to the door step of the RCMP. As a matter of fact, all I had to do was sign on the dotted line and I was enlisted. They made me a good offer, but it just wasn't meant for me to be an RCMP lawmaker.

Going back to my kinfolk, my mother's dad was a Scotchman; he was a blacksmith and mechanically inclined. My uncle on that end was the same; he was mechanically inclined, he was a welder. Naturally, that was more my way of life was to go into mechanical repairs and stuff like that.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: The last question. You said that you averaged three thousand dollars per season while you were in Cold Lake; does this include the value of the meat that you killed, the berries, the -- what makes up the three thousand dollars?

MR. METCHEWAS: The three thousand dollars, I would say, like, when I went in the fall of the year and I trapped between October and December, I would maybe make a thousand bucks. So, after that, maybe, I would go to a logging camp and stay there 'till maybe March or April and make another thousand. Then I would go trapping in the spring and make another thousand bucks. This is about the way it went. So, I had a choice to go either way and still come out with a few bucks and then survive through the summer, then work on the farm in the summer.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: You mentioned that your compensation amounted to five hundred dollars?

MR. METCHEWAS: I beg your pardon?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Your compensation payment amounted to five hundred dollars?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, right.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: What did you think of that? Is that a fair and equitable compensation amount for you?

MR. METCHEWAS: No.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: I had to ask that.

MR. METCHEWAS: No, I didn't even look at it. I didn't even receive the cheque. I just gave it to my dad: Here, dad, take it. It's not worth it for me to even look at. I'll just go in another direction, which I did.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Okay, thank you, sir.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Commissioner Prentice.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Thank you very much.

I wanted to carry on on that same line of questioning. Your family at that time would have had a successful farm -- sixty to seventy acre farm -- and I presume that's where you were raised as a young lad. And your father also would have trapped at the Primrose area, is that right?

MR. METCHEWAS: Right.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: There were quite a number of families that had the same combination of lifestyle and income, is that right?

MR. METCHEWAS: Right.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: I am less interested in the absolute dollars of how much money you would make from the Primrose area, but could you tell us what percentage of your livelihood as a family would come from the Primrose area?

MR. METCHEWAS: You mean the amount of time spent, or in terms of --?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: I know it's a difficult question to answer.

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, it is.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Maybe it does come down to the dollars, but your livelihood as a family was very much dependent both on Primrose and the farm which you had, and I am trying to get an idea of what was more important. Where did most of the family income and things which you needed to live -- and some of that was game, I understand -- where it came from?

MR. METCHEWAS: Boy, I'm not sure how to answer that.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Would the farm itself have produced a significant income, or what you did on the farm, was that for the use of the family?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, it was a combination of both. See, hunting and trapping was a lifestyle. That was more important. Farming was more like the secondary; it was something that you had to get educated to. Trapping, you already knew that; that was number one. Trapping and fishing, that was number one because that's all we did. Farming was more or less secondary.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: So, the trapping was the principal way in which your father, for example, would have earned his livelihood.

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, certainly, exactly.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: The money which your family had, the cash which your family had to spend and to buy things, that would have come from the trapping and the fishing?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, right.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: It would not have come from the farming.

MR. METCHEWAS: No.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Your family trapped and fished in the area north of Primrose Lake, did I understand, near Martino River and Muskeg River?

MR. METCHEWAS: Oh, yes, right in the Primrose Lake area.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: You had trapping cabins there?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yeah, right.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Thank you very much. You've been very helpful.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Any further questions? Do you have a few more, Mr. Henderson?

MR. HENDERSON: Just a few more, very briefly.

Mr. Metchewas is looking at his watch too. There's a message in there somewhere.

The one question that was suggested to me is, if you could tell the commissioners how you got the lumber to build your first house.

MR. METCHEWAS: Oh, well, I was about twenty-one years of age at that time. I worked in the logging camp at Loby's Logging camp up north there at the Primrose Mountain they called it. They had a big logging camp there. They cut up a bunch of lumber. I worked there the whole winter that particular winter, right from October until -- no, pardon me, from December until November.

What they did was, they couldn't pay me in cash until they sold or marketed their lumber and the market wasn't due until, maybe in the spring, after the lumber was planed, so they couldn't pay me. So, what I did was say, well give me a voucher to the store where I could get a line of credit. You look after that for me, fifty per cent, and then fifty per cent give me in lumber. So, they did. They hauled some lumber over to my place and I built myself a granary and a couple of shacks. That's how I got my buildings. And an outhouse, too, of course.

MR. HENDERSON: Of course. We haven't been here in the fifty-degree-below weather, but you'd certainly want something around here.

I just have one other question, and I hope that you can help us with it. We don't have this on the record, and we have to write a report that a lot of people who have never lived in the north have to read. When you say you are out on Primrose Lake and when you are hunting and trapping and everything and there is no waste, I hope we can clear up the fact that means to me that if you caught a beaver, you would skin the beaver, stretch the hide and eat the beaver. Is that no waste? Is that what you mean by that?

MR. METCHEWAS: I, myself, have never eaten a beaver, no. No.

MR. HENDERSON: But what would you do with the meat, then?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, hand it over to the grandad or something. You did dress it.

MR. HENDERSON: Yes.

MR. METCHEWAS: You did dress it. I mean, you didn't dispose of it, no. You'd dress it up and take it over to my grandad. He'd take care of it.

MR. HENDERSON: I, myself, am not fond of muskrat, but the same thing would apply.

MR. METCHEWAS: The same thing there, yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I, on the other hand, are.

MR. METCHEWAS: Jeeze, I'm getting hungry here.

Okay, go ahead.

MR. HENDERSON: Before we deteriorate into a cooking class.

You also said there was something you did with the bones, too. What was that?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, the bones. Of course, the antlers; you know what they do with the antlers. They hang them up there as a big trophy.

This portion, lower from the knee portion of the moose leg, is used for tanning hides. They take the -- I don't know what you call that.

MR. HENDERSON: The marrow?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, no. The inner lining of the hide. There's a sort of a, oh, I don't know. Maybe somebody has a name for it. I haven't got a name for it. Eh? The flesh? They take that away with the bone because a blade would cut the hide, and this doesn't. It just scrapes the --.

MR. HENDERSON: Oh, I see. You use the lower lake to make a scraper, because that won't damage the hide when you scrape it.

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, right.

MR. HENDERSON: Okay, thank you for helping us with that. As I say, we haven't gotten into it before, and I think I know why, now.

Those are all my questions. Thank you Mr. Chairman and thank you, sir.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Yes, thank you very much. Do you have anything else you'd like to add as a result of the questions or what you've heard? Is there anything more that you would like to tell us?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, I know I've missed a lot, but I think of it.

I just want to thank everybody, everyone here. I've taken up your time and my time, and I hope that we accomplish some favourable results. I certainly hope I have been of some value, some help to you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I think I speak for everyone here that you have enlightened us a great deal. Obviously, your life has been very interesting. You have done a lot of things and accomplished a lot of things. It sounds like a fascinating life.

We are delighted that you could take the trouble and the time to come and help us and share with us that experience. It has been most educational, and I have to personally say that it was very

enjoyable listening to you. You have been a big help, and for that we appreciate it and thank you very much. Thank you, sir.

MR. METCHEWAS: Thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. We've all been looking at our watches, so I think what we will do now is adjourn. Why don't we reconvene at around two-fifteen. Is that okay, Bill?

MR. HENDERSON: Two-fifteen is fine.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Two-fifteen? So, we'll stand adjourned until two-fifteen.

---HEARING ADJOURNED FOR LUNCH BREAK

---UPON RESUMING AT 2:15 PM

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Counsel, are we ready for our next witness?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, we are, Mr. Chairman. The next witness is Francis Scanny.

Good afternoon, Sir. Sir, I understand you are now fifty-nine years old?

MR. FRANCIS SCANNY: Yup.

MR. HENDERSON: As a young man, you spent time in the Primrose Lake area?

MR. SCANNY: I spent --. I left school in 1949. In the spring of '50 -- that was 1950, the spring of '50, I left school. The fall of 1950, I started going back -- I went back with my dad to the trap lines, and I trapped with my dad from 1950 to 1952.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you recall any interruption of the trapping or the life at Primrose Lake in 1952?

MR. SCANNY: In 1952, if I remember right, there was a couple of guys that came in on a plane, and they were talking to my dad at the time. They were telling my dad that they were there on behalf of Indian Affairs or the government, or whoever they were representing, and they were talking about taking away -- there wouldn't be trapping any longer after this and that they would be getting paid for their equipment.

They were taking an inventory list of all the equipment that my dad had; snowshoes, guns, and everything, you know. I had snowshoes at the time and a gun. They all took everything on paper.

That spring, I think-- I don't know what time of the month of that spring-- but he got paid; he got compensated for his equipment. I didn't have any license or anything, I was just sort of a silent partner to my dad. According to my memory, I saw that they took part of his money, I think in the amount of four hundred seventy dollars, out of his compensation, and gave it to me. I got that money -- four hundred seventy dollars -- for four years. The last payment was in 1956. It wasn't money, either, just P.O.s, purchase orders.

MR. HENDERSON: Prior to creating the range, did you have your trapping license?

MR. SCANNY: No, I never did. I was in school, like I say, until 1950. I never had a license of any kind, even fishing.

MR. HENDERSON: You are quite confident that the money that you did get by way of purchase orders was, in fact, compensation that was intended for your father?

MR. SCANNY: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you have to sign any papers to get that compensation?

MR. SCANNY: No. I am not sure; I am pretty sure I signed some paper when I got my four hundred seventy dollars.

MR. HENDERSON: Can I ask you, sir, if your Treaty Number is One forty-two?

MR. SCANNY: That was my dad's Treaty Number. My number is Two seventy-five.

MR. HENDERSON: Was your dad's name Francis as well?

MR. SCANNY: No. His name was Teddy.

MR. HENDERSON: Oh, yes, I see that. Was he also known as Thaddeus?

MR. SCANNY: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, maybe I'll show Mr. Scanny the Exhibit I.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Yes, please do.

MR. SCANNY: The reason why I had my dad's Treaty Number, in order to get your Treaty Number -- your own -- you had to be twenty-one, and I was under twenty-one at that time, so I didn't have my own Treaty Number.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Scanny is looking at Exhibit I at the point where apparently both his father and he are indicated under the same Treaty Number, One forty-two, which is the third page.

I'll ask you now, sir, if you recognize that as your signature?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, it is.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember signing that at all?

MR. SCANNY: No, not after forty years.

MR. HENDERSON: I'll just show you the first page, as well, and ask if that jogs your memory at all, or if you recollect anything about it?

MR. SCANNY: No. No, it doesn't bring back anything to me right now. Like I say, forty years ago -- this was in 1956. The thing here, too, is that at the time we were made to sign these things, like this one here, the actual signature -- they just handed me a paper like this here: Here, you sign here! I never bothered to look at what was written on there. Like I say, my dad did all the negotiating, and I never got involved.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember if anybody explained what the signature was for?

MR. SCANNY: No.

MR. HENDERSON: I'll just move back to my usual place.

After the range came in, how did you make a living after that, sir?

MR. SCANNY: I think, from 1950 to 1952-53, when we were trapping out there, the trapping was no good. I went to tie camps. The village was about seven or eight miles away, which was called Suckerville. That's where all the fishermen were. It was sort of a fishermen's village. I used to go down there and look for a job, and I did get a job fishing. I did that during the winter months. If not that, then I went to tie camps. There were several around the area.

There was no shortage of jobs or work in the wintertime or anytime in them days.

MR. HENDERSON: Suckerville, as I recall, is right on Primrose Lake?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, Suckerville. I could show you on the map. It's a little village.

MR. HENDERSON: Are you saying that you were fishing there after the range was created?

MR. SCANNY: As a hired hand I was fishing there. I didn't have my own license or nothing. I was just hired by the day.

MR. HENDERSON: And how much fishing was permitted in there at that time?

MR. SCANNY: Well, I wouldn't know. I've got no idea how much fishing-- how much fish was supposed to be taken -- but apparently I suppose there was a quota of how many fish they could catch. I don't know.

MR. HENDERSON: Were the tie camps that you worked in also located in the air weapons range?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, most of them.

MR. HENDERSON: Were they open after the range was created?

MR. SCANNY: No, I don't think so. I think it was open to 1954. We used to be working in a place we called Long Bay. We worked for a company there cutting ties.

MR. HENDERSON: And they were excluded from the range after 1954?

MR. SCANNY: Whether they were excluded or not, I don't know. Once I got out of there I never bothered to go back.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you ever go back to Suckerville after that?

MR. SCANNY: No.

MR. HENDERSON: What other sorts of work could you do after that?

MR. SCANNY: Well, I wandered around quite a bit. I went to work around Dawson Creek, B.C., Jasper and all over, wherever we could get jobs. We used to wander around Lethbridge. From 1956 until 1961, I think we would go to Lethbridge for sugar beeting during the summer months.

MR. HENDERSON: Were there other times that you were allowed back into the Primrose area for --?

MR. SCANNY: The thing that happened there is that the Indian people from the reserve here negotiated with either the provincial or federal to go back fishing in Primrose during the holidays. I think they negotiated for about two years, or something like that. They finally were allowed to go back to go fishing in Primrose during the Christmas holidays and the Easter holidays.

MR. HENDERSON: I am just trying to get a date for that. Do you remember what year -- around what year -- that would be?

MR. SCANNY: No, I don't remember what year. Anyway, they did go back up there; they were fishing up there. There was quite a few fishermen from here.

Later on, they got phased out -- white people that were commercial fishermen, you know. Indians from here formed a co-op with the white fishermen. After a few years, they were phased right out. Anyway, I don't think today there is no commercial fishermen from Cold Lake in that co-op at all.

At that time, too, I remember my dad, he got a flag from the air force. It was a big orange flag. And they got permission to go hunting during the Christmas season -- to go hunting moose, or something. Wherever they were supposed to be hunting, they were supposed to spread that flag out on the ground, so they would know where they were at. I remember my dad having that flag.

MR. HENDERSON: Were you involved in the negotiations for compensation in 1958 to 1960?

MR. SCANNY: No, I wasn't involved.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you subsequently become a member of council here at Cold Lake?

MR. SCANNY: I became a councillor in 1968. I was elected in 1968, and I stayed there until 1982.

MR. HENDERSON: And you subsequently became chief, I believe?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, I was one of the long line of chiefs. I have a list of names here of the chiefs that used to be for this reserve. There are about twenty of them, I guess. I was one of them.

MR. HENDERSON: I think they are showing that you were an acting chief around 1970, somewhere around that area.

MR. SCANNY: 1974.

MR. HENDERSON: 1974.

MR. SCANNY: Yup.

MR. HENDERSON: Now, during this period, did the subject of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range and the twenty-year term become a hot topic for council?

MR. SCANNY: It did become a topic after 1972. My dad used to talk about it. They gave up the bombing range for twenty years. He used to say that to us. After twenty years it would be negotiable again. After twenty years passed, which is 1972, there was no action taken; nobody negotiated anything about that bombing range. The people started talking about it. So, therefore, at that time, I was one of the leaders -- maybe I was on the council at that time. The people said that maybe we should try to do something about this. We did; we started acting; started taking action at that time.

We went to Indian Affairs; Indian Affairs wouldn't do nothing. We tried the Indian Association of Alberta, and at that time Harold Cardinal was the president of the Indian Association, and we tried with him. Nothing ever resulted in our favour, because we had no money. Money was our biggest problem.

Finally, I think in 1986 or '87, we took some money out of our band funds and hired Mr. Mandamin and John Cormick -- Cormack -- I think-his name was. They started taking action only

then.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember back in '72, were there community meetings that people attended to find out what was going on? Were there delegations that went to Indian Affairs, or do you recall who went to Indian Affairs?

MR. SCANNY: I believe there was a delegation of some people that went and tried to negotiate with Indian Affairs, you know, to see what could be done about the negotiating after twenty years. But, like I say, nothing really happened with Indian Affairs, anyway. They just ignored the whole thing.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember the circumstances in which the claim that we are reviewing right now was submitted in 1975, together with the Indian Association?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, I think it would be fair to say that it was brought in in 1975 with the Indian Association.

MR. HENDERSON: And were there any meetings in the community about sending in that claim?

MR. SCANNY: There were a few band meetings. It was the people that approved that we take money from our band funds to hire lawyers and to hire people to go after this claim.

MR. HENDERSON: Would those meetings have occurred around 1975 or before 1975?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, it would be in the seventies that people really started talking about the claim.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you recall what people would say at those meetings about the twenty-year period being up? What was the position that they took?

MR. SCANNY: I can't recall what they were saying.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember if any government people attended these meetings to hear what the people were saying?

MR. SCANNY: There was some -- at one meeting they had, there was Indian Affairs people, the regional directors and people from Edmonton came and sat with the people. They were talking about the claim. The claim was brought up at that meeting, I remember.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember the names of the government people who came?

MR. SCANNY: No. I think Jim Ruler (phonetic) was one of them.

MR. HENDERSON: I'm sorry?

MR. SCANNY: Jim Ruler was one of them. I have a hard time on names, to remember names. I can't bring up any names.

MR. HENDERSON: You did mention that the regional director at that time came to one of the meetings.

MR. SCANNY: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: We are just collaborating here. We think the regional director in 1974 might have been Fred Walkley?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, it would be one of them. Yes, I think it would be him.

MR. HENDERSON: It would have been him that may have come out and --.

MR. SCANNY: There was a big guy, the district guy. There used to be two offices, one at the district office in St. Paul and the regional office in Edmonton. The district office superintendent at one time was Horace Gladstone. He was one of the district superintendents.

MR. HENDERSON: I guess, after the claim went in in 1975, you were still on council for a few years. Do you remember the claim being rejected, or anything the government may have communicated to you about the claim?

MR. SCANNY: I wouldn't say that we were rejected, but there was no action taken on it. There was no rejection or anything, but it was on -- how would you say --?

MR. HENDERSON: The after-burner?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, you know, we bring in our claims and everything into them, and they say: We'll try this and we'll try that. But, nothing became -- no results.

MR. HENDERSON: That's fine. That's a period of council activity that we haven't any information about so far, and I thank you for bringing that to us.

I don't have any additional questions myself at the moment. It may be that some of the other counsel do, but they are shaking their heads. I am certain that the commissioners do, at least.

Mr. Chairman?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Scanny, for coming here.

I'd like to get, perhaps, back to that 1972 period. Why in [1972], to your recollection, what was it that made you think you had a claim?

MR. SCANNY: I wouldn't say thinking that I had claim. I think when you say you have a claim, you know, Primrose Lake was our livelihood.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Right.

MR. SCANNY: Which was taken away. When Primrose Lake was taken away, it made us what we are today. We used to be proud people. It killed our pride; it killed our culture; it killed everything that we stood for. We used to be a proud people; today we are a welfare people. We wait for our welfare every month, and there are very few people that have jobs here. There are very limited jobs and most of our people, like I say, they wait for welfare. When they took our bombing range away, that's what they turned us into -- welfare people.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Well, can you recall what people wanted in 1972? Did they want to go back into the territory?

MR. SCANNY: Well, some of them were talking about going back, if we ever got a chance to go back. Some of the people were talking about it; that it would be, maybe, worthwhile going back. Personally, I think it would be my waste of time to go back into trapping, because the way I learned in those days, the way my dad taught me how to make a living in the bush, trapping, fishing and all that, is different today.

If I went back out there and started trapping and if I went back the way I was taught by my dad, I think I would be in jail next week, because the equipment we used in those days are banned today due to some group of people called Greenpeace. They banned a lot of -- I think they hurt a lot of people by forming that group. You hear all over about Greenpeace restricting and banning traps.

You would have to do everything all over new -- everything new. So, personally, I don't think I would go back trapping.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: But in 1972, people from this community wanted something, and I am curious to know what that was -- in 1972.

MR. SCANNY: I think in 1952, when Indian Affairs in 1952 promised to the Indian people that this bombing range would be negotiable again in twenty years, I think they were looking forward to that twenty years. And when that twenty years came, there was nothing done about the negotiation. They were either going to be compensated by money or given the land back or whatever, but they weren't.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Did you bring people in, or ask people from Indian Affairs to come in and speak to them about that in 1972?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, we did talk to Indian Affairs, and we brought Indian Affairs in to talk about it.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: What did they say? What did they tell you?

MR. SCANNY: Like I said earlier, we met with them, and they just said that they would see what they could do about it. That was about it.

MR. HENDERSON: Just: We'll see what we can do?

MR. SCANNY: Yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: What were they going to see what they could do about? Again, I keep wondering whether or not -- did you want to say that the lease is up now, and we want to go back? Even in 1972 -- forget Greenpeace for the moment.

MR. SCANNY: Okay, you go back, after 1972, like I say, people are waiting for 1972 because the twenty years was up.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Right.

MR. SCANNY: They either go back trapping or else they would be further compensated.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I see.

MR. SCANNY: And that's what they were looking for, and I think that's what they are still looking for today.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Then Indian Affairs told you: We'll see what we can do?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, that's right, but they never did nothing.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. Did you keep asking them afterwards? Did you keep --?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, until today we are still asking them.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Yes, you are.

Indian Affairs, do you remember who it was that came in from Indian Affairs? Did you bring anybody in from Ottawa, or was it just local people?

MR. SCANNY: Just local, from Edmonton or the district office in St. Paul.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Did they say that they were going to look into it on your behalf; that they were going to try to do something?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, they were. They said that they would look into it. Since they weren't doing anything, we went to the Indian Association of Alberta. We met with Harold Cardinal.

Even at that time, I don't know what really happened after we talked to Harold Cardinal, president of the Indian Association.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Again, during that period, if you can remember, and I know it was a long time ago, was there any discussion, particularly with Indian Affairs, about saying: You know, what about these promises you made about helping us with another way of life? Or something like that? Did any discussion happen around that?

MR. SCANNY: No. When you are looking at another way of life, I think Indian Affairs were trying to turn the trappers into farmers. Due to that, my dad bought a tractor, some farming equipment. He had forty-seven acres, but he never farmed. He just broke the land and maybe had about a couple of crops. Then, he bought another trap line, just adjacent to the bombing range. He went back trapping again.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: During all your years on council, and correct me if I am wrong, but you said you were on council roughly from 1968 to 1982?

Now, during that period, from 1968 to 1982, did you ever have discussions -- you and council, especially council -- with the Department of Indian Affairs, or anybody from government about economic development programs or activity in your community?

MR. SCANNY: We did have a lot of meetings talking about Primrose Lake Bombing Range. They would ask you: How would you like to get paid; be compensated as people as a whole, or just the trappers? There's going to be one big compensation; how would you guys like to get paid? Nobody really knew how we wanted to get paid.

We brought it up to the people, and the people had mixed feelings about how we were going to get paid, because the trappers -- the actual trappers -- would say: Maybe we'll get paid the way it was the last time. We were saying that maybe we should compensate everybody.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: When was this?

MR. SCANNY: Between 1972 and now.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I see.

Okay, Mr. Scanny, those are all my questions.

Commissioner Prentice, do you have any questions?

Commissioner Bellegarde?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: I just have one question, Mr. Commissioner.

Mr. Scanny, you said that they took four hundred seventy dollars from your father's compensation. Did that cover four years or was that four hundred seventy dollars per year for four years?

MR. SCANNY: I got four payments.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Of four hundred seventy dollars each?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, each.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: So, you got a total of one thousand eight hundred eighty dollars.

MR. SCANNY: Somewhere in that area, yes.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: For four years.

MR. SCANNY: Yes.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: How much did your father get, do you remember?

MR. SCANNY: I don't know. I never kept track of it.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Okay. On the quit claim, the paper that you signed which was the quit claim, it was given to you with no explanation at all of what it contained?

MR. SCANNY: Nothing that I know of.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: What did you think it was for?

MR. SCANNY: Well, like I said, I never got no cash, just purchase orders. My dad got the cash and he signed the cheque.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Did you ever meet with any of the other First Nations during your 1972 negotiations with Indian Affairs?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, we did. We had a meeting with Canoe Lake chief and council at one time, talking about the bombing range. Apparently, at that time they had a claim too, so we joined -- we had a joint meeting with them. I think it was a couple of days that we were up there at Canoe Lake.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Were there any Indian Affairs staff members there with you at that time?

MR. SCANNY: No, no.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Just between the two First Nations?

MR. SCANNY: Yes.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you, Mr. Scanny.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Any further questions, Mr. Henderson?

MR. HENDERSON: I believe we have one.

When you received money over a period of -- was it three or four years, by purchase order, you were able to use the money by getting purchase orders; do you remember what you did use the money for?

MR. SCANNY: We couldn't get any money on the purchase orders, but there was one time that I needed some money, so I bought a calf from one farmer and an hour afterwards I sold it back to him.

MR. HENDERSON: Did either of you make any money on this transaction?

MR. SCANNY: No, I didn't make any. I needed money for something else, you know? I don't know what it was, but anyway, I bought that cow and I sold it back to him about an hour after for less -- maybe ten per cent -- and that's because I needed some money.

MR. HENDERSON: I think we understand the nature of that one. Thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: If I may, with respect to the purchase orders, could you get anything you wanted with those purchase orders, or were they limited in what you could do with them?

MR. SCANNY: Oh, we got anything we wanted.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I mean, if you wanted furniture, you could go get furniture?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, yes. At that time, I didn't have a home. I was just a young guy, you know, twenty years old. I didn't need anything in my household, because my dad had everything there. I was living with him there.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Just as a matter of curiosity, were you twenty when you bought the cow?

MR. SCANNY: I was about twenty-one.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay.

Mr. Bellegarde has another question.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you.

This deals with the fishermen's co-op. This was in Primrose Lake?

MR. SCANNY: This was the commercial fishermen from Saskatchewan -- Pierceland.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Okay. There were a number of Cold Lake First Nation citizens who were members of that co-op for a time?

MR. SCANNY: The whole thing started, as I said earlier, Cold Lake First Nation were the people that negotiated with the governments to allow them to go fishing during the holidays. They went through the negotiating with the government, and they got permission to into the bombing range and fish during the Christmas holidays.

About a year or so later, these commercial fishermen in Pierceland and around the area, they started putting their foot in there. They were talking to a few of the fishermen, and they told the fishermen that: Let's form a co-op and make our voice stronger. We can ask for anything, you know.

So, the Indian fishermen from here -- the commercial fishermen -- did join the co-op. After a few years of going to meetings and all that, they started to shy away from meetings and everything. Finally, they were phased right out. They lost everything. Being outvoted, the few people that were going to the meetings there, they were outvoted, and they were making rules and regulations and they were outvoted. They just got phased out.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: That was after 1956, right? When was this co-op formed?

MR. SCANNY: I don't know; I can't name the years.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: It was after the creation of the Primrose Lake Bombing Range.

MR. SCANNY: Right, after they lost the bombing range.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Okay, thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: As a result of those questions, is there anything else that you would like to tell us, or is there anything else that comes to mind now that you think we ought to know?

MR. SCANNY: Yes, maybe. I have some questions, and I don't know if it would fit in with what we are talking about today.

We talked about this claim. We had a few meetings with the local commanding officer at the base -- I think twice. We talked about this claim. He filled us in on some of the things that were happening. The thing is that we asked them about 1952, when they were trying to get us some files or whatever. They wouldn't give them to us anyway. The thing that happened with them was that --.

Out of curiosity, when you get oil companies in there today -- all the oil companies are inside the bombing range -- how much does the oil companies pay the provincial government, both Saskatchewan and Alberta, for the exploration that they're doing in that area, inside the bombing range?

I am just bringing this up so that you can have it, that this question was brought up. know for a fact that these oil companies paid so many millions to the provinces, both Saskatchewan and Alberta, for the oil exploration, and here we're left out in the cold. We always seem to be sitting on the inside looking out. Everything is happening around us and yet the people of this reserve are sitting here doing nothing and nothing is happening.

Even in the area where we have oil companies -- right around the reserve -- and nothing happening on the reserve. We have the Department of Indian Affairs sitting in Calgary on Indian oil and gas. These people are supposed to be working on behalf of the Indian people, and yet they aren't doing a damned thing.

Like I say, us people are sitting on the inside looking out, looking at everything from the outside.

At a couple of meetings with Ernie Isler (phonetic) our local MP and tried to get something on the reserve, get some money or something like that. He walked out on me one time. He just walked right out. He said: I didn't come here for that. He wanted some land on the reserve. He wanted to build a road across the reserve, and he wanted some land. I told him that if he wanted some land, I told him we didn't want his money, just give us some land; some more land. He

said: I can't do that; you're wasting my time and I don't want to waste your time also. He walked right out.

After this, after Thursday, I hope in all the world that something happens on our behalf I hope something happens for the benefit of the Cold Lake First Nation.

I would like to thank you guys for hearing me today, and I think it's about time that the Government of Canada started listening to our needs and everything like that, you know. I just want to say thank you very much.

I have a lot of things to say and, like I say, I left school in 1949. I was sixteen years old and I went to grade seven. In them days there was no follow-up after that. If you were in grade eight and you were sixteen -- our limit was grade eight, and our limit was sixteen years old. I was sixteen years old and I was in grade seven. I got kicked out of school at that time. Today it's different. You can go to university, college and all that. So, there's a big difference today.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Well, thank you again, Mr. Scanny. We certainly appreciate very much you taking the time to come out and speak to us, particularly on a subject, as Mr. Henderson indicated, that was the first opportunity we have had to talk to people that were part of council during some of that period, so that information is very valuable, and we thank you very much for coming here and sharing that with us. Thank you.

Okay, Mr. Henderson.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, the next witness is Mr. Maurice Grandbois and, with your consent, our own Mr. Maurice will carry on as counsel for the time being.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Certainly.

MR. MAURICE: Hello, Mr. Grandbois.

MR. MAURICE GRANDBOIS: Hi.

MR. MAURICE: Perhaps you could start out by telling the commissioners today if you, yourself, did any hunting, trapping or fishing in that Primrose Lake area.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Well, I was about fourteen years old at the time, I guess, and upon getting out of school, I did engage in trapping with my father for two seasons. Well, I was engaged also in the commercial aspect of it -- commercial fishing.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Mr. Grandbois, could you speak closer to the microphone, please? Or we can get our technician over here and see if we can relocate that.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Of course, my earliest recollections as a small child, I was with my parents up there until I entered elementary school, or the grade school. There is some small instances which may not prove of any great significance, but the hardships and the dedication and ambitions they had at that particular time, when I think back on it, they were very dedicated people.

They went through hardships that I remember as a small child, such as, they had to fight bitter cold, weather.

I am just going to say this, because when I think back on it, after all these years, it kind of strikes me as quite an accomplishment. We had to dig holes in four feet of ice. Your animals had to be in tip top shape, otherwise you didn't have a hope in hell over there. But, they worked at it

without any outside assistance. Providing you were equipped, you were okay. The trapping and fishing industry at the time, I would assume, they chose from season to season which ever may be the greater. In other words, if the fur price was in demand and the price was good, they engage in that particular thing. And in another season the fishing -- commercial end of it -- may have been attractive enough that a lot of the people engaged in that for that particular season. This is what I think of today as what was taking place.

Their dealings, I mean their markets and stuff, like, say, they brought out furs, why they sold them to certain merchants right in the immediate area. I heard the Hudson Bay, I remember when I was small, that's where they sold it. They also established credit so that they could get their provisions, I guess you might say, for the summer months. Then the following winter, they would stake them out again and go.

So, it was kind of a disruption, I would say, when the DND took over these tracts of land and the lake. The transition between, especially on my dad's side, he could not read nor write. He was a trapper. Mind you he had a home, a small farm and the like. But, I believe the transition leading up to today, has had quite an impact socially, economically, emotionally, environmentally, you name it.

If we have to take it all back and add it together, I do believe, from what I understand and have been listening to all day today and on the previous occasion, I don't think people did get what was rightfully -- you might say, their compensations were not adequate enough to adapt from a trapping environment to, say, a farming environment. This was very difficult for some, I would imagine, because I remember my parents during the summer months, they would be preparing for the coming season. They had all their equipment to contend with, and this disrupted everything, which brought all the other things that seems to set everyone back now, like booze and the like.

These areas at that time were abundant in fur, fish, the lumbering industry, fish processing. I remember even a fish processing plant at Suckerville, where they processed fish. All these provided jobs, employment opportunities for a lot of the younger ones at the time, which I didn't engage in myself. I was only fourteen or fifteen.

I guess, a little while later, I remember they had an agricultural course. I don't know who put this up. Maybe it was the Department of Indian Affairs, but several of us attended this short, introductory-type course, which didn't prove to no avail to anyone really.

Like I said, when people lost their traditional and what they were most active in -- they participated in this wholeheartedly -- why, once they lost that, it seems like they lost all ambitions and initiatives and the dedication. So, when I look back at it, I say to myself: Holy God, why are all these people here all of a sudden. Are the governments really going to look after us or say something and do something? Or, is this just another formality that we --.

So, all in all, I cannot go ahead and elaborate a whole lot. Like, I've been listening about people signing certain documents, because I certainly never signed nothing. Those that did sign something or another, I cannot see any provision in there for the later people, like myself, the descendants of these actual people that were involved in that way of making a living. I mean, what was the impact on the offspring and grandchildren and down the line and the rest of all of us sitting here? There was no provision there for that, I can see.

So, you see, it's hard for me to cover the whole area, because it's quite vast here. We have to start thinking of everything that's affecting us today in the current times here. It's forty-one -- forty-two -- years ago, I guess, this took place, and my life didn't actually revolve right around here for quite some time after that. I couldn't see much after everything in the early fifties, so I went out and took up a trade, which today I'm still active in. I do that for a living.

MR. MAURICE: What is your trade, Mr. Grandbois?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Well, I am a plumber.

MR. MAURICE: Yes, I appreciate that it's often difficult to try and bring all these different facets together and what happened over the course of forty years.

MR. GRANDBOIS: That's right.

MR. MAURICE: Maybe we could ask you a few questions, and I am sure the commissioners will have some questions which arise from what you have told us already.

You mentioned you were involved in some commercial fishing. To what extent was that?

MR. GRANDBOIS: You mean --?

MR. MAURICE: Did you --?

MR. GRANDBOIS: I was with my folks.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. Did you ever do any commercial fishing after the range was closed?

MR. GRANDBOIS: At Cold Lake, yes.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. How about your parents, did they do any trapping?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Oh, yes.

MR. MAURICE: You mentioned that people chose fishing or trapping, depending on the prevailing economic conditions of the times.

MR. GRANDBOIS: That's right.

MR. MAURICE: What about logging or other industries in the area?

MR. GRANDBOIS: I remember quite a few of them logging people in the area, although we personally, that I can recall, we were never involved in it as far as hiring out. We were more or less on our own.

MR. MAURICE: How did your family make a living after the range?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Well, my parents were already getting up there in the years. They had cows; they had horses; they had this and that, chickens and the like. Things kept on pretty well on a normal plane. So, it did not really greatly affect them, that I could see, and then the rest of it came along, I guess. People were on old age pensions and the like, and this took over until my parents passed on. I left the country for some time after that -- I mean this particular area -- but I still live at the same place; I am still at the same home place right today; the place that I was born actually. We lived on the other reserve; not here, in the English Bay portion, so we were fairly close to the lake and there was always something to do.

MR. MAURICE: Did you have brothers and sisters as well?

MR. GRANDBOIS: I've got one sister, no brothers.

MR. MAURICE: You also mentioned that there was a short, introductory agricultural course that was sponsored.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes, I forget what year -- maybe '64, no it was in the fifties, because I started my apprenticeship in '56, '57. So, it would have been prior that. It might have been about '54, maybe.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember who put that on?

MR. GRANDBOIS: It must have been done through the Department of Indian Affairs.

MR. MAURICE: What was the course all about? What did that entail?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Well, it was in a regular agricultural school in Olds and, like I say, it was the introductory courses. They more or less informed you of what was involved in the two years or so where you received some type of a degree in the agricultural field. They touched on most of the, you know -- because I was on it.

MR. MAURICE: Did you become involved in agriculture after this course?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Oh, I've done it at home, yes.

MR. MAURICE: What type of agriculture were you involved in?

MR. GRANDBOIS: A little bit of grain, cattle.

MR. MAURICE: Were you familiar with other people as well that were involved in agriculture around that time, in the fifties?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Everybody around here; most people did.

MR. MAURICE: Can you, maybe, elaborate on what the general economic conditions were with respect to agriculture in this area around that time? I recognize you are not an agriculture economist --.

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, not really, but the prevailing times would have offered --. Well, to start up again, when horse and buggy was one of the main means of transportation, of getting about in the immediate area, why your feed for these animals was a must. The same with your dogs on the trap line. So, with these things placed in front of you, you had to lay a plan. You had to have these, just like you would gas for your car. So, these were the things, I believe, that kept the people motivated, kept them going, because they had a goal; they had some challenge to meet. Without a challenge, when the DND took over, there was no more challenge. This is where it all dropped off, eh? It just dwindled away. This is my rough estimate.

MR. MAURICE: Sorry, Mr. Grandbois, how old are you?

MR. GRANDBOIS: I'll be fifty-seven in April.

MR. MAURICE: Going back to when the range was first created, did you ever hear about --?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes, I was up there with my dad at that time. There was word flying around that there was a takeover by the army.

MR. MAURICE: What do you remember about what was being discussed?

MR. GRANDBOIS: I cannot really say. It was just more of a rumour that I kept hearing off and on, and then, all of a sudden, bang, there it was. There was a restriction put on the area, I guess, and you still can't go in.

MR. MAURICE: Those are all the questions I have, Mr. Grandbois. Perhaps counsel may have some more.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you, Mr. Grandbois. I have one question and maybe you could in your own opinion --.

You mentioned that you didn't think the compensation was adequate. What do you think adequate compensation or a form of compensation ought to have been?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Well, there's a kind of a humorous little thing that I'm going to tell you right now.

I remember a neighbour of ours, just across the road, he was already quite old. Somehow or another, these purchase orders, or whatever they were, were negotiated by someone else, I guess. This gentleman, all of a sudden, he's staying at home and here he gets this old tractor. Now, the poor old guy don't know one end of a tractor from the other, you know. So, he's walking around this thing, scratching his head: What the heck am I going to do with this? I mean, sure, they bought the tractor. Fine and dandy. But, did they give him money to buy gasoline to put in this tractor? No, they didn't. So, that was an indication right there that there was some very poor -- nothing was adequate there. So, he turned around and sold that tractor for a horse. At least he could manage a horse. So, whoever came up with these ideas, I don't know. Whoever brought these into reality, I don't know.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Had you ever heard or had you, maybe, been involved with any kind of discussions or have any knowledge about the fact that there was supposed to be some additional education?

MR. GRANDBOIS: That was the talk at the time.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: And that it was supposed to provide some kind of an economic base to replace the--?

MR. GRANDBOIS: That's right. That is right.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Did you talk to people about that, or is that just things that you heard, or rumours?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Just more or less what I heard. Mind you, at the time I was already beginning to realize that I had to get out and see this fine country of ours, too.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Did you do that?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Oh, yes, I've been all over.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I'm sorry, I didn't get your occupation. I know you answered that question, but what do you do?

MR. GRANDBOIS: I'm a plumber.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: A plumber. How did you get all over the world?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Not all over the world; all over Canada and parts of the U.S.A. anyway.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Yes? Just touring around?

MR. GRANDBOIS: No, I worked here and there.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Where did you go to school?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Calgary.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: In Calgary.

MR. GRANDBOIS: My apprenticeship with a firm was in Edmonton. The only school we had at the time was in Calgary -- trade schools. I believe Charlie went there at the same time. He was a mechanic, and we both started at about the same time.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Oh, if you don't mind my saying so, you've captured the English language very well.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Well, I had to put up with them too. I still do today.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Good.

I don't have any further questions, Mr. Grandbois, but perhaps --?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Just one question, sir, and that deals with, I guess, what's called the rehabilitation or change of lifestyle. If you had the wherewithal today under your control, what kind of rehabilitation programs would you make available to the people of Cold Lake First Nation?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Come again?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: If you had a chance to have some rehabilitation or development projects for Cold Lake to replace what they had lost after the Primrose Air Weapons Range came into being, what kind of projects would you see happening here?

MR. GRANDBOIS: First of all I would like to see the Natives have a heavier say in the immediate development of this region; in the oil industry, the gas industry, and whatever is taking place up there right now. I would like to see the Native involvement in there as to their development.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Any other training programs or anything like that?

MR. GRANDBOIS: At this time, what prompts me to say this is, we have natural gas all over our reservation here. There are pipes leading out of it, and God only knows where it goes. I mean, we want more say in that natural resources.

Now, there is a pipeline starting up in the range right now, you know. Why weren't we notified of this? Why didn't we ask? As far as training programs, it's nice. I mean, we all require our immediate needs. I'm on the reserve plumbing right now, full time. We have all kinds of little problems, but we manage, we get by. I have a couple of apprentices under me right now.

These are areas that I'd like to see. Like, right now we are short of an electrician real bad. We don't have -- we have one, but he's not well.

These are areas that I'd look at because I've seen myself become a plumber and I got lost over there, you know what I mean? I got lost in the woodwork way over there somewhere, because there was nothing here for me to do up until just in the recent years. So, we can train a whole lot of people, but if we don't have anything here to give them to work, to do things, in various fields in manufacturing or whatever --. I mean, if we're going to lose it, it's no good to our economy, is it?

Agriculture is another area I would stress, because we have lots of land here, good arable land.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you, sir.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Commissioner Prentice?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Yes, sir.

You were a young man when the bombing range lands were taken away. You would have been a teenager, I presume, at that time.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Then, do I understand that you travelled a great deal after that and worked out from the reserve?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Right.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: What changes did you see over time in terms of --?

MR. GRANDBOIS: You mean when I got back here?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: When you came back, in terms of employment here.

MR. GRANDBOIS: There was no employment, really, except for the administering of things here. There was no industry of any sort. I mean, in the area there was, with Esso and them guys coming in.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: What about with the development of the base and the town?

MR. GRANDBOIS: Well, I worked at it, too, for a little while when I was still in school. Quite a few of them worked when they were developing the base. They worked on various construction jobs and the like. Both towns here were beginning to grow also -- Grand Centre and Cold Lake.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: As the base was developed and the town was built in the time, I presume, after the mid-nineteen-fifties, were there no programs where Aboriginal People who wanted learn a trade --.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Oh, there were some short-term ones. There was nothing that materialized out of it. There was no follow up on it. I mean, there was a lack of funding at all times.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Those are all my questions. Thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Anything further, counsel?

MR. MAURICE: No.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Those are all the questions that we have, Mr. Grandbois. Like the other speakers, we certainly appreciate you taking the time to come and assist us here. You are a very articulate spokesperson, and you have assisted us.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Well, if I can be of any help, you know, I'm right here.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You have been, and if we feel like you can, we will perhaps call upon you again some time.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Sure.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you, sir, for coming out and helping us.

MR. GRANDBOIS: Thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, at this time what I would like to do is take a ten minute recess, and then we'll have, I believe, one or two more witnesses this afternoon, and then we'll wrap up for the day. So, let's try to keep it tight to ten minutes, okay?

We stand adjourned for ten minutes.

---TEN MINUTE RECESS

---UPON RESUMING

MR. MAURICE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the next witness is Eli Minoose. Where is Mr. Minoose?

Hello, Mr. Minoose. Maybe you could start by telling the commissioners whether you, yourself, trapped, fished or hunted in the Primrose Lake area?

MR. ELI MINOOSE: I did some trapping --. I did some fishing; I didn't do any trapping.

MR. MAURICE: Did you have a commercial fishing license?

MR. MINOOSE: In later years, yes, I had a commercial fishing license for Alberta and Saskatchewan.

MR. MAURICE: Was that prior to the bombing range being established or after?

MR. MINOOSE: After.

MR. MAURICE: After?

MR. MINOOSE: Yes.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. So, you continued to go in how often?

MR. MINOOSE: Well, not only to Primrose, but I had all this commercial fishing license for Alberta.

MR. MAURICE: I see. Maybe you could tell us what you know about the bombing range; how it was established, what was promised and things of that nature.

MR. MINOOSE: Directly, I don't know. I never did any negotiating with any people. Like, that was older people before me, or my dad, who did all the --. Me, I was just a helper mostly. I was a hired man. I never had my own equipment.

MR. MAURICE: So, your father also did some commercial fishing?

MR. MINOOSE: He did both, trapping and commercial fishing and working in other places.

MR. MAURICE: How old are you, sir?

MR. MINOOSE: I'm fifty-eight.

MR. MAURICE: How did your family make a living after the bombing range was established?

MR. MINOOSE: Well, we had a small farm just west of here and south of the reserve here.

MR. MAURICE: Could you tell us about that farming operation and how that was operated?

MR. MINOOSE: Well, it was mostly operated by -- in the early years, in the late forties and fifties -- we used horses. Finally, we got one of those old tractors, close to 1948 or so. From there, in the winter months or early springtime, we did commercial fishing. In the spring sometimes, my dad went trapping, but I don't think he did that full time, though. Mostly fishing.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember any government representatives coming to provide instruction on the farming operation at all?

MR. MINOOSE: No, not directly; indirectly, yes.

MR. MAURICE: How was that?

MR. MINOOSE: Well, like I said, I never took any part in these meetings they had. It was all these older people; chief and council, they did all the negotiating, so I didn't take part in any of those.

MR. MAURICE: Did you, yourself, receive any compensation for fishing?

MR. MINOOSE: I don't know whether it was for fishing or trapping. We did get paid compensation for this trap line. They gave me a portion of my dad's, whatever he got. It was four hundred seventy dollars.

MR. MAURICE: Did you ever sign a document?

MR. MINOOSE: I'm pretty sure I did sign one, the last one, I think it was, sometime in the sixties or else late fifties.

MR. MAURICE: Can you --. I'm sorry, go ahead.

MR. MINOOSE: I don't know exactly. I can't recall exactly the year it was.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember much about the day that you signed, what types of discussions took place?

MR. MINOOSE: Not really. I was in the hospital at the time, so I don't even know. The guy just came up and had a piece of paper, and he says: Here, you sign this; you've got a cheque here for four hundred seventy dollars. So, that was it.

MR. MAURICE: Before I show you this document, I would like to know what your band number is.

MR. MINOOSE: It's Two hundred eighty-eight.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. Do you recognize this document, Mr. Minoose?

MR. MINOOSE: It might have been the one here, but my name is out here.

MR. MAURICE: Is that your signature?

MR. MINOOSE: I guess my signature is written on the left hand.

MR. MAURICE: This is the front page of this document, does this look familiar?

MR. MINOOSE: Not really.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. For the record, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minoose has identified his signature on Exhibit I.

How did you, yourself, make a living after the bombing range was established?

MR. MINOOSE: I worked here and there. Mostly, we had a farm until about 1956, but things weren't going very good. Everything was all breaking up.

MR. MAURICE: Do you remember why?

MR. MINOOSE: No, not really. I don't really know. We were probably getting pressure from Indian Affairs. There was nobody around and we were being squeezed from all directions. Everybody left the reserve -- all the younger people -- to different schools. All the able people were setting out all over the country for employment, which there was lots of here.

Finally, you know, they just phased out a lot of these things here. At the time, I didn't understand what was going on. In later years, we found out what was happening. People used to have lots of cattle on this reserve. They had farms -- not in a big way, but enough to make a living. This is how people lived out here. For employment, people went working out to make a living. We had to because there was no such thing as social services. If you don't do anything, you don't get nothing, so we just had to go somewhere after this reserve started going down.

MR. MAURICE: Going back to this document that you identified, Exhibit 1, do you remember who came to you in the hospital and asked you to sign this?

MR. MINOOSE: It probably was Eckland.

MR. MAURICE: Did he explain --?

MR. MINOOSE: No, they didn't explain nothing. They just told us: Here's a cheque; there's is a place here, sign it here. Your name is on there and your number is there. So at this time, I suppose I just accepted the money and I didn't even read what was on there. He just told us this was the last payment for the bombing range. I think that's what they told us. That was in 1960 or somewhere around that.

MR. MAURICE: Did anyone explain to you what would happen in the event that you didn't sign this document?

MR. MINOOSE: No. Probably wouldn't get your cheque. They would threaten you, I guess.

MR. MAURICE: Did you speak and read English at this time?

MR. MINOOSE: Yes, I did. I suppose if it was given to me to read, I would have read it, but they just handed it to you and says: You sign here. That was it.

MR. MAURICE: I am going to show you this one more time and show you the writing at the top of the page.

Do you remember reading those words?

MR. MINOOSE: No. I don't even know if these things were written on there when they gave me this part here to sign.

MR. MAURICE: Okay. So you have never seen this, then?

MR. MINOOSE: Well, like I said, I never read nothing. They just gave you a piece of paper. I don't think it was even typed like this here. But they just put this one here, and there was nothing there, or whatever it was. See, I was in the hospital, and I was in no shape to -- I was glad to get a few bucks anyway so --.

MR. MAURICE: Okay, thank you very much.

Those are all the questions I have.

Sorry, Mr. Minoose, could you, for the record, explain now what you just said about this document and about the writing at the top of the page?

MR. MINOOSE: I didn't read anything. I had a friend there with me when we signed our names for that. I don't know if she did read it, but I don't recall her reading that paper. All I was told was, Sign here. It's such a long time that I don't quite remember, but I am very sure that I never read what was written on there. I suppose he explained or said a few things to me about it, but I don't recall anything like that.

MR. MAURICE: So did anybody ever draw your attention to these words?

MINOOSE: Not after that. That was the first and last time I ever seen it.

MR. MAURICE: Those are all the questions I have.

Mr. Chairman?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: No questions from other counsel?

MR. MAURICE: No.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I have no questions. Mr. Prentice? Mr. Bellegarde, do you have any questions of Mr. Minoose?

There are no other questions, so we would just like to thank you for coming and providing us with this information. Like the other speakers, it is important to us and very useful to us, so we thank you for taking the time. Thank you, Mr. Minoose.

Counsel, do you have a final witness for the day?

MR. MAURICE: I believe Mr. Henderson is going to be taking over the questioning, or the interviewing, of the next witness.

If I could perhaps have a minute recess just to go and get him?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, we'll carry on and let Mr. Mandamin get him and just kind of sit here; okay?

Perhaps, you could identify the witness for us.

MR. MAURICE: I'm sorry, it's Mr. Jacob, but I'm not sure of the first name. I believe it's Sam.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I think it's Allan.

MR. MAURICE: Is it Allan Jacob? Okay, sorry. Thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, our next witness is Mr. Allan Jacob, who is wired for sound and ready to go.

Mr. Jacob, perhaps you could tell the panel about the work you've done with the community and the types of information that you have for us this afternoon.

MR. ALLAN JACOB: Yes, my name is Allan Jacob. I was born at Cold Lake. I am a life-long citizen of the Cold Lake First Nation.

I was very fortunate in 1977 in that my wife and I kept my great-grandmother, who was very old at the time, and during the two years, until her death in 1979, that we kept her, I took copious amounts of notes and tapes. I am still in possession of the tapes, and I am in the process right now of translating and transcribing them, hopefully to compile a history of the Cold Lake First Nation's Dene peoples. That is my main preoccupation at this time.

What I am going to be doing here this afternoon, hopefully, is presenting as accurate a picture as possible about the history of the Dene people and the fur trade. And also, for about ten to twelve minutes, I would like to play excerpts from the tapes. I have hundreds of hours of tapes of the lady in question.

Her name was Rosalie Andrew, and through extrapolation from her stories -- particularly her youthful stories about the incidents at Frog Lake, the so-called Frog Lake massacre in 1885 -- we assume she was twelve to fourteen years old. And being that there were no records kept that survived from that age, nobody knows exactly how old Mrs. Andrew was. So, from extrapolation, we assume that she was born in 1872 to 1874, and she died June 30, 1979.

She was a gifted story-teller. She had exquisite language control. She had command of the language plus what they called the Denene Hyatheway (phonetic) which is -- I suppose you could call it High Chippewayan. When I play her tape, I am going to pause at every few seconds for the translator to catch up to her because she does speak very fast, although she does speak eloquently.

From her stories and from documentation derived from various archives, we have found out certain things about the history of the people as it relates particularly to the fur trade, which is relevant to the hearings on Primrose Lake at this time.

Now, according to oral tradition, and that is stories passed on from one generation to the next, I learned through my great-grandmother, Mrs. Andrew, of a lady named Thwah Narelka (phonetic), which in our language means Twirling Martin -- translated very loosely, Twirling Martin - who was allegedly the first Dene person to meet a European.

Now, I had thought in my earlier years that this was just another folk tale. I hadn't paid much attention to it until about a few years ago when my friend, John Janvier, brought about some documentation he had gotten from the Hudson Bay archives, which tells the story of Twirling Martin or Thwah Narelka.

So from her story, the first contact our Dene people had with the Europeans was with employees of the Hudson Bay Company. I believe this happened pretty close to the Nelson River area of Churchill, Manitoba, at the Hudson Bay area.

There is no more history until about 1780. Again, we have to go through extrapolation to arrive at that estimated date. Around 1780 the original Janvier, and nobody knows to this day, I don't think, yet or has found any records as to what his baptismal name was, his name was Janvier. Well, we can assume from the stories that he was part Native, mostly French -- and he was an

employee at either one of the two big companies, either Hudson Bay Company or Northwest Company.

We assume that he arrived in 1780 because he had twin sons, one of whom stayed here and who was on the first Treaty pay list in 1876 as aged ninety-three. So, if he arrived around 1780 and he took a Chippewayan wife, he had twin sons probably in 1783. Again, we have to make inferences from recorded history.

This original Janvier, when he arrived, brought with him the fur trade, directly from the Hudson Bay Company into the area, and he did it in a big way. He taught the people the fur industry, the demands for the furs in markets such as Europe. There was a big demand for such items as mink, sable, silver fox, et cetera.

Now, there is a whole industry around the fur trade. You have heard stories about certain ways that you have learned from generations past; how to prepare the furs, not just to catch the animals, but to prepare them also, how to market. The people here received detailed information on marketing of the furs from these original Janvier people.

He had two sons. The one who is listed in the first Treaty pay list as aged ninety three, his name was Jean-Pierre. That much is known about him. His twin brother was Baptiste Janvier, who emigrated from here to a place called Neetalastweh (phonetic), which in my language is La Loche in what is now Saskatchewan. From what we know of Jean-Pierre, he was a very energetic individual. He had a lot of children, and that's all I can say about him; he had lots of children. His children in turn were energetic and they had lots of children.

Today, most of the people on this reserve are directly descended, one way or the other, from Mr. Janvier originally. I say that so that you can understand the impact of the fur industry and the people. They learned first hand the marketing.

In the years between 1780 and 1952, when the fur business was taken away from our people, there was great competition for the furs that were brought in by our hunters and trappers.

There were quite a few independent buyers. Some of them are named by the people in the stories. Some of them represent the big companies, Hudson Bay Company, who actually went onto the trap lines sometimes to get a step up on the competition.

Some of these people -- my great, great-grandfather, one of them -- would take wagon loads of furs, wagon and horses, and go to Edmonton -- Fort Edmonton -- and there he would trade the furs where the prices were better -- more competitive -- and where he would also shop for the basic goods that the people needed, like ammunition and the basic food commodities, at a much better price to them. He eliminated the middle man.

Our Dene people were the masters of the forest. They had complete and almost intimate knowledge -- I would say almost complete knowledge -- of their environment. My great grandmother told me that the Creator never built anything haphazardly or just for the fun of it. When the Creator made something, he had a reason for it. In granny's words, there is no such thing as a weed in God's garden.

The people knew about this inherent environment that they lived in totally -- almost - or as much as is humanly possibly, they knew and adapted to it. They knew about the foods, the edible plants, medicinal plants and herbs and the creatures of the forest, including the waters and the fowls of the air.

So, with this knowledge, this was a prime gathering area employed by the fur industry. People had the knowledge of the animals, and all of a sudden they developed from about 1780 a knowledge of the fur industry and the fur markets.

That, in a sense, will summarize very briefly, in a nutshell, the history of the people in this area. That I did as kind of a prelude to what you are going to hear next. Now, this tape that I have in here, or the excerpt of the tape that I have in here, was taken October 11, 1976, and that's a little over sixteen years ago. I get a little emotional at times when I listen to her voice, because she meant so much, and I believe she means a whole lot to just as many people in the Cold Lake First Nation.

Like I say, I am going to play it. I am going to listen to the translation, pause it for a couple of seconds every so often because she does speak very fast, and I want the translation to be proper.

TRANSLATION OF TAPE OF MRS. ROSALIE ANDREW:

"I know of this. The first time the white people came to this country, there were Frenchmen also that came to this land. Us people, we were living here and this Janvier, this Frenchman, there were a lot of Frenchmen that came over here, but Janvier was the only one that I knew. He came over here by boat and he had two sons, twins. One of them went to La Loche, and he died over there. The other Janvier that came here, that became Treaty, his bones are here on this land. His old man died here. That's the one that had gotten land for us here. We became Treaty.

"His son, the one that became chief here, they were raised here and grew up here. His name was Oandide (phonetic), that was Jackfish (phonetic). He was the chief here. His name -- his name was Jackfish Oandide. His real name was Macthias (phonetic). That's the one that was chief here, the first chief of this reserve.

"The first time the Treaty was made, he was the one that was chief. That was my grandfather. His name was Macthias. They lived here and all his children and grandchildren are living here. At Berry Point he took some land. His children became men and that's how come they took this land here. That's why we're here on this reserve.

"We were all farmers. We had cows and horses. One of the sons of Janvier took land over here on this (inaudible). Now, because he took the land over here, that's why we're over here. That was my dad's relative, my dad's grandfather's relative. That's who he was.

"I wanted to say something to Indian Affairs at that time. My husband had made a beautiful house for me, but it was so old and it was getting dilapidated. We had one cow and we had everything. We had all kinds of machinery. We had wagons and sleighs, and we had everything. So, we had one cow. When he died, I gave that cow away for his bills because I wanted to pay up his bills when he passed away -- my husband.

"So, I went into the bushes to trap -- up to Christmas. Oh, it was really cold. I went with people that went up that way. I made credit over there. It was really cold. One person said to me: If you make some money from furs, buy two cows for me. That's what she said. So, I went into the bushes -- way far away up north. That's where I went.

"Over there I went trapping for muskrats. Oh, there were so many muskrats over there. I killed a lot of muskrats over there, but it was so cold. My hands were just so cold, I couldn't even touch the traps sometimes, because it was too cold.

“At Christmas time we came back, and I paid my credit. Laurette (phonetic) was the one that was the merchant. Laurette was a Frenchman from Bonnyville, and he was the one that was teaching over here at one time, but he became a merchant. He left the school and became a merchant. So, that’s where I made my deal. He made credit for me for food and stuff when I went up north.

“We went far, far up north. There were a lot of muskrats up that way. I killed a lot of muskrats. It was really, really cold, but I never thought it was cold. I must have lived some life. I killed a lot of muskrats, and I came back here at Christmas time.

“I made a deal with Laurette, and I paid my credit there. He came to me, and counted my muskrats and all the other furs that I had here, ermine skins. He gave me one hundred dollars. I had one hundred dollars left over after I paid my credit. With that one hundred dollars -- he gave me one hundred dollars, and I gave him all my furs. I was going to buy a cow. My brother had said: If you are going to buy cows, I’ll sell you two cows. So, how much are you going to cost me, I told him. He said: For two cows, it will cost ninety dollars -- no, seventy dollars. So, I gave him seventy dollars. I kept them, but my daughter and her husband died and nobody was there to look after the cows, so I made hay and I kept my livestock that way; me and my daughter.

“But then they said to me: My aunt, you can’t look after this stuff here. So, I had sold a cow and I had some money in the bank. He had come to me for some money, and he said: I came to you for some money. I worked here and there, but I am not getting paid properly, so I don’t have enough, so I am asking you for some money, he said. I said to him: You, too, you have nothing; me, too, I don’t have very much. Nobody is here to look after the livestock for me. I was hoping, but I don’t have anybody. Everybody has died but me. I guess you are the only one that’s going to look after this for me.

“So, he made hay for me that year, and I kept those horses and the cows there, but the next year he says: I’m not going to make hay for you this time, but from now on I’ll look after your livestock for you. So, he made hay over there, and he took the horses and the cows to his place, and that’s where he looked after them.

“But me, I was still looking for my livelihood, and I did whatever I could for myself. I sold some cows and I bought two geldings. The cows started growing again, and I sold some and I put some money in the bank. I left it there.

“The old house that I was living in, it was getting pretty old and dilapidated. I guess Ben and his wife was looking for a house for me. I didn’t know that. One day Nora said to me: My aunt, your house is getting very old. It’s not very safe here. You should buy a house. I think it would be best if you were to buy yourself a house someplace. It’s not going to be good for you to live here anymore. I know a white man that has a house that he wants to sell. If you give him some money you can have that house.

“So, we went over there. I had some money in the bank, but we went over there to see that person. We got there and we looked at the house. It was past where Simon Martin lives on the other side of the highway. There was a white man that was living over there, and that was the one. We got there, and we looked at the house. We checked it out. From my house, it looked all right. It’s not too worn. I could buy it from him, but I didn’t know how much he was going to charge me.

“So, he said: You can have it for five hundred dollars. I know I had some money in the bank, so somebody took us over there to the bank. When we got to the bank, I got the money that was in there -- five hundred dollars. We went back over there, and he gave me that house.”

MR. JACOB: I played this here to illustrate to you, the Commission, that the fur industry was very integral to the economy of the area, you know, in that it fit in through the generations to eventually where it supported the economy of the people. The time span in her last story about the house and her trapping was like this: In 1918, a good half of the population expired -- passed away -- in the great flu epidemic. Out of an original family of ten, just four in her family survived. I guess, on his death bed my great grandfather told her: Do not ever think that life is impossible. He said: Through your efforts something will come up; life is not impossible here.

When they expired, the four that were left were an adult daughter, a ten-year old daughter and her granddaughter, my mother, who was two years old at the time.

They had cattle and, obviously, my great grandfather had a bill owing on the grubstake that he had borrowed for to go up north. Before he could go up north, sometime in November, he suddenly took ill, like a lot of people on the reserve, and died. Being the people they were, she sold the cow that they had to settle his debt.

Shortly after that, they needed cattle -- she knew that. They needed milk, because that was part of the economy. You just don't go to the local Red Rooster or 7-Eleven. There was no such animal then. So, from the garden and the cattle they had, they had a complete, well-rounded living.

But, she didn't have the money. So, what she did was she got on with some of her relatives who went up north on the Saskatchewan side of Primrose Lake and trapped. Within a month to six weeks, from the way I gather it, she had made enough to pay for her grubstake, to buy two cows and to pay for a decent Christmas for her family.

The cows multiplied and in the nineteen-forties, when she was about eighty years old -- thereabouts -- approaching eighty, or past, I am not sure exactly about the dates, she made an arrangement with Ben Matchatis, her adopted grandson, for him to look after all the cows and horses that she had on a share basis. This is how she earned her house. That was the bank that the people relied on in the fur industry.

Now, I just want to finish off with a little bit about my own experience, which is limited. I am only fifty-one years old. My father was a trapper then. He was not a very big man. If he stood five foot five, I might be exaggerating, and if he weighed one hundred thirty pounds, I might likewise be exaggerating. He wasn't a very big man. He wasn't the most experienced trapper, but he was energetic, loving and he was a good man. He supplied us very well. The one year that I remember, he brought back over two thousand dollars' worth of furs. He also had cattle that he bought with the proceeds from the fur sales.

About 1952 things weren't going very well for me. I was in residential school. I had decided -- I told my father that I'm not going back. I can't take it any more, for one reason or another. That's a long story, and I won't get into it. He said: You know, my son, I hear that they are taking the trap line away from us. The life we knew is going to change, and you are going to suffer a lot if you don't get your education. I told him I would run away. He says: If you run away and you came back here, my son, you and I are going to walk every step of the way back to Blue Quills -- seventy-five miles away -- and I'm going to have a willow switch in my hand. You are going to get an education.

Things were still okay, but after that things started to fall apart. My mother and my dad would tell me that after the kids left for residential school, it was really difficult because they had nobody to look at but themselves. Almost like their purpose in life was gone, because they could no longer practise their livelihood. They could no longer go back up north.

In my young eyes, he was my idol. To me he was a hero. I looked up to this man -- all five-foot five of him. I loved him dearly. That was his simple symbol of manhood, going up north, doing what he did. Even with less experience than other hunters and trappers, he was still doing okay. He was a man's man. But, after they took that away from him, things fell apart.

He will forgive me if I say that he got further and further into the alcohol problem. The family fell apart. Even I, my life fell apart on me.

This is an illustration that Primrose Lake was everything that the people needed to practise livelihood, to be a man. When they took it away, they literally emasculated my people. Things fell apart. My father had cattle and little by little the cattle disappeared. The implements that he had bought, they also disappeared, and nothing is left of his homestead now.

With that, I thank the Commission for entertaining us -- or entertaining our stories - and I'll end here, and whatever questions you have, I'll try to answer. Thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Jacob. I am sure that none of us expected to have a direct connection with the eighteen-seventies when we came up here. We would have expected that that was probably impossible, and I am sure that many of us wish we could have been here fifteen years ago, when a lot more information could have come from that extraordinary source.

When you told the story about going to get some money to pay off the debt and get a few cows and things like that, I have the sense in the way that you told the story that it was almost an unusual or extraordinary thing for Mrs. Andrew to have gone up into Primrose Lake. I would like you to comment on that, because I suspect that's not the case.

MR. JACOB: No, I don't think that it was an extraordinary event for the times. These people here were very hardy, including the women. I believe that Mrs. Andrew, my great grandmother, was no stronger or no better willed than any other woman in the area. But, she had to, and from her story she said it was cold, but to me it was like nothing. To her the ends justified the means. This was the way of life and they lived it.

MR. HENDERSON: I take it from the story, if I understood it correctly, that she herself had the skill and the knowledge to do the trapping to get muskrat. She was doing that herself?

MR. JACOB: Other people in this room could probably the question better than I could, but I assume from her stories and from her talking about it, and other stories, too, about her experiences with her husband earlier in the fur industry, that she was just as skilled as a woman could be in those days.

MR. HENDERSON: I wonder, when you talk about the story of the Frog Lake massacre, and you were able to make an estimate of Mrs. Andrew's age from that story, could you tell us a little more about the connection between Cold Lake and Frog Lake. I think that was just about the Treaty time, too. Is there a tradition, or is there something that Mrs. Andrew told you that would connect those three events?

MR. JACOB: Mrs. Andrew has a complete -- as complete as she can remember -- as a twelve, thirteen or fourteen year old young lady as to what happened in 1885. From what I can gather,

from her stories, we will have to go back to the Plains tribes and their dependency on an environment based on the buffalo. The buffalo was virtually annihilated in the eighteen-forties through the eighteen-eighties. They disappeared. Now, history has it that there was mass starvation in the Plains area, and this was one of the original mitigating factors that launched what happened at Frog Lake, plus whatever else happened, like the aggressiveness of certain people -- the arrogance of certain people -- including some of the clergy.

Now, her stories say that, when the event happened, three or four riders came from Big Bear's group as emissaries saying that we are in need of your people. This is a time that we need you and you will come now. Without getting into the story, what happened was that there was a travel

-- after the event, after the killings had happened -- in May towards Frog Lake. There they were involved with skirmishes with the Alberta Field Force, led by General Strange.

They came back, and none of them from this reserve were charged with any of the incidence in Frog Lake, and I believe that about July 1885, about two or three months after the incident -- the major incident -- at Frog Lake April 2nd, the Cold Lake people were back here, and they were cleared of any direct involvement with the killings.

MR. HENDERSON: Is there a connection between Frog Lake and the actual Treaty signing?

MR. JACOB: Only in that the people in Frog Lake felt, and there were three or four tribes in Frog Lake, one particular group, for instance -- Big Bear's group -- felt that the government of the territories, or Government of Canada on behalf of the territories, did not live up to the obligations they had promised within Treaty Six. But, that was only part of the reasons for whatever happened.

What happened was mitigated by the circumstances I was telling you about, and initiated by two or three different peoples only.

MR. HENDERSON: The Treaty Six boundary, the northern boundary of Treaty Six, passes very close to the Cold Lake Reserve, doesn't it?

MR. JACOB: It does. Cold Lake is the only Dene Nation within Treaty Six. I believe there are fifty-two nations. Mr. Bellegarde would know this.

MR. HENDERSON: He's not volunteering.

MR. JACOB: No, he's not.

MR. HENDERSON: We can certainly check that.

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt your narration. The northern boundary, in fact, passes quite close to Cold Lake and you are saying that the Cold Lake First Nation is the only Dene Nation in the entire Treaty Six area.

MR. JACOB: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Primrose Lake itself, as I understand it, is north of the Treaty Six boundary.

MR. JACOB: That I have no knowledge of. I can't comment on that.

MR. HENDERSON: The treaty to the north of this area, though, is Treaty Eight.

MR. JACOB: Treaty Eight, and to the further north, Treaty Eleven.

MR. HENDERSON: I believe Treaty Ten to the northeast, or to the east. My recollection is that Treaty Eight -- the first signing of Treaty Eight was around 1898.

MR. JACOB: 1899.

MR. HENDERSON: 1899?

MR. JACOB: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Is there any tradition here about why Cold Lake, being the only Dene Nation, was in Treaty Six, right at the northern edge of Treaty Six, and did not join, for example, with other Dene Nations in Treaty Eight later on? How does it happen that Cold Lake is in Treaty Six? Is there a story to that, or a tradition that you have heard?

MR. JACOB: I could give you a snide remark, but I can't at this time, because this isn't the time for it. No, there is no real reason that I know of -- that I've ever run across -- in oral tradition or otherwise why Cold Lake Dene were involved within Treaty Six rather than Treaty Eight. It might have to do with geographic configurations.

MR. HENDERSON: What geography are you referring to?

MR. JACOB: We're talking about certain delineations that may have been pre-imposed on Treaty Six -- geographic delineations. I believe that, before the commissioners arrived to negotiate Treaty Six, they may have delineated on a map somewhere the limits of the territories that they wanted within Treaty Six.

MR. HENDERSON: If I understand you correctly, you are suggesting the line was drawn on a map somewhere else and --.

MR. JACOB: I am not saying when. It could have happened in 1899. I am not sure when these Treaty Six boundaries were drawn up.

MR. HENDERSON: That's fine. Can you assist any further on that point?

MR. JACOB: I would probably be going far beyond what I should be talking here about if I wanted to go into Treaty. I believe, for instance, that under Treaty, as was said earlier by some of the Elders, that all the commissioners wanted -- they said: All we want from you is the depth of a plowshare. Some say six inches; some say twelve inches. That's all we want so we can grow grass to feed our animals and to feed our families with. All the rest of it we don't want; you can retain and that includes the waters, the sky, sub-surface rights, etc., and this is for as long as the sun will rise and the waters flow.

There are certain things that people have taken liberalities with on the negotiations, especially by the press. From our Elders we have learned that the Indians didn't say as long as the rivers flow. Indian people say as long as the waters flow, meaning the birth waters that are released before a woman gives birth, which means that as long as Indians live; as long as there are human people on this earth; as long as the sun will rise and as long as the waters flow.

I believe that what happened here with Primrose Lake is a direct transgression against the agreements arrived at between our people and those negotiating on behalf of the Crown in 1876.

MR. HENDERSON: Have you undertaken a project to collect oral history from other Elders in the community?

MR. JACOB: Yes, I have. Yes and no. I still very much am knee-deep into the stories of this venerable old lady, and if I could find the time I would.

MR. HENDERSON: I am sure the commissioners would welcome any other oral history that you could provide us with, or your recollections of information that you have received that would be relevant to the validity of this claim.

MR. JACOB: Some of the statements made by Elders in previous testimony to me stated that the lands taken by our headmen in 1876 ranged all the way from around Suckerville at Primrose Lake down to Anglian (phonetic) Lake, and this is according to my great grandmother's stories that they did take land. She didn't delineate Suckerville, but she did say that they did take land all the way up north and as far south as Anglian Lake. At Anglian Lake, and she specifies Beaverdam in her story, there was a house built for her grandfather, who was the headman, who was left in charge of taking possession of Treaty rations and passing them to his people. There was a huge house built on behalf of him by the Government of Canada, which means that Anglian Lake was at that time considered part of the reserve. That's about two or three miles further south.

Her stories say that she wants to know why these lands were taken away.

Willow Point on Cold Lake, for instance, is where her grandfather, Oandide, or Jackfish, or the man who signed the treaty is buried, as is his father in turn, Jean-Pierre Janvier. They had taken that land, but it's no longer part of the reserve now. People don't understand what happened.

MR. HENDERSON: Willow Point is on Cold Lake?

MR. JACOB: On Cold Lake, yes.

MR. HENDERSON: And it's not part of the reserve now?

MR. JACOB: Well, somebody moved the boundaries in the interim.

MR. HENDERSON: I believe, when I was listening to the tape, there was a reference to Berry Point as well. Is that on Cold Lake?

MR. JACOB: That's the one -- Berry Point and Willow Point -- that's the ones she's talking about.

MR. HENDERSON: Just to save a trip over to the map, is it marked by either name on the map now, or could you show us where it is?

MR. JACOB: Okay, from her stories, they ranged all the way up -- from the stories where she went trapping, she had gone far north, Anonneneh Ansee (phonetic), that means north of the Indian territory -- or the Cree territory -- which probably means north of this area at Primrose Lake.

She said that this was always our land. Always has been and always was and she wants to know who moved the boundaries.

MR. HENDERSON: When you indicate that two of the original Janviers are buried at Berry Point or Willow Point, that's in the Provincial Park?

MR. JACOB: Yes, it is.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you. Just to follow up on that, do you know if what is now the Provincial Park was ever part of the reserve as well?

MR. JACOB: From my own feeling, it was part of the reserve back when. From granny's story, it may not have been on this one here, but on other tapes, granny has stated that his grandfather had taken the land at Willow Point so that the people could have quick access to good fishing spots. And it's true; that's a good fishing spot at Cold Lake itself. He had built a house there, and that's where they are buried.

MR. HENDERSON: The other house you referred to on Anglian Lake, that's between Legough (phonetic) and --

MR. JACOB: No, it's south of this reserve. Cold Lake is north and Anglian Lake is due south of Cold Lake.

MR. HENDERSON: Right. I think we had somebody in December point that out on the map. We found Anglian Lake.

When you talked at the time of the Treaty that there had been great distress amongst the Plains tribes because of the virtual annihilation of the buffalo, do you know anything about the situation of the Cold Lake people at the time of the Treaty?

MR. JACOB: I'm glad you asked that, because that's why I mentioned what happened to the Plains tribes. Now, the Plains tribes' natural livelihood was interrupted when the buffalo were destroyed. It put their tribes under -- in your words -- great duress. As far as I know, between 1780, the original coming of the fur trade through Mr. Janvier, and 1952-53, when trapping was taken away, there was never any fluctuation in the economy. It always stayed there. People have never known hunger or starvation in the Cold Lake area. Not from the stories that I hear from great granny; not from the stories that I read or the stories that I hear from the other Elders. We have never heard of any famine or starvation.

MR. HENDERSON: Unfortunately, of course, you did say there were deaths here, and the Spanish flu epidemic, which was world-wide after World War I.

MR. JACOB: Yes, there were deaths from diseases that they had no natural immunity to, and that includes smallpox back in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

MR. HENDERSON: I am sure you could -- I don't think "entertain" is necessarily the right word -- but I am sure you could inform us for hours yet to come, but for the moment I can't think of another question or area that I would like to explore.

Apparently counsel don't have any questions to suggest to me.

Again, as I said earlier, we would like to have the opportunity if, in your recollection you can think of information that goes to the validity of the Primrose Lake claim, that you can provide us, please don't wait for us to ask. Failing which, I am sure the commissioners may have some questions. I certainly thank you.

Mr. Chairman?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you, Bill.

Yes, thank you for the presentation. I can't agree more with Mr. Henderson. I don't think in our wildest imagination we could have possibly thought we were going to hear somebody from that period. I can see how it could be moving to you. It's is equally moving -- perhaps not equally -- but certainly it was moving to us just to think about that. So we thank you for that.

I don't have any questions at this time. I may as soon as I --. I'm going to defer to my colleagues for the moment here and ask Mr. Bellegarde if he has some.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: The question of the boundaries, as far as the northern boundary being as far as Primrose Lake or even further, it was mentioned several times here and at a previous hearing. Do you know of any research or specific claim submission into that alleged boundary movement by the Cold Lake First Nation?

MR. JACOB: I didn't quite catch your question, Dan.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Has anyone done any research towards developing a specific claim on the boundary of the Cold Lake First Nation?

MR. JACOB: I know that we have boxes of files on the history of the area plus our claims. Now, as far as the moving of the boundaries, I have no idea. The territory of Treaty Six coming south of Primrose Lake is news to me. I am not sure when it was drawn up, and I am not sure that anybody on this reserve knows when that was drawn up.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you.

MR. JACOB: Much like we don't know when the boundaries of the reserve were moved, so that the Indians were left with much fewer acres on the reserve.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Commissioner Prentice?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Yes, the name of the Primrose area has been referred to earlier in testimony as Hathtuway. What does that stand for? What does that mean?

MR. JACOB: Hathtuway means Goose Lake in my language.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Goose Lake?

MR. JACOB: Wild Goose Lake, yes. I'm sure it is. A lot of times there is another word for it. Like, my great grandmother would call it Ohney (phonetic) -- that whole area is unspecified. Ohney Hathtuway is Primrose Lake itself.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: I see. This relates to the question Mr. Bellegarde was asking, but it seems curious to me that part of the reserve lands which were set aside under the reserve aren't on Primrose Lake itself. Given the importance of Primrose Lake and that area to the people, why was no part of the reserve set aside up there, do you have any knowledge of that, or are there any traditions on that?

MR. JACOB: I believe, from my grandmother's stories, that people always felt that it was their land and nobody could take it away from them. They would use the land as the generations did before. I believe that, like a lot of people say: Where's the paper. Our people never believed in paper. I believe that under Treaty they would be allowed to exist as they did before, making a living from the lands they had used before the Treaty, and this is where the trap lines came from, in the Hathtuway area.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: The research you have done, the Cold Lake First Nation were using those lands, Hathtuway around Primrose Lake, in a traditional way back to the days of Janvier, the original Janvier.

MR. JACOB: When Janvier arrived, I believe that it was around Suckerville where the people were living at the time. Unless somebody can point to me anything different, I believe that the people here have been indigenous to this area for untold centuries, even before then, because the language is completely of the area. We have a word, for instance, in our language which means road, “telew” (phonetic), which means frozen water, so that their route was frozen water in the wintertime, which invokes to me a thought that they did a lot of their industry in the wintertime also.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: The research that you’ve done indicates that the village, Suckerville as it has been described in these proceedings, was the centre of the community, if you will?

MR. JACOB: No, to be honest with you, that’s not part of my research. I am doing research through granny on other stories. What I heard was from the people that Suckerville was the centre. From my experience, it was the centre. I went up in the north to the trap line with my father in January 1947, when I was very young. We went to Suckerville. We travelled from there. So, I have no documented proof how long Suckerville was in existence, if that’s what your question is.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Well, I am just trying to find if that is part of the tradition of the people of Cold Lake.

MR. JACOB: The tradition of the people was that they ranged all in that area. I believe that Suckerville was born as a result of the demands of the fur industry. There were some mink farms in the area, fed by what the white people call, well, I suppose fish that they couldn’t otherwise get rid of and that’s the mariahs and ssuckers. That’s why it’s called Suckerville. I remember piles of mink from mink farms on the beach at Suckerville. But, the whole area, from my own research, from interpretation of the stories from my great grandmother, the area was always indigenous to the people here.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: I would assume that because the area that we are talking about has been a part of the bombing range and closed to the public and to the Cold Lake First Nation that there have never been any of the historical studies or, in some cases, the archeological studies that you might find in other parts of the province.

MR. JACOB: I have no knowledge of that, so I can’t assume anything.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: You haven’t seen any of those kinds of studies yourself, though?

MR. JACOB: No. There have been some archeological digs, but I believe they were south of the area.

Now, the person that was involved in the archeological dig is another band member. His name is John Janvier. I believe about four years ago, they went in and dug up a site. But, I do know from my great granny’s stories and other stories that people have always been there. People have lived and died and a lot of times they were buried near the places where they had lived.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: That was the question I was going to ask you. You have studied a great deal about the stories and the traditions. Are there areas in the Primrose area which are of importance in a spiritual sense to the Cold Lake First Nation?

MR. JACOB: The whole place was important in a spiritual sense. People traditionally did not put up a fence and say: This is this land and that is that land; or this is your land or that is his land. People would travel and roam the area in family groups -- particularly in family groups -- and use whatever is necessary. Sometimes people -- from her stories, my grandmother's stories -- people from up around Isle-a-la-Crosse would come and meet with people from here on the hunting trail. So, the whole area was sacred.

People were very spiritual in those days. My great granny would say that all what the Creator had created had a reason for being. The Creator never made anything haphazardly. By the same token, people understood nature as God's creation. They didn't own it as such. It was there for them to use until the end of time. This was the assumption that my people had.

Apparently, the government had come in and put an end to time sometime; but they didn't know that.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Thank you very much.

MR. JACOB: Thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Mr. Jacob, if I may, for just a moment, there are a few questions that I would like to ask you.

You have heard, not only over the last couple of days, but when we were here previously, a lot of discussion has taken place around the period from 1952 right straight through to 1961, when the quit claim was signed. Through all of that, is there anything that you can add to some of the testimony that has been given here over that period time? I know that you have heard most of it, or quite a bit of it, and I was just wondering whether or not you in your research, or the people that you have talked to -- perhaps your parents themselves -- whether or not there is anything that you can add to what has been said regarding that period and what people were feeling and what they thought they were doing?

MR. JACOB: Mr. LaForme, all I can tell you is what my father told me, and he told me no different from what other people said today.

I remember he received about two thousand two hundred fifty dollars as his share of the quit claim. Now, all I know also is that he told me that times were going to be different. He says: You cannot quit school, because you will not be able to derive a living like we have done in the past, and you will suffer if you don't go to school.

But he said, from discussions between himself and my mother, that I gathered that the so-called bombing range was going to remain in their hands for twenty years; that this was being leased from us. They also had the feeling that the payments would continue yearly until the end of the lease, at which time the people would resume their livelihood or renegotiate the arrangement.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you, Mr. Jacob.

Do you have a few more questions?

Bear with us for a little while longer, please.

MR. HENDERSON: When Commissioner Prentice asked you a question about how long the people had been in the area, you referred to the use of the language and the tradition of the language. There is a study or a science of linguistics that tries to determine age and locality of people based on the use of the language and the interrelationship and changes with the languages

around them, and the dialects around them. I was wondering if you were aware of that, or if you were referring to that in some sense, or more particularly, do you know if any linguist has done such a study in relation to the Cold Lake Dene?

MR. JACOB: Not that I am aware of. We deal very heavily in the stories that the old people told about, you know, the history of the people.

Now, from their stories, Chippewayan people travelled extensively, always coming back to this area. There is another tape in my possession -- I can find it -- where great grandmother talks about going from this continent, or from this island, to the other island, at a time when the land was more connected. There was less water. Not only the people, but the animals travelled back and forth.

Now, anthropologists have said that we came from Siberia through the Bering Strait. Our people, especially the Elders towards the south said: That's not true; they can't prove that.

Our stories state that we were created here. Now, if there is no proof past thirty thousand years, you know, some anthropologist say that there has been proof that Indians were here thirty thousand years ago. Some say ten thousand years ago, some say a previous ice age. I tend to believe oral tradition more than I believe anthropologists. I am not trying to discredit anthropologists, although I wouldn't swear by the Bible on those guys.

I'll believe that my people were created on this continent, until somebody can actually find proof that I was created over there. But her stories say that we travelled back and forth.

One interesting note, and I don't want to keep the Commission or anybody else too late, is that for many years nobody knew what the term Hochelaga (phonetic) meant. Some linguists thought that it could be Huron. Others thought it could be Iroquois. Some thought it could be a combination of Huron and Iroquois. Hochelaga is the original name for Montreal. In our language it means, "on the shores of the point". Hochelaga.

Our people travelled extensively in the days previous today. When they brought their furs in, a lot of them would travel by wagon towards Winnipeg. A lot of them would travel by canoe. At the time when York Factory was first discovered through Thwah Narelka out there -- Twirling Martin -- people did canoe all the way up there to shop. It was their way of going to their local Red Rooster. Like my grandmother said, they travelled by wagon, as soon as the grass started to grow in the springtime, and they would come back when the snow flew in the fall.

So, there was a lot of movement back and forth, but this was always traditional Dene territory. There was a lot of competition since the fur trade between the woodland Crees and the Dene people over the fur territories, especially the prime beaver territories.

MR. HENDERSON: That's fine. Perhaps Mr. John Janvier is intending to appear before the Commission tomorrow, and he was involved, as you mention, in some archeological digs to the south, and perhaps he'll be able to round out some of that information as well.

But, thank you for that. I have no further questions.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I don't think there are any more questions, Mr. Jacob, but I certainly do want to thank you. I also want to say how -- I mean the testimony that you gave was fascinating, and I suppose more fascinating with respect to this remarkable person that you have on the tape there who was able to --. I think it's quite remarkable to sit here and listen to evidence from -- or testimony -- from somebody from that period. For that we thank you.

I also thank you for spending the time with us and taking the time to come and share that with us. It's most enlightening and, as I say, fascinating. For that we thank you. You can be excused.

MR. JACOB: Before I am excused, Mr. LaForme, can I just add one more point?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Absolutely.

MR. JACOB: Our people have taken to date a lot of energy, a lot of time, spent a lot of money trying to redress this very unfortunate situation with the bombing range, Primrose Lake trapping area, and I hope that this is the first step of a positive outcome in favour of something that is at least justified for our people.

On behalf of myself personally and my family and in the memory of our older people, thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you.

Okay. That concludes our witnesses for the day. Like the previous witnesses, I want to thank them all very much for their patience, the information that they brought to us, the help -- the tremendous help -- that they are being to this Commission.

I must also say at this point, although I will surely want to say it again tomorrow, the interpreters, I want to give a special thanks to them. They have done a remarkable job, and we continue to be appreciative of that.

What we will do now is adjourn this session. We will reconvene tomorrow morning at nine o'clock, and I expect that we will be concluding this portion of our Inquiry at that time. So, before we leave, as has been the custom, we would ask to close this out with a prayer.

ELDER: (Elder's Prayer)

---WHEREUPON THE HEARING ADJOURNED FOR THE DAY, TO BE RESUMED AT 9:00 A.M. ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1993

6.3 February 3, 1993

---HEARING RESUMED AT 9:00 A.M. ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1993

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, we'll call the session back to order. As I am advised, these will be probably the last witnesses for this portion of our Inquiry and, as I understand it, we have four more witnesses, and we may be concluded around noon or shortly after noon.

We'll ask counsel, do you have a witness for us, please.

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, Mr. Chairman, our first witness this morning is Mr. John Janvier.

Good morning, sir. I wonder if you could tell the panel your age, please.

MR. JOHN JANVIER: My age, I'm fifty-four.

MR. HENDERSON: And you have been a life-long resident of Cold Lake?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, I have.

MR. HENDERSON: I understand that you are quite knowledgeable or have made a study of the history of the community?

MR. JANVIER: Well, I did some research in the last number of years.

MR. HENDERSON: I wonder if you could tell the panel, please what your research has taught you about the history of the community and share that with us, please.

MR. JANVIER: Well, I really didn't study anything in particular. It's just a general history, and a lot of it included family histories.

MR. HENDERSON: In terms of your family, I understand that you are directly descended from your ancestor, I guess -- it's pretty logical. Most of are descended from our ancestors. You are descended from the gentleman who signed the treaty on behalf of Cold Lake.

MR. JANVIER: I am a direct descendent, yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Could you tell us a bit about that history?

MR. JANVIER: About the Treaty?

MR. HENDERSON: If you could, please.

MR. JANVIER: Okay. The Chippewyan people -- this is from stories that I have heard. My father became chief when he was a young man, when he was thirty. He was bilingual; he could speak Chippewyan and Cree fluently, and he had first hand knowledge of the Treaty, or the spirit of the Treaty, what the treaty meant to the perspective of the Native people.

At that time, when he first became chief, he had people that were directly involved with the Treaty. These were by then very old men, but they taught him what was said and what was understood; what the Treaty meant to the Native people.

One of the main issues, or the main issue why the Treaty came to be was land. The Treaty Six area comprises a very fertile area of western Canada. It includes the middle part of Saskatchewan and Alberta, right into the foothills. So, that was the bread basket of the country, I suppose you can call it. So, that was a very important issue in Treaty Six to the Native perspective. It was very important, and one of the things that they were promised was that they would, in turn, as bands, each band would choose land that they could call their own forever.

Later on, when the lands were surveyed, they became reserves and this is where each band lived. That was one of the issues that was talked about and negotiated at Treaty -- land. They were promised that any land that they picked would be theirs. At that time the two people that signed Treaty Six on behalf of the Cold Lake people was a man named Jackfish. Jackfish and his brother Antoine. Antoine was recognized as the headman. I suppose today we would call him a councillor -- a band councillor. But at that time they were known as headmen.

As far as the Chippewyan people were concerned, they did not have any concept of chiefs, because they lived in small groups. They hunted and trapped, mostly families, maybe two or three families together. They did have a person who looked after the family, but there was no chief.

So, when the Treaties began, Jackfish and his brother being bilingual, both Chippewyan and Cree, a lot of the bands that were included in Treaty Six were all Cree, so they fit right in. Apparently, what was happening before the Treaties was that the Chippewyans were involved

with the fur trade, and because they had the abilities to gather food, a variety of foods, whereas on the plains it was mostly buffalo or bison. The Chippewayan people were able to provide fish, dried fish, and all the different game that lived in the forest. So, for that reason, they were often invited, with the Plains Cree to hunt buffalo with them.

Apparently, in 1876 -- in the spring of 1876, the Oandides, or Jackfish's family, were with the Crees. That was the year the Treaties were being talked about, and people were being invited, or bands, were invited to Treaty, and Jackfish and his people happened to be there. So, that was the reason why they were involved in Treaty Six.

The Native people have no concept of boundaries or whatever, so if there is any question about the boundaries of Treaty Six, the Chippewayan people did not consider anything that has anything to do with boundaries.

The land was one issue. Another issue at that time also in those years, the buffalo, or bison, were getting depleted by sport hunters and what not. Every year the buffalo were getting less and less, and that became a major concern to the Plains tribes. That was one of the reasons the Treaty was agreed to, because the Queen's representatives promised there would be another way of life: Since you are losing your traditional way of life, then we can possibly provide you with another way of life. This is what they were promised. It was another promise that was made to them.

The other reason also why the Treaty was agreed to was that years previous to 1876 there were outbreaks of smallpox, and that smallpox decimated or killed off more than two-thirds of every band. So, that was a concern as well, because in those days, even when I was a boy, if anybody had a cold, that was news. From that you can see how healthy people remained.

This outbreak of smallpox became a concern because two-thirds of every band across the Prairies were affected. Two-thirds had died off.

MR. HENDERSON: Excuse me, Mr. Janvier, we're just having a bit of information passed along here, and perhaps I could just ask you to wait for a moment until the disruption passes, because I am sure the commissioners don't want to miss why you are saying.

Thank you, sir, please continue with your history.

MR. JANVIER: At Treaties, they were also promised: Since you as a people were affected by diseases that were brought in, we will keep you healthy as much as we can. So they were shown medicine chests, and there was medicine in there; and whatever was in there, I don't know.

There was a chest. So, they were promised that, and also they were promised -- there was a doctor present at the Treaty negotiations. So, the Queen's representative pointed to the doctor and told them that in the years to come this man and those that will follow will also serve you and keep you healthy.

So, those were the issues that brought about the Treaty and why the Native peoples agreed to negotiate these Treaties. Also this is the Native perspective, or the way the Native people were made to understand, or the way the interpretations went was that they were told that any land that your chiefs choose for your reserves, they will be yours, and it will be protected.

He also pointed to the redcoats that were present there and he says: I give you this man or this redcoat; he will protect you and your lands. Even if you hear gunfire of war at the borders of your lands, you have nothing to fear, because this man will protect you. That was another promise that was made at the Treaty negotiations.

Another promise that was made was that they were told also that the Queen's people also will be coming, and they will be bringing their children. So, that means that there would be families coming as well. So, in order for these new, or the Queen's people, and other people that would be coming into your lands, they have to feed their families, so they are asking you for land the depth of a plowshare. So, that would mean the farming area. So, that was what they were told, and because they were willing to give this depth of a plowshare, then they agreed to negotiate.

The other thing that they were told, as well, was that all these lands, these lakes and whatever lives in it or on it, we are not asking you for it. The trees, we are not asking you for those; we just want the land where the families can feed their families. That's the way the people were made to understand. Because they agreed to those terms, then each representative from every band signed. Some were chiefs and headmen -- they signed Treaties.

That is the understanding of our Treaty Six as Native perspective, or the way the people were made to understand.

MR. HENDERSON: In terms of the words that are written in the Treaty, is there a tradition in your family that Jackfish was involved in negotiating some of those specific terms?

MR. JANVIER: He was. Well, they didn't write, so they spoke verbally. A man's word was good enough in those days. If a man agreed to do something, he kept his word and it was better than writing it on paper. That's the way they understood. So, whatever was written in the Treaty, or the articles of the Treaty, they weren't there to say: Put this on there and that and that. They agreed generally to what they were told.

MR. HENDERSON: Again, Jackfish, as I understand it, was recognized as quite a skilled negotiator in commercial and other business dealings on behalf of this community.

MR. JANVIER: Yes, they grew up with the fur trade. Their father was travelling along the river ways to forts and all that. In the meantime, he probably took his sons, and they were taught in the ways of the fur trader.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Sorry, Mr. Janvier, it appears that you have been interrupted again.

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, I am sorry. I had a bit of an aside with counsel here.

You have described that there was a trade of fish and dried meat coming from the north through Cold Lake, and that would be traded with people to the south and east. Obviously, there was a fur trade. The people from Cold Lake would participate in buffalo hunts down on the prairie.

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: If you go south from Cold Lake, where does the prairie begin?

MR. JANVIER: Well, in those days, the prairie began right at Cold Lake. As late as when the reserve was first surveyed, the original survey indicates that there was mostly prairie. That was the reason why Jackfish chose this area, south of the lake. He chose land right from the lake right through to Anglian Lake. That is south, better known as Beaverdam, I suppose, now.

MR. HENDERSON: When you say from the lake to Anglian Lake, which lake are you referring to at the northern end.

MR. JANVIER: To Cold Lake. What is now known as Lunge Point is a provincial park today, and the family had a village, which was kind of like their hang out. The Chippewayan people gathered there whenever they returned from Primrose Lake, or wherever they were gathering from. They would meet there for festive seasons, like Christmas and Easter.

MR. HENDERSON: Now, when you speak of Lunge Point, is that the same provincial park that we have called Berry Point and Willow Point? Is it all the same area.

MR. JANVIER: That's the area, yes.

MR. HENDERSON: I'm sorry, if you could tell us more about that aspect of selecting these lands.

MR. JANVIER: When they were promised that each chief could choose lands for their reserves and their people, that's the land Jackfish chose, land from the lake -- Cold Lake -- south as far as Anglian Lake.

MR. HENDERSON: At the time that the reserves were selected, I take it there would not have been many settlers in this area then?

MR. JANVIER: There wasn't any. There were no settlers.

MR. HENDERSON: Was there agriculture here in terms of livestock amongst the Dene people?

MR. JANVIER: At the time of Treaties?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes.

MR. JANVIER: I don't know about that. A few years later on there were people that had huge herds of cattle. There was also some land set aside somewhere east of Moose Lake and this was known as hay lands. What the people were allowed to do in these hay lands was they could graze their animals. Also, they were allowed to make hay there, as much hay as they needed. At that time also, there were no settlers yet. So, this would be the areas in what is now Fort Kent and probably Ardmore. South of that there is kind of a lowlands, meadowlands at that time. Now it's all farm land.

But, as to what happened, apparently for about three years in a row, the whole area flooded until there were those hay lands which were set aside. Nobody was able to use them, so after three years the government took it on themselves to start leasing these bits of -- these hay lands -- out. As a result, it became open land. Whoever needed land was able to lease or whatever -- homestead. That way, this hay land that was set aside disappeared. The hay land was set aside for the use by the Cold Lake band, the Kihikwan (phonetic) band. There was Frog Lake as well. They were able to use that land -- that hay land -- that was set aside.

MR. HENDERSON: The area that you are describing is much larger than the existing reserves as we would see them today, or as we would see them described on a map. Is there a tradition here or a history of how that shrinkage occurred?

MR. JANVIER: Well, when the settlers started coming in, they started claiming land and they filed for whatever homestead, I think is what it's called. Then they were allowed to homestead in these hay lands. So, over a few years, the hay lands disappeared. As to the records of those hay lands, I don't know where I could look. I suppose in the Archives in Ottawa, there may be some records there.

MR. HENDERSON: You haven't had an opportunity to do that kind of study, to travel to Ottawa and go through the old files?

MR. JANVIER: Well, I did go to the Archives on two occasions. One was to look through the family records. Well, not only the family; the people from Cold Lake records. Other documents I have looked through, like how the reserve was established and what happened from Treaty on until today, I suppose.

MR. HENDERSON: Was your family always involved in trapping and hunting and fishing up in Primrose Lake?

MR. JANVIER: My father was. My father trapped and hunted, but as children, I remember when I was taken away from home. I was taken to residential school, and I grew up in a residential school. There were only two months of the year that we were able to come home. This was during the summer, and there was no hunting or trapping then.

My father was also involved in agricultural pursuits. He did a little bit of farming and raised a few head of cattle. I think that's what he wanted us to learn. But in the winter he did go. He told me stories about the times that he went hunting and trapping. As a matter of fact, when we were away at school, my father and my mother as well went trapping together.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you know which area his trapping area would have been?

MR. JANVIER: No, but I know it's in Primrose Lake. They have names for it; names for different areas, but I don't know which area it was. He was involved in that.

MR. HENDERSON: To the best of your knowledge, were your grandparents involved in the same area?

MR. JANVIER: Yes. I've also run across some records about my grandfather, my father's father. After trapping he went to North Battleford. He sold his fur in Battleford. It's on the Treaty pay list. He was paid Treaty that year in Battleford. So, he was also involved in trapping.

MR. HENDERSON: When you were a young man, do you recall being involved in any of the discussions about compensation when the range was created?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, I remember one meeting I went to. I mentioned about that one meeting here. This was during Christmas holidays. That was about the years when Christmas holidays began for us as well. So, we were here for two weeks, I suppose, or ten days or whatever it was.

During the time we were here, there was a meeting called at the old band hall. I remember going there to listen, and there were two or three people present. One was from Indian Affairs and another, I don't know who he was. His name was Eckland, I think.

At that meeting the people were made to understand that they were going to get a fair deal, because they had lost their way of life. What they were told at that time -- I don't remember what year it was exactly -- they were told that they would be compensated annually for twenty years. Every year they would be getting a sum of money to compensation for the loss of their trap lines, or their livelihood.

After the twenty years were up, once the twenty years went by, then this deal was renegotiable again. By that time things will change and ways of life will probably change, and maybe people would want to negotiate for different things. That was what the people were made to understand at that meeting. That's what I remember of that meeting.

MR. HENDERSON: We have heard people say that they would go out onto the trap lines in early November, perhaps a little earlier, to do some hunting, and then everyone came back at Christmas. Is that your recollection, that everybody would have been in the community at that time?

MR. JANVIER: I think there is evidence there that as early as the times of Treaties, the Treaty was during the fall, and it was signed in September. By that time some of the families were probably gone to prepare for their winter trapping. There were lots of families that were not present at that Treaty.

MR. HENDERSON: Actually, I was thinking --.

MR. JANVIER: For the first year or two.

MR. HENDERSON: I was thinking more of the time of the meeting that you were describing, when you were young. Was Christmas a time when everybody was here?

MR. JANVIER: I was here at that time, yes. After that, when the holidays were over, we were back to school.

MR. HENDERSON: You were here because you --.

MR. JANVIER: We were shut off from the outside world. So, I don't know what happened back here. The school was in St. Paul. At that time it was a long way, because nobody had vehicles, or vehicles were not very common.

MR. HENDERSON: How old would you have been at that time, when you were in school and came home and overheard this meeting?

MR. JANVIER: I was about thirteen, I think.

MR. HENDERSON: You remember a gentleman named Eckland. I think you said there was someone there from Indian Affairs. Do you remember who that would have been?

MR. JANVIER: I don't know. I think he smoked his pipe. I remember him having a pipe in his mouth most of the time when there was the meeting. But I don't know his name.

MR. HENDERSON: Was a third government person there as well?

MR. JANVIER: There might have been someone that took notes or writing. I don't remember that person.

MR. HENDERSON: But you have no doubt about what was being said or the understanding of the people.

MR. JANVIER: No, I don't have a doubt at all, because I heard it, and that was what the people were made to understand. That was the reason why they agreed to this deal. That was the deal they were understood to have signed as well, probably. But, there again, I was not present. I was away to school. I was here just for that one meeting that I remember.

MR. HENDERSON: And that would have been around '52, '53? I am just doing a rough calculation.

MR. JANVIER: It was somewhere in those years.

MR. HENDERSON: We were told yesterday that you were involved or assisted with some archeological digs in the area. Could you tell the Commission a bit about that?

MR. JANVIER: Yes. In 1986, I think it was, there was an archeological dig sponsored by Essa Resources, and this was done at a Lake called Ethel Lake.

MR. HENDERSON: Is that Ethel, E-T-H-E-L?

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Where would that be from here?

MR. JANVIER: That would be north, a little west.

MR. HENDERSON: Of Cold Lake?

MR. JANVIER: From Cold Lake it would be northwest. Okay, what they found was fragments of pottery and, I don't know why, but you read about the Native people's history, and they don't date it any further than ten thousand years. They are convinced that the Native people migrated from Asia ten thousand years ago. I think we think different. But, that's what we always read.

Anyway, at that dig they established that there was pottery ten thousand years old. There again, ten thousand years. There were also arrow heads and points or spear points that were found. I remember one in particular, and the archeologist said that this stone was native only to North Dakota. There was no other place that they found stone but in North Dakota. There was one particular point or arrow head.

So ten thousand years ago, there is evidence that people travelled north and south, so even people from North Dakota were visitors in this area. I think it's quite evident from that find there at that dig.

MR. HENDERSON: I think it is fortunate that we don't have to deal with the Bering Strait issue, because it's a very contentious one in the community, obviously.

The archeological project that you were involved in, was there a report that was generated by that, that the community might have a copy of?

MR. JANVIER: There is a report. I think the report could be got from Essa Resources.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you know if anyone in the community has a copy, or did you get a copy yourself?

MR. JANVIER: I have a copy, but the filing system is not the best. It's somewhere in the house.

MR. HENDERSON: I think I know that system.

Well, that's been very helpful. If there are any other books or pamphlets; if there is any other information that you are aware of that's published about the history of the community, I am sure that the commissioners would like to be made aware of that. If you can't think of any right now, perhaps, if you think of some later, you could tell Mr. Mandamin, and he could pass that information along to us.

MR. JANVIER: Well, what I've said this morning is things that I have been told and I've heard. As a boy, my father used to get visitors and they used to speak, and I would sit and listen. That's where my information comes from.

In later years, I also kept my father until the time he passed away. During those times we used to sit together and he used to tell me these things. He also used to talk about the Treaty and what he understood about the Treaty. He adhered to the Treaty when he was chief.

He was also the last man to be appointed chief in the traditional way. He became chief in 1930 in the traditional way until 1947. Later on, in 1948 the elective system was introduced. As a result, people voted instead of appointing in the traditional way. They elected chiefs and councillors.

There was also at one time, this was after the Treaties were signed and when the lands were surveyed for Treaties, what Jackfish had requested for Treaty was denied, because the commissioner at that time accused the Cold Lake band of being involved directly with the Northwest Rebellion. For that reason, the commissioner told the government that the Cold Lake people didn't deserve any land for Treaty, because they were rebels. They were involved in this Northwest Rebellion. That was one of his reasons for not granting this land that Jackfish had requested.

Another reason he gave was that people are not hunting any more. They are not going to be hunting; they are going to change their way of life and they are going to become farmers, so they don't need all that land that they are requesting. That was his second reason.

This third reason was that a lot of the band members, or the so-called band members - that's what he said; his words -- were visitors. He counted only three hundred thirty people -- band members. If there was anybody else, then they were all visitors. That's what he said.

So, those were his three reasons for not granting the land that Jackfish had requested for our reserve. So, instead, because the Cold Lake band signed the Treaty, they were entitled, but they were denied, so they gave them only seven by nine miles. The land that they gave them, most of it was south of Beaver River. The northeast corner of their reserve touches the Beaver River. There are a few acres on the north side of the river. I think the north corner of the reserve is questioned by the provincial government. They are saying they cannot find the high R one forty-nine stake, but my father says it's there. He knows it's been put in there. So, the northeast corner is also reserve.

That was the reason why the people were granted only that area. There was also families from Hard Lake that came. Because they had livestock, they needed ways, or they needed land and hay grounds to feed their livestock because they didn't have any hay grounds where they lived. So, they came to Cold Lake and they mingled with the people. They intermarried, so they became relatives. But, the reserve being south of the Beaver River, they did not want to leave the lake, because they liked fishing as well, and they liked the scenery at Cold Lake.

So, they did not want to leave, but at the same time there were immigrant families moving in, even in the areas where Jackfish had reserved, or had chosen the land for a reserve. These families refused to leave Cold Lake, although there were other families, I think they were of French extraction, moving into Cold Lake.

People from the Cold Lake band got together and said: Well, we don't want to lose the lake. We like the lake; we can fish there. We have our fishing rights, so why don't we take some of the land from the original survey and put it by the lake. So, that's what they did. They surrendered from the original survey, and they had it moved to Cold Lake; against the lake. This is what is now known as English Bay Reserve. They didn't gain any land; they just moved over their own land to English Bay.

The only land that they got was when the original survey was done. There were already missionaries here, and they owned a quarter section, just adjacent here.

MR. HENDERSON: The missionaries did?

MR. JANVIER: The missionaries, yes. So, they were included in the original survey. Since the land didn't belong to the Cold Lake band, as they were told, they were given an extra bit of land equivalent to what was included in the survey -- the original survey. That became the Little Reserve east of town.

MR. HENDERSON: One thing I don't think is on the record either, was there a particularly good area in the area of Grand Centre or Legough Reserve or Cold Lake Reserve, is there a particularly good area that was a blueberry patch?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, I think as a boy I remember going east of what is now Grand Centre. I believe that's where the hangars are now in what is known as CFB Cold Lake Base. I think there used to be some berry picking areas there.

MR. HENDERSON: I want to thank you, sir, for the family history and the community history that you have brought forward. As counsel, I think I have finished with the questions that I have. It may be that the commissioners have a few more. For the moment, I certainly thank you.

MR. JANVIER: Okay.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Yes, thank you.

Can you tell me, Mr. Janvier, how did you obtain all this historical knowledge that you have? How did you go about getting that?

MR. JANVIER: Well some of it, or a good portion of it, is by listening to old people speaking. I guess one of the traditions is that if older people came, we had to sit down and listen. Now I see that was one of the methods of education. It was one way of teaching.

The other sources of information was probably from the Archives; some of it from the Archives. Like I have mentioned before, what I am saying this morning is not probably written anywhere. My information is from what I have heard from my father and from other old people.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I guess one of the things that we are trying to ascertain here is a better understanding of the Primrose area. One of the questions that was asked yesterday was: Why was that area, since it was so fundamental to the Cold Lake people, why was it not included as part of the reserve lands after Treaty? Do you have any idea about that?

MR. JANVIER: Because the land in question, where the Treaties were involved, is that these were farmlands. That's what the government wanted -- the farmlands -- so that these new people could feed their families. So, for that reason, the Primrose Lake area was not in question, because the Primrose Lake area belonged to the people -- the Cold Lake band -- and also people from other bands at Meadow Lake and Canoe Lake. They also shared the Primrose Lake areas. And probably people from Janvier.

So, in the Treaties this was not a question. This portion of the land or this part of the country was not in question. It was mostly the farmlands, lands that would be able to be farmed.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Whether it is in the Treaty, or is there some other source of understanding that even though the Treaty was entered into that the trapping and hunting and fishing rights that were being carried on by the Cold Lake people in the Primrose Lake area, were they going to be protected, or were they going to remain? What is your understanding of that?

MR. JANVIER: Well, like I say, people understood that this was where they made their living and this was their way of life, and they didn't think that it was going to be affected by signing Treaty or negotiating. Primrose Lake area was not negotiated or talked about at Treaty, because it belonged to the people. That's their understanding.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Were you involved in any kind of activity --. As we have been told many times, the understanding of the Cold Lake people was that there was an agreement, kind of that they would be paid annually for a twenty-year period. That seems to have ended in 1961. Were you involved from that period to the present in any kind of negotiations or any kind of attempts to get redress from the government or ask them what was happening here; what is going on?

MR. JANVIER: On one occasion, I don't remember exactly what year -- 1978 or 1979 -- I was a band councillor at that time for a term. One summer, I think it was in June or July, as a council body we went to Canoe Lake, and we met with some members of Canoe Lake. Also, there were two lawyers, one of them was a local girl from there. She was a lawyer then. Another one I don't remember the name. I was present at that meeting. It was hard to be involved, because we were told a long time ago that people had signed this quit claim, and that's the end of it. Forget it, you know? So, the depth of involvement, I couldn't tell you anything about it.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: But, it would be fair to say, that from 1961 up until you got on council and, perhaps, had that meeting at Canoe Lake, the view was that that quit claim had stopped everything?

MR. JANVIER: That's what we were made to understand.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Until you got involved in council, that was your first opportunity to really get involved with trying to correct that, is that right?

MR. JANVIER: Yes, involved and wise. It was the only time. Other times, prior to that, it was just to listen in on meetings or things like that. You see, I wasn't really involved then.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I am curious about those meetings. What was taking place at those meetings?

MR. JANVIER: At the Canoe Lake meeting?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: No, the ones prior. Were there meetings taking place on Cold Lake, where people were upset by the fact that it didn't seem that this deal was the way they understood it; that the twenty years was not really what was going to happen? Were there any meetings within the community that --?

MR. JANVIER: There probably was, but I was away to school.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Oh, I see.

MR. JANVIER: Like, that one meeting that I mentioned was the only meeting that I was present at.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay.

MR. JANVIER: Other meetings -- there probably were meetings, but I wasn't involved; I wasn't around.

MR. HENDERSON: If I might assist, Mr. Chairman, I think Mr. Janvier might be confusing the nineteen-fifties meetings with the nineteen-seventies meetings. I think the Chairman is asking: Before the meeting you had with Canoe Lake, for example, in the late seventies, were there meetings here that you recall?

MR. JANVIER: No, like I say, I wasn't involved. If there were any meetings prior to that, I was just listening in.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. Those are all my questions, Mr. Janvier, but I'll ask my colleagues if they have any.

Commissioner Bellegarde, do you have any questions?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Well all the questions have been adequately, competently answered, but I just want a clarification, Mr. Janvier, which deals with the Primrose Lake area itself. It was never considered to be part of the Treaty discussions because the Queen's representatives only wanted land to be used for farming to the depth of a plowshare.

MR. JANVIER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: And the Primrose Lake area was not farmland.

MR. JANVIER: As far as the Queen's commissioners were concerned, that was probably wasteland. They weren't looking at it; they weren't considering it.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: The Dene people used this land, and it was [theirs] to use; it belonged to them and it was never considered to be part of those Treaties.

MR. JANVIER: There was never any question of negotiating that area of land, because, like we say, people felt that it belonged to them. That's where their way of life was. Their way of life that they excelled in was by trapping and hunting.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: They said that during discussions over the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range, that they would lease this land for twenty years for annual payments, and at the end of twenty years would either get the land back, or they would renegotiate a lease. That was the understanding?

MR. JANVIER: Well, nobody's ever mentioned anything about returning the land to the people, but after twenty years the deal would be renegotiable. This was what I understood.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: One last question, and it deals with Jackfish and Antoine's selection of a reserve land according to the Treaty. Did they, when they first requested land, did they include land in the Primrose Lake area for their reserve?

MR. JANVIER: No, like I say, that was their way of life, and the only land in question was that land that they were promised for their own, where they would reside, where they would live.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: What happened to those individuals that the Indian Affairs people said did not belong to the Cold Lake First Nation and, in fact, there were only three hundred thirty band members at the time of the first survey, how many were there and what happened to them; the others that were not considered by the government to be band members?

MR. JANVIER: Well, that's all the people that they counted -- three hundred thirty people. From those three hundred thirty people, some visitors.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Do you know how many were considered visitors?

MR. JANVIER: Well, there must have been a few; not too many.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you. Thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME : Thanks, Dan.

Commissioner Prentice , do you have questions?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Yes.

Mr. Janvier, thank you very much for your evidence this morning. You mentioned this morning that the question which Mr. Bellegarde was just asking you about, the size of the reserve and the number of families that were amongst the Cold Lake First Nation at the time the land was set aside, and you said that some of the visitors weren't counted, or the argument of the commissioners was that they were just visitors, they weren't part of the First Nation. Has the band ever investigated the possibility of what is called a shortfall claim, a claim that the reserve lands which were set aside were not what was required in law by the Treaty, at the time of the Treaty? Has that been looked at by the band at any time in the past?

MR. JANVIER: I don't believe so, as far as those people that were there at that time. If you went visiting somewhere, nobody asked you: What are you doing here? You were given the hospitality. You know, if somebody comes to visit you, you don't ask: What are you doing here; why are you here? You are hospitable, and that's how the people were in them days. They didn't ask any questions. If there was someone from another planet, they wouldn't ask questions. They would accept them as a visitor.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Okay, thank you very much. The other question I had, I may have missed this in the evidence, but you were a member of council at one time. Were you a chief at one stage?

MR. JANVIER: No.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Okay, thank you very much.

MR. JANVIER: I was just a councillor.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Okay, thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Does counsel have any further questions?

MR. HENDERSON: No, thank you, sir.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: We have no further questions, Mr. Janvier. We certainly want to thank you for your attending here and helping us out the way you have. You have certainly, I think, informed us; educated us, and for that we are very appreciative.

If I can be so bold as to offer a suggestion, perhaps you are doing this, but if you are not, and you say much of what you had to say has not been written down, you might consider doing that or at least, as Mr. Jacob did putting some of it on tape. Some of this stuff can get lost all too soon. You are a wealth of knowledge and, perhaps, you might want to consider doing that. That's a suggestion, of course, and you can do what you will.

But, thank you again for your enlightened evidence here this morning. We greatly appreciate it.

Unless you have something further you would like to tell us, you can be excused.

MR. JANVIER: No, if there are any questions I can answer, whether here or later --.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. That will be fine, sir. Thank you.

MR. JANVIER: Thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, I should point out that part of Mr. Janvier's research has generated quite an extensive family tree of his family, and there is a copy of that posted beside the map here. Some of the people might be interested in having a look at that.

At this point, I am going to ask if we can take five minutes. The Commission is trying to make some arrangements to actually see part of the land that we have been talking about during our two visits here, and I think it is appropriate if could take five minutes now so that those arrangements could be concluded.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, unless there is any problems with that, I propose we adjourn until twenty to eleven.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, sir.

---SHORT RECESS

---UPON RESUMING

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Will the hearing come to order, please.

Counsel, can we have our next witness, please.

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the next witness is Mr. Maynard Metchewas (phonetic).

Good morning, sir.

MR. MAYNARD METCHEWAS: Good morning.

MR. HENDERSON: You have been a member of council and, at one time, chief of the Cold Lake First Nation?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, I have been.

MR. HENDERSON: I wonder if you could tell the commissioners, please, about your experience with this claim in your capacity as a councillor and as chief.

MR. METCHEWAS: Before I get into that, there are a couple of things I maybe would like to mention.

I was born in 1941 on this reserve, and I have lived here all my life until today. I missed the first six school years of my life. I didn't miss -- I didn't go to school is what I should say. I never went to school until the age of twelve. I liked the life of the fishing and trapping, so I stayed with my parents.

My father fished and also trapped. As far as I am concerned, he did fairly well at it. So, I didn't start school until the age of twelve and I went to school for four years. I completed grade five, so if you notice any stumbling in my language -- the white man's language -- that's the reason.

I guess a lot of fond memories come back when I stop and think of how much the Native people lost from their ways of living, fishing and trapping namely; and that's the older people. I am sure you have heard this over and over in the two sessions here, but I feel I should bring it up because

I did spend my childhood days, the late fall, winter and early spring months we spent between the fishing and the trapping camp.

Life was so much easier and so much simpler. We didn't have the power bills; we didn't have gas bills; we didn't have all the expenses that we do today. So, it was very easy to make a living.

The Natives from the Cold Lake First Nation -- and I am sure you have heard it -- were very proud people. They made their living fishing, hunting and logging was mentioned here. They made their living logging. I witnessed this. I guess I don't remember everything in detail as a young person, but I can recall some of the tougher times, like the cold days and times we hadn't brought enough food and we ran out. Those I consider the tougher times, then, but we always had meat or fish to eat, to live on. These are the times that I consider, and also the very cold days. I also remember some of the good days that we had over there, and that's why I enjoyed it over there so much.

Just to get off track here a little bit, during the Christmas break of this year, they allowed, I guess, some fishermen to go in and do some fishing, and I went in. I didn't get as far as I wanted to go, but I was in and drove up to Suckerville. Things were different from what I remembered. They had cleared the whole site, and really there is nothing there. It's so different. It almost bothered me, because this was where a lot of the Native people would meet. They would come, and they brought their fish to the fish plant, and from there they were shipped to wherever -- the fish marketing in Saskatchewan, I believe. The groceries were brought in and that's where we picked them up. So, we all would come in there and people would get together and play cards and have a good time. Then they would go back and continue their way of living.

That was basically, you know, my experience as a young person in the Primrose Lake area until 1952 or '53, I guess, when they could no longer go back to the Primrose Lake area, now known as the bombing range.

After that, my parents and a couple of other parents got together and opened up a day school here on the reserve. At the age of twelve I started school. The first day of school, there were three of us in our class. By the end of the year, I guess there was a total of eleven students in that day school.

Some of the things, I guess, that kind of bother me here is: It's too bad that these hearings have taken so long to come about. I am sure you have heard this over and over again that when the people of this reserve were signing these documents -- and I think a lot of them didn't know what they were signing -- they didn't realize that they were giving up their livelihood.

They assumed that in good faith the government people, namely Indian Affairs, would come back after twenty years, like they were promised, to renegotiate, but that never happened. I wish these hearings would have been held, maybe, ten years ago, when more of the trappers were still alive. I mean, we're talking forty years, and I was very young. To try and think back on the things that happened, it's a really tough job, because so many things, so many changes have happened that it's really hard to try and think of all the things that happened, because there have been so many changes.

I wish that these hearings had been heard ten years ago. I kind of understand that these hearings were sparked from the Oka crisis in Quebec. Whether this is true or not, it's too bad that these things have to happen to actually get these things underway.

When I was chief in my last term, it was between June of 1984 and March of 1986. One of the things -- I had a lot to do on the reserve to try and get things going, and one of the things I wanted to get going was these claims on the Primrose Lake Bombing Range, but I could never jump in with both feet, because I had so many other things that I had to deal with on the reserve that I could never get it going.

In between that period, maybe in 1985, they were firing these cruise missiles and landing them in Primrose Lake. One of the TV companies got in touch with me and wanted my opinion on how I felt about firing and landing these missiles on the Primrose Lake area. They wanted my comments. At the time I refused to give a comment. I thought about it, and I thought: Here's a chance for me to maybe plug in that this land was used by the Native people for their fishing and trapping rights, and maybe I could get, you know, some attention from the media, and maybe things could spark up. So, I called the TV company and I said, yes, I would make a comment.

They were there within a couple of hours -- at my place -- and started to interview me. I would not stay on the track on these missiles. I was trying to plug in the trapping aspect of it and hoped that it would come on TV.

To make a long story short, when they did show the TV part of it that evening on the news, they had cut most of it. They just showed my picture for, maybe, half a second, and I said, maybe, ten words.

I have also had meetings where this was brought up, and I tried to bring it to the officials at the Department of Indian Affairs. They would agree with me that, yes, maybe we had a claim and maybe we should do something about it, but that was as far as it would go. It would never, you know, carry on.

Like I say, I had so many other things going that it was really tough for me to jump in with both feet and try and really get it going. So, that was about the extent of my involvement regarding the trapping and fishing area claims.

When I stop and think about it now, as a young person, if the trapping areas hadn't been taken away when they were, I probably never would have got an education. I really don't know. But, because my education was so limited, I couldn't get a job once I was of age in the area. It seemed like you had to have a grade nine education to be able to qualify for jobs in the area.

I don't recall any Native people getting jobs at the base when it was under construction, because there was no money to buy equipment that was needed for whatever -- to pour cement or do any kind of brushing. The town of Grand Centre grew, and there was no money for the people to invest in any kind of equipment to work with. Because of that, the people didn't have as much to do in the winter months.

Drinking became a real problem. Liquor became a real problem. I was involved in it, and I know what it's like. Because of that, people of my age went through a lot of tough times, because of the liquor problem.

My dad tried farming and, like my brother indicated yesterday, I think we had a seventy acre farm, and we had very limited machinery to operate with. We had a few cows. We milked cows, we shipped cream to try and keep bread and butter on the table. But that was basically it. We didn't have enough to buy fuel and to keep operating.

In, I believe it was 1956 or '57, my dad then started a horse-drawn school bus, and eventually there was eleven horse-drawn school buses that hauled the kids to the reserve mentioned earlier. That's how we made a living. He made seven dollars a day doing this, and that's how we managed to keep the bread and butter on the table.

A lot of the other people weren't as fortunate, because they lost what livelihood they had. It was really tough on everybody. It was tough for the people to --. After being used to the type of living they made, it was very hard on them.

As far as background, I can't really elaborate on it too much, because my grandfather -- like my brother made a comment yesterday; he called him a professional trapper, and I don't think he was wrong. I would sit in the evenings. I would go over and visit him in the evenings. He always stayed close to us, and he'd have his tent maybe twenty, thirty feet from ours, and I'd go visit him in the evenings. I would ask him to tell me stories about what happened in the old days. But, he wasn't a good storyteller, so he would never tell me any stories. He would lay in his bed and turn over and he'd tell me: Oh, go home and go to bed.

So, I can't recall back any old stories. Because of my education, I don't do very much reading. Because I am so slow at reading I get discouraged. So, I can't give you any background. I can't read some of my shorthand here.

Just a couple of more things. It wasn't only, I guess, the Native people that suffered. We had some local fur traders as well that eventually had to close their stores, because there was no furs so they couldn't buy them and they couldn't ship them out. Art, Josh Langer and Clark's store eventually had to close, because there was a lack of furs.

Regarding the meetings, as a young person, my dad was very strict with us at home. Whenever we had company in the summertime, I had to stay outside. In the wintertime, then we had an upstairs and I had to stay upstairs. So, I could never really hear what was going on. As far as the meetings, I was not allowed to attend any of the meetings at the time, so that part, regarding the meetings, I can't really tell.

So, I think I've covered basically what I had to say.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you. In terms of your family history, before you went to school, which you said was not until age twelve, your whole family would go out on the trap line in season?

MR. METCHEWAS: Well, there was just my brother and one sister, and she went to the boarding school in Blue Quills. My brother, basically he was on his own, so there was just me and my mom and dad; just the three of us. There were times we would stay out at the trap camp for two or three months and not see anybody.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you have any recollection of what kind of income the family would have made from trapping at that time?

MR. METCHEWAS: I can't really recall. Like I said, I was very young, but I remember clearly in 1951 my dad made in the neighbourhood of three thousand dollars over, probably, the fall and winter and spring months. I remember him counting his money, and that's what he made.

He bought a 1951 Pontiac. In Grand Centre there is a car dealer there. The guy had two new vehicles and three used vehicles, and he had bought a new car and he paid one thousand seven

hundred dollars for it. After buying the car, he still had enough to buy fuel and grain to put in a little bit of crop back home.

MR. HENDERSON: Were you out in Primrose Lake at a time when someone came out to purchase a dog team?

MR. METCHEWAS: Oh, yes. That was kind of strange story, I guess. This one evening we were at home. It was dark; I don't know what time of the night. This individual came knocking at the door. He was a white guy. He knocked on the door and he said: Can I stay overnight? My dad made him a little place in the corner and that's where he stayed for a couple of days. We had a cabin right along Primrose Lake, and my grandfather had a tent along in the bush, and he had a dog team. He had five dogs, and he had a dog harness for the five dogs and a toboggan and it was all lined with canvas. It was a good dog team, and that's what my grandfather used to travel with.

So, this guy, if my mind serves me right, his name was Bob Routine -- I don't know how you spell it, but that's the name that rings a bell. He wanted to buy my grandfather's team, and my grandfather didn't want to sell them. He said: It's my only transportation, and I can't really sell them to you. Anyway, this guy kept after him to buy this dog team, and eventually my grandfather agreed. For some reason, seven hundred dollars rings a bell, I don't know why, but I guess at the time it was a lot of money and my grandfather thought he was getting a good deal, so he sold him the dogs.

The guy left, and the strange thing about it, the guy would always leave at night. Whenever he would come back, he seemed to know where we were all the time, and he'd always come back and he'd come back at night. I guess he was a night traveller. He came back another time and I think he stayed four days to maybe a week, and then he left.

I kind of got ahead of my story here.

Anyway, he told my grandfather he would buy the dogs, and they agreed on a seven hundred dollar price. He said: Well, when I get back -- to wherever he came from; he said, I'll send you the cheque for the amount. He took my grandfather's name and whatever -- address, I guess, if there was any. And he left. Later, he came back, maybe two weeks later and he stayed for maybe four or five days, and then he left again.

We hadn't seen him for quite some time, and we moved from the fish camp to the trap camp, which was along Martino River. One night he came, just about the time we were -- rat season was just about over -- we were just about ready to leave and he came. I don't know why, but I don't think you were allowed to shoot beaver with a gun; you had to trap them. Anyway, he told my dad: You won't be coming back, so you might as well try to get all the rats and beaver you can get. So, he stayed for a couple of days, but this time he was on foot and he left because there was no snow to travel with the dogs. He left and that was the last that we saw of him, and my grandfather never did get his money for his dogs. So even then the white man took --. Poor old Indian only had dogs for transportation.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I have a quick question. This guy wouldn't have little loafers and an attaché case, would he? A briefcase.

MR. METCHEWAS: I don't know. He had all kinds of little instruments.

MR. HENDERSON: No, this fella had a dog team.

Do you know if -- I copied down the name as Bob Routine, or Routen?

MR. METCHEWAS: Routine, or something like that.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you know if he had any association with the government at all?

MR. METCHEWAS: I have no idea. Just this one time, when he was staying at the fish camp with us, he had set out some little evergreens along the lake, and a little plane landed there and brought him supplies. I guess maybe food and some instruments. I don't know. They talked, I think, maybe for an hour and then the plane took off and Bob carried on doing whatever he was doing. I don't know.

MR. HENDERSON: When you say set out evergreens, was that like as a marker, or --?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, I guess it was a marker to indicate where he was so the plane would --

MR. HENDERSON: Moving ahead just a bit, in 1971-72, you were on council at Cold Lake?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, I was on council.

MR. HENDERSON: And was there -- I'm sorry, did you want to say something else?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, no.

MR. HENDERSON: Was there discussion in council meetings at that time about the lease and the twenty year period coming up, in your recollection?

MR. METCHEWAS: It was always brought up at meetings. The trappers at that time would always bring it up that, you know, something should be done regarding the bombing range and the trapping areas. But, I really don't recall whether we had ever went into, like, meeting with the government on such cases. That I can't say.

MR. HENDERSON: Subsequently, you were chief from 1978-79 and again in 1984-85?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: At that time, was council and yourself involved with this claim or discussions with the government about the claim?

MR. METCHEWAS: In 1978 and '79 it was about the time that Esso was moving into the area, and we were trying to get our foot in the door so we could get some of our boys employed out at Esso. So, at that time I don't think we -- or least I can't remember -- dealing regarding the trap line at that time. We were concentrating more on trying to get employment out at Esso.

MR. HENDERSON: Now, in your capacity as chief during that period, were you involved at any time in discussions about this claim, the Primrose Lake claim, or talking to the government about it?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, not really. As I say, I tried to get it off the ground, but I really didn't go at it. But I had heard that there had been meetings regarding that, but I don't know just how deep they were in it. Where it was at, that I don't know, and I never really had any meetings directly.

MR. HENDERSON: One of the things we didn't ask is, when you were out on the trap line with your parents, what were your parents' names, please.

MR. METCHEWAS: Pierre Metchewas and Annie Metchewas.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you remember any of the details of compensation your father or parents may have gotten, or your grandfather, for their equipment and for their trapping and hunting and fishing, and that sort of thing?

MR. METCHEWAS: I don't know how much money was involved, but I do know that my dad had bought some machinery. I guess they gave him a purchase order, or whatever arrangement was made. He had bought a new tractor, because I remember him talking to my mother, saying: I guess we're going to go farming to try and survive. He had bought some machinery through whatever, purchase orders, or whatever way money came in.

So, I don't really know how much he got. I can't say, because I wasn't involved.

MR. HENDERSON: Those are the questions that I wanted ask. Certainly, if they have triggered anything else in your memory that you wanted the panel to hear, please go ahead and tell them.

I don't know if other counsel have any questions, but I am sure the commissioners may.

Mr. Chairman?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Yes, thank you.

I've got just a couple of questions. Firstly, in the 1971-1972 period which you were on council -- is that correct, you were on council during that period?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You mentioned that the trappers would always raise the issue and wanted council to do something about it, and I think your evidence was that you really didn't get involved in anything specific dealing with that issue, but can you recall what it was that the trappers were saying to council? What was their complaint and what was the request that they were making?

MR. METCHEWAS: I think the understanding with the trappers was, they understood that it was a twenty-year agreement. They also understood that there would be compensation on an annual basis, whether it was yearly or whatever, but they would get compensation in the twenty years. Then, once the twenty years were up, they would renegotiate, not necessarily go back to the trapping areas, because by then it was all destroyed anyway. I guess the understanding was, you know they were to renegotiate for more monies, I guess. That was basically what they were asking for. Once the twenty years were up, they kind of sat and waited for the government. They dealt, they felt, in good faith. They felt that the government would, in good faith, come back and bring, hopefully, a deal on their claims.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: During any of these sessions, were any records kept? I mean, did anybody take minutes of the complaints that the trappers were bringing into council?

MR. METCHEWAS: Not to my knowledge. Possibly, but --.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Can you describe for us the manner in which a council meeting was held. For example, was a member of the Department of Indian Affairs present when you had your council meetings back then in '71 and '72?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes, at different meetings there was department heads at our meetings, but when these were brought up, I can't recall whether they were there or not.

I guess, one of the things, in the early seventies, probably '71, we were dissatisfied with the school, the day school, we had here. It was outdated; they were old buildings. The council at that time -- the chief and council at that time -- were trying to get a better school system. The government, again, wouldn't hear nothing of it. So, we eventually pulled our children out of school, and they stayed out of school, I think, for a total of eight months before the government finally decided, yes, they would build a new school for the Cold Lake First Nations.

That also took up a lot of time. I think it took up a whole year, and that was the period I was on council.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you recall during that period, because much has been said with the previous witnesses, that part of the arrangement was supposed to be -- and I believe even some have suggested that the Treaty alludes to this as well -- and that is that when the way of life was lost in the Primrose area, when the trapping and the fishing were discontinued, that part of the arrangement was that the government was going to come in and assist the Cold Lake community with finding other ways to make a living, with other economic development projects, as it were. To your knowledge, were you ever involved in anything like that, or do you know whether council was, or anybody on council that was ever involved in any kind of negotiations that took place regarding that part of the deal?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, no, I wasn't. I really never attended a lot of meetings, because I always tried to maintain some kind of a job -- you know -- keep my family alive, so I really didn't take in a lot of meetings, other than the time when I was on council.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Were you aware that that part of the arrangement that we've heard took place in the fifties, that replacement of the economic development loss, were you aware that that was part of the arrangement, or to your knowledge do you recall that that was supposed to be part of the arrangement, where government was supposed to help them find another way to make a living?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, I wasn't.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay. You were chief from 1984 to 1986?

MR. METCHEWAS: Yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: During that period, you indicated that Esso was coming into the area, and you were more concerned with trying to find employment opportunities for your band members. How did that work out? Were you successful in that regard?

MR. METCHEWAS: Between the period of 1984 and 1986, Esso had already moved in. The period was between 1978 and '79. That's when we heard that they were moving in and we were trying to get in.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, even during that period, then, what kinds of efforts did you make to get employment for your band members, and were you successful?

MR. METCHEWAS: I guess we tried to get in and, like I say, we didn't have no money to work with to get the equipment to go out and work at Esso, so it was very tough.

The other thing was, they had hearings and I didn't attend the hearings, but one of the council members at the time -- and he's our next speaker -- was at those hearings. I believe he can correct me if I am wrong, but we tried to keep out the union so the people in the area could

actually get jobs at Esso. But that didn't happen. When Esso did get going, the unions moved in and anybody that was a non-union member had a difficult time to get in. If they did join the union, their names were so far down, that it was impossible for them to get in.

There were also other companies. White people help each other, and they would lend money to each other so they could start businesses, so they could work out at Esso. In our case we couldn't. We couldn't even as much as, at times, buy a bond to bond our construction that we had out there. So, it was very difficult no matter how we tried to do it.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: In your experience, has employment opportunities in this neighbourhood, or in this area, because obviously there has been a lot of growth since the fifties outside of this reserve, what has been your experience, or what can you tell us a bit about the availability of jobs for your band members and how has worked in all of that growth in the last thirty-eight to forty years?

MR. METCHEWAS: There have been a lot of jobs in the area. Like I say, when they built the air base and the town of Grand Centre grew, the town of Cold Lake grew, but it seemed like there was never a lot of work available for the Native people. There was always some reason why they couldn't get a job. I had the same problem myself.

When I first got married, I didn't have nothing. I didn't even have a -- I think maybe I had one change of clothes, and I don't even really know why I got married, but I did. To try and get started; I used to walk from my place to Grand Centre, and I walked. Nobody would give me a ride. I used to walk all the way to Grand Centre. I would look for a job all day and then I would walk all the way home again. Then I would have to sit with a little tub with cold water and soak my feet, because I had blistered them.

It was really tough, and because of my education, what little I had, it was really harder for me to get employment.

I think a lot of the Native people had the same experience. They just literally couldn't buy jobs. Yet there were jobs available. People would move in from all over Canada; they would come to work here, but we were always excluded, it seemed like.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Do you know of any, or have you experienced in your times with council or any other councillors, or even from your knowledge from living in this community all your life, has there been any efforts on the part of the band and either the local town governments or the defence base, have there ever been any kind of meetings or attempts to involve yourselves in this community with, sort of, I guess, cooperative kinds of economic development projects? Did you ever engage in any kinds of discussions with the municipal government, for example, to enter into projects together? Has that ever happened?

MR. METCHEWAS: I recall some meetings we've had where we would try and meet with different -- like the base people, we call them the base people -- National Defence -- and also the local governments. We've met there with some people to try and get jobs, because we couldn't get jobs as individuals, but we were trying to get jobs as a contract, so we would in turn employ our own people to do this work. But, if they didn't agree with the way we wanted things, they would just literally shove us under the rug, type thing. So, that was as far as it would go. No matter how we did it, it was very difficult to try and -- like, we almost had to be two times greater than them, and when I say them, the white people, for us to be able to compete on an equal base.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Now, I've heard, and some of the witnesses have said, even as early as yesterday -- we're talking about various things that have gone on in Primrose Lake since this community has been denied access there. They talked about minerals being extracted from the area and timber coming out of the area. Do you have any knowledge of any of that happening?

MR. METCHEWAS: The only knowledge I have is, apparently the oil companies have moved in there and, I guess, are drilling for oil or gas, or whatever they're doing. That's all I know. There are also some roads built, but as far as us getting involved out there, I don't recall.

At one time, again when I was chief back in 1978, they wanted to re-brush the line -- the bombing range line -- all the way around the lake. We got in there and tried to get the contract, again to try and employ some of our people. They flew us over, like all through the lines, and we had other people who knew all about brushing. I had resigned, so I don't know whether it was carried out or not, but I remember that.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you, sir, those are all of my questions.

I'll ask Commissioner Prentice if he has any questions.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Your evidence has been very thorough. I only have one question. What was your grandfather's name, Mr. Metchewas?

MR. METCHEWAS: Alphonse Metchewas.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Commissioner Bellegarde?

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you.

Again, I have only one question. It deals with employment at Canadian Forces Base Cold Lake itself. Were there any attempts by National Defence or Indian Affairs to facilitate to allow First Nations people to find work at Cold Lake? You mentioned that there was some problem getting the necessary equipment. I assume that's protective equipment, or other equipment to work at the Cold Lake Air Base during construction. Can you tell me a bit more about this relationship, or non-relationship with the Canadian Forces Base Cold Lake?

MR. METCHEWAS: I really don't remember that part because, like I say, I was twelve, going on thirteen at the time when the base moved in.

I really don't recall how much involvement there was between DND and the people of Cold Lake First Nations. But I do know that everything was contracted; cement, gravel hauling, road construction. You needed equipment to get a lot of these jobs done, and also the PMQs were built and they needed carpenters and experts to do these, and I guess we just didn't have that. It was somethings new to us, so we just couldn't compete.

I don't know if I answered your question.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: That's fine. Thank you.

The next one deals with the negotiations after the twenty-year period. The Cold Lake First Nations people were under the impression that they would renegotiate after twenty years. You put that forward, but there was no response or no assistance. Were you aware that negotiations

were ongoing between National Defence and the Province of Alberta at that time to renew the lease?

MR. METCHEWAS: No, I wasn't aware.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: You were never involved; you were never informed?

MR. METCHEWAS: No.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Okay. Thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, I think we are finished with the questions. Counsel, are there any more questions?

MR. HENDERSON: No. I certainly want to express the hope that Mr. Metchewas' wife is not here, when he explained his reasons for marrying. Apart from that, I don't think we have any other questions. Thank you, sir.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Well, thank you sir. As Commissioner Prentice said, your evidence was very thorough and you have been very helpful to us. As with the other speakers, we are delighted that you would take the time and come here and inform us as you have, because it is important to us and it is very helpful.

So, unless there is something that you have to add, sir, or wish to tell the Commission, then you can be excused.

MR. METCHEWAS: Just one more comment, if I could.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: By all means.

MR. METCHEWAS: Mainly, I would just like to thank the Commission for giving me an opportunity to be one of the witnesses here. I hope, if anything comes out, that it is a fair deal to the Native people of this community, because I think it's long overdue. Hopefully they can hear our problems and we can get a fair deal in whatever way it is.

Thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: You're very welcome, sir.

Counsel, do we have another witness?

MR. HENDERSON: We do, I believe our last witness for this round of the community sessions. He is another former chief, Mr. Marcel Piche.

Good morning, sir.

MR. MARCEL PICHE: Good morning.

MR. HENDERSON: Your age, I believe is fifty-four?

MR. PICHE: I hate to admit it, but I guess it is right.

MR. HENDERSON: You also were acting chief and chief during the 1979 and 1980 period?

MR. PICHE: Yes, I was involved in council during those years.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I'm sorry, could we repeat those years, please, counsel?

MR. HENDERSON: I'm sorry, I'll try to get them more precisely.

My information is that you were acting chief in 1979?

MR. PICHE: I was elected to council in the spring of 1978, and I became acting chief in 1979.

MR. HENDERSON: And you were chief also in 1982 to '84?

MR. PICHE: Yes, I was.

MR. HENDERSON: And sat on council in 1978, '82 to '83 and 1990 and '91?

MR. PICHE: Right.

MR. HENDERSON: Did you, I suppose as a child or a young man, have any experience in Primrose Lake with your family?

MR. PICHE: Yes, my earliest recollection of life was mostly on the trap line. I can say that our whole family was involved in the trap line. If there ever was anything that was a family affair, it was trapping and fishing. From stories from my grandmother and my mother, they tell me - and I can barely remember -- they used to help me set our squirrel snares as young as about three or four years old. I would be involved in helping to trap in that way.

My first seven years I spent during the trapping seasons with my father's trap line, which was north of what is now the air weapons range, known as the Watapi Lake area. That's where we had our trap line.

You have heard many speakers tell of the good times that they experienced during those years, good times in that they made money; they made a livelihood. They were able to sustain - make a good living really -- out of their trapping, fishing. Those are also some of the things that I can remember.

Like I say, from a very early age, I also helped in the trapping. I remember trapping weasels along a lake where we had our cabin, as well as snaring squirrels. So, I did help.

One story that I barely remember is that my mother told me that one year I snared in the neighbourhood of two hundred squirrels over one winter. So, from that, that tells me that my family, as well as other members of Cold Lake, all made good livings from the trapping and later on from the fishing.

Just an aside, I guess, regarding the trap lines. There were three families in the area that lived or trapped along the Watapi Lake area. Later on a white man, I believe, started a trap line out there. During those years, we as children deathly afraid of white men because they were viewed as what is viewed today as bogeymen. We were deathly afraid of white men.

I think there was one instance when my life was saved, because I was afraid of a white man. I remember early one morning, when my dad left to go tend his traps, I noticed a figure down by our water hole. I was about five at the time, and I thought maybe my father had come back. I was going to go down to the lake by the water hole to go meet my father, but my mother called me back. Since the sun rose from behind where this figure was, my mother said that maybe it was a white man, so I got scared and turned back to the cabin. After we watched for a few minutes, it wasn't even a human. It was a wolf that was sitting by our water hole. If I had gone running down there, you know, I don't know what would have happened.

I remember that up until I was seven, I was on the trap line, like I said. I started school in 1947, so for the next six years I wasn't too involved in Primrose. When I first started going to

residential school, we had to stay year-round at the school, except for the summer months. But in the late forties, when we were allowed to come home during Christmas, then all my Christmases were spent up in Primrose Lake, helping my father to fish during those days that we had off for the holidays.

That continued on until the closing of the fishing at Primrose. In fact, we spent -- I thought two summers, but my father informs me that it was only one summer that we spent in Primrose during summer fishing. My whole formative years, up until I was about thirteen, were spent either trapping or fishing with my father.

Later on, I would like to expand a little more on some of the things that John Janvier spoke about this morning, and also hopefully add a little to what former Chief Metchewas talked about.

Basically, that's my recollection of what is now the air weapons range.

MR. HENDERSON: If you have some comments or a presentation prepared in terms of what Mr. Janvier said earlier and if you want to that at this time, that will be fine.

MR. PICHE: Okay. Originally, when our forefathers first chose our reserve area, it was comprised of approximately one hundred sixty-three square miles of land. Mr. Janvier spoke about the land being chosen as being from Cold Lake south to Anglian Lake. The eastern boundary chosen was in the area of what is now the Alberta-Saskatchewan border, and to the west it was up to the area of Port Kent. It included one hundred sixty-three square miles or one hundred four thousand acres. In today's terms, that would have been forty-two thousand hectares. Today, our reserve is in the neighbourhood of forty-six thousand acres. That's the three reserves, Legough, English Bay and Little Reserve.

How the size of the reserve became diminished, there are letters on record in the Archives in Ottawa that I personally saw from the Indian agent at the time who was at Onion Lake. He wrote a letter to Ottawa, and I did see that letter -- it's on file, as I say, at the Archives in Ottawa -- saying that the Chippewyan people of Cold Lake did not deserve the size of the reserve that was chosen by them because they participated in the Northwest or the Riel Rebellion.

Now, the people here know -- our people know -- that we never did participate in the Riel Rebellion. We stayed out of it, but that was a letter written by the Indian agent at the time, and that's how our reserve came down to the size it was.

I have heard questions from the Commission saying why was Primrose not included in the Treaty negotiations. I believe they were -- not Primrose area per se -- but we were promised in the Treaties our traditional ways of life as trapping, hunting, fishing. We were promised no interference in that traditional way of life at any time. So, we traditionally hunted and fished in the Primrose Lake area, so there was no question in our peoples' mind that the Treaties included that area.

That's all that I wish to expand on what Mr. Janvier said. Perhaps he did touch, or others did touch upon when we first became involved in trying to get something resolved around the whole thing, because, as I also recollect, at various band meetings, people always asked: What are we going to do about Primrose? How are we going to get some type of resolve? How are we going to get the government to live up to their agreement, or their promise, that after twenty years there would be a renegotiation?

That was always brought up to different councils. Like former Chief Metchewas explained, the chiefs and councils of the day could not devote full time to this pursuit, because there were so many other issues to deal with, and various people spoke of those other things that concerned us -- you know, every day life, social issues, economic issues -- that we had to deal with; housing and all the other things, that we could not pursue, and we did not have the funds to get some type of resolve with the Primrose issue.

As far as I know, in the late seventies there was some discussion from time to time regarding the Primrose issue, and I think it was said earlier that because our people were so trusting, they waited for the government to do something. Although I was never involved in the payments or the compensation that the trappers and fishermen received, I understood that they were promised help and a new way of life, if they agreed to give up their hunting and fishing and trapping rights. That new way of life, or the help in that new way of life never did materialize.

We further, from time to time, tried to do some research and pursue some kind of resolve back in the early eighties. We involved a former judge, his name was Cormack, along with who is now our present councillor, Tony Mandamin, to do some type of research to see what could be done. Then, after that, I wasn't involved for a couple of years, so I don't really know what happened. But, the issue was always brought up by our people, that something needed to be done.

I think it was said earlier that the information we received from Indian Affairs was that because our people signed a quit claim, there was no longer anything that could be done. But as far as my people are concerned, it was never a quit claim that was signed. As far as they were concerned, they signed the last payment; they signed for their cheques and that was it. There was no talk of quit claims.

I am sure that the Commission here has heard the same things over at our neighbouring community, over here at Canoe lake. I am sure they've said the same things.

Now, further, as to how Cold Lake First Nations became involved in the claims is that I believe in 1991, when the Commission was first formed, or first announced, and we were informed that Mr. LaForme would be the head commissioner, former Chief Blackman and I travelled to Montreal, along with councillor Mandamin to make our presentation to Mr. LaForme. Luckily -- I hope luckily -- we were the first people to ask to have our claims heard, and here we are in 1993 having our claims heard and, hopefully we will not have to wait another forty years to get some final resolve to help our people to get out of the economic hardships that we are going through right now.

Former Chief Metchewas mentioned various things that have gone on in regard to the Primrose range. There has been, I am sure you've heard, vast resource development; exploration has gone on in the area since we were kicked out. There has been timber cutting in the area. There has been fishing, which we have barely been involved with. Sports fishing is one of the big things going on in Primrose yearly, and we're not involved. We are not allowed to go sports fishing.

If I could just relate a short story regarding that. When I knew that military personnel and retired military people, as well as civilian employees of the military could go up there to Primrose to sports fish on weekends, I enquired at the base if I could go, since I also am a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force. They said: Well, you go up to the gate with your discharge papers, and they'll let you in. So, I went up to the gate at Primrose and I said that I would like to go sports fishing; here are my honourable discharge papers. Only then was I informed that I had to

be retired; meaning, I suppose, that I had to have served twenty or thirty years, or whatever it was, in the military before I could go sports fishing.

At various times, when I was involved in council, I tried to pursue domestic fishing, commercial fishing and sports fishing for our people. It is only recently that we have been allowed, I believe last fall and over Christmas, to be able to go domestic fishing at Primrose. During Christmas, that was a lost cause, because I don't think very many people went to set a domestic net, because it was no less than about forty below all during the holidays.

The various other things regarding things that go on at the present time at Primrose, like I say, there has been resource development, exploration and the province, as far as I am aware, has derived millions and millions of dollars for exploration leases, of which we receive nothing.

They also derive some money from timber permits -- or the province does. It doesn't affect us, or it doesn't help us in any way.

As far as the availability of jobs at the air base, I believe that some of our people here were involved in the building of the air base, but in very menial jobs -- labour jobs. That's the only thing that I guess it seemed we were eligible for were the labour jobs.

Now, as far as I know, no one from this reserve -- or I shouldn't say no one -- I believe that only one person has worked at the air base for any length of time. I believe he finally did retire from working at the air base. We are a community here of about a thousand people, and at any given time there is no one, or very few people on a permanent basis, that do work for DND. There are a few people that are hired from time to time during peak season, their peak season being during their military exercises when other countries and other bases come to do their military exercises. That's the only time that our people are hired.

Former Chief Metchewas has also mentioned that we tried to get in there with our construction company, but because we could not secure bonds, we could not bid on jobs at the air base with DND. So, that also left us out. This was as early as the early eighties. So, by and large, people of this reserve have never benefited economically from the military presence in the area. We have never benefited economically from their presence.

I am sure that many others have said that they could not cover everything that they wished. Hindsight is always a good teacher, but when I leave here I am sure there will be many, many things I wished I would have said.

I hope that in your time here that all of our people that spoke would have covered in one way or another all the concerns that we have regarding the future for our children, because, as was said by others, our people had to give up a way of life; and how do you compensate for a way of life. I don't think that anyone can put any monetary value, and I don't think we would ever try to put any kind of monetary value on what giving up our way of life meant to us.

So, I guess now I would be ready for questions.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you, sir. Your presentation has been very comprehensive, and I don't have many questions.

I don't believe we asked -- you may have said and we didn't catch it, but if I could ask your parents' names, please.

MR. PICHE: My parents?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes.

MR. PICHE: My father is Dominic Piche. My late mother was Charlotte Piche. My father, I believe, spoke --.

MR. HENDERSON: Was a witness earlier in the last session.

MR. PICHE: Right.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you for that. As I say, you covered most of the areas that I would have enquired into. As with everyone else, if you do recall something that you want to say while you are still here, please take this opportunity to do it, but I don't have any additional questions to ask at this point. I don't know if other counsel do. They are indicating not.

MR. PICHE: There is one other thing, if I may.

MR. HENDERSON: Please.

MR. PICHE: When the air weapons range was formed and our people were compensated, or the few times they were compensated, my understanding -- and I was never involved during that time -- but my understanding from all the things that I have heard from my people is that they were paid for their equipment that they had to leave up there in the bombing range, both trapping and fishing equipment that they had to leave up there, that's what they were paid for, but they were not compensated for the loss of their livelihood really.

Just to give an example, I can only speak from my personal experience, but I know that my father had a cabin up on the trap line, as well as a cabin at Primrose where we did the fishing and whatever equipment went along with the two ways, both hunting and fishing, or trapping and fishing. I am not sure how much my father did get compensated. I was never around then, but it may have been less than two thousand dollars per payment. So, that isn't very much for a lifetime of trapping and fishing that my father did.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Are you finished, counsel?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, I am. Thank you very much, Mr. Piche, Mr. Chairman.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I just have a couple of questions, Mr. Piche.

One, you mentioned that you couldn't bid on any contracts on the air base because your construction company, or your companies, could not get bonded. What was the reason for that?

MR. PICHE: Because we are situated on a reserve, there is nothing that we could put up for collateral. So, that's why we couldn't get bonding. All jobs, as far as I am aware, contracts through DND, you have to be bonded, and our company at that time, when we did try to bid on jobs, was not bondable.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Did you speak, or have you ever spoken, to Indian Affairs about that problem -- the Department of Indian Affairs -- or any other government agency about that problem and how you might overcome that problem?

MR. PICHE: I don't recall that I spoke to the department in any official capacity about bonding, but I do recall that when I was in business, in the construction business for myself, I did talk to Indian Affairs and other government departments on how I could get bonding for my company so I could bid on government jobs, but I was never successful. As far as I know there is no Indian company in Alberta that is successful on any government jobs -- to contract government jobs.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I don't have any more questions, Mr. Piche. As Mr. Henderson said, your evidence was very comprehensive and very useful, but I am just curious whether any of the other commissioners have any questions.

Commissioner Bellegarde? No questions.

Commissioner Prentice?

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Yes, thank you very much for your evidence, Mr. Piche.

Could you tell us what time you spent in the air force? You were in the services yourself?

MR. PICHE: Oh, yes. I was in the air force from 1955 to '58. During those years, terms of service were for three years, so that's what I was in for, three years.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Again, I asked this question of an earlier witness, but you were on council for an extended period of time, was the possibility of a shortfall claim ever considered by the council? Have you ever consulted with legal counsel, or some of the researchers who are available, about the possibility of a shortfall claim?

MR. PICHE: I don't recall that there was a shortfall claim discussed per se, but what was discussed was that we learned through councillor Mandamin that there had been some interest money set aside from the payments that the trappers did receive in the neighbourhood of thirty-five thousand dollars away back in the fifties, and that possibly we would pursue or try to get that money. My recollection is that that's the only thing that we really did discuss.

COMMISSIONER PRENTICE: Thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I think Mr. Bellegarde has a question.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you.

Mr. Piche, just in relation to the activity that is now happening at Primrose -- resource exploration as well as timber leasing and I assume cutting -- are [there] any Cold Lake units or individuals involved in working with the timber leasing and cutting, or else working with the resource companies during the exploration phases?

MR. PICHE: When the Cold Lake First Nations had their own construction company in the early eighties, I believe they may have done one or two contracts inside the bombing range to build leases, to do pipeline right-of-ways. But since then, I don't think that anybody's been involved. As far as timber cutting, I understand that it's done on the west side of the air weapons range, and none of our people have been involved in working up there.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Pipeline right-of-ways? There was a pipeline right-of-way?

MR. PICHE: Yes. Our company that was based on the reserve used to do pipeline right-of-ways -- clearing pipeline right-of-ways -- as well as building leases.

COMMISSIONER BELLEGARDE: Thank you, Mr. Piche.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: I believe Mr. Henderson has another question for you, Mr. Piche.

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, just one last question, if I may, sir. We've heard from a couple of witnesses in the past few days who had military experience after the creation of the bombing range, were there any members of the community who were veterans of World War I or World War II?

MR. PICHE: That I can't recall as far as World War I is concerned, but I do know that a former chief who passed away recently was involved in World War II.

MR. HENDERSON: And he was a veteran of World War II?

MR. PICHE: He was a veteran of World War II.

MR. HENDERSON: Did he return to the community after the war?

MR. PICHE: Well, he did, because he was chief later.

MR. HENDERSON: Was chief, yes, okay. I am not intentionally asking stupid questions. Sometimes they just sound that way.

After the war, did he follow the traditional lifestyle here? Was he involved in hunting and trapping at Primrose Lake?

MR. PICHE: As far as I can recall, yes, he was. I think it's a well known thing throughout Indian communities that the veterans from the various wars from Indian communities were forgotten after they returned and never did receive the types of help that other veterans received in other communities. I believe that's well documented and well known that our people were forgotten after they served the country during various wars.

MR. HENDERSON: Apart from the former chief, the late Mr. Leo Janvier, were there any other veterans that you can recall?

MR. PICHE: No, I don't really -- just off hand -- I don't recall.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you very much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Okay, any other questions from counsel? None.

Okay, Mr. Piche, I don't think there are any further questions. As has been said a couple of times now, your evidence was certainly very comprehensive and very well appreciated. We thank you very much for taking the time and coming here to assist us. I know you've been here throughout most of it, and for that we appreciate it. We thank you for your assistance, it's most helpful and will be most helpful.

If you don't have anything further to add or any other comment you'd like to make, you may be excused, sir.

MR. PICHE: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Does that conclude our witnesses?

MR. HENDERSON: Those are the witnesses for this round, Mr. Chairman. I have indications from Mr. Mandamin that he does have some documents that he may wish to submit in due course, and of course those will be shared with counsel for the government and given consideration.

In addition, he has the de bene esse evidence to which we referred the last time. I believe it has been released on a video tape from the Federal Court, and that will be made available as well and submitted in the same circumstances.

As Mr. Winogron noted at the outset of this session, counsel are working on some sort of list of issues that may assist the Commission, and that situation endures, counsel continue to address it. It may be, as Mr. Winogron said, that a ruling may be requested in due course, and I believe your

indication was that such a ruling, if requested, would have to be very specific, very clearly identified and brought to the panel's attention with sufficient notice to give it advance consideration.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, I'd also like to note that some of the photos on the back wall have vanished. That is because the community has very kindly agreed to loan them to the Commission for a short period so that we can attempt to make copies and, perhaps, use them not only for the visual reference, but perhaps include them ultimately in the report, which the Commission prepares. Certainly no decision has been made on that, but those photos have been very kindly lent for that purpose.

I believe you also wished me to note other matters for the record, and I'll do that very briefly, if I can.

It had been the hope of the Commission that the panel and some representatives from the community and from the government counsel who have been sitting through these sessions might have an opportunity to see some of the land that we have been talking about, and the commander of Canadian Forces Base Cold Lake, I guess with the assistance of the Office of the Judge Advocate General, was kind enough to extend an invitation to do that this afternoon. Unfortunately, the only operational helicopter that was available for the purpose could only accommodate three people, and in the circumstances the commissioners did not feel comfortable with making that trip without anyone from the government side or from the community to assist and attend with them. So, unfortunately, with considerable regret and yet with great thanks for the consideration that was given to the request, the commissioners must decline that opportunity that was extended. On behalf of the panel, I will be writing to the Office of the Judge Advocate General and the base commander in due course, extending those sentiments.

At the same time, I would like, for staff purposes, to extend our thanks to Walter Janvier and to Armand Loth who have been our community liaison people, who have assisted us since last November in putting together the sessions that we have had here. Unfortunately, I notice that Armand is not here today. He had a family member flown to Edmonton for medical reasons yesterday. I understand that everything is going well there, and I would like to note for the record our hopes for a happy outcome to that story. But certainly our thanks go to him and to Walter for the considerable assistance they have given to us.

Also to the interpreters, who have assisted us through these hearings, who have done a very difficult job in circumstances that we have tried to make as easy as possible, but I am sure we appreciate the mental effort and the linguistic skill that is involved in doing what they have done.

These hearings would not be what they have been without that very valuable assistance.

So, our thanks to them, and to the other staff members of the Cold Lake First Nation who have assisted us in many ways, and especially to the people who have been staffing the kitchen while we have been here and keeping us in coffee and biscuits and sandwiches, and generally keeping morale up and eyes open as we made our way through the day. I just want to register our thanks to them as well.

If I can conclude at that point, Mr. Chairman, I believe Chief Mary Francois wishes to make a few closing remarks.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Certainly, by all means. Chief?

CHIEF MARY FRANCOIS: Good afternoon, Elders, commissioners, honoured guests from the First Nations, and observers from the Department of National Defence.

It has been a pleasure to have had you in our community for the last few days. This Commission of Inquiry has given us the opportunity to share with you our cultural heritage and our attachments to mother earth.

Our belief is that mother earth provides all necessities of life; water, air, food and shelter. These basic needs were adversely affected by the establishment of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range within our ancestral Hathtuway territory.

The development interfered with our heritage by destroying the social, economic, political and cultural structure of the Dene people. It turned our way of life upside down. For forty years we have not been dealt with in a fair and just way. We have endured hardships, suffered conditions that no other Canadian citizen would tolerate. We have been forced to live in third world conditions.

This has resulted in a deterioration of social conditions. We suffer from alcoholism, suicides, high infant mortality. Our economic base was seriously interfered with. We lost access to furs, fish, timber, gathering rights, medicine. Even to this day, we do not share the economic benefits of this development.

Over the years the federal government has spent billions of dollars on the base and on training exercises in the Primrose Air Weapons Range. While our neighbours in the surrounding communities have profited handsomely, we on the other hand, have not benefited from the wealth derived from the ancestral Hathtuway territory.

The exploitation of our ancestral lands continued in the form of oil, gas, mineral, timber explorations. Our communities were divided into three separate locations. This has interfered with our culture. Our language is on the brink of being lost. This is due to forced integration of our

children into your schools.

As you all heard from our trappers and fishermen, we were a proud and independent people. We did not have to rely on anybody to maintain our way of life. We lived in harmony with each other. We lived in trust. Our word was our bond.

I am going to speak to you in Chippewyan.

A long, long time ago, these people that we were wishing that they would listen to us, and finally it has happened.

Our land in Primrose, the land that we lived on, the land that we prospered on was taken away from us. The Elders that are here with us, alive today, thank you for listening to them. All their grandchildren are grown up now.

My mom and my dad, when I was a little child, I used to go with them up north. I was too small; it was just like in a dream. It was beautiful up there. People were helping one another in every which way. They loved one another. Today, too, we still feel the same way, but today the ones that are here now, one old man said that in the future something terrible is going to happen to us, so be very careful, love one another, take care of each other, talk to one another. He has relatives again here.

The first time there was a meeting, the chief before me --. I thank them for the tremendous job that they did. The way I stand for you today, I know how hard it is to do things. We haven't got everything that we have. It's pretty hard. We try to meet with one another. We wish towards the white people -- we talk to them, but we follow what the Elders have said. If you don't do it, nobody else is going to do it for you, and that's true today.

From now on, all of us help one another. That way things will go better again. Our Heavenly Father loves us, and He will look after us. For that I thank you.

For all the councillors, they work very hard, too. Them, too, I thank them. All these people that we hired, I thank them too; the ones that are cooking for us; the ones that are looking after the place here. I thank them very much. I thank all these people that are strangers here. I thank them.

From now on in the future, maybe we'll have a meeting like this again. Maybe we won't see it, but if we stand together and think together, I am sure we can make it.

There is a lot of work. We don't know what to listen to. Everywhere on this earth all kinds of stories are coming. Strange things are happening to us now. It's not the same as before.

I won't say any more. Let's love one another. Let's be relatives again, the ones that are living here. That's the only thing I wish for.

That's the end. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I will talk to you for our grandchildren, children and all those in the future. That is what we're sitting here for. This is a big job.

This will be it. We're closing now. We'll sit here and eat together, and we'll go home in peace, quietly. We'll go home. And these people who are here from far away, I wish that they will get home safely, wherever their home is; that they will get home safely.

I thank every one of you over here.

I thank you very much, again.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAFORME: Thank you, Chief Francois, and on behalf of the commissioners, I would like to, as well, echo the words of our Commission counsel, that the people here have shown us nothing but kindness. You have worked very hard. You've done a fantastic job of getting ready for this and presenting the views of your community to this Commission which I have said over and over again, and certainly cannot say enough, is extremely important and extremely helpful to the work that this Commission has before it regarding your land claim.

As well, I have thanked on a couple of occasions, but I feel that I need to do it again, the interpreters who have a very difficult task, but have performed it as well as anyone could possibly do that. For that we thank them. That has made our task a lot easier.

I want to thank the people of this community; you Chief Francois, the councillors. I especially want to thank the Elders for their contribution and for the courtesy that they have shown us. I am sure that I speak for everyone that is involved with this Commission, friends from the government that have been in attendance, that you have been nothing but marvelous hosts, and for that we can't thank you enough, and for that you have made our task so much easier.

We have listened with extreme interest to the witnesses that have come forward. The things that you had to tell us were spoken sometimes with some humour, in all seriousness, and far too often

with a lot of sadness. Most of all, all of you, all of the witnesses that have come before us, spoke with passion.

We have said that this was the first experience for this Commission, and I can tell you that as a first experience, I don't think it could have been better. Again, we can only thank you in this community for making it that way.

I want to say that the words that you presented to us, while we thank you for them, we want to also let you know that we won't leave here and forget those words. We are going to take them with us. They play, as I have said over and over again, perhaps the most important part of what we have as a task before us. I can only tell you that, while we consider the words that you have provided us with, we will consider them in all seriousness, but I want to say also, that we will also consider them --. You asked us many, many times that what you are looking for is justice.

We promise you this: We will take the words that you have given us and, as I said, we will consider them very seriously, but we will also consider them with every ounce of fairness that we have inside of us. And we can promise you that we will do that, and we will do that quickly.

I don't know exactly when this particular phase of our Inquiry --. This stage where the community has spoken to us and that perhaps, as I've said, may be the most important part of what we do.

There are other phases which we have to go through now as an Inquiry. We have other witnesses to hear from, from other parts that have been involved in this process over the years. And we have, of course, as is always the case, we have to hear from the legal side of it and what those arguments may be. When we put all of that package together, we will be making those recommendation; we will be making our report and filing that report, of course with the Government of Canada, but also with you people here. That will contain our recommendations.

It is our hope that we will have that completed and before you by the end of April of this year. That is our intent. Now, of course, things may happen that will cause us to take longer than that, but as I say, these are the kinds of things that we want to do in a very timely fashion. You people have lived with this for forty years now, and we want to do our part as expeditiously as we possibly can, and we intend to do that.

So, in conclusion, while we do not necessarily have the authority to tell people what they are supposed to do or to insist that things are done a certain way, I think our role is to gather this information and to put that to the proper people and, as has been stated, hopefully the goodwill, whatever those recommendations will be, will come forward and that process will carry on. As you have stated over and over again, you want that to reflect justice, and we can only tell you that the part that we have to play in it will certainly require that as well.

So, that ends this portion of the sessions. Thank you again for being the wonderful hosts that you were. It was our pleasure to be here and to hear from this community. So, thank you once again, and we'll hold this session, this Inquiry, this portion of it in adjournment to our next phase.

Thank you very much.

---WHEREUPON THE HEARING AT COLD LAKE, ALBERTA WAS ADJOURNED

7. Extracts from the Cold Lake First Nations Witnesses’ Testimonies to the Indian Claims Commission, 1992-93

THE INDIAN CLAIMS COMMISSION

CLAIM OF THE COLD LAKE FIRST NATIONS IN RELATION TO PRIMROSE LAKE AIR
WEAPONS RANGE

EXTRACTS FROM TESTIMONY OF COLD LAKE FIRST NATIONS WITNESSES

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[Editor’s note: there are no sections 1 or 2 in the original. Please note that names follow quotes in this section.]

3. CHIPEWYAN TERRITORY

“But, the whole area, from my own research, from interpretation of the stories from my great grandmother, the area was always indigenous to the people here.”

Allan Jacob Volume VI, page 804

4. HUNTING, FISHING AND GATHERING

“The traditional territory of the Cold Lake First Nations include this area which we refer to as “Hathtuwey” in our language. Prior to the Department of National Defense occupation, the Chipewyan people were self-sufficient in practising their traditional way of life in the Primrose area; this means the hunting, fishing, trapping, picking berries, and gathering roots were normal activities that we depend on for our survival. Everything we need, we needed for good living was

there for us: Plenty of moose, fish, and wild berries. The income from trapping and fishing was used to sustain our families, our farms, and our way of life.”

“The community spirit was at its peak and self-esteem was at an all-time high. The fierce sense of pride and dependence was shared by all. We shared everything. The people were living in harmony with the environment and each other.”

Chief Mary Francois Volume I page 2

Mr. Henderson: “When you were in the Primrose Air Weapons Range, do you remember fishing, hunting and trapping?”

Mr. Francois/Interpreter: “...There were two of us, my brother and I. We used to fish from there, me and my brother. When we were finished fishing, then we would hunt muskrats. We used to kill moose or beaver. We had about twenty traps and that’s what we used to trap with.”

Benjamin Francois Volume I, page 43

5. COLD LAKE CHIPEWYAN TERRITORY

“When Janvier arrived, I believe that it was around Suckerville where the people were living at the time. Unless somebody can point to me anything different, I believe that the people here have been indigenous to this area for untold centuries, even before then, because the language is completely of the area. We have a word, for instance, in our language which means road, “telew” (phonetic), which means frozen water, so that their route was frozen water in the wintertime, which invokes to me a thought that they did a lot of their industry in the wintertime also.”

Allan Jacob Volume VI, pages 802 – 803

“What I heard was from the people that Suckerville was the centre. From my experience, it was the centre. I went up in the north to the trap line with my father in January 1947, when I was very young. We went to Suckerville. We travelled from there.”

Allan Jacob Volume VI, page 803

“The tradition of the people was that they ranged all in that area.”

Allan Jacob Volume VI, page 804

6. FOREST/PRAIRIE BOUNDARY

“Apparently, what was happening before the Treaties was that the Chipewyans were involved with the fur trade, and because they had the abilities to gather food, a variety of foods, whereas on the plains it was mostly buffalo or bison. The Chipewyan people were able to provide fish, dried fish, and all the different game that lived in the forest. So, for that reason, they were often invited, with the Plains Cree to hunt buffalo with them.”

John Janvier Volume VII, page 817

“Well, in those days, the prairie began right at Cold Lake, As late as when the reserve was first surveyed, the original survey indicates that there was mostly prairie.”

John Janvier Volume VII, pages 823

8. COLD LAKE CHIPEWYAN OCCUPATIONS OF PRIMROSE AFTER TREATY 6

“At that time the two people that signed Treaty Six on behalf of the Cold Lake people was a man named Jackfish. Jackfish and his brother Antoine. Antoine was recognized as the headman. I suppose today we would call him a councillor - a band councillor. But at that time they were known as headmen.”

“As far as the Chipewyan people were concerned, they did not have any concept of chiefs, because they lived in small groups. They hunted and trapped, mostly families, maybe two or three families together. They did have a person who looked after the family, but there was no chief.”

“So, when the Treaties began, Jackfish and his brother being bilingual, both Chipewyan and Cree, a lot of the bands that were included in Treaty Six were all Cree, so they fit right in. Apparently, what was happening before the Treaties was that the Chipewyans were involved with the fur trade, and because they had the abilities to gather food, a variety of foods, whereas on the plains it was mostly buffalo or bison. The Chipewyan people were able to provide fish, dried fish, and all the different game that lived in the forest. So, for that reason, they were often invited, with the Plains Cree to hunt buffalo with them.”

John Janvier Volume VII, pages 816 – 817

“I believe that under Treaty they would be allowed to exist as they did before, making a living from the lands they had used before the Treaty, and this is where the trap lines came from, in the Hathtuwey area.”

Allan Jacob Volume VI, page 802

10. TRADITIONAL LIFESTYLE AND USE OF PRIMROSE LAKE AREA

“Yes. That was a home. That was our second home out there. That was - in the first place, our people used to stay up in Primrose until they got this reservation here. So when they got this reservation, well, they come here in summer but then they’re up north in winter. Most every one of them had moved back in winter as soon as the snow falls.”

Pierre Muskego Volume I; page 21

“I remember, of course, a long time ago, about seventy years. I remember from that time.”

“Back then, I can remember staying in the bush with my grandparents from both sides; my father’s father and my mother’s father. I stayed with my mother’s father many times over, there in Saskatchewan. In the fall, we’d hunt for fox. We’d get credit at the store and then we’d leave. When the beaver pelts were prepared, around Christmas time, we’d come back and would pay up

our bills at the store. I remember it very well. It was very cold back then, not like today. It was cold. Even if it was sixty below, people would sleep outside along the trail.”

“People were content, they were happy. That’s the way I remember it. People didn’t have any problems. We hunted - we had meat and food we hunted for. That was the only way because there was nothing else. The only way to make money was with beaver pelts. Finally, there was commercial fishing. It’s a long story when you’re talking about the old days.”

“In the old days, people got along together. Even without money, people helped each other. You didn’t ask to get paid. Everyone helped each other. Everyone was happy then, not like today. I remember we travelled by horses and dog teams. When the Chipewyans made something, they made snowshoes. They also made toboggans. That’s as much as I remember that Chipewyans made for travel. Another form of travel was canoes made of birch bark. These were the things Chipewyans made for travel: Snowshoes, toboggans, and canoes. This, I remember well.”

“As for beaver pelts, some people were so good at hunting and preparing pelts that they made a lot of money. Come springtime, we traded at the store for supplies to last year-round. There were no jobs and very few white men.”

“Finally, word got around that the land was going to be taken away. They were talking about the Air Force. I saw it written in the newspaper that the land was being taken away, they said. About three years later, 1952, was the last time we harvested beaver pelts there.”

Dominic Piche Volume IV; pages 517-519

“What I am going to be doing here this afternoon, hopefully, is presenting as accurate a picture as possible about the history of the Dene people and the fur trade. And also, for about ten to twelve minutes, I would like to play excerpts from the tapes. I have hundreds of hours of tapes of the lady in question.”

“Her name was Rosalie Andrew, and through extrapolation from her stories - particularly her youthful stories about the incidents at Frog Lake, the so-called Frog Lake massacre in 1885 - we assume she was twelve to fourteen years old. And being that there were no records kept that survived from that age, nobody knows exactly how old Mrs. Andrew was. So, from extrapolation, we assume that she was born in 1872 to 1874, and she died June 30, 1979.”

“She was a gifted story-teller. She had exquisite language control. She had command of the language plus what they called the Denene Hyatheway (phonetic) which is - I suppose you could call it High Chipewyan. When I play her tape, I am going to pause at every few seconds for the translator to catch up to her because she does speak very fast, although she does speak eloquently.”

“From her stories and from documentation derived from various archives, we have found out certain things about the history of the people as it relates particularly to the fur trade, which is relevant to the hearings on Primrose Lake at this time.”

“Now, according to oral tradition, and that is stories passed on from one generation to the next, I learned through my great-grandmother, Mrs. Andrew, of a lady named Thwah Narelka

(phonetic), which in our language means Twirling Martin - translated very loosely, Twirling Martin - who was allegedly the first Dene person to meet a European.”

“Now, I had thought in my earlier years that this was just another folk tale. I hadn’t paid much attention to it until about a few years ago when my friend, John Janvier, brought about some documentation he had gotten from the Hudson Bay archives, which tells the story of Twirling Martin or Thwah Narelka.”

“So from her story, the first contact our Dene people had with the Europeans was with employees of the Hudson Bay Company. I believe this happened pretty close to the Nelson River area of Churchill, Manitoba, at the Hudson Bay area.”

“There is no more history until about 1780. Again, we have to go through extrapolation to arrive at the estimated date. Around 1780 the original Janvier, and nobody knows to this day, I don’t think, yet or has found any records as to what his baptismal name was, his name was Janvier. Well, I we can assume from the stories that he was part Native, mostly French - and he was an employee at either one of the two big companies, either Hudson's Bay Company or Northwest Company.”

“We assume that he arrived in 1780 because he had twin sons, one of whom stayed here and who was on the first Treaty pay list in 1876 as aged ninety-three. So, if he arrived around 1780 and he took a Chipewyan wife, he had twin sons probably in 1783. Again, we have to make inferences from recorded history.”

“This original Janvier, when he arrived, brought with him the fur trade, directly from the Hudson Bay Company into the area, and he did it in a big way. He taught the people the fur industry, the demands for the furs in markets such as Europe. There was a big demand for such items as mink, sable, silver fox, et cetera.”

“Now, there is a whole industry around the fur trade. You have heard stories about certain ways that you have learned from generations past; how to prepare the furs, not just to catch the animals, but to prepare them also, how to market. The people here received detailed information on marketing of the furs from these original Janvier people.”

“He had two sons. The one who is listed in the first Treaty pay list as aged ninety-three, his name was Jean-Pierre. That much is known about him. His twin brother was Baptiste Janvier, who emigrated from here to a place Neetalastweh (phonetic), which in my language is La Loche in what is now Saskatchewan. From what we know of Jean-Pierre, he was a very energetic individual. He had a lot of children, and that's all I can say about him; he had lots of children. His children in turn were energetic and they had lots of children.”

“Today, most of the people on this reserve are directly descended, one way or the other, from Mr. Janvier originally. I say that so that you can understand the impact of the fur industry and the people. They learned first hand the marketing.”

“In the years between 1780 and 1952, when the fur business was taken away from our people, there was great competition for the furs that were brought in [by] our hunters and trappers. There

were quite a few independent buyers. Some of them are named by the people in the stories. Some of them represent the big companies, Hudson Bay Company, who actually went onto the trap lines sometimes to get a step up on the competition.”

“Some of these people - my great, great-grandfather, one of them - would take wagon-loads of furs, wagon and horses, and go to Edmonton - Fort Edmonton - and there he would trade the furs where the prices were better - more competitive - and where he would also shop for the basic goods that the people needed, like ammunition and the basic food commodities, at a much better price to them. He eliminated the middle man.”

“Our Dene people were the masters of the forest. They had [complete] and almost intimate knowledge - I would say almost complete knowledge - of their environment. My great-grandmother told me that the Creator never built anything haphazardly or just for the fun of it. In granny’s words, there is no such thing as weed in God’s garden.”

“The people knew about this inherent environment that they lived in totally - almost 1- or as much as is humanly possibly, they knew and adapted to it. They knew about the foods, the edible plants, medicinal plants and herbs and the creatures of the forest, including the waters and the fowls of the air.”

“So, with this knowledge, this was a prime gathering area employed by the fur industry. People had the knowledge of the animals, and all of a sudden they developed from about 1780 a knowledge of the fur industry and the fur markets.”

“That, in a sense, will summarize very briefly, in a nutshell, the history of the people in this area. That I did as kind of a prelude to what you are going to hear next. Now, This tape that I have in here, or the excerpt of the tape that I have in here, was taken October 11, 1976, and that's a little over sixteen years ago. I get a little emotional at times when I listen to her voice, because she meant so much, and I believe she means a whole lot to just as many people in the Cold Lake First Nation.”

“Like I say, I am going to play it. I am going to listen to the translation, pause it for a couple of seconds every so often because she does speak very fast, and I want the translation to be proper.”

Allan Jacob Volume VI, pages 774 – 779

“I remember some of it. I will tell you. The first time the white people came to this land -we are descendants from these people, because of these French men named Janvier. There was quite a few French people who came, but these are the only ones I know. These people came by boat to this area, and they were twins. They were the Janviers.”

“One of them went on to La Loche, Saskatchewan and died there, and the other took land here, and he died here. His homes are at Willow Point in Cold Lake. When his sons became adults, one of them was chosen a leader. Was his name Ulndai? Anyway, this Ulndai’s name was Matteas. I am sure that was the one that was chosen leader and signed the Treaties. I was told he was my grandfather. So, when all his children were grown, he took land at Berry Point in English Bay, Cold Lake.”

“Everybody started to farm and raise cattle, so one of the son’s took land at Legross. That is why we are here. This person was my father’s brother.”

“I wanted to talk to Indian Affairs and say what I wanted to say. Before my husband died, he had built me a good home, but it was a long time ago, and it was starting to rot, and I had one cow. We had all the things we needed for farming. We had harness, sleighs and wagons. All these things your grandfather earned. When he died, we still had the cow. When he died he had some bills to be paid, so I sold the cow to pay his bills. Now we had no cows, so I went trapping in the bushes before Christmas. I went with relatives who were going over there. I received credit for foods.”

“Before I left, one person told me, ‘When you make money from your furs, you’ll buy two cows from me’. That was my brother. so, I went way up into the bushes, past Indian land. It was far from here, and I went with the people. I killed a lot of muskrats because the muskrats were plentiful. It was really, really cold. I had a hard time trying to open the traps with my bare hands, because they would get so cold. I came back here at Christmas time.”

“I paid my bills with a merchant called Laurette. Do you know Laurette? No? He was a Frenchman. He used to be a teacher in Bonnyville. He quit teaching and opened a store. He had given me credit before I left and had given me food to eat. That’s when I went up north to trap muskrats, and it was so cold up there. I sure had some kind of life. When I came back at Christmas, and I paid up my credit with Laurette, he counted my furs. I also killed weasels. I had \$100 left, and I gave him all my furs.”

“So now I was going to buy cows. My brother said he could give me two cows for \$70, so I brought them. So I gave it to him. At first I was looking after them with my son-in-law and daughter, but they both died, so I had no one else to help me look after them.”

“Benoit said to me, ‘Auntie, you cannot look after the cows yourself’. He also had no money, and he knew I had money from the sale of some cows, and he was there to ask me for some money. ‘I am here to ask you for money’, he said. ‘I have worked for people, but I am not receiving proper pay for my work’, he said. ‘If you have no money and are in need of things, so am I’, I said to him. I told him I had no one to look after my cows, because all of my family had died. ‘Now I need you’, I said.”

“That year, I made hay so I was able to keep the cows and the horses. The next year, he took over. He made hay for them. I continued to work at my livelihood meanwhile. When the cows started to increase, I traded two cows for two geldings. The next time the cows increased I put the money in the bank. I left it there.”

“The house my husband had built was getting old and unsafe, so I guess Benoit and Nora were looking for a better house for me. I didn’t know this. Nora said to me, ‘Auntie, your house is falling apart. I think it would be better for you to buy a house, because this one is falling apart. I know a white man that has a house for sale. You should buy it.’ So we went to see this man. I had put \$500 away at the bank. When we got there, past Simon Martin’s house, past Big Lake by the highway, we looked at the house, and this is the house. Compared to my house, this house

was better, although it was cold. He asked me for \$500 for the house, so we went to the bank for the money. So I got the \$500. When I got home, the man gave the house to me.”

Rosalie Andrew Volume VI; pages 779 – 783

11. SEASONAL LIFE CYCLE

“As a child, I was raised in Primrose. We used to live year-round in Primrose, We had our home over there. I lived with my parents, of course, as a child. My dad did trapping, hunting; my mother made moose hides and made dry meat for the summer, or in the fall people would go hunting. They would do the same thing, put the meat away for the winter. Everything that they got was fish - just like fish, birds, moose, things like that, anything edible. It wasn't played with, people use it - even the rabbit, the chicken. The rabbit, in the winter the woman made blankets with it, they made rabbit blankets or they made vests and lined it for the men or for the children to wear. The feathers from ducks they made blankets, something useful. They never threw anything away. If they killed a moose - I remember my dad use to chop up bones and my mother boiled those bones and made grease out of it - collects grease - not only my mother, people do that - the elders. I remember that. They save everything because if they don't there is no way of living. That's the only living they had.”

Genevieve Andrews Volume I pages 55 – 56

“According to the history of the people we have heard, I was raised by my grandmother. My grandmother was blind. she had told us the history of years, about our forefathers. And time immemorial, this is our grounds and this is our land. This is where we survive, off land, and this is our bank - Indian bank, not these banks that's here I'm talking about, where you put money away. There's an Indian bank, that is where we get our monies from.”

“We go back and forth from here to Primrose in order for us to survive. Even before our time, even before Columbus, even before the Queen was here, before they make treaties, this is our land and it is our country. This is where we lived in order for us to survive. What are they doing with this place now? They're destroying it.”

“The timber that's there, we made good use of it. Of any kind of a timber that's in there, such as birch, pines - we make log houses with pines, barns. Birch, we make canoes with it. We make baskets with it. And for our storage for our fridge, which we call fridge over here - not with electricity, we had no electricity. We used bitch lights. I might as well say it our right because that's the way we had called it. We made storage bins in the muskeg.”

“The older people, our fathers killed moose, deer, caribou. The woman, they tanned these hides in order for them to store stuff in there for the winter, and they put this away in the bins. Most of these people lived out there as we lived out there, throughout the winter, throughout the summer, most of us. We picked berries and we stored it away - not in jars, in the baskets.”

“We fish. And we make smoked fish as we make dried meat and pemmican. We store it all away for the winter - same thing with fish. Any kind of fish that we'd catch, we used it all. Such as mariahs – it's just like halibut. We used the skin, we don't throw it away. We use it for our

windows. Caribou hides, deer hides, what we could think is bright enough. We used that for windows.”

“Birds, ducks. They had dogs to hunt ducks, they didn’t need guns all the time to hunt ducks. They stored all these things away. Pemmican. They used the feathers to make blankets with. They skin it, they used even that for blankets. Its pouch - if you made grease, they put that grease into its pouch, store that away, as I just finished telling you for a light, for a bitch light. Of any kind of an oil that you could get out of species, they store everything away in order for us to survive.”

“There's more than that yet to come. As I lived with my dad in the bush, we had no cross-cut saw. I had no sweet saw, no power saw. I had to chop wood. Some times I chop wood, me and my brother, three days - it would last about a week - in order for us, me and my dad, three of us to go way in the bush for us to be trapping and hunting for the family. And my dad goes alone away for moose or for trapping. As he is coming back, if he shoots a moose, if it’s late, he tells us, he shouts out the directions.”

“We hook up the dog team and we just go, late or no -- late or not late. Even at one o’clock in the morning, we used to go in order for us to survive, in order for the wolves not to get at any meat of what we kill.”

“We suffered through these lands and yet we didn’t consider it that way. At times, we take it the hard way, but yet this was our life. This is the way were brought up, and that is the way we are still until today. I’m still that way. I don’t depend on my own as my dad had taught me.”

“And all the things my dad taught me, until today I still remember. It wasn’t a very easy task, but we still went through with it because this was the only way that we lived, this was our livelihood.”

Eva Grandbois Volume III; pages 435-439

12. OCCUPATION AT PRIMROSE LAKE (SUCKERVILLE)

Mr. Henderson: “I think for the record, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Muskego [indicated] on the map a home site or cabin site on the southeast shore of Primrose Lake and harvesting activity north and I northwest of the lake in both Saskatchewan and to some extent in Alberta.”

“Is that right, sir?”

Mr. Muskego: “Right.”

Mr. Henderson: “Were there a lot of cabins in the area where you indicated that you had a cabin on the southeast shore?”

Mr. Muskego: “Yeah, there was something like a village. Well, they even had a church over there built.”

Mr. Henderson: “Do you recall who built the Church?”

Mr. Muskego: "The Roman Catholic Church. The priest been up there said a midnight mass once or twice. So actually, this is the place where we used to live. People from area - surrounding areas come down there knowing that the priest is going to be there. So you can see for yourself that was our home either way."

Pierre Muskego Volume I, pages 36 – 37

Mr. Marten/Interpreter: "Give me a pencil. This is where I stayed. My dad's trap line was there. I started fishing 1926 and there was a lot of Indian people all over the place and all around the [lake]. There was so many people. That's what happened, we all lived there at fishing camp and for trapping until the Bombing Range happened."

Simon Martin Volume I; page 71

Mr. Marten/Interpreter: "Around 1929 there was a church. The priest told us those of you that want to go back to the Reserve can go back but those of you that want to stay can stay during Christmas time."

Mr. Maurice: "Do you know of any people that stayed at that village year around?"

Mr. Marten/Interpreter: "Yes, when they were finished trapping then they would start fishing."

Mr. Maurice: "Do you know whatever happened to that village there?"

Mr. Marten/Interpreter: "There were always a lot of people here right around the Primrose Lake and they fished."

Simon Martin Volume I; page 82

Commissioner Prentice: "Yes, the name of the Primrose area has been referred to earlier in testimony as Hathtuwey. What does that stand for? What does that mean?"

Mr. Jacob: "Hathtuwey means Goose Lake in my language."

Commission Prentice: "Goose Lake?"

Mr. Jacob: "Wild Goose Lake, yes. I'm sure it is. A lot of times there is another word for it. Like my great grandmother would call it Ohney (phonetic) - that whole area is unspecified. Ohney Hathtuwey is Primrose Lake itself."

Allan Jacob Volume VI; page 801

"I don't know that, but we used to call it Suckerville. It's a village that's still there. People used to gather there every weekend. It was a little store there, and a little cafe there, a place to gather, have a few card games. But in them days, there was hardly any liquor. We weren't allowed to have liquor. There was - some people might have a little drink, but any liquor like that didn't interfere with their - you know. It's just a place where we gathered every weekend. Sunday night, we'd go back and do whatever we were doing, fishing, whatever."

Jobby Metchewais Volume II; page 147 – 148

“Now, we are talking about Primrose Range. There has always been people living there, even during the time of my grandfather, who was the First Chief. That's where they said he died there, but I don't know exactly what place. My grandfather, the one I stayed with when my grandmother died, was the Second Chief then.”

Louis Janvier Volume III; pages 314-315

Mr. Henderson: “I just wanted to ask a few more questions about Suckerville. You did spend some time there during the year?”

Mr. Janvier/Interpreter: “Lots of time. I lived there a lot of times.”

Mr. Henderson: “And as we understand, there was a church there?”

Mr. Janvier/Interpreter: “There had been a church there, but I didn't see it myself.”

Mr. Henderson: “And there was also a store run by a man named Lardon, I believe?”

Mr. Janvier/Interpreter: “Yes, Jim Lardon had a store there. Sometimes Charlie Moore sold some merchandise there. There was a lot of people then. Today, there is hardly any of them alive, not many of those old people alive today.”

Mr. Henderson: “How often would the store be open? Would it just be open for a few months, when people were there?”

Mr. Janvier/Interpreter: “It was open all the time, even in the middle of the night. Time was not important at that time. You must went there at any time, and they would open it up for you. If you needed something, they just gave it to you and that was it. We didn't follow the time at that time. We just followed the sun.”

Mr. Henderson: “Would the people be there running the store in the summertime as well?”

Mr. Janvier/Interpreter: “I'd come back here and I worked. I did just about everything, digging senega roots. In the fall, we'd hunt ducks. I'd fill a sack full of ducks.”

“The store was open all year-round, all summer, at all times. That's where Jim Lardon's home was so he never closed.”

Mr. Henderson: “I was just waiting for the translation. Did Mr. Lardon or Mr. Moore buy furs as well?”

Mr. Janvier/Interpreter: “Yes, they did. They did buy furs.”

Louis Janvier Volume III; pages 323 – 324

“Hon'ka or Suckerville.”

Louis Janvier Volume III; page 329

Mr. Maurice: “Did you live at Primrose Lake at any time during your life?”

Mrs. Minoose/Interpreter: “Yes, I grew up there because I didn't go to school....”

“Where I grew up, in the winter and summer alike, my grandparents always lived there. I lived on duck, fish and moose. No sweet stuff for me.”

“I grew up very well in that area....”

Sophie Minoose Volume IV, page 510

13. SCANT PRESENCE OF WHITES OR METIS

“In the old days that was a free country for Indian, they made a living with it, the old people. Not very many white people, a few, that came from I don’t know where - they lived with the Indian, the Indian supported them.”

Genevieve Andrews Volume I; page 58

“They were always over there using the land; they lived off the land. summer and fall, people would travel over there, hunt moose. People thought only of being there before the white man came, when there were very few people around.”

Angelina Janvier Volume III; page 337

“Because I believe there was no license in 1940, and there was not many white people. Only after - I can’t say what year, but the white people start to come in, game warden and - and for the fishing, I don't know.”

“But anyway, there was no white people, maybe one or two.”

Isobel Martial Volume IV; page 485

14. OCCUPATION IN 1952

“Okay, I am Charlie Metchewais, a band member of the Cold Lake First Nations, born in 1928 on the reserve. This would make me sixty-four years old.”

“In 1931, I was sent to school with my sister in Blue Quills in St. Paul in a residential school, due to the fact that we got hit by a tornado that destroyed our home. That was one of the reasons why I had to go to the residential school.”

“At the age of thirteen, I completed my grade eight and was terminated from school. I had no further education to work for or to go to, because high schools were very limited and the funding just wasn't available.”

“I had no choice but to come back to the farm, and I remained in 1942 and helped my dad on the home farm to care for livestock and help with the farming. That's about what I did in 1942.”

“In 1943 I first ventured up north to the Primrose Lake area. My dad took me up there to do some commercial fishing. Also, we did trapping that year for the winter months. Then we did muskrat trapping in the spring. So, that just about completes 1943. This is pretty well how I broke into the north.”

“In 1944 I went up with my grandfather and stayed in the trapper’s cabin up there between the junction of Martineau River and the Muskeg River. That was the allotment for his trapping area, and he shared his trap line with me and educated me in the trapping area and taught me a lot of the northern life and the way of life in the north. I spent the whole winter with him.”

“That same spring I spent the spring trapping rats with my dad in the same area - the Martineau River area. We trapped muskrat and he also taught me how to trap rats, skin the rats, scratch them and skin them and what have you. That was pretty well what I did in 1944. It was pretty much the same in ‘45, ‘46 and right up to about 1948.”

“There was a lot of activity up in the Primrose Lake area at that time. What Primrose had to offer - what there was in Primrose - when I say people, I mean the band members and the people that were allowed to be up in that area - were trapping, fishing, hunting, logging, recreation for the holidays in the summer, and also for materials that they can pick like birch bark to build their canoes. I helped my granddad build a canoe. Snowshoes, baskets for food storage, toboggans and we also made moose hide for dog harness. That’s what Primrose had to offer the people, which was plentiful. They made a successful living out of it, and it was very enjoyable. It was a pleasant way of life.”

“In addition to that, Primrose had other things to offer in other areas, like aviation. We had airplanes flying back and forth to transport trappers to and from locations where you can’t get in with a horse and sleigh. Also, the creditors who did our supplying for us for our trap lines; to get our grubstake and our trapping supplies.”

“There was the Hudson Bay; they benefited by it. Jospanger’s general store from Beaver Crossing, Brady’s general store, Phil Clark in Cold Lake, Charlie Pinsky, and there were a couple of other general merchants that supplied food and material for the trappers. So, they benefited from the Primrose Lake area.”

“There was also logging industry, where there was work available, where there was logging operations with these contractors. There was Tom Allard, Dick Hatch, Olsen, Arnold, Loby Lumber Company. They had logging camps up there which employed some of the local boys to do contract work on piece work, labour work, time work, hourly work or whatever, but there was money to be made. So, there was pretty well a choice what you wanted to do.”

“And out of these logging operations as well, it wasn’t all in terms of cash, you could take lumber in trade, and you could also take posts or rails. You always came back with something that you could use on the farm.”

“The fishing part, there was also the commercial fishing industry and also domestic. You could fish for your own use and also commercial. That was available for the people.”

“What the Primrose Lake area meant to the people of this area and the neighbouring communities and other reserves from the beginning of my time, it was always mentioned and discussed in this area - everyone you talked to: How did you make out this year; how was your year this year and what did you do? It was always something to do with the Primrose Lake area. It was their livelihood and survival. It was a living that they got out of the Primrose Lake area.”

“They had the freedom of trapping, hunting, a means of survival. There was never ever any food or any carcasses or animals wasted. Anything that was killed was used; the hides, the carcasses, even the bone structure was used.”

“That was the people’s livelihood. That’s was they got out of Primrose. They went over there in the fall of the year. I know my grandfather was a born trapper and, [as] far as I was concerned, he was a professional trapper. He trapped up there in the Primrose Lake area all his life. He would go up in July and prepare camp for the winter. He would cut hay, stack the hay in preparation for someone who was going to bring him up there so the horses had some feed. In order to keep a horse up there, they had hay. So, they did this all by hand with scythe and a hand rake. They made, maybe, a tonne of hay.”

“Also, the ladyfolks were doing berry picking, dehydrating berries, preparing for the winter months, storing food, making their birch bark baskets and also the lacing from the roots to lace their baskets with. This was all done in the fall of the year, while they were up there.”

“So, then came the hunting season and, of course, the menfolk went out hunting; killed their moose, dehydrated their moose, stored their food and then they came back after that was done. So, that was the preparation there for about, maybe, a month to six weeks. Then they came back after the hunting and came back here for what they called the Indian summer. They would come back here and put everything away at their home here; lock up their doors and prepare to leave for the winter.”

“Later on, in maybe mid-October or whenever winter set in, that’s when they went back up north to do their trapping. So, if you want to go trapping this year; okay go trapping.”

“What my dad did was, he would go trapping one year - fully - but then the next year he wouldn’t, just to let the animals build up again. So, he would go fishing. So, he would kind of split the two areas between fishing and trapping.”

“Then, after, they’re gone up north; they do their trapping, come back at Christmas. They bring their furs and come home for the Christmas festive season. There were celebrations, feasts. You could go to almost every house - any house - there was a feast; you were fed. There was plenty of food. There was good relationship; everybody spoke to one another, told stories. told jokes, played cards. You visited - it was kind of a rotation - you just visited anyone that you wanted to visit. They had real good relationships.”

“Of course, this happened during the Christmas season and then right after Christmas, of course, everybody goes back up north again. At that point, there was very, very little liquor involved. I There was no liquor at all, because the government was very strict about liquor on reserve at that time. We did make a batch of brew - I did, too, but that was maybe just a one-night thing. However, from there on there was none”.

“The people went back up north and trapped from the first, after the New Year, right until the spring when the pelts started to discolour. There is a change of colour sometime in February or March - March, I believe is when the coats first start to discolour. Then the finer furs, like, I’m taking about I the beaver, the rats, they come into their prime about in April, and that’s when the

rat season and beaver season open. So, there is a line there and you have to change that. so you go and trap your rats - your muskrats - 'till, oh, I'd say, about the middle of April. That's their mating season, of course, and then they discolour as well. Then they become their summer colours, of course, and we have to shut everything down and everybody comes home for the summer. But, by this time, they've made enough money and got enough furs to carry on their living for the summer. That's what they lived on."

"I know my grandfather brought all his pelts, turned them over to McGillvary; I believe he was the Hudson Bay Manager at that time at the Hudson Bay in Cold Lake - I think his name was McGillvary, and then old Leslie Hill was after. He would turn over his furs and McGillvary was the banker. My granddad never got no pay in full. He could, if he wanted to, but he left it there and McGillvary acted as a banker and also a merchant, a supplier and grocery man. That's what he lived on. Any time he wanted groceries, he had a line of credit there."

"So, again, there's May and June and July and then, of course, you start all over again. So, this is the way the cycle went in the trapping area."

Charlie Metchewais Volume VI; pages 668-675

15. TRAPPING AND BLOCK TRAPPING AREAS

"Well, in Saskatchewan there were not registered lines. I remember a few years I been up there that they made into blocks - block areas where the closest resident, the one that reside up there -- like, you know, they have cabins, there's trappers in there that made blocks and then they -- that's where they -- that was for the muskrat and beaver and this and that. But I don't recall the first year that I bought my license."

Pierre Muskego Volume I; pages 23-24

"So these guys are telling the people that we'll block up Primrose area and you'll be a game warden in this area, you will be a game warden in the other one, the other one. So these old people they never heard anything in their lives to be a game warden, they were glad to get it I guess."

Victor Matchatis Volume II; page 248

"In 1944 I went up with my grandfather and stayed in the trapper's cabin up there between the junction of Martineau River and the Muskeg River. That was the allotment for his trapping area, and he shared his trap line with me and educated me in the trapping area and taught me a lot of the northern life and the way of life in the north. I spent the whole winter with him."

Charlie Metchewais Volume VI, page 669

16. ECONOMICS OF TRAPPING AND FISHING

"There is a lot of times, I remember old man sell his fur. In the two months we were not out there, sometimes he make 17, \$1800. That's what much fur he brings out in two months. And again another time you can come out with \$3,000. Another time you've only got a thousand. You see that" how it works. It not always work the same way."

“So a poor year you would be looking at maybe a thousand.”

“Yeah.”

“For those two months?”

“Yeah.”

“And a good year maybe 3,000?”

“In a good year maybe sometimes 3,000, 2,000, 200 - 2,500 maybe sometimes. It works that way. It's not always work the same. It's - you go out and set a snare for a coyote, you don't know he's going to come through there. You are just taking that chance. If he comes, you've got him. If he doesn't, you snare would be hanging there maybe all day. You don't get nothing out of it.”

Amable Scanie Examination Debene Esse, pages 28 – 29

“The people, our relatives from this reserve, had a very good life back then. They lived well. They made their living and made plenty of money from selling fur and that's how we made our living. I remember all that because the people were really good trappers. So, they made very plentiful money from there that I knew. My dad also made a lot of money.”

Scholastique Scanie Volume VI; pages 651-652

17. INDEPENDENT CHIPEWYAN LIFESTYLE FROM PRIMROSE HARVEST

“From that time when they took Primrose over, the people – they're not the same. They have to wait for social assistant. This time when we used to live - make our living, as I said, we never wait for social assistance to give us checks, we made our own, we lived our own, we earned our money.”

Genevieve Andrews Volume I; page 67

“And one thing I'd say: Like anything, we had like - supposing now we had our traps, our food, to go in the bush with. We had to supply that ourselves. We didn't get it from no one, you know. We managed to get our own food, our own traps, everything. Nobody helped us out to [buy] our food.”

Jobby Metchewais Volume II; page 137

“I was always with my father. I watched how he trapped and how he hunted and knew all of his skills so I became just as good as he was to be able to do this. We'd stay there until Christmas and then we would come back. He would sell his furs and he would buy horses from certain people. They would herd the horses to the Reserve around that time to sell. He bought some very good horses and harnesses, and that's what we used. He also bought saddles and other supplies so he was never without.”

“My dad had never begged for anything in his life and he always worked for us and we had plenty to eat. In the summertime if we did not have any meat, he would kill a cow, and that's

what we lived on. And in the fall, he would go hunting for moose. When he killed a moose, my mother would fix the hides and make leather food. And then out of that, she would make us mitts and moccasins for the winter months.”

Charlie Blackman Volume III; pages 295-296

“Since the closing of the Primrose Range, we are poorer and poorer until today. At least when we had our livelihood before the bombing range came, we would leave and have a good life. Summer and winter was a good life. Nobody helped us. The government never gave us money. The only money we saw from the government was our treaty money for five dollars.”

Charlie Blackman Volume III; pages 303-304

“Well, I go hunting. Anything what I can catch to eat, rabbit, chickens. I didn’t have to buy no meat. I didn’t take no meat when I go up north. What I’d take was a slab of bacon or stuff, what we need. I never took no meat up north. It was staples. There’s a lot of steak in the bush there, I never took any. I know I’m going to get something when I get up there. We took no meat. That was my meat over there.”

“And my welfare was over there in the bush, too. I remember that. I had welfare over there, not here. There was nothing here. That’s how we made a living. All these Indians up here, they made a living out of Primrose Lake. That’s our home up there.”

Toby Grandbois Volume III; pages 408-409

“This was -- this Primrose Lake is the most important land that they have taken away from us. This was an Indian bank. We don’t need to put money away in a bank over there to be waiting for us. The money is waiting for us in Primrose Lake. That’s our bank. This is where we get our money, and we make plenty of it, too.”

“Even before our time, our forefathers lived there. Before the Queen. Before Columbus. This is our land, and this is our country, and this is our bank. We live by land, we live off land, and we’re still living on it. Even how hard it’s going to be for me, the way I think, they have to give us back our land because this land belongs to us. I am really serious regarding this Primrose because this is the only survival that we had.”

Eva Grandbois Volume III; page 438

“Well at that time, it was kind of hard -- it wasn’t too hard. That’s all we had to do. We had to work for our living, we don’t get nothing from the welfare, nothing them days. We just have to do it. That’s all through trapping and fishing. We lost all that land. We can’t go fishing any more, not even trapping or hunting, nothing.”

Moise Janvier · Volume IV, page 465

“I knew people who came from Primrose. They were so happy to come back from the north because they had furs and whatever they made from up north.”

Hazel Jacko Volume V, page 606

“The only thing that I’ve seen -- all this work that I did -- that trapping was a good life. You didn’t have to buy meat; you didn’t have to buy fish. All you had to [buy] was flour and lard, tea and sugar, when you were trapping. But in those days, you’d go to a store in the summertime, when we haven’t got nothing and no way to make money, we went to the store, Josh Langer’s (phonetic) and old Brady – he’d just give it us, give you all the stuff you want, all summer. In the fall, we’d go back trapping and we’d pay for that - all the bills we had. And we used to have some money left over.”

Lazarre Janvier Volume V, page 614

“My first seven years I spent during the trapping seasons with my father’s trap line, which was north of what is now the air weapons range, known as the Watapi Lake area. That’s where we had our trap line.”

“You have heard many speakers tell of the good times that they experienced during those years, good times in that they made money; they made a livelihood. They were able to sustain -- make a good living really -- out of their trapping, fishing.”

Marcel Piche Volume VII, pages 878 – 879

18. SHARING OF THE BENEFITS OF PRIMROSE

Commissioner Bellegarde: "So whatever happened at Primrose during that time was linked very closely [with] the community of Cold Lake, couldn’t really separate the two communities as such, they were almost like one; is that right?"

Mrs Nest: “Yes. It was just like one because it wasn’t only me and my family I think when people came back from the north, everybody was happy, everybody had a good life, everybody shared. This I can recall.”

“When people came back for Christmas, I think was really the happiest time. You could hear sleigh bells going to Midnight Mass, New Year’s, people would make a big feast. It was really a nice life and now it seems like all of our tradition, culture is just fading out of our hands.”

Catherine Nest Volume II, page 231

“We got back this way; they had to bring horses back this way, I think. So, we came back, and I think my old man used look after the horses back here for his parents. The only time he goes back is to pick them up at Easter time. Before Easter, he goes back and gets them. But, in the meantime, we were back here.”

“But, one thing I remember, I used to look forward to their coming home, because they used to have plenty of furs, whatever they were hunting, whatever they were trapping. I knew they had enough money. They used to buy me things. I used to look forward to their coming home anyways.”

“As years went by, I started to have children one year after another. I started losing my sight. At first, my husband used to go out with his parents, but then as I started having children -- they

were only a year apart, three of them in a row -- he knew that I was getting blind, and he wouldn't leave me then."

"My children were naughty and very hyper, so it was sort of hard for me, especially when you are blind, with little ones like that; three, two and one. Anyway, he kind of stayed around me. Off and on, if I had somebody to stay with me, then he used to go out. He used to go and stay up north with his parents."

"But, during that time, I remember we used to look forward to their coming back from up north, because at Christmas, they used to bring us a big box full of groceries. That was our food hamper. And clothes for my kids."

"In the fall time, they still go up north, whether to make hay or for their horses; and hunting. That's where they seem to prepare for their winter stay, I guess. Right after the first of November, people were quite much with the church then, so they never used to leave 'till after the second of November. Then they all go up north and come in only at Christmas time. That's what I mean that we used to look forward for their coming back, because that's when I used to get clothing and food for my children. Even my children, they used to count how many nights until grandpa and grandma are coming home. They used to ask me that. They really used to look forward for that because, even though I didn't go up there, well, my husband and me we got enough from them anyway. They used to bring us enough food back. Right after Christmas, again, they did the same thing, go back. Easter, they did the same thing."

"Again, they used to buy us a bunch of things, like groceries and wild meat. Again, I used to look forward to Easter, of their coming back."

"A few years I spent with my children and look forward for this, for Easter and Christmas. When they went up north, I knew then that they never came home without anything. If they did, it was very seldom. They even used to bring me berries in birch bark. They used to make baskets out of birch bark. They would sew it up and my mother-in-law used to bring me cranberries, or whatever. That used to keep a long time, because cranberries don't spoil."

"After that, they weren't going up north any more; after they got paid for their trap line. I knew then, they were sort of lost. They used to work around here, maybe brushing or whatever they could do for their livelihood, to live from day to day."

Genevieve Janvier Volume VI; pages 635 – 637

"We never begged for our living, there was no welfare. If we didn't provide for ourselves, then there was no other way. Nobody could help us except ourselves. We may have been poor in other people's eyes, but we never thought we were poor."

Charlie Blackman Volume III; page 298

"The community spirit was at its peak and self-esteem was at an all-time high. The fierce sense of pride and dependence was shared by all. We shared everything. The people were living in harmony with the environment and each other."

Chief Mary Francois Volume I; page 2

21. IMPACT OF THE LOSS OF THE TRAPPING AND FISHING IN PRIMROSE AREAS

“Which was taken away. When Primrose Lake was taken away, it made us what we are today. We used to be proud people. It killed our pride; it killed our culture; it killed everything that we stood for. We used to be a proud people; today we are a welfare people. We wait for our welfare every month, and there are very few people that have jobs here. There are very limited jobs and most of our people, like I say, they wait for welfare. When they took our bombing range away, that’s what they turned us into - welfare people.”

Francis Scanie Volume VI; pages 732-733

“They spoil a lot of good people when the Government give that land away for us. They start giving out relief where there is no need of. They should give us something else to do, put us to work or something, it might have been better. But when they started dishing out relief, they ruin hundreds of good men and good young girls that could be able to work. They just ruined them.”

Amable Scanie Examination Debene Esse, pages 65

“So, it was kind of a disruption, I would say, when the DND took over these tracts of land and the lake. The transition between, especially on my dad’s side, he could not read or write. He was a trapper. Mind you he had a home, a small farm and the like. But, I believe the transition leading up to today, has had quite an impact socially, economically, emotionally, environmentally, you name it.”

“If we have to take it all back and add it together, I do believe, from what I understand and have been listening to all day today and on the previous occasion, I [don’t] think people did get what was rightfully -- you might say, their compensation were not adequate enough to adapt from a trapping environment to, say, a farming environment. This was very difficult for some, I would imagine, because I remember my parents during the summer months, they would be preparing for the coming season. They had all their equipment to contend with, and this disrupted everything, which brought all other things that seems to set everyone back now, like booze and the like.”

Maurice Grandbois Volume VI, pages 749 – 750

“Things were still okay, but after that things started to fall apart. My mother and my dad would tell me that after the kids left for residential school, it was really difficult because they had nobody to look at but themselves. Almost like their purpose in life was gone, because they could no longer practise their livelihood. They could no longer go back up north.”

“In my young eyes, he was my idol. To me he was a hero. I looked up to this man -- all five-foot five of him. I loved him dearly. That was his simple symbol of manhood, going up north, doing what he did. Even with less experience than other hunters and trappers, he was still doing okay. He was a man’s man. But, after they took that away from him, things fell apart.”

“He will forgive me if I say that he got further and further into the alcohol problem. The family fell apart. Even I, my life fell apart on me.”

“This is an illustration that Primrose Lake was everything that the people needed to practise livelihood, to be a man. When they took it away, they literally emasculated my people. Things fell apart. My father had cattle and little by little the cattle disappeared. The implements that he had bought, they also disappeared, and nothing is left of his homestead now.”

Allan Jacob Volume VI, pages 786-787

Mr. Herman: “Well, after they had taken the range, over, the dealer -- we used to make a deal at the store, Hudson Bay. We got credit in summertime, you know.”

Mr. Herman: “So after the bombing range close, they quit. All of them all the dealers, they quit. There's no income. No more fur coming in.”

Mr. Henderson: “Previously, you would build up credit through summer and then pay it off when you sold furs in --”

Mr. Herman: “Yeah.”

Mr. Henderson: “--the winter and spring?”

Mr. Herman: “Yes.”

Mr. Henderson: “And when you were excluded from the range, your credit was cut off, too?”

Mr. Herman: “Yes.”

Pierre Herman Volume I; page 126

Ms. Scanie: “Well, we did have the farm all the time, but ‘till we separated, everything drained out on account of alcohol. That was it. We both drifted away from each other.”

Chief Commissioner LaForme: “You say this was on account of alcohol. When the trapping was going ton, when that was your lifestyle, was there a problem with alcohol then?”

Mrs. Scanie: “Nothing.”

Chief Commissioner Laforme: “So, when you say on account of alcohol, is it that your husband starting drinking?”

Mrs. Scanie: “I can’t blame only my husband. I drank too. I can’t hide nothing.”

Chief Commissioner Laforme: “Did this start to happen after the trapping was all closed down?”

Mrs. Scanie: “Yes.”

Scholastique Scanie Volume VI; pages 658-659

“I was only here for about a year, and then I left and went to trade school. I went to Calgary for a few years, Calgary Tech. But, I noticed a vast difference when I came back in 1955. It was really

uprooted. It was so mixed up. The members, the people in the local area were totally in the dark. They didn't know what to do. I don't know how to explain that."

"The mine was still up in that area, but they can't go because there's a gat there; they can't go there no more. You would actually be shot or go to jail, one or the other."

"It did really hurt a lot of people. They got frustrated. Relationships started to -. There was a little bitterness in the area, and it really got bad to work. It was really terrible here for a while. It just turned everything around from good to bad. That's been going on forty years now."

"I have noticed in the last little while things -- the situation, the atmosphere is starting to change a bit. The younger generation have a different view. I think they are looking in different areas. They are starting to forget about the bombing range, now because there's no hope that they'll ever go back there."

"This is where there is another problem. When you're looking to go in some direction and the intent is there, but there is no movement, how can you get there when you don't have any funding or money, or anything to operate with?"

"I know there are a lot of young people here who have asked me several times to come and train them to be in apprenticeship as a mechanic or welder and stuff like that, which I had. I've got seven journeymen tradespeople here on the reserve, but when you don't have the money to do these things, it's rather difficult, and there are a lot of quality people here -- the younger people. They're willing to go in that direction, but they just don't have the money to work with."

"So, losing the bombing range rights really set this community back right to the ground. It really did. We were a very, very proud community. This reserve was a very respectful reserve. We were, I would say, above average. A lot of the individuals had livestock. They had gardens; they had homes. It was happy go lucky. We had good recreation here. We had good ball teams. We had good rodeos. Now we don't have that. We have no money coming in since we lost the bombing range. When we had the bombing range, when the guys came in, everybody had time, they had money to live with. So, we had good recreation. We had treaties here one week at a time; danced for a whole week. Didn't have to work; danced the whole week. Played ball; soccer, rodeos, hand games, Indian dances. Now we can't do that because we don't have no money. We have nothing to turn to. It really hurts."

"Like I mentioned, I said on losing the bombing range, there was a tremendous amount of frustration within the community. As a result, alcohol became a problem; the crime rate increased; there were conflicts among the members and in relationships in the surrounding neighbourhood; unbalanced feelings toward one another. When we had celebrations or any recreational activity here, we had outsiders come in; just loaded in this outside area over here. Some people came from Lloydminster, Marwayne, St. Paul, and Meadow Lake came here to share their days with us."

"But when alcohol became a problem and the crime rate increased, it kind of scared our neighbouring communities away. The kind of hesitate to come here. But now it's starting to shape up again. -It's starting to look a little different."

“We had a real good, beautiful New Year's dance here. This ball was just full. Before that, we had a round dance and it was full. So, it's starting to look a little better. We are starting to communicate, talk to one another. It's a little different atmosphere now, but for a while there it was unbearable.”

“Because of that sudden change and the transition, it is very hard to make a sudden adjustment over night. [You] can't build a Cadillac out of a Pontiac overnight. I think Johnny Cash tried it and it didn't work. Did you ever hear his song?”

“To get the Primrose system out of the members has taken a long, long while, and to get us adjusted to today's society – it's getting there, but the next problem is the funding, the money.”

“There is another thing that I noticed. Before, when the trapping and fishing was going on in the forties and before, the government -- the federal government -- had assisted the farmers. Whoever wanted to farm were given horses -- not everybody. I think there were five per year, or something like that -- five families, or something. They would get horses and harness and cattle and building supplies to get them started, to get them established.”

“When this bombing range -- after the settlement, when they got paid, this was nullified. That was cut out. There is no more of that, so we don't get no more help in that direction. So, we are pretty well everybody on his own now, and it's still a problem. I certainly hope that we can go in some direction that we can get compensation for what we've lost.”

Charlie Metchewais Volume VI; pages 680 – 684

35. TWENTY YEARS

Mr. Marten/Interpreter: “Indian Affairs never helped us for anything at that time. One man, by the name of Eckland, heard about the closure and he was there when we got money. He told us we will get paid for five years. They paid us for two years and then a year later the Range was closed to us.”

Simon Marten Volume I; page 75

“We understood that this was supposed to be for a twenty-year deal, is the way. I hear a lot of old people mention that twenty-year bit, but everything was so oral, there was nothing put on paper when we were dealing with Indian Affairs - everything we did, we went through Indian Affairs. They were the one that were negotiating for us.”

Ernest Ennow Vol. I p. 89

“They thought that they were signing another interim payment because there were negotiations -- from what I gather from other elders, the promise was for -- the Department of National Defense wanted the land for twenty years only and after twenty years there would be further negotiations.”

Ernest Ennow Volume I; page 102

“It sounded like it for me, it would be returned to me, the land, after twenty years.”

Pierre Herman Volume I; page 128

"It wasn't any more than we got before, but we did get something. And as far as I know, when my husband went to the meetings, he always said that they told them -- like the Indian Department told them that this was only for twenty years that they were leasing this land. And so they, in any way, some of them thought that was okay, you know."

Nora Matchatis Volume II; page 215

"The quit claim, I didn't like to sign it first time but according to some hearings -- I won't say -- it was told to me but they said it was for twenty years."

"So you know, when you are getting a little bit of money here for twenty years you feel not too bad. You know the way I felt anyway, it was going to continue for twenty years payment, that's okay."

Victor Matchatis Volume II; page 242

"And, then, we were told we were going to get five years."

Mary Marten Volume II; page 270

Commissioner LaForme: "Did your father ever tell you anything about what was happening with the range, what the agreement was. How many years compensation would be paid, things like that?"

Mrs. Marten: "Well, the only thing he told me was, they were leasing the land for twenty years and that the Air Force were coming in and they were going to build a bombing range. This is -- I don't know why but this is the bombing range that was told to us."

"So, he says, well for twenty years -- after twenty years if the Air Force left, then Primrose Lake -- the Primrose area would be given back to us. so I assumed all this time that was what was going to happen."

Mary Marten Volume II, page 274

Like I said, at the time I didn't go to meetings, it was just by hearsay from my dad. And my dad said Indian Affairs had told them that it was just a lease for twenty years. So, even to me, now and then, when I think of that -- what to me is -- what was the lease and what did it mean? I couldn't answer your question on that."

Mary Marten Volume II; page 285

"After twenty years, if the land continued to be used, we were supposed to get paid again. That was the agreement made at the time."

Louis Janvier Volume III; page 318

"Mr. Janvier/Interpreter: I wasn't told myself, but he was told. For twenty years, he said, the bombing range would be leased out. It's been a long time since then."

Angelina Janvier Volume III; page 334

“Only once I remembered when they were having a meeting in Primrose, he was there. I didn't go. When he came back he told me, he said, “Well, in twenty years, I guess we'll see that little shack I had built, that's when they're going to let us in again,” he had said. I couldn't figure out what --.”

Mr. Maurice: “What did your husband tell you about compensation during that twenty-year period that you couldn't go on the land?”

Mrs. Loth: “Well, I guess he had heard himself that -- when he went to that meeting, that they told him -- they were telling whoever was there talking to them about this, told him that it is leased for twenty years, just like it sounded. Like, in twenty years, they're going to get Primrose back. So that's what we thought all about. I thought about that all the time, that that's the way they made the deal.”

Sara Loth Volume III; page 353 – 354

“I said, ‘How are they going to do that?’ I asked brothers, ‘How are they going to do that?’ Well, they said, ‘They're going to lease for twenty years, lease it for twenty years.’”

“I said, ‘Well, do you think you're going to be able to come back in twenty years' time and be a good trapping yet?’”

“‘Well’, he said, ‘I don't think so. I don't think so because,’ he said, ‘if it's going to be a bombing range,’ he said, ‘there's going to be a lot of things that's going to be destroyed up there.’ But he said, ‘We hope to get enough money for that lease for the twenty years.’ This is what they heard.”

Jim Janvier Volume III; page 392

“Anyway, at that time when this started, I was the one that was in the meeting at that time about the bombing range -- I was at that meeting. Twenty year's lease, in twenty year's time, we were supposed to be getting paid and some money -- or we get the land back or the money, that's what they promised us. That's how they made a deal, I think. I'm pretty sure that's the way I understood, that's how it started. I was there.”

Toby Grandbois Volume III; page 407

“Yeah, they told us that we were going to get paid for so long. And then twenty years' time, we was going to get another payment or else we got that land back. That's what they said. That's the way I understood.” Toby Grandbois Volume III; page 420

“When were -- yes, we were told that every twenty years we would get paid. As I say, we didn't know that they leased the land. Maybe they just sold it, we don't know. Maybe they just leased it, we don't know. But anyway, as I hear my own way, they told us every twenty years you get paid.”

Isobel Martial Volume III; page 497

“Before we were to receive our final payment, government people came around before I got there. One old man, Benoit Grandbois, was sitting there before me, so I went up behind him. I wanted to hear what he had to say, so I went beside him. While I was standing there, they began to question him -- Benoit. He asked them, ‘For how long is this for that you make us sign this paper?’ He was told it was for twenty years, at which time the land will be returned to you. In twenty years you can go back where you were.”

“He really didn’t want to do this, but everyone else signed, so he couldn’t do anything else. ‘If it’s true what you say; if it’s for only twenty years, then I’ll sign my name,’ he told them. ‘I’m telling the truth,’ they said. ‘In twenty years you can have your trap line back. [Its] your land and you can move back,’ they said.”

“He -- Benoit -- signed the paper in front of me. When it was my turn, I said, when I was told to sign my name, how long it was for that they want my signature. They said it was for twenty years that you are signing. I asked, ‘Are you sure that everything is proper; that the paper are in order before I sign?’ They said that, yes, everything was in order and that I’d get my [trap] line back in twenty years. I remembered the things my father told me, but I couldn’t do anything about it. I was told that it would be definitely for twenty years only, so I signed my signature to get paid. If I had known better, I never would have signed my name.”

John Blackman Volume V; page 555

“Yes, he said that it was definitely for twenty years. He said the land would be returned after twenty years. I asked them if this was written down on papers I was to sign. I was told not to worry about it. Everything was fixed up. Twenty years to get your land.”

John Blackman Volume V; page 561

“Now, I think it was about thirty years or so. When they first gave us compensation for the bombing range (they said) you will receive another payment in twenty years, and, if not, you will get the land back. I remember being told that much.”

Edward Grandbois Volume V; page 570

“They said they were going to pay it in twenty years’ time. That’s all we could hear.”

Adeline Charland Volume V; page 583

“Well, the way it was explained to me and put across to me was that, just hearing from my dad, he mentioned -- my father -- he mentioned that they were bargaining, negotiating on the terms -- I think it was a twenty-year span -- and they would get compensated for so much money to try and establish themselves in another form of lifestyle; whether they wanted to be a farmer or a dairy farmer, or whatever.”

“There was mention -- the one meeting I attended it was mentioned there that there would be a possibility that they would review this periodically, but it didn’t indicate just how often. But, there was mention. Some of the members that were on the floor had requested that they have a

twenty-year package where, at the end of twenty years, they would review it, and if there was any other negotiations to made, they would be drafted up then.”

Charlie Metchewais Volume VI; page 697

“It did become a topic after 1972. My dad used to talk about it. They gave up the bombing range for twenty years. He used to say that to us. After twenty years it would be negotiable again.”

Francis Scanie Volume VI; page 728

“So, we were here for two weeks, I suppose, or ten days or whatever it was. During the time we were here, there was a meeting called at the old bank hall. I remember going there to listen, and there were two or three people present. One was from Indian Affairs and another, I don’t know who he was. His name was Eckland, I think.”

“At that meeting the people were made to understand that they were going to get a fair deal, because they had lost their way of life, What they were told at that time -- I don’t remember what year it was exactly - they were told that they would be compensated annually for twenty years. Every year they would be getting a sum of money to compensation for the loss of their [trap] lines, or their livelihood.”

“After the twenty years were up, once the twenty years went by, then this deal was renegotiable again. By that time things will change and ways of life will probably change, and maybe people would want to negotiate for different things. That was what the people were made to understand at the meeting. That’s what I remember of the meeting.”

John Janvier Volume VI; page 828

Chief Commissioner LaForme: “Firstly, in the 1971-1972 period which you were on council -- is that correct, you were on council during that period?”

Mr. Metchewais: “Yes.”

Chief Commissioner LaForme: “You mentioned that the trappers would always raise the issue and wanted council to do something about it...can you recall what it was that the trappers were saying to council?”

Mr. Metchewais: “I think the understanding with the trappers was, they understood that it was a twenty-year agreement. They also understood that there would be compensation on an annual basis, whether it was yearly or whatever, but they would get compensation in the twenty years.”

Maynard Metchewais Volume VII, page 865

36. THE COLD LAKE COMMITTEE

“After the payments were stopped in 1956, a lot -- about four years elapsed. The people started wondering what -- how come the payments were stopped. They started having meetings. It’s only then that I took -- started to take an active part in it. We formed a small committee, there was the old Chief Harry Janvier, my aunt Nora Matchatis, and myself, we were on the committee. We started asking questions wherever we could; we wrote letters -- again, all through

Indian Affairs. They relayed our messages. And this committee that I talk about, we were representing the people. We didn't do anything on our own. Any letter that we wrote we brought back to the people and we read it for them, this is what we have come up with. And the people at that time let us know if there was any additions or deletions from this letter. If it was not what they wanted, we didn't -- we made sure that everyone was happy with it before we forwarded any letters."

"What we were asking for at that time since we lost our way of life, we will never feel compensated until the government or D.N.D., whoever, gives us another way of life."

Ernest Ennow Volume I; page 90

"We went to church after the first payment. Boy, everybody had nice horses, wagons, you name it, everything. A few years later, we came and that was all gone. Most of them had sold everything back, probably not even for what they paid. And everybody was so hard up. So in my own mind, I made up my mind, that, God, we have to do something. So anyway, then I started going to meetings, to the Band meetings. I started going. And I thought, well, if I can be a help to these people I will."

"So anyway, they picked us out. Ernest Ennow, my nephew, and I, we were picked out to work with the Chief. Harry Janvier was the Chief at the time. So we were picked out to work with him, to try and get some more payment."

Nora Matchatis Volume II; pages 194 – 195

46. THE "QUIT CLAIMS"

"There is some typing on the top of this. Can you tell me, are you able to read that?-"

"No. You have to read it for me."

"How much schooling did you have?"

"I didn't have hardly any. Maybe about two years of schooling, that's all I had in all my years. All I know I understand enough when I travel and enough to sign my name and a few things that I know [on]the road that I can make out what it meant. That's how I do my travelling. But for reading and to write, I can't do it."

"Do you remember ever signing any papers over this Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range?"

"The only one that I remember to sign is when they released the money to us, when they released the money to me what I had. Whatever they offered me, I signed for that money, but I didn't sign nothing else that I remember of."

"What did you understand you were signing for?"

"It's just like signing a receipt that I got the money. They hand me the cash."

"And did anyone say anything to you about what you were signing?"

“Yeah, they told me sign this here. Your money is in the bank. You can take your money anytime after you sign this.”

“Was it --”

“The money was released to me. That’s Mr. Eckland.”

“And where was this?”

“He was there at the bank with the people and I was there at the time.”

“At the bank. Which bank was that?”

“Credit Union, Grand Centre.”

Amable Scanie Examination Debene Esse, pages 58 – 59

“And the people were told to go to this credit union, the trapper’s loan. When we got there, they were told to go each, one by one. So, I told my old man, ‘I’m going to follow you,’ I don’t care what they did to you -- to me.”

“So I went behind him when he was called. I went behind him, I hid away in there. Once I got in there, they couldn’t do nothing to me. So as we were walking in, Mr. Knapp was there. Some others were sitting. And Mr. Knapp told him, ‘Joe, you come and sign your name.’ And Joe said, ‘I can’t sign my name, but I’ll make -- I’ll put a cross.’ So he did.”

“And they told him, if you sign your name, that’s the only time you’re going to get your cheque.”

Mr. Maurice: “Did anybody explain what this was, what he was signing?”

Mrs. Martial: “No, not one of them spoke up after he told Joe that -- to sign his name, that’s the only time he’s going to get his cheque. Not one of them spoke, I didn’t hear any one of them.”

Mr. Maurice: “What did your husband think he was signing?”

Mrs. Martial: “Well, they told him he’s going to get his cheque. And on that cheque, we look -- I look at it, it was twenty-seven hundred dollars. And that was it.”

Mr. Maurice: “Was he told what would happen if he didn’t sign?”

Mrs. Martial: “Well, nobody mentioned about it. They didn’t tell him that he wouldn’t get it. Nobody spoke. I never heard anybody talking.”

Isobel Martial Volume III; page 491

“Then, when they began giving compensation, we were told they had cheques for us, that there were cheques in Grand Centre for the people. People began going there to pick them up. There were Indian Affairs people sitting there where the cheques were. We were told to sign our names before we would be issued cheques. We were told it was the final pay and to sign for our cheques, but we didn’t know what they meant at the time. So we signed our names before we got

our cheques. They didn't tell us what we were signing. We were only told it was for the final pay. We signed over our names and they distributed our cheques."

Dominic Piche Volume III; page 520

Mr. Maurice: "Do you remember much about the day that you signed, what types of discussions took place?"

Mr. Minoose: "Not really. I was in the hospital at the time, so I don't even know. The guy just came up and had a piece of paper, and he says: Here, you sign this; you've got a cheque here for four hundred seventy dollars. So that was it."

Eli Minoose Volume VI, page 767