

**BUREAU D'AUDIENCES PUBLIQUES  
SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT**

**308**

**TRAN12**

Les enjeux de la filière uranifère au Québec

6211-08-012

ÉTAIENT PRÉSENTS :

POUR LE BAPE : M. LOUIS-GILLES FRANCOEUR, président  
Mme MICHÈLE GOYER, commissaire

POUR LA CCEBJ : M. PAUL JOHN MURDOCH, président  
Mme MANON CYR, mairesse de Chibougamau  
Mme MELISSA BROUSSEAU SAGANASH, commissaire`  
M. JEAN PICARD, commissaire

**ENQUÊTE ET AUDIENCE PUBLIQUE  
SUR LES ENJEUX DE LA FILIÈRE URANIFÈRE AU QUÉBEC**

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**PRÉCONSULTATION**

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VOLUME 12

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Séance tenue le 5 juin 2014 à 19 h  
Neokweskkau Sports Complexe  
206 Main Street 1000, 3e rue  
Mistissini

**TABLE DES MATIÈRES**

SÉANCE DE LA SOIRÉE DU 5 JUIN 2014 ..... 1  
MOT DU PRÉSIDENT DE LA CCEBJ..... 1  
MOT DU PRÉSIDENT DE LA COMMISSION DU BAPE .....2

**PÉRIODE DE QUESTIONS :**

CHEF RICHARD SHECAPIO..... 5  
Mr. SHAWN ISERHOFF, CHEF DU YOUTH COUNCIL OF MISTISSINI..... 14  
Ms. SOPHIE GUNNER..... 17  
Ms. MARY MACLEOD ..... 21  
Ms EMMA MATOUSH..... 23  
Mr. ROBERT CARLIN et Mr. PAUL LINTON  
Conseil cri de la santé et des services sociaux de la Baie James ..... 25  
Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD ..... 33

**COURTE SUSPENSION**

**REPRISE DE LA SÉANCE**

Mr. JUSTICE DEBASSIGE ..... 38  
Mr. BOYCE TRAPPER ..... 40  
Mr. SIMEON PETAWABENO ..... 40  
Mr RONNY COON-COME..... 44  
Ms. PRISCILLA MARK ..... 47  
Mr. CHARLO ISERHOFF ..... 50  
Mr. JOHN MATOUSH and Mr. TIM MATOUSH..... 51  
Mr. PAKESSO MUKASH ..... 54

**SÉANCE AJOURNÉE AU 9 JUIN 2014 À 19 H**

**SÉANCE DE LA SOIRÉE DU 5 JUIN  
MOT DU PRÉSIDENT DE LA COMMISSION DU COMITÉ  
CONSULTATIF POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT DE LA BAIE JAMES  
Mr. PAUL JOHN MURDOCH**

5

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

10

Once we start, we notice that there are new people who may not have been here this afternoon, so we're going to remind people why we are here and why we are seated up here the way we are.

15

So this fall, the Canadian Government – there are three of them: Louis-Gilles Francoeur, Michèle Goyer, Joseph Zayed, his name is Joseph Zayed, and he couldn't make it today. So they were given the mandate to look throughout the whole Quebec territory to see what people stances were on the mining of uranium and their position or stance on it, and to see how people would – what their views would be.

20

So because it is our territory, the James Bay Agreement comes into effect so they were told that they did not have the jurisdiction to come here into our territory alone as a Committee, so we signed an agreement and it was stated in the agreement that we would sit together as a joint -- the joining of these committees so that we could participate with this in the Cree Territory. And so as though we are two separate bodies, but we sit together and this was – with their mandate, they have to come three times to Mistissini.

25

So this first tour, they want to know why, what concerns people have and what questions people may have and what they want us to inquire about on their behalf, so that they can be informed more clearly. So this is the first time, the first tour; it is open to everybody, so that people can ask what they want to ask.

30

So the second time we come by, which is probably in August, then we will come back with more information. It won't yet be the answers or responses to the questions; it will be another informative session so that people can be more informed.

35

So after that, the third time will be November and that is where you will be asked, based on your questions and other people's questions, so the information that we will get from that and the responses, so we can be more informed, then you will be asked what your position is on the Uranium mining industry.

40 So I just want to be clear; we will be coming back, we will be here three times. So right now, this is an open document and there is nothing yet on the pages, so we are documenting your inquiries and that is what today's session is.

45 So for the people I named, they are from the BAPE Committee and those who are sitting with me here is Melissa Saganash, Manon Cyr and Jean Picard. And so we are participating, we are here to oversee what goes through the Cree Territory by powers given to us through the James Bay Agreement.

50 So I will allow this gentleman to tell us a bit of what his mandate is.

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**MOT DU PRÉSIDENT DE LA COMMISSION  
D'ENQUÊTE ET D'AUDIENCE PUBLIQUE  
M. LOUIS-GILLES FRANCOEUR**

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

60 Bonsoir tout le monde! *Wadjia!* J'espère que je le prononce bien. C'est parce qu'à travers tout le Québec, il y a eu beaucoup de débats et de préoccupations sur la question de l'uranium que le ministre du Développement durable, de l'Environnement, de la Faune et des Parcs a mandaté le Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement, le 3 mars dernier, pour tenir une enquête et une audience publique sur toute la question de la filière uranifère.

65 Et ce mandat ne vise pas à évaluer un projet en particulier, mais à voir quels sont les problèmes que soulèverait l'exploitation de la filière uranifère au Québec, si le gouvernement décide d'aller dans cette direction. Et on nous demande de voir tous les aspects sociaux, économiques et écologiques de ce dossier, pour être capables de donner une vue d'ensemble au gouvernement sur tous les problèmes que ça pourrait soulever.

70 C'est dans cet esprit que le président de notre organisme, monsieur Pierre Baril, a formé la commission que vous a présentée Paul John et nous, de notre côté, on aborde cette question dans le cadre du mandat très précis que nous a donné le ministre. Et le ministre, dans sa lettre qui définissait notre mandat, disait qu'on devait aborder ça dans une perspective de développement durable et que ce mandat porterait à la fois sur les aspects environnementaux, sociaux et économiques qui sont liés à l'exploration et à l'exploitation de l'uranium.

80 Et il disait que plusieurs aspects vont donc être examinés lors de cette enquête, notamment tous ceux qui sont reliés à la santé et à la sécurité, des questions qui préoccupent énormément de gens.

85 Le ministre ajoute aussi, dans son mandat, que compte tenu des dispositions de la Convention de la Baie-James et de la Convention du Nord-Est québécois, que notre commission devrait travailler avec les organes créées par la Convention de la Baie-James en territoire traditionnel cri ou en territoire traditionnel des Inuits.

90 C'est pourquoi nous siégeons ce soir avec nos vis-à-vis de la commission du Comité consultatif de l'environnement de la Baie James et que nous continuerons ces travaux avec eux pour la partie qui touche votre territoire, au point qu'au printemps prochain, lorsqu'on va présenter notre rapport, on va essayer de faire un rapport commun, la commission crie et la commission inuite et la nôtre, sur tous les problèmes qui se posent dans votre territoire.

95 Les commissions peuvent avoir quand même des opinions différentes sur certains aspects, elles conservent leur autonomie entière, et elles pourront adresser toutes leurs recommandations dans ce rapport.

100 Aussi, au cours de nos travaux, notre commission entend faire preuve de la plus grande ouverture possible, mais on est astreint, à cause de la *Loi sur les commissions d'enquête* et en tant que commissaires assermentés, à la plus grande rigueur et aussi au respect des personnes et des institutions. Et on est évidemment, il faut le faire dans les limites de notre mandat.

105 C'est pourquoi, afin d'assurer une participation équitable à tout le monde, normalement on ne tolère pas de manifestations, que ce soit d'approbation ou de désapprobation, de remarques désobligeantes ou de propos diffamatoires dans une assemblée comme la nôtre.

110 Ce qui est dit en audience ce soir est enregistré et les transcriptions de ce qui se dit seront disponibles sur le site Web du BAPE, notre organisme, ainsi que dans les centres de consultation une semaine après la série de séances. Donc, dans environ quinze (15) jours, si vous voulez consulter sur le site du BAPE ce qui s'est dit ce soir, vous pourrez y retrouver le mot à mot de toutes les déclarations ou informations qu'on s'est échangé.

115 Aussi, la webdiffusion audio et vidéo sera disponible sur internet durant encore presque un an, c'est-à-dire jusqu'à un mois après la publication du rapport, au plus tard en mai 2015. Et notre site Web, lui, s'enrichira progressivement des différents documents et des réponses que les experts ou les organismes publics vont fournir à notre commission.

Alors, tous ces documents que nous allons demander aux experts ou aux différentes institutions gouvernementales sur toute la question de l'uranium seront sur le site internet du BAPE

120 et pour que tout le monde puisse prendre connaissance, s'informer et, évidemment, ultimement peut-être nous faire un mémoire qui sera mieux documenté et mieux informé.

Et le public, si parmi vous il y en a qui veulent nous déposer des documents pour enrichir, je dirais, cette banque d'information, eh bien alors vous pouvez le faire, en adressant vos propositions au BAPE.

125 Je tiens aussi à préciser que notre travail d'analyse va s'en tenir aux enjeux de l'exploration et de l'exploitation de l'uranium. On ne va pas toucher à la question de la production d'énergie nucléaire, on ne va pas toucher à la question de l'armement nucléaire ou de la gestion des déchets des centrales nucléaires. Mais par contre, si quelqu'un veut faire état de position morale par rapport à ces questions d'armement ou de production nucléaire, tout le monde sera libre d'aborder  
130 la question. Mais ce que je veux dire par là, c'est que nous, comme commissions, les deux commissions, on ne veut pas entrer dans l'évaluation des centrales nucléaires ou de l'armement nucléaire, ce n'est vraiment pas notre mandat.

135 Pour ce soir, les personnes qui ont déjà commencé à s'inscrire auront environ quinze (15) minutes pour nous présenter leur point de vue, leurs commentaires, leurs opinions sur cette question et il se pourrait que peut-être les commissaires posent une question ou deux pour, des fois, éclaircir un point en particulier.

140 Cette règle vise à évidemment permettre au plus grand nombre de personnes de pouvoir participer à la discussion. Et j'ajouterai aussi que vous-même, ou des gens qui ne seraient pas là ce soir, pouvez adresser à notre commission, jusqu'au 11 juillet prochain, des commentaires additionnels ou des opinions additionnelles en utilisant le formulaire qui est sur le site internet du BAPE, sur le site Web du BAPE. Ça peut aussi être envoyé par courriel, il n'y a pas de problème, et ceci, pour faire en sorte que des personnes qui ne seraient pas présentes puissent évidemment  
145 participer à cette réflexion.

Alors, voilà pour les principaux commentaires, je pense que je n'ai pas oublié, alors, on pourrait peut-être appeler un premier intervenant, Paul John?

150 \_\_\_\_\_  
**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

155 Oui. So the first person we are going to call up is the Chief, Richard Schecapio.

**CHEF DE LA NATION CREE DE MISTISSINI**  
**Mr. RICHARD SCHECAPIO**

160

**CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

165

*Wadjja!* Je vais me présenter, Richard Schecapio, chef de la Nation de Mistissini. My name is Richard Schecapio, Chief of the Cree Nation of Mistissini. I want to express my appreciation first of all for the people who are here today, who were here this afternoon, and also to the people that are listening on the radio.

170

Community members, BAPE representatives, Monsieur Francoeur, Madame Goyer, je vous souhaite la bienvenue encore une fois à Mistissini. Votre présence ici est appréciée et nous permet de vous démontrer, dans notre communauté, qu'il n'y a pas d'acceptabilité sociale pour le développement de l'uranium.

175

En tant que défenseur du plus grand lac d'eau douce au Québec, le lac Mistassini, nous nous opposons vivement à l'exploitation de l'uranium. Cela irait à l'encontre de notre mode de vie et de nos valeurs. Nous sommes réunis ici aujourd'hui pour proclamer, en hôtes et fort, que l'uranium ne devrait pas être exploité à Mistissini, sur Eeyou Istchee, et aussi au Québec.

180

I also would like to welcome members of the James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment, John Paul Murdoch, Melissa Brousseau Saganash, la mairesse de la ville de Chibougamau, Manon Cyr, Jean Picard, welcome.

185

I would like to start off by commending the BAPE for collaborating with the James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment in organizing hearings in the Eeyou Istchee, in Chisasibi two days ago, and in Mistissini today.

190

Considering the experience our community has had in evaluating the potential impacts and benefits for uranium development with Strateco's Matoush Advanced Uranium Exploration Project, the Cree Nation of Mistissini has an important role in providing to other Cree communities, as well as the province of Quebec, with some of the firsthand insights it has had throughout the years from its study of uranium's social, economic and environmental risk, risks.

195

It is timely that the BAPE would be mandated to provide the province with an opportunity to express its stand on uranium as we consider that there are great risks and uncertain rewards for all communities located in the vicinity of exploration and mining projects.

200 As opposed to tailings from other types of mines, waste from a uranium mine stays radioactive for thousands of years, and that is socially unacceptable. The Crees of Mistissini have demonstrated our belief in mining as one of the pathways to ensuring the economic vitality of our community, and of course our regions as well.

205 We are not opposed to mining development. We welcome and support responsible mining projects that have demonstrated a strong potential for creating quality jobs and ensuring sound management of its environmental impacts. As a matter of fact, several of our community members are trained and available for mining work, and mining has become one of the key pillars of our economic development strategy.

210 Preparations for the hearings are the Provincial and Federal Review Boards under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, and by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission from 2010 to 2012. On the Matoush Project we have brought out women, men, leaders, Elders, youth, and trappers to take a very close look at the potential impacts from uranium mining. Throughout this period, Mistissini was also active in providing its community members opportunities to participate in a dialogue with experts regarding issues related to uranium mining. We organized discussions, meetings, and events to ensure that Mistissini had the internal discussion that was required to determine whether the Matoush project was compliant with community aspirations and values.

220 After polling our community on its perspective on uranium mining Mistissini came to the conclusion that it was not something we could support without compromising our values and approaches to sound resource development and land use planning. In the end, the public consultations have provided us with a platform for expressing our position regarding uranium development on Mistissini traditional territory.

225 The Council of the Cree Nation of Mistissini and its members collectively presented the rationale for our refusal of the project. First, we are concerned with potential impacts on our culture, from contamination of plants, water, and traditional foods. We consider that health risks and the environmental risks from uranium mining, especially relating to air and water contamination from the waste rock and tailings which will be stored on our land are too great and not well understood.

230 Second, any workers, be they Cree or otherwise, would be exposed to a level of radiation that could pose considerable risk for their health and safety.

235 Also, we observed that a uranium mine was incompatible with other key elements of our development strategy; among them the creation of a sustainable tourism sector. This development



would rely on the preservation of Mistassini Lake, the largest freshwater lake in the province of Quebec.

240 Also, the creation of the Alabanel-Témiscamie-Otish National Park, the largest inhabited national park in Quebec. Generally, we found that the project was not socially acceptable to our community. The emergence of like-minded positions in other communities, among them Chisasibi, who passed a resolution supporting Mistissini eventually brought the Cree Nation Government to adopt the resolution calling for a permanent moratorium development at its general assembly in 2012.

245 My people also understand that this project could be the first of many at the Otish Mountains, which are located on traditional Cree trap lines and feed the watersheds that connect most Cree communities represent one of the richest uranium ore deposit in Canada. Any spill or leaching from uranium tailings in these mountains could potentially spread contamination through vast areas of the Cree Territory and Lac St-Jean region. This only increased the onus for us to prevent this development from occurring, as the cumulative impacts from many projects could eventually prevent us from harvesting uncontaminated traditional foods from our lands, which represent the core of our culture.

255 As the Cree way of life and economy is still reliant on abundant and healthy animals and plants from an uncompromised environment we must actively protect these lands. Our community's freedom to live off the land is the cornerstone of our culture, and our priority as a nation. This challenge is compounded by the fact that many of the great river systems in Eeyou Istchee have already been harnessed by large-scale hydro-electric projects. Our deep knowledge of ecological processes gives us the great responsibilities of protecting the land and its watershed, which include the health of Mistissini Lake. It is our duty as stewards of the land.

260 We have yet to be convinced that corporate administrations can generally commit to the long-term management of mining waste that will remain radioactive for thousands of years. Even the best security mechanisms will eventually fail. The recent floods along the Témiscamie River have provided a striking image of the potentially devastating impacts from increasingly unpredictable weather events. Climate change will only add to the risks inherent to uranium tailings management. The Cree Nation of Mistissini is here today to make sure that the province understands why we have refused uranium development on our land, and we appreciate the fact that the BAPE and the James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment has provided the platform to express our priorities and vision, which does not include uranium mining. Development on our traditional territory will never occur without our consent.

275 While we regret that the background documents produced by the BAPE have yet to be provided to us in English or in Cree, we intend to remain closely involved in the BAPE process in the hope that the Quebecois will recognize the best interests in choosing more promising sectors for mining development.

280 On that regard I have a suggestion for the BAPE that would help in developing a comprehensive opinion on the subject. As you may know, in our nation we have our own traditional specialists on the land, and the resources our people rely on. Cree hunters and trappers have a special responsibility regarding use of the land. In Eeyou society political life has always been closely connected with family and the land. The Eeyou have a world view that emphasizes the  
285 integrated nature of the spiritual, familial, economic and political spheres.

In respect to our land, our resources and our traditional way of life, hunters and trappers are the greatest specialists. You will not find greater expertise than that of the land users, so respectfully I suggest that the BAPE engage our experts to ensure it has sufficient knowledge of  
290 our culture to understand the potential impacts of uranium development on our livelihoods.

Before concluding, let me also remind you that as a First Nation the Crees of Mistissini have aboriginal rights guaranteed by the Canadian Constitution and International Law. We also have treaty rights under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. This framework ensures that  
295 the Crees of Mistissini have the right to, in particular, decision-making about issues impacting them; this right of free, prior and informed consent has been recognized by the Review Committee, COMEX, in its environmental review on the Matoush Uranium Exploration Project in July 2011. In its very first recommendation the COMEX clearly stated that for the project to be authorized the proponent must obtain the Cree's consent through the Mistissini Band Council with regard to the  
300 project social acceptability, and must enter into a written agreement to that effect with the Band Council, or another body designated by the Band Council. This conclusion is legally, politically, and socially right.

In conclusion, let me say how much I am proud of my community. I am proud of the people  
305 of Mistissini who came with unity to take a clear position against uranium. The movement started here, has rallied all other Cree communities. I can proudly say that today the nation as a whole is united against uranium development.

Et nous parlons maintenant à toutes les autres communautés autochtones et à tous les  
310 Québécois, afin que nous soyons tous unis pour dire non à l'uranium. The new Quebec Government wants a renewed Plan Nord Plus; that is fine with me, and perhaps for some people as well, as long as the Plus stands for "plus intelligent", meaning a responsible development respectful of the communities. So I say a Plan Nord Plus without uranium. Thank you very much, merci beaucoup.

315 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

*Mégwish!* Thank you. I had some questions but you answered all of them when you spoke. No questions.

320 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

No, one. J'aimerais savoir vous avez, vous avez mentionné parmi les obstacles que vous voyez avec l'uranium, la création du parc Albanel. Est-ce que ce parc, le projet de parc est très avancé et dans quelle mesure le développement de l'uranium serait une menace?

325 **CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO:**

Je te demanderais si tu me donnerais une minute pour te montrer un portrait pour te démontrer de quoi qu'on parle. Est-ce que tu me donnes une minute?

330 **THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Oui, certainement.

335 **CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

Can we have it on the slide?

340 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Je ne sais pas si c'est possible de présenter ou de projeter à l'écran l'image que vous nous aviez donnée? Je ne pense pas que ce soit – est-ce qu'on l'aurait Pierre? Est-ce qu'on l'a sur une clé USB? On va prendre une petite seconde pour regarder ça. Je crois que ça existe ou ça a été remis à la commission.

345 Mais pendant que les techniciens regardent la possibilité de le faire, je vois sur votre carte, évidemment en bleu ce qui serait le parc et en vert, m'a dit votre conseiller, ce qui seraient des claims miniers. Mais est-ce que c'est des claims qui peuvent vraiment donner suite à des projets? Parce que vous savez, sur des claims, il peut y avoir de tout petits indices qui n'ont pas nécessairement une valeur commerciale, et donc qui n'ont pas nécessairement, comment dire, qui ne vont pas nécessairement déboucher sur un projet minier.

350

Alors, est-ce que vous avez évalué la valeur ou le risque réel que ces claims-là donnent ouverture à un projet concret?

355 **CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

On garde ce parc – ce parc, ça va être le premier parc inhabité. On dit inhabité parce qu'on a des trappeurs, des familles crie qui s'occupent du territoire. En regardant la map que vous avez en avant de vous, tu vois les... en bleu, c'est les boundaries – the previous one. Je vais m'expliquer en anglais.

360 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Oui, allez-y en anglais si vous voulez.

365

**CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

The map that you see on the projector screen, the previous one...

370 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Des fois, la technologie, ça résiste à ma meilleure bonne volonté du monde.

375 **CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

375

Oui. Okay, what you see on the projector screen is, what you see in blue are the boundaries of the Otish, Albanel-Otish, Albanel-Témiscamie-Otish Park. It is the first inhabited national park, the largest park in the province of Quebec; over 11,000 square kilometres that covers the Otish Mountain region, Mistassini Lake, and part of the Rupert River. So, everything you see in blue is the national park. What you see in green are claims related to uranium.

380

So, we ask this question: how can a park, a national park and all kinds of uranium activity co-exist side-by-side when on the one side the purpose of the park is to protect the land, and on both sides surrounded by uranium, uranium claims? Just in what you see with all the claims, we are talking about 40 companies doing exploration works just on uranium alone in the Otish Mountain areas. From major companies to junior mining companies.

385

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Some participants told us this afternoon that they would be afraid that the presence of mining, uranium mining, in the area would make people afraid of visiting the region, and even the park. In your mind, do you see also a kind of incompatibility entre, between the mining activities and the park ecology? I mean, it is different from the tourist point of view; I am thinking about the ecology with the measures that could be taken if there is mining around there.

390

395 **CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

We talk about sustainable development; when you look at the two colours there, what is in blue is sustainable development project, what we see in green is potential that may cause impacts to the land, and that is totally unacceptable with our people. That is not sustainable development.

400 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Because it would hamper the ecology of the whole park?

405 **CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

It will, it creates a threat.

410 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

A threat, okay.

**CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

415 It creates a threat to the national park.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Thank you.

420 **CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

425 Even surveying, the people that come to Mistissini Lake year after year, the number of people coming to Mistissini Lake for fishing on the lake has increased over the past years. When they start hearing about uranium development within the Otish Park/Témiscamie River area, no. They have second thoughts of coming into the park region for future years to come.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

430 When the project of the park was raised was there such mining exploration activities around it, or if it was not the case at the time?

435 **CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

When the park was created, when the boundaries were established, because there were already claims in the territory, that is why you see the blue area that is narrower in there, because the claims already existed before the creation of the national park.

440 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Do you mean that the park could be bigger if there would have been no claims?

445 **CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

The park could have been bigger if there were no claims. You see --

450 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

What was the choice at the time, if you would have enlarged or made the park bigger?

455 **CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

Our people, our trappers, if you are familiar with the hunting trap line systems of our territory, our people, when they were consulted with the park project, the Albanel-Témiscamie-Otish Park Project, when they understood how this park would protect the land from any type of resource development projects, being mining, forestry, or any major projects, our people were interested to have more protected areas for their trap line, but for some trap lines, because there were already claims, they could not get that extra protection on their trap lines. So, that was the case during the consultation process of the ATO Park Project.

460 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

465 I have a, I don't know what language to ask you in, using all three languages.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

You have the choice.

470 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

We will start with English. I like the comment about, you know, having our own experts, and it was, it was interesting and good to hear that in your own internal exercise when the community

475 was educating itself on the Matoush Project that you relied on some of your experts. Now, the  
outside world doesn't have access to our internal experts, so I was wondering, is there any  
material, is there any – whether it is transcripts or videos or, you know, to listen to these experts  
480 raising some of the preoccupations that they had, like did anybody record, or could we get access  
to some of these experts, because the next phase is the expert phase, and, you know, it might be  
interesting considering them as such.

**CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

485 Our suggestion to our traditional specialists. Now, what we have been doing also, working  
with our local Elders Council, this is a matter of consulting also and advising with our local Elders  
Council, so that they can, that they also can recommend, you know, people, traditional experts that  
could take part in this. This is one concern that I had during the pre-consultation hearing.

490 One of the concerns I had, our people are going to come here today and express their  
concerns, their interests. We have seen, Thomas Coon made a presentation, how he spoke about  
the land, and when we go for the second phase of consultation the BAPE will be bringing  
specialists that may not understand the livelihood of the Cree, and this is why I am strongly  
recommending that someone out there that has a great amount of knowledge and expertise, that  
495 understands the livelihood of the Cree people, and our traditional way of life, should be on the  
panel.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

500 So, we don't have any other questions; I think your message is quite clear, and we will take  
that in account carefully.

**CHIEF RICHARD SCHECAPIO :**

505 Merci.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

O.K., merci.

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515

**YOUTH CHIEF SHAWN ISERHOFF**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

So the next person we are going to invite to speak is the Youth Chief Shawn Iserhoff.

520

**YOUTH CHIEF SHAWN ISERHOFF :**

Kwe! Good morning, bonjour!

525

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Bonjour!

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**YOUTH CHIEF SHAWN ISERHOFF :**

First of all, I want to thank the Panel for giving the opportunity to our community to speak about the uranium issue. I am the Youth Chief for the Cree Nation of Mistissini, and I speak on behalf of the youth of my community. In order to better understand the uranium issue in Mistissini the Chief in Council held a series of information sessions to learn about uranium in general, information relating to uranium exploration and mining, and the potential environmental effects. In 2012 the Mistissini Youth Council conducted a survey entitled 'The Cree Nation of Mistissini and Uranium Development'. The purpose of the survey was to document and better understand the Eeyou's opinion concerning advanced uranium exploration and mining development in the territory.

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A total of 382 survey responses were collected, which accounts for approximately 30 percent of our youth population. The results indicate that the vast majority of our youth do not support uranium development. The youth have many concerns with the potential impacts this type of mining will have on the environment. It is very important for the BAPE to recognize that the water, animals, land, and environment have a very spiritual, economic, and cultural significance to the Cree way of life. There is an income security programme that enables our Cree hunters and trappers to continue hunting, and this is to sustain the Cree culture and identity for future generations.

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Moreover, our hunters and trappers share the harvest from the land with our community members, and we have to believe that the food is safe. Later this month, more than 20 youth from my community will embark on our annual canoe brigade. Here youth are taught by Elders the traditional lifestyle in Mistissini Lake, the largest freshwater lake in Quebec. Fishing, game preparation, survival skills are taught to our youth by the Elders in the community. It is our way for the youth to establish a sense of identity, and what it means to be Cree.



555 The Albnel-Témiscamie-Otish Park is also a major concern should uranium projects be  
authorized in the Eeyou Istchee. The uranium projects pose a threat to the long-term tourism and  
outfitting opportunities for the Cree. Now, some may ask what the difference between uranium  
mining and other types of mining are. Uranium mining involves managing radioactive waste for  
560 thousands of years. Spills, leaching, manmade structural failures, flooding, fires, and other  
climactic events have the potential to create devastating effects to the environment.

A comment was raised last night in Chibougamau requesting for the BAPE Commission to  
consider expertise of the CNSC. We feel that the CNSC fails to effectively perform its duty to  
ensure environmental risks, health, and other environmental matters are minimized for the Cree. In  
565 our eyes, we view the CNSC more as a promoter and regulator for the uranium industry. We asked  
the CNSC how many projects they refused to licence, and the answer was none.

To end my presentation I have two questions: how will the BAPE Commission recognize the  
notion of free prior and informed consent? How will the BAPE Commission recognize the rights of  
570 the Cree Nation? The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the case  
that - states shall consult and cooperate in good faith with indigenous peoples concerned through  
their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the  
approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in  
connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water, or other resources,  
575 and the Canadian Constitution clearly states that the existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the  
aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.

The Cree Nation of Mistissini, along with the Grand Council of the Cree, have clearly  
demonstrated their opposition towards any form of uranium development on our traditional territory.  
580 The Cree youth of Mistissini do not support uranium mining, and we are not prepared to assume  
the risks associated with this type of development for our children and the future generations to  
come, and I hope Quebec makes the same decision. Thank you. *Mégwish!*

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

585 I have a question. In regards to the information sessions that you were talking about, the  
series of information sessions that were held, is there any one in particular that stands out in your  
mind as having been the most useful, or one subject that you felt was the most useful as far as  
informing the community?

590 **YOUTH CHIEF SHAWN ISERHOFF :**

One thing that stands out is, you know, as Cree people we always look to the future, and the  
generations, to be able to continue to teach our culture, teach our history to, you know, the younger

595 generations. I, for one, you know, love being on the land. I try to take my son out hunting in the  
wintertime, you know, during the goose break and whatnot, and I think that is the most important  
thing, is looking at the long-term effects of any sort of development, you know, that would occur in  
the Cree Nation.

600 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Je vais vous poser ma question en français pour être sûr qu'elle est précise. On pourra vous  
la traduire peut-être...

605 **YOUTH CHIEF SHAWN ISERHOFF :**

Je comprends le français.

610 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Vous comprenez bien le français? Excellent.

**YOUTH CHIEF SHAWN ISERHOFF :**

615 Je parle cinq langues. Non, c'est une joke!

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

620 Je voudrais savoir si les travaux d'une commission comme la nôtre, dans votre esprit, ça  
peut apporter un éclairage nouveau sur la question ou si votre idée est tellement faite que  
l'exercice qu'on fait est inutile et que ça vous amènera à évoluer sur aucun aspect du dossier?

**YOUTH CHIEF SHAWN ISERHOFF :**

625 C'est la première fois qu'on voit la commission BAPE ici dans le territoire de Eeyou Istchee  
puis alors on ne vous avait jamais vue, la commission, puis peut-être, je ne sais pas, je pense que  
la décision est claire pour la Cree Nation; puis l'exercice que vous faites, j'ai aucune idée de qu'est-  
ce que ça va apporter pour la Cree Nation.

630 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

Did your exchange raise the question when we come the second time, and hopefully we will  
be coming with some experts in particular areas. Is there a particular area where you would like us  
to make sure that we bring an expert, or, you know, somebody who knows a lot about a particular

635 area? So, is there a particular area that you would like us to concentrate on for when we come  
back on the second time?

**YOUTH CHIEF SHAWN ISERHOFF :**

640 Well, a lot of the questions we posed had to do with the exploitation and waste management  
phase; unfortunately, during the CNSC hearings they are only talking about the exploration phase,  
so a lot of those questions went unanswered, and the reason was that we are not even at that  
phase, so we might as well not talk about, we don't need to talk about it right now. Thank you very  
much.

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**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

Méggwish! Thank you very much.

650 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Et merci beaucoup.

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**Ms. SOPHIE GUNNER**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

660 Sophie Gunner. I am going to ask Sophie Gunner to speak.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Bonsoir, Madame Gunner.

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**Ms SOPHIE GUNNER :**

670 Kwe. One thing I want to say today, I am going to speak a little bit in Cree here, speak in  
Cree for a little while. I was told that I was going to speak at 7:00, that didn't exactly happen. I am  
not too happy that it seems like women aren't really regarded. I see that often; when a woman  
wants to speak she is kind of pushed aside or disregarded, but I forgive you. I am very happy that  
when I speak, as soon as I say something when I disapprove, and I like being honest with people,  
and I like saying it, being immediate in my responses, and of course my forgiveness. And so now, I  
will speak.

675 One thing I wanted to ask is I - I only have 15 minutes?

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

680 We haven't stopped anybody from speaking, so you can speak, but we would like you to consider everybody else when you speak.

**Ms SOPHIE GUNNER :**

685 I am going to consider the women that will come after me. I am happy, and I am grateful for all of you that are in attendance to listen to us, and this comes from the heart. My statement comes from the heart, and I thought at first when I heard about these discussions that my heart was, it was starting to hurt. You know when something just touches you deeply or upsets you, that is what this did to me, and so I don't want to speak for very long, but I thought that I would speak in Cree, that I would translate my whole document in Cree for the things that are bothering me, and as I am  
690 considering the Elders, also, who have been here for a while, that I might just speak in English instead. I just want to consider the Elders; they don't understand everything when discussions like this happen, and that is what happens when you go to a meeting when you don't understand. It is like you kind of stop listening because you don't know what people are talking about, and the ones I want to put at the forefront were the Elders, so that they understand everything that is being said.  
695 That is why I want to speak Cree, but when I look at the watch I am going to speak English so that I can get through this a little faster. You are all non-native up there, anyway. I am just kidding.

700 My name is Sophie Koonashis Gunner. I am a wife of a tallyman. My husband's name is Matthew Gunner. I am a mother, I am a grandmother, I am a Band member of Mistissini. These are the titles that I hold, but I don't sit on any committee or any Council, and this is why I can say what I want to say without anybody interfering with my concerns. I have many titles, even though I am not somebody important in my community, so I will discuss my concerns with the mining. Please forgive me if I stop once in a while when I speak, it is – I want to make sure I don't get emotional, but this all comes from the heart.

705 My concerns with uranium mining for the Cree people; every season has its own kind of harvesting. Winter is the most prosperous season for harvest for big game and small game, for wild meat, which is the main diet of the Cree people. It includes caribou, beaver, rabbit, ptarmigan, fish, and other small game.

710 Spring is waterfowl; waterfowl harvest, and it is the most festive harvest, and brings families together for this special time of year.

715 Summer is berry and fish harvest, and a relaxing harvest season. We are entering this relaxing harvest for fish and berries. Also, summer is the time to harvest for traditional medicine plants, a brief time to live in the community with family and friends, which is about a month and a half before our people head back to living in the traditional lands.

720 Some people leave for their traditional hunting and trapping grounds by mid-August of each year. Fall is, again, big game harvest for moose, bear, beaver, and other small game. So harvest time in the life of the Cree is all year-round. This is why we are very concerned for our lands and waters. The need to protect the land and the water is greater today. It is mentally distressing to just think about the damage that would be done to our land and water. Even the air that we breathe, and who can say? Where is the expert that can tell our people that live off the land, that  
725 our way of life, our culture will not be affected by uranium mining?

Our people's meat store is the land and the water that we have. The same way that it is unthinkable to talk of plans to contaminate the farmlands down south that are the main source of food for the white society, so it is unthinkable to destroy and contaminate the lands and waters of  
730 the Cree people that live off the lands.

This I got from an Elder talking to an Elder. 21 meals in one week, three of those meals are in a restaurant or store-bought for the traditional Cree that lives off the land. That is to tell us that 86 percent of the Cree diet is what we harvest off the Cree lands. Some Elders rarely eat store-bought food, or eat in restaurants simply because they say traditional food is better than food in  
735 stores, and restaurants are too expensive.

Would the Government grant a permit to a company to contaminate the farmlands of the farmers that provide food to be sold in the stores? If not, why would they grant a permit to contaminate Cree lands and waters that provide food for our people, and will this kind of damage to the lands bring famine to the Cree people? What about our children and grandchildren, our future generations? What will happen to us as the Cree people if the lands and waters get contaminated?  
740

I am a residential school survivor, and I don't want to go into detail about that sad chapter in Cree history, but I want to say this: the Government tried to destroy me as a Cree person by taking away my privilege to speak my mother tongue, and to take away my right to know the cultural roots of my people, but they failed. Today, I am stronger in my Cree language, and live the life of a traditional Cree since my spouse is now a head tallyman of his late father's trap line. We are just a couple of doors down from the Matoush project, we are downstream.  
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750 I would not say that I know all the ways of a traditional Cree woman, but I am getting very close to it. Government's first attempt was to language and culture as a Cree person, and is this just another attempt to destroy our identity as Crees, is through our lands, what they will do to the

755 land, because through the residential school it was the language and culture that was attacked, I  
can say. Now it is the land. I feel like a pawn in the hands of the Governments, and that they want  
to see if we survive this time by granting permits to contaminate our lands and waters.

760 The unemployment rate is high in the Cree communities, and though some can say we need  
the jobs, who would take a job that would put our people and culture and our children and future  
generations at risk? When we don't work we go into the land, so to bring food to our tables for our  
families. A job market cannot provide jobs for all our people, but our lands and waters always  
provided food for our people. So, we need to protect the lands that provide food for our people.  
765 What worries me is the waste that is left behind, and that I am supposed to be content when man  
says it will be managed effectively. I have mentioned before how a man made a super-sized ship  
and said it was unsinkable, but it did sink, and took 1,500 lives with it. That ship was called 'Titanic'.  
This is why I do not believe that man-made ponds will protect us from these toxic wastes, nor do I  
believe that man has a way so to promise our people that these ponds will never decay or overflow.

770 Just the other day I saw on the news about the decay of the Champlain Bridge; a massive  
steel and concrete structure. I am almost the same age as this bridge, but I am not telling you my  
age, and it is crumbling the report stated, but I am not 100 years old yet, but I want to be. Like I  
heard being said, that these man-made ponds can withstand 100-year storms. So this is why I do  
not have much faith in man-made structures, especially ponds. Also, the decayed products left  
behind get more toxic in the future. The need for nuclear energy in Quebec is zero, and it is  
775 because the Crees had to give up trap lines so massive production of electricity can be produced  
and sold. Quebec already made a choice on what type of energy they were to produce, so they  
should leave uranium where it is, underground, and do not disturb how we, the Crees, live in our  
lands.

780 I have another concern about recent floodings in the Cree lands, like the Témiscamie River  
was mentioned. The concern I have is since the diversion of certain Cree rivers by Hydro could  
this be the cause of other smaller rivers and lakes overflowing? God. I said I don't have faith in  
man, but I have faith in God. God the master engineer, God the real expert, already decided how  
many rivers and lakes were needed, and set the boundaries for these lakes and rivers for a safe  
785 environment for all people. But again, man came along and pretended he could rearrange what  
was already created, and do better than God. That is not possible. When God first put man in the  
Garden of Eden he said of everything he created man could eat off, except for the tree in the center  
of the garden you shall not touch.

790 Today, to me and my friends, today to me and my friends and my people uranium is the  
modern-day tree that society should not touch. Our people already said no uranium mining in Cree  
Eeyou Istchee, and like my late father used to say during the Quebec separation issue what part of

795 no does the Government don't understand? Namôya, no. (in Cree), don't do it. Some say that nuclear energy is cleaner, but it creates more deadly wastes, so I don't call it cleaner.

This is all that I want to say for now. I will submit a written submission. Thank you for coming and listening to our concerns.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

800 I thank you very much. I will ask my colleagues if they have questions. Your message was quite clear, you see the answer.

**Ms SOPHIE GUNNER :**

805 Thank you.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

810 Thank you very much.

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**Ms. MARY MACLEOD**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

Mary Macleod. We would like to call on Mary Macleod now to speak.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Bonsoir, Madame Macleod. Good evening, Miss Macleod.

**Ms MARY MACLEOD :**

825 My name is Mary Macleod; I sit on the Elders Committee. I wasn't there when they had a meeting today concerning this, what our concerns were, but anyways me and my friend there were talking about the map. Somebody mentioned there was a map there with all the claims that were around the territory there for uranium mines, uranium. Anyways, my husband is in the exploration business, so I know that the process that happens, you know, when you have claims. You have buyers, and you have mining companies, junior companies that take over the land that you claimed. My concern was are we going to settle this thing once and for all, that we don't have to go

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835 in front of other companies, you know, having the same problem, what we are trying to solve now? You know what I mean? Are we going to have to go to court again, you know, to argue with them, you know, we don't want, we already said no, and it should be final. No more taking anybody else to court. Anyways, that is what the, our concern was about. We would like to have this settled.

840 Okay, now I am going to talk to you people. I have really studied spiritual teachings, and I pretty much know the sacred teachings of our people, and the knowledge that they had from way past, which is maybe it is not exactly being discussed the way it was way, way back when, but they are a walking proof of our sacred knowledge concerning the land, concerning our relationship with the land, and everything in it.

845 I, myself, had a personal experience how, how we have an attachment to the land. I am a massage therapist by trade; I can't really practise it because I have a heart problem, but when I took my training I did the manoeuvres. That took three months. I learned that, but then I got into hydrotherapy. I did this in French, and I don't even speak French or understand French, not much anyway, but I knew I could get into the computer and picked up what they were talking about, and I learned from there, but what I experienced one time was I was the guinea pig, which was good, because they would practise on me all the things that we had to do in hydrotherapy. So I got all the treatments, but one time the lecture was going on, of course like I said I don't understand French, and I was laying there, I said what are they talking about, and I actually heard a voice in my head, but I knew it was my spiritual soul who was listening, and what I heard was 'Where do you get your food from? Where do you get your medicine from? Where do you get your experience in life?', you know? It really gave me the chills. I know, it comes from the land. We have this relationship with the land that is sacred, and we might not always experience it now but a big part, a big part of life is experiencing it, but my people, without even thinking about it, because they are hunters and trappers, are doing exactly that. They are listening to their soul.

860 This is going to sound like preaching, but it's not the kind of preaching that they do in church. I have other kinds of experiences where we always had Elders come into the university and talking to us, and one of the thing that – there is, actually, there is quite a few things that have been scientifically proven that, you know, this relationship, this knowledge we had about the land is so real that it is explained now in quantum physics, in metaphysics science. We knew it, we experienced it, but it is just now that it is coming out, you know? It is now more common to other than scientists, and all that. I do have a difficult time explaining this to my people because of what happened to us in residential school, how we were taught, eh? We were brainwashed in the religious area, but without, without - how do I say? – I think I lost my train of thought. I always do that when - because it is so hard to explain metaphysics. Then I tell myself what did I get myself into? But, you know, we are made from the same - our atoms are made from the same things that the trees and the animals and all that, you know? There is only four things: hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, carbon, all in different, you know, so we are all the same. Non-human beings, human



875 beings, what we see out there, what we call nature, we have - we knew that already, but anyways I will try and make my story short.

880 I think non-native people are going to have to see that there needs to be a change. There is a real need for change of consciousness; spiritual consciousness. What we have now, you know, it is not enough anymore, and nor do we have to understand this. We have to realize that what is out there is very much alive, as we are, human beings. So, we have to take that into consideration. I think most people know that our bodies are 80 to 90 percent water, and in our land, in the province of Quebec, it has been reported in a science, a world science, about - in the 90s, anyway. We have the highest, at least up in the top ten category of freshwater in our lands, and if we are 80 to 90 percent water what is more valuable? What should be more valuable to us than uranium? Our water here is more precious, it is priceless.

885 So that should, that can be easily understood by non-native people, how we value our land and our water. I think that is it for me.

890 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Merci beaucoup.

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895 **Ms. EMMA MATOUSH**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

900 I would like to give now the floor to Emma Matoush.

**Ms. EMMA MATOUSH :**

905 Thank you for giving us the opportunity to ask something. One thing I want to ask, I want to know what company is on our territory. It is like there is three places where they stake their claims, and one says - I am sorry, I think she is talking about how long - the companies that have come in and staked their claims, in their camps that they have built they have left it all behind, even the appliances and cutlery in the kitchen, and all the heavy machinery, they have just - they seem to have abandoned it. Even Ski-dos are there, snowmobiles.

910 So, I wanted to know which company is that? Which company is so powerful that they can look for uranium, the three camps that are there, the three stakes, the claims for that company? I wanted to know, if you can tell me, in August when you come back which company is that, because

915 I want to know, I want the water to stay pure so that my grandchildren can survive off of it. And the  
food, even the food that they have brought, they just leave it there. There is a lot of food that they  
have brought, and I want to say that – I am sorry, I don't understand the one term – she is saying  
that the... those, what they have abandoned. I think, I believe she is talking about trees, that they  
don't burn that wood because I don't want them to abandon that wood and just – I am guessing it is  
the plywood. I don't want them to just, to burn them in their abandonment. I want them to give  
920 them to me because I could make use of those, those woods, that wood. I have a lot of  
grandchildren, and we try very hard to be in our territory, on our territory, to take care of it, because  
I am a true hunter, and even though I am alone, I am here alone, I try very much to help with our  
hunting and our hunt so that my grandchildren, and my grandchildren to see me for as long as I  
live, that I will be practising the culture.

925 So, that is what I wanted to ask, to be responded to in August. Can you please have a  
response for me, or at least tell me, even though I am not even sure if I will be here when they have  
their meetings, because I don't even know if I will still be in the community. That is all I want to say,  
that there is three claims and I believe they are looking into uranium, and they don't seem to care.  
We can't see some areas in the summer; there is nobody there, and that they - they didn't even tell  
930 me with their abandonment of their camps. There is no announcement. There is no official  
statement that says that they have left. I am really hoping for those plywoods. I believe it is  
plywoods. There is a lot of plywood just sitting there, and I haven't seen them, but my family that  
have been on my territory have seen them. Thank you very much.

935 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

Emma, I want to ask you a question. It is not up to them who has the - it is not their job to  
find out which company is - to find out who is staking these claims, but I wanted to know which  
territory are you on, because I might know who to ask to find out about that company. Which  
940 territory are you on?

**Ms. EMMA MATOUSH :**

945 M17...

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

M 17? M17 B, that would be her territory. Because there are people that work for us that  
know which companies are staking claims where, so I will ask them. So, I will ask somebody to  
950 contact you to find out about that company. You won't have to wait 'til August.

**Mr. ROBERT CARLIN**  
**Mr. PAUL LINTON**

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**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

I would like to invite Robert Carlin. So, I will ask Robert Carlin to come to the front, please.

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**Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

Bonsoir, *wadjia*. My name is Dr. Robert Carlin; Je suis le directeur de la santé publique pour les terres crie de la Baie James. I work for the Cree Board of Health and Social Services at James Bay, and I am here with Paul Linton, who is Assistant Director of Public Health CIHR.

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**Mr. PAUL LINTON :**

(S'adresse à la commission en cri).

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**Mr. ROBERT CARLIN:**

Although our department plans to make a written submission of concerns and/or questions before July 11th to the BAPE, we would like to highlight our general concerns during this forum. We are not providing an analysis, but just expressing our questions and concerns.

975

I would just like to repeat that we are concerned that the people of Eeyou Istchee need to be fully and adequately informed about the impacts of uranium mining, and to make an informed decision concerning this issue, and we respect the right of the Eeyou Nation, of the Mistissini Nation to make this decision and to be fully consulted on this issue.

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We are concerned that the BAPE process needs to be aware of the specific impacts of development on indigenous peoples, both within the Eeyou Istchee and throughout Quebec.

985

Despite previous consultations we still have questions related to the risks and benefits at all stages of uranium development, from exploration to production to conversion to usage.

**Mr. PAUL LINTON :**

990

I am going to go off-topic here so you won't be able to interpret it.

(No translation)

Do you want me to do it in English?

995 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

Yes, I think we have a pause in the translation.

1000 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

We have no translation, so we cannot understand.

**Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

1005 Yes, okay, so I guess --

**Mr. PAUL LINTON :**

I will do it in English. I will say it in English.

1010 **Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

All right.

1015 **Mr. PAUL LINTON :**

1020 This is the one where I went off-topic. The thing that I was talking about was I have worked a long time as a nurse in the Cree Territory, I am from the Cree Territory. I worked on both sides of the coast, the Ontario side and this side, and when the land is affected the people say 'I am sick', they feel sick.

1025 On the Ontario side I have seen suicides because of what has happened to the land. I have seen people on this side that are very depressed because of what has happened to the land. When I worked in Waswanipi there was forestry that totally took out one trap line. The family had nothing to do; they turned to alcohol and drugs, depression, and that was their life afterwards, and this, with this that is one of the things, because the Cree are not like the non-natives. I notice it when I go down to Montreal, or when I talk with my family that lives down south. There will be a murder next door, who cares, it wasn't me. Up here if there is a death in the community, regardless of what the thing is, not only is this community affected but all the Cree communities are affected.  
1030 If it is a violent death, it is even more so, so that that was some part of where health is different for us than it is, well 'us', for the Crees than it is for the rest.

1035 The impacts of health on people in Eeyou Istchee, including the aspects of health, physical, mental, emotional and spiritual impacts on the health of the workers. We are also worried about the impacts of the health of the environment, impacts on the healthcare services, because we are the closest to most of the uranium in Quebec, and also the impacts on the culture. We will have really, it has the potential to have huge impacts on culture. That has been mentioned many times before.

1040 **Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

1045 Just to underline, we are concerned that the BAPE includes social impacts as part of the evaluation, and this includes impacts on tradition, cultures, and way of being unique to Eeyou Istchee, and we will submit a more detailed list of questions and concerns by the July 11th deadline.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

1050 Your last remark, votre dernière remarque – est-ce que vous comprenez le français?

**Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

Oui, très bien.

1055 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

1060 Votre dernière remarque m'amène à vous préciser une chose. Quand vous dites que vous espérez que le BAPE tienne compte des impacts sociaux, je ne l'ai pas rappelé dans notre introduction. Mais la *Loi de l'environnement* définit, a été définie par les tribunaux supérieurs, y compris la Cour suprême. Et les tribunaux supérieurs ont reconnu et établi, comme définition de l'environnement, que l'environnement et l'économie, ce ne sont pas deux choses séparées; l'environnement, c'est composé de trois choses : la dimension écologique, sociale et économique. Et nous sommes gouvernés par cette définition de la loi. Ça nous serait très difficile de ne pas tenir compte des éléments sociaux dans ce débat, d'une part.

1065 Et d'autre part, j'ajouterai que nous sommes obligés, par ailleurs, de travailler avec les critères, les seize (16) critères de la *Loi sur le développement durable*. Et si vous parcourez les seize (16) principes de la *Loi sur le développement durable*, ça vous donnera une idée des critères que nous aurons à l'esprit et plusieurs des recommandations et des aspects que vous avez soulevés tombent dans ces catégories-là.

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Alors, soyez convaincus que les éléments que vous avez souligné que vous voulez que nous éclairions, nous allons en tenir compte.

1075 **Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

Je veux souligner que l'environnement social, c'est unique, c'est à part, ici, même pour souligner pour la santé ou le bien-être, le mot (mot cri) et le concept, ça vient d'ici.

1080 **LA COMMISSAIRE GOYER:**

1085 Justement, j'aimerais que vous nous ameniez un éclairage sur la spécificité des aspects sociaux que vous voulez qu'on regarde, c'est-à-dire que c'est grand, le côté – vous dites les impacts sociaux. Il y a toute une panoplie d'aspects. Est-ce que vous pourriez nous en énumérer quelques-uns?

**Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

1090 Nous allons soumettre quelque chose écrit, mais ça pourrait inclure les traditions, l'accès à la nourriture traditionnelle, l'environnement social dans les communautés. Vous pouvez aussi regarder les impacts antérieurs par d'autres développements qui se sont déjà passés. Je crois qu'il y a beaucoup d'expertises en arrière de moi, avec tout le développement qui s'est passé dans la région.

1095 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

1100 I have a question. Don't feel obligated to answer it, especially if you are going to be making a written submission, but I mean if you can speak to it a bit I would greatly appreciate it, and it is related a little bit to the comment that you just – the last, that you made, you know the past experience with development and so on.

1105 When we are talking about health impacts and evaluating health impacts there is often a presumption on the capacity of the institution that is responsible for taking care of health. So, you know, so I guess the question is: is the health authority for the Cree in the territory, is it equipped to, you know we assume a certain baseline. We assume, there is a lot of assumptions that are always made about the health authority, and their capacity when we are evaluating something, or we turn to the health authority for a lot of the information and the expertise that we need when we are evaluating things.

1110

1115 So that that is one issue, and then I guess the other one is I know that the question is raised about impacts on the health of the people, but what about the impact on the institution that manages the health of the people? I guess it is more of a capacity question. I am wondering, have you, is it an institution that is working well and can handle all kinds of challenges thrown at it, or - I guess it, I guess yeah.

**Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

1120 We included impacts on the health institution in terms of the delivery of health services. We are a small Public Health Department. With the BAPE process I know that provincial bodies of expertise like l'INSPQ, le ministère de la Santé are involved. To underline this, just within the past two weeks we have had to address another development issue directly as well, so there is development going on. Il y a beaucoup de développement qui ce passe. Maybe Paul has a comment on that, as well?

1125 **Mr. PAUL LINTON :**

1130 The Cree Health Board, as health boards go, is a relatively young organization. We have had 35 years. The MGH has been there for 100, at least. So, we are relatively young. We are still making strikes forward, but we also are running into obstacles. One of our major obstacles is a language barrier and a cultural barrier between the people that provide the service and the people.

1135 We have some Cree nurses, we have one Cree doctor, we need a lot more than that, but we run into barriers where even in a simple thing of getting a patient's point across from the patient to the doctor through an interpreter, which we have no trained interpreter that are trained to interpret. With medical terminology it is hard because there is a lot of things that don't have any, and now coming in to uranium, there is lots of words that have, they are not there for the Cree. They are not a part of their life, because of the life they live.

1140 So we run into a lot of issues like that where we are trying to get it across, and it is difficult challenges, but we are making small steps, and to answer if we have the capacity to do all this, we are scraping the bottom like everybody else from what I can see, because these things are big, these things move fast, and with the Government turning down the screws on the health system we don't expect to get much bigger than we are now, but the Cree are very creative. They will find what they need to find, but also for us even, looking at health care in the community.

1150 The health care that you are regularly wanting down south in Montreal is not what the people want here. They want to have a choice between what is their care from their specialists and their care from the south. So, there is that bridge that we are fighting with right now, or wresting with, I guess, to see how we can get a balance within our organization, because a lot of the things – I will

1155 use an example I used the other day. If you have a patient that has a mental problem, depressed, stressed, some of them might be good to send to the Douglas, load them up on medication until they act like a zombie and send them home so they are no problem, but are they better? Not really. Some of them will really improve by sending them into nature with Elders to work with them and to work through their problem, but if there are worries and concerns that nature is gone we lose that aspect of our care.

1160 So, down south you are worrying about running a good European health system, up here we have to have a good European health system so Quebec is happy with us – yes, you are doing a good job – but we also need to have the other arm that right now is very hard to develop because it is unrecognized, although there is many stories that we could tell and facts that have been proven where the traditional Elders do know as much as the medical experts.

1165 **Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

Someone this afternoon mentioned this as a conversation; I think it is a challenge as a public health department to have a conversation on a complex issue between languages, between cultures, et ça c'est la vérité qu'il y a plusieurs langues, il y a plusieurs cultures puis un sujet très complexe à discuter. It takes time.

1170 **Mme MANON CYR, mairesse de Chibougamau:**

1175 J'aurais une question. Hier, à Chibougamau, on nous a parlé de la santé, le portrait de la santé des populations du Nord. Est-ce que par hasard, vous auriez eu l'occasion de faire des portraits de la santé, puis tenant compte des aspects sociaux dont vous référez par rapport à la population crie, qui pourraient... aux membres de la commission qu'on puisse voir et peut-être un peu plus apprécier?

1180 **Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

Oui, il y a plusieurs sommaires de la situation de la santé de la population, c'est disponible sur le site Web du Conseil cri. Alors, je vous encourage de regarder ces informations.

1185 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

1190 Mais ce qui nous était dit hier, c'est que les portraits sont faussés parce que les échantillons de population sont souvent trop grands et que ça ne permet pas de voir, parfois, certains problèmes qui seraient spécifiques à de plus petites communautés. Est-ce que vous partagez cette opinion ou cette critique qu'on faisait hier?



**Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

1195 Je pense que c'est une réponse un peu trop générale dans certaines situations que c'est difficile de démêler ou interpréter l'information qui est là. Dans d'autres situations, il y a des informations très claires, je ne vais pas les détailler en ce moment.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

1200 D'accord.

**LA COMMISSAIRE GOYER :**

Mais il serait intéressant d'avoir la réponse.

1205 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Pas d'autres questions? Écoutez, je vous remercie beaucoup, moi, au nom de notre commission – oui?

1210 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

Moi, j'ai un autre commentaire.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

1215 Oui, allez. Vas-y.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

1220 Just a quick note, if they consult the website and they see information could they write to you to have it formally submitted? It is only when something is formally submitted then it can officially go in the record for such a concern.

**Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

1225 Anything that is available on our website is public, so that would be fine.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

1230 Okay, thank you.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

1235 Oui. Bien, je voulais vous remercier de votre engagement de nous faire part par écrit de vos préoccupations sous forme de questions pour que nous puissions, en septembre, avec les experts ou les spécialistes, porter un éclairage en profondeur sur ces préoccupations que vous avez. Je vous en remercie, c'est très précieux pour nous.

**Mr. ROBERT CARLIN :**

1240 Merci. Mégwish.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

1245 Mégwish aussi.

**Mr. PAUL LINTON :**

Thank you.

1250 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Alors, si vous le permettez tout le monde, ça va nous faire du bien, on peut prendre une petite pause de dix, douze minutes et puis on revient avec les autres personnes qui sont sur notre liste. Et il y a du café, on vous remercie de votre attention.

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SÉANCE SUSPENDUE QUELQUES MINUTES

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**REPRISE DE LA SÉANCE**  
**Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

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There is still people coming in to sign but I want to remind you that this isn't the only time that you will have the opportunity to speak. You will be able to put your statements, you can use the internet to send your questions, should you have any, or if there is something you very much want us to look into. We would like to invite Jimmy Macleod to speak.

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**Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD :**

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Thank you for letting me talk to you's. My name is Jimmy Macleod; I am from Mistissini, I am a Cree. I will just give you a brief history of myself. I have been in mining exploration for 25 years, so that is my field of work. I have done a lot of work in the Otish Mountains. Back in '65 we did a lot of staking for uranium, and back about – we did some work also for all the staking that has gone up there now.

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I am sorry to tell you I was one that staked Matoush, so I was there, and I just want to brief you that all these years I have worked there I have worked with different companies. I have experienced a lot of things that I have seen. I have also worked very closely with the trappers in different situations, some of the camps or different things that went on in exploration. We also, you know, managed camps, worked with the trappers, the families that were involved in certain areas. We worked with them very closely, and that was my life in exploration, is staking claims, line cutting, and the years went by, we lost a lot of that job opportunities. So this is where we decided now why don't we get them involved more into the field of mining like prospecting, camp setups, working closer with the mining companies. So we knew what was going on mostly in each project.

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It is the same with Strateco; we worked with them very closely. We worked with Cameco, various companies, and afterwards I started realizing there was more issues on environmental. So that's when I formed a company, Envirocree, so this way then we could be more giving the tallymen more aware what is going on in the territory.

1305

We worked also with Stornoway when it first started with diamonds. Now, during the process of his developing Stornoway as it went from exploration into the phase of extracting some of the drilling, all the process of getting to know the property better. We were working with them, but at the same time they were coming to Mistissini and informing the trapper monthly. With this process the trapper was able to understand the project very more closely as what is happening. It didn't matter what it was, the trapper was informed. It was a tailing pond, or how are they going to extract

1310 the gold, what procedures, how much land are they going to – so they had a more understanding of  
the project.

1315 The other thing we did is we put it in 3D dimension. Now the trapper did not know what it  
was going to look like, the mine, but when we showed him in the 3D he had a better picture,  
understanding now that is what it is going to look like. So, this is the process we went through, and  
I think right now what I would like to say to you's is what I see right now, talking about uranium, I  
find that we are not getting the - we are getting the information but it is too technical for our people.  
I think we need to find a way that we can explain it a lot easier to them.

1320 I, myself, have worked in uranium. I am still, myself, say to you I am questioning myself yes  
or no, should it be mined or not? I have no answer yet, although I am in that field of exploration,  
and that is my feeling right now, that we need to inform our people in a lot better and a lot simpler  
way they can understand it. So, that was basically all I wanted to say, thank you.

1325 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

Thank you. Thank you very much.

1330 **LA COMMISSAIRE GOYER :**

Vous nous dites que malgré le fait que vous avez travaillé longtemps en exploration...

1335 **Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD :**

English.

**LA COMMISSAIRE GOYER :**

English?

1340 **Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD :**

Yeah.

1345 **LA COMMISSAIRE GOYER :**

You don't understand French?

1350 **Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD :**

You said something about me working on --

1355 **LA COMMISSAIRE GOYER:**

Okay, I will try. Did the fact you worked for a long time in exploration, you say you don't have your own idea about it, uranium mining. What kind of answers do you want the Commission gives to you to help you to have a better idea for make you an idea about uranium industry?

1360 **Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD :**

1365 I would like to see more the information of, like a lot of people are saying this is a dangerous substance, and I think that is something I am not totally aware of. Where is it so dangerous? Can you explain that more to me? And if it could be, you know, explained better as the usage, different things on it. How can we prevent it from, let's say is there a - there could be a disaster, can it be? Is it going to hurt the rivers? More studies, more information, that is what I would like to know.

**LA COMMISSAIRE GOYER:**

1370 It is what I want to understand about you.

**Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD :**

Yes.

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**LA COMMISSAIRE GOYER:**

Thank you, Mr. Macleod.

1380 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Could I ask you? Sorry, could I ask you another question?

**Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD :**

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Sure.

1390 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

1395 You said that, you gave the case of Stornoway. They were explaining to the trappers, you said, monthly what was going on so that they have a better picture of the whole thing. My understanding, is that could you make a comparison between this type of information directly to the people and what you just said to my colleague, that if there would be more information, more accurate information, detailed that maybe the understanding of this question would be different?

**Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD :**

1400 Like the process I am talking about, it is like for instance when they would explain how they were going to extract the diamonds, that it was very – and you know like it is going to be open pit, so we understood that. So, people knew that there was going to be a big hole, and some sites they are always going to be there, and they said yes, it's going to be a lake. For instance, what are you going to do with certain type of rock, where are you going to pile it? What are you going to do with it, and it was all explained.

1405 You know, various stages as it went, that was explained more, and I think the same with this uranium, that you have to go from the phases of how are you going to mine it? Like, I'll give you an example, is Strateco. I mean, they were saying it is only exploration phase. Yes, but you are putting a ramp in there already, so what happens after that? You know, couldn't you change that, don't put a ramp? Can't you just drill it and find how much ore you have, or changing the system. And this is what I think our people would like to know, is could you do it another way? Could you do this? You know, this would be a more open discussion on the project.

1415 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

So if I understand you well, you think that there was a lack of information?

**Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD :**

1420 I think that, yeah, to tell you today most of the mining companies are informing the trapper more often than it was before. When I worked with certain companies you know which ones are not giving that much information so you try to push them to say get more information. What are you doing? If you are drilling, drilling. If you are going to do a big trenching, show them, tell them everything that you are doing, and which gives the trapper a chance to understand where the project is moving, and it doesn't hurt him while he is hunting at the same time. I think that the information has to be put together more with the trapper and the mining companies.

1430 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

And would you make the same evaluation? If the same information was given to the whole population, do you think that the picture of acceptability would be or could be different a bit?

1435 **Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD :**

I think so, and because it could – they have a better understanding of the project now, and I think then, you know, give them a better way of thinking of the project, how they can prevent it from certain things happening as, you know, like anything happening like of a big disaster of waste or something, how can we prevent that? Are you guaranteeing me you can do it? You know, these are the things that I think you have to really explain a lot more.

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**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

I am wondering, how do you address the challenge of, because I am hoping to get a little insight into your, especially in your work with Envirocree, and one of the challenging questions I think is, and it has been raised a couple of times, it is the appreciation of risk, how community members and how tallymen see risk versus how the community sees risk, and, you know, how you manage that risk. You know, one way is sharing the information, but is there something else that can be done? Is there something else that can be presented or explained, or is there another conversation that needs to happen so that these two groups can come to a common understanding on what an acceptable level of risk is?

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**Mr. JIMMY MACLEOD :**

Well, I will give you an example. We work with another company down in Waswanipi area, with Envirocree, and what we did with – the mining company approached us to be able to meet with the town and explain their project, and during that time we put all the tallymen together, and we had the company's, one of their exploration field geologists there explaining the project. It is not in the face of the outgoing, but they were both sharing what is happening they are doing in the exploration and the trapper explaining not to go in certain areas, can we agree with this? Don't build a road here, don't go in the mountains, don't touch my fishing spot.

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This was all put together on the book. We put a whole document together for it, so the tallymen received the information, what they had agreed between each other, and that is the way the relationship was working. So, I think that was kind of, you know, securing both parties, and most of the information went to the community, to the Chief and Band Council had a document on that.

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1470 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

No other questions?

1475 **LA COMMISSAIRE GOYER :**

Non.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

1480 So we thank you very much; it was quite interesting.

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**Mr. JUSTICE DEBASSIGE**

1485 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

We invite Justice Debassige.

1490 **Mr. JUSTICE DEBASSIGE :**

I have about like 20 pages, so it might take all night. No, I am just kidding. Good evening; my name is Justice Debassige, you can call me the boss. It's okay. Two years ago the youth began an opposition against the uranium exploration project. They brought the community together to share their concern and have their voice heard. I was one of the youth.

1495 Their main concern on the subject was the health of community members, animals, environmental impacts, and for those who still live on the land. It is very clear that the community do not accept uranium mining.

1500 I attended a conference in Anchorage, Alaska on environmental impacts on all sorts of mining. I would like to thank the community of Mistissini for sending me to this conference. I have learned a lot in that experience. I met a variety of people that experienced uranium mining impacts in their own communities.

1505 The Sioux Tribe in South Dakota, United States, face a variety of mines, including uranium. The Cheyenne Tribe face contamination along the Cheyenne River because of the nearby uranium mine. The Navajo in New Mexico experienced uranium mining impacts in their area also.



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As we all know what happened in Fukushima; the uranium market has reduced drastically since the incident. To be specific on the concerns I have mentioned earlier, environmental impacts are very dangerous; unpredictable weather can disrupt the mine if it should happen and cause danger to the land and our lake that we hold dearly.

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We have a history of heavy rain, strong winds, and most of all, forest fires. How would corporations manage that kind of safety? We do not know. We do not know how new technology can keep the land and the people safe. Even if the new technology worked, as a community we would not take that risk. We rely on the lake for fresh drinking water; it nourishes our bodies and keeps us cool during the hot summer months.

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The lake is our home. It would devastate our Elders, youth, and everyone else in our community if the water gets contaminated. As to health, we fear that serious illnesses and diseases might come right on our doorstep. The risk of thyroid cancer, lung cancer, leukemia, et cetera, would devastate our community. There are other matters that concern community members. 30 percent of community members still live on the land.

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My great-aunt and uncle live on the land most of the time, and the only time they ever come to the community is for supplies or to visit my family and I. Their camp is approximately 130 kilometres north from here. They do not know what is going on. There are other community members who hunt to make a living. They sell animal fur and keep their meat for their families. Those people are under the Income Security Programme, as mentioned earlier today. This mine would force them to stop hunting.

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1535

There are some families who do not have much to offer in their homes. Sometimes they have to resort to hunting and fishing to feed their families. Hunting and fishing is not only a spiritual and cultural asset to our community, it is a practice that helps us survive during times of trouble. As Mr. Thomas Coon said, has shown you, hunting and fishing is a way of life for us Crees. I would like to thank you for listening, and your time. I know it has been a long time, and I would like to respectfully say that as a community member of Mistissini we still say no to uranium. Thank you.

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**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

I guess you were crystal clear, so thank you very much.

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**Mr. BOYCE TRAPPER**

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**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

We would like to summon Boyce Trapper.

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**Mr. BOYCE TRAPPER :**

I am happy to see you, I am happy to greet you. I just want to tell a story. I want to tell you a story of what I went through, my experiences.

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December 25, that is when my wife had passed on. She had made her statement; I don't know if she had been told or where – I just wanted to say if, if this mine goes through and these works, this industry is approved everything will be destroyed. We will be affected; that is what she said. All the animals, from the fish, including the fish, and she said that she disapproved or could not approve of this industry, and I was grateful that she made her statement, and she passed on on the 25th of December.

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And for myself, I stand with her because of that, this can kill, I also say no. I cannot surrender this. She said all the water would be affected and contaminated.

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I want to greet you, thank you, and I am pretty sure I won't see you very soon; I am 78, I believe, and I can still drive myself around, and I never even went to school. I learned everything from the land, from hunting, and I still sustain myself. Thank you.

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**Mr. SIMEON PETAWABENO**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

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Mr. Petawabeno.

**Mr. SIMEON PETAWABENO :**

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Kwe! I am one of the people that didn't go to school. I was educated on the land, so I am going to tell the stories of the wisdom that was bestowed upon me. My father gave me teachings and taught me, and therefore gave me wisdom, and that intelligence sustained me and has brought me to where I am today. I was able to do everything he asked of me, and I knew of everything that he told me. I understood, and with the skills that he gave me and taught me I used them well, and

1590 when his time was done on this land he transferred the land to me, that I would be the tallyman,  
and that is how it was, and he told me stories of his stance in the past and how he brought us up  
properly and healthily, and it is because of his wisdom and intelligence, and I think about the way of  
life of the Mistissini people.

1595 When we were put on this earth, even the non-native people had, they have their own skills  
and talents and wisdoms, and even with their schools we have the equivalent as Cree people on  
our land. When I first recall Mistissini it wasn't this big. There is a lot of Elders that told me the  
stories of how they survived, how they came to be, and there wasn't much here in Mistissini even  
for me.

1600 With the discussion that we are having now, there wasn't that much going on. – I believe, is  
what he is saying. – I am 71, 79 years old, and I can say it wasn't like this. People used oars to  
paddle, there was no motor at the time of my story. We were still using our oars to paddle, and with  
the skills that were bestowed on us as Cree people, that is what I think about. When I think about –  
with the discussion topic today, there wasn't so many non-native people. It was just the managers  
1605 or the bosses that would be around.

1610 Today, there is many of us, and many things are, many opportunities, and there are many  
doors are opening, and it is the same thing on our territories. Many things are showing up; there is  
a lot of announcements, a lot of – and the Cree people also had had their own statements when it  
comes to their territories and their land. There is a lot of different stories, a lot of different  
testimonies, testimonials. There is a lot of development coming, or that has come, and the way I  
understand it, I just hear about this once in a while when I am here. This is the topic of uranium,  
and I think about when – there is a lot of topic in discussion, and when they talk about this very  
dangerous mineral there is a lot of discussion, a lot of people talking, and it is different from the  
1615 other, the other minerals.

1620 With the other minerals, if something goes wrong, or if it surfaces, there isn't as much  
discussion. There doesn't seem to be as much concern. So for the Cree it seems to be a very  
surprising thing when we talk about this particular ore or mineral, and I can't say that I am very  
knowledgeable on this, but I am aware of – I just hear people discussing this mineral and the  
dangers of it, and it is as though on our territory the Troilus Mine is, has, our territory is part of the  
territory that is affected by this mine, and so – I am sorry – the stories of that ore with the Troilus  
Mine, the dangers of that ore is not the same as the way, the discussions of this uranium, and so  
with uranium what effects is it going to have? What is going to happen if anything should go wrong,  
and we hear that when – when we think, there is a lot of consideration with this mineral and when  
1625 there's discussions about it, and that is what we hear when we discuss it, and it's been a while now  
that we have heard about this mineral.

1630 That is why I think that when we want to thoroughly be aware of something we have to speak to each other clearly and be honest about the threats of this rock or the dangers or the safeties, and we know that there is very different ways that they go about mining, such as the open pit, and the other one we call it – I guess it is a den – when it is an open pit.

1635 So, there is various ways that they mine. And like the mine that I mentioned that is Troilus, there was a big, they dug a very big hole, or very deep – I guess he's saying that there was 11 years. In 24 hours, it was a 24-hour job. That was the way that worked. The work never stopped, and I guess there was shifts. So we were told how the company was going to do this, and those that were, the companies that were mining, they told us everything about how they were going to go about it, the way they were going to do it, the process. Even as, so much as how deep they were going to go, and even the kind of vehicles or machinery they were going to use, and I think a lot of people are expecting or hoping that we get a more elaborate explanation of the process for uranium. That is why people, I think, are surprised or a little concerned where are they going to store this ore, this mineral, uranium, especially the contaminant? Will that be stored separately? Will it be just sitting there out in the open?

1645 That is the way a mine is, when they build it. There is a lot of dust; it is just a cloud of dust. When the dust comes out it seems like a cloud. If you go hunting, you will see that even the snow has a different colour near the mine, and we have to be aware of where the wind comes from. Wherever the wind goes, that is where that dust goes, and so if such a mine is approved where is that – what are they going to do with that, how are they going to handle that? How are they going to manage it? And I can tell you a lot about this because there was always dust at that mine.

1650 That is all I wanted to say; I just want to share what I have seen, and as soon as there were job openings we don't even know if it is very secured. There is those that came and, from the Environment, with – so when they said that they would, even with the bylaws or the laws that they would have to follow them, they actually sometimes found a way around it, or there were loopholes and things happened, and so even where – sometimes the, I guess it is the tailings, sometimes there would be some rogue tailings or rogue effects, and we were shown.

1660 We were shown, and this was said to us. There is three different places or three different minerals that were mined, and when the stone is put into, I believe the machinery, he is saying, that the residuals or the contaminants, those can't be used anyway, so the company would, I guess, deposit it somewhere, and when that is done we said that we – that this had to be contained, and yet, and yet it is still – something had happened at this mine, and these contaminants were either airborne, or – it affected like even the water. It found its way into the water.

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So, they managed to prevent it, or managed to stop it I believe, and with other projects that has to be contained, and it has to be enforced, whatever the precautionary measures are deemed necessary have to be absolutely enforced so that none of these contaminants find their way to the surface or into the ecosystem, and the company said that – I guess a company said that they either were not – they didn't have a duty to actually clean what they had, the mess they had made.

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So, I expect with these discussions – we just want our people to be spoken to directly, and informed on an even level, because with the work that I have done, and as a hunter, I was taught every precautionary measure for the animals. I was taught everything; that I would not overkill an animal or a species, and how to be careful in the way I would kill an animal, and that I would not destroy or disrespect the land. If I kill too many animals that is a disrespect of the animal, and if I am hunting something, not to kill more than necessary, and that is the way the Cree are.

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It is a respect of the territory, the land and the animals, and that is why when the Cree speak it is, their way of life is very important, and just the same way a non-native person would have very high regards of their stores and their farms, the Cree people have the same regard for their territory, because it is almost as if those are our farms. We are the caretakers of that. We manage that. We manage everything that grows there.

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From the fall, we would go – sometimes we would be there for eight months on the land. When I was still with my father, we would be out for eight months. We would leave in September and we would be back only June in town. We were able to survive from the land, and that is the way the Mistissini people were and are. That is why we have such a high regard for our land, and I believe every nationality always takes care of, or has a high respect for what, for their sustenance.

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So when something comes up that is maybe somewhat of a threat to their territory, their land, then there is an immediate concern. And so now these discussions are open, so I wanted to speak. And so the land was beautiful; the way the land was made and created for us, it is beautiful, it always has been, and I feel like our land is being disturbed, and that is what I have seen as I have been growing up. When I hear we are destroying or affecting something that is beautiful, and for the creator or the spirit that put us here everything had already been made perfect.

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Thank you for letting me speak.

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**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Thank you.

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**Mr. RONNY COON-COME**

1710 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

I would like to invite Ronny Coon-Come.

1715 **Mr. RONNY COON-COME :**

I would like to speak on behalf of the hunters and trappers because today I, myself, I live off the land, and tomorrow morning I am going to leave for Camp Osprey. I am going to work there as a fishing guide, and about 40 years ago I worked with my father on the same area, Mistassini Lake, and all my life I have hunted and trapped on this lake.

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I fed my family and clothed my family on this lake, and today, since November I got laid off from my job. I didn't have enough hours to claim my EI, so during that time, that is when, that is the source of food I provided for my family on the table, but my wife works with the Cree Health Board as a janitress, and she helped me a lot financially. Lucky that she got a job. Imagine what would happen if my wife didn't work? I am sure we wouldn't have any other source of income except for the trap line and for the guiding services, too.

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And this job that I have today was passed on from my father. He was the one that taught me the lake and how to survive. I can tell you, this lake itself, it is not a very nice place to work within four seasons, and I noticed the climate change, too, since because I, myself, I started hunting and trapping before the Income Security Programme ever existing, and before the James Bay Agreement, and that was the only source of income that I received because at that time because I was young, is from fur, animals, and the eight months that we trapped, that was our income for the future year.

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If we had a bad year of course we didn't have any supply with us within the next winter, so we had to live off the land and the source of income that we received we received from the fur income. And my main concern is about the lake itself and the water, because I know, if Strateco company makes a mistake I know what is going to happen. I could no longer continue feeding my family here on this lake.

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Well, I worked for Strateco for one year, but I worked with a subcontractor, not directly with Strateco, and I know when you have, when you are working for an employer and you have, and if you have something that doesn't please the employer, so – then you are not going to get hired again. You are going to lose the job. So, that is what happened the last time I worked there. I got laid off because they closed the project, and when they finished closing the project, I asked my

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1750 employer for my ROE and I had a very difficult time just to receive my ROE because he didn't pay what he was supposed to pay to the Government by the - but finally I got a hold of my ROE, and with this seasonal job that I had, and it is only a few months on the lake as a guide, fishing guide. So, it happened sometimes that I don't have enough hours to receive my ROE, so what happens is when a project comes around they always seem to hand the project to a tallyman on the trap line, and there is - I myself I am not a tallyman on the trap line, so whatever source of income that is going to come into this trap line or whatever in the future, I am sorry, it is going to head straight to the tallyman, the source, the revenue.

1755 So us trappers, us hunters, we hardly receive revenue as coming from these mining companies, and here, like for instance Chibougamau, around that area, I had a brother-in-law that lived there, that had his trap line and he trapped around that area. Him, he died of cancer because – it concerns about the mine that were around that area. There are about, if I am not mistaken there are about 13 mines that were opened there, and I am not too sure if they hired 13 Crees during that time, because we weren't under the James Bay Agreement at that time yet. So, today, even though with the mining that are opening today. Like for instance, Camp Éléonore, I myself I looked for work there and that project has been started for four years, and here still I don't receive work from there.

1765 But my main concern is what is going to happen to us Crees that hardly receive any benefits from these projects in the future?

1770 Us, as the hunters, what are we going to, how are we going to benefit? What will we benefit if this lake is destroyed? I am pretty sure that no client will come and fish in our lake, that I will be able to take on this lake for them to get fish to even feed their children, and that is the way it is today. The clients come to our lake, they take those fish back and they put the fish on the table, but if they pollute the lake I am sure the clients will stop coming, especially for the fishing, and they take their limit home, too. I am sorry with my English, I can't speak very, because I am not an educated person. I try my best.

1780 And my main concern is I would rather have this project stop, closed, no uranium on Cree territory. That is my, that is my saying, because I know that my family are not going to receive that, that much benefit from this contract, because I, myself, I know my history, where my father and his father used to hunt and trap from Témiscamie and from the end of those, the lake, and up north to the Camp Matoush area. That is where my grandfather had his trap line before, so it was split in many ways, and I, myself, asked for a job on this contract when they started to develop the road to the diamond mine, and here today I still don't receive any information. They didn't hire me yet, even though that used to be my grandfather's trap line.

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1790 So, that is what happens today. If you are not related to any tallyman you are not going to receive that much money, either, from any of the gold that is going to be developed in the province of Quebec, because I have seen it, and I know how it is, and I know how it feels to be left out, too, and that is how, today, that is how the Cree hunters and travellers are today. They kind of get left out from all the projects that are being developed.

1795 It is only the tallymen that get the money, and sometimes the tallymen, they forget their relatives, too, and like I said before, today I still live off that lake, and not long ago we came back from our goose break. I have two sons. They don't go to school. One of my sons who work in Camp Éléonore and he didn't complete his secondary III, and when he did his secondary development test to work there he failed. So, he had to take another course and he didn't finish the course, and today he is lacking of a certificate to go to work there. So he got laid off, and now, today, he is coming with me. Tomorrow, he is coming with me up to the lake and we are going to go try and we are going to stay there for the rest of the season.

1800 And if they take that away, the whole lake, if they pollute it, that is my question. Us, as the hunters and those that live off the land - open one hand right now, I don't have any money, no source of income. I can't go to the store and buy something. The only way I can put food on the table is to take my canoe or my boat, or just take my stuff and leave the reserve and go hunting for a few hours and come back, and that is how it is today. It is hard for me to explain in such a short time. It is not an easy situation to be in, the situation that I am in today.

1810 I, myself, have experienced what you call - I have been overstressed, depressed, and the only cure I found is just to leave the reserve for a while, go in the bush, do what I like to do the best, and come back here, and if they take it away and if they pollute the rivers and streams and I live to enjoy, that is it for me, I guess. That is it for my family, the ones that are not educated, because I have a family that don't have work today that are - that don't have that proper education because you need certificates to go to work. You need a first aid course and all such things as those, and when you can't read and write it is very difficult for somebody to work in the environment such as mining, extracting gold, or extracting uranium.

1820 And when I was in Camp Matoush, when I worked for Strateco, we had two shifts when we worked there. Our shift was two weeks and two weeks off, and I had a foreman, myself, that took care of the contract as we were, like, getting ready for the, for the ramp, explorers and ramp, and one thing I noticed when you have two shifts, you have two bosses, two foremen, and one thing I saw when they made a mistake that concerned me. They were going to open a road so they would have access to the gravel pit, and this foreman that was on that contract told the other foreman that they were not supposed to open any gravel pit. They were supposed to take the material that is at the center of that road they were going to open. So what happened is then we changed shifts, and the other foreman come around and him, he just opened up another pit, a gravel pit, and the gravel



1830 pit has a lot of mooring in it, and the rain came and the mooring went into a small creek and that is what they use when they build dams, mooring, and of course it blocked the small creek, and my main concern with that mistake is is it going to happen if the development continues, if they have a licence? Is one foreman going to make a mistake and the other foreman is going to correct the mistake, or if they have a spill.

That is all I can say for now. Thank you.

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**Ms. PRISCILLA MARK**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

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Priscilla Mark. I am going to ask, summon Priscilla Mark.

**Ms. PRISCILLA MARK :**

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Good evening. My name is Priscilla Mark.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Good evening.

1850

**Ms. PRISCILLA MARK :**

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I need to get comfortable first. I am a community member of Mistissini; I am proud to say I am from Mistissini because of being the largest freshwater lake in the province of Quebec. I work as a community worker in Youth Protection. I am a mother of a three-year-old son, and I have a common law spouse that has strong ties to the land. He enjoys hunting and trapping. Therefore, is providing very well for us with his harvest.

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With this being said, I feel it is my responsibility to protect my family's health and environment. When I see pictures on the effects of uranium in Iraq or other countries, it is devastating and traumatizing to see such images in these countries. Children are born deformed as a result of exposure to uranium.

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Now, will this company ensure that our future will not be, our future children will not be born deformed? I believe that they cannot sell us the notion that they will take all the necessary precautions of a safe plant. My brother-in-law, Leon De Conti, is from the community of Kitigan

1870 Zibi. They used to have well water, but today they are hooked up to a water infrastructure because in the mid-'80s they had 16 people die of cancer. That prompted a study to be done on water, and discovery was made that Kitigan Zibi sat on a huge uranium deposit. There was no uranium mining going on, but it still affected the community through the well water supply. Yes, they may make millions from this project, but our health and the impacts on our environment should be of greater importance than creating a mine.

1875 The health of our nation is threatened, which is the reason why I am strongly opposed to this project. Thank you.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

Priscilla? We just had a couple of questions.

1880 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Bonjour, est-ce que vous comprenez le français?

**Ms. PRICILLA MARK :**

1885 Un peu.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

1890 Un peu?

**Ms. PRICILLA MARK :**

1895 Oui.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

1900 Bon. Si ce n'est pas clair, si ce n'est pas clair, vous me le dites et puis je vous poserai la question en anglais, d'accord?

**Ms. PRICILLA MARK :**

1905 Oui.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Cette communauté qui a été exposée à l'uranium et qui a eu des problèmes de santé sérieux dont vous venez de nous parler.

1910

**Ms. PRICILLA MARK :**

Oui.

1915

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Ce que vous avez lu ou entendu là-dessus, est-ce qu'on précisait si c'était à cause de la radioactivité ou à cause de la toxicité chimique de l'uranium? Parce que l'uranium peut être toxique, ça peut contaminer, comme l'arsenic ou d'autres choses, là, avez-vous une information là-dessus ou vous n'en avez pas?

1920

**Ms. PRISCILLA MARK :**

I have only heard of the impacts of that community because it is my brother-in-law that told me this information. I haven't read it myself.

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**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Okay, so you don't have any information specifically on that?

1930

**Ms. PRISCILLA MARK :**

Yeah, but I am sure this information can be brought forth.

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**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Could you just name me the place again?

**Ms. PRISCILLA MARK :**

1940

Kitigan Zibi is located right beside Maniwaki.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

1945

Okay, I know what you mean. Oui, je vois.

**Ms. PRISCILLA MARK :**

Okay.

1950 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

O.K., je vais vous remercier. Est-ce que d'autres personnes ont des questions? Non? Ça va. Alors, on vous remercie beaucoup et merci de la précision.

1955 **Ms. PRISCILLA MARK :**

Okay, good-night.

1960 **LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Good-night.

1965 **Mr. CHARLO ISERHOFF**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

Charlo Iserhoff. We are inviting Charlo Iserhoff to speak.

1970 **Mr. CHARLO ISERHOFF :**

1975 My name is Charlo Iserhoff; I am 51 years old. I have got a daughter, and I have got two grandchildren. I say no to this uranium. Why? How many of you have watched the movie called Thunderheart? It really hit me when I watched that movie, Thunderheart. I don't mind other mines like the diamond, the gold, because I know we have to put food on the table for our families. I don't have much to say. I am going to let you people, you can write this down. If this project goes through you are not going to have a Thunderheart you are going to have a Thunderwarrior because I will be there to stop it. I don't have anything else to say.

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**Mr. JOHN MATOUSH**  
**Mr. TIM MATOUSH**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

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We are going to send in John Matoush.

**Mr. JOHN MATOUSH :**

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Greetings. My name is John Matoush. I think the uranium mine, that is actually how I sustained myself when I worked. That is where my grandfather is, even my father is on their territories, and that is where, that is where my late father is now laying to rest. That is where he is buried. I was only six years old when I lost my father, and it is near Williams Lake, and that is where he rests.

2000

I do go to meetings when there are discussions, and this is the first time I have actually participated, and I still don't understand the effects of this uranium. The Cree literal translation is the rock that is bad or that is dangerous, and I still expect to one day see this rock, because there is such, I don't know how to say it, there is so much discussion about it, so much negative connotations about it, and I haven't yet heard of anybody having died from exposures from uranium in our territory. It is something else, something else is killing us on our lands.

2005

And here in Mistissini there is some places you can't even, just on the water here, on the shore, you can't use the water from there. You can't go there for water. It is just, the only thing they use that water for is for the children to go swimming. And elsewhere, since this road has connected us to Mistissini, to the outside world, because there is mostly sand, and that alone, a lot of - even though it is just sand, there is still a lot that ends up airborne, and it travels very far, and even the water itself is even affected or must be affected by such dust.

2010

To the north here I saw, about halfway to Chibougamau there was a lake there, it is called Waconichi. It is this beautiful water there that is clear all the way through, and today it is not, it is not so clear, and I remember as a child when my parents got, my mother got married, that is where we lived, and when we were paddling I was able to see the rocks at the bottom of the lake. If you go in that lake now it is as though the stones are murky, and so that must affect the animals, the fish for sure.

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2020

And in the winters, I was on our lake and there was still no cement or concrete on our road here. It was mostly sand. Even on the ice you would see the sand, and in the spring the ice would melt very quickly, and wherever this sand was that is where the ice would, there would be holes.

2025 And today, since they have built the highway with this concrete it is not like that, and there is no  
sand on the lake anymore.

2030 And so with this other road, since they used sand it is going to be the same thing, and the  
lakes, they are ruined sooner, and the effects are visible in the winter – I don't understand the exact  
term he is using – but that is all I will say about that. And with the mine that they are considering  
building there, I don't know what the decisions are for this mine yet. I am not very approving of it,  
either, if there is such a danger of destruction, and I thought about – even with the dams, I was  
2035 thinking why are they building dams? They said that they were going to divert rivers all the way to  
Chisasibi, and so I thought with the mine if something wrong happens it is going to go through the  
whole Cree territory.

2040 I was thinking about this. I can't say I know very much. I only went to school three years. I  
only basically poked my head into school, so I can't say I can fully understand these discussions, or  
what is being tabled, and you can't teach a Cree person his language the way you can teach a  
non-native language to the non-natives. If we use our own language we would understand more,  
that is what I have been thinking about. – He is talking about communication. – And so we would  
maybe understand more.

2045 I have heard a lot of people who would talk, and I mean children, when they talk about  
something their vocabulary is way off, even just speaking, to speak Cree, and the youth are the  
same way. And if the people are taught their own language people would understand each other  
more through their own language. That is what I have been thinking about, and I am not very good  
in English at all. I basically have to guess what people say; I can't speak English very well. I didn't  
2050 really go to school, and I was still able to, I believe, start a company, even though I didn't go to  
school.

2055 I started a carpentry company, and I was able to use like younger people, my grandchildren,  
and I had to – I even had to work my own documents, even the bookkeeping. I was still able to do  
that. Even I managed all that, and my wife had already passed on and she had gone to school,  
and she had managed to, help me manage with that, but she was working here at the Band Office,  
and she would help me once in a while, and she was able to take care of herself even though, even  
though she hadn't had that much education. That is the way I saw myself.

2060 And when the discussions of the uranium came up my late grandfather, he hunted there, and  
his brothers went hunting there. That is their trap line, and so I expected or hoped that I - that we  
would be invited to the mine so that we can be told how exactly the processes are, but even when  
we have these discussions, but we are not told, and I think he is talking about the inheritance of the  
trap lines that his grandfather to his father to himself and his children, and so I cannot approve of  
such a mine for the industry of uranium, but maybe in the future. Maybe it will open one day when

2065 the people that have tried to prevent it will have passed on, because that is the way things are. When we prevent, when something like this comes up, when we stop jobs and such we prevent other people from being able to work, non-native people, the Cree people.

And with the mine I can't approve of it very much. Thank you, that is all I wanted to say.

2070

**Mr. TIM MATOUSH :**

2075 I just wanted to speak, to talk about the land, the M16 territory, and for the Council and Councillors when we look at those hunting territories, it is still, there is still no certainty. There is actually no document that says, that actually differentiates the families or those trap lines, and so today there is still no document that clarifies M16's divisions.

2080 When he is talking about the business the company that he started, the carpentry company, it is in the '90s that he had started that company, and it is called 'John & Sons', and that is where we gained the skills, as his children, to do that kind of work, as carpenters, just like my brothers and my fellow Cree in Mistissini. That is what we do here in Mistissini. I think it is his brothers. Today, we have a company, we have an electrical company today that we started for ourselves.

2085 And so I, my stance also - with our line of work, because today we are the only ones that do this kind of work as electricians in the Cree territory, and we work in the mines, and we have contracts for our company, but there is no, we don't have - and with the proposed mine there is still nothing. We still haven't been contacted, or we still haven't been invited or have the opportunity to work, and I don't think I want my company to be there because I stand with my father, because we want the - we don't want the mine to be on our territory, and for me, for my opinion, when I look at the territories and it bothers me when there is a lot of - I think he is pertaining to the claims and the stakes all over the territory - and I am very worried, because if I teach my children what my father taught me when it comes to hunting; I am afraid that those days would come to an end. We won't be able to transmit what has been taught to us by my father. My father always hunted, and that was his way of surviving, and he is like that today. He still loves to hunt and lay his fish nets, and then goose break, he is always out on the land.

2095 And that is where we get, we are very happy that our father is able to live like that, and for his way of life we don't want that to be lost, so we hope and expect that we can hunt where my father hunted, but we are going to be afraid of hunting there if a mine is actually opened there, or is given the licence. So, I am not going to allow my children to go anywhere near that, to go near the mine should it ever actually be erected. I wouldn't take that risk, especially myself, nor for my own children.

2100 That is all I wanted to say. I didn't say my name; my name is Tim Matoush. Thank you.

2105 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

2110 I don't have any questions right now, but there is something I want to say. So what your father spoke of, when the sand, the dust from the sand, he teaches me a lot because of that, and I am very thankful for his testimony, his statement, because what he is discussing, I know where that comes from, what he is talking about, and it does bother me once in a while when I hear our people as if they put their own talents or wisdom lower because they didn't go to school. I want people to know, just as your father spoke, when he talked about that there are people who, they get paid a large amount of money who have studied for extended periods of time and they are paid to study that, and your father already understands that, and I want to say all those who put their testimonies down today, when it comes from the culture we are very impressed from the Cree philosophy and knowledge, and that is going to help us extensively, and this will help us when we want to teach and make people be aware of the points of view. So, I thank your father, I greatly thank your father for his wisdom. Thank you.

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**Mr. PAKESSO MUKASH**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

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(Not translated) Pakesso Mukash.

**Mr. PAKESSO MUKASH :**

2130

Bonjour. Je m'excuse que des fois, je fais beaucoup de traduction, je fais mon possible, je vais dire que c'est vraiment plus facile de traduire la philosophie, je vais dire non-amérindienne, québécoise, peut-être, parce que ça vient des... comme le vidéo. C'était vingt-cinq (25) minutes de terminologie qu'il faut que j'explique la philosophie au peuple, aux aînés.

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I am going to speak in English because I think it is the more generally-understood language, and I excuse myself to the Elders, who might not be able to understand what I am about to say.

2140

There is one thing that is very interesting when we get to the work of translation, and I am very proud of the fact that I speak three languages, because I am Cree, Naskapi, Abenaki and French-Canadian, but if you ask me who I am, I am Cree first and foremost because I have been formed by the philosophies and legends and stories of my people; and when it comes to translations there is a very unique thing that happens, is that to transmit the philosophy of corporations and the Government to the people, it is not that hard. It always comes down to finances and resource development and jobs.



2145 Yesterday in Chibougamau was not that difficult for me. What is difficult is for me, you might  
not have noticed, I have had to translate two days alone. The partner that I was supposed to work  
with did not show up. In Chisasibi I had a partner, and for me as a Cree person, it is very hard to  
absorb. Like, I didn't get a chance – I had to actually apologize to the listeners – I am like 'I have  
got to go to the washroom', and then I realized it is on air, so everybody knew that I had to go to the  
2150 bathroom, and there was a panic if I wasn't in the booth, apparently. Excuse me for that. So, I have  
had to take very little sips of water, and to speak, and like I said, yesterday in Chibougamau was  
not easy to transmit, and because it was all financial. It was all jobs and so on, and I noticed that  
there was a gentleman who suggested that you differentiate from the – is this a sign? – to  
differentiate from the rational and the emotional.

2155 The difference is if you do that you are actually differentiating technically the educated and  
the non-educated, and therefore in certain contexts the Cree and the non-Cree, but the emotional  
people are the ones, as you have heard in the testimonies, they go there, they live there. They can  
tell when there is dust in the air. They can tell when there is holes in the ice because of sand, and  
2160 of course they are going to be emotional, because their ties to the land are so deep and ancestral  
that it hurts to see any kind of damage or threat come to their territories, and the differences  
between maybe the province of Quebec and the Cree people is when we talk about ownership of  
the land, Quebec owns it as a province for resource development. The Crees do not own it, they  
love it. That is why they get emotional. So, you can't differentiate. I hope you didn't take that  
2165 suggestion yesterday to heart, because you can't tell people who weep when the animals are  
dying, when the fish are sick and dying, or the moose have tumours, you can't say they are  
irrational, because they reverberate within that existence every day, and with all the work that I  
have done in translation, I do have a great respect for you today with your consistency in allowing  
people to speak, even at length, without interrupting them.

2170 Normally I would suggest, I prefer when people talk a little quicker because I have to  
translate, so 20, 30 minutes is sometimes a little bit long, and I am going to tell you something;  
when it comes to language, I do this work because I want you to understand the philosophy that  
comes through the Cree language, and it is not easy to do so. When you say two o'clock, I have to  
2175 tell the people that the small hand on the clock has to go around twice, and so – but when it comes  
to the land and the way they feel about it I have tried my best to transmit, to make sure you  
understand that there is a love there, and that there is an immediate and definite pain when  
something is threatened, and I also noticed that there is something that happens when Quebec  
and the Cree meet.

2180 We have already signed a nation-to-nation agreement, but how many of you speak three  
languages? How many people have you heard testify in Chisasibi, here, that could speak to you in  
French, Cree, and English? There is very few Quebecers that take the effort to learn an aboriginal  
language, therefore they will never understand the philosophy. They will never understand why an

2185 Indian cries, like in the commercial, and the guy wasn't even Indian, he was Italian, you know, when they throw the paper on the ground and he's got that one tear?

2190 So very few people, they still think that we are savages, that we still live off the land, and it is interesting, because here the people are affected immediately by what happens. Even the Elder that just spoke before me said that just down by the water they can't use that water. The kids go swimming in it, and that is about it, and in Chibougamau the concern wasn't on the surrounding land, the concern was the road, if yellowcake or uranium is transported on a highway. They didn't really seem to care about the environment, just the road that goes through their town.

2195 That shows you what the philosophies are. The Crees actually are sustained by what is around them. Chibougamau, you close off the highway and the airport, what are they going to eat? IGA or whatever. They only have maybe a couple of weeks' worth of supply, and I am sure they would turn to hunting, too, if that was the case, but what I wanted to say, the concern and what I would like you guys to consider is like John Paul said, he acknowledges, or Paul John I have heard  
2200 in translations, that the Elders when they speak, the first thing they say is 'I don't know very much because I didn't get an education', and it hurts me in the translating booth because if, you might have noticed sometimes when they speak about the land at length in all its detail and all its philosophical beauty, I struggle. I speak three languages. I am not a linguist, I am translator, and I have to generalize what they are saying. So, if one of the men, the hunters or women was to tell  
2205 you that on a certain point on Mistissini Lake there is a certain kind of fish that is spawned at a certain time I wouldn't be able to tell you because it is a language that I have not lived. You have to be out there to live it and to understand it, but one thing I want you guys to take into consideration is that when it comes to the mining, like when we talk about experts, I get the sense that we are kind of weary of the experts.

2210 Like, I remember hearing during the Paix des Braves that we had experts and scientists that worked for Hydro come and ask, I believe it is a Niposh family, or the family that was affected, where are the fish? We have to do studies on the fish. So the family who has been there forever told them the fish are here, here, here. (speaks in Cree). Here, here, here, and here. The experts  
2215 said oh, and they went everywhere else but there to tell Hydro there is no fish, go ahead and do what you want to do.

2220 So, when we talk about experts, what you don't have at your table, or John Paul might be the closest thing, is somebody who speaks Cree, French, and English, but he is Cree. We don't have a Quebecer that speaks French, Cree, and English that works, that can transmit the philosophies amongst yourselves.

But when we talk about the effects of uranium and such, again we are weary of the experts, but I am sure - I have translated your opening statement, and I do believe that you will be

2225 autonomous and independent and get the experts that the Crees deserve, but I would also like you  
to consider in the studies to find out what the state of the health is of those that have been directly  
affected by mines. I would highly recommend that you do not take our politicians' word for it. This  
is a chance where the people get to speak on their own behalf, and I would really like you guys to  
2230 consider, find out where the mines have been. Even if it is not uranium, if it is iron, whatever else,  
find out what the effects have been, and let the health of the people speak for itself.

In the Cree territory, I don't know when the last natural death was. I would love for the Health  
Board to tell me when somebody has passed away from natural causes; either drinking and driving,  
alcohol sickness, or cancer. Cancer is a big one now. Diabetes is very high in the Cree. I think we  
2235 are at 40 percent of our population. And so the health risks from the mines. We will have the  
experts say you don't have to worry about it, but the Crees, again, are very worried about should  
something go wrong.

And when Hydro-Quebec dammed the La Grande River something did go wrong. They like  
2240 to flood in the fall, November I believe. That is when the beavers and the bears have hibernated,  
and they are ready for the winter. The waters rose, and bears drowned. Now, for regular French-  
Canadian "Bien oui, c'est des ours! So what, t'sais? Il est où, Big Mac?" You know what I mean,  
but for the Crees these are almost our brothers, and it hurt, and hunters found beavers that had  
actually tried to escape the floods and had their feet frozen and were still looking for somewhere to  
2245 live.

Now, very few people care about that, but those are stories that exist, and 10,000 caribou  
drowned. I believe our Premier said something about caribous and jobs recently, I am not going to  
quote it, but 10,000 drowned and Hydro got away by saying it was an act of God.

2250 So, uranium. You all know the concerns that the people have. The radiation, if something  
was to break or go wrong how come nobody is accountable? The gentleman yesterday who had  
stakes in Strateco, I wonder if it would occur to him that if something goes wrong and he kills a  
whole population or community if it would affect him as a stakeholder or shareholder? I don't know,  
2255 and who is accountable? Who, does Strateco get to say well, the earthquake, we didn't expect  
that. The Crees were worried about it, it is an act of God. It isn't.

And so there is one thing I want to share with you guys, and it is a story. It is funny, because  
I am actually on the same – I am on a committee with Thomas Coon, and we always joke about,  
2260 you know, don't talk too long. I try to keep him within, as a chairperson, within three minutes. He  
never does it. (In Cree)

2265 There is a story about an elderly lady in Whapmagoostui , and I want you guys to understand the story for the fact of how great our people actually are – même si on est considéré des Sauvages.

2270 Let me know if there is a Quebecer that has this story about their grandparent. There is an elderly lady you know Whapmagoostui whose husband passed away in the '90s, and she was 70, nearing 80 years old. Actually, I think she was already in her 80s, and her land is probably the furthest from the community. It is 150 kilometres or more from the community. So, if something goes wrong she has got to make it back through the land to Great Whale, and Great Whale is the last kind of isolated Cree community.

2275 And when her husband passed away that fall, as you have heard the men and hunters here say they leave, right? They leave for the whole season. She wanted to, and the community said you can't, we are not going to leave you here. Like, 80 years old, we are not going to put you back on the land. She said I grew up on the land, I lived with my husband on the land, you put me back there, and she is a very feisty woman. She recently passed, I think, this year, and they said: we are going to send you out there, we are going to give you a bush radio, lots of batteries, you check in every day to make sure you are okay.

2285 She was alone at her camp, and so every day she would check in, you know: (in Cree), I am doing all right, don't worry about me, and then in the middle of the winter, or near the middle, she stopped calling in for a day. One day she missed, so within the community they were now concerned. They waited the second day, she didn't check in.

2290 They were already fearing the worst, she has passed on, they are getting a team to go get her body. The third day before the flight is about to go she checks in. Keep in mind, she is 80 years old. She said: I am really sorry (in Cree). She had killed two caribou on her own, which are big game. She had butchered and cleaned them all for her own sustenance, and this is a woman who lived, I believe, to be in her 90s, who passed away, I believe, this year.

2295 And this is the story of how great our people are, even as individuals, and even more so as a nation, and I would like you to use that story in the testimonies that people have used to realize the humanity of our people, and that we are not protecting the land just for ourselves, we are protecting it for Quebec as a whole, but please, I would like you in – I know I have a concern, or give you basically a mini-mandate: could you please use the Cree Health Board, or whoever you can, to find out what the state of health is of the hunters, the greatest people of our nation, who live near or on the mine sites, whatever the mine may be, because we don't yet know how terrifying uranium may be, but a lot of our people have cancer now, and that is my last suggestion, is just please do what you can to use the knowledge of the health of our people to help kind of clarify what the future of our people is.

Do you have anything to say, Melissa?

2305 **Ms. MELISSA SAGANAHS:**

Thanks, Pakesso.

2310 **Mr. PAKESSO MUKASH:**

Thank you, Melissa. Merci beaucoup.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

2315 Well, first actually I wanted to thank you for your translating job, and to be honest when I saw your name coming up at the very beginning I was very pleased, and reassured because I have heard you translating in other contexts, and I have seen you rise to the challenge better than most. And one of the things, one of the problems that I have in my work, and that I see you having when you are translating, and it relates to the last person who spoke, that wasn't simple what he explained about the sand and the wind and the water and the ice. He said it in two sentences, but he explained something extremely complex, and how do we – I guess the question I have is, well I am now asking you questions, our roles are reversed, but the question is what can we do in the future, moving forward, to make sure that when our people speak it is not as less quality knowledge, or that it is not – but the richness of what is said, the profound expertise that exists in what is said is used to its maximum, the way, you know – so I guess that is one question. If you had any suggestions for us on concretely how could we achieve that, other than getting two translators so you can go to the bathroom when you want?

2320

2325

2330 **Mr. PAKESSO MUKASH :**

I was just going to say keep me coming back.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

2335 All right. Find a friend, too, that we can use so you can go to the washroom more.

**Mr. PAKESSO MUKASH :**

2340 I am really sorry about that. That is the funny thing, is it is very interesting that very few of us can do this. I am surprised. I am not perfectly – I haven't mastered the Cree language. I sound like maybe I have, I haven't, and (in Cree) and it shows that what the state of our culture and language is, and that is why I love our hunters because I know out there they are speaking this

2345 language and they are transmitting it, and I think – I like it when, you know, they try to say 'wadjia' –  
quand vous essayez de nous saluer dans notre langue, on essaie – mais c'est ça, l'autre affaire,  
c'est que justement, c'est encore évident, même qu'on a signé la Convention de la Baie-James,  
même la Paix des Braves, que c'est rare que sans la traduction, la transmission de communication,  
on ne peut pas se comprendre.

2350 Comme il y a des fois, j'ai de la misère à traduire ou des fois, il faut que je traduise quand il y  
a des niaiseries, quand le monde vont niaiser, parce qu'entre Cris, on aime rire. Donc, dans ma  
traduction, j'ai essayé de transmettre, même des fois si les blagues sont plates ou spéciales, je les  
transmets pour que tout le monde puisse rire ensemble.

2355 Puis je pense – c'est difficile à dire comment faire – mais je pense qu'une affaire que j'ai  
remarquée : peut-être d'ici à vous autres, vous êtes élevés, il y a un grand espace. Ça prend  
quelqu'un qui peut rapprocher le peuple.

2360 Like you are kind of like an emcee, because it is us and a table, and your committees, and I  
think if you had somebody that helped, also helped people understand the focus of the meeting,  
the communication, and help either lighten it, lighten the mood, or keep everything kind of steady it  
would help, but it takes a special kind of person to do even that, let alone translations.

2365 Like the people have said, they would like things to be explained to them in laymen's terms,  
but in Cree there is no such thing because the language is so eloquent, and it takes a master who  
can understand the concepts of radons, I don't. I don't remember if I did very well in chemistry in  
school, or biology, but I am trying to make the Elders understand. Even the soccer ball thing  
helped, you know, but even that was hard for me because I don't know how many Elders play  
soccer, but I think we are getting there, and I think there is something to be said for this incredible  
terminology of a very high-level of understanding of the environment, but again, even if you bring in  
2370 your experts and they do a three-hour presentation on radons and uranium and radiation the Elders  
will trump them in the time they have spent on the land.

2375 When Elders say something is in the air, even with global warming. There was an Elder who  
once said that the mist that comes from the waters, the white waters in the waterfalls, that mist  
carries across the land, and therefore helps it freeze, it makes it colder. We have killed all our  
rivers, there is one river left, and there is no more white water, so there is no more mist that is  
airborne, therefore the lakes can't freeze as much. And this is just an observation. He didn't go to  
school, and I thought it was interesting that it was an Elder who thought about this, who was so  
aware of the winds and the small things, the minute things that happen on his territory that he  
2380 actually kind of had a pretty viable theory about global warming, you know what I mean?

2385 And I think that that knowledge, and that transmission should be honoured, and there should be either a session where you find a way to explain it, and the video is very hard to do. Like, when you guys showed it in Chisasibi I left. It was like it is a video, I can leave, but Eliza tried to – when I got back she was translating it, and then I took a shot at it.

2390 Ce n'était pas facile, vraiment pas facile, mais j'ai fait mon possible – c'est plus de comprendre les concepts, pas les petits numéros. That is very hard, but I do believe we are getting somewhere with what you guys are doing now, and I do feel there is a mutual respect, and I think by the end of this – a statement I will make is that if the Cree, you come back a second tour and third tour, hopefully I am around, if the Cree are more educated on uranium, whether the safeties and so on, and they still say no, I hope that Quebec realizes that the Crees have now been educated on uranium, and if they say no it is more powerful than it is now.

2395 As a hunter, I think it is already powerful, it should be enough, but I think once they come back and over-educate us and we still say no, Quebec has to go okay, well now they know their uranium, and not come back four years from now and try again until we say yes, do you know what I mean? That is really all I have to say. If there is any other questions?

2400 Can we go home now? I think we are all in the same bus.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

2405 Je me permettrai un commentaire. Je pense que la commission et tout le monde ici a noté que ce n'est pas seulement une performance que vous avez faite comme traducteur, c'est presque un exploit. Parce que faire ça tout seul, j'en ai souvent vu, je vous avoue que ça, ce que vous avez fait aujourd'hui, à d'autres endroits, je n'ai pas vu ça souvent. En fait, je ne l'ai jamais vu. Alors, bravo pour ce point-là, d'une part.

2410 Deuxièmement, je peux vous dire que c'est vrai que moi, par exemple, je ne comprends pas le cri, mais on peut rejoindre la culture d'autres personnes par d'autres atomes crochus. Je suis un chasseur et un pêcheur, et je peux vous dire que j'ai apprécié, extrêmement apprécié cette expérience du territoire que j'ai sentie, cette expérience de la terre, des animaux, des liens profonds qui unissent les humains à un territoire.

2415

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

I'm not sure if you want to translate?

2420

**Mr. PAKESSO MUKASH :**

Je vais faire ma dernière partie de traduction. (Traduction). Do I get a bonus for that?

2425

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Et je vais même ajouter que vous ne serez pas payé plus cher pour ça! Vous savez, bon, moi, j'arrive avec mes atomes crochus pour comprendre ce que vous faites, mais même ma collègue qui n'est pas chasseur, elle aussi a saisi puis on s'en est parlé. On sent que cette connaissance du territoire n'est pas seulement une expérience sur des années, c'est aussi une grande question d'amour qui se construit justement sur cette étroite relation avec la terre.

2430

Alors, moi, je peux vous dire que cette journée, on l'a vraiment appréciée beaucoup et voilà. Ça fait partie, ça a ajouté au plaisir de découvrir la région de Mistissini.

2435

**Mr. PAKESSO MUKASH :**

O.K., je vais traduire.

2440

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

Si vous pouvez.

2445

**Mr. PAKESSO MUKASH :**

(Traduction). Merci beaucoup.

**LE PRÉSIDENT FRANCOEUR :**

2450

C'est moi qui vous remercie. Et je pense que je me fais le porte-paroles de tout le monde en avant, en vous disant qu'on vous remercie beaucoup de votre participation.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH :**

2455

(Propos non traduits).

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**SÉANCE AJOURNÉE AU 9 JUIN 2014 À 19 H**



2465

Je soussignée, YOLANDE TEASDALE, sténographe officielle, certifiée sous mon serment d'office que les pages qui précèdent sont et contiennent la transcription exacte et fidèle des propos recueillis par moi au moyen du sténomasque, le tout selon la loi.

ET J'AI SIGNÉ :

2470

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Yolande Teasdale,  
Sténographe officielle

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