

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

**308**

**TRAN60**

Les enjeux de la filière uranifère au Québec

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POUR LA COMMISSION DU BAPE : M. LOUIS-GILLES FRANCOEUR, président  
M. JOSEPH ZAYED, commissaire

POUR LA COMMISSION DU CCEBJ : M. JOHN PAUL MURDOCH, président  
Mme MANON CYR, commissaire  
Mme MÉLISSA BROUSSEAU SAGANASH, commissaire  
M. JEAN PICARD, commissaire

POUR LA COMMISSION DU CCEK : AUCUN REPRÉSENTANT

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

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**DEUXIÈME PARTIE**

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Mistissini

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**THE SESSION IS ADJOURNED TO NOVEMBER 17th, 2014**

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**NOVEMBER 13th, 2014  
EVENING SESSION  
Mr. JOHN PAUL MURDOCH, PRESIDENT  
JAMES BAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

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**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

10

Before we start again, I think there is some people here that are here now that weren't here before when we started this afternoon. I just want to inform the people that this session is not about the Matoush Mining Project. This information session is about uranium.

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This mandate is from the Minister of Québec and this team that is called BAPE are the ones that are following up on this mission, collecting all the information and the comments of people, not only the native people but also the non-native people.

20

And this is the third phase of this mission, so from all these comments and thoughts, the people concerns that people expressed, we will be recording everything that is being said so that it can help us to produce a report on our mandate.

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And I also inform the people that if there are other people that want to talk, that they can respect others and when people share their comments, that they should have a time, a limited time to express themselves so as to give the opportunity to others who will want to make comments as well.

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And now we are going to begin again. We do have people that have put their names and registered to share their concerns and comments and our first speaker will be Amy Linton.

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**Ms. AMY LINTON  
YOUTH CHIEF OF MISTISSINI**

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**Ms. AMY LINTON :**

Good evening Mr. President, Commissioners. My name is Amy Linton. I am the Youth Chief of Mistissini.

40 I am here today representing the Youth of Mistissini. Our Council which strives to preserve our traditions and community wellbeing quickly sought to understand the puzzle, benefits and drawbacks of uranium exploration and how the issues in uranium mining affect our community.

45 I would also like to mention that our community has been made aware and has come together because of the potential hazards of uranium exploration on our land. It is due in part to the work done by the Mistissini Youth Council.

50 Before I took this position, the Youth Council headed by Shawn Iserhoff did a remarkable job of raising awareness of this issue in the community, by conducting a door-to-door campaign to learn the opinions of the people living in Eeyou Istchee. This was an important task and I would like to thank my preceder and all the young people who worked so hard to achieve the goals I described.

55 I would like to begin by sharing my many concerns and doubts as to whether it is possible to explore uranium without jeopardizing the future of ancestral Cree lands.

Our position is no different from what you have already heard from the Grand Council of the Crees and the Cree Nation of Mistissini which made it clear in earlier hearings that there will be no uranium projects on our territory without prior consent.

60 In addition to the presentation by the Grand Council of the Crees, I think it is obvious that we are not the only ones in Québec to take a rather thin view of the real benefits of uranium exploration. For many, any interest we might have had in the promise of economic development quickly faded as we listened to the developers and heard the very optimistic tone of their presentations in light of the serious issues it would create for our people.

65 Given the seriousness and the decisions to be made, it is unfortunate that we were not made aware of all the relevant information earlier in the process. Without necessarily influencing our choice, it would have been allowed for more information and balanced dialogs with the mining companies that had showed interests in exploring for uranium on our territory.

70 As well, we knew that any explorations whether for uranium or something else had a downside and sometimes even involved collateral damage in the terms of its impacts on the environment and on nearby communities.

75 When it comes to uranium mining, the real impacts on the land and its inhabitants will only be manifested in the future. It is not surprising to see that there is great deal of scepticism in our community and among many of the stakeholders who have appeared here before us. The mining

companies played down the risk factors in their presentations and talked about controlling the risks of these projects.

80

We are like any other, but we know so well that they are not and that careless management of waste could be devastating for generations yet to come. Although I am not a scientist, nor a uranium expert, given the widely deranging opinions on the topic, I feel that the research is not yet sufficiently conclusive to say that it is possible to conduct exploration with no danger to current or future generations.

85

The future is playing out today. It is in our hands. We have a responsibility to make decisions in the interest of our future generations. I cannot accept the idea that we will be remembered as irresponsible, interested solely in satisfying our economic impulses with no consideration for the environment or for those to come after us.

90

From this perspective, our Elders hold an important role in the place of our culture. We need to preserve the legacy that they have left us and the sacrifices they have made for us; sacrificing the fleeting revenues generated by uranium exploration pales in comparison to the sacrifices some of our Elders made for us.

95

The underlying question specific to uranium exploration is waste management. The figures are enough to make you shudder. Some say it will take tens of thousands of years before waste from exploration is inherent and no longer poses a threat to health or the environment. Knowing this, how can we blindly go forward?

100

There is plenty of examples in Québec and across Canada of mining companies that make pretty promises and give speeches advocating sustainable developments and then leave behind tons of wastes for today's government to manage at tax payers' expenses. Such cavalier behaviour by a company involved in the uranium industry could have incalculable and as yet unknown consequences. How can we be sure that waste will be properly managed for thousands of years? The question amply illustrates the absurdity of the debate.

105

While ore has been in the ground for ever, exploration on the other hand is part of recent history; therefore it's impossible to say that beyond the shadow of the doubt, we can contain all potential harm arising out of uranium explorations. As many have said, the studies are incomplete and any claims to the contrary would only make us more mistrustful in the uranium industry.

110

They came to play down the impact as an indefensible position for our community; we were directly affected by the possibility of exploration on our territories. While the Matoush Project is increasingly unlikely in the short term, this Commission must act responsibly and take a decision that is in the broader interest of Québec's population.

115

120 The fear and anguish created by watching a company pound our territory in the name of profit and its shareholders, is just another example of the difference in opinion in how we define the term collective wealth. Since we define ourselves to a large degree by our attachment to ancestral lands, it is unthinkable to disassociate who we are from what we do to the land. The territory belongs to us and we to it. Our own preservation depends on the continued existence of our territory. No economic promise could undo the inextricable tie that binds us to Eeyou Istchee.

125 Therefore, we ask the Commission to do its work in the best interest of all. We believe that from this perspective, it would be dangerous to ignore the lack of social acceptance for uranium mining among Quebeckers.

130 Since we have clean energy resources and a diversity of richness that could be developed without fear of environmental disaster, why should we cave in to the interest of just one industry?

135 In closing, we mustn't lose sight of the fact that both uranium mining and exploration involve hazards and that the Québec Government has wisely decided to stop using nuclear power to generate energy.

I would like to thank the Commissioners for listening to what I have to say and wish you the best as you continue your deliberations.

140 **THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Thank you very much. Allez-y.

145 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

150 I will do this in English. Looking at the Youth Council, I think the Mistissini Youth Council, I think you can be commended on the efforts and everything you guys have done to get the youth involved and engaged. It's quite exemplary and I think there are quite a few youth councils that could take Mistissini Youth Council as a model. And I find it commendable that the Youth Council is getting involved trying to ask questions, you know, engaging in the debate and the discussion and unfortunately, that's an unusual thing these days.

155 I am wondering, does it happen the other way? Is there enough of government developers finding out what the youth vision is of things instead of always asking the youth to respond to something that somebody else wants to do. It's kind of an open-ended question so if you feel like answering it, it's okay but in the context of development whether it's uranium or anything else, are there sufficient opportunities for the youth to share their vision with governments or developers?

**Ms. AMY LINTON:**

160 It would be great if the government would listen to our opinion, and if they have any other  
projects in mind or developments, of northern development. It would be beneficial for the youths; it  
would be great if there was one step to be done in any program, in any mining where it was  
involving youths and their opinions, that would probably help everyone in the future because the  
future is -- the youths will be our leaders.

165

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

Thank you.

170

**COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

Well my first question is quite related to the one of Paul John. If we ask you to describe the  
ideal future for you, what would you say in terms of vision?

175

**Ms. AMY LINTON :**

I envision the youths to have a future where they are healthy, where they are able to practice  
their culture, where they would be able to go out on the land and go and do our traditional practices  
hunting, trapping and also to be able to eat the delicacies of the moose, of the goose. We do eat  
everything of the animal so in one workshop that I went to, there was uncertainty in if uranium  
mining would affect the animals. They were uncertain if it would affect the insides of the animals.

180

To my understanding, it would. So, I would like our culture and our traditions to be preserved  
by the youths. It will be important for them to have jobs but jobs that wouldn't affect their health  
would be ideal as per my vision.

185

**COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

And you mentioned your fear with respect to hazards, environmental impacts, health effects,  
waste management, I wonder where did you get your information?

190

**Ms. AMY LINTON :**

We have had scientists and professionals help us in educating us, our youths as well as me.  
I have had a doctor that I have met -- I did have his information but I misplaced his note but I met  
him in Québec City, you know, we have been interacting through e-mails and he's been able to  
help me realize all the hazards and the health effects that would come with uranium mining.

195

**COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

200 Did you read a little bit about the information that the Commission got during September, when the Commission met with many national expertise, international expertise, resources, did you read some of this information or you didn't have the chance?

**Ms. AMY LINTON :**

205 I have been able to read some. A lot of it seems inconclusive to me. It doesn't seem like they are certain in what effects there would have to the health, to the air, to the environment, to the health of the animals. It really seems that there was some uncertainty there so this uncertainty is what brings fear to me and to the youths.

210

**COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

215 How do you feel when you have two different positions from experts with respect to environmental impacts or health effects? Does this disturb you? Does this increase the uncertainties? Does this make that you are in a precaution position? How do you feel when there is no – how do you say, consensus?

**Ms. AMY LINTON :**

220 Well, it's disturbing, I can say. I felt a lot of uncertainties of how the mines would be able to be ran without any leakage of tailings or without any harm to the air. There were some studies that were clashing and this was, I guess, this would happen in all studies. There are always people pro and people against. So in my opinion, the studies, they weren't able to give a hard "no, it will not affect our environment" or a hard "no, it will not affect our animals."

225

**COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

230 Even if many persons said that the technology is now enough secure? Do you believe in that?

**Ms. AMY LINTON :**

235 I believe that technology has come a long way, but there will be some flaws always in any development, in anything that is to be created, there will always be flaws and there will always be some mistakes, so I am not prepared to have the future of our Cree Nation to be affected by some uncertainties of technology, because we can never re-promise any perfect technology, there will always me flaws.



240 So that right there gives me the idea that I don't want it to affect my future. I would like for my children to be able to have a life where they are not affected by uranium or where they are told: you cannot eat the moose anymore. I would like my children to be able to thrive in their culture and I believe that uranium mining would affect the culture and the future to come.

**COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

245 Thank you.

**Ms. AMY LINTON :**

250 Thank you.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

255 In the group of young people that are working with you, I imagine that up to a certain point, the dynamic among the individual could be comparable to what we can see in the south among the young and that we have our sons and daughters. They are not all of the same opinion. I have never seen a group of young having all the same idea; some are more critical, some are more sceptical, some are more, you know, entrepreneurship in their mind.

260 What I wonder is this: we say we have the same opinion as the Elders, we say we have the same opinion of the Grand Council, we are of the same opinion of the Cree Nation of Mistissini, this unanimity, is it 100% amongst all the youngs or are there some that dream of becoming engineers, high level technicians that can develop the territory, that can work and create a future that will be a little bit different or if it is the same thing for everybody?

265 **Ms. AMY LINTON:**

270 I believe the youths of our future will have goals to be engineers and scientists but I believe – well, I know for a fact, with the youths that I have worked with while I have been Youth Chief, I have done a few programs, well a few activities in regards to uranium mining and they have all said that they don't want to be affected by uranium mining and they have also asked: "Why do we have to tell them again? We have already said no. Why do we have to repeat ourselves?" And I have asked young boys, I have asked girls, I have asked older guys who are businessmen and they agree. They agree that they don't want uranium mining in Mistissini, the ones that I've talked to, and I've talked to a few, a lot I can say, but I think that even with their future to come with the decisions that they will make, I am certain that they will still want to preserve our culture and our land.

275

280 I believe that they would not choose to work for or to develop any sciences that would harm  
the animals, the culture, the people, the water, the air. If anything, they would try to make it better  
but I don't see people aiming for jobs that would harm our future.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

285 Okay. You said, my second question would be this: you said, if I understood well the text that  
you were reading, that you regret to have not been more informed sooner in the process of this  
project, and you were referring to Matoush Project I think at that time, and you said: maybe, if this  
would have been done, that maybe you would have had some other kind of attitude with those  
people; it could have been different, maybe. Could you develop what you had in mind when saying  
that?

290 **Ms. AMY LINTON :**

I was saying that because, well the reason why I said that was because we weren't informed  
from the beginning, from the very start when Strateco started developing the Matoush Project. I am  
295 not saying that if they had informed us before that we would have said yes; that is not what I was  
implying, I was implying more that if they had informed us sooner, we would have been able to  
develop our decisions, we would have been able to educate our people sooner. It would have been  
more beneficial for us to know sooner but I am certain that our attitude against uranium mining  
would still be the same.

300 **THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

It could not, it is not even a possibility that your vision of the question of this project could  
305 have changed a bit?

**Ms. AMY LINTON :**

I don't see the vision of the project to be any different from what it is now. I believe that in the  
end, maybe our decision would have come sooner, but in the end, it still would have been that we  
310 want to preserve our future, that we want our children to be able to live off the land as we have for  
thousands of years since time immemorial. This is what we've been and this is what, I hope, that  
we will always be, is to live off the land, to have our children to be out on the land.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

320 I was not meaning that you could have had different objectives on the long-term preserving the land and the culture, I understand that this is a deep, very profound objective in your mind, in yourself.

**Ms. AMY LINTON :**

325 'Mm, hmm.

**LE PRÉSIDENT :**

330 What I mean is could you have -- would it be possible that your idea of the project could have been more compatible with that objective that could be the same? The objective could be the same -- could you have an idea that a project like that could be more compatible with this objective if you have had a deeper knowledge of it? Could it be? I mean, is there a possibility or if it's no, not possible?

335 **Ms. AMY LINTON :**

It is not possible.

340 **THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Thank you.

**Ms. AMY LINTON:**

345 I don't see uranium mining happening in Québec. For one, for me, speaking personally, I see all of Québec being affected by uranium mining. I have seen all of the potentially uranium mining sites and this will affect us all. This will affect Montreal, this will affect every major cities. Do you really want all of Québec to have health problems in the future? I would say no.

350 **THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Thank you. This was my last question, thank you.

355 **Ms. AMY LINTON :**

Thank you.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

360 Thank you a lot for your presentation and again commend the Mistissini Youth Council very good work.

**Ms. AMY LINTON :**

365 Thank you.

**LE PRÉSIDENT :**

370 Thank you very much.

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**Mr. JOSHUA LOON  
MISTISSINI HUNTER TRAPPER**

375

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

Joshua Loon. Is Joshua Loon here?

380 **Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

Hello.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

385

Hello, good night.

**Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

390 My name is Joshua Loon. "Pay close attention to what I have to say because I choose my words very carefully and I never repeat myself; I told you my name that's the who." I saw that movie once and I thought that was cool.

395 First, I would like to thank each and every one of you for sitting here listening to Eeyou Chisasibi and Mistissini including Chibougamau and other parts of the region of Québec.

You have listened to us very carefully, you have sat there for countless of hours and I would like to ask the audience to applaud your patience and understanding.

400 I don't know why I am nervous. I talk on the mic all the time but this one is different because this one is coming straight from my heart. As you can see, there is a little piece of paper that I decided to do it from the heart and I will show you a presentation later on.

405 You will probably ask me why am I here. There's two reasons why I am here. First, it is I am speaking for the people who are unable to be here, they are too shy and also too young to sit here with me to talk to you. I have a one-year old daughter and I am speaking for her. Second is I would like to inform BAPE, Québec, and the whole world that Eeyou Istchee is not for uranium development in Eeyou Istchee.

410 And because -- I'm using it. I've worked with CBC North for a couple years, I was here on Phase 1, Phase 2, I listened to all what people had to say, and one of the things that kept popping out is uncertainty; the word uncertainty. And us, Crees, we don't use that word a lot, uncertainties. When people are going to do something, they are certain that they will do it but never do it uncertainly. And I know that Grand Council will not proceed or go ahead if there's uncertainty, if they are not comfortable what is ahead. And you have sat there listening to people verbally and also in writing. Well, here is a presentation that is a little bit different. I will show you my topic. My topic is about harvesting for the winter.

420 Here is – can you see it? Yes? Okay. Here is Mistissini riverside and recently me and my father, my nephew Martin and two other hunters went to “Neskiskau” not this one, the real “Neskiskau”.

425 As you can see, we were preparing to go to “Neskiskau” That's us going there. I was very excited to go there. Here is Québec, this is what mining companies sees but let us zoom in. This is “Neskiskau”. That's the point that we leave and here is our arrival. That is my dad, tallyman. As we prepare our day for tomorrow, this is where Philip takes us to “Neskiskau”. And here is my dad for the evening.

430 So next day, we were preparing to go hunting. As you can see this is a beautiful place to go hunt. And here is my nephew, Martin, travelling with Simon Medowasis. Here are a few pictures. Here is a moose that we saw and here is Martin shooting the moose and he killed – it's a big moose. And here is Simon, Simon who is also a teacher. He went there to teach Martin for traditional practices. Martin is a young man and he is preparing this for his future. As you can see, this is the evening, where we went home after our kill.

435

As you can see, this is a very calm place. It is peaceful. Here is Martin, very excited to kill his moose. As I drove by there I thought about the peaceful -- I wanted to share this to as many people as I can. Here is the next day that we call it (word in Cree). We went to go cut up the meat after.

440 Here is Simon and his brother Stanley teaching Martin. Martin is 24 years old and he is teaching him how to cut the moose and there is a lot of things to learn about cutting up moose. As you can see, it's a very big harvest and you have to cut it in ways that you can easily cut when you are defrosting it.

445 And this is what we do in our traditional hunting ground. This is what Martin is excited about to teach -- this is my father recording and that's Simon. This is where we hung up the meat to dry and as you can see, this is a very hard long work to do, and that's me and the team. So after Simon left and Stanley left, me and Martin went to go hunting by ourselves. This is where the final exam is. We went to go search one moose and this is the places that we visit in "Neskiskau". I killed one  
450 moose, a female. This is my harvest for this year and this is Martin. As you can see there is no Simon there, he is passing the knowledge to Martin. And Martin is on his own now and he's cutting up the meat by himself.

455 This is our hunting gun. This is when back to Mistissini. You see my father and my nephew, this is Martin and his moose and this is my dad getting on the plane.

As you can see, that's only a four-minute piece of a fast presentation and as you can see that this is our way of life. You have listened to us and you have heard us, now you have seen part of our culture and that culture will be passed to many generations. This is what we are hanging on because as you can see, when you see the beginning of the map, the Québec, that's the view of the mining companies they are looking at. But I took you lower on the land surface. This is where I  
460 took you and I showed you what we call harvesting for the winter.

465 And here is one thing that I remember working as a CBC North reporter: I asked Mathew Coon Come, our Grand Chief, I asked him this question: "Why is it important for our people to hold on this Eeyou Istchee?" And he told me that the most valuable things are the people. "Which people? The people who live in the community? – No, the people who live off the land because those ones such as Simon Medowasis, he lives off the land, he's our teacher and he's a very valuable person." And we said: "Listen to those" and we said: "Either listen to those what they have  
470 to say, what their concerns are, and also..." So my kill, my harvest is -- when I harvested my moose, at the beginning I did not understand what Mathew meant when he said that the most valuable people are the people who live long terms in the bush. That's when I understood what he meant, because without him I wouldn't be able to harvest my meat for the winter.

475 So that's my presentation for that. I know it's a very short presentation and one other thing,  
my last comment or my conclusion is in 1971, in October, Premier of Québec met Malcolm  
Diamond. Malcolm Diamond is the father of late Billy Diamond. And the Premier, he met him but  
within two minutes or so, the Premier of Québec walked out on him, he turned his back on the Cree  
480 Elder. Once that happened, late Billy Diamond was so discouraged, he was so disappointed that's  
when Malcolm said to Billy, he said: "He will go back to school, he will learn the white man's waste  
and he will use it to recognize your rights".

Now what if Robert Bourassa didn't walk out at that meeting? What if he'd stayed there and  
listened? Would Malcolm Diamond say those words, say those words to Billy? In 1975, he reached  
485 an Agreement in James Bay, James Bay Northern Québec Agreement and that's why we are here  
and we ask Québec not to do the same. Don't walk out on what we have to say because Malcolm  
says we are here, Elders, we are here to help you. And me as a young generation, I am still young,  
I am here to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves.

490 **COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

I would like to speak with you a little bit about certainties or uncertainties because many  
people we met during the three phases told us that there is a lot of uncertainties and as soon as we  
have uncertainties with uranium, we don't want it. You showed us very nice photos. So the first one  
495 is your plane, I think, or you were taking the place, is there any risks related to taking a plane?

**Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

Excuse me?

500

**COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

Is there any risk related to taking a plane?

505 **Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

For me, no, because I trust my pilot and also I trust my father. He prayed before we took off.

**COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

510

Okay. So let us take another example. Perhaps there are some accidents in the village here  
with the cars every year?

515 **Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

Yes. But it's also, like there's a lot of accidents.

520 **COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

Okay.

**Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

525 Just where there're slippery roads.

**COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

Okay.

530 **Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

There's accidents. What causes it...

535 **COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

Why, when we get to uranium, I just want to know your reasons: why when we get to uranium we don't need any uncertainties?

540 **Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

I will give you one example. After, when my daughter is about 24 years old, after when I win tour de France, and then she will say to me... what did you talk about now when I said after winning tour de France, is that certainty or uncertainty?

545 **COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

I'm sorry, I did not understand, can you repeat please?

550 **Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

I will speak it in Cree, it will much easier for me also.



555 **COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

Okay.

560 **Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

When somebody says they want to do something, they have a goal to do, they will look at it as a goal that they are aiming for. Just like a race, when you have a goal to win the race, it is hard to get it. And sometimes, you know, when there is a race and you think that you can win that race but you are not sure and it's the same thing. If you have some uncertainty in your heart or if you are certain or uncertain about what is in your heart, listen to your heart and just find out.

565  
570 When you talk about the tailings, the effects that it will have on the land, it will surely destroy our land for there're something, because this thing that you want to get out is deep in the ground and you have to do something to reach whatever it is in the ground, in the depth of the ground. You have to do something to reach for it.

**COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

575 You harvest meat for the winter. Just a question like that: what do you eat? Do you eat everything, every part? Do you use the skeleton? I am sorry, perhaps it's very -- the bones?

**Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

580 I will make this short. I eat what my wife cooks.

**COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

585 So I can say the same thing but can you give us some more information about specifically what do you eat, which part? Do you eat every part of the moose?

**LE COMMISSAIRE :**

590 All the meat, yes. There are bones in the legs that we eat, yes. I don't know what you call them, the little pink things, marrow. And also we take care of the moose, like my mother is a well-known craft lady. She made a lot of jackets with the government and Grand Council. So those things, we are still learning also, taking care of the moose, so yes, we take everything.

595 **COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

Thank you.

600 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

I am mixed up with my language. I wanted to ask you something else. Is it dangerous to get on the plane, to fly in a plane? Because I know sometimes there are a few people that are fearful of flying up in a plane.

605 What you showed on the Québec there, you didn't what is waiting for you over there and you still take a risk even if you feel -- you are afraid, you still take the risk in getting in the plane or, you know, you don't know what's ahead of you but you are still looking forward to it.

610 **Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

The pilot of the plane has many years of experience in flying the plane. He knows what needs to be done to manage the plane. He knows where to go. And that is why I am comfortable, why I am comfortable being with him because he knows how to fly it. If I was to fly, I would not be here. And when we speak of uranium, that is the fear that we have. Even with all the experts, their knowledge in the uranium mining, I don't know those peoples, I do not know these people, I don't know what their positions are.

615 I was still young at one time. (...) early 20s, I lived in Montréal and I used to say this word to people that I don't know, I said: "I trust you but I do not trust the devil inside you." Meaning I don't know what's inside of you and that is the phrase I used to say (Cree words). But now my life has changed, I am not that person anymore but the thing there with (Cree words): who do you listen to?

620 When you say something to somebody, they tend to listen to you but sometimes you don't really mean what you say, what he was referring to when your are saying that: I trust you but I don't trust the devil inside of you.

625 **THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

630 (...) point I think, and I am surprised that you seem to have difficulties with uncertainties because in my opinion, as a hunter during, let's say, I started at six years old, so I have an idea, I think that the hunters are the best managers of uncertainty. When you go in the bush, you never know what will happen; you never know where you will put your foot; you don't know where the game is, you have to find, to adapt, to invent, to create, to make solutions all around. So you are an expert on uncertainty management. Why other people that are inventing, creating technical things

635 should not have the same questioning and the same ambition to find good solutions? Don't you  
think they also manage uncertainty?

**Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

640 Well managing one person or one thing, that's easy to do. But managing the whole territory  
is very difficult. Do you understand? When you are managing 80-400 people to a 1,000, it is difficult  
to manage; but if you are managing four people, your hunters, you take care of your little group, it's  
easy to do. But there are also uncertainties with uranium that can be managed. Does that answer  
your question?

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**LE PRÉSIDENT :**

'Mm, hmm.

650 **Mr. JOSHUA LOON :**

So that's the big difference between managing a small group and managing, I don't know, a  
thousand workers.

655 **THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Okay. Thank you.

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**Mr. THOMAS NEEPOSH  
GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREE**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

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The next person who we'll call up to speak is Thomas Neeposh.

**Mr. THOMAS NEEPOSH :**

670 I am here to make this presentation on behalf of the Grand Council of the Crees. A little  
background; I worked for the Cree Nation of Mistissini for over 29 years and about 25 years as  
Director General, and I have been involved an awful lot in politic locally and regionally.

675 So now, I am the newly elected rep for the Council Board representing Mistissini, and that is part of the reason I have been asked to make this presentation, so there is a little background.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the BAPE back to Mistissini. We are pleased to have you here with us once again.

680 As you know, the issue of uranium development is extremely important to Mistissini. This community is, after all, Ground Zero for uranium development in Eeyou Istchee and in Québec.

685 Although I know you have a very busy schedule, I hope you have a few moments during your time to look around you and appreciate the beauty of Eeyou Istchee. I encourage you to look around you and to get a sense of how beautiful and vast this land truly is. Perhaps you will begin to understand what compels us to keep fighting against uranium development in our territory.

690 Respect for the land is the cornerstone of Cree culture; it is our love for this land that keeps us fighting so hard. We are responsible for this land. We are the stewards of this land. Eeyou Istchee is Cree for the people's land. And our love for this land is truly at the core of who we are as a people.

695 The land has been handed down for our care and we are just borrowing it from future generations to come. This is what we have learned from our parents and what we teach to our children. This is the message that we hope to impart to you in this hearing.

700 During the second phase of your mandate, you have listened to experts and Ministers' representatives, now you are taking time to listen to the people. I believe that this is the most important part of your mandate so far. We know that you take this part of your mandate seriously. Because the decision of whether or not to allow uranium mining in Québec must reflect the views of those who will be directly affected by it, it must reflect the views of those who will deal with the health and environmental effects. It must reflect the views of those who will be impacted if a tailings pond would leak and who will have no choice but to clean it up if it does?

705 In Eeyou Istchee, this means that the decision of whether to develop uranium mines must reflect the views of the people who live there, the Crees of Eeyou Istchee.

710 This was the approach the Cree Nation took when it decided to ban uranium mining on his territory. When Strateco began its exploration project in the Otish Mountains on Mistissini's family hunting grounds, Mistissini's leaders approached their people because it is us, the people, who will be affected. It is us who will ultimately deal with the effects.

715 The Cree Nation of Mistissini listened closely to what the people had to say; the Elders, women, youths, trappers, teachers and health care providers in the community and the answer amongst the Crees of Mistissini was resounding: “We oppose uranium mining in Eeyou Istchee.”

720 Back then, the Cree Nation listened to what the experts had to say. We have also listened to what they didn’t say and the questions they could not answer. During the BAPE’s hearings in September, we listened again. And here is what we heard both times: there are many unknowns, much about the risks associated to uranium development remains unknown and uncertain, again the word.

725 We know with certainty that the wastes produced by uranium mining are highly toxic and radioactive and will remain dangerous for thousands of years. We know with certainty that these wastes will be left behind at the mining site. We know with certainty that there have been serious problems with the tailings containment structures that have been used in many past and existing uranium projects.

730 We are told that these known risks should not concern us but when we have pressed the experts, we have come to understand that the footings for their confident pronouncements are in fact very limited. The health risks for local population are largely unknown. There haven’t been enough studies to say with any certainty that these living near uranium mining projects will not encounter health problems. There is not even information to know the extent of those health problems. But we do not know that the local communities are likely to suffer many negative psychological effects when they live close to a uranium mine.

735 How could we be sure that uranium mining will not make us sick? How could we be sure that our children’s health will not be at risk? How can we be sure that our land will not be polluted?

740 The environmental risks and the risks to wildlife are also unknown. Mining projects in Saskatchewan have created higher than expected levels of radon and other radioactive elements in surrounding areas. They have found high levels of selenium in fish, a toxic substance that is not even regulated because the law makers don’t know enough to identify that toxic. How can we be sure that our water will not become contaminated? How can we be sure that the animals and fish that we eat won’t be made toxic?

745 The stability of current isolation and containment methods is also unknown. The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission has tried to convince us that the new containment methods are safe and full proof but we do not have even one example in Canada or elsewhere in the world of these methods actually working for as long as we need them to.

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The CNSC relies on models and projections of future events to reassure us that their methods are safe, but these models won't account for unpredictable weather events; you cannot predict the unpredictable. This is particularly true in the context of climate change because no one knows what the future holds; these predictions aren't worth much.

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How can we be sure that the dykes, dams or pounds won't leak? How can we be sure that the surrounding environment won't become contaminated if they do?

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What is known is that insufficient funds are put aside by the mining companies to deal with the long-term maintenance of dykes, dams and tailing pounds; even less is put aside to deal with the effects of those dykes, dams and tailing pounds when an unforeseen disaster occurs.

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The Mount Polley tailings spill in BC was devastating to the local environment and the local communities that live off that environment. It was built by educated qualified engineers much like those who built the dams, dykes or pounds for uranium tailings. Those engineers used models and projections, it was subject to strict regulations and the Mount Polley dams still failed. And now it is projected that it will cost anywhere between \$15 million and \$500 million to clean up the resulting mess. The amounts that the company had to set aside won't come close to covering those costs.

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So who will be left to foot the bill for clean-up costs and maintenance of uranium mines in the North? Us, the Crees of Eeyou Istchee. Because when the government sues the mining company in a fight in the courtroom in the south about who should be held responsible, it is the local community who is stocked with that mess.

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When the government cuts corners because there is no room in its budget to cover "unforeseen costs", it is the local community who must clean it up. That is why it is the voice of the people that must be heard; if uranium mining goes forward, it is us the Crees of Eeyou Istchee who will be left with the legacy of uranium mining. It won't be the mining companies who will come to Eeyou Istchee to remove the present ore and then leave once they've made the profits.

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It won't be the government whose promises are often forgotten, it will be us who have lived here since time immemorial. It will be us who continue to hunt, trap and fish on this land; it will be us who were to pass down to our children and our children's children the important practices that our parents taught us. It will be us who will be left to deal with the long-term risks. And so, it is our voice that must be heard.

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*Meekwech!* Thank you. Merci. That's the presentation that I wanted to make and on a personal note, a lot of people of Mistissini know that I took an early retirement as of April 1 of this year for reasons to pursue more of our cultural and traditional practices, hunting, trapping, fishing on our land, so I have more freedom to go back to our land and I need a clean land with healthy

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animals to hunt for. That is why I took a leave. I want to carry on the importance of our culture and language and living off the land.

Thank you.

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**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

*Meekwech.*

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**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

You summarized what most of your people said and you did that in very concise words, but there is one question that worries me a bit among what you said. Because you said that the same engineers that built those dykes, dams, tailing ponds that are leaking today, you know, will create the next generation of technical solution. But what worries me is that the CNSC, they don't authorize now dykes, dams and tailing ponds in the five mines using -- that are operating, sorry, in Saskatchewan. I think we were explained that they use different technologies and that now they do not use this type of technology, they have other ones.

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But I hope I don't make a mistake when saying that and I was just wondering to what you were referring when you say so, because you seem to say that, you seem to mean that they could authorize those things. We see that in mining industries, the standard mining industry but from what I remember, it does not seem to be the solutions that are now used in the uranium mining industry. Or else if it is, there is very little and it seems that those technologies are fading out.

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**Mr. THOMAS NEEPOSH :**

I guess the point that we are trying to make is no matter who plans for what experts plan for it or what technology brings in, that's still, to us anyway, it's still questionable whether their methods will be working. You know, it is a question of -- we are not trying to single out a certain engineer, we say that engineers or other experts have in the past worked on these projects and some failed. So that's the risk.

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**LE PRÉSIDENT :**

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Okay. What you mean is not those specific strategies, it's the fact that there can always be uncertainty in a technical solution.

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**Mr. THOMAS NEEPOSH:**

Yes.

835 **THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Okay, I got the point.

840 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

*Meekwech* Thomas. I just want to ask if we could have a copy just for the records of the text, okay? If you send it later or... you know?

845 **Mr. THOMAS NEEPOSH :**

Okay.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

850 Or you could give it to Mrs. LeBlanc just in the back there, she could put it in the file immediately. Okay?

**Mr. THOMAS NEEPOSH :**

855 Thank you very much.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Thank you very much.

860 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

Est-ce qu'on prend une petite pause?

865 **THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Oui.

870 **10-MINUTE RECESS**



**Mrs. ELIZABETH COON COME**

**Mr. JOHN PAUL MURDOCH :**

875 Elizabeth Coon Come.

**Mrs. ELIZABETH COON COME :**

880 Hello. Can you hear me? I will say in Cree. I welcome everybody, I great everybody who is in the front and also the audience.

885 I wanted to share some of my comments as well and concerns. I also have concerns about this topic on uranium mining. I will speak from my heart and express the negative impacts that I know I will feel. I will talk about the animals because that is where our source of survival comes from; it is from the animals because that is what God gave us for survival. And I speak for the animals.

890 Because there are always there, there are all over the land in the North. There is no way for them to be prevented to wonder where ever they want to wonder around. There is a difference between farming animals and here, up here in the North. The animals that we depend on get their source of food in the bush, in the wild, and I am also a woman who was raised on the land and I am a native, a Cree woman. Because even Cree women can hunt, they can kill the animals for survival. Her parents were always living off the land. When the topic of uranium mining first came out, it was uranium mining is in our hunting territory, in my late father's territory. We were all raised off the land and also the territory where the Swallow hunt that is where we were also because the Swallow -- my sister was married to a Swallow and therefore she was also, and her family was always hunting in the land.

900 And about this uranium mining when they said that they would prevent the toxic from floating in the air, I don't believe that because you don't know where the wind will blow from day to day, and every day the wind blows from any direction and it is said that the animal, the wild animal when he looks for his food, he knows where to go. And that is what is the same for us too. That is what it's like for us.

905 We know where we can look for the game to hunt. We don't live like the non-natives, like they can just go into a grocery store and buy their food, whereas for us, we live off the land, we have to look for our game, for our food.

910 I am also speaking for our young people, our youth, our grandchildren, our great grandchildren. I am also an Elder of this community and I do stand and speak up for our children.

I look at all what has already been done up North and I am thinking what this is going to be like when the uranium mining is going to be allowed? I am thinking, when I watch these non-natives working up North, for them it is going to be like them walking into a dangerous zone also. It is going to have a negative impact on them as well.

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It is not only going to affect us, native people; it will also affect the non-native as well, the negative impacts of uranium mining. And sometimes I wonder about the government. I am always thinking, I wonder if they are only thinking about the economy or what they can get out of this uranium mining.

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I am against this uranium mining and I speak for my children and my grandchildren as well. For if I just keep, if I'm silent about it and if I pass on, then my children and my grandchildren will say: "How come our grandmother, our mother never spoke up against this?" And this why I am expressing my concerns and I stand against uranium mining.

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I am not only thinking about the animals, I am also thinking about the land itself, the waters for when I go out on the land, that is where I get my water or I make my tea, and the uses of the water that we have. And if something happens with uranium mining, it will affect our waters too. It will affect us when we will go out in the bush again, the water and everything, the water, the food, the animals and the land as well.

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**Mr. NORMAN ISERHOFF**

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**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

Mr. Norman Iserhoff, here.

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**Mr. NORMAN ISERHOFF :**

My name is Norman Iserhoff and I am from Mistissini. The first question I have -- what we are facing is very difficult. (...) what is happening within our territory. It's so much different than when I was young. There was nobody bothering us; we would just live off the land, and to see and to hear what is happening now...

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We are very rich in natural resources. We have gold, copper, we have all of these natural resources. I don't oppose these mining but for uranium, it is no. I say no. Have you told the people that uranium is poison? And I don't think, I have never heard it. But I have a friend from another

950 country, that's what he told me, and I know, I believe he's telling me the truth, and just one drop of uranium on our lake, that is the end of our lake. It is going to be finished, no fish, no animals.

955 We have, like I said, we are not warriors, we are peaceful people. We love nature, we love to live here on our land, we love our land. We love people. We don't have anything against anybody but it's just to protect our land. We need to stand together on this as well as for everybody's health, not just the natives but also the outsiders.

960 We have a lot of people coming out, fishing off on the big lakes; people just enjoy that, people from all over the world. We even have people from overseas, France, that come to fish here in the summer, Americans, Canadians but if one drop or a little bit is dropped into this lake, no more. There is going to be no more, no more life.

965 We love to live in this peaceful nature; we are this kind of people, and we want to keep it that way. And we will stand with our leaders, fighting for the rights of our people. We will continue to stand together, not give up the fight against uranium mining.

The future is ours and for future generations and it's for us to decide and I sure hope that the government is listening to us. What is more important, money or life?

970 We have other natural resources, like I said, that people can benefit from; all the natural resources around us, not just here but throughout Canada.

975 I can say I have heard from people in surrounding towns here, they have uranium but they oppose to it also in Chibougamau. They opposed that a long time ago. And why should they start that on our own territory?

You know, I appreciate you being here. I want to thank you for your time here and for listening to us and I don't have anything against any of you but I am against this uranium mining.

980 Alright? That's it. Thank you for listening.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

985 Thank you very much.

**Mr. NORMAN ISERHOFF:**

Thank you.

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**Mr. JOHNNY LOON**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

Next person I will call up is Johnny Loon.

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**Mr. JOHNNY LOON :**

(...) and I can also see that I am kind of thankful to be here and for you guys to be here and like any other person, I am not really a shy person to talk to people but when I am trying to talk with my heart, through my heart, it's kind of ... I hope they get the message, that's what I am thinking.

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And I thought this evening, you know, I did not want to have -- I know this is going to be the last, maybe the last thing for Mistissini to have to be here, and other people to come for with the uranium thing. And I thought to myself, you know, if this is the last time they are going to be here why not fight to the end? That is what I am thinking.

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Now, I will not go down... okay. First thing, what I wanted to talk about is I remember in the beginning, when Strateco was here, the CNSE was here, they made a statement that CNSE said there are a neutral organization like BAPE is like a neutral organization. They are not taking sides of anybody, right?

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And I usually follow what CNSE is doing and I found that the CNSE went to Calgary University to make a speech on our social acceptability. And it says here: the social licence, al licence to stop. So in a way, when I read everything it mostly -- you know, at first they said it is a neutralized organization based on facts what they are doing, but when they had the presentation, it sounded more like they were with Strateco or uranium mining, for it. That's what this presentation was about. And the other thing about...

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**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

May I interrupt you for a second? Would it be possible that you deposit that document in the back at the end, so that we can refer to it and it would be highly appreciated.

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**Mr. JOHNNY LOON :**

You can also, I googled it down.

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1030 **THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Yes, but if we could have the copy, we could start from that, it would be important.

1035 **Mr. JOHNNY LOON :**

And the other thing I didn't -- to me, I never really looked at -- and my family, my wife and kids and other people I have met, they never really believed that it is going to be -- how do I say this? (Cree words) and things like that and this is what they had in their paper. Like we believed in this thing, Incredible Hulk and Spider Man that is what is in here. Saying that I guess we believe that it's going to be a mutation of people but no, that was not what motivated us to say no to uranium.

1040 To my understanding, so CNSC sounds like they are, with our fight against uranium, they are fighting against us actually. And if they are a Government organization -- right? They have to follow the laws and the regulations with the Government of Canada. They have to do that.

1045 Why I brought that up is Canada actually signed, you know, the UNDRIP, the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People, that is what Canada already signed also. Before they did not want agree with the 144 other countries that agreed with it, with the United Nations. Why I am bringing that up is because I am trying to practice my rights to keep my land, to keep our land. Not just for myself or for my kids, but for Québec, Canada and globally. That is what I am looking at. Because if the United Nations can realize our rights, and make a declaration of it, then why not use it?

1055 In bill C-469, there is a lot of stuff here that if this goes on, if this uranium still goes ahead and CNSC already went ahead with the licencing when we said no, then they have broken the Declaration of Rights of Indigenous people already because there is a lot of things -- I guess I didn't really come prepared, I just went into what I can see to help us, you know, and the laws. The UNDRIP states that indigenous have the rights to self-government, meaning we have the right to say no or yes to something.

1060 And this other document *Free Prior and Informed Consent*, I will just read a little part here:

1065 *“Resources extracted and other major development projects in or near indigenous territories are one of the most significant sources of abuse of the rights of indigenous people worldwide in its prevailing form, the model for advancing the natural resource extraction within the territories of indigenous peoples appear to run counter to the self-determination of indigenous people in the political, social, economics spheres.”*

1070 That was said by James Anaya in 2011.

1075 So, that's something really big and how come we're still like debating if there is an uncertainty? To tell you the truth, for me "uncertainty" is not, like Joshua said, it's not in my vocabulary. Uncertainty came from the government, the scientists, and Strateco, I would say. Because for me, I am certain to know uranium in my land, I am certain we are doing the right thing to say no. I am certain I am exercising my rights as Cree indigenous person.

So there's a lot of things in here that really touches on some stuff.

1080 The United Nations who signed the Declaration, all these documents are there for review and this is what Canada signed. Yes, it is written... (In Cree, no translation) ...the Declaration is because they saw that indigenous people are going to try to stop everything. What we are trying to do, we are not trying to rip materials, the minerals from their lands. Yes, we are going to do that, yes we have to sit down and yes there are things we will say yes to and things that we will say no to, and those have to be respected.

1085 So that is what I wanted to talk about, you know, and why should we not -- why should the Government not listen to us even the Premier of Québec? When there's already laws, the Declaration that were adopted. And this, I was really disappointed when I saw this from CNSC. And now, I thought to myself: why does Canada do not want to uphold Her Majesty on the Declaration of Indigenous Rights of people, why? Is it because they want to bypass everything so they can just take everything without the consent of the indigenous people?

1090 We have a right, everybody has a right, each and every individual of you guys have a right. If you say, let's just say for example: if I want to hitch a ride to Chibougamau, and if I ask you guys and you say no, I am not going to force myself into your vehicle because you have the right to say no, right? And I have the right to be obligated to agree with your decision. It's just an example anyway.

1100 Two weeks ago, I went -- just a little story. Two weeks ago I went to the Otish Mountains, the first time, because there's already the access road, the extension of 167, and I went to the old, not the Strateco road that goes there – I wanted to see it but I didn't have time because I know it's a long road, I don't know how many kilometers it is but I went to the old site from another company. I have no idea whose company it is but there is an abandoned camp there and it just hurt me. I know the people that have their land (in Cree), machines, the buildings (in Cree) ... seen the camp and he knows whose territory it's on. They've seen a lot of... because I know those guys are uncertain of what's going to happen with the manmade structures. How many years it's going to hold. So many times we hear uncertainty in these meetings but like I said, I am certain and people I have talked to are also certain that they would say no to uranium mining or exploration.

1110 And the fact is that because we want to keep the land, we want to keep people alive not just  
– it's kind of hard to really try to put everything on to you because all of my life I have been hunting  
like the other people. I have been talking about hunting and it's hard to just spill out everything to  
you guys in one, two, three meetings or four. It's really hard. So I am just throwing down everything,  
what I can do right now.

1115 We are a proud Cree Nation who still holds on to our traditions. We are not selfish, meaning  
we are trying to keep our lands and waters for future generations of our people, the Québec,  
Canada and globally; that's what I mentioned.

1120 Now we are the people of the land and we will always be. So I say again: no. Please, no to  
uranium mining because we have all the facts like Mr. Binder usually said: we are based on facts  
and I am trying to base my argument on facts of my rights and that means that you have to respect  
those, it says so in there.

1125 Alright.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

1130 We thank you very much. I asked you to deposit the documents you have from the CNSC  
but we already have it in our documentation, our analyst told us. It's at Question 18.1 so the  
document was already in our documentation, so it's not necessary to make a formal deposition.  
Okay.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

1135 Actually, I have a question and it is based on how you felt when you saw that document,  
because one, I would like to commend you because I have seen you in Phase 1, Phase 2, and  
Phase 3, you're obviously somebody who gets involved a lot, you followed, you did research, you  
even went to see the site and I think that's a very admirable thing considering what we do and we  
1140 appreciate, you know, your input; it helps us to do what we need to do.

And I am hearing you talk about how you felt when you saw that. When you are going  
through this process -- Phase 2, for example, we heard people from the Ministry of Environment,  
we heard people from the Ministry of Wildlife, I am assuming maybe in the Matoush Project, I  
1145 wasn't involved in any of that assessment, but I am sure you had Government people speak there  
as well. CCSN told you that they were neutral, but at any time when the whole uranium issue is  
being discussed at any time during this process when you heard government people speak did you  
ever hear anything that made you think that they might be on your side on some issues? Or does it  
feel, you know, does it feel like either they were neutral or rather they were on the side of industry?

1150 **Mr. JOHNNY LOON:**

I am trying to remember all those meetings that have happened, the proceedings; it's hard, but most of the time when you have something to say, when I have heard people talk about certainty and uncertainty, like right now and other times, just like the questions -- where they based on the questions? Like I have something that tells you: okay, do you really know what you are talking about? That's what I used to think. And it's kind of hard to say that yes, this guy was for sure with the Cree Nation on our stand against uranium.

1160 It's hard to say that because what -- I have heard the neutral part but mostly the questions sounded like they lean toward, you know, with the Government's decision to go ahead with the uranium. So that's what I, for me, my understanding; that is my personal understanding.( In Cree). And it' is kind of hard, that's why I told myself this evening, you know: Oh, I have got to prepare something, at least something to say to at least stop this thing from happening, and I found it in here. Because whatever we say, if we don't know our rights then people can question it and then we can fall. That is what I was thinking. So, yes, this is it. (In Cree).

Any questions? Come on, I know you have some.

1170 **THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

You're too clear.

**Mr. JOHNNY LOON:**

1175 It's okay alright, thank you.

**Mr. JOHN PAUL MURDOCH :**

Thank you.

1180 **Mr. JOHNNY LOON :**

Thank you so much and I hope everything goes well, you know, and I hope we can have -- I just hope. God bless you all.

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**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

**Mr. JOHN PAUL MURDOCH :**

*Meekwech!* Hubert Petawabano.

1195

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO: :**

Good evening. *Waachiyaa!*

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I thought I would share some points. I have my little document here, but before I proceed, I would just like to mention to you that I worked for the Cree Nation of Mistissini. I am a local environment administrator, my name is Hubert Petawabano.

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So I have been following this file for the last four years. So a lot has been said about the uranium and we heard this tonight, we heard it before and I just would like to point out a few points that I wanted to share tonight. So, I will start by this.

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Okay, in the recent years many environmental disturbances have forced us to rethink our connection with our environment and these events have underlined the need to take better care of our planet. They've also shown how fast our environment is changing and our policies have evolved accordingly to allow us to manage the changing conditions of our lands and waters.

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At the local level, last May's flood on Témiscamie River has caused problems for several community members who had to hurry back to their camps and save their cabins and equipment. No one had seen the water level go up so fast before. In the face of this change, we can expect natural events such as heavy rains or rapid snowmelt in the spring to become increasingly unpredictable.

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Such extreme weather events could affect uranium mine tailing ponds and create a higher risk for contamination of surface and ground waters. Even though, they may be designed to withstand hundreds or thousand year storm, the change in weather patterns could bring these storms around more rapidly in the future and threaten their stability. Other unpredictable events such as earthquakes could also pose a risk for the many thousands of years during which uranium mine waste will have to be managed actively.

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How could a person or a corporation commit to managing this waste responsibly over the next 75,000 years, example?

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I would like to touch on another part of my notes here. It will be more with the -- what the resolution that was passed at the National Assembly. I'd just like to remind the BAPE that on the provincial level, the Quebec National Assembly passed a resolution on October 30th, 2008 calling for the adoption of an official position against the burial of any type of radioactive wastes on our province territory.

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The transcript of the 38th legislature showed that there was no debate on this question. This illustrates without a doubt the consensus among our provincial leaders that there was no interest in participating in this aspect of uranium market.

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Then, in October 2012, a decision was taken in the population's best interest to decommission the Gentilly-2 Nuclear Power Plant.

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This decision represents a second important step in our exiting the nuclear industry which is directly related to the uranium mining industry. The reasons behind this decision were valid then and are still valid today with respect to the decisions that we have taken democratically to respect our commitment for future generations.

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And on my last paragraph, I would just like to mention about the -- we have heard that different parts of Québec where they oppose any exploration on uranium so I just thought I would add this last paragraph.

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There is tendency when people talk about potential uranium exploration in other parts of Québec to have a "not in my back yard" mentality. I would like to remind the BAPE that the well-known Canadian astronaut, Chris Hadfield, once said in an interview:

*"When you look down on this earth, you realize that whatever we do on this earth, we are all in this together."*

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This includes how we perceive our responsibility towards the environment. So that is my statement for this evening.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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You referred to a resolution that was adopted by the National Assembly in 2008, the one that said we will forbid any dumping of radioactive materials in the Québec soil.

**MR. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

'Mm, hmm.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Does t include – I don't have the wording of that resolution close to me, maybe you have, was it including uranium mining residues?

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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To my best knowledge that was precisely that. That is radioactive material.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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It could cover that.

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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Yes, or cover the... Well, I can find that resolution.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Because if I remember, at the time there was a question of having an official repository for nuclear waste somewhere in Canada and some people were offering, having the idea to put that in Québec. And I think that this was a reaction to the idea of burying nuclear waste, not mining. But maybe the text is different. I just want to ask you, do you have the resolution ahead of you.

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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Well I have parts of it here, yes.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Could you read it?

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

What was that?

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**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Could you read it?

**MR. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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Okay, I will read it. Okay. There is an exchange at the National Assembly here and it goes on to say that the... okay, that:

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*“The National Assembly asked the Government to forbid the burial on Québec Territory of nuclear wastes or irradiated nuclear fuel coming from outside Québec.”*

So we are talking about nuclear wastes.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Okay, it's quite different from uranium residues or tailings. Yes, okay, I understand. But in your mind, it should be the same, if I understand your point.

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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Well to how I understand was they don't want to receive any radioactive waste here in Québec from outside Québec, so that's why I say now: why would you go into uranium industry when they don't want no waste in Québec?

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Okay. Ça va? John.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

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I'm wondering, as LEA do you have to deal a lot with like people complaining about mining activity or finding things on the territory? Like, is it something that people, the land users come to you with, you know, impacts of mining on a territory? I was just wondering if you could speak a little bit about that, if that's the case.

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**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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Yes, there are people that do mention that there is quite a bit of -- how should I call it, abandoned camps or abandoned exploration sites in the territory. I know there was a study, not a study but there was like a study that was done by the CRA and they've interviewed a lot of the land users and they identified on a map, and I used to have it in my office, somewhere, and there is a lot of sites where there is a lot of clean-up to be done, drums, you know, abandoned camps so there are some out there in the territory.

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So they used our territory and I don't think the MDDEFP now -- it cannot cover the whole thoroughly, you know, it's a big territory.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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I understand that there are many abandoned camps that were used for exploration or even installations of old mines in the territory. Okay, it's not very nice when you see that, but probably, as an environmental manager, you understand that what can be emitted by tailings is much more damageable because it can be acid, it can be heavy metals. Do you have this type of pollution in the territory because of the mining industry?

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**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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Well, the recent mines that we have, to my knowledge, is the Troilus Mine that was built in the 90s but a lot of the mines that I heard about and not necessarily know about is around the Chibougamau area. We have an old mine here, Icon Mines not far from here, less than -- no, less than halfway to Chibougamau, there is an old abandoned mine that never was cleaned up. We have issues there, issues of petroleum that members saw when they disturbed the area. So there is some sites here, I would say more to the south but further up north there is not -- there's only this Troilus Mine, like I said, and a new one is coming up, Eleonore and Stornway Diamond Mines. So it is mostly south from here but not far.

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**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

But you have problems of pollution because of those mines more in the south?

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**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

Again, I know that people from Chibougamau or Ouje did a lot of studies on the Chibougamau area. There is a lot of contamination in that area, the Chibougamau area.

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**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

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The Chief is not here right now, so I am going to ask you a question. When, you know, people come to you about complaints about finding abandoned sites or, you know, they might be concerned about contamination or they have these kinds of preoccupations, do you feel that you have the tools, the resources or the time that you need to help address these issues to -- you know.

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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Okay. Certainly I don't have the capacity to meet all their requests but often times, you know, when we know there's -- a few times, when we knew there was a bunch of drums that are about -- like on the shore, an example, that they were abandoned, so I usually call MDDEFP, the Government Environment, so usually they do react when they know there is going to be a potential contamination. And I will send pictures and that so -- but a lot of times, I get this from the land users, all the information of potential contaminants, you know. It's rare you are going to hear from a mining company; maybe they report to MDDEFP, I don't know.

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**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Are you informed by the MDDEFP, the Environment, of the decision they make when they go and see or give advice, you know, or they make decision about those things? They make inspection, are you informed of the results of those inspections? Or even if they are -- what decisions can be made about those; you inform them but do they inform you about what is happening with those sites?

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**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

Yes, I am trying to recall here. I know we informed, we are waiting a report on the Temiscamie flood, Temiscamie River this past May, there were a lot of drums that flowed down the river, and so we are still waiting at least the report, at least for us for our knowledge too, you know, and as a community and as the land users over there, they are waiting for, we are still waiting for a report, I don't know if they are done. Well, by end of the summer they would have done the report by end of the summer, they said, so we are still waiting for -- maybe we will ask and see how they will respond.

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**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Did you have more problems with the prospection sites or the mining sites?

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**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

Again, the mining site, the only reason -- one at least, north of Mistissini is the Troilus Mine, and right now it's in rehabilitation, you know, they are restoring the area. I know they are monitoring that in the tailing pond and my brother actually worked there for a good number of years, so they are still monitoring that after four or five years now. So I guess, there is little reassurance when they are still monitoring it, you know, real reassurance. But as for the other mine exploration sites, well, you cannot see them all, there are scattered, it's a big territory.

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**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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But I imagine that the hunters or the fishermen of your community, when they find something they advise you?

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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Yes, they usually advise me, they come to the Band Office and advise me and if I feel it needs for MDDEFP to be informed, I do inform the MDDEFP.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Have you made an inventory of those sites where that looks like kind of a small dump in the bushes like that? Have you made an inventory on that, a list of those?

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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Abandoned exploration sites?

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Yes.

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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I know, like I said earlier, they are pinpointed on a map and there is a map, existing map that CRA has, and also here in Mistissini, but the actual visit of the sites was not done -- maybe a handful were done but the majority of them were never visited but only the land users saw it. So they got the information from the land users, the hunters.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Okay, that's all.

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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That's all, yes. There is nobody to clean it up.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Okay. But did you make a list by order of importance, you know, to have the dirtiest at the top and the smallest in the bottom so that you would have kind of a priority list to work on that?

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

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Because I think what you said on that though was a whole bunch of sites were identified and people were not able to visit them all.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Yes.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

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So they would not know how to rate them if they weren't able to visit them all.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Yes, but maybe by the information given by the hunters, they can have an idea maybe, or with the pictures and so on?

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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I am sure pictures would help but not everybody has a camera when they go hunting.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Yes, you are right.

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**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

So, it's hard to say, you know, the level of priority, it's hard to say.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Okay. And the Department of Environment, they don't make such a list and discuss it with you?



**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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Not that I know of.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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Not that you know. Thank you.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

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And do you know who we could call at the Cree Nation Government to maybe get a copy of that map or the sites that were identified?

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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Yes. Either Cameron McLean or... I missed one guy.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

Mark Dunn?

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**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

Mark Dunn.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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It would be really appreciated to have that list because it would give a first idea of the dimension of the problem. Interesting. Okay. That's all for my questions.

**Mr. HUBERT PETAWABANO:**

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Okay, thank you.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

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Thank you very much, Hubert.

1550 **THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

Thank you very much.

1555 **Mr. SHAWN ISERHOFF**

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

1560 Okay. I was just wondering if (in Cree)... George Shecapio, Shawn Iserhoff.

**Mr. SHAWN ISERHOFF:**

1565 Good evening. I actually have the memoire here for George Shecapio and Peter Shecapio. They made this memoire together, so I will be reading it to you.

**(Mr. SHAWN ISERHOFF READS THE PRESENTATION OF  
Mr. GEORGE SHECAPIO AND Mr. PETER SHECAPIO.) memoire**

1570 So that was the brief submitted by George and Peter Shecapio.

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

1575 Well I don't think we have any questions on the brief but I guess you wanted to say something as well?

**MR. SHAWN ISERHOFF :**

1580 Yes, I just wanted to mention, I know that there is a question that came up earlier this afternoon, I think it's Mr. Zayed, he asked one of the speakers, you know, if uranium can help reduce greenhouse gas reductions. My question to Mr. Zayed is have you guys considered other forms of alternative energy? I recently had the opportunity to go to Germany and witnessed the progress they have made in the last 20 years regarding alternative forms of energy.

1585 Since the early 90s, there has been no uranium mining and are now in the process of phasing out of the nuclear industry. My question is why is that?

When they gave us examples regarding mines in northeastern Germany that was operated by the Wismut Company in northeastern Germany, they spent more than 6 billion in waste

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management and in the restoration of one mine site. And some projections have indicated that it could be as high as 15 to 20 billion dollars by the time they finish.

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As Hubert have mentioned previously in his speech, the Québec Government announced the closing of Gentilly-2 as well as National Assembly in Québec adopting a resolution concerning the state of National Assembly as the Government forbid the burial in Québec territory of nuclear waste and irradiate nuclear fuel coming from outside of Québec.

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I know Mr. Francoeur mentioned that uranium mining is different from nuclear waste. But my question is this: would you call Québec Government responsible if they were to give uranium to other countries and they have to deal with that nuclear waste, even though Québec does not want it? It is not responsible. Is that a responsible government? Is my question to Mr. Francoeur.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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For sure, I will not give you the answer. This question has been raised by many participants and we are considering the arguments of everybody in our report. But you can be sure that we will look at this dimension which is ethical and moral up to a certain point, but it is part of the values of a society that people can defend in a society. So it will be something on which we will make a judgement that is for sure.

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**COMMISSIONER ZAYED:**

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I would like to add a comment. I hope that all our questions are interpreted as a question, not as a comment. There is no comment and/or position. So when you refer to one of my questions related to greenhouse effects, there was no comment or position, it was just a question that was raised. Comments were raised during Phase 1 or sometimes in Phase 2. So that's all.

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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You have to understand that we are making an inquiry and that people have different positions on those questions. The example that Joseph just gave you illustrates that point very clearly. Some people think it can help greenhouse gas control; we are asking you what you think about it. It does not mean that we are for one or the other side, we want to understand your point of view on that. That is why we ask questions. It's not the position we have, we want to know your position. You understand? Our job is to make an inquiry so our job is to question.

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**Mr. SHAWN ISERHOFF :**

So we can answer the question to the panel? Is that what you are getting at?

**LE PRÉSIDENT :**

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No, we are not giving the answer at this time. We want to consider all the arguments that people may have to find out ultimately what seems to be in the best of public interest. That is the point we want to understand, the position of people. And you will have the answers about it in our report; that is for sure.

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**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

I was wondering if you had more because I mean, I am not trying to be funny but I have a question. So I was wondering if there is more you wanted to say before I could ask you a question.

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**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

No.

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**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

Okay, I have a question. And as like Mr. Zayed said, there is nothing behind this question, but actually, I will explain the presumption I am making.

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When we looked at Section 22 and we got a little bit when Johnny was speaking, when we are looking at the environmental impact assessment of a project or even this exercise or the brief that you talked about mentions Section 22, we are required to do a balance, whether it's a project or the mandate of this entity. There has to be a balance. They are not allowed to look just at one side; you have to look at the industry but you also have to look at the culture; that's the whole point of Section 22. There has to be a balance between Cree culture and development.

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You were apparently involved a lot, I remember your intervention in Phase 1, and what the current Youth Chief had talked about your involvement in the previous year, and I was wondering, in your experience which seems, you know, substantial when we are looking at whether it was the Matoush Project and so on, you've obviously spent a lot of time getting to know the industry, getting to know the developer, trying to understand that point.

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I am wondering, in your assessment, how much time was spent getting to know you, getting to know your culture, getting to know your point of view because if we are going to do balance, we are going to need to educate ourselves about both sides. So I am wondering if you have any comment on how you feel about in that exercise, how much time is spent on getting to know your vision or, you know, what is the Cree culture.

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**Mr. SHAWN ISERHOFF :**

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I wonder if you can rephrase the question differently because I can answer in a few ways but can you rephrase the question?

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

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I guess it's, you know, when we are talking about the uranium industry, for example, and the decision makers who have to make decisions on uranium industry, they have to balance many things. One of the things they have to balance is the Cree tradition, the Cree land; it is required by Section 22. How much effort in your mind does the government make in getting to know Cree language, getting to know Cree tradition? You know, if it's a balancing exercise, is it the same amount as the effort that is put in to getting to know mining project, energy project, whatever project it is? You know, if it is a balancing act, how much does the decision makers really know about your culture, your vision, your tradition?

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**Mr. SHAWN ISERHOFF :**

Il think throughout this process, we witnessed many of our Elders and tallymen and trappers talk about the environment and relay their expertise. You know, it has been mentioned time and time again that, you know, our hunters and trappers and Elders are -- they have PhDs because they have been out on the land since they've been born. And, you know, their knowledge should really be taken into consideration and it is something that, you know, we don't often see be respected by different panels. Like the CNSC that was back, that was here in 2012, you know, and it is something that needs to be recognized by yourself sitting up there that, you know, our people have been here for thousands of years. We have passed on our knowledge from generation to generation and we want to continue to do that. And our knowledge can go -- cannot be neglected is what I'm trying to get at.

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**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

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Thank you.

**Mr. SHAWN ISERHOFF:**

Thank you very much.

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**LE PRÉSIDENT :**

Yes, thank you very much. *Waachiyaa!*

**THE PRESIDENT MURDOCH:**

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(President Murdoch addresses the audience in Cree, no translation.)

**THE PRESIDENT FRANCOEUR:**

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I would like also to tell you how we were pleased to be here for the third time. In fact, I know more now some parts of the Mistissini than many villages in the south of Québec.

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It was also a very interesting experience to work with the Consultative Committee of Environment of the James Bay Agreement, our colleague here. It was really a very rich experience, and also at the end and mostly to rely on your participation. You are very involved in the protection of your territory. We understand the message you are giving us and we will take that into account; be sure of that.

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So I thank you very much for your participation and involvement, and we will consider the meeting is over. Okay. So thank you very much.

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**SESSION ADJOURNED TO NOVEMBER 17th, 2014**

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I, YOLANDE TEASDALE, Official Bilingual Court Reporter, duly sworn as such, do certify that the foregoing is a true and faithful transcription of the evidence herein to the best of my skill and ability, THE WHOLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW

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AND I HAVE SIGNED:

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Yolande Teasdale  
Official Bilingual Court Reporter