

MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

REGIONAL CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY MEETING

SOUTH INDIAN LAKE (OPCN)

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Transcript of Proceedings
Held at Thompson, Manitoba
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2017

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CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

Serge Scrafield - Chairman
Glennis Lewis - Commissioner
Neil Harden - Commissioner
Tim Sopuck - Commissioner
Cathy Johnson - Commission Secretary

Doug Smith - Report writer

SOUTH INDIAN LAKE:

Chief Chris Baker
Ian Halket
Councillor John-John Baker
Councillor Louis Spence
Angus Dysart
Wilbur Wood
Bertha Wood
Debra Bighetty
Mary Baker
Nora Spence
Art Merasty
Gerald Dysart

Reporter: Cecelia Reid

1 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2017

2 UPON COMMENCING AT 11:00 A.M.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Chief, we are
4 ready whenever you are.

5 (Opening prayer)

6 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Who is your
7 spokesperson?

8 THE CHAIRMAN: I guess I'll start.
9 But did you want to say a few words first?

10 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Maybe some
11 introductions.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Sure, maybe that's a
13 way to start. So I'm Serge Scrafield and I'm the
14 chair of the Clean Environment Commission. This
15 is the panel. So maybe I will start with Glennis,
16 we'll go around here. And then maybe could
17 everyone introduce themselves? Okay.

18 MS. LEWIS: I'm Glennis Lewis. I'm a
19 commissioner with the Clean Environment
20 Commission. I've been part of the Commission for
21 three years, working exclusively on this
22 particular hearing. So, I'm pleased to be here.
23 Thank you for inviting us.

24 MR. SOPUCK: My name is Tim Sopuck.
25 I'm with the Clean Environment Commission. I just

1 came on with the Commission about nine months ago.

2 MR. SMITH: My name is Doug Smith.

3 I'm working for the Commission, helping on writing
4 the report that we are going to do, so I'm taking
5 notes.

6 THE REPORER: I'm Cecelia, I'm the
7 stenographer, so I am taking down everything that
8 is said here today and will produce a transcript
9 of it at a later date.

10 MR. HARDEN: I'm Neil Harden, I'm also
11 a commissioner. I've been a commissioner for a
12 little over three years now. This is my second
13 round of hearings. I did the hearings on Lake
14 Winnipeg three years ago.

15 MS. JOHNSON: Cathy Johnson, I'm
16 secretary to the Commission, and I have been at
17 the Commission for 13 years now. So it's about 13
18 years, and I've been through a number of hearings,
19 especially the Hydro hearings of Bipole, Keeyask,
20 Lake Winnipeg, and just lately the
21 Manitoba/Minnesota transmission line. And
22 unfortunately, your community is one that we
23 haven't visited yet, which is unfortunate.

24 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: I like that word
25 "yet". It's coming.

1 MR. HALKET: Ian Halket. I think
2 everyone here knows me. I'm acting as an advisor
3 to OPCN.

4 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: I'm Chris Baker,
5 the Chief of OPCN Nation.

6 GERALD DYSART: Gerald Dysart, I'm a
7 member of the Trappers Association.

8 WILBUR WOOD: Wilbur Wood, Fishermen's
9 Association.

10 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: He is the vice
11 chair.

12 BERTHA WOOD: Bertha Wood.

13 MARY BAKER: Mary Baker, I'm a fisher
14 woman. I fish.

15 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: John Baker. I sit
16 on the Fishermen's Association and the Clean
17 Environment Committee, and I'm a resource user on
18 the land, and a fisherman, active fisherman. I've
19 been fishing for about 40 odd years.

20 DEBRA BIGHETTY: Debra Bighetty. I'm
21 the daughter of John-John Baker.

22 ART MERASTY: I'm Art Merasty,
23 economic development for OCPN.

24 LOIUS SPENCE: Louis Spence, band
25 councillor with the O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation.

1 NORA SPENCE: Nora Spence, vice chief
2 of the OPCN Cree Nation.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you all. And
4 thank you for inviting us today. One thing I did
5 want to mention, normally I would mention a little
6 later, but because Cece spoke to it, we are
7 required in our legislation to record everything.
8 But if that was the only thing, we could maybe
9 close our eyes to it, but it is very important for
10 us to be sure that we get all of the views that
11 are expressed to us recorded, and then we do go
12 back and look at them all to help us write our
13 report. So it is very important we do that, so I
14 hope you don't mind. Cece has been doing this for
15 years for this organization, but for others too.
16 So we get a very good record that way, and that's
17 available afterwards, so you can see it as well,
18 of course.

19 So we have been asked by the Minister
20 of Sustainable Development to invite all First
21 Nations and communities identified in the region
22 of the Hydro developments in the north to provide
23 written input, and their response to the Regional
24 Cumulative Effects Assessment. And I know you
25 have done that, and so we thank you for that. And

1 that will help us tremendously in our report.

2 The Minister also said that if a
3 community really expresses a desire to meet with
4 us, we are to accommodate that. So that's what
5 we're doing today. We had hoped to get to your
6 community, and I know events made that impossible,
7 and I'm very sorry to hear about the death of one
8 of your elders. But we are happy that we are able
9 to meet you here at least to do that. So that
10 will be, as I say, a great benefit to us.

11 The Minister also asked us to conduct
12 meetings in a way that encourages inclusiveness
13 and minimizes formalities, so we hope to do that
14 today. There's no need to be formal or stick to
15 any procedures here, other than we have to speak
16 in a way, which I don't always do, so that Cece
17 can record it accurately.

18 Once we have heard from all of the
19 communities that want to speak to us or that want
20 to submit something in writing to us, we will
21 submit a report to the Minister of Sustainable
22 Development. And our main job is to summarize
23 everything we've heard. And we've started to do
24 that, but obviously we haven't yet heard from
25 everyone. So once we have, we will do a good

1 summary of that. We will, of course, have
2 recorded all of the input, both written and
3 meetings like today's. So all of that will also
4 be available to the Minister and to anyone else
5 who wants to use it. And I've already mentioned
6 that we're going to transcribe it all.

7 So I think that's really all I wanted
8 to say in the way of opening here. And we would
9 encourage you to speak your mind on any topic
10 related to this report that you would like to do.

11 I think, Chief, that would be the end
12 of my opening comments.

13 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: So the report that
14 you expressed is science specific?

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Mostly, yes.

16 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: On the
17 environment?

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

19 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Not of the impacts
20 or history of what has taken place, and things
21 that have occurred in our community, the
22 devastation and other things that have taken
23 place; is that correct?

24 MS. JOHNSON: Not quite. We also have
25 a history report that we commissioned that

1 includes all of that kind of information, of how
2 things came about and some of the conflicts that
3 happened.

4 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: The existing and
5 ongoing effects, adverse effects that have taken
6 place and that are continuing to affect our
7 people, not only our people but our socioeconomic
8 plan, I guess to choose the right word --

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Normally we try and
10 have microphones so she can hear everything, but
11 in here of course that's not possible. So you
12 know, I have a suggestion. I know we've got you
13 all set up here, would it be better in the middle
14 of the table?

15 (DISCUSSION OFF THE RECORD)

16 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: First I should
17 thank you for giving us -- and accommodating us,
18 we appreciate it. I know I think Cathy Johnson is
19 the one that Ian has spoken with in respect to our
20 first, I guess, attempt to meet in the community.
21 Unfortunately, things happen in respect to -- and
22 we respect our customs and our culture, because
23 when someone passes in our community, we generally
24 stop meetings and respect the families. So that's
25 the way we are, that's one of our customs, and we

1 thank you for respecting our desire.

2 Unfortunately, there is not I guess
3 enough folks to come and really express what has
4 occurred and what has taken place and what
5 continues to happen in our lives.

6 I'm pretty sure if you read the
7 history, we got relocated totally. We've got
8 reports, we're talking scientific reports we've
9 gotten from Fisheries and Oceans prior to CRD and
10 after CRD. And we are continuing to get good
11 people like Ian Halket and others to assist us in
12 trying to understand what is happening for our
13 lake, our fish, our way of life, our culture and
14 environment.

15 I don't think that many people know or
16 understand, in Manitoba anyway, in Canada, the
17 whole country, on what really took place and what
18 occurred. And most importantly what they -- when
19 they relocated us, they really destroyed our way
20 of life, our culture. I mean, imagine someone
21 going in your home and asking you to burn it down,
22 they're going to put you somewhere else.
23 Everything that you've ever known and understood
24 about life and how it works, and the independence
25 of the way of life, and then they subject you to

1 rules and regulations. Particularly with our
2 parents and our grandparents way back in the late
3 '60s and early '70s, where our people, our
4 parents, no fault of theirs, on the rules and
5 regulations -- and on top of that there were not
6 many rules and regulations in respect to the
7 permitting of the interim licences that they
8 received, Manitoba Hydro.

9 They didn't -- at that time they had
10 no clue as to what was going to take place. They
11 only looked at certain areas that had experienced
12 a similar devastation in their respective
13 communities, in the areas that they decided to go
14 and develop Hydro projects, such as the Churchill
15 River Diversion.

16 And also some of the things that we've
17 encountered and have experienced, like one is
18 disrespectfully Canada -- I mean, if you think
19 about it, I know the history pretty well, is in
20 1913 when they started planning where they were
21 going to develop, in '57 they developed Jenpeg
22 because of this community, the mining. And they
23 had plans. And throughout the whole process in
24 1908 -- I'm sure maybe you've read some of the
25 reports or the requirements that we wanted from

1 Canada. They didn't come make reserve on our land
2 as they should have. But if you put it all
3 together and place it, and you put it on the
4 table, it's a big puzzle. But as you walk through
5 the sequence of timing and what was happening at
6 the time, the plans of not only Manitoba, but of
7 Canada -- Canada was involved in that process
8 also. They were walking hand-in-hand and in full
9 knowledge of what was taking place, and the need
10 of hydroelectric power.

11 Winnipeg at the time was only
12 generated by a river, Winnipeg River. And there
13 were other places that had generated electricity
14 in the outskirts, in the rural areas. But then
15 they decided in those days to say, hey, you need
16 to have electricity. And if you recall, Winnipeg
17 Hydro owned the railcars, the electrical cars, and
18 then Manitoba bought that industry.

19 And then they got the great idea of,
20 well, we can harness more power. But what
21 happened is people got advanced and got their
22 lives easier up here where we live, particularly
23 in our community, we can only speak in our
24 community and what happened, what occurred. And
25 even before that, if you follow the history as I

1 did, and the chronology of the events that took
2 place, I can understand why Canada and Manitoba
3 did not want to make our community a reserve.
4 They deemed us as squatters, illegally on land
5 that rightfully belonged to Canada, which is
6 wrong. We were there for -- archeological proof
7 and history shows that we were there in existence
8 for thousands and thousands of years, prior to
9 even this country becoming Canada, or this
10 province being constituted as one of the
11 provinces.

12 So those things need to be brought
13 out. These things are hidden and covered, and not
14 very many Manitobans realize the devastation that
15 occurred and what took place, and the disruption
16 of our lives. Like, if you read a lot of the
17 reports, there was no social assistance in our
18 communities, we were self-sustaining people. We
19 had a very good industry. We had a very good
20 culture. We were one of -- we were, according to
21 the reports that I read in the investigation and
22 history of South Indian Lake, we were one of the
23 more stable and more richer producing, productive
24 economically communities in the north, because of
25 the fact of the lake, the production of fish and

1 the way of life that we lived. In any given year
2 we were only there for, you know, about two months
3 out of the year, when we settled, when our
4 grandfathers and grandmothers settled our
5 community.

6 But there has been a lot of -- and
7 don't get us wrong, we're not trying to blame or
8 point our finger, but the other people, like
9 Canada and Manitoba, Manitoba Hydro and the other
10 people that are responsible for giving out
11 licences and complying with the regulations and
12 rules and acts and water stewardships and that,
13 they ignored their responsibilities. So it is our
14 task and our responsibility to make sure that
15 those are followed, and that they have to realize
16 the people that are responsible, that have allowed
17 this to happen, they must compensate us. They
18 must realize and say, hey, we did these people
19 wrong.

20 Because technically and
21 realistically -- and again, I'm not trying to be
22 offensive -- but you are all, in our minds, in our
23 view, in my view anyway, you are elders. We were
24 young, we were the children of that time. But
25 your children have prospered and have grown and

1 the communities have grown, cities, towns,
2 industries, spin-offs from the hydroelectrical
3 power that was produced from our lake as a
4 reservoir. That's never been acknowledged or
5 never been noted and said, hey, we should thank
6 those people and we should acknowledge what we've
7 done to them and their environment, and how we
8 destroyed their way of life.

9 We fought both Manitoba, Canada,
10 Manitoba Hydro for years, over 40 years we've been
11 doing this, our parents, our grandparents, now
12 it's us. And the conditions that they put, they
13 subject us to still exist. We're still throwing
14 out slop pails. We're still only getting water in
15 45 gallon barrels. And this council, chief and
16 council, we work very hard to change that way of
17 life and change the mistakes that people have put
18 there. And it's unfortunate that you -- we were
19 hoping that you would be there to visually see the
20 houses and the conditions that they put us in.

21 They promised us wealth, work, our
22 parents, you don't have to work again, you don't
23 have to go and get work, you don't have to go and
24 get coal oil to have light. They basically
25 mislead our people. And our people at the time

1 realized and recognized, well, what are you guys
2 going to do for us when you destroy our land and
3 our water? They said, well, don't worry -- it is
4 a quote that people use -- they said, well, your
5 lake will get bigger, that means you'll have more
6 fish. Your hunting grounds will be larger because
7 the lake will be larger, and the animals will be
8 more abundant because all of these things are
9 going to increase these things.

10 But even then they hid it. They had
11 no clue. And even to this day they have no clue
12 as to when it's going to -- when the destruction
13 is going to stop. They don't know when the
14 equilibrium is going to take place. It could be
15 another 100, 200, could be 1,000 years. But the
16 fact is that everybody that enjoys electricity and
17 spin-offs of the industries that have come from it
18 benefit.

19 According to some of the records and
20 some of the things, and even former Premiers and
21 former Ministers -- one that I can recall is David
22 Newman was one of the Ministers, he said that, you
23 know, we should be giving them back something.
24 Even the Premier at the time suggested that 10
25 per cent rebate to the community for what's

1 happening, so they can help us sustain our
2 independence and our self-sustainability and our
3 dignity and our pride in being who we were and who
4 we are today. That's not occurred. But everybody
5 else has prospered, everybody else has a good
6 life.

7 The president of the Manitoba Hydro,
8 former president Bob Brennan, now Kelvin Shepherd,
9 they make huge amount of money, and so do all of
10 the executive council, their vice presidents and
11 boards and so on.

12 And what do we get left with? We got
13 left with social assistance. Like we were making
14 an average, according to the studies that were
15 done, we were making between \$4,000 and \$6,000 in
16 the '60s. And that's equivalent now to what?
17 Maybe 50, \$60,000 a year annually. And what do
18 our people get, a single guy, single people,
19 family members, they get maybe between \$9,000 and
20 \$24,000 on social assistance. It's a huge
21 setback. And nobody wants to address it, or
22 nobody wants to say, hey, we really hurt these
23 people, and we destroyed their culture, their way
24 of life, their independence, when they promised
25 that we wouldn't be in a welfare state. But

1 that's what exactly happens.

2 And what really angers us and hurts us
3 is they hide it, they lie, and they stand by and
4 allow it to happen. I think maybe sometimes if
5 people are saying the truth about it and wanting
6 to, you know, the Premier says this is going to be
7 the strongest Province in Canada. That's his
8 words today. He makes a pea factory in Portage La
9 Prairie where he's from, that's what we know. And
10 I've asked the Minister of Indian Affairs, how
11 come they don't build an industry in our
12 communities, on our reserves, and put our people
13 to work? Instead they would rather put us on
14 welfare. That's not right. That's wrong. Our
15 children should have the right to upgrade their
16 skills and have a prosperous future.

17 I don't know if you guys realize the
18 devastation that has occurred in our communities,
19 with the drinking, with the drugs, with the
20 murders, with killings, all kinds of stuff have
21 happened. Our people have drowned out in the
22 lake. Hydro don't acknowledge it. They say,
23 well, they shouldn't have been traveling there.
24 Our men are experienced, well experienced how to
25 travel the lakes and waterways. That's how we

1 grew up, that's what our fathers taught us. So
2 when you hit a log or a deadhead, and they don't
3 acknowledge and say, well, where's your evidence?
4 Our evidence is that we've been traveling there
5 for hundreds of years, none of us have drowned.
6 We're not stupid people, we don't go somewhere
7 where we're going to risk our lives. We know our
8 environment, we know our limits as to what we can
9 and cannot do against nature. We respect her.
10 People just hide it.

11 Even the Fisheries Act, nobody from
12 the Department of Fisheries -- even they studied
13 it before and after -- nobody has put Manitoba or
14 Manitoba Hydro or Canada to task and said, hey,
15 we're doing wrong. Instead they hide it. Because
16 they can't stop this, because then everybody's
17 lights go out and everybody's job ceases to exist,
18 the employment, sending their children to college
19 and university, stopping their payments for their
20 mortgage and their truck payments and their food.
21 People don't take that into consideration. We're
22 not trying to stop progress. But what we want is
23 the assistance that they promised us, the life
24 that they said we would have. Our fathers and
25 grandfathers and grandmothers and grandfathers

1 fought this. Our brothers and sisters fought this
2 too.

3 They wouldn't even -- who started the
4 Northern Flood Committee? South Indian Lake did.
5 Look at the history. We were the people that
6 started that. And at the end we got kicked out.
7 We didn't even get acknowledged. Then they went
8 to the Northern Flood Agreement. They kicked us
9 out of there too because of the fact that they
10 said, well, you're squatters, you have no rights
11 on this place, even though our ancestors founded
12 it and said, hey, this is a good place to live.
13 And we lived there forever, generation after
14 generation. We negotiated with the Dene on a
15 territorial boundary that we would respectfully
16 say, okay, we won't go there, you don't come here,
17 and we will not intrude on your land and on your
18 hunting grounds. It was a rule, it was a golden
19 rule. It was honour, based on honour and respect.

20 We don't see that with the Province,
21 we don't see that with Canada, we don't see that
22 with Hydro. Instead what do they do to us? They
23 laugh at us and make fun of us -- not in our face,
24 but on their actions they do, it's very clear.

25 And how do you think we feel? And if

1 you have to throw slop pails for now and wait for
2 a water truck to come and fill up your 45 gallon
3 drum, I don't think you would live that way, or
4 you would like it, you wouldn't stand for it.
5 People would come to your community, into your
6 homes and sue somebody and make somebody
7 responsible and fix it. But because we're First
8 Nation people, we're subject to that. And yet we
9 have treaty rights, we have fiduciaries. And
10 nobody wants to say okay, we screwed up and we
11 unlawfully did this to these people. And what are
12 we going to do about it?

13 And somebody has to take that forward.
14 And I'm hoping that you people do that and you put
15 it in your reports, and finally come to some sort
16 of agreement and understanding of what you've done
17 to us, what our children live through, what our
18 elders go through. We work hard to try and make
19 life as comfortable as possible for our people.
20 They cut off our compensation, our fishermen, they
21 said you won't be able to fish no more, but we
22 made liars out of them. The men and women in our
23 community are still fishing and still producing.
24 They may have to use more nets, they may have to
25 work harder, navigate at a more safer degree. But

1 that should tell people -- and through that is a
2 testimony of what we are about. We're not going
3 nowhere.

4 And what has everybody done? Stood by
5 and allowed this to happen.

6 Then you comfortably sleep in your
7 homes, and comfortably go to work, and never think
8 about what we're facing, what we have to go
9 through. And I'm not trying to make you feel bad,
10 but you are asking me how I feel. And what I see,
11 what we walk through.

12 Now I walk the streets of this town
13 and I walk the streets when I go to all of these
14 communities. All of them have running water,
15 hydro. They have schools, they have health
16 centres, they have RCMP, their roads are paved.
17 They have water and sewage to their homes. They
18 have libraries. They have pharmacies. All of
19 this stuff. And who powers that and where does
20 that power come from to make all of that work, and
21 who benefits from it when they go to work? They
22 do.

23 Now, take our situation and our
24 community. We want to work too. We want to have
25 careers. We want to progress as the province did

1 and as this country did. But how can we, when you
2 ignore the fact that you destroyed our way of life
3 and you subject us to a prison called a reserve,
4 and we can't go out of it? But yet you come and
5 destroy it and you say to hell with those people,
6 they can live on welfare the rest of their lives,
7 generation after generation. I don't know how you
8 feel about that, but me, I would be ashamed. I
9 would really go back to my people that make these
10 kind of decisions and say, look what we've done.
11 I know you can't pay us back the trillions and
12 billions of dollars that you've made off this lake
13 and off of us. But you should have the dignity,
14 you should have the respect to say we need to
15 correct this mistake, not only in Manitoba and
16 Manitoba Hydro, but Canada also.

17 Like I said, I researched this, I've
18 done this. These guys kicked me off the land and
19 told me go to school, which I did. You know, some
20 of those people ask me, why do you want be chief?
21 I didn't choose to be chief. I chose to be a
22 fisherman and a trapper, because I was free and it
23 was a good life. But try and do that now. You
24 know, that's a business. It's like a sport, it's
25 like a gas station, fishing, that's what that is.

1 And you have to work hard. And then people try
2 and deter you from doing that. They say, here,
3 take a welfare cheque, and then put that into
4 people's mentality and their way of life. Then,
5 of course, they are going to get used to it. But
6 who is responsible for that? Are we to say, okay,
7 we don't want that?

8 We have to try and keep up with times,
9 we're subject to learning English, and the way
10 they try to put us in the mainstream of life.
11 We're not saying we don't want to be part of the
12 growth of this country or the growth of this
13 province. But how do you expect us to grow when
14 you guys if you don't allow us to, or don't give
15 us the opportunities that make those things
16 happen? It's shameful.

17 And people stand around and say
18 nothing about it. I've read the Fisheries Act,
19 I've read the regulations. I've read the rules.
20 I've read the CEC Environmental Assessment Acts.
21 I've studied all of these. And every regulation
22 and legislation Act under the Water Stewardship,
23 which is new, the Environmental Assessment Act has
24 relatively been changed, and the Fisheries Act has
25 been changed in 2013. Why aren't they following

1 it? Who wrote these rules and regulations? It
2 sure in hell wasn't us. It was the country of
3 Canada. It was the Province of Manitoba. It was
4 the entity that destroyed our way of life,
5 Manitoba Hydro. They wrote these things. They
6 don't even follow them. They say to hell with
7 those guys, we're the boss. We're the ones that
8 make the rules in the ways that this country is
9 going to be run, and this province. Even though
10 they have treaty and Aboriginal rights, so what?
11 What are those Indians going to do? They've got
12 no money, no funds, they ain't going to take us to
13 court. How are they going to do this?

14 But like I said, if we're truly to
15 what we say we are, as Canadians and friendly
16 Manitobans, then why the hell aren't we realizing
17 what we've done to South Indian Lake and the other
18 First Nation communities that have been destroyed?
19 I don't understand that.

20 I've studied psychology, I've studied
21 sociology. I've studied economics. But I don't
22 see it over here. And we work really hard to try
23 and develop our communities and try and develop
24 the future of our children, and the opportunities,
25 limited opportunities.

1 I asked Manitoba Hydro, Kelvin
2 Shepherd, Ruth Christiansen, when they built
3 Keeyask, Wuskwatim, all those people, nobody came
4 and knocked on our door and said, hey, do you want
5 to come to work? They went to the United States
6 of America, they went to Ontario, they went to
7 Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Quebec.
8 Go to the airport, see all of the different people
9 that go and get off those planes. And what has
10 changed a little bit for Keeyask is there is more
11 First Nation peoples working there, which is good.

12 I think of Conawapa, that other dam
13 that they have built, all of them, all seven of
14 them. They got you picking up the little sticks.
15 No meaningful employment, no meaningful future.
16 Jenpeg was the same thing. Cross Lake still
17 doesn't want to sign a NFA agreement because they
18 don't respect their word, the rules, the
19 regulations.

20 Our children are killing themselves.
21 Our children are killing each other. And again,
22 I'm not blaming, it's our responsibility, but how
23 do we fight it without the resources that Winnipeg
24 may have, or Thompson, or Brandon, or Portage la
25 Prairie, Steinbach? All of those places have

1 grown.

2 And all we're asking is to have fair
3 treatment. And if you base it on skills, we even
4 put in a counter offer. They said, oh, that's too
5 rich, that's too high, are you crazy? Well, read
6 your studies and look at the amounts of money and
7 the spin-offs and everything else that we've been
8 expressing here. Calculate it. People pay land
9 taxes. They work for Manitoba Hydro. They work
10 for this building. Mr. Johnson was the one, the
11 old doctor, he owns this building and he gave it
12 to his son, Tim. But what powers it? There was
13 no lights here. Nobody would come to work here.
14 It would be cold. They would refuse to come here.

15 But you understand what we're saying.
16 And as commissioners, when you write your reports
17 you should identify these things on what occurred,
18 quit hiding behind lies, quit hiding and putting
19 it under the rug, as they call it. That's wrong.

20 Our children have just as much right
21 to get proper education. They have just as much
22 right to try and look at a future and say, hey, I
23 want to get up and go to work today and have
24 pride. Because my son and daughter will see me do
25 that, and I will do that too. They wake up and

1 say, hey, mom, where are you going? Oh, I'm going
2 to get your welfare cheque, son, or daughter. Oh
3 boy, that's a great future for me. That's not
4 right. That's wrong. And you as commissioners, I
5 hope that you have that responsibility in here, in
6 your heart, to tell these other people what is
7 going on and what has happened. It's wrong, and
8 somebody has to correct it.

9 And we need help and we need support,
10 because we're the people that you guys, when you
11 turn on your light, think of us. I said that to
12 the people too lots of times. I talked to
13 Minister Clarke, I talked to Deputy Minister
14 Bruce, I talked to Minister Bennett, and Palut
15 (ph) I think is her name, they developed a new
16 Minister. I've been talking to the former
17 government. And history shows the NDP took place
18 and power, they lost their election base because
19 they were going to flood South Indian Lake
20 40 feet. The Conservatives came in. History is
21 repeating itself. And nobody is doing nothing for
22 the people that have been impacted directly.

23 But life goes on over here, all nice
24 and cozy and everything is fine. It's not fine.
25 It's terrible. We've lost our values, our

1 principles as people. I've no idea why. We're
2 supposed to help one another. It's not right.

3 But I say this, and actually what
4 1,000 more people will say over there, but again
5 we have to be respectful for our customs and how
6 we live. We've kept, and keep them alive. We
7 still help each other as best as we can. We still
8 assist each other with what we have. Because
9 nobody comes there. They try, and they lie and
10 they say, hey -- even some of the things that
11 we've negotiated, we have to fight in the courts.
12 They didn't come here and say, hey, this is what
13 we did. We have to spend a shitload of money and
14 make them feel like, hey, the law is telling you
15 that you've got to do this. In '85 they said we
16 have NFA rights, but the courts had to tell them,
17 even though they knew. So who is right and wrong?
18 And who walks the straight line and the proud line
19 that they brag about?

20 They don't come -- Edward Jinsky, Jim
21 Adams, vice president, they came and apologized
22 and they acknowledged the fact that they destroyed
23 our way of life. And they said, hey, we will
24 change this, and we will try and work with you and
25 give you opportunity. But we still have to fight

1 them, we still have to say, hey, you've got to
2 riprap our shorelines, our grades are falling in,
3 our roads are going to crumble into the lake. And
4 even still they play stupid games with us. They
5 say, well, because you don't want to cooperate
6 with us, we're going to market. So some other
7 companies will come in, or Saferson or Muller.
8 Even though we tried to work hard to try and
9 develop our own capacity on our own construction
10 companies. And they didn't come and knock on our
11 door and say, hey, maybe we can give you a
12 \$50 million contract, or \$20 million contract to
13 come and help us out at Keeyask or at Wuskwatim.
14 They didn't do that.

15 Even when they gave out that
16 \$75 million for training and employment, they
17 never came to our community. They send me to
18 Northern Affairs, I went and seen Marilyn Duval
19 and I asked her, and I expressed that to her, and
20 I went and seen the Minister then, Steve Ashton,
21 and said, hey, how come we're not getting a fair
22 share of this? And their reply was, well, your
23 numbers went to Nelson House, because that's where
24 your band is from. And I went to Northern Affairs
25 and said, whoa, it's over here. I went to MKO.

1 They didn't give us direct funding or direct
2 opportunity. They left us out again. And then
3 they say, well, we're going to do this in good
4 faith, Chris. And I say tell me, show me evidence
5 that you've been doing this in good faith for the
6 last 40 years and I might believe you.

7 Nobody knows what's going to take
8 place in this lake. Nobody knows how many fish
9 are going to live, how many moose, muskrat,
10 beaver, otter, or what we have to go through every
11 year when the water goes up and down, fluctuates
12 through the augmented flow program. They have
13 been doing that illegally and unlawfully since
14 what, '86 I think, or '80 something, when they
15 initiated that augmented flow program. And then
16 they had an experimentation for nine years prior
17 to it to understand how to master it.

18 You all come from Winnipeg. I'll
19 assume that. Go to the Red River and the
20 Assiniboine River, that river is this small. It
21 is, because I know, I seen it, I go check it. I
22 don't go to see how muddy it is, I go check it to
23 see how much water there is in there, for my own
24 personal knowledge and understanding. That lake
25 is 300 miles long, and they ran out of water to

1 generate the other three generating stations that
2 are on that river system, on that thing. The
3 other ones that are from Keeyask all the way down,
4 or Kelsey and that way, is generated by us.

5 They say there is no adverse effects
6 when we build a dam. Sure there is. You may not
7 see it, but we do, we live it. I will tell you,
8 in some of the reports there was a 1 per cent -- 1
9 per cent, one person out of 100 that were on
10 social assistance before this destruction took
11 place. And it wasn't because they chose to, it
12 was because either they broke their leg or they
13 weren't able to work. We were self-sustaining
14 people. Like I said between four and \$6,000 per
15 year per family in South Indian Lake, that's what
16 we made, that's what our fathers and grandfathers
17 and grandmothers made. That's equivalent today to
18 a very good paying job.

19 But imagine the potential that lake
20 has and had? Like I said, I would prefer to be a
21 fishermen and a trapper than a chief. Because
22 then I have to fight all the time and I have to
23 get criticized on and shit on, not only by the
24 Government of Manitoba and Canada and all of the
25 other people that we have to deal with, our own

1 people do that. Because they say we're doing
2 nothing and we're making lots of money. That's
3 not true. But all we're saying to you guys and
4 appealing and reaching out to you guys is you guys
5 need to do the right thing and write the right
6 report and say, hey, somebody has to be
7 responsible to these people that we destroyed the
8 lives of.

9 All of our parents that are sitting
10 here right now, we were the children. They made
11 our mothers and fathers burn their houses. They
12 gave them the match and said, take your personal
13 belongings out and you put your house on fire,
14 burn it down, because you ain't going to be able
15 to live here because we're going to flood you out.
16 They did. And then they relocated us.

17 Our system was that we had clan
18 systems, our families, the Spences, Linklaters,
19 Moses, all of us lived in areas, then they mixed
20 us all up and we're everywhere in our community.
21 And that disrupted our way of life.

22 We never got hungry. We never
23 depended on anybody. We were self-sustaining and
24 proud people. Everybody worked.

25 Anyway, maybe somebody else is going

1 to give you some other insights on it too, not
2 just me. But I think you have the gist of what
3 we're saying, and I hope a more clear
4 understanding and more consciousness of the
5 importance of what you write and what you submit,
6 and making other people responsible. Imagine if
7 it was your children, imagine if it was your
8 brother or your sister or your mom or your dad or
9 your grandma and grandpa that was subject to this.
10 Put yourself in our shoes and how we feel and what
11 we have to live with. Forty years later we still
12 got no running water and sewage, no jobs.

13 We created, the council, we fought
14 Canada, we fought Manitoba and made them
15 responsible. FNIT, First Nation and Inuit Health,
16 we made sure that they gave us services. Manitoba
17 didn't come to our aid, or Canada, as they said
18 they would. We did all of that hard work.

19 Anyway, maybe I would like to, you
20 know, let others say something too. (Speaking
21 native language.)

22 Serge, I was just asking, telling them
23 to express what we have seen, gone through, not
24 just from me, allow them to say the things that
25 they need to say. And say your name so it's on

1 the record.

2 WILBUR WOOD: My name is Wilbur Wood.

3 Well, I grew up a lot healthier than my children
4 today. Which I had everything, I could go out,
5 get things I needed, I didn't have to be in town.

6 I had everything. I was supported, sure, my
7 family supported me, but we lived off the land.
8 We didn't have to go to a store and try and buy
9 something all of the time. Sure, we had things
10 like this. You know, it was way better than the
11 life I'm living today anyways since this flood.

12 It made a lot of difference even to
13 the school. Because I remember when we used to go
14 to school, we used to be in school all day. We'd
15 have a little break, have lunch in the school.
16 But now since our flood, they moved our school
17 right next to the store. Our store is right
18 across from the store, you know. When the kids go
19 out for recess, what do they see? A pile of
20 drunks, you know, people standing there smoking.
21 You know, we never had that when we went to
22 school. I didn't go to school long but, you know,
23 it wasn't like that before we got moved.

24 And when we started fishing, when I
25 started fishing it was good, I had it good. I

1 didn't have to work that hard to get what I would
2 make money on. I would get a boat and motor, I
3 would pay for it in one year. I would be -- I
4 wouldn't have to worry about it because they took
5 a percentage of my fish that I catch. But now I
6 get a boat and motor, I don't know how long it's
7 going to take me to finish paying for it, and I
8 have to work three, four times harder, you know.

9 And look at now, sure, I'm a trapper
10 and a fisherman, but what am I doing? I can't go
11 out, I can't go out and trap because it's not safe
12 for me to go out, you know. Now Christmas is
13 coming. You know, I don't mind working, I can
14 still go out there and do things I want to do, but
15 I can't because, you know, it's not safe, I can't
16 just go out. And if something happens to me, who
17 is going to be responsible? Hydro sure as hell
18 isn't going to be responsible for that. They're
19 going to say it is your fault. Was it me that
20 flooded the lake or Hydro? Who is supposed to be
21 responsible? They say you are supposed to know
22 where you're going. Sure, I would have knew 40
23 years ago, I would have knew where to go, I would
24 have knew where it would be safe. But today I
25 don't know where it's safe. You have channels all

1 over which you never had, you have islands now,
2 you have current going through places where there
3 was just voids.

4 And you know, like we used to pick
5 seagull eggs, you know, eat them. But now you
6 don't have that either. Like this spring I was
7 out spawning, and I check this little island, like
8 it was cleared by debris and I checked it, I
9 checked for eggs. There was a few eggs there. So
10 I told the boys, okay, we're giving it a couple of
11 days or so, when we come back we'll pick them
12 because they will lay again. So two or three days
13 later, we came back, we met that little island
14 floating, the water took it away, you know. So
15 there is no more eggs there, all there is, it's
16 just a rock. You know, all of these places like
17 the birds nest, you know, there is hardly any
18 more, no more. Sure there will be some, but when
19 the water rises they're gone, all the eggs are
20 gone. Those little birds are swimming around
21 drowning, where it never used to be like that.

22 It's a lot different from this flood,
23 I know. Because, you know, before we never had to
24 be all together like that, but we used to -- sure,
25 we knew each other. But then again too, you know,

1 like we had things to do. You know, we didn't sit
2 there and watch TV, we would go and do something
3 else. We used to go down the bank, make boats out
4 of trees, you know, float them to shore. There
5 would be a whole bunch of boys doing that, you
6 know, just walking on the shore, enjoying this,
7 you know. But now all the kids -- there's some
8 kids here, there's some kids there, they want to
9 fight, you know, it's just -- I don't know. It's
10 just things that happen. That never used to
11 happen to us.

12 Like I never remember wanting to get a
13 bunch of guys and go fight, you know. It's a big
14 change now. You know, like I got two boys, you
15 know, they want to fish, but one is not interested
16 anymore because, you know, there's nothing there
17 for him. The other one is coming down anyway, but
18 I don't know for how long he is going to --
19 because, you know, I tell them how I made a
20 living, how it was. And they thought it would be
21 great for them too, if they would do it. But now
22 it's a different story. We hardly have fish now.
23 Like, even to set a net now, you know, it takes
24 you quite a while. You know, before you wouldn't
25 have no trouble setting nets, but now you've got

1 to, I don't know how far you have to go to go pick
2 up an anchor. You know, you always have to have,
3 once you find anchors you always have to have fuel
4 in your boat. Like before we used to just go to
5 the shore and pick up a rock. Now sometimes you
6 have to go in the water to go pick up rocks, you
7 know, to use it for an anchor. It's a lot of
8 work.

9 You know, we set nets, next thing we
10 know we have to pull them out, they're full of
11 sticks. Sometimes we have to cut up our nets, and
12 a net is \$140, and Hydro won't give you nets for
13 that, they will say, no, we will put money
14 somewhere else, we already did that. Yeah, you
15 already did it but your thing is still here, what
16 you did is still here, but our net is gone. You
17 think it's nothing so, you know, I don't really
18 agree with that.

19 In places that we go -- we go, all the
20 trees are in the water, all the ground is, your
21 ground is up there, your anchor is here, you can't
22 go any place and drive up with a Skidoo like where
23 you used to, it's no more. It's not like that any
24 more. It's pretty hard now as far as that goes.

25 Like everything is gone, like our

1 birds are gone. What -- we never used to walk
2 way, way out like in that lake to hunt, we used to
3 hunt just around home. And I remember all the
4 time before the flood I used to go, just go out
5 and paddle around Shoe Rapids, but now you can't
6 even do that. All you see is a bunch of trees
7 going in the water. You'll never kill anything
8 around there.

9 They ruin everything. All of the
10 medicine is gone, everything. You've got to go a
11 long ways for that. Even picking berries is hard,
12 because you can't go where you used to go, because
13 you can't get off the shore. All the debris, all
14 of the trees are in the water, and debris. And
15 that's about it.

16 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: John Baker. You
17 commissioners, these things that you guys report
18 to, who do you give it to and what becomes of
19 this? Is there any value of it for our people,
20 what we're talking about, like my brother is
21 talking about?

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, the report that
23 we will do after we've heard from everyone will go
24 to the Minister of Sustainable Development. And
25 yeah, then it will be her decision as to what to

1 do -- hers and Hydro's, I guess, decision as to
2 what to do next, although I guess she will have
3 some authority there.

4 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: So the work on this,
5 what you are reporting will be up to Hydro again?

6 THE CHAIRMAN: No. The report is
7 going to the Minister, so the government, so the
8 last word will be the government's. But they will
9 involve Hydro, I'm sure, in reviewing that report.
10 The report was prepared mostly by Hydro staff and
11 consultants, but also by the government, they did
12 it together, so it was a joint report. And the
13 Minister then sent us the report and asked us to
14 get input from as many communities as we could,
15 and then to summarize that and do a report on that
16 back to her. So that's what we're doing.

17 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: The reason why I'm
18 asking this is because I've experienced this
19 before.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

21 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: You know, from other
22 things. And like as far as my experience with you
23 ladies and gentlemen that are sitting here
24 listening to us, is these reports are done and
25 then they're shelved, and that's it, nothing ever

1 comes of it.

2 I've put in claims where -- well, you
3 don't live in South Indian and you're not a band
4 member, you're not a treaty person, all of these
5 things come from lawyers that represent Manitoba
6 Hydro and Manitoba. And I've got paperwork on it,
7 if you want me to gather it and send it to you,
8 where it says you're not included in there because
9 of my status as a non-native. That was before I
10 became, I applied for my status.

11 And the other thing that I would like
12 to add that my brothers were saying was, it's
13 difficult, what's happening in our community, all
14 the environmental devastation that's caused by
15 this development. Because before the flood we had
16 the best fish in the world, export white fish,
17 which was a really valuable commodity. Because a
18 million pounds of that right now today could add
19 up to \$10 million for our community each year and
20 employ everybody in our community. And all of
21 that was destroyed. And our fish was rated from
22 export right down to the worst of fish, cutter
23 white fish, which are not even consumable for
24 human beings, they are for dog food and animal
25 food. And we can't even sell those to make a

1 living, to do our work.

2 Again, it's the shorelines where our
3 medicines were, where all life comes from, the
4 water that is produced to feed our fish and our
5 ducks and whatever lives on our shorelines. Even
6 in the bush, our animals, our moose, our caribou,
7 and fish have been let go. And it's not only our
8 people that are suffering from this. You guys
9 will suffer one of these days, you know, down
10 south the people will suffer. And I know that for
11 a fact because it's affecting -- where does this
12 water go? It comes here, from our community here,
13 and all the way up south because they changed the
14 current in the water. All of the rivers used to
15 flow north. Now this one river, the Churchill
16 River has been diverted to flow south. And
17 everything that we experience over here is going
18 to come here, and that's when everybody will wake
19 up and say, oh shit, we've done something wrong
20 here, we're killing our planet.

21 I read these things. As people, as
22 human beings, including everybody on this earth is
23 destroying this, our land, our way of life. And
24 when we try to get programs from government,
25 Manitoba Hydro, they say here's your limit, this

1 is all you get. And that's not enough to fix what
2 has been destroyed.

3 And like the Chief said, there is
4 regulations, but they don't follow them. They
5 don't follow the regulations for environmental
6 clean-ups, Manitoba Hydro, or Manitoba goes to
7 Hydro and says, yeah, go ahead and destroy more,
8 to hell with it. You know, it's really
9 frustrating to see that, to live through it.

10 And what they said to -- like I was at
11 the meetings, I was just a young fellow, maybe say
12 12, 14 years old when I first heard of the
13 meetings. And I sat, and my parents took me, and
14 they said to our parents, hey, you guys won't have
15 nothing to worry about, you know, we're going to
16 bring you houses. You don't have to cut wood for
17 it, you just turn a knob and the heat is there,
18 turn another knob and your water is there. You
19 don't have to haul water, cut a hole in the ice or
20 melt it in a pail. You don't have to throw out
21 slop pails. All you have to do is sit around and
22 enjoy life. It sounded like heaven when they were
23 talking, and here we're living in hell.

24 Our children dying, killing each
25 other, I've lost a few children and brothers,

1 suicide and killings. And when I was a kid that
2 never happened. It hurts. And it's not going to
3 stop. Their children are going to get that.
4 There is nothing changed. There is nothing done
5 to change that. And all of the books in this
6 north that show where the lungs of the earth is,
7 what do you call that thing, biosystem, where
8 oxygen comes from. They show Lynn Lake, Nelson
9 House, everything except South Indian is not in
10 that book. You guys look for South Indian in any
11 of these reports that are published for the public
12 to see, the whole country to see, South Indian
13 Lake is never in those books, or mentioned.

14 It really just angers me. You know, I
15 see another commission come in here, I don't know
16 how many people, how many commissions I've talked
17 to in my life, and nothing has changed. Hydro
18 still does what they want to do. They still get
19 their licence. I know they will get their
20 licence, their final licence. No matter what
21 happens, they will get it. Because the majority
22 of this country and this world needs that power.
23 They are not going to give a shit about 750 people
24 in South Indian Lake. That's what has happened.
25 We're just dust to the rest of the country. We

1 don't matter. They'd rather see us all die off,
2 save them money, make them more money, flood more
3 of our lake, take our industry away.

4 We have one industry in our community,
5 that's the fishing industry, the backbone of our
6 community. That's what I do. Now that industry
7 is in jeopardy, every year since this development
8 has come in. And there is no richness like they
9 promised, nothing. They just killed off our way
10 of life.

11 And our medicines that grew along
12 shore, that cured our people, they killed those.
13 And they sent us out on their place and put us on
14 pills and more pills, and we're unhealthier. You
15 know, it's just crazy the way things go.

16 And I'm hoping you guys are different
17 from the other commissions that I talked to, and
18 the other people that I talked to that are
19 supposed to set things right. I've gone to
20 meetings and people have said to me, hey, John, I
21 know how it is to be in your shoes. That just
22 flares me up, and I get angry. I say you are so
23 full of it, you don't know. You know, you guys
24 are sitting here, what are you going to do after
25 your job is done? You are going to get a pension,

1 you don't have to worry about it. Me, when I quit
2 fishing, what am I going to get? A bunch of
3 crooked old hands and a sore back and a rundown
4 outfit and nets that are no good, and a welfare
5 cheque or an old age pension, if there is any of
6 that, because one of these days they are going to
7 cut that out too.

8 You know, people like yourselves that
9 are employed steadily and have incomes coming,
10 they have this attitude like they're feeding me,
11 they're giving me a home. And I don't like that.
12 I don't think that's true. And the homes that we
13 had, where I grew up, it was in my dad's home,
14 they built it. Today I live in a house where
15 Manitoba Government can come and say, hey, you are
16 out of here, this is not your house, this is not
17 your land anymore.

18 You know, where's my children going to
19 go? They are going to end up in the same dam
20 place that I did. And they are not going to have
21 a history. They are not going to have roots. Our
22 roots were pulled out from the ground when
23 Manitoba Hydro came here. It hurts me when I
24 think about that. When I tell my grandchildren
25 about the way I grew up and what I seen, they say,

1 grandpa, did you grow up in a dream? This is a
2 nightmare we're living in.

3 My son died, my nephew died, and my
4 father, because of this development. What is the
5 cost of that? Can any of you tell me how much
6 your grandfather or your children are worth, put a
7 number on that; or how much you are going to get
8 paid to rip your roots out from where you grew up,
9 or say this is how tall I was when I was 15 or 16,
10 or say this is where I was? You know, our
11 children don't have that. They don't know where
12 they come from. We're just here, that's it.
13 Where we came from is gone. Development has took
14 it for the benefit of the many. Ask the people in
15 South Indian Lake, what's left of us has to suffer
16 for the benefit of everybody in this country, in
17 Canada, because that money helps this country and
18 this province. And it's still happening.

19 I hope this commission can change
20 that. It would be wonderful. But I doubt it very
21 much in my mind that you people can do anything
22 about it. Because this is just a process that our
23 country does, just to show that, hey, we did this,
24 we went and seen these people, we talked to these
25 people, we have a heart. For what? Just to write

1 down things on paper, that gives you heart?

2 The country should look at our
3 community and our children and our lives, and the
4 money that they made from us, from our suffering,
5 from our devastation, from our loss, for our
6 children.

7 My son was 17 when he hung himself,
8 and Nick was 17 when he hung himself. My brother
9 was 20 when he shot himself. What did you guys
10 lose? How much is that worth to you if your son
11 had done that, or your brother? What kind of
12 number would you guys put on that?

13 And they're asking for a licence to do
14 it some more, a final licence where they don't
15 even have to come in and ask us if they can do it.
16 You people think that's right? Any of you think
17 that's right?

18 If this helps, and I pray it does, you
19 know, for my grandchildren, and for my
20 grandchildren that hasn't come yet. I don't know
21 what is going to set it right.

22 That's about all I've to say. It just
23 totally pisses me off, these processes that they
24 have, like what we're doing here, and nothing ever
25 becomes of it.

1 IAN HALKET: So John and Wilbur, you
2 both have said, at least what I got there, that
3 the fishing has changed in the lake?

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes.

5 IAN HALKET: And you guys have
6 described to me the difference in the fish. Can
7 you share that with the -- or talk about how the
8 fish have changed?

9 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: Our fish used to be
10 pristine, export white fish. They have these
11 little pink noses and pink arms, and they're
12 shinny and healthy and they're big. And now the
13 fish that we catch are small, dull looking, full
14 of sores, water sores, blisters. Some of them
15 have one eye. Some of the fish that I gutted have
16 no ribs and their spinal column is like mush. And
17 if that's not proof enough that the ecosystem is
18 dying in the Churchill River, and that's carrying
19 it down south to all of our rivers. And these
20 guys, Manitoba Hydro wants to continue to do that?

21 And it's up to you guys to say, yeah,
22 it's okay, go ahead, in your writings. Maybe you
23 guys should tell them that, say you are killing
24 not only the people of South Indian Lake, but also
25 what they eat, what they live on, the environment,

1 the ecosystem.

2 You know, I've seen some really
3 strange fish. I've seen fish that look like
4 snakes with great big heads, northern pikes, I've
5 seen them with no teeth. And I've gut fish where
6 I've seen moss inside their gizzards, you know,
7 what they eat. And that's what we eat. I've seen
8 beaver die along the shore for no reason at all,
9 and not just one, but 15, 20 of them floating
10 around all over the place, muskrats. And I've
11 seen islands with eagle nests that have come down
12 into the water where they have fallen.

13 It's not only the people that are
14 affected by this development, but also our whole
15 world, our birds, fish, animals, plants. Even the
16 things that live on water under the rocks that are
17 along the shore, the jelly stuff, the little eggs
18 and stuff like that along the shoreline, those get
19 dried up when the water recedes, and then they get
20 flooded when the water comes up and they die. And
21 that's going to be forever.

22 And you know, they want a licence to
23 keep on doing it forever, a final licensing,
24 Manitoba Hydro, where they don't even have to come
25 and consult with the people what they're going to

1 do. Money is not everything. It's just a part of
2 life.

3 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: The sad part about
4 this is you can't change it because we're so far
5 down the pike. But what I think, or what we
6 believe is that, you know, like I said earlier,
7 you can't -- it's like what John said, how do you
8 pay back a life? Like I'm not -- we're not
9 kidding.

10 When you grow up on the lake and on
11 the bush, you learn to respect those things or
12 they will kill you, they will take your life like
13 that. She has no conscience, she has no regret.
14 I'm talking about Mother Nature. You disrespect
15 her once, she will punish you. And some of our --
16 like these are experienced people that have been
17 on the lake all of their life, and they drown,
18 they fall through the lake or the ice, or they're
19 dying of cancer or some disease that we have no
20 knowledge of, that's never been a part of our
21 life.

22 When a man comes, a man come to us as
23 chief and council and says, give me a job, because
24 I've lost my dignity as a man, a provider for my
25 wife and children, how do you address that when

1 you know you don't have the financial resources to
2 give back to that man the opportunity that was
3 taken away from him, and the women? It's a
4 generational cycle.

5 Imagine that -- my dad, when we were
6 young, he used to get up, get us up 5:00 o'clock
7 in the morning. We were out on the lake at 6:00.
8 We were there all day. That lake produced about
9 probably over maybe 1.1, 1.3 million pounds per
10 year, throughout the full seasons, summer, fall,
11 and winter and spring, including the trapping,
12 including the hunting. If you hunt and kill a
13 moose or caribou or fish, that means you don't
14 have to go to Safeway or somewhere else to buy
15 three, \$400 worth of food. That's not put in the
16 equation, or acknowledged. Or the fish that we
17 harvest, or the berries that we preserve and put
18 away, those things are not being noted. The way
19 of life that we had is gone.

20 It's like Wilbur and John was saying
21 to you, it's real, our children are killing
22 themselves. I said that earlier, not only from
23 suicide, but the influences that have come along
24 with this progress it's called. And what's not
25 taking form is we've all gone to school, formal

1 school up to certain degrees. Some of us have
2 gone to university, some of us have got a degree,
3 some of us have diplomas, stuff like that, right?
4 But like I said, we said earlier and you're
5 hearing it, what does the future hold for our
6 children, our grandchildren and the children that
7 are not here yet, and even the people that exist
8 today? There is a welfare line it's called.

9 And imagine, 1 per cent of our
10 community at one time was dependent on that and 99
11 per cent of it was self-sustaining,
12 self-supporting. Think about it in this sense; we
13 were prospering, we were doing well, then our
14 world got turned around in a shot from your area.

15 Now you're prospering, now you're
16 advancing, now you're having the spin-off benefits
17 from the destruction that took place. But you
18 forgot to put back what you take, or to be
19 grateful for what you've received. And
20 consciously knowing the devastation and at what
21 cost to the 1600 members that are under the OPCN
22 Cree Nation, and not only including that, the
23 reports say there were white people and Metis
24 people there, and they're still there.

25 Our community, how they design it, the

1 core area were the teachers, the nurses, the
2 Hudson Bay manager, the RCMP, they all have
3 running water and sewage, all of them, but none of
4 us. Because you would not come there and teach
5 our children, you won't come there to look after
6 the health needs as a nurse or a doctor or a
7 dentist if you had to throw a slop pail. I would
8 not go in there if I had to throw out my own shit
9 and my own piss, there is no way you're going to
10 get me there. So, obviously, evidently,
11 logically, they said let's accommodate the core
12 area, to hell with these people.

13 The truth is hard, the reality is even
14 harder to live. But for the past 40 some years
15 our people have been living in that condition.
16 And so have our children. They've grown up in
17 what they've given us, or subjected us to, without
18 even us having anything to say about it. But
19 we're still there and we're still living, we're
20 still surviving.

21 And like I said, imagine, take your
22 wife and your husband and your kids and your
23 grandma and grandpa there and come and live with
24 us. I've asked every president, and I've met like
25 what, four of them, start with them, and also the

1 vice presidents, and also the senior management at
2 the Manitoba Hydro, Canada, Manitoba, Premier,
3 Premier Selinger -- who is our commissioner in
4 California? Dewar, right? We've sat with them.
5 I invite them, I say our council, our people want
6 you to come and live with us. Ministers, they
7 won't -- we've showed Ruth Christiansen what
8 Hydro -- the houses they dragged from Rivers,
9 Manitoba to South Indian Lake.

10 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: Even those houses
11 have killed our people, from asbestos, and how
12 crispy they are. You light a match and those
13 things will blow up, those houses.

14 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Some of our band
15 members, I don't know, Angela and her babies,
16 Connie and Mike, George and --

17 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: His daughters.

18 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: His daughters, two
19 of them, they have burnt in these homes. Because
20 you can't have enough time, a fire truck will go
21 there, it's like that, it's a branch wall, dried
22 branch wall. You set it on fire and it will just
23 go in minutes. They don't even have a chance to
24 get to the door or go out the window. But we've
25 been trying, as council, we've been fixing their

1 mistakes.

2 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: And these are the
3 houses they replaced for the houses that our
4 parents burnt. I don't remember anybody ever
5 dying in a fire in our community when I was
6 growing up.

7 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Or starving, or
8 suicide, or drowning -- very seldom. Our people
9 grew up to be old, like in their 80s, 90s, men and
10 women. We just finished -- we just buried our
11 eldest person this spring, this fall, she was
12 100 -- 102. Our elder that just passed on is 90
13 years old. He came from there. He came from that
14 time that we're talking about. Most of our
15 elders, they lived well in their 80s, men and
16 women. My mother is 87. Our grandmothers and
17 grandpas lived in their 90s.

18 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: You see the
19 difference between our parents and our children.
20 My son lived only 17 years. He couldn't handle
21 that lifestyle that we had in South Indian Lake,
22 in our community. Like, I've gone to the school
23 where I've sat with the teachers and they said,
24 your kids are so unwell behaved and they're angry
25 and they should be behaving themselves. And you

1 try to get up in the morning with no water to wash
2 your face or change your clothes to come to school
3 and say, hey, this is a normal life. They have
4 running water, the teachers all have running
5 water. All the white people that come to our
6 community, right away they have brand new houses,
7 running water connected to the water pump. And
8 our people still have to shit on the slop pail and
9 throw it out, and breathe that shit while they're
10 living in those houses.

11 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: And that's
12 progress. Like I said, we're not trying to make
13 you feel bad, but you need to tell the truth.
14 You've got to quit letting Canada and Manitoba,
15 and Manitoba Hydro hide this dirty lie. It's time
16 that somebody takes responsibility and stands up
17 and says, hey, this is happening in our country,
18 in our province? How can that be? Canada is
19 supposed to being ranked tenth now or something.
20 It used to be number 3 or something like that.
21 Now we're like 50.

22 And like we're not trying to say to
23 you people and to our neighbours and to our people
24 that we live with, and asking you to feel sorry
25 for us because we're poor little Indians that live

1 on welfare. That's not the case. But what we're
2 asking is to make these people responsible and put
3 them to task, and make them follow their rules and
4 their regulations that they wrote.

5 Legislation wrote it, Manitoba
6 legislation, Canada, Constitution, they're the
7 ones that wrote it. Fisheries Act, every act,
8 every regulation that I'm aware of, that I've read
9 and studied, has come from the Province of
10 Manitoba or Canada, or the policies that we have
11 to live by comes from the Department of Indian
12 Affairs. They subjected us to that, to the word.
13 We developed and produce probably around 100 and
14 what, 40 some reports annually, right? That's
15 what we're accountable for. That's what we're
16 supposed to produce and submit. That's not
17 including the reimbursement policies that we're
18 subject to.

19 If Hydro decides, or if Manitoba
20 decides -- they have a legal obligation through
21 the consultation process. I've sat with Minister
22 Clarke, it's in draft, I made her aware of it.
23 Like she is proud enough to say, yeah, it's in
24 draft. But to whose benefit? It sure as hell
25 ain't mine or our people. It's the Province of

1 Manitoba, or entities like Manitoba Hydro, or
2 forestry, or mining, the duty to consult is
3 bullshit. I have fought that lots and lots of
4 years. And I hope to God this is not part of the
5 duty to consult. Because if it is, I want it on
6 record that this is not a duty to consult. It's
7 not consultation.

8 WILBUR WOOD: Another thing is all the
9 sickness, you know, nowadays you see a lot of
10 people getting sick. A lot of people, some of us
11 believe it's the water, because we never had this
12 water before. There's all kinds of disease now
13 that we never had. You know, never used to see
14 people with diabetes, no, I don't remember all the
15 years that I've lived. And you know, the fish we
16 used to eat, it used to be like, like that canned
17 salmon, hard, nice and hard, you know, firm. But
18 now you try to eat a fish, it's mushy, watery, you
19 know. Like me, I don't feel like eating fish like
20 I used to. Sure, I will eat a fish from some
21 place else in that lake, you know, it's still
22 good, it's nice. But in South Indian, it's not
23 the fish we used to eat, not as healthy as it used
24 to be. I guess they don't have the food they used
25 to have. They don't -- they're all not that well.

1 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: You know, when I
2 asked about what happens with the reports you guys
3 are doing, the reason I ask that is I read a
4 report a long time ago, quite a while back, what
5 they predicted would happen to our people, and
6 what it would cost to develop it. And it was in
7 that report, written. What's happening to us now,
8 suicide, unemployment, alcoholism, drugs, and
9 young people getting pregnant at 13, 14 years old,
10 and dying, all of that was already known before
11 all of this was happening. That was, like I read
12 that report. And yet it still passed and we're
13 doing the same thing right now as what they did
14 with that report, nothing was done. It just went
15 on, it continued. They didn't care. Nobody cared
16 about what happened to us as far as my knowledge
17 is. Because I have read reports where all the
18 stuff I see that I lived through was reported and
19 predicted to happen. And it didn't matter.

20 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: The other things
21 that we have, over and over again, you know, they
22 say good faith -- and I know you know what the
23 dealings are with the province and entities that
24 come to us and they divide us or try to, and they
25 continue to do that also. And it's wrong.

1 Most recently the high waters that
2 took place because of the tremendous amount of
3 snowfall from last year, like there were I think
4 100,000 cubic feet per second through Missi Falls,
5 and it flooded that, and really got water there.
6 And they said, well, only the fishermen will
7 recognize, not him as a resource worker, or not
8 him as an employed person, because it has no
9 effect on him. That's such bullshit. We're all
10 affected equally. We're all impacted, regardless
11 if we're fishing or trapping, we live there. But
12 yet in their strategies and their things, and they
13 won't come out and say, I would never do that to
14 you guys, Chief, we would never. And I say,
15 you're so full of shit, you know. Yet they don't
16 have the strength or the courage to say, yes, we
17 are doing this to you, and yes, we are trying to
18 segregate you, separate you from each other,
19 because of identity of what you're using the lake
20 for, what the purpose of your meaning of
21 sustainability in respect to what it produces and
22 what it produces for you, and it's use. But if we
23 all live in the same house, which we do in a
24 sense, we all use the same bathroom, we all use
25 the same kitchen, we all use the same living room.

1 If somebody comes in there and destroys our
2 bathroom, right, we're all affected equally.
3 Because we all got to use the bathroom, for a
4 shower, brush our teeth, urinate, you got to take
5 a poop; right? They took away one bedroom,
6 someone has to bunk with somebody. When they take
7 off our stairs, same principle. But why would you
8 get \$10,000 and I'll get an apology? Because we
9 all live in the same house. We all use it and
10 utilize it to benefit ourselves.

11 It's just us as people that live
12 there, that's not including our children, our
13 grandchildren, the people that are going to come.
14 And they don't think of that, or they don't see it
15 in that sense. It's just a lake. What are you
16 crying about? We're making it a bigger lake.
17 Nothing is going to happen to you. Well, it is.

18 And we got rules and regulations to
19 protect your interest. You have even further
20 assurance because you're treaty, you have
21 Aboriginal rights under the Constitution, under
22 section 35. And we have Northern Sustainable Act,
23 we have an Environmental Act, we have a
24 regulation. We have a process that says what they
25 can and cannot do. And nobody follows it. What

1 are you crying about? You got your lights. But
2 you forgot to tell us you were going to give us a
3 five or \$600 a month Hydro bill. Who else in this
4 country, in this province that I'm aware of, they
5 don't pay that much. You know, they say to us --
6 I fought them and I said to them, how in the hell
7 can you justify a Hydro bill that there is a
8 fridge, a stove, and baseboard heaters? There is
9 no washer, there's no dryer, there's no hot water
10 tank, but yet Hydro bills are three, \$400 a month,
11 sometimes five, \$600 per month. So what are you
12 worried about? You don't have to pay for it,
13 Canada will pay for it, you're on welfare for
14 God's sake.

15 I mean what the -- I'm not supposed to
16 swear, right, but I get excited and I get worked
17 up, right, and I swear. I swear at the Ministers,
18 I swear at the Regional Director, I don't give a
19 fuck because -- I don't, because you don't. You
20 show me disrespect. It comes both ways is what I
21 was taught, what we were taught, we still carry
22 those values and principles, and those beliefs.
23 But you've got to try and realize, I mean there is
24 only a small group of us, but the majority of us
25 that have gone through it, and again our children,

1 you know, some would say about the suicides, or
2 the fighting, or the lack of interest in
3 education, or lack of interest in wanting to seek
4 and go out and do these things.

5 We all know through human studies,
6 through sociology, through psychology, through all
7 of the mental health and all the other things that
8 we studied and read, analyzed, determined, it is a
9 basic principle of how well and how strong your
10 community is. It's based on the economics of it,
11 the comfort. It's the hierarchy that Mazel
12 developed, right? You know the hierarchy that I'm
13 talking about? It's in sociology 101 they say.
14 That's the same thing. We had that, we had it all
15 the time. But nobody believes us.

16 It's because we're just bush Indians,
17 we're stigmatized and labeled as that, because we
18 can't think past our noses for some odd reason. I
19 don't know why it's like that. But yet we can fix
20 our own motors without sending them to Thompson or
21 anywhere else, we're able to fix the Bombardiers
22 that we were introduced to, our stoves, electric
23 stoves, the lights people have adapted to, because
24 we don't have electricians and mechanics and stuff
25 like that. They didn't plan it well.

1 But I'm curious on what your
2 backgrounds are. Some of you look really sad.
3 Serious, man. But you guys, what backgrounds do
4 you come from? Like what are you, doctors,
5 lawyers, scientists, professors, politicians? You
6 had to have some sort of a career at some point in
7 time?

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Do you want to start?

9 MS. LEWIS: Well, I have a kind of
10 diverse background. I'm a botanist, so I have a
11 doctorate in biology.

12 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Do you know what a
13 botanist is? Does anybody know?

14 MS. LEWIS: I study plants.

15 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: She studied
16 plants, like that plastic one behind you.

17 MS. LEWIS: No, not like that. And
18 then I became a lawyer, and I've worked in the
19 Federal Government and I'm now retired, and I'm
20 teaching Environmental Impact Assessment at the
21 Brandon University, and I live in Brandon.

22 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: So you have a PhD?

23 MS. LEWIS: I do.

24 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: That's what I
25 would have if I didn't become Chief. I'm not

1 kidding. My preferred study was the law. That's
2 what I took in Brandon University. That's what I
3 was.

4 MS. LEWIS: At Brandon University?

5 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Um-hum, in the
6 '70s and the '90s.

7 MS. LEWIS: I was there in the '70s as
8 well.

9 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: In the '80s --
10 they kicked me out of RD Parker in '70 something.
11 But that's interesting. But you understand what
12 we're saying?

13 MS. LEWIS: Yes, I do.

14 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Even using you as
15 an example, and just starting right off the hop,
16 why weren't we given that opportunity? Yet they
17 knew, everybody knew what was going to take place
18 and how it was going to adversely affect us, and
19 yet they didn't take that into consideration.

20 MS. LEWIS: You know, I canoed on the
21 Rat River and Notigi Lake in 1973, when all of
22 this -- the diversion was just starting. And then
23 we went back again when we were up here last time.
24 And it was, you know, it was extraordinary to see
25 what I remember of that lake.

1 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Those are one of
2 our routes that we used, our ancestors. My mom
3 and dad travelled from South Indian all the way to
4 Nelson House, from Nelson House to Split Lake,
5 Split Lake across to Norway House. Our ancestry
6 went to Sheridan, Wabowden, to pick up supplies,
7 by boat, without a motor, by canoe, like paddle.

8 So what is your background there,
9 Serge?

10 THE CHAIRMAN: So I worked most of my
11 career in the Manitoba Government, two places, a
12 good part of the time two places, one municipal
13 affairs, so that's where I dealt with
14 municipalities, and then the other half was
15 Environment and Conservation.

16 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: So what degrees do
17 you got under your belt?

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, so I did
19 economics, and then environmental studies and
20 business administration. Those are the three
21 areas.

22 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: So you obviously
23 know what we're talking about and what kind of --
24 you know, imagine that, you know, imagine that,
25 and we did express that and our grandfathers and

1 grandmothers did say that in our language, the
2 interpreter was Billy Moore they call him now,
3 Billy Moose, and Basil was there, Basil Perreault,
4 and they didn't quite interpret what the old
5 people said. In the '60s, late '60s they had
6 discussions in South Indian, in Winnipeg, and
7 other places, commissions that John-John
8 expressed. It's interesting.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: In the late '60s?

10 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Yep, 1969. They
11 even had, they already had -- like I said in 1913,
12 in 1913, this is -- imagine the Land Transfers Act
13 happened in 1930, right, NRTA. Manitoba Hydro had
14 already plans for every river, every falls, every
15 site identified in this province in the northern
16 region, in the southern region of this province.
17 We wanted -- we had adhesion to Treaty 5. In 1875
18 in Berrens River they made treaty. Then they
19 brought it to Norway House and then they brought
20 it north, adhesion to Treaty 5.

21 In 1908 they came to Nelson House and
22 Split Lake. Because they knew what was happening
23 and they took them to places, right,
24 commissioners. Commissioner Simmonds was the one
25 responsible to go around and sign the treaties

1 with First Nations peoples. And they amalgamated
2 us. That was an economical practice that they
3 did, the Federal Government, on purpose. They
4 said the Indians over there in South Indian Lake
5 are band members of Nelson House, 200 miles away.
6 The saddest mistake they ever made. And I brought
7 it to their attention, to Tom Saunders and to Gord
8 Hannahan, and to other people, Ministers, late
9 Minister Lavlin, and Andy Scott, Trade Minister
10 Andy Scott, those guys, Reg Alcott, those guys. I
11 said look at this, what you did. You say you
12 haven't done a mistake, but yet I think it was in
13 19 -- Brochet, they signed treaty in 1909, but
14 guess who signed the pre-treaty for them? The
15 Dene. And they put, and said these two people is
16 Brochet. But they said one is Dene, one is Cree,
17 how can that be? But they did it anyway. Until
18 Mr. Hislop, Patrick Hislop said the Cree and Dene
19 didn't get along too well. So they said, well,
20 we'll go to Lac Brochet, which they did. There
21 was 12 signatories to Treaty 5. Now there are 30
22 First Nations that are recognized on the adhesion
23 to Treaty 5, and Treaty 10, which is the Dene for
24 Brochet. But we've all made mistakes.

25 But the good thing that these guys did

1 when they kicked me out and told me go get
2 educated, I'm glad they did, because if I didn't
3 then I wouldn't be able to tell you this cool
4 stuff you probably already well know. But I can
5 talk at the level that you're at. But you can't
6 talk at our level, unfortunately. And that's no
7 disrespect. It's like what John-John said, lots
8 of people have expressed that they empathise. And
9 you can't, unless you walk the trail and unless
10 you walk the life. You can empathise all you
11 want, but realistically you will never know the
12 pain and the sorrow and the burden and the weight
13 that you have to carry, or the losses and the
14 things that life throws at you.

15 I can't be white because I don't know
16 how to be, and I will never pretend to be white,
17 because I don't know what it's about. I can read
18 your rules and regulations and your laws and all
19 of that, even that I don't understand it sometimes
20 because it's imbalance, there's no justice. And
21 more shamefully, there's no social justice, which
22 is real if you study and you understand it as I
23 did.

24 But here's a fine example of that,
25 through and through, every layer. You can peel

1 it, it's an onion, and get to the core of it. And
2 maybe then you wouldn't even understand. You will
3 see the wrongs that have been done, but do you
4 have the ability to correct it? That's what we're
5 asking. And like John said, we're doubtful.
6 Because you guys are like a court system. She's a
7 lawyer. She wouldn't sit here, or somebody would
8 not commission or appoint her to such a high level
9 commission unless she had the background and the
10 knowledge and the skill, the requirements to sit
11 here and say, hum, does she have the credential,
12 does she have the knowledge and ability and skill
13 and education and credibility to actually write or
14 say substantially the truth, or at least look at
15 it and acknowledge it and say, hey, maybe it is
16 right, maybe it is true. You can't be a judge
17 without being appointed, and that's a political
18 appointment.

19 They educated me well. Experience,
20 knowledge. So we need your help to make them
21 people in the governments and the authorities that
22 did this to us --

23 MS. LEWIS: But I'm limited in my
24 knowledge, and I recognize that. We've got two,
25 so we have other commission members here who have

1 experience and knowledge that I --

2 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: But together
3 you're, of course --

4 MS. LEWIS: -- can't begin to reach.

5 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: But we can't --
6 it's like this, right? Right? It's simple. It's
7 a process. If you came to live with us, you will
8 die, because your skill and knowledge would not
9 carry you. But you go with him or him, or him, or
10 them, these two ladies and us, you will survive,
11 because we won't let you die, because it's not in
12 us to do that.

13 But if you turn back history, and I've
14 said this to my professors and I've argued my
15 point, and they can't argue it because that's what
16 devolution -- or whatever you want to call it, or
17 however you want to term it. You came here, we
18 didn't let you die, we taught you all of the
19 skills and all of the things you needed to do to
20 survive on this land, in this harsh environment
21 that your grandfathers and grandmothers entered
22 into. What you neglected to do was to teach us
23 what was coming. You didn't do that. You
24 subjected us to residential school, you subjected
25 us to a bunch of bad people. I don't like

1 priests. I don't like being Catholic, and I'm
2 not. I'm from the United Church. But even them,
3 they did that. United Church of Canada did the
4 same damn thing. The Government of Manitoba
5 allowed it, Canada paid them to do. Yet we all
6 knew. Nobody did nothing, yes.

7 Yeah, but we'd like to get into more
8 discussion about what actually -- so that they can
9 go home and share, we can go home and share with
10 our people what actually this Commission is about.
11 I mean, again, I don't want to be insulting or I
12 don't want to be disrespectful, but I don't
13 believe that you sit here for nothing, you know.
14 Somebody has appointed you, respectfully, there
15 has to be a purpose and there has to be an end
16 result. And the limited authority that you have
17 been bestowed upon by the Minister of Stewardship,
18 so that we can have an idea as to what our
19 expectations are from you.

20 You expect us to come here and spill
21 our guts and tell you our stories of what we
22 encountered in real life, but rightfully they
23 should give us that same respect back and say,
24 there is nothing that we can do other than write
25 another report. And that's it. You have to be

1 honest and say, yeah, even though I'm well
2 educated, my limitation is this, that's it, bang.
3 Even though I'm a lawyer, even though I'm an
4 economist, I don't know what you do or the other
5 ones, but it's interesting.

6 But I will bet you dollars and
7 doughnuts, you're well educated, you're well
8 informed, you have good backgrounds in respect to
9 what is needed or else you wouldn't be sitting
10 here. That I know. They wouldn't come and get
11 one of us to sit here, even though they had some
12 former chiefs sitting on other Commissions,
13 Nepinak, which is Harvey, which is a good friend
14 of mine, we sat in assemblies together. And there
15 was some other ones, Bob Mayer was here, late Bob
16 Mayer, I know. These other guys, Sales -- I knew
17 them all -- not Sales but -- I knew them all, but
18 they were pretty -- like with Keeyask and
19 Wuskwatim, there is a huge, tons and ton of them.
20 This guy, the lawyer that they hired, he says I
21 got 1020 linear feet of information.

22 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: We still have it.

23 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: I told him to
24 shove it up his ass because he doesn't know what
25 the hell he's talking about. And he says, you

1 people are going into your own demise. And I
2 said, what are you, nuts? That's from a lawyer.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Who said that?

4 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: I forget. He's a
5 tall guy with no hair. Your own demise, this is
6 what's going to take place. He was representing
7 Manitoba Hydro.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, I think I know.
9 He's not part of this Commission but, yeah, I do
10 know, probably know who that is. Let's take a
11 break.

12 (Recessed for lunch at 1:15 p.m. and
13 reconvened at 2:30 p.m.)

14 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: We're with you,
15 partner.

16 MR. SOPUCK: I'm going to start with
17 my childhood.

18 MS. LEWIS: We don't have that long.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: How much time have you
20 got?

21 MS. LEWIS: I was born at any early
22 age.

23 MR. SOPUCK: I was very lucky that my
24 dad took me and my brother out fishing and hunting
25 wherever we did. I grew up with that, and I ended

1 up going to the university. I took Biology in
2 university, so I graduated with a degree from
3 Zoology. I've spent about 35 years working in
4 environmental conservation work in Southern
5 Manitoba. Most of my work is with farmers.

6 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: What is Zoology
7 about?

8 MR. SOPUCK: Sorry?

9 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Some might think
10 you studied the zoo. Tell them what Zoology is
11 about.

12 MR. SOPUCK: It's animals, that's
13 right, it's birds and animals.

14 Actually, I have a connection to
15 Southern Indian Lake, in that one summer I worked
16 as a summer student at the fisheries camp. It was
17 the year that the lake was being flooded. It was
18 1976.

19 ANGUS DYSART: After it was flooded.

20 MR. SOPUCK: Okay. Then it was '75,
21 the year the water starting coming up.

22 ANGUS DYSART: They dammed it off in
23 the fall of 1975. It would be around October.

24 MR. SOPUCK: It was the year when the
25 Diversion started flowing water down.

1 ANGUS DYSART: The Churchill Diversion
2 started around '76.

3 MR. SOPUCK: Yeah. So, it was in that
4 period of time. So I spent a summer on the lake
5 there and I got to know a number of folks in the
6 community, and I asked one family if they would
7 let me stay for a while. So I actually lived for
8 a year in the community. It was with John Beady
9 and Isabelle Moose, way back when. I know that
10 John Beady has passed away. So I spent some time
11 on the trapline, the fish camp, things like that.
12 So your community and I have a connection.

13 DOUG SMITH: I've spent most of my
14 life working as a writer and researcher and
15 editor. I'm from Manitoba as well, from Winnipeg.

16 MR. HARDEN: I'm an engineer by
17 training. I worked 20 years in the water
18 resources field with the province. So I can look
19 at the analysis that Hydro does and I can say
20 whether it's good, bad, or indifferent. But I'm
21 here to listen to the impact on people, not
22 numbers.

23 MS. JOHNSON: I have a degree in
24 wildlife biology and I have worked for the
25 department for about 30 years. I've dealt with

1 trappers quite a bit, I've worked with the
2 trapping program, endangered species, habitat. I
3 went away for a while and came back to this job,
4 and have been learning way more about the
5 communities than I ever knew before, and it's been
6 really good. I can't say I have an understanding,
7 but I have empathy and a little bit of a
8 connection to what I've heard.

9 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: So what -- one of
10 the things that we have discussed and expressed,
11 the impacts it had on people, and our environment
12 to a degree. But I think we should focus on, just
13 suggesting that we focus on the shoreline, the
14 impacts to the shoreline, and that man can express
15 that, right there, the engineer, he worked with --
16 biology, of course, also is important because they
17 can relate and link to the impacts and adverse
18 effects that have occurred.

19 We were hoping from that -- and the
20 connection to the use of our traditional practices
21 that have been taken away or that have been
22 destroyed. I think it's important for us to
23 express those things, our medicines, the berries,
24 historical sites, the use of certain areas in our
25 community.

1 And also to note -- it's my memory,
2 and you guys can help me out, I don't believe
3 through this process that they've actually come
4 and asked us for our input or our traditional
5 knowledge in respect to what has been -- like the
6 bugs, for example, or the medicines that were
7 underneath the rocks and on the shoreline. Also
8 the weekis and all of the other traditional
9 medicines that we were taught by our grandparents
10 and our parents. I think those are very important
11 things that need to be noted.

12 And also the studies. Like I don't
13 know his name, I'm bad with names, I'm sorry. He
14 was there prior and after, a year later, so he can
15 relate to something that we've experienced. Like,
16 there was over a thousand islands at one time in
17 South Indian Lake. Now there's very few, they're
18 reefs and they're underneath the ground. And what
19 was on there and what was important. Like Wilbur
20 and John and the others have shared, like the
21 Seagull Islands that we used to harvest from, and
22 also the other creeks and rivers and things like
23 that, and the conditions of our wildlife, our
24 beavers, our muskrats, and the other water bearing
25 animals, like the otter and other animals, the

1 mink and things. And also the fowl, the birds,
2 somebody has expertise on that. Like the loon,
3 for example, I have seen their eggs and their
4 nests floating around and being destroyed. Also
5 the different kind of species of fish, the
6 different species of the kind of bugs that the
7 fish eat, those are critical, those are important.
8 And that relates to the texture of the fish and
9 the species that were there.

10 For example, we all know there were
11 sturgeon there at one time. I don't know where
12 they went. We know there were perch, goldeye,
13 different kinds of suckers, red, black, they're
14 still there. But like the perch, I don't know, I
15 used to shoot them with a bow and arrow, those
16 perch. And those little ones, those fish we used
17 to look at underneath the rock and catch them.
18 They're about this small and they're flat and
19 they've got a long tail. And we used to have
20 games on that.

21 Also traditionally way back, I
22 remember our grannies and grandpas, they used
23 to -- like there were certain medicines along the
24 shore, underneath the rocks and part of the rocks
25 and part of the shoreline. Like they used to pick

1 potatoes, they used to pick little potatoes and
2 harvest them. They're no longer there. All of
3 those kind of things.

4 Maybe we should focus a little bit on
5 that first, and maybe give Angus an opportunity to
6 share from his perspective or his experience in
7 regards to some of the things that he went
8 through, and what he sees. Because we all had a
9 little opportunity to say something. But I would
10 like us to go back to the shorelines, what was
11 done to us. And that connection is to us
12 directly, because that's the land and the water.

13 And the quality of water is another
14 issue that needs to be noted. Because now they
15 won't let us -- they say you shouldn't drink the
16 water, right, unless you boil it, where before you
17 could see the bottom of the lake in certain areas.
18 Or where the equilibrium may come is in some of
19 the studies that you guys have reviewed and some
20 of them have been part and parcel of, in respect
21 to what has happened in the regional cumulative
22 effects. Because the river affects everybody, the
23 waterway. I think those are things that we need
24 to identify and express.

25 And the laxness of both the Department

1 of Fisheries and Oceans, the Environmental
2 Conservation, also the Water Stewardship has roles
3 and responsibilities that we expressed earlier,
4 and those have been ignored and they haven't made
5 plans. And what we've said is, they knew what
6 would happen, but yet they went forward anyway, or
7 they didn't know and there was no plans before,
8 during, and what does the future hold? There is
9 no indication. And nobody can tell us.

10 Manitoba, we worked with Donald
11 McDonald for many, many years. We worked with
12 Manitoba Hydro hydrologists, biologists,
13 engineers, everybody, and we've expressed our
14 concerns. And they have not made any kind of
15 attempt to collect data that was over there. Like
16 I don't know who said, I think that man, the
17 Department of Fisheries and Oceans studied that
18 lake 10, 15 years prior to CRD. They also studied
19 after and during. And I don't know if they did
20 studies now, present? They didn't come and ask us
21 what our knowledge, our traditional knowledge was
22 all about. They should have combined it together
23 prior to them making decisions on our environment
24 and our lives. Nobody has done that, not to my
25 recollection, not to my knowledge, or the research

1 that I've done in respect to the impacts of the
2 CRD and the Hydro projects.

3 Those are the kind of things that I
4 think are keenly important and need to be shared
5 with you guys, or to say to you guys that what are
6 you going to do, and what is your responsibility
7 to that? And who do you make responsible to make
8 sure that those things are done fairly and
9 adequately? With the huge amount of data that has
10 been collected, and some of it isn't even put
11 together in combination of telling us what
12 actually took place, why the fish are gone, why
13 certain areas are dead, the algae and nutrients
14 that feed the fish, the animals, the ducks, the
15 birds, everything. Even the water beetles, there
16 is no more water beetles, or fish flies, there
17 used to be a huge abundance of them. You remember
18 those little fish flies that dried up? There used
19 to be lots of them. There is no more, hardly any.

20 Or the vegetation -- somebody studies
21 botany -- they should incorporate that in their
22 findings, in their reasoning behind what should
23 take place and how it should be addressed.
24 Because it's part of a natural form of filtering
25 and cleaning itself, the land, the water and our

1 environment.

2 And this we said too, we've
3 experienced these certain kinds of ailments,
4 serious ones like cancer, diabetes, things that
5 impact us from the conditions that others have
6 created.

7 If you drink water that's not good,
8 you'll get sick. Or if you eat the animals that
9 come from that water or drink that water, there's
10 impacts that I believe need to be looked at and
11 reviewed and then make a decision. And then make
12 somebody responsible for that to correct it. I
13 mean, that's your role and responsibility as a
14 commission and as people with your degree of
15 education and degree of knowledge and expertise
16 that you bring to the table. You can share from
17 us our knowledge, because we are not scientists,
18 but we do know about the land, we do know about
19 the things that have occurred and continue to
20 occur. The erosion, and when is it going to stop
21 and where is it going to end, and what are the
22 impacts that are going to take place and continue
23 to take place?

24 Those little bugs that the fish eat,
25 and the birds, and even the squirrels and

1 everybody. The rabbits, they move down the shore.
2 They don't go down there for nothing, they go
3 there to look for food. And that affects them
4 too, and we eat those animals. The muskrats,
5 they're dead, they used to be -- I know old Leo
6 Linklater and his brothers at one time, I know for
7 a fact they used to catch a thousand muskrats
8 every year. Now there is none, there is hardly
9 any. Remember what John-John said and identified,
10 and others could swear it and attest to it. The
11 beavers have been frozen on the ground. The eggs
12 on the shoreline have been frozen, the fish eggs.
13 And then it impacts the temperature of the water
14 and the cycle of spawning.

15 Those are things that you guys have to
16 put together. I know it's a huge task and a huge
17 responsibility, but I think it's your
18 responsibility and your role to make sure that
19 those people do the correct measures in different
20 zones, in their zone from zero to six, I believe,
21 that have been identified by Conservation and
22 Water Stewardship.

23 And there's the defiance that you have
24 to look at, like how they defy gravity and made
25 the water go in a different direction. That's

1 incredible. They say you can't defy gravity, but
2 there is -- you can go to South Indian Lake and
3 you can see it goes the other way. Instead of
4 north, it goes south now, or sort of south --
5 yeah, south. So those things are important for
6 you guys to note.

7 And they haven't done that. They
8 haven't consulted with us. They haven't asked us
9 for our input, or our traditional knowledge in
10 what is occurring, or what's been taken away.
11 Like the medicines, the berries, the birds and the
12 animals and the things along the shore, the impact
13 that it has on the shoreline, and it continues to
14 impact. So those are things that you guys need to
15 get somebody and say, hey, have you done this?
16 Throughout the whole report there is none, that we
17 found anyway.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Have they -- if you
19 don't mind me asking a question -- has either
20 Hydro or the government ever asked you to do a
21 traditional end use study and offered to support
22 it?

23 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: No, never. No.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: I know they were done
25 by the Keeyask communities but --

1 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: And Wuskwatim.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah. But you've never
3 been asked?

4 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: No, not once ever
5 in the history of this. A lot of people say
6 Nelson House, Split Lake, Cross Lake, Norway
7 House, York Landing and Fox Lake have been
8 impacted. If you look at it and assess it
9 accordingly and properly in a process way, South
10 Indian Lake has been the most impacted versus
11 Chimihowin. Chimihowin was another community that
12 got relocated.

13 South Indian Lake -- there is only two
14 communities that I'm aware of in this province
15 that have been totally uprooted and relocated to a
16 different site. One of them is our community.
17 And that's also another impact that nobody has
18 ever acknowledged or studied or found any -- and
19 we're expressing to you what we've seen and what
20 we've gone through. So that needs to be studied,
21 that needs to be -- somebody must be responsible
22 for that, and to address it. Because if you're
23 doing a regional cumulative assessment, that's
24 part and parcel of it.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

1 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: And that is
2 missing. There's a gap there, and somebody has to
3 fill that gap, or at least say, hey, this is
4 what's going on, and what kind of plan are you
5 guys going to propose, or who is going to develop
6 it? They made a good job of Bipole I, Bipole II,
7 Bipole III, Wuskwatim, Keeyask, Jenpeg. They've
8 gotten all of their turbines from across the
9 ocean. They studied that well and planned it
10 good. But what they've forgotten or neglected to
11 do is plan for us on what's going to happen and
12 what's continuing to happen, during, before,
13 during and after and to the future. If you could
14 find it, please share it with us.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, no, I don't think
16 so, not for your community by what you are saying.

17 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Somebody needs to
18 make somebody responsible for that, and why isn't
19 it being done?

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. Tim wanted to ask
21 a question. Could he as well?

22 MR. SOPUCK: Actually, maybe it's for
23 Cathy, because were there community impact
24 summaries that were in the written report?

25 MS. JOHNSON: Yes.

1 MR. SOPUCK: So who would have written
2 that?

3 MS. JOHNSON: Hydro.

4 MR. SOPUCK: Hydro wrote that. From
5 just existing information?

6 MS. JOHNSON: From existing -- your
7 community profile.

8 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Yeah, but think
9 about it. I examined your lives, all of us. And
10 to hell with you, you don't know shit about what's
11 in our life.

12 MR. SOPUCK: I was only asking the
13 question because I didn't know where the
14 information came from.

15 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: You are stirring
16 emotion in me, you are stirring things that --

17 MS. JOHNSON: But that's what we want
18 to know, whether the community feels their
19 situation is reflected adequately in that report.

20 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: They're not. How?
21 You would never gave us the opportunity to have
22 input.

23 MS. JOHNSON: Okay. Well, we want to
24 know that. So if you could write us a letter to
25 that effect, about just the community profile part

1 of it? Because Ian is taking care of the biology
2 part of it. I will talk to Ian about it and we
3 will sort it out, because we need that input as
4 well in our case.

5 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Like I said, the
6 things that you see witnessed, I know we catch
7 trees and stumps. My nephew, little nephew, he
8 fell off a skidoo and the thing went right through
9 him. He would have died. He flew off the Skidoo
10 and it hit him and it went right through, embedded
11 right through his body, a little boy.

12 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: Things like that
13 happen to people in our community. Children die,
14 drown where the slop pails are being dumped. We
15 have had one child fall into that and drown in
16 shit.

17 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Like, you know,
18 you talk about economical parcels that are
19 sensitive. When you hit a log or you hit a reef
20 or rocks, or it used to be an island, a foot
21 generally cost what, about 3,000? That's just the
22 foot. That's not the down time, that's not the
23 transportation, bringing it from over there to
24 here, and the cost that's associated to the loss
25 of your income. I mean, these things are real.

1 And those gaps need to be recognized and they need
2 to be put on record, and people need to be
3 responsible for it. If I go through here and I
4 fall through there, I will sue the City of
5 Thompson. I have that right. Or if you're
6 driving down in Winnipeg and you fall through the
7 road, somebody is in trouble, somebody is
8 responsible. But the same allowance is not given
9 over that, it isn't. They say, hey, we
10 compensated you. But it's still occurring. You
11 sign off on agreements, but you've taken advantage
12 of somebody that doesn't have the skill or the
13 knowledge, or the thorough process, informational
14 process of deciding that. And you say here is
15 \$5,000, take it or leave it, or give up your
16 right. That's wrong. When it stops -- and nobody
17 even knows that either, and that's not discovered
18 or that's not part of you guys -- I don't think
19 any of you have any data on that, or any
20 information.

21 So you should go and tell those
22 people, this is what's missing and this is what
23 needs to happen. These reviews and these
24 collection, combination and collaboration of all
25 of this data should be part of the Regional

1 Cumulative Effects Assessment. That's what needs
2 to happen, but it's not happening, because of no
3 full participation from us to begin with, or
4 consultation before or after or during.

5 And the little bugs and things that
6 make fish grow, and like the ducks eat it too, we
7 know that, they eat those little snails, we eat
8 their gizzards, they're not there no more. Or
9 sand, ducks eat sand for a reason, I don't know
10 how the hell they digest it, but they do it. And
11 when we cut their gizzards open we eat it, because
12 it's healthy food. But you don't see it no more.

13 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: The shorelines are
14 totally -- I don't know how to describe it here.
15 They're not productive because of how the water
16 goes up and down each year. Even if you clean the
17 shoreline, the next year you still have the same
18 amount as you had the last year that you cleaned
19 it. And the growth comes back, the earth falls on
20 it along the shoreline, and then you get the same
21 reaction for the past 40 years. Every single year
22 that has happened.

23 And the fish that live from there and
24 grow from there and get their food from there are
25 dying from starvation, and some other kind of

1 diseases that I don't even know what they are.
2 Because I have seen some pretty wild looking
3 deformed fish from fishermen that have been
4 fishing 40 years, maybe more. And it's not only
5 the fish, but I've also shot moose where they have
6 bubbles inside their rib cages, inside, where I
7 have just disregarded them because I'm afraid to
8 eat them, to catch something from these animals
9 that we've been having for food for six thousand
10 years, as long as our ancestors have been here.
11 And they ruined it in a year, they ruined a total
12 lifestyle with this flooding, with this
13 development.

14 And you say development, it sounds
15 like something good, you know, something really
16 prosperous to people, development. But what kind
17 of prosperous do our people have in something? I
18 don't think that word should be used in our case.
19 You know, I have no words to describe it. And
20 it's happening continuously. As we're sitting
21 here talking it's happening. The water is
22 flowing, the ground is being destroyed.

23 And in my thought, when it's winter
24 time with Manitoba Hydro, they can push as much
25 water as they can underneath that ice, as much as

1 they want, because it won't go up or down because
2 it's held by the ice. And we don't know how much
3 water they're pushing down to generate the powers.
4 And then in the spring time when that comes up,
5 our ice busts. You should see the ice in the
6 wintertime when we go hunting. Last winter I seen
7 it. I've never seen it like that before on our
8 lake, where you have ice sheets all over the
9 place, chucks of ice the size of this table just
10 floating around where you're traveling.

11 And the caribou that migrate, that
12 effects them. They can't walk across that. And
13 the moose. And then the migrating birds that used
14 to come and nest in our traditional territories,
15 they're affected by that too. Everything is
16 affected by this water, our whole lives and the
17 lives of the earth. And I don't think it's coming
18 back because it keeps happening over and over
19 again, even if we clean the shorelines. Because
20 we can't clean the whole works all at once, we
21 just clean portions of it. In this portion the
22 trees fall down and it comes back to where we
23 cleaned before.

24 And the mercury that goes into our
25 water from our trees, because that's where mercury

1 is created from the trees, correct? And it falls
2 into our water and our fish will eat it and then
3 we eat it. I don't know if there has been mercury
4 tests in our community for our people.

5 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: There had been in
6 the '80s for mercury.

7 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: I have never been
8 tested for that. Where you have kids, or young
9 people that have little blotches of white hair
10 growing on their head and skin blotches. I have
11 asked questions about what causes that. And this
12 one guy told me, he was a water specialist, he
13 said it comes from the water, pigmentation, if
14 there is too much copper in your water, or lead.
15 You know, us people, we don't know those things.
16 We just find out later. And this is where life
17 comes from, water.

18 WILBUR WOOD: And Hydro advertising
19 the -- I seen a book where they advertise, you
20 know, power from clear, green water I think it
21 says.

22 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: Renewable.

23 WILBUR WOOD: You know, it's not
24 green, it's gray muddy water, trees all over it.
25 If somebody would take a picture of it, a real

1 good picture and show it to those people, I think
2 they would think different about us, you know, how
3 it is for us. It might be good for them, but
4 maybe they would think, some of these people, if
5 they lived there and looking at all of this mess,
6 looking at all of these trees in the water. You
7 know, it's not clear, green water or whatever they
8 say it is.

9 ANGUS DYSART: Well, I guess it's time
10 I should share my part of why I'm here. I'll just
11 put these pictures up

12 That's when the water reaches its peak
13 in the summer, as it goes on -- everybody has to
14 see here. And then when -- like South Indian Lake
15 itself is like a reservoir, because Manitoba Hydro
16 holds the water level there until it reaches it's
17 peak. And it stays at, once it reaches its peak
18 in the summer it stays there, it's a reservoir,
19 South Indian Lake is a reservoir. And then in the
20 winter they start using that water -- this is the
21 States that I have been taking pictures of what's
22 been happening. See?

23 Now this is the springtime where that
24 beaver house was about -- see the lake -- put
25 this, for example, like this -- the beaver house

1 must have been sticking out off the water,
2 probably about three feet. But all of that is
3 dried up, you can see the runways.

4 I have more pictures but this is all I
5 brought, just for example. And another thing too,
6 if I can just cover a little bit of what they've
7 been sharing with you.

8 And my name is Angus Dysart anyway.

9 And Manitoba Hydro started having
10 meetings with the local people of South Indian
11 Lake around the late '60s for the Churchill River
12 Diversion, and the damming of Missi Falls and
13 South Channel. The Churchill River, that Missi
14 Falls was the main one, and they had another small
15 channel that was called South Channel. This was
16 about 70 miles from the community of South Indian
17 Lake, where this Missi Falls and the South
18 Channel. So they dammed off, they just rocked off
19 Missi Falls, just closed it right off. And they
20 had a little control dam there in the South
21 Channel. Then on the other site, when you come
22 toward south, that Rat River, it's another
23 controlled dam. Like that slowly opened in the
24 winter to let out the water to turn the turbines
25 along like Kelsey, wherever the turbines are that

1 produce power.

2 Now, that's when this devastating
3 time -- look here. Now, before the project was
4 completed, South Indian Lake was a pristine lake.
5 The world's producers of export white fish, and
6 these were abundance of fish too. Like at that
7 time South Indian Lake itself was self-sufficient.
8 Which is -- that was in my great, great
9 grandmother's time. Like I don't know how many
10 years they lived there, but when I think of it, my
11 great grandmother had 25 kids, and by the time I
12 was born, I seen all of my uncles and my aunties.
13 So anyways, which tells me they well managed their
14 resources.

15 You know, like here is some of the
16 pictures that I got from the computer. So you can
17 see that it was a well pristine lake, you can just
18 tell by looking at it. It was blue crystal clear
19 water. That was the community, part of the
20 community, but they lived along the shore right
21 from the south end down to the north end of those
22 shores.

23 And then these are my grandmothers
24 here, at the age of maybe about 80 or 90 years
25 old, they were still raising -- this was, July 1st

1 used to be our Indian days, and then all of the
2 old people would compete too. And you would be
3 amazed, just from looking at the pictures, how
4 well they were like living right out of the
5 community. You know, like right from harvesting
6 fish, you know, moose, wheat, birds.

7 So as I go on, and as I said the
8 world's producer of export white fish, an
9 abundance of fish, also an abundance for fishermen
10 to catch and commercial fishing. Also an
11 abundance of animals, like trap animals, like
12 beaver, muskrat, otter, mink, martin, fox, there
13 was abundance of them too, to be trapped by the
14 trappers.

15 After the Churchill River Diversion
16 was complete, it was devastating them. Fishing
17 dropped, no more exporting white fish, and less
18 animals to trap, and lots of land erosion,
19 pollution to the water. Also when they hold the
20 water back to the level in the summer in along the
21 lake and rivers of the Churchill River Diversion,
22 beavers built their beaver houses along the lake
23 and rivers, also otter and muskrats build their
24 bang holes along the river and lakes.

25 So anyways, like in the summer, this

1 is the original level of South Indian, which they
2 usually hold it back, eh. And then when you think
3 of it, like the muskrats and the beaver, where
4 they build their beaver houses would be the
5 original level of the lake and the rivers. You
6 know -- well, you know all of this, when they did
7 the Diversion all of our lake, our medicine, which
8 we get from water and everything. And most of
9 all, what affected it the most, where they most
10 made their livelihood from was the fishing. It
11 was the world's export white fish that were
12 harvested from the South Indian Lake area at that
13 time. But now with all of this Churchill River
14 Diversion damage, all of the fish dropped
15 continental, and there is not much fish now today.
16 It would be lucky if they catch 100,000 pounds in
17 the season.

18 And before that, before this Churchill
19 River Diversion came into effect, after the
20 project was done, they used to get 800,000 pounds
21 on a winter. And then they used to get it -- they
22 used to fish, catch a bunch of fish, they used to
23 get another adjustment of 800,000 pounds. So
24 you're looking at over a million pounds for
25 winter. And then the same thing with the summer,

1 800,000 pounds, they caught that limit in no time.
2 Then they get the same adjustment, they adjust
3 their limit.

4 And why I know all of this stuff,
5 because I was younger and I used to pack fish when
6 I got older, when I was 16, when I got my first,
7 my social insurance number, 16 years old. I
8 packed fish, and I had to pack fish at camp 3 and
9 camp 9 in Lou Narrows, used to take turns working
10 in those camps. They would transfer us. I was
11 only a student at that time. I would only work in
12 the summer. So I've seen it.

13 But I haven't got the pictures. I
14 thought I had some, but when I dig in the pictures
15 in my files, these are just recently taken, what
16 it was like after they raised the Churchill River
17 Diversion, South Indian Lake Diversion.

18 So anyways, I will continue on here a
19 little bit, finish reading my letter at least.

20 And then when they dropped the water
21 in the winter, beavers die in their beaver house,
22 otter, muskrats die in their bang holes, and all
23 of the dead carcasses end up in the water, when
24 they hold the water back to its level in the
25 summer. Also more erosion. See, all the, like

1 the shorelines, it will be just completely
2 different every year because they erode into the
3 water. And all of that erosion, all of the willow
4 trees, poplar, birch, whatever trees stand on the
5 shoreline, it all ends up back into the water.
6 And it's down in deep where nobody knows, it's
7 under water. But if anybody wants to check that
8 out, they're welcome to it, but they're under
9 there. Because where else would all of these
10 trees on the shoreline go? Simple answer, it goes
11 right to the bottom and stays there.

12 And this is why the lake itself is
13 affected drastically, because of erosion,
14 pollution, from all of the dead carcasses from all
15 of these years. Well, it has been over 42 years
16 now when Hydro completed their project, and this
17 has been going on, like I call it, it's a 42-year
18 cycle, cycling the same way every year. And that
19 lake will never be in the original way like it was
20 before.

21 When I grew up they promised 30 years,
22 they said everything will be the original level
23 and everything will be the same. But I'm almost
24 going to be an elder now myself. I haven't seen
25 that day yet. And yet when this project was

1 supposed to -- came into effect at South Indian, I
2 was one of the young children that grewed up, like
3 most of these people sitting here.

4 And Hydro promised to prosper, like
5 they said, clearly, and anybody here I guess will
6 agree with me, when they used to hold meetings --
7 but knowing, like my dad, I always used to tell
8 him, take notes, write in black and white and get
9 him to sign it. But at that time, verbally,
10 people believed in what anybody said, they figured
11 they would keep their promise. But now today,
12 whatever they promise, you don't see nothing like
13 that there. Like once they got the okay and
14 licence to do the Churchill River Diversion, once
15 that was done -- I don't know, they totally forgot
16 about me. I was one of the young generation, they
17 totally forgot about me and all of these people
18 that live in South Indian Lake. Especially them,
19 they put up with all of this, and that's what
20 affects the Churchill River Diversion.

21 And you know, that's pretty well what
22 I can share. You know, like myself when I was
23 growing up, I had a family coming up too. So, I
24 had seen my fishing was gone, so I had to try and
25 get another place to have an income to support my

1 family.

2 I didn't do this on my own, somebody
3 had to come in there and ruin my life, because
4 this was my future. I've seen my dad fish a lot
5 of times, and I went with him when I was younger.
6 He would have ten nets, and in the morning, we had
7 until 5:00 o'clock in the morning right until
8 about 9:00. And then that boat would be full and
9 he would drop me off on the shoreline to dress the
10 fish for him. And then when he finished doing the
11 other five, he would come in and help me. And
12 what we dressed for our first lift, he would load
13 them up and take them to the main camp where they
14 sell fish. And this went on for years, because I
15 can clearly remember. But that's all -- that was
16 all changed in the year of 1975, in the fall of
17 1975.

18 And I thank you for your time. And
19 then as an environmental people, I hope you can
20 see the picture clearly, how devastating it is for
21 these people in South Indian, and for me too.
22 Like that was really a turn over in my future.
23 And a lot of people made it out of South Indian as
24 millionaires too, because I know that, I seen it.
25 And that airways is still going today, I think,

1 that Calm Air. We made ourselves -- we went only
2 one toboggan, one net.

3 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Lamb Air.

4 ANGUS DYSART: Yeah, Lamb air.

5 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Calm, Lamb were
6 there. There were about seven buyers that used to
7 come in there and buy.

8 As you can see, just from this small
9 group of our people, there have been other people,
10 there's people in Winnipeg, Portage, Brandon,
11 everywhere, even in B.C., right to the east coast,
12 Nova Scotia, our people are there.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Your people?

14 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Yes. They had to
15 move. What else? Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta,
16 a lot of the young people, they go work at the oil
17 mines and the other mines that are there,
18 employment opportunities there. Some of them
19 moved here, like Angus started at Leaf and then he
20 moved here because the mine shut down in Leaf
21 Rapids.

22 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: I have a question
23 for you. This commission, after you find out all
24 of this information that we are giving you guys,
25 you people, and Hydro is after final licensing,

1 that final licensing, this is what's going to
2 happen again to us, if they get that. After they
3 got their licence, their interim licence, they
4 forgot about South Indian Lake. And if they get
5 their final licence, again it's going to happen,
6 and then this is a total waste of time, nothing
7 comes of it.

8 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Okay.

9 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: Our lands will keep
10 eroding, our fish will keep dying, and our people,
11 a lot faster than the rest of our country.

12 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: You guys are
13 missing gaps in your cumulative review, huge ones.
14 Somebody is lying to you, even to you. And that I
15 can fairly say is Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro.
16 Even the Department of Fisheries and Oceans has a
17 responsibility to this process. We've gone to
18 them, we've sat with them, Ian and I went and sat
19 with them, when? Last fall, right?

20 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: They lied to the
21 whole world, Manitoba Hydro, on big billboards.
22 I've seen a native girl standing in front of a
23 falls and saying clean, renewable energy. Have
24 you seen that billboard of Manitoba Hydro? That's
25 a lie. That's false advertising. And nobody does

1 nothing about it.

2 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: But we still, you
3 still have to take -- you know, the world is
4 electronic now, everything, our whole lives is
5 immersed in it, you have walls around it.

6 ANGUS DYSART: Maybe I will share a
7 little bit of that. I was -- one of the RSLs,
8 South Indian Lake, RSL of South Indian Lake, I was
9 the president at one time. And they have to
10 travel in places. Like, I went to the States too.
11 The same thing, like the way you're sitting now
12 hearing our -- how we were affected. But I don't
13 know whatever -- and I never got any feedback from
14 them. But when I went there, the way Manitoba
15 Hydro advertised, like the way they treat the
16 people that were affected by the flood, like them
17 people there in the States, they thought we
18 were -- like, for example, they thought our
19 streets were paved with gold.

20 I've got other pictures besides these,
21 I have a few more but I don't bring them all.
22 Because I worked on this for years for the RSL of
23 South Indian Lake. And I'm not going to bullshit
24 anybody about anything, but it's only through
25 knowledge and through my experience that I've had

1 that I want stuff to come good for the people, and
2 not only for me. Like, I'm still pushing myself
3 to get a bit of compensation from Manitoba Hydro.
4 I don't mean 5,000. What they have destroyed,
5 it's going to be -- never going to be measured by
6 money or by anything. But it will be nice to live
7 on a clean environmental place at least, so when I
8 step out I will be happy. But that's not going to
9 happen to us. Like there are a few problems.

10 I will tell you, for example, that
11 lake itself, South Indian is affected every year.
12 All of the dead carcasses and all of the erosion,
13 the trees, you know, and whatnot into the water,
14 and it turns to mercury and it's not fit to drink.
15 Like, when I share this with people they can't
16 believe it, how they let us -- like I was from
17 South Indian myself too, but when I seen this
18 wasn't going anywhere, my future wasn't planning
19 out for Manitoba, which they promised to prosper,
20 the future generation to prosper. I waited there
21 and hang around there, but I never seen that come.
22 So I had to take some other steps besides waiting.

23 And now I'm one of the elders. I've
24 never had a knock on the door from Manitoba Hydro
25 telling me this was the bright future that he

1 promised me after he affected my entire community
2 and my livelihood and the medication that I've
3 got. Like I had a good, like I grew up there
4 and I had a good life with my grandfather, my
5 grandmother, my mother and my father. I didn't --
6 I didn't go to school much, but then, you know,
7 when you're thinking about all of these people
8 that I talked to, and they grew up, they had the
9 knowledge. They showed me. They managed their
10 own resources for generations. Like for that
11 fishing too, a lot of people came and fished
12 there, but then they still managed. And Manitoba
13 Hydro always said bigger lake, more fish. And I
14 dread to tell my dad this, it's not going to
15 happen like that dad, no. When you raise
16 something other than the original level of the
17 lake, you're going to get everything polluted. It
18 will be just like poison.

19 And today I still see it. Manitoba
20 Hydro said it will clear up itself in 30 years.
21 It hasn't cleared up at all, it's getting worse.
22 Like I said, it's a 42-year cycle already.

23 NORA SPENCE: My name is Nora. I just
24 wanted to say a few things as well, being born and
25 raised in South Indian Lake. Like I'm not that

1 old yet, but growing up in South Indian Lake at my
2 age, like I've seen the devastations to our
3 shorelines that has been brought up here today.
4 And when you look at our lake today, like it's
5 really saddening and it's very disheartening.
6 When you look down to the lake where it was once
7 so beautiful, like today when you look at our own
8 children when they are down at the lake trying to
9 enjoy the lake, they can't swim down there, but
10 they do. The water is not clean. It's very
11 dirty. It's unsafe for our children. Not only
12 the water being so corroded, it's the safety with
13 the high current that goes right through our
14 community.

15 And I think that with you guys being
16 here today, it's unfortunate we are unable to be
17 in our community in front of all of our people,
18 because what you heard today is just a little bit.
19 Like there is so many people who have their
20 stories back home. Especially sitting with a lot
21 of our elders as well, I think that their stories
22 should be told and heard. Because, you know, they
23 carry -- they know the history, they've been
24 living in our lands for generations past and there
25 has been so many changes that have occurred. And

1 also I think that hearing our stories is, I think
2 that you need to see for yourselves, you need to
3 actually come to South Indian and see, go out on
4 the lake and visually see, take photos, document
5 these things that are being said, because it's the
6 only way to truly believe what we are speaking
7 about is, you know, to actually experience it with
8 us. And I think that, you know, there should be
9 an invite to you guys to come to our community for
10 that, and also to speak to our community members.
11 Because there is a lot more that needs to be said.

12 Again, a few others have mentioned
13 that they were never given the opportunity to
14 speak, they were never given the opportunity to
15 express the devastation that they've experienced
16 all of these years. Like even our children, our
17 children today need to be heard.

18 Lots has changed in our, you know,
19 that has changed in the way our lifestyles are
20 compared to the way we were brought up, being
21 brought up at fish camps, for example. I was
22 brought up at a fish camp in the summer months.
23 We were out on the lake, like I would say 75
24 per cent of the year with our families. And back
25 then it was great, because you worked together as

1 a family with your parents, with your siblings.

2 And now our families can't even do
3 that, they can't take their families out on the
4 lake, they can't do that today. But back then it
5 was -- you know, that's why families were so
6 close.

7 It's a close knit community, right,
8 where we come from, from South Indian. But today
9 we are so separated because, again, we are limited
10 employment, and that's why many have chosen to
11 leave our community to, you know, come out here
12 and work, provide for their families. Lots have.

13 My children had to come out -- well,
14 not only my children, but our children that have
15 to leave our communities to get educated to get
16 better jobs out here. See, that's family
17 separation right there. And it has impacted a lot
18 of our community members.

19 Also like, a few have brought up
20 regarding our shorelines. I'm a resource user, my
21 husband and I spend a lot of time out on the lake,
22 year after year. And we see so much changes every
23 year. It just gets worse and worse. Like, you
24 know, we love to hunt, we love to fish. But we
25 can't live on that, I mean, you know, for income

1 wise, we can't live on that. But that's why we
2 have to get jobs, we have to get employed. But to
3 harvest for our family in regards to the moose,
4 the caribou, the fish, and you know, our resources
5 are deteriorating year after year. Our moose,
6 like someone mentioned our moose, it's -- our
7 moose eat and drink from our waters, the lake
8 that's being contaminated year after year. You
9 know, they drink and eat from there, and then we
10 eat the moose, you know. There's sickness that
11 comes from that. And year after year we are
12 experiencing more and more illnesses to many of
13 our community members, that our people are dying
14 from what they're exposed to, just from our own
15 backyard.

16 Even with like trapping, people used
17 to sustain themselves with trapping, fishing. But
18 like, you know, this time of year is, you know,
19 when trappers really look towards that income to
20 provide for their families for, you know, this
21 time of year, like the holiday coming up, they
22 can't even do that because the fur bearing animals
23 as well are gone. How are they supposed to meet
24 the needs for their family for Christmas when that
25 was their source of income for their home?

1 Our people were not -- barely
2 educated, they did not understand the devastation
3 that was going to be impacted upon their lives.
4 I'm speaking now in regards to my parents, for
5 example. My father grew up from the land, it
6 provided for us, for us children, it provided for
7 his wife. And because of the flood, my father
8 lost his life because of the way the water and the
9 ice affected the currents, right? And then he
10 went through the ice where he always travelled,
11 and then one day he went by there, and gone.

12 And he left, he had a widow that had
13 to, she had to provide for her children all by
14 herself, when my father was the main provider for
15 our family. And that's not only for my family,
16 that's a lot of other family members that had the
17 same situation as mine. And I think that needs to
18 be heard too.

19 So I'm asking before anything is ever
20 finalized, you need to come, you need to hear our
21 people, you need to listen to them. And I think
22 that it's time that somebody listens. Like people
23 have expressed themselves, you're saying. We've
24 come again and again and expressed our feelings of
25 what we are faced with. How many more times do we

1 go around this cycle that they have mentioned?

2 Like we need to be heard, our people
3 need to be heard. Our children need to be heard,
4 our young people. Because you know, our community
5 is going through a lot. And the way, you know,
6 modern day society is now, it's getting harder.
7 It's harder to meet the needs of our people,
8 because they can't -- again, you know, people
9 can't sustain themselves the way they used to, and
10 that's been said over and over again. But I
11 think, you know, we need people to help us find
12 solutions. Where do we go from here? What does
13 our future look like? Is it going to continue the
14 way it has been? And if it is, if it does, then
15 things are going to be far worse in the future for
16 our children and our grandchildren.

17 Our people are suffering. They've
18 been suffering for a long time. And I think that,
19 you know, we need answers, our people need to know
20 where do we go from here? And whose
21 responsibility is it? Is it Hydro, is it the
22 province, or is it Canada? Who is going to come
23 and say, okay, let's sit and find solutions; or we
24 will just write your stories down and take it
25 away, and again maybe next generation we'll come

1 and talk to your children? Like, how many -- it
2 has been what, three, four generations since the
3 Diversion. And I think it's time.

4 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: If you think about
5 that, you know, the devastation that we talk about
6 on our lake, that there is so much opportunity
7 there for jobs as environmental people. That
8 could be cleaned, and every single member of our
9 community could be employed with this boat and
10 motor on it, snowmobiles in the winter time, all
11 of that could work within it. And Manitoba would
12 get a bonus out of it, and Manitoba Hydro would
13 get good PR saying, hey, we're cleaning up this
14 fuck up that we did -- excuse my language. But
15 it's not being done, not enough, you know.

16 There is ten boats in our communities
17 that go out on the lake. There used to be 187
18 fishermen on the lake, not in them 10 boats.
19 There is 30 people that have boats. We could
20 expand that. It would be beneficial for our
21 community, our people, our country, our colonies.
22 And it's only being done, just a little bit, by
23 those ten boats that I mentioned. And that's what
24 they put out and said, hey, we've created for you
25 for six weeks out of 52 weeks. We're supposed to

1 make a living on that, our retirement plan and our
2 children's education, on six weeks a year? And
3 there is opportunity there to expand that, to make
4 it bigger, to employ our people, and better our
5 river system, clean our waters. Nobody pushes it.

6 We do, we bring that up at meetings.

7 I don't know. And you are a commission of
8 environmental people. Maybe if you pushed the
9 issue for us and mention this and say, hey, it's
10 not only for them people, but also for the future
11 of your children, a cleaner world, a cleaner
12 earth, cleaner waters. All of this water goes
13 into the ocean, and that's where life comes from,
14 the water. And not only South Indian Lake, but
15 every Aboriginal community that's connected to
16 this river system that Hydro has screwed up
17 totally, all of those people are probably in the
18 same situation as our community, where their
19 children don't have jobs, they don't have no
20 future. But yet they have millions in job
21 opportunities to clean up the river. Like nobody
22 would provide the money to do that. These people
23 that are making money, like Manitoba Hydro making
24 billions of dollars from this industry, and
25 Manitoba getting some of that, and Canada. And

1 yet it's the people, the native people that don't
2 get a penny.

3 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Okay. Back to the
4 gaps that we first mentioned and the
5 responsibility on your shoulders in filling those
6 gaps, and making sure that those assessments and
7 the findings and the data is collected. I think
8 it is your responsibility and your duty to make
9 sure. We can express and talk about all of these
10 others things, we have lots -- we could express a
11 lot of the devastation that we experienced.

12 The real gist of it is to make sure
13 that those people, those entities and the
14 governments that allow that to take place, through
15 the processes and that, and the rules and
16 regulations that are required to obtain the
17 licences, and also the environmental assessments
18 and the impacts and all of that kind of stuff that
19 we are fully aware of. And I don't envy you a
20 bit, but that's what you need to -- you are
21 appointed by the Government of Manitoba, you are
22 sanctioned by the authorities that apply the laws
23 and rules, and it's by your judgment and your
24 findings that you will identify those gaps.

25 And the other further matter that is

1 required, particularly the traditional knowledge,
2 and also the proper consultation process that
3 needs to take place to make it a closed circle.
4 And then the informed decisions that we have to
5 make based on -- because no disrespect, your
6 assessment of the community regional effects,
7 they've failed, they're flawed. It's you that's
8 going to say, yes, it's flawed, yes, it has to be
9 enhanced, yes, it has to be filled in the gaps.

10 But if you don't, then you'll hear our
11 dead spirits haunting you and your families -- I'm
12 just kidding. You are the ones that have to live
13 with that consciously, in realizing did I do a
14 good job, did I do my due diligence, did I do what
15 I was committed to do in respect to this? And all
16 of you are well educated, well versed, well
17 knowledgeable, so you have no excuse. You can't
18 claim ignorance in respect to your roles and
19 responsibilities. And you must go back and tell
20 these people, these entities that employed you and
21 given you such a terrible task and responsibility.
22 But the good thing is, I believe that through this
23 process, I think that you would rightfully do the
24 right thing and tell them, we failed, you have to
25 go back and correct and be responsible.

1 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: And not only for one
2 year until they get their licence but as long as
3 that river flows.

4 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Because I don't
5 know the -- your assessment, cumulative assessment
6 of the Churchill and the Winnipeg water regime,
7 does that give everybody the green light and say,
8 well, everything is okay? As you well know, it
9 isn't. I don't know what the end result of your
10 tasks are. You have never told us. We were just
11 asked to come together to talk, dialogue, and
12 share, but you haven't told us what your roles and
13 responsibilities are. You've told us your
14 educational background and where you come from,
15 what you've done, which is important to me to
16 understand what degree of authority and degree of
17 education and your ability to assess it as it
18 really is. And obviously somebody checked your
19 backgrounds, and checked where you came from,
20 where you lived, since you were a kid, and said,
21 hey, these are the people that we need. Because
22 you all hold authority in your respective fields.
23 And so when you say something, somebody will say
24 they can't be lying because they know. Just like
25 us, we have traditional knowledge. We could

1 challenge yours and we would probably be parallel
2 with you or maybe even above you. No disrespect,
3 but we're the ones that live there. And you've
4 never come to ask us, which is really
5 disrespectful, and shameful, not on your part but
6 whoever assigned you to do this. But the good
7 thing is it has come forward.

8 Now the real question is, what are you
9 going to do? And how are you going to do it? And
10 who are you going to make responsible to ensure
11 that those things are followed through thoroughly,
12 fill in the gaps?

13 But some of the things that you need
14 to know is, there is no studies on the shoreline.
15 There is fluctuations of the water and the effects
16 of it. You can't tell us, you can't even go to
17 court because you'd get thrown out. You're a
18 lawyer, you would know that. If you took the case
19 forward you would get your ass kicked, because you
20 have a lack of data, you have a lack of evidence,
21 you have a lack of tangible data that can
22 substantiate your findings. But you have to live
23 with that, if you make that decision.

24 I wouldn't want to. I would rather
25 say, hey, there is huge gaps here, there is huge

1 data missing, particularly consultation and input
2 from the people that live in that region. It's
3 fair to say there is no data, there is no
4 collection of data on the shoreline, the adverse
5 effect on the shoreline or things that live from
6 it. And that needs to be addressed.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

8 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: So you realize
9 that. And there is no consultation process with
10 us, there is no participation. Because if they
11 ask me, I'm going to call you out on it, and I
12 have got lots of witnesses here. We have this
13 woman writing everything that I say. And we have
14 scientists, we have good advisors, we are not
15 uneducated.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: No.

17 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: We have lawyers
18 too. We have biologists, zoologists,
19 hydrologists, engineers. We have botanists too,
20 teachers, social workers. We have arse holes like
21 me that say, hey, buddy, straighten out. I'm not
22 afraid to tell you guys that, because it's the
23 truth. We wouldn't come here and lie to you.

24 So out of respect, we ask and we
25 demand that you must go forward and tell them in

1 your report that there are huge holes. And we are
2 not the ones that made those holes or those gaps.
3 It was not our responsibility. We weren't the
4 ones that said, hey, go flood South Indian Lake,
5 go make it a reservoir, let's screw up the
6 ecosystem. Canada stood by and allowed it to
7 happen. So did Manitoba. So did the entities
8 that are responsible to them. They covered it up.

9 This is like residential school,
10 buddy, and we're the people, we're the witnesses.
11 We're the ones that lost.

12 When Nora tells you about Albert, I
13 used to hunt with him when I was a boy, I used to
14 fish with his dad. I used to trap with his
15 father, I trapped and fished with John-John and
16 Gerald. And I seen these women out there, working
17 the land. What we are telling you is the truth.
18 And that's been broken down. And people have just
19 put their head in the sand, closed their eyes.
20 Justice, justice is blind, it's true. But I think
21 what you guys must do is to correct it, balance it
22 out.

23 Some of the things that I know, I have
24 read enough, studied enough, that what you put in
25 your reports will be, okay, things are fine, but

1 they're not. Because we are in a process, and we
2 are tired, we are tired of fighting, we are tired
3 of being ignored. It's terrible.

4 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: We are the last
5 generation that knows what we've lost. Our
6 children don't know it, what we've lost, or our
7 grandchildren, but we do. And after we're dead,
8 it will be just what you guys have in the books.

9 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: And the other
10 thing too, I'm glad that our vice chief has
11 brought that to your attention, one of the things
12 that we do, that you must do, I won't say you will
13 do or you have to do, but you must do this; you
14 must come to our community and look at the
15 conditions, the housing that they gave us, the
16 challenges that they've left us, the jewel that
17 they have given us to shine, at all seasons, even
18 in the wintertime, even they say -- we've argued,
19 Art and I, Leslie and council, we have argued with
20 Hydro about safe ice trails. They limit it. They
21 say, well, everybody has to follow this trail but
22 if you go off the trail that's your
23 responsibility. You are liable. And they put us,
24 chief and council liable for what? For something
25 that we had nothing to do about on the unsafeness

1 of traveling the lake, or on the ice?

2 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: Take the lives of
3 our fishermen. I read that, what Chief Chris is
4 talking about. Like we are liable for our
5 fishermen that go on the lake for what Hydro and
6 Manitoba has done. There hasn't been anybody paid
7 for the loss of life in South Indian Lake using
8 the environment, ever.

9 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Yeah, there's
10 people that have hit deadheads. Like I said, they
11 flew out of the boat, they drown.

12 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: And fallen through
13 the ice.

14 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Yeah, because of
15 the change of currents. Like you imagine that the
16 current used to go north, now it's going south.
17 And there's islands that have been made because of
18 the erosion of the land. And then when you go
19 through these channels, the current changes. It's
20 like putting a pedal on a rock, or a rock on a big
21 stream, and it creates backwards, it creates other
22 kind of, different kind of a system or stream of
23 current. It's simple, I mean, it's logically
24 simply thought out process, if you do something to
25 something, then of course there's going to be an

1 effect.

2 But when somebody says to you there
3 are no effects, if we dam over here at Keeyask at
4 the Odie River, it won't have an effect at South
5 Indian Lake. That's not true. Or if we dam
6 Wuskwatim, there is no adverse effects. Or if we
7 dam Notigi and put a control structure on there,
8 there is no effects. Or the reservoir that's
9 being released, there's no effects. That's not
10 true. It's a bunch of bullshit, lies. We are not
11 stupid people.

12 When our children go down -- like we
13 protect our children, we tell them don't go down
14 the bank. And what Nora expressed about our
15 children swimming, they grow sores on their skin,
16 that's not normal. They do swimming and then they
17 grow rashes and sores that you have to go to get
18 antibiotics to counter the infection.

19 These things were not studied, these
20 were not planned, they were not part of the
21 process that you are responsible to write about,
22 and make sure that they were done accordingly. It
23 didn't take all of these things, the knowledge and
24 the data that they accumulated, before, during, in
25 between, after, and into the future. That's what

1 a regional effects assessment is about.

2 And I will bet you all of your
3 paycheques, all your pensions, your homes, your
4 trucks, whatever you own, that you have not done
5 that. If you can say that you've done it, then I
6 will shut up and leave you alone. We will. But
7 you can't, because we know that. We are
8 knowledgeable of it. We know how to read. We
9 know how to use a computer. We know how to find
10 data.

11 I can show you through these changes
12 of the Acts. I don't believe that Hydro has ever
13 followed the regulations, or met the required
14 requirements through the regulations to keep their
15 licence; or even the interim licence that they
16 use, they haven't even had any consultation
17 whatsoever since '96, or '86, when they got it and
18 received it. Not one year that I remember them
19 coming to us and saying, guess what, we're going
20 to add another two and a half feet of water,
21 because we experimented with your lives for nine
22 years, so here is our conclusion, we need an
23 additional two and a half feet, because Lake
24 Winnipeg can't generate it. Therefore, in our
25 system, the most logical and economical way that

1 we can meet the demand of electricity that's
2 required, not only here in Manitoba but for export
3 sales, will come from here.

4 The Department of Fisheries and
5 Oceans, there is a process, there are penalties
6 that they need and have to meet. It starts at
7 500,000, the first time, when you get caught or
8 somebody tells on you, that goes up to I think
9 about 12 million after that, right? There is
10 stages. And not once has anybody been penalized
11 through that process, and those rules and
12 regulations that apply.

13 There isn't even identification of
14 classifications of what those licences are
15 supposed to be at. Nobody even has the ability or
16 the courage to say, hey, this should be a Canada
17 Clean Environment Assessment Act process. Because
18 if you add it all up and if you read the Act
19 itself, it clearly states in there that anything
20 above and beyond, like Wuskwatim, like Keeyask,
21 Manitoba Premier tells us, the province, that this
22 is what, a two, \$3 billion project, shot way over
23 budget. So was Wuskwatim. Read the Act. The
24 Federal Government has a responsibility on huge
25 projects like that.

1 Then on top of that they get the mine
2 to determine or define what is navigable
3 waterways. So if you think about it from our view
4 and say, well, South Indian Lake is no longer, the
5 Churchill River is no longer a navigable
6 identified waterway, well, what idiot would have
7 thought of that? I went and seen the Minister in
8 Niagara Falls, I met her, and I said Minister, who
9 did this? Don't you know this country was based
10 on and built on navigable waters? Oh, yes. Well,
11 what built this country? I'm playing with her to
12 see how knowledgeable she is. It was through the
13 Treaty, the beaver, the fur, right? And guess
14 what, all of those people had to go through South
15 Indian Lake down the Churchill River to get to the
16 Port of Churchill, and get to York Landing, York
17 Factory. Well, isn't that navigable? Huge river.
18 Then they turned it into a lake. Nobody said shit
19 about it. It's okay. And that's your
20 responsibility, and that's every one of you to
21 say, hey, something is wrong here, we must fix it.
22 Minimally we must correct what we did wrong to
23 these people that have adversely and have
24 devastated their lives forever.

25 It's serious business when you -- just

1 recently one of our nephews -- son, hung himself,
2 not too long ago. He was what? 20 years old?

3 WILBUR WOOD: 21.

4 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: His uncle found
5 him, and as John-John says, one of those boys that
6 he talks about is my son. He was 18. Try to live
7 with that and try to understand that, and then try
8 and empathise with that. You can't. It's
9 impossible for you to do that. But you have a
10 huge responsibility that you must do, and make
11 sure that these people and these entities,
12 Manitoba, Manitoba Hydro, and Canada and the
13 Department of Fisheries and everybody else that's
14 responsible, that developed these rules and
15 regulations and the laws, have to be put to task
16 to make sure that they're adhered to and followed.
17 Or else what the hell are they doing there?

18 And proper compensation and
19 accommodations under the consultation process, the
20 accommodation to consult, accommodation to do all
21 of those things, they haven't done that for us.
22 Like I said before, and we've all expressed it,
23 they looked at us as squatters. In 2005 that
24 changed, after we became the 63rd First Nation
25 officially in Manitoba. And we fought that battle

1 for 98 years and 8 months to get recognition. But
2 we did not give up and we did not go away.

3 So you have to understand that people
4 have tried to hide this for various reasons. Lots
5 of careers have been built because of this,
6 political careers. Ed Schreyer was what, 30 or 29
7 years old, I believe, when he got elected. And
8 even him, he said that we will prosper, we will
9 have all of these things, all of these huge great
10 big developments will come to be and we will share
11 in this prosperous process, when 10 per cent of
12 the First Nations communities have been adversely
13 affected by this effect. And that has not
14 happened either. That's a gap and that's
15 something that needs to be addressed.

16 Everybody else in our experience got
17 compensated under the Northern Flood Agreement.
18 But us, we have to fight to get our \$3 million
19 plus 8,500 acres of land. And they said, hey, you
20 guys got compensated in the ROE. The trappers got
21 about \$2.5 million, so did the fishermen. But
22 again, if you read the reports there was about,
23 there was -- they identified about 478, 479 people
24 at the time living in South Indian. And remember
25 what I said earlier, 1 per cent out of them, the

1 working people, 178 fishers and trappers that I
2 identified, one of them was on social assistance,
3 maybe five of them were on pension. Imagine that?
4 Now fast forward 43 years ago to the future, the
5 vast majority of our people are on social
6 assistance. The vast majority of our people have,
7 you know, succumbed to alcoholism, drug abuse,
8 domestic abuses, every kind of violence that you
9 can think of. And I don't think that's written
10 anywhere.

11 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: Incarcerated too.

12 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Yes. Our young
13 men, because of violence, because they have no
14 self-esteem, they have no future. It doesn't look
15 prosperous to us. Imagine, there was, I would say
16 1.3 million pounds of fish that came out of South
17 Indian annually. And every one of them people,
18 all 178 people that had fishing licences made
19 approximately annually, just from that one source,
20 probably around 4 to \$6,000 per year. That's
21 pretty prosperous in those days, that's about as
22 much as you guys make. And you took 14, 15 years
23 of your lives to get there. And it's portable.
24 We can't take our lake where we want to go. We
25 have to live with it and what happens to it.

1 Those things need to be examined.

2 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: These agreements
3 that Hydro makes saying, okay, this is how much
4 water we are allowed to do, that agreement is
5 there, and they go over, they've gone over three
6 or four times their limit and nothing has
7 happened.

8 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: More than three or
9 four times, and below it.

10 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: And below it. And
11 isn't that a law? And that law has to be
12 followed. Like my brother says, these guys are
13 allowed to do just whatever they want to do
14 because they have that interim licence already.
15 And they've broken it. Those agreements are all
16 bullshit. You know, like our Fishermen
17 Association, our Trapper Association, the
18 Harvesting Association, all of that has been
19 broken, not by us. And nothing is being done.
20 It's just been struck out of the record and
21 continued on right to last year. They said it was
22 a fast snow thaw, but they closed that dam at
23 Notigi so Thompson wouldn't flood, so they let us
24 flood.

25 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: There is lots of

1 rich history here. Even if you think about it,
2 the Lake Winnipeg water regime, they prefer to
3 flood up South Indian before they did that. They
4 had options, they had developed economic --
5 economic examples, everything, on how to do that
6 over there. But the fear that they had was they
7 would have a huge amount of lawsuits on that from
8 every community that surrounded Lake Winnipeg and
9 the farmers, and also the recreational activities
10 and the potential of the tourism that was there.
11 So they left it alone and they said, let's go up
12 there. That's what happened. And that's what
13 took place. And what did they do? They did
14 nothing. And that's not right either. The other
15 thing that, you know, is like we don't even know,
16 and we've asked them, right, we've asked them time
17 and time again, when does this stop? When is it
18 going to hit the equilibrium of this lake?

19 Even the great Dr. Suzuki, right, he
20 came to our community, we invited him, he came, an
21 international scientist like him came to our
22 community and listened to us. We talked to him.
23 And he said that's a devastation, one of the worst
24 things that this country has allowed to happen,
25 this province, for the benefit -- that's real.

1 Another example is I think in Alberta
2 where they've taken down dams, I think either that
3 or in British Columbia that I've read and studied
4 and they've taken it down, and the natural flow
5 has gone back and the fish, the salmon have come
6 back, and they've re-developed and all of that
7 other kind of stuff, right?

8 But something has to be found on
9 how -- the scale is, they say it starts around in
10 the '60s, this is in the late '60s or early '60s
11 is around \$4 million, but you times that by what
12 it is today and what it's worth, that would help
13 us at least battle the challenges that we have.
14 Like with our children and their future, and the
15 right amount of infrastructure, water and sewage,
16 the roads, education, those kind of things are
17 important. And that wasn't -- that was supposed
18 to be part of the plan, but they didn't follow
19 through with it. They did not.

20 They said they would, but they didn't.
21 They promised our mom and dads and our grandpas,
22 but it didn't happen. It didn't materialize.

23 So share with us change. What are you
24 going to do and how are you guys going to
25 accomplish this and what is your thoughts on what

1 we're talking about here? And the other thing too
2 is, we would like to have a commitment from you
3 guys to come and see for yourself. I know your
4 report is due by January, somewhere in that time
5 frame that you have to have it and put it on the
6 table and produce it. But I think you are going
7 to -- if you did that you will do no justice to
8 what your responsibilities and roles are, and your
9 commitment to doing the right things that you
10 should do and you must do. I don't know where
11 you're going to find all of that information and
12 fill that huge gap, I don't know how you're going
13 to do it. Because next time I see you, either one
14 of you, I'm going to ask. Your diligence, your
15 responsibility should be to fill those gaps, and
16 fill those missing reports and the collective
17 data, particularly the traditional knowledge that
18 you need, in order to make it a whole, a realistic
19 and a truthful report. Because if you don't, then
20 you're going to -- your kids, if I meet them, I'm
21 going to say, hey, I met your dad, big
22 bullshitter. I met your granny and your grandpa.
23 I don't mean to be rude or vicious, but that's
24 what you have to deal with. Because we are the
25 ones that have to live it.

1 So I think that you need to seriously,
2 seriously look at it and consider it, and go back
3 and say, hey, we can't do a Regional Cumulative
4 Effect Assessment because of these reasons. And
5 they're real, they're not just fabricated, they're
6 not just last minute thoughts.

7 What you guys should have done way
8 back here is you should have come to us first and
9 said, what do you think? Not at the eleventh hour
10 when you have to finish the report. And you're
11 supposed to be intelligent people, systematic, all
12 of that stuff; right? I'm not trying to embarrass
13 you or disrespect you, but that's how I see it.
14 That's what should have happened, and I don't know
15 why it didn't. Only you have the answer, as the
16 chair, so you've got bigger shoulders. That's why
17 we gave you the keys. I mean, aren't I -- that's
18 why I wanted to be a lawyer.

19 MS. LEWIS: It's not too late.

20 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: It is. You don't
21 know how old I am.

22 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: So I have a
23 question. What do you think -- what we have been
24 talking about today, in your point of view, what
25 do you think will become, will they extend this

1 process or will they say, okay, that's it, this is
2 the report, and we're closing it and accepting it,
3 and not fill in the gaps that we've been talking
4 about?

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, they, the
6 Minister, the Minister has asked us to look at, to
7 do I guess two or three things. One is to review
8 the report that has been prepared, you know, that
9 great big document.

10 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: It's 145 page
11 document. Well, I read it, and that's why I'm
12 telling you it's full of holes.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I'm still reading
14 it. I mean, I've read a good part of it, maybe
15 not quite all of it yet, but I'm going to be
16 reading all of it by the time I'm done here. So
17 they've asked us to review that document, number
18 one, review it. Number two, to talk to the
19 communities and get their input, their thoughts as
20 to what they think about the document, what they
21 think its strengths and/or weaknesses are. I have
22 to tell you we are hearing mostly weaknesses. And
23 then to give a report back to the Minister.

24 The first thing we are going to do is
25 make sure everything, and that is why we have Cece

1 with us, we are going to make sure of two things;
2 one is that everything that we're sent in a
3 written way is available to the government and to
4 Hydro, and to anyone else who wants to see it, of
5 course; and two, that everything you tell us, such
6 as you've done here today, is also available, word
7 for word. So that's number one.

8 Number two is we are going to
9 summarize, as best we can, all of those views, and
10 we are getting views loud and clear. It's not an
11 easy job, as Doug here can tell you, he has been
12 tearing out his -- should I say tearing out your
13 hair, Doug?

14 DOUG SMITH: You can say whatever you
15 want.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Trying to summarize it
17 because we have heard, frankly, we've got it from
18 you but others too, we've had an earful, and some
19 of it very pointed. I know that you were polite
20 to say that you didn't mean to offend us a few
21 times, but you gave it to us fairly direct. Not
22 just you, others have done this too. I think it's
23 a little different in your case because I think it
24 would be fair to say you have had less involvement
25 than some of the other communities who did have

1 some involvement, not because of this project but
2 because of Wuskwatim and Keeyask and some other
3 Hydro projects that they were involved in. So
4 they have had more input. So you have told us --
5 in doing this, one of the things that we have to
6 look at is what were the gaps in the study?
7 You've told us from your view what you think some
8 of the gaps at least were, from your community's
9 perspective.

10 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: It's not what we
11 think, it's what we see and know about.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Right.

13 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Because the
14 reports that are based on that came from who?
15 Manitoba and Hydro. Then where is the involvement
16 of the First Nations peoples? You are asking us
17 to give you our input or what our thoughts are.
18 They're not thoughts, they're real.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

20 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: And you should,
21 like I said, you should be very careful how you
22 write that and what words you put on there.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: That's a fair comment.
24 You're right, it is knowledge and it's knowledge
25 based on generations of experience. But you have

1 also said --

2 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Not only that,
3 Serge, it's based on the data that has been
4 collected by the scientists, and only by Manitoba
5 and Manitoba Hydro, not us.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Right.

7 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: And you're telling
8 our story again, and that's wrong. You're telling
9 how my life is. And they got no word or no
10 knowledge whatsoever of what we've experienced
11 until today. The only people that were in that
12 room, and correct me if I'm wrong, was Manitoba,
13 Manitoba Hydro, and their personnel that wrote
14 this story and those research papers.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Right.

16 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Their
17 environmental assessment process, Conservation,
18 Water Stewardship, not ours. And that's what we
19 are saying, put it on record, that's the gap that
20 we're talking about. That's the hugest gap that
21 you must fill, and that is your responsibility
22 that you must correct prior to it going anywhere
23 else. Then it would be true, it may be a true
24 process, but how long is it going to take? Until
25 January? Good luck. Because you flawed it

1 already. You've crippled it. You're going to
2 have a two headed, three headed baby, with no
3 arms, no tongue, no vision, no ears, that's what
4 you're going to give birth to. That's the
5 reality.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, you've made that
7 very clear today. Not just you, but of course the
8 other community members. And I wanted to say,
9 first of all, thank you for doing that. We did
10 need to hear this and we've heard it clearly. It
11 will give us -- you know, it's immensely helpful
12 to us in preparing a report and identifying what
13 the gaps are, which is part of what we have to do
14 here. And you are not the first community to say
15 there is traditional knowledge, and the
16 community -- as you say, not just traditional
17 knowledge, but science as well, there has been no
18 input from the community. You've said it very
19 strongly here today, but we've heard this from
20 other communities as well. And that you weren't
21 involved in any way in the study.

22 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: And I want to
23 correct you on another thing too, and I want this
24 on record. That when you say that the
25 O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation, South Indian Lake,

1 has not been in any whatsoever project, then what
2 the hell are we doing here, if there was no
3 effects or there was no project in our region?
4 There is a huge reservoir that powers every God
5 damn generating station that Hydro benefits from
6 in this province, in this country. So that's a
7 wrong statement. That's wrong for you to say.
8 Totally. If it wasn't for that reservoir, would
9 these other five stations, or four, that are
10 generated by that water, would they exist? Yes,
11 they would. But would they produce the required
12 demand? No, they wouldn't, unless South Indian
13 Lake got diverted. So that's a project in its
14 own.

15 And then they have the nerve to put in
16 their language, this is Manitoba and Manitoba
17 Hydro on future developments, every time that they
18 make a generating station, that's the future. And
19 it is directly linked to the water that comes from
20 our environment that generates the future. And
21 that's why I say to you, Serge, be very cautious
22 and very careful on how you place those words.
23 You are offending me now, totally, because you are
24 ignoring the fact that the hugest project that
25 they could have made was that reservoir, to meet

1 the demands of the future, forever. You are
2 talking their language, and it's wrong. I thought
3 you were independent thinkers. You know, I'm not
4 trying to scold you, but I want to point this out.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, it's fair to
6 point it out, but I think the point, and perhaps I
7 didn't make it very well, but the point I was
8 trying to say is that some of the other
9 communities, although they had no input just like
10 you in this RCEA, in the preparation of this
11 document, you've said you had no input, your
12 community had no input, other communities have
13 been telling us the same thing. Some of them did
14 have input in recent projects like Keeyask, where
15 they did do traditional land use studies and they
16 did do an impact study from their perspective.
17 The project, the Diversion project and the damming
18 and the creation of the lake, yes, there was no
19 involvement there. I'm not disagreeing.
20 Absolutely, I agree with that.

21 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: And it should be
22 noted, and it should be recorded, and that's the
23 gaps that we are identifying, and those are huge,
24 in doing an assessment. Because if you don't
25 incorporate those, then how is your assessment

1 true and how does it -- will it hold ground? It
2 won't. And I wouldn't want to be part of that.
3 Why lie and put another lie on a lie? It's not
4 right.

5 It's like what we've been expressing
6 to you. It's time that people know what happened
7 over here. It's time that people realize the
8 conditions we're subject to. Not only our
9 environment of our lake and the conditions that
10 have impacted us, but the conditions we have to
11 live in. Like tell me, who do you know that is
12 going to pay \$400 or \$500 a month for a Hydro
13 bill? And we say, we rightfully compensated you.
14 Well, do the math as we did. Their compensation
15 has been paid 100, maybe 1,000 times over, with
16 all of the economical spin-offs. Somebody said
17 they were in economics. Well, it's not very hard
18 to figure that out. Like I said, this building is
19 lit up by those projects and by that reservoir.
20 These people that work in here should be part of
21 the equation of the profits that are generated
22 from projects such as the reservoir that we live
23 in. It used to be 6,000 employees by Hydro, now
24 it's about 500 and something -- 5,000. That's not
25 including the municipalities that collected the

1 taxes, that's not including the PST, the GST, the
2 economic spin-offs that we go buy from gas bars or
3 grocery stores that contribute to the economy of
4 every community that those 5,000 plus workers come
5 from. We're not stupid, I surely ain't. I know
6 how to add. I passed kindergarten. I guarantee
7 you, I know how to add one and one, and I do know
8 how to count to ten. And you put it all together.
9 And that needs to be told.

10 Those are the gaps that we're
11 expressing, these are the things that aren't seen.
12 Not only the shoreline that you're responsible for
13 through this process, the other kind of things
14 that occur. That's your responsibility to say,
15 hey, look what's happening. This needs to be
16 reviewed, this needs to be studied more, there has
17 got to be a plan in place.

18 For as long as Hydro generates water
19 and electricity from the waters that we live in,
20 that's impacting our lives. Not only the
21 environment, the environment is your
22 responsibility, that's what more than likely the
23 Minister said. We're not studying the people,
24 we're studying the environment and what's
25 happening. But the environment itself must be

1 protected, but the people that live in that
2 environment also must be acknowledged and
3 protected also, and accommodated.

4 Like I said, Serge, do the math.
5 There was 178, according to the studies, 178
6 fishermen. Annually, we made -- which is our
7 grandfathers, our fathers, you know, a comfortable
8 living. That was taken away, totally, totally
9 destroyed. That's a gap that you need to fill and
10 that's something that must be addressed.

11 And on top of that, I'm combining that
12 and what happens every year when the shore falls
13 in two feet. That's your responsibility to say,
14 hey, something is wrong because we don't know
15 what's happening. We don't have data, we don't
16 have the information, we don't have the science,
17 and we don't know if it's going to be 100 years or
18 200 or 1,000 years. They've predicted, like Angus
19 and everybody else has said to you, they said in
20 30 to 40 years this lake will be better, there
21 will be more fish, more wildlife, more ducks, more
22 seagull eggs, more duck eggs, more muskrats, more
23 beaver. Well, they were dead wrong about that
24 partner. It's ass backwards.

25 And then there are further diseases

1 that we've experienced. We didn't have cancers,
2 we didn't have diabetes, we didn't have all of
3 these illnesses, the social impacts. They didn't
4 plan it. And then they're telling you, go and see
5 what those little Indians are up to, see if
6 they're okay.

7 Again, I'm not trying to be, you know,
8 mean. But that's how it works in our life.
9 That's how we feel because that's how we've been
10 treated. And you can't blame us for saying it,
11 because that's exactly what has been taken and
12 happening. And you can't deny it, you can't tell
13 me and say, hey, Chris, you're wrong. Because I
14 have studied too many, I have seen it, I have felt
15 the racism, I've walked through it, I lived
16 through it. So have all of us.

17 Now that needs to be corrected. And
18 you, sir, have the pen to correct it. And you
19 ladies and gentlemen have the minds to assist him.
20 Because you asked us and now we've told you. It's
21 not thinking, it's not -- it's actual, it's fact,
22 it's real.

23 (PROCEEDINGS RECESSED)

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. So I guess we're
25 going to resume here for about 10 or 15 minutes to

1 do a wrap-up. So I guess I will turn it back to
2 Chief Chris Baker.

3 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Yeah. We have a
4 science review that we've been involved in, along
5 with other parties. And it should be given out,
6 the review, the latest by Friday, right, this
7 Friday, so you should be able to -- and we can
8 forward that to you. I will ask Ian to forward
9 that to you guys so you can incorporate it and
10 review it and get some background on that.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Sure, that would be
12 welcome. Thanks.

13 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: That's one of the
14 things. Like we said, in order for you to
15 appreciate and understand what we're saying, not
16 just by what we're talking, but to really immerse
17 yourself in, you must come there to the community.

18 And the other thing is that you have
19 to somehow fill those gaps, those things that
20 we've talked about, the things that we know of and
21 have full knowledge of. Because it's not fair,
22 again, I want to emphasize that strongly, it's not
23 fair for somebody else to tell us about our lives.
24 They have no idea about it. But they make
25 decisions and they make assumptions, and they make

1 papers out of it and stuff like that. That's
2 wrong. You have to come over here on our side and
3 actually participate in it fully to appreciate it
4 and get the full meaning of it and the full
5 feeling of it.

6 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: We bring up our
7 point of views at meetings. We sit with the
8 Conservation and stuff, and we tell them about
9 this. And they put down a piece of paper and say,
10 well, according to our data there is nothing wrong
11 with this lake, it's a good lake, the ecosystem is
12 all right. From their office -- how are you
13 supposed to judge sitting in a room like this and
14 say, hey, there's nothing wrong with South Indian
15 Lake, it's okay. You haven't stepped on the
16 ground or in the water. And the visit that we
17 talk about, it shouldn't be only that one time,
18 because it's totally different from the winter, to
19 the summer, to the spring and the fall, because
20 the water level is totally different, the erosion.
21 Go and see the lake.

22 Like, this past summer when I was
23 working on cleaning up the shorelines, I had my
24 grandson -- I have a picture of that. Seven feet
25 of the ground fell, and that's every year that

1 ground falls like that. You know, after we clean
2 that ground there's new decay on it, so we have to
3 start over on that same ground and continue a
4 little bit. That's why I say there's so much work
5 out there, there's so much available for our
6 people to work in our community, and yet it's not
7 being utilized. Saying, okay, this is what you
8 get, \$200,000 to employ people for six months, or
9 six weeks, and that's all you're getting, no more.
10 So six weeks we're living and the other 46 weeks
11 we're dying.

12

13 ANGUS DYSART: We also have submitted
14 a counter offer to Manitoba Hydro, a very detailed
15 and very budgeted and planned, like any other kind
16 of identified proposal and process to it. Like
17 evidence of what John is talking about. We
18 incorporated all of these scenarios and the
19 potentials, and it's on an annual basis, like
20 other reserves have received, but we have not
21 received those kind of allowances or
22 compensations. They have given us, through the
23 community association of South Indian Lake, the
24 best, it was \$18 million and that's it.

25

 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: And even like what

1 Angus was saying that Hydro -- I sat on that board
2 that Angus was talking about. They write us a
3 letter and said, here, sign this paper that you're
4 okay with screwing up your life for \$5,000.
5 Except this one lawyer gets \$1,000 out of that,
6 and he has got 100 clients, that's \$100,000 for
7 that person who hasn't even been affected by what
8 we lived through, stuff like that. And that's
9 wrong. It's so wrong, other people that get
10 affected benefit out of our misery. Just like you
11 guys, you know, you get paid for doing this,
12 reporting what we've gone through. You guys
13 benefit from our misery.

14 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: But you are going
15 to correct it.

16 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: Hopefully.

17 IAN HALKET: I have a question. The
18 augmented flow program, and that four and a half
19 foot fluctuation, when you're out on the lake,
20 Wilbur, John, Chief, Angus, how big are the waves
21 on a stormy day?

22 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: On a stormy day? I
23 have been in waves the size of buildings, the size
24 of a house, both my wife and I. They're big.

25 IAN HALKET: So the four and a half --

1 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: If there's something
2 over the next wave or if there's a tree coming up,
3 it's very dangerous for me.

4 IAN HALKET: So that four and a half
5 foot fluctuation that augmented flow program works
6 on is an average, right, it's done in a stilling
7 well beside the lake. But it doesn't take into
8 account the wash of the waves, which is really
9 doing the damage to your shoreline.

10 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: Yeah, that's true.

11 IAN HALKET: So when you talk four and
12 a half feet fluctuation, and when you add as tall
13 as a building wave on top that, that tells you the
14 reach of the wash that is now happening on the
15 lake, and that is moving on down. So it's a lot
16 bigger than the four and a half feet that we tend
17 to utilize, or use to describe the AFP. The
18 impacts of that program are tremendous. And
19 that's what is causing, or I would infer that
20 that's causing all of that erosion, and it's that
21 dynamic that's doing that.

22 ANGUS DYSART: Another thing too, like
23 the weight of the ice, it's frozen against the
24 previous shoreline that year. But when all of
25 that ice drops, it's still stuck to the shoreline.

1 And when it starts to thaw, it pulls the land out
2 with it. And I'm sure all that erosion is caused
3 by that weight of the ice too. Because it's
4 attached to the shorelines, all of that is pulled
5 in. So you're looking at, for example, the first
6 year that I took those pictures, and when I went
7 and looked at it after, after the water started to
8 come up, I looked at it, I bet you there was about
9 a good six feet gone. And I didn't even see it,
10 it's just like somebody took a clean sweep of it,
11 it's all gone. I didn't take a picture of it,
12 though, I never thought of it, but just for
13 curiosity I went and checked on it. It was that
14 Rat River, just before that dam there, just behind
15 there.

16 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: Even what Angus is
17 saying about that water movement in these
18 pictures, the shoreline sometimes is 30 feet, you
19 know, dried up in the spring time. And in the
20 fall this is where our fish and all of our animals
21 and bugs that live in our land come and breed to
22 repopulate the shorelines and that. They're all
23 frozen stiff to death. And then when that thaws
24 out, there is no rebuilding of it. And this
25 occurs every year for the past 40 years.

1 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: 43.

2 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: 43 years. Sorry, I
3 don't know.

4 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: So you need to
5 study that, and there is no data on it. Nobody
6 has done it.

7 IAN HALKET: But I like John's point,
8 because yesterday we were in a meeting with
9 Manitoba Conservation and Manitoba Hydro, and we
10 were talking about turbidity in the middle of the
11 lake and the Secchi disks, and lowering them into
12 the water to find out how clear the water is in
13 terms of that disk. And John is right. They use,
14 they go out to the middle of the lake when the
15 weather is clear and calm and they lower the
16 Secchi disk, but they never do it near the shore,
17 they never do it in turbid or in stormy weather.
18 As a matter of fact, there is no record for 2016
19 because every time they went out it was too
20 stormy.

21 And that's what we were discussing
22 yesterday, is it was too stormy to do it. But yet
23 they will come back and they will say, well, look
24 how clear the water is. Well, yeah, because we
25 went out in 2015 and measured it three times and

1 found out that the Secchi disk gave us one and a
2 half, three feet, or whatever they were reading.
3 And that's much clearer than it was in the '70s.
4 When you look at the Secchi disk readings in the
5 '70s, there were 42 different sites around the
6 lake that they were doing them with. And yeah,
7 sometimes they weren't -- they couldn't get
8 readings because it was too stormy, because that's
9 a huge lake. But, you know, comparing the data,
10 it's not comparable from a couple of data points
11 to many data points. So -- and that's just
12 turbidity. But that turbidity has a huge story to
13 tell in terms of light attenuation into the water
14 column, and also a story to tell in terms of, just
15 in terms of the erosion that's happening on the
16 side of the lake, because that's where it's coming
17 from. Anyway, this is all in the science report
18 that you'll be getting.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Good.

20 IAN HALKET: And we can talk about
21 that. And maybe -- well, we'll be giving it to
22 you, sending it to you. And we would like the
23 opportunity also to come and discuss it with you.

24 MS. JOHNSON: Okay. We'll see what we
25 can do.

1 WILBUR WOOD: Another thing too, you
2 know, about our fish, we've been asking Hydro for
3 many years to try and get our fish back up. When
4 our fish go down Missi Falls, there must be a
5 whole bunch of them going down, whatever fish
6 there is, they never have a chance to come back
7 up. There is no way for them to come back up, so
8 they're down there.

9 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: What he's talking
10 about is, we've discussed many years over and over
11 through our steering environmental committee it's
12 called, is to have a fish ladder, or an access for
13 fish to go through the dam.

14 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: And that's another
15 rule, and I've read it, where any river has been
16 closed off, they're obligated to build a fish
17 ladder, whoever put that dam there. And that's
18 never been done. And they say it would do no use
19 anyway. But only the Minister can do that, not
20 somebody else, not Conservation, but the Minister
21 himself can deem the lake that it can't go back,
22 no matter what we do.

23 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: So in closing, we
24 want you to know that you have a tough job and
25 that hopefully you don't think we're taking on --

1 or saying this is your responsibility, but we do
2 know your responsibility to this process that you
3 have been tasked with. And we're hoping and
4 praying that you will do the right thing and that
5 you will make those people responsible, and the
6 entities and the Minister fully aware that there
7 are huge gaps, and that we have failed, all of us,
8 including us.

9 They made you guys responsible and put
10 you to the task. Now that we have this
11 opportunity to express that, it's your job now to
12 take our voice, our concerns and our findings
13 along, and putting together, amalgamating those
14 things that you guys have written. And maybe you
15 are part it of, I don't know, the findings and
16 stuff like that. But those are your words and
17 those are your processes. And if they failed --
18 if I was your teacher, I don't know if you would
19 have passed. You would have to repeat the same
20 grade. I guarantee you that.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: I did actually have to
22 do that a couple of times.

23 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: Well, now you're
24 the one that has to do it again. So remember,
25 it's a hard decision, the directive, and it has

1 been 43 years. And there is strong evidence that
2 support what we know, because you are the ones
3 that gave us that ability and that chance to read
4 it, and study it. Now we are giving you feedback
5 and we are grading you. And I think you've heard
6 our expression and our findings.

7 It has failed us totally, not in the
8 sense that we did it here. Now you know, you have
9 no excuse, none. You can't find one. It's not --
10 there is no needle there. There is a pillar
11 there. There is a great big light there that's
12 shining bright. And we just helped you uncover it
13 and said, hey, look at it, it's real. Now you'll
14 have to fix it, you and those people.

15 JOHN-JOHN BAKER: And pray that the
16 Minister doesn't says okay, we are done. Now we
17 can go on and shelf you guys.

18 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: We want to thank
19 you, sincerely thank you for giving us the
20 opportunity. I know you didn't have to give us
21 another, but because of Cathy and Ian and the
22 others that give us another opportunity to come
23 and talk with you, to tell you how and what we
24 know. Not what we think, it's what we know.
25 There is a difference. And I know you know the

1 difference. Knowing and thinking are two
2 different things.

3 You know I'm here, I'm wearing a vest,
4 I have a white shirt and a black hat on. It's
5 real. So are we. It's not what you think how we
6 look. We know how you look too. And we know your
7 backgrounds. And that's why I asked. I never ask
8 a question without already knowing the answer,
9 ever.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: That's what they say.

11 MS. JOHNSON: See, he is a lawyer.

12 CHIEF CHRIS BAKER: That's what the
13 professors do too, and teachers and educators.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

15 ANGUS DYSART: It's best to have a
16 little prayer.

17 (Closing prayer)

18 (Concluded at 5:00 p.m.)

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