

MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

REGIONAL CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY MEETING

SPLIT LAKE (TCN)

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Transcript of Proceedings  
Held at Split Lake, Manitoba  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8, 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

## SPLIT LAKE: (TCN)

Nathan Neckoway - Band Councillor  
Ian Halket - Consultant for TCN  
Michael Keeper  
Janet McIvor  
Victor Flett  
Janessa Flett  
Michael Garson  
Will Dumas  
Wade Beardy  
Marcel Beardy  
Betsy Flett  
Melanie Spence  
Larry Beardy  
Allan Keeper  
Elizabeth Beardy  
Annette Saunders

Reporter: Cecelia Reid

1 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2017

2 UPON COMMENCING AT 10:00 A.M.

3 NATHAN NECKOWAY: Welcome everybody.

4 We are going to get started here. And I will get  
5 Allan to -- turn that down. Okay, here we go. We  
6 are going to get Allan to open this meeting with  
7 the prayer. And then what I will do is I will  
8 have the panel introduce themselves. And we will  
9 give you a better overview of why we are here  
10 today and we will go from there.

11 (Opening prayer)

12 NATHAN NECKOWAY: Thank you, Allan.

13 Okay. Again, welcome boys, girls, members. Okay.

14 We will start here. I will get the CEC panel to  
15 introduce themselves, and then I will provide a  
16 brief overview of why we are here and to give a  
17 reason, you know, for why it is important for  
18 today's meeting to get the input from the members.  
19 I will start with that. Do you want to start with  
20 that microphone?

21 MR. SOPUCK: I'm Tim Sopuck. I'm a  
22 member of the Clean Environment Commission. I'm  
23 from Winnipeg.

24 MS. LEWIS: I'm Glennis Lewis. I am a  
25 commissioner with the CEC, and I'm from Brandon.

1                   THE CHAIRMAN: My name is Serge  
2 Scrafield, and I'm the chair of the Clean  
3 Environment Commission.

4                   MR. HARDEN: Hello, my name is Neil  
5 Harden. And I'm a member of the Clean Environment  
6 Commission.

7                   MS. REID: I am Cecelia Reid. I'm the  
8 transcriber and I will be taking down the spoken  
9 word for you.

10                  MR. SMITH: I'm Doug Smith. I work  
11 for the Clean Environment Commission as a writer.

12                  MS. CATHY JOHNSON: I'm secretary to  
13 the commission, so I do most of the work I think.

14                  IAN HALKET: I'm Ian Halket, and I'm a  
15 consultant and I'm working with TCN.

16                  NATHAN NECKOWAY: Thank you. For the  
17 boys and girls here, I'm not sure if you know who  
18 I am, I'm Nathan Neckoway, one of the band  
19 councillors. Everyone else, welcome. I'm pleased  
20 some of you are able to make yourself available  
21 today. And just to give you a brief, I guess,  
22 understanding why we are here today; the panel,  
23 consisting of the four here, like they are -- they  
24 have a -- they are different professions. I  
25 believe someone is an engineer, biologist and

1 environmentalists.

2                   But the panel is here basically --  
3 before I go on, Mike, I guess we can just go ahead  
4 without a translator for now. We have got Mike  
5 Keeper to translate for when the elders come. But  
6 anyways, the panel here, the CEC panel has being  
7 going around and meeting First Nations. And today  
8 they took the time to come and listen to us  
9 Tataskweyak members in relation to Hydro  
10 development, Manitoba Hydro.

11                   The reason why they are going around,  
12 you know, basically listening to the perspectives  
13 on how we are impacted as a First Nation on Hydro  
14 development in the northern area. So they are  
15 here to basically listen to what we, as members  
16 living in the Hydro area, how we are impacted. It  
17 could be the way our social lifestyles are  
18 affected. It could be the way the environmental  
19 lands are affected. It could be the way how  
20 future employment opportunities are affected.

21                   But again, like I'm glad to see the  
22 young kids here, because again, you students, like  
23 we always say you are the ones that are going to  
24 be the future leaders. And I'm glad to see some  
25 other members here, because I see members in the

1 crowd here right now, that you've got the  
2 experience. And it is a good opportunity for you  
3 staff members that have the experience to come  
4 voice it and allow the panel to hear how we at  
5 Split Lake are affected. Because, you know,  
6 through speaking to some of the members, they kind  
7 of indicated that the other First Nations shared a  
8 lot of stories with them in relation how Hydro  
9 affected them. Because Hydro right now is in our  
10 area.

11 Like again, for the younger people,  
12 like we have been hearing this at band meetings,  
13 that a lot of us are born into Hydro, a lot of us  
14 live Hydro, a lot of us will die with Hydro,  
15 because Hydro has been in our area since the  
16 1950s. And that's like right now, it is over like  
17 60 years. And Hydro will continue to be in our  
18 lands.

19 Right now you all know they are  
20 building the JTKDA dam, the Keeyask, they are  
21 building in Keewatinow out there, and Conawapa is  
22 the next proposed dam to be put up. And they just  
23 built Wuskwatim. And they also did that, you  
24 guys -- everyone sees the transmission line,  
25 Bipole III. Like a lot of times we say in the

1 band meetings that us as TCN members, we are  
2 totally surrounded by Hydro development now since  
3 this Bipole III was put up. That's a line that  
4 runs from Keewatinow to run energy to the south to  
5 accommodate that power that they sell. And you  
6 look kind of to the south, southwest of us, you've  
7 got Kelsey, and you've got all of these other  
8 dams. There is what, five dams within our  
9 resource management area.

10 So you, as young people, you are going  
11 to be living this lifestyle with the dams being  
12 here, with the transmission lines being here,  
13 converter stations being around. But again, like  
14 for you, as young people, like I think it is very  
15 important that you students have the understanding  
16 on how Hydro affects us. And again I hope that  
17 some of the other -- the other members, your  
18 uncles, your relatives that are here today, can  
19 share good ideas, because I know there is a lot of  
20 people with experience here. And I'm pretty sure  
21 the panel here will have a good understanding.

22 But again, we want to hear from  
23 everybody. And that's -- I just hope that some of  
24 the elders are going to come and join us. So, I  
25 guess we will -- Mike, did you want to come

1 elaborate here since a couple of elders got here?

2 Mike is going to translate what today is.

3                   MICHAEL KEEPER: (Speaking native  
4 language.)

5                   NATHAN NECKOWAY: Oh, thanks, Mike.  
6 Just before we continue, we have got lunch being  
7 prepped here, and we will start, I guess, the  
8 opening the floor for members to come up. But  
9 just to keep in mind that the panel here is not  
10 Manitoba Hydro. The panel is here to listen to us  
11 to put together a report on how we see Hydro  
12 affected us. So basically they are here to put a  
13 report, to report to the Minister, Minister of the  
14 Provincial Government to tell the Minister how we  
15 are affected. So again, whatever you are here to  
16 share is very important, and just a reminder that  
17 they are here to listen to us.

18                   MICHAEL KEEPER: (Native language  
19 spoken.)

20                   NATHAN NECKOWAY: Just again, just for  
21 the panel's information, like I met them this  
22 morning just to give them heads up that, you know,  
23 gave them a brief history on TCN's involvement  
24 with Hydro. And I indicated to them that, you  
25 know, we've been affected in many ways. We have

1 agreements that go back years ago. And basically  
2 like I encouraged some of you to share that. I  
3 told them that we were impacted last spring in  
4 relation to the high waters, the flood that  
5 happened, spring of 2017, this past year. These  
6 are things, feel free, the mic is open, you guys  
7 come. We will get started now because we have  
8 until 3:00 o'clock. It is already after 12.  
9 Lunch is to be served, and I understand that there  
10 is another group of students coming at 1:00  
11 o'clock. So again, we can start it now, and the  
12 mic is open there.

13 MICHAEL KEEPER: (Native language  
14 spoken).

15 JANET MCIVOR: I just want to make a  
16 comment, because I got to go back to work at 1:00.  
17 It is Keeyask is impacting us at the education  
18 part, concerning the parents because they have to  
19 leave their children, and the children are left at  
20 home, and they feel lonely. They feel neglected  
21 at times. And it is really impacting on our  
22 learning at the school, this Keeyask time. And it  
23 is impacting us with the flow of traffic, because  
24 of the trucks and alcohol coming through our  
25 community, strangers coming into our town. It is

1 impacting us a lot. And I see a lot of this in  
2 the school because I have to keep counselling the  
3 students. I'm the vice principal. My name is  
4 Janet McIvor.

5           And some of the students are sitting  
6 here, and I encourage the students to come up and  
7 ask questions and talk about how, you know, you  
8 are impacted by the Hydro development that's  
9 happening further up. Don't be shy to come up and  
10 ask questions, and talk about how it has affected  
11 you, because it is affecting us. I feel it every  
12 day how it is affecting us.

13           And like, we used to have the leisure  
14 of going down fishing, doing outdoor lifestyles  
15 and all of that. We can't even do that anymore,  
16 because this summer when there was a high level of  
17 water, they wanted us to use 20-foot boats. I  
18 don't have a 20-foot boat. And how come they  
19 can't accommodate us by providing that kind of  
20 transportation for us, our leisure?

21           And water, drinking water, it is  
22 affecting us, our health. I buy lots, every week  
23 I buy about five, six cases in Thompson. And I'm  
24 not a rich lady. And I know some -- all of our  
25 community, we need that water in our community,

1 and Hydro is not providing that. They do that for  
2 York Landing. I mean, yeah, York Landing they  
3 provide that water, bottled water. We need that,  
4 even at the school. We need that. So if you can  
5 make a recommendation for Hydro to provide water  
6 to our students and to our community, because our  
7 communities, the health is not -- it is in  
8 jeopardy. Our diabetes and cancer is going up.

9 And I will just leave it at that. I  
10 will get somebody to talk you, because I got other  
11 stuff to talk about. But I will get somebody to  
12 bring up other issues. Okay. Thank you.

13 MICHAEL KEEPER: That was Janet  
14 McIvor. I'm going to paraphrase a little bit in  
15 our language what she said for the benefit of some  
16 of the elders in the audience. (Native language  
17 spoken).

18 Can I say something? I guess  
19 development started in 1957, and I was born in  
20 1965. I'm 52 years old at this point in my life.  
21 I got grandkids. I have been married for 30  
22 years. And I have a number of grandkids. And I  
23 worry about them for the future. And some of the  
24 things that I worry quite a bit about is the water  
25 quality in our community.

1                   When I was a kid I learned to swim  
2 when I was probably around three years old. And  
3 our environment provided the best natural  
4 playground for us kids, because we didn't have a  
5 lot of money when I was growing up. We had a lot  
6 of natural resources in our territory, though.  
7 And swimming was -- swimming is one of the  
8 greatest passions of my life. I still swim a lot.  
9 And I remember as a four, five year old, looking  
10 with my eyes open in the water, looking at the  
11 little fish that were swimming around all over the  
12 place. You come into our territory today, you  
13 can't even see two feet in front of you. You look  
14 into containers that have been purchased to hold  
15 our water nowadays, you know, sometimes there is a  
16 sick kind of settlement of, I don't know what the  
17 heck it is, but it is being consumed by our  
18 people.

19                   And, you know, when I was a kid the  
20 norm for our people was probably 90 to about 100  
21 years old. I used to see a lot of centenarians  
22 among our people. You can hardly see elders  
23 around in our community when you look around.  
24 They are all gone.

25                   And most of our people, the oldest you

1 can hope to be nowadays as a First Nation person  
2 is around 60 years old. So development has taken  
3 probably half of our life span away from us. At  
4 least 40 years has disappeared from our life span  
5 in that -- I see people my age, I'm probably going  
6 to be dying in the next ten years. You know,  
7 that's how development has affected our health.

8           There is kids, if you went to our  
9 nursing station and you looked at the stats, you  
10 know, we looked at our stats at one point in our  
11 community when we were fighting to get  
12 transportation for the people of this community  
13 that are affected in their health because of  
14 development. There is a lot of diabetes. There  
15 is a lot of autism. Cancer is really prevalent in  
16 our community, where people that are my age are  
17 dying from cancer. You know, it is really scary.

18           And you know, as a kid, as a kid I  
19 remember going around the rocks. And I see a  
20 couple of the guys I used to hang around the rocks  
21 with in the audience here. And, you know, it was,  
22 as kids, five, six years old, we were able to take  
23 fish out of this lake and provide lunch and supper  
24 for our families. And fish is known to be one of  
25 the most healthy foods that you can consume

1 because of all of the health benefits of fish.

2 You go in our lakes today, you don't see too many  
3 fish in there.

4 Our people have known about water that  
5 is kept in a bowl or some sort of bowl, it starts  
6 to lose its quality after so long. And you know,  
7 the elders that know about stagnant water, they  
8 said not to consume that stagnant water, and  
9 that's basically what we are living with in our  
10 territory at this point, because the water has  
11 been stagnated, and it is killing our people.

12 Thank you. (Native language spoken).

13 VICTOR FLETT: I've got a question.  
14 Are you the panel, same panel that approves  
15 licences for Hydro dams to be built?

16 MS. JOHNSON: You have to come to the  
17 microphone.

18 VICTOR FLETT: My name is Victor  
19 Flett. I just asked about are you the same panel  
20 that approves licences for any Hydro development  
21 to be built?

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thanks. It is Victor?  
23 Yeah, thank you. Serge Scrafield, chair. Yes, we  
24 are the same -- the Clean Environment Commission  
25 does hold hearings for licence, for Environment

1 Act licences, including Hydro dams. So I think  
2 the answer to the question is yes. Not  
3 necessarily the same people, but the Commission  
4 does do that. For instance, the CEC did hold a  
5 hearing on Keeyask. They don't make the decision.  
6 They make a recommendation to the Minister, and  
7 the Minister makes decisions. So that's how it  
8 works.

9 VICTOR FLETT: This is the only first  
10 time testimony has ever been given to any Hydro  
11 development?

12 THE CHAIRMAN: No. They have held --  
13 the Commission has held hearings, and I defer to  
14 Cathy as to how many, but on other Hydro  
15 developments as well. So, we've had testimony  
16 from communities. I can't speak about this  
17 community on Keeyask, but I do know that  
18 communities all over the province have testified  
19 before the Commission on Hydro projects.

20 VICTOR FLETT: And outcomes, what are  
21 going to be the outcomes here today? Will the  
22 outcomes of our testimony affect anything in the  
23 future, like our partnership with Hydro?

24 THE CHAIRMAN: I hope so. What we've  
25 been asked to do, by the Minister, so the Minister

1 of Sustainable Development, has asked us to hold  
2 meetings with communities, if they want to meet  
3 with us -- so thank you for inviting us here --  
4 about the impact and analysis that was done on all  
5 of these northern developments, and to get the  
6 views of the communities. And we are -- we are  
7 going to do about three things.

8           First of all, anything expressed to us  
9 will be available. That is why we have a  
10 transcriber, so that all of that will be  
11 available; number one. Number two; we will do a  
12 summary of it. As best we can we will try and  
13 summarize everything that we have heard and  
14 provide that to the Minister. And the third  
15 thing, based on all of that, we will make  
16 suggestions to the Minister on where to go from  
17 here, based on what we hear from the communities.  
18 I should mention many communities, including your  
19 own, have also given us a written document  
20 document. So we have that too.

21           VICTOR FLETT: Thank you.

22           THE CHAIRMAN: I do want to add to  
23 what both Nathan and Mike said here, it is great  
24 to see all of the students here. So thanks for  
25 coming. If you have any views, we want to hear

1    them about Hydro. That's our job, is to hear the  
2    views about Hydro and the developments as they  
3    affect your community. And I believe -- well, I  
4    know that Nathan said as well, you are going to be  
5    the leaders not that far away, and so we want to  
6    hear from you.

7                   MICHAEL KEEPER: I'm going to try and  
8    paraphrase that exchange there. (Native language  
9    spoken)

10                   JANESSA FLETT: Hi. I want to know  
11   why are we having floods when the dam is not even  
12   built yet? And why is Hydro doing nothing about  
13   it? Like, making those rip raps. Like this past  
14   spring, there was a flood, right? Around the TCN  
15   gas bar, it was horrible. And why are the Hydro  
16   rates going up? Are we paying for their mistakes?  
17   And I heard a lot of stories about the lake when  
18   we were younger -- when the older people were  
19   younger, and we can't even see that anymore. And  
20   as for me, I'm 18 now, and I worked for BBE in  
21   Keeyask. I seen stuff going on there. I seen  
22   their mistakes. They just leave them there  
23   sometimes. They don't -- call them  
24   environmentalists, their safety. And I have the  
25   memory seeing a HP pool, it is used to make

1 concrete. And that could be leaking into our  
2 lake, Nelson River.

3 I think it was just 2016 they seen a  
4 sturgeon with no eyes. We can't even fish here  
5 anymore. We can't swim. We can't swim anymore  
6 because we get rashes on our skin, or we get sick.  
7 And our fish, we can't even trust eating them any  
8 more, you know. It sucks to not be able to eat  
9 out of our own lake. I think that's it.

10 MICHAEL KEEPER: (Native language  
11 spoken).

12 MICHAEL GARSON: I'm not too sure --  
13 I'm not too sure whether you are aware of what we  
14 are talking about. My name is Michael Garson.  
15 There is some of us with the same name, but I'm  
16 the handsomest. But anyway, nice to see you  
17 people.

18 I don't know how much you are aware of  
19 what is happening here. Or did you have to come  
20 here to find out that we have been struggling?  
21 What year was that dam over there, at Kelsey? I'm  
22 asking all of you people here. What year was that  
23 dam in Kelsey? You shouldn't be puzzled.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: We think the late 50s.

25 MICHAEL GARSON: Don't think. You

1 should know all of this information already. You  
2 guys just come here as if you don't know what has  
3 been happening. Don't act like that. We are fed  
4 up with those kind of people coming in here  
5 pretending they don't know nothing. We don't have  
6 to tell you we have been struggling. You guys  
7 heard about it, you guys knew about it, because  
8 you are working with the government.

9                   Now I'm not too sure where you are  
10 standing or where you are coming from. I hope  
11 some of you are 70 years old. Right, some of you  
12 are 70 years old? You should know life now. 60?  
13 You should know life. You should know how these  
14 people feel about their grandchildren. Do you  
15 have grandchildren? Right. Some of us have  
16 grandchildren. These are not stupid questions.  
17 Answer me. Do you have grandchildren already? If  
18 you don't, you better listen to us.

19                   You can't learn anything from the  
20 book. You have to live here. You have to be  
21 around longer before you ask stupid questions.  
22 I'm sorry I have to speak like that, but I hope  
23 you understand where I'm coming from.

24                   I used to be a chief in 1978/79. And  
25 today I still hear the same old problems. We need

1 a water plant. Where is your pens and pencils? I  
2 didn't come here to fight with you guys. But I'm  
3 so fed up already, you guys coming in here  
4 pretending that there is no problem here. Well,  
5 pretending that you don't know what has been  
6 happening. That's not nice. That's not very  
7 nice. We didn't want that project. And you guys  
8 were already involved in it, and our old people  
9 said, don't, don't build that dam.

10 My grandfather never went to  
11 university, but they were a lot smarter than us,  
12 you people. Don't come here to try and solve our  
13 problems. Just write down our problems, and  
14 believe us. I'm sorry that you are not 60 years  
15 old, because apparently you won't understand what  
16 I'm trying to say. We are drinking shit water  
17 right now. I want a new water plant. Not from  
18 this river. Mark that down in your books. We  
19 want a new water plant. Because I don't trust  
20 this river anymore. Do you want to drink our  
21 water? You have some of the young people go get  
22 water from the lake, would you drink it?

23 This is what the young lady was  
24 talking about; she can't swim anymore. Come on,  
25 be honest, who you working for, us or Hydro? Or

1 are you working for the people, for the future?  
2 Because if you are not, you going to be standing  
3 in front of God one of these days, because you are  
4 going to be one of the killers for our young  
5 people. I'm sorry to say that. That's how  
6 urgent -- we have to take care of what God's plan  
7 was.

8 I hope we all believe about God. Did  
9 you hear about God already? He is up there. A  
10 lot of people don't know about that. A lot of us  
11 don't respect God. We think we are so mighty.  
12 What did God say to Adam and Eve in the garden of  
13 Eden? I hope you have heard that story. It is  
14 one of the first stories in humanity. What did he  
15 say? Can you remember what God said to us? Take  
16 care of this garden. Do you know what he meant by  
17 that? Take care of water. Take care of land.

18 And we have polluted -- I'm sorry to  
19 say that you people have polluted more than us,  
20 and you are draining it over here. Now you are  
21 going to block it, they are going to block your  
22 shit that's coming down south.

23 I hope you have heard this before.  
24 But I'm not trying to get you mad. I'm just  
25 trying to make you realize that you can't learn

1 everything from the book. I'm glad that you guys  
2 came, and listened to our youngsters. She spoke  
3 very well. I hope you don't forget her when you  
4 go back. Speak for us. We are not trying to  
5 create enemies.

6           When we said, when we didn't want that  
7 dam over there, there was a reason. My  
8 grandfather said don't build that dam over there.  
9 But it is the sake of money. And I'm scared what  
10 is happening right now. What else, where else  
11 could we go to find jobs? Because it is a  
12 disaster to destroy water. Water is the main  
13 resource in our daily lives. And if you can't  
14 feel that for us, I hope in your fancy offices, I  
15 hope you can remember us. And I think that's why  
16 you are here. Maybe some of you remember it. But  
17 we seen people like you too many times already.

18           We need a new water plant. Our  
19 community is getting larger, just like anywhere  
20 else.

21           I'm not trying to make you mad. I'm  
22 just frustrated watching my grandchildren now, my  
23 great grandchildren, I have two of them, one of  
24 them is a very good jigger right now. I hope he  
25 is healthy enough to -- a little guy not even,

1 just over one year old. I want him to be healthy.  
2 But he is not going to be healthy if he is going  
3 to drink this water here. I'm sorry that I have  
4 to call it shit water. They are not listening to  
5 the people that look after the water plant. There  
6 is garbage coming out of those pipes. That intake  
7 is right in the middle of the channel. And my  
8 elders said already that's not safe, that's not  
9 going to be safe.

10 So we need a big water plant somewhere  
11 else. And I hope Hydro doesn't get away with this  
12 anymore, because it is affecting the lives.  
13 Because God said don't murder, and if you guys  
14 want to murder us with water, you are going to  
15 have to face God one of these days.

16 I'm very concerned, all of us are very  
17 concerned. I'm not afraid to say anything. I  
18 feel for these young people that are growing up.  
19 They are going to have their families pretty soon.  
20 So believe us when we said we are worried. I said  
21 I'm not going to move from here, I was born in  
22 Split Lake and I'm going to die in Split Lake. So  
23 many days that God is going to give me the days in  
24 this world. Like all of us are facing that,  
25 nobody knows. We might even be dead next year.

1 We better work with each other.

2 I'm sick and tired of watching people  
3 come in, and I have to believe my elders when they  
4 said people like you come over here, and that's  
5 when you guys leave you throw away those notes.  
6 Do you know why they say that? Nothing has  
7 happened.

8 So I'm dearly wishing that -- I hope  
9 I'm not the only one, you know, you guys know that  
10 our water is not safe. I wish you guys can donate  
11 \$1 million each, before you go, give it to the  
12 chief maybe. We will improve some of the things  
13 the way it is now. I'm going to ask about that,  
14 if I'm still alive in five years, if you donate  
15 that million dollars to us, for my grandchildren.

16 Nothing is clean anymore. Clean  
17 environment; come on. Before you came here you  
18 should have understood the water is contaminated  
19 already. The whole channel from Norway House all  
20 the way to York Factory. Do you believe me? You  
21 can not make the water clear again. You know what  
22 they say when they start operating that generating  
23 station at Kelsey, 1957. How many years is that?  
24 42 plus 17 -- 60 years ago.

25 He says, Michael, how come you are so

1 worried about water? Don't you trust God? And I  
2 had to stare for a few moments. I thought Hydro,  
3 is stupid question. Michael, do you believe in  
4 God? Why are you so worried about water? My God  
5 said look after the water. And we are not.

6           And nobody can tell me -- my  
7 grandfather told me already when I used to sit  
8 down with him early in the morning, to pray to  
9 God, that nothing would harm the people in this  
10 world. So you better believe us. We are worried.

11           It is not even completed yet, but that  
12 shit is going to back up, and I don't know whether  
13 there is going to be a Split Lake anymore. And I  
14 hope you guys will hide if that happens, because  
15 you are one of the workers that didn't do  
16 anything. You are going to regret that you didn't  
17 help us.

18           So anyway, 40 years, did I say 40  
19 years or 60 years? He said in 50 years time,  
20 don't worry, Michael, that water is going to be  
21 clear in 50 years time. And today I can honestly  
22 say it has gotten worse. The fish are dying. You  
23 heard that young person.

24           How would you like to swim under the  
25 water, and then you bang into a rock, or whatever?

1 This is what is happening to the creatures that  
2 live in the water. They are deformed because they  
3 are banging their heads. They didn't see the  
4 rocks anymore. We can't see the fish anymore. I  
5 used to see fish, going with my grandfather back  
6 and forth in the channel here, no worry. I  
7 just -- I just took some water, clear water, like  
8 we buy in the store. Clear water, that's how it  
9 was when I grew up.

10 But about 1970, that's when it is  
11 murky, until now. We found everything on that  
12 channel. What else do you have to know? What  
13 else do we have to prove before you believe us?

14 We need that water plant. I need that  
15 water plant. These people need the water plant.  
16 Our future needs a water plant, not from this  
17 channel. I don't know why they are not bringing  
18 us clear water. That's the other promise that  
19 they gave us. They would supply clean water every  
20 week. It is not happening. That's one of the  
21 promises that Hydro made. Did you know about  
22 that? Did you study our agreement book? I'm sure  
23 sad that you people are helping out the government  
24 destroy the land and water. I hope your families  
25 are okay. And we hope our families are okay.

1 Thanks so much for listening.

2 I'm not mad, I'm worried. Thank you.

3 MICHAEL KEEPER: Michael Garson, one  
4 of our former chiefs. I'm just going to  
5 paraphrase what I remember from his speech.  
6 (Native language spoken).

7 NATHAN NECKOWAY: The mic is still  
8 open everybody. The ones that just walked in, the  
9 people that are up front here, they sit on the  
10 Clean Environmental Commission board. There is  
11 the Environmental Act that's been implemented in  
12 Manitoba, and now basically they provide reports  
13 to the Minister in relation to any Hydro -- any  
14 other development projects in Manitoba.

15 So again they are here today to come  
16 to hear from TCN members today regarding Hydro,  
17 how Hydro affected us. They went visiting other  
18 communities. They went and heard their  
19 perspective on how they were impacted. So today  
20 they are here to hear us. And the mic is open for  
21 anybody that wants to share, because we TCN again  
22 have been involved with Hydro many years back,  
23 back in the 50s. Did you want to -- go ahead.

24 WILL DUMAS: I know how the water has  
25 affected us. Water is killing our people today.

1 Too much. This is like a living nightmare for the  
2 past 60 years. 18 years, I have been living here  
3 a long time. Water is affecting us. Garbage, I  
4 have seen a lot of cans, beer bottles, everything  
5 in the water exposing it, killing our people,  
6 leading to the cancer, disease.

7 My name is Will Dumas, born in  
8 Winnipeg, 1999. I was speaking to the people who  
9 worked at the Hydro -- like you can't work, the  
10 money isn't power, it is about life. Humanity,  
11 human race we are. The creators who made us. You  
12 people, Hydro, do you work for the government?  
13 Even though they work, they work as humanity falls  
14 one by one. As we fall -- what I have seen is a  
15 living nightmare for this.

16 Many of our people die too much, one  
17 by one. 100, 1,000, I don't even care. Boy, I'm  
18 currently 18 today. We build our water treatment  
19 plant here in Split Lake to store the water for  
20 us, we could swim again. I haven't swam in 18  
21 years right now. I have swim since my 7 to my  
22 12s. Almost like a year now I haven't swim.

23 So you people, I demand this, help us  
24 rebuild our lives again, as we once are. Help us  
25 restore the water, clean up the water and restore

1 it, so we can swim in it and drink water again, as  
2 too much people die on us. This ain't money or  
3 the government, it is about the world, humanity  
4 who has made us, the creator and God made for us.

5 I demand this. Help us restore the  
6 water. Thank you.

7 WADE BEARDY: Hello, my name is Wade  
8 Beardy, and I'm part of the junior chief and  
9 council. Right now we are working on getting a  
10 new pool area in our community. And the sad part  
11 is I haven't swam in this community at all. Like,  
12 I had to go out of my community to swim. Like,  
13 throughout my life, I had to swim in Winnipeg,  
14 Thompson, York Landing. And right now I just wish  
15 I could have swam more often in this community,  
16 not out of it.

17 And right now I'm just working my butt  
18 off to get this community a new pool. And I  
19 shouldn't have to be doing that. We should really  
20 have clean water. And that's the big -- no,  
21 that's the biggest issue with what is going on in  
22 this community.

23 Like my cousin, he used to pick up  
24 crabs along the shoreline, but that's -- that's  
25 not happening any more. That's -- to me that's

1 really sad. So can you please fix the water issue  
2 in our community. Thank you.

3 MICHAEL KEEPER: (Native language  
4 spoken)

5 MARCEL BEARDY: I am Marcel Beardy,  
6 and I grew up in TCN. And I have been doing  
7 environmental studies the past 17 years already,  
8 in different areas, towards water quality,  
9 aquatics and waterfowl and terrestrial animals.  
10 And my main concern is, like I used to work for  
11 Hydro, seven years as an utility worker. And from  
12 what I see from my own eyes what Hydro is still  
13 doing, still going on, like ongoing, like today,  
14 right now, like every summer. Like pouring  
15 contaminated, radiated water, like it is cancer  
16 related, and it is still ongoing today. They do  
17 that every summer.

18 They store water, like in a pool,  
19 three foot pool, that's got seven of them, and it  
20 is filled up every summer, like snow and rain  
21 water gets in there, and it seeps down into these  
22 holding tanks. And it is contaminated. And what  
23 Hydro is doing, like every year, like they dispose  
24 that water into our drinking water so our kids can  
25 swim in it, our people drink in it. We lost a lot

1 of people through cancer related over the years.

2 I'm pretty sure you know that.

3 But that's my main concern in that  
4 area. And I hope you take back from what I've  
5 been saying. And that's all I got for now. Thank  
6 you.

7 MICHAEL KEEPER: (Native language  
8 spoken)

9 And one thing I forgot to mention,  
10 Councillor Nathan is encouraging our people to  
11 come forward. Okay.

12 BETSY FLETT: (Native language spoken)

13 MICHAEL KEEPER: That's one of our  
14 elders. Her name is Betsy Flett, and she is 80  
15 years old. And she's got basically one complaint  
16 about development that's happened in our  
17 territory, and she goes back to her memories when  
18 she was a young girl on her land. This land  
19 belonged to the First Nations, she said. And it  
20 was always First Nation land. And when Hydro came  
21 on to our territory and disturbed us, we had  
22 everything. There was plenty of fish. The water  
23 was great. Our land was teeming with wildlife  
24 that our people have always used to sustain  
25 ourselves.

1                   And she says after Hydro came  
2 everything disappeared. Where is my land? Where  
3 is the resources that I grew up with? I never  
4 needed nothing from anybody. Everything that I  
5 needed to live and to sustain myself, my land  
6 provided that for me.

7                   And we never needed hand outs, didn't  
8 need anything from anybody.

9                   And Hydro, when they first brought --  
10 when they first enticed our people with power,  
11 there was old people, there was elders at this  
12 table, she said. And they brought some instrument  
13 in here and they told our people that it would  
14 cost us three dollars to light our homes, and now  
15 once they -- the first thing that they did when  
16 they brought the little trinket of light into this  
17 community is they polluted the river system. They  
18 put a line across this river in order to light up  
19 this community, she says. And that's the first  
20 thing that I remember of Hydro doing to our land.

21                   They put something foreign into our  
22 water system, and that's when destruction started,  
23 she said. And that's what we've been living with  
24 ever since they disturbed our way of life.

25                   And she says from the three dollars

1 that we had to pay with the beginning of our  
2 relationship with Manitoba Hydro, the prices today  
3 that we are living with are astronomical compared  
4 to the three dollars that we were promised that we  
5 were going to pay to light up our homes.

6           And it seems like everything that  
7 proceeds from these people is about deceit. And  
8 they play with our people. It is almost like, it  
9 is almost like somebody that -- or an animal that  
10 has prey is what she was alluding to. Sometimes  
11 you see an animal that when they train their --  
12 when they train their young to bring game down,  
13 they will let out a little mouse in front of them,  
14 and that's basically what she sees from Manitoba  
15 Hydro in terms of the treatment they have  
16 perpetrated on our people, she says. They play  
17 with our people.

18           They come into our territory, the  
19 light that we enjoy in our territory, and we were  
20 partners to, they use it as a weapon against our  
21 people, she says.

22           So what I want you guys to take back  
23 to Manitoba Hydro, she says, is for them to quit  
24 using that resource as a weapon against our  
25 people, she says, because it has brought nothing

1 but destruction to this territory, is what I see,  
2 she says.

3           And I'm just about finished my journey  
4 on this land that was given to me by the creator  
5 as a gift, she says. I'm just about finished my  
6 journey, and there is a lot of those -- a lot of  
7 those people that I grew up with, they are in the  
8 ground and they are sleeping, and I'm ready to go  
9 there too, she said. But I'm worried about the  
10 young people, she says. I'm really worried for  
11 them. So that's why I want Manitoba Hydro to be  
12 aware of this message that, you know, to quit  
13 fooling around with our people. Make things  
14 right. Egosi.

15           MELANIE SPENCE: Hello. My name is  
16 Melanie Spence. I'm a teacher here in the  
17 community. I'm also -- I've been a councillor too  
18 for two years, and I did speak with the CEC  
19 hearing in Winnipeg while I was a councillor.

20           My question is to the panel here, or  
21 the CEC in general, why are the board -- why is  
22 the Clean Environment Commission approving any  
23 dams at all? It is like the board are helping  
24 kill our people, are helping destroy our food  
25 supply, everything. Like our elders said, we have

1 nothing left. You are basically killing our  
2 spirit. You are killing who we are.

3 The government has done nothing but  
4 found ways to assimilate us to make us live like  
5 them. We are pushed on to reserves to be  
6 different, to have our -- to live our traditional  
7 way of life, at least try.

8 We can't even eat the fish here any  
9 more. We can't even go out to what is left of our  
10 traditional area, because of the water conditions,  
11 the ice conditions. Can trappers actually trap  
12 anymore? Can they go on the land anymore? How  
13 many more people are going to die because of the  
14 conditions of the ice, because of the food that's  
15 around us? We can't even eat moose meat. Can we  
16 trust the moose meat around here anymore?

17 Hydro has done nothing but kill us  
18 slowly. We have -- I don't even know what they  
19 call those stomach illnesses anyway, and some have  
20 cancer. H pylori I think it is called. My  
21 husband has that. My next door neighbour, Alice  
22 Bitter, I hope she is here, and I hope she is  
23 going to talk soon.

24 I just want to express that Hydro has  
25 done nothing but hurt us, and we will not stand

1 for another dam, and I resent this one that's  
2 being built right now.

3           There is so much cocaine being sold in  
4 the community and on the site there. They find  
5 ways through the computer to sell. People don't  
6 even come home with a pay cheque. They sell their  
7 cocaine, they spend their money over there. I  
8 heard they even had slot machines that they had to  
9 pull them out of there.

10           What is Canada saying? Well, throw  
11 money at the Indians just to get what we want. Is  
12 Hydro and Canada willing to relocate our community  
13 if it floods? Four days we suffered. We couldn't  
14 even leave our homes because of how much it  
15 snowed. Our councillor had to demand a helicopter  
16 because he knew our community would flood. Hydro  
17 didn't want to give that helicopter, but he  
18 practically swore at them. He said I will hold  
19 you responsible. It is not easy talking about  
20 what Hydro does to us. I will hold you  
21 responsible if anybody dies from these floods that  
22 will occur. And our community did flood. Did  
23 they throw \$3 million at us? Is that what our  
24 lives are worth? \$3 million?

25           Once that dam is up, it is going to be

1 up, what, three more feet, three metres? What is  
2 it? This is just the beginning. I'm surprised  
3 there is not more negotiations because there is  
4 not even an emergency plan for our people if this  
5 community flooded. Split Lake will become an  
6 island. Already they are talking about bringing  
7 it in higher again.

8                   What is left of our resource  
9 management area? They flooded over there. That's  
10 all that's left of Split Lake.

11                   They didn't even compensate for Bipole  
12 I and II. What did they give my grandpa? A box  
13 of traps. Is that all he is worth? That was his  
14 livelihood. He had brothers and sisters, that's  
15 how they lived. Hydro didn't care about them. My  
16 uncles today, their family, they are suffering.  
17 They were never compensated. People don't have a  
18 choice around here because Hydro bullies their  
19 way. My brother-in-law, Jonathan, was bullied out  
20 of there. He didn't want that dam there, but that  
21 was his trapline, and the Saunders and whoever  
22 else, that family line. Nobody wanted it. But  
23 does Canada care? Does the province care? No,  
24 they just want our Hydro bills to pay for your  
25 dam.

1                   And, yes, we had beaches. Our kids  
2   won't see that. My era was probably the last  
3   kids, my age group, we had beaches. My grandkids  
4   will never see what Split Lake was like. Why do  
5   we have to pay for a swimming pool when it was  
6   Canada that approved everything? We should be  
7   given a pool. We should be given a water  
8   treatment plant, because we can't even drink from  
9   this river. What makes Thompson special? What  
10   makes Churchill special? I bet Canada paid for  
11   their water treatment plants, and Gillam.

12                   Don't we have a right to live? Second  
13   class citizens, that's who we are. There is a  
14   resource -- there is a sign on the highway; the  
15   Minister of Canada wanted it down because we are  
16   not paying \$50 a month? Why do we have to follow  
17   anybody's rules when it is our land, this is our  
18   reserve land.

19                   You guys are all visitors in our home.  
20   That was brought up by one of the council members  
21   too. We shouldn't have to ask for permission what  
22   we want to do to keep the drugs out of our  
23   community. That's what is happening, drug dealers  
24   coming in here and hurting our children. That's  
25   what I'm so upset about.

1                   And the damage that Hydro is causing  
2   to flood our communities, and they are doing  
3   nothing, they are saying pay for it yourself. We  
4   will replace one board if one board is damaged.  
5   But they damaged everything over there. Thank  
6   you.

7                   MICHAEL KEEPER: Now Melanie Spence.  
8   She is one of our teachers. And she covered a lot  
9   of subjects. (Native language spoken). I will  
10  stop there. There was a lot of areas that she  
11  covered like mostly about (Native language spoken)

12                  MELANIE SPENCE: I would like to add  
13  one more thing. The pre-determined compensation  
14  that we are getting after the floods, high water,  
15  low water monies. Why is Hydro making us pay for  
16  their mess with our compensation dollars? Why is  
17  it coming from basically that, the compensation  
18  dollars? 5 per cent of what they are giving goes  
19  to the workers to clean up their mess. Why isn't  
20  that money coming directly from Hydro? That's  
21  what I'm wondering. Compensate you and now you  
22  work for it, is basically what Hydro's message is.  
23  We will destroy it, but you clean up our mess.  
24  What kind of picture is that? Pre-determined  
25  compensation, 5 per cent has to go to a shoreline

1 clean up to make our people clean up their mess.

2 I just want to put that on record, why is Hydro  
3 doing that?

4 NATHAN NECKOWAY: Okay. Thank you to  
5 the members that talked, you know, for the last  
6 couple of hours. But the lunch is ready. We are  
7 going to eat first. We have been waiting for  
8 lunch. The cooks are done, so we are going to  
9 take about maybe, 15, 20 minutes to grab something  
10 and then we will continue with comments.

11 (Luncheon recess taken)

12 NATHAN NECKOWAY: Welcome back  
13 everybody. I would like to thank the ladies and  
14 gentlemen for providing a good lunch. Thank you  
15 ladies and gentlemen.

16 But anyways, we will continue with why  
17 we are here today, but for those that walked in, I  
18 just want to again introduce the panel. The four  
19 that sit up here, they sit on a Clean  
20 Environmental Commission. They are basically here  
21 to listen to us, TCN, in relation to Hydro, how  
22 the development affects us that live in Split  
23 Lake. They have been going around to other  
24 communities and listening to their concerns, their  
25 impacts that occurred amongst them. From when we

1 started earlier to lunch, we heard a number of  
2 good comments, concerns.

3           But again, like, I met them this  
4 morning at the Stewardship Centre, and I basically  
5 gave them heads up that what they are going to  
6 hear from members could be really touching, and it  
7 is really a big impact on our members on how --  
8 you heard some members, you know, become  
9 emotional. There was some anger. There was some  
10 frustrations.

11           But all in all, this process, you know  
12 has been going on for years and years and years,  
13 and now we hope that, you know, finally, some  
14 group, you know, on a government level can  
15 understand us.

16           And basically you heard also what is  
17 the outcome of today. But again, like, we are  
18 going to hear more. And I know you heard lots in  
19 relation to how the water is affected. And I know  
20 sitting around lunch, people had the opportunity  
21 to express more. But again, like we can talk  
22 about these for days and days. But again, I know  
23 we are limited on time, so I think we have about  
24 another hour and 15 minutes before they have to  
25 head back.

1                   Anyways, I will open the mic up and I  
2 know that Larry is going to be talking.

3                   LARRY BEARDY: Hello, my name is Larry  
4 Beardy. I'm a high school teacher, I'm from this  
5 community, Tataskweyak. I gave you some documents  
6 that are outstanding, particularly in a certain  
7 area, in the resource area, for users of the land.  
8 That's what I gave you, those documents. (Native  
9 language spoken).

10                  The other thing I wanted to talk  
11 about, it is not documented, but I did notify some  
12 people at Keeyask, especially the lead people. I  
13 know they have discussions around the environment,  
14 about the land and what happens around the land.  
15 One of the things that really affect us is the  
16 turbidity of the water, also the acceleration of  
17 the water. And in our area, Split Lake, it is  
18 like a funnel. All of the water flows into this  
19 lake, and it really causes a lot of problems, more  
20 specifically the water and also the animals and  
21 the waterfowl.

22                  One of the things that I wanted to  
23 bring to the environmental people is how can we,  
24 in our modern technology, how can we control the  
25 speed of the water, the acceleration of the water?

1 How can we control that? And also how can we  
2 control all the amount of debris that comes into  
3 the lake?

4 I'm pretty sure you heard some of the  
5 people -- the students have mentioned there is no  
6 place to swim. The water is very, you know, it is  
7 not very potable for us. So that's what I wanted  
8 to bring to your attention.

9 We've been reading about in the  
10 school, especially in science, in the area of  
11 science, that there are technologies available in  
12 the world where there is hydro development. They  
13 talk about what about bogs, putting bogs in the  
14 tributaries to stream the water, strain and funnel  
15 the water that comes in, anything that comes  
16 through. What about that concept? There is  
17 places in the world where they grew bogs. We  
18 studied that in school, in high school.

19 Also what about controlling the speed  
20 of the water that's coming in, especially in  
21 places like Split Lake where there is a community?  
22 There is places in the world -- I've been to  
23 Israel myself, I've been there two times. I see  
24 how Israel controls the tide. The tide is a force  
25 of water that is accelerated by the natural

1 environment like the wind. But you can control  
2 the speed of that water coming. And they use --  
3 they use barriers. They use barriers to control  
4 water. How come you can't build barriers on the  
5 river, and control the water coming into the lake?  
6 That kind of concept.

7 I'm pretty sure in this modern age of  
8 engineers and scientists, how come we can't  
9 resolve those two issues; the acceleration of the  
10 water and also the amount of debris. The  
11 acceleration of water causes the sediments in the  
12 water. It destroys the lake bottom. That's why  
13 the fish disappear. That's why there is mercury  
14 in the system. How come we can't control that?  
15 That is my question today.

16 And I hope with Hydro and the  
17 Commission, they can talk about that. And also  
18 talk to our people who have the traditional  
19 knowledge. Talk to our elders. The people that  
20 are on the land, talk to them. And I'm pretty  
21 sure that we can minimize the impacts of all of  
22 that hydro development has caused.

23 May I remind the Commission also that  
24 Hydro development, the majority of Hydro  
25 development in Manitoba is created in the Split

1 Lake resource management area. The majority of  
2 development is here. And that's why we are so  
3 adamant, we are so angry, we are so frustrated  
4 about all of that development that surrounds us.  
5 Something has to be done. Something.

6                   And that's all I bring to your  
7 attention today. And I hope with the help of the  
8 Commission, that let's get these discussions  
9 going, how we could minimize the impacts. We are  
10 talking not only today, but we are talking also  
11 for future generations. I'm pretty sure that we  
12 can do something.

13                   (Native language spoken).

14                   So that's what I wanted to share with  
15 you today. From a personal view, my own view,  
16 Hydro has been with us since, I don't know, early  
17 50s. So we are talking a long time Manitoba Hydro  
18 has developed in our area. So I share that with  
19 you today, and I hope that the Commission is  
20 listening. Sometimes we have commissions come  
21 through, and the next thing we know those  
22 commissions are tabled, they sit on the shelf for  
23 150 years. They just sit on a table.

24                   Same with the Royal Commission. We  
25 had a Royal Commission here. Where is all of the

1 things, the recommendations the Commission  
2 recommended? They are sitting on a shelf some  
3 place.

4 That's all I want to say, so thank you  
5 very much for coming to my community Tataskweyak.  
6 Egesi.

7 ALLAN KEEPER: Hello. Tansi. My name  
8 is Allan Keeper, from this community, Split Lake.  
9 I had a chance to speak to a couple of guys, Serge  
10 and Tim, I wanted to share with the other ones  
11 about what I said. Anyway, what is missing, I  
12 told Serge is somebody speaking Cree in the  
13 commission. The language is missing in your  
14 panel, on behalf of the First Nations people that  
15 they are speaking for, especially TCN. (Native  
16 language spoken).

17 That's what is missing, the  
18 translation. Who you are going to talk to, to  
19 present this material to, to the government? So I  
20 have a friend, he is in grade 12. He grades  
21 people taking Native studies in the University of  
22 Manitoba. And he grades people with a PhD degree.  
23 And the reason why he does that is because a  
24 professor cannot grade a paper, whatever, that's  
25 written, because it is talking about culture, and

1 his student is writing about culture, he can not  
2 grade that. So they assign somebody that knows  
3 about culture, their spirituality and their ways  
4 in order to grade that student to get his PhD  
5 degree.

6                   And that language is missing. That's  
7 what I'm saying. When you go there and present it  
8 to the government, he is not going to -- there is  
9 going to be things missing because your way of  
10 thinking is different. I said we talk about  
11 ethnocentrism and marginalization and the bias,  
12 and these three words -- you know,  
13 marginalization, we talk about it here. Our  
14 people are frustrated, cast aside from the rest of  
15 Canada, not listened to. Ethnocentrism, when the  
16 western society tells you it doesn't apply to  
17 western culture, it doesn't apply to Canada. It  
18 doesn't apply, it doesn't work that way.

19                   You talk to a lawyer, he will say that  
20 our laws are here already. We have laws too. We  
21 have rules. We have sacred rules, laws that apply  
22 to us. Those are the things that you must  
23 understand these things. Somebody has to do a  
24 workshop with you guys for this to happen, for you  
25 to understand a little more. I don't have time to

1 do a workshop for stuff like that, but you have to  
2 have that respect to do that, to come into a  
3 community and have that respect.

4 I told these guys, my language, when  
5 you greet somebody, Watchia (ph), it means to shed  
6 light. When the newcomers came here, our people  
7 said Watchia, it means we respect and honour your  
8 land, your environment where you come from. In  
9 return, do that to us. That's what we expected.  
10 That is not happening. We need that respect.

11 Even today, in today's society, the  
12 way we are educated, what needs to happen is  
13 that's what I wish for that to happen in the  
14 government. Because you are sending a message,  
15 you want to come to speak to us, you have to have  
16 that respect, you have to have that integrity.  
17 And that doesn't take much to happen. You can not  
18 go there and just think from your perspective and  
19 go there, and present this material.

20 So, that's why this guy that has grade  
21 12 that grades a guy with a PhD degree, because  
22 that's what these people are saying, the people  
23 that spoke here. We talk about Wachi (ph), it  
24 mean mountain, it means a tree going straight up.  
25 We have a foundation under there, we have roots

1 with the trees. Everything. These are what  
2 creator wanted. He wanted these laws to look  
3 after Mother Earth. That's why the leaders,  
4 Justin Trudeau, he said that, the Native people,  
5 we have to turn to them, we have to listen to them  
6 because they know what is happening to the earth.

7           On the other note, on the other side  
8 of the word, Machi (ph), it means bad, everything  
9 is upside down. If the tree is upside down, it  
10 has no roots, it has no connection. It has  
11 nothing. The Indian Act has nothing. The laws,  
12 they don't have any meaning. That's why there is  
13 destruction, machi, you know, these are bad  
14 things. Just like my language, it tells me that.

15           Our language is powerful. Our  
16 language in the Cree way, it is called (Native  
17 language spoken). That's the true meaning. It  
18 means spiritual language. That's what Cree is.  
19 We have been called Cree by the newcomers. We are  
20 called Christianites, people of the cross. It is  
21 not the real word.

22           So a lot of times, what I'm trying to  
23 say is we need true meaning. We need truth. We  
24 need to hear our voice. So that's one of the  
25 things I recommend.

1                    Briefly about what happened to our  
2     territory here; I'm a trapper, I am a land  
3     resource user, I trap. My cabin was under the  
4     water, about that much high water went over there  
5     through the Nelson River and through the Odie  
6     River. When Hydro released water from Churchill  
7     River it diverted itself through the land. A  
8     creek became a river. A pond became a lake.  
9     That's how it looked up from the chopper ride I  
10    went.

11                   Over there, after the fact, there was  
12    muskrats drowned; the best swimmers, otters and  
13    beaver. All of these egg shells laying all over  
14    the shore. It says in the agreement, 1977 and '92  
15    agreement, it says before any damage is done on  
16    our territory, on our resource territory, there  
17    has to be assessment done, environmental  
18    assessment it is called. I believe this  
19    Commission sits on that. That's the law.  
20    Environmental law, the Environmental Act of  
21    Manitoba, it says that in there, before you flood  
22    any territory within our resource area, you have  
23    to do an archeological study.

24                   We have a graveyard sitting outside  
25    our cabin. I don't believe any environmental

1 person ever stepped into there and looked at, hey,  
2 there is a graveyard. Hey, there is a  
3 pre-historic land site here, a marking, where  
4 native people have lived here for thousands of  
5 years. Nothing has been done in that way. It is  
6 going to go that way, because if the water is high  
7 here, it is going to affect it over here. That  
8 river comes this way, it goes down, and it is  
9 going to go up because there is no way for it to  
10 fluctuate into. That has to be done. That's what  
11 I wish for these laws that you talk about to be  
12 listened to. That needs to happen.

13                   So, when you go there, where is the  
14 feedback? I want to see the feedback. Where is  
15 the information, where is the global, where is the  
16 email of what was done? I know the Bipole III,  
17 the environmental sat here. I never saw any  
18 feedback. I know they were traveling around the  
19 community talking about this.

20                   But again, I hear there was an Ojibway  
21 person sitting on the panel.

22                   So there was more people here, more  
23 damage here too. They have to have that respect.  
24 People want respect here. They want to be  
25 listened to. That's what they are wishing for.

1 We are just not blowing air in here and going  
2 nowhere. It has to go somewhere. Who is going to  
3 carry this? Who is going to be our leader? The  
4 chief and council who is our voice.

5 We have a voice called trappers.  
6 Those are our treaty rights, trappers, fishermen,  
7 hunters, we are the resource users, we need a  
8 voice, not only chief and council.

9 We need language people that can  
10 interpret to talk to people, and then bring the  
11 true meaning, the truth of what is happening.

12 So, I hope -- I don't know what is  
13 going to happen here after, I heard there is --  
14 what happens next? Are you going to select this  
15 person that's going to report back in Cree?

16 So, this is written in our agreements  
17 with the Government of Canada, it is already in  
18 there. It is in the big binder, '77 agreement.  
19 So it is already written in there, except it is  
20 being infringed upon. Nobody listens to it.  
21 Hydro comes in here, they think it is their land  
22 already. They think that they can do whatever  
23 they please here. And they disrespect the laws  
24 that were signed already. This is signed by the  
25 Government of Canada and the Province already. It

1 is there in black and white.

2 Are you guys aware of these  
3 agreements? You need somebody to translate that,  
4 a logical person like a lawyer or somebody, to  
5 talk this -- to tell you it is already here. This  
6 has to be passed, this has to be listened to.

7 Already myself, I'm a high school  
8 teacher, I'm a native studies teacher. That's  
9 what I teach. I read it, it is there. (Native  
10 language spoken).

11 I just translated to the elders, who  
12 is going to take our voice? After you guys leave,  
13 where are you going to take it to? I know that we  
14 had opinions on the last commission, on the Bipole  
15 III, we sat down like this. We spoke. And I  
16 never heard of anything about it. There was no  
17 Cree voice up there to bring back to the people  
18 what was said. There was no -- nothing brought  
19 back. No information, not even a document that I  
20 saw. That's what I look for as a teacher, to  
21 bring current information to the classroom.

22 So what is going to happen? Are you  
23 guys going to select a voice, a speaker for us,  
24 and bring back that information to us that's  
25 ongoing? Because I know, the fact every time we

1 sit like this in the band council, there has to be  
2 something else coming up within the government.  
3 Like Conawapa, we sat down with the people,  
4 listened to their concerns.

5 I'm suspicious every time the  
6 government comes here and sends their people here.  
7 Is this to say that we sat down with the people  
8 already, we listened to them? How many more times  
9 are we going to sit like this and pursue with  
10 Conawapa, or to any other environmental future,  
11 economic development, that's going to happen  
12 within this country, Manitoba? So, those are the  
13 things that I see, because I know that's law,  
14 that's part of the law of Canada, they have to  
15 address our concerns. But do they listen to it?

16 So I just wanted to express that.  
17 There is so much more to be said. Egosi. Thank  
18 you.

19 ELIZABETH BEARDY: Hello, I'm glad you  
20 people are here. It is about time that people  
21 come to our community to listen to what we have to  
22 say. My name is Elizabeth Beardy. I'm a liaison  
23 worker for TCN, I work in Keeyask. God gave me a  
24 mouth and God gave me a voice. Today I will use  
25 that voice and the mouth to speak on behalf of the

1 people, because I'm a mother, grandmother, and a  
2 great grandmother.

3 (Native language spoken)

4 I want to bring you back to when I was  
5 a little girl, in the past when I was growing up.  
6 I see some of my friends here. In the summertime  
7 after school we used to run down, we used to go  
8 down to the lake because our water was nice and  
9 clean before in the '60s. We used to take our  
10 shoes off, our socks off and roll up our pants up  
11 above our knees and go in the water. And we would  
12 get these little cans, and we would stand there,  
13 and you would see all kinds of different little  
14 fish swimming around. We used to go like this.  
15 We were just so happy to get fish in our little  
16 tin cans. And some days I used to run up to my  
17 granny. I used to get so happy, look, granny,  
18 (Native language spoken). I used to say that.  
19 There used to be probably five different little  
20 fish in there. And she used to have names for all  
21 of those little fish that I caught in the water.  
22 But today you don't see that.

23 And in the early of my married life,  
24 my husband and I used to take our children  
25 swimming down at the beach. We used to have

1 beaches. There is probably five different places  
2 where we had nice sandy beaches. But today we  
3 don't see that. If only you come here in the  
4 summertime and look around. You can't walk around  
5 along the shore like we used to because of the rip  
6 rap. It looks ugly.

7                   And where I work, sometimes I go on a  
8 tour, I go every now and then. And two weeks ago,  
9 I went down to that site, and it had a great  
10 impact on me. When I came up from there, I was so  
11 emotional, I had to take the afternoon off.

12                   The way I felt when I was looking  
13 around, sure those guys are happy. Oh, it is  
14 going to be -- it is going to look nice. So it is  
15 going to look nice to them, but not to us, because  
16 our land is destroyed. A lot of trees are gone.

17                   The animals and the fish, they have  
18 taken sturgeon out of that water and they tried to  
19 put it somewhere else. They don't know what they  
20 do to us. We feel the hurt and the pain in what  
21 we see. I can only speak for myself, because this  
22 is what I seen.

23                   And another time when I went down, it  
24 was about a year and a half ago I went for a ride  
25 down towards that south access road. And there

1 was another devastation that I seen. As I  
2 parked -- stopped to park on the side of the road,  
3 I pulled over, and then I walked across the road.  
4 And I was looking around. No trees around in that  
5 big spot. And then I seen a vehicle coming behind  
6 me. So I ran back to my vehicle. And the red and  
7 blue lights came on. It wasn't the RCMP. It was  
8 a game warden.

9                   When I ran back to my truck he came  
10 walking. He says, "What are you doing, are you  
11 hunting?" That angered me. I told him hunting?  
12 Turn around and take a good look of what it looks  
13 like there. What am I going to hunt when there is  
14 no trees around? You guys have chased all of the  
15 birds away, the animals. I said, yes, I'm  
16 hunting, I'm taking pictures of what devastation  
17 you guys are creating, I said. And the partner I  
18 had with me was so scared. After that guy walked  
19 away, because I didn't give up in responding to  
20 each question he had asked me. He was curious  
21 what I was doing there. I had every right to be  
22 there, to see what was going on to our land. What  
23 our land is being -- that it has been desecrated.  
24 And it really hurts.

25                   This is what we go through. A lot of

1 people do not understand, people that live down  
2 south. And each time we want something, Hydro  
3 denies it. They always say it is an act of God.  
4 It is not an act of God, it is always man-made  
5 destruction that we have here. I would like to  
6 continue, but I don't think that I can stand up  
7 any longer. Egosi.

8 MICHAEL KEEPER: (Native language  
9 spoken).

10 JANET MCIVOR: One more. I just  
11 wanted to mention when my son was working on  
12 security at Keeyask, and he told me, he told me  
13 when there was a very important guest coming in to  
14 the site. The foreman came up to them and said  
15 there was three native security guards and one  
16 east Indian, and two white security. So that boss  
17 said, you three go do something else, and you go  
18 and secure the gate there. It says that to the  
19 east Indian. And you two guys, the white guys,  
20 you two guys, will meet these Hydro guys because  
21 they are important status there. And my son felt  
22 really bad. That's the experience that they have  
23 up there. The bosses -- it is supposed to be zero  
24 tolerance operation.

25 So within a few months he quit because

1 he couldn't stand that. But he is working in the  
2 community now. But I'm thinking the other people  
3 that are working out there, and they meet this  
4 every day. It is not good. And they are going  
5 to -- after they are done over there, they are  
6 going to come into our community and they are  
7 still going to feel it. And I'm just recommending  
8 that Hydro should be more aware of these  
9 contractors that come into our territory to make  
10 sure that they understand our culture up here, not  
11 to be racist like that.

12 My son is not an ugly person, not to  
13 meet these important Manitoba Hydro staff. And it  
14 took a while for him to -- he was so depressed.  
15 It took him a while to get out of that state. And  
16 that's what I'm recommending, that Hydro is  
17 accountable for all of these contractors that go  
18 over there. And they have to make sure -- like,  
19 they don't expect this hatred. Thank you.

20 MICHAEL KEEPER: (Native language  
21 spoken)

22 ANNETTE SAUNDERS: (Native language  
23 spoken).

24 MICHAEL KEEPER: This is Annette  
25 Saunders, one of our elders at TCN. She is just

1 recounting an incident in a meeting where a  
2 representative of Manitoba Hydro spoke on the  
3 relationship that Manitoba Hydro has with the TCN  
4 people. And apparently the statement that he made  
5 at that meeting was, as far as damages go, they  
6 have done no damage as far as TCN is concerned.

7                   And the elder said that she was so  
8 upset by the statement, just from the devastation  
9 she has seen in our community, for a person to  
10 make a statement like that, which was basically a  
11 bold faced lie to her.

12                   So she challenged, and she challenged  
13 with an interpreter, and told the person that, you  
14 know, the problems that you've created in our  
15 territory, you close your eyes to the devastation  
16 and you ignore what our people tell you about it  
17 in terms of the problems that are created in our  
18 territory.

19                   ANNETTE SAUNDERS: (Native language  
20 spoken).

21                   MICHAEL KEEPER: (Interpreting) At  
22 that meeting, with the challenge on the table,  
23 Hydro was told by myself that we see all of the  
24 devastation. Our children are getting hurt around  
25 the shorelines because of the rip rap that's in

1 place because of erosion control. Plus the areas  
2 that our children used to swim are gone, they  
3 disappeared at this point in time. It is just a  
4 lot of devastation throughout our territory.

5 I have just received some hard news.  
6 I think we are going to have to shut down the  
7 meeting at this point. So Annette, did you want  
8 to close off with some thoughts?

9 ANNETTE SAUNDERS: (Native language  
10 spoken).

11 MICHAEL KEEPER: The elder just wanted  
12 to take the time to thank the panel for coming to  
13 our community, listening to our concerns. And she  
14 just wants to make sure that she informs the board  
15 that Hydro needs to hear about what is happening  
16 in our territory, and in our homeland. And she  
17 also wants to thank the young people that came and  
18 participated in this important event. And thank  
19 you folks.

20 NATHAN NECKOWAY: Before we shut down,  
21 just so you know, since this is being recorded  
22 here, I know you guys heard a lot regarding  
23 impacts of Hydro development. But one thing I  
24 think you have to note down too, is that you guys  
25 will be leaving our community, and you are going

1 to be traveling on that big impact that we have,  
2 PR280. PR280 was a road that was built for public  
3 usage only. It wasn't a road there to actually be  
4 used for supplying all of the material to a dam  
5 and a converter station, Keewatinow.

6 I know that back in 2014 I indicated  
7 to you that we at TCN had a blockade up on that  
8 road for the safety of our people, plus the  
9 northern people. People would get into accidents.  
10 We lost members on there. Again, there has been  
11 many accidents since then and now.

12 And like for myself as council, like I  
13 sit on a PR280 board. We've got a meeting next  
14 Wednesday. At that meeting we are going to sit  
15 down with, you know, deputy minister, along with  
16 Manitoba Hydro, and TCN members to stress the  
17 conditions of PR280.

18 They committed to a five year  
19 commitment in 2014. Going on to year four, this  
20 coming spring, 2018, the work schedule has  
21 stopped. The Province has not put on the work  
22 schedule to have the roads continue upgrades. So  
23 that's a concern. That's an item that TCN are  
24 going to be basically addressing. But I think for  
25 your assistance, relaying the message that that

1 road should be fixed, should continue the five  
2 years up to Thompson. That road is very used, so  
3 many semis, impacts. And that road is getting  
4 destroyed. And even though they fixed 53  
5 kilometres as of today of 133 kilometre road, they  
6 still need to complete it. I just wanted to state  
7 that so you can report it.

8                   But unfortunately, Councillor Gary  
9 Garson wanted me to relay a message of sad news  
10 that his nephew passed away. We had a young guy  
11 that was in the hospital. He just passed away  
12 about a half hour ago. So he just wanted me to  
13 relay the message. And usually when we have a  
14 member passing, out of respect for the family, we  
15 just kind of close off the meeting.

16                   But I was going to ask Larry to do a  
17 prayer, closing prayer. And bless the family and  
18 safe travels everybody.

19 (Closing prayer.)

20                   (Concluded at 3:20 P.M.)

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