

NOV-15-95 WED 9:07

PAUL F WILKINSON & ASSOC

FAX NO. 5144820036

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SPEAKING NOTES FOR CHIEF KATIE RICH

For: 14 November, 1995

**Canada Labour Congress
Montreal, Quebec**

HELLO/BONJOUR/TAN ETINEK

I AM KATIE RICH, CHIEF OF THE 550 INNU OF DAVIS INLET. I AM HAPPY AND HONoured TO BE HERE TODAY. I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE PRIDE AND SUCCESSES OF THE INNU, NOT ABOUT OUR SUFFERING AND FAILURES.

BUT, FIRST, YOU NEED TO KNOW A LITTLE ABOUT WHO WE, THE INNU, ARE, AND HOW WHITE INSTITUTIONS HAVE FOR THE PAST 200 YEARS TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO CRUSH OUR SPIRIT.

COMMUNITY:

UTSHIMASSITS MEANS "PLACE OF THE BOSS". IT IS WHERE THE WHITE GOVERNMENTS PLACED US IN 1967. WE DID NOT CHOOSE TO BE PLACED THERE. WE HAVE SUFFERED AT THIS PLACE, YET WE ENDURED. WE HIT ROCK-BOTTOM AT THE BOSS'S PLACE, YET WE CONTINUE TO SURVIVE.

WE, THE MUSIUAU INNU, HAVE NOW CHOSEN NATUASHISH (LITTLE SANGO POND) FOR RELOCATION. IT IS A TRADITIONAL GATHERING PLACE FOR US. WE PREFER TO BE CALLED "MUSHUAU INNU", OR "INNU OF THE BARRENS". WE BELONG TO THE INNU NATION.

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WE WERE NEVER CONQUERED BY WHITE SOCIETY. WE NEVER SIGNED A TREATY. WE ARE THE ORIGINAL AND LAWFUL OWNERS OF MOST OF WHAT YOU CALL LABRADOR. THE ROOT CAUSE OF OUR SOCIAL PROBLEMS IS THAT WHITE INSTITUTIONS - GOVERNMENTS, THE CHURCH, AND TRADERS - DISEMPOWERED US. THE SOLUTION IS FOR US TO ASSUME ONCE AGAIN CONTROL OVER OUR OWN AFFAIRS, BOTH INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY. WE HAVE OUR OWN LANGUAGE, CULTURE, TRADITIONS, LEGENDS, LAWS, AND VALUES. WE ARE ONCE AGAIN MAKING OUR OWN DECISIONS AND OUR OWN CHOICES. WE ARE MAKING OUR VOICES HEARD ACROSS CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD.

CHRONOLOGY:

- 1947/49** DISCUSSIONS TOOK PLACE BETWEEN NEWFOUNDLAND AND CANADA REGARDING INDIANS AND INUIT OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR UPON CONFEDERATION. WE WERE NEVER ASKED TO PARTICIPATE. NOR WERE WE EVER APPROACHED TO VOICE OUR IDEAS OR OUR CONCERNS, WE WERE CONSIDERED AS NOTHING. TODAY IN ST. JOHN'S, WE ARE CONSIDERED AS LITTLE MORE THAN NOTHING - WE ARE CONSIDERED A NUISANCE, A HINDRANCE.
- 1949*** THE TERMS OF UNION MADE NO MENTION OF INDIANS OR INUIT. CONSEQUENTLY, WE RECEIVED FEW OF THE BENEFITS OR SUPPORT GRANTED TO OTHER INDIANS ACROSS CANADA.
- 1950** CANADA AND THE PROVINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND IMPLEMENTED SPECIAL FUNDING FOR HEALTH SERVICES FOR INDIANS AND INUIT OF NORTHERN LABRADOR.
- 1954** THE FIRST COST-SHARING AGREEMENTS FOR LABRADOR INDIANS AND INUIT WERE SIGNED BY NEWFOUNDLAND AND CANADA.

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1965-1992* 47 INNU DIED FROM ALCOHOL-RELATED CAUSES.

1967* WE WERE MOVED TO DAVIS INLET AGAINST OUR WILL.

1969* NEWFOUNDLAND AND QUEBEC SIGNED AN AGREEMENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHURCHILL FALLS. THE DEVELOPMENT FLOODED A VAST AREA OF OUR LAND, DESTROYING BURIAL AND SACRED SITES, AND DEVASTATING ESSENTIAL FISH, PLANTS, AND WILDLIFE. WE WERE NOT CONSULTED OR COMPENSATED. WE NEVER GAVE OUR CONSENT.

1976 NATIVE RESIDENTS OF DAVIS INLET, NORTHWEST RIVER AND CONNE RIVER REQUESTED TO BE REGISTERED UNDER THE INDIAN ACT.

1977* WE SUBMITTED OUR COMPREHENSIVE CLAIM TO CANADA.

1978 MINISTER OF DIAND SUGGESTED POSTPONING FURTHER REGISTRATIONS UNTIL CONNE RIVER BECAME FINALIZED. CANADA ACCEPTED OUR COMPREHENSIVE CLAIM.

1980 PREMIER OF Nfld. REQUESTED THAT OTTAWA NOT REGISTER MORE INDIANS, AS IT WOULD DIVIDE NATIVE/NON-NATIVE COMMUNITIES.

1986* CANADA SIGNED A TEN-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH FOUR EUROPEAN NATIONS TO CARRY OUT LOW-LEVEL MILITARY FLIGHT TESTS OVER OUR LANDS. SINCE THAT DATE WE HAVE CONDUCTED NUMEROUS PEACEFUL PROTESTS OBJECTING TO DISTURBANCES TO OUR TRADITIONAL HUNTING, FISHING AND TRAPPING ACTIVITIES. MANY OF OUR MEMBERS HAVE BEEN IMPRISONED.

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- 1989 CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND SIGNED SEPARATE AGREEMENTS REGARDING THE INNU AND INUIT OF LABRADOR.
- FEB.14/92* SIX INNU CHILDREN TRAGICALLY DIE IN A HOUSE FIRE.
- JUN./92* THE INNU NATION AND THE MUSHUAU INNU BAND COUNCIL COMPLETED A REPORT **"GATHERING VOICES: FINDING STRENGTH TO HELP OUR CHILDREN"** AS A RESULT OF OUR INQUIRY INTO THE HOUSE FIRE.
- JAN./93* SIX CHILDREN WERE FOUND IN AN UNHEATED SHACK SNIFFING GASOLINE, APPARENTLY IN A GROUP SUICIDE PACT.
- FEB./93* FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS MET THE INNU IN DAVIS INLET. WE PRESENTED A DOCUMENT **"HEARING THE VOICES: GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN INNU RENEWAL"**, WHICH CONTAINED A SEVEN-POINT HOLISTIC HEALING PLAN FOR THE INNU.
- JUN./93* REFERENDUM SELECTED LITTLE SANGO POND AS THE SITE FOR OUR NEW VILLAGE.
- AUG./93* DEAN DONALD MCCRAE, SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR TO THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, PRESENTED HIS REPORT ON THE INNU. THE CONCLUSION IS THAT CANADA HAS FOR 45 YEARS FAILED TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND ASSUME ITS CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE INNU.
- DEC./93* PROVINCIAL COURT WAS EVICTED FROM THE COMMUNITY.
- APR./94* INNU ACCEPTED THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT OF POLITICAL COMMITMENTS IN RESPONSE TO OUR SEVEN-POINT PLAN.

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APR./94-FEB./95*

WE CARRY OUT 20 TECHNICAL, SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND ECONOMIC STUDIES, WHICH PROVE THAT LITTLE SANGO POND WOULD BE AN EXCELLENT SITE FOR OUR NEW VILLAGE. THE COST OF THE VILLAGE WOULD BE SIMILAR TO THAT OF OTHER VILLAGES RECENTLY FUNDED BY GOVERNMENTS.

MAR./95*

WE TABLE ALL STUDIES WITH RON IRWIN AND ASK CANADA TO RESPECT STATEMENT OF POLITICAL COMMITMENTS. WE HOPE FOR A CABINET DECISION IN THE COMING WEEKS. INTERIM POLICING AGREEMENT WITH RCMP SIGNED.

MAY/95*

AGREEMENT WITH NEWFOUNDLAND TO NEGOTIATE BETTER JUSTICE SYSTEM.

OCT./95*

FRAMEWORK CLAIMS AGREEMENT INITIALED BY INNU, NEWFOUNDLAND, AND CANADA.

COMMUNITY:

WE HAVE ALREADY ACHIEVED MUCH: A REDUCTION IN ALCOHOLISM OF ABOUT 50%; A SIGNIFICANT DECLINE IN SEXUAL ABUSE AND SPOUSAL VIOLENCE; THE CREATION OF OUR OWN POLICE FORCE; THE TRAINING OF 17 INNU COUNSELLORS; A DECLINE IN SOLVENT-ABUSE; TAKING OVER THE GOVERNMENT STORE; NEGOTIATIONS FOR A CULTURALLY SENSITIVE JUSTICE SYSTEM; NEGOTIATIONS WITH DIAMOND FIELDS RESOURCES TO SEE IF WE COULD BENEFIT FROM AND CONSENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MINE AT VOISEY BAY; TRAINING FOR 75 INNU IN CONSTRUCTION SKILLS, OPERATING HEAVY MACHINERY, AND OTHER PROFESSIONS; AND MANY OTHER INITIATIVES.

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IF WE ARE TO RESOLVE OUR PROBLEMS ONCE AND FOR ALL, HOWEVER, RELOCATION TO LITTLE SANGO POND IS OUR BEST HOPE AND OUR NUMBER-ONE PRIORITY. WE BELIEVE THAT IN THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS WE CAN GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS SOLVING PERMANENTLY THE PROBLEMS THAT PLAGUE OUR LIVES NOW. WE SEE MORE INNU HELPING INNU. OUR NEW COMMUNITY WILL BE HEALTHY. WE HAVE CHANGED OUR LIFESTYLES. WE ARE FIRMLY ON THE PATH OF HEALING AND SOBRIETY. WE ARE IN CONTROL OF OUR LIVES. OUR CHILDREN WILL GET A BETTER EDUCATION AND WE WILL BE BETTER PARENTS. WE WILL BE STRONG AND PRACTISING THE TRADITIONS AND CULTURE OF OUR ANCESTORS. WE WILL LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

WE ARE TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT IS HAPPENING AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRYING TO SOLVE IT.

WE WILL BECOME A MODEL FOR OTHER NATIVE COMMUNITIES ACROSS CANADA THAT HAVE SIMILAR PROBLEMS TO OURS. WE WILL BE ABLE TO SHOW OTHER PEOPLE HOW WE HAVE DEALT WITH OUR PROBLEMS.

I WISH TO DISTRIBUTE TO EACH OF YOU A DRAFT RESOLUTION. IT READS AS FOLLOWS:

"WHEREAS THE CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS RECEIVED AN ADDRESS FROM CHIEF KATIE RICH OF THE MUSHUAU INNU IN MONTREAL ON 14 NOVEMBER, 1995;

WHEREAS THE CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS WAS IMPRESSED BY THE PROGRESS THAT THE MUSHUAU INNU HAVE MADE, WITH FINANCIAL AND OTHER ASSISTANCE FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, IN RESOLVING, INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY, THEIR SOCIAL AND OTHER PROBLEMS;

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WHEREAS THE CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS IS
PERSUADED THAT THE KEY TO RESOLVING
DEFINITELY THE PROBLEMS OF THE MUSHUAU INNU
LIES IN THEIR RELOCATION TO LITTLE SANGO POND;

WHEREAS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW VILLAGE AT
LITTLE SANGO POND WOULD STIMULATE THE ECONOMY
OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR, BENEFITTING
NON-INNU WORKERS AND BUSINESSES;

WHEREAS THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, IN ITS
STATEMENT OF POLITICAL COMMITMENTS, UNDERTOOK
TO SUPPORT THE RELOCATION OF THE MUSHUAU INNU
TO LITTLE SANGO POND, SUBJECT TO CERTAIN
CONDITIONS;

WHEREAS THE 20 STUDIES TABLED BY THE INNU WITH
THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAVE FULLY SATISFIED
THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS IN THE STATEMENT OF
POLITICAL COMMITMENTS.

BE IT RESOLVED

THAT THE CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS HEREBY
ENDORSE THE IMMEDIATE RELOCATION OF THE
MUSHUAU INNU TO LITTLE SANGO POND;

THAT THE CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS CALL UPON
THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA TO FUND THE
RELOCATION OF THE MUSHUAU INNU TO LITTLE SANGO
POND IN CONFORMITY WITH ITS STATEMENT OF
POLITICAL COMMITMENTS;

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THAT CERTIFIED COPIES OF THE PRESENT RESOLUTION
BE SENT TO: THE RIGHT HON. JEAN CHRETIEN, HON.
SHEILA COPPS, HON. MARCEL MASSÉ, HON. HERBERT
GRAY, HON. LLOYD AXWORTHY, HON. RONALD IRWIN,
HON. BRIAN TOBIN, HON. JOYCE FAIRBAIRN, HON.
SERGIO MARCHI, HON. DIANE MARLEAU, HON. MICHEL
DUPUY, HON. ALLAN ROCK, HON. ARTHUR EGGLETON,
HON. PAUL MARTIN, HON. DAVID ANDERSON, HON.
DAVID DINGWALL, AND SENATOR WILLIAM ROMPKEY.

I CALL UPON YOU TO ADOPT THIS RESOLUTION.

SOME 200 FIRST NATIONS, CITIZENS, AND ORGANIZATIONS HAVE ALREADY
WRITTEN TO RON IRWIN, SUPPORTING OUR RELOCATION. YOU HAVE EACH
RECEIVED FRENCH AND ENGLISH VERSIONS OF A FORM-LETTER TO RON IRWIN
SUPPORTING OUR RELOCATION. I ASK EACH OF YOU TO TAKE A FEW MINUTES
TO SIGN THE LETTER AND TO PLACE IT IN THE BOX SET ASIDE FOR THAT
PURPOSE BY THE ORGANIZERS. CANADA NEEDS TO KNOW THAT FUNDING OUR
RELOCATION HAS POPULAR SUPPORT AS A HUMANITARIAN ACT. LETTERS FROM
PROMINENT NON-NATIVES SUCH AS YOU WILL CARRY A LOT OF WEIGHT.

THANK YOU/MERCI/TSIHNSKUMITIN!

CHIEF KATIE RICH

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