

GDI YORKTON MICHIF CONFERENCE
APRIL 24, 1999 10:00 A.M.
TAPE 1

I live in Fort Qu'Appelle today. I'm an addictions counselor and I feel pretty bad like that. I lost my wife in November which was a big part of my life. I miss her a lot and me and my children from Yorkton and the other one is in Regina. The other one in Yorkton here. But things are coming along right and I speak my language. And like Edwin said the "good ole days" (inaudible) We had a wonderful teacher. We just talked about him this morning. Thank you for listening..

Next one. Come Mary don't be shy. Take a deep breath (inaudible)

Hi I'm Mary Pelletier and I was born and raised in Crooked Lake. When I was fifteen I had to go out and work and ever since then nothing's worked, till November when I was laid off and were living in Melville area here.

My name is Mervin Pelletier. I was born 12 miles south of here too and like Edwin said my life is pretty similar to his there I guess. I like to forget those too but I agree with what he said life was real nice. People got along so well. I remember we used to go out cut the hockey sticks in the bush. Use a little can to play hockey just about all night you know. I miss those days in a way. I'm married. I have four children. I lived various places, in Calgary, Edmonton and a Drywaller by trade. And I'm glad to be here today to learn a little bit about my language. A lot of our people are forgetting our language. Like my children don't even know how to speak language. Don't even understand it, really. And that's a sad thing to forget your language like that, culture and stuff. Thanks a lot.

Hi I am Senator Rose Ledoux of this region and I was born twelve miles south of Yorkton here and uh I'm married. I have eight children and thirty-six grandchildren and four great grandchildren. And ah we live in Caldor. But of course we've lived every corner of Canada. But we made our home in Caldor and its very...very nice and peaceful there. Thank you.

My name is Noella (not sure of name) St. Pierre and I'm from Yorkton.. I just wanted to come and check out this conference and see how its gonna develop and be educating to people that speak the Michif language.

Hi my name is Lyndon Smith and I'm with Right Tracks studio. Were working with the Gabriel Dumont Institute here doing a lot of video recording and thanks for letting us be your guests. This is part of something called the Michif Language Preservation Project and one of our goals (inaudible). Leah will tell you a little bit more about it is to help preserve the Michif language. So thanks for letting us come.

I'm Maurice Ledoux (not sure of name) and I was born in Dutchcart, Manitoba and I'm married(inaudible). We've got three kids. A lot of grandchildren and we've been married for the last forty years. And this is one of my grandchildren. Thank you.

My name is Allan Tremaine. I'm currently living in Dawson Creek. I'm Minister of Education, Language, Culture and Minister responsible Seniors of the Metis Nation of BC. My mother and father were both Michif speakers. We have lost our language of course. Because of some early life experience in some residential school and I'm here to see what we can do to preserve our language. Thank you.

My name is (inaudible) Lavallee. I was born in Crooked Lake. (Inaudible). For 53 years. (Inaudible) great grandchildren. That's all.

Thank you.

(Inaudible) Born in Crooked Lake. Raised in Crooked Lake. A veteran. World War II. Five years overseas. What else can I tell. Yah we moved to Regina in '54. Made our home there. Were still there. Were happy. (Inaudible) move around. Have a shot once in a while. Little jigging sometime. Thank you.

My name is ? Marion. I used to be a Pelletier. We grew up in Crooked Lake in a Metis community. I worked for the government for the past thirty-two years. Right now I'm with Social Services and I've been married for the past thirty years with one son and my sister and I had started teaching the Metis language in Regina, but it didn't last too long. The structure wasn't there. So I'm hoping that this gets off the ground and we get back to our roots of the Metis language and ah I'm hoping every way possible to get it going. Thank you.

I'm Melvina Fine _(not sure of name). Been married for thirty-eight years. Four children. Never worked out. Always been a housekeeper. Born in Crooked Lake and that's about all I can say about this now.

My name is ?and I was born in Lebret, Saskatchewan. I now live in Regina and I'm here because I need to learn more about my Metis language and I'd also like to get my children to learn more about the Metis language.

I'm Mary Bighead and I'd like to thank the organizers from ? observer. Also I work for Saskatchewan Education and an ? Language Consultant. And all the developments that are happening at that level ? they are planning today is really very important for ? culture in the school system so ? meeting a lot of people ? connections I guess ? Because as I sit and listen to the people speak on the importance of language and the connections as our culture. Its very important that we continue to start or the rekindling and rejuvenation of our languages so ah.

My name is Darlene McKay and I was born and raised in Prince Albert and I am here also to see what and how we can bring back our language of our people and our generation that's coming up. We've lost a lot of it and its time we get it back .

Mary Hersdorfer from Prince Albert. I was born in Fish Creek. Married. Two kids and I would like to see the Michif language brought back.

Hi my name ?? and I'm just an observer too. ??? When we did get ?? She talks to me all the time. I lost that too. A long time ago. Our parents never spoke it except if they didn't want us to understand what they were talking about and one time my grandmother she said something and I gave her the wrong answer and so she hit me with her cane. All because I gave the wrong answer and so from then we never did speak it and lost and I just love the language. Every time I get a chance to be able to speak to some people I can understand, but I can't speak it back. So that's what I'm here for to really get it going again if we can . I'm with Metis ? in Regina.

? ? from Regina. Born in Lebret. Married. Had five kids. We adopted one and I ? all my life since eleven years old. That's all I can say.

Good Morning. I'm ? Coskis. I reside here in Yorkton at the present time. I'm a student at Gabriel Dumont Institute out at Churchbridge. I was born in somewhere between Caldor and Langenburg I guess and then I got taken to Langenburg hospital so. But my mother always talked the Michif language. I can understand it fairly well, but I can't speak it at all and ? pick up on speaking it. Thank you.

My name is Linda ?. I was born in here in Yorkton. I was about five, six, my dad got transferred to Moose Jaw and I lived there all my life. ? Moved to Calgary. Worked in a Best Western. Moose Jaw in a laundry. Best Western. Moved back to Yorkton. I took a lot of courses here; cooking, sewing. But I do speak, I do understand the Michif language a bit and I do speak it and I do have a big Michif book at home that I'm studying right now and I really would like to learn. Now were living in Yorkton again. Thank you.

I was born in ? That was eighty-one years ago and I didn't, we couldn't go to school them days. We just had to learn our selves. Michif.....Michif to translate them you know. Michif when I was fifteen. Michif.....you know. Michif.....when I was fifteen. Michif.....yah that's all I can tell about myself. Thank you very much.

Michif.....the only time.

Michif..... That's all I can say.

I'm Gilbert Pelletier. I was born, these guys were born twelve miles south, I was born eleven and three quarters miles south here. I went to the same school but I was on the South end and they were all on the North end. But I worked at various jobs from fifteen years old. Done mostly farm work and I decided there must be something easier out there so I had to go back to school when I was thirty-five years old to get my grade twelve and I did and I fortunate enough to get a job with the provincial government as Social Worker for a number of years and I tried my hand at working CEC. You know I wasn't quite smart enough I guess. So I went back to work on a farm and I do various jobs now and I fortunate enough to get on the Liquor and Gaming Commission. Which I'm a member of and I do various jobs for our Local here and ah. I guess there's my better half sitting across from me there if you get that camera ?? I been with that little woman for thirty-seven years but, now well its time for me to rock.

Hello, I'm Myles Pelletier. I'm forty-six years old. I was born in Crescent Lake also. I was a Drywaller most of my life. Right now I'm trying to be an Area Director and body man at the

same time. I'm trying to fix up my car. I'm hiding my better half ?Gilbert. My better half ain't here. I got mine hidden by the chair. Just kidding. Right now I'm the Area Director for Eastern Region IIA and I'd like to thank all you folks for coming down. Me 'n Murray 'n Ed 'n Gilbert, here we had a rough time setting it all up and I appreciate ? all here. Thank you.

My name is George Pelletier and I'm ? Director of the Manitoba Metis Federation. My portfolio is Michif Language and also Culture Heritage and Youth and Sports and Recreation. I was born in Minadosa and my father is originally from Saskatchewan here. He was born in Indian Head, Saskatchewan and I'm glad to see lots of my relatives here and every time I come here. We lived here for about a year a while back and every time I come here it seems like its a renewed, just like a homecoming to me and ah I just ah time goes by so fast when were talking. When I was at Gilbert showed me last night the time went by so fast. All at once I looked it was twelve o'clock and it was one o'clock Manitoba time already and I says oh its a way past my bedtime. But you know when you get into conversations like that its. ?????That's all mixed, all combined like this. That's Cree, French and Saulteaux are all mixed into the Michif language and that's Metis language and that's Michif. Thanks.

????????????????????

Norman Fleury, Saint Lazar, Manitoba. ?????????.....that's the junction of the Qu'Appelle and Assiniboine Rivers???St. Lazar???? la longue des Michif(the language of the Michif)???? dans le l'ecole(in the schools). Les enfans(the children)??? se pas de fout(its not their fault). ???te longue(your language).....????????????Louis Riel ??? Louis Riel??? Manitoba Metis Federation ???thirty years ago ta tant passe(lots of time passed) ?????????ma langue(my language)??? Murray Hamilton ??? Metis Nation of Saskatchewan ?????????ninety-seven years old ???in June ??? sa langue tout le jour (his language every day) sous frier ninety(his brother, ninety) ?? the other day. ??? in '79, eighty-five years old.??? dans la phone(I spoke with him on the phone) ??? la langue aux Michif (in the language of the Michif) ??? seventy-nine?? ma tante(mu aunt)?? si pas trout taur(its not too late)????? les enfant(the children) ??? en cous les veaux, le vieuxer ocik (and the elders and the aging here)???? la langue(the language) those are our teachers. Those old people, the elders. I always say they are the bundle carriers and our youth will language on for us because who else is the future of the Metis people is our youth. And we, when I first started in this organization, I was a seventeen year old boy and you know I'm still there when I first started in the Metis Federation in St. Lazar. And we've come a long ways and I always say if your a believer you know the Creator is with us and he's helping us get to get together with people. It was so nice this morning when I met my co-host, facilitator and friends, relatives we're all relatives.????? If you start talking about your roots????? si mous cousin(this is my cousin(si mous tante) this is my aunt. ??? That's what kept us together. We were proud to be related to one another one time. When you had a cousin. First cousin, that was your brother, that was your sister. Ma sir, mous frier??? and grandparents, they were the foundation of our culture, of our tradition. So any ways with that I would like to end by saying that we got two good days ahead of us and when you are all resources, you're all teachers, you're all people that have lots to share here. That's why your here and if we would our minds together and everything else that we need, were gonna work hard together and were gonna get there. ??? Thank you.

My name is Leah Dorion,?? Gabriel Dumont Institute. I've been at GDI for four of years. I do the book publishing and resources ??? Gabriel Dumont Institute ..and one of our priorities at Gabriel Dumont Institute is to do Michif Language resource development so one of the ways to start preserving the Michif Language is to contact the Michif speakers ...and we've actually received some funding assistance from Saskatchewan Education to video record the ?? this weekend as a start ...and throughout the weekend I'll be introducing myself and maybe you know connecting with you and talking about potential interviews and biographies and if you want to get involved in any of the resource development at Gabriel Dumont Institute, please contact me and we'll welcome any ideas that you may have on Michif resources and I have with me some studio crew people, Lyndon Smith and Al Ramsey and were going to be informally interviewing people and video recording. If you have any questions or concerns about any of the video taping contact myself or any of the video crew.

My name is Yvonne Morrisette. I was born in Big River. Grew up in Park Valley area. I'm a Metis lady from there. My parents never spoke English and so I learned English in school. My kids speak French and that was the prominent language at home and I married a Metis man and up until a few years ago, I'm learning English again.

My name is Murray Hamilton. I live in Saskatoon. I'm originally from Lebret, Saskatchewan. My Moshum and my cocum both spoke Michif and other languages as well. My mom still speaks Michif and I want to thank everybody for coming today and I want to encourage those Michif speakers that are here to speak your language. Both our chair people obviously understand Michif and its your meeting. I want to make that clear. I have lots to say. Maybe I'll say it later on. We want to look at our agenda. I think the important thing today is that each of us have a different role to play and when I say us, I mean us as individuals and us as organizations. Some of you will note on I'm the Vice President of the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan. I'm also the Chairman of the Gabriel Dumont Institute. About five years ago, maybe six years ago, Bruce Flamont came to the Institute and he said "look you guys. You have to do something about Michif. You have to." So myself and another fella from P.A., we went to the Provincial Government, we went to the Federal Government and we got a little bit of money and we had the first Michif conference here about two years ago. And we weren't able to do much follow up after that. Bruce went from different communities and he tried to organize the people and he had some success. The Institute has also done some stuff. I don't want you to all grab your book, but this is a copy of the New Breed and on page fifteen, there's an ad in there asking people to identify themselves as Michif speakers. We need to put on a list all the Michif speakers that we can find. The Gabriel Dumont Institute has also produced a little bit of curriculum because I heard... I think it was Selma say to me this morning, we want to start teaching in the communities but we don't have anything to work with so I want you to think about that today. I think Ed and Norman have made it pretty clear that this is not a Michif Speaker's conference. This is a planning forum for a bigger conference. You people are in the driver's seat. You can tell us. You can tell the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan. You can tell the Gabriel Dumont Institute. This is what we would like to see happen. We cannot do anything without you people. If we are going to produce books. If we are going to produce tapes. Whatever we are going to do. We can't do it without you people. So were here today. I want to tell you that the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan is very supportive of the Michif speakers, but at the same time, we don't want to get in your way. You have to tell us what you think should be

done. Not the other way around. I didn't come here to say you have to do this, this and this. One of the problems that we have is that we don't have, I don't know what you call it, Norma, formal Michif organization in this province. We have all the people that are here today. There are many more. There are probably hundreds of Michif speakers still left. I know in Regina. I know about fifty to a hundred people at least that speak the Michif language. So somehow we need to organize the Michif speakers. There is money available. I want to thank Myles Pelletier; I want to thank Gilbert Pelletier; for dragging me to a meeting with Clay Serby who is from this area. He's the NDP MLA. And Gilbert can tell you and Myles can tell you and we all agreed that whatever money is available is available for the Michif speakers and Mr. Serby promised us, in fact, we have it in writing now that there will be fifty thousand dollars from the province available and nothing has been spent yet. The money for today came from another place. It came from the MNS. Yesterday I was on the phone to the Metis National Council and the Federal Government in... there's a letter here. Department of Canadian Heritage received authority from Treasury Board for Aboriginal languages. Your share of that money just for the next year. Is going to be no less than a hundred thousand dollars. Now, I promise you that we will not spend any of that money without your say so and what I'm hoping to away from this conference with is a lot of things, but the most important thing I guess, and I'm hoping Norman can explain this better than I am. We have some money. What needs to be done. We can't do everything. People will want us to do everything and often times we, Li Michif, we throw some money in there and there's a lot of squabbling or fighting that goes on. We have to be bigger than that. The Michif language is bigger than all of us. It doesn't belong to any one people or any one person. It belongs to all of us. So I would like you to have a good discussion today about two things. There are probably of lot of other things, but what would you like to see done and who's going to do it. Now, there's one other thing. The Metis Nation is like an octopus. You got the Head office, then you got all these arms. We don't want to be your boss. We don't want that, but we want to work with a group of people and in the North right now, we have a what we call a Northern project and it deals with Metis governance in the Northern communities and what happens there is they have a Northern project committee and instead of the Committee coming to the Metis Society. Every time they need some money, what they do is they give that Committee quarterly instalments and at the end they make a report to the Metis Nation. It gives them the best of both worlds. The Michif speakers need to work with the Gabriel Dumont Institute. They need to work with the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan, because all of us. Doesn't matter who you are; if its the Gabriel Dumont Institute; if its Myles' region; if its any other thing that we have going on, in the end, everybody had to accountable to the Metis community. You have to be accountable politically. You have to be accountable financially. Now, you people may decide that you want to form your own association. I can't stop that. That's your right. Any five people can get a lawyer and they could form a non-profit organization. But what I think, they way I see it is this, the Michif speakers have the language. You have that. The Gabriel Dumont Institute has some academics. Right now we need curriculum for the school system. We need curriculum for the universities. We should almost be ashamed of ourselves because the Gabriel Dumont Institute it teaches Cree at the University. Two years ago we advertised for a Michif speaker. We couldn't find anybody. So we have to train some Michif teachers. We need people like Ed and Norman and Bruce Flamont in Saskatoon and we need to bring in people like Gilbert Pelletier, George, Selma, whomever and we need to train them. This is... here's some paperwork for school. Here's how you can teach and it can be done. Because after the war ...right now you need four years training to get a teacher's certificate. I know, I'm a

teacher. But after the war, they trained teachers in six months . We gotta start somewhere. So that needs to be done. There's the Michif speakers and the only thing that politicians like me should be doing is going helping you get money and I've done that already with Myles and with Gilbert and with Bruce. There's some money available from the Province. There's some money available from the Federal Government, but we need somebody to work with. Maybe today, tomorrow think about it lots. Maybe you want to establish an interim committee. A Michif language committee. Later down the road when you have a great big conference where there's hundreds of Michif speakers. Maybe you'll want to form and provincial organization and a national one, because there is so much interested in this. Allen Tremayne is here from B.C. We have two gentlemen here from Manitoba and Norman has been....There's a pamphlet here and I don't know if its been around, but its called the Metis... Manitoba Metis Federation Michif Languages Project. We're trying to do a similar thing here, maybe its working well in Manitoba, I don't know and if its not working well, how do we make it better here. But, we have... the last time we met, we talked about Michif. There was no follow up. Now we have the opportunity to do that follow up. And we can't mess it up. The politicians have no business telling you what to do and that includes myself. So as you can tell, I'm a long winded guy, but to me, we have to figure out who's going to do what and you guys have to drive the horse. You have to drive the cart. We're lost without you. So, what needs to be done. Who's going to do the work and I'll stop there. I want to again, I wanta thank Gilbert Pelletier, Myles Pelletier, ? Ed St. Pierre and Norman for being here today. I encourage the Michif speakers. The other thing is, I never like my picture taken, because I'm getting kind of chubby and I'm kinda shy, but some of you that are really strong in your heart...Gilbert, Edward, Norm, George. Some of you, I know if you had, had a le boue in front of you, you'd talk your, my head off, but we need these tapes, video tapes. We need audio tapes, because we need that so that we can make curriculum. We're books, we're teaching material. We have to have that. We also call that banking the language. I don't want to say this, but this gentleman here is eighty-one years young and Stella and Jim have been around for quite some time. We need to bank the language, because in years to come, we have to have that on tape, so that when we're trying to figure out, well how how did they say this. What did they mean when they said this. We have some place to go. Now, to some of you, you say, is this really worth it. Well I want to tell you that I've seen it done before in a different country, but with the same problem. In 1990, my wife and I went to New Zealand and the people there, the original inhabitants are Maori people. They had almost lost their language. The only people that could speak it were about fifty-five years and up and then they started having meetings like this and they decided, something's gotta be done. By the time I arrived there in 1990, they had been at this for twenty years. The people forty-five, fifty-five and up could still speak their language and they had set up their little schools, sometimes in garages, sometimes, wherever. And they did it. They preserved their language and now the young people are speaking it again. And I got a lot of ideas from there. They did those things. So we should never give up hope. It can be done. Michif stories... I grew up in Lebret and if anybody here... I still owe Myles twenty dollars, by the way, for the last ruggaroo story. But ??? or as I say it, roo ga roo, is a...well you know what it is. I don't have to tell you. But, we need stories like that. There's lots of good Michif stories out there. Our kids go to school and they learn about Dick and Jane. They learn about Shakespeare. They learn about ??? But, they don't nothing about their own history. Their own culture. We need that. GDI has produced one little series about Alfred. We did it in Cree and we did it in Dene. Now we've got it in Michif. Which brings me to another thing that Selma talked about. There are variations in Michif from community to community. We need to

talk about that. But I think we agreed... I think we're all on the same. I think we've got beyond that already. Anyway I want to thank everybody and from now on I'm just gonna sit in the corner.

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Side 2 - blank

**GDI YORKTON MICHIF CONFERENCE
APRIL 24, 1999 11:00 A.M.
TAPE 2**

That we don't give up, because our forefathers and our ??parents left us with a very rich culture. ??? today now that half of us don't even speak or want to speak it. I think it's very important that you know we pick it up from here on in ?? In our culture and speakin our language. I think what we have to do. We have to create an interest. The positive interest. That it is important to our children and grandchildren. That our language is very important to maintain our viability. Now, I forgot to mention this morning I work with a lot of Native Veterans. I work with the Department of Veteran Affairs. I work out of the Saskatoon office and I cover the North a great deal and it gives our Veteran's affairs, Native Veteran's affairs great deal of satisfaction when I walk in their homes. The first thing they ask me if I can speak the language. I think its very important ??? work for our own people up North From the wee tykes to the grandfathers. They all speak their language. Of course they've got a different environment. There they have their communities. Which is ?? mainly Native. So therefore; its very easy for them to maintain their culture, their language. Whereas here we're spread out, but it can be worked. And we have to continue working towards that. And I've also been involved with Native ??? which ??? projects here. I've never left it. ?? working for government??but I'm still very interested working for, especially for the Michif language. And with that I ??? proud to be a Metis tape here. Some of you havn't heard it. He's going to play that now.

We just thought as part of a...maybe.. Its always nice to have music and this is a lady that composed this song, Oralee Brooks, and its called "Proud to be Metis" and its Metis Nation music. So, lets just listen to this. I love this tune. It starts off with the drums, but then the fiddle comes in.

Metis Anthem
Music

Okay now before get into small groups. What I'd like to find out is how many the people here today speak and understand the Michif language. Would you please just put your hand up. Is somebody recording this.

What if you just speak a little bit and understand it a little bit.

Fluent speaking.

Huh.

Fluent.

Oh no.

You gotta be fluent. Just like you can't be half pregnant.

Sixteen people.

How many understand it, but don't speak it.

Some of them.

Baby talk.

How many don't speak or understand period.

?? If you can't speak it, ???that's fine.

I understand just a bit.

???

Well I think you'll fit in that category there.

Okay, before we break into small groups, a couple things I want to remind you. In order for this, for a Michif language to go forward. Its very important today and tomorrow, that we establish committees. Working committees. There'll be a lot of volunteer work and a lot of hard work to bring this thing forward. To go forward we have to have dedicated people that are willing to sacrifice...plus...the number...you want a committee that's workable and what is preferable is we have both genders, female and male into this conference plus, ?? of age. Also what you could be discussing in your group is that we should have an elders group. Because they're the factors. They're the ones that could give us good input. The number system, it should be entirely up to the groups and you should be directing us for who in the group its going to be. What direction you want us to go. What direction you want us to go. When do we want to hold our conference. Where do we want to hold our conference. Where do we want to hold our conference. When. These are very important. That'll give whoever is chairing the meeting??have something to work with and also that committee. The work committee should include Gabriel Dumont and possible members from Metis Society of Saskatchewan. You should include those two persons. One from each. So they have an input and we get the word out. Is there any questions to what we're gonna be covering? Now, you may ten, twelve items, each group. What we'll do, we'll put em on a... we got a...?? paper here. Yah, we'll put em on here and tomorrow, once we get all this together, we'll put em on there and which ones we feel that are feasible, which ones we can work with. We'll deal ?? issue by issue. Step by step. Some of them will be the same. That's fine. Okay. Are there any questions? The only way I can see it. We only have the one room, ay? We were gonna break up in smaller groups, but unfortunately we can't because the fact of

the space. We only got the two rooms. So what we'll do, is we'll put...we'll break it down to three groups and you have one recording person that's there and then you could all make the presentation or have one make the presentation tomorrow. Have a spokesperson. Make the presentations. And one recording secretary so she can take down what you people have discussed. What you people want. Its very important that we get these down black and white so we have something to move forward. To wherever the case is. Make our presentations. Because, you know, unless we have something concrete. There are ?? we have to meet again. Unless we have something to look for. We have to have an agenda. Where are we going. ??? We want this to go forward. Okay. Okay, now, what I'm going to do, I'm going to number youse. We'll work in three groups. ????

It's up to you guys.

We only got the one here and one there.

I wonder if maybe we can identify, maybe identify those different groups. Those that speak Michif, will have one group. Those that understand it, another group and those that don't speak or understand it. That's just an idea, okay. Correct me if I'm wrong. We have to brainstorm here and maybe other people have other ideas. But the reason I'm saying that is because, then we can come back and share what we know with each other and then we can maybe do the number system. Because, like I mean, if your not gonna have people that speak the Michif language, your not gonna have no teachers. Those are the teachers and then some of the things you can talk about... What is the Michif language to you. What does that mean, first of all and like where would you like to see this program go and how and maybe discuss those kind of things, so, like, I don't know if were getting ahead ourselves here, but, we were supposed to maybe have some guest speakers, maybe see what's happening in Manitoba. What's happening in B.C. and then work into these groups. Well, we got two days. Like we can do those kinds of things. I'm just brainstorming. Another thing you can maybe do, is those that speak the Michif language, you're gonna talk about your family background and where were you from and your lifestyle. What they used to do with the stories and those kind of things. Like there's so many things. Like, were not gonna do it all in two days. But we have to priorities what are the importants of this workshop. Is it to form those committees. Is it to form these different groups. Or what do you want to learn? Like, your the people that, so maybe, some of you people... Can we hear from some of you people? See what you think?

Yah, give us some ideas.

Give us some ideas. Because, like we said, your the people that's gonna be running the show here. Anybody else have ideas.

I would...like I don't speak it, so, but I wanta learn. But I could be one of the organizers from the Regina area to get, to make sure all our people know what's happening and ah with Selma. Selma's gonna be teaching. Vina and Stella and Agnus.

Well, you could discuss it within your groups. See what you want. This is the idea. But what were saying now... What people are saying is we want to break our groups today. Some that

Speak and understand our language and some that only understand. Or do you want to make it all in number system and go in with it. I think it would be most difficult to try break the, because I think, ?? my ideas. I think we should just number em and go with it. What do you... Anybody got a suggestion?

I think what he suggested was the best idea. Break into three groups.

Yah, we'll have a big group then.

??? into three groups like he said. The one that speaks the Michif and the one that understands it.

Okay. How many don't understand, ah understand, but can't speak it. Put your hands up.

I can understand a little bit and I can speak a little bit. Not full sentences. So to carry on a conversation.

?????????

?? direction what did they need to know how to speak it and people that don't know nothing they come up with ideas. How do we learn. Where do we learn from.

But what we are doing today is a formation.

Mr. Chair, I think we have enough time to do both, but I think its really important for just the Michif speakers themselves to get together and then people like Myles and the baby talkers. You know, its good for us to get together, because you know, those people that speak it well tend to think alike. And then, maybe tomorrow... we have enough... we got lots of time. Then maybe, we can mix them up. But, I think its very important for the Michif speakers to get together by themselves. The other suggestion, I'm sorry Edward, is maybe, it would help... I don't know, just an idea, Norm and Ed, before we break into groups, maybe there's some questions that we want to make sure people address. I don't know.

Well, these were actually interview questions that we put together with Leah Dorion and we thought that maybe there would eventually be a biography done, like, interviews of people that are willing to speak about whatever they want. Is it their life or is it about their legends or stories and they would be interviewed by the GDI and that way you'd have something in audio video tapes. But as far as the working group, well ah, I think we have to have a working group, first of all.

I was gonna ask him. You said you were getting along pretty good up there with the language in Manitoba. Could you tell us how you started it and how far its gone?

Okay.

And we can have an idea how you guys did it in Manitoba. Start it up.

Yah that's a good idea.

Okay, when our ideas. When we first started as a province and myself as a coordinator of this organization. We're a bit like what we are doing here today, kind of . You want to plant a seed, but you don't where to plant it. So first of all, if you going to plant a seed, you got to work up your plan. You got to cultivate. You got to summer fallow and then you got put your seed and then your gonna harvest what you planted. So, they said... Norman, what were going to do here is were going to form a board and that board consists of the Board of Directors of the political organization and their portfolio is education, culture, heritage. This gentleman here, George Pelletier, my co-worker friend, that travels with me all over the province and now, out of the province. He sits on that board. And there's a Rita Cullen. Her portfolio is education. And there was an Ed Duscharme which his was culture and heritage and ah youth. Well, he sat on that board. Now, they've changed the portfolios around in the province and we got a Grace Menard. Cause this Grace Menard. She speaks the Michif Cree. We have two languages that were fighting for the Michif languages in Manitoba. That's the Michif Cree and the Michif French. And ah, so we have George here, who understands the Michif Cree. We have ah Ed Duscharme, who understands the Michif French. We have Grace Menard who understands the Michif Cree. So then, we've met a few times and they said the first thing we'll do is were going to conduct community consultations and what that means is like myself , the coordinator, coordinating the Michif project. I go to every regional meeting. We have seven regions in Manitoba. That's how our organization, the structure is. We have the provincial body. Well you have your national body. Your provincial body and then you have your seven regions which make up the Manitoba Metis Federation: there's the Interlake Region, there's the Southeast Region, there's the Southwest Region, there's the Southwest Region, there's the Pas Region, there's Thompson Region, and there's the Dauphin Region. Did I miss any, George?

Southeast.

I said Southeast already, but that's fine. We'll reinforce it. Any ways, we've traveled together. Throughout these regions. And like we were saying this morning, like Murray said, like my co-facilitator here Ed was saying, Edwin, its the people. Its what the people want. Its not what the politicians want. Its what the people want. So when I went into those communities, and done my community consultations. Those people said to me right away, oh I want to learn that language. My Grandma and Grandpa spoke that language. I want to learn that language. Okay that's fine and dandy to say you want to learn that language. Some of us grew up with that language. We have it in our hearts. We have it in our minds. And when we hear a word we can see what were talking about. Kee machiyoo. You can see that person going hunting. Ke do ki yayoo. You see that person visiting, you know. So like its also a visible language. You can see it. You can feel it. So I said in the books, if your gonna learn it, you need to have adult education classes, like evening classes. Same as you do in Red River Community College or in Gabriel Dumont Institute. Your gonna have to teach it. So how you gonna go about doing that. You need to have teachers. Who's going to qualify those teachers. Where are you going to hold these teaching sessions. Who's going to pay for it. There's traveling involved. There's teaching involved. So those are the kind of things when were brainstorming we gotta think about. To become a reality, how you going to do those kind of things. So then when I went to these

meetings...so the people understand what were talking about when were talking by Michif, I speak those languages. ???

You see, that's where you got the resource. The resource people that speak those languages and its not insulting people by saying, you can't speak that language, because maybe its not your fault. Maybe you never had the chance , but here's a chance to speak it. That's why its part of those community consultations. And elders came to us and they said, by God you know, I can tell stories you know, in Michif. I'm willing to help youse. So the volunteers come out and some old people say, oh yah?????????. I'll help youse. So there your gettin those volunteers. Its the people that's doing it. Those are our resources and then you take some people in the organization, they said, well, the mandate for people that are going to work with the MMF, they should be able to speak a few words. If there's an elder that comes in to our organization, they say, ??????????

See that's the way you greet people. You go into those offices sometime, people don't even look at you. Its just like a dog walking in. Like I know one of our Board of Directors from Brandon. She went to the Head Office and that girl never even looked at her and yet that's their politician. Where's our respect. So we gotta teach that too as part of our language. So those are the kinds of things we're looking at in Manitoba and also making use of those people that identifying our resources cause all of us here have something to offer. Some people tell stories. They tell their legends. They say where their born and raised. If their people fought with Louis Riel. Like we always talk about Louis Riel and we talk about Gabriel Dumont, but what about those other people that fought there. We don't tell stories about them.????????????????????????????

So like those are the kind of things those stories have to come out. So like when we went to Dauphin there, right away this lady she said, you know we want you to start those programs and then you start, Headstart programs with in the schools with the nurseries, nursery kids and the kindergarten kids. We want youse to tell those stories like you have here like these language series with the Gabriel Dumont Institute, but we want them told in Michif, not in English. You know we want them in the Michif language so we can learn the language. And then a person from Brandon. We have a daycare center. Its run by the Metis organization. She came to me the other day, the Director, she said, Norman, you know those little kids there, we want to teach them Michif. How can we teach them. So I says, well I can come there and I got a little Red River cart I made. I got a little log shack. I says I can talk about how we used to build our own houses. That Red River cart we were buffalo hunters a long time ago. Our people were the biggest ranchers in the world. They had a lot of buffalo. They used to have a lot of horses. You know something to instill pride in our children. Not those negative stories all the time, but the positive stuff. Who we are. Who we really are. How we contributed. Like when a my grandfather, one of my great grandfathers was an interpreter in the courts. He spoke Sioux, Saulteaux. He spoke French, Cree , English. He was a court communicator and he had no...no basic education, but he can do those kind of things, so those are the kind of stories other things we have to do. So any ways as part of this community consultation now, we are also forming this elders advisory group and that's people over sixty years old that speak those languages. The two languages... gotta be two women... two men that speak, understand those languages, because, as you prior to twenty years ago our language was only oral. It was only said. It was never written. So now we want to have a writing system. So how are we going to do that. That's another thing. Are we gonna use... We have to use the present system that we were educated in school. Its called Roman orthography, but we can call it Michif orthography. We have to use that system. A writing system. Because when we write those books somebody's

gonna read that. We made two little booklets. I made two little booklets in Michif, already, but, we haven't published them, but, its just a start. When we go to our meetings, we show them that and oh that's good. That's what we want. ?????????????? you know????????? you know that's what we want. ???You see, that's...those are the kind a things that we have to do and then this language committee that we were talking about this morning. They're gonna form those at the local level, because the local executive people. They're going to have to have responsibilities also and they're going to form those language committees of those people that can speak those languages and lets say in D??, they want me to teach for a lot of years now. They want me to teach Michif Cree, but I can't go all over the place, because there's a lot of requests now. So now there's elders there that can speak that language so we're gonna use those elders and if there's somebody there that could write it and then those elders will talk about these different things like these interview questions that we have here. We can do that. Like where did you learn to speak Michif, you know and who else in your community and /family speak Michif. And that way we want to know who are all those speakers. We got to identify the speakers, first of all. Its like doing an enumeration. We have to find out who those people are, because those are our resources and then were putting things together like, how do you say 'the sun'. How do you say 'the moon'. How do you say 'the leaves are changing'. The different seasons. That's going to be part of our system, or thunder. ???????

Like those kind of things they want to learn. Or in school, how to count. You know and we count in French, usually. See there's the difference. We have to say what Michif means. Michif means you use your verbs in one language and the nouns in the other language and the grammar doesn't change in either one of them. We have this guy. His name is Peter Bocker. He's from Amsterdam. A Dutchman. He come and studied us. He's the one that told us our language is very, very important. Its the only language in the world that has two languages together in one. There's nobody in this whole world that has a language like we got. Like they say, how, how do you know when to change when your talking, when you say ??????????. ???is Cree. Le patate is French. ??? You see they wonder how we can change from French and Cree. But I says, we don't even realize it. Because we learnt that. You know. Like ah, when we say, ah things like, ????? A Shoovroo, that's French. ??? I'm gonna shoot, that's Cree. You see, they don't understand how the system works, the Michif. Well, its our language, like I said, God gave us that language and we still got it. The people, like my mom, ninety-seven years old still speaks it and my grandfather spoke it. He was born 1870 and his grandparents spoke that language and they want to know how old it is. You see these linguists here, they studied us, eh, but, I said don't ask me how that language was made, because I says I wasn't born that time, but I know for sure that there must have been a Frenchman that married a Cree lady and they couldn't speak the language, so when they had a baby, that Frenchman spoke to that baby in French and that Cree woman spoke in Cree and that baby made that language. You see, that's maybe the way this language was born. It had to be born somehow. So it goes back a long ways. You know. So this guy, he tells us we have a very important language and in 1985 in Winnipeg, they had a Michif language conference. There was a Cree Indian woman that they call it Michif language conference. There was a Cree Indian woman running it and a Saulteaux. How you gonna learn your language when you got two people that speak different language teaching you. You have to have the Metis involved. You have to have the Michif speakers involved. So and then tapes. We got tapes. We had Father Guy Lavallee who interviewed the French people and we have people like Abraham Ledeaux from Duck Bay. He interviewed a bunch of people, but those tapes in our library in Winnipeg just now I started to translate and start to document these tapes.

That's a shame! Because there's people there that are dead now, old people, they told their stories. They were so interested in telling their stories, that we took those tapes and we put them away for ten years. We can't do that anymore. Because there's Abra...what's his name ??? I don't know if any of you guys ??? But his dad was ?? and they came from St. Madeline. And he's telling the story there. His dad is the brother in law of Louis Riel. His sister is Margaret Belmere_ (not sure of name). And St. Madeline, they used to travel there and ??? traveled with Louis Riel to Montana, where he was teaching school. ??? you know. So those are kind of things we have to tell our kids in the story books. So what I'm saying is with the community consultations were asking our people, what do you want. What are we going to do with this language. So like your here today and I'm here trying to help you people out. We'll have to say these language committees are important. The elders are important. So thank you. That's just what we're doing in Manitoba and its going really well. Its going very, very good in Manitoba. I must say this.

???? maybe George, maybe you can say a few words ??? twelve minutes .

Well ah. He have pretty well said mostly everything ah except when we went around to each, each community, the ah the people ah that are around the age of ah fifty or so come, come right up and grab, grab your hand and ah and you know they earnestly want, wanted to speak, speak that language and ah also ah they said its so many years since I heard that. Like ah my ah like is it my parents used to speak that to me and then, then ah I'm sure that I could speak it again soon I start talking a little bit. It won't take long before I start to learn it and ah so then afterwards ah he said continue to do it because we want it and ah also yesterday we were coming to here ah I give ah Norman a tape of my father. He was talking about ah about Nanabush and ah and that story of what was going on in ah and how he was talking there about that and ah you know that's, that's history ah you know I couldn't find that tape for a long time, then all at once I found it one day. I was going through all my stuff then I found and listening to my father talk in there and also the ah other part of the tape was ah when he got interviewed by this guy here from Amsterdam and ah and then afterwards listening to that ah I said that's, that's something that's history besides ah we got, we got lots of other tapes that's in ah there that people that are gone who are used to speak that language and ah you know ah today the problem is that we found that mostly everybody that ah was forced out of it are sort of shy. Like ah Mervin and I were talking here earlier during the break that ah you know ah, some of them ah were forced to, to just ah talk ah the English language where ah where the, they didn't ah , lots of them called them 'oh your First Nations. Your nothing but ah First Nations. Your not Metis and you know they were sort of ah then after that they started to believe that and ah and saying that we don't want to be First Nations but then when they got them off the track and forgot that they are Metis. Who is really the Metis people. And ah you know ah that's what I got right across, all over Manitoba that ah for some of the youth I've worked with that said that they were afraid and so they were forced to talk English and just English and then forget, forget about the Michif language and then afterwards that sort of changing, changing right now, because they want to learn it again and ah there's so many ah youth ah that are ah coming back. That are out and ah and wanting and ah also lots of, lots of elders that are coming to talk about it. So its growing fast even though we just started, we just started to process ah since around November ah already we gotten this far. We got quite a ways and its growing quite fast and ah so its, its something that ah I really forward to, because I know that ah like ah that's on there, that song that was sung there "Proud to

be Metis” is ah that’s what part of our Michif language is and that’s what we need to keep and preserve. I’ve been saying that for so many years like ah probably lots of people that I talk to here ah in the past few years and that’s what we talked about is that were gonna forget this language ah because nobody’s talking it anymore, just us and ah then afterwards ah said well we gotta do something about it ‘n’ you know its good now to see so many people that are... are doing something about it ‘n’ ah ‘n’ that’s a big progresses especially how many there is here today. That’s, that’s a big growth. Thanks.

You know while George here was talking when he said about that song “I’m Proud to be Metis” well so am I proud to be Metis but you know I just thinking, wouldn’t it be nice if that song was sang in a Michif . Like...

Exactly!

In our language.

You know I wonder if a guy could get somebody that can understand the language and translate it into the Michif language and sing it, cause it is a beautiful song, but it would be nice to hear it in our own language eh. You know.

It would be possible.

Well, no doubt about it, it would be possible, but it would be nice. If your proud to be Metis, sing it Metis. Sing in the Metis language I was thinking, eh. You know. Would you be able to do that Norman?

Oh yes.

Could you sing.

?????

Would you be able to sing it?

???????

I forgot to mention that there is a Michif dictionary, but its out of print now. That’s the Turtle Mountain ah Chippewa Cree they call it because in the states, your not Metis there, your not Indian, your an American citizen. So this is Michif and this was put together by ????? there the ones with this John Crawford. He edited it and this is a Michif dictionary and that’s what we have to put together here in Canada, is a dictionary.

Can I get up and speak for a minute on our experience in trying to start a Michif language class? We did start something. It was kind of like a pilot project, but we ran into a lot of difficulty, but there was a lot of... we had people there that were from five years to...this fella was fifty. So we had a conglomerate of people, okay. We came across some that wanted to be just conversational

Michif and some that wanted to learn verbs and adverbs and stuff like that and ah we were using a curricula from out of Turtle Mountain. Was it not?

Yeh.

And we ran into a lot of difficulty, because there was words in there that you could use both ways and it was probably the influence of that area where they were using a different word, like a Cree word and we'd use something else.

In the French.

Like ??? and something else. What was that other word?... There was a few anyway and we'd get into great discussion. Lengthy discussion on these things saying, well which one are we gonna be using. Are we going to be using this word which is in the curricula or the word we know from our area. I don't know. I think people from up North use a different kind of Cree or different Michif than we do. I think it depends predominantly if your with the French, you'd use a lot more French or if your with the Indians, you'd use a lot more Cree words. So, we've got to set some kind of structure where were gonna use this word and this word only. You cannot be having two different words, because, like, we know what it is, but if we're teaching, say, people that don't understand it at all, we're gonna have to sit down and get one word and that's the word we're gonna use.

Yah, you can't bounce back and forth eh. We have to have Michif language, Michif language. Because, I deal with a lot of Michifs up North eh. Like you say...

They're...they're a little different, aren't they?

But, you can understand them.

Oh, I can and so can a lot a lot of other people but, ...

There's a lot different words to use, but we can overcome that, but what we're saying if were gonna have a dictionary, it'll be straight Michif. We shouldn't be bouncing back and forth.

Where is this dictionary gonna come from?

Are we going to be using that Turtle Mountain one, because that's the one we were using?

This is a sample and we have to look at examples that are already out there and then we got to put ours together, but this here I recognize everything, because I can understand Saulteaux. I can understand Cree and I speak French, but here like you were saying the influence of a nearby community will influence the language one way. Its the same like in Duck Bay, Manitoba. Those people moved from St. Madeline. They were the Michif speakers. When they moved to Duck Bay, because there's a reserve there, they use a lot of Saulteaux in their language. You take like ah...there's a reserve...the people from the Fort Qu'Appelle area or is it the...

Closer to Fort Qu'Appelle, I think. There's Blondeau's that come from down there and when they speak, they use a lot of Cree and I remember this Oleaza Blondeau. He married my dad's first cousin and they say, "oh boy le Blondeau???" You know we'd say "they could really speak Cree", because they use more Cree in their language. Where like you were saying, we use more French, but there is a Michif language that we all understand, but if you come from that area, I don't know if you have to just use that particular language. But your gonna have to use a dialect that everybody understands I think and that recognizes. That's gonna be part of that dictionary that were thinking of putting together, anyway. Because there's arguments there now. They say well that's not the way we speak Michif, us. We got, we speak more Saulteaux. Well then, that's because your living close to a Saulteaux reserve, otherwise that language is not Michif. So what were gonna have to do is try to work with the Michif speakers. Now the president of our organization is saying, the Michif speakers as you know are very diversified. They can speak many languages. The Metis spoke, Saulteaux, French, Cree. So, like in, the president of the MMF is saying we have to submit proposals to the government now for the Metis, Cree speakers and the Metis Saulteaux speakers, because up North in Thompson, Manitoba, there's reserves there like, Cross Lake, Norway House. They have Metis communities. But, because their mom's Cree and their dad is Scottish. They learned to speak the pure Cree. So the language they want to be taught in their area is Cree, not Michif and the places like Duck Bay, they want Saulteaux. But, we're saying, we want Michif and that's the Michif Cree. And the St. Laurent people, they want the Michif French, because that's the Red River language of like, Louis Riel used to speak. That's the language that they want. So we got a big job, basically.

How did you get with your organization in Regina? How far did youse get?

We had about six classes and ah they were quite productive, but we ran into a few difficulties and it kind of dissolved.

Actually we never had a spot to where...we'd say the meeting would take place here and then we'd find out that the place was not open for us. We had to go to a private place. So we kind of never had a real spot. Everybody just kind of faded away. Because, there was never a proper address and the time setting of this. Which I think was not us to be blamed for it. It was just that the building was not there for us.

You know, so we were constantly moving and the people would go to the place we went before and we'd be somewhere else. So it was really quite a... to get a place going would be really good. To have a room where it was ours all the time and when something else came up...

End of side 1 - tape 2 & 3

Beginning of side 2 - tape 2 & 3

I want to speak to this ah.. Selma's problem, because it creates a problem for me. That's why I'm begging for somebody to work with, because I've received request from Regina. One of the Locals there, Metis Locals, wanted some money to do Michif. I also got a request from a couple other places and I think I know what is Michif and what isn't from my grandparents, but I'm not an expert, obviously. That's why I need somebody to work with and we need that Michif committee to say, yes, that's the Michif that we want to teach and this is not, you know, so that's

when requests come to me I would love to be able to turn to Selma and Gilbert and whomever and say, well somebody needs to authenticate this. Somebody needs to say, you know, that's what we want. Because I know, like the last... just think about the last meeting we had. Michif conference. Father Guy came and I told Bruce, I said, I don't think he speaks Michif. I listened to the man before. He speaks French and he was in that room about ten minutes and he realized right away. They could understand him, but he had no idea what they were talking about. It's the same thing with the people and I'm under pressure all the time already. There's people in Ile a la Crosse that speak Cree with a lot of French in it, but it's not Michif. ???????? That's, you know, like, that's not the Michif that we know and I think, out of that last conference...what happened, that was a good thing, I'm glad that Norman raised it. Selma is a, you know and ah, and ah...

Alvina.

Alvina and Gilbert and I don't know all of you thoroughly, but we need to take Baker's book. We need to study it and there's always going to be a little bit of difference, but somebody...if GDI is going to produce Michif materials, we need to develop a common...we need, I need somebody to say, yes this is Michif and no, it's not. Cause, I have no business doing that. So, I just want to reinforce that.

Yah, I'd like to comment on what she was saying there. We had a few classes here in Yorkton too. And we have books. I don't know if we have the same books. But, what I did when we were teaching em, is that I, you know I scribbled off the ones that I didn't think fit. I put in the words that we use. I know as a Michif speaker and if I wasn't sure, I always had Auntie here that knows the language and there's another one there and there's my uncle there, there's my mother eh. Like there all over eighty years old. So they spoke the Michif all their life and I go to them and I say, well this doesn't sound right to me. Is that the right word and they say, no this is the way we say it. So I just scribbled it off and wrote the right one.

This is what we had started doing, but ah...

But I think if we got together once in a while and ah you know, we got to communicate I think in order to ah...

Like I said, the curricula we had was from the United States and the Coordinator that we had putting this together would say, no, no, no, you can't use that, you have to use what's in the curricula and we knew it was wrong. It was right, but it was not the language we used. It was... was it Saulteaux or...but, I imagine that's probably the same curricula you had?

Probably.

We got it from Bruce Flamont.

We can get the book that we were using, if you want to take a look at it and I can tell you what we did and I can tell you what we did with that book. There's a lot of it we didn't agree with it either, so we just corrected the word that we used. You know, that I know.

Did you find that some of the people just wanted to learn to speak it and not learn to write it, like, when you get into the verbs and stuff, it was kind of confusing.

Yep.

You know and that's and like and I don't verbs and adverbs and what not. Like I was having a problem with it. So I probably wasn't the best instructor, but I tried hard.

I would like to comment on what you have to say there. You know a few, must be about fifteen twenty years ago we had a program, radio consultation program. It was called Metis Anoosh and that's Metis today. What we did in that consultation is that we listened to every home. Every home, say like if you have a local community, say like Yorkton here has quite a few people and ah say for instance if there's ?? or someplace that has about ten Metis and somebody talked the Michif language then said something in Michif then go right around the circle and say that same Michif language and ah say the same word. Like ah like you just continue in the circle of each word and then ah next time you see them, all at once you notice that they knew. They knew what it means and they could pretty well say it, already and ah we done that for a good, for a good six weeks and ah lots of those people were learning and then after that the program was over then after that it sort of faded away, but I think that, that ah type of consultation needs to come back also. Is home groups, like somebody going to a Local where there's about twenty, thirty people gathered together and go around the circle and say the same words and learn that Michif word.

I think its so important that you know were gonna run these classes that we have somebody that not only knows, but somebody that has a good vision. You know like you like you say you have to use pictures. You have to use words that mean something. You have to keep it interesting. That's the big thing and they'll pick it up, usually. But we have to keep it interesting and you have to have some continuity. Where we gonna hold and where we gonna have it. This is what we have to discuss, because you know???but, if you turn em off, they'll never come back on.??? we have to be awful careful. And everybody's looking at their watch, but we're not ready to go yet. This gentlemen had a question.

I was just wondering, like, if you ah, worked on the dictionary and got that all set up and then, then the people would have to go by what's in the Michif dictionary and then that way there would only be one argument, there wouldn't be....

In other words, we'll take this book and rewrite it. We'll change some of the words.

That's right.

I before we get into it, we should do that, because ???the wrong message.

Yah, uhuh.

At least got something to work with.

Gilbert, would that be the same Michif as I have .

I never seen it.

But, I think that would be the best start and that way there would be no...

No conflict.

No conflict on, you know, what is the Michif language.

Yah, we have to identify our own language. ???????? Can't dilute it. Its diluted enough as it is. Anybody else got any questions? What about your partner from Manitoba.

BC

BC you want to say a few words. We haven't heard you from BC.

Just that we talked about regional difference. The Metis people living there, they speak ah a mixture of French and Cree and a lot of them are speaking a lot of more Cree in their language and just very few French words so ah I when we had our Michif conference ah January of this year we ah there was only a small handful that actually spoke the Michif language with ah with fluent French and Cree mixed and ah the majority of them were speaking a much more ah ah Cree language. There are even some of the older people living in Fort Nelson that speak a mixture of French, Cree and Dene, because there's a lot of Dene speakers there so I don't even know what kind of language that is, but ...

We're in trouble boy.

Yah I couldn't understand them too when I went to Fort Nelson ????

Yah because they mix the Dene with it. Quite a bit of Dene.
But how are you organizing it in BC. This is what we would like to know.

How are we organize? We're just newly fledgling Metis Nation. Just two years. We just have our constitution now and so we're still going through the growing pains, but we are a... Michif language has been put on the agenda that we would like to have a... develop a curriculum for Michif as well as, we want to have it articulated so we that can teach it at the universities and because I work at a college system that is affiliated with the University of Northern British Columbia, we can have the UNBC come and teach with a linguist along with the speakers of the Michif language in the community and it would be articulated so that we could have Aboriginal language teachers trained and be teaching our children in the schools. And so that's the direction that we would like.

Have you formed your committees though?

Ah...we haven't formed any committees as such, we are, we have started a database of the Michif speakers and we have...so far about seventy in the province that have identified that they're Michif speakers.

I brought a Michif language curriculum that SaskEd printed in 1994 and what I'm going to do is pass this curriculum SaskEd has developed. Its one hundred and three pages long and this is a guide. Its been adapted from Cree language courses and its a Michif adaptation. So for people who are interested in developing Michif curriculum. There's stuff that's been started, but I must say that there's a lot that needs to be done, but its has to be done with Michif speakers and so I'm going to pass this around the table. I'll start at this end and maybe by the afternoon everyone will have to see what has been developed to this point.

????copies?

Sure, Murray is there access to a photocopier?

If somebody can Xerox it upstairs fine. GDI will pay for it.

Okay, I guess.

I know Mr...speaker. Can I just borrow that book for a second? No, no the other one. The Dutchman. Norman told us this morning about the nouns and the verbs and how it goes together. I met this guy in 1988 at a GDI conference and he came to me and he said "Murray" he says... ah he introduced himself and he was interested in the Michif language and he had a list of communities that he was gonna go to. And some of them I said "no, there's... as far as I know, there was no Michif speakers there. In fact his first book, ah was blue and it had a copy of a...a picture of ah my kokum's brother on there. Modess Godlin from Lebret and he spent quite a bit of time. He came to Canada many times and he studied the language. Now, I think we have a good start here.

No sound on tape

or Selma and again the technicians. The Metis experts. He's identified most of the communities where Michif is spoken. So if we take those communities and we use their language to make the changes to the dictionary, we got a good start.

Would it be feasible or possible to get our own version of it? With all these ? books?

Well, I support Norman and yourself that that has to be done, but at the same time that's going to take a long time and we need something in the mean time. Like just to redo the dictionary. Norman and yourselves, your the experts. You could say how long that's going to take. But ah...

But, we could get money for it?

Yes.

Yes.

Yes.

But, that book there, we don't have to change everything.

I was just wondering if maybe we could take that book and each region go through it and see which words that we do use and the words that are different and maybe put our version of that word in that book and then maybe, get together or whatever. Some kind of a plan to get together and go through the book again and see if those are the words that we do use or which one we're going to use.

Maybe when we break up into small groups after ?? discuss with youse. We'll get our feedback from everybody.

The gentleman from BC.

Yah I just wanted to say that Gabriel Dumont Institute has a number of resources that they have on the history of the Metis and I was telling Leah that maybe what we should be doing is looking at the ah...what has been published in English and do the translations in Michif so that we'd have something we could teach in the classroom and then we could also put it on, either CD or on tape, so that our people could hear the language read and then see the words as well.

With that in mind?????Now ah we've got a lot of ground to cover and??cover as much as we can. So if you could be back at 1:00 o'clock. Were gonna start sharp at one. All be back at 1:00 o'clock.

Break

End of side 2 - tape 2 & 3

**GDI YORKTON MICHIF CONFERENCE
APRIL 24, 1999 1:00 P.M.
TAPE 4**

Make sure that ah...you know if you don't want somebody to be on the committee. Make sure somebody dedicated and it not political involved. In other words we must be non political. This committee must be non-political otherwise you have interference if you have political involve in it. Okay, now, we were talking this morning. How many people here that smoke, I mean that speak fluently and understand the Michif language. Put your hand up so we can break you in groups. Not that many.

I can understand it 100%. I can speak it about 50%. So what group do I fit into?

Those that understand it.

Pardon.

Those that understand it.

Kay.

Your in the next category now.

Okay the people that understand it, you can use this non-smoking room, smoking room here. You can room yourself there. You can move yourself there and remember you have to record it. You have to bring out the points cause, we're gonna discuss that afterwards. The direction we're gonna go, okay? These are things, within your small group, make sure get everybody involved. This is why we want to break into small groups so we want a participate from everybody and we'll be kind of a ...myself and ah Norman here and Gilbert will be kinda going around from group to group. If you have any questions or any problems, please feel free to ask us. Okay?

Everyone dispersing into different groups. Lots of mumbling and shuffling around.

Remember somebody's gotta take notes. Somebody's gotta take notes on what your discussing and ? topics.

shuffling and mumbling

All in Michif ...

End of Side 1 tape 4

Side 2

All in Michif ...

So what we're saying here like is that we want a committee sixty-five and over, advising committee to advise the younger ones. Michif language you know. And we want to form a committee with everybody here that's over sixty-five.

We're too young I guess, eh.

We want to have ?? committee.

Michif.

So we can come to you guys for advice about the old days.

Michif and mumbling.

Well, that's the kind of advice that we want from, to advise the younger people, you know. We want everybody sixty-five and over, hopefully, to be on that committee.

Okay, not being mean or miserable. What'll they learn by it? What will they gain by my Metis language?

They'll gain a lot by telling them what you knew. They way you used to live. The way we used to live as Metis people.

Well, I'm pretty sure we'll never live that way again.

I know, but we don't want them to forget the way we used to live. It may be rough sometimes, but you know, we had a lot of fun too.

Yah, I know, but...

It was hard times, but we still had fun. Got along a lot better than we did now.

Michif...

Michif... that's all I'll get. That discourages me. I'm told by somebody, young person. I tell them how we live and ?? damn liar. You know, I don't believe in that bullshit. You know what I mean. If I tell that person something I didn't tell them a lie. That's how I look at it so are they going to listen to us? Are they going to gain anything by it?

I think when we gather today eh. What we trying to do is get our Cree language back. Our Michif language back. That's the biggest thing. We try to get it back now.

Michif.....

Michif... oh well I got no practice like, you know. It takes practice to keep on top of your language regardless what language you talk. English, Chinese what the hell ever. You got to have practice. So that's all it takes. I never forget the language.

No No.

No. Not a one of you either. So that's the whole thing. ??? fine

Well I think we'd learn from the advising committee. I think, me. We'd learn from you guys.

Well you know, of course there's gonna be some, like you say. There gonna call you liars and they're gonna call these old ladies liars.

There's gotta be the odd one, but we gotta...we can't worry about those kind of people. You know, we're working with the people who wants to learn. Who wants to know their heritage, eh.

And that's the ones we want to work with. If some smart aleck comes along and calls you a liar, well I'll just tell em, okay, get going.

???

Yah, well if that happens, that happens, but we can't be discouraged by just a few of those guys.

You take Moshum ???you know, he told us a lot. And sometimes ??? hey are you telling me the truth. You know, but we never had the nerves to go and tell him he was lying or we had respect for him. We'd sit down and listen to him.

Well that's like today. They got no respect. People got no respect no more. Not like they used to have before eh.

I think those that are interested in the language and culture, they'll be there to listen.

They'll be there to listen. That's right.

I think basically that's what our main goal is teaching the history and the culture and the language at the same time.

Teach the people who wants to learn.

That want to learn.

There's a lot of the them that are really interested.

Do you think there will be...

I think it'll be beneficial to all of us.

I think that there's lots of em, but there's just never been any involvement or no language thought about it eh. Its just what they picked up and basically its gotta be all one Michif language instead of trying to mix it all up.

Well its going to be mixed anyhow regardless of ???Michif. Most of us will be mixing ??? Michif ??like that's pretty hard to break that, but be nice I suppose to try.

?????????Michif ?? long time ago, you know they way they used to live before our time even. That's really interesting to hear. And if people are interested in learning that, those are the kind of people we're gonna work with. I don't say we're gonna work with them all, because we can't. There's gonna be the odd one that's... well that's in every group though, you know, but we can't be discouraged by one or two smart alecks that's gonna come along and say...you know, wants to get smart about it, but that's...I don't mean to say smart alecks.

??we gotta do it. Try it and see what...??

Are you willing to do it?

If you don't try it and see. Your not going to learn by this meeting.

Well see all you guys are going to be together when we come. We'll get you guys all together as a group when we want advice eh.

Up and over sixty, sixty-five.

So we'll come to you guys as a group. It'll be a group, not just one.

mumbling, various people talking at once

I'll go along with that, but I don't say I'm gonna be attending the meeting every time.

Well, nobody's expected to be there every time. If you could make it, we'll be happy to see you there, but if you can't make it, then you can't make it. That's all there is to it. There's nobody...and none of these...even these guys, they won't always make it all the meetings, but.

Okay we'll go on with the other committee now. How big we want it.

I think we'll wait for the rest to come in for that one.

You think so.

Yah, we got no...we got all the elders here. We got no elders out there. There all young ones out there.

We could say how many we want.

Yah.

I think we should mostly get the elders involved in that committee ???anything else. Like us younger generation...

We're done with that one .

No we're done with that.

Signed, sealed, delivered.

We want to form committees. Not only one committee.

To organize these meetings.

We want a committee to organize these meetings.

But, we also want...we also want a committee that gonna be talking to government. We want at least five people there. We gotta incorporate. We're able to get all this money, but we gotta incorporate. We need five people in this committee. There not gonna be the boss by any means. Don't get me wrong. There not gonna be the boss of anything. Everybody's gonna be involved in the way this money is gonna be spent and you know this committee will gonna come and say, well look, there's the cheque guys. This is how much we got to put this thing on. How are we going to work this. Everybody will get involved in how we're gonna set this thing up. Not just the committee, but those will be our ... I guess our spokespersons or something to go and talk to government for money.

Negotiations.

Yah to negotiate for the money.

And set up these meetings and that.

And set up these meetings, but we need, we need people that are dedicated. Who are not afraid to go speak to government people that... you know sometimes people feel, yah I can do it, but when you come to meet a group like this, maybe we'll meet a dozen, a dozen government officials and your all alone there where there's only two, you know, people are intimidated sometimes and that's...and some people just can't talk in a group like that eh.

Yah somebody's that not afraid to talk.

No and we'd like people to be able to talk to these people here.

Like I know Edwin would be used to doing that because he's been doing it all his life. He's used to talking groups like that so I would like to get him in that group. Cause he's used to working with government people. I'd like to nominate Edwin, for one, to that group that's gonna be talking to government and be our..one of our spokesmen.

Yah, I'll second that.

???Gilbert

Would everybody be ...would everybody agree with Edwin? Being one?

I wonder...how about the other group, though? Other guys.

There's only four sitting in this other place.

???

They can't speak Cree. These are the ones that's important, okay. These are the ones we want. Yes.

???? **Mumbling**

I nominate Gilbert Pelletier for one of them.

Want to second it?

I'll second it that motion.

? kind of lost here people. You wanted a committee, okay. How many committees you gonna have here. A committee to say..for the Michif language join the meeting and a committee to set em up. I think it'd be better if you had a committee to set a...to set everything up and have a different committee of these older generations.

???

No, no, but what committee are you on right now?

That's for the arrangements.

For arranging the meeting?

Yah.

Where to get the money.

We're only going to have one committee. For everything like.

No, no, the elders are..

You lost me here. You know what I'm saying.

Mumbling. Everyone talking at once

Those ?? are advising committees. For the Michif things. That's our advising committee. That's our elders and that's the ones we go to for advice. You know, cause we don't know. We don't know there what as much as they know. We might have went to school longer. Some of us might have grade ten, grade twelve where they don't have it, but they still know a lot more than we do. You know, books is not everything. Books is the only way it'll help us is to go to government and talk, that's the only way they help us, but these are the guys that knows the real thing. The real Michif ways.

Mumbling

Their the ones that really know our culture. Okay we need five people on this committee and like Ed's been saying, you gotta be dedicated and hopefully you'll be able to make meetings. You'll be able to talk to government.

You should ask, who's gonna be ?? just to talk to the government.

That's what we're talking about .

Who's gonna be able to talk to them.

That's what we're talking about.

Is that ???

That's...

The committee.

That's.. a committee.

?

Yes and to get the money for...to have what we're gonna be having.

?

They're the ones to make, yah, they're the ones to go and negotiate for the money, but they're not gonna be handling the money. Everything is gonna be an open book policy. You wanta see the cheque book. You see the cheque book. You want to see all the receipts, the receipts will all be there. None of this under the table bullshit that they been having. You know, like, you can't see...yah, like you can't see the books. You can't, you don't know where the money went. You don't know how much money they got, you know, but this is what I'm saying. This is what everybody's gonna know, where the money is.

?

If you want to know where the money went to, you come and see the books. The books are right there. You bring somebody along that's able to read and write really good and they'll tell you exactly where the money went.

How much.

And how much.

How much we've overspent.

Yah, how much we spent and how we spent it, cause everybody's gonna have a say in how to spend it. This committee's not gonna be the ones to have the say, well look, we got fifty

thousand dollars, there's five of us, now lets spend this money the way we want. It doesn't work that way. Its not gonna work that way.

The people are gonna have the...

Exactly, everybody gets involved in...

The elders are gonna be talking to the government for these...

No, no

Just giving you the advice?

Yah.

How to do it?

Uhum.

Everybody will be involved in the way we're gonna handle this. See that's cultural, for them its cultural. For the older ones that's cultural, eh. That's the ones that knows their culture. That's the older committee.

How many you want on this committee?

Well we need...

We got two already.

?? from GDI, didn't we?

Yah, we get one from GDI.

We get an appointment from there.

Yah they're going to appoint one to us from GDI.

So what are we looking at, five?

?GDI.

Mumbling.

Yah, yah.

And there's no politics involved. The only politician we want is a guy that's gonna be helping us get the money is Murray Hamilton, but otherwise this isn't political. This is a Michif gathering thing and that's all we want. This is just straight for Michif language and culture. Anybody else? What about you?

He's from Manitoba. They're from out of the province, these guys.

How broad is this ??discussion.

This is right through Saskatchewan and we're gonna be getting...when we have it this summer. When we this big one this summer, we're gonna have...we're gonna be inviting people from all over Canada and the States. You know, this is gonna be worldwide, hopefully. We're gonna be getting people from all over. Wherever there's people talking our Michif language.

Wherever there's Michifs.

Yah, wherever there's Michif, we're gonna reach those people.

See how they're doing and how they doing it.

Yah.

Get a good feedback.

Well we got two, maybe we should get those other groups in here.

Now, they got three.

Somebody in there, maybe we can find somebody who...

That guy from GDI.

Yah, we need two more.

And there's two here.

Maybe they've nominate somebody from them other groups there.

Yah they may have, yeh.

Yah, probably.

If not, we could do it when we get into a big group.

Mumbling

Yah, but Lawrence I think we outlined that whoever's on this committee has to speak and understand the lingo.

Yah. That's what I was saying.

Mumbling

The other group, are they electing a committee too?

No.

No, because they can't speak...they gotta be able to speak and understand it.

Oh, oh.

I'm gonna nominate Gilbert.

Mumbling.

You want to get on the committee?

You gotta be nominated for that. I can't nominate ...

Well, I nominate Mervin.

Mumbling.

Is everybody agreed.

Yep, yah, yah.

Okay that's four. Cause they did appoint one for us.

I would nominate Lucy, but she's home sick all the time.

You know, I don't know, but I think we should get the one with the opposite sex now. Because we're too top heavy with men here.

Yah. We need a woman.

They'll be ?? we're ramrodding it ??

Stella.

I'll second the motion.

??

Everybody in favor.

Get somebody else.

No.

Mumbling.

Your on Stella. Your it.

?? be the Premier, you.

Mumbling.

That's it.

Mumbling.

She doesn't want to.

Are you going to? Stella?

Michif

Are you going to?

Michif You don't have to ask.

You want to decline.

Mumbling.

Kay Stella, you decline?

Kaykwi?

You decline?

No. No.

No, I'll stay.

Okay, she's in.

She's in. Good girl!

Okay, that's it for that one. Now, I think what we're gonna do...what we'll do now is we'll break for a few minutes. Stretch your legs and your nicotine fix and that. Come back in about ten minutes.

End of Side 2 tape 4

GDI YORKTON MICHIF CONFERENCE APRIL 24, 1999 2:30 P.M. TAPE 5

....and I think what we'll do is each committee will give their report and ah we'll have them on the... we'll put em on the boards tonight. Somebody will and then we could priorities them tomorrow. So the committee that was in that room wants to give their report first. Whoever the Coordinator was.

We were the baby Michif language people. We don't know our language, but we'd like to get to know it ay. So ah I started with what B.C. is doing with literacy for British Columbia for Michif language in particular the Metis and we had our conference in January of this year and there was just a small handful of people. There was a hundred people there. Only four or five Michif speakers and the rest of them were more Cree and speakers and then we sent out a survey of all the Michif speakers and we've identified seventy throughtout the province with a higher number of them within the B.C. central area of Prince George and the Locals around that area. Then we talked about the Metis Nation of B.C. would like to assist Gabriel Dumont Institute in translating of the resources that they have like the Historical Booklets and other resources so that we have a curriculum that we could use nationally and then I also mentioned that I had the opportunity to meet Christine Dodges, the Director General for National Literacy Secretariat and she was telling me that the Federal Government is very much interested in supporting Aboriginal literacy language projects and so because none of us know our language that we could easily qualify for running some sort of a program where we could be teaching of the Michif language so I've given the address here so that we can all apply to Christine Dodge. She was very supportive of that. Then we talked about the regional dialect and differences because we sat in on these discussions this morning and we heard that our that there was so many different variations of the Michif language but we wanted to have sort of a national literacy or national Michif curriculum so that we could all be speaking from the same pages or reading from the same page. We had a little bit of discussion about the history of the language from one of the people that attended and they said it basically...the language, when they spoke was a protection from the authorities so thats what the language that they used in the home community ah communities so that when they would talk, they would be talking amongst themselves and thats why maybe some of us we don't know our language but we've heard it spoken when we were younger as children. We need to also talk about having our political bodies whether it be Metis Nation of Saskatchewan, Metis Nation of B.C. or Metis Nation of Alberta, Manitoba Metis Federation, Metis National Council to...ah as sources of lobbying to the levels of Government so that we can have the ability to teach this language in our community. We talked about the Michif language dictionary project that you were talking about and we see that the Michif language has to be developed and occur simultaneously and we need to heighten the awareness of the retention of the Michif language. We also talked about a Michif emersion program. We have French emersion programs. Cree

emersion programs but, we don't have any Michif emersion programs and we would like to see a Michif emersion programs and one way that we could do this is if we would go into partnerships with the school boards and say that our children...ah would like, we'd like to have our language taught to our children and so we talked about how we could this and but, we'd look at the community schools where seventy-five, eighty per cent of these children attending the schools are Metis or Indian children. So if we have this as a lobbying for these schools and the school boards to include a Michif emersion program. That this is maybe a base for our children to have their language retained. We talked also about pre-schools like the Headstart programs and so we mentioned that we need to involve the elders and programs and as well as curriculum in these Headstart programs. We also mentioned about this new New Zealand, Mauri model of language for preschoolers. Then we also talked about collection of stories from people and we should be submitting, maybe articles in English of these stories of these people, but also in Michif so that our people could constantly see our language reinforced in our publications. Then I mentioned that last year that Metis National Council had a literacy writer's week and there was a number of stories that were published or not published, but were developed that week. A hundred and thirty stories. They were at levels of one, grade one to three and grades four to six and they are all at adult reading. It's not like fun with Dick and Jane. Its stories that adults would relate to at a lower level of literacy and those would be easier for translating in a Michif language. Again we talked about the...I think I mentioned about those community schools. I see it written down here and we also talked about a certificate of language ah Michif language teachers and we thought that Gabriel Dumont Institute could ah maybe look at a two year certificate program in the Michif language and this way we could have our Michif language speakers in the schools at a faster rate than the four years. So that they could be either like teachers associates or teacher aides in the schools with the Michif... or their area of expertise would be in Michif language. If we don't do anything about it soon our Michif language will be extinct, because we noticed that in this room where the Michif language speakers were. It was...the majority of the older ones that were there and there was hardly any younger ones and so we noticed that. We did talk about other things, like upcoming events. There's Metis Women's Conference that is planned here for the Fall. So we need to maybe have some Michif language people attending that as well as the Conference on Aging in Alberta and its co-sponsored with Metis Nation of Alberta, Metis Nation of Canada. So it would be a good chance for Gabriel Dumont Institute and Louis Riel Institute to maybe interview these people and theres an ad that appears in the recent Windspeaker on the dates of that. Thats at the end May. Then I brought in the information about the Aboriginal Literacy Training Conference May 11 through the 12th at the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre and some of the workshops that are going to be there is proposal writing and there will be many government officials from Victoria as well from Ottawa that will be there and so theres literacy strategies and training methodologies that work in First Nations communities as well as the Metis communities that are out there so its maybe an opportunity for us to get some ideas on how to write proposals to the government especially if we're going to be addressing these to the National Literacy Secretariat's office and I think thats the end of our discussion, basically.

What was you said???B.C.??

Oh and we mentioned that actually ...when we talked to our elders at the conference, they were telling us the history of our language. That it was...the Hudson Bay. They called it the Hudson Bay Michif, because our people came from Alberta and Saskatchewan and even from Manitoba

and they followed the fur trade and when the fur trade post came up to Fort Nelson and Liard and Lower Post that it was the Michif speakers that would speak with the Indian groups there and that's why our language is not a pure Michif down like it is in the Southern provinces but rather it's much more of a...I can't say the word but I'll say what they said "it's a bastardized Michif language" because it includes the Dene language and so everyone present at this conference and those people that have answered our survey, they said that they would like to see a national literacy Michif language, where we're all speaking the same language and so they want to steer away from involving the Dene language. So that's what we're talking about and that's it.

Any more question? We're having our own little conference here. You got any more questions for that group that was...group one. If not, thanks Allan and what we'd like... you to hand in those reports after so we can put em on the flip charts, if you don't mind. Okay next group. Oh, you got something to say?

Yah. I want to... Allan ah. I think this is something you need to discuss with your President, Mr Pierce. I'm concerned about...like Dene or Cree, like for example any of those languages. It's true that there's a lot of Metis or Halfbreed people that speak those languages but there's money going into those Indian organizations that is intent on saving those languages. It's my understanding that the agreement that we came up with Federal Government was that the money that Metis National Council is getting was to be used for Michif so you need to go home and try and get Mr. Pierce. You have to educate him, because it's not up to us to save Dene or Cree or whatever. We have to worry about Michif and if there's money coming in the top, it should be directed at Michif. I'm sure you realize that, but...

That's what I mentioned with the discussion that we had in January that when we spoke with the speakers there. They said that they would like to see a national Michif language where it's just the Cree and the French and get back to that and so the majority of those people that are answering our surveys are wanting to have a national language. They're not wanting to reinforce the language that they already have.

Anybody else? Well thanks again, Allan. Now the next group that was in this little room here. I think I should have went in your group. We did a lot of talking and kind of spoke of some kind structure being done with the speakers that were in this room to be the majority of decision makers along with the technical support which we kind of named ourselves being the technical support because we understand, but don't speak it as fluently as the speakers do, so what we were thinking is to set up some kind of a structure with first training some Michif teachers on how... I guess the proper way to teach like going through maybe Gabriel Dumont and teaching these speakers how to instruct and ah we kind of spoke about having a curricula put together where all the words mean the same and going through and the North. How the North speak and how the South speak and that and have some some kind of language and we looked at that booklet that Norm had provided and we found out that most...how they speak in Manitoba is the same way we do. Well that group in there anyway. That was in there with us ah spoke the same according to that little book and we also spoke about maybe having camps for children where these kids would go there and we'd have some elders or some people that spoke very fluent Michif and spoke to these kids in nothing but Michif like for a week if they went to camp for a week. They had their instructors or their guidance counsellors and that would only speak to

them in Michif and I think that's the way we can start teaching the young how to speak the language. That's it.

Thank you, okay then we'll go on with the report from within the room here and ah.

We're next.

Yah, we're next.

Okay, merci. The Michif speakers group ah which was the bigger group. We talked about the way of life of the Metis people, like past, present and future. But, our main thrust of our conversations amongst ourselves and our dialoguing was to do with the Michif language but first of all when we first started to talk as a group, we talked about the legends and we talked about the werewolf, that's Lee Loo Garoo. We talked about Nanabush. We talked about Chi Jean. We talked about Wee Sa Gee Tchak and we talked about Aw ta yook kay win. Cayas ??? Li Michif. We talked about that too and we had a real good group. Very good response here, because all of a sudden, you could feel it in your heart and you could feel the Michif language coming out strong amongst our elders here and they all of sudden started to share about the life of long time ago, the past, the present and the future. We also talked about history. How our involvement as a people with Louis Riel and our people that fought in the resistance in Batoche and a lot of our people died for our rights. For our lands. Our land claims, especially for our language that we've lost and that's what we're fighting for here today. We've also talked about the Metis people when they were doing the freighting and they used to...the wars that they fought with the Souix and they established boundaries. Like everybody had...there was a lot of land, but we still had our boundaries as nations and that they were the biggest Buffalo ranchers and that they also had, they were horse people. They raised a lot of horses. But the thing that we talked about was how we lost our language and why did we lose...or not lost it completely, but we're in the verge of losing our language and why our language is in danger and ah one elderly lady said we can't give up now, like we gotta keep going. We gotta fight for our language and ah the First Nations people, there was remarks, comments made that they're ahead of us. They teach it in their schools. They teach their language in their schools. They also have local control of their own education. They also have what they talk about, self government and that's part of the education system and ah the small kids up North speak their language. They're just small kids and they speak their language and our children have lost it, but another person in our group said well it's not the children's fault if they lost their language. You can blame it on the school system. You can blame it on parents who either haven't taken the time to teach it or they thought it was no use, teaching it and when the people disbursed, they lost everything. They lost their language. When they lived together in communities, they had everything. They had their way of life. Their culture was based on their livelihood, their language. The language was everything and once they start moving away, they lost their language, because years ago when you used to visit one another, the first thing you'd do is speak Michif. So it was in your community ah another thing that we talked about here is the extended family units. When somebody died in the family and they were very close and the children were not orphaned. They weren't taken by the welfare system or they weren't taken by the child care system. They were taken by godparents. They were taken by their grandparents. Somebody was always there to reach out and help one another. So we talked about that also. And ah, we also talked about that today, there is no time

for friends and relatives like there used to be. There used to be a lot of socializing through dances, playing cards, playing games. Also telling legends where our grandparents used to tell legends and stories and that's what held us together. Today we don't have that. Another thing that's killing us as a Metis nation is the jealousy. ?????????? So that's what's a big one. That's really detrimental to our cause. We got to get over that. We also talked about foods like the traditional foods that they used to eat. Some people said it's spring time now. It would be time to eat Li Peezan we used to call them. Li gopher???? Eating Muskrat and eating tripe. ?????????? Those kind of foods. Some people said, well you can still go and get em in the slaughter house but, they clean em too much. **Ha ha ha people laughing.** You have to have that manure smell there to make. The flavour????????? And if we're going to get back some of our language, we have to use the Gabriel Dumont Institute series that they have. It's called the Learning Series...what is it called The Alfred Learning Series and ah use those methods to teach youth and the adult and using the audio visual aids and getting putting together multimedia kits and stuff. And they said we grew up with our language. That's why we never lost it. There's some people don't have that opportunity today. They didn't grow up with the language. We grew up with that language. So then we came to talking about an advisory committee. So there was a great discussion. A lengthy discussion on the elders and so the elders here are going to be the participants of the advisory committee. ?? was talking with my friend over here and ah we said, you know, when we first started our meeting we talked only in Michif. Everything was in Michif and then we lead over to the English and it killed everything. So that tells you that as soon as you speak a different language, it ruins everything. The Michif, when we had our Michif talks here, we were laughing, giggling and talking about everything. Then when the English came in ?????????? it wasn't the same. So that tells us, if we're gonna speak Michif and we're gonna work on Michif language, we have to use our language. ??? and then there was a coordinating group that was put together, a language committee and there was five people and they were talking about, it would be incorporated or these people would be the lobbyists. They would be the people that would negotiate. They would also use the elders and advisory group where the elders would advise them on where they should go and so there was nominations put forth and the people that were nominated were: Edwin St. Pierre, Gilbert Pelletier, one person from GDI, which you'll have to make a choice and Mervin Pelletier and Stella Lavallee. Thank you.

Mumbling asking if anything else.

No, I want to thank the Michif speakers, in particular the elders. At least I have...when somebody...I have somebody to phone now for somebody to get together. I have somebody to work with and I thank you for that.

Okay then if we don't have any more. I don't have any more. You don't have any more.

I would like to have those people that were the leaders in the discussion. So the chairpeople come with over here and we'll decide on how we're going to put this on the flipcharts for tomorrow. Please.

Okay then with that if we don't have any more to discuss today. Oh Gilbert has something to do or somebody has something to do. Miles...

Oh. Okay, I don't know, for those that don't know there, we're going to have a supper between six and six thirty at the Elks Lodge and then there's going to be a dance to follow and I hope Alex signed up his bow and stuff because we'd like to get to him play a few tunes.

Applause and mumbling.

Well I think we'll see you guys over at the Elks Lodge, eh. For those of you that don't know where the Elks Lodge is the easiest way I could instruct you guys to go is, is go straight to Canadian Tire, behind Canadian Tire, straight across. There's Cristies funeral home there. When you see Cristies funeral home, theres a road that goes in left. You just go straight left. Follow that road. You'll see it. Down by number nine highway there. Its on the east side of number nine highway. Its actually very easy to find if you live in Yorkton.

Laughter

What road is it on?

It's on...whats the name of that road there, Noah? Palliser Way I think is the name. There's a sign there that says Palliser Way. Yah, and for the dance...the supper...what we're gonna do is the speakers here and the guests, invited guests are gonna be first. We ordered six hundred dollars worth of chicken and the stuff that goes with it and whoever else comes to the dance and stuff, they're welcome to come to the meal, but we're gonna be feeding the people that are in this conference right now first and after that they can line up. It'll be buffet style everybody, but hopefully, that our speakers here and everybody else thats in here right now will be the first ones to the tables and after that...Johnny comes late, well whatever's left, they can help themselves. Okay?

Don't forget, don't stop at the funeral home. Keep going.

Laughter.

Six o'clock and the dance follows.

It's gonna be catered to us at six. Between six and six thirty I told em.

Now for tomorrow. Ah what time do youse want to start? What time would be a good would be a good time? Nine thirty, nine?

too early

Nine.

We can't start till ten.

Ten.

Ten.

Give em till ten.

Yah there'll be some headaches.

There'll be a few headaches in the morning.

Ten o'clock then. Okay? We'll go till we're finished. Get your rest and get your partying and we'll see you tomorrow at ten o'clock.

GDI YORKTON MICHIF CONFERENCE
DAY 2, APRIL 25, 1999
TAPE 6

??? Prayers in Michif or Cree

Merci. Thank you.

Well first of all, I would like to thank Myles here for the supper he gave us last night and organizing that dance and the fun we all had. I'm sure most of us were there last night. I'm sure we all enjoyed it.

? Didn't like the supper. That guy complained about the supper. I don't know what Grandma feeds that boy, but I'm sure theres nothing that anybody else could cook that pleases him.

Short discussion about what they were going to discuss and whether there were any marking pens.

You girls from GDI have any marking pens by any chance?

A what?

Marking pens? Felt pens?

I can check with catering and see if they have any marking pens.

Allan will run upstairs and get some from the front desk.

More hushed discussion. Something about Metis speakers.

That lady from GDI, did you get all the names of the speakers...the Metis speakers?

We've got... if you havn't filled one of these out. I'll collect these and keep you on our mailing list to send you information.

Did everybody fill one out?

So whoever hasn't filled one out...

I'll take one.

And I'll put these people on my mailing list.

For what?

For just everything, information, newsletters....

Hey I'm not really a speaker, but I can understand a lot. Could I fill one out?

Fill one out. Yah.

Mumbling and discussion.

Does everybody want me to type a mailing list out and send it to everybody?

Yah. Addresses and phone numbers.

Okay, so what I'll do when I get back next week, I'll type out a mailing list and a phone list.

Have you got the list now?

I'm just collecting the names.

Yah we'd like to see everyone fill one out. Their addresses and phone numbers.

Mumbling.

That lady that ah...thelma is it?

Selma?

Yah, do you want to put the list of your deals on here with the felt pen? Your group? And then who did that...you gonna do ours, eh?

And then Allan.

And then Allan. You want to put yours?

Sure.

Mumbling, something about not many people and lots of people will be Metis speakers at 12 o'clock. Everybody talking at once.

I think what we'll do while they put this writing on their flip charts here. We got a couple rooms here. If you want to break up into your groups again and discuss when you'd like to have the next meeting so the committee will have something to work on. Okay? Where you want it and when you want it and how big do you want it. Who do want to invite. So we have some guidelines to work with at the committee. So the same groups you were in. The group that was here yesterday has to stay in here and the other two groups could go into the other two groups and discuss that, okay? ?small groups. Because they're going to take a while yet. ??? Then once we get this, once we discuss this, we should ??right after. ?we got a long ways to go. We try to get done as soon as possible.

We'll have a meeting before the big one eh? Another one?

Well the committee probably will. If we could just meet with the committee that's here. Where's Gilbert?

Mumbling.

We get together with the group. We're a group. Is Mervin here?

No.

We're short one man already.

Mumbling.

Would like to expand on some of the points as I address them.

Yah.

Alright, we were in the small room and this is our chart here and I recorded some of the discussion that was happening in that room so, um I'd like the members who were in that room to kind of expand the ideas that we have here. I kind of...what we did was put them into three categories ? about highlighting some of the main points that were talked about and then looked at some of the considerations and then some action items that the committee will then have to discuss when they meet. So then we kind of suggested three ideas for the major conference that was...is going to take place in the future. One was that the Michif language conference coincide with the Metis Women's conference that's gonna be held in the Fall of 1999. Two was that, there was a suggestion that the Metis Assembly, the political body is gonna meet in August so that would be another time that you could consider to meet. Plan a conference and three, that it just be by itself. That Michif language conference and you focus on...you know, educational aspects, maybe, the teaching, the strategies, methodologies...you know, it could be focused specifically on Michif language. Now, rather than going the combination. Now I'd like Evelyn to kind of expand on this idea here, the Michif language conference to coincide with the Metis Women's conference. Some ideas.

Okay, what we're doing is, our Regina chapter, Metis Women's and this includes every Metis women in the province and we thought it would be a good idea to have this Michif conference

the same time as that..our Metis one, we can expand it to three days and have it all in one building and I think we're going to have enough money raised that we could pay for almost all of it, except, some of our visitors, we wouldn't be able to have enough money for the rooms, but if we know ahead, in advance and in each Local, they can raise...do their fundraising for their hotel rooms to be there for the three days and the conference would cover their meals for the three days and everything else ??there would just your room money that maybe each Local could raise money or do something. The Locals in each area could raise money to send their people and we wanted...it was gonna be a two day conference, but they said it would probably take three days so we could expand it to three days, but we have to know, because we soon have to put in our time we're gonna have it. We want to have it at the end of September and its gonna be...there will be other speakers there. What we're working with now is youth and in the women's department, we work with getting them back to school if they're in the younger generation. Um abuse, there's all kinds of abuse. There's sexual abuse. There's mental abuse. There's physical abuse. So there's gonna be speakers on that and there's gonna be ah I havn't got the paper with me. I wish I would that with me, but there's gonna be quite a few topics that we're gonna be dealing with at that conference and we just, it was just a suggestion ah the people who are planning the conference have to you know, can take it or just ignore it. It don't matter, but we would sure like to have you there, because there is a lot of people. Its kind of a central location too for everybody to come from across the province ah, but each local will have to let us know, you know, how many are coming and that and certain times so we know how many big rooms to book for this.

Anybody else from our group want to speak to that? Okay, both of these suggestions um I know that the focus on Michif language would be dedicated to speakers only and that was a suggestion that came out from the group that the first they would be dedicated to Michif speakers where recordings could take place and that would be whether you went with the Michif language focus conference or the Metis women and the Michif language combined. Okay, some considerations when you're thinking about um how we're gonna organize this is the funding issue. Evelyn mentioned that the Metis women are already in the process of writing proposals, fundraising and so on and so other Locals will have start doing fundraising activities or you know, approaching organizations and so on for uh in preparation for to assist them in attending the conference and they would like to have a really good turn out at the conference, support. The other thing is, if we're going to do things like recordings, then, we need the people who can do that for us, to assist us in that development, for example; we would need technical support and this would be things like computers uh, uh, sound systems, anything like that. So we need the people who are, who specialize in that area to come out. Uhm, we have to notify Metis Locals as soon as possible so decisions have to be made pretty quick, in terms of getting notification out there the conference thats gonna be happening. Whats gonna be on the agenda and so on. Michif language planning committee and Metis women to coordinate the conference if thats the way we're going to do it. Then those two are going to have to decide when they're going to meet and go ahead with the planning considerations. Some action items...that is one of the action items actually, is to get those two committees to meet and to discuss conference considerations as soon as possible. The conference, the action items, because they wanted ah, ah, the first day dedicated only to Michif language speakers and to record stories, uhm, those kinds of sessions, then the conference itself will have to expand more than one day so they're looking two or three days for the conference so thats an action item. Uhm, focus on elder Michif speakers. Focus on elder,

youth and women would be another action item. Uhm, basically, because of the reasons Evelyn brought up and then another way to approach the conference would be to combine language sessions with other sessions, for example, she talked about uh, the entrepreneurship, ah, session could be one ah, aspect a conference and then you could move on to another aspect which would be the language focus, maybe and another focus could be, if your going education, you can focus on strategies and methodologies to use withing lang...Michif language uhm, teaching approaches, whatever, you know, so your focus could be in different areas within the Metis uhm, agenda. So thats basically what we talked about in our group.

Is there any questions on that?

What are the dates...proposed?

The dates for...?

Yah, what date? Have you got any dates set? Possible dates?

No. No. They're not set yet.

The only...if you're going with the Metis women, there.

Give us that date.

September, October.

Okay, we'll send you that information as soon as I get back we'll...I can even send a copy of the first proposal we sent out, because its all in there what we want to do, then you'll have an idea from there. Okay?

Okay.

There will definately be one day set aside ?for this Michif speakers. That means, even us guys that can understand a little bit aren't allowed in there. Just strictly the speakers. Thats what we were saying because we do need to focus on our Michif language, eh? So thats one of the things we said that guaranteed the speakers get one complete day for themselves, straight speakers.

Just for language.

Strictly speakers.

Yah, but we'll send you the information you need and the date and then you can go from there. You can like accept it or not. ??you do then you'll have an idea what I'm talking about.

??committee can work on it.

If you would like to have the Michif language the first day and then maybe part of the next day, you know.

Okay, ???now next group. George?

Hookay, ???

You got a tough one to follow.

Okay, what was suggested here. What we talked about was having a Michif conference that they were talking about as I was trying to write down every little bit, but lots of it I could remember here, but also February 4th and 5th, which is the Labour Day weekend, because they talked about October, but the elders already said its getting cold already at that time so they suggested the first weekend in September would be the right time and also that the main speakers mostly are of here and Manitoba of the people that speak Michif. They're the only founders of the Michif language is you might as well say that its mostly around the Southern part of Saskatchewan that pretty well up North already its different, its a different type of Michif already, but the Michif language that we talk is the real Michif, because when our ancestors were born, their grandparents like there was the French father and the Cree mother and then that child started talking those two languages and then thats where it began. It was said here yesterday someplace also that same thing and thats where the Michif came from cause thats where thats the real Metis language. Because thats the true language that because its mixed. Its not only into one language compared to some places that they speak some like Saulteaux some what the Cree, but of course I'm not saying that their not Metis, they're Metis, but this is the real one. Thats what was suggested here and also that they'd be ?? Saskatoon and also that way they'd be able to get a tour of the Head Office of Gabriel Dumont Institute and also that they might take a tour to Batoche and also suggested that we contact the Board of Governors of the MNC for more funding for the for that part and then, then I heard something else afterwards. After we finished, but I guess, I guess Myles will tell you about that and ah, but that what was talked about.

You don't happen to be talking about what Murray suggested that we do?

Yah Murray and you. But you ??talking ??

??getting incorporated, inoporating the speakers. I think thats what you're suggesting, isn't it?

No George was...I mentioned to George that a we have to walk before we can run, but Alberta, ah, Manitoba is getting organized and so are we. So we have a provincial committee, but what we should also start looking at is a national committee, one from each of our Metis nation affiliates, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, BC and Ontario. There should be a national committee so that they make sure that the money that the MNC gets goes towards Michif language and not for some other business, cause it happens all the time and you people know that so we not only...you know its up to that committee to be a watch dog in the province, but we also need a national one, like for example; May the 12th MNC Board of Governors, like all the MNC presidents are meeting in Vancouver and they're gonna be deciding on a formula for all that

Michif money is split up between the provinces. So we have to send a strong message to our presidents that the easiest thing would be to divide it by five, that money.

Also you ah.

That's the easiest thing, but if, you know, ah some of that money should go towards those people that are maybe a little bit farther ahead. I know Allan...where is he? Is he gone someplace? Oh there he is, there, see he's gonna disagree with me right away. This is...

Laughter

Now see...anyway, that's, that's, that's politics. I don't want to talk too long about it, but...

What you are saying then, all these Metis Michif organizations are under one umbrella as far as funding goes?

No. I'm saying that we...

Lump sum and we spread it out?

There's a lump sum that comes from the la Government. It goes to le Michif and then the national body, Metis National Council. Last time we got money, they divided it into five equally, between the five organizations, but we have a provincial committee already in Saskatchewan, one in Manitoba. We need a national one. Somebody from your committee should be meeting with Norman and Allan I guess from BC. At least two or three times a year.

To sort this out?

To sort that out, yah.

Okay.

??you struck up a committee yesterday. If one of those people from that committee sit as a board for the??

Either you or Gilbert and Stella, like, we're gonna have to get Stella, Gilbert and yourself into Saskatoon before May the 12th before Clem goes to Vancouver to say "Clem, heres what our thoughts are on this or maybe one of you should go.

Taking this all in, Gilbert?

???

He's ready for suggestions and I mean some ideas that are put forth to us here. Remember keep in mind this ??for you people and the people that are organizing it and you'll see what we have

to do. You got to give us directions. ?? very interesting, but ah dates and locations are different. Ah wheres this ??in Regina? Native women, Metis women?

Yah its in Regina.

Whats that?

Where is this ah women gonna hold their ah?

In Regina, yah.

?a location here.

Ah we thought we'd support the Landmark Inn.

Landmark Inn eh?

Yah.

???Thats a fairly big place.???

Oh yah, they've got lots of meeting rooms. As long as we let them know well in advance.

What does the people here feel about that idea? First the one in Saskatoon. They're gonna hold it off.

Actually, I don't think its up to the people, its up to the committee to decide if they want to go and like Evelyn was saying, they didn't say exactly in October. They said September, October. It depends on availability and the funds. Am I right, Evelyn?

Yah, we'll know in a little while, though. We're gonna go with a date as soon as we can so we can start sending out invitations to different Locals.

That would be up to the committee's decision. If the committee's decision wanted to go have it in Kamsack, its entirely up to them.

Its only a suggestion. Its nothing, you know...

But this is what to meet the people ?the committee??is only here to serve the people.

Well thats why...

The majority of the people want to hold it in Regina, then I guess we should hold it in Regina. The mojority want to hold it in Saskatoon, then I guess we should hold it in Saskatoon thats what I'm saying. If we make the decision, they'll say, well why didn't you guys ask us. ?that position. Right Gilbert?

No, but I think if they had the local Meetings and if we were invited to attend and then we'd gather the notes and bring them all, all together when we meet.

That could be a suggestion too.

You know I can, around here I can take, I can go around to the locals and to look in ?and find out what ? Yah and get it all down and then just take it so we could all look at it.

So the the then idea was Myles has...you guys want to leave it up to the committee to decide how, where and when?

Yah I don't expect an answer today.

No, we're not saying that, but ah the committee here, people here.

I have the information you can use it.

Are you happy with the idea the committee looking after the dates?

Yes, yes! Its gotta be up to them.

Okay so then the committee ??

Yah, if we have a show of hands, maybe. Who's in agreement with what Myles said?

That the committee says where the conference will be held?

Yah, just put your hands up, who's in favour of that. If you want the committee to look after everything. If you object to it, we want to hear that also if you have any objections. Okay. Majority favoured, but if you have any strong objections, we want to hear that too.

Allan do you got any objections?

I'm in favour whatever you guys want to do.

Okay now, is anybody taking notes on this? Where that lady that been writing here? Where is she?

We're not being recorded on here?

I've got an audio recorder.

Okay, the feeling is, you're going to leave it up to us to decide where and when, okay? If there are any more suggestions on these... you know, we want some feedback from the committee regarding these three topics here, amalgamating sort of with the women, with the Metis women.

Do you see any problems in that? Would we be, you know, leading one way or the other? Missing our focus as far as the Michif language goes?

Thats, thats, thats part of the, part of the decision that the committee has to make. Like ah, when we talked about it in our small groups, there's pros and cons to that.

Thats what I mean. We have to air them out.

And I don't want to be la ?? here, you know, but it depends, we don't, I don't expect the Michif speakers to pay for everything. Its gotta be kinda like a partnership. Ah theres good ideas, because we'll get more people in one place. We can get more things done. And ah, but its something the committee will have to decide. Like for example, you talk about Regina versus Saskatoon, You got to think about how do we get the most for our money. Even a conference itself, I have no problem with the Landmark. I stay there all the time, because its an Aboriginal place and I support them. Ah but I like what Myles did last night with the little Elks hall only we need a bigger place. Ah like for example; meals, maybe we can find Metis people that are I know... no chicken, absolutely!

Laughter

But for example; just a couple things, little things that I...I think you should consider. We have to support one another. Like for example; we hold these great big conferences in the Sands hotel and we have a party after. The hotel charges you four dollars for a beer and you know, what they call corkage and they make all the money. I don't care where people stay if its in Regina or Saskatoon or Brandon. I don't really...as long as it takes place, but ah you know, if we could ah, have a maybe a Metis women or one of the Locals in Regina do all the food, the catering. Ah somebody can do the dance, so that Metis people make the money, like we have to stay in a motel or a hotel thats true, but why should we give them all the money, we should put as much money as possible back into our community.

Well we don't have a big enough building for one thing, you know, in Regina for something like that,so, but I'm sure the Landmark would let us do some of the cooking. I'm sure they would. Lester Henry would let us do some of the cooking.

Yah, but you know what Murray suggesting, like what I done there is I got a Local to take care of the dance like then whatever they make goes to their Local like on the beer sales, see what happens down there like Murray said the hotel gets all the money, but like this you don't have to have the dance in the hotel. Rent a hall. Sell the beer and raffle stuff off and everything, then whatever you make it goes to your Local or your Metis women organization. Whoever is catering to it. So I think thats what Murray is suggesting that he figured was a good idea.

Yah, we could do that, sure. There's all kinds of suggestions. Just write them down.

Okay then, what we'll do then, ? the committee there we'll get these ideas there, ?brainstorming and we'll come up and ?give us that information there, which sounds good. To have catering and

all that. I think maybe ? Okay? Okay?report on that soon. We get together soon. We get the funding and that???Dates and that. And you want us to meet before the twelfth, eh?

Well, whats the date today?

Today must about must be about the 23rd , 24th.

I have to be in Saskatoon on the eleventh. I gotta be there eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth. So would that be a good time to meet, then?

Uhm.

I have to be there anyway, so.

How is your day. You get a full day?????????

Well, Yah, I got, we have two full days actually.

We need that information before the eleventh.

No. I think the thing, you guys, we can discuss that after. We can have a little meeting about when the committee's going to get together, because we're wasting these people's time.

Okay, is there any other suggestions, here? I don't want to rush you, but make sure everybody's clear. And everybody's clear that the committee will send, you know we will send you a report on what our findings, and dates, etc. ??report from here. We'll do that as soon as we get this thing settled. The dates and that we'll be sending you. ?have to send twice. But, we will send you a mailout as soon as we get all this information together.

And just for the committee, don't, already thats twice this morning people said, Murray, you guys are the bosses now. You start acting like it. If you want to meet on the 12th , you say Murray, you be there and I'll be there. So you know, you guys gotta...

Yah but, you suggested that the head cheese is going up there also.

But, if necessary we can, we can, like in the next couple of days we can put this all together and we can say, Clem here's our report. This is what we'd like you to push. And you gotta remember about Clem he has to go there and fight for us. Allan can you leave the room.

Laughter.

I have to do the same in BC. So I can't hear what you're doing.

I told somebody, get this guy drunk, last night, you know, like.

He left too soon.

He left too soon, but ah, you know Clem is up against you know, all the presidents are gonna want their way as well, but we have to tell Clem, here is what we decided in Yorkton. Here's what we want you to push for.

Okay, so we'll get a little get together before we go ???

Yah.

Okay, anything else ??on this? Now, we have a lot to go through yet. A fair bit. Did you want to break now and come back no later than one, or do you want to go right through?

I want to go right through.

Ay?

I gotta go right through, cause I'm flying out.

Laughter. GO GO GO.

Well, what time do you have to leave at.

Just take a ten minute break and we'll keep going.

Thats a good idea.

Okay, set your ?ten minutes. Have a doughnut.

?here story to tell.

Theres a story coming up. Hold it! Hold it!

It'll only take about two minutes. Kay, we got a story to tell. What happened to two Metis elders. You know two minutes and he was my cousin. I'm going to let Mrs. Ellery tell you the story cause it happened to her and him. It was between her and her husband here.

Well this wasn't that long ago. This was a few years ago, maybe three, four years. I'm a busy person. I have to be active. In the winter time, I go for walks, but I have to have a reason to walk. So I figured, I'll set snares and catch some rabbits and that will give a good walk. Good exercise, so I told him, I says Aleck, when you go to town, you buy me some snare wire. Okay, he did. I made some snares. Got my sticks, everything, went to the bush. Every morning I'd get one rabbit, sometimes two. So one time, I figured, well what the heck. Is he gonna sit in the house and not catch a rabbit. ??can't be. I said, you make some snares. Prove to me that you can catch a rabbit. If not, I will show you how. So he got ready. Went in the bush and I got thinking. The next morning, I figured that guy is gonna do something. He won't be able to catch a rabbit, he'll go to my snares. So I dashed in my bedroom. I could see from the window there.

Saw him going in the ravine bush. All of a sudden, like where my snare was. ??? I ran back to the kitchen. He comes in, proud as a peacock. Rabbit! I says here, clean it. So I figured, I gotta prove my point first before I open my mouth. So I got dressed. He went to the barn to do his chores. I got dressed and tracked him right to my snare. The snow was flat where this rabbit struggled and he...so I didn't say I checked at my stick and I had marked it, because I know. I went out outside and I said Aleck, you darn, I might have used a little harsher word. You stole my rabbit.

Don't believe her.

His nephew ???rabbit. And he told him the story. But of course he tried to ??and then his nephew went back. The next year he came back to visit and brought him a cap with a rabbit and with rabbit teeth.

Okay, grab a short break now, ten minutes.

Yesterday, it was our group. The ones that are non speakers and we have very little comprehension of the Michif language, because of other reasons, residential school or just a lack of our parents or the way we were brought up, that we didn't have the Michif language reinforced so I just went through the notes that we had and I put down the ten or twelve key points that we have to contribute to the Michif speakers. So we felt that because we're non Michif speakers that we are in a unique position to learn the national Michif language through a national Michif curriculum and two, Headstarts programs is an excellent place to begin Michif language programs and then the third key point was, applications can be made through a national literacy secretary to apply for funding for an Aboriginal literacy language program and the address is there for everybody that wants to get that information. Metis run institutes such as GDI and Louis Riel Institute to provide curriculum development of Michif speakers handbook of a complete list names of Michif speakers in the provinces and develop a Metis ??Michif database so that call we can call upon our Michif speakers in our Locals and our communities and so that we can have them sort of in into the schools and over to the Locals to develop the Michif programs in the communities. Metis politicians, National and Provincial should heighten the awareness of the retention of the Michif language. Third point was, Michif immersion programs instead of a French or Cree immersion programs and this should be negotiated with school boards and community schools with a high Aboriginal population. The sixth, seventh point. Language issue at the higher level academic level of education. Teacher education programs such as SUNTEP should focus on Michif language as part of their curriculum. As part of their delivery structure of that program. Same with BUNTEP I guess and PENT and Nortep. Implementation of Aboriginal language programs, such as a teacher assistance program. A two year program that I believe GDI now has with university transfer focus on training Michif language teachers. GDI curriculum already published should be translated into Michif for national curriculum of the Michif language and then along with that I ??Metis affiliates should contribute towards natural Michif project in the translations. So, I know I spoke with British Columbia and they are in favour of us contributing to get that translation project going. Literacy project last year that was sponsored by Metis National Council developed a hundred and thirty stories of adult stories with a level one and level two comprehension. Level one is one point, one to grade three level of understanding and level two is four to six level of comprehension should

be translated into Michif. Collection of stories written in other publications such as New Breed could be written in Michif and English such as we see on the airplanes when we fly, you know, you have these English story one and the other side its the Michif so that we have the reinforcement of our language. Publish our own Michif language dictionary ???eliminate the regional differences like what we talked about earlier. And interviewing the Michif speakers, its important that we get their stories and the history of our people down and that's it.

Thank you.

Any questions? Any comments?

Excuse me, just one word, there, where it says about it says high Aboriginal population.

I can change that. But I mean, I know I taught in the inner city schools in Saskatoon and we had seventy-five, eighty percent of Aboriginal peoples in the schools and then when you look at the families that are mostly Metis speakers ay, so Metis families.

You want to change that so...?

I can change it to Metis if you want it.

? Change it to ah, what do you got there? You want to read that part again?

Here it is.

Well okay, so its Michif immersion programs instead of French immersion negotiated with school boards and community schools with a high Metis population. Better?

I actually wasn't being difficult I just, Aboriginal can mean cover First Nations and everything else, you know.

Inuits?

Yah, Inuit. That's all it was.

Yah, because you see that all the time. They say Aboriginal, the whole works, Non status, status, the whole kit and kaboodle. Any other points. You want to question on that? As we said before, all this stuff will be put in a mail out to each individual that's here today if you register. All this will be mailed out as soon as we get it all together. Okay, who's got the second group here?

Oh Selma, I bet. She's gone. She had a headache.

There must be somebody from that was from that group.

This was a report from those that understand the Michif language. They speak very little of it or some of it. They say to develop some kind of structure of Michif speakers. Technical support.

Very similar to what I mentioned here with a list of all the Michif speakers, so that we can have these people as resource peoples in our community. Develop a work plan, words, similar differences, sort of like this dictionary idea that we talked about and develop plans for children. Summer camps where only Michif is spoken so those are also very good ideas.

Can I just mention something on there? Selma had mentioned out in the hallway,

Yes.

now correct me if I'm wrong Stella, because she said, Stella will do the speaking, right? You'll do the speaking, the Michif and Selma will do the writing and that for you. Did you talk about that?

Oh the ??

Yah, Yah.

Okay, so like an interview and then writing??

I think Selma will work with Stella, you know.

Oh work along with Michif speakers.

Yah.

This Stella's the support person.

Yah, Stella's the support.

Mumbling.

But, she will take all the notes for her and anything that has to be...so.

And I think what Selma is getting at there is a good idea. The Michif speakers will be one group.

Yes.

And then they're gonna need Selma and other people, Leah, myself are gonna be like the technicians. You know, say the Michif speakers want something typed up or they want...you know, they need help to send information out.

Draft it out. Yah.

Yah.

Like for example; when this committee meets, there are gonna be decisions made. Somebody has to type up this report. Put it together. Leah is that us?

Just talking technical stuff. Yuh.

Technical stuff like this. The papers that are on the wall.

Oh yah, we can collect those up.

We'll collect them up and you and I will...

Work on a report.

Work on a report and before we send it out, we'll give it to you guys and you guys can...

Super, yah.

That's what Selma was getting at. All the Michif speakers are gonna need like ah, consultants .

I can even...I've got pictures and video and audio, maybe we can put something in the New Breed at the next edition to announce the people, you know I've got dance photos from the week. Conference sessions, so if you want I can write something up very simple, but just to let people know. If that's okay with the group.

You want to put it in New Breed?

Well the next New Breed, ah, it comes out...Murray when does the next one come out? Do you know?

I'm not sure.

Cause it'd be nice to have some pictures and something about what we've done here.

Oh yah, we'll definitely have something in there and again somebody's gotta do it.

I can draft something.

Somebody's gotta do it. That's all I'm getting at.

Yah, if you want me to work on something.

I think it would be a good idea for you to get the committee and get a group picture of the committee.

I would like that. I've got the camera here. I'd really like that. That would look nice in the New Breed. Yah. So I'll be here.

Okay, now the next group. I think that's the group that was here. ?represented here.

Mumbling. Everybody talking at once. Laughter.

Michif speakers, the legends of the Metis people. Like the La Roogaroo stories, Nanabush and Chi Jean. The history of Louis Riel, Buffalo hunters, farmers and ranchers. All of these should be part of a curriculum development project, I would think. Our way of life, past, present and future. Digging of sinica root, trapping, hunting, fishing. Our schooling, childcare system, adoption, extended families and visiting of relatives. Michif language again. Elders, very important. They are the teachers. They are the stories. They know the stories. They know the legends. They know our kinship and lineage. They know our traditional culture and heritage. They know the traditional medicines like roots and herbs and the children want to learn. The food of the Metis people, like the tripe, the muskrat, the gopher, the beaver, wildberries and wild game, etc. Metis organizations, I guess all of the provincial affiliates need to get rid of the jealousy and make friends and have respect and make use of our resources. Then Gabriel Dumont Institute, Alfred Reading Series and the adult literacy project that I was talking about. They should be developed. Video and cassette tapes of the Michif language speakers. So that was their report.

Any questions on that?

That Alfred Reading story. That's with that little guy. That's child books. Is it translated into Michif or no?

Yes it is.

Also GDI has puppets of the Alfred Reading series that were made by a Metis lady out of Belleview just outside of Batoche and maybe we could do puppet plays of these things speaking the Michif language.

I wanted to ask a question to Leah and the lady from SaskEd, Mary. When I worked at SUNTEP, we had Cree language tapes in the library. How far away are we from getting Michif tapes. Like just a rough guess.

Well, you know, it can be done with a good working group of Michif speakers. Lindon has a studio. We've had Michif speakers in the studio to record and its just a matter of developing what guided speaking on tapes, like um, you know, today the weather is bad, you know, and so I'm not going outside, like little sentences and having someone come in and read it in Michif ?? Do one on the weather. ??the curriculum is there, but the Michif phrases are not developed so we have vocabulary there. Phrases that could be worked on. We just need speakers.

Cause Myles and I were saying, its, like yesterday I was, we were at state there. I went across to the pawn shop and I bought four tapes. Four for ten dollars. I got a pretty good deal. Some fiddle music and some other stuff I can listen to on the way home today. But you know if people have tapes.

There's a lot of opportunity like Leah said to start something in curriculum development. Collection of stories is one that's really being pushed in terms of resources from our elders

stories. We have life histories. Such as all these suggestions up here. There's other resources besides the one that Leah mentioned yesterday that came to ?languages curriculum guide with a Michif adaptations too. There's also another guide that's called the Western Canada protocol and in there is strategies that you can use in narration and so on.

I would suggest to the committee and to myself, I guess with GDI that's gotta be a priority, those tapes.

Well these interviews you're doing now couldn't you put em in a tape, today.

Yeh, that's the intention. You see what Lindon's gonna do you see all these hours of tapes, we're gonna store it there, then we could edit it down later and what I'd like to do is have a video next time we come together just showing the highlights of the conference, you know and we could make a small video, but we could also do all the individual biographies. I'd like to see them on a video and potentially a book, highlighting Michif speakers, you know, little picture and their story, life story. So there's, today what we're collecting is leading up to future resource development. So thank you so much for participating, because this could lead to some very good resources in Michif. So we're very pleased.

Excuse me. All those tapes, like what I think Murray and I would suggest doing also is like when you have a sentence there in Michif, you should have it also in English. Cause its easy to say a word, but what does it mean.

Association.

That's right. So I would suggest also having it...

I'd like to. That's what...if we do a video, I'd like it all subtitled. Like everything spoken in Michif, but you'd see the words coming on the screen. You know, cause there's people who use captioning too. People who don't hear, so we could use a captioning system under your interview. So people who have been interviewed I would like to get a captioning system.

Yes, especially, you know, a lot of our mail we get from the federal government. You know, one paragraph is English. The next paragraph is in French so you can relate it, eh?

I'd like to see that and that's what we'll do, because its so important to have both.

Yah, because, you get a better feeling. A better understanding.

A better understanding.

I want somebody to put down on this paper. Allan.

Mon frier.

Mon cousin. We need to ah. We need to ah. We can't always count on government, because sometime they're good, sometime they're bad. The GDI board is meeting May 18 and what I'm going to propose to them if somebody writes this down and I don't forget. When we do these tapes. They'll be like everything else we have. They'll be for sale and we should, you guys, the committee, should negotiate with GDI. Its, some of that money should come back to ah, to the Michif...

Council.

Council or whatever you want to call it so that we...

?

Cause, we even do that with, like John Arcand. We sell tapes for him.

We split it down the middle.

We split it down the middle. I don't know, we have partnerships with all kinds of people. So if you write that down, just that the production of Michif materials, some of that money should go back to the committee.

To the committee.

To the committee, yah. That way, you'll always have a source of revenue.

That's exactly it and it flows, like, you know, it really starts flowing. Like what we'll do, when GDI makes the money, we want to use that money we raised from the Michif resource sales to other Michif projects. So it just cycles around. The committee can use money to do interviews and writing dictionaries.

Roughly can you give us an idea what the costs for to make a video, just so the people have some idea.

You know, Norm, maybe Mr. Pelletier here could help me out. Manitoba is proposing to do a Michif video. From what I understand, from Norm, they have a proposal for about twenty thousand dollars. Its twenty thousand dollars for this Michif video.

?translations. Its the Michif words that translates into English. Like ??how are you? Which is written in English. ?? Have a nice day.

Laughter.

With Manitoba, the video...I've seen the video proposal and what it sounds like, they're gonna, they budgeted for on location to go to Metis people's homes, to their farms and follow them around when they're doing their work with their cattle. They're gonna go to a Metis feast and they're gonna video tape the whole feast and its all gonna be in Michif and all subtitled and its

gonna talk about Metis lifestyle, culture, families, and that way the kids, when they're in school, they can see what the Metis' ??at home and the can see what a feast was. They can see people on the land trapping so that's what the Manito... Norm has mentioned about their video.

Jeese you missed a ?? last night.

Oh I got pictures of you dancing. Ha Ha Ha.

Laughter.

I think those GDI girls. They left too early there. ??if they had to stay a little bit longer, their pictures would have been a shaky.

To get all this together, how long would it take you about? So we have some idea.

Yah, I'd sure like to potentially...we're gonna need some, like, the report from this. So I can see within about two to three weeks to get the report. All the typing done, photocopying, but before it all goes out, I'd like to have the committee look at the draft, ay Murray? Of what comes out of these... report.

Well he's coming out on the eleventh, ay Gilbert?

?

To Saskatoon.

I'm gonna be there on the eleventh, yah.

Yah, if we can have it done by then, we can have a look at it.

You can get a draft, yah, and then if people could look at it before it gets sent out, yah.

???

Well once the committee approves it, before it probably goes to everyone here. I believe, eh?
Everyone will have ??

Anything else. Murray, you have anything to add to it? Where's our boy from BC? Anything to add to it?

No I was just...

He wants to talk about larzjaw, fund-raising. I was just mentioning to Gilbert that we should have a logo. That's another thing, we should have a Michif logo. How do you say that au Michif? And ah have some T-shirts and sweatshirts and that sort of stuff done up so people identify, you know.

You know I done that one for the Metis Friendship centre ??I done that one up.

So that's another thing somebody's gonna do. We should ask everybody here. We got some good young artists around. Come up with a logo for Michif. Next time when we have a conference, we should have a little binder with our logo right on there. Say to everybody, yah that's Michif.

And we have to give some idea??draw it up, ay?

Yup.

That can be done. There's nothing wrong with that.

Yah, it should be done in sort of a crest form so a person could put it on a jacket instead of just a T-shirt.

Yah, that's what I'm talking about.

Different from everybody else.

I'll tell you what. One of my boys, before he even went to school, we'd drive the hill in P.A. to go to McDonald's. He was not even two years old and he knew what that big M. What that meant. He didn't know ABC or nothing, but he knew what the big M meant. When you see that Metis flag, you know right away what that...you know, it gives it a sense of a...

Identity.

Identity.

Pride.

Even I know now what SLB stands for now. It took me a long time.

You can see the stylized M with the Michif sign.

What does SLB stand for?

Saskatchewan Liquor Board.

Saskatchewan Liquor Board?

Laughter.

Can you see that stylized M?

Is there anything else?

Well I do want to add. I got some ideas for fund-raising if you guys just want to take a minute here. I mentioned to you before, I'm vice president of Literacy BC and the literacy BC has published a little booklet on walk for Literacy and the Vancouver Island literacy chapter of BC have raised over a million dollars in just three years on walking for literacy. So why can't we think of doing a walk for Michif language across the Metis homeland and ah, you know, maybe get some of us in shape again and ah, I'm proposing...but, you know, we have corporate sponsorship, like we have Starbuck's coffee and we have Honda, the van. So that it travels along with people and they carry a banner and they're walking and then each one of those corporates gets sponsorship to sign up and like I said, in three years, they made a million dollars, just on Vancouver island alone and, ah, so I'm proposing to do a walk for a Metis literacy centre in the North and we're going to take a walk all the way from the Alberta border, Alberta, BC border all the way up to Lower Post and we're going to raise funds for that region, of a...Northeastern Region for the Metis. About nine thousand Metis that are ah, have low literacy skills. The national literacy...just getting on the literacy issue here. The survey that was published here last, a couple of years ago from Metis National Council. Forty percent of Canadians are functioning below literacy levels, but our Aboriginal people are even 17.9 percent below the national average. So you look at that and you factor in forty, plus that 17.9. That's 57 percent of our people do not know how to read and write and function below grade nine. So if we, you know, have those kind of issues brought forth to the government, like the National Literacy Secretariat. They now have an interest in developing even an Aboriginal literacy project within National Literacy Secretariat and we bring forth that and we get that as a provincial and federal funding for our projects, we will see some changes. So ah maybe we could think about doing a walk for Michif language and have or like a hands across the nation or something. Any kind of things like that, you know, do a, you know ten kilotmetres and then somebody else take it over from there across the Metis homeland and ah all the way up to Northeastern British Columbia or down to Vancouver, whichever, you know, we can maybe think about that next time this committee meets so that we could raise some funds.

Yah.

No comments? Anyone wants to start walking?

I think that was...I'll walk.

A good idea to get going.

Yah I think that then we won't rely on the government all the time.

That's right. Pretty soon they're not gonna have any money to give us so we have to.

We should be self supporting.

Be kind of self supporting and...

Anything else? Anybody have any... won't keep it longer that I have to. How about you, Gilbert? Anything to say to add to it?

Kay kwie.

I have a question for Murray?

All of you, like, this Michif conference, uhm, will it be credit through ABE program, post secondary and university levels?

??Mount Royal, we had Cree and Blackfoot credit program. ??same thing in Saskatchewan for Metis people?

Yah, in fact, we made an attempt at this about four years ago. Everybody needs a kick in the...

In the derriere.

In the derriere, yah, and Bruce, Bruce Flamont came to the Institute about four years ago and he really woke us up and I thank him for that. He said, why are we...he wrote letters all over the place, he says, there's nothing wrong with teaching Cree he said, but that's not our language and here we were at GDI teaching Cree in Regina, Saskatoon. When I started at GDI in 1990, ah, language has always been important to me and I went to the GDI Board and I said, look, we're teaching all kinds of classes. No language classes. So they passed a motion that said, yah there's got to be at least one class for language. Aboriginal language. So for the past nine years, they've been teaching Cree. Everybody that goes into SUNTEP, the teacher program has to take at one class. Some take two or three and Bruce said, no, no, that's all wrong. Why are we teaching Cree. We ought to be teaching Michif and I agreed with him and I put an ad in the paper. I put it in. It cost me about six hundred dollars. I advertised in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert. I couldn't find one person that wanted to teach Michif language. In fact, right now GDI can put on a Michif course and we have meetings coming up. We've had meetings in the past with the university and we've said, look, if I bring somebody here and they can speak the language and they can teach a little bit, how are going to test that person.

Well they can't.

You know, if Gilbert wanted to come and teach. If Stella wanted to come and teach. We could do that. What I need, all I need is one person, like ah, I'm trying to steal this women from Winnipeg. Where's Norman? He's not here. S'good. You remember that women that was at, at ah that last meeting. She was a Flamont. Rita. She's teaching right now, Red River College. There's very few people, like, maybe George could come and do that for us. But if somebody..you know, I need some help finding... There's very few people that speak Michif fluently and first of all, want to teach, or two, have the skills to teach. We have the structure to do it. We could have a Michif class and make money at it. We made over a hundred and eleven thousand dollars last year. Just on those Cree courses, cause we have this arrangement with the university that all the fees that go into...the students have to pay fees and in fact, we only...in Saskatoon its just the first year students that take that Cree course. The rest of the people that take that Cree course are all white people and we collect money from them. So if we had...I need

a Michif teacher. So I been trying to steal this Rita Flamont away from Winnipeg. She's already teaching Cree over there, I think Michif for Red River College. That's why, we...you know, like, where do I find this person. Norman could obvi...I think he could obviously do it, but, you know ah those kind of people are hard to get.

Who says we can't send somebody out to learn from her and bring them back here?

Well you know, Myles and I were talking about we want some tapes instead of listening to Dolly Parton going down the Highway. Sometimes we can listen to, you know, Michif tapes. But, what we need to do. What the committee needs to do, like, obviously, they need to do a lot of things. They need a lot of help. But what we could do is we could take this guy. He's still a little bit shy, but he's fluent. We could do it and if we brought him into Yorkton here. He's already teaching and he's up there at the front saying this is how you say this and this. Who in the heck is gonna come and check him out except for other Michif speakers. He might be doing a good job. He might be doing a bad job, but if we train him, like we're running out of time folks. We could get Norman. Bruce is an excellent teacher. Excellent. He's funny in the classroom. He's really talented. He could teach a Michif course, easy. But, we'd be wasting him, because we need him in the communities. But Norman, the committee has to use some of their money to bring people like George and Gilbert. Some of the people that are not shy and train them. Give them...like Leah and I...

You just said I was shy.

Well, you're not shy anymore.

Make up your mind.

Leah and I could teach this whole room and Allen. One, two, three of us are teachers. Who else in here is a teacher? Everybody here is a teacher. Um, Mary...you know, you guys don't know about lesson plans, but that's moonias for teaching, but you go into a room, you got an hour to do this, you say, okay, this is my objectives. We could, we could, we taught Harry Daniels. He come to teach a class six weeks for us at the university, one time. But Harry's used to getting up and giving a one hour presentation or twenty minutes presentation and that's it. But, he really didn't know how to teach for a long time, so SUNTEP, we spent three days with him. We told him, this is how you make lesson plans. This is how you do this and once he learned how to do that, well it was easy. So we have to train some of these people. The committee...

Has there ever been teaming a teacher up with a Michif speaker.

There's a brilliant idea.

I'd really like to see...

Whats that?

Team teaching.

Team teaching.

I've team taught Native Studies and Metis History for four years with different people and it brings so much. But, I think that's never been applied to languages yet like training...having teachers working with the speakers and team teaching together.

??It works, it works, because that's what we do in British Columbia. Northern Lights College has an affiliation agreement with University of Northern British Columbia and we have a linguist that works along with people that speak Haida gwy or they Shim Shin or they speak Dene or they speak Talcan, but we don't have any Michif speakers, but if we work along with the linguist and work along with a Michif speaker, you can get a university credit for Michif language and that's a three credit course or a six credit course, depending on the length of that course and so that's one way of getting your language class accredited at the university and so its a cool teaching model.

I think that's a fine idea this team teaching, but if you're gonna get people that are dedicated to this, you know, we have to be able to say to them, once we teach you, once you learn the skills, this is what your gonna be doing. So many times that we take all these courses and there's nothing for them afterwards. We let them go astray.

But then the ones that are gonna be teaching Michif speaking, they'll be dedicated to it, because the only place they're gonna be able get a job in under that field is teaching Metis.

Yah, but, is there vacancies for them. This is what we have to establish.

No, but, I think we've already identified that need in that first section of notes there, that we want to work with the school boards and we want to address the Metis students that are there and say that we want, not a Cree language program, but we want a Michif language program, so we need to have those Michif teachers that are certified to teach in the school that could have a two year teaching certificate or two year teacher's aid certificate so that they could teach the language aspect of that class.

You could have, like, a teacher, a Michif language teacher's instructor certificate.

That's right.

And therefore you're accredited.

And then, especially with the cool teaching model.

There's one thing that we have to...when we go home from here, there's something that we have to tell our people is that, you know, lots of people are still used to saying le Cree ??and you know, that's what its mixed with. Its le Michif ???you know, its li Michif???its, you know, that's the way we're used to saying it and but its not, its li Michif.

Yah, but you look at these books ??Metis. That's what they're trying to get at. ???say Metis, but its Michif.

Anything else?

Whats the difference between Michif and Metis?

Its nothing. Its just a word. You're gonna say Michif is in the Michif, Michif.

Michif is the language and Metis is the nationality.

Metis is the Michif. Only that's the French version. Like the Metis , that's a then we say Maytee.

Laughing and everyone talking at once.

Okay, like, when we take Native Studies in class would that included to take, say, like if this Michif class becomes accredited program, would we also, ah, our history, like ah, the Aboriginal ??we studied. Would it also be in coincided with the language itself instead of just taking all Natives in general, we'd just learn about our own people. That way it would easer for us to pick up on the language?

Oh no, we already fought that battle and we won. Like ah, not completely, but in fact, see, there's so much work that needs to be done. We don't have enough money and enough people. The first class they take this Native Studies. Like for example, even our name we changed. Right here it says Gabriel Dumont of Native Studies. Well, that's, this is a...what it is, is its the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Metis Studies, so we've changed that.

It was changed back in '94, but not officially.

Slowly.

Slowly. You'll notice this one. This one says, the most recent one, Gabriel Dumont Institute of Metis Studies. The first year class is called Native Studies, because you have to look at Native Studies, because Ed and this guy always say, you know, we have to study both sides of our heritage, like cayass. But, when you get to year two, its Metis Studies, its not Indian Studies. You can take if you want, like when you get in third and fourth year, you can choose if your a specialist. Calvin Racette about ten years ago developed...ah, I don't know how to explain this in Michif, but maybe somebody wants to, upper year classes, senior classes, so you know you get to be an expert or you think you're an expert.

Four hundred level.

Four hundred level. Three hundred level. Eight hundred level, which is masters. We need to develop those classes. Like right now one of the problems we have, but, you know, this has to work with language too. Like you have specializations when you go to university. Right now we have...when you go to SUNTEP you can be a social studies teacher, science teacher and there's some people that become Cree teachers, lots, not lots, but about I'd say about five percent have a Cree specialization. How come there's no Michif specialization? Its there. We can build

it. The university is agreeable. It can all be done. We just need to produce some Michif teachers. I don't know if I answered your question, but...

???You don't need to have a grade twelve degree or anything to be a Michif speaker or teacher as long as you can speak the Michif language.

You don't have to have an academic grade.

If there's a need, if the need is recognized and we know in our communities that the need is there and then therefore SaskEd can give a probationary certificate.

With no academic standards?

Without your B.Ed and all these other... as long that need is recognized.

There is in British Columbia, the movement of culturally competence versus a master's degree and ??we have what we call prior learning assessment ?recognition and ah I don't know does Saskatchewan have that now? University?

Culturally competent. I don't think so.

I've just never heard of that before.

We have what is called traditional pursuits.

Traditional pursuits. That's very similar to what we're...

?programs?

Yah, because all the universities in British Columbia have an Aboriginal Liaison and some of those people have Bachelor of Education degree, Masters of Education's. Some of them have Bachelor of Art's. Some of them are not, ah, don't have any formal education, but they are culturally competent in their aboriginal language so if lets say university or college is in a traditional territory of the Haya gwy, then there's no reason why they can't hire a person from that community of the Haida Gwy in BC as long as they're culturally competent and they get the same rate of pay as a person that has a degree, because of their knowledge of the language. Their knowledge of the traditional. Very similar to what we have there in that one about the elders are very important. They are the teachers. They know the stories. They know the legends. They know the kinship. They know the traditional culture and heritage. So that's what culturally competent is. All of that. And then prior learning and assessment and recognition is something all the universities are looking at nationally across Canada and also internationally and you'd take a look at the portfolios that you have done in your lifetime. Your, all the things that you've done in your work experience. Even your traditional knowledge and you can go to a university counselor and they will look through all of that and they will give you a certain university credits towards a degree and that's what prior learning assessment and recognition is

and that's a very big push in British Columbia. We've adopted that. Ontario has adopted it. As well as...Alberta has to some extent. As well as First Nation's Institutes.

??

But nothing in...at the university level yet in Alberta.

Yah, I was just gonna mention that locally developed programs are more so ?high school, but in a university setting, this idea of team teaching ?sessional contracts that would recognize the masters that you're talking about experience and prior knowledge ?assessment ??These are all taken into considerations in the contracts of the teachers that go out and teach. They don't have the qualifications.

What I really encourage...

?the whole information on prior learning and assessment what we're doing in British Columbia. Would that be useful to you?

If you can send copies to GDI so we can keep that, cause I didn't know about that. Do you have information on that?

On prior learning assessment.

If you can just send anything.

But send it anyway, because I have to go through all my apple boxes.

But I think its important for the Michif speakers to realize that, you know, teaching in your own community, getting your own programs, you know, don't worry about getting all this university, we'll work on that together, but do it, keep up the good work in your community of doing your programs out of your Friendship Centre or your Metis Local. Like, really encourage that too, you know, we at GDI will try to do what we can through university and that type of academic environment, but keep what you're doing in the communities. I think that's absolutely fabulous.

The other thing, Myles, all the your people that work for you and the people in Regina, Dan Welsh's crew. Wherever we can do it, like, anybody that works in Pathways, like your brother, Barry and all those people. They should be learning a little bit of Michif. There should be an hour or two every week. Build that into your budgets so that you can help Gilbert pay for his gas or stuff like that. All of our staff like Leah and I and the rest of us, we're gonna have to...

Tighten up.

Tighten up.

Okay, what I'd like to ask Al Tremayne if it isn't too much problem, like all that curriculum and everything you got on Michif in BC. I would hope that you could...

We don't have any Michif...just prior learning assessment.

Well, whatever like that, what you were talking about, that part of learning assessments and stuff like that. I would hope that you could probably send it to our committee here and maybe there's something there they can take out of it, ay, that would help them.

Sure.

And don't forget, like, SaskEd's connection to developing the programs and that.

There's a lady, I don't know how closely Mary works with Gloria Mehlman?

Gloria Mehlman is our director of Aboriginal education.

She's not here today, but we

Where, in Saskatoon?

End of tape 6, side 2

**GDI YORKTON MICHIF CONFERENCE
APRIL 25, 1999 - DAY 2
TAPE 6.1**

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Regina.

We owe her and I want you to tell her that we thank her very much for the support she's given us, because Gloria Mehlman, I don't know where she's from originally, like around Broadview area?

Yah, I think so.

And I don't know what her language is, but she knows what Michif is and there's people on her reserve that speak Michif and she's pushing from inside government to help us.

Yah.

And she's a very nice lady and she can't always give us what everything we want, but she really tries hard.

That's why we got the funds to do the video taping and individual interviews. They, SaskEd provided us with the dollars to video tape everyone.

We do have some friends in government.

We do, yah.

They're not all enemies.

And if Romano and his clan want to stay in power, they better be better to us.

Let's not get into that now.

Laughter.

Okay anything else? I know lots of people have to travel great distances to get home and the time is a flying. All I want to do is I want to thank all these for coming and attending this two day conference. I think its very important. I think we should go home feeling good and I think what we have to do as individuals is continue pushing for this language deal and from here we should go on the more PR. Thats what we need to do. Our language is important. If your talking to a brown person, you should start talking Cree to him. If you can speak the language. If he can't understand you, they'll gonna tell you. There's no harm in that. Cause we have to do more in this area, because what we are doing is we're isolating ourselves. We have to get it out. I think these meetings are good for that. You get people talking more about our language and our culture. And as I said before, we will get all this stuff out to you as soon as they get it done and we have a chance to look at it and we'll send you out all the information you want, meeting, etc. as soon as we find out. And our number is on there. If you have any question, feel free to call me. I'm at work most of the time, but you call the office. I get home once in a while, but I got my home phone number there. In the evening, you can call me. And if you have any veterans that are in your area. I do cover the Northeast part of the province here. I have a big area to cover, but I will speak to the Native veterans, if they want to speak to me. I've met a lot with a lot of them, but if they'd rather talk to me, thats fine, I'll deal with them. Okay? If theres

any other service we should be providing, we should be looking into these things. Nobody got any more to say.

Well, I just want to thank Myles and yourself Edward and Gilbert for helping us out. I want to thank Leah and the staff from GDI. Especially I want to thank the speakers here and we got LOTS, lots of work to do as you can see and we'll try our best. Thats all we can do and if we need a kick in the behind, kick us. You people in Yorkton, I want you to take good care of this Mrs. St. Pierre here. She's going to be ninety next year. I don't want you smoking around her.

Laughter.

I don't want you to let her eat too many gartoos, because its not too good for the heart. But, ah, especially, on that book there these forms that are um, I know of at least a hundred Michif speakers in Regina. I'm gonna go over there and organized them a little bit more. Theres probably many more around here. Wherever you come from, you probably got Michif speakers. We need those names so we can start putting together a list. And Ed and Gilbert and Stella, they will make the final decision on where the conference is, hopefully when its not too cold or when people are too busy, but thats their call. And other than that, I want to thank you. Travel safely and again thanks Myles for all your help. We couldn't have done it without you and I appreciate that and no one group is more important than the other. We each have a role to play. Everybody's got something to offer and we all have to pitch in if we're going to do this so merci, thank you and drive very carefully. Please take care of yourselves.

I just want to thank you people for coming down eh.

Applause.

Also the people that from out of town, I think we should give them a big hand, because they come from a long way. They spent a great deal of time. I think they deserve a big hand.

Applause.

And we will see you all in the fall and if you have any questions, like I said before, feel free to call the committee.

Whoever wants interviews can stay and we will interview ?? stay here till the end.

Yah we're still doing interviews. If you don't want to be interviewed, fine we'll stay here till we get it done.

Untill it's done, yah.

Okay? Have a good trip back. See you all in the fall.

I also would like to thank all you people that showed up here and we couldn't have had this conference or anything without you so you're the ones that made it work and I would especially like to thank Grandma St. Pierre. She sat there for two days and contributed whatever she had to

contribute which is probably greater than everyone of us have, you know, our younger people. So I'd like to thank you very much, Grandma.

Applause.

And if you guys got anything, any kind of feedback that you want to ??the supper, the dance or whatever, write us down and we'll see if we can do little bit better job next time, but it was sort of short notice and I would especially like to thank my cousin, Gilbert here, who without him going out and doing a lot of work for us, we wouldn't have been able to have this conference. Thank you Gilbert.

Applause.

Oh, oh, Leah, before you go. Handfor Norman Fluery. He really got a lot of . Do you want to say a few words before you go au Michif.

We got a couple more people that we would like to still interview and ah so like we've got Edwin and we've got Mr. Lavallee and his wife and I don't know if that would be it for interviews. Would Gilbert..Gilbert would you like to be interviewed or anybody else? But, we're interviewing mostly the elders and people that are also speaking the Michif language that would like to share their stories, but we're interviewing anyway and its been great. So far we've got a lot of rich information from these people and thats...I think that's the only way we're going to retain our language and preserve our language interviewing a lot of the elders. Somebody else would like to be interviewed.

Well I should be.

Okay, we'll do that for sure.

Gilbert and whoever is around here, I beg you to take to take a little bit of time. If they ask too many questions tell em thats it.

We'll just do a very short interview and not as lengthy, but we'd like to get as many people as we can interviewed so we can use the Michif language , but personally.....????????**All in Michif** Don't give up, because there's too many of us here to give up and we're gonna make sure that this language is gonna make history and we're going to get there and our children and grandchildren will be able to know what Michif is all about. Thank you.

Before we leave?George here ??say a few words?? Closing prayer. ??okay George?

Make it short. Bingo is gonna start.

Maybe the best way to close is with the Metis National Anthem.

I didn't bring the tape with me.

But anyways, what I would like to say is I'd like to thank you for the invitation and its been a good two days and its been a reunion to see all our friends and relatives again here and its been a joyous time. ?????? Merci.

Prayer in Michif.

Thats it I guess.