

**The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture videos Habitat First Nations panel  
May 29, 1976  
(The UN Habitat Conference on Human Settlements was officially May 31-June 11, but  
Habitat Forum, which was the NGO/public portion of the conference and took place at  
Jericho Beach, opened May 27)  
Vancouver**

**All 25 of these videos were shot in 2 panel sessions “Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims”  
in Hangar 5, also known as the Plenary Hall**

**<http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/07304>**

**Video 1.**

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (01)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry, Maracle, Brian, Maracle, Kitty,  
Baker, Simon**

**Description: Opening remarks by Kitty Maracle, introduction of the Chairman, Brian Ma-  
racle, and welcome from traditional chief of the Salish Nation, Simon Baker at the Habitat  
Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976.**

**Kitty Maracle:** This is BC Indian land. The land in which we're sitting and the forum that's tak-  
ing place belonged originally to the Salish nation. We welcome you to BC Indian land. This af-  
ternoon our programme is on aboriginal rights and land claims. I want now to introduce you to  
the chairman of the programme, Brian Maracle. If there is a similarity between his name and  
mine, for mine is Kitty, it's only coincidental - he happens to be my son.

**Brian Maracle:** I'd like to tell those people here that not only was this originally the land of the  
Salish people, it is still the land of the Salish people, because BC is still Indian land. I'd like to  
start off by introducing the panelists we'll have this afternoon. The first speaker will be **Bill Wil-  
son**, a past executive member from the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, a member of the Kwakiutl  
Nation. The second speaker will be **John Amagoalik** [note I see that UBC Centre for Human  
Settlements spells his name Amnogollik; am not sure which is correct], the land claims director  
from the Inuit Tapirisat [now Inuit Tapiriit] of Canada, and the third speaker will be **Harry  
Daniels** who is representing the Métis Association of Alberta.

At this time I'd also like to point out some other native leaders in the audience. We have repre-  
senting the Salish people a traditional chief from the Salish people **Chief Simon Baker** (please  
wave there Simon). I think perhaps if we could have a word from you in a minute Simon to wel-  
come the people to your land and to our land. I see Mr. **Ed Head**, the president of the Manitoba  
Métis Federation, Mr Ray Jackson, the president of the Yukon Native Brotherhood, Mr **Bill  
Lightbown**, the acting spokesman for the BC Association of Non-Status Indians, and there may  
be one or two others I may introduce in a minute or so. Simon, can we have a word from the  
Salish people, the owners of this particular location?

**Chief Simon Baker:** Thank you Mr. Chairman and my Indian friends that are here today and all  
the other people that are interested in our problems and I personally welcome you on behalf of  
the Squamish and the Musqueam band and the Tsawassen band who at one time lived  
in this area, all along the Fraser River right around here, right up to the North Arm up

Burrard Inlet. This is going back I would say a thousand years ago. My grandmother used to say to me, 700 years she remembers back when there was 15,000 Indians lived in this area all the way up the Burrard Inlet. So our problems today that I know that we have faced ever since I was a young boy, I had worked with a lot of the native people, and when I say native people I don't want to separate anyone at all. We are Indians of Canada and we hope that these young people here today who are going to speak are going to give good presentations, something that we have lived, something that we are fighting for, and something we have to do something about, and that's what it's all about. That's why these young people are here today. All across Canada and I have been involved—I'm pensioned off now but I've been working for many, many years. I'm not a very happy man. I'm a proud Indian but I'm not a very happy man because our problems haven't been solved, and we hope that they will be solved sometime in the near future.

[Speaks in Musqueam I believe—I cannot transcribe]

I just want to say that I am very, very happy to see you here, where we once lived a happy life of our forefathers. Thank you very much Mr. Chairman and I hope that you will have a pleasant stay here and I've been trying to gather my Indian people here to go out there and do the Sun dance but they're too busy trying to get organized. Well you know, it takes time, and we hope that we'll get the sun back within a few days. I know it's cold - it's maybe alright for the Eskimos but for us Coast Indians, we got to wear our long johns yet! Thank you very much.

**Brian Maracle:** One announcement before we start with the first speaker, we have some copies of the Waseeka [sp?] newspaper, it's a journal devoted to the land claims movement which is available for people and there are also some additional land claims materials for sale at the Hangar 8 at the Friendship Centre booth.

2.

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (02)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry, Wilson, Bill**

**Description: Bill Wilson of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs speaks at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976. Copyright Harry Daniels Estate and Murray Hamilton.**

**Brian Maracle:** .... and with that we'll start with the first speaker Bill Wilson, the past executive member from the Union of BC Indian Chiefs.

**Bill Wilson:** Thank you very much Brian, Kitty and all the Indian people present and all present. It's encouraging to see you come out on such a horrible day to listen to something that for many of you I'm sure would seem to be extremely obscure if not completely out of line with present day thinking. Brian did mention that I was a past member from the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and as such I felt that the whole conference scene would be over for me and I wouldn't have to be addressing assemblies and talking to other people and going to workshops and doing various other things. There were a lot of reasons I was very glad that that kind of a system would be over, because in fact that's the answer of the Canadian government to just about all the problems that confront them. To hold a conference, give the people a little bit of money, let them organize, come to the meeting, blow off steam and go home and think they've done something. And I suggest that perhaps that's what Habitat is all about, is let us get together, blow off steam, get a bad case of verbal diarrhea, go home and think we've accomplished something and yet the problems continue to exist and in fact compound because we're burying our

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head in the sand. And I can state to you quite categorically that that is the policy of the Canadian government in regard to its native peoples. We have no desire on the part of the government that now is acting as a showcase for the world, to deal with the problem that confronts them in their backyard. The answer to the question of the native problems is let us buy off a few native leaders with large core funding dollars, let us create status positions and expense accounts, organizations that are nothing more than puppets of the federal government, let us fund them and fund them and fund them but never allow them to do anything. As soon as they get close to accomplish anything, let us take their funding away from them. Let us make it difficult for them to operate. Let us have RCMP officers following them around and taking pictures of them. Let us have other security people hassling them in their personal lives. Let's have people with long lenses sitting in the stands trying to be obscure, snapping picture after picture after picture. It seems unfortunately to be not only the answer to the Canadian government but probably every other government that ever took over a land that was occupied originally by a people who had been there since time immemorial. And this is such a land. Australia is such a land. Africa in all its aspects is such a land. India was such a land. And here in the latter part of the 20th C, we are making exactly the same mistake in Canada. And aboriginal rights while it may seem something very obscure, something for lawyers to talk about, something for ego tripping Indian leaders to talk about, something that makes press, something for the oil companies to bandy about, something for bureaucrats to make thousands and thousands of dollars a year off the backs of Indians, comes down to one simple question: whether or not we as a country—and you can substitute any name you want—whether or not we as a country have the moral turpitude to allow people to survive in a manner that's consistent with our history. The question of aboriginal rights here in Canada is whether or not we are going to allow the Indians in British Columbia and the Indians in the Yukon and the Indians in the Northwest Territories and in every other province in this country to survive with some dignity in a manner that reflects their traditions. Or are we going to proceed as we proceeded everywhere in history. Are we going to proceed on the assumption that we are right and everything else that's inconsistent with what we believe in is wrong. And that we have the god-given right to erase all traces of cultures that have existed for twenty thousand years. And that's what the issue is all about. And don't let the oil companies confuse you. And don't let the lawyers confuse you, and don't let the politicians confuse you. It's not about progress. It's not about energy. It's not about the requirements in the south. It's not about occupations since time immemorial. It's not about the Proclamation of 1763 or the Nisga'a case, and it's not about something called the just society, or all of us participating as equals in a country.

What it's about in a nutshell is genocide. It's about the desire of one culture because they happen to have more numbers to eliminate another culture because they happen to be in a minority, and because their values and their beliefs and their history and traditions are somehow inconsistent with the all-consuming culture that seems to be devouring the land and the water and the air. And it doesn't matter how you try to rationalize that: that's genocide. It just takes a little longer because probably we don't have the balls of the Nazis that did it in a night, or did it in a couple of days. Being much more humane we'll stretch it out for 150 years to 300 years, but the end result will be the same. Some supposedly superior race will dominate the entire country and those that happen to feel different or believe different will disappear. And that's the struggle of Indians insofar as aboriginal rights is concerned, and you can throw all out your doctrines, throw out all your legal bullshit, throw out all the political jargon, it's a question of whether or not Indian people in this province and in this country will be allowed a hundred years from now....

[TBCont'd]

### **3. cont'd**

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (03)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry, Wilson, Bill**

**Description: Bill Wilson of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs speaks at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976. Copyright Harry Daniels Estate and Murray Hamilton.**

**Bill Wilson:** (cont'd)... and it's a question of whether or not if you look around you the people will start to look different, or will they start to look the same or will they continue to look different. My sincere hope is that 100 years from now or 1000 years from now, or 10,000 years from now, people will look different. People will talk different. People will act differently, people's cultures will be expressed and reflected in the things that they do. Not because of one standard that seems to be consistent with the majority group, but because of the fact that the people, each and every individual has something to contribute to the fabric of a country, not only this one but all countries and something to contribute to the world, not because they happen to be more powerful, not because they happen to be richer, not because they happen to have more numbers, but because they're people. Because they're individuals with their own self respect, with their own language, with their own cultures, with their own traditions. And a hundred years from now, a thousand years from now if we can't look at our brothers and sister and realize that there's some difference, that there's some reason, there's something within all of us that should survive, then we've made the very same mistake that our brothers to the south have made.

Celebrating their 200th year down south, they're celebrating that they've spent 200 years trying to be the same, trying to make everybody the same and put everybody into the melting pot, and eliminating all the values that made the country strong in the first place. And the melting pot, and I'm sure some of you have heard me say this before, is little more than where the meat and good bones and get burnt, and the scum and grease rises to the top and controls everything. And I would hope that that's something that we cannot look forward to in Canada. I would hope that that's not something that we will look forward to in the world.

And the question of what's happening here at Habitat, even in this political forum, which is sort of the token satellite for all the dissident groups around the country to come in and pretend that they're doing something, while the people downtown are really making the decisions. Even in this it matters that we continue to express those opinions. Even in this tokenism it matters that we continue to share those feelings. Because maybe, maybe—someday those people downtown will realize they have a responsibility to the people here and will start to make decisions consistent with the values that we express here.

I would hope only in conclusion that all of you probably aren't as cynical as I am. Because I feel like Simon Baker. I haven't been involved as long as he has, I haven't even been alive as long as he's been involved, but I feel very tired and very cynical about the future of Canadian Indians. Because I see us being bought off and sold out by our own leadership. I see us being bought off and sold out by our own people for expensive accounts and core funding and big dollars. And I see this same uncaring government continue to do what it does, maintaining colonialism within the boundaries of Canada, with the Department of Indian Affairs allowing Indians to be second-class citizens, allowing Indians to have no privileges, not even having the right to make their own world. Having a department of ten thousand bureaucrats living off our backs, living on our money, living on the excuse of our suffering to make a living for themselves. And Canada spends five hundred million dollars a year supposedly on Indians, money derived from our land, money derived from the resources of our land and eighty-five percent of that goes into the money-grubbing pockets of those bigoted and incompetent people that

work in the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. [applause] And the other fifteen percent goes in welfare programs to Indian people who continue to suffer on reserves and the fifteen percent is not dedicated to continuing to helping them raise themselves by their own bootstraps. The fifteen percent is dedicated to keeping them in their oppressed conditions, keeping them exactly where they are, as third or fourth class citizens in ghettos or places to die in. Each of you should probably, if you are from other countries, and you really want to see how Canada treats its natives, should make a trip to some of the surrounding reserves, and I don't mean Musqueam or Squamish, or Sechelt, or some of the people that have been fortunate enough to have talented people and a bit of money and certain expertise. I mean some of the reserves in my district, or some of the reserves in the Williams Lake district, or some of the reserves in the North where ten or twelve or fifteen people live in tar paper shacks with no heat, no light, no running water. And I'll tell you, the last thing I'll say, the Department of Indian Affairs, if we're talking about habitat, is the classic example of Canada's attitude towards its native citizens. Habitat according to the Department of Indian Affairs is a ten thousand dollar frame home with no insulation, no foundation, no running water, no electricity, and no possibility of those things ever occurring. And you can go less than ten miles from this very site, and find eight thousand dollar homes on no foundations with no running water and no electricity. And that's Canada's answer to habitat, that's Canada's answer to the treatment of its native peoples, and I would certainly hope that those of you who are indigenous to other countries, and have suffered through the same things that we've had to suffer through, are going to be better off perhaps because of this, but I doubt it. Perhaps the twenty million should have been spent building houses in Canada alone? We could have probably solved the housing problem in British Columbia. [applause] But like Simon I'm a very sad and cynical man. And I would hope that that cynicism doesn't fall over to all of you, because if we stop hoping I suppose there's nothing left for us. It's extremely sad however when I see people with all the talent that we have in the province of British Columbia, my last cynical note, cannot even get it together for the betterment of their children. And I would hope that that's what this conference is about, and I would hope—I know for sure that that's what aboriginal rights is about—it's about what kind of legacy are we going to leave for our children and our children's children. It's not about me, or Simon, or any of the speakers you'll hear today, it's about how are our kids going to live a hundred years from now. Are they going to have to go around with their head down discriminated against by the Department of Indian Affairs and society in general? Or are we going to build a place for them to stand on their own two feet and be proud of what they are and where they came from.

I'll leave you with that last thought. What kind of place is this going to be for our children a hundred years from now.

Thank you.

4.

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (04)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry, Amagoalik, John**

**Description: John Amagoalik of the Inuit Tapirisat speaks at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976.**

**Brian Maracle:** The next speaker is **John Amagoalik** of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada. As you may know the Inuit people have submitted to the federal government a land claim covering

750,000 square miles of the Northwest Territories. They've claimed it as their land; they are willing to share it with the people and the Government of Canada. I think Mr. Amagoalik would like to tell us some of the details of that proposal.

**John Amagoalik:** It is an honour for me today to be standing on sacred Indian ground. I am here today to speak to you on behalf of the Inuit who live in Canada's North and on behalf of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, our national organization. Today I want to talk to you about our land and about our land claims proposal recently presented to the government of Canada. It is our proposal to share with Canadians our land and the resources it contains. This forum is especially appropriate place to talk of these things. It is a gathering of people from all over the world to talk about the problems of human habitation, the meaning of ownership, and the rights of people to determine the way they live. These are political and cultural concerns, political in the sense of looking to the future, planning, making decisions, and cultural in the sense of flowing from historical and traditional roots. The Inuit land claims is a statement of our political and cultural objectives and the instrument we propose to insure our survival and security as a unique group of people. For us, it is a place to start, to give Inuit a chance to deal with the problems being raised at this forum, and a chance to define our rights and roles in the emergence of a new North.

Up until ten years ago, the North was seen as a wasteland of ice and snow. Happy smiling Eskimos, brave bush pilots who flew by the seats of their pants, and even more brave mounties, singing as they munched across the tundras. The discovery of mineral wealth changed that vision of the North. It is now seen as a warehouse of energy and minerals. For us it is slightly different. To us the north is Nunavut, our land. To us, it is not a barren frontier, waiting to be conquered, explored and exploited. To us it is a land which produced a people. It gave us a language. It gave us a culture. It is a part of us. We depended on its moods and whims for life or death. We lived with the land, moving from place to place, hunting and fishing and adapting our lives to the environment rather than trying to change the land to suit our ambitions. To us that North is home. It is where we were born, it is where we will die. It is the land which belongs to our children who are not yet born. No one challenged us in our land. Visitors came, not to settle, but to trade for furs or to hunt for the seal and the whale. They came to explore, with our help, the land we already knew so well. We had no need to divide the land to build fences or to pay lawyers to register our ownership on pieces of paper. It was our land because we occupied it and used it ever since time beyond the memory of man. Today we still depend on it. It remains the source of our traditional foods, caribou, seal, fish are still very important to us. The need to go out on the land still drives us out of our settlements.

But other things have changed. We travel in snow machines rather than dog teams, and live in pre-fabricated houses rather than igloos. The discovery of mineral wealth has brought with it new types of explorers and the notion that the North is a reserve of oil and gas ready to heat Canadian and American homes and fuel their Cadillacs and Buicks. The government of Canada decided without asking us that the land belonged to the Queen who lives in a palace across the Atlantic Ocean. It brought in schools, hospitals, housing and a way of life based on money. It exercised control through permits, licenses, and strange laws. All of the traditional rights the Inuit took for granted, rights associated with our way of life, were no longer clearly and firmly ours. Those aboriginal rights became subject to negotiation and their gradual erosion threatened the existence of our culture.

We had two choices. One was to defend our rights through the courts. We were never conquered by war nor given away our rights by treaties, the usual European methods for dealing with native rights. Backed by the Royal Commission of 1763, we said that large

areas of Northern and Arctic Canada were to be protected for native people. We could have gone to court and perhaps won. But our land is too important to us to take a chance on a court that is not part of our culture and might not understand our ways. We know the land is ours and the threat to our land is a threat to our identity. These are not things to argue in court. So instead we chose to sit down as reasonable people, to talk to the government of Canada to obtain an agreement which will guarantee and formalize Inuit rights, to make them clear and translate them into the language of the law. In effect, we have decided to join Confederation. Finally, and only on the condition that we'll be full and equal partners.

First we want title to at least 250,000 square miles. This is necessary to guarantee our control of the most important areas for preserving the wildlife and the environment. We will not own land for the sake of exploitation but rather to conserve and support the animals and their habitat which are essential to our way of life. And this land will be shared, not owned individually but controlled by communities collectively in keeping with our tradition. We want a separate territory north of the tree line. This territory would not be exclusively Inuit but would guarantee Inuit a more effective voice in government. We need time to develop a system that is sensitive to the needs of the North and the Inuit. We want to share in the revenues of the resource development. We are giving Canada ownership of almost 700,000 square miles through our proposal. In return we expect to benefit from oil, gas and mineral production on that land. We will use the money to improve the opportunities available to Inuit, to reduce our dependence on government handouts.

We want programs to guarantee our hunting and fishing rights, to make sure the traditional way of life remains available. We want special programs to protect the ecology on offer and others to upgrade those living conditions which are inadequate by any standards.

Our land claim will soon be negotiated with the federal government but we will be negotiating ownership as Inuit understand ownership. We will be negotiating our partnership with Canada in maintaining the life of the North. In the past, decisions have been made about the North by those sitting in their glass towers in Ottawa and who has never seen an Inuk or who has never been North of the 60th parallel. This can no longer continue. We will no longer tolerate being administered. The time has come for us to govern ourselves and our own land.

Thank you.

5.

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (05)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Harry Daniels of the Métis Association of Alberta speaks at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976. Copyright Harry Daniels Estate and Murray Hamilton.**

**Brian Maracle:** Again I point out that the details of the Inuit people's settlement proposal are contained in the Waseeka [sp.?] paper which is on the floor and is available to everyone here. Some further announcements have been brought to my attention. We have a few other native leaders here in the room with us. We have the President and Vice-President of the Nova Scotia Non-status and Métis Association, **Viola Robinson** and **Lorraine Cox**; we have the Secretary-Treasurer of the Native Council of Canada, **Mr. Fred Jobin**; and the Vice-

President of the Manitoba Métis Federation **Miss Mary Guilbault**. Our next speaker is **Harry Daniels**, the Land Claims Director for the Métis Association of Alberta. Harry.

**Harry Daniels:** Where do you start, and where do you end? I was just talking with **Bill Wilson**, and I said I'm sick and tired of speaking at conventions and meetings and conferences. This is my second UN conference and I'm engaging in the verbal diarrhea that Bill has mentioned. I share his cynicism. The only thing that Canadian society has afforded me, so far, as an educated person under their system, is at the age of 35 to be an old man with ulcers and bad nerves. To learn about a system that doesn't give a damn about its own people, much less about the native people of Canada. We, the Métis and Non-Status Indians of Canada number approximately a million people. We outnumber both the Treaty Indians and the Inuit put together. It is not because we are not Indians, or not because we don't have an Indian heritage, it is because of the policies of the Canadian government that have divided us. We cannot effectively deal with our land rights. When the Treaty Indians have to go to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and we have to go to **Lou Falkner or Ron Basford** that son of a Basford, and various other people, there are so many laws that exist that for us to effectively deal with them would take a hundred years of getting educated in the system and by that time they're going to change it on us. Personally I spent ten years studying aboriginal rights and I was sitting in Edmonton just last week and the realization came to what a stupid man I am. There's nothing to study. The existence of our aboriginal rights and land claims is a reality. So why study it? Why am I Land Claims Director of Research? Because we're sucked into their system that makes us fight their way, that makes us compile data, categorize it and put it in little cubicles and little pigeonholes and little index cards and on microfilm and filing folders and I was sitting there, and I said Jesus Christ Harry, you've wasted ten years of your goddamn life. The Métis people have fought two wars of liberation against the Canadian government, in 1869 and 70, and again 1885. They call them rebellions here. I choose to call them wars of resistance. We fought to save a free Indian nation in the West as we knew it at that time, because of what had happened in the East. Our leaders at that time **Louis Riel, Ambrose Lépine**, and before them **Cuthbert Grant**, realized that the encroaching hordes from Europe were going to commit cultural and physical genocide against a people that were so close to god that they wanted to share this land with a bunch of pricks.

If I'm swearing here and if I get out of hand, I'm not going to apologize for it. It's how I feel. Yesterday I was asked are you going to get involved in demonstrations or in violence. Well that's ridiculous. How can we wage a war against a government that would wipe us out in a couple of hours. And it's a red herring as I stated yesterday. The violence that we have to talk about is the violence of the Canadian government, the violence of the governments in South America, in Africa, in India, and Australia, New Zealand, and anywhere where indigenous peoples exist. Oppression is running rampant and the dominant society is waging a war on humanity. That is the violence to talk about. Not the violence that they would like to see us do, blowing up bridges, burning down buildings, gas lines or whatever. The lack of a land base, and the need to identify with a certain piece of geography is inherent in every human being. Not only we Indian people. You talk to anybody, they can trace their families back to the Rhine Valley, or to Glasgow, Scotland or the Highlands, or Manchester, England or wherever in Europe. We can do the same things yet we can't live in our valleys anymore. The Salish people cannot live on this piece of land anymore. Why? Because of the bloody air force base here that no one wants anymore.

[to be continued]

6.



**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (06)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Harry Daniels of the Métis Association of Alberta speaks at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976.**

[Harry Daniels cont'd]: What do you identify with? Hastings and Main? 97th Street in Edmonton? Main Street in Winnipeg? Rose Street in Regina? Our people have to gravitate in the goddamn slum areas of this country. And they go there because that is where we are put and the only place that we are allowed to live in the cities unless we are a bureaucratic Indian like myself or unless we have somehow chosen to disregard our Indian heritage and say I'm white, or I'm French. I have cousins who are blacker than the ace of spades and they're "French" now. Beautiful people! Because they made some money and they did well but they don't talk Cree anymore. My cousins were raised by my grandmother who only spoke Cree. My uncle saw my cousin in the street [Cree phrase] and he said "oh I'm sorry Uncle Bill I don't understand that language." That is how far he has gotten away from himself, as a human being. We talk about oppression in other countries and I think it's relative. I want to mention one thing here. We can say that there are isolated cases of people being put in jails, people being put in prisons in other countries and we go oh my god that is terrible. They're doing it in this country as well. In 1972 in Stockholm I met a very intelligent human being. His name was Miguelche Sardi who ran the Barangay project in Paraguay. Because he was feeding information to the native people of Paraguay, he has spent the last six months in jail, persecuted and tortured, cut off from all communications and in ill health. We have to know about those things. Why? Because they are happening in Canada as well. I know of five Indian leaders who are dead by violent deaths since my involvement in the last ten years. And I know of more who are spending time in jail. I know people who have died of ill health because of broken dreams. One man in Saskatchewan, Walter Lannigan. No one even knows who he is, no one gives a damn. He died in a hospital bed, a broken man, because he wanted to fight for the aboriginal rights of his people and even the people didn't give a damn until this core funding process came through. Now the government says that because of core funding, native leadership has evolved. They gave us core funding because native leadership was real then. And you had to buy us off some way. I can remember when we were organizing in the 1960s, we used to borrow gas money, hitchhike to go to meetings and organize. Christ, two years later I was flying first class. Reeling drunk off the plane, hey I'm here for the meeting, I'm the guest speaker tonight, I'm going to tell you all about my land claims. Did nothing for the people who were back on the reserves and the Métis settlements and colonies.

Canada, and the present and past Canadian governments, have displayed political paralysis when they are trying to deal with native land claims. They have effectively shown their inefficient methods of dealing with our land rights. The only thing that they could do was divide us. They've done that effectively. And I think that this whole forum here is a sham and that Canada should not be hosting this conference. I think this conference should be held in Europe, not here where people can't deal with land claims. Not hosted by a government that won't care about human settlement. The only human settlements they care about is where they can build their next city, how they can expand, who is going to exploit what and where and how. And they don't care if it's a poor white man living there or a poor Indian. If they want that land they're going to expropriate it. I don't know why they're sitting downtown talking about it and saying all these nice little things to each other, Yes jeez we have these Indians in Canada, oh yes we have some in Paraguay as well, and we have some natives in Africa, oh yes we have some in Australia as well and we're dealing with them. But how are they dealing with us? When 65% of the goddamn jail population in Canada is Indian men? And in Pine Grove in the women's jail in Sas-

katchewan at any given time it's 95-100% Indian women? That's violence. People without a land base, people who cannot effectively and objectively get into economic development of any nature, even economic development as far as supporting their own families. People suffering from ill health, dying of cancer and tuberculosis, institutional diseases that we never had before. Under this present system, the lack of education, the lack of meaningful recreation. With a few ball teams around, government funds a couple of powwows every year, that is what they do to us. You want to talk about violence, that's violence. When you deny any race of people the basic amenities of life, you are committing the worst kind of violence.

And like brother Bill just finished saying a while ago, they're going to stretch it out. At least the Nazis killed them goddamn Jews overnight, turn on the showers or stoke up the ovens. They knew what they were going to do and they told the world about it. Hitler wrote his book *Mein Kampf* and he told everybody what he was going to do. And he did it. But here they talk to you nice, they hold big meetings and they say yes we're dealing with the native people, but they're just throwing them in jail down the street. Indian women are whores, the boys are pimps, thieves, in the cities. The ones who are working have completely sold out. I no longer identify as being an Indian. Now I ask you can you honestly sit there and not understand that type of violence. And they ask these questions, are you going to wage war against us, are you going to do violent things, blow up our bridges, and burn down our towns. Maybe we should. Maybe we should.

I can't stand here and give you a historical perspective in terms of legislation and everything—I could, off the top of my head. All the legislation I went through, but as I stated at the beginning, I refuse to talk about that anymore. I don't give a damn for treaties, I don't care for their Indian Affairs policy, because the land that we're standing on is Indian land. The rest of it right to Nova Scotia and Newfoundland is Indian land. Well they killed the Beothuks so there's nothing there, now there's a few Mikmaqs living in the South of Nova Scotia had to go over there, I mean in Newfoundland. That's how they took that part of the country. Is that not violence? Is it not violent when some of your lawyers and executives ride through skid row to pick up young Indian girls. And they do it; I've seen them. There's one respected lawyer who's well known in Canada. He used to come down to skid row in Regina in his car and pick up young whores. Nice young tenderloin. That's violence.

7.

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (07)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Harry Daniels of the Métis Association of Alberta speaks, and questions from the floor are taken at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976. Copyright Harry Daniels Estate and Murray Hamilton.**

**Harry Daniels** cont'd... How we are going to deal with it, I don't know. We're going to have to talk to the older people I guess, to everyone, and to find a solution. I feel inadequate standing here speaking on behalf of the whole Métis nation of 750,000 to 1 million people when I haven't even consulted them, and they haven't given me permission to talk for them. I'm here because I'm supposedly one of the knowledgeable Métis leaders. I couldn't lead a hog to eat slop. I could lead a horse to water but you can't make 'em drink but a pencil must be lead. That's how ridiculous it is.

One thing that I want to say though is that however we deal with this, I don't want any of you to reject us for what we're doing. If it comes to a point where we do fight for our land and we do die for it, that'll be a proud day for me, because I don't see... I cannot stand back any longer and play games with my mind or the people's minds. Like some wise old sage said sometime, some place somewhere I don't know who he was or where he came from, it's better to live on your feet than die on your knees.

[Applause]

**Brian Maracle:** "During this time now we have schedule time for you to ask questions of the panelists, make comments. There are a number of microphones scattered around the building, I can't see all of them, I can see about 2 or 3. Since there's a #6 on one of them there must be 6 of them. Before we get into that section of the programme, there's something I clipped out of this morning's Vancouver Province, which I'm told is on the front page of the Toronto Globe and Mail. And it concerns a reported settlement of the Yukon land claims. Now we all know that newspapers, computers and white people do not lie, but the clipping here says that the draft agreement has been negotiated in principle between the government and the Council of Yukon Indians. We are fortunate in having the President of the Yukon Native Brotherhood, Ray Jackson here. I hope he's still here and he has indicated that there is not a great deal of truth to this particular clipping and that there are a great many errors. I had hoped that perhaps he could get to a microphone and perhaps make a statement for the Yukon Indians. So with that we'll open up this section of the programme to comments, questions, or odd paraphernalia people would like to address to the speakers or to the gathering at large. And because of the lights if someone could wave a programme or something so I can see where the microphones are.

[long pause waiting for questions, asking for people]

**Woman with English accent:** "Mrs. Turner from the United Nations Association Chairman of Human Rights. I've been working for some time trying to find out a little bit more about land claims. It seems to me according to Justice Morrow that the Dene peoples' treaties had Xs forged on them. This is still in the Supreme Court. But I would like to go a little beyond land claims into the question of whether we couldn't get soft loans for self help development for native people. We're talking about the new international economic order worldwide and Canada extends loans at 2 1/2% at a long term of repayment to people in Bangladesh and Colombia and Ghana, I would like to see her do this to her own native people.

**Brian Maracle:** Thank you. As soon as this session is concluded, a film that the Inuit people have brought with them will be shown I believe in that corner of the building, the projector's being set up, and I think it's entitled The Inuit of Pond Inlet and it's an hour long film and people are welcome to view that. And sometime later possibly tomorrow the film from the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, The Land Is The Culture, will be available for viewing as well. Any questions or comments?

**[Unnamed woman, also English accent]** "I'd like to know why land claims can't be discussed at Habitat Forum."

**Harry Daniels:** "We made representations to the Canadian government over the last hundred years I guess, but more contemporarily we have dealt with it last year on April the 15th we made our position known to the federal government to Prime Minister Trudeau and at the Secretariat for the NGO conference, if any of you were involved in that in Ottawa, we passed a resolution that land claims would be a priority and aboriginal rights would be a priority

of the Canadian delegation to Habitat. Now whether Mr. Danson has included anything of that nature in his speech, I don't know. The Native Council of Canada just recently gave an ultimatum to the Canadian government that before their annual assembly at the end of June they want an answer on aboriginal rights and what the Canadian government's views are pertaining to Métis and Non-Status Indians of Canada. So if it's going to be discussed at Habitat, I don't know. But we have exercised all possibilities I think in trying to get that as a priority from the Canadian government standpoint on human settlements. That's all the information I think I can give you on that.

**Woman:** "But we here, this Forum has some input into what is going to be discussed at Habitat, can we organize and see that it will become on the agenda at Habitat.

**Harry Daniels:** "Well if the people want to do that, that's fine. And if we could get our voice into Habitat I think it would be a good thing and if the people want to organize in that way and put a position paper out and even sign it, I don't know what mechanism we could use to get it down there but I understand we're going to be meeting with the Canadian delegation every night and next week, somewhere downtown in some church, and if we could pass a resolution from this forum and take it to the Canadian delegation and if we could get some press coverage on it or whatever, however we want to design it, maybe we could have them talk about it.

8.

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (08)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Questions from the floor are taken at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976. Copyright Harry Daniels Estate and Murray Hamilton.**

[Cont'd, questions from the floor]

**Woman 3:** "Could I address questions to the speaker and make some comments please. I would like to ask our speaker if he would answer a question and I make comments first. I am a member of the National Council of Women of Canada and I would like to say on behalf of all Canadians, not just the women of Canada, that we are very very concerned about our Indian hosts who for my part were here when my family first came about 150 years ago. I would like to say that we would like to do something to help but it's a very difficult situation as you know. But I have a suggestion and I wonder if you would comment on it. Supposing the Indians of this area would become the wealthiest landowners because of the price of land in the whole of Canada and I think when justice is done you will be the wealthiest ones in Canada and perhaps in the world. So if you had a considerable amount of money of your own, and you had a pilot project, how would you do it? Would you say well they've taken away our land and they've got Vancouver. Do like the churches do, find a place a way out and just beautiful and you set yourself up with a nice lodge and a habitat for people to come and confer and talk. Second you call your own people together and you say now look, they're showing new programs for new Canadians. *[To see this part in the video, you have to go to video #21 to pick up on the rest of this woman's comments. I'm just transcribing it here for the sake of coherence.]* We're going to have programs for our own Canadians and we're going to teach them a lot of things. We're going to teach them what it didn't show in the history books, that we have proud background. We're going to tell the stories like the Indians handed down, some of them compare to Noah and the ark, and I have some of the stories on tape, I'll give them to you, my brother

has collected. Told from one generation to another and they were wonderful people in British Columbia and Canada. They're also very artistic as we can all see around here, they were immensely proud, and it's nothing that I've done, it's something that the Indians have done as well as others. Now when you get them together in your pilot project and your education, teach them how to look after themselves and feed themselves wholesome food. Don't go near the Safeway or all the other terrible places where processed foods. Teach them never to touch pop or anything you can buy in a can and start to grow their own little vegetable gardens and teach them how to do that. The Indians started us off with corn and a few other things. And when you've done all that and you know how to grow their garden, and they feed themselves very well, for heaven's sake come out and teach the rest of the Canadians. Because their slowly spiralling hospital costs and we're just mortgaged right out of our homes with taxes to pay for them eh? Alright and when they've done that, perhaps you would like to comment on what you think about an aquaculture programme to get back the places where they took your places where you naturally caught the ooligans or netted the salmon and say get the hell out of here. And my mother would pass out if she heard me say that, get the hell out of here, I'm going to teach my family (excuse me, getting so excited) to start fishing the way we used to do again, we can do it. Some of them are, some of them are trying to remember the way their aunts and uncles and they're trying to get back to it. It'll go a lot faster if you get a pilot project and show the rest of Canada and the world how they should be living. Will you answer my question sir?

9.

**[NOTE: this video description is inadequate. This section, Harry Daniels does not appear. It's Jens Lyberth, Inuit Brotherhood, having an exchange with Pierre Trudeau]**

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (09)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Questions from the floor are taken at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976. Copyright Harry Daniels Estate and Murray Hamilton.**

[video starts in middle, bit missing, new MC unnamed, long beard): "... Jens would like to say some things and then the gentleman at microphone 5, our advisor from the panel here, and then the gentleman there.]

**Jens Lyberth:** speaking Inuktitut: "\_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Prime Minister Trudeau\_\_\_\_\_ Vancouver... Habitat."

[Continues in English:] Now I have the opportunity, ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to present the paper I've been writing down on behalf of the Inuit in Canada, to Premier Pierre Trudeau now that he is here. I could hand this piece of paper to Mr. Trudeau so he can see what we think of what you should think of us, as man to man. I would like to have this honour to present this to you Mr. Trudeau. **[Trudeau descends from the seating platform, applause, they shake hands in the risers, talk privately.]**

**MC with beard** [Unidentified]. Thank you. I think perhaps if our speakers who are waiting would allow, since our friend Jens has addressed a question to Mr. Trudeau, perhaps he would like to be an advisor from the floor like the others have been today. And would like to say a few things...Well I don't know if it's fair to try to summarize it, but our friend in this paper has claimed that in terms of the Inuit Brotherhood in Canada, I think in the preface he

makes a very specific remark which relates to Mr. Trudeau. He says "in the present situation our prime minister and his cabinet in dealing with Inuit problems have been as effective as a kayak without a paddle." Would you like to make any statements about that sir? Perhaps microphone 5 is the closest?"

**Pierre Trudeau:** "Well Mr. Chairman I repeat I haven't read the brief, it was just handed to me now. I can imagine what the meaning of this metaphor is, of a kayak without a paddle, but having a kayak is a start, and it's easier to make a paddle than a kayak.

**Jens Lyberth:** Mr. Trudeau...

**Pierre Trudeau:** If you want to consider the kayak as being the country of Canada, holding a certain population in it, the paddle I assume is the symbol of moving the kayak and directing it. The Inuit people have just begun in the past generation to come to grips with their own identity. They don't know the direction they want this kayak, of which they are crew members, to go. They are divided amongst themselves, some of them want to preserve their way of life, some of them don't, some of them want to put their hopes in the future, some of them have their hopes in the past. We will try and build a paddle together, we will try and move in a direction which is acceptable and agreeable to all Canadians, we can not determine that direction certainly from the strictly government point of view but we have to determine a direction which is acceptable to all Canadians. Inuit are Canadians, Indians are Canadians, the rest of us are Canadians. I know that many native people have their eyes turned toward the past. They want to undo the injustices that the white man has perpetrated on the aboriginal and native people. They want to rewrite the history in order that certain things should not have happened. I don't believe that this can be productive. I don't believe that it can lead to a creative future for Canadians. I think that certain injustices have been committed and attempt to right those injustices must be made. And this is what the government is doing in sitting down and negotiating for instance with the Yukon Indians, we're very advanced in our negotiations now. We've already negotiated a settlement with the northern Quebec Indians. We have negotiators talking with the Westcoast Indians. First what is necessary is for the Indian people or the Eskimo people themselves to agree on a certain way of righting that injustice. And then let it be righted. I think this must be done, it is in the process of being done. The first brief I think we've heard from the Inuit was presented to the government about six months to a year ago. It is a very complex and well thought out brief. It does not provide for any easy answers. The money is only one aspect of it I guess, but the territory and the value of the claims is only one aspect of it. The aspect that I am concerned with is that none of us, no Canadians, be a slave to their past, that we all build the country together for the future. There's no point trying to rewrite history. Some of my own fellow Canadians are trying to do that. They're trying to rewrite history as though the Plains of Abraham battle would have been won by the other side. And this is not the way in which you build a country. Because you can go back at each succeeding stage in history and find some injustice, some injustice perpetrated on somebody by someone else. And all we can do is be just in our time, and just in the future. And this is what we are attempting to do, in negotiating sincerely with the Inuit and with the Indian people. That's about all I have to say."

**Jens Lyberth:** Prime Minister, it is nice to talk to you as a man to man, at least at a distance here, but let me as a final statement as an Inuk tell you that I think we Inuit are the first to self criticize because we understand you. Now we are asking you to self criticize yourself in what you've been doing to us, which resulted in families who cannot speak to each other, the families and the people who lost their identity, and at last tell you, and tell the whole world if it is necessary, that a kayak without any paddle is dead.

**Pierre Trudeau:** Well I don't want to write a rebuttal, but you know in terms of self criticism, we certainly have taken that counsel. In 1969 very shortly after our government had taken power, we proposed a certain native right policy which really was the statement of equality of all Canadians, abolishing the Indian Act, abolishing the concept of reservation and so on, and the Indian people rightly so, and the Inuit people rightly so, sort of said wait, hold your fast. Not too quick. We want time to think this over, to research our claims. We still want to be treated differently than the white man, we've complained about the Indian Act for a long while, now we don't want it abolished, we want it changed and we'll tell you how if you give us time. And we're giving you the time and we're giving you money to research your claims. But... you're finding trouble., your people are finding trouble, I don't know what you mean by saying that families can't talk to each other, I imagine you mean that they are divided, some want to go one route, and some another.

**Jens Lyberth:** No. When I came to Canada, a year and a half ago, I thought that all the Inuit could speak Inuktitut. And could understand your language. But today after I have been working a year and a half between the Inuit themselves, as an Inuk, speaking their own language, I found that because of the development the government of Canada or whoever had developed the North, if I may say it this way, have resulted in that families couldn't talk to each other. Maybe it doesn't mean anything for you people, but when it is difficult enough to keep a language as it is because there are only 18,000 people on land, and then start to see mother crying because she can't talk to her son because of the education which is put into me from the school side who do not have anything to do with my parents.

**Pierre Trudeau:** Oh come on now. I mean people all over the world can't... you go in Italy and a few decades ago a person couldn't speak to another in the next village. You go in India and there's some 80 dialects and hundreds of different languages. The Inuit couldn't communicate among themselves if you put an Eskimo in with a Siberian Inuit. The French people until the Third Republic couldn't talk French to each other, you had all kinds of patois across the country. if you want to thank the white man for anything it's to teach them a lingua franca so that they will be talking to themselves, English or French, whatever. But if they want to speak their Inuit that's fine but nobody's forcing a child to learn some other language than his mother. You know the difference... I think what this conference is all about is we're all faced, the whole world and the metaphor is of the Spaceship Earth and Barbara Ward and they've said it all, is that we're all faced with a great big problem. And give or take one or two centuries there's no difference between the plight of the Indian and the Eskimo and the plight of the white man living in Vancouver or Toronto or Montreal. They're all in a pretty difficult civilization, they're all faced with the difficulty of adapting to the industrial age. So we've got a couple of centuries advance on you. We're not doing a very good job of adapting to the industrial age; you perhaps have got a couple more decades to run into the same kind of a mess, but we don't have the answers to our urban problems and our industrial problems and that's what this conference is all about. And we're looking, and it'll probably take a few more centuries if not another millennium to find it as I was saying at another place this morning. You know man had about fifteen thousand years to adapt to the agricultural civilization. We haven't done it in two centuries and we probably won't do it in another two centuries. We've just got to keep trying and not feel sorry for ourselves. I hope you don't mind if I'm talking frankly here and I suppose I will be reported but I take it as a .you know we have got to face our problems and our facts.

**Jens Lyberth** (who has been trying, at a different mic, to get a word in) "Give me a chance.

**Pierre Trudeau:** "Yeah, well."

**Jens Lyberth**, laughs “I think we are talking about two things. What I’m talking about for people who can’t understand each other is because of the language have been put into a country, in my country, were English where only around 5% of the population of 18,000 speak English. The schools which have been existing the last 10 years now, there are no Inuit teachers. I was just talking about it in the paper. There are no Inuit teachers. And not because Inuit didn’t want to. Inuit are trying but the language is different. And today it resulted in that the mother and father cannot speak to their children. Because the children have learned English in the school and not this language. Which resulted in that those two people cannot communicate. That’s what I meant by that. I know the difficulties about the French Canadian and English Canadian and their language problems. I certainly agree. Myself I speak four languages fluently now, not because I was forced into, but because I was interested to express my point of view to the people in the world that we have to understand each other.

**Pierre Trudeau:** Thank you very much. I don’t think we should be slaves to our past and I think what you are doing here is fine, to build a future together, and I will read your brief [waves arm, walks away from microphone]

**Jens Lyberth:** I hope to see people here this afternoon and I have some few papers which if people are interested they can get.

**11 and 12. Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (11&12)  
Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims**

I think before Mr. Trudeau goes there is a gentleman who wanted to speak on this very same topic.

**Man:** “I’ve had the privilege of living in the Arctic and sharing some of the experience that our speaker has been just now defining, the difficulty of being understood, and I would like to point out that in our culture which is so dedicated to individualism, the inability to share a common sense of belonging is already built into us, and it’s so difficult as our prime minister has just also demonstrated to transcend that neurotic individualism, that inability to hear what is being said to us, to be able to have a meeting of minds. Now individualism as we are expressing it really means anti-collectivism. How then can we achieve what Mr. Trudeau has asked for a common dialogue all over the world if we don’t first examine our psychological commitment, the binds of individualism and learn what it really means psychologically to belong, to enter into community. And our Eskimo friend was trying to convey to you the experience of an Eskimo family who may share the same words, the same language, but who cannot share the same experience of belonging at the same time.

**Woman:** “Mr. Chairman I had hoped to speak before the Prime Minister left, I think perhaps he has gone but I would like to go on record for the United Nations Association of Canada Human Rights Committee in explaining that Canada embraced the Decade Against Racism, the UN Decade, and when I was asking some of the Manitoba Indians how we might best proceed they said you cannot do anything about racism as far as the Indians and Inuit go until you raise their self esteem. They must be taken off this welfare pattern and given money analogous to that being suggested in the New International Economic Order. And I would therefore like to suggest that longterm and low interest loans could be extended for self help development, not the kind of development that we go in and say this is what you need, but we must let them decide that. Thank you very much.



Woman from audience: “Unfortunately I am not a sir. Lillian Tustin of Kamloops. I represent 3 million low income people. And we also have the same problem that my friend from Inuit has. I know some of the ministers who have worked up in there and they have told me a great deal about your problem. And while you have an actual difference in speech, because you have a different language, even we who are Canadians and have the English language have just as much a problem of having the government and people in government circles understand what we are trying to say. They come to us and try to tell us what we need. We know what we need, and we can tell the government what we need, but try and get the funds to put it into the practice, and you’ve asked something that the government has no intention apparently of paying any attention to. I would just like to say to some of the gentlemen who spoke this morning about another format. I came to this conference to learn what the problems in Uganda are, to learn what the problems about Bangladesh are, and about the problems of the Inuit. If we do not allow people who know what these problems are to inform us what they are, how can we intelligently make any intelligent decision of any kind. Thank you.”

**Man** (speaking French): “To just answer the objection that was made to the last speaker, who spoke of the Third World people, those people from Africa, I should wish that we go a little beyond that type of expression. There are the wealthy and the poor. There are those who live on the margin of society and those who hold power. They’re not those people, these people, I do not know, Peruvian and Indian and such, I know a man by the name of Rodrigo, I know someone by the name of Zeze, I know Marcelo who is a worker, they’re all human beings to me. And as regards the conflicts, I think we’ve had just a wonderful example of the existence of conflicts in this society just now, and it’s not by masking or hiding these conflicts that we’ll solve them. And it’s to the honour and the credit of this country that these conflicts may be expressed publicly with a Prime Minister and with a man representing a minority and I think this is very encouraging. It’s not by saying that there are no conflicts or we’ve gone beyond the conflicts that we can.. It’s by resolving these conflicts that we’ll have solutions to problems and there will create conflicts and new problems and this is what we have to keep up and that is what is social transformation as regards the... and the past that has just been mentioned, I think here again we have an example of our Inuit comrade it’s not a question of attachment to a past as such but it is rather to use the past to construct something new, to move forward, not only to be subject to what is imposed by modernism, modernism may be very, very passé, it may be very, very regressive, whereas the return to a primitive or past or many years ago may be very progressive and if I can have one last comment, I’m certain among you wish to study the questions I’ve tried to raise in my brief statement, I wasn’t able to but I might mention a book which I recently published, *Culture et Pouvoir*, and it is the product of many researches from many countries so it is a collective effort, this book, and which speaks about the efforts that are being made by those in researches in human societies who’ve tried to overcome the difficulties I’ve mentioned. Thank you.

Transformation of the environment, aspirations and value so it’s closely connected with the theme, it’s published in Paris by the Editions CRNS

**Man:** “One impression about the American experience which I have had, the man, the Inuit that we have here today represents the mastery of Western cultural values in his dress and in his ability to communicate and it’s a spontaneous irresistible flow of attention which goes into what he is saying because as I grew up, of all the Treaties I knew the Western culture would not honour with the Indians, the one which I personally always honoured was that if the Indians could

master our culture, that we had to give them what they wanted. And this is what I see going on here. And it's been suggested that we break for lunch so that we can get on with the next business after lunch.

**MC:** 2 final advisors of this morning:

**Man:** "Thank you. I come from Nigeria. The problem that was expressed by the gentleman, I don't know his name but I think he's an Indian, about the language problem, the culture problem, is not unique to them alone. In Nigeria alone there is likely to be nothing less than 100 different languages and dialects. It is not possible to express these languages in such a way that everybody will understand what you're saying. Therefore it is possible to use one that you pick. In my language, we can speak to about 8 million people, perhaps 10, others can only speak to about half a million in their own language. Some maybe more than 20,000 not more perhaps. So perhaps what the prime minister said is not really completely out of the way. What he said something about agreeing to a philosophy of your own. Perhaps you should decide for yourself what you want. If you want your children to understand the language and don't want it dead, you've got to teach them in the house, in the home, the mother must speak that language to you and you must speak to your own children and you must hand this over hand to hand and mouth to mouth and it will be dead. If you expect government to do it for you you are wasting your time, you should do it yourself. Now the schools generally speaking are a very good forum for teaching children these languages. You should organize your own school and force government to insist that a part of the curriculum contains your own language and you teach them yourself. Whether they like it or not they have to accept it. If they accept you as a member of this nation. And I would suggest that if the prime minister is here, he would take what I have said in the spirit in which I have said it. I am not a politician and I don't intend to be one but I think that if you want these people together with your own people so that you are all one, *unus umum* in the middle, then you must listen to them, accept what they want, and help them to get through to themselves. Thank you.

**MC:** Right after the next gentleman on microphone 5 speaks, Mr. van Putten would like to read the statement that he will be opening for signatures and that he will be reading at the United Nations conference, so please don't leave if you would like to hear what Mr. van Putten has to read. Go ahead please.

**Man:** Apparently from what I understand here, I come in this morning to attend this, but as an Indian from North Central British Columbia, I can see that there is a lot of misunderstanding about what really is defined as an Indian in Canada. Even the Prime Minister himself said it, ok you've got to do it our way. This is not so. Our culture was denied us, in fact when I went to school, I was forbidden to speak my own language. I had to relearn...  
(cut off - very unfortunately)

**13. Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (13)**  
**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims**  
**Questions from the floor**

**MC:** Just a couple of people who have been asked to speak on related subjects in the afternoon, so perhaps we can let the gentleman to the left speak and after that we can go onto the next speaker so that we can close more or less at 12:30 and come back in the

afternoon. I would remind you that there are papers still here for those who want to speak in the afternoon. I know there are some very interesting experiences that could be shared with the rest of us in the afternoon. I believe that Hans, Mr. van Putten wants to read this statement after the morning session is over.

**Man.** Mi nombre es Vicente Jimenez is de la Universidad de Cuba. First we should wish to send our greetings to the officials of the meeting and to all those who have come here from far lands to attend this forum, and we should take this opportunity this morning to express in very brief terms our own feelings on the subjects that have been dealt with particularly the theme social justice as we understand it. It is very difficult to speak of social justice when millions of people still live in abject misery, poverty, with electricity, without running water, without any medical care without shoes, without clothes, without food, without any housing and without any implication whether our group of capitalist countries who are consuming more than 60, 75% of the resources of the world, and capitalist societies will never be a model for social justice throughout the world. This pattern they have established, this mercantile commercial approach to life is incompatible with any rational and adequate solution to the material and physical and spiritual problems of the human being. There must be a just and equitable distribution of the benefits of the civilization and benefit of the progress of all humanity. Our country in 1959 was in the position of many other developing countries with a social and economic structure which had many shortcomings, with a lack of technological resources and with the necessary resources to advance and progress and to achieve through social justice and its objective had to be reached. And in our country we have completely transformed the economic and social structures which have resulted in a transfer of authority to the people to ensure the participation of all the peoples in the solution of the problems facing any country that this collective and conscious effort by our people has resulted in a true progress through an equitable distribution of social production reflected in the progressive distribution of national production. At the same time we have guaranteed and this has been enshrined in our constitution we have guaranteed the right to work, the right of the people who work in the field to own their land, the right of any child and youth to free education at all levels, the right of any young person to have hospital and medical care, even in the most remote areas of our country. The right of women to equal opportunities in the social and cultural and active world regardless of colour and religion and the possibility developing without any constraints placed upon them that reduce their dignity in only 16 hours of the entire panorama of our country's change. Everyone is aware of the progress that has been achieved in the field of health, education, social infrastructure, complete development of rural areas, and a 60% increase within a five years without mentioning of course the other achievements but more that the solidity of our economic structure will help other countries to achieve this progress because one country should not necessarily limit itself to achieving its objectives and overlook the problems of other countries.

**MC:** Thank you very much. I would like to introduce our next advisor. He is Paul-Henry Chombart de Lauwe He is a Frenchman and a professor at the École des hautes etudes en sciences sociales (cuts off)

14.

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (14)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry, Redbird, Duke**

**Description: Harry Daniels of the Métis Association of Alberta and Duke Redbird of the**

**Native Council of Canada present a statement on the Aboriginal Rights of the Métis and non-Status Indians of Canada at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976.**

**Harry Daniels:** "Ladies and Gentlemen, my name is Harry Daniels, I'm the Aboriginal Rights Research Director for the Métis Association of Alberta. Myself and Duke Redbird who is the Vice-President of the Native Council of Canada, representing 750,000 Métis and Non-Status Indians, were supposed to make a statement here at 6 o'clock about aboriginal rights and the government in action, and we ran into a logistical problem with the face group, but we are still going to go on and make our statement. If there is any dialogue after, we'll gladly enter into dialogue. However we realize there is going to be a show after and we have to live within those time constraints. We are going to be making a statement right now for those who wish to hear it, about the Aboriginal rights and Métis and Non-Status Indians of Canada. Right now I'd like to introduce the Vice-President of the Native Council of Canada, Mr. Duke Redbird.

**Duke Redbird:** "When the Native Council of Canada decided to attend Habitat, this was two years in the developing stages, a progression from one committee meeting to another. And when we decided to participate in Habitat, we had hoped that the Canadian government and the delegation that was here representing Canada would give a sincere and fair and just effort to introduce the nature of the aboriginal rights and land claims of the indigenous people of Canada into the Canadian delegation's position in regards to the United Nations and this world conference. A number of our members of our association have been working with the non government organizations, the NGOS, and have had direct contact with the Canadian government over the last two years in regards to the aboriginal rights and land claims of the native people of Canada.

And we came to Vancouver hoping that this dialogue would continue and it would be met with a genuine sincere effort on their part to bring our position clear to the other delegations. We've found that this isn't so, that the Canadian delegation in fact does not want to enter into a dialogue regarding aboriginal rights and it was for this reason that we hoped that we could have a dialogue tonight perhaps here at the Forum with the people who are attending Habitat where we could explain what aboriginal rights is, what the indigenous land claims of the native people is.

In order to give a little background, historical background on the manner in which the native people of Canada have arrived in the year nineteen hundred and seventy-six to be in such a dispossessed human state in Canada, we have to go back to the origins of the native people in North America and the original explorers who came here and settled in Canada. And we have to look at two different worlds, we have to look at the Western European world of 1492, and we have to look at the native world of that same time. And we have to look at certain different concepts that the native people of 1492 held, and the kinds of concepts that the Western Europeans who came here, the ones that they held. We find that in the pre-Colombian times, the idea of land ownership in Western Europe was a concept in which the white man owned land and then he built a castle on it, and his habitat was not a house but was actually a fortress to defend other people from taking that land away from him, and that was the kind of idea that he had. He had ideas that he considered essential to human civilization and none of these ideas existed among native people in North America before 1492. As some examples of this we can look at what kind of a world the native people of North America lived in.

They lived in a world without the so called essentials of civilization. They lived without land ownership, without competition for personal gain, without police forces, without magistrates, without judges, without a written language, without legislated law, without or-

ganized political parties, without institutionalized religion, they lived without a concept of money, they lived without written language. And they were civilized. They were a people who had found the answers in North America to a lifestyle where they could live in a civilized social pattern without the so-called civilizing ingredients of the Greco-Roman world of the Western European man.

Now in that day, in the 1400s and 1500s the first explorers who came to North America and found the native people in such a utopian state, they took the ideas back to Western Europe, and in that day, the native person in North America was called “the noble red man,” the man who had found a type of lifestyle and a type of philosophy in regards to land, in regards to habitat, that did not encroach up his neighbours, that did not produce armies, that did not seek territory for the sake of empire building... (cont'd)

## **15. Continues with Duke Redbird**

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (15)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry, Redbird, Duke**

**Description: Duke Redbird of the Native Council of Canada presents a statement on the Aboriginal Rights of the Métis and non-Status Indians of Canada at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976. Copyright Harry Daniels Estate and Murray Hamilton.**

**Duke Redbird** cont'd: Now on that day, the great philosophers of that day in the 1700s, the Voltaires, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Sir Thomas More, all of them spoke with great philosophical flourishes about the nature of the North American native man who had discovered something that this conference here today is trying to seek the answers to. 400 years ago our people already lived in a state that was almost utopian if one were to look at it from the kinds of answers that this conference is trying to come to, the native people already had those answers.

Well, the native people were such an attractive race of people that there were those amongst the white society who decided to come and live with the native people. And the native people gave them their home. They adopted them into their societies, into their lifestyle. And children were born of this union between the Western Europeans and the natives. And those children that were born carried the genetic blueprint of the North American native and the Western European society and that union produced a group of people known as the Métis people, the half breed people, the people that the Native Council of Canada represents.

Now out of that union there grew up a type of society in the plains and other parts of Canada where people of mixed blood tried to bring the best of both worlds that they understood, that which they had learned from their fathers' world, that which came down through their mothers' world. And they created societies on the plain, and these communities and societies responded to the North American continent in the native fashion. In other words, the Indian people of North America had a covenant with the land, and still have a covenant with the land. And that covenant says that I won't try and change you for my purposes. You are my land, I'm going to change myself to suit the purposes of you, my mother the earth. That is the nature of covenant between the native and the land. And that covenant was passed on to the mixed people, the Métis people, and because we had that kind of a covenant with the land, we didn't want to own the land. We didn't want a deed on the land, we were satisfied that we could get the abundance of a benevolent nature and we could be a free and happy people in North

America living side by side with our Indian tribal brothers and also with the white society. But a hundred years ago in 1885 all that changed because the Canadian government, because some of our people had decided that we were going to create a world of our own in the West, a state of our own, a place where we could exercise sovereignty and determination over our lives, where we could introduce those good things from the Western European world and mix it with the native world. We wanted to have a government in Canada that would be an ally to the Canadian government and our people sought to have a working relationship with the Canadian government and a hundred years ago, the Canadian government under John A. MacDonald sent out a force of 900 men under General Middleton and destroyed this young new nation that was about to be born on the Western plains. Destroyed our people, destroyed it because we wanted to exercise some sovereignty over our own lives. And many of the white people remember the Battle of Culloden, when the clans gathered and the British did exactly the same thing to them, and scattered the Scottish clans. Well they scattered the Métis clans, they scattered the Métis people, a hundred years ago.

And they took our leader, Louis Riel, and they hung him as a traitor. Because he helped in a war of resistance because he wanted to see, born on this continent, a nation that had the best possible attributes of all the known political processes that were extant in that day. They hung Louis Riel, and they scattered our people, and they stole our land, and they put our children into schools.

## **16. Continues with Duke Redbird**

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (16)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry, Redbird, Duke**

**Description: Duke Redbird of the Native Council of Canada presents a statement on the Aboriginal Rights of the Metis and non-Status Indians of Canada at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976. Copyright Harry Daniels Estate and Murray Hamilton.**

**Duke Redbird** cont'd: And they took them away from the land and away from the people. And they took all our rights and they left us totally landless without a treaty, without a reserve, with nothing, and we are the forgotten people. The Métis, the Non-Status Indian people of this country, we have nothing, absolutely nothing except a desire and a will to find a place that is our own, a habitat where we can exercise our autonomy in North America and in Canada. And we have gone to the government for the last hundred years, one government after another, didn't matter whether it was the Conservatives or the Liberals, it didn't matter, one came, one went, they all said the same thing, Métis and Non-Status have no aboriginal rights, we have no land claims, we are blanketed under the umbrella of Canadian citizenship, and isn't that great thing. Isn't it a great thing, when we have no aboriginal rights, and people ask me they say what is aboriginal rights? What does it mean? Well it means simply this: that aboriginal means from the beginning and rights means truth and justice, and from the beginning in North America our people exercised truth and justice over their lives and in their lives but now today, that truth and justice that we understood has been taken away from us, because there is no truth or justice when 97% of our people, the Métis and Non-Status people in this country live under the poverty line, when 60% of the people occupying the jails in this country are Métis and Non-Status Indian people. When our children, our little Métis children who are born of unions that are known in many places as illegitimate because they happen to be a union between a white man and an Indian woman, and that little illegitimate Métis child who's a half-breed now and doesn't belong on the reserve and doesn't belong in white society, they take that little Métis

child and they stick him into the Children's Aid Society who then takes him and ships him out to any place where they can find a home for him, and some of those homes aren't very good and I can tell you because I went through it myself. I went through eight different foster homes because I was 9 months old when I was taken away by the Children's Aid Society. Out in the West we have a great scandal happening right now. Our little Métis children are being sold to the United States, rich Americans are buying the offspring of illegitimate unions between white and Indian. And people ask me well how is it that these illegitimate unions take place? And I can tell you, part of it is because of the Indian Act, part of it is because the Canadian government has produced an Indian Act that says that if an Indian woman marries a white man, she loses her Indian status. And therefore cannot go back to her home, cannot go back to her family, cannot be buried on the reserve with her people, and so rather than lose her Indian status, rather than lose the little bit of land that she's got, she prefers to live without the union of marriage under the law of the land.

Now when we talk about the aboriginal rights of Indigenous people, we have to talk a little bit about what the Canadian government, how they have responded to what we have been saying for the last hundred years. The Native Council of Canada a year ago last April went to the federal government, went to the cabinet, we asked Mr. Trudeau, we said Mr. Trudeau, do we have aboriginal rights? We think we do; is your government going to recognize our aboriginal rights? Trudeau said "it's under study. It's under consideration."

A few months went by and we wrote another letter to him. We said "is the Canadian government going to recognize the aboriginal rights of Indigenous people?"

**Mr. Trudeau** wrote back another letter and said "It's under consideration. It's a very complicated issue. We have to sort it out." In the meantime Mr. Trudeau has said that Louis Riel wasn't a traitor, that he was a great patriot and that he should be respected, but at the same time he's talking about our leader a hundred years ago, today he still refuses to recognize the aboriginal rights of Indigenous people of Canada.

And I'll just in closing because **Harry Daniels** who is here representing the Métis Association of Alberta and who is an aboriginal rights expert, much more than I am, has got a few words to say to you, but in leaving I would just like to say a few last words on Mr. Trudeau's speech when he opened the United Nations conference on Habitat, he talked about love. He said "we have to love" and in response to Mr. Trudeau's speech, I would like to recite this poem that I wrote called "**Old Woman**." It goes like this.

Old woman  
in the field bent low, immobile and still  
What thoughts tumble about  
Behind those sad black eyes  
That had not felt the moist edges and wet bodies  
Of heartbroken tears  
Since a hundred pangs of transgression  
And broken promises melted away  
With the passing years  
What language does the stream of consciousness employ  
Is it words or sounds or mists of  
Past reflections hastily snatched  
    Before the precious breath of life forsakes you entirely  
    No time now old woman

For multiplication tables and essays  
No time now for politics and religion  
No time now for polite conversation  
How close you are to the earth  
How love you bent in the lengthening shadows  
You appear to be a stone  
Upon the bare horizon  
And the bright sun of your youth  
Has faded softly behind you  
So that now the rays only reflect your image  
Across the naked desert  
And what of you  
Will you slip away from my understanding  
And stand in the darkness  
Old woman I know who you are  
I know this barren wasteland on which I stand  
Was once a forest  
And you old woman had life and beauty  
Love and energy and freedom and passion  
And chatter with the gods  
Birch trees cried here take my bark  
That you might sleep in my arms  
And the great creatures of the forest  
Dropped their fur clothing and said  
Let my warmth be your warmth  
Make a pillow for our head  
And the worlds swooped down and  
Lay their finest plumage at your feet  
And bade you wear them  
For you were their child  
Their brown golden child  
Who sang their songs  
And danced their dance  
No your eyes have no harboured tears  
But your body has carried the weight of treachery  
For others came, pale helpless souls  
And your golden arms encircled them  
And your golden heart embraced them  
And your golden mouth kissed them  
This was your youth old woman  
Bent so low  
And where are they now?  
After they cut down your beloved forest  
And slaughtered your animal brothers  
And tore the wings from your bright birds  
And ground your mountains into dust  
Did they leave you with anything at all?  
Except pain and misery and sorrow and hunger  
What thoughts have you  
    What last word before you give up your spirit  
    To eternity



Did they leave you even that?  
One thought, one word to take with you  
To the last hunting ground  
Love

(applause)

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## 17. Harry Daniels

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (17)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Harry Daniels of the Métis Association of Alberta presents a statement on the Aboriginal Rights of the Métis and non-Status Indians of Canada at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976.**

**Harry Daniels:** "My name is Harry Daniels, I'm the Director of Aboriginal Rights Research for the Métis Association of Alberta where we represent in the neighbourhood of 70,000 and Non-Status Indians depending on how fast we are born or die. I'm going to speak more in the nature of politics and the political paralysis of the Liberal government and their inability and ineffectiveness not only in contemporary society but historically as well to deal with our situation in a very objective and meaningful manner.

There's a communiqué I have with me here on the Declaration of Principles and Canada's input in terms of native people. It reads special rights, needs, aspirations of indigenous peoples must receive full consideration. That is their input on our behalf. Those are the people who are going to be our advocate.

We have asked them and given them various recommendations that we would like to see go through in Committee III in the Land section, and they have not to date written in any part of our resolutions or recommendations into their position. They haven't had a position yet. All they have been doing to my knowledge at this UN assembly is abstaining and passing a buck.

As Duke mentioned, we met the Prime Minister on April 15, 1975. We gave him our position paper on aboriginal rights as we see it. He assured us at that time that we would have a response within a month. We waited that month and further, and now it is 1976 and he is saying that we will probably have an answer before our annual assembly of all Métis and all Non-Status Indians in Canada on June 29 of this year.

Our people fought two wars of resistance in 1869-70 and 1885 for a free Indian nation in the West. And the battle cry at that time was "Nous Sommes la Nouvelle Nation!" Because we spoke French at that time, and Cree and English. We still adhere to that battle cry because we are that new nation. We are the only people who have evolved in this country to our knowledge, or that I can really say evolved here. A visible entity that we find our roots in the Indian nations here but as Duke explained, that we are the products of intermarriages.

But no one in this government, in past governments, or in the first government, the only thing they have done to deal with the aboriginal rights of Métis and Non-Status Indians as Duke has said is sent an army out to wage a war of extinction against the Métis and Non-Status Indians. We have been dispersed, and as a consequence, we are the most displaced

people in Canada, and dispossessed. We do not have a land base. In every community where I come from in Saskatchewan and Alberta that I can speak of, in the North, they are bringing in tourism. My people have lived in those towns since time immemorial; they can't remember when the first people came there. They can't own land in those towns. Yet white people from the city can come there and get title to their land and become landowners. Yet my people have to be squatters and live in 25-year leases, or permits, or miscellaneous permits to live on the land.

So that means when they incorporate those places into towns, my people will not be on the town council, they will not be on the school board, they will have nothing meaningful to do with that town or hamlet or settlement or whatever it is. Because they are not landowners and landowners alone can vote. They are squatters in their own land, as we all are. I have maintained this attitude that the rest of Canadian society are interlopers in this land and until such time as anyone deals objectively and to our satisfaction with our land rights, until then and only then will I change that attitude, and any one of you sitting out there who perpetuates and adheres to a system that does perpetuate the injustices that we as Métis and Non-Status Indians suffer, then you are just as guilty as that government even if you vote for them. Unless of course you can change it and put a different system in there and I don't know what at this time, I can't describe one that may even satisfy our needs. Unless of course it was run by us.

And the only way we can get involved in meaningful government is if we get involved at the local level which means that our aboriginal rights have to be reaffirmed—not recognized, reaffirmed. They recognized the rights of the Métis and Non-Status Indians over a hundred years ago. They passed legislation, there was orders in Council, there was dialogue between the people, Mac-Donald the first Prime Minister and his cohorts admitted it to themselves and to the public at large. And yet when they saw that the West could be exploited for farmland and it was no longer only a fur-bearing country, it was not good and not feasible for them any longer to recognize the aboriginal rights of the Métis and Non-Status Indians. For that matter, the Treaty Indians, who became Treaty Indians. So they passed legislation to supersede what had already gone on. And they have continued to do this until this date. And that is why we find ourselves in this particular situation. The only solution that we can have is to sit down with this government and hope we can change its myopic view of the whole overall situation and what we are facing.

I have to agree with Duke when he says that Trudeau, in the beginning, came here and he talked about love and we should all deal with a passionate love. Two days later he's selling nuclear arms. The only thing he loves is the bomb and destruction. We are not the only people suffering here. Don't get me wrong. This is not a crying forum, this is not a forum for me to salve our wounds or your wounds or anybody else's. If we win, poor people of this country are going to get better services. But as long as the poor people of this country, the poor whites and non-native people can look down on poor native people as something lower on the social strata, then we will never see social change.

## **18. Harry Daniels cont'd**

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (18)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Harry Daniels of the Métis Association of Alberta presents a statement on the Aboriginal Rights of the Metis and non-Status Indians of Canada at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976.**

**Harry Daniels** (cont'd): And a lot of places where we speak and we try to profess what we understand and know as being right, a lot of people say well don't look at me, I'm not doing it to you. Of course you're not, but you're helping to perpetuate the system that has been the oppressor of the native people. The community groups, the self help groups, are doing great things. And they feel strongly about us and they verbalize their support. The Canadian Labour Congress, the farmers union, but they have their own battles to take care of. Like the other day they're battling on Parliament Hill, the farmers. They threw eggs in Mr. Whelan's face. Nothing happened. Yet the native caravan went down there on an aboriginal rights issue and they called out the gendarmes and they called out the army and beat them with clubs. The postal workers broke in to the Parliament building and broke windows, manhandled guards. Nothing happened. Why? Because they have a lobby and we don't. They can afford to do those kinds of things, and the government cannot afford to stand by and do anything about it. Because these people are powerful people. If what the Labour Congress and the farmers' union and the teachers unions and the varied other unions and self help groups and community groups that they want to help us, and if we can get together and do something about this, together, we may see social change. But as a group of people who want and need our aboriginal rights.

It's inherent in every individual in this room to identify with a certain piece of geography, whether it be here in Canada or in Europe. My people came from the Highlands, we came from Bavaria, we came from Scandinavia, and they can name a town where they came from. We are the same kind of people. We can identify with those places but we do not have land tenure. I cannot see this government who is sitting over in the UN doing nothing, not only for us but for Canadian people at large, for all you sitting out there, I cannot see them being an effective force for us. They are doing nothing and will continue to do nothing unless people here get together on issues and deal with issues. We can verbalize all we want.

You want me to give solutions? The only solution I can give you to our particular predicament is for this government to make a public statement and agree to, or agree to live up to international conventions of human rights that they have entered into, and recognize our aboriginal rights.

I am convinced that the only alternative we have, if they don't do that—like I spoke this afternoon at the other forum, when I say that the aboriginal rights of the Métis and Non-Status Indian people have to be recognized, I am not speaking out of empty-headedness. I mean that. Because if it doesn't happen, the frustrations that my people harbour are going to surface in a violent manner. Not that they want to, but that's the only thing that I think that we'll be able to do in the end. I have been convinced of this for ten years, yet I hope it doesn't come to that because culturally as a nation we want to remain solvent or alive. If that happens, we will be nothing. They will wipe us off the face of the earth this time. I'm also convinced that if we do not receive an intelligent answer from this government very shortly, that the only way the Métis and Non-Status Indians of this country are going to receive satisfaction is if we take the land, just move onto it, occupy it and say come and get us. That is the only way. (applause).

And I will be the first to say I will be a part of that process. I am not what you would might call an ignorant Indian, like a lot of people. I have attended your institutions, I have studied psychology and political science and law. I am not talking as a fool. I have studied all your revolutions, like the French Revolution when people were used, when the middle class was through with them they sent the sans-culottes back and the peasants back to being peasants and the army back to being army and they took over and they were the new goddamn regime. We are going to have to replace the whole social order in this country with a new one that we're going to have to come

through together, as the people of this country. We have to share this country, but first of all, and foremost, my main concern and the concerns of our people is that aboriginal rights are recognized. And I will say again if they aren't recognized...

You talk about violence. I will talk about violence for one second before I close. We were at a press conference last week sometime, a week and a half ago, almost two weeks ago now. And one reporter asked us "are you going to indulge in demonstrations or violence?" Now that is silly. Of course we're going to do demonstrations, that is the right of every individual in Canada under the constitution. I supposed it is, because everybody's doing it. But the violence that we're supposed to be talking about gets shunted to the rear and put off in the wings where no one can see it. It is the death rate and the infant mortality of Indian children. The life expectancy of Indian women which is far below that of other Canadians. The jail population, 65% almost at any given time of any institution, and 50% in New Westminster in the penitentiary, are native men. At Pine Grove in Saskatchewan, the women's jail at any give time, 95-100% Indian women. The lack of adequate housing, when families of 10-12, 13-15 are living in a 2 room shack. The lack of medical facilities, dental facilities, proper education, the lack of time to be able to indulge in meaningful culture and recreation. That's violence, the denial of those social amenities to any individual in this country, that is violence. That is the violence we should be talking about.

The government sits downtown in its ivory tower and they don't only talk to us about violence, they talk to all the other union members I suppose, but that is how they skirt the issue and all the do-gooders in society and all the whatever, pick up on that. And they create dichotomies. "We can't support that group because they're going into violent action. We can't support this group.." And people are just spread apart. If we could all get together and overthrow the 3% that control the economy, then I'd gladly get into some violence.

19.

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (19)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Harry Daniels of the Métis Association of Alberta presents a statement on the Aboriginal Rights of the Metis and non-Status Indians of Canada, and questions from the floor are taken at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976. Copyright Harry Daniels Estate and Murray Hamilton.**

**Harry Daniels** cont'd: The statement that we are to make today is that statement I guess, that we are being denied one of the basic elements of human existence, the right to be able to identify with a piece of geography and not have that right encroached upon by anyone by means of violence or invasion or whatever. I hope that we don't have to fight for our country again. I sincerely hope that. But if we do, we will have to. And we will. And there's only one thing I can say to that, like I said before. It's better to die on your feet than live on your knees.

*[leaves podium; applause. Returns as MC]*

**Harry Daniels:** The face group are going to be putting on a play here. We have 10 minutes but there are no microphones, and if there is anybody who wants to ask any questions, if they could verbalize just by hollering we'd be glad to answer it, and if not, then that is equally as good. Sir?

**Older white man:** Before the white man came, in the Greek times there was natural laws that people went by, and these people, before we came here they lived by a set of those natural laws even though they weren't defined. And part of their solution might be reverting back to those natural laws, and doing research on those. Thank you

**Duke Redbird:** Further to what you're saying, we talk about the type of law that existed, brought to my mind the buffalo hunt. It was interesting that on the prairies, with the buffalo hunt and the hunters got together, and the strongest and best hunters went out and they killed the buffalo and the natural law was that the first kill from a buffalo hunt went to the aged, the elders, the widows, and the children. The first kill went to them. The second kill of the buffalo hunt went to the families and the young people. The third or last kill of the buffalo hunt, that's what the hunters ate. Now if we were running a society like that today, those amongst us who would go out and pursue our separate careers, the first kill being our wages would go to the old people, to the children, to the widows, the second amount of money we would make would go to the families, and the third amount of money would be the money that we would put in our pocket to satisfy ourselves. That's the natural law and that's the kind of law if the Métis and the native people of this country if they were running things, that's how it would be. (applause)

## 20. Questions. Harry Daniels.

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (20)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Questions from the floor are taken at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976. Copyright Harry Daniels Estate and Murray Hamilton.**

**Question:** Are you involved with AIM? (mostly inaudible)

**Harry Daniels:** Am I involved with AIM, as a direct participant? No I'm not a member of AIM but I know a lot of the AIM members and I subscribe to their philosophy and I think it's a good thing, and I think the AIM people should be quite proud of themselves over what they're doing. And that they are being used as scapegoats a lot by government saying that they are a bunch of violent people who are doing aimless things which I don't agree with at all. I have some very good friends, a good friend of mine, Ed Burnstick in Edmonton we carry on dialogues all the time about the situations, we discuss them. To this point in time I have not been actively involved but am seriously considering it at this time.

**Question from man:** do you consider yourself more moderate than AIM? Or more conservative?

**Harry Daniels:** Moderate? I don't know about more conservative, it's just that I have a different way of doing things, and I work more in more insidious ways probably than they do. When I speak, I speak as giving to people my experiences, what I know, and at this point in time I'm speaking for the Métis Association of Alberta, I'm not supposed to be saying most of what I'm saying here because they are a moderate group. But I'm saying it anyway. That's who I represent, the Métis and Non-Status Indians of Alberta.

**Harry Daniels:** We have seven minutes left, with which to get it on like Doctor John. If not, if I've totally mesmerized you by now, that if at any point in time during the remaining days of this forum, that if anyone wants to stop and have some dialogue and talk about these kinds of things, I'd be more than happy to discuss them. And probably at that time we can talk about alternatives. We are in the process of writing a declaration and of a statement of claim to various parts of Alberta. We are also involved in putting together our alternatives and to see what we want to do with that land. We have plans and we present them to government but they don't respond to us, so we are going to try it again. And like I say, I don't know what the future holds but if we keep on being rejected by the government. And if that answers any of your questions I don't know but we are actively involved right now in Alberta anyway in dealing with those types of things. And hopefully we can come to some peaceful agreement with this government or their successors, but if not Mr. Clark and his friends will probably [? can't hear phrase] with this bunch, but anyway it doesn't matter who we have there, we have to have understanding created that there is an aboriginal right, and however we get it, and arrive at it with the government, because we have to understand they are the ruling body, they are in power here, they have the guns, the ammunition, the arms to put down any serious kind of rebellion anymore, by a small group such as we, but we will arrive at some sort of resolution I hope.

**Woman:** *Question (quite inaudible) about how housing would be delivered and how Métis and Indian communities would or could participate in decision making on how that would happen*

**Harry Daniels:** The lady just asked about housing, which I mentioned before, and she asked if we wanted to be part of the planning and the building of the homes, of course we do. Anyone does. It's easy to walk into someone's place and say I'm going to build a home for you, and leave it at that.

**Comment from woman:** not getting what they want, where they want them

**Harry Daniels:** Yeah that's happening in Alberta right now, the Métis people have a program. Mr. Ron Basford who was Minister of Urban Affairs about four years ago promised us 50,000 brand new homes for Métis and Non-Status Indians. To date I think they've delivered 2000 and most of them are of an inferior design and some are trailers. And the Métis people have largely not been involved in the design of these homes or the location. And it's ludicrous to build a home for a person when they haven't got a land base. First of all, and there are certain sections of the federal Housing Act that we have to adhere to. And then Alberta Housing Corporation comes into it and says well we superseded what the Federal Housing Act says and it goes on and on, and finally there's so much red tape there, that the people, the Métis people who can get the homes are the ones who already own their land in various small communities. The ones who are squatters do not answer or satisfy the needs of the various Acts that are going to give them homes or under which they will be built, under CMHC specifications.

**Woman:** how do you spell Métis

**Harry Daniels:** Métis is M-é-t-i-s. It's a Latin derivative, it means mixed blooded in French or that's how it came down. Then you have Mestizo in Spanish, and mulatto for the black people and so on and so on.

**Duke Redbird:** This forum has to end at 7 o'clock but just before everyone goes, one question was asked, how can the public help. Well one of the things that you can do is write to Trudeau's

government, write to the newspapers, right to your members of parliament, and demand that this government reaffirm and recognize the aboriginal rights and land claims of native people of Canada. That's one thing that you can do. (applause)

I'm sorry this has to end and that the facilities aren't such that we can enter into meaningful dialogue but if we want to go outside later and talk in the middle that's fine with me but the Face Group have been schedule here by Mr. Sattersfield or whatever his name is, Satterthwaite, something like that [NOTE- it's David Satterthwaite, who brought most of the slum rights groups and housing etc. NGOs to the forum, is now in 2015 still head of IIED] and he has scheduled another group in here, so perhaps later in the week we will hold another workshop in a smaller room, if we can, and at that time maybe we can work on some meaningful resolution to come out of this workshop or out of this assembly. And hopefully before the Canadian delegation has too much input or no input into the UN Assembly. I thank you very much. (applause)

[Drums.]

**21:** *[NOTE: this is a replay of video #8, woman from Council of Women in Canada. I have gone back and filled in her remark there, as it was cut off in #8, so go to 8.]*

**Title:** Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (20)

**Subject:** Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry

**Description:** Questions from the floor are taken at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976.

[Cutting and pasting whole question/statement from Video #8:]

**Woman 3:** "Could I address questions to the speaker and make some comments please. I would like to ask our speaker if he would answer a question and I make comments first. I am a member of the National Council of Women of Canada and I would like to say on behalf of all Canadians, not just the women of Canada, that we are very, very concerned about our Indian hosts who for my part were here when my family first came about 150 years ago. I would like to say that we would like to do something to help but it's a very difficult situation as you know. But I have a suggestion and I wonder if you would comment on it. Supposing the Indians of this area would become the wealthiest landowners because of the price of land in the whole of Canada and I think when justice as done you will be the wealthiest ones in Canada an perhaps in the world. So if you had a considerable amount of money of your own, and you had a pilot project, how would you do it? Would you say well they've taken away our land and they've got Vancouver. Do like the churches do, find a place a way out and just beautiful and you set yourself up with a nice lodge and a habitat for people to come and confer and talk. Second you call your own people together and you say now look, they're showing new programs for new Canadians. *[To see this part in the video, you have to go to video #21 to pick up on the rest of this woman's comments. I'm just transcribing it here for the sake of coherence.]* We're going to have programs for our own Canadians and we're going to teach them a lot of things. We're going to teach them what it didn't show in the history books, that we have proud background. We're going to tell the stories like the Indians handed down, some of them compare to Noah and the ark, and I have some of the stories on tape, I'll give them to you, my brother has collected. Told from one generation to another and they were wonderful people in British Columbia and Canada.

They're also very artistic as we can all see around here, they were immensely proud, and it's nothing that I've done, it's something that the Indians have done as well as oth-

ers. Now when you get them together in your pilot project and your education, teach them how to look after themselves and feed themselves wholesome food. Don't go near the Safeway or all the other terrible places where processed foods. Teach them never to touch pop or anything you can buy in a can and start to grow their own little vegetable gardens and teach them how to do that. The Indians started us off with corn and a few other things. And when you've done all that and you know how to grow their garden, and they feed themselves very well, for heaven's sake come out and teach the rest of the Canadians. Because their slowly spiralling hospital costs and we're just mortgaged right out of our homes with taxes to pay for them eh? Alright and when they've done that, perhaps you would like to comment on what you think about an aquaculture programme to get back the places where they took your places where you naturally caught the oolichans or netted the salmon and say get the hell out of here. And my mother would pass out if she heard me say that, get the hell out of here, I'm going to teach my family (excuse me, getting so excited) to start fishing the way we used to do again, we can do it. Some of them are, some of them are trying to remember the way their aunts and uncles and they're trying to get back to it. It'll go a lot faster if you get a pilot project and show the rest of Canada and the world how they should be living. Will you answer my question sir? How about a pilot project and have you enough money for one piece of land in some beautiful place, I can mention a few.

**Brian Maracle:** I think perhaps, I don't want to attempt to answer that, I'll ask our panelists. Perhaps it would be fair for me to summarize that as I saw somewhere in your question wondering what the eventual settlement or perhaps what goals these people have in terms of an eventual land claim settlement. I think the Inuit people have already laid out what they see as a settlement for sharing their land with the rest of Canada. Perhaps we can ask the other two panelists their particular ideas and how they would relate to your particular ideas there. Harry or Bill?

**Woman:** maybe I can add one comment to that, if you have the pilot project and growing this garden, start up some booths so we can all buy your organic food, how's about making what you've got already now, don't be like renters and think oh it isn't much and I'm not going to be here long, make your place just fantastic, like Findhorn and show us what you're really made of. I'm with you you know.

**Brian Maracle:** Ok can I get Harry and Bill make a statement about what they see as an eventual land claims settlement and how the food production would fit into this.

**Harry Daniels:** Jesus Christ. I think you're right. Well (laughs)... um.... Anyway. That was good; you confused me completely! [he's being diplomatic in the face of what he is recognizing as patronizing in her question it seems]. (Audience laughter) I don't know what you wanted me to say. And to conclude my speech (laughs) all I can say in response to THAT is that what Indian people are saying is that there are geographical differences and people are going to have to deal with it as they see fit. And it's not for me to stand up here at any forum and hypothesize or otherwise offer any solutions because I can't speak for Caslan Colony in Alberta or the Salish band here or the Blood Indians in Alberta or the Ojibway in Ontario or the Naskapi in Quebec, I can't speak for them. I don't know what they want. But what I'm hearing over the years is just let Indians be Indians and they'll take care of the rest. I mean this garden stuff, we never planted gardens, my people! I mean we were a nomadic people on the prairies, the Cree Indians, the Plains Cree and they hunted buffalo and we can't go back to that obviously because they're in parks now and behind fences. The moose are gone. There are very few left in the bush and the deer are disappearing and there are so many laws that we can't pursue our traditional lifestyles but to be realistic, if there was a land settlement, an agreement between the Canadian government and the Indian people of Canada, I just have to say again that the people



will decide in their own geographical area what they want to do with their land. If they want to plant corn or tomatoes and stuff like that, go ahead, and the Plains Cree will sit and dream about buffalo, we'll have to live on rabbit tracks and snow I guess, but that's all you can do, is let Indian people be Indians, and they will decide what they want to do with their lives. I don't know if the Coast Indians ever planted things. See you've really confused me, I don't know what the hell I'm saying (audience laughter). I think I'm going to sit down and think about it for a while (laughs) (audience applause). I'll go buy some seeds and plant something, maybe I'll plant some humanity. (Applause)

## 22. Bill Wilson

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (22)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Questions from the floor are taken at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976.**

**Brian Maracle:** I'll call Bill Wilson up for a minute next but before I do that I've noticed two other people come in recently, Bobby Manuel who's an executive member from the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and Chief Joe Mathias from the Squamish people across the way. (applause). Bill?

**Bill Wilson:** One thing that I would like to do is return this whole thing to a very serious note. I think it's perhaps with respect to the lady, the bit of comic relief that we needed from the heavy things were happening to us to begin with but nevertheless I would hope that what we take away from here is the seriousness of the things that we were saying. And I don't mean to in any way take away from what you were saying ma'am, but I think that what we should remember, at least what I tried to say, is that the question we were talking about in regard to aboriginal rights is not the Indian people dictating to the larger population what they should do, or the larger population dictating to the Indian people what we should do, or any segment of the population dictating to any other segment of the population what he or she should do. It's a question of respecting the individual rights of every section of the population and respecting the individual and rights of every individual that makes up those sections of the population, and the real question is whether or not each one of those people is going to be allowed to express their dignity, desires, cultures and traditions in a manner that is consistent with their history and culture. Are we going to allow ourselves to fall into the trap of trying to live up to one standard, or are we going to allow ourselves the distinct luxury, are we going to fight for the luxury of having each one of us be allowed to express their own individuality. And insofar as what the Indian people want from settlement, and I certainly couldn't speak for any Indians other than myself, what I would like from the question of the land claims settlement or any other resolution of the outstanding agreements is the right for my children to be able to make a choice about how they want to live. If they want to be white people that's fine. If they want to be Indians that would be even more fine. But I want them to have that choice. And as things presently exist, Indian people do not have that choice. As things presently exist you're either an outcast or a bad copy of something that wasn't worth copying in the first place. And I would hope that as I said before, a hundred years from now your children and my children and their children's children will have the opportunity to make a choice. Given that they have different backgrounds and different cultures and different languages and they look different. But to make that choice, and that's all I would want from it. And what that means probably in economic terms and political terms is having land and resources so you can be competitive, unfortunately. Because it seems that unless you have land and resources, nobody gives a shit who you are or what you are. So probably those are the

basic ingredients of what we require from land claims in order for us to survive, and remember that. If there is one thing that I could get through to you today, if there is one thing that I would hope to get through to you today, it's a question of survival. It's a question of whether or not the Indian people whoever they may be, Salish or Kwakiutl or Cree or Métis or anybody, it's a question of whether or not a hundred years from now they're going to survive. And that's the issue to bring it back to a more serious note. Thank you. (applause)

**Brian Maracle:** Microphone 3?

**Man from audience (long hair long beard):** "I'm David Harper. I don't represent any organization. I understand you have, what you feel is grievance toward land claims, but I'd like to narrow things down, bring it to a point. The Indian that I know, is a child of mother earth. Is a child of the father that is the great spirit. That Indian, I am. I don't care what colour your skin is, whether it's yellow, red, black or white, we are brothers, we're on Planet Earth, and this habitat ["habitent'?] can be a place where the dissemination of true ideas can come out to the people who have an open mind. Those of you that do have an open mind, wanna hear the truth. You wanna hear something that is revolutionary, you wanna hear something that is true, and will change radically and bring the final answer to the destiny of humanity. At the same time, there is restrictions in the form and the way we have of disseminating these ideas. And there are people that are bound to those restrictions and don't with to have the ideas revealed. Those of you that do have an open mind are going to hear and see something that you cannot imagine to show you the indivisible unity of all life, to reveal to you what you truly are as the image of the great spirit, and therefore the son of god, and therefore the daughter of god. All throughout the universe we have many planets, many systems, but as the ancients proclaimed many thousands of years ago and still proclaim throughout history up to this present day, earth, mother earth, is the centre of the universe. Mother Earth has a name, you have a name, you were born with a name, Mother Earth has a name, her name is All. Our father has a name, if you look up in the heavens you will see a sun, the great light, you will see a moon, the great dark, one without beginning, without end, and Mother Earth, the father and the mother are one, there is going to be revealed to mankind out of this conference what 'habitent' really is, it really is where you live. You live in that body of yours and there is a secret of that body, it is an idea, which Adam was, which you are. (Audience member yells out "what's your question?" to applause) The question is this Mother Earth doesn't have any regard for money, for land claims, neither does the Great Spirit. The question is, are you going to be a child of Mother Earth, or are you going to grab land and try to make money and say it's mine, and therefore perpetuate the evil that persists on Mother Earth at this time. There's been warning, prophets have said it, it's been written about, Mother Earth is going to shake off that system. Mother Earth is going to shake the buildings, the pollution, all fo the things that are detestable to the Great Spirit and to Mother Earth off. The question is are you going to stop claiming, are you going to receive the idea of what you are that will show how to dwell in your body forever, in an eternal body and how to live in a cooperative manner with Mother Earth and with the Great Spirit that is within you, that is your Governor, that's your government within you, speak to that one within you.

**Brian Maracle:** OK thank you. I don't think that's a question that needs any expertise to answer. I think that's something that we can all answer within ourselves.

## 23. Questions from the floor etc.

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (24)**  
**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Questions from the floor are taken at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976.**

**Brian Maracle** cont'd: Is there another speaker or questioner? Sir?

**Man:** I like what I've heard so far today from the representatives for the Indian chiefs. I'm just a hippie and I have a lot of problems figuring out how I'm going to relate to the world. And I don't think it's any different Indian or white.

Brian Maracle. Thank you. Sir at no. 6?

**Man, First Nations man from Manitoba:** I'd like to shed more light on the lady who asked the question. If you look back quite a number of years ago, somewhere about a hundred and twenty years ago, an Indian prophet, a chief, a great chief got up to his people and he said this earth is going to be flooded by another race of people, and when it's overrun with another race of people they are going to invent something that's going to destroy them or destroy the resource that's within it. And pollute and do whatever it does. It's going to have four wheels and you go all over the country today you see that. The cry of that lady is the same thing that the chief said. When that happens there will not longer be any resource for them wheels to turn. It's then that the Indian will lead the people in how to live in harmony with Mother Earth like that gentleman is so desperately trying to put across. And I think that's what the lady was asking for. The Indian people had said that over a hundred and twenty years ago, that we would begin to lead this society who'd desperately needing leadership into the way the world is going to go. And I think that prophet has said that many many many years ago. And how we do it, it's like Mr. Daniels said, I've known Mr. Daniels for quite a while and that's the first time I've ever heard him stuck for words. But I think in sitting down with the Indian elders and everybody else we are going to learn to live in harmony and we are going to give directions on how this earth is going to be lived in Canada here. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

**Brian Maracle:** Mic #4

**Man:** "Mr. Chairman, with regards to the follow up action on the decision taken by the Canadian NGO conference and the plenary meeting a couple months ago with regards to aboriginal rights, I'd like to ask the panelists if there's somebody on the panel right now that is coordinating the follow up action, and if there isn't somebody coordinating the follow up action, I'd like to suggest Mr. Daniel's name for that sort of task.

**Brian Maracle:** A follow up to this particular meeting here?

**Man:** No, the woman down there asked Mr. Daniels a question with regards to what can the forum do in terms of getting the whole issue of aboriginal rights brought up at the conference, and Mr. Daniels indicated to her very clearly that the Canadian NGO plenary conference a couple of months ago put together a position on aboriginal rights which they presented to the government, which the government has taken very lightly, and at this point in time there's the opportunity and the need for this forum to coordinate follow up action on that decision that was made back a couple months ago, and I was wondering if there's a panelist or somebody from your delegation that is presently coordinating that type of work. If not I suggest Mr. Daniels coordinate that type of work.

**Brian Maracle.** I understand that Fred Jobin is a member of the Non-governmental Organization committee that has an input into the official proceedings downtown and in

conjunction with this I've been handed a resolution that has been written by the Inuit people, Mr. Amagoalik, on behalf of the Inuit Tapirisat, there is a resolution here that they would like to see passed by this body here which if it is passed will be passed along to the official, through the non-governmental organization to the official deliberations downtown at the Habitat for the delegates from across the world to vote on. And it's been worked on by the speakers here today and it reads:

'Be it resolved that we the participants at the Aboriginal Land Claims Workshop held May 29 at Habitat Forum do support the land claims position papers presented by the Inuit and native nations of Canada, to the people's governments of Canada both provincially and federally. Be it further resolved that we support the request of the Native Council of Canada and their submission to the federal government of Canada for the recognition of their aboriginal rights.'

That is the suggested resolution that's been asked by some people that it gain recognition from this group here so that it can be debated downtown in the official proceedings. That possibly may be a follow-up from what you were suggesting at that microphone there.

(To audience member at microphone:) Would you like to speak on that?

**Woman from Australia:** Yes I don't know whether this forum is involved purely in aboriginal land rights and claims in Canada. I'm from Australia. In November last year we had what amounts to a coup d'état in Australia and one of the first people to suffer and who have suffered most extensively are the Australian aboriginals who during the three previous years to November got some teeth into a national organization which in effect had no real power but it was the starting of some sort of definition of their own destiny. That has lost its teeth altogether now and at the moment in the north of Australia, uranium has been discovered in aboriginal areas and the new federal government has suggested that it will not interfere with any aboriginal claims and rights until there's been complete discussion with the aboriginal people. However the mining companies have already brought in all their mining equipment and have laid out their plans for a very extensive bench mine on areas which are regarded as sacred and traditional hunting areas of the Australian aboriginal. I could go on and discuss mortality rates and non-status about the Australian aboriginal, but what I would like is simply to draw to this forum's attention the situation of the Australian aboriginal and ask that it be included in submissions or representations to the United Nations body asking not just that the Canadian government but the Australian government to look very closely at the implementation of its policy for fear that it will be simply a gesture as it has been for the last one hundred years in Australia.

**Brian Maracle:** Thank you. Those people who may be interested in that particular topic are welcome to come to a session tomorrow dealing with land claims and it'll be sponsored by the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, and the members of the Black Congress from Australia are members of the World Council. That'll take place at 1 o'clock tomorrow at Hangar 6 and any resolutions dealing with matters of that nature I imagine would be coming up at that time.  
(cont'd)

#### **24. Questions from the floor; miscellaneous**

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (24)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Questions from the floor are taken at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976.**

**Brian Maracle:** In the meantime I'm told that we must begin to start winding things up here, another reminder that the film that the Inuit people have brought will be shown in about ten minutes someplace in that general corner of the building. And it's an hour's film on the Inuit of Pond Inlet. Fred would you like to make a statement?

**Fred Jobin:** My name is Fred Jobin, I'm the Secretary-Treasurer with the Native Council of Canada. I'd like to answer the gentleman's question on how we would participate in the NGOs. The Canadian NGOs which we're involved with are meeting on Monday at the Wesley United Church downtown and at that time we will be presenting a resolution on aboriginal rights to the Canadian NGOs and then on Tuesday night we will be meeting with the official Canadian delegation and we will be presenting it to them then. If this does not work and no more commitment comes from the Canadian government on our aboriginal rights re: affirmation of it, we will be asking other countries to bring this whole question to the floor of what is happening downtown. Thank you.

**Brian Maracle:** Sir, microphone 3.

**Man:** "Yes, two years ago the Indians in B.C. were stopping the highways, stopping traffic on the highways trying to bring attention to their problems. And at the end of the summer I heard something to do with they were going to not accept any more government funds. And I was just wondering if they carried this out and if any other Indians have stopped accepting any government funds.

**Brian Maracle:** Just a brief answer, in April of '75 last year at Chilliwack the Union of BC Indian Chiefs did reject government funding. A month later the BC Association of Non-Status Indians did. The Union met recently two weeks ago in Courtenay and I think that decision has been reversed. The Non-Status organization has yet to meet on that particular question.

Yes ma'am? Number 6 (Pointing to audience member.)

**Woman:** Mr. Wilson mentioned that it was a matter of survival. And I have been with a small study group that is concerned that we people of Canada not just let things slip by and the survival or lack of survival be our fault and we have been watching the Berger Commission. One of the books that I read in connection with this is that book "This Land Is Not For Sale" and there was a chapter about the situation in Manitoba where the Indians did not get a fair settlement. I don't know whether it's something the people can comment on here. But another chapter of that book mentioned that we needed to watch Northern British Columbia. And right now the whole matter of Northern British Columbia is going to come up again, and this brings it right to our doorstep. Could anyone tell me what kind of attitudes or give some advice on that particular application of being aware of the whole practical matters of survival.

**Brian Maracle:** I'll leave that open to the group. The information that the lady was talking about, I think there are books and I think that particular book is on sale at the Hangar 8 Friendship Centre booth as well as other land claims material. Sir at #4?

**Man:** Thank you. My name is Roy Douglas. I think that because of the shortage of time at this meeting perhaps it would be well to formally move that the resolution as read, be considered and voted on perhaps and I'd like to move that that resolution be considered now.

**Brian Maracle:** Thank you, Roy Douglas. We have someone who'd like to move that resolution that I just read regarding the aboriginal rights and land claims that have

been submitted to federal and provincial governments. Would there be a seconder for that?

**Woman:** I'll second that.

**Brian Maracle:** Yes ma'am your name?

**Woman:** Linda Rogers.

**Brian Maracle:** Linda Rogers, thank you.

**Man:** Mr. Chairman this forum here is not acceptable to that kind of resolution going. I think we have to carry it a step further. You've got to do it in a process and way where our associations are handling it at this particular time. We have a forum and we're taking it step by step and if we jump the gun on that kind of resolution, I know the support is here, there's no question about that because the people are here they are interested in it. But I think we have people who have put it in a proper form in a channel and it has to go, in order to get it to the proper place and put it on the floor. And I would appreciate it if you would let us go through that process. That's the reason why I came all the way from Manitoba here to give assistance to my colleagues to make sure that it goes through the proper channels. Thank you.

25.

**Title: Habitat Forum: Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims (25)**

**Subject: Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, Daniels, Harry**

**Description: Questions from the floor are taken and closing remarks are given at the Habitat Forum on Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims, British Columbia, 1976. Copyright Harry Daniels Estate and Murray Hamilton.**

**Brian Maracle:** Thank you. Yes, sir?

**Man:** I would be pleased to withdraw the motion if perhaps the gentleman could tell us more about the nature of the process he has in mind.

**Brian Maracle:** Yes I think Fred would be able to tell you what the native people have planned.

**Fred Jobin:** Well I can't speak for all native people in Canada. I can speak on behalf of the Native Council of Canada which represents the Métis and Non-Status Indians. Our president, Gloria George, is involved in the official Canadian delegation. She is one of the advisors. Our Vice-President is involved in the monitoring of the conference, one of the monitoring task teams which has been set up. I myself am involved in the NGO Canadian group, plus on the post-Habitat committee. Mr. Harry Daniels is also involved with the NGOs. So what we are attempting to do is use that process which has been set up even though we don't agree with it. However, if all our efforts here are unsuccessful, and the Canadian government fails to reaffirm our aboriginal rights, and we understand the decision is going to cabinet next week, then I would see other methods we have to take. And these are methods I cannot divulge. These are private internal things, but you know I appreciate the support of all the people here. We support the Inuit land claims, we support the Status Indians and their claims. But what I am saying is this forum is not the proper place. However we will come back to this forum after the next few days and inform the people here what exactly come out of our deliberations with the NGOs and at the official forum.

**Brian Maracle:** I've been asked to remind people here that this is a no smoking area, we've got a wonderful facility here of all wood and flammable materials and I'd probably start by asking the people that was just at the microphone to extinguish your cigarettes please.

The UBCIC film, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs film *The Land Is The Culture* will be shown immediately after the Inuits' film and I understand the Inuit film is just about kicking off now in that general direction of the building. It's an hour's film. The Union's film is about 28-30 minute long. Any other questions? Yes Ma'am?

**Woman:** Yes I would like to make a statement on behalf of Native Women's Association of Canada as President that we feel too that we have just met with the standing committee on Indian Affairs in Ottawa on the 25th, we feel it's very important to support the aboriginal land claims but we also want recognition of the status of native women and I would like to quote what we had said. "We are upset that the government is giving consideration to the establishment of a federal human rights commission which will specifically exclude grievances of native women. We understand further that Canada signed and ratified the international covenants on human rights and that this Act will allow Canadians to have legal recourse to justice in areas affecting political, civic, economic and social and cultural rights. In this light we would like to see the government's international actions translated into domestic policies to alleviate the double standard of treatment of native women. As it stands Indian women have no guaranteed Indian rights and no avenue with which to address their grievances." Thank you.

**Brian Maracle:** Thank you. Any other speakers, comments? Turn up the heat! Turn off the rain! If there are no other questions I guess we will conclude this session today and we will remind you that the World Council of Indigenous Peoples will hold a land claims workshop tomorrow at 1 o'clock in Hangar 6 and thank you for coming out to the session this afternoon, especially in this terrible weather.

**[Ends at 4:50; musical interlude plays until 6:13]**