

**Council of Yukon First Nations**  
**Special General Assembly**  
**Constitutional Summit Process**  
 CYFN Administration Building  
 Whitehorse, Yukon Territory  
 March 8 to 10, 2005  
 Summary Minutes

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**Attendance:** ( There were many people in attendance not listed here.)

Grand Chief Ed Schultz, Council of Yukon First Nations  
 George Henry, Chair for the Special General Assembly  
 Victoria Fred, Co-Chair for the Special General Assembly  
 Elder Roddy Blackjack  
 Elder Percy Henry  
 Chief Angela Demit, White River First Nation  
 Chief Bob Dickson, Kluane First Nation  
 Chief Darren Taylor, Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in  
 Chief Eric Morris, Teslin Tlingit Council  
 Chief Eddie Skookum, Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation  
 Chief Steven Buyck, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun  
 Chief Lucy McGinty, Selkirk First Nation  
 Chief Joe Linklater, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation  
 Chief Mark Wedge, Carcross Tagish First Nation  
 Chief Ruth Massie, Ta’an Kwäch’an Council  
 President Fred Carmichael, Gwich’in Tribal Council  
 A/Chief Lesley McDiarmid, Kwanlin Dün First Nation  
 Chief James Allen, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations

Councillor David Dickson, Liard First Nation  
 Richard Sidney, Chair of the Constitutional Commission  
 Judy Gingell, Commissioner  
 Ken Kane, Commissioner  
 Norma Kassi, Commissioner  
 CJ Marian Sheldon, Commissioner  
 Agnes Mills, Commissioner  
 Bob Charlie, Commissioner  
 John Burdek, Commissioner  
 Paul Birckel, Commissioner  
 Tiffany Smith, Commissioner  
 Brandon Kyikavichik, Commissioner  
 Dave Joe, Technical Working Group  
 Daryn Leas, Technical Working Group  
 Rick O'Brien, Vice Chief AFN, Yukon Region  
 Jerry Geddes, Sergeant at Arms  
 Roberta Yeomans, Executive Assistant to the Grand Chief  
 Denise Beattie, Manager Constitutional Summit Office  
 Bill Barrett Jr.  
 Joyce Smarch  
 Darla Lindstrom  
 George Shepherd  
 Robert Wally  
 Matt Thom  
 Sam Johnston  
 Gwen Wally  
 Peter Johnston  
 Emma Shorty  
 Georgina Sydney  
 Paddy Jim  
 Melanie Douville  
 Alfred Chief  
 Mike Seguin  
 Frances Woolsey  
 Nicole Kuster  
 Harold Chambers  
 Tosh Southwick  
 Pauline Sias  
 Robin Bradasch  
 Kluane Martin  
 Patt Delaney  
 Kathy Van Bibber  
 Doris Anderson  
 Shadelle Chambers  
 Ronald Bill  
 Johnnie Smith  
 Allan Taylor  
 Steven Shorty  
 Jessie Dawson  
 Doreen Olson  
 Bruce Taylor  
 Jenny Christianson  
 Clara Van Bibber  
 Elizabeth Warville  
 Richard Olson  
 Norman Snowshoe  
 Johnny Kay  
 Peter Ross  
 Melba Mitchell  
 Roger Kyikavichik  
 Greg Charlie  
 Tracy Bruce  
 Renee Frost  
 Jessie Barrett  
 Stanley Jack  
 Charles Eikland Sr.  
 May Brodhagen  
 Ronald Bill  
 Danny Joe  
 Sharon Sims  
 Carmen Baker  
 Audrey Baker  
 Johnny Sam  
 Terry Billy  
 Shwandna McAully  
 Clyde Blackjack  
 Albert Genier  
 Robert Hager  
 Albert Peter  
 Mary Battaja  
 Tookie Mercredi, Camera  
 Graham Tracy, Sound  
 Gail Gallagher, AFN, Ottawa  
 Wendell Nicholas, AFN, Ottawa  
 Eric Fairclough, MLA  
 Roxanne Livingstone, CHON FM  
 Chuck Hendrie, CHON FM

## **Day 1 – Tuesday, March 8, 2005.**

Meeting came to order at 9:25 am. Opening prayer and a Tagish Kwan song was presented by Johnnie Smith. Nicole Kuster sang a welcome song.

*Binders covered in black felt with red felt cut-out's of the wolf and crow design were available to all delegates. Included inside was the agenda, rules of order and a variety of documents relevant to the Special General Assembly.*

### **1. Welcoming Remarks**

GEORGE HENRY as the Chair, welcomed everyone to the Special General Assembly (GA).

JESSIE DAWSON welcomed everyone to the traditional territory of Kwanlin Dün First Nation. The issues up for discussion were very important she said.

RUTH MASSIE welcomed everyone to the Ta'an Kwäch'an traditional territory. Constitutional renewal had been discussed for many years and it was good to see a GA held in that regard she said. She thanked all those First Nations that were involved at the community level.

ED SCHULTZ welcomed everyone to the GA. He referred everyone to the small white booklet titled Together Today For Our Children Tomorrow, by the Yukon Indian People, dated January 1973. He noted page 38 which outlined what had taken place regarding settlement years 1 and 2. If we were to live the essence of this document we would enjoy an ability to ensure that our issues are always at the forefront. Everyone is reorganizing themselves to strengthen their positions. There are many things on the horizon, and I've devoted all my time to try to find ways to ensure we work together. I believe that we have a moral responsibility to our children to do what is right. This is not about money. I've heard the many opinions, there is not one solid reason why we can't do some of this stuff. There has to be a level of trust among each other, like in times past. You have the opportunity to set a precedent to give other First Nations hope, others are excited for you. You are the best people I've ever had the privilege to know he said. The Grand Chief introduced the Chair, George Henry and Co-Chair, Victoria Fred.

GEORGE HENRY said it was pleasant to see the beautiful binders with the wolf and crow emblems so prominently displayed.

### **2. Agenda Review and Rules of Order**

VICTORIA FRED read out loud the agenda and Rules of Order as included in the binders.

DAVID DICKSON said he was concerned about voting, and majority votes. If a First Nation is outnumbered by a majority vote, I see a problem.

GEORGE HENRY said in these proceedings we will work by consensus, so no vote would be necessary.

JOE LINKLATER said discussions may come down to a vote.

ED SCHULTZ said the Rules of Order had been accepted in 2001. After some continued discussion the following motion came forward;

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Motion 1.    | To accept the agenda and rules of order as presented. |
| Moved by:    | Chief Eric Morris                                     |
| Seconded by: | Darla Lindstrom                                       |
| Passed by:   | consensus   |

*Break.*

### **3. Chiefs' Opening Remarks and Introduction of Delegates**

CHIEF MARK WEDGE introduced his delegation.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS introduced the Elder Sam Johnston.

ELDER SAM JOHNSTON thanked the Ta'an Kwäch'än and Kwanlin Dün First Nation for allowing the gathering on their traditional territory. He spoke in his native tongue, welcoming all delegates.

ELDER MATT THOM said he was happy to be involved in the discussions. Many Elders had passed on, and many new faces were in attendance.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS introduced his delegates, saying he was looking forward to the next few days.

CHIEF RUTH MASSIE said they too were hopeful for good discussion to take place. She introduced her delegation.

CHIEF BOB DICKSON welcomed everyone, thanked the Ta'an Kwäch'än and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and introduced his delegation.

CHIEF JAMES ALLEN welcomed everyone, thanked the Ta'an Kwäch'än and Kwanlin Dün First Nation for allowing the gathering on their traditional territory. It was important to show respect and listen to each other. He welcomed the members from the Gwich'in Tribal Council, and introduced his delegation.

COUNCILLOR JESSIE DAWSON introduced the delegates from Kwanlin Dün First Nation.

CHIEF DARREN TAYLOR introduced his delegates. He thanked Ta'an Kwäch'än and Kwanlin Dün First Nation for allowing the gathering on their land, and introduced his delegates. He looked forward to some good dialogue he said.

PRESIDENT FRED CARMICHAEL introduced his fellow delegates. They were very honoured to be a part of the discussions he said. We are all one people, and we must all unite.

CHIEF JOE LINKLATER said he was happy to be in attendance and to be having these discussions. What all this means is very important, it must take place in a respectful way. For that reason it's important to allow the media in, so those citizens in the communities can hear what we say. He welcomed everyone and introduced his delegates.

CHIEF ANGELA DEMIT welcomed everyone. She introduced her delegation, saying we must unite. Although not self governing, we still need the assistance and unity of other First Nations she said.

COUNCILLOR DAVID DICKSON said he was happy to be in attendance, and wanted to publicly assure the Kaska people that he would do nothing until full consultation had taken place at the community level. He acknowledged everyone in the room.

CHIEF LUCY MCGINTY said they were honoured to be in attendance to discuss the future of CYFN. These next days are very important for us all, and it's good to see people here that have originated from 1973, I look forward to hearing from them also. I thank Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council for allowing us on their traditional territory. She introduced her delegation.

CHIEF EDDIE SKOOKUM introduced his delegation. Without our language and continuation of our traditional activities we will lose our culture he said. He encouraged good dialogue and freedom of expression for everyone.

ELDER ROBERT HAGER spoke on behalf of the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. He introduced the delegates. He thanked Ta'an Kwäch'än and Kwanlin Dün First Nation for allowing the gathering on their traditional territory. We are here to discuss the constitution and we are grateful, and we have a clear message from our people he said.

ELDER MARY BATAJA spoke in the native tongue. She was happy to be in attendance.

CHIEF JAMES ALLEN said he wanted to acknowledge International Women's Day. We need to recognize that women played a strong role in where we are today, in our culture women have always been honoured and respected for their roles.

ELDER RODDY BLACKJACK said he saw everyone in the room as one people. All the young people around the table need to know where they come from and who they are. If we are going to change the constitution, we must ensure we are strong enough to stand on our own feet. All the rights to the land and water have to be enforced by our self government. I feel strong when I look around and see all the First Nations.

ELDER PERCY HENRY spoke about the need for a renewed constitution. He spoke about the importance of the Elders in all the deliberations that were planned for the next few days.

#### **4. Introduction of the Constitutional Summit Commissioners**

RICHARD SIDNEY as the Chair of the Constitutional Commission acknowledged everyone and introduced the Commissioners and staff as follows:

- John Burdek
- Norma Kassi
- CJ Marian Sheldon
- Paul Birckel
- Agnes Mills
- Tiffany Smith
- Bob Charlie
- Judy Gingell
- Ken Kane
- Dave Joe
- Daryn Leas
- Denise Beattie
- Brandon Kyikavichik

He referred everyone to the booklets within the binders titled, Constitutional Commission, Council of Yukon First Nations Final Report and Recommendations Volume 1, and Constitutional Commission, Council of Yukon First Nations Background Papers Volume 2.

*Lunch break.*

GEORGE HENRY said copies of Percy Henry's submission to the Commission titled The Voice Of An Elder, was available to all delegates.

#### **5. Video Presentation**

RICHARD SIDNEY said the video was a summary of the discussions and presentations received from the communities. He thanked Tookie Mercredi for the excellent job done in compiling the video. It is based on our history and some of the footage is excellent, it gives the context of the work we've done over the past six months. The video titled Forward Into The Past...Constitutional Summit was shown to the GA. Based on the information received by the Commission, the final report and recommendations had come forward and are stated in the booklet Constitutional Commission, Council of Yukon First Nations, Final Report and Recommendations, Volume 1 he said. Our history with other governments is not positive, we look at the impacts, the highway, residential schools, Indian Act, and we ask ourselves are we at a better place. Through discussions at the community level we heard about educational issues, at Yukon College we had over 100 students participating, and the message was clear. At that same meeting we heard a young girl speak about the experiences they'd had as a family, where government was intending to take her sister into care. We were asked, what do we do. Communities said agreements were based on empowering First Nations at the community level, and they wanted to maintain control. During this process it was clear that work still needed to be done. We find ourselves as a Commission, struggling with the issue of bringing forward a report with recommendations that would support the wishes of the communities. During the last six months our mandate was questioned, we only listened to the communities and only recorded

what we heard. As part of the Final Report, we go back to the original first leaders that spoke to our rights. He referred everyone to the Final Report booklet and read out loud from it.

## **6. Review of the Final Report and Recommendations**

DAVE JOE referred everyone to the booklet and provided an overview of issues as follows:

- Introduction
- History of First Nation constitutional development and evolution in the Yukon
- Work of the Constitutional Commission
- Community hearings
- Constitutional options and models

*Break.*

TIFFANY SMITH handed out a document titled Submission to the Grand Chief and Constitutional Summit Commission of the Council of Yukon First Nations by Rick O'Brien, Regional Chief, Yukon Territory to the Assembly of First Nations, February 17, 2005-draft. It was for information purposes only she said.

DAVE JOE continued his review of the Final Report and Recommendations booklet.

JOE LINKLATER said in light of all the testimony heard throughout the Yukon, in terms of a central body, had they looked at the current constitution and how it addresses those concerns. From all I've heard our current constitution does well in meeting our needs. We have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on cooperative governance, and why would we shift authority around in this room, when there's more authority out there. I don't understand why these options have not been included in this final report. These are real functioning documents. The cost of establishing a fourth order of government is also a concern. We hardly have enough resources to implement our self government agreements, and now we are asked to establish another order of government.

RICHARD SIDNEY said option 1 (in the Final Report) was maintaining the status quo. CYFN as currently structured was established under the Societies Act and was not a true government. We heard that First Nations want a central government that would allow Leadership to come together. We don't want to compete with other First Nations in regards to their operating budgets. It was felt that with a re-focussed CYFN, we would be more efficient and effective.

JOE LINKLATER said I understand the status quo was looked at, but my understanding was that we would look at the current constitution and what we could do with it, and modify it. Now we have a new constitution and a sharing agreement. How can we simply expand the current constitution to accommodate these changes he asked.

RICHARD SIDNEY said we built on what was there. As part of the discussions in the communities, there was strong emphasis on advocacy, representation and exercising the authority and power and jurisdiction of self governing First Nations. As part of our discussions

tomorrow we will review our current constitution. We were following directions received by the communities in determining our recommendations. What we have provided here is essentially what we heard. Tomorrow we hope to clarify further.

GEORGE HENRY said in the GA Resolution dated September 16, 2004, the GA instructed a process be undertaken for a new regional body.

DAVID DICKSON said how can you share with the Kaska. Do we first have to sign off in order to participate he asked. We have a lot of natural resources in our territory.

RICHARD SIDNEY said there are no preconditions to participating in a sharing accord. We would like to see the fundamental concept of sharing discussed among all First Nations. We had to establish a process where all First Nations could be supported, that's how the concept of the Sharing Accord came forward. We want to assist with establishing capacity within First Nations. Tomorrow we will discuss the issues further and hopefully provide clarity.

JOE LINKLATER expressed a variety of concerns, saying he was surprised to see a fully drafted sharing accord included in the binder. There is still a lot of confusion regarding the sharing concept. Self governing First Nations and non self governing First Nations would contribute in differing ways he said.

RICHARD SIDNEY said the newly drafted constitution outlines what we've heard the First Nations envision as a central authority. This process is not designed to take power away from First Nations, only that everyone operate collectively. Paramouncy and associated issues would be further discussed tomorrow he said.

JAMES ALLEN said at this point, he too was concerned. He hoped to resolve the issues so as to move on to the next step. It appears the Commission went beyond the scope of what we envisioned. During discussions we were concerned there were entities being formed, such as the Self Government Secretariat and CYFN, and there was no coordination between the two. We thought the constitution would look at things from that point of view. It appears there is now thought about a fourth level of government. We are not clear as to what it means to share powers. We have passed laws on our traditional lands and we are unsure of how that would fit. The sharing accord has been added without our understanding of the issues.

DAVE JOE read aloud GA Resolution 411/04 as included in the binders. He referred everyone to tab 2 in the binders which held GA Resolution 410/04 and 411/04 as well as the Constitutional Technical Working Group Terms of Reference.

JAMES ALLEN said he had asked what the costs of this would be at the last Leadership meeting.

RICHARD SIDNEY said included in the binders under tab 5, a Draft Implementation Plan for the Constitution and Related Undertakings of the Northern Nations Council was included. He read aloud from that document. We are proposing gaining separate funding to establish a central organization.

ERIC MORRIS thanked the Commission for their reports. They had done a good job in presenting options to the GA he said. In some cases there seems to be a separation of what was heard from the community and what was heard from the Leadership. Delegation of authority entails a process where you empower a central authority. Part of what we will do here is essentially debate issues and discuss what we perceive things to be he said.

MARK WEDGE thanked Percy Henry for his written submission. We must continue to look forward, we have to be equal in every way. He expressed his appreciation for the work of the Commission.

GEORGE HENRY tabled the document titled The Voice of an Elder written by Percy Henry.

Closing prayer said by Mary Battaja. Meeting adjourned at 5:25 pm.

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### **Day 2 – Wednesday, March 9, 2005.**

Meeting came to order at 9:40 am. Opening prayer said by Ronald Bill. Paddy Jim performed a welcoming song for the GA.

ED SCHULTZ said he was pleased to see the dialogue that had taken place yesterday. They had tried to get a fix on the scope and width of the recommendations. If you take a close look at the existing constitution and what is being proposed before you, there is really no substantive change. Right now it's like a blank cheque. I would prefer the new draft because there are clear rules on how CYFN would use that delegation of authority. There has been confusion regarding the sharing accord and other things. They are proposed as things to consider, not necessarily to approve. It is necessary that we strengthen our constitution. Right now you haven't given instructions, you said you could delegate but there are no instructions as to how to exercise that delegation. For example regarding the gun law, CYFN under the current constitution couldn't do anything. We came up with a bill, but we're not sourced, we don't have a power base. Your choice here is to stay as a society or else enact a new entity. Between today and tomorrow we must have some firm decisions on the constitution, how we strengthen our position as a people. The other documents can wait for a later time. I was a youth when all this started, but it's not a new idea, we've been talking forever, so let's demonstrate to our youth that we will do it. There is an Elders Council now, but the Elders deserve more which is included in the new constitution. Recommendation is that we not compete with other organizations for funding. Our source of funding for CYFN comes from Ottawa. If we didn't get that money, someone else would get it but communities wouldn't, because it's only for organizations. We need a solid constitution so that when negotiating for funding we have the needed clout, a solid framework is needed in order to negotiate with. Nothing in this will take away anything from the people. We work representing the people, fighting for what's right. There is nothing wrong with organizing ourselves. The message of the Chiefs is maximize our dollars. We have an opportunity. We have to get through these three days with a firm decision. Some say we go too fast, I was 7 when this started and I'm 42 today, that seems like a long time. Over 30 years ago you said you would

do this, as a people. I can't imagine the patience of our Elders, sitting through hundreds of meetings. Every effort is being made so that you have a clear understanding of what is being proposed. You don't have to marry the sharing accord or other documents to the constitutional changes. The existing constitution does need some collaboration, we are not changing things, other than the source of that constitution, and I encourage you to look at that. I hope you have a good session today said the Grand Chief.

## **7. The Voice of an Elder**

VICTORIA FRED read out loud the document titled The Voice of an Elder, Presented by Percy Henry, January 2005, Dawson City, Yukon Territory, Canada. It is re-typed as follows:

### **The Voice of an Elder**

*Hello and welcome to you all my relations and nations, for we are all a Nation of First Nations. I would have walked away from all these land claims negotiations a long time ago. However, my good friends Elijah Smith and Harry Allen both travelled separately to entrust me with a message. They said, if anything is not seen right or said right with the UFA or any land claim negotiations, you, Percy, carry the message of how the Elders would have wanted it. Within a couple of days of my seeing each of them, they passed away.*

*I have seen and met a lot of very good people over 35 years or so, through participation in executive Elder committees all over Canada, in political negotiations all over USA and Canada, and going through many First Nation communities where I am witness to similar problems and lifestyles.*

*I have seen many people of all cultures come and do good work to understand our ways and needs, and yet our ways are all but gone. Instead, First Nations are still being told 'how to' and 'what should our needs be' from Euro-government systems. Even our own people seem to have forgotten who, when, where, why or what First Nation people once were.*

*Before anything else, I want to apologize if I make anyone feel bad. This is not my purpose. My purpose and my responsibility at this time in my life are to be an Elder and to teach. To speak up and to share truth as an Elder/teacher sees it. An Elder does not speak from opinions or theories but from personal experiences. When an Elder uses passed-down knowledge, it is based on fact. It is what is certain after centuries of trial and error, for one mistake on the land is fatal.*

*I still travel to communities and attend Board meetings today. What I see tells me the Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA) has done nothing to protect the future of First Nations' unique way of life, or any other Nations' future. In every country, every people was given a unique way of life to take care of; it's a 'responsibility'. For thousands of years, we have taken care of the unique way of life given to us, and that unique way has taken care of our people. This is one of the many reasons I am alive and stand before you, and you are alive to teach the teachings, and one day we could all be one with all the elements Mother Earth provides.*

*The many different cultures that have lived in the Yukon have always tried to help each other. There has never been a war here between the people of the land and the Euro-Canadians. Perhaps when we signed the UFA we believed we were still helping each other. Some of us still believed in trusting each other the way we did when we first traded with the Russians, or when we meet way off in the bush in Wintertime, 'here, we'll share some tea and meat. Thank you, see you again friend.'*

*After 35 years, an Elder sees we did not understand the UFA. Most Elders can't read or write, so they are left trusting the hired help. First Nation Leadership tables themselves still don't clearly understand the impact of the UFA. Regardless, we signed the UFA. We walked into yet another den with no light, no weapon and all the children leading, telling them, 'it's for your future'.*

*Yukon First Nations signed the UFA so our children would have a better life, sharing and 'being part of' with all Euro-Canadians. We understood all the First Nation people would have a voice. Instead, we continue to have Euro-Canadian policies forced upon us. We were told we would live under our own laws, but in fact, we continue to be subject to Euro-Canadian laws and policies. Some of us don't see this is happening, and some of us don't understand why. Much has never been explained to the First Nation public. After 35 years, it is clear to me that the First Nation people don't know what's happening, and don't have a voice. The changes that result do not secure a better future for our children.*

*There are some major reasons for this:*

*Through the many changes the UFA has brought, we have let go of our sacred duty to the land, animals, water, and air that protected and fed us since time began. We have always clearly known we are only borrowing the land from future generations, because they have to use it too. Maybe the UFA and governments have overlooked the fact that these responsibilities are ours – eg. (Quote from the UFA) "Minister has final say". Later I will discuss this business of who really has final say. What matters is that whoever is making decisions for our children is not using traditional law. They are not being responsible to the land, water and air.*

*We can't discuss the UFA without some history. In 1984 the government couldn't get consent about the Yukon Land Claims Agreement In Principle (AIP) from all First Nations at once. There was also other unfinished business most of us did not know. Between 1973 and 1984 the Federal Government made us promises. For example, Trudeau said that the hunting and fishing rights of the First Nations would be entrenched in the Canadian Constitution. We thought this had happened when the Constitution was revised in 1984. Today, we see First Nation people being charged right and left for hunting. So we see this promise was not kept. This is one example of unfinished business. Much of what I have to say will be about unfinished business.*

*So when the AIP didn't work out, the government came back creating the UFA, which is really a mirror of the AIP. We should have all paid attention to the unfinished business before going into a new stage of negotiations, but everyone was busy hurrying up.*

*In their greed to hurry us up, the government targeted individual communities within the UFA. This is how the UFA divided us. It encouraged us to fight with each other over land, wealth, and power. My father travelled freely throughout the Yukon, Alaska and the NWT. He shared his knowledge and his food and respected the traditional landmarks of each territory. Once our peoples were united by our unique way of life. Today, they fight between communities over things that belong to the next generation. When our grandchildren's relatives are busy fighting each other, who is caring for the little ones' needs?*

*Not only has the UFA set one community against another, it has divided individual communities. This is because we are all confused about the meaning of the UFA in our day-to-day lives, let alone the future. For some of us it means a big paycheque, for some of us it's 'family comes first'. For some of us it means trying to protect and hold onto a family trapline. Even if we are working that trapline, the UFA says anyone can stake it for minerals, even minerals 'unknown'. While we are trying to understand the English, the government was thinking years ahead, although not for the future children! To some, the UFA means governing ourselves again, the unique way we did back when we used Mother Nature as the main energy source to life. But I will talk later about how this idea of self-government has gone wrong.*

*Within our communities, the UFA has also caused trouble between the status and non-status. In a signed First Nation, our non-status relatives share the same benefits as our status relatives. We were told we would be able to negotiate for their names to bring in dollars to our governments. But this has not happened. The names of our status relatives have to bring in dollars for all of us. There is confusion between the definition of 'beneficiaries' and 'members'. These classifications stand in the way of us being united.*

*We vote people into leadership and expect change for the better, but it doesn't happen. We speak up at public meetings, or through Boards and Committees, such as the Renewable Resource Council, and it seems no one listens. We were told during the Land Claims that we would be heard. We were told we would have say about changes to that 92% of the Yukon that we lost, although we didn't understand we were losing it either. Instead, it is*

government policies that have say. Not just over the 92%, but also over the 8% of Yukon land left over for the First Nations. That 8% isn't even divided equally among us. If these people who make decisions are really working for us, how come everything is so confusing?

Recently, the Minister had six months public discussion on captivity of wildlife. He only pretended to consult with us. He held in-camera meetings where he didn't even pretend. Elders shared hundreds of years of knowledge and law of the land with him. They said 'don't government know, wild animals go to all people. Animals feed everyone'. The caribou, like us, have many responsibilities. They can't meet them when they are in captivity. The law of the land, to First Nation people, will always be Mother Nature. It is the only land law that will work here. The Euro-Canadians have their WalMart and Super Store. They have their universities and libraries. This land is our store, our university and our church.

We were also told during Land Claim negotiations that we would be part of all the new development and share everything. We believed this because of our traditional way of life, everyone shared responsibility for decisions. This is why Elders negotiated for 40% of the federal and territorial workforce in the Yukon to be made up of First Nations people. These people were supposed to learn skills and then return to our communities and First Nation government to help us. Now that there have been a few First Nations that signed the UFA, where is the return of those workers to assist us? While we wait, we still believe that these people will come and help us, for it is part of our way of life to live with hope.

So, it seems no one listens to the First Nations people. Direction does not come from them. Often it doesn't come from our Leadership either. Leadership only brings home the message. Why does our Leadership not challenge the extinguishments clause, gun law, Child Act etc. For example, the gun law. Maybe in big cities they have problems with guns, however, First Nations people in the Yukon still have close encounters with grizzly bears and angry moose. We need our guns. A long time ago we traded over 100 furs for a kettle or a knife, how much more did we trade for a gun? We have given up a lot to own a gun! Just because we do not have much fur left to trade cheaply, we are asked to give up the land and resources for \$2.40 an acre, to the will of a Euro-government system. Instead of getting cheap furs from us, they're getting cheap land. The real value of what they get from us is not defined until it has been taken away from us and someone else wants it. We see clearly. We see that for 160 years the way the Euro-Canadian government and its allies have dealt with us has not changed much. This is an indirect message Leadership brings us when we pass on other messages, and we notice direction is not really coming from them.

If direction is not coming from First Nations people or First Nation Leadership, who is it coming from? Direction is coming from a hidden group of men and women who do not care about human rights, or Christian or spiritual law, or how to respect the air, water and earth to which we own our lives. These hidden men and women don't acknowledge our responsibilities as First Nations people to our inherent rights. These men and women are the ones who create agenda for people in elected positions. They make up a caucus table with the power to control elected people. The Minister just carries the message. An appointed privy council or equivalent often leads their caucus table. First, they hold a meeting among themselves. They get the elected representatives sworn in and signing a code of ethics, a document passed in-house. The public, not paid employees, should approve it. Eventually, the Ministers meet with the First Nation Leadership, who in turn have already signed an oath of confidentiality. All First Nations members who do not have a conflict of interest should also approve this document. Both the Ministers and Leadership now become vehicles for the caucus tables. We never see minutes of the meetings they have with our Leadership, do such minutes exist?

Often, we hear that the government is consulting on an issue with the stakeholders. These are usually individuals or groups who will win or lose something from a decision. They might be outfitters or oil companies, or companies that can make money from building a railway. Their opinions seem more important than ours.

Let me ask you, who are the real stakeholders in this country? Think of the total of taxpayer dollars the citizens put to this country. It goes to all the salaries and services of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. It goes to all those land claims PSTAs. It goes to the highways and the ferries and the Prime Minister's salary. How can the dollar value of a supposed stakeholder be more than this?

*So, when the First Nation people meet with governments, when we speak our names and our hearts and try to share our knowledge, it is already too late. Those men and women have been there before we even knew what was happening. They have already talked to the Ministers, the Chiefs and all the in-house caucus tables. Everything has already been decided. The steps to reaching decisions are hidden like steps in dirty water. Yet in the world our Elders lived in, it was a responsibility to have everything shown and explained to everyone.*

*Why does our Leadership let itself be walked over by other governments? Why are they not challenging the Canadian Constitution and other documents that are put in place without approval of all cultures living in Canada today. Because, it seems to an Elder, today's governments, even our own, have one thought that lights their way, it guides the constitutions and policies that are supposed to make life better for our children. That thought is economic development. Well, economic development is like a battery lamp, it's going to burn out. And here again, the First Nations people have been wrong. In our hope and trust, we believed our neighbours and relatives focussed on developing constitutions and policies for the solidarity of the First Nation people and for the body, mind and spirit of our children. Even when we recognized the need for economic development, we thought we could be heard through the UFA. But, as an example, the UFA clearly does not recognize First Nations rights or title to the land, nor to the water and air. The lands you settled for can be staked by outsiders for resources, or taken away by the government to put in a road or bridge you don't want.*

*Despite all this, we still want to share, as we have always done whenever we had a chance. We want to share, using the traditional law that has protected this land and its resources for thousands of years. Thousands of years! That's how good that law is! But we have lost our voice over 92% of the land, and our laws cannot even be applied throughout our traditional territories. The 'applications of general law' will override whatever law a First Nation develops.*

*Looking back on the Elders' knowledge, it is clear there was plenty of good food, air and water 160 years ago, before first encounter by Euro-Canadians. Today everything is dirty, dirty everywhere. And so as an Elder and grandfather with many years of experience, I ask you, are we, the First Nations, proud to be walked all over by other governments who do not share our values? If there is a time that governments need to be listening to the knowledge we want to share to help everyone, it is now, in 2005. Long ago the First Nations and the governments had communications problems and two very different ways of life. Today we all can speak the same language, English, yet the First Nation people are still unheard, by all governments.*

*But if no one else will listen to us, we can at least listen to each other, the way our Elders visioned it. We need to develop our own constitution and policies from our own people, with Elders taking the lead. We need a Yukon-wide Elders Council and the people of all First Nations in order to do this. We need to do this without theories or opinions from in-house representatives who do not receive direction from the First Nation people. This idea of a CYFN constitution I will come back to later. First I will talk more about CYFN and the UFA! Our mistakes will show us a way to a better constitution.*

*This Elder has watched every inch of the way from the beginning, and remembers why CYI was first put in place. Its purpose was to get the best for the protection of future generations. Not just future generations of First Nations, but future generations of animals and plants. That way we would always have clean water, air and good food. Back then the Elders instructed us to negotiate for these things.*

*Today First Nation people wonder, has CYFN been so well taught by the federal and territorial governments that it puts all the hard work of the Elders, such as 'Together Today For Our Children Tomorrow' on a shelf alongside the 'citizen plus' document and forgets about it? The Elders created a work plan for us. How many checkmarks can we put to those tasks? Is it CYFN's way to name things after these Elders while burying these Elders' dreams? May an Elder remind you of their dreams! They were always of one people, one way, and one law – to the one that created everything. The Elders' dreams were for all two legged who walk on Mother Earth, guided by the forever eyes of Father Sky, growing from the energy of Grandfather Sun, and protected by Grandmother Moon during the darkness of night. The Elders' dreams were for our people to be able to continue the hard but sacred work of protecting the air, water and earth. The air, water and earth give us our lives and make up our bodies, in the same way these elements did for all our ancestors. The Elders clearly knew there were many generations and nations yet to come.*

*What kind of governments have the First Nations become that we pay lawyers and young heritage officers good money, but forget the Elders who have shared seventy or eighty years of survival lessons with us? If they are lucky, the Elders who are left received small honorariums and a quick thank you in their language. It is as though saying 'Mahsi Cho' or 'Gunalschish' can make up for all the times we haven't listened to our Elders and for all the wisdom we have ignored. Everything that the Elders always wanted is documented somewhere, in an attic or a basement, so research it! Use it! It was left for us! The Elders who are still with us should be properly compensated for all their past efforts. In particular, the Elders who worked towards land claims between 1973 and 1984, were promised compensation back then, but have never received it. This is more unfinished business! Even if some of these Elders have passed on, their families or communities should be compensated for these Elders' hard work.*

*First Nation people do not see that CYFN has done its job. First Nation people feel that selling 92% of the Yukon for \$2.40 an acre, and all the resources with it, was not getting the best for First Nation people. The highest wealth in today's world is land, and that's what we have responsibility to. An Elder asks you, was it even ours to sell? And now that the land and resources are gone, we can no longer live up to our responsibility of protecting what keeps us.*

*First Nation people are powerless as we watch the land, animals and elements being abused. The Euro-government systems which bought the land for so little, and block our voice, do not know how to take care of the land. They are not humble enough to see this. They think they can invent a new land law through government policy. They want resources without the responsibilities that go with them. They are always in a rush. We see them stumble over their bootlaces. We Elders hear plants and animals crying today like children in a bad residential school. We can't help no matter how hard we try.*

*Has CYFN done its job when 'cede, release and surrender' of all First Nations peoples' rights as First Nation people was written in the UFA?*

*Was 'cede release and surrender' ever explained in full to the Nation of First Nations before they signed? Extinguishing the First Nation rights and title in 1993 affected the individual rights of all status First Nations individuals in the Yukon.*

*Did CYFN remember that Trudeau promised he would take our hunting and fishing rights and entrench them in the Canadian Constitution.*

*Where is the ongoing education on the UFA for the Yukon First Nation people, and the non First Nations who live with it?*

*Do First Nations ever see an honest discussion about the UFA among the First Nations who are thinking of signing? Or are their leaders instructed what to tell their members and threatened with the holding back of promised funds if they disagree?*

*Where can the voice that disagrees speak out instead of whispering in fear?*

*How can First Nations, as a people, agree to a child, who knows nothing of governments, being used on the radio in a paid advertisement for the Land Claims 'yes' vote?*

*What place has CYFN made for Yukon First Nation people who refuse to 'cede, release and surrender' their rights, who don't want pretend power, and who do not agree with the UFA? In First Nations' unique way of life, there was always room for everyone, as long as we gave a simple thanks and showed respect for everything, preserving all for next generations.*

*Today, even the federal and territorial governments have a structure that lets people of different backgrounds bring forth opposing opinions for public debate. But where is this opportunity in CYFN, or even at the community level?*

*What has gone wrong can still teach us. So now an Elder wants to talk about changes to the CYFN Constitution. We need these changes to protect our people and our values. And if this new constitution is going to do this, it needs to be able to stand up in a court of Canadian law.*

*We need three things for a good constitution. We need direction from the people in the communities. We need traditional law through the Elders. We need recognition as a people under the Canadian Constitution.*

*If the people in the communities are going to be part of this, they need to be educated about the purpose of a constitution. They need to be educated about what CYFN does, or could do.*

*If we are going to protect our unique way of life, the CYFN Constitution needs to include traditional law. And if we are to overcome the divisions the UFA has created, we need to have one constitution for all of us.*

*As an Elder, something else is just as important, if not more so. That is justice/truth. This is where we should be putting our efforts. To create good justice with strict principles and mandates. The best justice would come from a Justice Committee made of two Elders from each community, elected Yukon-wide. Those Elders need to have knowledge about the land claim negotiations from beginning to present. This Elders' table would have the authority to remove the Grand Chief or any elected or appointed high seat if they break First Nation responsibilities to traditional laws. They would have the authority to call for a re-election if the Grand Chief is removed. This Elders Justice Committee table would create its own terms of reference, and have the power to enforce the constitution and policies that would represent all First Nations, Yukon-wide. One constitution, one set of polices concerning people, animals, plants and the environment, all confined to traditional laws, without any third party interference.*

*We need to really look at Together Today For Our Children Tomorrow for guidance. We need to re-address the UFA with traditional law values. We need our Leadership to lobby for a First Nation seat in the Yukon Government to provide a public opposition voice on our behalf. We need an opposition voice within CYFN to ensure opposing First Nations voices are heard among us. We need an ombudsman, or a native ambassador. Every culture today in Canada has someone to make sure of cultural identity and rights. Where is there one for First Nations? If the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) plays this role, it does little on behalf of First Nations in the Yukon. Perhaps its hands are tied also.*

*The world as we know it today is full of choices – people can't make vegetarians eat meat or vice versa. So why do all our Yukon First Nation people have to swallow the UFA, a document that is an economic religion, not a spiritual one?*

*Clearly the UFA is a confession that First Nations do have rights and titles to all land, water and resources, why else would we be asked to 'cede, release and surrender' as stated in the UFA? Knowing the First Nations are the first people here, and are the true keepers of the land, is one of the other reasons First Nations should re-address the whole UFA. This document is being used to tell us what to do, not to work with us. This is 'dictation over a nation'.*

*The Elders Council should direct the First Nation Leadership to rework the document Together Today For Our Children Tomorrow. The Leadership needs to take it again through the Euro-government systems, and take on the responsibilities the document talks about, nation to nation.*

*We may not agree with how we have been treated by Euro-government systems, but there is no reason First Nation governments and Leaderships should become like them.*

*It is not our responsibility to our children to learn to live with our environment and each other once again, instead of managing over everything? Animal farms, fish farms, tree farms, and First Nations in a corridor do not represent our values. We must not get caught in a no-win situation. We need to remember the words of past Elders, 'we will never be able to eat minerals or drink gas or oil'. The hunt for today's minerals, gas and oil is destroying our food, our water, our air, and our unity – all in our children's name. When there is no food, no water, no good air, and no unity left, the First Nation children will turn against us because we did not speak the truth. Because we destroyed what we said we would protect.*

*To define the UFA as protection for the future of any children is false, especially when the UFA no longer represents an umbrella. The Elders laid down guidelines for what we were to negotiate. We need to revisit their document. We need to be transparent about this to our people, even if it takes a long time.*

*I know what you have heard is more than one can handle. However, Elders do see, and what Elders see is not good for any nations' future. While some of our people have more wealth today, who can say that our spirits are strong, or that we care for each other the way we used to?*

*Elijah said, "Do not let my dream die until they are equal in every way, nation to nation". This Elder brings a message that is a gift from generations of brother and sisters of all nations, come together today, for tomorrow is too late. Let's all put aside our differences and put a purpose to our todays. Let's stop being busy and start achieving results. Otherwise, clearly, there is no tomorrow for our children. Let's make every day today.*

*May the four winds guide us all.*

*Signed Percy Henry, January 2005, Dawson City, Yukon Territory*

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*Break.*

GEORGE HENRY said Judy Gingell, Brenda Chambers, and Bertha Allen were all recipients of the Aboriginal Achievement Award for 2005. He announced the banquet and entertainment scheduled at the Gold Rush Inn beginning at 6:30 – 8:00 pm later that evening.

### **8. Presentation of the Draft Constitution**

DAVE JOE provided an overview of the document titled The Northern Nations Council, March 2005, Draft Constitution of the Northern Nations Council which was included in the binders. He said three documents would be reviewed, the newly drafted Constitution, the old CYFN Constitution dated August 1995, and the booklet titled Constitutional Commission Council of Yukon First Nations, Background Papers, Volume 2. It was displayed through a Power Point presentation on the overhead screen as well.

Regarding 5.1 if you join and sign the document and demonstrate that your people support the document, then you don't have to delegate any law making power you have. He referred everyone to the booklet Volume 2 on page 75, option C, which had been brought forward by Mark Eikland. He then referred everyone to page 82 and page 83 in Volume 2 which outlined issues pertaining to Chapter 3,4, and 5. First Nations have a lot of law making capacity within their agreements he said. He referred everyone to page 85, and read aloud the list beginning with 13.1 and down. Those without self government agreements have powers as listed on page 81.

Regarding 5.2, we agree with Mark Eikland in terms of this paper. He continued reading out loud from the document. Under 5.4 we have not defined the term conflict, and we assume it's what you've currently agreed upon. You've defined it as an operating incompatibility he said.

Regarding Article 10, Article 12, Article 14, Article 17, Article 20, Article 21, they are all new. He referred everyone to the handout titled Legislative Structure, a schematic outlining how the new Northern Nations Council would fit into the Canadian Constitution Act 1982.

*Lunch break.*

### **9. Round Table Discussions Regarding The Draft Constitution**

GEORGE HENRY requested feedback from the GA regarding the draft constitution, then we can continue with questions and answers he said.

MARK WEDGE said we need the ability to exercise legislative authority, and we, as not finalized, see the application of using our laws. We are not participants, but are recognized at the Yukon Forum, but it's not quite enough. We look forward to the ability to have legislative authority and powers. When looking at the preamble, we tried to develop our laws in terms of our Family Act, to lay out that there's an under-writing, or a fundamental approach that we put into our self government agreements, that says our traditions and laws should move forward into contemporary law. We need to find a process whereby the Elders' traditional values and knowledge flows into modern law making legislative processes. We see a central authority to move forward into legislative authority, to become our own governments. There is an important need for a central authority to advance these interests, make the central authority the law of general application, we need that kind of thinking, that's an important part of this. We look at justice issues and this document begins to lay a foundation for administering our fundamental beliefs into contemporary processes. We would like to see rights of redress for First Nations as an alternate form, if that's comfortable with our citizenship, a central body may address that. There were a lot of Commissioners involved since 1973, they've been there for the First Nations, and I have a great trust in them that they would not move us in a detrimental direction. The man and woman years of experience there, the leadership and capacity as First Nations, there's a tremendous amount of capacity. So we see we have the capacity both individually and collectively. We need to move to a different level. The Commissioners have spoken not only with the Leadership, but also the youth, women, many different groups. We feel confident that the recommendations being put forward are in the best interest of all of us as First Nations. There is no taking away of authority, you will not give anything away. Whether self governing or not, this may be the best way to move. To us there are certain things in terms of programming, not to take it away from First Nations, but there are areas and needs that a central authority could address. That's something we see as a participant to an Executive body, and we would be involved in shaping and determining legislative authorities. We have the comfort to move ahead on this, we appreciate the effort and work gone into it by the Commission.

ERIC MORRIS thanked the Commission for their findings. We are drawing on a wealth of experience he said.

EMMA SHORTY said she was nervous speaking publicly. She was taken from her mother at four and a half years, and didn't leave residential school until she was 16. The document presented by Dave Joe was a good one. You people have given me so much strength, and you have a lot of strength when you sit in a group like this. Self government is good for us. I feel very strongly about the document shown on the screen. Some of the thoughts were new to me. I'd like to see this happening, I have mixed feelings in that I feel that we should take it back to the communities to be introduced to our people before we really go ahead with it. I like what I see. As an Elder, I was not aware of this Commission, that it was happening, and I feel that Elders need to be better informed.

SAM JOHNSTON said it's appropriate for us to form our own government. We continuously ask permission for what we can do, yet we know from our ancestors we don't need anyone to make decisions for us. Let's prove we mean what we say. We want control over our land, this beautiful country of ours. A lot of education has been gained by us over these last 30 years. Around this table sit a few of us that have sat in the Legislature over there. Let's form our own party as Northern Nations here. They'll have to listen to us then. If we get in there as the official opposition, at least we could have a strong voice. Who knows, we might form the next government. Even today other governments look to First Nations for support. It's under our vote, and those back home, that get them to where they are. Why not form our own, where we can make decisions and practise our own traditional laws, our language, our health, everything would be done correctly. Percy Henry's ideas could be incorporated. If we all think about it that way, to gain control, I think we will make it. I think we will make history. It will show the rest of the world that these kinds of things can be done. We all have similar interests to protect what we have, our ancestors had that kind of control, they were the caretakers, and today there are different things we have to follow, now everything has to be written down. It's time that we show we mean business by coming forward and forming our own government.

MATT THOM said we all seem to be having difficulty with self government. We are here to do it, we don't have to wait on anybody. The Federal and Territorial Government have kept us waiting. We need to follow our traditional ways. Many times I've heard when growing up, never forget who you are. Along time ago it was predicted that we would get lost among the non native people. We would lose our way. That's almost what happened until we got self government. It's alright, respect them, but don't join with them. They have their own ways, you have your ways. It's good to carry your modern education in one hand, but hold on to your traditional ways in the other hand. Use our traditional ways.

PETER JOHNSTON said I was born a couple of months prior to the paper being delivered to Ottawa in 1973. These are my views, I don't see any pressure to do something now. It's a shame that we haven't lived up to our obligations to our people in the communities. There isn't a meeting that I've attended where Chief Angela Demit hasn't asked for our help. I find it shameful that we haven't assisted. We as self governing First Nations haven't utilized our self government to the maximum. Within Teslin Tlingit Council we have been moving forward administratively. We are proud that we are charting our course looking at our youth as well as our Elders. As young or old we need a voice in our communities. It's promising in that we have a lot of young people around this table. It's a promise that we won't be short on leadership in future generations. The more barriers we overcome, the stronger we will become. The optimism is there, our Elders show it. I worry about the cost of such a government. We struggle at TTC financially, as Tlingits we want to move forward with the changing times, that's a strength we have as a people. We are very open to sharing. Just the costs alone could affect some of the smaller First Nations. An agency like this will suck up the most talented people in our First Nations, we need them as much at home. First Nations youth populations are growing 3 to 1. Twenty years from now it will cost a lot more. I do believe CYFN has a role, and I appreciate the role it does play. I appreciate the work of the Commission. People need a chance to look at where we are going and where we have gone in past. That voice is still strong today after 30

years. I don't think it's a big loss if we don't make a decision in the next day or two. I agree to taking it back to our communities for approval by the people.

GWEN WALLY said I like Peter, understand. Both of us were children in 1973 and have been raised in the process. In recent years we became more involved. I see the pros and cons of this. From working in the Lands Department, I see benefits of giving CYFN more political clout. Presently we are being run over by the Federal and Territorial Governments. I see benefits of doing this, but I too feel apprehension for the same reasons as Peter. I believe in united we stand, divided we fall. Government has almost accomplished dividing us. We need to have a chance to talk to our people, to see if it's what our people want. I would be worried to go home and put my neck on the chopping block. We struggle in the communities with capacity. When developing our laws, I do agree that we could come together and work that way. We could use the same process we used on the UFA, do things together. I really believe we need to stand together on this. We must do our due diligence. What I see is very positive. For me to make a decision at this forum, is to get direction from my people back home. I am supportive of working together, I know it's possible.

EMMA SHORTY said education for our children, child welfare and human resources are our biggest needs. I've worked in education for a long time and I see Carmacks is in trouble. Child welfare shows they are apprehending our children like they did when I was young. It's time to take over education and child welfare, so our children will be educated in the right way. I feel very strongly about education.

GEORGINA SYDNEY said I was here when we had our first GA in the early 70's. Today I listen to you people talk about self government and I look back and see we've come a long way. We still have a ways to go, but we are self governing. I've been thinking about everything. I appreciate the work done by the Commissioners. We've given them an enormous job to do in a very short time. They brought the information back, it's up to us to look at it, we are doing it for our grandchildren's grandchildren. When sitting here, this is our parliament, our legislature. This is just a small taste of the powers we could have when enacting our own laws. This is sharing a little bit of what we have. CYFN is not another entity, it's us, we are CYFN. We are not giving them anything. We could become so powerful, we have it right in our hands. I don't say jump into it tomorrow, but we must remember those things when we make these decisions. I sit on the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and we come against other governments who have no respect or honour for our agreements. Our wildlife is depleting. There's contamination on our land. What will we leave our children's children. We have to get together and start exercising our authority. I am also involved in administration of justice within our community. Government feels they have no obligation to honour our agreement, because administration of justice was left out of our self government agreements. With a strong central First Nation government we can move it. Those are the things we have to keep in mind when doing these deliberations. All the Elders in past said It's not for me, it's for those kids coming behind. It's now up to us to carry the ball, do the job. I appreciate your time, all of you take care of yourselves.

ERIC MORRIS said we are in an important time, and we have an opportunity to take true control of our own destinies. I think back on what has occurred. The task is to take our next step with

confidence and courage. When you understand our strength, the combined wealth we have as First Nations it's unbelievable. The experience held by the Commission is unbelievable. When thinking about our people and the effort by them to work towards self reliance, independence, the courage to stand up to those that have oppressed us in past, it's amazing. Our focus is often on individuals, but we are a collective. What we are doing here today is amazing, I believe we have to take the next step with the spirituality that has sustained us to this day. We take it with gratefulness and an acknowledgement of those that helped us get to this place. When I die I'd like to leave this place knowing we've done well together. Thank you for listening to us and hearing from where we are coming.

RUTH MASSIE thanked the Commission for their hard work and dedication. You've coordinated things to make it easy to follow for this assembly. Some delegates feel overloaded with information and there is a little confusion, but I think Dave, George and others have assisted to guide this entire process. I thank Percy Henry for his document. It's a reminder as to why we started this process in the first place. Ta'an Kwäch'än Council has been self governing for three years and it hasn't been easy. We are mostly set in Whitehorse and have dealt with the Federal Government and YTG, and have experienced lack of respect shown by them regarding self government. I see the strength in a central organization. If united I see a role for CYFN. Why should we have to fight for recognition in our own homelands. We have the opportunity to empower our whole territory. Each First Nation deals with government and they stand alone, and I think if all First Nations in the Yukon and North stood behind one issue in each community, I don't think YTG would take us all on at one time. They might then listen to us. They are not treating us like partners. Do you think YTG would do that if CYFN had equal power, I don't think they would. We have ability as self governing First Nations to prevail over them with our laws in our own communities. Each First Nation has expertise, and if we shared our expertise among ourselves it would assist those First Nations lacking capacity. Each First Nation could share and a coordinated effort would ensure cost effective ways to do it. Ta'an Kwäch'än Council was the eighth First Nation to get self government. Over the years many other First Nations negotiated agreements and they saved us a lot of years at the table, those first First Nations saved us a lot by sharing. Many First Nations backed Ta'an Kwäch'än Council in the negotiation process as well. I think the time has come for First Nations to come together, empowering us all at the central level, we need that political clout, because we don't have it individually. There needs to be continued discussion and explanations given with some of the items in the constitution, but the changes need to have us come together and for us to think about these issues.

NICOLE KUSTER said I am a strong believer of unification. When looking at the draft constitution I too had a lot of questions and am hesitant on some items as well. If we were to make one roof over us all, would it be more difficult to gain consensus. Even within our own First Nation we often struggle to gain consensus. Could that set us back. I like the Youth Council being included. I ask that the Youth Council have one or more Elders included on it. I sit with an open mind and want to hear how everyone feels. I sit here with great interest in how we can become united.

BOB DICKSON said our initial response to the constitution is we agree that the First Nations need more power. In too many instances YTG has run over us. First Nations need to start

thinking about how we can sway the way government thinks. After reading the constitution, what does this mean to First Nations without agreements. How does it address those First Nations from BC and NWT, and how do we work together and have cohesive management. In the current constitution the new members are full-fledged members. What does that mean then if we are in different jurisdictions, how will it affect us. We agree with Yukon-wide elections for the Grand Chief, but how will they be funded and implemented. Currently we are funded to barely survive, and we need to continuously seek funding. Sharing of jurisdictions, those with self government agreements, those without, and those outside the Yukon. This initiative still has to go back to our First Nation. We need to present this new constitution to our membership who will either agree or come up with new ideas. Getting consensus can be difficult. I think we need to focus on everyone working together. We need to fix some of these things that have happened, make YTG and the Federal Government more accountable to our people. We can't sit here forever, we must take control and start doing something.

KLUANE MARTIN said we have to get united nationally. I have been across the country listening to our people talking about becoming self governing. Many of us are self governing and we don't get recognition from either the Federal or Territorial Governments. We must show what we can do, we are progressive in the Yukon. I think we can move ahead, let's not get lost between the shuffle. Some of us are politicians, lawyers, doctors and nurses, and we are catching up. We've just started our path, and I hope we don't lose our way again. Remember we are the minority people in Canada. Every year they bring in new people to Canada, government says we are a land of immigrants. I say we are the original people of Canada and we are special. We cannot let them take things away from us anymore. There is now an integrated pan Canadian system, there's no mention of First Nations in that. We cannot let ourselves get lost among the other people. I hope we will be the first to move ahead.

JAMES ALLEN thanked the Commission for all their work. We as Champagne and Aishihik First Nations are for unity, for having one voice in Ottawa, nationally and internationally. We believe there should be a central organization, but we are concerned with the documents as they are. If you seek funding for Northern Nations it may be confused with the Northern Nations Alliance which already exists. Regarding the judicial system proposed, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations has not yet negotiated its administration of justice, and we don't have any positions on how a central justice system would look. There's a lot of uncertainty about sharing of self government power, how it would work, and how it would affect us. There was discussion about FTAs and PSTAs, we are not certain of those impacts. We are also concerned about how much the restructure and new proposed structure would cost. You would look at an expenses for an Elders and Youth Council, as well as the new members from other First Nations that may join. I've expressed this at Leadership, this vision of empowering the central organization, may be a vision for 10 or 15 years down the road. I think our job is to look at how we reorganize ourselves to get to that vision. We are developing some bodies, our Self Government Secretariat, the Yukon Forum and the Intergovernmental Forum, and we can work to strengthen those areas. I think we have vehicles to fight government in the interim, until we do form this future strong organization. I think what these documents before us do, is they present a larger picture than what CAFN had in mind when we discussed restructure of the central organization. This will require additional consultation with our people. We are not against unity or a central

organization, but if we sign off on these documents, we are uncertain as to how it would affect us. We need more consultation at the community level.

ALLAN TAYLOR said as Kwanlin Dün First Nation, we haven't been a part of CYFN since 1995. We have an open door policy at Kwanlin Dün First Nation, willing to work with any First Nation on common goals in any department. I believe we've already had self government, our Chief and Council negotiated one on one with Canada and YTG. We used our technical people. As Kwanlin Dün First Nation we have the past and present Chief and Council who have fought so hard to get us where we are. As at April 1<sup>st</sup> of this year we will be self governing. We will be reluctant to give up any of our authorities. Once again, I thank CYFN and the Commission and other First Nations for inviting us to the table.

DARREN TAYLOR said I don't disagree with any comments made prior to my speaking. This is a chance to dialogue between us and debate and discuss things respectfully with an open mind and heart. I don't mean to offend anyone. Regarding 1973 and the document Together Today For Our Children Tomorrow, I don't dispute those words. Personally I think they accomplished their aims, they reaffirmed our rights. The meaning is still the same now, at a community level. We have the tools and powers under our own agreements to do things at the community level. I believe we do need a central organization. For us to grow and protect our lands and resources, we must do that ourselves. We have commonalities but also unique differences. The constitution reaffirms our basic collective rights that we have in each community. There is a role for a central organization. I agree with Peter Johnston and his comments. I too was one of those children, and those Elders who went before us should be applauded. We are governments in our own right. We need to be recognized as governments, we have that power in our agreements, and we simply have to implement it. If we have educational issues, we have the authority to take it down. There are commitments from governments on funding and their responsibilities, and that's what the central organization needs to do, keep them accountable. I see us re-negotiating now to get half of what we negotiated. At this time I cannot sign on to this constitution document, I'm not prepared to give up anything. Regarding the sharing accord, I don't think anyone can tell us how we share, we establish those things ourselves. I agree we have to evolve and move forward. I don't think we've given ourselves a chance to evolve. I think the old constitution has everything we need. The problem is, there are federal, territorial, and municipal governments that do not recognize us. We must ensure our voices are heard and they live up to their commitments. Leave programming at the community level, the funding coming to us directly from the Federal Government. At this point in time I can't sign on, or endorse any of this. We need to ensure our communities have a full understanding of what is here. When looking around the table I see governments, that is our task, getting that recognition. We can't have one set of rules to govern us, we can't do that when we have self governing and non self governing First Nations. What would we empower the central organization to do for us. I don't think the constitution was broken or wrong. We should have amended it to meet our immediate needs. We are always reacting to other governments. Industry wants to come in. They have to involve us. If they don't involve us, then we don't allow them on our traditional territory. Until our views and concerns are addressed at the outset, we can't invite anyone in. I feel we are presently more powerful than any other government. Our task is getting that recognition. I don't know what affect this will have on our existing structure.

*Break.*

FRED CARMICHAEL said the last two days had been very interesting. We from the delta truly admire your leadership. You are very knowledgeable on the issues, you present very good speeches. I can really feel the emotions, they are high in this room. We find ourselves in a bit of an awkward situation because we are from the NWT with our own government structures. We are proud to be a member of CYFN, regardless of what you call it. I feel we must refrain from commenting or passing an opinion on the constitution, because at your September assembly there was concern about our role. Our Chiefs made it clear we would only participate on issues that dealt with our land in the Yukon, or on overlap, and we respect your authorities. The draft constitution is your jurisdiction and I don't believe we from the delta should really comment or take a role, we believe it's entirely your responsibility. We have similar problems, struggling with self government. We are developing four community constitutions, and one constitution for the Gwich'in in the delta. There are concerns regarding our relationship with you. Our right to vote along with you is something we could review further. We wanted to come into this union so as to deal on key large issues together, because we believe as First Nations we have many common issues, and together we can stand united and make progress on that front, that was the main reason we joined CYFN. To give us the opportunity to deal on issues where our Yukon land is involved. We thank you for allowing us at the table on concerns such as the Peel River Watershed. I believe there is a need for you to have a central voice. You are a powerful group and you will set the direction. Work together for future generations, and stay united.

DOREEN OLSEN said she was the Elder from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. She thanked the Commissioners and Elders who had travelled to bring their spiritual voices to us. I have learned from the Elders. As we talk about the constitution and self government, I remember in past I had a vision, and today it's happening. There were two wheels, one was unity. We should be proud of what we have today. The wheel is coming to a stand still. As Yukon First Nations, we are taking power and control over the government. I am here to tell you that the wheel has to stop. The Creator told me this, to bring it back to our people. The wheel will stop. That means other governments cannot control you anymore. I have seen a lot. I see within my own family, cancer and more cancer. Traditional knowledge and medicine will heal us. I have learned something from every illness I've endured. We should be a proud people, we are all in unity of working, sharing and trust. Sharing what we have in our hearts. People always ask me how I'm doing, I say I'm fine, my journey's not over. Only the higher power can take me home. I thank Percy Henry and his wife for the long journey they have walked. She spoke about the loss of her grandchild, saying she only wanted healing to take place. There was a circle prayer and I saw a vision of my grandchild. When I was sick the last time I phoned from Edmonton asking them to pray for me, and they did, and I got well. As an Elder I want to share with you, I thank my Chief and Councillors for what they are doing for us and our young generation. I thank you all for listening to me.

DARREN TAYLOR asked the GA to disregard a paper which had been passed out. It did not originate with Chief and Council he said, and it should be disregarded.

ELIZABETH WARVILLE said she felt honoured to be in attendance. It seems with self government we all went our separate ways. We need to stand together to make a strong voice.

Individually we are always stopped. My father Percy Henry was one of those people who paved the way. I see the changes we have made, but we still have a long way to go. Our Elders are our vision, we should never forget that. We must remember to sit back and learn.

JOE LINKLATER said when we signed our self government agreement, our Elders warned us that people would begin arguing over money. We came to the understanding that working together made us stronger. I know my name has been dragged through the mud, but at this table I represent the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, and sometimes that means compromising for the greater good, and sometimes we go on our own. Our objective is to do what's best for our people. I harbour no bad feelings towards anyone. When we agreed to having this constitutional review, we agreed to a resolution and a mandate and that asked for a commission to go to the communities, to hear what they say and assemble a final report and implementation plan. That mandate has been satisfied with the production of this report. I believe the Constitution Commission has done its job, and now Leadership will take that report and decide how to use and implement it. It think it's presumptions to draft a document without Leadership's direction and approval. I understand this report is to provide us a clear idea of what had been said in the communities. In our present constitution, we make up CYFN, we are CYFN. This already exists, we shouldn't ask for permission to pull this one away and accept the new one. This is an organization that's a part of us. My problem is that I know and believe that we are self governing and we carry our self government with us, something handed down from our ancestors. That can't be extinguished. The tough part is having others recognize our rights to exercise our freedom to act. We can delegate these authorities to a central government, but will they be recognized or will we be frustrated again. We have issues around the delegation of authorities. In the draft constitution there are non derogation clauses, nowhere will this derogate our rights, so what do you call giving this right away, it's a small point but it emphasises a concern. If we take the final report and accept it we accept the notion of a central government, a one stop shop, an administration that exercises authority and enforcement, etc. The Federal Government would like to see us under one roof and they would only have to negotiate one agreement. The problem is that we are all different. To have one agreement forced on all First Nations would not work for Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation. We know what we want and we know how we want to approach it. The Federal Government is doing all it can to get us into a single organization so they can deal with us that way. What's the purpose of community consultations in this event. The costs for operating a central government is another concern. If this organization chooses to move to a centralized organization there will be hard issues to face. I think if we change this organization, the little money we do get may be gone. What will a central organization do for us regarding jurisdictions, there are reasons these fields are not occupied. My mandate is not to fight with government, I am told to go and cooperate with government. We have an Intergovernmental Forum and a Yukon Forum and have administrative cooperation. We share authority with the Yukon Government and we've put a lot of work into that. We remain strong and united as individual First Nations and we were able to push forward our agendas. We overlook that this organization was created by past leaders and Elders and some of those around this table. We have evolved this organization into what it is today. This is where we come together, none of this has to change. We can take this report and determine how we can make this organization something we can all share in. He thanked the Commission for their hard work with the reports. As leaders we will take it from here, that's our mandate. These reports were only tabled two weeks ago, we've not had enough time to deal with this. We

haven't even taken the final report to our Council or people. We have in our package an implementation plan with no dollar amounts included. I propose we set aside the Final Report until we are ready to deal with it. At least two Yukon First Nations are not yet self governing. We are still learning about self government. We are not ready to give it up and hand it over. I respectfully ask we set this aside, continue to discuss it, but have the time to consider and reflect upon it, and be given the time to respond properly.

GEORGE HENRY said the agenda had been accepted and amendments to the Draft Constitution was in anticipation of what you approved as part of your agenda. As Chair I did not have any preconceived notion of whether you should or should not approve the constitution.

ANGELA DEMIT Thanked the Commission. They appreciated the visit to her community. She thanked Percy Henry for his document. When I read it, it opened my eyes and heart. I ran for Chief because I wanted to represent my people in White River. I believe if we work together and stand strong together we can overcome anything. We've heard many words from the Elders. You know of our struggles in the past. We continue to want to move forward. Many people have stepped forward and offered their help. I admire and take great pride in those Elders and leaders that blazed a trail for us. Our tradition and culture is that Elders are the hierarchy of our First Nation. We must lift them up and stand behind them. We cannot take orders from other governments. Residential school days are over and we have to voice our opinions strongly. We have to oppose what is being pushed on us. I sit here to ask for your help, for all First Nations people, if we are united we can achieve much. Percy Henry said the UFA has bound the First Nations, governments don't live up to their part. Dictation by governments must stop. I see CYFN to be a benefit for First Nations. We have concerns with power and authority. Under the Indian Act they already have power over us. We get very few dollars. There is still a lot of work to be done. Chief and Council of White River First Nation wants to allow our people to see what has come forward at this GA. I have not had enough time to review it. In the video, Rose Blair Smith spoke the truth, we do approve of other First Nations moving forward and achieving their self government, but we appreciate that others know of our struggles too.

CHARLES EIKLAND SR. said he'd been around since land claims started. I was president of YANSI and worked with many from the past. I was born before the highway, and remember the building of the highway. We lived off the land and I never saw a cucumber or tomato until I was nine years old. I've been involved as Chief and Councillor. My opinion is that we need to look at how the current CYFN structure can better work for us. We need a stronger political voice in the legislative structure, send delegates to Ottawa. Get a petition that we want a Yukon First Nations political party in the Yukon. The Yukon First Nations Party should be in power. Then send a delegation to Ottawa and meet with the Prime Minister. We should have the right under the constitution as any other party. Set up a technical group of lawyers and others to help with self government issues. We have to be careful that the CYFN technical group works for us not against us. Only need a few changes in our CYFN structure. Whatever type of political party we set up it must have strong legal standing. Lawyers could assist in this important issue. Make the central body stronger and pay attention to what our Elders are saying. We hear of many instances where YTG walks over our people. We need to be across the river making a loud noise.

Closing prayer said by Peter Ross. Meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

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### **Day 3 – Thursday, March 10, 2005.**

Meeting came to order at 9:30 am. Opening prayer said by Matt Thom.

GEORGE HENRY welcomed everyone back. There were several First Nations that still needed to express their opinions he said. He welcomed Grand Chief Ed Schultz and his wife Yvonne Jack to the front of the assembly.

#### **10. Grand Chief's Address**

ED SCHULTZ said he had met with the Chiefs after the meeting yesterday and had given them his resignation as Grand Chief. I asked the Chiefs for an early release so that I could pursue another political role. My intent is to seek leadership of one of the political parties in this territory, and to become Premier of this Yukon Territory, and become a part of bringing in the opportunities. Timing couldn't be worse. I've had a public life for some time, and I believe the experiences I have gained both here and elsewhere now lend themselves to reshape the Territorial Government. It was not an easy decision for me, and I have my wife Yvonne here, and my children, who have sacrificed a lot and endured a lot of hardship. I've missed a lot of things, but this decision is supported by my wife and children. You are the greatest reflection and embodiment of human spirit that I have ever known. As a people you have persevered, with all the trials and tribulations and now here today, conceptualizing a framework of collaboration and co-governance necessary to carry you into the future. I've been honoured to have this opportunity to have this forum occur, to provide you the opportunity to debate this question, openly, honestly, and with respect. So as I put a close to this chapter in my life, I want to lend some thoughts. This is not a question of, if we should do this or not. You must. If you don't do this, someone else will, and they are the Yukon Government and the Crown. All laws of general application apply to you, your citizens and your lands, that's the reality. That means the decisions over those lands are being made in the legislature across the river. The concern that you're creating another 'Indian Affairs', doesn't concern me. You have to trust each other, you have to recognize that if you started this fight together, you should finish it together. Open honest dialogue is welcome, it's the way we've always done it, even before contact, and we shouldn't be afraid of it. One thing I will take with me is how you taught me the value of having a debate, a different opinion, and still being respectful. You must take the time. I beg you don't repeat 1995. This forum was to be opposite of that, to bring people in, not push them away. You have to stay strong. The legislature has a plan that reaches far beyond where some of us are thinking today, that's how they operate. Things in general don't happen by happenstance over there, most things are planned, it leads to empowering them, that's why a collective body for you is necessary. There is no intent in these provisions to stop you in any way. You have some big things in front of you, a rail link between Alaska and British Columbia, you have pipeline discussions. People around the world want to come and take what you have and are preparing themselves to do just that. Companies in Russia and China want to be here. The power you have is one step, the next step is finding a mechanism that works for you all, where you can strengthen your resolve and put on the table a position that the others have to adhere to, not just

consider. I've completed all the commitments I set out to do, and now it's time to turn a page and do some good work on another venue. This part of my life will be the most cherished of my memories. I will forever be grateful to you for taking a chance on me, taking a risk in me, and believing in me. I can't emphasize enough, please, think seriously about ways to get closer, find ways to facilitate everyone to get closer, and for those that are thinking about walking away, please reconsider your thoughts. None of us want to look back in our old age and say we were a part of the process of splitting everyone up. You have the heart and will. God bless you and I hope you have a successful conclusion to these proceedings.

ERIC MORRIS asked all the Tlingits to gather around him. Beautiful parting songs were sung by Chief Eric Morris, Chief Mark Wedge, and Georgina Sydney, to honour Ed Schultz and his wife Yvonne Jack.

### **11. Round Table Discussions - Continued**

DAVID DICKSON said CYFN had been formed to complete land claims. The Kaska have self governing powers, but they are not tangible on paper. When we create treaties we are moving into self government. Whether we sign a paper or not. My definition of self government is self determination. There is great pressure for the Kaska to sign off. Will this new structure help the Kaska. We have always stated the borders were not made by us and it separates us. When are we going to start challenging these parameters put around our people. In the Voice of an Elder, it's asked why don't we challenge the gun laws. Will this organization challenge these laws and the other issues in Percy's paper. Back home I hear our people say, how can we sell the land, it doesn't belong to us, we belong to it, we belong to the land. What about our languages. Our language programs are scattered. Do the various departments work together. Working in education back home, I started to learn about the programs. The political players have to make it so that the language departments work together. You can do that. Aboriginal Language Services and the Yukon Native Language Centre, do they work together? There are problems in education as well.

ALFRED CHIEF said he was happy to be in attendance and congratulated Ed Schultz in his new path.

LUCY MCGINTY said we'd like to express our gratitude to the Grand Chief for serving his term in office. We were proud to have a member serve in that capacity. As leaders we have learned a lot by working with him. He brought creativity. New ways to think about ourselves as communities and how to serve our people. She expressed her deepest thank you and wished him the best of luck. The Northern Tutchone would show their appreciation for the Grand Chief and his family when they visit the communities. I appreciate all the dialogue from yesterday around the table. People were sincere. I acknowledge Percy's report, I found his observations something for Selkirk to think about. I would like to share the report, or have Percy Henry visit Selkirk First Nation. It is quite true on how things are moving and how things are changing. We struggle to maintain and preserve our languages, especially with the youth. We are low on our fluency of language speakers and concerned about that. At this point in time, Selkirk is working diligently in gathering traditional knowledge in many areas, using the Elders and how we can apply it to our agreements in building a base for our self government. We are busy in our

community exploring ways on how to work together as a tribal council. We are beginning to understand the obligations of our agreement and how we will continue into the future. We see a need to work and come together and address the priorities we all have in education, health, and languages. We won't make it by ourselves. We believe in unity, of nation building, because we are taking the words of the people who have paved the way for us. We understand that there is a need for CYFN, but its role and mandate is unclear. We are at different stages in our agreements. These are things that need to be taken into consideration. Dialogue with the people in the communities is where we get approval and support. For Selkirk First Nation, we are working on opening communication with our people and having them involved as a government, as an assembly. We are looking at educating them so they fully understand our agreements and what is expected of us.

DANNY JOE said I think we should be thankful for where we are today, instead of feeling sad. In my day, my grandfather should have been sad, but what he did in order to survive through the hard times is, he still smiled. That means whatever he did, he was thankful for every day. I'd like to thank the CYFN Constitution Commission for their report. You have done a big job. Child welfare, education, justice, all are important. In order for us to deal with it we have to have one voice. When will that come. I try to speak with an open heart. To me, we are kind of scattered, we don't work together much. I hope one day we will become one voice. It's really important. We have many young people here watching, and I'm really impressed with the young speakers, especially Peter Johnston, keep it up, I'd like to hear more. They will carry on the next generation. The Elders are going too fast. They've finished their job. The young people should be up here, we'd like to hear from them. The Elder spoke about his involvement in the land claims process along with Elijah Smith. We need to think about global warming, the Pelly River water last year was too low, and forest fires are getting worse. We need to train our own firefighters. I want to thank the Grand Chief for all the work he has done, he's a Northern Tutchone. I want to say Ed Schultz, you are not by yourself, we will be behind you with all our prayers.

EDDIE SKOOKUM said it took me by surprise, what the Grand Chief had to say. To Ed, whatever your future endeavours, may they be good, keep a good thought. I know you have strength. Through the good times and bad times, we managed to overcome with your leadership. You are an accomplished speaker, a considerate and family man. From the Northern Tutchone perspective, we are happy to discuss a political and economic alliance with the Northern Nations. The leaders of the Northern Nations should discuss this, but we don't think we need to put together a pan northern government. The future of CYFN, the role and mandate of CYFN does not need to be renewed. We do not support changing CYFN into a pan northern government. It should be a central organization that actively supports our success as governments and should continue to assist our members who continue to seek final agreements. Look to those without self government and acknowledge them equally, at the same level. We struggled for many years to make our own decisions. We do not see power in delegating our law making powers to this proposed Northern Nations executive. Self government is self reliance, something you do on your own, it's more than just passing laws. Continue to build self government day by day, working together at the tribal and territorial level. We believe CYFN has a key role in this. We should focus on strategic priorities and issues that matter to the communities. Should maintain strong communication and open, active, honest dialogue. Ensure CYFN's activities are

transparent and consistent. Many of you and us have made important progress, but we need to strengthen how we work together. We need our Leadership and officials and community teams to work effectively together toward our shared objectives. CYFN has an important role to play in the implementation of our treaties. The Self Government Secretariat is an important resource. We all know CYFN is our organization, but the recommendations of the Commission are far reaching, and if adopted CYFN would no longer exist. The adoption of this would require a consensus of all of us. We need to look at the grass roots people. Our youth are demanding jobs. The Northern Tutchone have no boundaries among us. The land is our store. We need traditional knowledge and law on the top of every paper, include those guidelines in everything. If a First Nation wants recognition, we should start acting like a government, exercise your powers. I feel very comfortable in the mandate from my people, what their wishes are and where we have to work together. Over the last few years the Northern Tutchone have struck a number of steering committees. We always hold a one day session with our Elders, and then with the community at large. We feel the more awareness they have of what we want to do, the better. We discuss fish and wildlife management, heritage, resources, mining, zoning, access, forestry, fire management, economic opportunities, public awareness, recreation and tourism, and we try to hold open houses to make everyone aware. We have a protocol with the government on child welfare. We have a sharing accord among three First Nations. We spend a lot of time and money in trying to do what's best for us. If any First Nations want help, come to our offices, we have the documents there and in order to save others money, we have to share. It is true, we need to come together in a formal way. We must look at the powers of the Grand Chief, we know there are lots of good people that could fill that void. He thanked the Commission for all their work.

CLYDE BLACKJACK said he too was glad to be invited to the GA. In 1965 I became a Band Councillor. Over 40 years, and I'm still at the table, I still have work to do, the job is not finished yet. We must get things in order for our grandchildren. I don't want my grandchildren to go through the same difficulties we went through. He thanked the Commission for all the work they had done for the Yukon First Nations people. We can't stop now, like Danny said, we need to keep on smiling. Give yourself a good smile for what you did for your people. I've learned a lot from you people, I'm still learning today. I love you all. Ed Schultz was a very good Grand Chief, and I appreciate that, and thank him very much for everything he did. Thank you to the Commission.

STEVEN BUYCK said on behalf of the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun I welcome everyone and thank you all for the speeches. I hear it's coming from your heart. It's our organization. I thank you for the frank, open honest dialogue. No one should take any offence. What we speak are issues from within our communities. Our Elders and leaders in the negation days always said stand up and take control, be recognized as true equal partners in all decisions in your territory. Train, develop, manage and control yourselves. With that, self government came forward. The First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun always believed in unity. Sharing was the forefront of our people. Only by working together will we move forward. CYFN is us, we are a collection of First Nations people, governments and communities. Our mandate at CYFN was always to ensure that the spirit and intent of our agreements were lived up too. We need to review the mandates of CYFN, look at the objectives, have we done what we said we would do. We have always thought of CYFN as ourselves, and we need to support and help our brothers and sisters.

We must look at all the breaches in our agreements. Can communications be fixed, can we build. I thank the Constitution Commission for their findings. You have done the job well, now it is up to us, to go back to the communities, present the recommendations from the Commission, and it's up to our people to decide where we are going. It is up to us to carry out that direction. There are many outstanding issues when reading this document. I personally believe that we are moving too fast. What certainty are we providing to our citizens. We have to go back to our people. We have to look at our obligations, the enforcement side, what about disagreements. Consensus building will require a lot of work. Overall, I say our membership will have the final say, they mandated our government to go forward, so they will tell us how to proceed, and what direction to take. Whatever we do today will affect our children, our future, so I think we have to ensure we do it right, seven months is way to quick. We need to work out our issues. We've always looked forward to becoming self sufficient, self reliant and accountable and transparent to our citizens. I will take this report back to our community to deal with this. I'd like to thank our Grand Chief for his hard work, his dedication to our causes. I look forward to him getting into Yukon power, First Nations power. It will help us in the long run, his experience will help us to reach our goals and aspirations.

ROBERT HAGER said he agreed with what Chief Buyck had said. He believed in a central CYFN, something central to support the communities in what needs to be negotiated into the treaties. I believe we are a strong self government. I fought hard for self government. I give thanks for the work of past Elders like Sylvester Jack. I have been through many organizations including the Native Brotherhood and CYI. Sometimes things are not easy in the community. Self government means working hard for your community, being accountable to the community. I saw Indian Affairs come in, I saw liquor come in, I was in residential school and experienced the pain. We need to think about our children, help our young people. We are trying to put together a sharing accord for all the First Nations. We need to strengthen ourselves. While I was Chief for 32 years, my wife raised our children. I appreciate and am grateful for my wife, she was a Christian lady and was my backbone all the way through. He then acknowledged Roddy Blackjack and Percy Henry for their diligence and work on behalf of First Nations. He reminded everyone that Elders needed support when away from home. He spoke about past days and times shared with Elijah Smith. Our support is there for a central organization, but it doesn't have to be a government, it will put us back to Indian Affairs days again. Unity among the First Nations will give us strength, we just have to stand up to the government. They are afraid of us taking action. I thank all the people who have worked so hard, now they can go home and rest.

MARY BATTAJA spoke a prayer. She thanked everyone for their attendance, saying she was very happy to be seated at the table. Let us put to rest our ancestors who have blazed the trail for us she said. My spiritual work is a call to serve. It's a wonderful place to be, a servant to your people. So we need to move on and be grateful to our Elders of the past and present. Every person I have met in my workplace was very special. I was called to have prayers for a baby that did not live, and sometimes these are difficult duties, but we must do them. There is a time and place for everything that happens. I am also a survivor of residential school. She continued speaking about the past and the many Elders who had come before. At this time I thank the First Nations people for giving me this opportunity. I shall carry on the work for my people. We've lived in the past, we're in the present, and so let's move on to the future. She thanked the Grand Chief for his work for First Nations. She thanked the Commission for their work. She reminded

everyone that the youth needed their help. People need to get healthy. Let us not be discouraged. If we collectively work together to meet our goals, we can unify. I will continue to keep you all in my prayers. We cannot do things on our own power, the Creator is always there for us, a humble people are a strong people. As an Elder I wish our Grand Chief and his family well and thank him for all he's done for this organization. As first people on this land, we were always self governing. It's not always about constitutions and papers, it's also about having fun and laughing.

*Lunch break.*

RICK O'BRIEN said he had been listening over the last days. It was clear we all want unity. We talked about a central need for a central body. What does self government mean, does it stop at the community level, or does it go higher. Percy Henry is right, our hands are tied. We need to come together under one roof. We need to build on our self government agreements. The most important thing is jurisdiction, what does it mean, we need to develop a common law and build on it. Come together for a week or two and sit together to discuss the laws we want to pass. We have already delegated some authorities to the central authority. We can accommodate each other with the understanding that each community has its own issues. We know there is development happening, coal bed methane, the pipeline, drilling, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We always talk about lack of capacity and human resources at the community level. Our hands are tied because we don't have the jurisdiction to make the decisions that affect our lives. I need a forum where I can address all First Nations under one roof. As a member of Kwanlin Dün First Nation, I have always seen us as one. What do you want the central body to do. We have to demonstrate that we are pulling together with one voice. I don't believe that it will be a one window approach to consultation, it will be a first step, then take it to the community level. Does self government mean it stops with Chief and Council, or will you defer things to a central organization. He thanked the Commissioners for their hard work. He congratulated Ed Schultz on his new focus. He encouraged people to vote for aboriginal candidates when they run for public office. Our Grand Chief has the opportunity to meet with Ministers in Ottawa, sometimes financial burdens stop people from attending meetings, that's why you need a central body so you can talk with them and allow them to speak on your behalf. I've been sitting in the background listening, we need unity, a central body, but no one wants to relinquish powers. We need to come together to make a common law. Let's use our authority as a unit, make a common law and build on it.

RODDY BLACKJACK spoke about sharing. A central organization would help to protect us. If the federal government or YTG tries to infringe on us, we would have our own laws. I know that a central government would fight for us, our rights and our culture. First Nations law was the first law in the Yukon, and Elders can share that history with our young people. We need to work this out for our future generations. By getting back together it would make us a more powerful people. I feel strong for our future generations around this table today. Overlap issues need to be resolved. A central government would help in that matter. He spoke about the need for clean air and water for the next generation. Together we can make ourselves stronger for our future children and grandchildren. Self government was in existence long before the other governments. We managed our lands and animals under our self government. Child welfare is a

concern. Traditional knowledge and its use must be applied to our traditional territory. Overlap issues are a concern. We need to come together to protect our rights and culture.

PERCY HENRY said he had felt it was time to present his document. He reiterated the need for unity and one strong voice. Why are we so far apart, what are we waiting for. I ask that you all take a serious look at one another, because your future children will suffer if we don't unite. Elders have been saying the same things. We have to look at what we are doing here. A central organization needs to be in place. That's why I wrote my letter, lets take over our own land, water, and game, and make our own laws for our land. I hope Ed Schultz will help us, because we train our people here, and the government takes them away. He'll have a difficult job.

## **12. Commission Member Remarks**

AGNES MILLS said she wanted to acknowledge Wendell Nicholas from the Assembly of First Nations. When I worked for the National Indian Brotherhood, his father was vice president and we had a great opportunity. I welcome him to the Yukon. He's here on residential school business. First of all I thank the Elders Council for having confidence in me to chose me as one of the Elder spokespeople on the Commission. I thank my Chief and Council for having the confidence in asking me to sit on the Commission. To the people of Yukon, NWT and BC I thank you for giving me that opportunity and responsibility. As a young person, my mother and I moved to Aklavik for medical reasons. I am so proud to be sitting across from my Gwich'in people who helped us. I thank my fellow Commissioners. What a powerhouse. So much knowledge. Wow what a crew. I have the utmost respect and mutual understanding of these people. All the Commissioners and technical people were great. She related some of the humorous highlights from the community meetings, as well as the sad stories relayed to her by community people. She spoke about the pride the Elders had, how much they want to see unity. The Kaska and Kwanlin Dün First Nation are wanted back in the fold. I hear the youth, their cries. They know what they want, they need things in the communities specific to them. We have to hear their voices as well as the voices of the Elders. The traditional role of women and grandmothers needs to be brought back into our society. We are not asking for gender equality, but for what we had in past. I believe our present constitution is flawed, it needs more teeth. We need to have power and be at par with the Territorial and Federal Governments. When on the CYFN Health Commission I saw how they ran over us. Non Insured Health Benefits are still not adequate, we continue to have to fight for what we need. Child welfare, education, health and social issues are important and need to be dealt with right away. You have the power to come up with laws to take care of our own. Our children should never have to be put into permanent care, we should enact what we have under our agreements. Language is still a major issue. Residential school impacted many of us. We are still ridiculed because we can't speak our language, by our own people sometimes, and we are victimized all over again. I respected Sylvester Jack, he used to say they knocked that language out of him, that when he tried to relearn his language, it got stuck in his throat. I end in saying we are looking for some action, for holistic solutions to wellness and empowerment of our people. There are so many needs in our communities. I thank each one of you for allowing me to speak these things. I thank the Elders, the Leadership and the people. We are all in this together, we have to move forward, we can't stand still. We need action today. I thank Percy Henry for his paper. Thank you all for

allowing me to be a part of this historic undertaking. I hope it won't take too long to get to where we want to go.

PAUL BIRCKEL thanked the Elders Council for choosing him. He spoke about the 30 years he had spent involved in First Nations business, giving a large part of his life to it. The constitution has been evolving all this time, and this is the next step. Developing a constitution with government powers. It saddens me when people say we didn't have a mandate, we did have it through resolutions passed at the Leadership table. In communities people expressed their desire to see unity. Child welfare and education continued to come up. Grass roots people want us to come together, to have a stronger voice. People worry about giving up law making authorities, but realistically, the laws passed at the central organization are your laws, you pass them as a whole, people from each community. You are not giving anything up, you simply ask the Central organization to do what is needed. The more consistency we have in our laws, the stronger we will get. The Territorial Government is just running over us. In Dawson City we have been rejected to build the bridge, we need to change that. I thank you for having the confidence in me on this Commission.

BOB DICKSON suggested that it was important to talk with the Chiefs and make some recommendations as to what to do with the report and where to go from here. I think we need to come out of this assembly with some clear direction he said. He suggested extending the GA for another day.

JOE LINKLATER said I believe the Final Report has been tabled. I see a draft resolution, and would prefer to end this GA today at a reasonable time. We have made other commitments for tomorrow. I see on the agenda that there were other documents that were to be reviewed, they could be tabled as well.

ANGELA DEMIT said we have covered quite a few things and heard a lot of comments, and we cannot stay the extra day. People are returning to their communities.

LUCY MCGINTY said we feel the same, we also have to return tomorrow. I suggest we do as much as possible today.

EDDIE SKOOKUM said we have educational issues and student exchange activities in our community and have checked out of our hotels, and I don't think we could check back in.

DARREN TAYLOR said we have commitments tonight. I would like to wrap things up today and deal with the resolution. We've all agreed that the documents have to be reviewed at the community level. Nothing is wrong with what has been brought before us. It's an internal process. I'd like to deal with the resolution, take this back to the community and then at the next Leadership meeting have some frank discussions on how we will deal with this. This is not the end of this, it is not doom and gloom. We are still effective and efficient under the existing organization. The real issue here is the status of CYFN under the Societies Act, how can we empower this under Yukon legislation or otherwise, and those discussions should happen at the Leadership table. I want the time to share this before I make any decisions.

ERIC MORRIS said we respect the schedules of other First Nations and will do whatever is necessary to remain committed and help them. I suggest we look at our assembly in June to continue on these issues. Another matter we should address is what to do regarding a Grand Chief for the interim. We look at finishing today.

GEORGE HENRY said the consensus seems to be the meeting should end today.

JUDY GINGELL thanked the GA for allowing her to be a part of the Commission, and the communities for inviting and feeding them. What I have heard sitting here for three days is we have to be united. We need to continue to speak with one voice. We've heard that over and over. As Commissioners we felt very safe in the communities, that people could be honest with open minds, and say what they wanted to say without offending anyone. We speak from the heart. Sometimes we say things that might offend someone, but we have to say what has to be said. I've heard people ask what will a central body cost. First you have to lay out the plan, then you put the costs to it. If the cost is great, you start pulling down and deleting what you can. We heard that we need to share. At every GA sharing is brought up. Sharing and caring for each other. We heard Elders on our trips say sharing needs to be addressed. We also heard from women at the community level, they need a role at these discussions, they know health and education issues at the community level. They need a forum where they can come and address these issues. They see a central body. At one point they said if the Grand Chief is a male the Vice Chief should be a female. Those discussions took place. In the end, the women decided they would gain those positions on their own merit. It was recommended a woman's directorate be established. We heard issues from Elders and youth, youth will become active from here on. There were questions about the AFN, what is the AFN Vice Chief's role, and how do we assist him when he goes to Ottawa. We need to communicate with him so he can take our message to the national level. I remember when working on these agreements, I heard the leaders around the room say we can do this job better than Indian Affairs, if we only had that responsibility. When I was Chair at CYI, Chiefs said programs and services should be at the community level, we devolved all the programs from the central body back to the communities. Now we hear maybe some programs and services should be back at the central level. That's what we heard. You may want to think about a test case in law making. Either in child welfare or education. In doing that, you will find out what's needed and how to work together. We hear that our children are still being taken away and education is an issue. We need to do something and use a test case. I plead, don't leave this assembly without the resolution to accept this Final Report. It's all here, the Leadership will take it and deal with it and work with it. If we don't accept it, it will get lost somewhere. We've always carried things forward through resolutions. I thank you very much.

RICHARD SIDNEY thanked the GA for allowing his address. On behalf of the Commission we find ourselves in this predicament at almost every session. Tiffany Smith wanted to express her views as to what the youth had heard. That energy was very positive during deliberations. About 16 years ago we had a session at Marsh Lake where we had technicians and negotiators spend three days working together. We brought in our respected leader Elijah Smith. He listened to us for three days and when we gave him the floor he said a maximum of twenty words, including "I think you're saddling up another dead horse". The Commission never felt it was doing that. During this process I've spent many days reflecting on his words of advice. I hold you all dear to my heart, you are my friends. I thank Chief Eddie Skookum for nominating

me for this, I did the job with best intentions. We had no hidden agenda. We have heard many times from many sources that we were outside our authority. We go back and look at the instructions you provided us, to come forward with a new organization. We all embraced that responsibility. It was an amazing assignment you provided to us. We had an opportunity to look at the future, that's what we saw. As Commission members we all saw the future, that's what we saw. What we provide to you is a glimpse of that future. We've listened to women, youth, Elders and even to Tagish Elvis in Ross River. I thank each and every one of you as leaders. We never tried to politicalize the process. We are not delegates to the GA and it's with your offer to allow us to speak here, that we are allowed to speak. I've worked in many positions with you and been in the trenches with you. You all contributed an enormous amount. In future we see enormous potential. I want to thank Elders Roddy and Percy for their contribution. Tirelessly persevere with the message, unify, work together. The message from Brandon and Tiffany are that youth must be heard. Elders say their voices must be heard. How can we benefit each other, financially, on an annual basis we generate probably 70-80 million dollars a year. That's just the money from government, not development within our territories. We talk about power, you don't appreciate power until you understand power. Elders understand. They have exercised traditional forms of government for thousands of years. Some legends are over 900 years old,, that's the true form of government we talk about, that's what we owe future generations. Not what government puts on the table before us. That's the message we heard from the people. It's not us fabricating those stories. That's why we have the video. We knew you would have questions. We ask what is self government and what is CYFN, it's each and everyone of us sitting around here, that's what it is. Based on what we propose you have no requirements of providing any power to this organization, it's at your discretion. It's up to you. If you want to take over education, you decide, if you want to share it, you decide. Right now YTG is exercising that authority. I want to talk about the potential of what we provide collectively. Many nations throughout the world struggle with empowerment of people. That was the basis of negotiating final agreements. We were provided instruction we had to negotiate community based self government. We spent years fighting government to change policy. I recognize and honour your concern. If you don't exercise your authority, laws of general application automatically apply. In one community we were asked for help by an individual who had been ostracized by the Yukon Teachers Association and YTG, they were threatening to take her to court. She needed help to take the issue up and challenge government. When I accepted this challenge it required courage and foresight, people strong enough to want to move into the future, together. We as a Commission accepted that challenge. Government comes from the people, you cannot do it on a Societies Act. Government comes from the people. We hear from you that we've done our work, and it's with respect and honour that we bring these documents forward for your consideration. What do we do now. What's the next step. Some say stay as we are, there's no need to change. Other groups say, what we have is unacceptable. Through the FTA and PSTA we told government it was unacceptable. We wanted formula financing, the same arrangement that the provinces enjoy. We have provided a summary of what we heard. I want to thank each one of you for your input and I request on behalf of the Commission and that you extend our sincere gratitude to your citizens for their contributions. Everything that was done was recorded. Minutes and 55 hours of video tape of community meetings are available. So thank you. Thank you to Leadership when we met with you. I thank Elders and youth for their contribution, it was integral to what we presented. I thank the technical staff. In closing I want to say one thing, when we talk about empowering leadership and based on the constitution

we've provided, who are we empowering, the Chiefs, the youth and Elders, it's those people who will discuss laws and look at our future and its them that will bring it forward. I don't know what more we can put into it to ensure its representative of the feelings of the people. That's why we structured the Council the way it is, the Leadership will bring their power to the table. It would be nice to sit around and discuss law, child welfare, that's what we were talking about. So, we find ourselves in the same building that many of us went to school in. There's an irony to that. When we did community visits, we heard from one community that this building should be burned, an unbelievable message.

GEORGE HENRY said the AFN were holding a residential school update tomorrow at 9:30 am.

TIFFANY SMITH thanked Chief James Allen for nominating her to the Commission. She thanked everyone for being so strong at a time when it's easy to fall. Sometimes when you carry the future you trip and fall, but I'm up again thanks to the Elders and my people at Kwanlin Dün First Nation. We have to educate our youth now so that in 10 years we can give them the job. I thank everyone. I'm still learning a lot. I wish all our kids could do what I've done in my short life so far. Let's help educate our youth so that we will be ready when the time comes. I thank you Richard, you've taught me a lot. I thank you all she said.

MARK WEDGE I'd like to take this report back to my community. Then at the June GA take the community recommendations and bring them forward there. Look at where communities are at with these recommendations and adjust or modify them. We have a proposed resolution, a connection to a technical team, so that our communities can talk with them about these recommendations. At the upcoming GA we can have further discussion and see where we go from there.

### **13. General Assembly Resolutions Numbered 1 and 2**

RUTH MASSIE read aloud the draft resolution number 1. Lengthy general discussion took place around the room, with many suggested wording changes and editing notations coming forward from the delegates.

DORIS ANDERSON said the original wording for the resolution (as handed out) was adequate and clearly stated the intent. No wording changes were needed.

*Resolution 1. was revised several times during the discussions but a final version was not read out loud into the minutes. It is included here as it was finalized several days after the GA concluded.*

#### **Special General Assembly Resolution 1 – Dissolution of the Constitutional Committee**

WHEREAS:

- A. The General Assembly established the Constitutional Commission by a resolution dated September 16, 2004.
- B. The General Assembly mandated the Constitutional Commission to:
  1. operate at 'arms length' from any First Nation and the Council of Yukon First Nations.

2. travel to all member First Nation communities, hear and record input of First Nations, Elders and youth, citizens and technicians.
  3. prepare a final report and recommendations and to present its findings and recommendations to this Special General Assembly.
- C. The Constitutional Commission has fulfilled its mandate and has tabled its final report, including its findings and recommendations, to the Special General Assembly.
- D. XXX

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Special General Assembly:

1. Has reviewed the final report including its findings, draft constitution and recommendations, and requests that the Chiefs report to the June 2005 General Assembly with respect to the recommendations.
2. Directs that the Constitutional Commission be dissolved as soon as practicable.
3. Directs that any remaining surplus funding in the budget of the Constitutional Commission be disseminated to the First Nations to assist them to adequately consult with their citizens.
4. Access to technical assistance be provided from the surplus funding, if any, for follow up community discussions.

Moved by: Chief Ruth Massie  
 Seconded by: Chief Joe Linklater  
 Passed by: consensus on March 10, 2005

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TIFFANY SMITH read aloud the draft resolution number 2. General discussion took place around the room. The resolution is retyped as follows:

**Special General Assembly Resolution 2 – Youth Representatives**

WHEREAS

- We are the youth of tomorrow today.
- We as youth are committed to working to keep traditions, heritage and culture alive while we continue to learn and grow into leadership positions.
- We acknowledge that the new constitution includes the creation of a Youth Council.
- In the interim, the youth need a voice at Leadership.
- The CYFN constitution may be amended pursuant to Article 27 at any meeting of the General Assembly provided that:
  1. written notice of the intent to amend is provided to all Yukon First Nations which have joined in constituting the central government a reasonable time before the amendment is approved and adopted, unless there is unanimous consent to waive the required for notice; and
  2. the amendment is approved by not less than three-quarters of those First Nations which have joined in constituting the central government and are present.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Article 13 of the current constitution of the CYFN be amended as follows to provide that two seats be made available to youth representatives who would serve as members of the Leadership:

“(d) two youth selected by the youth representatives of each of the First Nations which have joined the central government.”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of Yukon First Nations make funds available to allow for the participation of the youth members at Leadership.

Moved by: Ed Schultz

Seconded by: Gwen Wally  
Passed by: consensus on March 10, 2005

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#### **14. Grand Chief Vacancy**

JOE LINKLATER suggested a meeting be held next week to discuss the Northern Strategy and Economic Development, and at that same time we could appoint an interim Grand Chief leading up to the summer General Assembly. It would give people time to consider running for the position. The following motion came forward;

Motion 2. That the Grand Chief vacancy be discussed by the Chiefs at the Northern Strategy meeting planned for the week of March 13th.  
Moved by: Chief Joe Linklater  
Seconded by: Chief Bob Dickson  
Passed by: consensus

ERIC MORRIS suggested Chief Joe Linklater be named Interim Grand Chief.

JOE LINKLATER said he was honoured to be considered, but had to decline. The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation are more than willing to help shoulder our share of the responsibilities of this organization, and I will help out where I can. As Chiefs, we will be able to carry this on to the summer General Assembly.

ED SCHULTZ said it was important to identify someone as soon as practicable. I beg of you to make a fast decision. I nominate Chief Eric Morris to be the Acting Grand Chief he said.

ERIC MORRIS was persuaded by words from Ed Schultz and others, and accepted to do the job for five months. Chief Eric Morris accepted the Acting Grand Chief position with no objections expressed by anyone at the assembly.

ED SCHULTZ said it's for five months, and I assure you I will spend time in preparation with you. He commended Chief Morris for his hard work and how he carried forward the tradition of his people. You emulate what a Grand Chief should be, and I'm glad you took the position, and I will do whatever I can to ensure you are fully prepared for the position.

ERIC MORRIS said it's been a long three days for us and we've had some good discussion. We have a lot of work ahead of us, we will have to work hard to bring conclusion to some of these things he said. I thank you delegates for your support, and I will do my very best to represent you.

#### **15. Closing Comments**

ACTING GRAND CHIEF ERIC MORRIS thanked the Chair, George Henry and the Co-Chair Victoria Fred for their hard work. They were given gifts of appreciation by the GA.

KATHY VAN BIBBER and DORIS ANDERSON presented gifts to the Ed Schultz and his wife Yvonne Jack, in deep gratitude and appreciation for their contributions to the Yukon First Nations people.

GEORGE HENRY presented the Youth Council with the 'cell phone interference' pot of money totalling \$55.00.

Closing prayer said by Kluane Martin. Meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

"Just Minutes" – March 16, 2005.