

Transcript of First ITC Meeting

Inuit Meeting: Minutes

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1971 Toronto Ontario

PRESENT:

Noah Qumak Sugluk, P.Q.

Jacob Oweetaluktuk Port Harrison, P.Q.

Celestino Makpah Whale Cove, N.W.T

Josiah Kadlusiak Igloodik, N.W.T.

Ipeelee Kilabuk Pangnirtung, N.W.T

Tagak E.C. Curley Edmonton, Alta.

Mary Cousins

Tagak Curley started the meeting by explaining that a letter was sent to all Community Councils, and he hoped they had received the letters which explained pretty well the nature of this meeting. Also, the reason for the delegates to come to the meeting was for the Indian Eskimo Association of Canada (I.E.A.) to learn more about their concerns; the question was raised as to whether I.E.A. should continue to try and assist the Inuit people. Tagak continued:

So for these two main reasons you are here to discuss the matters that are concerning you. The main part of the session will be up to you people to decide how you would like to have it set up, so we are open for any questions. Maybe after lunch we may know more about our agenda, so this morning we will just talk about anything you feel we should talk about and discuss. So if there is anything you wish to bring up now, you may do so.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

Will the I.E.A. Directors, Mr. Clark and Mr. Dunne, be meeting with us sometime this afternoon?

TAGAK CURLEY

We may meet with them if there are any questions that have to be answered by them. If there is anything we do not have an answer for, we will bring them in if there are questions to be raised in regards to legal matters. Or we may have them tomorrow. We could carry on without them all day until tomorrow, except that if questions are raised in regard to the British North America Act or the legal situation they will be here to come and give us a hand.

So we will just continue and see what we can bring up. Any specific questions raised by you delegates I will put down in writing and prepare them for a question period.

JOSIAH KADLUSIAK

I would like to know more about the responsibility and functioning of I.E.A.

TAGAK CURLEY

(Tagak explained when I.E.A. was formed and why it was necessary to form this association, and what it has been doing in the last few years. I.E.A. has been assisting newlyformed native organizations, but until now I.E.A. has not really been in close contact with the northern people and for this reason I.E.A. is starting to get more involved with the Inuit now.) Tagak went on:

I.E.A. also supports native organizations across Canada in the way of publicity or if there is need to be a political force and their assistance is requested by any other organization. So in general, I.E.A. seems to be an "outside watcher" for all native organizations. I.E.A. is financed partly by the federal government, with the majority of funds coming as donations from interested people. I.E.A. also supports native people to be recognized as native people or aboriginals, and in this regard I.E.A. has been a strong supporter of native peoples' rights.

Tagak asked the delegates who had been at the Coppermine Conference to explain a bit about what happened at Coppermine so the rest of the delegates could learn more about what was discussed there. He explained the conference was sponsored by I.E.A., so that might be one of the examples of what I.E.A. is concerned about.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

I think Mr. Noah Qumak is in a better position to explain about the Coppermine Conference.

NOAH QUMAK

It was the first time I had ever heard of I.E.A., when I was sent to the Coppermine Conference. I had known the Quebec Indian Association and when I heard about another Indian Eskimo Association, for awhile I thought there were two things going on at the same time. I have to look into my notes to be able to tell exactly what the main concerns discussed at the Coppermine Conference were, so this afternoon I may have a better idea and can report to you after lunch.

TAGAK CURLEY

I would like to ask the delegates again to try and come up with the Inuit' future plans, so is there anyone who would liketo speak in regards to our ;

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

I will say something about I.E.A. since we have never heard about it before, so in order that you may receive something to think about I am going to explain a bit about what I know. The I.E.A. seems to me to be beside the government but it is actually going towards the native people. At this very moment there is need for a very close look at our own situation in our communities, because in the past only the government has been handling our affairs.

During the early stages when the government first came into our communities, it was quite all right for them to look after our own problems, administration, and so on; but right now there seems to be something in between. In the past there was nothing bothering us, but right now at this very moment there is something interfering with us Inuit. The culture of the Inuit will not be the same any more as it used to be. Our culture is still here, but in the near future it is not going to be the same as it used to be. If this continues too long from

now into the future, there won't be any power left in us. The white people will be just overflowing our culture and there won't be anything left that we can do if it continues this way. but if we say right now that we want the government to handle our problems, our affairs and our lives, we will never be able to do things on our own, like decisionmaking, if we only let the government continue to look after us.

So we have to find an organized voice amongst ourselves so we may direct our lives the way we want them to be. Maybe we should have something like an Inuit' organization. For certain reasons, because the government and I.E.A. should not be telling the Inuit, it would be better if you do this. Right now is the time to act and form so we may control ourselves in the kind of life we would like to have in the future. For these main reasons I think we are here at this very moment to talk about.

TAGAK CURLEY

Since there has been some confusion as to what "association" means, I think it would be a good idea if we try to find a definition or a name similar to that in the Inuit language.

There was serious discussion about the term "association" and possible names in the Inuit language.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

In Arctic Quebec when we were in the process of forming a Coop Federation, we also had to give a name to our language, so the name "Elagisa" was adopted and it has been Used ever since. That is the official word now for the word "federation."

There was a long discussion of the word "federation", trying to decide a term in the Inuit language for the word "association."

CELESTINO MAKPAH

First, let's try and find a name for the word "association" and then we shall call it that same word all across Inuit country.

Second, for those of us who are working for the government, the government obviously was aware of I.E.A. and they agreed for us to go as a delegate from our communities there are more than two here who are working for the government so obviously the government may not object to such an organization. So for that reason, let's not fear the government and just talk of whatever things we would like to discuss here at this meeting.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

We should not even be concerned about our employers, which is the government, since we are here to represent the communities, and that is what we are going to do here.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

We represent not only ourselves here at this meeting; we represent a whole lot more people in our communities, so even if I was thrown into the garbage the people would be more

affected if I was thrown away, so actually we are here to talk and report to our people when we get back to our communities.

TAGAK CURLEY

The situation right now as far as Inuit are concerned is that communications are very poor. The Inuit at this moment are split into four regions the Mackenzie Delta, Keewatin, 'Baffin and Arctic Quebec and have never attempted to unite with each other. We should no longer let this nonsupport amongst Inuit continue; we must now unite and support each other as Inuit. Just because Quebec is not a part of the Northwest Territories, we should not overlook the Inuit there. He should all become one group the Inuit.

There have been problems in Arctic Quebec' as we have heard in bits and pieces in other Inuit settlements; but just because it was part of Quebec we have not been able to give them help or advice. but we should not let any problems or anything interfere with our future. If we are to concern ourselves with our own little region, we will never grow or become self supporting people. The Inuit first of all must join together.

At this point, it was decided that the choice of a word for "association" would be postponed for another day.

TAGAK CURLEY

It might be a good idea if each one of you spoke on behalf of your community and gave us an example of problems that have arisen which should not have happened if the Inuit had more knowledge of their own rights.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

Do you mean in regard to our own community, or even about the government, or in regard to our land how it is being used, and so on? For example, if I talk about my community and about the problems that have happened to the Inuit and the land, and so on, maybe we will get a closer understanding of the government and whether it is doing good for us or not.

Tagak Curley explained about his history and concerns, and his experience in government and why he left the government and is now with I.E.A.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

There has been a confrontation between the Quebec Government and the Inuit people. Since 1964 the Quebec Government has been trying to take over the administration, but the Inuits have refused this. There has been a lot of misunderstanding amongst the Inuits; they have been confused and frustrated and for that reason the Inuit people of Quebec have not definitely said themselves what they want, due to lack of understanding of what they should know. So with all this misunderstanding going around in the past few years, the Inuits have completely rejected both governments and their proposals for Quebec administration and have decided to make proposals themselves. There has been a group of men who completely rejected the proposals made by both governments to the Inuit people of Quebec. The Quebec Inuits have made up their minds that they are not going to lean on the governments any more; they are going to decide from now on what they want rather

than depending on the government, because they feel if they are doing just what they want they may be better organized and definitely would be a better help to their own people.

Because of this problem between the government and the Inuit people, the Indian Association of Quebec had become aware that the Inuits were having problems with the government; so they invited Inuit leaders from Quebec settlements to talk about possibly joining the Inuits and Indians for their association. So far there have been no commitments or agreements but they hope to be meeting in future again to discuss future plans amongst the Indians and Inuits. So far the Indian leaders have just told the Inuits that it is up to them whether they wish to join their association or whether they wish to form their own association. As far as I know, there have been very smooth talks between the Indians and the Inuits and they might be deciding which way they wish to go in the near future. Next month the Indian Association of Quebec will be having a general meeting again and they have invited Inuit leaders again from the settlements. After that we may have a better idea of what will happen between the native peoples of Quebec.

NOAH QUMAK

The Indians and Inuits met at meetings and so far the Indians have been talking about the advantages of their association. They told the Inuits all the good things about their association, but so far we have not heard about the disadvantages if we join their association. So after maybe learning about possible disadvantages of joining the Indian Association of Quebec, we may decide whether we should join them or not. So at this time we are not sure, but we have had talks with them of this nature. The Indians were to have two other meetings at which time they were to discuss the Inuits possibly joining their association.

The only problem is, if we are to join the Indian Association of Quebec and if there is another Inuits' organization to be formed amongst you people here at this meeting, it would seem to me that we would be interfering with each other as far as we Inuits of Quebec are concerned. I feel it would be better for us if we had a stronger organization all across the Inuits. It seems to me we would be more effective as far as Inuits are concerned. There would be more power amongst us. I feel the government is now aware of Inuit people of Quebec forming an association; we have been talking with them for the last seven years and no agreement has been reached, so I feel that both governments are now aware that in the near future Quebec Inuits will be forming their own voice.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

Let there be no confusion amongst you people here; we are only explaining the possible future agreements in Quebec but we are not saying this is what we are going to decide. So far there are no commitments so these are just possibilities that Noah and I are explaining to you people.

NOAH QUMAK

I have talked with people and I know some Inuits in Arctic Quebec are not happy about being in two parts for example, Quebec and the Northwest Territories so I feel they should not be. Maybe an Inuits' organization would help to share ideas' because I know the first settlements that were invaded by the white people are now losing their culture and this is very obvious. With an organization of Inuits we would control ourselves. If we do not form

an organization amongst ourselves, our ways, lives, culture and language will disappear and we will have no control over it in a very short time.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

In our area, in Keewatin, there is no one managing the affairs of the Inuits other than the government. It is all government. I will give you an example:

Near the surroundings of Whale Cove we have a large lake with plenty of fish. The white people control that lake just like they own it. There is a man, who is a tourist, who is probably one of the richest men there and he controls that lake. I don't mind at all if anyone ;,s a tourist comes into our communities and fishes. The only thing I don't like about it is the government is the channel through which these private enterpriser go of course, because it is their land! So far there have been two large lakes which have been taken by private enterpriser with the help of the government, and this is one of the examples I really dislike. Since they are the government, even though they are aware of the rights of the native people they will not come and tell you "Do you know what your rights are? Do you know what you should do?" I think we, the Inuits, are just waiting for something to come up. For instance even though we are Inuits we are usually able to tell the difference between the wrong and the right.

I suppose it happened that first of all the private enterpriser contacted the government officials; without consulting them there would be no way he would be able to control the two large fishing lakes. I know the government official very well and have known him for a long time. Without his approval the private enterprise would never have gone into the two lakes. As far as I know he started to get the control; one he definitely has, and the other I am not quite sure but possibly he will get that too. But he doesn't hire local people for tourist guidesin that large fishing lake, so he has everything which he owns and does things in his own way. These should have been under our control; they should never have been given to the American enterpriser. If I had not been suspicious of that man I would have fought him and fought the government official; but whenever I started to mention anything of that sort he would just seem to pick up a heavy rock and put it on top of me, and there was no way I could get across to him these sorts of matters.

This sort of situation will continue if we just let it be. We do know all the opportunities will not be taken away by the white people and we don't mind any developments coming into the north; but first of all we want to make it very clear we would like to be involved in any private business or developments taking place.

Before, we didn't know how to organize ourselves and the government obviously didn't say how to organize ourselves; and we obviously didn't have anything like money to help us organize. So for that reason the government probably asked "Well, why don't you people organize?"

I know of one thing where the government built tourist cabins at Whale Cove, but there was no airstrip so business was poor and the tourist cabins were just there. So three years ago the government transferred the tourist cabins into Crown Assets Disposal. One thing I was not happy about was this. The Cooperative bid on the tourist cabins and one Inuk also bid on these buildings which were offered to the highest bidder. We heard there was not enough money from Whale Cove because the highest bidder was an Inuk, and the Inuk didn't have enough savings in his account. But actually he was the highest bidder and they were up for bid again back to Crown Assets.

TAGAK CURLEY

Why would the government put the buildings up for sale again? Was the Cooperative not the highest bidder?

CELESTINO MAKPAH

This is where the strange part comes in. I will make it more clear. The buildings at the Crown Assets were then up for the highest bidder so the Cooperative bid and the Inuk bid on the tourist cabins, and then these were sent to Ottawa. Then we learned that the Inuk was the highest bidder but didn't have enough savings in his account, so the government put the cabins up for the highest bidder again. Next we heard the Americans bought the tourist cabins. That was three years ago. They took a look at them once and now they are still sitting at Whale Cove and have never been touched for the last three years. This is where a real disappointment was in Whale Cove. I feel there was interference somewhere within the government.

JOSIAH KADLUSIAK

In Igloolik the main example of interference are the housing sites. In the early years the Inuit did not have any say when the government arrived; they built their residences in the Inuit' village along the beach and when the Inuit' housing started they shoved them up awaybehind and constructed their houses on wet mud.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

Were there any better places to build them?

JOSIAH KADLUSIAK

Oh, yes. This is the sort of problem we have, and the same thing is going to happen to our land. In the near future the hunters may have to hunt at a greater distance if we allow the disturbance by economic development, which is the exploration and mining people.

The Inuit just talked about the housing sites among themselves but action was never taken. Because we never had any say in our community, the Inuit are now way back behind, far from the shore. Since the Inuit live by hunting alone, they had always built their homes along the shore and everyone was happy about this.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

Now those who are doing nothing (the whites) are closer to the shore since they do not even have to carry anything heavy for themselves.

JOSIAH KADLUSIAK

The Kabloona like to have clean settlements and never want to damage their land. As for hunters with dog teams, they are just doing the opposite so they have to somehow carry

the dog food (like walrus meat and so on) to their dogs way back in towards the land behind the Kabloonas' residences. If the Inuit were closer to the shore where they do most of their work, obviously there would be a cleaner settlement.

TAGAK CURLEY

These are examples we need to have of the things we should have control of in our communities, and only an organized voice can fight them.

IPEELE KILABUK

I am going to say something which Simonie probably had said before at the Coppermine Conference. This is in regards to a fishing resort at Pangnurtung. If I had been informed right from the beginning I would have considered any action to be taken towards the man who is building his own tourist cabins at our main fishing river. I know very well this Kabloona is going to make a lot of profit from this area, and his profits will not mean anything to the community. If he leaves eventually, so will his profits.

As I became aware of this project I immediately held a meeting with all the Inuit residents at Pangnurtung. Simonie and myself at that time were the only ones aware of this developing situation> so we met with the Inuit; but because they are not businessminded people, they could not at that time decide and stop this Kabloona's profitmaking project. So Simonie and I were turned down and the project went ahead. Actually, it was too late anyway; that man had been planning this idea for a long time and had never bothered to inform the Community Council. He had been making arrangements to build these tourist cabins with the government for quite some time. He then informed me after all arrangements had been made and when he was approved by the government, so in this case I was actually very surprised and not prepared for any action. This river is very important for the Inuit of Pangnurtung since it is a few miles from the settlement; the caribou are usually found around the area and it is the best area for hunting in the summertime since there is no disturbance around there. Now with the interference going on all summer, the caribou will surely not be near the river any more. There was already an indication proven last summer.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

It is true that any private enterpriser will not proceed with business unless he has been approved by the government. The government usually announces any developments such as we have been talking about only when all the arrangements are approved; therefore we the Inuit are usually not equipped to make any further decisions. If the private business firms are to form any business in any place in the north, okay} let us participate and plan also. The Community Councils especially should be involved. Those kinds of decisions made by the government are very disappointing and will be disappointing if they are to continue.

TAGAK CURLEY

It is true that the Inuit are usually informed only after all the arrangements are planned and approved by the government. Therefore not much choice is given to the Inuit. One way you can do something about it in regards to any situation of that kind is to publicize the incident through newspapers and so on. The agreements that were made between the private

enterpriser and the government without consulting the Inuit must be publicized in all available sources of the news media.

JOSIAH KADLUSIAK

The time is here now for us Inuit to unite and work together, and I think we Inuit should try with all our rights to take control of our land. The assistance the government is now handing to Inuit (which is welfare) will not make anyone a man. Should the land be controlled by the government or by the Inuit?

NOAH QUMAK

If the government is to control our land forever, the Inuit will not have any area to hunt in any more in a very short time.

TAGAK CURLEY

In regards to the land claims, I think we should ask the Legal Committee of I.E.A. to assist us, and you will have your queries answered more clearly than we can attempt to answer. I know Mr. Clark and Mr. Dunne will also be available to explain this situation more thoroughly' and I am sure they will be glad to hear from you. If you agree, we can ask the Legal Committee to help us in this case' perhaps by tomorrow morning. (All agreed).

JOSIAH KADLUSIAK

My main concern as far as mineral and oil explorations are concerned is that they should not only support the Inuit labor men but should also compensate the communities for disruptions that they cause with the wildlife, our livelihood, whether they know it or not.

TAGAK CURLEY

As I have said before, the Legal Committee will be able to look into this case. This will not be an easy one, since Prime Minister Trudeau has stated he will not recognize aboriginal rights of the native peoples of Canada. Anyway, the Legal Committee will be glad to assist you with this problem.

NOAH QUMAK

We all know now that the explorations are causing disturbances and contaminating the sea animals and fish in and around the surroundings of our communities. If this continues, and we let it be as it is, the hunting areas will be more distant from the communities so the Inuit must think and consider whether or not the exploration companies should compensate us for the harm they are doing us and for more harm in the near future.

JOSIAH KADLUSIAK

I believe myself that the hunting must continue and hope it will never be stopped.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

Obviously it must continue and not be stopped. Look, when the food arrives from the south to the stores in our communities, you should take a good look at the prices. This is supposed to sustain our lives, but the Inuit actually could not live on food provided by southerners which is available in most of our northern stores. Even if enough food is imported into our communities, the Inuit could not afford it, so hunting is crucial and beneficial to the Inuit.

--- LUNCH BREAK ---

Mr. Allan Clark, Executive Director of I.E.A., and Mr. Norman Dunne, Western Regional Director of I.E.A., joined the meeting after lunch.

Tagak Curley outlined what had been discussed during the morning meeting, and said:

The first two things we would like to give to the Legal Committee are:

- 1) Land claims;
- 2) British North America Act in regards to Inuit people.

NORM DUNNE

Peter Cumming, a lawyer, will be able to come over tomorrow morning. If you really want to get into legal questions and the B.N.A. Act, I think he is as good a man as you could find. We have this Legal Committee here who had a hand in writing the book "Native Rights in Canada", and I think this Committee still exists and is available. I would think that the Legal Committee could either, or both, answer specific questions the group might have, or they could draw up a proposed plan of action on Inuit aboriginal rights if that would help.

TAGAK CURLEY

We went into this in sort of a broad and general way. We know there was an Act, but some of us don't know what the British North America Act is or what our legal rights are, etc., so it would be interesting for us to go into specific areas. I just told them I am glad there are people willing to support us with that sort of thing, as it is an almost impossible thing.

NORM DUNNE

There are a lot of questions there are no answers to, because no one has ever asked the questions; and if people don't ask them, nothing will ever happen.

ALLAN CLARK

I think that our Legal Committee' if they were asked, would be happy to go about preparing a report based on some of the questions you might raise dealing specifically with the Inuit situation, similar to the way "Native Rights" deals mostly with Indians. Maybe what is needed is a whole pooling together in one book, and our Legal Committee would be more than happy to do something like that.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

It certainly would help u' to understand what we are lacking right now' we actually don't know any legal rights of the Inuit.

TAGAK CURLEY

They agree they would like to see such a thing like that, because they have never seen how far they can go and what their limits are, and what their rights are; so they may go and fight for something that is impossible.

NORM DUNNE

If we could get that done by the Legal Committee, we could take it out of the lawyers' language and put it into understandable English and then into syllabics.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

It certainly would help us wake up if such a book was produced.

JOSIAH KADLUSIAK

Also, I think that we should look into historic sites in the north for instance, old houses and old artifacts. We must take control of them rather than just let outsiders come in and pick them up and leave. These actually belong to the Inuit and they need to control them from their settlements.

TAGAK CURLEY

I understand there is now a regulation on historic sites' and it is now illegal to search and pick up any artifacts out of the old Inuit' homes. Only people authorized by the government are now allowed to search the old homes of Inuit.

NOAH QUMAK

The historic sites, especially the old homes of Inuit, are from generations of us Inuit, and therefore they should not just be taken by outsiders because they belong to us and should be left to the Inuit. Maybe we should look into this with the Legal Committee, and after we will know what action we will need to take. Obviously we Inuit would never start collecting old artifacts from Kabloonas' country, because they own them; and this should also apply to the Inuit.

The group agreed that the Legal Committee check into this and let the group know what regulations the government has on historic sites and old artifacts of the Inuit.

ALLAN CLARK

There would be no harm in having a letter forwarded now, or as soon as possible, to the Historic Sites Board (if you want to do that) just setting out what your concerns are.

NORM DUNNE

A little publicity about a soapstone quarry got an order out right away. You know the Coppermine Coop soapstone quarry was interfered with by some miner who filed a claim on it. Peter Cumming wrote an article that was in the Toronto paper; there was a lot of publicity about it, and Chretien issued an order that nobody can touch these soapstone quarries. That came out mainly because of a lot of publicity, and the government looked as if they were at fault and they were, of course. Basically, it was an aboriginal rights thing.

The concern regarding soapstone quarries was discussed, and the group urged that an agreement between the Inuit and the government should now be reached that the Inuit have first claim on soapstone quarries in the north.

TAGAK CURLEY

Inuit will eventually get into problems regarding soapstone quarries with mineral and oil exploration if something is not done right now.

NORM DUNNE

It depends on how big the guy who makes the claim is. At Coppermine it was one miner who made the claim; with big mining companies then you really have to be organized to be able to fight.

Discussion of claims continued, but the group strongly agreed that protection be given in regard to soapstone quarries by the government on behalf of the Inuit.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

The Inuit will have to be very careful and fully understand the legal situation in regards to mineral and oil exploration if they form an association. The agreements are usually made between the government and mining and oil exploration companies and with promises that they will provide employment to the Inuit; but we will still have to be careful and protect our wildlife, our livelihood, and hunting areas. So we need to fully understand what alternatives we have. I think the Inuit association will need to know all the legal matters, especially with regard to exploration.

The group agreed that the Legal Committee look into this and report to the Inuit so they may be better equipped to prepare their proposals to the government.

There was lengthy discussion on land claims and protection of wildlife in regards to possible contamination of animals, especially fish.

The three questions raised at that time were: 1) historic sites; 2) soapstone quarries; 3) disturbance of wildlife.

The group wanted to know what kind of regulations are made on these three points' and what alternatives the government has for disturbing their livelihood around their own environment.

NOAH QUMAK

I would like to see all the hospitals that occasionally receive Inuit patients have an Inuk interpreter in southern Canada.

TAGAK CURLEY

I think we would be able to check into this situation ourselves. If we have to, we can send a letter to the provincial governments or the hospitals direct. It is really the institution's or the government's responsibility to hire interpreters for various hospitals, and this we can check ourselves.

NOAH QUMAK

There have been occasions where an interpreter was badly needed in provincial hospitals. Some patients have lost weight because of worries, especially at transient places. There is one especially where patients have complained about, in Montreal, where patients hardly ever receive decent meals. The other delegates are also aware of those transient quarters in Montreal.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

I think the government responsible for patients would be glad to hear complaints about the transient patient centre at Montreal. Since they are paying them for accommodation and food, I am sure that is where they would like to see it spent.

JOSIAH KADLUSIAK

I experienced the transient quarters myself. I think the name of the place is the Richmond Hostel. There have been many complaints regarding food at that place.

There was further discussion about complaints that Inuit have had about Richmond Hostel in Montreal.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1971 TORONTO, ONTARIO

Mrs. Mary Cousins of Frobisher Bay, N.W.T. was now present with the group.

The choosing of a name for an association was discussed once again. The group accepted and agreed that all Inuit use the word "Tapirisat" for the word "association".

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

I suggest we brief Mary Cousins on what has been discussed yesterday, especially about legal matters and the three main points that were presented to the Legal Committee' historic sites, soapstone quarries, and disturbance of wildlife.

If we try to form an organization or association right now, it would seem to be best for the Inuit if we form m the association in a very short time. We should not wait years to form m

an organization. Now the time has come and we cannot afford to wait years to form an Inuit' association. We must be prepared now to prepare our plans for the future. We cannot form an association just within ourselves, but we must receive support from our fellow Inuit, and the way to do that would be to have meetings with Inuit in northern Canada. What we need to plan right now is how we would like to have various meetings in the north, and then through these meetings we would decide exactly how we would like to have our organization set up.

TAGAK CURLEY

To brief you a bit on this, Mary, the idea of forming a national organization amongst the Inuit was discussed yesterday. The group here felt that they could be the organizing committee for a national Board; we regret to say there is no spokesman from the Mackenzie area but we can say there won't be any problem at all if someone is to sit on this body. What we propose to do is call ourselves an interim organizing committee until further plans are made.

The reason we thought of forming an organization, or this committee, was that if we wish to hold various meetings in the north there is no way we will get any assistance from the government without being recognized as a group. So as we feel very strongly about forming an organization, we decided we will call ourselves an organizing committee; and even if we are a national organization, we would not be interfering with regional organizations if the people wished to form such organizations in future.

MARY COUSINS

Would you then be called suchandsuch an organization, or would that be a temporary organization?

TAGAK CURLEY

It would be up to the committee and whatever they wish to do; but this committee would be a supporting committee to other small organizations in Inuit country.

MARY COUSINS

Would the Indian Eskimo Association of Canada be able to assist the Inuit for any specific requests such as the legal situation, or in any other thing that we could not obtain from the government

TAGAK CURLEY

Of course, because it is a citizens' organization and that is what it is there for. Any requests to them would be considered very carefully by I.E.A.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

Is I.E.A. fully aware of government activities or plans?

TAGAK CURLEY

We usually find out, but we do not usually know the full details of what their plans are; but there is usually a way we get to find out what the government is planning to do for Inuit people.

MARY COUSINS

There are no restrictions within the government; the government never makes any rules or regulations available to the Inuit people.

TAGAK CURLEY

This is actually the government's responsibility, to make sure that you know how to use their rules and regulations.

MARY COUSINS

But the government doesn't do that. The only time is when it comes to collecting fines of about \$500 for not following the regulations that is how they inform you about the laws and regulations.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

Right!

MARY COUSINS

It seems it should be the other way around; we should be charging them for not doing their job in informing us about the laws and regulations when they accuse us completely by surprise.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

Before I came to this conference I was involved with the laws and regulations regarding polar bears. They asked me what type of bear I had caught and (some text not available)

The group felt it was not the fault of the Inuit for not following regulations, but it was the government's fault. There are usually little bits and pieces of what the Inuit are supposed to follow, but never enough to understand what sort of regulations and laws are applied to them.

Many other examples were given about the problems of the Inuit because they were not aware of laws and regulations imposed on them.

MARY COUSINS

A child is supposed to go to school until the age of 16, and if a student misses many days of school the government will cut off their Family Allowance; but how many families actually

know that regulation? The case may be that the child was not at school because of sickness, but the mother, not knowing there was such a regulation, never bothered to inform the teacher and then they turn around and stop their Family Allowance, which is actually to me not fair at all

Inuit in the north usually get into trouble mainly because they are not aware of the implications. The Inuit do not understand that once they have been in trouble with the law, it will show on his or her records forever and may prevent him from getting a job. Some Inuit believe that once they have paid their fine the trouble is over with them' but it isn't. I would very much like to see the laws and regulations made available to Inuit. There is just no way of getting information available to the Inuit in the north right now.

There was a long discussion on laws and regulations imposed on Inuit. The group felt they should be consulted before regulations, especially in the north, are prepared by the Territorial Government.

TAGAK CURLEY

One important thing } would like you to know is that in Canada there is an association called the Canadian Association for Humane Trapping. This association is trying to stop the trapping. I think we should consult with them also and express our concerns to them, because if they are trying to stop the trapping in Canada it would not do any harm to let them find out what they are doing to the Inuit. If their goal is to find a better system than trapping foxes, and so on, it would be a good idea if they would work with the Inuit and let both of them try to find a better system than trapping.

The group agreed Tagak should write a letter to this association and find out what steps they are taking, and what alternatives they are planning if the trapping is to be stopped in Canada, especially in regards to the Inuit people.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

I think we here should work on the groundwork and see if we can form ourselves into a committee while we are all together.

TAGAK CURLEY

This is most important for you people now, because that is the only way you will be able to meet with your fellow Inuit in the north and Arctic Quebec other than at government sponsored meetings. I.E.A.'s request for funds on behalf of the Coppermine Conference delegates from the federal government, to hold various meetings, was turned down and this indicates the government is not in favor of Inuit meetings without government agencies. So the only way you will be able to discuss your concerns and Future plans is to form something. Get together if you are in favor of Inuit' concerns and if you feel there should be Inuit sponsored meetings in the north and Arctic Quebec.

MARY COUSINS

I am very disgusted to learn that the federal government refused to grant I.E.A. money to hold various meetings in the north.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

We all know there is money available from the federal government. It is quite true if the government wishes to have meetings with the Inuit they can do it any time; but when the Inuit want to make their own plans by themselves, it seems to me the government does not want to provide funds to Inuit. If the Inuit spoke out their plans for themselves, I think the government would not be too happy. So in my mind, for that reason the federal government did not accept the request because the Inuit may make plans for the future. The government has stated time and time again the Inuit should make their own plans, and make decisions, and so on; I think this is only a verbal expression and not the real truth of the government.

MARY COUSINS

Why did the government not accept the submission for funds to have Inuit meetings?

TAGAK CURLEY

When I can find it, I will read you the letter I.E.A. received which explains the reasons why.

There was a long discussion about the possibility of forming an Inuit association.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

We have to consider what regions the Inuit' association would be concerned with. I think we have to solve this right now. } think if we decide the direction we wish to go, we will be in a better position to request funds for holding meetings.

There was a long discussion of the proposed committee's plans.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

Noah, you understand what the group here is proposing, and the role the group would have. Is there any objection or concern you may have of this group forming into a committee?

NOAH QUMAK

I will learn more about the possibility of joining the Quebec Indian Association after the meetings they will be holding in the near future. I will be able to decide after that whether another organization would be accepted or not.

TAGAK CURLEY

The Quebec Indian Association would not have any interference with our association.

NOAH QUMAK

I see. If the Quebec Inuit learn of this committee I am sure the people will support the organization strongly. I have heard some Inuit are not in favor of being administered differently and categorized differently just because of the boundaries.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

I was having a problem of understanding what was being discussed. I think we started out trying to form this committee and its goals, and somehow the topic went into the regions. I think this is where the holdup is right now. Okay, let's just forget our regions for awhile and examine the committee, and just look at the whole area of Canada where Inuit are. First of all, we must decide about organizing and form ourselves into a committee and register ourselves with a permanent identity. Then we will be able to go back into our regions or communities and deal with the problems.

There was discussion regarding clarification of an organizing committee.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

The main thing now is deciding on this committee, then we will be in a position to hold meetings and deal with more specific problems.

There was further discussion.

JACOB OWEETALUKTUK

Are you all in favor of forming a committee?

CELESTINO MAKPAH

Let me ask a question first. What is the title of this committee

NOAH QUMAK

I suggest it be the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada

All were in favor of Noah's suggestion.

TAGAK CURLEY

How about the committee of I.T.C.?

Discussion followed. A final decision was made, and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada was adopted as a permanent title for this Inuit organization.

JOSIAH KADLUSIAK

(Expressed his concerns and the indications he had learned from his tour up in Baffin island regarding the polar bear quota imposed by the N.W.T. governments. He felt the Community Councils should really be the ones to make these regulations.)

There was strong support by the group. They all agreed that in Baffin and Keewatin there is a real disappointment as to how the N.W.T. Government is distributing the polar bears. At that point the group agreed a letter be sent to the government regarding polar bears and how they are being distributed. However, first I.T.C. would send a letter to all Community Councils.

JOSIAH KADLUSIAK

I learned from my trips up in the high Arctic that the Inuit indicate there are actually more polar bears than before, rather than decreasing as the government says. The Inuit are saying the bears are increasing.

There was a long discussion about polar bears. I.T.C. agreed they would consult the Community Councils and then send a letter to the Government of the N.W.T.

TAGAK CURLEY

I have the letter from Chretien now, which I promised to read to you. Could I proceed with it now? This letter fully explains why they could not provide funds for Inuit meetings. (Agreed.)

Tagak read the letter, which stated that the Government of the N.W.T. already had funds to hold meetings with the Inuit.

MARY COUSINS

The government will only sponsor Inuit meetings if it is acceptable to the government; in other words, which the government is in favor of. It is all very well that the government sponsor meetings of Inuit on what the government likes, but we Inuit have to meet with our fellow Inuit and make our own plans also.

CELESTINO MAKPAH

Those meetings mentioned are surely preplanned and are not the Inuit' ideas.

TAGAK CURLEY

I feel the reasons mentioned for not making funds available to I.E.A. for Inuit meetings are not the real reasons. I think there is another which the government did not mention. Anyway, we do not agree with him and we will have a firsthand knowledge when we as an Inuit' organization requests funds.

Peter Cumming joined the meeting. The three points discussed earlier (historic sites, soapstone quarries, and disturbance of wildlife) were brought up to him.

NOAH QUMAK

We would like to know exactly what kind of regulations the government has laid on our history sites and old artifacts in Inuit' land, especially the old traditional homes of our forefathers.

PETER CUMMING

I'm sorry, I cannot answer that question. I'll find out and write to you and it can be distributed. I am not aware of anything being done. I don't know. I will have to check it out by reading the legislation and by contacting the government.

TAGAK CURLEY

I understand it is illegal now to search and dig up historic pieces of old houses and artifacts.

PETER CUMMING

What is it you people want? If it is illegal at the moment, what would you like to do?

MARY COUSINS

Keep things in the north.

TAGAK CURLEY

From our long discussion this morning, the group here strongly felt that the artifacts from our forefathers should not be taken outside the north. Let the Community Councils have control over them; they are the property of the

There was a long discussion on historic artifacts in the north. The committee felt the government had cheated them on the historic pieces in the north.

NOAH QUMAK

We also discussed the need for protecting soapstone quarries in the north. Is there any regulation or protection the government has now for these?

PETER CUMMING

We raised with the government whether this could or should be done, and they've changed the mining regulations to allow soapstone quarries to be exempt from mining claims. So prospectors now cannot claim soapstone quarries.

TAGAK CURLEY

Does this regulation apply to all the north where Inuit are?

PETER CUMMING

You might have to take steps in each case to tell the government you want this to be declared a soapstone quarry, exempt from mining claims. But that Can be done. You can now have your soapstone quarries protected from anyone else by contacting the government.

NORM DUNNE

If there is a piece of land with some soapstone on it' the way things are now the government says the government owns this and if the Inuit wants some soapstone, okay they give them some. If the Kabloona comes along and wants something, what the government is doing now is: they say, okay there are special tickets you have to make out and we will decide. But they may still give them some. Now if you had your aboriginal rights, then the Inuit would own that soapstone, not the government, and the Kabloona would have to come to the Inuit to get permission to use some. But right now the government is saying the government owns this' and they decide whether you use it, or the Kabloona use it. Maybe that will be fair and maybe it won't; but if it is in your back yard and if you can establish your aboriginal rights, then you may be able to say: okay, that is our soapstone we own it, not the government, and no one can use it unless we give our permission.

If this committee becomes a reality, then maybe the committee could advise all communities who have soapstone quarries what steps they should take.

NOAH QUMAK

Is there any provision or alternatives the government have for disturbing our wildlife (on which we depend for our livelihood) by exploration activities?

PETER CUMMING

They are setting areas aside. There is provision now whereby areas can be set aside as wildlife sanctuaries, and as you know they have hunting regulations. But they are not doing anything about the people who are exploring except where the community objects, and then they are now entering into some agreements with the oil and mining companies so that the company has to use certain equipment and do certain things to minimize the effect on the hunting. There is no general law that is going to protect you.

TAGAK CURLEY

I suppose it is going to be the responsibility of the people in the community.

PETER CUMMING

Banks Island is the first example. What happened there is that the government entered into an agreement with the oil company whereby the oil company could only use certain equipment and there would be an inspection team to make sure that nothing happened to the wildlife.

The only thing that can be done in any case is for the community to ask the government to protect them; and if they won't, to get your committee to help by bringing pressure upon

the government. That is what happened with Banks Island. The Coppermine Conference got a lot of publicity about this in respect to Banks Island, and because of that publicity and pressure the government made this agreement with the oil people. An Inuit trapper goes around with the oil exploration crews, and is paid a salary to do so, to make sure that as little damage as possible is done to affect the wildlife.

NORM DUNNE

The community of Sachs Harbor decided which Inuk should be hired. The same kind of agreement has now been made with Indian people at Old Crow in the Yukon. One thing about it is that one community by itself does not have the power to fight this, and I don't think they are getting enough protection which they could if they had a bigger voice.

PETER CUMMING

The only reason the oil companies go along with this on Banks island is because they know a lot of publicity will be given if they do something wrong and this will cause the government to be upset; so on Banks Island the oil company is very cautious and very respectful to the Inuit people's rights. Although much more should still be done, at least it is something.

NORM DUNNE

The oil company posted a bond on Banks Island to guarantee so much money in case there was damage; but it is not enough money, and it is to be paid to the government and not to the community. I think it is the wrong way around; I think it should be a lot bigger bond, because no one really knows if there is damage and if there is, will it ever be corrected? No one knows, so it should be a great big bond and should be paid to the community if something happens.

TAGAK CURLEY

That goes with the aboriginal rights problem.

PETER CUMMING

They still haven't recognized aboriginal rights, but at least they are doing things now to minimize the effects of exploration upon hunting.

NORM DUNNE

As long as they can deal with one community at a time. At Old Crow they did everything they could to keep the Yukon Native Brotherhood out of their meetings; they didn't even tell them what was going on.

NOAH QUMAK

If the mining exploration and oil exploration are to be near our rivers, we certainly must negotiate with them.

The group agreed that setting aside areas as wildlife sanctuaries was not accepted, because it could mean more distance to travel for trapping and hunting just to go around the boundaries.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1971 PETERBOROUGH, ONTARIO

The whole morning was spent observing the Indian Eskimo Association's Board meeting at Trent University in Peterborough.

The reasons for having the Inuit meetings in Toronto and Peterborough were presented to the Board meeting. They were:

- 1) Result of the Coppermine Conference;
- 2) Result of I.E.A.'s request for funds
- 3) Reasons for forming an Inuit Tapirisat of Canada organizing committee.

The afternoon was spent discussing further plan or I.T.C., and communication. It was decided and accepted that the Committee prepare a submission for funds to the Citizenship Branch of the Department of the Secretary of State.

The Committee planned to have an all Inuit meeting of Canada from the main regions; Mackenzie, Keewatin, Baffin, Quebec, Manitoba, and Labrador. The location was not decided, or how many are to be invited from each Community

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1971 PETERBOROUGH, ONTARIO

The morning was spent discussing the functioning of the officers, and as to how they would select the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer. It was decided that nominations would be made and the officers elected.

Noah Qumak and Josiah Kadlusiak were nominated

Noah Qumak was unanimously elected Chairman of the Organizing Committee of I.T.C.

Josiah Kadlusiak was elected Vice-Chairman of the Organizing Committee.

Tagak E.C. Curley was elected interim Secretary-Treasurer until such time as the Committee appoints a permanent Treasurer.

Part of the morning was spent at the board meeting of the Indian Eskimo Association.

After lunch, the Committee proposed the following to the Board of I.E.A.:

- 1) That I.E.A. continue to support Inuit whenever necessary or whenever requested.

- 2) That I.E.A. proceed with the proposed plans for a National Native Development Fund.
- 3) That I.E.A. assist with the preparation of submitting a request for funds from the Citizenship Branch to hold meetings. and act as a secretariat when requested by the Inuit.

These requests were very warmly accepted by the I.E.A. Board and were to be given priorities by the staff of I.E.A.

After these announcements, part of the hour was spent with press reporters.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1971 TORONTO, ONTARIO

The morning, until 11:30, was spent discussing where the location will be for the proposed I.T.C. Conference with representatives from all the north, Arctic Quebec, and some from Manitoba and Labrador Four main points were:

- 1) The Committee unanimously chose Ottawa as the location for the proposed I.T.C. Conference.
- 2) The Committee agreed I.E.A. would prepare the submission to provide funds for the I.T.C. Conference to be held in Ottawa. The date is to be chosen in the near future.
- 3) The Committee selected Edmonton to be the mailing address, c/o Tagak Curley who was elected interim SecretaryTreasurer.
- 4) The Committee agreed that I.E.A. would proceed to prepare a temporary letterhead for I.T.C., with s permanent one to be decided at the major conference.

Three delegates left for home, and the meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.