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- Making of canoes; log canoes, birch bark.
- Tuberculosis epidemic.
- Effects of non-Indians on Indian life style; spiritual values, hunting; fishing; land use, etc.

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Kate Assinewe: ...their knowledge with them and we always learn so much from them when we spend this part of the year with them every year. And our group seems to be getting larger and larger and it means something good. It's a sign that something good is happening and we witness this daily from morning until night here, while we're here. This afternoon we would like to get some speakers that we know will be leaving early to say a few words and those who haven't had a chance, maybe we could call you up now. Is Herman Atkinson around?

Answer: No, he isn't.

Kate Assinewe: Ted Wheatley, would you like to say a few words? If you want to sit here and we could put the....

Ted Wheatley: (Ojibway) So I will try to explain to the people here who only talk English. I come from a part of Ontario on the great lake - Georgian Bay. I live on one of the 30,000 islands and it's been a pleasant home for me. The land is not rich. We know wherever an Indian has been put to live, it is land that is no good to anybody else. But they manage to grab it and make a living. That's where I live. There was nine of us in the family. Don't ask me how many girls because I've forgotten, and the boys, too. There is only a few of us left in the family today. Now my grandfather used to tell me that I would live a long, long life. He would live to be well over 130 years of age. We used to hark back in history to see how old he was. When we used to go to the Sault (Sault Ste. Marie), when they clothed the Indians, what they got. They got flour, they got blankets and a few other incidentals. That was to be their heritage; that was to be the way they were to be treated. They only got it once. They never got it again. So promises, promises and promises, they never materialized.

Well then, to talk about this red willow. It's a medication that my people have used from time immemorial. It's the willow that grows wherever this Great Spirit known as Nanabush in the Indian dialect - he surveyed the land, he flew, he had wings to fly from one area to another - and wherever he landed to make a pot of tea, that's where the red willow grows. When you see a red willow anywhere, no matter where you go, you see it growing there, you'll know that Nanabush had landed there. So, it's a great thing to remember. Now, this morning here, if I jotted down certain things that were omitted from the stories and the legends that we heard, it would have been something. But I didn't do that because I never expected I'd face you people today. If I had known that, I'd have gone home.

So there it is, and that land over there where we live or where my people live - there were five villages there at one time and

that's only a small island compared to others. And each community had their own way of making a living. The people

right in the centre, I believe it was known, the village was known, as Skima(?) village. But us crazy guys used to call it Skin village. Now there, there were, I can recall, years ago, these people would start to make something they saw they had never seen before, like a water canoe, birch bark, elm, you name it - and log canoes. We used to call them log canoes. That time you could find a pine tree they called cork pine. A cork pine will never get water-logged and they made the log canoes out of it. I can remember we used to paddle around log canoes. You didn't have to paint them or anything to make them waterproof. The water wouldn't penetrate through them and they were light because they were called cork pine. And of course, the birch bark canoes - we used to go to this center village, Skima village. It was seven miles from where I was raised and we used to walk to go up there and they'd lay out this pine for a bark canoe. The next day you went there, the canoe was already in the water.

Now there were certain things they used in the making of these canoes. They had to use some sort of a material to sew it together, like the gunwhales on each side. And they normally used cedar rims, very thin, about a half inch thin. And they'd boil them. And they'd bend them any shape they wanted them. And at the end, they soaked the end, both ends, of the canoe. It was pointed at both ends. They sewed it with what they call this here, not cedar, I think it's spruce. Some of the spruce has long roots. A full grown spruce will have roots that grow about, oh, possibly twelve to fourteen feet. Now they'd dig these roots meticulously and they spliced them in four ways to make a string pliable enough to sew that, the bow and the stern of the canoe. And of course, they had two or three seats; like, one in the center, one at the back and one at the front. And when they paddled around, what they used to make the waterproof on part of the bow and stern of the canoe, was pitch. That was also pine and there was three kinds of pitch they used. Spruce, there is two kinds of spruce, and the pine. They got these together and they cooked them to the color of amber and then after they cooled it off, they wrapped it up in a piece of birch bark and that was your repair kit as you travelled along because it's easy to make a hole if you run into a stick or a rock or something in the water. You pull your boat up there, turn it upside down, dry it off, put your pitch on there and a piece of little birch bark, about like that, and fifteen minutes, you're on your way again. They were that ingenious.

And I seen them make hand sleighs. It was an artist's dream the way they made them, so perfect. And they didn't have a measure to use; they just used their hands, like this. It was twelve inches, whatever. They were so exact that if you went

to look at them, you'd never know how they could be so perfect in design. In any of the things they saw, they made it like it should be. If it could be made with hands, they done it. It was really wonderful to go and see them, you know. So we thought, "Well, darn it! Our village, we can do that, too." We layed out a thing to make a bark canoe. We couldn't do

nothing! - because it takes certain birch bark, certain thickness of bark and you can only take it off the tree at a certain time. And that certain time is when the blueberries are first getting ripe. That's the best time you can get bark, birch bark.

And to mention again about the porcupine, that was another thing. It was good for meat, it was good for the larder. And that's the time too, the porkies are good. The quills are good on the porkies until the berries are ripe. Once the berries, blueberries, are ripe, they are milky. You can't use them. But after that, after they are milky, they grow another set of quills and they are hard.....

(break in tape)

....full length is the time to pick it because it'll never lose it's scent or the color of it. You pull it and you dry it - that, before the sun ruins them, in a darkened room. Once it's dry, you put it away, not where the sunlight will get at it and it'll last for years. It'll not lose its odor or the color of it. So these things, these people had to use - they never went to school - they didn't read this in these books. You just went for it. Now when I think of it years ago, it used to go on, you know. It's just that. But after I learned what you have to do to do certain things, as well as the birch bark and if the bark is good. When you see a birch bark tree, the one that's good, it must be smooth, it must be straight. And when you cut it down with a knife, it'll make a loud noise when you take it out; that's the best. It'll not split.

So, this is what I want to stress to you people. Perhaps you know more about it than I do but this is as much as I know about it, because that's the first thing the old people learned the young ones, the young people growing up, those who want to learn. There are those that didn't want to. It didn't mean a thing to them. Well, in lots of ways, these are the same ones that should learn that trade because they are the ones that would really make use of it in their time. So by listening to the old people, it's usually the best policy, because they know it, they've got it up here. They've lived the life. They've seen the times that have come and gone, the change in this world. And what they tell you, you get the right people, is the truth. And I'll repeat again an Indian loves his children and kills them to death with love. They love them so much. I have known this around home where the Indians have reservations where they were bounded like a village, when the people from

the white father came to give out a few dollars to each person, and make a band out of them to be members of that area. The next time they came, the people were gone. They had gone to visit somewhere. They won't go back till fall. Sometimes they don't go back at all if an intermarriage has taken place. So there are a lot of reserves there. I do the research for some government people there. They had the places that were deserted. If the white, the people that govern the country, go

there two or three times, there is nobody there, they declare them as a government park and it states somewhere in the North America Act that once you leave your reservation for twenty years, it automatically goes back to the crown. That's another way of taking it away from the people of course. I have helped people in interpreting and translating to them, going to the powers that be to try and get their reserve back. They cannot get them back. The government gave them - they didn't own the land in the first place. It originally belonged to the Indians yet the government appropriated the land. So there are a lot of places there that have been lost by the government.

Hunting rights are the same thing. We had hunting rights on our reservation. You renew them every year and if you let it lapse, it automatically goes back to the crown. When you want to hunt, the first thing you know, the game warden collars you, unless you can sneak around at night somewhere. So we learned to sneak. Lots of times, I was never caught when we went hunting because we had no place. The reserve we live on - there is too many people there. There is not enough animals there to sustain us. And that, too, is another thing, where you learn the trade. Like in the fall of the year when the spruce in the swamp turns to a lemon color, the trout are on the shoals and we used to go out and they taught us that when you get to a school of trout, they are milling around like that, there is one there amongst this bunch of fish a different color, maybe dark, maybe grey color, darker than, or it's a different color from the other one. You kill that one, you kill the whole works because they are still searching for that one. That's another thing that's unbelievable but if you just, if you go in indiscriminately and bother the water, they'll take off. What you've got to do is spear them to break their neck and they won't bleed so the water isn't made bloody. Now there are other things. I tell you these because they are no good to people anymore. There is hardly any fish left.

So, another thing I'd like to dwell on for a little while. There are places on our reservation where Indians made a sacred burial ground. There is one place there especially. They call it the Surprise Channel. Now, as far back as I can remember when we used to go around hunting or picking berries or whatever, that place was a no-no; that's all they said. They didn't say why. So at this particular time, I was travelling

with my family - I had a family of my own - and there was a storm coming up. We thought we'd stop there. So we stopped there and as soon as we made camp, you couldn't lay there. As soon as you hit the pillow on the ground, something would whistle in your ear. So we had to leave. And then afterward I asked around, "Why was this?" "Well, we told you that was a no-no place. It's sacred ground, declared by the Indians. It's a sacred burial place."

Well then, eventually, I used to go around with this old man and he said to me, "Find out that bay where this one sacred burial ground is. There is about five feet of water there. And don't never go in there to stay overnight on certain phases

of the moon. Now that's five feet deep." Well, you know me, I always do the things I'm not supposed to do, so I went and I anchored my boat there overnight. The next morning I got up early to get a pail of water and my boat was on dry ground. Where did the current go? The depth of the water never changed otherwise. But it went somewhere. I thought, "Well, there's my boat. I'll never get it away from there." It was quite a big boat. So I went up - I think it was blueberry time, too - I went way up the hill there; there was some blueberries there. I wondered, "How am I going to get this boat in the water?" So I was up there about, well till dark. I never went down to see my boat. Oh, I felt so bad about it that I just camped there that night, and the next morning I didn't go near the boat. I didn't want to see it on dry land. I went some other way.

There was another place at the far end of the bay where there was a little stream coming from the lake that was being fed by a spring. I went there to get water. And inadvertently I came around to the edge of the water and my boat was up in the water just as nice as ever. The water had come back to the full depth of five feet. That is one of the things. But that only happens during the certain phases of the moon.

And there is another place there that used to - where the center village used to be - they have a cemetery there. They call it the pagan cemetery. They weren't pagans, but they were not Christians. They had no Christian names. They just had the names of animals that they were named after. When these people died off they were separate from those that were christened in the church. And these graves used to be a house over them with just something - we used to call them doghouses - the length of the grave. And right at the head of it, there is an opening there and a little sort of a place that we could set a plate of food, and on Hallowe'en night, All Saints night, they'd have a feast. The women folks would cook every imaginable sort of food - animals, you know, meat - and then on the stroke of midnight they'd parade over to this place and set the platter on this place where the grave is and then go back home; and then they'd eat. The next morning they go back; the food is all gone. It's not that these spirits ate the food,

it's just animals probably but they tried to believe that it was the spirits laying there of these that had died; they had come to clean the plate. But I imagine it was animals.

And right on that there, where that cemetery is, there is a high rock, sort of a mound. There is no hole or anything that I ever saw there. Well, these people that live there, they developed a plague called tuberculosis, lung disease, and there was about 150-200 people living there in my time. Well, in 1925 they almost all died off, so the medical officer of health came and told them to leave their places, to move down to where we lived - the original reserve where I have lived. And there is only two families left today out of that many. They left their homes there. What probably happened was, the explanation I heard anyway, was that they built these homes out of timber,

green timber. They squared them just like they'd been done at a mill. They did a perfect job when they built their homes, them big places.

Well, what happened was they built these with the green logs and then as the timber dried up, they developed cracks; these are pine logs. The places were drafty. They weren't air tight. Young people would have a cold and it would develop into tuberculosis. And of course, when they cough, they spread the germs all over and got into the cracks of those trees. When that child died or adult or whoever it might be, they just whitewashed the walls and cleaned up the place and then left it at that. When the next cold weather came, somebody would develop this disease and therefore, the whole village, even the adults... One lady I used to visit told me that anytime a child or an adult took sick, they got ready to bury them. It was that certain that they would die. None of them ever recovered. So eventually when the medical officer of health came, they decided for the people to move down to the village where I live.

Well then, there was a legend that started from old people left over from - like, that originally settled there - that there was some prehistoric animal living under that mound of rock I told you, right in the centre of the village. And they were the ones that was doing away with the people. Well, another thing was the pagan graves as we called them. Used to be that place looked just like the floor. Not a blade of grass, no brush grew there. Just as if somebody kept the place clean. And when, after there was a brush fire - somebody started a brush fire - and these dog houses, we call them over the graves, burnt. And in two years, that was all overgrown with trees. What kept them clean before is a mystery. Yet, you can go there and you are walking about that high off the ground. That's the feeling you have. It's a, you know, it's a feeling that some unseen person is there - even in broad daylight. I've walked there lots of times, like in a trance. I had to go through that way. So these people are there, the spirits are there apparently.

Well then, there is another grave there, a Christian grave and that's all fenced around. Well, one time I heard a rumour that there was something feeding on the bodies. And every one of them Christian graves had been dug by some animal. Whether it was new or old, every one of them. We used to go and fill them up. Go back again, they'd be dug again. So, apparently there is some truth in the saying that there is a, some sort of an animal under that rock. Nobody lives there now. That's my story.

Kate: Thank you very much Ted. We've learned a lot and I've heard some things I haven't heard for a long time.

Ted: Well, there is more yet but I don't want to...

Kate: Much more.

Ted: I can only say so much.

Kate: Sam Osawamick here from Wikwemikong. Let's hear a few words from Sam, okay?

Sam Osawamick: (Ojibway)

(End of Side A)

(Side B)

Sam Osawamick: (Ojibway)

Kate: I'd like to call on Ernest Debassigae from West Bay.

Ernest Debassigae: (Ojibway) The Japanese, they have a (Ojibway), it takes a long time to learn that. (Ojibway) it shaped his character. (Ojibway) I'll say just a few words in English, what I'm trying to get at is our young people, some of them have been committing suicide. There was a rash of that a few years ago on the island and I think this, what we need more and more and more among our young people is trying to bring back our traditions. Because we've been borrowing off the white man for so many years and somehow it hasn't seemed to help us very much. I don't know how you'd say it psychologically or morally. We haven't improved morally since the white man has come. I think our people were much more religious and they were more aware. They were continuously aware of the spirits. But now it's only on Sundays. They have to go into a church to, they've just gone strictly the white man's way. But I think this is what we need, to reinforce our, I don't know what you'd say, psych, bring back and teach our

kids all of these things because no matter what we do, no matter how big a house you build or how many cars you've got, you'll still never be a white man. I don't care but I think this is a very important thing. That's the thing that we've got to bring back, I believe, for the salvation of our young people. I think that's all I got to say. Thank you very much.

Kate: Very interesting. Here, Joe Yellowhead from Rama. Would you come up, Joe?

Joe Yellowhead: (Ojibway) Our teacher was no good, I don't think she could even write her name. (Ojibway) My old man, (Ojibway), take good care and listen. (Ojibway)

Speaker: Back to Wikki (Wikwemikong) again. Kate Assinewe, we want to hear from some of the women.

Kate Assinewe: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, my fellow people. I want to speak of my little home town where I was born 72 years ago and there is a few people here from South Bay. I was born there and I was, I guess, christened in the Roman Catholic church. Probably I was only a day old. We were never told in those days. We were just told this is what

you're going to do and that's it. We didn't learn our own language, our native language. We were told not to speak it - "You have to talk English to learn something, to know." But in all these years, in living with people and learning and hearing things, I began to believe and I'm beginning to believe and I'm thinking that our native language, our native way of living, our culture, our religion, the way our people believed, is the right way. The way the Indian believed.

He had his ways, he had his beliefs, he had his religion and I think this is why our people fell into the picture with religious priests because I think we were already Christianized from the time life began with our Indian people all over Canada, United States and where all. North America is a big continent and we're a lot of people, native people living.

I had a phone call from my son when he lived in the States. He's not living now, he passed away a few years ago. And he called me from the States and he said, "Mom," he said, "it's going to take all the people, all native people, not only a little handful from Wikwemikong or from South Bay or from West Bay or from where have you. There is reserves all over. We have to have togetherness and this togetherness will come from our culture and from our belief that this is the way we're going to survive. We have to be together, all native people. No matter where you're from, we're brothers and sisters from North America, all this continent."

I've listened to Ernie last year, Ernie Tootoosis. I've listened to him last year and the year before and the more I listen to what he says, the more I'm beginning to believe that this is the native way, is the only way of religion and culture and language. We cannot be a white man because even if we live with the white people - I've lived in a white community - that doesn't make me a white person. You always want to go with your people and be with them.

I was over in South Bay last week picking raspberries. That's where I was born, that little place. And I went all over. I remembered when I was a baby; I remembered when I was growing up. I remember I was only one day in school there where I was sent to school. I think the school was two miles away. I remembered everything, all the planting we did when I was just a child, planting corn and little things, cucumbers and stuff. And even the water we drank. You don't see that kind of water anymore. They have this stuff they chlorinate with and you get it out of a tap and that doesn't taste good. They do that, they say, to kill the germs or whatever. But I think the best water is the water that comes right from the earth. I fill the bottle over there in South Bay, this pure water. It was coming out of right from the ground and I said there is nothing in this world that tastes so good as what comes from the earth. No matter what you grow or what you drink, the water that comes there, that's the best.

We were told that we have to listen, we have to listen to a

religious person, to the clergy. So a couple of weeks ago, I was visiting with my family in West Bay and my daughter says, "Oh, I'm so glad you're here, Mom. We'll go to church." I said, "I didn't come here to go to church, I came here to visit. I think this is what people should do. You don't get together that often." Well, so she says, "Oh, that doesn't sound like you, Mom. You always made us go to church when you were raising us. You said, 'You have to go to church, if you don't do that you're not a good Catholic or you won't know what you're doing and have to pray.'" Well I said, "That was thirty, forty years ago but now I'm beginning to learn different." And I intend to tell my children what I'm thinking because when you're brainwashed when you're small, you grow up with this and I think our parents, or my parents, were brainwashed into believing something that wasn't a part of them. It wasn't a part of being Anishnabe. It was the white man's way that came so they were told to believe that. There is no other way, that this is the way, the way of the white man.

When my little grandchild was sick about three years ago, I tried everything. We went to doctors; I don't know how many trips we made. She had x-rays; we went to Sudbury. No, they couldn't find out what's wrong with her. So I went to my native people and I said, "I don't know what's wrong with this child." So we prayed for her in the native way and we burned a little of the sweetgrass. She got better, so I'm thinking

that's why. We believed she would get better through her native treatment and today she's - there's never been any reoccurrence of any of what bothered her at the time. So whether or not it was the feeling that she had, maybe, that she wasn't being treated right or she wasn't being, like a nervous person or what, and she got over all this. And this is why I believe this native way of treating people. You believe in the medicine, you believe in it. It's going to do you good whether you're sick or not, you still do things like that. You take things from the earth, you make a nice tea out of it, and that's the best tranquilizer that you can have. Like, supposing you've had a hard day's work and you don't know, you're shaking; you make a little herb tea and drink it and you go to a nice sleep - the native way.

And like Ernest said here a while ago, Ernest Debassigae, he said there is a lot of vandalism going on in this world. This is not an Indian way, this is not natives. They never did that. But now today, they are doing it. It's because they're learning through the white man. The white man, he doesn't teach us anything. Even the priests and the clergy, I don't think they would care for us....

(break in tape)

Kate Assinewe: ...want to destroy themselves, they want to destroy one another. They want to destroy the growth - even a garden. It's growing nice, it's coming up nice. Somebody will come along and... That's not a native way; it's not in us to do

that, but gradually we're learning that. So now, the more you go back to the native way and the more you go back to what you're ancestors taught, you'll gradually begin to appreciate one another and know that this is the way to live - the way our ancestors lived. They taught each other things, they visited each other, they talked together. There was no vandalism there. There was just quiet, open fun. Whether or not they had a dance, they had a nice party together, it was good. And this was the way people lived. Now you're scared to go to bed at night. You don't know who's going to be prowling around in the back yard or you got to be watching all the time - and that's not the way. People don't respect; the children today don't respect, not enough respect for their elders. Thank you for listening.

(applause)

Speaker: Thank you, Kate. Tomorrow we won't be having Ronny Wakegijig with us. He has an important meeting to attend to so I'd like to call upon him now because we'll be missing him tomorrow.

Ron Wakegijig: (Ojibway) Well, last night when I was talking in my own dialect, I was talking about the two parallels that we're faced with every day that we live on this earth. So I realized when I got home there might be some younger people that I wasn't able to reach. So in respect for these younger people, I'll do my comments this afternoon in the English language or whatever I know of it. But first of all, in keeping in line with the teaching of my elders, before you pass on a message which might benefit somebody, your fellow human being, you have to first ask the Creator to send all the powers by which we are surrounded every day of our lives while we are living in this existence, this physical world. And the way to show that is by putting some tobacco in the pipe, on the clean earth or in the fire. And you ask the Creator that your words, if you speak the truth, will not offend anybody. Hopefully that we'll all learn from it.

My friend and my teacher, Ernest Tootoosis, touched on a lot of subjects, a lot of areas this morning when he gave his four hour talk. (chuckles) So anyway, he told a story about his uncle that was allowed to have a glimpse of another form of reality which a lot of us either don't understand, or we don't want to admit exists. See, reality runs in parallels just like everything else. First of all, there is a physical reality and then there is a spiritual reality. The spiritual reality takes in everything. That's the most powerful force there is. I've travelled all over Canada and most of the United States over the past few years. Every now and then I get called to speak to people. A few years back I went down to the midwest United States, in the state of Kansas with a religious group. We did a sweetgrass ceremony to open; it was something like prayer days. These people are very interested in bringing in the North American Indian people into this religious group. I was very enthusiastic when I got there. I figured maybe now the white man is going to listen to us, he is going to hear our

spiritual teachings. Four days later I came away very disappointed. It didn't turn out the way I was made to believe it was going to turn out. Maybe that was a good thing for me.

I carry my pipe with me wherever I go. My pipe has put in thousands of miles over the past few years. I took this interpreter down to Kansas but I wasn't allowed to bring him in to this big gathering. So I realized then that some of these teachings that the Christian followers believe in, they don't really follow them. See, Christ, in my estimation, was the greatest medicine man to ever walk the face of this earth. He was one of the greatest teachers that ever walked the face of the earth. And I have yet to meet somebody that practises those teachings.

We talk about religion and we talk about spiritualism. A person could be religious without being spiritual and a person

could be spiritual without being religious. Religion is a group of laws that are made by, written down by men, human beings like you and I. If we don't follow them, if we disagree with something, we make up our own rules and we make up our own religion. In the true spiritualism, there is no room for that. There is no room for differences. You got to be blind to color. You don't judge a man because his skin is darker than yours. You don't judge a man because he speaks a different dialect or different language than yours. If you are able to put aside those types of discrimination, then you become spiritual. If you count how many religions are in existence today - I don't think I can count that high - seems everybody has their own religion. The Indian spiritualism, it's a hard life, very hard to follow. These are teachings, they are not rules and regulations that are written down by man, mankind. Whatever regulations there are, are dictated by the laws of creation.

I've been around to a lot of reserves, travelling around seeing sick people, physically sick people. I've travelled with Joe Yellowhead who I consider a very knowledgeable man in the medical knowledge that our people passed on through the ages. We've been able to help people get better again, physically. But I've also come across a type of sickness that a lot of us are afflicted with today. And that type of sickness is called jealousy, hatred. Every case I've come across where bad medicine has been used against my fellow Indians stems from this sickness, this hatred and jealousy. There is a man that talked about vandalism today. There is two types of vandalism; one where you go around destroying public property, somebody else's property. There is also that other type of vandalism; it's called character vandalism. Go around preaching hatred, calling down your fellow man. That type of sickness, I don't know a cure for it. I can't help people with that kind of illness. Only the Creator can do that, directly, by direct intervention.

So the other things that we're faced with in the world today - see, this seminar was labelled to be a medicine conference.

Maybe there is some confusion in some people's minds whether it is a medicine conference. Let me assure you that it is a medicine conference. What we're trying to do is trying to achieve two kinds of cures at a gathering like this. When you listen to these elders, the teachings that they pass on to you, if you listen and if you listen well, if you absorb these teachings, then your very spirit is the one that's going to be cured. The other part of the medicine - there are some people here that came for physical help - we'll do our best to accommodate that also. But I have yet to meet a medicine person, man or woman, that does not call on the higher power to effect a cure. Every medicine man I do does these things. The first person he asks for help is the Creator and the spirits that are placed for that very purpose. See, there is not only

one spirit, there is not only two. There is legions of spirits. Each one of these spirits has been given a responsibility. Sometimes when we pray if there is a rain coming on and it's going to spoil what you're going to do, you can ask, direct intervention that rain will stay away until you're finished what you have to do. That's the power, so the same holds for medicine. There are spirits that look after your mind and there are spirits that look after your body and all these people have to be called in. That's what the medicine men do and the medicine women. These are truly spiritual people.

I have yet to hear a medicine man say, "I cured that person." or, "I cured those people over there." There is no such power, no man has that kind of power. But sometimes these spirits pick out a certain individual that's going to handle this power properly. They use him so they can help these sick people. During my travels, I've seen a lot of native people, native groups and it saddens me to see what I have seen. Even our Indian leadership seems are preoccupied with controlling other people's lives. That too is a form of illness. It's hard to overcome those things. Those kinds of lessons were brought over by these western Europeans. And these people have started wars that just about wiped out everybody on the face of this earth. So now we've accepted those teachings and the Indian people themselves are trying to destroy each other. That is why it's very crucial, very important at this time to start turning back to the teachings that these old people bring to us.

See, there is one enemy that every man has, every man, woman, and child. And that enemy is time. Time doesn't stop for anyone, it keeps on going. The greatest evil that a man can do is not to make use of that time. So you young people, you're young right now and in the prime of life. But that time, that little clock keeps ticking away. If you don't listen now to these elders, when the time comes that you're considered elders, you won't know anything. That's the greatest danger there is.

I was growing up on our reserve, I was caught in a real

dilemma. I went to these federal schools where a religious order of people were teaching us the white man's education. After that school was out, I'd go home. I lived with my grandmother who was an invalid. One day I got home, I was feeling pretty bad because of something that happened at this school. I was sent up in front of the class to read out of a book, a white man's book. And this religious person started laughing at me, laughing at the accent I had. And I still realize I have that accent. He started ridiculing my language, started ridiculing my grandmother and all the old people that were living on the reserve. I went home and I felt pretty bad. My grandmother, being the wise person that she was, she realized there was something wrong. Anyway, we had supper and after supper she told me, "Sit down, I want to ask you something. "(Ojibway)," she says, "What's wrong with you?" I

said, "Oh, nothing, (Ojibway)." "Alright, (Ojibway), there is something wrong." So I told her about this school teacher that made fun of my accent. My grandmother just threw her head back and laughed. "If you are worried about that then you got no problems at all," she told me. "You just prove to that person, you speak two languages, she only speaks one. That means you're smarter than she is. I would like this teacher to come in here and speak to me in my own language then I'll laugh at her." So that took the sting out of this very deep hurt I felt at the time. So now I don't worry about my accent. As long as I don't have an accent in my own language, I'm satisfied. And I speak my own language fluently. And it was the elders that taught me that, I didn't learn it from a book. Nobody hit me with a strap several times a day. I learned it from the old people, my elders. And that's why I value the friendship of these elders. A lot of them, ever since I was a kid, have talked to me at their own level. I never heard an elder talk down to me like you talk down to a small child. Some of the greatest chiefs on our reserve used to talk to me at their own level. That's the way you have to talk to your children. Children are little people, we have to help them along because to a small child, the world is awfully challenging, scary. It's big, everything is big.

My grandmother never read a psychology book because my grandmother couldn't speak or write English. Told me one time, "If you ever have children of your own, when you talk to these children, don't stand up and talk to them and look down at them. You pick that little child up, bring them up to your level or you get down on the floor and talk to him at his level." Four years ago I read a manual on psychology. There was a passage on child psychology. Those words that my grandmother taught me thirty some years ago, were only written about ten years ago by some white man, a highly paid psychologist. All of these teachings that these elders give to us, you'll find them written in psychology, sociology manuals. Some of them are fairly recent theories. Our people have been using these methods for thousands of years, teaching children. But somehow, because of today, the way society is structured, we have put aside these old people. Ernest talked about an old age home on Manitoulin. Sometimes I've been critical of the

old age home that's on my reserve. I've been critical of it. I will continue to be critical of it. Some of the best friends I ever had are in there right now - institutionalized. When I grew up, I saw those people are free spirits. The only laws that they followed were the laws of creation, and the laws of survival. An old medicine man that taught me most of what I know about natural medicines is in there right now. I can't visit him anymore. This institution destroyed his mind because they took away his freedom. I have gone to this nursing home, this old age home, and I can't stay in there more than ten

minutes. It really hits me hard to see these old people. They've been put aside like you put away junk - someplace that you're not going to use anymore.

Well, let me tell you, friends, these people are not junk. In fact, that's the most valuable asset we have in today's times, is these old people. So, if we start showing them some of the respect that they deserve, we'd be much better off for it. The Indian knowledge we possess doesn't even compare to what these people carry around with them. Doesn't cost any money to get that knowledge. All it costs is....

(End of Side B)

(End of Conference 1982-1 tape)

INDEX TERM	IH NUMBER	DOC NAME	DISC #	PAGE #
CHILDREN				
-raising of	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	6,17
CHRISTIAN CHURCHES				
-and Indian religion	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	14
CRAFTS				
-canoe making	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	5,6
DEATH				
-graveyards, grave sites	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	7,8,9,10
DEATH				
-spirits of the dead	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	9
DEATH				
-suicide	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	10
DISEASE AND ILLNESS				
-tuberculosis	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	9
EDUCATION				
-and cultural suppression	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	11
EDUCATION				
-traditional	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	6
ELDERS				
-as teachers	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	15,16,17
ELDERS				
-respect for	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	13,18
FAMILY				
-care of elderly	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	17,18
FISHING				
-techniques	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	7

HOUSING				
-log houses	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	9
HUNTING				
-regulations	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	7
INDIAN-FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS				
-negotiations	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	7
MEDICINE AND CURING PRACTICES				
-and plant remedies	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	4,13
MEDICINE AND CURING PRACTICES				
-prayer	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	12,13
MEDICINE MEN AND WOMEN				
-powers of	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	16
RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY				
-Christian religions	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	12
(vs.)				
RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY				
-revival of	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	10,11,12
RESERVES				
-loss of	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	7
SPIRITS				
-Nanabush (Ojibway)	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	4
TRANSPORTATION				
-canoe	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	5
VALUES				
-loss of	IH-OM.14	CONF 1982-1	87	13