

ALASKA ESKIMO WHALING COMMISSION HEARING
September 11, 1977

Charles
Edwardsen,
r.

Let us now begin our testimonies which must be told without any flaws. This very morning that Hearing Officer sure didn't want us to tell the truth. But now it is time for us to tell the Taniks the Inupiat ways without any changes or any lies. The truth must be corrected in their papers with your testimonies today about our whales. Everyone coming down must sign their name which will record the testimonies. If any of these testimonies are turned down, we will turn the testimonies in and file suit against them for falsifying our true live style. This is our hearing today, anybody may come forward and face the crowd to testify by signing their name. Each person willing to testify can do so, I want to encourage you to give your testimony this morning because they did us wrong. This meeting is being held in our Inupiaq language which tells our strength without any flaws. Whoever would like to testify may start now. (applause)

Vincent
Nageak, Sr.

Are we talking about whales?

Charles

Yes, and we are starting now so come forward.

Vincent

I never like to keep quiet but I haven't spoken in a while. First, I want to ask a question because I want to make sure I understand. Have they actually stopped our whale hunting?

Charles

Yes.

Vincent

And can the government kill a whale?

Charles

Other countries can hunt whales. The conservationists started working on this in 1972 until today knowing about the Inupiaq's hunting whales and wanting to stop them. What we are learning right now is what your government has been working on since the 1st part of June. While in Washington, D.C., I found this out. Also they had had a meeting in Australia in which 16 countries represented said that the Inupiat whaling has to stop and that they must give it up because they are killing off all the whales. When we found all the facts we called a meeting of all Inupiaqs and let them know we will not give up our whale hunting. And after doing so, we again told them that they are being foolish in Washington D.C. When they came to hear the Inupiat this morning, their Recording Secretary was unable to understand the Inupiat language. This Hearing will be our answer, from the Inupiat's view about our lifestyle that we will not give up whaling for the United States. They can do what they wish. We will start now and we must be outspoken.

Vincent

Okay, I understand now being alive and living with you as Inupiat, with one God who is our strength, keeping Him in mind while we are at this meeting. He will lead us because He is our leader. The people that called the meeting asked us in desperation, and who do we turn to? To God. Let us pray. (Prayer in Inupiat) The first time I started hunting whales was when I was a boy, also other boys that are now here with me. When whalers from time immemorial wounded a whale, they make sure that they killed it. When they were successful they divided and shared the whole whale. Even since boyhood we got a share. We were there to perform menial tasks for the crew, such as getting blubber for the needy to use in their stoves. The whole whale is cut up and the baleen, which is the only item that can be sold, is sold to whoever they find that will buy it. After the

price has been set by the trader they are traded for the needed items such as ammunition. We would be happy when the whalers are successful and each crew would clean the baleen themselves. When the crew is unable to clean them, Charlie Brower would get them cleaned for a wage. The baleen was cleaned so we could be able to sell them to the Taniks. We worked for one person for wages cleaning and taking care of them. We would get paid only after the baleen had been tied up and was drying. The meat itself is never sold then, but was always shared with visitors from other villages. I often heard that when there are visitors, they should be given muktuk or meat. It is never kept for oneself only. From the time I can remember that is how it is. The only part they keep track of is the main Captain's share. My father told me, as a whaler, that this captain's share must be kept for use during Thanksgiving and Christmas festivals. But when a visitor is to be given blubber from this share the whole crew must be consulted first. It is not up to me to give it out alone. Because that share has been given to me without any charges by the whole crew to share with everyone. We cannot go without this sharing. Anybody here in Barrow with a relative inland such as Anaktuvuk or Fairbanks will send them some without selling it so that they can have a taste of something knowing that they relish, love and miss it.

The blubber is something we Inupiat cannot go without. It is something we have been eating from time immemorial with everything we eat. Because we can't just go out and pick greens although they do grow in other parts of Alaska. Here, even just looking outside, there is none. When spring comes all of us Inupiat will start preparing and go out. Even times of starvation would come close to the whalers at the beginning. But there is always the blubber which we can't go without. As soon as the smoke from the chimney at the whalers' camp is visible, people will come, hoping for a share of the blubber and a hot drink. They might have the Coleman stove but they don't want to waste the gas when they are out on the lead. In case they ever got stranded that is their only means to survival. That is what we already have to go through, there are a lot of people that don't realize it. I went through it, Tommy Brower knows it. The only reason we hunt in the spring time is for the meat, fuel for stove to keep our children warm. Hunting for walrus or anything with blubber, even beluga. When they do catch a whale, each person's share does not last until the next whale, because the conditions are not always right.

When the conditions are not right, it is impossible to catch a whale even though there are many whales sighted. When they do start traveling close, the crews go after them. Once a whale is wounded, the crew makes sure it is caught and not lost; even though other crews can go after other whales. That crew wants to make sure the wounded whale is not lost. The crews who are not alert get reprimanded by the elders. - - and this would be an embarrassing situation.

And now we find out we cannot hunt whales: us, who are without plants, who can only hunt in the spring time for food, who are raised by the meat of the animals, your animals, who are not raised by eating vegetables, only with animal meat. For those of you who live on the coast as far as Pt. Hope, that meat is your livelihood. When the seals are scarce and the walrus comes, we do catch walrus sometimes. Going back to the white people, they can pick off vegetables for their food, and as long as there is food for sale they buy food for their children. But for us, we need animal meat. If they stop our whaling, our craving for oil would be too strong. As for me I cannot go without oil very long.

Because I was raised on oil. Eating meat without oil is not appetizing at all.

Who is the final authority on whales? Is it the white people? No, it is our one and only God. He gives the whale to anyone he wishes to bless and that person will kill it. Even if they get several whales, none of the whale will be wasted. Even during butchering, they are thinking of their relatives in Kotzebue, Kivalina, inland, Anaktuvuk Pass and they will not forget them until they have sent a portion. They know they need the oil too. Part of that whale is always shipped since the airplanes have started flying here. But I hear that white man whalers do not catch the whale for food. They do not hunt the whales so they can eat it. They hunt only to make money off of the blubber and probably the other parts, and they throw away the meat we could use for food. And as for you, Inupiat, you know 19 whales were caught this spring and where is the meat from those 19 now? How did all that meat disappear? By selling it? No. The meat disappeared via our stomachs and also to our far away relatives.

The Inupiat have been very wronged by this ban on whaling. It is so wrong, that it hurts; because to you, the Inupiat, the whale is your livelihood. The belugas and the ducks are not as vital as the whale to you. You store them in your cellars as extra supplies, but nowadays even when you bring home ducks, you don't even have time to store them. They are eaten up before you know it. Even though there is a lot of white man's food, people like me, are not used to the white man's food. Food gathering time is short, so we Inupiat hunters hunt without any sleep. This hard labor for oil is done for our relatives elsewhere and for our children. Nowadays, because of our population, each person can have just a little handful from each whale. When I was young person who is able participated on the crew to help in any way he can. And when they catch a whale we are entitled to a share. And if they stop the whaling, we can only live on hardship.

Other countries can still hunt, and you, who use whales only as food are being stopped. Are they getting fewer, as told now? I have been to Hershel Island long ago; and if they are diminishing why are they growing in numbers on this side of Hershel Island? Is this any indication of extinction? When I was there at first, I didn't see even one whale, just belugas. But now, Inupiat east of us are saying there are many whales there, just floating and sleeping; and now there is also word that there are more whales than before around Kotzebue. Are they really diminishing by the looks of it? As for myself, I would not say that they are diminishing. This spring I heard there were many whales passing through both closer and also further out. When I was younger we still use mast sail boats. When leaving on boats we could see indications in the sky that there is ice on the east side of this ice pact and usually the big whales would be over there. We usually do not bother these whales because we are hunting for walrus. Sometimes there are many whales just floating. Last fall I heard that there were many of these whales, and that the people from Barrow were hunting them even though it was a risk. So now where are the meat from those whales? Did we finish them all by selling them? I have never heard of anybody selling it. We eat them, send them out and give them out, or age them for better taste after which they are taken to satisfy our stomachs. I think I have talked enough. The only time the whale can be hunted is in the spring; in the fall it is not always here. During the spring, we catch the daring and the younger whales. In the fall, they all return in various sizes in abundance. So there are a lot of whales we can go after. How is it that the whales are diminishing, when this is their route

Vincent

and you as hunters have not noticed any shortages? But there are outside hunters hunting with ships. They're the ones trying to finish off the whales. It would be best if they are stopped from hunting whales, since they don't hunt for food. But we hunt whales for our food. We should be allowed to continue hunting whales. God made them for us for food, and I know you understand.

Elijah
Kakinya

I am not a whale hunter like him (Vincent). I have not been on a crew like him (Vincent). I am only an inland hunter. I was brought here so my testimony may help. As far back as I can remember people here from Barrow were always bringing blubber to the Nigliq people, and the inland people would give them skins. That is what they used to do long ago. I would not like for the whale hunting to stop here in Barrow because this was being done from time immemorial here in Barrow. That is how I live. Even though I'm not a whale hunter, I was raised on blubber and oil with meat. And did the people from inland buy from their relatives here? The relatives from here would bring the oil to give to the inlanders, and the people from inland places like Anaktuvuk Pass would give them skins, sinews or other things from animals that they had hunted through the winter. That is the way they lived long ago. I am not a whale hunter but I grew up eating oil. Even when I don't come to Barrow, I would hear that Barrow people had caught a whale and, yes, I will again eat oil. And I won't pay for it, - - this was a certainty. Yes, I will eat oil from that whale, and not have to pay for it; my relatives will send me some muktuk and meat. I also don't want whale hunting stopped. I agree with Vincent. Whenever Barrow catches a whale, it doesn't matter which crew, a package will reach us with muktuk and meat. It will arrive with our name on it.

People from Barrow and Anaktuvuk Pass are now related by intermarrying from long ago and that is why we are given meat all the time from our relatives. Anaktuvuk Pass is my home from the beginning. The other one died and the others have left so I am the only one left. I see here descendants of some of the people who were originally from Anaktuvuk Pass, some of them with my blood. This is how I can testify that to this day I have never bought oil or meat from the whale. It is always given to me from relatives. And because of this I certainly would not like to see the whale hunting stopped here in Barrow. I strongly feel like that because the white man's only reason for killing the whale is to make lots of money from the oil. He does not want it for food, just for money. And that is why they don't want you to have your way or succeed in this, you who own the land, you people from Barrow, you, who from time immemorial have always hunted the whale. Long, long ago they hunted it with harpoons, this is what I've heard. And I would not like whale hunting to stop. I was asked to testify about the whales. I have learned to live, I am now 82 years old and because of that I must know how to live. I must know right from wrong. An Inupiaq is not like a white man in his diet. An Inupiaq cannot satisfy his hunger without oil even though he is eating other things too. So how can you stop hunting the whale? I know you can't stop. You will not stop. Keep hunting the whale so long as they don't stop you. Eating without oil does not last. Even though I'm an inlander, I was raised on oil, because my father was a concerned provider who also couldn't go without oil. This is so for our people; nobody here can live without oil, as Vincent said, our white man government is foolishly wrong to see the oil only as a way to get money. I second his feeling about that. I too cannot go without oil.

Elijah

Nowadays, I don't take it in the morning but come lunch time it must be there, and also at suppertime. Did I buy it? It was given and sent to me by my relatives here in Barrow. I testify to this...they have gotten a whale in Barrow... I will eat oil; I am certain of this....I will eat muktuk, and meat. I say thank you to people here. Even though I am not a whale hunter I get the muktuk and meat, because of the way our people from Barrow and my home are. This is our strength. People in Barrow can catch the whale and the people inland have been accepting the meat and muktuk. That is why you should never have to stop whale hunting. Our white men are unmindful and they are wrong, so wrong. The Inupiat do not eat plants, only game that has to be gotten first. The game we hunt is all we grow up on. That is how I was raised from the time I was able to hunt. I had a father who was against wasting food. We always ate it all. That's the kind of father I had, who treasured meat for food. And because I had such a father, that is how I am too. I would like very much to be of help to Barrow people about the whaling but I am nothing. I want you to follow in the footsteps and ways of our elders of long ago. I don't want the whale hunting stopped because it is our livelihood. Thank you for letting me come to testify. My people up there are not outspoken and thank you for picking me to come here. Their reason being that they don't really know ways of long ago. But me, I know, I am 82 years old and my wife is 81, because both of us know how to treat our stomachs. (applause)

Otis
AKivgak

I am grateful that I might be of help here and that I am able to speak. Because a person has been given at least his breath by his Maker up to today, even though he is not well in body. I am thankful. I am one of those people raised with survival in mind. We were raised living on game and we learned this from our parents, hunting either on land or at sea or anywhere. I lived as a nomad then, inland, and I am glad that we opened by talking about our God because we do not survive without Him. Even when living among people who don't believe, our life is still not up to us; we have a Leader, the Maker of all things, this is what a person knows. When a person is going to be hunting, God is remembered first. Not by our own will but by His will who is strong, that we have heard of and know of. When I am preparing to go whale hunting, even though I am not a very good person (you know me), I look to God and pray first and when this is done there are no hardships, He is with us. This goes for the people who help. We never have money to pay them. When it is time for sewing together the new skin cover for the boat, the sewers are the ones who are praying and hoping for the good hunt. Their pay comes when we are successful, because they have been heard by the Lord. That is the reason they get a share of the whale and they had been expecting and knowing that meat and muktuk would be given to them.

Why and for what reason is our white-people government now battling us? We know the people before us have always tried to make a living and we have learned from them. The government people are now only following their minds; only their human will. They are not following God. But with God's help, it is certain: He is the only way. Even when times are very hard he eases them for anybody. From time immemorial we've learned from whale hunters and watching them I have learned a little and even though I don't follow them hunting anymore, I urge my children not to stop. I urge them because when they do go down I wait for their success.

otis

They have finally left and they have taken my place, in a sense. They will bring me food. We, who don't live on plants, are always looking forward to their harvest of meat when they go out hunting, no matter where, hoping they catch us food. It is hard to be manipulated from far away by the whiteman government. They are battling us. They are like soldiers. They are being foolish, and they are not to be followed. If they want to do something to me I'm at their disposal, I cannot run away. After I learned to hunt, my father died and that is all I did. Hunt. When I could have been going to school, I was just hunting. My younger brothers and sisters, Ekowana, Nuliatchiaq, Magniq, and my older sister and my mother were the ones I had to hunt for, for their food. I would have learned or studied if I had just gone to school but I had to find their supper which otherwise would not be there. They would always be thinking, maybe I will catch a seal for our supper. So now I don't know the English language, even though I understand very little from the short time I was in school.

This whaling has started and it will not stop. Bearing the cross, the strength of the Maker, you must continue to fight them. You will not only fight them, but your God will be there. He will listen. I feel so hurt thinking of our children just growing and fighting for survival while other countries can freely hunt. How will we live? This is not right, it is very wrong, their battling us. Because the animal - whether big or small, bearded seal, or seal or ducks is our means of life. They are always shared and given by relatives. And it is not only their doing, their thoughts are led by God. You find yourself being grateful, when you no longer can hunt, and still food is being brought to you and given to you. These people who give the food are among you here sitting with you and they are to be thanked very much and I hope that they still will be successful in their hunts. A person is never alone during his hunting. When he tries to go by his own will because he thinks he can, is not successful. He is not remembering the only One person who will help him. He might be able to kill the small animals on land but the whale is a hard and difficult one to catch. When the whale doesn't want to be caught, the hunter cannot catch him. The hunter has a Leader [and the whales know] which is their Maker. I would like to really urge you, like soldiers also, and our soldier is God, so with Him as leader do your best.

M. J. Aiken

Although I'm not very old I would like to speak before you go too far into your testimonies. I would like to tell you why the government is trying to stop your whale hunting. Starting from the land claims settlement I've been going to meetings there where the laws are made, learning a little about them, listening to them. And right now, I know a little about their reasoning. I'll do my best to tell you that. The law was made five years ago that they would send us \$467.5 million. It might already be gone and some of them down there are thinking "those people up there who we spent that much money on already, how can they be worried for food? We'll take their money, they have already gotten rich. Now we'll get rich off of them because we have already sent them that much money. They have about a billion dollars [with the \$500 million more from Alaska]" That is why they are trying to stop so many things. They have already stopped our caribou hunting, or they are limiting it. "We are the ones to sell the Eskimos meat", they think. Why are we letting them get away with such things? There are other people trying to

Lesley

sell us meat. The lawmakers are reading these letters every day. Right now I'm letting off my thoughts. They have already started this and if you can speak up we must back up our elders who are testifying against stopping the whale hunt. Especially you younger people must act. I also have learned about Inupiat ways, about hunting for food and eating game for breakfast, lunch and supper. I was raised on not eating plants, only meat. It really hasn't been that long, I'm only 51 years old but I did want to let you know my thoughts of why they are doing this. When we don't have anymore money and they have stopped all our hunting, what are we going to have, unless we testify and be heard right now. The money will be gone, it won't last many years. We will have had to spend it on meat. We will be buying great amounts of meat from outside with our money, this is what they are thinking and waiting for. I know the lawmakers receive letters and I have seen it and they are so big its hard to oppose them. Whenever a person stays quiet and doesn't fight they write laws without consulting him, making it so it can't be understood without first using the dictionary word for word. It stands like that unless a person finds out first. If these laws to stop our hunting are written where we don't understand them we will be stopped. I want you to back these elders and this is the reason I'm telling you this because I too love meat, the Inupiat food and to this day I cannot go without it. When I started eating white mans' food, not frozen meat which is used to eat everyday, that is when I started getting fat. When I stopped eating all Inupiat food. This is what I wanted to tell you to back these elders up in their testimonies.

Thomas
Brower, Sr.
Brower,

I also have something to say and you all know my father was a white man. My mother was Inupiaq and I also have uncles who are Inupiat who taught me how to live as an Inupiat. Because they said if I don't know how an Inupiaq lives and try to make a living here I wouldn't last. Those words I heard and, when these words were passed to my father he didn't forbid it when my uncles wanted to take me on their hunts even though I was young. I was 11 years old when they started taking me out and my father didn't forbid it because I have to know how to live in this cold country and this is what I must learn from these men my uncles. That I must learn how to hunt. To begin with, my father, when he came here to the Inupiaq, married an Inupiaq, he does not take Inupiaqs word as nothing [as frivolous], he held it in high esteem because he became part of them, a relative of them. They were not really his original background people, but they were the people he will be living with. That is the reason many Inupiat people turned to my father, respecting him, because they found out that he will teach them in return what he had learned outside and pass it on to them and for that reason they respected him.

This is how it was when I was growing up. When they have been out hunting and when they brought their catch to him he didn't try to trade with them at first. He told them to visit his wife: "Go eat first and then we will do our trading", this was his word. While then growing up I know his first reason for coming here was to find out the prospect in the whaling industry. Only the baleen was important for land stations like Barrow, but with ships the blubber of the whale was also important. I participated during those years when we would sail out to the pack ice looking for whales, not bothering with the whales close to the land. During the latter part of September they would take us out toward Siberia or Wrangell Island, or Hershel Island. Lots of new ice would be there, with

many leads open with heavy ice as permanent ground beyond. And in the main water there would be whales floating and these were the whales we hunted with ships. Right now we are concerned with Inupiaq meat that we were raised on. Even though I have a white man for a father, my stomach is an Inupiaq stomach. Without oil, without fermented Inupiaq meat I couldn't live ever.

Going back to the government, in either 1896, 1894 or the 1900's they brought the reindeer here so the crews in the ships that might be wrecked here in Barrow would not starve because of animal shortage. When they brought the reindeer, the reindeer was first meant for the Inupiaq. And those reindeer that were yours, each person having a herd, until BIA came in with their laws forming a coop, taking the herds, and putting them in incapable hands. Then how long did the herds last? I used to take care of reindeer herds. In the fall I would be glad when the bull reindeer would travel to the beaches toward the coal mine because they would breed at this time. In the fall, we would segregate the caribou so they wouldn't breed with the reindeer. For this is the time they are followed and joined by the reindeer. Now we say that the reindeer is gone: I have seen caribou and reindeer breeding together. After these young fellas came, who were just trying to earn money and really not caring for the reindeer, after the government took the reindeer away from the owners. The caribou interbred with them, the whole coastal area is now without reindeer, all the way to Noatak, the mouth of the Yukon River and as far as Barter Island. These are the reindeer they talk about. They are nothing. I say they are nothing. If one person had taken care of them properly they would be running still.

When the work on oil started, since my father died, the young men who were looking for oil were startling the reindeer with their vehicles. While my three unmarried sons were here in Barrow for supplies, the oil men chased the reindeer off boundaries. The Ikpikpak was the boundary line for the companies and once the reindeer crossed we had to ask permission to retrieve the reindeer from other company owners. We were told "no, you cannot". The BIA has seen this, their own doing, this last thing that they themselves instigated which didn't work out, and they couldn't face up to it. They were only happy to see it not work out and they forbade us to cross the boundaries. I tried talking them into it saying that I will give all the unmarked ones to the company for a new start. No, it will not be like that. That was the end of our reindeer.

So now, you are being given orders? laws? regulations from the so-called protectors of caribou, whalers and those who call themselves game management people -- after they practically TOOK away -- the only animals you yourselves herded. When the reindeer joined with the caribou, as you know in your hearts, the bigger part is the reindeer, your reindeer. So now they are being regulated. Since you didn't take care of them they are now being called caribou. This summer while camping I watched my grandson at the edge of our drinking water lake, splashing around. He is the son of my youngest son. While I was sitting on the lee side of the house this boy said, "Grandpa, here is a caribou coming". I watched that caribou come close by the house and he stood close to the boy, just watching him, and finally, thinking a caribou does not usually come this close and be so inquisitive and daring, and thinking that the caribou might hurt the boy, I picked up a bolt action type 22 gun and I started getting very close to the caribou. I kept watching the boy and finally

I hit the hood of the vehicle with the gun and when he turned to look at me I recognized the mark on him, our reindeer's mark. This was one reindeer who might have recognized the scent, and wanting to be close to a human again it had come to us. When I had a herd of reindeer they would always come whenever they would come on my leeward side, sniffing me on the body, because they missed a human being. I shot that caribou in the body and after a few steps when it died I called my wife and daughter-in-law to come down and see the ear (where it was marked). After my wife went to it she said, "look at that, one of our reindeer herd had come home". Twenty years has passed but there are still reindeer with marks living with the caribou.

We think back to the way we live, the Inupiaq, living along the coast, and to the way we are manipulated. When this land was bought, the Inupiaq was not bought. I have never heard of a law which said that the Inupiaq was not bought. I have never heard of a law which said that the Inupiaq were bought. But the people who they bought the land from told them that these Inupiat who are already there, who live there, will not be manipulated. They will be respected. When Christianity first came up here all the Inupiat as far as I knew would go to church. Some of them who worked for my father used to be shamans. My father said one time, to test one of them, "The weather used to be changed (by shamans), why don't you let it get windy?" This old man came to my father and looking up at him with tears in his eyes told my father calling him by name "Charlie, when Christianity came to us I accepted it and I would like to forget the old way of life". My father said to him, "I will never again say that to you. I respect you as a person. You have said what I wanted to hear. I will not try to make a fool of you again about it." This is the kind of thing I grew up in. I had a white man father and Inupiaq mother. Many times, now, the law makers look to me and ask if I couldn't have a say about things to help my people, to represent them. I am now speaking from my heart and if the Inupiaq way of life were to be changed now it would be a hardship.

There are no growing things (plants) we can pick. But the One person watches us and provides for us. This One person, the Inupiaq gratefully respect. You heard these elders speak: when there is some extra it is sent out to relatives. And I say here and now that our population is growing: people from other places are moving in and it will keep happening to the whole coast of Alaska. There will be laws and regulations limiting our hunts. We know now that some animals are getting fewer and these things we will all hear about. If it has to be so I would really like it if there is some good in it for you the younger generation. We the older generation had others before us too and they are now gone and there are not many of us older generation now, just a very few. What we went through and our way of life we leave to you and if you will keep it alive you must work together. Should just one group of hunters get many game? Or will there be a limit of one per crew like the limit on caribou? If there should be a limit of one animal (whale) will there be several people with guns with marks on them as captains shooting to claim their catch [limit of one] Is this how it will be? These are the things you must think about. These regulations might not be for long. When I participated during the commercial whaling times, the head of the harpoon is marked for identification and also the bomb which is shot into the whale also has the mark of identification. These were the only ones with identifications. In case the rope should break off that bomb which first hit the whale with that mark on it will be the identification.

Thomas

The bombs used to shoot the already wounded animal are not marked. So I am telling you this which I learned then, there was no question as to who that whale belongs to. Only the first bomb to hit the whale is marked. The time will come when you must have to worry about such things. The coast is getting very heavily populated and it will be even more populated. Here in Barrow alone there are now close to forty boats out whale hunting, and because of this I think you should think of these regulations and others when it is getting harder to hunt, so you will do the right thing.

As for me my body is still Inupiaq, my stomach is still Inupiaq so the words of these three elders who spoke before me would be the same words used by those who are already dead who were great hunters. Those who have passed on from among you, your fathers and your grandfathers, they are the ones you are now hearing through our words, through the few of us left. Hoping to be of help, this is what I give to you. But when the animals are coming by we hear they are counting them. They come by via different routes, closer in and farther out, sometimes there are none on the closer lead because they are traveling on the lead farther out, going east. When they start saying how few the whales have become, that there are "only 300" I am reminded how in the fall I hunt whales below the islands east of us. Sometimes I go after one, sometimes two bubbles. Seeing these I know here are whales. When I get there it is usually every very muddy because there are so many whales, sometimes 5, 10, 15 whales would come up right after each other when they startled. And when they start traveling there would be 30, 60, 70, 90 whales would go by after I had seen only 2 bubbles (indications) (signs). For this reason I never believe when they say that there are only 300 or 1,000 whales now. There is something wrong somewhere. They always point at the Inupiaq, something which is always to try to hinder the Inupiaq. I wanted to pass on to you what was taught to me by my father, my uncles, which I have already lived through. Thank you.

Daniel
Leavitt

I am not very old, but old enough. I am 61 years old. I understand everyone who has spoken, they didn't speak English, they talked about their way of life. I have an older brother. We were raised learning from these people who testified, being taught the Inupiaq way of life. We haven't lived with our father since we were 11 years old. We worked for Tom's father living with our grandparents. We never went to school. And my grandfather was my teacher about the Inupiaq's way of life. The way a man, standing tall, would live. And right now I will say this to you. You young people, having gone to school, having been educated, you are not above these elders with white hairs. The elders already know the way of life you now have reached. They know what is coming tomorrow and how to live through it. And I believe the 3 people, with Tom as the 4th, who spoke to us. They were taught too. My grandfather who I'm going to talk about can make a living with just the pole with a spear which is used for testing the ice while hunting, and hunting seal. He didn't use a gun. He would fill up a cellar catching seals through the blow hole. He can kill these whales we are now talking about with just the harpoon without guns. He would kill whales like that being just a crew member until he decided to get a crew together himself to see how many he can kill and to prove he can kill more than anyone. When he went whale hunting that spring he harpooned many whales but never killed them. That is what these people were telling us, that we need God's help. That grandfather of mine was a shaman, who raised me. He was able to become a weasel, he had a bear in him, and he also can put an animal

to sleep by following his tracks and singing to him. One time putting my back to him, while he was sitting he said to me, "My grandson, if you can learn this song, it is not a sin, I will sing it once. you keep your back to me, if you don't learn it it's okay." He sang it and it wasn't very long but there was only one word I could remember. It wasn't meant for me to learn it. This is now my grandfather raised me: "Grandson, there won't be any animals left for you to hunt," he would say pulling away my pillows, pulling me out of my bedding. So I could be a man he said, be a man and follow the hunters as they hunt and that is why I follow along and hunt so people who are able can get shares. These elders who spoke before you, lived like animals (hunting for food and survival) in those days. I was among them for maybe a few days. An animal after being curled up for the night, goes out hunting for his food, and after eating, goes to sleep again for the night. This is the way of life they told us about. And since this is our way of life, we don't want to stop our hunting animals, we don't want to stop our whale hunting. That is the kind of life, like animals, our people had long ago.

I've gone through starvations, going without food for days, and these times helped to strengthen me. As for the blubber (oil) they were talking about, after going without it for days I bravely (shamefully) went to my uncle because I want oil -- to Tom, who spoke before me. He didn't say anything but gave me a seal poke half filled with oil. He said I will not buy it but that he is giving it to me so we can return to good health again. And this oil, from a whale, helped my people who were starving, losing strength, to get back to health enough to be able to hunt again. Some of you might remember this instance. Bert Okakok knows about it. Wesley should know about it too because he used to follow our hunts. We never carried much food supplies. And you young people, you're smart, you're educated, you heard both English and Inupiaq ways of life, you understand both. So why are you letting yourselves be taken, why are you letting them stop our whale hunting? You know how to speak English; you can understand English. My understanding will be like that, straight forward, not to obey regulations nor be afraid to be put in jail. Even though it must be nice to live to be 82 years old, this 82 year-old is alert, lively, his words are precious. He looks like he's ready to run around. And us here who just now passed 60, we thought we were old, but we are still young and as long as we don't loose our hunting our bodies will be just as strong as his. I know, and I wouldn't lie, that I can live both ways. So are you, you are like that, you can live both ways. So we don't want to lose our whale hunting, we want to keep it. I am ready to leave anytime to go whale hunting. My boat is ready anytime. I don't have much more to say but I want to urge you young people, this is what you must learn, what these elders have told us. I have it, it was taught to me by my grandfather. My grandfather was dying for 3 days and after those 3 days he turned to Christianity and gave himself to God. A person who lives without God has no one to help, no peace of mind and this is my testimony.

Bert Okakok

Since we're talking about whale hunting, I grew up participating in the whaling crews. I was still a crybaby when I started going whale hunting. My uncle, Qinaqtaq, would bring me along pulling me on a sled and when they are rowing

and I get sleepy he would put me on his lap and put me to sleep. Here they are working hard and here he had in mind to teach me and as it turned out I wasn't a very good learner. And when we no longer can see whales on this closer lead, as soon as weather permits, and as soon as it no longer gets dark, they would row, (there were no motors then) all day long to go farther out to the lead, even though you couldn't see it. Once there, we would hunt for whales, rowing, we would go below the point (Point Barrow) hunting for whales and when we would start for home it would be rough going with rough water, usually no ice, maybe a few pieces. When we get hungry we cooked with coals. We didn't have Coleman stoves then to play around with. I was in on those ancient whale hunting ways. I was very young, but I can't say what my age was: I was still at that cryable age; that Vincent always made me cry. That is the way our elders then treated us, even through hardships, they would hunt for our food, food for the future, and thinking of people who were poorer than them. Not everybody, then, was a hunter, but the ones who hunt always shared their food. You already heard these elders speaking of those who lived on animals only, and nowadays we don't live on animals only. When we are short of something we run to the store, where we can find many things but the Inupiaq food is something we can't go without. Even when we eat the whiteman's food we are usually not satisfied but eating the Inupiaq food is filling to satisfaction. And you all know me, some food don't agree with me anymore, I get sick often. My stomach is not very strong now anymore. And now I only eat Inupiaq food because my stomach agrees with it. And also I can't go without oil. I eat blubber everyday. I can't eat seal oil now but I eat whale blubber, the only thing keeping me alive.

I also didn't believe whoever counted whales. In those times when they don't see whales on this side they go way out to hunt whales. That is where many whales travel so far away we can't see them from up here. You already heard these remarks about different routes whales take. There are more whales far out than there are on the lead close by. These elders who testified are teaching us the good way of life we should follow. They are telling us about fighting for our rights against those lawmakers who are trying to stop our whale hunting. That meat and oil are some things that we can't go without. When whale hunting is stopped we will starve because we are not able hunt seals and bearded seals. The whiteman government will not take care of us, they will not care if we starve. For that reason let us back up the people who are trying to help us to continue our whale hunting, when they ask for help let us help them as much as we can.

Charles
Edwardsen,
Jr.

After a 10 minut break Arnold Brower and Jacob Adams will talk to you about the whaling captains meetings.

Arnold Brower,
Sr.

You all know me, I am Arnold Brower, Sr. I also made it to the times that these elders were telling you about. I was a boy helper to Vincent and I started learning from him, watching my elders whal hunting and following along. I believe in their word about hunting. When I try to do it my own way it usually doesn't work out right. Their teachings about whales -- that they could detect danger, that they could smell -- these teachings I found out were true by my own doings (by not always minding their teachings).

Their teachings are all true, the whale can smell, see and hear. This I have found out myself. From way back, from the time I could remember, these people respect that animal, the hunting of it, and knowing that it takes special know how, any noise or playing around is forbidden at whale hunting camps. Because the whale is the center of their livelihood, their food, the center of their festivals. They must eat it every day. And Barrow is the route of the whale since time immemorial. In the spring, in April, it travels east. During spring I have heard that there are 3 types of whales traveling. First the small speedy ones; then, around May the next bigger size and these would be many and during this time is when the whale hunters would get their biggest catch. Then the big ones with calves and the right whales would be last. This spring, as usual, we watched these whales travelling from April to June. They travel by clockwork, just like they can tell time. We start expecting to see them at daybreak and once we see the first one they all follow. Even when the lead closes they still travel east. I am a witness to these facts, which have already been told and which I had already heard about from my elders.

The whale is really the center of our life, we tell stories about it, it brings festivities, the nalukataq, feasting when the whaling hunt is over. This is the only thing the Inupiat has. They don't have anything else. This is the thing that the whale hunters try their best for, and they don't think of money. Right away the successful hunter starts getting ready for this, so the people might enjoy themselves and have fun. The whale is very dear to the people up here. They've had it from the beginning and for that reason I would not like to see the end to that. Even when we try to change things, no, the elders tell us to keep it as it is, because it has been like that from the beginning. It is a vital part of our life in so many ways. Here in Barrow the whale travels through twice a year in the spring and in the fall. In the fall, in September, they travel by till the ocean freezes over. When conditions are right we kill some of them. Fall time hunting is hard since they usually are far out and we have a hard time bringing them in and the meat spoils sometimes. But there are people who are always trying to make things difficult for other people, and the only thing those people see in writing are about the meat spoiling. These things are the things that are now hurting us Inupiat. They see this spoiling and they see us as wasteful. Even though we are trying and doing our very best to store it all away, some of the meat spoils. I completely back up what Vincent Nageak, Elijah Kakinga, Bert Okakok and Otis Ahkivgak told you about our way of life which has been from the beginning. I want it left alone. I want whale hunting to continue unless they find a valid reason to stop it, something valid to show that it is becoming extinct, so that we could see it with our own eyes that there are only very few whales.

I never said that I want to eat the very last whale when I testified in Washington, D.C. When I was there I saw, in writing, this desperation about how the whale is becoming extinct, and this writing had been happening without us knowing about it. It had been written without our knowledge, without first consulting us, and it was being taken to a meeting in Australia on the other side of the world. "The whales are becoming extinct; it's best for Inupiat to stop whale hunting." These words were part of what was being taken as records of testimony to that meeting. We found this out just before the delegate left. We were luckily informed about this otherwise we would never have known. This plot was prepared by those people down there without first consulting our way of life and without first

finding out how this would affect our life and how it would be here without the whale. They did not worry about the bad affect it would have on our lives. Their only worry was that the whale was becoming extinct so they were going to stop the Inupiat from hunting. This is what was down on paper and this is what made us seek your help. When I was there the last time we met again trying to find out more about it and trying to find the good in it. Etok was there and others were there and the lawmakers were there, the big bosses were there and the Assistant Secretary of Interior was there. What we wanted was to hear this from them, straight from them. How is it that this thing has come about? Who started it? These were our questions. The pushing around was going to be completely turned around. We were being blamed for this and that, but we were now going to be told firsthand. We found out how we would slaughter whales; not how many times one whale had to be bombed, but as if each bomb was for one whale. It was astounding, but there it was down on paper. We asked to be told how this information was gotten. They were even hesitant in telling us all these and others because they were so wrong, and had no proof. You've heard of one white man who worked for NARL who would go around asking kids, girls, "who had shot whales", instead of going to us hunters for this information. This is what was on paper. These methods we found out about, and disapprove of them. These were tales to put the blame on us, but they were down on paper.

This wasn't all. You know about scientists, they study everything and are very highly educated. They write about many things. There was one, Durham, who was there, who told about how he was a brother to the Inupiat, how he was now one of the whale hunters. He was applauded and admired at the meeting. In one of his talks he said, which really hurt me, "Eight percent of the whale is thrown away, ever since we no longer use dog teams." This was really too much to take and it really hurt me. This prompted me to tell them how even before the whale hunters go out they are planning how they will share up that whale. I told that person that I would never believe his word now because it is just tales, make believe stores, that he had written. I hurt his feelings but I told him that I will not believe in his word now. You probably know and have seen him around here. He was trying to back us up but that one statement hurt me. A little statement like that makes us look very wasteful with the whale meat. That statement is wrong. When we share up the whale some of the shares are now just a potfull because there are so many people now. The captain gets a bit more. I told them that we do not hunt the whale so we can sell it. I also told them not to change our whale hunting. I had a few testimonies from the few of you because we didn't have time, and I was backed up by those testimonies. In order to do anything about our whale hunting they must have proven material which shows we are doing wrong and they must have exact counts to prove the decline that they claim.

Leave our whale hunting alone which we have lived with from the beginning of life up here. This is what I told them. But I also told them about the time of our first meetings with them when our turn came to testify, William Aron, who was heading this up stood up to leave and Dale Stotts went and blocked his way at the door asking him why he didn't want to stay to listen to us. This was not a right thing to do but we did want him to hear our side. He did not hear our testimony, after telling us to go there. These things we had to go through.

We were really badgered down there. He gave us to those people like throwing a scrap of food to a team of starving dogs. We were told to go back to shamanism, to our old way of hunting, they used all the regulations to block us from testifying, they wouldn't let lawyers answer our questions or our lawyer couldn't speak for us. Like this instance this morning at the beginning of the hearings when we were told this is the only way for the hearing to go on that there are rules to follow. I'm glad I went along to that meeting, not sending Dale Stotts alone, because I think we got to them a little, answered some of their questions. We are going through these tough times because we don't want to stop hunting the whale, we don't want your food be taken away from you. We are now this far and to top it off this morning happened because I want to testify in my Inupiaq language to you without an English translator because I knew I would keep forgetting what I want to say. I didn't care if he didn't let me talk if he didn't have a translator. I'm glad we can do this here in our own language and are able to talk about our whale. I'm sure this will be of great help to us once it's typed up in the English language and they will be able to understand better. They must let us know if there are now just a few whales left. I won't oppose them if this is in fact true but if it is true, we want to know. I don't think it's right for them to do that just by guesswork. If they are going to stop us from hunting the whale which is our main food there must be more than just guessing at numbers. This will continue to be my way of thinking. I don't want them to listen to the people who live down there and who are just guessing at numbers, and untruths at that, and then putting these down as documents. I do not agree this is what our lawmakers should go by. This has to be corrected because our livelihood, our culture, lies on the whale so much. It is our food. Our culture lies on it. I am with you who think we should be allowed to hunt the whale. Thank you.

Rosabelle
Rexford

I want to thank you for allowing me to speak. I tried giving my testimony in English this morning but I kept getting mixed up, so I want to give this in my Inupiaq language. I think they, our whiteman government, are wrong when they try to stop our whale hunting. As far as I can remember back to my childhood I could never go without oil, this was what my parents taught me. I always hear about the whales travelling each spring and fall without stopping. I am also deeply hurt by our white man government when they try to stop us the Inupiat on the Arctic coast of Alaska, from hunting the whale, just like all you people. If they do succeed, lets look at the map of Alaska for a minute, they are trying to stop our hunting up here, and if fishing were stopped down around here (indicating map) they would also fight about it like we are doing now. Look at Barrow right now, there are many white people in and out all the time, and if the white man's food were to be stopped from coming up here they would suffer. Lots of white people don't know our way of life up here, the extreme cold weather we live in, even though there are a few white people up here. We have to hunt for our Inupiat food in every direction, with all our might. I have children of my own and I'm not trying to use them as excuses, but I can say this, if they should stop the whale hunting what the heck am I going to feed my children? I'm saying this to use as my own excuse. I was raised on oil too. If they are

going to stop it the white man will feel my desperation for sure. We know we don't run the life of a whale, we know our overall Maker watches over them, we might talk about it in every way but we know we must keep Him in mind first. Thank you.

Nathaniel
Napageak

I don't want whale hunting to stop either because my stomach is also Inupiaq. Our elders have talked to us the younger generation about the way of life past so we might live it too. It's hard for me to try to talk because I hurt. When I first started participating in the whale hunts I had even forgotten my Inupiaq language, I had been swallowed up by the white man ways. I had to learn all over again even eating the Inupiaq food. I studied and studied and was taught even to drawing on the snow exactly where I was to aim at the whale. They never taught me to shoot at the flippers but to the exact spot. Because I loved to hunt I always tagged along, following hunters older than me every chance I had, trying to learn the right way, even though I wasn't very easy to teach. They never gave up on me. And I am thankful I stuck to it and learned. I can speak English but I am not going to try to learn from them (the hearing going on in English in the multipurpose) but from you the elders I still want to try to learn the ways of our people which has been going on from the beginning so I will know it in my heart. I am speaking from my heart and my body cannot live without oil either. There are a lot of us young men here who are just now starting to hunt by ourselves, but still learning, and we will not give up. We're not here just to listen and forget. We'll learn to scold and teach while hunting down there, not just to take them out and ignoring them. I don't want the whale hunting to stop either. There are our elders here and they are old enough to even still hold me in their lap like a baby. My feelings are very hurt right now and I urge you to speak up. We, who are just now growing up and following along our elders' footsteps must speak up against them who are trying to stop our hunting. We will be heard. We are Inupiaq and we are speaking in our Inupiaq language but this is the only way we can express ourselves. Someone mentioned here that we have a divine Ruler. I'm not mindful, I don't always listen, but when I get frightened I remember Him. He is always first in my mind. And this is right and He is the only one providing for us. He wouldn't let the whale travel through here if the Inupiaq didn't live on oil. He wouldn't lead them this way. Their pilgrimage through here is short, two months in the spring and one month in the fall. He knows they are needed here and that is why they travel through here. I came to this meeting because I was concerned and wanted to know more. Our elders' words must be backed up. Our elders wish for us to continue to hunt. You must speak up. I was a little scared to get up but I had to say what I thought should be said. I'm not saying I'm a great whale hunter but that I have lots to learn yet. There are still many older than me I can follow and learn from and as long as I can learn I will keep following them on their whale hunts so that I can pass it on as long as I live. How to shoot to kill, ways of the sea, the ice, these are all that I still must learn about. That's all.

"Hey you, who live here, move away, I like what you have and I will have it. You can have a little bit of it for a little while but it will be mine." This is again what they are doing to us about our whale. Here they are hunting the whale killing many each year just for the oil of it and maybe baleen. They won't even tell us how many they always get. And here we are getting just a few, for food only, and they are trying to stop us. The oil (petroleum) which is being found here in Alaska might last here through our generation. But I do know this, that if they stop our whale hunting our people are not going to last. When the petroleum is gone we will have to go back to the whale blubber for fuel. Without the whale blubber we are gone too. The petroleum won't last forever. They are still drilling for it and they don't always find it. Blubber was our only fuel before petroleum and here they are taking it away from us. You have lawmakers who don't think and who do not plan for tomorrow. That's

My name is Eugene Brower. I will try
a boat recently became the captain of
because he was unable to do it
younger brothers we will try to do
there with us. I have
I've studied and asked
at the whale with the whale
that we were successful las
in my crew. We have
were the cause sometimes
he could've
there are young people
when we were
to take them
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to
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catches
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of

success before the whale is dead; he always knows. When he doesn't want to be caught he doesn't get caught no matter how much you shoot at it. You all know this. We don't go out whale hunting just any old time either. We must prepare for it. These are the things we must let them (lawmakers in Washington, D.C.) know about. How we must prepare, how hard we must work first, preparing trails and everything. Let them come up and see for themselves. Let them help making trails and be in all our preparations. So they will know that we are not making these up. Maybe then they will realize what we must go through and that our whale hunting is not just a play thing to us. That it is a very hard job in all, camping in the cold weather. I'm glad I was in on the times when they used to go with dog teams. When I was in Ignavin's crew, we were down below Skull Cliff and we ran out of food. And we ran out of gas and everything. And after they caught a seal they told me to make tea using the blubber for fuel. There was soot all over, and I didn't know how to do it. After they taught me how I finally made them tea. These are the things they (the lawmakers) don't know about. Tough times we have to go through. And every crew doesn't catch a whale, only some do, when conditions are right. There are places down there where we are not able to go hunt, because of bad ice conditions, we just watch it because this type of ice will take us with it. These are the things they must find out about. We can't control the weather and ice conditions, they are beyond us. These things have already been said but I also wanted to mention them. Also we eat the heart, intestine and kidney of a whale, these are the best parts of the whale and they don't know them, they think we throw these away. Also the Eskimo dancers' drums are made of a part of the inside of the whale, I don't know the name of it though, otherwise I would say it. And they say we are wasteful. We don't always use every bit of the blubber because we don't have dog teams now. These things they must know.

I wanted to give you my thoughts, being one of the younger generation, I studied and I am still learning. When a crew catches a whale and I go down to help butcher it, I always ask just where they shot at it. How do you shoot from the front of the whale, from the side, and from the back? These are the things I ask them so I can learn and I want to thank you who have taught and answered my questions. I had to learn, loving to hunt, and I couldn't learn being quiet and I didn't learn overnight, I started when just a little boy and I am still learning. When they do stop our whaling and we can't eat it any more it is really going to be hard on us. Me and my children love to eat Inupiaq food and when we have to go without it I wonder what I'm going to be thinking. If they do stop us I'm going to take my boat and go whale hunting. I have to have it for food, it's part of my body. We can eat white man food for only a very short time. We can't eat it every day. It's not the same. While camping we eat frozen whale meat, mauktauk and blubber and it keeps us warm. This is while camping inland in the wintertime, we can eat it without have to first cook it. Which one of you here have bought beef meat and eat it frozen while camping and hunting? It's no good, I've tried it, it tastes different. Let them find out these facts; the whale we can eat even just raw and I can't eat their food like that and that's all I wanted to say and I thank you.

Ralph Ahkivqak Here is the worst bad little man of Barrow who is now going to speak. I see my teachers, here, my dad, Arnold Brower Sr., Okakok, Nageak but this is the first time I see this man. (Meaning Elijah Kakingak and he was introduced) One time I followed Nageak seal hunting and we saw a caribou out on the ice and we killed and ate from it. We couldn't catch a seal, the conditions were bad. This was not the only time. Every man here has a son except me because I never found a wife. This might be funny. I'm a man but I'm a very short man. I never forget this word, the word of our teachers from long ago, about feeding people, those less fortunate than us, these are their teachings. I had a grandfather, James Taakpak, and I have a father, Otis, you see him there, very old man but he still stands. These are my teachers and my father taught me too. He taught me after my mother died who was also my teacher. When I was 7 years old, she died. My mother always told me to go to Sunday school in the morning even though I didn't understand for what reason. That was my mother, she never wanted me to feel unwanted and that she will tell me what to do until her time is up. I cried and cried when she died, my grandfather, Taaqpak, wasn't there to talk to me. I didn't know what to do then I remembered my mother's words, "I'll show you how, you go to Sunday school every Sunday. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." My mother had a prayer for me and just remembering this I remembered the Three in One, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Even though I don't get married there are people who will talk to me and teach me. I'm not just mouthing off but this is a reminder. I see these men even younger than me who will do the feeding, of your children; these men will do the hunting and feeding. When food is given to people they remind me of people long ago who used to be very thankful and say thank you. Thank you, they say, and for that reason we are doing this fighting for our right today. We are nearing our Thanksgiving feast and we'll do our best, we are not going to just lay around, we never just play around with our life. We see each other, recognizing each other, happy to see each other no matter where we meet, that's how we are. Remember your children wherever they might be, however, they might be, remember them in your prayers. That's what keeps me going. I thank all of you who are our parents.

(Adams

If there is no one else to talk . . . There was a meeting of all the whaling captains from all over Alaska from St. Lawrence Island to Barter Island when we found out that our whale hunting was being stopped. They got together to put together a defense. A delegate was picked from each village to defend our rights. Their goal was to keep our whale hunting rights. They will work toward this. There is 8 or 9 in this group. I was picked to represent Barrow and I will work toward that goal. When our livelihood, we the Inupiat's livelihood, is being manipulated by others, it is not right, it's very wrong. Who is going to run our life for us? We are, with the help of God. We found the whale had been watched and counted by our whiteman's workers and this was put down on paper and being used as evidence by our lawmakers. When our lawmakers read these types of papers their minds start working and then decide the whales are few in number now. When this was found out by our people in Washington, Etok is one of them, they prepared a paper also to help us. They wanted the International Whaling Commission to read it also. We want to tell you about that paper. It will be given to the Department of the Interior, and it will be used in Kotzebue, at the hearings. What it says is to completely study the whale and to count the whale, using instruments which will be better than the eyes for counting and do this for five years. This is our suggestion in that paper but we don't know right now if, after reading it, they will do it. But we will give them the paper so they won't stop our use of the whale. Then, after a complete study, and after letting us take our part, only then, is it time to make decisions about the whale.

Charles
 Edwardsen,

That time when I first found out about what they were doing I was very shocked too. I cried for three days because I was very hurt. I called Arnold Brower Sr. if he would come down to Wash. D.C. Telling him that our white man government is again doing these appalling, dirty tricks. They were using lies and trying to make a pretty picture in their own eyes and making our hunting a shameful thing. They say we, the Inupiat, are embarrassing to them. This is what our white man government was making us look like. I was very hurt and told them that they will not take our whale hunting away from us, that the Inupiat will not sell themselves out. When we confronted them we used all their own ways, their knowledge and their laws. When we turned to them we didn't worry about money. We just want to find the best way to fight it and asking what we can do about it. Because of their such dirty minds we called for help for lawyers, telling these lawyers that your own people here, these stupid people are even embarrassing. Face your own goody goody kind we scolded them. Scolding them won't put us into trouble. We will put to our governor the knowledge about our whale from the people who really know about it and we won't give up our whale hunting before our demands are met. Your testimonies will be my tools so they won't use the lie they now have. We now have proof that what they had were all lies and wrong and these lies are now in the open, even their mathematics were way too low. Using their own tactics and teachings we found out about their tricks. These are the kind of people we now face, people who do things by trickery, but making them look right. We will oppose them and you will be heard by the other countries who also opposed your hunting. They will see in writing what you have testified to. We have turned to them without any lies and so will the other villages. We will have in our hands our papers in the English language to give to them at the hearings in Kotzebue. We want to face them and give them truths without question about our culture. We've proved the lies they've tried to use to do us in and we have dug out the root and maybe now they'll understand. I'm happy the Inupiat use the whale for strength, and with all my might I will help my Inupiat people from being cheated with lies. Our work on this will not have lies in it and we will not be ashamed of it and that is how we will give it to them. It only has one end to it and that is the whale and that whale we will not give up. We will not just sit around in suspense and wait for something to happen, wait for them to decide on our lives, because we are Inupiat. When it's time to do something we will do something about it. We will show them that we are people who do not just lay around and get walked all over. I'm glad this all got out in the open, and that I get to share my hurt with you and that way it seems to have disappeared. I can now fight without shame and be forward about it, shoving away all their argument, I can fight for our whale. We'll shame them about the way they do things. It won't look pretty in words and their papers will say how terrible we are. They will say again that we have no brains to understand. But you've answered their accusations and this thing they were doing is so horrible. When we've been hurt like this we always get together and from now on we should stay together and go forward together and we'll be stronger.

Arnold
Brower,

I'm Arnold Brower Jr. I'm always in on the whale hunts and I was raised here and live here. I went to school outside but I always came home to be in on the whale hunts, and the summer hunts too, so food will be there for the winter for my younger siblings and relatives. That is how I was raised. When it comes to this, when we must have to sit and testify about our whale, about them trying to stop our whale hunting, it gets hard for me to understand their reasons for it. They say they have counted whales and that when we hunt, it's so bloody, it's gross. That is what the white man thinks. When they stop our whaling eating and we start trying to live on the seal alone they are trying to shorten our life. Me and my people don't want to die yet but want to live with satisfaction with a full stomach. If they are going to stop our eating then they must also be stopped from eating, if that is how they are going to be. They have to go through the same thing, they are people too, they're not made any different. I want to say this, if it's going to be down on paper and for this reason they will stop our whale hunting it is not right. Not after seeing our testimonies. They've stopped our caribou hunting and when they stop our whale hunting, what are they going to give us to eat. We still have to hunt for our food. When they stopped us from hunting caribou they send meat which wasn't even enough for one or two days. And they stopped the caribou hunts in March until August. Because I oppose this kind of tactics I say this. Thank you.

nest
ankson

I just wanted to add to what Elijah said about what the Inupiat along the coast and the Inupiat inland always did with their whale from the beginning. What the Barrow Inupiat did with the inlanders so did the Pt. Hope Inupiat. I wanted it known that it was the same down there. Pt. Hope people always met with Cape Thompson with their boats and these inlanders from Kobuk and Noatak, with their kayaks. They met there to feast from oil pokes and other whale meat which these inlanders are not able to get inland. I wanted it known that they always share down there too. Two years ago elders met representing each village in the Northwest Alaska, villages around Kotzebue were represented and Pt. Hope was also represented. This meeting took place because they had gotten a whale in Pt. Hope which they couldn't put a claim to. The part of the whale with meat, blubber and muktuk was brought to this meeting to be shared by these elders. And one of them from Kotzebue said that he was thankful for the blubber. He thought he wasn't ever going to have a taste again for a long time after being raised on it. He was a very old man and he shared it with other people of Kotzebue. During a feast like this people make partners with each other and this old man and my grandmother became partners. He gave her an Eskimo lamp. These people were very happy to be given the blubber because they hadn't had any for quite some time and they were again getting together to share. I just wanted to tell you this.

ald
ower

I would also like to say something even though I don't participate very often in the whale hunts, although I do follow whale hunters during spring and fall hunts. Whale is my life too and in my mind when I look at the whale I see it all being used, even down to the bone, old and new. Even before they start whale hunting, when they are just getting ready, people's bodies change, their bodies are in waiting and they can't wait to start. After the whale hunt they use the whale bone and the meat, even the gums are eaten; baleen is used to make things with and these are used during the next whale hunt. The baleen was used for fish nets before the white man's net came along. To this day we make use of the whole whale. The younger generation studies and learns the white man ways, in writing and in words and about the beginning of man. But we are also told by our elders, after learning all these we must return to our people and use them for the good of our people. Many of us in the younger generation have learned the white man ways but our minds and our bodies are still Inupiaq. This can never be changed. I feel very tense and my feelings are also hurt. Our use of the whale has never been changed to this day from the beginning. It is proved by the testimonies of our elders. Our feeling about the whale is very strong. So strong it makes us cry. I'm having a tough time trying to talk but I wanted to tell you these. It will still be my life and it will not change. That's all.

nold
ower,

I want to let you know that there was one person who backed me up in Wash. D.C. when I felt all alone in this fight for our right and I want to thank him. He was the only person who helped me. He was Senator Stevens and I want to thank him in front of all of you. Someone from his office was here and I wanted him to know but I see he has left.

acob
dams

If there is no one else to speak I want to tell you that all your testimonies will be translated into the English language and typed up and sent to Wash. D.C. to be read down there. They will study your words and maybe they will understand your feelings. And I want to thank each and everyone of you who were willing to come and speak up about part of our way of life. Before we leave, following our tradition, I would like to ask Elijah Kakinga to close the hearing with a prayer.

lijah
akinga

At our prayer meetings on Wednesdays I always stand up to prayer, because I know I can't live without my God. Because God has given me and my wife this long life so we can be of help to our grandchildren. He is our only life and I want to thank him that he allowed me to be of help. We must always look to Him for our needs. Prayer in Inupiaq.