

**LA COMMISSAIRE :**

1235 Parfait. Merci.

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

1240 Alors Monsieur Cummings, Monsieur Chicoine, on vous remercie beaucoup.

**M. ROBERT CHICOINE :**

Merci.

1245 **LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

J'inviterais maintenant madame Ann Beer s'il vous plaît.

Bonsoir, Madame.

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**MME ANN BEER :**

1255 Bonsoir. Merci beaucoup. Je parle d'un toute autre sujet. O.K. et je crois, si vous le permettez, j'aimerais le lire, c'est très court en anglais.

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

Oui.

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**MME ANN BEER :**

Et puis je peux discuter en français après.

1265 **LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

Fine. Can you please speak a little louder please?

**MME ANN BEER :**

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Okay. Yes. Un peu plus ici. Ça va comme ça?

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

1275           Oui.

**MME ANN BEER :**

1280           O.K. So thank you very much for allowing me to participate this evening. I would like to speak quite briefly about the educational and psychological value of l'Anse-à-l'Orme for young people.

1285           I'm a teacher with 34 years experience in the Montreal area. I've taught in the French and English school systems, school, high school, college and university level.

              But I would like to say, I'm here today as an individual. I'm not representing any organization but I would like to speak about the interest of the thousands of young people who I have worked with over the years.

1290           Since 2008, I've taken almost all my college level English classes to L'Anse-à-l'Orme for field trip. Consistently, students speak about the great value of visiting this wonderful area.

              About 10% of each group tell me that they have never set foot in a forest before and some have never met a wild ecosystem.

1295           Others have visited wild places but they know nothing about the life cycles that occur there and they don't know anything about what nature gives back to us whether it's oxygen coming from the trees or cleansing of the water or attention of water or heat reduction in the summer.

1300           On many trips, we have a guide with us often an ornithologist, an ecologist and an expert on local geography and each time, we all learn new facts.

              So for me and for the students, I work with L'Anse-à-l'Orme is an outdoor class room and it's an extraordinary important one, very, very rich.

1305           We usually spend much of our time in the forest section on L'Anse-à-l'Orme road but we sometimes walk to the edge of the field so even into fields which allows us to fully witness the life of the birds and other creatures that are there.

1310           And I'll just give you a very short list: hawks, owls, woodpeckers, warblers, sparrows, chickadees, robins and nuthatches are just some of the birds we see. We observed chipmunks,

1315 squirrels, salamanders, frogs, toads, and three kinds of snakes, the brown snake, garter snake and the eastern milk snake and we've seen deer tracks. And once, I'm sad to say, we even found a deer hunch at the time when somebody was apparently poaching deer on the site. So it would seem.

1320 Students often say and this is a very interesting point I think: it's like a discovery channel on TV. Which is because their view of nature isn't something you view on the screen and they are astonished to find you can actually go outside and find it and for free.

So I believe working with nature directly is one of the great hopes we have for supporting young people right now.

1325 I'm sorry I don't have economic arguments or scientific arguments because that's not what I do.

1330 Young people today are suffering from terrible levels of depression and anxiety about the future. They are afraid and it's not surprising because of we hear about climate change every day and we hear about the destruction of the ecosystem every day. But I think also there a deeper reason, a personal reason that they've been disconnected from nature. They've been forced into a kind of disconnection from nature. Many of them are very anxious about environmental concerns and the way their life are being run right now.

1335 So my classes are focused on these interactions with the world around us, different cultural relationship with nature, I've also done a great deal of work with Indigenous people and indeed I set up an Indigenous study certificate at my college.

1340 And how these relate to health and healing. And we might comment on the health related issues given the enormous health costs for people in Montreal today.

Encouraging the students to write and talk about their relationship with nature has had wonderful results. It seems to motivate and move them deeply. They come to class, they want to talk about it. They are enthusiastic about this.

1345 Before the field trip, often, some are not familiar with the concept of, I don't know if you're familiar with a Shinrin-Yoku, it's a Japanese concept, a wonderful book called "Your brain on nature" talks about it by Selhub and Logan. And also Richard Louv work about "Last Child in the Woods" and the green school movement in the US.

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But Shinrin-Yoku is forest bathing and in Japan, it's the simple walking in the forest or another natural area for mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health and it's actually prescribed by doctors in Japan. It can be as effective as anti-depressants for some people.

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So, when given a chance to experience L'Anse-à-l'Orme, students are very much affected. We always stop for a few moments in silence to observe and to listen to what is around us and this moment is often the center piece of the writing that they produce later. They describe a feeling of bounding with the forest and with the fields there.

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And I've been approached by students years later because I live in the West Island, I've lived there since 1989. My children grew up there as well. But when I meet students years afterwards, they will say to me: "Hi, are you still doing that walk to l'Anse-à-l'Orme? I have never forgotten it, I have never forgotten the moment when we all stay quiet and listen to the trees and the wind." And two students at least, have actually sort of grabbed me and said: "never stop doing it".

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So it shows that it matters to them even years later. Some of these students don't have the economic privilege of a country cottage, hiking or vacations off the island. They may have no access to a car. You can reach L'Anse-à-l'Orme by bus from Lionel-Groulx metro.

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They often come from cultural and socio-economic backgrounds where only the remnants of natural land only or little are left to them.

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Well some students already know and love the natural world others share us a striking lack of knowledge through no fault of their own.

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One student from in a city background who had never been to a wild area before visited on a spring day when the red and white trillium flowers were carpeting the forest, he asked me who planted all those flowers? He had no idea they were natural. He didn't know what that meant that they were natural.

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Another one kept her hood up the entire trip because she was terrified that the deadly poison of snake would fall down her neck. She had no idea that there weren't poison snake on the island.

Several students have not known what poison ivy is and they've been introduced to it. We've talked about it, we've seen it and they were astonished to know that they can actually hurt you.

These are forms of fundamental education for children and teenagers. And clearly they have not been getting them.

1390 And many responses have come from a very interesting group of science students. One of  
whom said when I asked: do you feel you have a relationship with the world of nature beyond the  
human made world? One said: "I've never asked myself this question, I have never even thought of  
asking it. I did not know it was possible to ask this question." So I really wondered what her science  
education had been like if that question was so striking to her. And she kept coming back to talk to  
1395 me later and said that this was a transformative moment in her understanding of her relationship  
with the world.

Now, do I have time for a few quotations from my students or no?

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

1400 Yes. Not much though.

**MME ANN BEER :**

1405 Not much. Okay, I'll be very quick, yes, okay.

So here's some of their words: the adventure in the forest made me realize a beautiful  
woodland exists in the West Island, the trees, the bushes, the creatures and the sounds of nature  
made me realize it is not too late even in the West Island to solve environmental issues, there is  
1410 still hope. We can still protect green space and the habitat of the animals in that forest. The forest  
is important to me, it's a setting where you can relax and unwind. We must save the forest.

I'll skip that one.

1415 I enjoyed the trip on Thursday very much. It was lovely to see the gorgeous green. I was  
fascinated by the salamander and the wood frog. I don't understand why anyone would not want to  
preserve all this natural beauty.

1420 Too much of it is gone already. People often don't realize how we actually need it with the  
risen pollution and the decrease in nature, things aren't heading in a good direction. The entire  
population may ceased to exist if the environment diminishes, it's a scary thought. When I was  
younger, I visited Trinidad, my mother's country very often. It was a big change from living in the  
city of Pierrefonds, we were surrounded by fruit trees and beautiful plants and wonderful prairies. I  
would hate for my children not to have that opportunity.

1425 And then, a very short poem. I promise it's really short. This was from a young man, very shy  
young man who said he actually wrote it sitting on a tree log. "From the smallest sprouting grass  
plate to the largest blooming tree, this place in which I travel now, life envelops me. Gone the role

1430 the things I know, the worries and the cast, this place in which I travel now is all the time aware of; the chirping of the youngest jay, the smell of ancient oaks; this place in which I travel now breeds curiosity and hope. Some would call it wilderness and some would call it home, but this place in which I travel now for now is all my own.

1435 Now these are students between the ages of 16 and 21 mostly.

So I hope these give a glimpse of what I experienced regularly which is watching young people experience this extraordinary green coverage all and I would hate to have to tell them in my trip in the next couple years, yes, it's beautiful but half of it is going or more.

1440 And I know people need houses and I know that development will continue but I would love it if we could build on brown field sites and preserve this one.

1445 I had a comparison with Mount-Royal itself but which I've also some historical facts but I'll skip that for the moment if you like. But just to say that in 1876, the visionary mayor of Montreal, was very much the head of protecting the mountain and they apparently spent a million dollars in the money of 1876. Think how much that is now to do that. And they had to expropriate 16 land owners. But think how important the mountain is to us today. It is the green land of Montreal and I would love it if l'Anse-à-l'Orme could be the green lands of the West Island.

1450 So thank you.

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

Merci, Madame.

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**MME ANN BEER :**

Oui, je peux parler en français ou anglais.

1460 **LA COMMISSAIRE RAPHAËL :**

Parfait. Je voulais savoir est-ce que vous avez une vision particulière pour le parc?

**MME ANN BEER :**

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Oui. Le plus naturel possible, oui, avec les sentiers quelqu'un parlait des sentiers bien sûr parce qu'on ne veut pas que tout le monde casse les petits plantes et tout ça, oui. Mais c'est magnifique comme c'est maintenant.

1470 Et c'est parce que ce n'est pas contrôlé par les humains. C'est le seul endroit que je connais sur l'Île de Montréal où on découvre des choses chaque fois. Je sais que beaucoup de personnes connaissent monsieur David Fletcher et David a souvent été notre spécialiste. Il est merveilleux avec les jeunes parce qu'il était enseignant aussi. Et c'est incroyable, chaque fois, j'apprends des choses nouvelles et les étudiants sont éblouis par ses connaissances et ce qu'on peut voir.

1475 Et bien sûr aussi je le fais au printemps et dans l'automne et bien sûr c'est complètement différent. Ça c'est quelque chose aussi. Et il y a des étudiants qui sont venus deux fois ou même trois fois et qui adorent ça et c'est incroyable parce qu'on a eu des gens qui ont demandé de nous accompagner. Alors c'est comme, c'est des jeunes qui veulent faire une classe de plus. C'est des amis de mes étudiants qui disent : « Est-ce que je peux vous accompagner. »

1480 C'est incroyable! Pour moi c'est le pinacle, le...

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

1485 Le pinacle.

**MME ANN BEER :**

1490 Oui, oui. Le pinacle de l'enseignement que je fais et les effets sont absolument extraordinaires. Et j'aimerais le voir, le garder entièrement comme quelqu'un vient de dire parce que si on le coupe en deux, j'ai peur que beaucoup des animaux et des oiseaux vont partir. Ils ne vont plus être là.

1495 **LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

Merci. Dites-moi quand vous allez avec vos étudiants où est-ce que vous circulez? Vous allez surtout du côté de la Rivière-à-l'Orme?

1500 **MME ANN BEER :**

Oui.

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

1505 Ou si vous allez sur les terres qui sont en friche en ce moment? Ou dans la zone qui serait à construire?

**MME ANN BEER :**

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Oui, oui.

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

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Près du grand ruisseau, près des étangs, Lauzon, le 90? Est-ce que vous allez jusqu'à là?

**MME ANN BEER :**

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Non, on va sur L'Anse-à-l'Orme Road. Oui et on a c'est le bus du collège qui vient avec nous et qui nous laisse là et on va où il y a les grands pylônes électriques.

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

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Oui.

**MME ANN BEER :**

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Et on entre là et puis on va au nord. Et si on a un peu plus de temps, on va jusqu'aux champs, on va pas là.

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

Comme derrière le Collège Charlemagne là?

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**MME ANN BEER :**

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Oui. Et on va dans les champs après, mais bien sûr parce qu'on n'a pas beaucoup de temps, une heure peut-être une heure 20 minutes. C'est pas long, mais j'essaie de les laisser voir l'écosystème au moins et ça dépend des jours. Un jour on a trouvé un hibou avec un bébé hibou dans un arbre. Alors on n'est pas allé très loin du tout parce que tout le monde était tellement excité pour voir le hibou et un bébé. Oui.

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

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Merci. Alors il me reste à vous remercier.



1550 **MME ANN BEER :**

Merci beaucoup.

1555 **LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

Merci beaucoup Madame. Alors on va prendre 15 minutes et on devrait revenir vers 20 h 45.  
Merci.

**PAUSE**

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**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

1565 Bonsoir, on reprendrait si vous voulez vous asseoir. Et j'inviterais monsieur Irwin Rapoport please, s'il vous plait.

**MR. IRWIN RAPOPORT :**

1570 Sure. I didn't know I was next.

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

Fine. You are welcome.

1575 **MR. IRWIN RAPOPORT**

Should I start right now?

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

1580 Yes. Well.

**MR. IRWIN RAPOPORT**

1585 Okay. I'm ready to go.