

Henry Gordon Academy, Cartwright

presents

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

CAST:

Tommy Mugford	.....	Teacher
	.....	Judge
	.....	Patrick Lewis
Dawn Praught	.....	Sharon (student)
	.....	Beverly Sherbrooke
	.....	Court Herald
	.....	Choral Reading
Greg Roberts	.....	Pierre LeBlanc
	.....	Lawyer
	.....	Grandfather
Faye Pittman	.....	June (student)
	.....	Monique Benoit
Melody Pardy	Cindy (student)
	Mr. Ryan
	Lawyer
	Mother
Hughlett Clark	Greg (student)



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Presented by: The Henry Gordon Academy Drama Club,
Cartwright, Labrador.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Tommy Mugford.....Teacher
Judge
Patrick Lewis

Dawn Praught.....Sharon (student)
Beverly Sherbrooke
Court Herald
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Gregory Roberts.....Pierre LeBlanc
(Lawyer)
Grandfather

Fay Pittman.....Student (June)
Monique Benoit

Melody Pardy.....Cindy (student)
Mr. Ryan (Lawyer)
Mother

Hughlett Clark.....Greg (student)

TEACHER ADVISORS.....Mrs. Laura Trask
Ms. Ceri Price
Mr. Ralph Trask

CHORAL READING by Dawn Praught:
"Labrador" composed by Bob Palliser, 1981, Rigolet.

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

ACT 1, SCENE 1

The curtain opens and we are in the classroom. The teacher begins a lesson on Labrador and her natural resources.

TEACHER (saying as he enters): Settle down girls. Greg, take your feet off the desk. Today we are not going to be using our books. We are going to do a little review. I want each one of you to tell me one of Labrador's most important natural resources. Let's begin. (SHARON PUTS UP HER HAND.) Yes, Sharon.

SHARON: Hydro power.

TEACHER: Can you explain please?

SHARON: Well, sir, if you look at the Churchill Falls project, it is one of the largest hydro developments in the world. It produces power from the Churchill River.

TEACHER: That's right, very good Sharon. Would someone else like to tell me another resource? (JUNE PUTS UP HER HAND.) Yes, June.

JUNE: Minerals, sir.

TEACHER: Yes, June. Minerals are important to Labrador. Would you like to explain how?

JUNE: Well, for many years the iron ore in western Labrador has brought much wealth to the people of Labrador City and around that area, you know, employment and good wages. And also, the whole province has gotten a share of the profits from taxes.

TEACHER: Very good, June. Well thought out.

GREG: Sir, I was walking down the road the other day when I tripped over this big rock. I thought it was a hunk of gold there for a while.

TEACHER: Greg, if you have nothing intelligent to say in my classroom don't say a word. Let's continue please. (CINDY PUTS UP HER HAND.) Yes, Cindy.

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

CINDY: Tourism is becoming an important natural resource to Labrador.

TEACHER: How do you mean, Cindy?

CINDY: A lot of people usually go south for their holidays but since the dollar started to fall it's become very expensive. Now people are looking for other vacations...like going cross-country skiing in Labrador. After all, we do have one of the best areas for cross-country skiing in all of North America. They even had world class competition there last year. And didn't the Canadian Cross Country Ski Team choose Labrador City as its' training base?

JUNE: That's right. Maybe lots of people will want to come to ski in Labrador.

TEACHER: That's a good observation, girls, and one we hadn't thought of before, and I must agree with you. Winter vacations would add to tourism in Labrador. O.K., any more resources? Sharon.

SHARON: Sir, what about the fishery? A lot of Labradorians still fish for a living. I guess it's still an important resource for the people up here.

GREG: Hey, sir. The other day I was fishing and caught a great big scully.

TEACHER: I told you before, if you've nothing intelligent to say, don't say anything. Sit up straight my son. As I was going to say, Sharon, we still recognize the fishery as one of Labrador's most important resources. As you say, it's still the main occupation of most Labradorians and the entire province. You'll remember how we discussed the Labrador Boundary Dispute and how Britain was asked to settle that dispute. Well, it now appears that same dispute is again going to the courts.

CINDY: Oh yeah! Sir, I heard something about that yesterday.

SHARON: What's going on there, sir?

TEACHER: Well, there are business people in Quebec who believe they have new arguments to re-open the Boundary Dispute. They're going to ask the Supreme Court

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

of Canada to re-think the 1927 decision giving Labrador to Newfoundland.

GREG: Sir, I don't see why we've got to be "given" to anybody. Why don't we just say we're on our own?

JUNE: Yeah, sir. We've got lots of resources, we could go on our own.

TEACHER: Well, it's just not that simple. You need money to develop resources and...

GREG: Well, all the provinces must have started somewhere. No one says it would be easy but...

TEACHER (LOOKING AT WATCH): We're almost out of time. Now before you go, pass in your essays on the Labrador Boundary Dispute. (EVERYONE DOES EXCEPT GREG.) For homework this weekend, I would like for you all to watch "Tea Time" with Beverly Sherbrooke. She is going to have guests on her show discussing the re-opening of the Labrador Boundary Dispute! Greg, where is your homework!?

GREG: I forgot it, sir.

TEACHER: (IN A RESIGNED MANNER) Greg, I'm really tired of your excuses. Now tell me the truth. Have you got it done or haven't you?

GREG: Sir, Walter's dog ate it. (CLASS GIGGLES)

TEACHER (TO GIRLS): Give it up. Greg, that's one of the poorest excuses you've ever given me. (PAUSE) That's it. I've had it with you. You either sit down and do that paper now or you get a zero for your efforts or, should I say, your lack of efforts.

GREG (OUTRAGED AND SPEAKING LOUDLY): You mean now!? Right now!? Sir, it's Friday and I've got...

TEACHER: I don't care what you've got. You either sit down and do that paper now or you get a zero. (SHARPLY) End of conversation!

GREG: Oh, sir!

(BELL RINGS)

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

TEACHER: Don't forget to watch the T.V. program.

SHARON: Sir, I've got a real important swimming lesson today, so can I get my Mom to watch the show?

TEACHER: No, young lady. You watch that show and give me a three-page report.

SHARON: You'll get a report from my swimming teacher.

TEACHER: Go home, Sharon.

(CLASS LEAVES)

TEACHER (TO GREG): I'll be back in an hour. Have something done. (TEACHER LEAVES)

GREG (PICKS UP BOOK AND READS): The lumber company had been given permission by the Newfoundland Government to cut trees south of the Hamilton River. Suddenly an official from Quebec appeared. He said the land south of the river belonged to the Canadian province, so the lumber company would have to get permission from the Quebec Government. Suddenly, it was very important to settle the boundary of Labrador. This was a dispute between two countries: Newfoundland and Canada. They asked the courts of Britain to judge the question. The British judge ruled in favor of Newfoundland in 1927. Quebec has never felt that the decision of 1927 was fair. (GREG FALLS ASLEEP AND BEGINS HIS DREAM.)

ACT 1, SCENE 2

COURT ROOM SCENE - TWO LAWYERS AND A COURT HERALD. A LAWYER FROM QUEBEC AND A LAWYER FROM NEWFOUNDLAND.

HERALD: Hear yea! Hear yea! Hear yea! This court is now in session. All rise. The presiding judge to hear the case of Newfoundland versus Canada in the dispute of ownership over the area known as Labrador is Judge J. Noel of Her Majesty's Crown. (JUDGE ENTERS)

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

JUDGE (RAPS GAVEL ON DESK): Be seated. Today I will preside over case number 23142, filed by the Province of Quebec on the day of our Lord, March 3, Nineteen Hundred and Twenty Seven, and to be heard before me on this day of our Lord, May 25, Nineteen Hundred and Twenty Seven. The charge is as follows: The Province of Quebec will argue beyond any doubt that Labrador and the waters surrounding Labrador are the rightful property of that province. Newfoundland will argue that the land drained by waters flowing into the Atlantic Ocean are linked to and should be recognized as property of Newfoundland. Both sides have agreed to have this case heard by judge without jury. Procedure is as follows: Quebec will give its' argument first, Newfoundland will give its' argument second. Each will make a summation. I will then weigh the evidence and reach a verdict in the privacy of my chambers. I now call upon the Honorable Pierre LeBlanc to present his case on behalf of the Province of Quebec.

PIERRE: Thank-you. Your most gracious and wise judge. It is my pleasure to stand before such a distinguished and reknowned person as yourself, to unveil what Quebec perceives to be irrefutable evidence that Labrador belongs to Quebec.

JUDGE: Drop that flattery, Mr. LeBlanc, and proceed. This case will not be decided upon the number of colorful or flattering adjectives you shower me with.

PIERRE: I beg your pardon, your wise and gracious honor.

JUDGE: Mr. LeBlanc!

PIERRE: I have to ask, your honor, does it seem likely that a British judge in a British court can hand down an impartial decision between Newfoundland - a British colony, and Quebec - a land of Frenchmen, antagonists of the British for many years?

JUDGE: Mr. LeBlanc. I would like to remind you that Quebec is not owned by France, and whether it is filled with Frenchmen or not, it is definitely a part of Canada, and Canada is definitely a part of the British Empire. Sir, you do yourself an injustice by mistrusting your own legal system. I assure you there will be an impartial trial. Please proceed.

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

PIERRE: Yes, of course, your grace. It was just a minor point.

JUDGE: Hardly, Mr. LeBlanc. Do you have your arguments prepared or don't you?

PIERRE: But of course, your grace. To begin with, the people of Quebec have always travelled across the vast lands of the Labrador, right to the Atlantic Ocean - without boundaries - to make a living from the coastal waters.

JUDGE (ANNOYED): Your point, Mr. LeBlanc!

PIERRE: Your wise grace, it is obvious the area called Labrador is stuck on to the great belle province du Quebec so it naturally should be ours by fact of its' geography.

JUDGE: Do you have any other facts to support your argument?

PIERRE: Qui, your wise and gracious judge. Any wildlife professional will tell you that the great caribou herds of the land now called Labrador goes home to Quebec for the winter, not to Newfoundland.

MR. RYAN (SLAMMING FIST): Objection! Objection!

JUDGE: What is your objection, Mr. Ryan?

MR. RYAN: The next thing that this man is going to tell you that the ownership of Labrador is settled by the number of trees leaning towards Quebec and the number of trees leaning towards the great province of Newfoundland.

PIERRE (RUBS HIS CHIN): I never thought of that! (HERALD BEGINS LAUGHING)

JUDGE: Order! Order! Mr. LeBlanc, would you please sit down and give Mr. Ryan a chance to speak on behalf of Newfoundland?

MR. RYAN (STANDS UP): Thank-you, your wise and gracious judge who represents fairness and justice in the name of Her Majesty.

JUDGE: Mr. Ryan, you don't seem to have any more control

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

of your tongue than he does.

MR. RYAN: I most humbly apologize to your great wisdom.

JUDGE: Please continue or sit down, Mr. Ryan. Do you have any facts to counter the Quebec argument?

MR. RYAN: Yes, your highest order of justice. I have proof to support Newfoundland's claim that it owns Labrador. It is an undisputed fact that cannot be refuted by any knowledgeable person.

JUDGE: And what is this great evidence, Mr. Ryan?

MR. RYAN: Icebergs, your grace?

JUDGE: Icebergs?

HERALD: Icebergs?

PIERRE: Icebergs?

GREG (IN HIS SLEEP): Icebergs?

MR. RYAN: Yes, of course, icebergs your grace.

JUDGE: You better have a good explanation, Mr. Ryan, or I will charge you with wasting our court's time.

MR. RYAN: I do, your grace. As does the salmon return to its' birthplace up the stream to spawn each year so do the great Labrador icebergs come to fill every harbour, nook and cranny of Newfoundland, and not to Quebec. I ask you to deny this? Can you? Can you?

PIERRE: Objection! Objection!

JUDGE: Order! Order! Order!

(LIGHTS FADE AND THEY LEAVE STAGE)

(TEACHER ENTERS AND FINDS GREG ASLEEP)

TEACHER: Asleep in my class again! Greg! Greg!

GREG: What? Who won?

TEACHER: You haven't got a thing done! Go home and watch that show. Try and get something into that thick head of yours.

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

ACT 2, SCENE 1

Typical family in Labrador. Mother is knitting and grandfather is wittling a piece of wood. (DOOR SHUTS)

MOTHER: Is that you, Greg?

GREG (OFFSTAGE): Yes, Mom.

MOTHER: Stir up the soup before you come in please.

(GREG ENTERS)

MOTHER: How come you're so late this afternoon?

GREG: I had to stay in for old Longface again.

MOTHER: I don't want to hear you calling your teacher a name like that again.

GREG: But he made me stay in for a full hour!

MOTHER: What for this time?

GREG: I never did an essay on the Labrador Boundary Dispute.

MOTHER: How often have I got to tell you how important your homework is?

GREG: I don't know. I got to watch T.V. for homework tonight.

MOTHER: Are you telling me the truth?

GREG: Yes, Mom.

MOTHER: I can't imagine you having to watch T.V. for homework.

GREG: Yeah! I got to watch "Tea Time". Beverly Sherbrooke is going to have two guests on discussing the re-opening of the Labrador Boundary Dispute.

GRANDFATHER: Not again. They've been arguing that issue ever since I was a young feller.

GREG: Well I got to watch it on T.V. now.

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

MOTHER: Well, my son, you had better change channels or it will be over before you even see it.

(GREG GOES OVER AND CHANGES CHANNELS)

GREG: See you tomorrow, J.R. Ewing.

(TEA TIME - BEVERLY SHERBROOKE SCENE)

ACT 2, SCENE 2

LIGHTS UP - TELEVISION STUDIO SETTING - HOSTESS AND TWO GUESTS.

BEVERLY: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to Tea Time. I'm Beverly Sherbrooke. This afternoon my guests are Mr. Patrick Lewis, a businessman here in St. John's, and Miss Monique Benoit, a businesswoman from Montreal.

In light of last weeks development in the Labrador Boundary Dispute between Newfoundland and Quebec, we felt it would be interesting to get the viewpoint of these two businesspersons. As we all heard in last weekend's news, a group of Quebec businesses in Montreal have uncovered new and substantial evidence that they feel will reverse the 1927 decision giving Labrador to Newfoundland. This, of course, will have to be debated in the Supreme Court of Canada. The possibility that the 1927 decision could be overturned and Labrador could be given to Quebec poses many questions and problems for all concerned.

This afternoon we aren't going to dwell on the political probabilities that Labrador will be given to one or the other, but rather we'd like to take a close look at what's to be gained by whoever wins and what is to be lost by whoever loses. We are going to focus in on the natural and cultural wealth as well as the financial possibilities of the land called Labrador. (TURNS TO GUESTS) Good afternoon, Mr. Lewis and Miss Benoit.

BUSINESSPEOPLE: Good afternoon, Beverly.

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

BEVERLY (TO MR. LEWIS): I understand you're a St. John's business. Would you like to tell our audience a little bit about your work?

MR. LEWIS: Yes, of course, Beverly. I'm a fish distributor here in St. John's. We buy fresh and salt fish from the established fish plants and the local fishermen. We then package that product and ship it to the rest of Canada and abroad.

BEVERLY: And you, Miss Benoit?

MONIQUE: Beverly, I'm a furrier in Montreal. I buy furs from all over Canada. These furs are then made into coats, hats and mitts. As a matter of fact, I brought along a pair of mitts to show you. (SHE SHOWS HER MITTS)

BEVERLY: Oh yes, they're lovely. What type of fur is that?

MONIQUE: That's muskrat, one of the many furs I buy from Labrador.

BEVERLY: Oh, you buy alot of furs from Labrador?

MONIQUE: Oh yes, the local Labrador trappers send them to me.

BEVERLY: No, not yet, but I'm hoping to get up there this year. I hear it is beautiful.

BEVERLY: And Mr. Lewis, have you ever been to Labrador?

MR. LEWIS: I've been there briefly a couple of times on buying trips. Now since I've set up my contracts I feel it is unnecessary for me to travel back and forth. But the times I was there it was very beautiful.

BEVERLY: Well, this should interest both of you. We have an excerpt from a human interest story that was shot on location in coastal Labrador. For those of you at home, like myself, who have never been to Labrador, this should give you a feeling for the land that is being discussed in the courts today. So take your cup of tea, sit back and enjoy.

(INSERT NARRATION FOR SLIDE SHOW)

WHO ASKED US-ANYWAY?

TAPE NARRATION INSERT

This is coastal Labrador, the land God gave to Cain. Though it has developed in many ways, especially through its' resources, it is still a vast expanse of undeveloped forests and lakes and rivers.

It is a place of open, friendly people. Most people in small communities on the coast of Labrador lead a pretty quiet life. There is no flashy entertainment. Children fish from the wharf during the summer and during the winter their entertainment is on the hockey rink.

The men and women of Labrador fish for a living. As soon as the ice starts to melt the people of coastal Labrador can't wait to start fishing.

Labrador life also has its difficulties. Here, after a particularly bad snow storm, these men are shovelling out the open air skating rink.

Skidoo is the main form of transportation during the 6 to 8 months of winter. Often, Labradorians attach wooden boxes on skids, known as Kamotiks, to help carry supplies as well as people.

Labrador's most prize possession is its beauty. In the winter, as you have seen in the previous slides, has a stark beauty. Labrador's wildlife is varied and one of its most important features. It provides both beauty and food. This is one example of its wild beauty.

Labrador is not only beautiful, it is interesting. Geologists say it has some very interesting rock formations.

There is, however, one element of Labrador's beauty that is unbeatable...her sunsets.

(MUSIC)

BEVERLY: Well, you can see Labrador is a beautiful place and that it would be an asset to either Quebec or Newfoundland.

MR. LEWIS (LOOKS AT MONIQUE): It's just as I remembered it.

MONIQUE: I can't wait to visit Labrador and meet her people.

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

It looks absolutely gorgeous.

BEVERLY: Now, the important question. How will winning or losing Labrador affect the ordinary, everyday person and businessperson in their daily lives? (TURNS TO MR. LEWIS) How will you feel if Labrador is awarded to Quebec?

MR. LEWIS: All my life it has always been Newfoundland and Labrador. I can't even imagine Labrador not being a part of our province. I'm sure the people of Newfoundland don't want this to happen at all.

BEVERLY: Monique, how would Labrador benefit you as a Quebecer?

MONIQUE: Well, we have always felt Labrador should be part of our province. Even geographically it's connected. If it is awarded to us it will just be like a homecoming.

BEVERLY: Monique, tell me how Labrador and its resources will benefit your business.

MONIQUE: Beverly, as it is now my company has to pay high taxes on furs coming from Labrador. If Quebec acquires Labrador these taxes would become non-existent. This would add to the yearly profits of my company.

BEVERLY: And you, Patrick?

PATRICK: Well, Beverly, my situation would be the reverse of Monique's. Now fish comes to the island tax free. If Quebec gets Labrador we will then have to pay high taxes on our fish. First, this would decrease our profits and secondly, as a lot of our fish comes from Labrador, our fish products will be reduced and many companies, like mine, would be in severe financial difficulty. I think that the
...

BEVERLY (CUTS IN): I'm sorry, Patrick. I'm going to have to interrupt you there. We are running short of time. (LOOKS AT AUDIENCE) We have seen today how the ownership of Labrador will benefit Quebec and how the loss of it would affect Newfoundland. It is a serious problem that can only be settled in the courts. The sad thing is that someone has to

WHO ASKED US ANYWAY?

lose. (TURNS TO GUESTS) Thank-you for joining me today. It has been a most interesting discussion.

MONIQUE and PATRICK: Thank-you, Beverly.

BEVERLY (TO AUDIENCE): Thank-you for watching. Join me on Monday when my guest will be Doctor George Dunbar from the Aquarium here in St. John's.

(LIGHTS FADE OUT AND COME UP ON FAMILY SCENE)

GREG (TURNS OFF T.V.): So much for that.

MOTHER: My them slides were some lovely.

GREG: He doesn't know what he's talking about and she doesn't know what she's talking about. He's afraid of losing some money. She figures we should belong to Quebec because we're joined together. Why didn't they have a guest from Labrador on there?

GRANDFATHER: That's right, my son. (GETS UP) The Newfies want to keep a tight grip on us, the Quebec fellers think they should own us, but what I would like to know is, "WHO ASKED US LABRADORIANS ANYWAY?"

GRANDFATHER BEGINS SINGING THE "ODE TO LABRADOR" AND IS JOINED ON THE FRONT OF THE STAGE BY THE REST OF THE CAST.

(CURTAIN CLOSES)