

National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



Enquête nationale
sur les femmes et les filles
autochtones disparues et assassinées

June 1, 2017

**Part 1 Hearings: Families and Survivors
Whitehorse, Yukon
Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre
1171-1st Avenue, Whitehorse**

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls**

Whitehorse Community Hearings - Day 3

COPY

**Chief Commissioner Marion Buller
Commissioner Qajaq Robinson**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS
Public Volume III**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

First hearing

Witnesses: Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Hammond Dick and
Lloyd Caesar (Family of Jane Dick-Ladue)

Evidence:

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue and Lloyd Caesar
with Wendy van Tongeren (Commission Counsel)4
Wisdom shared by Elder Hammond Dick18

First Hearing Exhibits24

- Exhibit P1: Text by Shaun LaDue: "We didn't start the fire," two pages, stapled top left corner.
- Exhibit P2: Powerpoint presentation "Jane Dick-LaDue" shown in evidence; five slides comprising a title page, a map and three photographs.
- Exhibit P3: Written statement that Shaun Ladue wrote and read into the record; first line "My name is Shaun LaDue, I am Kaska Dena, of the Crow Clan"; three pages, stapled top left corner.
- Exhibit P4: *Whitehorse Star* article "Inquest Ordered In Woman's Death" Vol. 70 No. 2, *The Whitehorse Star*, Thursday January 8, 1970.
- Exhibit P5: News article "Transgender man calls Yukon law Discriminatory," *Yukon News*; article bears date 6/1/2017 top left corner; two pages, stapled top left corner.
- Exhibit P6: News article "Becoming a man," *Yukon News*; article bears date 6/1/2017 top

Second hearing:

Witnesses: Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil and Mary
Charlie (Family of Tootsie Charlie)

Opening prayer by Anne Raider in Dene.....25

Evidence:

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil and Mary Charlie
with Christa Big Canoe (Commission Counsel)25

Second Hearing Exhibits.....44

Exhibit P1: (electronic copy): Two-page document
entitled "Excerpts of the *Indian Act*" citation
Indian Act, SC 1951, c 29, (paragraphs 93-98)
- ("intoxicant" includes alcohol, alcoholic,
spirituous..")

Third hearing:

Witnesses: Joan Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Bryan Jack,
Allan, Heather Jack Jane Anne Carver (Family of
Barbara Jack)

Evidence:

Joan Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Bryan Jack, Allan,
Heather Jack, Jane Anne Carver
with Karen Snowshoe (Commission Counsel)45

ORAL TESTIMONY ONLY; NO EXHIBITS ENTERED

Fourth hearing:

Witness: Gina Gill (Family of her Auntie Sophie and
cousin Linda Joe)

Evidence:

Gina Gill with Karen Snowshoe
(Commission Counsel)80

ORAL TESTIMONY ONLY; NO EXHIBITS ENTERED

Fifth hearing:

Witnesses: William Carlick (Family of Wendy Carlick)

Evidence:

William Carlick with Karen Snowshoe
(Commission Counsel)94

ORAL TESTIMONY ONLY; NO EXHIBITS ENTERED

Whitehorse, Yukon
June 1, 2017

(HEARING RECONVENED)

1
2
3
4
5
6 JORGINA ZEEGERS: Good morning. Before we get started
7 I'd just like to go over some general
8 housekeeping items just to keep in mind
9 throughout the day. So, again, please we'd like
10 you to keep your cellphones off or on mute. It's
11 very disturbing to the family members who are
12 sharing.

13 Just in regards to those looking and needing
14 support, the folks that are wearing the yellow
15 lanyards, blue -- if you want to hold up your
16 yellow, are there to talk -- go to speak with.
17 And on that note, on this side of our tent there
18 is a cabin with a green door where you can go and
19 sit and -- and share what's on your heart if you
20 do need support.

21 Today we don't have any cultural activities.
22 And for those of you that have been around or are
23 just here today, in the Families tent and in the
24 room just behind us here, as well as in the
25 Elders tent we have little patches of squares.
26 And as you can see on the blankets here, folks
27 from all over Saskatchewan and here now in the
28 other room have created squares, sharing what's
29 on your heart. And those squares will be created
30 into two more blankets. We have enough for three
31 now. And we -- if you have the time and are
32 willing to, you can participate in that as well.
33 And I'll be sort of bouncing around if you have
34 any questions or want some guidance. There's no
35 boundary on it and we appreciate your input that
36 way.

37 As you can see, scattered around throughout
38 this room and the public room we have the tear
39 bags. The used Kleenexes will be placed into the
40 fire as part of the cultural ceremony, to give
41 that back to the grandmothers and grandfathers,
42 so we thank you for that, if you're wondering
43 what that is.

44 And of course if you have any other
45 questions or concerns, anybody with the green
46 tags, the commissioners, our elders are available
47 to answer any questions you might have.

1 Have a good day.

2 CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank you. Good
3 morning, everyone. Here we are, day three
4 already. Let's get started this wonderful day in
5 a good way with a prayer from our elder.

6 ELDER WILLIAM CARLICK [speaking without a microphone]:

7 Let's take a moment to shut down the chatter in
8 our mind. When we do that, we become good
9 listeners. We need to listen for the Creator to
10 come to us in a good way. We need to be good
11 listeners so that we can hear what the ancestors
12 and helpers have to say. We have to be grateful
13 [indiscernible] never ask for anything from
14 [indiscernible]. He has given us everything we
15 need. Everything. All we do is give thanks, be
16 grateful to Him. And always remember that we
17 need to follow His great law, His unwritten law.

18 He has given us our ancestors, the ones that
19 walk with us, the two-legged, the four-legged,
20 the ones that swim in the water and watch over us
21 as we go about what needs to be done in the
22 sacred circle. The Sky People that have come and
23 blessed us, we don't need to see them. They're
24 there. They're helping us. We give thanks to
25 them. We give thanks to all our ancestors that
26 are coming to help us as we stand here in the
27 sacred circle - the ancestors from outside the
28 universe, the ancestors inside the universe, the
29 grandmothers and grandfathers up on High Mountain
30 that watch over us as we go about what needs to
31 be done, give us strength, help us heal. We give
32 thanks to all of those. They ask only one thing
33 of us, is that we also help them heal and look
34 out for them, honour them.

35 It is important going forward that we all
36 work together because we're all created the same.
37 We are all the same. Creator does not look at us
38 because we're white, because we're black, because
39 we're yellow, or because we're red. He does not
40 favour anyone. He favours us all. He says one
41 thing to us as we go about our daily lives, He
42 expects the spirit in each and every one of us
43 because that spirit is Him, it is He. We don't
44 have to like that person, but we have to respect
45 that person because He is part of the Creator.
46 We get energy from each and every one of us when
47 we work together. We get healing, whether we

1 know it or whether we don't know it, that's not
2 important, only that we believe in Him. I pray
3 to all our ancestors to have pity and have mercy
4 on us, and to have mercy on me because I'm so
5 pitiful but yet I'm so grateful. [Aboriginal
6 language spoken]
7 CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Ms. van Tongeren,
8 are you ready?
9 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Yes. Thank you.
10 So June 1st, scheduled for 9 o'clock till
11 10:30 the key speaker will be Shaun Ladue,
12 S-h-a-u-n L-a-d-u-e. And as a first request,
13 Madam Commissioner, I would ask that Shaun Ladue
14 present a prayer for the group today for the
15 room.
16 SHAUN LADUE: [Aboriginal language spoken] I thank
17 you for watching over my cousins, my brother, my
18 relatives as we come together to tell our
19 stories. And I pray that the commissioners
20 continue to hear us with open hearts and open
21 minds, and that Canada can follow our path to
22 healing as we tell these stories. [Aboriginal
23 language spoken]
24 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Mr. Registrar, this witness,
25 Mr. Ladue, would like to affirm with an eagle
26 feather, please.
27 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Just grab that feather here.
28 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. And, Lloyd, would you like
29 to join in swearing with the eagle feather. Just
30 come forward and hold it together.
31 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. So we've got Shaun and Terry,
32 and, sir, your name?
33 LLOYD CAESAR: Lloyd.
34 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Lloyd --
35 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Lloyd? Okay.
36 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- Caesar.
37 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Lloyd Caesar? Great.
38 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: C-a-e-s-a-r --
39 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you very much.
40 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- L-l-o-y-d.
41 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you.
42 Good morning. Welcome. Do the three of you
43 solemnly affirm that the evidence you will give
44 today will be the truth, the whole truth, and
45 nothing but the truth?
46 SHAUN LADUE: I do.
47 TERRY LADUE: I do.

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 LLOYD CAESAR: I do.

2

3 SHAUN LADUE, TERRY LADUE and LLOYD CAESAR, affirmed.

4

5 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you very much.

6 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: And Shaun now has another request
7 of the Commissioner, please.

8 SHAUN LADUE: I request that the commissioners also
9 take an affirmation to continue to listen to our
10 stories across Canada with an open mind and an
11 open heart and free of prejudice.

12 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Chief Commissioner Marion Buller,
13 Commissioner Qajaq Robinson, do you both solemnly
14 affirm that you will continue to do this work
15 with an open heart, with an open mind, and
16 without prejudice as you go across the country?

17 COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: I do.

18 CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Yes, absolutely.

19

20 CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER and
21 COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON solemnly affirm.

22

23 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Okay, thank you.

24

25

26 **First hearing**

27 **Shaun LaDue, Terry LaDue, Lloyd Caesar, Hammond Dick**

28 **(Family of Jane Dick-LaDue) with Wendy van Tongeren**

29

30 **(Commission Counsel)**

31

32 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: So may I call you "Shaun"?

33 SHAUN LADUE: Yeah.

34 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you. Everyone who
35 comes into this room to speak to the
36 commissioners has made a choice and they have
37 made choices about what they are prepared to
38 share, what they seek to share with the
39 commissioners, and in this context with many,
40 many more because this is a very public forum.
41 Shaun, I'm going to ask you to just summarize
42 here at the beginning what are the topics that
43 you intend to share with the commissioners today?

44 SHAUN LADUE: Today I'm going to share about my
45 mother, her death, the impact all of this has had
46 on my family, my -- my four siblings and myself.

47 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you. Now, before we
actually get into the body of -- of those topics,

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 is there something that -- that you'd actually
2 like to provide to us as a backdrop or context?

3 SHAUN LADUE: Yes. I'm a writer and I have been a
4 writer for a very long time. And I love music.
5 And I was listening to a song by Billy Joel
6 called "We Didn't Start the Fire". He wrote
7 it -- he wrote it and published it in 1989. And
8 the lyrics read:

9
10 We didn't start the fire
11 It was always burning since the world's
12 been turning
13 We didn't start the fire
14 No, we didn't light it, but we tried to
15 fight it
16

17 Now, Billy was referring to the world events
18 between '49 and '89, when he turned 40. We can
19 see how these lyrics can reflect the experience
20 of First Nations in Canada. The fire is
21 colonialism that the Europeans brought with them.
22 Their ideals on how life is to be lived, how
23 resources, nature and animals were to be
24 subjugated and utilized, how the land was a
25 commodity to be owned, how the Indigenous people
26 were thought of as less than. And after 500
27 years these ideas have not changed much. The
28 First Nations women and girls are thought of as
29 disposable. They are not. They are the life
30 givers, the storytellers, the history keepers,
31 the prophets, and the matriarchs. We didn't
32 start the fire.

33 The fall out of colonialism is like a
34 fallout of a nuclear war, a winter without light.
35 The governments of Canada and the Territory
36 wanted to solve the Indian problem. They started
37 with forced relocations of bands, tribes, and
38 groups. It was always burn since the world has
39 been turning.

40 Europe has a long history of conquering and
41 ruling each other. North America, not so much.
42 We tried to live peacefully within our
43 environment, taking only what we needed. There
44 were small battles and wars lasting just days.
45 Most disagreements were worked out with
46 discussions, understandings, and some pretty
47 strict social rules. We didn't start the fire.

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 The colonialists and their descendants
2 continued to view the First Nations as a problem
3 that needed to be fixed. They took away the
4 children. To take away the children is to take
5 the light away from any community - and they are
6 still taking away the children.

7 No, we didn't light fire, but we tried to
8 fight it. Forty-five years ago a group of Yukon
9 First Nations started to whisper, "Together today
10 for our children tomorrow." This grew into land
11 claims for a majority of the Yukon. Then 20
12 years ago people started to talk about the
13 outcomes of the residential school experience.
14 This led to the Truth and Reconciliation
15 Commission. Now we are talking about the
16 Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls,
17 and there are also rumblings of the '60s Scoop
18 survivors. We didn't start the fire.

19 WENDY VAN TONGEREN Now, Shaun has -- I just -- I just
20 want to re-enforce that you drafted that and that
21 you have presented it. However, unfortunately I
22 don't have copies to present at this time, but
23 I'll make sure that that is looked after.

24 [Speaking to staff]

25 Okay. Now, I understand that you have some
26 other things to say about yourself and your
27 family, and you're going to use the PowerPoint to
28 assist you with that?

29 SHAUN LADUE: Yeah. There's a PowerPoint and my -- my
30 story along with my brother's and my sister.

31 WENDY VAN TONGEREN And is the first slide that you
32 want to be seen of the Territory or?

33 Okay. So that's number 2, please.

34 SHAUN LADUE: I'm going to start off with the official
35 introduction. I'm Shawn Ladue. I'm Kaska Dena
36 of the Crow Clan. My parents were Jane and
37 Billy. My grandparents were Margaret and Frank
38 Dick and Edith and Joel Ladue.

39 I'm going to talk about the impact my
40 mother's murder had on her five children.

41 In late October '67, almost two months after
42 my birth, my brother, Terry, and I were taken
43 away from my grandparents, Margaret and Frank
44 Dick. We were in a bush camp at Tucho, also
45 known as Frances Lake. It was our traditional
46 area.

47 The social worker, Ms. Lafayette (phonetic),

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 felt my parents -- or my grandparents didn't know
2 how to properly raise children and that they were
3 too old. She didn't take into consideration that
4 my uncles and my aunties were there also. She
5 didn't take into consideration that we believed
6 that families raise children, not just the birth
7 parents.

8 Slide 2. Or my mom's picture. Okay.

9 In 1970 my mom, Jane Dick, was violently
10 taken from her five children and the outcomes
11 were devastating for us. We were 2, 4, 6, 8, and
12 10 years old. My grandparents were forced, under
13 threat of jail, to send my three oldest siblings
14 to residential school at Lower Post. My brother,
15 Terry, and I were in foster care. The theory
16 behind interfering with our family was it was for
17 the best interests of the child. Was it best for
18 my siblings and I to endure years of separation
19 and isolation? Collectively we have experienced
20 the following: mental health issues, alcoholism,
21 drug addiction, homelessness, limited education,
22 family violence, fetal alcohol spectrum children,
23 children in care, a sense of dislocation,
24 criminal activity, shortened lifespan, suicidal
25 ideations and attempts, jail and prison time,
26 chronic illness, limited social connections,
27 limited employment opportunities, sexual abuse,
28 physical abuse, mental abuse, emotional abuse,
29 loss of traditional knowledge, loss of language,
30 loss of culture, loss of history. How is having
31 five people endure that list in the best
32 interests of them?

33 In 1982 I remember Terry coming up to me.
34 We were both living in group homes in Whitehorse.
35 He had our parents' names written on the palm of
36 his hand. He shared this with me. It was our
37 first connection with our family.

38 In '93 I was doing research for a project at
39 the Yukon Archives. I came across a *Whitehorse*
40 *Star* news article from January 9th, 1970. On the
41 front page news it stated that my mom, Jane Dick,
42 had died and had been Medevaced from Watson Lake.
43 I was stunned as I stared at that microfiche
44 machine for several minutes trying to make sense
45 of the three little paragraphs.

46 WENDY VAN TONGEREN I'm not sure if it's the same
47 article, but it's basically [indiscernible]

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 SHAUN LADUE: I was 29 years old when I found my mom's
2 grave site in Liard. It was kind of surreal.

3 In 2001 I was hired to teach at Ross River's
4 Community Campus. On the wall were dozens of old
5 black and white pictures. One day while I was
6 cleaning up I looked up at the wall of pictures.
7 There staring back at me was a picture of my mom,
8 Jane Dick. I was 34 years old and I had finally
9 seen what my mom looked like. I was stunned. My
10 late sister and my late brother look so much like
11 her.

12 I don't have any stories about my mom. I'll
13 never do the "do you remember when" conversations
14 because she was involved with somebody who was
15 violent and hurt her so bad she fell unconscious
16 and never woke up. She was almost 29 years old
17 when she died, leaving behind five young
18 children.

19 When children are taken away from the
20 family, the reason to get up, to keep living is
21 gone. Taking away the children is taking away
22 the light. All the interference on our family
23 has had its toll. In the past two years we have
24 lost my two oldest siblings. They fought for a
25 long time to heal from the pain of being
26 separated from family, from the legacy of
27 residential schools, from the alcohol that hid
28 the pain and unknown regrets. They died young
29 and alone. I remember once my brother, Gary
30 (phonetic), asking me if life would be different
31 if we had grown up with our parents, Jane Dick
32 and Billy Ladue, would we have been a family. I
33 couldn't answer his question. I still don't have
34 an answer.

35 All these policies, all these well-meaning
36 detentions -- intentions, pardon me, all these
37 ideas of best interests of the child has almost
38 killed off my entire family. My siblings and I
39 have spent almost 50 years trying to heal from
40 these intentions. I guess what I'm saying --
41 what I'm saying is that residential school hurt
42 my parents, hurt my three older siblings. The
43 '60s Scoop hurt my brother Terry and me. When it
44 takes almost 50 years to heal by someone else's
45 actions, that's a steep price. To start living
46 and enjoying life at 50 years of age, it's a bit
47 of a rip off.

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 What do I want the National Inquiry to know?
2 That my mother's murder was a culmination of
3 cultural genocide, residential school, and the
4 '60s Scoop. The impacts on her five children --
5 the -- pardon me, the impacts of her measured on
6 her five children was overwhelming and tragic.
7 There are though records of her murder. There
8 are no answers why her life was cut short. I
9 want the National Inquiry to know that because of
10 all the events in my mom's short life had an
11 impact on me as her child, my mom was able to
12 give me one gift - she kept me -- she gave me
13 life and she kept me safe inside her for nine
14 months. I don't have any stories of my mom and
15 me. I don't have any sense of her in my life.
16 There is a gap inside that nothing will fill. I
17 think it is meant for her love.

18 I'm sure there's life lessons my mom could
19 have taught me but never got the chance to. I
20 have never known the warmth and reassuring place
21 wrapped in my mother's hug. If I could -- of all
22 the things I could ask for, more money than Bill
23 Gates, more intelligence than Stephen Hawking,
24 better looks than Brad Pitt, all I want is a
25 visit with my mom, to hear her voice, to get a
26 reassuring hug, and to feel the love of a parent.
27 These are my thoughts as a child of a murdered
28 Indigenous woman. The National Inquiry can't
29 bring my mom back or any of the other murdered
30 women, but please give us answers and closures to
31 these devastating events that took place in our
32 life. It's time to place our women and our girls
33 back on their pedestal, to protect them, to love
34 them, and tell them that they're our everything.
35 [Aboriginal language spoken]

36 WENDY VAN TONGEREN So, you've read two very powerful
37 pieces and so now I'm -- I don't have something
38 else for you to read. You don't have anything
39 else that you have brought to read?

40 SHAUN LADUE: No.

41 WENDY VAN TONGEREN What would you like to do now?

42 SHAUN LADUE: Do you have anything to say?

43 My brother will talk for a minute.

44 WENDY VAN TONGEREN Okay.

45 TERRY LADUE: Hello. My name is Terry. I haven't
46 talked about this for 52 years. I had no sense
47 into talking about it. What happened is -- it's

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 over, there's nothing we can do to change it.

2 The effects it had on me is very simple, I
3 don't know how to love. I was never taught that.
4 Me and my brother together, but we're not
5 together, we might be here talking together but
6 we live in the same community and we can't even
7 visit each other. My whole family is like that
8 because they took my mom away from me. The thing
9 I lost is to be able to show compassion and love
10 to my own boys. I've got three beautiful boys
11 out there and I can't even tell them I love them
12 because I don't know what the heck that word
13 means. I've got beautiful grandchildren and I'm
14 scared to go and see them because I don't know
15 how to love them. That's what happened, what's
16 taken from me, when they took my mom, when my mom
17 died. Look at those people up there on that
18 screen. I lost my two -- two older siblings.
19 There's only three of us left. The effect it had
20 on me was it drove me down to Vancouver and stuck
21 a needle up my arm for 13 years trying to kill
22 the pain. Drinking, trying to kill the pain,
23 wondering why nobody wanted me. Why? I felt
24 like I was nothing, like I was just a piece of
25 whatever. My mom wasn't there to hold me or hug
26 me, to give me strength, to give me encouragement
27 to stand up and fight.

28 I really don't trust people like you guys.
29 I don't trust the government and I don't trust
30 the RCMP because all they want to do and it seems
31 like all they want to do is throw us in jail all
32 the time. They don't take into account for what
33 they did to us. They don't look at us and say,
34 "Look what we did to those people." They just
35 want to throw us in jail. That's all they want
36 to do, or take our kids away. I don't want that
37 anymore. I don't want my, you know, kids to be
38 taken away because what happened to me in my
39 foster care system, I don't want to see that
40 happen to anybody, the sexual abuse, the
41 putdowns, you know. My foster parents were kind
42 and gentle parents but they had some real strange
43 friends that would come over. You know, I used
44 to remember listening to them going, "Well, every
45 white man should have a good Indian tied up in
46 the back yard," you know. That's my childhood.
47 And on top of that, being raped for, jeez, until

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 I was at least 12, I guess, when I moved into
2 that foster home. You know, I -- I learnt a long
3 time ago not to speak because when I stood up and
4 I tried to say something, they told me to shut
5 up, it's not happening.

6 Like I said, I -- I don't know what I came
7 here and I don't know what to expect out of here,
8 but, you know, if anything comes out of this, I
9 hope that they realize that we can't keep doing
10 this to our people. You guys want to do
11 something, why don't you start treating our
12 Native people as human beings and not economies,
13 you know. I'm tired of watching my people's kids
14 get taken away and put into the foster care
15 system so that people can get rich off them.
16 When is that going to start changing? When are
17 we going to start changing? You know, I hear
18 people talk with murdered and Indigenous women,
19 it's a good thing, but that's just talking about
20 it. When are we going to start solving the --
21 the problems to it? When are we going to come up
22 with some kind of programs to help these men not
23 to do it anymore? We talk about this, but we
24 don't talk about solutions. We just talk about
25 how it made us feel. I think that -- I think
26 that talking is over. I think it's time to stand
27 up and start doing something about it. There
28 shouldn't be another missing or Native woman out
29 there or any kind of woman. I'm not just talking
30 about Native woman. I'm talking about all women.
31 We lost that somewhere between then and here. We
32 lost that respect that we used to have for our
33 Native people. Our Native people used to have
34 respect for our females. We used to honour them
35 all the time. What happened? Alcohol, drugs,
36 '60s Scoop, residential school. And then you
37 want to know why we're so screwed up? When is
38 the government and all them people going to stand
39 up and start looking and going, "Yeah, we did
40 that to those people"? I don't see nobody here
41 standing up saying, "We did that to them." It
42 takes stuff like this to stand up and say, hey,
43 we're tired of not being heard. At least I'm
44 tired of not being heard. And I kept it in for
45 52 years I kept this in, thinking that nothing is
46 going to happen. You want to be on my good side,
47 you want to prove that you're going to do

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 something for me, then don't let this die. I had
2 too many things happen to me through government
3 system and government care. I don't trust
4 anything do with government. All they know how
5 to do is rape and take our families apart, rip us
6 apart. So why should I trust them? They never
7 come to me and say sorry to me. They never come
8 to me and offer to help me feed my family. I was
9 16 years old when I finally finished with that
10 group, that foster care system, and you know how
11 they -- that was it, you're 16, you're an adult,
12 get out; you're on your own now. They didn't
13 tell me where I'm from. They didn't tell me who
14 my family was.

15 I remember one time I was sitting in the
16 bathtub. I must have been about 6, I think, 6 or
17 7 years old, and I was sitting in there scrubbing
18 my skin with a wire brush because I lived with
19 white people. And I don't know -- I couldn't
20 understand why my skin was brown and they were
21 white. I sat and -- and I wish I had a picture
22 of that tub. You could have seen a little boy
23 sitting in there scrubbing his skin off,
24 scrubbing it because he didn't like that damn
25 colour, because he didn't want to be like that.
26 Because all I ever heard about Indian people was
27 we were just nothing except drunks, nothing
28 except alcoholics. Old women were nothing except
29 sluts, whores. This is what I grew up. Today I
30 don't think it. Today, it took me many years to
31 fight to get that thoughts out of my head. Many
32 years of healing, many years of slipping and
33 sliding. And I'm no better than anybody else.
34 Just because I don't drink people think I'm
35 better. No, I'm not. I just choose not to
36 drink, that's all, that's it. I'm still human
37 and I still make mistakes.

38 If I had anything, I would tell you two days
39 ago -- or was it two days ago? It was two
40 days -- yeah, two days ago, on the 30th, I turned
41 52. I was sitting here for my birthday. I went
42 outside to the front and my family, Dennis Shorty
43 and a couple other people sang a birthday song to
44 me. 52 years old, I never had that done to me.
45 And you know what, I swear I saw my mom dancing
46 behind them and it hurt, but it also made me
47 happy because for once I felt like I was loved by

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 my mom. I know I'll never feel the real love
2 from her because she's gone, but I know and I
3 hope and I pray that my family could join up and
4 become strong. But the way things are going, I
5 don't think it's going to happen. I think I'll
6 be dead before that happens.

7 And as for this inquiry, I don't know. Like
8 I said, you guys want to prove it to me, you guys
9 are going to have to prove it to me. I hear
10 words all the time. I don't want words anymore.
11 I want action. I want action. That's what I
12 want. No more words. No more saying things. I
13 want action. Whether it's getting more help for
14 the community so we can stop this violence,
15 whether it's getting help so we can deal with our
16 people with alcohol problems, your drug problems,
17 or counselling for our sexual -- you know, sexual
18 problems that's going on in the communities. I'm
19 tired of all this. I'm tired of seeing my people
20 get hurt and nothing happen. I've been hurt and
21 I've been hurt bad. My life, I learnt not to
22 trust, not to love, not to let nobody get close
23 to me, and I still live it today. Up in my
24 hometown in Ross, you come by my house, my
25 windows are darkened out. I live in the dark
26 because I don't trust. I can't trust. And if I
27 trust somebody, they might hurt me, and I might
28 get mad and I might hurt them back. How can you
29 trust anybody if you're never got shown trust?
30 How can you love anybody if you never got shown
31 love? How can you believe in something when
32 nobody believed in you? All my life people put
33 me down. All my life the government system said
34 that I was crazy. They wanted to ship me off and
35 get some kind of depression electric shock
36 treatment. Well, jeez, the poor kid was raped
37 for how many years. Do you think you would be in
38 any good health? You know, every night for five,
39 six years straight going to bed knowing that you
40 were going to get raped. Instead of having my
41 mom come down and give me a kiss, I had some guy
42 come down and do something else to me.

43 Yeah, it affected me, this death of my mom,
44 and I wish it didn't. I wish I could stay cold-
45 hearted and just cover it all up, but I can't
46 because it's going to destroy me, that anger. So
47 I've got to talk and I've got to let it out.

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 And -- and if I don't, I might harm somebody or I
2 might harm myself. Because the last 52 years,
3 from the day they took my little brother away
4 from me until this day, there isn't too many days
5 that I haven't thought about using a damn bullet.
6 Because I have. I've thought about it everyday
7 sometimes. Every day. But everyday I find a
8 reason to live. Every day I find a reason to
9 stay strong. You know, help to -- not having
10 no -- no -- no understanding of what love is, but
11 I'm still here fighting to find out, you know.
12 I'm still here willing to give it a shot. Scared
13 and -- you know, scared because I don't
14 understand what this family love is.

15 I'm -- I'm back up in my hometown and I've
16 been here for five years, six years, somewhere
17 like that, and that's amazing for me. I never
18 stayed in one place longer than two years. But
19 that was something that I was taught, if you have
20 trouble, you get up and ship him on. That's --
21 that was my childhood. I got in trouble, "Oh,
22 well, it's his fault. Get up," ship him on.
23 You know, they don't think about what that little
24 boy went through.

25 The loss of my mom hurts me the most because
26 I wish I could just once get a kiss from her.
27 Just once. I would give up my whole entire life
28 just to feel her once give me a kiss on my cheek
29 or to hug me, or just to wish me a happy
30 birthday. That would be what I'd want, but I
31 know it's not going to happen.

32 I am an alcoholic and I am an addict. Like
33 I said, I stand -- stood down in Vancouver for
34 13 years sticking a needle up my arm trying to
35 forget the pain, drinking everyday. It wasn't
36 just once in a while. It wasn't just an hour of
37 drink here and then I would sober up for -- it
38 was constant. Everyday, you know.

39 And I remember that day that I decided to
40 quit drinking, I tried to commit suicide. Second
41 Narrows Bridge, Ironworkers Bridge I was going to
42 jump off of. I had enough and I couldn't live
43 anymore. I remember that day because I climbed
44 over that bridge and I was going to jump. I was
45 going to let go. And all I could see was
46 pictures, pictures of my two beautiful boys at
47 that time, pictures of my mom coming to me,

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 pictures of my dad and -- or who I thought was my
2 dad. Pictures of my family coming to me. I
3 still don't know why I didn't let go, but I'm
4 here and I don't -- I don't question it. Maybe
5 [indiscernible Aboriginal word] had a reason for
6 me to climb back over there and come back across,
7 I don't know, but I know that that's -- that's
8 what made me realize that I don't need to do that
9 to myself anymore. I don't need to punish myself
10 because it wasn't my fault, and for many years I
11 blamed myself for it. Out of all those people in
12 that picture, I'm probably the only one that was
13 willing to help everyone. I'd go -- bend over
14 backwards because that's what I think family
15 does. When you say you love your family, you'd
16 do anything for that family member, and I would.
17 Even though I never grew up with either one of
18 them, I would always be there for them. I don't
19 know what happened or what changed in my life,
20 but I know that dealing with this today for me is
21 letting go of something that I haven't let go of
22 for 52 years, and that's the anger I had towards
23 the government officials, and the anger I have
24 towards against the RCMP, the anger I have
25 against [indiscernible] people. I don't trust.
26 And if you want my trust, you've got to earn my
27 trust. And if I see this fall apart, I'll never
28 trust again. [indiscernible]
29 WENDY VAN TONGEREN Thank you, Terry.
30 Shaun, is there anything that you need at
31 the moment?
32 SHAUN LADUE: No, I'm good. I'm good.
33 WENDY VAN TONGEREN Okay. So, I'm wondering whether
34 or not I can ask you the question that we talked
35 about.
36 SHAUN LADUE: Go for it.
37 WENDY VAN TONGEREN Okay. So, Terry, you are called
38 by many "The Bridge", B-r--
39 SHAUN LADUE: That's Terry, I'm Shaun.
40 WENDY VAN TONGEREN I'm sorry, Shaun. "Wendy, please
41 remember who you're talking to," to self.
42 Shaun, many people call you "The Bridge",
43 B-r-i-d-g-e.
44 SHAUN LADUE: I'm considered a bridge because --
45 WENDY VAN TONGEREN There's just a little bit more to
46 the question.
47 SHAUN LADUE: [indiscernible]

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 WENDY VAN TONGEREN What unique perspectives do you
2 have that helps provide insight on how to
3 transform our society into one that honours and
4 protects women, Indigenous women?

5 SHAUN LADUE: As we know, I was apprehended when I was
6 a baby and I was adopted by a white family. It
7 wasn't a good situation, but it was what I grew
8 up with. So in reality, I grew up walking in the
9 white world and I have come back to it. Now I
10 walk in the First Nations world.

11 When I was born, I was assigned female at
12 birth. I was raised as a girl. So, I walked in
13 the world of women for a long time. For 44 years
14 I walked in the world of women. I understand the
15 fears, the hurts, the scares that we have as
16 female-based bodies. You know, the fact that we
17 get sexualised and, you know, we aren't -- we are
18 thought of less than even. And in my 44th year I
19 talked to a counsellor, I explained a few things.
20 He said, "Oh, you're transgender." And I said,
21 "What's transgender?" And he explained it to me.
22 It's somebody like myself who was born with a
23 biological body as female and actually have a
24 male brain. I see the world very much in a male
25 way. So I did, I proceeded to transition. I'm
26 going into my fifth year living as a man. So I
27 walk in the world of men.

28 And those are my unique perspectives is
29 growing up, you know, being seen as this
30 colourful white child because I grew up in a
31 middle class white home, and also as a girl, and
32 then transitioning and going back home and living
33 in my traditional territories and learning how to
34 hunt and learning how to keep a wood stove going
35 all winter when it's minus 40 and building my own
36 house, you know, those types of things. And a
37 lot of people have come to me and said, "Since
38 you changed, you've changed." And what they're
39 trying to say is since I have transitioned I'm at
40 peace with myself, of who I am. There is though
41 struggle there anymore. I am a Kaska Dena man
42 and that's how it is.

43 What was the other part of that question?

44 WENDY VAN TONGEREN What -- what unique perspective do
45 you have that helps provide insight on how to
46 transform our society into one that honours and
47 protects Indigenous women?

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 SHAUN LADUE: There are men out there who have been
2 hurt and continue to hurt others. And those of
3 us who have been there and seen that and don't
4 want it to happen anymore, I think it's our
5 responsibility to tell those men to stop, to stop
6 hurting the women in their life, to stop seeing
7 them as sexual objects, to start seeing them as
8 human beings, as powerful human beings. We have
9 to stop the denigration of half the population of
10 the world and the life givers, you know. If you
11 kill off all the men but one, the human race will
12 continue. But if you kill off all the women,
13 that's it, we're history, you know.

14 And the [indiscernible Aboriginal word], He
15 placed us all here for a reason and part of that
16 is to give life again and to keep going, and we
17 have to remember that, that life is a gift.

18 WENDY VAN TONGEREN I wonder if we could just -- do
19 you mind if I just ask him to bring up the
20 picture of the grave of your mom?

21 SHAUN LADUE: Yeah.

22 WENDY VAN TONGEREN Okay. So, that's in the
23 PowerPoint and I believe it's the last. There we
24 go. Okay. So, I'm going to ask about something
25 from a more practical perspective. So it's clear
26 to me, Shaun, that you have over and over again
27 honoured your mother. And I have brought up the
28 grave that you have arranged that a picture be
29 taken of that.

30 SHAUN LADUE: Yeah.

31 WENDY VAN TONGEREN And I am just wondering, from --
32 from your perspectives, your unique perspectives,
33 what are the things that we can do to honour
34 people like your mom, the Indigenous missing and
35 murdered, and also -- Indigenous women and girls,
36 but also those who have been violated, who have
37 been treated in a violent way, have been treated
38 in a way that denigrates them? What are some of
39 the practical solutions? What can you share with
40 us?

41 SHAUN LADUE: One thing is there has to be a memorial
42 in every community, First Nations community, with
43 the names engraved of all the women, names not to
44 forget - Jane Dick, Elsie Shorty, Annie Dick
45 Simmons (phonetic). Those are just a couple that
46 I can think of off the top of my head and that's
47 just in my family. And we have to -- we have to

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar
Wisdom shared by Elder Hammond Dick

1 have, I don't know, a symbol or something where
2 those names are engraved and there forever.
3 Because they did something. They did something
4 great. They brought in the next generation.
5 My -- my family and my friends who sit behind me,
6 their mom, their grandma gave them some amazing
7 life lessons and those have to be remembered.
8 So, a Territorial book, you know, of the life
9 lessons of these people who have gone in horrible
10 ways would be a good one. Not to forget these
11 stories. Never to forget these stories.

12 WENDY VAN TONGEREN So there is another speaker, it's
13 Lloyd Caesar. Now, we can either go to him or if
14 the commissioners would like to ask you
15 questions, that's another possibility, so.

16 [indiscernible]

17 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. So, Lloyd, go ahead.

18 LLOYD CAESAR: Good morning.

19 My name is Lloyd Caesar. I was
20 traditionally adopted into the Dick family when I
21 was a young boy. Jane was my sister. In the
22 European way, a step-sister. In our traditional
23 way, she is my sister.

24 And when I was a young boy, my mother passed
25 away. I was 9 years old. My Aunty Margaret Dick
26 and Frank, they came and got me from where I was
27 living at that time. My Aunty Margaret told me
28 that she was going to raise me up. So, that's
29 how I was adopted into that family.

30 I just want to speak on a little bit of
31 this. As a traditional parent, as soon as my
32 sister Jane passed away, that was my
33 responsibility to raise my nephew, but I was also
34 a residential school survivor, so it was hard
35 enough just trying to raise myself up. When they
36 released me from residential school at the age of
37 16, I did not do a lot to care for myself. They
38 haven't given me any tools. I didn't even know
39 what even a crescent wrench was when I was
40 released from school. That's the kind of things
41 we were facing at that time. But right now my
42 heart goes out to my nephews.

43 And I am also an elder from Ross River Dena
44 Council. And I have my brother here, Hammond,
45 Hammond Dick, who is also an elder. He wanted to
46 sit with us in support of our family. There's
47 not much I could say, but I just wanted to point

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar
Wisdom shared by Elder Hammond Dick

1 out that Jane was my sister, and traditionally my
2 responsibility was for my nephews and my niece
3 when I don't know how to do it. Like, my nephew
4 Terry said, he did not learn how to love, and
5 that was part of my ... Yeah. It's really hard
6 to express the sadness and the pain that we are
7 going through. Also, my nephew has been gone for
8 five years. Nobody knows where he is. The same
9 with Greg Caesar, my sister Tanya's boy. So with
10 that I -- if -- I would like to pass this on to
11 Elder Hammond.

12 ELDER HAMMOND DICK: Good morning, commissioners. My
13 name is Hammond Dick. I'm here as a support for
14 the family. The story you're -- you're hearing
15 is of my older cousin, my -- my dad's younger
16 brother's daughter, Jane. And I'm here as a
17 support for the family. And Lloyd asked me to
18 say a few words in regards to the residential
19 school.

20 Most of us my age were taken away from the
21 community of Ross River back in 1954, around that
22 area, when we were children. And our parents
23 didn't have -- didn't hardly have a say in
24 whether we should stay home or -- or not. So
25 the -- the RCMP and the missionaries came and
26 collected all school-aged kids and hauled them
27 away to Whitehorse or Lower Post in many cases.
28 And my cousin Jane and Lloyd and a lot of his
29 family members were -- were taken away at that
30 time at a young age, not knowing where they were
31 going. I was also amongst that group. We were
32 taken away to Whitehorse and -- and Lower Post.

33 And these families have grown up in a
34 totally different environment than what they
35 would have been raised in. And they were treated
36 with disrespect. And they -- they experienced
37 sexual, emotional, and physical damage while they
38 were in these institutions. And when they got
39 out, a lot of them, you know, became parents
40 themselves, and a lot of them do not have -- did
41 not have any knowledge of how to raise families,
42 and to cope with some of these -- these
43 difficulties they turned to drugs and alcohol at
44 an early age. And back then I don't think there
45 was any -- any counselling available for people
46 that fell into these drug addiction, alcohol, and
47 other addictions. So, Lloyd has asked me to --

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar
Wisdom shared by Elder Hammond Dick

1 to say a few words on that. And it's ... Even
2 today I think a lot of our people find it very
3 difficult to, you know, deal with things on a --
4 on an everyday level. My nephews here, my
5 nieces, you know, they -- it takes them a lot of
6 courage to step forward and tell their story, in
7 the hopes that, you know, something will -- will
8 come out of this commission, out of these
9 hearings. And I'm here in support of my nephews,
10 my nieces, my -- my cousin here. And so I
11 just -- you know, you'll probably hear a lot more
12 about some of the -- the experiences that -- that
13 face our people, not only here but right across
14 the country. [Aboriginal language spoken]

15 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you.

16 LLOYD CAESAR: Thank you, Hammond.

17 I just needed that little break. Just
18 there's a picture behind you of my sister's
19 grave. You see a lot of -- a lot of graves like
20 that in Liard or all over in Dena country, where
21 buried so many of us that it was impossible to
22 remember who was the last one to -- was buried.
23 And we didn't have no money or anything to -- to
24 give them good headstones. We made our own with
25 boards but in a couple years they were destroyed
26 and pretty soon there's graves with no markers at
27 all but just lumps. A lot of us that were
28 growing up, we go visit family members at their
29 grave and we couldn't find their graves because
30 there was no markers. And I just want you guys to
31 know that all other nations always have good
32 graves and have -- have the money to improve
33 that.

34 I ... I was raised with my sister Jane.
35 She used to call me and my brother Harry Dick,
36 "You crazy kids. You -- you boys are really
37 crazy, but I love you both." I remember her
38 saying stuff like this to us. And we had a good
39 family going and -- and then after a while
40 everybody split up. Alcohol started to rampage
41 on our communities and bootleggers used to come.
42 Whatever little money we had went to the
43 bootleggers and to the people that came by and
44 sold us drugs and stuff.

45 I'd like to thank everybody here and our
46 lawyer here. With that I'll just pass it back.
47 Thank you.

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 TERRY LADUE: There's just one more thing I wanted to
2 say before I hand it back. I know that I said a
3 lot of things that were negative, but I was
4 taught a long time ago to try to try to walk out
5 of a meeting without thinking negative, so I'm
6 going to tell you a story about me and my little
7 brother here.

8 I remember when we were kids I didn't know
9 he was my brother at the time, but he came over
10 to visit and we were running around and playing
11 outside. And for some funny reason me and my
12 brother, we found chocolate cake or we took
13 chocolate cake from my mom, my foster mom. We
14 took off and we went out and just pigged right on
15 it, eh. Just gulp, gulp, gulp, gulp it down.
16 And I remember because when we went back in mom
17 called for supper, me and my brother walked in
18 and we both tried to look innocent. We've got
19 chocolate cake all over our -- all over our
20 faces, right? "We're not hungry." Mom wanted to
21 know why and she looked down and she started
22 laugh because she could see chocolate cake
23 covered. That was about the best thing, the
24 fondest memory I have about our childhood
25 together. So, good -- you know, like, I might
26 talk about all the bad stuff because it was bad,
27 but there was some good memories that I'm just
28 starting to remember now and I wanted to share
29 that one with you guys. Thank you.

30 SHAUN LADUE: I still love chocolate cake.

31 [Audience laughter]

32 SHAUN LADUE: Uncle Lloyd mentioned -- or Uncle Harry,
33 a story that was told to me from family members.
34 I was a baby. We were living out at Tucho,
35 Frances Lake, in camp, and uncle seen the social
36 workers coming down the road. He grabbed me. I
37 was two months old. He put me in a backpack. He
38 grabbed Terry, who was still in diapers. He
39 round up our other three siblings. And he'd take
40 us into the bush and he'd hide us for two days.
41 He's, like, "You're not going with those people.
42 I know what happens. You're not going with
43 them." And he came back and brought us back and
44 he took good care of us, you know. And ... But
45 that's the kind of reaction that my family had
46 when they seen government people coming was we've
47 got to run and hide. And that shouldn't be like

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 that. And it's like that because of all the
2 hurts that have happened generationally. And I
3 think we have to stop, put things aside, and
4 reintroduce ourselves as Dena and the government,
5 governments and re-establish better boundaries.
6 Because they say a good relationship -- a good
7 relationship starts with a good foundation. A
8 good foundation starts on respect, mutual
9 respect. And we have to start again because I
10 don't think that [indiscernible] are going back
11 to Europe, and so I guess we're going to have to
12 work on something a bit more beneficial to all
13 the groups who live in Canada now. Yeah.

14 You had some questions?

15 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: You actually --

16 SHAUN LADUE: [indiscernible]

17 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. We've met before
18 because --

19 SHAUN LADUE: You came to Ross River.

20 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: I came to Ross River and everyone
21 was very hospitable and I saw your wonderful
22 house that you're working on. And I -- I
23 expressed my gratitude to you for your
24 hospitality.

25 SHAUN LADUE: You got to meet my daughter.

26 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Yeah, that's correct. It was
27 very meaningful for me. Okay. So, and it was a
28 time that you told me about these articles that
29 were written about you in a local paper.

30 SHAUN LADUE: This one came out in October of 2013,
31 I -- yeah, 2013. I had come home. A family
32 member had passed away and they asked me to stick
33 around for a while. And I had already come out
34 as trans to my family, and I had family friends
35 who encouraged me to go to the media because
36 there's probably other people in the Yukon who
37 were trans who are struggling. So they did a
38 newspaper article on me and it's called "Becoming
39 a Man" in the *Yukon News*. And so this was
40 published. It's a nice picture of me and a good
41 story. It was done very well. And go I back
42 home and Ross River is a bit of a tough town
43 sometimes. You know, if you're a bit different,
44 you might not be well-accepted, and I was a
45 little bit concerned, you know. And I noticed
46 that somebody had taken it out of the newspaper
47 and posted it on the -- on the community bulletin

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 board. There was no marks on it. It was just up
2 there. And I thought, well, I just did it then
3 and, you know, if the rough guys in town see
4 this, they might just kick my ass, you know,
5 heterophobia, homophobia, that type of stuff.
6 And I walk out the door and there was about five
7 or six of the tough guys in town are in front of
8 the judge every two months and, you know,
9 drinking lots and stuff and I'm going, "I can't
10 run fast enough and I didn't bring the truck,"
11 and they go, "Shaun, Shaun, come over here. Come
12 over here." I'm, like -- so I sort of slide over
13 towards them, "Hey, guys." They start clapping
14 me on the back, "Right on, man. Right on, being
15 your true self." They -- "We respect you for
16 that." One of the guys, a little guy but he's
17 tough, he looks at me and goes, "Anybody give you
18 shit, you come tell us, we'll kick their ass for
19 you." Okay. This is -- this is the kind of
20 respect you can get when people acknowledge your
21 authentic self and it feels good, you know, so.

22 And in 2015 I officially moved home to the
23 Yukon. I had been living in Vancouver for a long
24 time. And in Vancouver I had a -- a driver's
25 license that said that I was male, but when I
26 came back to the Yukon, they rely on your birth
27 certificate to give you your gender marker on
28 your driver's license, so I had to go back to
29 female. I immediately went to the Human Rights
30 Commission and we worked with the government and
31 it's now you just have to have a letter stating
32 what gender you need. And I believe two weeks
33 ago they introduced new legislation for the *Vital*
34 *Statistics Act* in -- in the Yukon and that's
35 partly my -- partly what I have done. Not fully,
36 but there is a trans community that now is
37 working together to help the government iron out
38 some of these glitches.

39 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: A wonderful example and
40 congratulations.

41 Are there any questions from the
42 commissioners?

43 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you. Thank you, all of
44 you for sharing, what I know is you have waited a
45 long time for and thank you.

46 I would like to re-affirm the affirmation
47 I -- we gave today in every community I go to and

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 to use your words again, and I'd like your
2 permission to do that.

3 SHAUN LADUE: Yes. Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you.

5 SHAUN LADUE: [Aboriginal language spoken]

6 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I don't have any questions.

7 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: I think we have some seeds,
8 if ... I think Shaun, it would be all the more
9 special if it came from you, rather than me give
10 it.

11 [indiscernible]

12 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: We're so grateful that you
13 came today and shared your wonderful stories with
14 us. And we have a very small gift for you,
15 they're seed packages. They're important because
16 they can give new life. So, thank you.

17 [hearing din]

18 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: We'll take a break until
19 10:45.

20

21 **First hearing Exhibits**

22 **Shaun LaDue, Terry LaDue, Lloyd Caesar, Hammond Dick**

23 **(Family of Jane Dick-LaDue)**

24

25 Exhibit P1: Text by Shaun LaDue: "We didn't start the
26 fire," two pages, stapled top left corner.

27 Exhibit P2: Powerpoint presentation "Jane Dick-LaDue"
28 shown in evidence; five slides comprising a title
29 page, a map and three photographs.

30 Exhibit P3: Written statement that Shaun Ladue wrote
31 and read into the record; first line "My name is
32 Shaun LaDue, I am Kaska Dena, of the Crow Clan";
33 three pages, stapled top left corner.

34 Exhibit P4: *Whitehorse Star* article "Inquest Ordered
35 In Woman's Death" Vol. 70 No. 2, *The Whitehorse*
36 *Star*, Thursday January 8, 1970.

37 Exhibit P5: News article "Transgender man calls Yukon
38 law Discriminatory," *Yukon News*; article bears
39 date 6/1/2017 top left corner; two pages, stapled
40 top left corner.

41 Exhibit P6: News article "Becoming a man," *Yukon News*;
42 article bears date 6/1/2017 top

43

44 (HEARING ADJOURNED AT 10:10 A.M.)

45 (HEARING RECONVENED AT 10:52 A.M.)

46

47

Shaun Ladue, Terry Ladue, Lloyd Caesar

1 **Second hearing:**

2 **Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil and Mary Charlie with**
3 **Christa Big Canoe (Counsel)**

4
5 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Okay. Ms. Big Canoe, are
6 you ready?

7 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes. Thank you, Chief
8 Commissioner, commissioners.

9 Today I would like to introduce you to the
10 family of Tootsie Charlie, and I'm actually going
11 to introduce you to more than just those who will
12 be testifying, and so I would like to start with
13 immediately beside me is Anne Raider, and beside
14 her is Darlene Jimmy (phonetic). Beside her is
15 Cecilia Gobeil. Beside Cecilia is Jack Jimmy.
16 And at the end we have Mary Charlie. And if the
17 family in the back could just stand for a minute
18 when I say your name. We also have Aggie
19 (phonetic). Aggie. And Phoebe (phonetic). We
20 have Cynthia Jimmy, and we have Margaret. And
21 there are other extended family in support, but
22 these are the sisters and children of Tootsie
23 Charlie.

24 I would kindly ask Mr. Zandberg to affirm in
25 the three that will be testifying and that
26 includes Anne, Cecilia, and Mary.

27 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Anne, I'll pass you an eagle feather.
28 Is that okay? So everybody has one. Okay. It's
29 right there, you've got it.

30 And I've gone and forgotten a few names
31 already. So we've got Anne, Cecilia and Maggie?

32 VARIOUS SPEAKERS: Mary.

33 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Mary. I knew I was going to get that
34 wrong. Okay.

35 Well, good morning and welcome. Anne,
36 Cecilia and Mary, do you solemnly affirm that the
37 evidence you will give today will be the truth,
38 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

39 ANNE RAIDER, CECILIA GOBEIL and MARY CHARLIE: Yes.

40 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you.

41
42 ANNE RAIDER, CECILIA GOBEIL and MARY CHARLIE,
43 affirmed.

44
45 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Mary, may I ask you a couple
46 questions?

47 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: [indiscernible]

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Oh. Yes, I'm sorry. The family
2 has kindly requested that we begin with a prayer
3 led by Anne.

4 ANNE RAIDER: [Dene spoken]

5 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Mary, may I ask you some
6 questions? Mary, can you please tell the
7 commissioners a little bit about Tootsie and some
8 of the strengths and some of the stories that the
9 family want to share with the commissioners?

10 MARY CHARLIE: Hello. My name is Mary Charlie. I'm
11 here for my sister, Tootsie Charlie, that was
12 taken away from us in 196-- '67, sixty-- '66,
13 '67. I'm just not quite sure what year it was
14 because I was young.

15 Tootsie was my oldest -- oldest sister in
16 our family. There was 14 of us in the family, 10
17 girls, 4 boys, and she was the oldest one. And
18 she had four -- four children. Two is gone and
19 we've got Darlene here, my niece, and my nephew
20 Jacky (phonetic).

21 And Tootsie was a good mother and a good
22 sister, and she was gone from -- they took her
23 away from us from -- in our young age. And she
24 was a beautiful, beautiful mother. And we don't
25 have no picture of her right now because back
26 then we didn't have nothing, no cameras or
27 anything to take pictures, but my -- my Uncle
28 Johnson Jules (phonetic) was the one that takes
29 pictures of all of us. But when his tent frame
30 burnt down, all the pictures and everything went,
31 so. She was married to Matthew (phonetic) Jimmy.

32 I really miss her. I just ... You know,
33 when she died in that year, '66 or '67, she went
34 to jail because of her drinking. And Native
35 people are not allowed to drink at that year. It
36 was just unfair. And she spent two weeks up here
37 in jail. And I was living with -- at home with
38 my mother, with my parents, and my younger
39 sisters and brothers. And Matthew and them had
40 their house right next door to mom and dad in
41 Liard.

42 And when she went to jail up here, they --
43 she spent two weeks up here in jail and I don't
44 know if they gave her a bus ticket or something,
45 they're supposed to give her a bus ticket but I'm
46 not sure if they did. But I phoned the RCMP the
47 day that she was supposed to come back on the

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 bus, and they said, well, she should be out,
2 she's out, but I -- and we waited for her that
3 night with my parents, mom and dad and Matthew,
4 but she didn't show back, she didn't show up.
5 She never came on the bus.

6 And the next day I phoned the RCMP to see if
7 they -- they know where she is, and they just
8 said that she left, supposed to be on a bus that
9 night, but she never showed up at home and we
10 waited. I phoned them maybe, like, every second
11 day, the RCMP in Watson Lake, and -- and they
12 said they'll check up on it. And they never --
13 they never even tell us anything until two weeks
14 later I was down at the riverbank in Liard with
15 my mom and dad. Mom and dad were fishing. And
16 the RCMP was come -- came over and asked me
17 what's -- who is Pete Charlie and Lina (phonetic)
18 Charlie, and I said that's my parents. "Well,
19 could I talk to them?" And so I called mom and
20 dad up and -- and I waited for them, and they got
21 them in the car. And when they got -- when mom
22 got out of the car from the RCMP, she was just
23 screaming. And she told me [indiscernible] --
24 they found [indiscernible] in Whitehorse. And
25 they found her body in a dump in a Whitehorse
26 dump. And there was a marker on her -- around
27 her neck. And she -- and she had all her makeup
28 around her.

29 You look at Darlene Jimmy right now, that's
30 how she looks. She was a pretty, pretty woman.
31 And she takes a lot of time to dress up, put on
32 makeup. Especially when you want to go
33 somewhere, we have to say, "Okay," we have to
34 tell her about two hours ahead. So she takes her
35 time, put up her hair. Had to have a lot of
36 patience with her, but she always dress up
37 beautiful, everywhere she goes, even to the
38 store. But I really miss her and I hope
39 something -- I hope something is done on this.
40 Because they never -- the RCMP never investigate
41 nothing on her death, nothing. They never told
42 us anything how she died. But I'd like to say
43 to -- to the inquiry that something should be
44 done on behalf of my sister. And the RCMP should
45 have done more, I think more -- more
46 investigation on her death that year. But my mom
47 and dad's gone, without knowing how her -- their

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 daughter died. And she was a beautiful sister of
2 mine, mother, aunt, and I really miss her a lot.

3 We never really talked about her death
4 because I think mom just really -- even before
5 she died, she always think about her, but she
6 never really talked, we never really talked about
7 it, but today we had a chance. So, somebody to
8 do something about it, to look into the stuff.
9 The RCMP should do more work on families like
10 that that pass on and have -- the family have
11 closure or something, release.

12 Thank you.

13 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Cecilia -- can you ...

14 Cecilia, may I ask you some questions?

15 CECILIA GOBEIL: Hi, my name -- hi, my name is Cecilia
16 Gobeil. Tootsie is -- is my mom and my sister.
17 My mom gave me away when I was very young to my
18 sister, Tootsie and Matthew. And I just remember
19 very little of her. Tootsie come down to Lower
20 Post and come see me. I remember her coming
21 there, giving me dry meat. And I cry after her.
22 It's the last time I seen her. I cry. I have to
23 tell her to take me home. And to this day I
24 still -- still looking for her, but I didn't see
25 her after that when she left Lower Post.

26 Matthew, really his -- last time I seen him
27 he was sick, but he still called me his daughter.
28 He don't -- he -- he don't actually say
29 "daughter", "my little monkey" he called me.
30 Because when I was a little girl he always wanted
31 to pack me around. And when he get a little bit
32 of money, he take me out to the stores and bought
33 me -- I remember he bought me boots, cowboy
34 boots. Boy, I was just proud to show it off.

35 What -- what I come here for is -- is to
36 find out what -- I want to see -- you know, they
37 never looked into her death. There was nothing
38 saying about her death. There was no picture,
39 there's nothing. I went to her funeral. There's
40 nobody say anything and just like you don't mean
41 anything, you know. To this day we're still --
42 still struggling because we are First Nations.
43 And I'd like to see -- like to see us being
44 treated as equal. You know, the RCMP got to
45 start respecting, you know, respecting us. And
46 they should be going through -- like, going
47 through -- if they want to become an RCMP, they

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 should go to school to understand the First
2 Nations because we -- we are people and we should
3 be treated like people, like them, you know. And
4 thank you.

5 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Cecilia, can I ask you a couple
6 more questions?

7 CECILIA GOBEIL: Okay.

8 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yeah. So, you have explained to
9 the commissioners that -- that -- that Matthew
10 and Tootsie took you in as their own. So, you
11 think of Jack and Darlene as your brother and
12 sister as well, right?

13 CECILIA GOBEIL: Yeah. Yeah. I look at my --
14 my -- Jacky and Darlene and Richard. We used to
15 hang out -- I usually hang out with Richard all
16 the time. And we used to get into trouble all
17 the time. We -- I also hang out with Darlene and
18 I call her as my sister and -- and Jacky as my
19 brother. And I -- and my younger one is Richard.
20 We used to get into trouble all the time. And --
21 and people used to think he's the instigator. I
22 think we're both instigator. We get into a lot
23 of troubles. And I remember all the times we
24 have fun sober, drunk, but he looks after me all
25 the time. I supposed to be the big sister, but
26 he's the one who always look after me.

27 And one time we went camping with mom and
28 dad out in the bush and we had the big brown car.
29 And they said we've got a big brown car, we don't
30 need to go struggling out [indiscernible]. So we
31 [indiscernible]. And we [indiscernible] we bring
32 it back to the camp. Say mom, dad, they say,
33 "Gee, how lazy." I say, "Well, it was easy." So
34 [indiscernible]. I -- I have good times, but
35 it's very hard for me to get -- get associated
36 with them because I stay in Whitehorse now and I
37 get -- every chance I get a chance to go to
38 Watson I try to visit them.

39 What -- what my big concern is, as I said, I
40 stated already, that if something happened to
41 someone like what happened to my sister, the RCMP
42 should, you know, respect and investigate the
43 whole thing instead of just sweep it under the --
44 you know, under the carpet because we -- they
45 think we don't mean anything, but we are human
46 beings. You know, like, residential school is
47 over, you know. All I ask is respect.

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you. Before I ask any other
2 questions, I am going to ask that anyone that is
3 in the large tent to please turn the ringers off
4 on your phones. We're hearing them constantly
5 and a family is trying to tell a very important
6 story, so to respect and honour that please take
7 the time to turn your ringers off or step outside
8 of the tent. Thank you.

9 I have only one more question for you, if I
10 can, Cecilia. You had -- you had told the
11 commissioners and you have referred to Lower Post
12 and we all now know that Lower Post was one of
13 the residential schools. When Tootsie died,
14 where were you guys? Where were the children?
15 Where were her children?

16 CECILIA GOBEIL: I think we were all at Lower Post. I
17 can't remember. I was very young and I can't
18 remember what has happened. I think -- I'm
19 pretty sure it happened when we were down -- we
20 were going -- we were still in Lower Post, but I
21 wasn't too sure really. I just -- my mind is
22 blank. I can't -- can't remember.

23 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So is it fair to say you didn't
24 know at the time of her death? No one told you
25 because you guys were at school?

26 CECILIA GOBEIL: I didn't know -- put it this way, I
27 didn't know about my sister's death for a long
28 time. I don't -- I can't remember. I can't
29 remember. My -- my mind is just blank. I don't
30 know when. Maybe because I just don't want to
31 welcome it, I don't want to accept it, I don't
32 know. I just can't -- can't remember.

33 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.
34 Anne, may I ask you some questions?

35 ANNE RAIDER: Yes.

36 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So we've heard some stories about
37 your sister. So maybe I'll start with that, to
38 see if you want to add anything else about
39 Tootsie to help the commissioners understand who
40 she was.

41 ANNE RAIDER: Sure. So we had a family circle last
42 night and we both cried, all cried, and we
43 laughed. And ... So, I know Phoebe was --
44 because Phoebe is the -- the oldest sister. She
45 remembered quite a bit more about Tootsie and she
46 shared about Tootsie's love of makeup and her
47 beauty and how she loved to take a long time

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 to -- to put her makeup on. And we talked about
2 her husband, Matthew, who has passed, and how --
3 what a loving husband she married. And how I --
4 I remember Matthew courting her and I always
5 remember the song "Your Cheating Heart". He was
6 a great Hank Williams fan and he used to have
7 this phonograph at the house and he'd have those
8 LPs, and Hank Williams would be blaring as he was
9 courting my sister, so ...

10 They had four children. Two are deceased
11 and we're really blessed to have with us Darlene
12 and -- and Jacky. Our custom is about family,
13 culture, First Nations. It's about family. So
14 in our way -- my older sister teaches me that in
15 our way Darlene is our daughter and Matthew is
16 our son.

17 But I -- I remember I was in the residential
18 school but we weren't told about the death.
19 We -- I -- I didn't attend her funeral or her
20 service. I remember mom's heartache. That I
21 remember very vividly is her pain. Yeah. She
22 was ...

23 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Take your time. Take your time.

24 ANNE RAIDER: She ... Everybody that knows my mom
25 knows how much she loves her children and her
26 grandchildren. So, her heart died that day that
27 she lost Tootsie. She was always worried about
28 her. She -- I remember her worrying. We didn't
29 have a phone. We don't have a cellphone like we
30 have today. There was no -- there was no
31 communication, so it was really hard for mom. It
32 devastated her. Because we lost another sister a
33 year later and that was really -- further
34 devastated my mother. Yeah.

35 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: We -- we heard -- we heard Mary
36 talking about -- more about how you learned of
37 the death. And can you share with the
38 commissioners what the family had to share or
39 understand about some of the issues around and
40 surrounding Tootsie's death?

41 ANNE RAIDER: Yeah. Well, like my niece said
42 yesterday, she lost her mom twice. They took her
43 away to the residential school, or prison camps,
44 and then they -- they -- the way the *Indian*
45 *Act* -- the *Indian Act* was written, First Nations
46 weren't allowed alcohol, so for having a drink
47 she -- she had to go to jail.

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 In the residential school, as many know that
2 many that there were there, there was
3 segregation. So, I really didn't know my older
4 sister because there was the older girls and the
5 younger girls, and you were not allowed to -- to
6 mix with your brother, sisters. So, there was --
7 yeah, it was hugely segregated. All I remember
8 is poodle skirts. Mm-hmm.

9 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Were there other concerns or
10 issues that the family wanted to let the
11 commissioners know about in terms of not just the
12 investigation but just the treatment of not just
13 your family but your community during that time
14 period and now?

15 ANNE RAIDER: Yeah. In the '60s and still today,
16 thankfully society is moving and becoming more
17 conscious. Because in the '60s there was
18 widespread racism and racism by the Government of
19 Canada through its racist legislations. And
20 there was racism in the community. So, my sister
21 was subjected to racism from all levels. And
22 also back in 1942 the Alaska Highway was coming
23 through, so our women were subjected to a lot of
24 violence by army people when the Alaska Highway
25 was coming in. So I feel there is a direct
26 correlation between the development, developing
27 the economy and violence against Indigenous women
28 because every time there is development there is
29 violence against our women. Yeah.

30 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Can you tell us a little more
31 about the racism? You said things are improving,
32 but did the family feel that they're still
33 experiencing that from time to time?

34 ANNE RAIDER: Well, racism, well, still exists, of
35 course, but, I mean, as -- like I say, as we move
36 to be -- become more conscious people, you know,
37 and more -- more awareness on education on who we
38 are as Dena people. And ... There's just a lot
39 of ignorance. You know, there -- there is a lot
40 of ignorance of ... Because of ignorance people
41 say the wrong things and do the wrong things.
42 They -- and we're tired of educating people
43 really. It seems like a lifelong process, right?
44 But I think -- I -- I know that Canada can do
45 more and I know that Canada can do better. And
46 we speak today and give voice to our sister, who
47 never had a voice. She wasn't allowed the voice.

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 She wasn't allowed legal counsel to fight her
2 charges because in the '60s First Nations were
3 not allowed legal counsel. She didn't have a
4 forum to give voice to the racism. She didn't
5 have a voice to say end the violence. So, we're
6 going to do that across Canada for her as
7 Indigenous women. We're all going to do that for
8 her.

9 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Anne, can I show you a document
10 that I believe you have seen. I'm going to ask
11 that the commissioners be provided the same
12 document. Can you just tell me what the title of
13 that is?

14 ANNE RAIDER: The *Indian Act*.

15 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And it's the *Indian Act* in 1951.

16 ANNE RAIDER: Mm-hmm.

17 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And so could you do me a favour
18 and read in what section 2 had a definition
19 around "intoxicant" was.

20 ANNE RAIDER: "'Intoxicant' includes 'alcohol,
21 alcoholic, spirituous, vinous, fermented malt or
22 other intoxicating liquor or combination of
23 liquors and mixed liquor a part of which is
24 spirituous, vinous, fermented, or otherwise
25 intoxicating and all drinks or drinkable liquids
26 and all preparations or mixtures capable of human
27 consumption that are intoxicating.'"

28 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So when Mary was talking about the
29 fact that Tootsie had drank, was she drinking an
30 intoxicant?

31 ANNE RAIDER: [indiscernible]

32 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And on the page a little lower
33 down, can you read in section 94 the 1951 *Indian*
34 *Act*?

35 ANNE RAIDER: Sure. "... an Indian who has
36 intoxicants in his possession, is intoxicated or
37 makes or manufactures intoxicants off a reserve
38 is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary
39 conviction to a fine of not less than \$10 and not
40 more than \$50 or to imprisonment for a term not
41 exceeding three months, or to both fine and
42 imprisonment." [as read]

43 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Now, that says off reserve, but
44 there is another provision on the next page.
45 Could you please be so kind to read in section 96
46 of the 1951 *Indian Act*.

47 ANNE RAIDER: "A person who is found with intoxicants

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 in his possession or her possession or
2 intoxicated on a reserve is guilty of an offense
3 and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of
4 not less than \$10 and not more than \$50, or to
5 imprisonment for a term not exceeding three
6 months, or to both fine and imprisonment." [as
7 read]
8 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So on your understanding and what
9 the family had to talk about their understanding
10 when Tootsie was arrested in Watson Lake or in --
11 from her home and taken to Whitehorse, it was
12 because of the *Indian Act* said that Indians were
13 not allowed to drink intoxicants, is that true?
14 ANNE RAIDER: That is true.
15 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And how does the family feel about
16 that?
17 ANNE RAIDER: Our families feel that it's -- it was a
18 racist piece of legislation that killed our
19 sister.
20 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And it's fair to say that -- that
21 the fact that Indigenous people in the Yukon were
22 being arrested up until '66 or '67 --
23 ANNE RAIDER: Yes.
24 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: -- on this law has caused harm?
25 ANNE RAIDER: Yes. And our family lived in poverty.
26 So when she was taken to jail, she had no money
27 to get home. Yeah.
28 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And so with -- with no way to get
29 home, but please remind the commissioners how far
30 away is Watson Lake from Whitehorse.
31 ANNE RAIDER: Well, it depends who's driving, but ...
32 (laughing)
33 [Audience laughter]
34 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Fair enough.
35 ANNE RAIDER: It's roughly around 300-and-some
36 kilometres. ANNE RAIDER: Yeah.
37 [Various overlapping speakers]
38 ANNE RAIDER: Oh, yeah, a long -- yeah, that's right.
39 [indiscernible]
40 CECILIA GOBEIL: Yeah, at that time it was, well,
41 longer to get to Whitehorse. I think it was
42 about 10 hours, 8 hours to -- because they have
43 the roller coast, the road was a roller coaster.
44 But now about four hours now. So, it's total
45 different.
46 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And so if she's in Whitehorse and
47 she has to get home 10 hours without a ride or

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 money to -- to get home, is it fair to say she
2 was at risk of harm?
3 ANNE RAIDER: Very at risk of harm, yes.
4 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: We've talked and the commissioners
5 have heard the family talk about Indian
6 Residential School and that the children were in
7 residential school and that you were in
8 residential school. The whole family was in
9 residential school --
10 ANNE RAIDER: Yes.
11 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: -- is that true?
12 ANNE RAIDER: Yes.
13 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And is it fair to say, without
14 getting into details or sharing any particular
15 things, that a number of this family suffered a
16 lot of harm at Lower Post or other schools?
17 ANNE RAIDER: Yes, that's true.
18 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Cecilia might want to answer this
19 one question. When the kids were taken away from
20 Tootsie, what was she like before? Because I
21 understand the family said that when the kids --
22 when the kids were taken away that's when Tootsie
23 started -- or had -- had started to drink. Is
24 that fair? Can you tell us a bit more about
25 that?
26 CECILIA GOBEIL: I can hardly hear what you said. Can
27 you repeat that?
28 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Sure. When -- when the kids, when
29 Tootsie's kids were taken away to school, did she
30 drink more?
31 CECILIA GOBEIL: To be honest with you, I was very
32 young and very -- I have, as I said, a little
33 picture of her. And I don't remember her
34 being -- drinking. And I remember her coming to
35 see me and dropping me off some dry meat and
36 giving me a hug and trying to get me out of
37 there. But she always -- always -- I remember
38 just a very little bit of her. And she was --
39 she was dressed nice. And she was happy to see
40 me, but I -- I don't remember her drinking. I
41 don't remember her -- I have got no memories of
42 her or Matthew drinking. So, I think all that
43 happened when -- when the kids were taken away.
44 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Does that -- do Anne or Mary want
45 to add to that?
46 ANNE RAIDER: Yeah, I think -- I think it's important
47 for the public to understand some background and

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 some context within this story. We have a big
2 family in the Southeast Yukon. We come from a
3 really powerful lineage. My great-grandfather
4 was Maje. His name was Maje, whose name I have
5 got, I have taken. I have chosen to take that
6 name because I want that name to live. I want it
7 to be passed on. But our family lived up on the
8 land. We spent -- we're a nomadic people and we
9 spent a lot of time living on the land. Our
10 father trapped and earned his living through
11 trapping. And we lived in Pelly Banks and we
12 lived in Frances Lake, beautiful traditional
13 territory.

14 And when the people would come through our
15 country looking for gold, our people helped. Our
16 people were kind, generous, considerate. And --
17 and then when the -- it was time for these -- the
18 government of Canada to steal our -- the
19 children, they were flying the children out from
20 remote. Because we lived very remote and the
21 only way you could get in was to fly in. And so
22 they -- the government threatened our people and
23 intimidated our people to move. They -- they
24 said, "Well, your children have to fly. What
25 about if they get in a plane accident?" They put
26 fear into our people. And when they took the
27 children, they said all you could hear was
28 mothers crying. So if you did not agree to go to
29 school, your parents were threatened to be
30 jailed. So they -- they promised our people --
31 they promised our people that they would take
32 care of them. They said, "If you move, you will
33 be closer to your children at the residential
34 school. We will take care of you. We will give
35 you money every month. We will give you a
36 house." At what cost? Sorry. So our people
37 moved. They relocated. The government has done
38 a great injustice to the people that lived in
39 Pelly Banks and Frances Lake. [Dene spoken]

40 Development happens up there, we have no
41 say. We're not asked. Our elders have said no
42 to mines, a couple mines. They're -- they're
43 ignored. You go to Frances Lake today, you still
44 see the trails. You see the trails of our
45 ancestors because they travelled, they travelled
46 that land. They knew the land like the back of
47 their hand. They never complained.

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 So coming into where the government was
2 going to take care of them, they were so
3 devastated without the children because First
4 Nations, our hearts are our children, we all know
5 that. So, Tootsie would have been devastated.
6 She would have been just devastated losing her
7 babies. Yeah.

8 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you. That -- for sharing
9 that really important part of history of your
10 community.

11 And so one of the other --

12 ANNE RAIDER: [indiscernible] want to say?
13 [indiscernible]

14 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: One -- one of the other questions,
15 and you have kind of touched on it just now when
16 you were speaking to the commissioner, is that
17 the economic development and the harm to the land
18 or the environment, do you guys feel that that
19 harm that's done to the environment in your
20 traditional lands is like the harm done to
21 Indigenous women?

22 ANNE RAIDER: Absolutely. There is not a doubt in my
23 mind, in my soul, in my heart. Indigenous
24 people, we have such a deep spiritual connection
25 with the land. You harm the land, you harm us.
26 Yeah.

27 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: At this point I would just like to
28 ask if any of the three of you would like to add
29 anything or if I have overlooked asking you
30 anything, to please do so.

31 ANNE RAIDER: I do have some recommendations.

32 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes. And then -- for sure. So,
33 please feel free to share with the commissioner
34 your recommendations and ideas.

35 ANNE RAIDER: I spent a lot of time, it's been my
36 life's passion working on these issues. And I
37 spent a lot of time thinking about my sister last
38 night and what she would want me to say. I asked
39 her, I talked to her to help -- to help me. And
40 I kept calling the loon spirit in. And my
41 sister's name is Tootsie, and in Dena that means
42 "loon".

43 So as Indigenous people we are very
44 distinct, with unique heritage, language,
45 cultural practice and spiritual beliefs. So, I
46 want everybody to know what it means to be
47 "distinct". The dictionary says unmistakable,

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 easily distinguishable, recognizable, visible,
2 obvious, pronounced, prominent, striking. That
3 is we as Indigenous people. We have proven that
4 you can never assimilate us and you can never
5 change us. The White Paper of 1969 tried that.
6 It didn't work. The colonial policies and
7 structures continue on the path of assimilation
8 today. A good case is the child protection in
9 Canada. There is a direct correlation between
10 child apprehension and murdered and missing
11 Indigenous women. There is a direct -- direct
12 correlation between child protection and
13 homelessness and people on the streets. In the
14 Yukon 90 percent of children in care are First
15 Nations. In the Yukon there is racist policies
16 that need to change in child protection.
17 Families are not compensated at the level that
18 foster parenting is compensated. That is
19 unacceptable.

20 So, we hear a lot of talk and a lot of First
21 Nations saying healing. Healing, healing from
22 violence. Violence, I believe, is in the
23 experience that violates your dignity or your
24 [Aboriginal language spoken]. [Aboriginal
25 language spoken] In our language means "dignity".

26 I believe that our wellness, because Canada
27 committed -- committed a horrendous act of
28 cultural genocide, we need to repair that fabric
29 of culture. We need to come back to ourselves.
30 Our children need to come back to who we are, so
31 healing has to be culture. In our culture there
32 is a lot of spiritual teachings. My mom lived on
33 land and she would live at Simpson Creek, dry
34 fish. Every summer when we came out of that
35 prison camp, she was drying fish, making dry
36 meat, making moose hide. I would sit in the
37 little mosquito tent and read my *True Confessions*
38 and my mom would be working very hard to feed me.
39 And people would come on the highway and she
40 taught us how to be generous. She gave. She
41 gave fish. She gave dry meat. She gave people.
42 They stopped for coffee, they stopped for tea.
43 She'd feed them, she'd cook them bannock. That's
44 who we are as Dena. You don't teach these
45 things, you live these things.

46 My mother always said -- used to say, "Don't
47 be mean. Don't hold anger towards people."

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 She was teaching us the virtues of
2 compassion and forgiveness. She taught us how to
3 be humble. She never spoke mean about anybody.
4 When people would insult us and say we're from
5 another land or Pelly Indians, she'd say, "Pelly
6 Indians [Dene spoken], (mimicking laugh)," like,
7 "What are you going to do about it?" (laughing)
8 [Audience laughter]

9 I think government needs to fund cultural
10 programs without the bureaucratic application
11 processes. My life has been about filling in
12 application processes. I mean, it's been so
13 bureaucratic. There is no cultural lens to their
14 application process. It's very difficult, very
15 time-consuming, and you have organizations that
16 do not have any money, with huge expectations.
17 We're on the ground, there is a lot of work to be
18 done, and we don't have time to fill in their
19 bureaucratic process. It's very difficult. They
20 need to change their applications. More or less,
21 never mind an application, they need to provide
22 core funding.

23 So with addictions, the government needs to
24 put their money where their mouth is. First
25 Nations, our people, our community want to heal,
26 they want to learn their culture. They want to
27 go on the land. That's where they want to be.
28 That's where they want to heal. They want the
29 elders, they want to heal, they want to live our
30 culture. Culture has to be lived.

31 There is nothing that makes us happier than
32 seeing our children dance. Nothing makes us
33 happier than seeing our children sing. Nothing
34 makes us happier than seeing our children speak
35 and hearing them speak our language. Our parents
36 are so proud. It brings us to life. And that's
37 what we need is life and culture does that.

38 Our organization, I work for Liard
39 Aboriginal Women's Society, and we signed a
40 Together for Justice Protocol with the RCMP on
41 March 8, 2012 because there was never a
42 relationship with the RCMP. Historically never.
43 So -- and the women's organizations, women have
44 always been ignored as to the direction, what are
45 their priorities in the community. So we -- we
46 did a two year process, the RCMP, with the RCMP,
47 with a lot of elders, a lot of women, a lot of

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 very, very powerful women advocates, and we
2 worked with Dr. Allan Wade from the Centre of
3 Response Based Practice and we talked about
4 violence and understanding violence from a
5 response-based approach.

6 So, in order to address violence we have to
7 get out of the woman's head. We have to stop
8 saying that she had something to do with it, that
9 she contributed to the act, that it's because she
10 didn't have good boundaries, it's because that
11 she attracted that person or it's because she
12 didn't have a good self-esteem. It's all about
13 her. It's not about her. Everything -- you --
14 you avoid what the -- the perpetrator has done.
15 And in oftentimes we overlook how the woman
16 resisted and we overlook how did she respond to
17 the violence.

18 I hate going to workshops on residential
19 school. I find them very tiring. Because I hate
20 going into a workshop that talks about our
21 deficits, that we have a deficit, that we have --
22 we have no parenting skills, we have no this, we
23 have no that. We are Dena. We have a lot. Our
24 culture is encoded in each of us. It's something
25 we will never forget. You just provide the
26 environment, it will come to life. Ask -- or
27 come to a handgames tournament in the Yukon in
28 the summer, you will all watch little children on
29 the mat. As soon as a person gets on the mat,
30 they say, "Oh, I don't know how," they get on the
31 mat they know because it's encoded in you. You
32 can never forget. That's why we can never be
33 assimilated because our culture is encoded in our
34 DNA.

35 There -- there is a terminology that really
36 bothers me that the health professions are using
37 and it's this notion of vicarious trauma, which I
38 think is more damaging than doing any good.
39 Vicarious trauma to me has a notion that you can
40 catch some trauma from another person because
41 you're hearing their story. Therefore, you may
42 pack their garbage and you may take it home, thus
43 it will be very burdening on you. My mother was
44 very compassionate. As Dena people we are all
45 very compassionate. Somebody comes to you for
46 help, somebody is burdened by their problems, you
47 never think about vicarious trauma. I look at

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 the commissioner yesterday, I asked her, "How do
2 you stay so fresh, you look like you haven't --"
3 she was with us at 7 o'clock last night. And she
4 says, "It's because I enjoy what I do." So if
5 it's tiring you and it's burning you out, you're
6 in the wrong profession. So let's lose that
7 term, "vicarious trauma". Let's stop scaring
8 people from getting into helping people.

9 I have been very blessed to have worked with
10 professionals and -- from the Centre for Response
11 Based Practice. I have gotten to see through
12 their -- through their training how damaging the
13 justice system is. The justice system -- in
14 order to address violence, you have to address it
15 in the context of safety and justice. In our
16 community we have circle court, we have circuit.
17 So what happens is the court cases are always put
18 off, always put off, and so there's no swift
19 justice for -- for victims of violence. And
20 somehow the system has to change so that there's
21 more swifter justice because a woman, you --
22 you -- the anticipation, I can't imagine the
23 anticipation of a court case coming, only to go
24 to the court and find out that it's been moved
25 again to another date. And oftentimes the -- the
26 abuser is in the community, creates fear. And a
27 large percentage of women are not reporting
28 violence and not reporting sexual violence
29 because oftentimes a woman's life will fall
30 apart. There isn't a justice system. I heard
31 somebody refer to it as a legal system.
32 There's -- there is blame. It's just a -- and
33 what happens, what's happening too is RCMP are
34 investigating cases, if somebody reports a sexual
35 violence, the RCMP reports it, and then if they
36 don't believe they have sufficient evidence,
37 it -- it becomes an unfounded case. And I
38 believe we should have cases -- how many cases in
39 the Yukon are unfounded? I'd like that
40 information. I'd like that information in Watson
41 Lake, how many are unfounded. So if it happens
42 again, if a woman has her case unfound the first
43 time, why would she report?

44 Also in terms of the criminal system,
45 there's a language that needs to be change. The
46 slamming mutualizing. For instance, I'll refer
47 to one section, I -- I don't know what section it

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 is of the *Criminal Code*, but it refers to
2 invitation to touch. And mutualizing language I
3 speak of is -- it -- it -- language either
4 conceals or reveals violence. And through the
5 justice system today, it's concealing violence.
6 We refer to -- when children are raped, we're
7 referring to it as sex. A child cannot consent
8 to sex, so I don't know why they're using that
9 language.

10 So, less of antidepressants, less of
11 medicating our people, more cultures. Culture,
12 culture, culture. I cannot emphasize that enough
13 is culture. And no more application processes.
14 Core funding for Indian Women's Organizations
15 across Canada, I will always say that. [Dene
16 spoken]

17 [Audience applause]

18 CECILIA GOBEIL: I'd like to point out something. I'd
19 like to point out something. I consider myself
20 lucky because I've got two moms. And because my
21 sister raised me and then I went back to my mom.
22 And we went to -- we went to -- we didn't go to
23 all this, you know, welfare stuff or nothing. We
24 just -- they just kept going, they looked after
25 the kids, that's all. They should bring it all
26 back, you know, instead of having the kids go to
27 the welfare. So, you know, they raise the kid.
28 You know, welfare just step in through the family
29 and take them. They shouldn't do that, you know.
30 They should bring back the old -- old ways.
31 Like, it was too much for my mom, so my sister
32 stepped in to take -- take over and looked after
33 me. And I always think why she do it, my mom why
34 she did it. But while I get older I understand
35 why she did it, because it's too much for her.
36 And my sister, she's the oldest and she took over
37 because I understand that I am -- I was
38 hyperactive. I always going, going all the time,
39 it was too much for my mom. So that's why I
40 was -- Matthew called me monkey, because I was
41 climbing everything, I was climbing around, and
42 can't -- can't control me. I was climbing
43 around. So, I think that's why the reason. So,
44 what I'd like to say, welfare -- to -- to this
45 day welfare, they step in to people's -- people's
46 place. And there's one going on right now in
47 Carcross. Grandma wants to get her kids back,

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 but they say, no, the welfare took the situation
2 over. It -- it wasn't right. I thought she
3 should go see somebody to fight because she don't
4 drink. So, I think the -- you know, the family
5 should step in, the grandparents should step in
6 when the -- when the parents can't do it. So,
7 they should -- should be involved, you know,
8 with -- with the government. And the government
9 should step in, offer money to them instead of
10 saying -- because the grandparents don't have no
11 money but they want to take over the kids,
12 you know. It's -- they should be treated like
13 equal. When the government give money to foster
14 parents, they should give money to the
15 grandparents, you know, to help them. Thank you.

16 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Mary, did you have something else
17 you wanted to add?

18 MARY CHARLIE: What I think I was going to bring up is
19 back then they had -- they always had -- they
20 said Native people can't drink, can't do this,
21 can't do that, but yet they take away -- take us
22 away from our family. And our parents used to
23 live in Ross River, but we travelled over from
24 Ross. And I was about 6 years old, travelled all
25 the way from Ross to what, to Liard. But they
26 made our parents to -- to take us. They took
27 our -- take us away from our parents and made
28 us -- they send us to Lower Post. I spent eight
29 years down there. And -- and we have to -- like,
30 we have to become a Catholic. And that's how we
31 got our middle name, all of us is Anne.
32 You know, my name is Mary Anne, my sister
33 Margaret Anne, Cecilia, all of us Anne. And I
34 said I'm going to change my name one of these
35 days, I said. And then Anne asked me, "To who?"
36 I said, "Anne."

37 [Audience laughter]

38 MARY CHARLIE: So, anyway, you know, to this day I
39 figure, you know, the -- if they treat us more
40 better, like they -- like they picked up my
41 sister when she was drinking, you know, she would
42 have been in the bush with her -- with her kids
43 every summer. That's where we go every summer
44 when I come out from residential school. And
45 Matthew used to take the kids out after she
46 was -- she passed on. We went to [indiscernible
47 place name] with the kids. But the kids never

Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil, Mary Charlie

1 really been raised up on the land after their
2 mother passed on. And then the -- and they lost
3 all being with her, knowing her, and she got
4 quite a few grandkids that the kids don't even
5 know her. And we don't even have a picture of
6 her to -- to show them.

7 You know, there's got to be a change.
8 You know, I'd like to -- something be done on
9 this missing and murdered women's. Something's
10 got to come. I want something done. Instead of
11 just they say -- they say, "Okay, we'll do
12 something about it," but yet they never -- they
13 never do anything about stuff like this. They'll
14 just put it on the shelf and, "Okay, let's forget
15 it, that's Native people stuff," you know. That
16 hurts. The reason -- we lost a good sister and I
17 would like to -- I'd like to find out how she
18 died and stuff like that. I'd like to -- I wish
19 I was -- you know, get to know her more, but I
20 was going to Lower Post school and stuff, I never
21 had a chance spend years with her. She was a
22 pretty, beautiful sister. And she's got a really
23 beautiful daughter and son. The kids missed out
24 on -- because they took her life. I just would
25 like to say I hope they do something,
26 investigation on this. You know, people who lose
27 a family, a sister or mother, down the road I
28 hope they investigate instead of just leaving it,
29 let it go because it's Native people, they say.
30 We should be treated equal. That's all we ask
31 for. We have rights like the rest of the people
32 in the world. We're all human. Thanks.

33 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Commissioners, that concludes the
34 evidence and the stories that the family wanted
35 to share with you. If you had any questions
36 or ... No? So.

37 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: No, we don't have any
38 questions. It's been wonderful. Again, thank
39 you.

40 And as a very small token of our
41 appreciation of your sharing today, we have seed
42 packages because seeds are life, new life. So,
43 thank you very much.
44
45

46 **Second Hearing Exhibits**

47 **Anne Raider, Cecilia Gobeil and Mary Charlie (Family**

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 **of Tootsie Charlie)**

2
3 Exhibit P1 (electronic copy): Two-page document
4 entitled "Excerpts of the *Indian Act*" citation
5 *Indian Act*, SC 1951, c 29, (paragraphs 93-98)
6 - ("intoxicant" includes alcohol, alcoholic,
7 spirituous...")
8
9

10
11 (HEARING ADJOURNED AT 12:04 P.M.)
12 (HEARING RECONVENED)
13

14 **Third hearing: Joan Jack, Greta Jack, Bryan Jack,**
15 **Lorraine Dawson, Heather Allen, Allan, Jane Anne**
16 **Carver (Family of Barbara Jack) with Karen Snowshoe**
17 **(Commission Counsel)**
18

19 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Let's resume. Ms.
20 Snowshoe, you're ready to proceed.

21 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you Chief Commissioner. Chief
22 Commissioner and Commissioner Robinson, it's my
23 honour to present to you today, first of all I'm
24 Karen Snowshoe, and it's my honour to present to
25 you today the Jack family, they're Tlingit and
26 have travelled all the way from Atlin, B.C., and
27 the family has indicated they would like to begin
28 with a smudge and prayer.
29

30 (Silence during smudging. No affirmation or
31 oath - smudge instead)
32

33 KAREN SNOWSHOE: The Jack family has kindly offered
34 the smudge. For anyone else in the tent here
35 today who would like to smudge, please feel free
36 to access the smudge just behind the family here.

37 And just a tiny reminder about cell phones,
38 to please turn off, or at least turn off the
39 ringer. Thank you.

40 Chief Commissioner and Commissioner
41 Robinson, again as I've indicated the Jack family
42 is here to speak their truth.

43 Survivor and family Joan Jack has kindly
44 offered to introduce her family.

45 Joan I would like to offer you this tobacco
46 in support of your truth telling today and I

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 understand that you're also -- when you introduce
2 your family, you're also going to explain the
3 families way that their consciousness are bind
4 and the way that they ceremony around truth
5 telling.

6 JOAN JACK: (Aboriginal language spoken)

7 I just say my name and my totem from Ojibway
8 Territory where I come and Yithkajecky (phonetic)
9 is My-Tlinget (phonetic) name that I've been
10 given as an adopted member of this family. And
11 to begin I feel directed by the spirit to sing
12 two verses of the Inclucupmoke (phonetic), you
13 heard Inclucupmoke songs already in this hearing
14 today. So Kwankoshakley (phonetic) taught me
15 this song and it doesn't sound Inclucupmoke,
16 because I'm not Inclucupmoke, but it's their
17 travelling song, so I'm just going to sing two
18 versus of the travelling song and then I'm going
19 to ask each of my family members to say who they
20 are and then at the very end, if I forget, please
21 ask me to sing the last two versions of the
22 Inclucupmoke song so that we're not all just
23 flying around in space. (Laughter).

24 Like I said I'm forever grateful to
25 Quancoshackley, who I hope is watching today for
26 teaching me their travelling song. And you don't
27 need to stand. If you want to you can, it's your
28 call.

29

30 (Singing Inclucupmoke Song)

31

32 JOAN JACK: Call upon and invoke all the spirits of
33 our ancestors to join us here today. And I had
34 asked the family to turn around and show their
35 crest, 'cause that's who we are. I've been so
36 grateful to receive this design and the privilege
37 of wearing because I'm not blood like My-Tlinget,
38 so it's a privilege. It can be taken away.
39 (Laughter). It's a privilege, so, Greta, did you
40 want to start please? And tell everybody who you
41 are.

42

43 GRETA JACK: My name is Greta Jack, Juh-neek is my
44 Indian name. I'm from the Wolf Clan, Heniitti
45 (phonetic). My sister-in-law made my vest. I'm
46 very proud of it. Thank you. (Aboriginal
47 language spoken). Lorraine Dawson. And I'm glad
to see everyone here. Guh-nes-chee.

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 LORRAINE DAWSON: Guh-nes-chee.

2 BRYAN JACK: My name is Walted (phonetic). My English
3 name is Bryan Jack. I'm of the Wolf Clan. My
4 mother is Dockake (phonetic) and my father is
5 Chief Henry Jack Huh Jack (phonetic) and I'm part
6 of the Taku River, Tlingit First Nations peoples.

7 ALLAN: Good afternoon, my name is Allan, my native
8 name is Yunatondon (phonetic). I'm also of the
9 Wolf Clan From the Taku River, Tlingit First
10 Nation. I just wanted to show you the vest, the
11 Wolf Clan vest, and I wear it proudly today, for
12 out -- in support of our women folk that have
13 passed on, not only have passed on but are still
14 here with us, living and showing us the way
15 ahead, the future.

16 HEATHER ALLEN: (Aboriginal language spoken) Heather
17 Allen, English, Uhawtoasoc (phonetic). I'm with
18 the Kokatong (phonetic) Clan from Atlin, B.C.,
19 and the blanket I'm wearing today is actually my
20 grandmother's blanket that's been passed on to my
21 mom and I'm wearing it here today.

22 JANE ANNE CARLICK: Hi my Tlingit name is Iskee-kut
23 too lee-seen. And my English name I Jane Anne
24 Carlick (phonetic). Thank you very much.

25 EVONNE JACK: I'm Evonne Jack. My Tlingit name is
26 Kha-sane. I'm from the Wolf Clan and Whatseyit
27 (phonetic) is my first cousin on my mother's
28 side. Ganachis (phonetic).

29 I think now, we talked about it this morning
30 and we've been talking about it all week and
31 we've been talking about it for two weeks and I
32 think this morning Greta is -- oh I should have,
33 sorry, before you go Greta I should have said
34 that I laid out the little regalia here. This
35 little regalia is -- the design is by -- I forget
36 his name, Wayne's name? We're all drawing a
37 blank, my brother Wayne who's going to kill me
38 later. (Laughter) We're lucky to have a master
39 artist and carver in our family and my husband
40 and I look after children in our family and she's
41 not named yet in Tlingit, but Mia Carlick wears
42 this and dances it and she's two. And so she
43 couldn't be here with us today because she would
44 be making too much crazy noise and these are her
45 little goochin (phonetic) moccasins for the
46 goochin, so... She represents Yandakinyah
47 (phonetic). That's okay. Whoof. And then I've

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 also brought, and I need a chair put beside
2 Mia's, if somebody could bring a chair, this is
3 the human design from the Tlingit culture to
4 represent the space for all human. Yeah. We'll
5 put it here, yeah.

6 Because, you know, symbolism is a really
7 very big part of the law. And the Tlingit law,
8 like many other Indigenous law has ways to
9 recognize everyone.

10 GRETA JACK: This is surreal. It wasn't my intention
11 to come to this gathering, but my sister-in-law
12 as usual asked us to bring regalia and run little
13 errand here and there and here I am.

14 So, I am not all that prepared but I do want
15 to say I'm proud of my family, our tradition and
16 I'm here to -- I'll be jumping all over the
17 place, so you just gotta be patient with me. So,
18 I'm from the Henry Taku Jack family and Gloria
19 Reed (phonetic) who had 14 children and Barbara,
20 who is the fifth oldest one, fifth youngest. My
21 mom went to residential school for 11 years
22 without ever going home. Lejac School in Central
23 B.C., and my dad who went to day school in
24 Ketchikan. So they, mom, I think they cleared
25 all the traditional spirituality out that she
26 had, at least in the practices. As for my dad,
27 he continued on and thank God for that.

28 So, my sister Barbara, was fifth oldest and
29 I remember coming home for the two month holiday
30 from residential school and there was my little
31 sister and -- very beautiful little girl, and mom
32 and dad by that time had started drinking. They
33 already had too many children being taken away
34 from them to go to residential school, so I think
35 that Barbara was a alcohol syndrome baby. She
36 was still very smart, very strong and very tall
37 compared to us. So, my mom was quite abusive to
38 her, so I don't think that -- she was made to
39 work like we were because we had a large family,
40 we had to look after the youngster and the house,
41 mom was a bit of a perfectionist, so there was
42 never really any time to play or just be
43 ourselves. We were caretakes from as small as we
44 could remember and I cared for Barbara along with
45 my sisters because we were transferred after
46 seven or eight years in residential school from
47 the oldest. I was luckily -- I was only there

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 for four years and ...

2 So, we started going to day school in Atlin
3 and parents continued to drink and soon my
4 brothers and sisters began to drink and I could
5 remember Barbara as being a very abused little
6 girl. She was so very cute and we lived in a lot
7 of fear and because of the aftermath of
8 residential school, she was sexually abused. As
9 I was sexually abused when I was 12 year old by
10 my older brother. Not until he explained to me
11 that he was abused for seven years in residential
12 school and when he came home he had to prove he
13 was a man. Did I start to understand and forgive
14 -- begin to forgive him and love.

15 Up until seven years ago when I quit
16 drinking and drugging, did I understand? Yes. I
17 was affected by residential school big time.
18 Like the whole family, including my mother.
19 We've lost so much.

20 I remember my little sister. I grew up and
21 the school only took grade -- up to grade 7, so I
22 had to go to Whitehorse to go to school, so Marva
23 (phonetic) stayed home and as one child left
24 after another to go to residential school the
25 oldest one took over and took on the
26 responsibility of caring for the little ones and
27 helping.

28 So Barbara eventually had to leave to
29 Whitehorse. As well, both my parents died within
30 nine months of one another. My dad first at age
31 of 73, no 74. And my mom, nine months after at
32 the age of 46 and the young ones were sent to
33 Yukon Hall in Whitehorse. And another family
34 took my sister in and I saw -- I went to see her
35 at the school when I was over there and asked her
36 how she was doing, did she like it there and she
37 chose to come to Whitehorse with me. So, she
38 stayed with me, I think, for seven months and she
39 was pretty good, but she saw -- she saw -- met
40 some friends who she teamed up with and they
41 began to drink. She was 14, and began to drink
42 and the girls still tease me to this day about
43 when they were out with Barbara how they would
44 see my car coming and they would run around the
45 corner and hide and peek and see if I was still
46 there looking for them and ...

47 So eventually I decided that I couldn't go

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 on with sleepless nights and driving for miles
2 and miles looking for her anymore and I -- I was
3 wrecking my health and everything so I went to
4 Social Services and asked if they could help me
5 care for her. And they put her in a group home
6 here in Whitehorse. She had rheumatic fever or
7 another kind of fever, which she had a hole in
8 her heart and she had to be on heart medication,
9 so when she wasn't out on the street she was back
10 in the group home. Sort of it was back and forth
11 that way and one time she was missing for 10
12 days. Well I knew that something had happened to
13 her because she would have phoned me. She would
14 have called me. She called me practically every
15 day from where -- from the group home and we'd
16 talk and I'd meet her and, you know, visit and
17 she was just gone, she just vanished and we -- I
18 didn't know if she had gone to Vancouver, was
19 somebody picked her up and taken her to Vancouver
20 or something, which was always our fear. And
21 time went by and then RCMP member came to the --
22 what was called the Vocational School at that
23 time and mentioned that they had found some
24 remains on Grey Mountain and they had checked
25 dental records and stuff and they had identified
26 her, my sister Barbara Jean as being the person,
27 so ...

28 So, at the time, after my parents died I
29 looked after two sisters and a brother plus my
30 own for three and a-half years and when they came
31 with the news we wanted to have a funeral for her
32 and the Department of Indian Affairs said, well
33 we didn't need a full size coffin so they gave us
34 a baby coffin to bury our sister in and that was
35 -- it was like, even my younger brothers and
36 sisters and my daughter who knew her well, it was
37 like unreal, it was like --

38 So that kind of sticks in my mind, you know,
39 that -- sometimes how worthless people think of
40 our being First Nations People and I just get so
41 afraid to get in touch with that anger that I
42 feel underneath. I'm trying to manage my life in
43 a more positive more productive way than I was
44 when I was drinking. So, sometimes it's very
45 hard to choose the right path and to stay on it.
46 I think there are lots of people who have long
47 since given up with any support. There's lots of

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 talk about it. But for the person that lives at
2 ground level and goes for support, where is it?
3 I had to knock on many, many, many doors before I
4 found the support that I could to stay clean and
5 sober.

6 I purposely put myself through the wellness
7 program at the courthouse because I needed that
8 discipline. So for a year and a-half I showed up
9 every week. I spoke to my probation officer. I
10 did the workshops. I tried everything I could,
11 it's so hard.

12 But there was so little else. Like there
13 was so little else. You go to ADS, well ...
14 There weren't any workshops there. And Konlin
15 (phonetic) done help me with sewing classes.
16 Like you could go and make mukluks and that was
17 so healing and it was good to be with First
18 Nations People where you felt, or at least I felt
19 comradery and less shame, less guilt. I still
20 carry a lot of the shame to this day. But I'm
21 trying to deal with it.

22 And every once in a while I feel my heart
23 glowing with pride that we can stand up as
24 productive responsible people that are trying to
25 uplift First Nations.

26 I know Barbara didn't have a -- I know it's
27 not about me right now, but I know that in her
28 day when she was 14 and on the street there
29 wasn't anything. There was punishment rather
30 than support I think and -- like it is -- the
31 group homes isn't like what it is today where
32 they do get support and ...

33 But there were two women that came forward
34 after a man died and they said do you know -- do
35 you know, and it was years after Barbara died,
36 years, and they said do you know that so-and-so
37 that just passed away, I said well no, that I
38 didn't. But they said that he was last one to be
39 seen with my sister Barbara and -- and I said why
40 didn't you tell me. Like why didn't you say
41 something? And they said they were scared. They
42 were scared that something might happen to them.
43 And that's common of First Nations people, you
44 know, we were taught, "Don't say anything, you
45 know, the police are going to come and get your
46 kids. Don't say anything the police are going to
47 come and take your mother and send her away for

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 three months because she was drinking when she
2 was [indiscernible]. You know don't say anything
3 about the moose because the game warden is going
4 to come and take it and give it to the towns
5 people and fine you. And if you don't have any
6 money for the fine they'll sent you to jail."
7 You know, it's like we had to live in silence.
8 And we don't anymore. We could speak out and I
9 think, unless we acknowledge the shame and the
10 guilt that we are -- and the fear that we are
11 carrying around we'll never be able to do
12 anything about it. And God in Heaven, like we
13 need workshops, we need land based healing camps,
14 we need culture camps, we need, we need to be out
15 on the land because as far as I'm concerned, I
16 went to about four treatment centers, but to me
17 all it was was an institution, where you'd walk
18 -- I wasn't even aware of it that I was walking
19 around in fear that, you know, I was going to be
20 badly punished if I didn't listen and that was
21 all I could do was get that feeling. I remember
22 when I was a little girl at home I would get a
23 feeling and I would go and stand in the middle of
24 the floor and I'd tell my mom, "Mom, Suzy Quawk
25 (phonetic) is going to come and visit you today."
26 "Oh, that's nice." And I'd go and sit down and
27 Suzy Quawk would come to visit. And she said,
28 "Oh one of the kids said you were going to come
29 and visit me today." "I did mom. I did." And
30 she had a little puppy at the door and I was
31 looking at the little puppy. "Mom, he's
32 thirsty." She said, "There's a whole lake down
33 there. If he was thirsty he would go and have a
34 drink." And I said, "No mom, he's thirsty."
35 "Okay." So she gave him water and he drank the
36 whole bowl.

37 And I was gifted with premonition and dreams
38 much like by brother Bryan and I think our whole
39 family is that way. They say intuition is the
40 truest sense of God and I honestly believe that.

41 And from my mom going to a residential
42 school, she branded it as witchcraft, so I -- I
43 to this very moment, I struggle with that. They
44 taught her to be afraid, where my dad just
45 accepted it as yes and I was very close to my
46 dad. And a lot of harm was done.

47 I've forgotten what I was going to say, but

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 I just want to be well. I -- it was frightening
2 to have the two, well the three First Nations
3 people beaten to death in our -- in Whitehorse
4 here. My heart goes out to the family and it's
5 just so hard to believe that something like that
6 could go on. And it just brings back a load --
7 the load of fear that we've been carrying all our
8 lives from physical -- you know physical abuse or
9 sexual abuse if -- if that's what took place,
10 which was an aftermath of residential school.
11 You know, it wasn't so much what they did to me
12 there but it was what they took me from. It's
13 what they took me from. The God that gave you
14 everything, the sunshine and the water and the
15 leaves and the fish and the animals to a Jesus
16 that was going to send you in hell to burn
17 forever. And I couldn't understand it and yet,
18 you know, you'd go to the stations of Cross, like
19 why are doing that to God, like why are they --
20 it's kind of like it was totally, totally
21 different than what we were taught to believe in,
22 to be grateful for everything as opposed to
23 residential school. Be fearful of everything,
24 because boy you're going to hell if God didn't
25 agree with what you were doing and they were
26 telling me to be a good girl, well what the hell
27 did that mean. You know, I didn't know what good
28 or bad was, we were, you know, so, you know, they
29 took us from our very -- you know, someone --
30 someone said to me, you know, that Hitler, he
31 massacred the people, but the Church in that day
32 took our children and that's worse. They took
33 our children and that was the quickest way to
34 annihilate and integrate the Indian people into
35 the European way of living. And I didn't
36 understand it at -- like I mean I had to think
37 about that and my instructor said, well, you
38 know, I'll leave it with you and, you know, I
39 could see the damage that has been done because I
40 think there would have been less frustration and
41 drinking if -- if it wasn't for residential
42 school, you know, and if Barbara hadn't gone
43 there. She was sexually abused there, as were
44 lots of -- I don't know how -- I was such a, "I'm
45 going to tell dad," you know, "I'm going to tell
46 sister." I was a big tattletale, which is --
47 which kept me out of lots of trouble, got me into

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 lots too, but it certainly kept me out of a lot
2 of things that could have happened to me there.

3 But I think for Barbara, had she been
4 treated right in residential school and not
5 sexually abused and the aftermath of residential
6 school sexual abuse stuff, I think that she would
7 be alive to this day.

8 You know, you hear people say, "Well, get
9 over it already." Well, hello, they're tired of
10 hearing about it, I'm tired of living it. It's
11 so very hard to have to -- because you never
12 really quite, I mean the pain lessons, I mean
13 it's been seven years since I really understood
14 that residential school, how much it affected me
15 because I was a spoilt little brat and, "Oh,
16 you're so cute." And, you know, I would get in
17 trouble and, you know, but it was so military.
18 It was so line up in ranks and kneel and say the
19 whole rosary on a cement floor and pray before
20 you go to breakfast and pray when you get to
21 breakfast and pray after breakfast and pray
22 before you go to school and then pray when you
23 get there and pray when you leave there and on
24 and on. Like I -- it's really hard for me to
25 believe still that people that believed in God
26 could do such things, you know. Could just be
27 the way they were and treat us the way they did
28 and it affected all our people. All.

29 I think even, it didn't only affect our
30 parents to lose one child, like first it was
31 Lorraine that went to school, then it was
32 Lorraine and Doug, then it was Melvin, there goes
33 a third kid and on and on and on right down to
34 the -- well the 13th child. And I remember when
35 it came to my sisters turn to go to school and I
36 was the oldest one left, it was so lonely. The
37 family -- it affected the children too. I mean
38 the streets were no longer filled with children
39 that were playing baseball or dodgeball or -- or
40 you know, playing cowboys and Indians or playing
41 house or, you know, it was just so quiet and
42 lonely. And there was some of us who were taken
43 from -- out to the trap lines so that the
44 children wouldn't be taken and boy, my Uncle
45 Willie was one of them and is he ever champ to
46 this day. He doesn't know how to read or write,
47 but, you know, man-o-man he's quite the

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 character.

2 And Elizabeth Nieman (phonetic) who is also
3 from my village was taken to the trap line as
4 well and hidden because they didn't want her to
5 be taken.

6 So, I'm sure there are many many more from
7 each of our villages that that had happened to,
8 but it tore the village apart. It was like
9 Pattie Ward (phonetic) and Mrs. Pattie went to
10 the trap line with Uncle Willie and then you know
11 another, so it split the whole village up. The
12 life that we were used to, living in peace and --
13 just was no more.

14 And being an aware little child, I mean to
15 see that and to have to live with it when I --
16 just growing up. How do I get over it. You
17 know, how do I just drop it like I can an old
18 pair of shoes and walk away and, "Oh, I'm better.
19 I'm good now, boy I'm over, I'm healed." The
20 pain lessens I think and the frequency between
21 remembering and feeling it in your heart how much
22 it hurt. I think is there, but I would like to
23 see us go back to our ways of sweats, I know the
24 Christians aren't going to think much of it, but
25 I've tried it. I've tried the Catholic way, I've
26 gone to every single Church, I've gone to Bible
27 Camps, I've gone everywhere to try and find a
28 way, because we were taught, "Oh, you know, witch
29 craft, you know, you're not allowed to say thank
30 you God for the sun because that means you're
31 worship." I'm not worship, and I felt that I
32 was, it's kind of like, "Oh my god, I can't thank
33 God for the sun because I'm worshipping the sun
34 now." And the water, they saw it as worship. I
35 was just thanking God for the gifts he gave us,
36 but it was scared into us, the things the
37 residential school wanted us to believe. So I
38 search long and hard before I decided. I know
39 our religion is strong and true and I want us to
40 go back to sweats, I want us to go back
41 ceremonies, I want us to get Indian doctors
42 because we have tried it the White man way for
43 how many decades and decades and decades. It's
44 time we did it our way.

45 I so believe in my heart that's what is
46 going to save us. I so believe that it will help
47 the -- so many of us to get on the right track.

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 That is what's going to help us.

2 And right now my head it going -- and I just
3 noted someone looking at me, [indiscernible]
4 "Oh," right away, she thinks, you know, asking
5 for a sweat or a ceremony or -- or something, I'm
6 a witchcraft, like I mean that's how it plays
7 with your head, you know, you're a pagan, you
8 know, like listen to the Bible, the Bible says
9 this and oh my God you're going to hell and, you
10 know, I mean that's conditioning, they condition
11 to think -- condition us to think that way. I
12 mean, you know, it's so hard to be stand up and
13 to sometimes to be true and strong. And yet I
14 know we have God gave us the strength, we're just
15 not using it. We have -- like I mean are we so
16 beaten down that we can't get up and speak for
17 ourselves, do we have to accept the Catholic
18 Church way because they beat it into our heads?
19 I mean do we have to accept any other way other
20 than what we believe in our hearts. I don't
21 think we're too beaten down. I think we were. I
22 think we were for way too long and I think it's
23 time for us to stand up and share what's in our
24 hearts and find a way to -- so we all could be
25 unified so that we don't find murdered and
26 missing aboriginal women anymore. We can do it.

27 So let's all try to pull together and see
28 how we could help one another and God in heaven I
29 know, I know, I know we can do it. I know the
30 great spirit is here now and I think he's
31 blessing us and guiding us. I think he's helping
32 me to say the right words. I think he's helping
33 you to hear the right words. I think people are
34 compassionate and caring and I think that we can
35 pull together and I think that we can look after
36 our women better, our children as they grow up so
37 they don't live with abuse so that they don't run
38 away to the streets and get killed or start
39 drinking and drugging and get killed.

40 I would also like to say that there are many
41 strong honourable men that stand behind their
42 women. And my brother Bryan has supported my
43 sister-in-law Joan for 25 years. And believe me
44 she's a handful, you know, (Laughing) she's --
45 she's all over the planet, like she is everywhere
46 and she's -- she's doing this and running over
47 there and, you know, if somebody needs to be --

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 need a good talking to, she's the one to do it.
2 She can talk the birds out of the trees.
3 (Laughing) And he has stood behind her with
4 patience and he's a very humble man and I'm so
5 proud of him and I would like to thank all the
6 humble supportive men out there that support
7 their wives that are trying to live the right way
8 without drugs and alcohol and live -- do to
9 traditional pursuits and unify us and I'm sure
10 there are many out there. We would like to see
11 more of you.

12 And by the way our friend would like to know
13 if there are any more men like Bryan. Where is
14 she? (Laughing) She would like to know if there
15 are any men like Bryan. She was joking this
16 morning over breakfast, so ... Oh, she's a
17 sweetheart.

18 Okay, so like, you know what, I really want
19 to thank you for listening to me and it's so
20 important we move forward in unity and Jean's
21 here to help us. Jean, and she's from my
22 village, she's a Carlick and I just want to thank
23 you for all the support you've given us, because
24 man, you know, we certainly can't do it alone.
25 We've been trying for too long and I just really
26 want to say thank you and thank you. (Aboriginal
27 spoken).

28 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you Greta. Going to invite my
29 sister-in-law Lorraine now, to share with
30 everyone about Barbara and her relationship with
31 Barbara.

32 LORRAINE DAWSON: (Aboriginal spoken) Two days ago I
33 woke up not realizing that I'm going to be here,
34 that I'm going to be talking about my sister that
35 I never really had a chance in my life to know.
36 Because of residential school, yippee, took me
37 away from home when I was just going on six.
38 Then I had TB. I was just going on six, so I had
39 TB, no explanation, no goodbye mom, no goodbye
40 dad, no goodbye brother, I didn't know where I
41 was going. They just put me on the plane, that
42 was it. Mom didn't know, Dad didn't know.
43 Thirteen months I stayed out in Edmonton. Once
44 in a while I got a letter from my dad, mom,
45 little bit of money, 'cause I was just a little
46 kid anyway and I bought candy with that. But I
47 didn't know where I was. I don't even think I

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 had a chance to know what it was to cry because
2 who was there to cry for. My mom and dad wasn't
3 there, I didn't have no brothers and sisters. I
4 was all by myself.

5 Then I came home, back to school. I didn't
6 go home after 13 months. I didn't go home. They
7 took me right back to school. Oh, I was excited,
8 six year old, going to see my brother, I never
9 see him long time, I don't know where I was.

10 Going to go see him. So I knew a shortcut
11 through the dining room from the girls rec room,
12 straight across the dining room right down the
13 hall to the men's. They wouldn't let me go. All
14 I seen was my brother on that end. He's passed
15 away now, but he was next to me. And I hollered,
16 "Douglas, Douglas," and we're just going to run
17 and that nun pulled me back, pulled Douglas back.
18 We couldn't go see each other, we couldn't talk,
19 we couldn't hug, we couldn't anything. So
20 Douglas felt so bad, he turned around, he started
21 crying and he said, "I hate you, I hate you, I
22 hate you, you went away from me and left me
23 alone," he said. "Douglas, Douglas." He's way
24 down there. I tried to holler to him and explain
25 to him. No, he was hurt too bad. He went away,
26 I went away. That was supposed to be forgotten.

27 Then went home after 10 months. I see this
28 little boy crawling around and I tell my mom,
29 who's that little boy? Shut up she say. That's
30 your brother. I look at him. He was about maybe
31 two months, no, three/four months old. Where he
32 come from? Shut up. Don't ask. That seemed to
33 be my custom ever since I was a kid.

34 There was always somebody, education wise,
35 knew more than me, that can talk, then I hear
36 that word shut up lots, so I start shutting up.
37 And then when I did open up my mouth I said the
38 wrong things because I didn't know how to speak
39 right. So there was a lot of tortures, but some
40 reason another, something in my head keeps
41 saying, and still saying, "Lorraine, you go
42 ahead, no matter how tough, go ahead."

43 I made a resolution after my husband died 13
44 years ago, I don't know, I pray lots, I was happy
45 my husband, my late husband was Catholic, I don't
46 know why because residential school, isn't that
47 nice. So I was happy he was Catholic, so that

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 was good.

2 And then -- anyway, as time went on Barbara
3 came around, I barely, barely remember my sister,
4 I know, she was up to here on me, she was to me
5 kind of withdrawn. It depended on how you pay
6 attention to her. That's her guidance, that's
7 what she -- I noticed when I was younger she
8 [indiscernible]. If you played with her she'll
9 play with you, but if you fought with her, she'll
10 fight with you. You know, just like a family
11 thing, but I really, really, I know she was
12 drinking, I was.

13 So I think in a lot of ways our family had
14 suffered lots because of residential school. Mom
15 and Dad depended on us because we were there for
16 their company, to be their babies. To be
17 whatever for them and then they came along and
18 they took us away. I remember so clear about
19 that Lower Post. They say things about way off,
20 I don't want to mention any names, way off that
21 way. Over that way. Down that way. People that
22 went to that school. I remember when I see them
23 come into school, just like it said in a book,
24 they had sores, they had, some of them had hardly
25 no clothes, some of them didn't even know that
26 they were not going to see their mom and dad
27 because they were in school, they didn't know
28 that. And why did I have to be behind it and say
29 no, that's not true. No, that's not true.

30 For some reason in my life I was trying to
31 make something real for a change. Something that
32 I could treasure and this Lower Posting just
33 really -- and even if we went in as family, like
34 I got sisters there, but for some reason we
35 couldn't mingle, because there was too many. In
36 one little room like this, I bet you any money
37 there was 50, 50 little juniors like that running
38 around and you had to stay in that room. You
39 stay in that room two/three hours 'til
40 dinnertime, 'til suppertime.

41 Barbara, who she -- I don't know who she was
42 with in Lower Post or if she even made it to
43 Lower Post, because there was so many in our
44 family that mom was just looking after us, one
45 after the other. I really wanted to get to know
46 her, but everything going on and her alcohol, she
47 had alcohol problems, I got alcohol problems and

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 she never really, as far as I know, mingled with
2 us, me anyway being the oldest, 'cause she never
3 really knew me. I never really had a chance to
4 know her. All I knew is by name, that's my
5 sister.

6 You know, I don't know with this thing,
7 which way to talk, like they tell you don't cry.
8 Don't this, don't that, don't everything. Don't.
9 That's all I know is don't. And then they say if
10 you don't do it you're going to get in trouble.
11 Okay, there I go again. Now it seemed like my
12 life, it seems like, I go someplace I'll get
13 lost, so I always want to be in close to people,
14 close to somebody where I won't get lost.

15 I only went as far as Grade 8 then I quit
16 school and I ran away. I went 10 years in Lower
17 Post. Six years in a hostel here in Whitehorse.
18 Used to be the Catholic Hostel. So I was away
19 from home most of life. What do you do two
20 months at home and you don't know your parents
21 really good and then all of a sudden you gotta go
22 again. Then you come back again. Another two
23 months. The addition at home with the kids and
24 the other ones that are in school. We never
25 really knew each other. We never had a chance to
26 know each other. We all wanted mom and dad's
27 love. Ten of them going -- she's going to love
28 all 10 of us at once. We didn't get that love.
29 We fought. That put barriers between me and
30 somebody else in my family because I couldn't get
31 the hug I want, she pushed me out of the way, you
32 know.

33 And like my sister said, all I knew about my
34 sister Barbara, and I'm very glad, very proud,
35 very, very everything that this came up, because
36 the other day when I heard this was coming up, I
37 just heard it, and I thought, oh my God, how long
38 has she been gone and I never even thought of it
39 and by the grace of God and the good people, all
40 you good people, you put this thing on, you're
41 going to get more back, because I'm pretty sure
42 there's lots of others like me too that didn't
43 know anything about this and then my sister, very
44 good sister-in-law, the bestest in the westest
45 (Laughing), came to my house, because I say that
46 because we have our own little things. I call
47 them little. She came to my house and she told

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 me about this going on. Well I didn't know what
2 this was about and then after she left I thought
3 finally, finally, somebody is thinking about the
4 women.

5 You know, we have our celebrations to women.
6 We go to celebrate the men too, but I don't which
7 way to go about it, because I seen so much when I
8 was younger. The women getting beaten up, left
9 and right. And nothing happens. And this goes
10 on and on. And I noticed that ever since I was a
11 kid through my family, then I'd look at others
12 family. It's -- I wish I had the words to say it
13 but I -- Barbara would have been there somewhere,
14 somebody would have help her, but you know, like
15 I said before and again, I don't really know her,
16 but I know what she look like and I know what
17 she's sounds like, you know, and she was that
18 type of a girl for what was going on in her life,
19 that if you got mad at her, to her, you were just
20 a wall. You -- she seemed like she could just do
21 anything. That's the way I seen her when she get
22 mad. She didn't matter who she hit. She hit me,
23 you know, but I knew it and she -- I didn't get
24 in trouble, she got in trouble. So, you know,
25 but I wish in a way, I hope in a way, that like
26 my son said, you know mom, if you don't move on,
27 you're going to get left behind. And I thought
28 about it and thought no, I'm nice and comfortable
29 right where I am. I don't want to move.

30 Then things came up. Then Lower Post came
31 up and that's when I started realizing I had to
32 move, I had to go. I had to everything. My mom
33 and my dad, mostly my dad, my father, when he was
34 alive, we weren't rich, we didn't have much, but
35 I think what we had there besides love, there was
36 a lot of care, it was really hard understanding
37 of all of us and there was a lot of different age
38 in mom and dad. And, you know, as time went on
39 the only living my dad made was wood cutting.
40 Working for the Indian Agent then too, cutting
41 wood.

42 So, it's a really lost world there. Seems
43 like it anyways. And when I came here, I said to
44 myself, "Well, what are you going to say? Are
45 you going to talk about Lower Post?" I just, all
46 I can say is I don't want to even think about
47 Lower Post. I'm trying to think about Barbara.

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 That's the one I trying to think about, because I
2 never really knew her and I wish to God I had.

3 So, anyways Barbara, here I am and I'm
4 talking about you and I'm bragging about you,
5 what I could say about you. I hope you hear me
6 and if there's any forgiveness that has to be
7 done please accept it from every one of us and
8 look done on us and we'll look up to you.

9 Thank you very much.

10 KAREN SNOWSHOE: I'd like to invite my husband
11 Whatsayit (phonetic) to share and share about
12 Barbara and whatever he wants.

13 Did you want to take a break first?

14 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah.

15 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Several people are needing to go to
16 the bathroom, frankly. Do you want to go.
17 [indiscernible] it's up to you. Do you want to
18 go? Okay, we'll take a washroom break, he said.
19 So, and then we'll start with Bryan. I don't
20 know, ten minutes? Okay.

21

22 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)

23 (PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED)

24

25 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Are we ready to start?

26 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Yeah.

27 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Go ahead.

28 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Joan I understand you'd now like to
29 introduce your beloved spouse and invite him to
30 speak and again in support of the truth telling
31 process I offer you this tobacco to.

32 JOAN JACK: [indiscernible].

33 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you.

34 JOAN JACK: (Aboriginal spoken) Whatsayit, I'd like
35 you to take this, 'cause I have one and invite
36 you to share your beautiful self.

37 BRYAN JACK: (Aboriginal spoken) I was listening to
38 my two sisters talking about, this is around
39 missing and murdered women. What I had
40 acknowledged was that they were both -- both
41 discussing the residential school. I think as --
42 I think that we have to start connecting the dots
43 on the issues around missing and murdered women,
44 because if it is as important as we say, we have
45 to know that the residential school is attached
46 to the missing and murdered women. Because the
47 residential school took our independence away.

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 It took our self-confidence away as a people.
2 Attempted to take the traditional lifestyle that
3 we had away.

4 So I believe that the one thing that I've
5 observed throughout my political life is that
6 when we talk about land and land issues,
7 everything is separate, the trees are separate
8 from the water and water is separate from the
9 people, people are separate from the mountains,
10 so on and so forth. When you want to come down
11 and you want to sue people about the mountains
12 they want to talk about the rivers and it
13 confuses people. Keeps people ignorant of the
14 fact that we're talking about land and land
15 issues.

16 So when I make reference to the separation
17 and the connection of these dots that I'm talking
18 about right now, when we talk about our women, we
19 talk about our land. When we talk about our land
20 we talk about our spirits. We talk about our
21 traditions, our people, our elders, our children.

22 We never take it to heart that the very same
23 people that we tried to educate have gone through
24 struggles where they've gone out there and gotten
25 jobs. They've gotten through grade 12 and
26 whatever. When they go out there the prejudice
27 is still out there. Always has been.

28 The issue around missing and murdered women
29 has to be a priority. And across Canada.
30 Constantly, because prejudice is always a factor
31 in Canadian -- in our lives as indigenous people.
32 And for me standing in front of you as
33 commissioners right now, there's nothing more
34 important than having my people relaying their
35 messages, because my sister Barbara, if the idea
36 -- if the idea was, it never got investigated,
37 she could have been lying up there right now.
38 Nobody would have known.

39 We have laws about murder. We have laws
40 about everything in our lives and we as
41 indigenous people are supposed to adapt to that.
42 How could we adapt to it when the issue around
43 missing and murdered women has not been dealt
44 with. They're still fishing our people out of
45 the Red River in Manitoba today.

46 The thing that I want to share with the
47 people here is I'm a traditional person, I was

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 brought up in a bush. And I wish in my life
2 right now that life would have been at a
3 standstill where I could still be out there and I
4 could be in a sense, but time is of the essence
5 as they say. Oh, I watch and my life as a child,
6 for my parents fought, the abuse of women was a
7 reality in my life, past tense. In today's world
8 we make it an art. Because right now the
9 confidence that we've taken from our women in
10 residential schools, it's working pretty damn
11 good, because the women that are abused in our
12 communities, go back to their abuser. And
13 there's people that call them stupid. When are
14 they going to learn. When are they going to get
15 a life. They'll get a life when the professional
16 people put the word worldwide that abuse to our
17 women stops. If we have laws that are supposed
18 to make our lives better and they're written down
19 on books, then why aren't our lives getting
20 better?

21 When you break it down the real governments
22 that should be acknowledged are the citizens of
23 Canada. Not the people that have money that can
24 sit in front of lawyers and government
25 representatives. Laws were made because of
26 people. They were made because our women were
27 murdered. They were made because of drugs and
28 alcohol. And I'm going to say something that
29 probably very few people say, the very laws
30 support drugs and alcohol. Because I'll say
31 another thing, it's in our pharmacy's. It's
32 killing our people. The food that's in the
33 market, it's killing our people. We have sugar
34 diabetes, we have cancer, you know, do you think
35 that God that we pray to everyday decided he's
36 going to invent cancer? No, no, no. That's not
37 what God's are made for.

38 We have to start looking at the realities
39 around our lives as human beings and start
40 working with that. Do an assessment. We make
41 laws to stop everything and nothing ever stops.

42 Going back to my sister, I knew her when she
43 was a child and starting to grow up and ... I
44 remember in my life when there was -- when I
45 acknowledge where my brothers and sisters went.
46 And I lived in wood camp. We had a crib that was
47 about four feet long, about three feet wide,

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 somewhere in there and we were just small kids,
2 we had four children in there, we had a tent
3 frame about seven by 14 and were -- somewhere in
4 there anyway, it was a tent frame. We lived a
5 beautiful life out in the bush, but eventually
6 alcohol and drugs and whatever got a hold my
7 family and, you know, you see the fights that
8 went on between my parents and -- and I'm going
9 to be straight up, like it's something that -- I
10 mean you talk to people and they say well that
11 happens in every family. Here I am standing in
12 front of people that say, "Hmm, hasn't happened
13 in mine." You know, but the thing about it, the
14 system that was built on abuse to women was built
15 with alcohol. It was built with residential
16 school.

17 You know the saying that they want to take
18 the savage out of the Indian, it's alive and well
19 today. How many people know that. How many
20 people that have gone to schools, that have gone
21 to universities, have gone to college, know that?
22 We need an education on our education. Because
23 if we don't start doing things in a proper
24 fashion this will continue. And we could write a
25 million other laws and our women in Canada will
26 never be protected. Never.

27 So, I know time is of the essence, and that,
28 you know, there's other families that want to
29 speak out, but there was a time in my life where
30 I wanted to stand up in front of people and say
31 how I felt. It never came. It never came
32 because the dollars and cents that came from
33 Department of Indian Affairs never supported any
34 lifestyle that we lived traditionally as a
35 people.

36 I think that -- I want to share a moment
37 with you and it's coming from residential school.
38 I was one of the very few children that ran away
39 from school, because there was about three of us,
40 and sometime in the winter time, sometime in the
41 springtime, sometime in the -- you know, whatever
42 time of the year, as long as I had a chance, I
43 wasn't going to stay in those schools. You know,
44 I got beaten up, I got abused, the whole nine
45 yards. I went to this one café, I had already
46 hitchhiked 15 miles away. I walked into this
47 café, my hair was all dusty, it was pfff, I was

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 tired, I didn't really give a shit, I was about
2 six years old, five/six years old, I can't really
3 remember, I got to have been about six anyway,
4 and this one lady she said, "The bathrooms over
5 there on your right, behind the counter." And
6 she said, "Just make it fast." And I could hear
7 her talking because them days the walls were
8 thin. And the -- she was talking with that lady
9 and I couldn't hear that lady what she had said,
10 but she said, "Yeah, I know." She said, "I could
11 throw them out," she said, "But there'll be just
12 another one coming in the next day." There was
13 other children running away from -- or running
14 away from school also. So it was on a consistent
15 basis, the children ran away from those schools.

16 I think that if we want to do a proper
17 assessment again, that we have to, and you as
18 commissioners, connect the dots. The answer
19 isn't on the policies, it's not on the
20 guidelines, it's on the person. I'm one of them.
21 Because the story I just shared with you, you
22 didn't even know that, within the last five
23 minutes, you didn't know what I was about. And
24 it's time we learnt that in Canada, what
25 aboriginal people go through and why we want to
26 stop it. Our women need protection. They're the
27 bearer of our nation. They're the protector of
28 our children. If we don't have that, I could
29 never have been here if we had -- if my mother
30 was killed in residential school. She went to a
31 school where she was abused. I know women my
32 mom's age that have children from the people that
33 are supposed to protect them. And does that
34 continue today, I'm not going to answer that.
35 I'm going to leave that for the legal people to
36 look at it and do an assessment on it. Because I
37 think a lot of our people came here to this
38 inquiry around missing and murdered women to get
39 answers.

40 So I'm going to let it go at that and I just
41 want to acknowledge the people that have
42 supported this and I think this inquiry is
43 something that has to be strengthened. We need
44 a solid foundation under our feet. We need
45 something to work off. We need more people that
46 can come in and say we need protection of our
47 women. 'Cause the way I look at it as man, is

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 that if it wasn't for our women I wouldn't be
2 here today, so I thank all the women on the face
3 of this earth, no matter what race, no matter
4 where they came from. (Aboriginal language
5 spoken)

6 JOAN JACK: I just have to add a little something
7 before I invite, as the family facilitator,
8 before I invite other people to share, you know,
9 where I'm from in Manitoba there's a lot of men,
10 not to slam the men at home, but there's a lot of
11 men that stand up and pontificate about how women
12 are the water bearers and women are the backbone
13 and so on and so forth, but I want to tell you
14 I've been married to him 25 years and I have
15 pissed him off. And he has never raised a hand
16 to me. (Laughing) Not once. And that's the new
17 norm in our household. So, I just wanted to back
18 him up.

19 So I wanted to invite the Elder Jal Tun
20 first, if he wanted to say anything? Or -- yeah,
21 you want to share. Another man who doesn't hate
22 anybody.

23 ELDER JAL TUN: Good afternoon again. My name is Jal
24 Tun and I'm so filled with emotions, you know,
25 after listening to the family, you know, I grew
26 up beside and I got to know each and every one of
27 them and our families are huge, but it's still,
28 when there's one missing out of the family, that
29 hurts. And with our family, with our traditions,
30 the women are the leaders, they govern a lot of
31 our society. It's just today, that's been
32 happening for thousands of years. So, before the
33 European people came our people were at one with
34 one another, we knew where our women, where they
35 supposed to be, they were supposed to be up, but
36 it seems like in today's society we have to start
37 turning the concerns back onto the government.
38 Educate the law, educate RCMP on how to talk to
39 our people. You don't just come into a society
40 and start calling them down because of whatever.
41 RCMP need education. Our people, they've
42 been trying to educate us in the proper way for
43 as long as I can remember. But thank you, those
44 teachings are the wrong ways. Especially through
45 the government, through the Church, and now how
46 the laws repressing us from talking out and
47 protecting -- protecting our women. They seem to

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 shrug it off.

2 The Church has a record that is despicable.
3 When I went to residential school that's when I
4 first recognized that our -- or the government
5 was not even looking -- or considering our women.
6 After seven years in residential school I never
7 saw my sisters for four years. When I came home
8 they told me my sisters were passed away and ask
9 why didn't they tell me. They said they didn't
10 want to disrupt my education and school. So you
11 can imagine the shock, because the women are our
12 biggest part of our life and I'm proud to say it
13 now because I've lived a life, I lived the wrong
14 type of life when I came out of residential
15 school and now I look back, I look back and I'm
16 putting things into perspective the Native way.
17 I look at our people in a Native perspective. I
18 look at our women differently. I try to talk to
19 them in the proper way and give them all the
20 respect that's possible, 'cause that's our
21 culture.

22 Now, if anything comes out of this -- this
23 type of work that's going on, let it be education
24 for the government and the authorities. They
25 know our ways. But we have no respect up to now
26 and hopefully the whole world will -- the
27 Canadians will turn around and look at us
28 different and look at our women different and how
29 they absolutely took our culture and really tore
30 it apart. Now, we're not -- we're not just
31 asking we're telling, things have to be put back
32 into perspective. Hopefully it's going to be
33 starting now.

34 JOAN JACK: Thank you Jal Tun. Maybe ask your mom if
35 she wants to say anything first, 'cause she knew
36 Barbara. Did you want to say anything Jean?

37 JEAN: [indiscernible].

38 JOAN JACK: Okay. Awesome.

39 JEAN: I just want to talk about Barbara a little bit.
40 Barbara Jean and I are about the same age. We
41 kind of hung out together when we were very young
42 teenagers, 'cause me too I ran away from home and
43 I lived on the streets of Whitehorse when I was
44 very little, same old as Barbara Jean. I think
45 she's either, she's probably one year younger
46 than me. That close, so ... We hung out for a
47 little while in Whitehorse here when we were

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 living on the streets when we were 14. I think
2 Barbara went missing when she was 14 and I
3 remember my last time with her and it wasn't
4 really good. We got into some pills or
5 something, but that was the last time I saw her
6 and as the years went by I thought of Barbara
7 Jean a lot. I know my kids, my daughters
8 remember me mentioning her lots of times
9 throughout my life and I ask myself, "Where's
10 Barbara, how come nobodies looking for her." I
11 asked myself that, "Why, why do they -- is she
12 not important." And I question myself over and
13 over about that throughout the years because I
14 don't know what's going on. And then my cousin,
15 Angel, another one that went missing and to me
16 the way it feels looks to me as like nobody's
17 going to do nothing. Nobody's going to do
18 nothing about it and try and find out why they
19 went missing. That's hard. You know, I don't
20 know Barbara Jean that much, but I know she drank
21 lots just like I did. And we ran away from home
22 and were homeless. It was hard, you know, we
23 lived in the ship down here at the shipyards.
24 That's where we lived. And I don't know how
25 long. Then all of a sudden she was gone and I
26 never seen her again. And that's hard when you
27 see your relatives disappearing and nobody
28 looking for them.

29 I just wanted to share some of the feelings
30 that I went through with my cousin gone and I
31 still feel like that today. It still feels like
32 to me that nobody's doing anything.

33 Thank you very much for listening, that's
34 all now.

35 JOAN JACK: (Aboriginal language spoken) I wanted to
36 ask her daughter Helen if she would share with
37 us. Helen's a very important person in our
38 lives. She's the hope.

39 HELEN: Hi. So, I don't speak in front of people very
40 much. I'm a little bit emotional after my mom's
41 crying, so just give me one second.

42 So I was quite blessed as a child. Like
43 there was chaos, there was craziness, but there
44 was also some blessings that I received. One was
45 my grandparents. I was like the apple of their
46 eye. Their first grandchild, so I got a lot and
47 a lot of love put into me. Another one of my

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 blessings was my mom. She's a story teller.
2 Like, you wouldn't know it to speak to her unless
3 you are beading with her or working on regalia or
4 going for a drive or sitting around a campfire,
5 but she tells stories and she tells them well.
6 And so through her eyes I've been able to see
7 some things about my people. And so, like, Bryan
8 talked about how he would run away, my mom told
9 me those stories, but she told them in a light
10 where she was so proud of him and he was like
11 their hope. Like, he had such strength and
12 courage and he didn't believe them when they told
13 him that he had to cross a deadly river to get
14 home because he knew which way was to get home
15 and he went that way.

16 Also like another, I don't want to name
17 names because I don't want to share peoples
18 stories without their permission, but another
19 person who took the strap and they couldn't break
20 them, they couldn't make them cry. And then the
21 other stories too that she's told me about are
22 stories about, you know, tragedy. About her
23 friend Barbara Jean going missing and them
24 finding her on Grey Mountain and how she knew
25 that the police didn't really care and it was
26 more likely that the police would take somebody
27 up Grey Mountain and harm them than find out what
28 happened to Barbara Jean.

29 And so, I was able, I've had the opportunity
30 to hear these stories of strength and courage and
31 resistance of my people and also to hear these
32 other stories and a lot of them about the chaos
33 and the craziness and the harm that came to our
34 people.

35 But one of the things in sharing my story
36 with my Auntie Joan that came to me was that it
37 was normalized. Like those stories that my mom
38 told me about Barbara Jean and the police not
39 really caring are not really, you know, there was
40 no faith that they were going to do anything
41 about it, that was normal. That was common.
42 That women were being abused inside their homes,
43 outside of their homes, they weren't safe out in
44 the community, that was normal. That was the
45 common reality that I grew up with and that's a
46 bit challenging for me 'cause I have nieces and
47 such and young women that I love and I don't want

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 them to grow up in a world where they are unsafe.
2 And they are more unsafe specifically because
3 they are aboriginal. Because of the colour of
4 their skin and where they come from.

5 I also work with women and children who are
6 fleeing violence and so statistically women are
7 more likely to be assaulted, abused, sexually
8 assaulted by someone they know. That's the
9 statistics. But when it comes to Aboriginal
10 women, we are just as likely to be abused,
11 assaulted and murdered by someone we don't know
12 as someone we do know. And so it heightens our
13 risk and it's because of -- like because we're
14 Aboriginal and where we come from. That's what
15 causes our history of residential school and such
16 that's what's causing us to be at higher risk.

17 And so with the missing and murdered
18 Aboriginal Women Inquiry, when they were calling
19 for it, you know, I thought about it and I went
20 to some of the talks and I asked, I think Amanda
21 this question one time, like, what is -- what's
22 going to happen with this inquiry that's going to
23 help me look at the woman across the table from
24 me and give her something to help her stay safer,
25 to make her hope brighter, to make children's
26 hopes brighter. I didn't get a very clear
27 answer, but that's something I'd like you to keep
28 in your mind is that at the end of the day I want
29 to be able to provide something to these women
30 that I sit across every day and that'll make them
31 safer. Thank you.

32 JEAN JACK: (Aboriginal language spoken) We have one
33 more Tlingit community member here. I wanted to
34 know if you'd like to share anything Yvonne. In
35 our way, in the law, we can't leave anyone out
36 who belongs, hey.

37 YVONNE JACK: I didn't know Barbara Jean as I was
38 quite a bit younger than all of these old guys
39 here. (Laughter) But I do remember the impact
40 when Barbara Jean did disappear, because of
41 course my mom is the sister of Auntie Gloria and
42 it was quite an impact when we talk about our
43 reserve. Our reserve is very small and so we
44 were all impacted equally about this tragedy.
45 And again we talk about there has been many
46 stories about the impacts of residential school
47 and the chaos that we were all surviving in. And

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 it was a real traumatic time because the -- on
2 our reserve there wasn't one family that wasn't
3 touched by that kind of physical violence. There
4 wasn't one family that didn't have -- that the
5 women weren't -- the women weren't held up, the
6 women were very abused by their partners.

7 And so when you look at those kinds of
8 things, again I need to say I'm much younger than
9 these guys, (laughter) and when we look at how
10 times have changed and we're getting a lot more
11 education around the different things in one
12 generation.

13 I want to share one story of when I was
14 young. I was sitting with my mom and we were
15 doing something together and she looked at me
16 right out of the blue and she said to me, "Have
17 you ever thought about getting married?" And I
18 said, "Yes, I have." And she said, "What kind of
19 a man would you like to marry?" And I said, "I
20 would like marry a Chinese man." And she said,
21 "A Chinese man, why a Chinese man?" And I said,
22 "Because they're short like me and I could really
23 fight back when he wants to beat me up."

24 (Laughter) You know, it's sounds kind of
25 comical, but at the same time when you think
26 about that when you're 10 years old, that really
27 tells the story of what it was like and what we
28 had to endure as a people. When we look at the
29 impacts of residential school. And how those
30 residential schools really bred anger, bitterness
31 and resentment. Not only with our parents, they
32 actually fostered that with their children,
33 because they know -- because they didn't know any
34 different.

35 When we looked at those kinds of things,
36 that's exactly what we're starting to come back
37 from. So when we talk about funding for healing,
38 I think it's important that we talk about not
39 only that, but as well the duration of that
40 funding. It's tragic when there's funding for a
41 year or two. Thanks, but no thanks. That
42 doesn't work.

43 In order to be able to create some healing I
44 think it's really important that looking forward
45 we really start to -- we've heard time and time
46 again I think, not only in this particular
47 inquiry, but also in others where they say

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 looking at our traditional ways and having the
2 ability to be able to bring some of those things
3 back.

4 I work, have always been a support person my
5 whole entire life and there's a common thread
6 here that continues where we just really need to
7 start looking and there's a lot of us that are
8 focusing a lot more on our well-being and that's
9 a real big plus.

10 When we look at most of the families in the
11 Yukon, most of us have been touched by
12 residential school and of course there's a lot of
13 turmoil that we still face today. So I just want
14 to say (aboriginal language spoken) for listening
15 to me.

16 JOAN JACK: All right. Well if there's nobody in the
17 family that has anything burning. Is there
18 anything burning, you're all okay. Burning,
19 done. (Laughter) Okay then I guess it's my
20 turn.

21 I don't want to stand with my back to you.
22 Let's switch spots.

23 So I know we've gone way over time. There's
24 so many things racing through my mind. I'm not
25 going to speak about Barbara Jean because I
26 didn't know here and you've heard from my family.

27 As a woman, as an indigenous woman, for me
28 it's really about power and place. You know, and
29 our power and our place, without power and place
30 and recognition and provision of the same, we're
31 not able to fulfill our responsibilities as who
32 we are in our communities.

33 I'm very grateful to my adopted family, you
34 know my husband's family for indulging, you know,
35 and allowing me to share this platform with them
36 and I've asked their permission and they're okay
37 with that. 'Cause I'm really concerned about
38 some of the larger issues. There's a saying, you
39 shouldn't judge a book by its cover and you never
40 know someone's story. You know, when you see a
41 strong resilient indigenous woman standing there,
42 it's more -- it's probably more appropriate that
43 you assume, unfortunately, if she maybe, I don't
44 know, 15 or older or what, that she's been raped.
45 You know, that she's been beaten. Like for me, I
46 can say I've survived all those things. You
47 know. I've survived rape on more than one

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 occasion. You know, I've survived domestic
2 abuse. I often joke and say, you know, Bryan is
3 my third husband, third time lucky girls.
4 (Laughing) Don't give up. You know, don't
5 settle and that's the hard part, that the
6 oppression has caused in all of us, men or women,
7 is that we tend to settle, you know, and we get
8 comfortable and we even get -- you can even get
9 comfortable with pain. You know, you hear people
10 say that in the books and stuff, but I've learned
11 that from Bryan, you know, watch and going out in
12 the bush so much with him and being in literal
13 pain that after a while when you're hiking
14 between Atlin and Dunakanaw (phonetic) it hurts
15 so much that you're just like okay with it. And
16 that's how we kind of get in life too. And in
17 some situations that's okay, but as a woman, it's
18 not okay and my job today and in this lifetime,
19 appears to be making space and holding that space
20 all the time.

21 I have daughters, you know we have
22 daughters, and I've raised many Tlingit daughters
23 as well. You know I brought Mia's regalia here
24 today, you know, because her grandmother is one
25 of my husband's sisters who is having a hard time
26 now. She's on the street somewhere right now.
27 Today here in Whitehorse. I'm sure. You know
28 the last time we saw her she was drinking and
29 having a tough, tough time. So I brought her
30 grandchild's regalia, you know for her.

31 I also wanted to say in general about the
32 Inquiry, you know, I did go on Facebook and do a
33 whole bunch of lives and I have been doing media
34 work and I will be doing more media work, that I
35 think it's really critical that people in the
36 positions of power and decision making be
37 indigenous. And I don't -- I didn't personally
38 have a difficult reaction with learning, just
39 now, today, that you were, you described yourself
40 as a settler to someone, I didn't realize that, I
41 thought you were Inuit, but I'm not Inuit so I'm
42 not going to say anything about that. And I
43 actually think at the Commissioner level, it's
44 really good to have Canada represented in the
45 fullness of, we're kind of missing a couple of
46 colours, but, you know, in the fullness of our
47 country, but within the organization I did a

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 video yesterday about how as a woman, I can only
2 speak for myself, and my husband talked about, or
3 somebody, one of you talked about how they keep
4 moving the bar. They keep moving the bar. Every
5 time we get educated the bar gets raised and
6 somehow we're just never good enough. Especially
7 as women. You know.

8 There's a big debate, I'm kind of off track
9 here a little bit, sorry, there's a big debate in
10 Manitoba right now about should women wear
11 headdresses, and you know that's one thing I love
12 about Tlingit culture, is that because it's
13 matrilineal and matiarcle (phonetic) to a degree,
14 the women's place as Jal Tun said, legally is
15 clear. The women are in charge. It's sad for
16 you if you don't have a Tlingit mom, like I'm not
17 a Tlingit mom. It's very sad for my children
18 that they don't have a Tlingit mom, because we're
19 fighting our way back into the position of the
20 government. Into the position of privilege that
21 you're born into when you Tlingit mom. So the
22 women are in charge in Tlingit country and that's
23 the legal part of it in terms of Tlingit law.

24 I just want to tell one little story about
25 Jackie Williams too and his son was here earlier
26 When I first got out of law school, Yvonne's dad
27 said to me, I want you to do two things, he said
28 I want you to throw out the Indian Act and I want
29 you to raise money for land planning and that was
30 in 1991. So in 1991, the Taku River Tlingit
31 First Nation had the foresight to be thinking
32 about getting rid of the Indian Act and getting
33 money for land planning before anyone even
34 thought of land planning. Sylvester and Jennie
35 Jack were doing that. And so I was doing the
36 research with all the Tlingit people and sitting
37 and listening and listening, and even I talk a
38 lot I'm super good at listening and Jackie
39 Williams was describing, I said, "Well what
40 about, like who talks for the house and who's in
41 charge?" and he said, "Oh well the men, the men
42 talk for the house." And I thought to myself,
43 huh, I said, "Well that's kind of no good." And
44 he said well that's the way it is. He said, "In
45 your house your husband talks for the house." I
46 said, "Oh okay." I said, "Well what about if
47 he's a bull shitter. What about if he just goes

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 and says whatever he wants. What about if he
2 doesn't talk to anybody in the house? What about
3 that?" And he looked at me and he said, "You'll
4 be sitting on the other side. You're the
5 opposite clan. Get up and leave," he said,
6 "we'll all know he's bull shitting." (Laughter)

7 That's a veto ladies. That's a veto. You
8 know in the court of Tlingit public opinion,
9 that's a veto, you know, so if you're sitting --
10 what he taught me was that if your sitting in
11 clan, like, Jal Tun used to always talk about
12 that to me too, that if we sit in our places and
13 we wear our regalia we are in the law, the laws
14 alive. So I would never sit beside my husband or
15 behind my husband as some people would imply, I
16 would sit across from my husband. Keeping him in
17 check. (Laughter)

18 And so things like that that are Indian
19 indigenous laws, even for us as Ojibway, and I'm
20 not here to talk about that, there's all kinds of
21 ways that we have place that may not look the
22 same as a white feminist, but they have as much
23 or more power and that's the work of the Inquiry
24 that I think really needs to be done.

25 Looking at the ways in which we as
26 indigenous women are to be treated so that we can
27 grow our girls up into those places and teach our
28 men what their roles are as well. I worry more
29 for the men than I do for the women, 'cause you
30 cannot take away a women's place as a mother,
31 ever. Whether she has children or not, she's
32 going to be somebodys auntie, you know, she's
33 going to be like -- our -- but with men, the
34 economic role of our men, like you heard some of
35 the testimony here, Bryan's their father, he used
36 to hunt for the White people in Atlin when there
37 was no extra foods. You know, so we used -- they
38 used to sell -- they used to sell the meat
39 because they didn't know how to hunt. They'd get
40 to Atlin they'd be hungry. They'd go see Henry
41 Tad Jack and say I'm hungry. He'd go kill a
42 moose, he'd get paid, he's buy a tin stove.
43 That's what was allowed. That's what happened
44 all over this country until our men weren't
45 needed anymore. Until the White men started
46 hunting for themselves or going Safeway or Extra
47 Foods. So the place, the economic role of our

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 man is something that the Commission should be
2 looking at strongly because as Helen said, we as
3 indigenous women are just as likely to be killed
4 by our own people, like all women she said, are
5 more likely to hurt by their own, somebody they
6 know, and so it's double for us. The racism my
7 husband talked about, we're likely to be killed
8 at home and we're likely to be killed when we
9 leave home.

10 So I don't mean to be rude, but I think the
11 Commission needs to focus on, like you've heard
12 from our family and our community, helping us
13 reconcile. The dead law, which is common law,
14 like this is the way I teach the difference
15 between the common law and indigenous law to
16 Elders. "Have you ever speeded." And they're
17 like, "Well yeah." "Okay, well you broke the
18 law. When you got to Whitehorse you should have
19 went right up to the court house and said, 'Shit
20 on the way from Atlin I was speeding and could
21 you give me a fine.'" You know. The White laws
22 dead unless you're caught and convicted. And
23 even then nothing might happen. It's a dead law.

24 Like my husband said it's not the law that's
25 going to help us. The law that's going to help
26 us what, how the Commission responded to our
27 family. "It was hard, I got a headache." But
28 the Commission adjusted to us not wanting to
29 affirm, 'cause I didn't just say that out of the
30 blue, you know. So the Commissions adjusting.
31 That's indigenous law at work. You adjust to the
32 situation. You respond respectfully to the
33 situation.

34 So I just want to recap too what Yvonne was
35 saying about the funding, you know. If Canada
36 really valued women in general, all women in
37 Canada are constantly begging for funding.
38 Begging. Like, what is that, you know. I call
39 bull shit on Canada, sorry. You know. And if
40 they're really concerned about us, maybe you
41 could give us indigenous women all the money we
42 need and we'll help the other women. (Laughing)
43 I'm sure they would welcome our help. But this
44 is really about the money.

45 You could just look, I'll -- I don't want to
46 take peoples time, but one more example about the
47 land, like you can see what Canada values as a

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 State and it values perpetuating the lie that
2 this is not indigenous land, 'cause we are of
3 more value within the Canadian State broken and
4 not able to go out on our land. We create jobs
5 for people in jail, we create jobs for social
6 workers, now they're probably going to fund a
7 whole bunch of women's shelters, which they
8 should, but, you know, we are so much more than
9 our pain and we are in this pain because of what
10 you're doing. If you'd stop doing what you're
11 doing we wouldn't be in this pain. But then you
12 wouldn't need all the jail guards, hey.

13 (Laughing)

14 So, the best thing we can each do, I think
15 as women, is sober up. Sober up. You know it's
16 hard. I'm an alcoholic drug addict too. Okay.
17 Hi, my names Joan. You know. I'm also a chip-
18 aholic. (Laugh) Sober up. Find the help you
19 need and like Greta said you might have to knock
20 and knock and knock and knock, 'cause I don't
21 have a lot of faith that this process is going to
22 produce anything, really. It's going -- and so
23 that's what I said to my family, well why should
24 we come? I'll just close with this. Why should
25 we come? I said because we'll heal ourselves.

26 (Laughing) If anything we can find
27 reconciliation within our family, you know,
28 because, you now, last week Greta and I were mad
29 at each other, but now we're not because we've
30 used this process to continue our family healing
31 and I would like to see that come out of this.
32 That there needs to be a conflict resolution
33 process developed by the Inquiry that could be
34 given to Helen in a pamphlet, a booklet, or
35 training, so that families could have that and
36 they could learn how to resolve conflict.
37 Because we don't know how to resolve conflict
38 because of colonization. Residential school, day
39 school, somebody hurts you, you go to court you
40 sue them if you've got money and the justice only
41 works for the rich in Canada. You know, if you
42 -- if you don't have money to hire a lawyer well
43 you're shit out of luck. Sorry. Sorry, it sucks
44 to be poor in Canada. So the justice system is
45 no hope. So if the Commission could find some
46 money to help us heal ourselves, we know what to
47 do. We know what to do and we know how to do it.

Greta Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Allan
Heather Allen, Jane Carlick

1 But that would require putting us in charge for
2 real, not just pretend.

3 Getting too cheeky I better stop. Okay.
4 We've gone way over. I think I should just sing
5 the last two stanzas and then -- oh but I don't
6 know, did you have any? I don't know.

7 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Chief Commissioner, Commissioner
8 Robinson, do you have any questions for this
9 family? No. Okay. Before you do the last two
10 Stanzas, I just want to apologize to your family.
11 I neglected to offer tobacco to the other
12 speakers, so I don't know if it's too late to do
13 it, but I just know that some people would like
14 to place their tobacco in the sacred fire. So if
15 that's okay. Yes.

16
17 (TOBACCO GIVEN TO FAMILY MEMBERS)

18
19 JOAN JACK: So you may have gathered that the big
20 thing I think that speaks to our resilience is
21 humour and teasing, so poor Karen has been teased
22 already about wanting, you know, she's paying a
23 referral fee to my sister-in-law's to go find
24 somebody. (Laughing) But I got to tease her a
25 little bit more. Yeah, she's gotta hit the bank
26 machine first she said, but I want tease her a
27 little bit more. She was so nervous she brought
28 her mother. (Laughing) Her mom is here and I'm
29 -- we're really happy and so I'm really happy her
30 mom's here and we're really happy your daughter
31 was with us. She is very good -- very good to
32 us. Your daughter treated us really good and I'm
33 happy about that so I wanted you to know that.
34 That's what we do when we're nervous, we bring
35 our mom. (Laughing)

36 Okay. Like I said in case someone just
37 tuned in, we own our songs, we own stuff. Don't
38 let anybody think you don't own anything. So in
39 case anybody in Clucupmoke (phonetic) is watching
40 this and sees me sing this and they're going to
41 be like, what the heck, you know, so even though
42 I don't sing it like Inclucupmoke people, like I
43 said, I'm Ojibway, but Kwankoshakley taught me
44 this song and I felt to sing the first two
45 stanzas, 'cause it's a travelling song and we
46 went on a journey together today and I'm just
47 going to sing the last two and again I'm so

Testimony shared by Gina Gill

1 thankful to you Kwanko (phonetic), I don't know
2 if you'll ever see this, but, yeah, she's a
3 powerful women in the Nikola (phonetic) Valley
4 who you should talk to too.

5
6 (Singing last two stanzas of Inclucupmoke
7 song)

8
9 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)
10 (PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED)

11
12 **Fourth hearing**

13 **Gina Gill (Survivor)with Karen Snowshoe (Commission**
14 **Counsel)**

15
16 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Ms. Snowshoe are you ready
17 to start?

18 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Yes.

19 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Good.

20 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you Chief Commissioner. Thank
21 you Commissioner Robinson. It is my honour to
22 introduce you today to Gina Gill.

23 Sitting in support of Gina is her daughter
24 McKenzie, McKenzie Gill and thank you for coming
25 in support of your mom McKenzie, I know it means
26 the world to her. And I understand that you have
27 a friend Kim, sorry, McKenzie's friend -- cousin.
28 Okay, McKenzie's cousin and your niece, Kim Gill
29 as well, thank you. And our Elder Roger is here
30 in support as well. Thank you.

31 So before I welcome you to share I
32 understand you've prepared some notes of things
33 that you would like to share with the Commission
34 today. Thank you. And I understand that you've
35 travelled all the way from Pelly Crossing, so
36 thank you for coming here today.

37 So before I ask you to begin, I'll just ask
38 you to maybe swear on the Bible. And that's --
39 you've chosen the Bible as the way to swear that
40 what you'll be telling today is the truth.

41 Gina Gill, do you swear that the testimony
42 you will provide today will be the truth the
43 whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help
44 you God.

45 GINA GILL: I do.

46
47 GINA GILL, sworn.

Testimony shared by Gina Gill

1
2 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you. Gina, I'd like to offer
3 you this tobacco in support of your testimony
4 today. And again it's a complete honour to have
5 worked with you and my heart is with you today.

6 So Gina I'll now invite you to address the
7 Commission, and I understand that you're very
8 passionate about the issues before us today with
9 missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.
10 And you're going to be sharing a bit about what
11 brought you to this [indiscernible].

12 GINA GILL: Zenu Southine, Gina Gill Uge (phonetic).
13 Good afternoon, my name is Gina Gill. I would
14 like to first take this opportunity to say thank
15 you for inviting me to be a part of this. This
16 process has been amazing. It's been inspiring
17 and also has given me strength. I would like to
18 acknowledge my family for their support and their
19 guidance that has made me a strong woman. So I
20 would just like to get started.

21 I'm so passionate about this work. Years
22 ago, before I was even born, my Auntie Sophie
23 went missing in the 70's and we still haven't
24 found her, so I would like to honour her. And I
25 lost a cousin at a very young age. She was
26 murdered in Pelly Crossing, Linda Joe. And I
27 have a lot of family members and friends, a lot
28 of women who can't speak up for themselves, so
29 I'm always advocating on behalf of women, human
30 rights, our duly laws. I'm always advocating.

31 So, and myself personally, I've been through
32 a lot. I was a victim of a home invasion a few
33 years ago, with my daughters were present at the
34 house. My ex came in and wasn't happy with my
35 new relationship and they brutally beat and
36 stomped on all of them and then continued to
37 fight me, broke my nose and my children had to
38 run across the street and call the RCMP. And the
39 whole process was horrifying. You -- you get
40 revictimized through the whole process. But
41 there's a lot of other issues that take place.
42 And as soon as a woman does speak up about any
43 violence or any wrongdoings, there's lies made up
44 about you. You're threatened. You learn the
45 family dynamics very quickly in a small
46 community, because it creates division. So and
47 I'm still going through that to this day.

1 I don't appreciate the lies being made up
2 about me. I come from a very strong traditional
3 family. I know my values. I hold it very close.
4 I'm a very honest person, so to have people going
5 and saying that I'm not is not okay with me.

6 There's a lot of reasons that women fall
7 into these situations. The residential school
8 affects that have taken place, they're
9 intergenerational. It affected me. My mother is
10 a residential school survivor and my father is
11 the son of a war veteran, so I grew up, you don't
12 talk about anything, you be tough, you don't be a
13 baby, you work hard, you keep your values and
14 take care of your children, you honour your
15 family, but I also see a lot of other people who
16 chose a different way. Fighting -- family
17 fighting over wrong. They don't want to help
18 good people. They see bad in the good people.
19 They only help their own family and praise their
20 own family when they are not doing right. They
21 -- a lot of people seem to have no compassion or
22 empathy and there's a lot of false pride. You
23 have to work to be proud of yourself. You can't
24 just claim that. You can't just put on a vest
25 and say I'm traditional. You have to walk the
26 talk and a lot of us we were taught not to speak.
27 You don't speak up. You don't talk about
28 anything, you just take it and you carry on.

29 So in my age, most of the women are second
30 or third generation survivors and that being
31 taught don't speak don't talk about anything.
32 And they grow up with low self-esteem. They have
33 trauma issues, they have low education, no
34 identity, no worth, no respect for themselves.
35 They're just lost. I was there. I was
36 absolutely lost. I didn't know who I was. I
37 grew up in Saskatchewan. I moved back in the
38 Yukon when I was 16. Quite a culture shock. But
39 now today I'm very proud of who I am and I want
40 other women to be proud of who they are too and
41 you can get through it. You can get through
42 anything. If I can do it, you can do it too.

43 So with having these sort of things growing
44 up it leads women to unhealthy relationships and
45 especially if a man has been catered to and not
46 taught right, it's hard to get away from them.
47 It's hard to realize they're the ones that are in

1 the wrong. They turn it around and say it's you.
2 Tell everybody they know that it's you, when it's
3 actually them. I found out that men do not like
4 to be told no and they do not like to be called
5 on their actions.

6 My family drilled in me the values to
7 respect all. And I do. But I'm judged. I'm
8 still judged for my past when I was very young.
9 I'm judged for helping others who are in need,
10 because they think I'm not doing good in my life
11 if I'm affiliating with these people. I'm trying
12 to help them. That's what I was taught. It
13 doesn't matter if it's a Minister or if it's
14 somebody on the streets, you treat them the same
15 way.

16 But it also led me to pick wrong men in my
17 life. Men who claim that they were good. They
18 come from good families. It doesn't mean they're
19 good. And you don't realize that until you're a
20 ways in and it's very hard to get out of that.

21 So we need to address the residential school
22 symptoms and the effects. We can't take it
23 anymore and we need to be very strict with it.
24 We need to address the negative behaviour and
25 attitudes. The unhealthy relationships
26 definitely needs a lot of work, because all
27 actions have accountability and responsibility
28 and we have to make it right. We need to look at
29 the Justice system and make serious changes
30 because the victims in the families get
31 revictimized by all the agencies that are
32 involved. And then we need to do a lot of work
33 on healing. Many options, many, many options
34 here. We must find a way that everyone can let
35 go of the pain, the anger and the trauma, whether
36 they think or not, there's a lot of healing that
37 needs to take place.

38 We all have a choice in how we chose to act
39 and behave and we're responsible for our own
40 actions, and I chose at a very young age that I
41 did not want to treat others bad, even when I was
42 mistreated. I was told you don't stoop to their
43 level and if I stoop to their level I'll never
44 teach them or show them how you are supposed to
45 act. And when I am mistreated I take it like a
46 champ. I swallow it. I still am very respectful
47 to that person despite what they go around and

Testimony shared by Gina Gill

1 say about you. But, I've given out a lot of
2 respect and I would like it back now. I give a
3 lot and I deserve that back. I don't deserve any
4 mistreatment. Any people making lies about me
5 that are not true, that's not right and they need
6 to be held accountable for that.

7 We need immediate action on all of these
8 areas and that's what's going to make the women
9 and everyone feel better immediately. Make us
10 feel stronger, make us feel like we're being
11 heard, inspire us and give us strength. It'll
12 open doors so that we can do more healing, 'cause
13 I know when I see adults, my family, and my
14 parents, when they're healing it heals us.
15 Hearing all of these stories, it heals me,
16 because I know they're healing and they're
17 letting it out and the education and the
18 knowledge so that we can let the next generations
19 know that that treatment is not okay and don't
20 ever take it. You need to stand up for yourself.
21 We all know in here what's right and what's
22 wrong. That was one of my biggest issues. I
23 didn't listen to my gut. Has such a big heart
24 that I would no, no, no, I would choose to see
25 the good in you, not the negative.

26 And in a relationship, that's not what you
27 can do. You can't help people who are not ready
28 to help themselves.

29 When we were going to court and the
30 sentencing just finished in March, it was a long
31 horrific process right from the get go. We were
32 treated like we were lying and like we were the
33 ones who did the home invasion. We got no
34 support. The Crown didn't help me very much. I
35 didn't know anything. I'm very educated, not in
36 a court system. I've never been in a court
37 system, I don't know how it goes and it does not
38 go well for a victim. It's all for the
39 offenders. The Crown didn't even let me know
40 when the sentencing was taking place and they
41 knew I was very passionate about it, that I
42 needed to be there, I wanted to be there, I
43 wanted it in our community so that our Elders
44 could hear and see everything. None of that
45 happened despite many people talking for me as
46 well, saying that this is what needed to take
47 place. So when I brought it up about the

1 sentencing, they said, "Oh well we, our Crown
2 support worker is vacant right now and we don't
3 have ..." So I started asking questions about
4 that. What's the turnaround rate for those Crown
5 support workers? And it's very high. Why is
6 that? We need to look into that, maybe speak to
7 the former Crown supports and ask them what are
8 some of the issues? Why couldn't they stay in
9 those positions?

10 So, and also the offender got all the
11 support. My First Nation Chief in Counsel made a
12 decision that they weren't going to help either
13 of us. The offender or the victim. Which
14 doesn't still not quite sit quite well with me.
15 I was the victim, he was found guilty and he
16 still got the support.

17 A Counsel member, Elder Counsel and worker
18 went ahead and still submitted a letter on the
19 offenders behalf. The Judge said that that
20 letter held a lot of weight for his sentencing
21 and all he pretty much got was a slap on the
22 hands. She used her title and her status to help
23 him. This was abuse of power in her authority of
24 her positions. This needs to be addressed.
25 There are a lot of unhealthy people out there
26 that claim to be healthy and we need to show them
27 and teach them that they're not and to stop
28 picking on the ones who are doing good.

29 All I've ever done is to seek righteousness.
30 My Elders all tell me I'm doing the right thing.
31 My family all tells me I'm doing the right thing.
32 But there are many people in positions of
33 authority and power that they don't -- you know,
34 they give you dirty looks, they're very
35 unprofessional. I'm way younger than them yet
36 I'm modelling what a good person is.

37 That's all I have.

38 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you Gina. Gina, earlier today,
39 oh in addition, I first met you over a month ago
40 here at KDCC and we had a good chance to chat
41 then, so I know a little bit about what you're
42 hoping to share with the Commissioners today and
43 again we met this morning and you asked me that
44 -- 'cause I was taking notes if there was
45 anything that you had forgotten, you asked that I
46 would be able to ask you questions, so is that
47 okay if I ask a few questions? Thank you.

Testimony shared by Gina Gill

1 Gina, what -- you've talked about a journey
2 of challenge and of being a survivor and I would
3 -- the way I view is that you're more than a
4 survivor. You appear to be a role model for your
5 daughter and you've spoken to me about that
6 before, can you maybe just speak to the
7 Commissioners a little bit about your
8 relationship with your daughter. How your
9 daughter has played into your healing path and
10 what your hopes would be for her?

11 GINA GILL: Years ago I spent a lot of time with my
12 grandmother. She guided me a lot and she drilled
13 into me God gave you a mouth and you intend to
14 use it, that's what you need to tell people. My
15 sisters and brothers used to say I was a little
16 tattletale and (laughs) -- and that's all right.
17 Now I'm advocating. I'm at my general assemblies
18 right at the forefront, I fight for the rights of
19 our people, I'm very into that. That's just in
20 me, compared to the very scared shy girl that I
21 used to be. I pushed through that because of my
22 grandma. My grandma passed away when I was in my
23 early 20s, she was 93 years old and soon after
24 that her son passed away, my uncle who was a very
25 good father figure to me. In the 90s there was
26 not so much support, there was no really
27 information on grieving, what that process is
28 like, so for a young lady to do it all on her own
29 was quite overwhelming. I ended up turning to
30 drugs and alcohol to help me cope. I didn't want
31 to cope, I didn't want to think of it. I never
32 had that kind of hurt ever in my life before and
33 it was hard.

34 So at a very young age I went to treatment.
35 I did three programs. I did that all on my own.
36 I didn't have a lot of support and, you know,
37 your families, sometimes they're -- they feel
38 ashamed or guilt or whatnot. I knew I needed to
39 do it for me. As I never wanted my children or
40 my nieces to ever go through what I went through,
41 to ever feel that lost feeling, to be searching
42 for their identity to know who they are. We
43 should know that. And we shouldn't have to fight
44 for that.

45 I am an auntie and the youngest of five.
46 And I'm an auntie of approximately, I think, 35.
47 I take my role very serious. My first niece is

Testimony shared by Gina Gill

1 only two years younger than me, but I'm very much
2 her auntie. And I knew they're all watching me.
3 And I know my aunties and uncles are very
4 traditional. They're very strict. And I know
5 they are watching me. And also my ancestors,
6 that I need to make them proud. So I dedicated
7 my life to that. I'm not perfect. I don't think
8 anyone is. But I try.

9 If anything I would internalize the pain. I
10 would never push it onto somebody and that's why
11 most of the women go down the road of alcohol and
12 drugs, is because they are too nice and kind to
13 put it onto someone else, they take it in.

14 So I did a lot of work. It's a healing
15 journey. It's not something that I'll ever get
16 over, it's always -- I'm always learning, I'm
17 always growing, but for any women out there, it
18 doesn't matter where you are in your life. If
19 you're down on the ground, you can get back up
20 and you can do it. I was down there many times,
21 not just once. And I got through every time. I
22 fought through every time. Now, it's not hard at
23 all. It's just my way of life and it's very
24 easy.

25 I have two young daughters and my niece Kim.
26 They're my inspiration, they keep me going. I
27 try to make the best choices in life and show
28 them, you have to do what's right. Even if they
29 do wrong I'm the first one to call them on it.
30 I'm not one of those families or people who, "No,
31 not my kids, not my family," 'cause that's not
32 going to help them. That's going to baby them.
33 They're going to be spoilt. Take life for
34 granted and that's not what we're supposed to --
35 we're supposed to be hard working respectful
36 loving people. So that's what I've tried to show
37 them their whole lives is to be that. So I try
38 to model it as much as I can help everybody,
39 anybody and that's what heals me as well. Thank
40 you.

41 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you Gina. When you first
42 started speaking about why you're so passionate
43 about this work and wanting to come before the
44 Commission, you were mentioning that there's so
45 many women who are also survivors of violence,
46 who are afraid to speak up, what message do you
47 have for those women, other women survivors, our

Testimony shared by Gina Gill

1 indigenou women and girls who've survived?
2 GINA GILL: I guess the message I have for them is,
3 like I said, I was the most shy scared girl ever,
4 but I pushed through. I dug deep. Prayers,
5 family, go to anybody who will support you, who
6 will believe in you and stick with them and
7 that's how you're going to get through it. When
8 we were at the pre-inquiry, there was several
9 women, I was very flattered, I was very shocked,
10 saying, "You need to speak, you need to. You
11 need to talk for us. We can't." A lot of them
12 were fearful that, you know, the same things were
13 going to happen that I was talking about. You're
14 going to get shunned for calling people on their
15 wrong. You're going to get shunned for doing
16 what's right because a lot of people aren't there
17 yet. It doesn't matter, keep doing it.
18 I walk into my community, into my band
19 office and it's not very welcoming sometimes.
20 There's some very negative people there and still
21 yet, I go in, I hold my head high, I work with
22 them, very respectful and professional to them
23 and that's where I say I want that back now.
24 I've dished it out all these years, I want that
25 back. They do not have the right to be
26 unprofessional and the status's and the titles
27 that they hold, it's sending a wrong message to
28 these children, to the next generations. The
29 youth, I work a lot with the youth, and they ask
30 me, "How come that lady's so mean. How come
31 she's -- is she allowed to say that or act like
32 that." They know it. They know what's right and
33 what's wrong, but yet they see these people every
34 day saying they're good people, when we watch
35 their actions and we know. They got some work to
36 do. But how do you tell somebody that that won't
37 see it. That's where we need a lot of help. A
38 lot of those barriers.
39 There's the division that happens in small
40 communities is amazing. It's profound. So I can
41 see why a lot of women don't want to speak up.
42 They don't want more trouble. That's where I was
43 and I had a close cousin, like my sister, came up
44 to me and said, "You can't let this go. You have
45 to charge them. You have to go through it." And
46 I was like, uh, I don't want more trouble I just
47 want it to go away. It's going to cause more

1 friction. It's going to cause a family feud.
2 It's going to cause this. No, those kind of
3 actions, they break your spirit. They're
4 breaking your spirit and don't ever allow that.
5 You've come so far. You're -- they said you're a
6 victim. "What, I'm not a victim." (Laughs)
7 That's how modest I am, how strong I am, I don't
8 ask for help I just go and do it. I find out how
9 to do it on my own usually. As you can see
10 there's not a lot of support, it's because I
11 didn't ask. I didn't ask anybody to come and be
12 with me, to come and sit with me, because that's
13 not the type of person I am. Not saying that's
14 very good all the time, but it's how -- it's how
15 I am and it's helped me through.

16 There's a lot of fear out there though.
17 There's a lot of violence. People are scared to
18 stand up to it. Fear of retribution. Of anymore
19 actions taking place and I thought after all the
20 work I've done, everything I stand up for, all my
21 families beliefs and values, I got to do it, so
22 we did it.

23 Not knowing how the court system works, I
24 didn't want my children to be re-victimized.
25 That was my biggest issue why I didn't want to go
26 ahead with charges. They were so young at the
27 time. They're 12 and 14 now. That's still young
28 for them to witness an event like that that I
29 protected them from their whole entire life.
30 That was hard. Darn rights that broke my spirit.
31 I worked their whole lives so that they would
32 never go through what I went through, what my mom
33 went through, what my other family members went
34 through. I've worked so hard to break those
35 cycles. But men are very tricky. They tell you
36 what you want. Tell you when -- when they need,
37 at the most critical time they say the perfect
38 things, make you believe they're a good person,
39 make you believe they've changed, make you
40 believe they will change more, that -- and then
41 you find out into it you're totally wrong.
42 That's a hard hit to take, but again I'm not the
43 type to pity myself, feel sorry for myself, so I
44 choose to uses all of these things that have
45 happened in my life for strength. I take out the
46 negative parts and I just walk with the good.

47 All these bad relationships made me strong.

1 Now, I wouldn't -- I'm not standing for that ever
2 again in my life and no other woman should.
3 They're worth more than that. We deserve more
4 than that and that's where we need to go. If we
5 all stand together, we're even stronger. It's
6 hard to stand alone. It's lonely. It's a lonely
7 life, but that's all right, it's worth it.

8 But the more of us that stand together and
9 stand up to the negatively and the dysfunction
10 and all of these residential school affects,
11 we'll see changes. I already see changes. I see
12 changes in the women. They look happier,
13 healthier. They're glowing. For myself as well,
14 I've come a long way in the past six months. I
15 had a few close family members pass away, took
16 everything out of me. That was a whole different
17 area of life. Again you take it as a lesson, you
18 grow from it and you use it for strength. Don't
19 use it that this happened to me and that
20 happened. We can't take it back. You don't want
21 to live like that. Be happy. Do things for you
22 spirit that make you strong, that make everybody
23 else strong. And that's how I got through it.

24 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you.

25 Chief Commissioner, Commissioner Robinson,
26 Gina's indicated that her testimony is complete
27 now and she's open to questions.

28 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: I have a couple of
29 questions but first I want to say thank you very
30 much for inspiring everyone here with your
31 courage.

32 You said you went to treatment, was there
33 one thing that turned the world enough for you to
34 go for treatment? One thing that did it for you?

35 GINA GILL: Yes. I was in a bad relationship. It
36 was not going very well. Still to this day that
37 man is making lies about me, talking about me,
38 doesn't want to pay child support because he says
39 it's for my addictions. Well I'm not there
40 anymore. We had a domestic violence situation.
41 I said no. I'm not doing this. That was in
42 2004, so I took me and my little children, they
43 were very small, McKenzie was only one, Madison
44 was nine months, or about, no she's 15 months,
45 Madison was nine months, and I thought, "No."
46 And McKenzie looked at me and said, "It's nokay
47 mommy, Kenzie's here." And that was my turning

1 point. "No, I am you mom, I should be telling
2 you those things."

3 I vowed I would never -- I would break these
4 cycles and then that happened. So we carried on,
5 came into Whitehorse, we went to the women's
6 shelter until I could get my house. We were
7 waiting for it, it was still being built. So I
8 stayed there for a while and again of course, the
9 man is like, "I'm doing this, I'm counselling,
10 I'm doing everything." Wasn't the case. My mom
11 has never gotten involved in my relationships and
12 that day she picked us up, it was right before
13 Christmas, and she said, "Baby, I need to tell
14 you something." I said, "Yeah, what's that mom?"
15 "That man is not being very good to you. He's
16 not doing the things he's saying. He's partying
17 in your house. He has not so good women in your
18 house." "Okay." She turned around, my sister
19 turned around, "Do you want to stop? Are you
20 okay?" "No, I'm good." And they looked at me,
21 "Are you sure?" I prepared myself for this,
22 because I knew in here he was lying. And for the
23 first time in my life it's like, "No, not going
24 to do that." Hard choice. Break up my family.
25 Make the choice to do that. And I chose I'd
26 rather be a single mom than to ever endure
27 anything like that, or for my children to see. I
28 didn't want them to see their father being like
29 that. So that was the major turning point for
30 me.

31 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you so much for sharing
32 with us.

33 You said you -- I just need a little bit of
34 clarification, you said you grew up and spent
35 some time in Saskatchewan, can you -- like how
36 long were you there or here? I just wasn't too
37 sure.

38 GINA GILL: I was born here in Whitehorse. My
39 mother's from Selkirk First Nation in Pelly
40 Crossing and my father is from Saskatchewan. So,
41 when I was two we relocated back to Saskatchewan,
42 lived there for 14 years and then we moved up
43 here and -- when I was 16. That's why I was
44 saying quite the culture shock. I grew up in a
45 White society, in a White community. I didn't
46 see the Natives very much there, nor did I want
47 to. I was -- the Native people that we seen were

1 very down and out. I was very young and I didn't
2 understand why they were like that or what had
3 happened or the restrictions that were made on
4 them and I guess I judged my own people. It's
5 like that doesn't feel like something to be proud
6 of. It doesn't look like something to be proud
7 of, so I always had that shame in me, that I
8 didn't want to be First Nation.

9 Me and my brother were the youngest, so the
10 others had already moved on. And we lived a
11 rough life in that racism. We were the only two
12 native children in the whole community. There
13 was a lot of getting picked on.

14 So when we moved back here it was even
15 scarier. I wanted to know who I was. I could
16 feel it. I yearned for it. I yearned for the
17 drums. My mom brought us back all the time. We
18 came back for summers -- visits. Thank God that
19 my family is so traditional that I got to see the
20 fish camps and the moose skins and all of the
21 values that are drilled into you. And I even
22 remember as soon as we would come close to the
23 Yukon or get to the Yukon, I could recall smells,
24 and I would just cry. And I was like, "Wow," I
25 remember the smells and yearn for it my whole
26 life. It took me a few years to get over feeling
27 emotional every time I smelt wood smoke. It's
28 one of my fondest memories. I love that smell.
29 Still to this day I only use wood stove, I won't
30 use a furnace. It's very comforting, it's very
31 warm. We don't have wood stoves in Saskatchewan,
32 so ...

33 Very -- it's very interesting that, you
34 know, just the beat of the drum, it took me a few
35 years to not cry when I heard a drum. So to be
36 -- when I was 16, I jumped right in. I wanted to
37 learn everything and anything about my people.
38 About my ways. We had just signed on self-
39 government, so I was very curious. I wanted to
40 know what that was all about and we had a very
41 good First Nation that wanted to teach us. So we
42 had youth programs that we had -- we were trained
43 on how to take care of the books, how to take
44 care of everything. We applied for renovations.
45 We picked up our youth centre. We fixed it us
46 and then we had to run it. So once they seen
47 that leadership they, you know, asked some of us,

Testimony shared by Gina Gill

1 "Would you like to come into the office, I think
2 we could really use you guys." So they started
3 teaching us about the agreements and negotiations
4 and things like that and I was just, I don't
5 know, I love that. Maybe it's because I just
6 wanted to learn everything and anything about my
7 people. So that's what I've been dedicating my
8 live to and that's what helps me and gives me
9 strength. Going back to the land. Practicing
10 our ways, our culture, trying to speak our
11 languages. That will also give the women
12 strength.

13 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you. Thank you very
14 much and to your daughter and your niece. Thank
15 you.

16 KAREN SNOWSHOE: I just have one tiny question. You
17 mentioned that you and your brother felt racism
18 and you were the only two Native kids when you
19 were in Saskatchewan. Which community were you
20 in?

21 GINA GILL: We lived in Shellbrook, Saskatchewan,
22 that's about 20 minutes from Prince Albert.

23 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you Gina and thank you McKenzie
24 and thank you Kim. Gina is there anything maybe
25 that's come to mind that -- anything else that
26 you'd like to say to the Commissioners.

27 GINA GILL: Again I would just like to thank this
28 process and I'm only looking forward to the
29 future. I know it's going to be even bigger and
30 brighter. Going to give a lot of hope and
31 strength and I know it's going to give courage to
32 more women. There is many women that are in this
33 situation. Many women that are being
34 demoralized, degraded. Especially when they go
35 to these agencies for help. That needs to
36 change, because it's stopping them. If we have
37 an unhealthy worker, nobody's going to go to
38 them. They don't want to go and be mistreated or
39 looked down on. Especially when that person
40 doesn't have the right to do that. It defeats
41 the purpose. We need to have healthy workers in
42 these fields of work. Otherwise nobody's going
43 to come forward. But like I said, it doesn't
44 matter where you are in your life, you can get
45 out of it. Dig deep and you'll get it. Do your
46 prayers, do your homework and do the work.

47 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you Gina. (Aboriginal language

Testimony of Gina Gill

1 spoken)

2 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: We're very grateful that
3 the three of you came today and we have small
4 gifts for you. [Indiscernible] seed packages. I
5 don't need to tell you about the rules of
6 reciprocity, I'm sure you know. But seeds are
7 important because they start new life, so thank
8 you.

9 We'll take a 15 minute break.

10
11
12 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)

13 (PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED)

14
15 **Fifth hearing**

16 **William Carlick (Family of Angel Carlick and Wendy**
17 **Carlick with Karen Snowshoe (Commission Counsel)**

18
19 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Ms. Snowshoe are you
20 ready?

21 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Chief Commissioner, Commissioner
22 Robinson, it is my honour to introduce you to
23 William Carlick. William will be addressing the
24 Commission today and William has brought a number
25 of family members and supports that I will
26 introduce. Next to William is his son, grandson,
27 sorry, Terrence Carlick. Kim Carlick is seated
28 behind William and Kim is the spouse of William.
29 Next to Kim is Mr. Carlick's niece, daughter,
30 sorry, daughter, Melissa Carlick and support
31 person Kim Boyd, is that correct? Pam, okay.
32 Pam Boyd. I'm batting, what's that expression
33 when you're batting -- it's a long day, I'm
34 sorry.

35 Seated directly behind me is Chief Bill,
36 Chief Doris Bill of Kwanlin Dun, welcome Chief
37 Bill and seated next to Chief Doris Bill is the
38 Minister -- Minister of the Yukon Directorate,
39 Jeanie Dendys. And I understand there are also
40 three support people behind, who are paddling as
41 in canoe, paddling friends of Melissa. Welcome.
42 Thank you.

43 And William, I understand that you have
44 requested to affirm today with the eagle feather.
45 Okay.

46 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Good afternoon William, welcome. Do
47 you solemnly affirm tnat the evidence you will

Testimony of William Carlick

1 give this afternoon will be the truth, the whole
2 truth and nothing but the truth.

3 WILLIAM CARLICK: Yes. I do.

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BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay, thank you.

8

KAREN SNOWSHOE: William, thank you for being here.

9

It's an honour. It's a real honour to know you
and I will now invite you to speak.

10

11

I offer you this tobacco as a very respected
Elder, somebody who's been guiding our process
and ceremony. I want to thank you for that and
whenever you're ready I invite you to address the
Commission.

12

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14

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16 WILLIAM CARLICK: Thank you for the introduction. I
17 am so happy to be here. It is all meant to be.

18

When the Commission came originally with the
Minister I want to participate because I felt a
commitment on part of my family, my sister and my
niece, our niece and sister-in-law, daughter,
granddaughter, that someone need to come and tell
their story.

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And the reason I felt committed was because
my mother. She's made the journey, just recently.
I remember sitting with her and listening to her
and the hopelessness in her voice is what made me
commit to this process. I love my mom. I pray
for the day I get to see her, but I'm okay.
These tears are tears of happiness. They're
tears of happiness and I don't need nobody to
feel sad for me, because for me to be here I'm
happy. I show my happiness through tears. We
need to cry more, because crying is healing.
Nobody has the -- has the ability to say who
could cry and who cannot cry.

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This morning I was so honoured to wake up
and welcome a new day. We take it for granted
that every day's going to be there for our self,
because we considered tomorrow. When I was so
honoured to see a new day, I get to see my
grandson, my wife, my daughter and all of you.

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When they ask me to say the prayer this
morning, I was so honoured because every time I
say the prayer it brings tears to my eyes, tears
of joy, but also tears because I'm so pitiful
when I acknowledge the Creator for all the gifts

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47

Testimony of William Carlick

1 he's given me. When I left here I was in tears
2 because I was so honoured, because I felt the
3 Creator close to me and all the ancestors close
4 to me. When they asked me to say the prayer, our
5 teachings is -- there's no right or wrong way to
6 say a prayer. So I said the prayer that I was
7 meant to say, but when I started that prayer out
8 I reminded everybody, like I will remind you
9 right now, we have this thing in our mind that we
10 call thinking. It's always working overtime.
11 And I said, first time thing I told everybody
12 when I stood there with this mic I said, "Turn
13 that off, that thing go rambling in your mind,
14 you need to turn it off," because only when we
15 turn it off we can start hearing all the things
16 we need to hear. So I said the prayer the way I
17 was supposed to say it. And when I left, my
18 belief and understanding was all the missing and
19 murdered and those that are held against their
20 will that are hearing and able to hear, said a
21 prayer for everyone. I was their chance to say
22 it and I felt good about it when I left here,
23 because to me I did what I had to do.

24 We always need acknowledgment in this world
25 when we travel. We always -- when somebody says
26 something you always need acknowledgement and
27 when you're on this path of the spiritual belief,
28 sometimes you don't get that acknowledgement.
29 Maybe you never will. But for me I been blessed
30 when I left here going back to where I was going
31 ahead, a little bird came along and he said, "I
32 am with you." He said that four times.

33 That's what we need to go back to,
34 communicating with not only those around us, but
35 communicating with all our helpers, the ones we
36 see and the ones we don't see, because going
37 forward we need more of that.

38 My sister and my wife's sister-in-law, my
39 daughter's auntie, when she was going to have
40 little Angel, nobody knew she was going to have
41 little Angel, she hid it from us all including my
42 mother. My mother, she was up in age, so she
43 seen a lot, she knows a lot and she's done a lot
44 and she's been through a lot, and she fooled mom
45 too. And one day, when it came time to have
46 little Angel come to this physical world, then
47 she finally found that out and was just as

Testimony of William Carlick

1 surprised as all the rest of us. But little
2 Angel was very dear to her. We used to go down
3 and visit them with my family just to be with
4 them all the time. We watched them grow up. And
5 we -- that's how we grew up as family. That's
6 how the grandson's here because we always stayed
7 connected in spite of all the things that are in
8 front of us we stayed connected.

9 But we never choose how we're going to leave
10 this world, and they accept it and we did that,
11 we accepted many things going forward including
12 what happened to our loved ones. We have no
13 control over what -- what situation and how they
14 live. It's not for me to ask why they happen.
15 Maybe I'll never get an answer for anyone of
16 that, but at the end of the day there's a reason
17 the Creator and all the ancestors are putting us
18 through this, teachings and all of that.

19 But I feel good to be here to share the
20 stories that we do have to share because our
21 families bigger than what we have here. Our two
22 older sisters, have three younger brothers,
23 they're grieving our mother's loss, now they're
24 grieving our sisters loss.

25 And to find that energy to sit before you in
26 a meaningful way for me would be impossible if it
27 wasn't for this, and everything it represents,
28 it's not only an eagle feather, it's a way of
29 life.

30 I can only tell my story before I can tell
31 others story. My sister was born in the early
32 60s. Right now, the sacred fire, if you ever
33 been there you can see it's a tent with a
34 beautiful spruce bow floor and a little wood
35 stove in the corner. It was 60 below when we
36 lived in that place we call Wood Camp outside of
37 Cassiar, B.C. in the early 60s. My dad was a
38 woodcutter. Mom was expecting Wendy. We didn't
39 have vehicles like we have today, you can push
40 the remote start and off you go. We had a
41 neighbour that had an old truck that was at the
42 end of its usefulness. Him and my dad built a
43 big campfire right underneath it and they spend a
44 good part of the day trying to get that old truck
45 to go, but the ancestors had things and plans for
46 all of us and they allowed that old truck to
47 start up and my mother got into it in the 60

Testimony of William Carlick

1 below weather, made the journey for 15 miles
2 before it finally decided to give up and she was
3 able to get a ride at the maintenance camp and
4 travel to Cassiar and that's where Wendy was
5 born, just before New Year's. And we always joke
6 as a family, including my mother that Wendy had
7 the shortest birthday. We usually spend a whole
8 day on our birthday, but she had less, couple of
9 hours on her birthday before the day was out.

10 But I never really got to know my sisters.
11 Because when I was six years old they took me to
12 a place called Lower Post Indian Residential
13 School. I didn't know what it was. Six years
14 old. I remember my kids when they were six years
15 old. It's just -- you get into survival mode at
16 a very early age. I survived. And my brothers
17 came and joined me and we survived. My sisters
18 were through a couple of doors, they're only less
19 than a 100 feet away, but they might as well be
20 on the moon. Never saw them very often, never
21 had any relationship as a family with them and
22 they were going through the same thing I was
23 going through. So when we left residential
24 school we still didn't have that connection as a
25 family anymore.

26 And then when I went home, we used to live
27 outside of Cassiar, where right now in a place we
28 call Whiskey Flats. If you look at all the
29 history of this place we're sitting on right now,
30 you'd see some of the houses that were -- you
31 won't find in the subdivision that we find in
32 Whitehorse anymore. We had probably the lower
33 end of what was here, but we call it home because
34 there was love there. Even though it didn't last
35 very long.

36 We knew hunger as a family because my dad,
37 he loved to go up to the bar and spend all his
38 money. We knew violence because when he came
39 from the bar, violence was always within that
40 little place that we call home. But somehow we
41 came through all of that, and I'm still here for
42 60 years old. And I don't say that to have
43 anyone anywhere feeling sorry for me. That's not
44 what I'm telling you about.

45 What I'm trying to convey to you is that
46 what I was part of and what's happening to all
47 our people is part of a bigger picture. And one

Testimony of William Carlick

1 word that comes to me always is: Where do you
2 point? What direction do you point? Where do
3 you find it to find out why we're at where we're
4 at today and why we're still heading in that
5 direction where our young ones are getting
6 addicted and taking their lives, and why
7 everything to other people seems so hopeless?

8 One of the things that residential school
9 offered me and many others was religion. Every
10 Sunday they'd allow us to dress in our best, and
11 it was my favourite day only because we get to
12 eat cereal out of a box, and I looked forward to
13 that after going through the ritual of the
14 religion. And the ones that were our parents at
15 those places were priests and nuns.

16 And what I look and work towards today as I
17 sit before you, and still working on it, is the
18 ultimate teaching: kindness and compassion. And
19 when I look back on that as a six-year-old, wow.
20 That was so far away.

21 When I left high school and graduated -- I
22 guess I graduated back in 1974, I graduated from
23 F.H. Collins. I had my picture up on the wall.
24 My daughter and my wife used to go there and have
25 a good chuckle about that hippy's picture on the
26 wall. And I remember, me and my brother, we used
27 to go out and we were carefree because we were
28 free. We graduated. We were not in residential
29 school any more. No supervisor was there to tell
30 me what to do.

31 One thing I shared with my brother at that
32 time was, you know, I told him, "If that's
33 religion, I don't want to believe anything." And
34 I didn't until I met my wife and she showed me
35 how to be a parent to my children. I met a
36 teacher who carried the sacred ways and told me,
37 "Not having a belief is not a good thing to be."
38 And then I found out there was a good way. It
39 was always there with our ancestors before
40 colonialism. Our ancestors held onto it tight
41 because they had to because it was survival.
42 They believed in our spiritual ways.

43 Right to this very day I see that there's
44 still a struggle to acknowledge that the
45 spiritual way is, for no other better word, a
46 good way. The spiritual way that I follow today
47 is -- it's not a religion. It's a way of life.

Testimony of William Carlick

1 The more I go to ceremonies, the more I become
2 aware. I realize that the Creator has laws,
3 unwritten laws. Now I know what I need to do
4 because those laws are not negotiable.

5 Then I also learned that there's natural
6 law. When you look at the animal world, they
7 teach you more than we realize. They're given
8 instructions and they follow their instructions
9 exactly the way they're supposed to do it. One
10 of their instructions right now -- and the other
11 day when we went back home to check on our home
12 fire, and coming back out I watched a mother
13 moose and a newborn calf just barely walking,
14 standing there looking at us and acknowledging
15 that we're on a good journey together. What
16 he's doing now from the natural law is he's
17 teaching his young one. All the natural world,
18 animals teach their young ones. All the mothers
19 that are here teach their young ones.

20 So going forward, I always hope and work
21 towards making our spiritual practice available
22 to all that want to participate. Working at the
23 sacred fire is such a gift. You see so much, you
24 hear so much, and you meet those that you need to
25 meet. I'm so grateful for them and for that
26 because they should be here also talking because
27 they have so much to share. So much. It's just
28 incredible.

29 I'm so grateful for the atua (phonetic), I
30 call them, the panel members that sit before us,
31 that came before in a circle, that they hear what
32 I wanted to say, that we need to allow our
33 spiritual ways and practice to be a big part of
34 what we're doing here today, because if I didn't
35 have that, I would sit here and tell you that
36 everything we're dealing with is so impossible on
37 so many levels. But when I look at the Creator
38 and what he's given us and the ancestors that are
39 here to help us, the thing that they tell us is
40 nothing's impossible.

41 And going forward, I pray and continue to
42 pray that this process -- like it's been said,
43 it's a good one. It will come to be. It will do
44 what it's supposed to do because it has our
45 ancestors helping us. Whatever direction it
46 takes, they're going to be there. We've opened
47 up that door through ceremony to make it happen.

Testimony of William Carlick

1 And it only start because we believe in it, and
2 now it's opened many doors. Gunis jeesh
3 (phonetic).

4 Our niece Wendy, what happened to her, it'll
5 come out through this process, through ceremony.
6 Ceremony will bring it all out. Whoever's behind
7 this has no place to hide. There's no place to
8 hide. They know who they are. The ancestors
9 know who they are. We'll just have to keep going
10 in hearing everybody and their stories.

11 I'm just so grateful to be here in light of
12 all the things that I've experienced in my over
13 60 years of travelling on this path. I'm so
14 grateful that the Creator has allowed me to be
15 here to see my grandson, to share the ceremony
16 with him. His dad left us, and he came to us
17 after his dad left as a gift from the Creator
18 because we were on this path, and he said, "We
19 know you're hurting. We know you're doing work.
20 So here's what we're going to do for you. We'll
21 give you a grandson." Gunis jeesh. We all have
22 grandchildren. They're so dear to us. We all
23 have family. They're so dear to us.

24 I'm not perfect. Never will be perfect.
25 The Creator never created anybody perfect.
26 That's why nobody has the ability to judge
27 anybody. But moving forward, my goal in life,
28 whatever day that I have left, is I still work on
29 the one thing: kindness and compassion, the
30 ultimate goal. We all need to visit that
31 kindness and compassion. If we all had kindness
32 and compassion, we wouldn't be here today. We're
33 all one big family. We're all in it together
34 now, but we're all in it with ceremony. So we're
35 all in it with that sacred circle, the sacred
36 circle of life. I'm so grateful for this
37 opportunity to speak on behalf of all my loved
38 ones with me and all the ones that are making the
39 journey now. And we have allowed them to take
40 that journey that they need to take. And we
41 always say, "We'll see you again." Gunis jeesh.

42 KAREN SHOWSHOE: Thank you. Thank you. Number four,
43 thank you. Thank you. Thank you, William.
44 Mussi.

45 I just want to acknowledge, William, your
46 strength and courage. I first met you -- I
47 shouldn't say I first met you. But when you

Testimony of William Carlick

1 first came to speak to me about participating in
2 the Inquiry, it was just a few weeks ago, and I
3 was so honoured that you had come to me. And
4 part of me was in disbelief that you are able to
5 come here to KDCC and an speak with me because at
6 that time I had understood -- what you had told
7 me is that -- I think it had only been a few
8 days, not even a week, since your sister's body
9 was found at Kwanlin Dün. And I understand that
10 you won't be speaking too much about that as it's
11 an active investigation. I understand that it's
12 been -- has it been ruled a homicide?

13 WILLIAM CARLICK: Pardon me?

14 KAREN SHOWSHOE: Do they know -- was it a homicide?

15 WILLIAM CARLICK: My understanding to this point, from
16 what has been shared by the RCMP, is the
17 statement -- it's always the same statement.
18 It's still under investigation.

19 KAREN SHOWSHOE: Okay.

20 WILLIAM CARLICK: And there's really nothing that has
21 come beyond that.

22 KAREN SHOWSHOE: Okay. Thank you. I just wanted to
23 clarify. So your sister passed, and I understand
24 that was a huge loss. That was Wendy Carlick.
25 And she was the mother of Little Angel, and
26 Little Angel was your niece. And so when you and
27 I met, you had spoken to me about Little Angel, a
28 little bit about her life, and you told me what
29 happened to her. And then you also talked about
30 some systemic issues in terms of what is making
31 our women vulnerable, Indigenous women and girls,
32 vulnerable to violence. Do you mind speaking to
33 the Commissioners just a little bit about how we
34 can honour Little Angel's life, speaking to them
35 a little bit about her life, what happened to
36 her, and maybe some of the issues that led her to
37 be vulnerable to violence?

38 WILLIAM CARLICK: I only look at it because there's so
39 much of what we can point a finger at in today's
40 society that is part and parcel of it all. You
41 have to go way back, probably 500 years ago,
42 prior to 500 years ago. You can use your
43 imagination and seek that understanding that our
44 ancestors back then had a spiritual belief system
45 that they clung to as a survival responsibility.
46 But also they had those laws that were unwritten
47 laws that they followed, that today we kind of

Testimony of William Carlick

1 totally ignore but are still valid.

2 But for 500 years, our people, the
3 Indigenous people of Turtle Island, have gone
4 through many, many, many challenges. The first
5 and foremost was -- the first germ warfare ever
6 was launched against our people. And I'm not
7 saying that because I want anybody to feel bad
8 about it, but it's part of a continuation that I
9 see that's still happening today. It's part of
10 the continuation of a society that puts money and
11 the power that they supposedly get from money as
12 a priority over people's lives. And we need to
13 look at how all of that factors into our people
14 now being nothing more than a commodity in
15 today's system where people are making a
16 livelihood off that. I don't say that in
17 criticism, but I say that because statistically
18 all you have to do is look at everything in the
19 system points in that direction. It's still a
20 continuation of that.

21 How do we stop that? Our Little Angel, she
22 was doing everything she could to be independent,
23 to seek the freedom that she deserved, and to
24 overcome all the challenges that came before her.
25 And she did that. She graduated from a broken
26 home. Because when they came to the city, their
27 home fell apart. And his little brother Alex, we
28 call him Ethan, he's still here with us. He has
29 a lot to say because he's paid probably the
30 biggest price. Like everyone else here, they all
31 paid the price.

32 But that price need not be squandered by the
33 way we go forward and make those changes that
34 need to be made. And for me, those changes start
35 with accepting our spiritual ways as a realistic
36 -- to support. I'll give you an example, and I
37 shared it with the panel, that we have healers
38 and teachers that are coming to look after the
39 sacred fire, because we need them there to make
40 sure that it's effective, it's safe, and that
41 everybody's taken care of in a good way.

42 But yet, when it comes to them being
43 compensated in the western way, they don't have a
44 degree. They don't have a doctor. I worked for
45 the City of Whitehorse for 28 years, elevated
46 myself to being a supervisor running a crew of
47 eight professionals, and they paid me 50 dollars

Testimony of William Carlick

1 an hour. And I'm looking at somebody like that
2 that has so much responsibility that you can't
3 even put it in a qualification manner. And yet,
4 it's nothing for society to assume that they're
5 going to volunteer their service.

6 That's the inequality going forward that
7 needs to be changed. Fifty percent of who we are
8 is what we can't see, but yet it still exists.
9 The spirit world we can't see because we don't
10 have to see that. But it doesn't mean it doesn't
11 exist.

12 So through those -- all across Turtle Island
13 they're there, doing it as we speak right now. I
14 pray that their services will be acknowledged,
15 that they will become more available to our
16 people. More available to our people, to the
17 point where we don't make one statement of them
18 and then go on with our lives. That every time
19 we talk about healing in the community, we talk
20 about the healers, the teachers, and the
21 teachings that come with it and ceremony that
22 comes with it.

23 I don't say this because I want anybody to
24 feel otherwise. I say this because this to me is
25 reality. We went through residential school with
26 all the resources that was available to help us
27 deal with residential school issues. Somehow I
28 fell through the cracks. I don't feel bad about
29 that because I always said I was working for a
30 system. I fit into that system. I was able to
31 pay my way, meaning I volunteer, I work and help
32 to make sure the ceremony's there for all that
33 wanted to take part in it, for 20 years, and it's
34 still going. But we're getting old and tired.
35 Our young ones need to pick up.

36 We need to offer it in schools, our history.
37 History didn't start 150 years ago. I always
38 joked with my coworkers before. I said, "You're
39 missing a zero." And they looked at me and they
40 kind of chuckle. They know where I was coming
41 from.

42 But we need that missing zero in our
43 schools. We need our teachings and our
44 traditions, not to be an option, but a good one
45 where somebody getting an effective smudge is not
46 told, "It's not our way." We hear that too much
47 in our part of our society with our people. We

Testimony of William Carlick

1 hear it too much. "It's not our way." But that
2 same person thinks nothing of just after
3 finishing making that statement, turning on their
4 cell phone and getting onto Facebook, and not
5 thinking, "That's not our way either." So we
6 have to come to terms with not using that
7 statement anymore and accepting what's available
8 and letting somebody make the decision because
9 it's available and it's good

10 Because one of the things that residential
11 school taught me was to be committed because of
12 survival mode, but that commitment now I put
13 towards the spiritual teachings that need to be
14 done. Because I know from my grandson when
15 hopefully he gets to be my age, that he has the
16 ability to overcome some of the things that are
17 happening out there that we don't talk about,
18 that I hear around the sacred fire. And they're
19 really not good things to hear because you can
20 say it to a lot of people, but a lot of people
21 are too busy. They won't hear you.

22 But to me, for Little Angel and his brother
23 Alex, we know Alex. We hear him. He has things
24 to say. He's struggling right now just to get
25 past that drug called alcohol and the drugs that
26 are so readily available to take you down at any
27 minute. How do we overcome that? Through
28 ceremony. We will take it down through ceremony.

29 And working together is another thing.
30 Working together with our family, working
31 together with those that are still walking on
32 Mother Earth with us.

33 Overcoming grief. We all go through grief.
34 Especially when you get to be 60 years old, you
35 start seeing people that you love leave. But to
36 see young people leave, especially the ones that
37 take their own lives, that's the teaching that
38 needs to be there for them. Then they'll
39 rationalize and realize that where they're going
40 is not a good place. They will think, not twice.
41 They'll think many times before they even
42 contemplate doing that to themselves. Ceremony
43 will teach them. We owe it to them. We owe it
44 to the ones that gave the ultimate, their lives.

45 I cannot speak on behalf of my family
46 members that are not here. But if I don't talk
47 for myself, who's going to talk for me? So

Testimony of William Carlick

1 answering your question, as far as the
2 investigation, all of that side of it, it's still
3 a work in progress. Little Angel passed away in
4 2000, later 2000, on a beautiful day like today.
5 Right now there's words in the air about getting
6 ready for her graduation and it's what she was
7 doing with her mother and grandma, my mother who
8 made her a nice dress for her graduation,
9 traditional one. And then only to graduate for,
10 what, not even a day? No more information from
11 what happened to her has ever come our way.

12 But it goes back to ceremony. We'll bring
13 that back. It will bring it out. And what I
14 hope the panel would hear and recognize what the
15 need going forward is, that we don't walk away
16 from what we started here, that we continue to
17 build on it. And what I heard at the sacred fire
18 that needs to be built on is we need a gathering
19 of all the healers and teachers here in the
20 North. From that gathering, it will bring up a
21 lot of things that we need to know. And the ones
22 we don't need to know, we will never know it, and
23 it's okay. But what we're talking about is all
24 the issues we're dealing with, with pedophile,
25 with drugs, with all the things that we are faced
26 with. It'll bring those all up.

27 Rather than having the Inquiry put pages of
28 documents and put it in an archive somewhere, I
29 think they should start looking at the next part
30 of the journey, the next what they would call
31 investment in something they've already started.
32 And it's alive.

33 We're dealing with something just lately,
34 and I want to share it to you, because it's all
35 part of this colonialism and the perspective you
36 can have and the perspective I have.

37 We went to Hobema one time where it's a lot
38 of spiritual people and medicine. And a friend
39 of ours, one of the family members, had just
40 finished a ceremony there, and I asked, "Well,
41 just out of curiosity, what was the ceremony
42 for?" And she said, "We had the ceremony in
43 order to go back to when our ancestors signed a
44 treaty because we wanted to know what that treaty
45 was about." Their ancestors, like we're doing
46 today, created a ceremony around a treaty so when
47 the treaty was enacted, it became a live,

Testimony of William Carlick

1 spiritual document. It was alive. And so they
2 went back to visit it and see what was the
3 spiritual terms, for no other better word, for
4 that treaty? Because the Europeans at that time
5 think, oh, it's a bunch of Indians who just
6 signed it and they don't know how to write. They
7 don't even know what we're talking about. But
8 our ancestors knew every language. They knew
9 every process. They knew everything. So when
10 they went to them and consulted with them through
11 ceremony, they made that document a live one.

12 We have what we call up here land claims.
13 We have our own treaties. Maybe it's alive.
14 Maybe there was ceremony that made it alive, but
15 I don't know.

16 But the reason I'm saying that is because
17 it's part of what I understand and where I'm at
18 on this path called life, and I want to leave all
19 that with my grandson and the seven generations
20 yet to come, because we're not leaving them very
21 much right now. We're trampling everything that
22 our seven generations before us left us. But
23 it's not too late. We're still here.

24 And all I could do for Alex is pray for him
25 because at the end of the day, that's all I got.
26 That's all we go, is prayer.

27 KAREN SHOWSHOE: Commissioners, Mr. Carlick has
28 requested to complete with a prayer, which he
29 will lead, but before he does so, he would like
30 to invite questions from you.

31 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: I don't have any
32 questions. Thank you.

33 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I don't either. Just
34 gratitude. A lot of what you don't see, cameras
35 and -- is the feeling in the space that is the
36 process over the last few days. And you've been
37 the guardian of that to a large degree, and I
38 just want to thank you for that. I'm hearing
39 families laughing and crying and hugging. That
40 wasn't the way it was on day one, and I want to
41 acknowledge that and thank you.

42 WILLIAM CARLICK: Can I ask that we all join hands in
43 a sharing circle, because when we join our hands,
44 we all bring a circle of goodness. We all bring
45 something that we need to share. And what we
46 need to share is the energy that the Creator sent
47 our way and all of the universe has sent our way

Closing remarks, by Chief Commissioner Buller

1 as we stand here. That is why I have this hair
2 the way it is. It's long. And they always ask
3 me, "Why do you have long hair?" I shared -- my
4 belief is it's an antenna to catch all the energy
5 that's coming from the universe that I need so
6 that I can help and share with all of you,
7 whether it's what I say, whether it's my presence
8 near you, it's whether I pray for you, it's
9 whether we do this and what we're doing today.
10 And I'd like to acknowledge that as a very
11 important part of what we need to do going
12 forward. And I will put this mike aside because
13 I want to also make that final connection.
14
15

16 (PRAYER) 15:58 to 16:05
17

18 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Thank you, everyone. I
19 just want to let you know that, first of all,
20 there will be a closing ceremony at the sacred
21 fire at 6:30 tonight. And I just want to let
22 everyone in the room here know that the health
23 team will be contacting all participants within
24 the next two weeks just to make sure you're okay
25 and to get your feedback about our process.
26 We're going to take about a five-minute break and
27 then I'm going to give my closing statement.
28 Thank you.
29

30 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)

31 (PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED)
32

33 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: It's time to draw our
34 first hearings to an end here in Whitehorse. I
35 want to thank the members of the Kwanlin Dün
36 First Nation who have given us a very warm
37 welcome, and I also want to thank the members of
38 the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council for their warm welcome
39 as well.

40 Very warm thanks are extended also to the
41 staff here at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre.
42 They've taken very good care of us, especially
43 the wonderful cook. The food has been wonderful.

44 I want to thank the Elders, who have kept us
45 focused and on the right path for the work we had
46 to do this week, the work that we're going to
47 have to do as we go forward.

Closing remarks, by Chief Commissioner Buller

1 I also have to brag for a moment about the
2 wonderful, hard-working and passionate staff of
3 the National inquiry who worked around the clock
4 to make this happen.

5 I want to tell you that it's been a change.
6 The spirits of the missing and murdered women and
7 girls came. They joined us here. Survivors of
8 violence brought their courage, their wisdom, and
9 their resilience and shared that with us.

10 In three days we've heard many stories of
11 loss. We've heard anger. We've heard pain. But
12 we've also heard courage and strength and hope.
13 But perhaps the most moving thing of all that's
14 happened is the magic of the healing that's
15 started. You can feel it here. The healing has
16 started for many people and it will continue for
17 many who have already started their healing.
18 It's been transformative for so many people who
19 have talked to us.

20 I'm truly grateful to the families who have
21 come forward to share their stories with us.
22 We've learned from them. We've gotten to know
23 them, and we won't forget them. We won't forget
24 what they said. Their lessons have been very
25 important.

26 So we'll take what we've learned from these
27 three days in Whitehorse and move forward into
28 other communities across Canada. The spirits of
29 the missing and murdered Indigenous women will
30 join us there too, and the courage, the
31 resilience, and the power of the survivors will
32 come with us there too. I look forward to
33 meeting them all and hearing from them all in the
34 future.

35 I thank you very much for this opportunity
36 to move forward, to move forward with hope, and
37 to move forward with healing. Thank you very
38 much.

39 Having said that, I hope you join us at 6:30
40 for the ceremony. Thank you.

41
42 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)
43
44
45
46
47

Closing remarks, by Chief Commissioner Buller

1
2