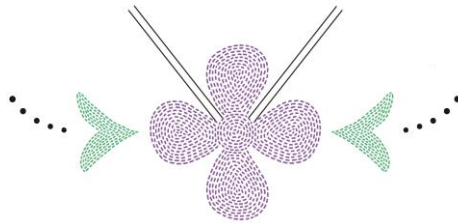


National Inquiry into  
Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls  
Truth-Gathering Process - Part 1  
Public Hearings  
Membertou Trade & Convention Centre, Kluskap A  
Membertou, Nova Scotia**



**PUBLIC**

**Monday October 30, 2017**

**Public Volume 17:  
Clayton Saunders, Audrey Saunders, Delilah Saunders, Miriam  
Saunders and Paula Saunders, In relation to Loretta Saunders;**

**Monique Fong Howe;**

**Rebecca Moore**

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## II

### APPEARANCES

**Note:** For the purpose of establishing this record of attendance, counsels are considered present whether they attended one or all of the public hearings held over the course of the day at the Membertou Trade and Convention Centre - Kluskap A (i.e. the main public hearing space).

Assembly of First Nations	Julie McGregor (Legal counsel)
Government of Canada	Sarah Churchill-Joly (Legal Counsel) Jennifer Clarke (Legal Counsel) Anne Turley (Legal Counsel)
Government of Nova Scotia	Minister Kelly Regan, Heather Ternoway, Lesley Poirier McLernon, Janel Fisher, Pat Gorham, Justin Huston, Sarah Outhit Smith, (Representatives)
Eastern Door Indigenous Women's Association	Non appearance
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, Saturviit Inuit Women's Association of Nunavik, AnânuKatiget Tuningit Regional Inuit Women's Association Inc., Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre, Manitoba Inuit Association	Beth Symes (Legal Counsel)

III

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
<b>Hearing # 1</b>	1
<b>Witnesses: Clayton Saunders, Audrey Saunders, Delilah Saunders, Miriam Saunders and Paula Saunders</b>	
In Relation to Loretta Saunders	
Heard by: Commissioner Qajaq Robinson	
Commission Counsel: Joseph Murdoch-Flowers	
Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge Keepers: Louise Haulli, Katy McEwan, Jane Meade	
Registrar: Bryan Zandberg	
<b>Hearing # 2</b>	
<b>Witness: Monique Fong Howe</b>	87
Heard by: Commissioners Qajaq Robinson and Michèle Audette	
Commission Counsel: Fanny Wylde	
Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge Keepers: Catherine Martin, Louise Haulli, Skundaal Bernie Williams, Jane Meade.	
Registrar: Bryan Zandberg	
<b>Hearing # 3</b>	
<b>Witness: Rebecca Moore</b>	131
Heard by Commissioner Michèle Audette	
Commission Counsel: Jennifer Cox	
Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge Keepers: Catherine Martin, Louise Haulli, Skundaal Bernie Williams, Jane Meade, Katy McEwan	
Registrar: Bryan Zandberg	

IV

LIST OF EXHIBITS

NO.	DESCRIPTION	PAGE
<b>Witness: Clayton Saunders, Audrey Saunders, Delilah Saunders, Miriam Saunders and Paula Saunders</b>		
<b>Exhibit: (code: P1P04P0101)</b>		
1	Folder of electronic images displayed on monitor during the public hearing.	86

**Witness: Monique Fong Howe**  
**Exhibits (code: P1P04P0102)**

1	PDF of "Chapter 8: HIV/AIDS Epi Updates, July 2010 - HIV/AIDS Among Aboriginal People in Canada" posted on Public Health Agency of Canada website, 38 numbered pages. Printing date 7/11/2017; date modified 2015-05-15. (Link: <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/hiv-aids/publications/epi-updates/chapter-8-hiv-aids-among-aboriginal-people-canada.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/hiv-aids/publications/epi-updates/chapter-8-hiv-aids-among-aboriginal-people-canada.html</a> )	130
2	PDF of "Indigenous Women, HIV and Gender-Based Violence," published by the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, March 2017 (28 numbered pages)	130

**Witness: Rebecca Moore**  
**Exhibits: none entered.**

1 Membertou, Nova Scotia

2 --- Upon commencing on Monday, October 30, 2017 at 10:21  
3 a.m.

4 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Commissioner,  
5 my name Joseph Murdoch-Flowers, and today I have the honour  
6 of working with the Saunders family from Happy Valley,  
7 Goose Bay, Labrador, and originally from Hopedale in  
8 Nunatsiavut.

9 To begin, you know, in preparation for this  
10 we went over some -- some things about protocols, and so  
11 on, and I understand that three family members wish to give  
12 the oath and the -- the oath on which they will -- the --  
13 the Bible on which they will give the oath is -- is  
14 actually the -- the Bible of Loretta Saunders. And so I'll  
15 let the family speak more about Loretta, but it's -- it's  
16 Loretta's Bible. And -- and then one will affirm and  
17 another will hold a Feather, so perhaps we can start with  
18 Clayton Saunders.

19 **MR. REGISTRAR:** Helps if it's on. Okay,  
20 good morning, Mr. Clayton Saunders, I will...

21 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Excuse me, he's a  
22 little hard of hearing.

23 **MR. REGISTRAR:** Is he, okay. Yeah, I can  
24 speak up a little bit.

1 Good morning. If you'd like to take the  
2 Bible in your right hand, there.

3 MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS: (Indiscernible).

4 MR. REGISTRAR: Yes, please, yes.

5 CLAYTON SAUNDERS, Sworn:

6 MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS: Next Miriam  
7 Saunders will give the oath as well.

8 MR. REGISTRAR: Good morning, Miriam.

9 MIRIAM SAUNDERS, Sworn:

10 MR. REGISTRAR: Okay, thank you, thank you  
11 very much.

12 MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS: Okay, Miriam.  
13 Audrey Saunders as well will provide the oath.

14 MR. REGISTRAR: Very well. Good morning,  
15 Audrey.

16 AUDREY SAUNDERS, Sworn:

17 MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS: Delilah  
18 Saunders will solemnly affirm.

19 MR. REGISTRAR: Okay, good morning, Delilah.

20 MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS: Good morning.

21 DELILAH SAUNDERS, Affirmed:

22 MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS: And Paula  
23 McDonald is holding the Eagle Feather. Is there anything  
24 else that you'd like to say about that, or are you content

1 to hold it? Okay.

2 And I would ask Commissioner, that, that  
3 satisfy the requirements of the oath or affirmation. Okay.

4 **MR. REGISTRAR:** Okay, I believe your name is  
5 Paula? Okay. Welcome this morning.

6 **PAULA SAUNDERS, Affirmed:**

7 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** We talked about  
8 a lot in preparation for today and I really enjoyed talking  
9 with you. It's -- so I will enjoy talking with you again  
10 today. And I'd just like to start with the question, what  
11 would you like to tell the Commission today? And who would  
12 like to begin?

13 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** I'd like to tell you I  
14 came here in hopes to continue my daughter's passion.

15 Loretta, she was murdered in -- in -- in  
16 Halifax, by roommates, and prior to her -- her being  
17 murdered she called me, and she was working, and she had a  
18 lot of passion for our family, for our people, so I'm  
19 hoping that some of the things that we spoke about prior  
20 her to being taken I'd like to try to continue and to help  
21 my people, our people, to prevent from what's happening to  
22 them.

23 So I just want to be able to try to continue  
24 her work because she had a passion for our people and the

1 way our people are being treated. And then -- and, and she  
2 also had a passion for the murdered and missing.

3 And that's why I'm here. I'd like to be  
4 able to try to see -- try to find out myself, for myself  
5 why. And I'd like to prevent -- you wouldn't be able to  
6 say -- I couldn't talk in front of people before, but  
7 because of my passion that she handed on down to me I would  
8 like to be able to continue her work.

9 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Can you tell us  
10 about her work that you want to continue?

11 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** I'd like to be able to  
12 -- see we talked a lot about residential schooling because  
13 my parents were in it. I was in residential schooling,  
14 plus child welfare.

15 My daughter said to me when she went --  
16 first time she started talking about it, she said, "Mom, do  
17 you know our people are being killed off by our own  
18 government -- our own" -- and she -- she had a big passion  
19 for it. And I'd like to try to not get right in, but I'd  
20 like to be able to see if there's anything in her work --  
21 is this going to be able to -- for me to continue on  
22 because this is new to me. Well, it's three years now.

23 And I guess you're all wondering too, why  
24 I'm out here and not down -- down to my own community?



1 Because you people were here. You're like my own family.  
2 You people were here for me when I first lost my daughter.  
3 And to me you all are family because you are the people  
4 that -- only people that helped me understand and helped me  
5 to be able to get to where I am today. So that's why I'm  
6 here. I'd like to explain that's why I'm here in Nova  
7 Scotia. I'm not going to be attending the -- like not --  
8 didn't stay to attend my people -- my own -- in my own  
9 territory.

10 So I'm here because I didn't know nothing  
11 about murder -- I -- know about murdered and missing  
12 people. I mean I heard of people murdered and missing  
13 because this is my third murder in my family. And when my  
14 -- my other two family members were murdered I never had  
15 the support that I have from you people.

16 So I'm hoping to learn and continue my  
17 daughter's work, and I thank you all for being here -- the  
18 First Nation people for being there for our family. And in  
19 -- I was ashamed of being who I was. I'm -- I was ashamed  
20 to be Inuk.

21 And my daughter, Loretta, when she came to  
22 university in Nova Scotia she started getting traditional  
23 ways, and started talking to me, and telling -- like she  
24 said, "Mom, do you know we're being killed off by our own

1 government?" By, by the Newfoundland, Labrador government.

2 And I'd like to be able to -- to -- to  
3 continue and I'm asking you people to help me, because like  
4 I said, this is -- this isn't -- I really don't know where  
5 to start. I need -- you -- a lot of you people been doing  
6 it for years, and you have -- fighting for your children  
7 that you never got. I don't want that to happen to my  
8 children and my -- that I have with me and my  
9 grandchildren. I want to make a better life for my  
10 grandchildren.

11 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Did you want to  
12 add to that, Delilah?

13 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Today I came here --  
14 before I start, I -- I want to echo what my Mom said. My  
15 sister did go missing, and was found in Mi'Kmaq and the  
16 Ilnu, they -- they came together and really helped my  
17 family. And they taught me a lot of ceremonies which  
18 helped me -- helped me connect with my own culture. And I  
19 -- I do consider this place a home as well.

20 I want to talk today about a lot of things  
21 that my sister taught me. She taught me a lot about the  
22 things my Mom was talking about. She spoke about -- you  
23 know, her white privilege -- our white privilege and --  
24 well, not white privilege, but like, white passing, and she

1 was really aware of all of those things.

2 And she was writing her honours thesis on  
3 missing and murdered Indigenous woman and girls, and how  
4 colonial constructs design that fate for Indigenous women  
5 and girls.

6 I -- I want to share a lot of the things  
7 that she taught me, and I -- I saw how things played out  
8 after she went missing and she was found murdered. I saw  
9 how her white passing privilege -- it, it helped -- like,  
10 it helped the situation. And I've met thousands of family  
11 members across the country who, who haven't had that and  
12 I've carried a lot of guilt because of that.

13 But I -- I've seen the other side of it and  
14 I -- I want to share that today.

15 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** How did you see  
16 that play out? Sorry.

17 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** I think my Mom can  
18 speak to this a bit more too, in the sense that they did  
19 have her listed as a -- a white woman at first, and -- do  
20 you want to say something about that, Mom?

21 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** When my daughter first  
22 went missing they had it white woman missing, and I started  
23 to -- I started to clap because they called her white  
24 because I knew they were going to start looking -- when,

1 first when they said she was a white woman I would call --  
2 I call to the investigators and they would answer me. I  
3 would talk personally to the investigators and they -- and  
4 then they started -- after they started -- when they  
5 started calling her Inuk I had start swearing, and  
6 everything, at them to get -- to get answers. They had --  
7 I didn't get to talk to the investigators after that.

8 I started talking -- and having to talk to  
9 this go-between, like, I called -- he was a go-between.  
10 And when I asked him questions, he said, "Oh, I can't  
11 answer that. I can't --" and I -- I had to start cursing  
12 and I could -- I knew my father was rolling over in his  
13 grave because he didn't like me cursing. I found -- I  
14 found I was (indiscernible) cursing.

15 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Loretta and I, when  
16 we lived in Halifax together, we got pulled over by the  
17 police and we were, we were buying drugs -- this was a  
18 number of years ago -- and we got pulled over by the police  
19 and they were really, really sweet to us. They were --  
20 they were kind to us even though we were buying drugs.

21 And Loretta said to me after that incident,  
22 she said, "this would have gone completely differently if  
23 we looked more Native or if we were black." And she made  
24 me really aware of those situations.

1           And I -- she -- she also -- I helped her  
2 with an assignment on missing white women syndrome. And  
3 that's one thing that really sticks with me, all of the  
4 things that she taught me about, and then I saw with her  
5 case, when a white woman goes missing there, there's so  
6 much more effort put in to investigating. There's so --  
7 there's more public outcry. And I've -- I've seen stories  
8 of Indigenous woman and girls who are painted in such a bad  
9 light.

10           And the media -- the media tends to -- the  
11 media is considered one of the most powerful institutions  
12 in the world, and there's no denying that. And the words  
13 they choose are so careless and not just careless, but  
14 cruel, they're cruel.

15           And I, I saw, I saw that play out in front  
16 of my eyes. The things that she taught me about it -- it  
17 just unfolded in front of me. And the evidence is there.  
18 You know, I've seen it.

19           And I was actually travelling across the  
20 country, I'd only been moved away from Halifax for a couple  
21 of months. I was taking the Via Rail, Greyhound, and I was  
22 hitchhiking to B.C. My sister -- she was like, "Delilah,  
23 what the F are you doing? Like, what's wrong with you?  
24 You don't realize -- like, do you not realize this isn't

1 just happening to one Native woman. This is happening to  
2 thousands." And she -- she said this is being considered a  
3 national tragedy, a national epidemic, and it -- it did  
4 help me be more -- more cautious, but I didn't realize how  
5 big of an issue it was until it happened in my family.

6 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** I can remember -- I  
7 can remember when she was hitchhiking, I'd be on the phone  
8 crying to Loretta because she was -- see -- that -- it's --  
9 the thing about my children is they look white. And by our  
10 own -- by -- when we lived in Goose Bay it's more white --  
11 it was more white than when, before the -- the  
12 (indiscernible) cards come out and you -- you were getting  
13 benefits.

14 Because when we were -- we've -- I first  
15 moved there I was always -- I -- I grew up and I -- as a  
16 dirty 'skimo and my children, while they lived in Goose Bay  
17 they were picked on by children -- by the people there as  
18 dirty 'skimos, but when they tried to travel to my own  
19 community, they were called white people, so we've -- I've  
20 had a struggle wondering what -- what -- I guess, they  
21 really did too, because -- especially my older children,  
22 but when the younger ones come in all these benefits was  
23 in, so everybody was a 'skimo.

24 People even who -- who -- who call me a

1 'skimo -- now they're -- they're LIA members theirsself  
2 (sic). And, and they're, they're the ones who's -- who's  
3 being the head ones. The head ones are the people who had  
4 us degraded and called dirty 'skimos, to a point my father  
5 used to work down to Iqaluit, and mostly Frobisher Bay and  
6 Sanikiluaq, so we -- the weather where we live, you could  
7 go weeks without -- without any income waiting for your  
8 cheque. And my dad's cheques used to come. And there --  
9 the people who -- who -- who are running us and being our  
10 leaders now are the people.

11 My mother would ask me, "Can you go see if  
12 we could charge a piece of seal meat until dad's cheque  
13 come?" I go up and they say, "No." And guess what, you go  
14 down to the dock, and down at the dock -- I dare say you go  
15 down now and the bones are there. They'd rather let it  
16 rot, and now that's the people who's telling us.

17 Even to my sister -- my sister -- she's my  
18 sister by blood. She may have been adopted, but because  
19 she became a Winters (ph) only her oldest granddaughter is  
20 considered a member.

21 So it's not -- it's not our blood, so  
22 there's another thing I'm -- I know. I may lose my job for  
23 this, but guess what, I don't care anymore because I'm  
24 tired seeing my real Inuk with the full blood being killed

1 off. Like my daughter said, "We do not have to worry about  
2 anybody else killing us off. Our own government is killing  
3 us off."

4 And I think that's why my husband didn't  
5 want me to talk because -- public -- because, guess what --  
6 Loretta put her spite and her -- her fight for her people  
7 in my heart and there's no one taking it out. And who, but  
8 the Creator, God is the one who has done, and enabled us to  
9 be able to fight for our children.

10 Enough is enough for me. I'm tired of  
11 seeing my people treated like animals while the ones who  
12 treated us like animals now -- now are our leaders.

13 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** You told me,  
14 when we were preparing, about some of the things you do in  
15 helping Inuk in Nunatsiavut; do you want to talk a bit  
16 about that?

17 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yeah. I'll just  
18 start. I -- like, hard to believe it, I was a real quiet  
19 woman, or girl. I was. But my passion -- and I worked --  
20 I started off -- like, I worked -- I went to school. I  
21 went -- I left home. I was scared. I -- I was frightened  
22 to death, even in Goose Bay because we're such a small  
23 community. And then I got into -- back into school. I  
24 don't think I even -- I didn't even talk. I think it was



1 two people I talked to really in school.

2 One is gone, bless her soul, and she was  
3 murdered, Sarah Opid (ph). I want to remember her too,  
4 Sarah Opid from Nain. She was my friend. And she was  
5 murdered, but guess what? She was -- they claimed it was  
6 self-protection. But she was always beat up, so how could  
7 it could have been self-protection? She was always beat up  
8 in the beginning, but of course, you know, it wasn't --  
9 hers was in self-defence, but to me it's murder. Once you  
10 take a life regardless, there's no -- no excuse, when you  
11 murder a person you murder them.

12 And then I -- I started working in the fish  
13 -- but then I started working in child protection. I  
14 worked in child protection for 15 years. And the -- I end  
15 up out of there. They even went to accuse me. I did a --  
16 I made out the cheques. They even went to accuse me,  
17 because I had some children with me, but I had to write the  
18 cheques out, but the social worker -- I'd like to find out  
19 the truth because I never did it. But they even accused me  
20 of writing a cheque to myself and signing another person's  
21 -- another person -- another social worker's name.

22 And the reason they claim I stole was  
23 because I was on my way to St. John's with one of the  
24 children. What -- that was my husband's relative -- I was

1 on my way to take him to a hospital and I was allowed to  
2 write out my -- I said, "Okay, I'm going to write out the  
3 cheque because I need it for in St. John's." They signed  
4 it. I throwed -- I didn't even have time to file it --  
5 "Oh, yes, you did because it was thrown in your filing  
6 cabinet." Have you -- any of you -- anybody ever done  
7 something in a rush and then planning to file it after.

8 But I never ever -- but I think that was a  
9 way to get rid of me. Because I -- I worked in child  
10 protection 15 -- for almost 15 years. I fostered hundreds  
11 of children and then all of a sudden I'm no use to them.  
12 And then I can see that. I can see why now.

13 Our children are being taken away, even  
14 after my daughter was murdered -- my son -- he -- my son,  
15 James (ph), he's -- he -- he -- his brother, Edmond (ph),  
16 said, "Come on, we have to go look for sister." And when  
17 he did his girlfriend, at the time, they had one girl, a  
18 little girl, they said -- she said, "If you go, don't come  
19 back." And he never. And apparently, I didn't know, she  
20 was pregnant again.

21 But while he was out searching that baby --  
22 my granddaughter, who -- who I had -- was very close to --  
23 when I lost Loretta I lost grandchildren. They didn't even  
24 approach us. Approach us to -- to see if we were

1 interested. I -- I, I never had -- I wouldn't have been  
2 able to at the time, yes, but at least they could have  
3 approached me and said, "Your -- your -- your granddaughter  
4 is going into care. You know, do you want anything?"

5 But like I said, at the time I never had the  
6 energy. I had just lost my daughter. She was pregnant. I  
7 lost a granddaughter there. I says granddaughter because  
8 so many people -- three people, including my husband, came  
9 and said it was a little girl, and they described her in a  
10 white dress, long blond hair, and white ribbon. How -- so  
11 I know the Creator let us know it was a little girl. In  
12 our hearts we believe it's a little girl.

13 So my, like -- and then I worked, like  
14 there, and the difference in it, we did not take children  
15 if there was someone sober, someone reliable with that  
16 child.

17 In fact, I worked at -- as client liaison  
18 worker for then -- for them then. They, they approached me  
19 and asked me to apply for this job. And not -- not very  
20 often a child went into care. I would go -- if I had to I  
21 would find a babysitter and take them, because I knew, the  
22 people, take them to a babysitter and then talk to the  
23 parents next day. We gave them a chance. We didn't just  
24 take them.

1           Now, if they see you out -- if they see a  
2 couple out drinking, they, "Oh, they got children." But  
3 yet, you can go into the same bars, see the social -- some  
4 social -- not all because some hides away. I worked with  
5 them. Some social workers in the bar, loaded drunk, next  
6 day, they're down telling parents how to raise their  
7 children, and they don't even have a child theirselves. How  
8 can you support and try to tell the mother, and then...

9           Like my granddaughter, the one who my  
10 granddaughter, her mother never ever drank. She was a good  
11 little mother, right. Yeah, you know, they, they might  
12 have been two childless little couples together, which they  
13 could have worked on and they turned around -- no. And  
14 then -- and they didn't even see if they needed help.

15           Prior to that he was married for two weeks.  
16 They had a stillborn baby, and the day the little -- the  
17 day that -- the -- the -- when she -- the girl, when she  
18 went in labour she come to me and she said -- she called  
19 me, and she said, "Mom, I need to go hospital. I'm  
20 paining." So we took her up -- or we took -- I got my  
21 husband take her up. They done -- they done -- the, the  
22 doctor at the time -- every time she come -- I could tell  
23 you, I -- you could tell when a pregnant woman, they're  
24 glowing.

1                   But I -- when I seen her that last few  
2 weeks, or month even, you could see the darkness in her  
3 eyes. You couldn't see the spirit of the -- you know -- I  
4 don't know how to explain it, but a pregnant woman they  
5 blossom. But then -- and then when she got sick, she got  
6 the pain. She went in the hospital. Come find out my  
7 grandchild was one month dead in her body.

8                   And the doctor -- because I -- every time  
9 she come, because I could see -- the last time I seen her,  
10 I said, "Did you" -- I said, "Did the doctor -- did the  
11 doctor feel you? Check?" "Oh, no", she said, "She never  
12 do check me." She said, "But she -- she -- she let me hear  
13 the heartbeat." The baby was dead a month. How could she  
14 hear the heartbeat? All that time she was hearing her  
15 heartbeat.

16                   And that's another thing -- like, they're  
17 put through that, and it's -- and after he going through  
18 all that, and her -- his sister -- his sister was just  
19 murdered. They took his daughter and they didn't even  
20 offer supports. They treat our people like dog. And then  
21 they take them out to Newfoundland.

22                   This -- this place that's supposed to be --  
23 huh? In Roddickton, Newfoundland, that's supposed to be --  
24 that place was going to be closed down, closed. They were

1 going to close it down. The, the social workers weren't  
2 going to be there anymore. Instead they took two social  
3 workers -- two social workers from Hopedale and Nain, and  
4 they kept them, and guess what? All our children is gone.  
5 New little industry.

6 And that's where my daughter was talking  
7 about, they're killing off our people. They're going to  
8 take them out there and they're going to try to make them  
9 white.

10 I've seen that with people my age. They  
11 were taken away. Brought out of our communities and you  
12 show me one normal one. You show me one normal one without  
13 issues or -- even like they were -- oh, it makes me so mad,  
14 I don't know.

15 And then so I -- so I -- I -- I resigned  
16 from social services and I started working at the hospital.  
17 And this is where I get to hear and see a lot of my -- I  
18 used to be homesick, but now I see my people every day --  
19 every day. And you know what, you see certain ones  
20 blossoming.

21 But you see my age, and people my age,  
22 they're still the little shy woman. They're still the --  
23 there's, they're scared to speak up. They're scared to  
24 speak up because the same people who had us way down low is

1 the big ones now.

2 Because I asked for support. Is there -- is  
3 there anyone coming here with me? And you know what? They  
4 got no money. No funding. No funding. If it -- if, if it  
5 was -- if they had any compassion for us they would have  
6 had somebody here. I'm just -- I'm too damn -- I'm just  
7 someone to keep quiet. And guess what? I don't need to  
8 stay quiet anymore. And I told them, "I'm coming. I'm  
9 coming. One of these days I'm retiring and I'm coming."

10 And I tell you no more seeing my people  
11 hurt. I want to speak up for the ones who cannot speak up.  
12 And that was my daughter's passion. Was to speak up for  
13 the people who cannot speak up, like I was. I know there's  
14 a lot of smart people out of there, but guess what? We  
15 cannot -- there's no -- there's certain positions cannot be  
16 filled by my people because they don't have the education.  
17 Yeah.

18 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** You -- when we  
19 were talking earlier too, you talked about medical travel.  
20 People going from Nunatsiavut to St. John's.

21 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yes, that's another  
22 thing. That's what really ticks me off. People on social  
23 assistance, and where we're living too, it's very -- like  
24 meeting Goose Bay is cheaper than on the coast. Down on

1 the north coast the people -- you see the price, people --  
2 I give an example. There was a watermelon -- what was it,  
3 \$188? So they check to see why the watermelon was so high.  
4 Oh, they made a mistake. I think it was something like  
5 \$80, was the right price. For a watermelon. And then they  
6 take our caribou away.

7 So poor people on social services, they have  
8 to travel for medical reasons. Right. I told them I was  
9 coming. They -- we just -- this was just done to them.  
10 They -- they -- they have to travel from Goose Bay, from  
11 the coast, Nain, or Hopedale, like on the coast, they  
12 travel to Goose Bay, then they have to travel to St.  
13 John's. One thing -- it -- it started off \$20 a day for  
14 one of them to stay in the hotel for their meals, for the  
15 full day, in a city where they don't have a clue.

16 I didn't -- I didn't have a clue when I went  
17 to the city. I don't think I went out for two or three  
18 weeks. I wouldn't even poke my head out the door. I  
19 wouldn't even do that in Goose Bay, leave alone St. John's.

20 So the poor people, they come out of  
21 Hopedale. They get there about 10:00 or -- Nain, the  
22 coast. And they get out, they get to the airport. They're  
23 at the airport. And they got to catch a flight. I'll take  
24 an example, one got there about 11:00, 10:00, 11 o'clock.



1 They got on the flight about 9:00. Some of them don't have  
2 breakfast, or anything, and some -- a lot of people are  
3 diabetics, so they get to -- if you're on welfare you will  
4 -- you have to come -- you go -- you have to come and you  
5 go to the airport. Lucky enough Nunatsiavut cuts in now,  
6 but we shouldn't have to because -- like, we shouldn't have  
7 to.

8 What they're doing is putting  
9 (indiscernible) or they get to Goose Bay. Say their flight  
10 is 4:00 or 5:30 or something, they have to stay at the  
11 airport and wait. They used -- they would have to, but  
12 thank God Nunatsiavut cut in with the van. We have a van  
13 so they take them to, to friendship or somewhere.

14 But if we didn't get involved with the --  
15 with the people on the assistance, they would have to be at  
16 the airport, stay there, probably didn't have breakfast.  
17 No money to buy -- no money to buy a lunch or -- or -- or  
18 dinner, what they call -- I call supper and -- dinner and  
19 supper, but out here they say lunch and dinner. I'm  
20 learning. So they have to wait at the airport. No money.  
21 Maybe children with them, hungry.

22 And then they get -- they, they get to St.  
23 John's, they'll -- they'll let the van take them to the,  
24 they'll let the van take them to wherever they're staying.

1 If they're staying at the Health Science in the hostel,  
2 it's perfect because their appointment is there. But if  
3 you've got an appointment, other than in that building,  
4 they'll give you a five-dollar voucher to get on the bus.  
5 Well, we don't know how to get around on buses.

6 We don't -- you know, leave -- how are you  
7 going to put a sick person, for an example I had -- my son  
8 had escorted one of his uncles out. He had cancer, okay.  
9 Lucky my son lived in -- in St. John's, when he was with  
10 his ex-wife there, Paula (ph). Sorry, not -- don't mind  
11 me, I could collar her -- but you know he had to get on a  
12 bus. He just finished chemo. He got on a bus and -- and  
13 there was no seats, probably had to stand up. And the poor  
14 man started throwing up. Just imagine if he was by  
15 himself, or my son wasn't used to travelling like that.  
16 And, and you know, I -- I've heard them get talked to like  
17 dogs.

18 And I know, I was on assistance myself. And  
19 they're like I was. I was quiet to a point where I had --  
20 I had -- I was only 17. Can you imagine -- and I had a  
21 filling out. And later that dentist, he said, "Oh, you  
22 needs a filling. We'll fix that." And he said -- he said,  
23 "How you going to pay?" I said, "When I" -- we called it  
24 welfare cheque, "When I gets my welfare cheque." He said,

1 "Oh, let me look in your mouth again." I was six months  
2 pregnant with her, and he said, "Let me look in your mouth  
3 again" -- with Audrey, so that one, and I (sic) said, "let  
4 me look in -- he said, "Let me look in your mouth again,"  
5 and I let him, and he said, "Oh, my you got gum disease"  
6 and I was thinking, no, I don't. I was too scared to say  
7 no because he was a dentist. A white person. That's how  
8 we grew up. We had to -- the dentists, and the nurses, and  
9 the cops, and the doctors -- they -- you had to look up to  
10 them.

11 And we did. We were even taught by our own  
12 parents to do it because they knew. They were in the real  
13 residential schooling. I was in, what they  
14 said -- called residential schooling, but I, that's what  
15 I'm trying -- but you know, I sat there and he said, "Oh,  
16 you got a gum disease." And I was trying to -- I was too  
17 scared to say, "No, I don't." I sat there, six months  
18 pregnant, and he hauled every one of my teeth out. And  
19 I -- that's how quiet and scared a person I was. And I  
20 don't want to see that happen to my people any more. So  
21 that's -- you know, and that's what's -- they're being  
22 treated like.

23 I wonder, do social services get \$20 a day  
24 for their meals when they go on meeting. Is that their per

1 diem? I hope so. I wonder, do their insurance cover only  
2 -- that our people -- they don't -- on social assistance,  
3 they do not get fillings covered. Automatically, if you're  
4 on assistance your teeth is out. And that's why they took  
5 mine out. I suppose he got -- he wasn't going to get his  
6 little whatever for his one teeth, but he figure, "Oh God,  
7 I got a good quiet one."

8 Oh, that's another thing, I'm tired getting  
9 called the quiet ones. I get -- I've -- I've been  
10 introduced as the quiet one. Guess what? We're not quiet  
11 anymore, thanks to my daughter. She left something in me  
12 that I will never let go, never.

13 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Loretta brought  
14 this out in you, this...

15 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yes.

16 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Do you want to  
17 talk about -- about Loretta?

18 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yes. My girl. She --  
19 she -- she was a very petite -- they may want to fill in  
20 too, but she was really tiny little girl, really petite.  
21 And I don't even know where to start, there's so much, but  
22 you know what -- I let her father and them talk about her  
23 too. I want to talk about when she was in university. Why  
24 -- why I'm like this.

1                   And when she was in university she -- she  
2                   knew of my background. She knew of my background. I was  
3                   very very sexually abused at a very young age by family,  
4                   and by the community people. There was a few community  
5                   people.

6                   It was -- it was so normal. It was so  
7                   normal. That you got to a point you even start playing  
8                   boyfriend and girlfriends, it was so normal. And I've had  
9                   -- I've seen many in court who assaulted women or boys, and  
10                  they've said, "Oh that's our tradition." That's not our  
11                  tradition. It is not.

12                  It was so much going on that it was -- it was  
13                  -- it was normal, but you still couldn't go to your  
14                  parents, although you knew it was bad because your mother  
15                  was say, "If you ever do anything bad you're going to get a  
16                  licking." But it was -- and then the predators would say,  
17                  "If you tell your mother she's going to beat you because  
18                  this is bad."

19                  And -- so you -- you -- you grew up -- I --  
20                  I was -- that's why I was a very sheltered person, and  
21                  Loretta seen that, and she -- I -- I took up drinking. I  
22                  was never a drinker. I took up drinking. And I think  
23                  that's what brought it out of her -- out -- brought it into  
24                  her, for the passion, because I wouldn't -- I wouldn't

1 remember what -- as all I talked about was my sexual abuse.  
2 I'd bawl about my sexual abuse to them. My poor old  
3 husband and them -- I mean they had to live through it.

4 And what pisses me off is that one who  
5 sexually molested me did the same to my -- he did -- he did  
6 -- he did to my mother. He did it to me. And he did it to  
7 his children in his first marriage. His family, and I know  
8 family's against it for me, but you know what, I don't care  
9 family or no family, if you haven't got the courage, I'm  
10 going to do it for my grandchildren, and my girls, and  
11 their children, and for all the little children that I've  
12 been around.

13 I fostered a lot of -- a lot of -- a lot of  
14 children, and then I've got a lot of people who call me  
15 mom, a lot. And a mother takes care of their children. So  
16 my -- I'm taking care of those -- I want to take care of  
17 those and help those who's going through it.

18 And that same person who molested me, he  
19 molested his children from his own marriage and guess what,  
20 he's in jail for his own grandchildren now. But guess  
21 what, he going to be out again, and I think after coming  
22 here and hearing stories of girls who were raped, young  
23 girls -- I think of friend all the time, Pamela Fildear  
24 (ph), her and her daughter, like murdered and was already

1 by someone who was already a pedophile. I really believe  
2 the pedophile's home, if they could they could -- a lot of  
3 those people would be killed. I believe it.

4 Because the same person who molested me --  
5 he -- and he, right in front of our eyes, he took a hammer  
6 and he killed our dog. If, if you can do something as  
7 cruel as that there's -- you can do it because really, I  
8 think they do it, either to their dogs, you can imagine  
9 that -- sure you do -- don't listen, you get -- but that's  
10 how you think.

11 And I like to be able to -- and this is the  
12 way I -- I have to heal. My daughter wanted me to heal.  
13 And when she was in university she brought all this out,  
14 see, she seen it. She heard me drunk and crying, and  
15 bawling about it. To -- on the end of it my relatives that  
16 come, they don't come around anymore now because I used to  
17 cry, and drunk, and bawl about, and a lot of them was --  
18 that's all the same family. It's to a point, it started of  
19 childhood. It started into my teen years. And it's still  
20 happening today, and I'm going to it tell you, enough is  
21 enough. I have to speak up. Yeah.

22 And Loretta was the one who got it out in me  
23 because when she started her thesis she would call me. She  
24 knew I was sexually molested. She knew I was in

1 residential schooling.

2           And -- and like I said, I always say, I had  
3 the good part of the residential schooling because my  
4 parents, my father, I have an uncle in my living room,  
5 who's been there for ten years. He was in the residential  
6 schooling where he was taken as a little child. He was  
7 beaten. But he don't get no residential schooling money,  
8 guess why? He was late putting it in. Because we had a, a  
9 worker from my organization supposed to be doing it, and we  
10 were out to getting my daughter's award, but something come  
11 up with her, and instead of someone going and finish, he is  
12 not getting it because it wasn't put in time.

13           Mine was put in time only because my husband  
14 and my son, they -- they took me to the courthouse. I  
15 signed the papers. And he express mailed it, and that's  
16 the only -- I just made it, the deadline. But I didn't  
17 want to apply for it. Loretta got me to apply for it. She  
18 made me understand I deserved it. Because to be honest,  
19 even though incidents happened to me, when I was in North  
20 West River -- that's where I went to school, that was the  
21 best and safest time of my life. That was the best and  
22 safest -- and I've -- and -- and I feel sorry because --  
23 and I didn't feel I fitted into the residential schooling.

24           But Loretta said, Mom, you know what, the



1 things that you go through, the way you are, is because  
2 your father and your mother was in the real -- real  
3 residential schooling. And they were taken as little  
4 children. They were beaten. I wasn't taken and beaten. I  
5 was -- you know it does -- to me it was different. And I'm  
6 -- I don't know -- the apology we were going to get is --  
7 hey, we were the ones sexually abused, or put in the  
8 hospital. Where is it about my parents and my father and  
9 my uncle and my grandma, where is it about they took our  
10 language? I don't agree with the, the apology, because  
11 it's nothing to do with our -- with our culture. Nothing  
12 to do with, with our language. It's all to do with, if you  
13 were sexually assaulted or beaten.

14 And -- and Loretta was the one who brought me  
15 -- brought it out to me and Loretta was -- then she said,  
16 "Mom, guess what? I'm learning." They are now using child  
17 welfare to -- to -- they're even using child welfare now to  
18 make -- to -- instead of residential schooling. And even  
19 like with my daughter they've -- they've put her through a  
20 lot too. You know, so I -- I think there's a lot she's a  
21 bit nervous about talking, but I'm trying to fill in so --  
22 give her a little bit more courage to be able to talk about  
23 it. But -- I don't know what -- like I need a vent.

24 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Do you want a

1 break?

2 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** I think  
3 (indiscernible) I think -- do you want to take a break,  
4 or...

5 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** I wonder if we  
6 might take a break, five minutes? Is that okay?

7 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** We'll take a five-  
8 minute break.

9 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Thank you.

10 (SHORT PAUSE)

11 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** If I could ask  
12 everybody in the room to -- to quiet down. The Saunders  
13 family is ready to continue.

14 Mr. Flowers, I, I don't see our registrar.

15 I -- I'm really sorry, it's really important  
16 that the recordings be on because this -- as you share with  
17 us, this is to speak to the country, and it's, to us,  
18 forever in -- in the records of this country, so I don't  
19 want any of your words to be lost, so if we could just --  
20 once Bryan's back and presses the record button, which I am  
21 -- don't let me touch computers.

22 Mr. Flowers, as we wait for the registrar to  
23 come -- there's photos on the monitors behind us. Will we  
24 have an opportunity to hear about those, or...

1 Do you-- we'll wait till Bryan comes, I'm  
2 just -- I've noticed them, and I just wanted to acknowledge  
3 them, and hopefully we can hear more about them.

4 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** And did you  
5 want to show more of those too?

6 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** We have more. Mom?  
7 Mom? Do you want to show those photos too?

8 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yeah, photos, yeah.

9 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** We'll -- we'll  
10 proceed.

11 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Okay.

12 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** We'll -- it's  
13 -- it's being recorded, and -- and -- we won't miss  
14 anything.

15 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Okay. Audrey,  
16 did you want to -- you wanted to add something? You want  
17 to speak? All right. I think Audrey was going to speak.

18 **MS. AUDREY SAUNDERS:** My name's Audrey  
19 Saunders, and I'm a survivor of violence. I've been in a  
20 few relationships where it was really violent. I was  
21 living in Lab City with my two boys. And I got beaten up  
22 pretty bad. I broke my collar bone -- broke my collar  
23 bone. And I went back to Goose Bay to live with my mom and  
24 dad. It was recommended that I do that by Child and Family

1 Services in Goose Bay. There was a social worker that was  
2 taking my ex to court for child support, for my second  
3 child, that he owed. And -- well, she when she was going  
4 to court for child support she started having an affair  
5 with him, and I found out and the charges got dropped.

6 And I lived in Goose Bay then and I moved to  
7 Hopedale and I started seeing another guy and he started  
8 being very abusive to me so I left him. And one night he  
9 broke into my house and beat me up pretty bad, where I  
10 wasn't recognizable. It took the cops -- the RCMP -- it  
11 happened about three o'clock in the morning -- it took the  
12 RCMP pretty much 24 hours to come see me.

13 After that I had a social worker show up at  
14 my work -- where I was working, and tell me they were going  
15 to take my two boys permanently.

16 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Well, listen, she was  
17 going out with this feller, and they broke up. They were  
18 broken up. Then she was home in bed and he went in and he  
19 beat her door down and he beat her up.

20 My cousin was in the apartment next door,  
21 and she called the RCMP that when he beat her up. They  
22 never even come to see her until she -- till about 3:00 or  
23 four o'clock the next day -- like the afternoon. And she  
24 was beat up pretty bad.

1                   She had called me to see if I could take the  
2 boys. I couldn't take them at the time because I already  
3 had a son with a mental illness and my second son at the  
4 time -- my husband was in hospital and they told him that -  
5 - told us that he had cancer, and our first son together --  
6 he went out with some friends drinking and they had given  
7 him something. He didn't tell me to this day if it was a  
8 pill or what and he got sick.

9                   So at the time of her beating, I couldn't  
10 take them because they were both sick with mental illnesses  
11 and one used to cut himself up. I didn't -- I couldn't let  
12 my grandkids go through it.

13                   So she had asked other grandfather and his  
14 girlfriend and they -- they decided they would take them,  
15 and our understanding it was just till -- because she was  
16 beat up pretty bad.

17                   I didn't see her, but her brother told me  
18 she couldn't get out of bed. He didn't recognize her. Her  
19 face was all beat up.

20                   And somehow the kids end up in care and we  
21 were in agreement with it because they went -- he -- they  
22 went to the grandfather, and they promised they weren't  
23 going to separate them, and next thing you know they were  
24 separated and given up for adoption. No -- we were never

1 ever -- again, we were never ever approached to see if --  
2 if we -- had any interest in taking them.

3 See there was -- like I said, I work for  
4 them, but there was an incident at one point, and I know --  
5 and then, like, my daughter, she said -- well, Loretta, she  
6 says something that we -- she said, we were passed out, and  
7 she was sleeping in between us, and her friend was there,  
8 but that's -- that wasn't true, but she couldn't have been  
9 sleeping with us because she wasn't there. So this feller,  
10 he went and he tried to get at her, right. And they used  
11 that against me for what -- for -- for what this guy had  
12 done to -- huh?

13 No -- no -- no. About, like about Loretta,  
14 that's including with Audrey -- that's because -- that's --  
15 that's -- that's excuses that they're using because of an  
16 incident that happened with Loretta. She was 19. There  
17 was no children under the age of 16 in the house at the  
18 time.

19 So we didn't start drinking, me and my  
20 husband, till the children got older, so we stayed sober  
21 for 25 years for our children, so.

22 And she -- Audrey, her -- she was beaten up,  
23 and they didn't even -- when they decided -- they told us  
24 they weren't going to separate them, and they weren't going

1 -- like, they weren't -- they weren't going to be  
2 separated, but we weren't even notified.

3 And I was told by the adoptive parents and  
4 by them, we weren't allowed to see them. In fact, they  
5 came to where I worked with Nunatsiavut at the time, they  
6 were going to a children's program, and the lady who had  
7 him when -- said, "I'm not bringing him here." I said,  
8 "You have to bring him here. He's Native," because she's  
9 non-Native, right. "You have to. You have to keep his --  
10 him -- let him know that he's -- he's Native." And she  
11 said, "Well, I promise to bring him here, if you promise to  
12 let him you was Miriam and not -- not your Nana" -- and I  
13 did, I did it. For their sake. They do have -- and I kept  
14 away because I knew they had good homes, but that wasn't  
15 the point.

16 We had -- we -- we -- I had to make a  
17 promise that I would have -- you -- I see them all the  
18 time, but I didn't -- they never did know I was Nana until  
19 Loretta's been a blessing. Maybe I'm starting to see a lot  
20 of blessings since Loretta has gone home to heaven.

21 My grandsons -- they -- they in-boxed me, in  
22 fact, her youngest boy that was in care, he -- he in-boxed  
23 me and he said in his class to had to -- they were given  
24 three names of people to write about and Loretta's name was

1           there. So he knew he was Saunders's, and he got a hold of  
2           his mother, so we are starting to have a bit of contact.

3                        I don't know, I let the mother -- the  
4           adoptive mother know, but I haven't heard from them --  
5           maybe, I don't know she said, no or yes, but every now and  
6           then he'll pop up. He's 14, and he's coming back  
7           hopefully. I love him, and he knew -- I love my grandkids.

8                        And it's something we need to -- I need -- I  
9           want to stop -- yes, if they're adopted out to -- if the  
10          next family's white, just at least don't completely take  
11          them from us.

12                      I want to -- you know -- I, I -- it's hard  
13          seeing your grandchildren there and not being able to hug  
14          them the way you were when they were -- because they were  
15          older when they went into care. How old were they? Three,  
16          four, five, something like that, but they -- they do --  
17          they did know us. So that's another thing they -- they --  
18          three and five.

19                      So another thing I see that's happening to  
20          our people, grandparents who aren't able to take care of  
21          the grandchildren -- that -- don't give them -- I don't  
22          think that should give them a right to completely taking  
23          them off -- out of our lives because we still love them.  
24          But there are circumstances that we are unable to take



1       them.

2                   Had my sons not been sick at the time I  
3 would have taken them. And I didn't want them to live  
4 through the fear and scare of seeing my son cutting himself  
5 up all the time. Thank God he's over it now and was  
6 through medication. They put him on Ritalin because he was  
7 a high -- you know, high -- hyper child, and now he's a 32-  
8 year-old with a 12-year-old mind, and -- and we got to live  
9 with it. You know. I just wanted them to know about that.  
10 What -- what do you want to tell them?

11                   **MS. AUDREY SAUNDERS:** I have another child,  
12 Mariah (ph), she lives with me. She's nine. After Loretta  
13 got murdered the doctor put me on Ativan and a sleeping  
14 pill to help me sleep, and not long after I was asked to  
15 leave my home because of my prescription.

16                   I wasn't put in a safe place. While I was  
17 at that place they put bars at my windows and they were  
18 videotaping my bedroom to see me coming and going. So I  
19 called Mom, and told them, my brother had been come in  
20 town, in St. John's, and he come down, and seen it was  
21 true. And he got -- they got me into the friendship centre  
22 in Mi'kmaw.

23                   They wouldn't let me see Mariah for a whole  
24 month. And then they made supervised visits, and I was

1           begging and asking to do drug tests. They wouldn't do it  
2           for like four months. There was no court order.

3                       I was just told they might -- when the drug  
4           -- they finally did drug tests because my mom come in and  
5           made them do it, and it came back negative, nothing in my  
6           system and they just said I could go home.

7                       **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** She was kept away four  
8           to six months, just because -- yeah, she was kept away.  
9           She had been given -- she -- prior, she was -- like, she  
10          was a user. After she lost her children. After she'd lost  
11          her children she got into painkillers, and then she had to  
12          go -- she went and got help for it after -- went onto the  
13          methadone problem.

14                      And when Loretta was taken, that's what she  
15          -- they put her -- the doctor put gave her a prescription  
16          to help her with it and then they accused her of using even  
17          though it was prescribed for her. And when they said, "Oh,  
18          you're using." They put her in a very, very bad place.  
19          There was people using and she was -- she was just -- you  
20          know, she was on the methadone trying to -- keeping herself  
21          clean. And they tried to say -- I know they tried to set  
22          her up.

23                      But once they found out that she had never  
24          ever applied to -- for membership with our -- with our

1 organization -- with Nunatsiavut, she never ever applied  
2 because of her fear, for how she was treated.

3 And they would not believe that she -- that  
4 her daughter wasn't Inuit. Or she is Inuit, but she's too  
5 scared to apply because of what's happening. She's too  
6 scared to -- she was too scared to apply because it seemed  
7 like the Native children were getting taken away, and  
8 brought.

9 And when -- when they took her she begged  
10 them to give her the drug test. They cut -- they used to  
11 cut her hair. They refused to do it for four to -- was it  
12 four months or more?

13 **MS. AUDREY SAUNDERS:** Four.

14 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** They had her in this  
15 real bad place. People shooting up. And she called me  
16 crying.

17 So I -- me and her brother ended up going  
18 out. And we had some help from the -- we got her into the  
19 friendship centre, and she started getting help with --  
20 from Emilia (ph) and them then. But -- and then I went  
21 back -- I went out to healing centre myself. Then after I  
22 knew they were okay, right.

23 But she -- social services has been giving  
24 her a really hard time. And I believe her because my

1 sister, she also is a social worker, and once they found  
2 out she was in residential schooling she's been getting a  
3 very hard time.

4 Yeah, they even -- they went to visit my  
5 daughter and them and they were questioning about their co-  
6 worker, my sister, a social worker, right. So she's  
7 getting a rough time too, because she was in residential  
8 schooling. Thank you.

9 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Delilah,  
10 when -- when we were talking and preparing for this too,  
11 you -- you -- you spoke about some of the -- the -- the --  
12 the deep connection that -- that you and Loretta had, and,  
13 and how that relationship developed. Do you want to talk a  
14 bit about that?

15 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Yeah. Is that on?

16 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Yeah.

17 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Yeah. Loretta was my  
18 -- my best friend. She was my other half. And she -- she  
19 was my closest friend. We didn't hide anything from each  
20 other and we helped each other through a lot.

21 I lived with her in Halifax. I -- I moved  
22 to Halifax about a month after she started her first year  
23 of university. I went there to go to a treatment centre.  
24 And I chose the treatment centre in Halifax because it was

1 close to her and I ended up just staying there until I was  
2 about 21.

3 And she -- we -- we told each other  
4 everything. We -- we hung out all the time. There was  
5 never one without the other. And we -- there were a lot  
6 different facets of our relationship.

7 We -- we really wanted bigger, better lives  
8 for ourselves that what we saw back in our communities.  
9 And a lot of these situations that we had seen ourselves  
10 in, be it substance abuse, or toxic relationships, and we  
11 would always say to each other, "we're going to take over  
12 the world." And we had -- we had big plans for our  
13 futures.

14 She wanted to go to law school. She wanted  
15 to be a mother. She wanted to be a wife. She wanted --  
16 she wanted to help our people. And she -- she was on that  
17 path to do that.

18 I was looking through some pictures last  
19 night when Joseph had asked me for some, and there's one, I  
20 don't know if it's too appropriate to share, but it -- it  
21 will give you a little insight to her sense of humor, and  
22 I'm just going to hold it up.

23 Okay. So the funny thing about this  
24 picture, it's on Facebook, and someone had commented on my,

1 my push-up bra, but they didn't know it was a push-up bra.  
2 And Loretta started a big rumor that we didn't -- we didn't  
3 fix, I suppose, she started a big rumor that I got breast  
4 implants. And so there's a huge thread on Facebook and she  
5 was -- she was really silly.

6 She had the best laugh. She had the best  
7 laugh. She -- it was just full body. Sometimes almost  
8 cackling -- like her whole body would...

9 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Her belly would  
10 jiggle.

11 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Yeah. She had a  
12 little Buddha belly, it was -- it was cute. And this  
13 picture -- me, and my parents, and my sister, and Garrett  
14 (ph) was there; wasn't he? We went to -- we went to some  
15 amusement park in Nova Scotia, Clements Park, or something  
16 along those lines.

17 Loretta loved driving fast. She loved  
18 driving fast. And my mom started crying, and I think she  
19 was scared, but she said it was because Garrett was in the  
20 car.

21 But that -- that was really a beautiful day  
22 and she loved spending time with friends and family and she  
23 had a really big heart. She -- she helped me with a lot of  
24 -- a lot of my own stuff, in guiding me to find direction

1 in my life.

2 We -- we did support each other a lot. She  
3 sent me an email, out of the blue -- from this picture. I  
4 don't remember what that was from. I think it was New  
5 Years Eve and me, Loretta, and our friend Amy (ph) showed  
6 up. We're all wearing a bit of sparkle. And this woman  
7 was kind of catty with us because we were all matching, or  
8 whatever. And she's like, "Oh, these rich girls." We were  
9 like, "Oh, yeah, with our Swiss bank accounts," and we --  
10 we -- we were always laughing and having fun, and...

11 But back to the story about -- what was I  
12 talking about? Before the picture. What was I talking  
13 about?

14 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You were talking  
15 about the (indiscernible).

16 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Oh, she, she was at  
17 the university. She went to St. Mary's, and she wrote me  
18 an email out of the blue. She's like, "Hey, D, I just want  
19 to let you know that I'm very proud of you." And it's  
20 something that I still read. I was starting to go back to  
21 school. And she's like, "This is your year, like, for  
22 school," and she's like "thank you so much for helping me  
23 make sense of the chaos in my life and being there and  
24 listening to me," and that's something I -- I still read

1 quite often.

2 You know, we were always sending each other  
3 messages. We were talking all the time, whether she was  
4 lecturing me about my poor decisions, or we were talking  
5 about things like colonialism and about abuse.

6 And for a long time Loretta had difficulty  
7 talking about her own traumas, but near -- near the end of  
8 her life, when she was working on her thesis she began  
9 really digging into those difficult things. She -- she  
10 moved out when she was about 15?

11 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Fifteen.

12 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** About 15.

13 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Sixteen.

14 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** And she moved to St.  
15 John's and she got on CHOICES for youth, where you like get  
16 emancipated and you get -- you receive social assistance.  
17 I ended up doing the same when I was 15.

18 But she moved to Montreal after St. John's,  
19 and she became addicted to drugs, and she was being  
20 exploited at the age of 15, sleeping on park benches. And  
21 she ended up moving home -- when, mom?

22 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Two -- two years,  
23 three years, then she was -- she left about 16 --

24 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** She was like 17.



1                   **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** -- she was about --  
2 coming back about 18, I think.

3                   **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Yeah, she -- she came  
4 back to Goose Bay when she was about 18. And I remember  
5 when she came home, she -- she -- you could tell that  
6 she -- she had been using and she wasn't in a good place.  
7 And she struggled with that, but she did end up getting  
8 sober, and she finished three years of high school in eight  
9 months.

10                   **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** On my God.

11                   **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** And she -- she -- her  
12 determination, and her -- her drive -- she was -- she is  
13 still one of the strongest people, and I think a lot of  
14 that comes from my mom. She -- she was -- she was my role  
15 model. She was my best friend, you know. We could be  
16 fighting one minute and then, you know. But we never  
17 turned our backs on each other. We were -- we were best  
18 friends.

19                   She finished three years of high school in  
20 eight months, and then she did a transition year to go to  
21 university, and she did that in Goose Bay. And then she  
22 went onto St. Mary's University.

23                   And I remember one thing she talked about  
24 quite often was a girl -- she told a girl that she went to

1 high school with, not the eight-month like, adult high  
2 school, but that she actually went to high school that  
3 she's going to St. Mary's, and she said to Loretta, "Don't  
4 you have to be smart to get in there?"

5 And -- but that -- that's just stuff that  
6 some people face, you know, when you're trying achieve your  
7 dreams. But Loretta -- Loretta used that as fuel. She  
8 used her trauma as fuel to -- to really -- to really --  
9 like, propel herself forward. She -- she never wanted to  
10 live in victimhood. She never wanted to use her trauma as  
11 anything. She -- she used as a strength because she -- she  
12 was -- she didn't just -- she wasn't just resilient, she  
13 overcame things, and she -- she thrived.

14 She -- she's someone that I still look up to  
15 and that I feel really guides me. And someone who -- who's  
16 still teaching me today through the conversations that  
17 we've had and the things that she's lectured me on. But  
18 she -- she's still very much in my heart.

19 And I think for a long time I -- I had  
20 difficulty calling on her because I, I was really bitter  
21 that she was gone. I was achieving things, and I wanted  
22 her to be there. And I wanted her to see that I was in a  
23 good place because I know I did make her worry. I made my  
24 family worry. And she never wanted my mom to worry about

1 anything because my mom is already had a lot on her own  
2 plate.

3 But I think for a long time I had a hard  
4 time calling on her and sitting with her -- her spirit.  
5 But I went to a healing centre just recently, in September,  
6 in Kitigan Zibi, the *Òde Widòkàzowin* Centre. And I got to  
7 distance myself from a lot of things that I had going on in  
8 my life, you know, priorities, responsibilities, that sort  
9 of thing, and really sit down with fears and stuff that I  
10 had hold, held onto, assaults that had happened to me,  
11 traumas that had happened to me.

12 But one night -- everyone was too scared to  
13 go out by the fire by themselves, but one night I had been  
14 sitting with things; my fears, my insecurities, my pain,  
15 and I went out to the fire by myself and I, I closed my  
16 eyes and I was crying and I -- I called on Loretta and my  
17 *Anânsiak*, and *Atâtsiak*, my grandmother and my grandfather,  
18 to come and sit with me and my cousin Tina (ph), who  
19 committed suicide. I called on them to come sit with me  
20 and help me -- help me carry it. And that's the...

21 I'm finally able to sit with her now, and  
22 while I was bitter that she hasn't been here to be able to  
23 experience life with me and I could be an auntie to her  
24 baby. And I remember -- while I was bitter about that -- I

1 -- I'm able to experience her presence in a different way  
2 now.

3 I remember when Loretta told me she was  
4 pregnant. I was on a beach in Tofino, B.C. I had moved  
5 away. It was my first time really away from family. And I  
6 -- I was really enjoying it out there. And she made plans  
7 that after graduation she would come visit, and she texted  
8 me, and she's like, "Oh my God, D, it's a positive." And I  
9 remember like, squealing on the beach because like, she  
10 would have been an amazing mom.

11 She -- and she had that in her. Like, no  
12 matter what she had been through she can still carry that  
13 love and that like, she -- she had such -- she -- she would  
14 have been an amazing mom.

15 And I told her, "Like, just say the word,  
16 I'm on a plane. I'm back. Anything you need."

17 And I -- when we lived together on Cowie  
18 Hill, where she was murdered, I used to blast the heat, but  
19 leave a window open and put my feet outside because that's  
20 one thing we had in common, we hated when our feet were too  
21 warm. But she, she hated the heat in generally. Oh, my  
22 God, she would storm out and she'd be like, "Why do you  
23 have the heat so high?" And she -- like she'd say --  
24 anyway, she hated being way too warm. And we lived on the

1 tenth floor so the summers were -- were bad.

2 We -- Halifax was -- was our city. And  
3 we -- we did everything together. Went shopping, we would  
4 go out dancing. And another thing about Loretta, she loved  
5 to dance. I was an awkward dancer. And one thing she  
6 would still laugh about right up to when she passed away.  
7 We went out dancing at Reflections in Halifax, and we had a  
8 friend named Gustavo (ph), and we went Merengue dancing,  
9 and he was -- he was flinging me around -- flinging me  
10 around and she -- she said that I looked like a little rag  
11 doll, a little wet rag doll being flung around. And that's  
12 one night that we went out. So it was something she  
13 always still laughed at. I was like, "Oh, he's a good  
14 dancer."

15 But we -- we did have some difficulties  
16 together, especially when we were drinking together. I  
17 think there were a lot of unresolved things that we had  
18 experienced that brought out a lot of anger in us. So we  
19 have gotten into fist fights, and -- but she -- she's --  
20 she's the huge part of my heart, and a part of who I am.  
21 She -- she has helped guide me and helped me become the  
22 person I am along with everyone in my family.

23 Since losing her we lost a huge part of our  
24 family. And you see it in -- in how our family has broke

1 down in many ways at certain times because she -- she had a  
2 very important role in our family. She was very supportive  
3 of every one of us, and she understood -- she understood  
4 why we had the pain and the hurt that we did. And why we  
5 hurt other people, because hurting people hurt people. She  
6 was very compassionate. Very -- you know, she was -- she  
7 was my best friend.

8 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Thank you.

9 I -- you know, I -- I -- we -- when we were talking and  
10 preparing for this, it was -- it was so wonderful to hear  
11 that, and it's so wonderful to hear it again. Thank you.

12 When we -- when we were talking and  
13 preparing for this too, we -- we also talked about some --  
14 some of your experiences with -- with the media, and with  
15 the -- and with the police investigation when Loretta went  
16 missing, and later when she was found. Do you want to talk  
17 about some of that and the court processes and so on?

18 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Okay. I think the  
19 media were extremely insensitive in how they -- they  
20 handled my sister's case, even though we were fortunate to  
21 have the media coverage that we did. And that's something  
22 that -- that's -- it's difficult to -- I don't know. It's  
23 -- it's good that we had the media coverage that we did,  
24 but it's difficult when you deal with people who just view

1 your loved one as a story, or the...

2 I'm going to start with how I found out  
3 Loretta's case had turned into a homicide case. We had  
4 just finished doing an interview with CTV, I think, and  
5 Kelison Dahl (ph) she -- she was extremely kind and I --  
6 she was good.

7 We were driving back to the Rice residence  
8 at St. Mary's University because St. Mary's University had  
9 donated a room for us like, as the hub. And I think we  
10 were going to go meet with the detective and -- Yelchin  
11 (ph), Taylor (ph), and his partner at the time, and you  
12 know, I thought maybe they just had questions or something.  
13 You know, I -- I still it very much in mind that we were  
14 going to find Loretta and she was going to be fine.

15 While a part of me, knowing the research  
16 that she was doing and the stories that we talked about,  
17 and everything -- while a part of me knew it was unlikely,  
18 the logical part of me knew it was unlikely, I pushed that  
19 away. That was my sister. That was my best friend. And I  
20 got a text message and it was from -- it read, "Hi, this is  
21 Basel (ph) from CBC Toronto. Sorry, this is turned into a  
22 homicide case, but would you be able to speak to us this  
23 evening?" And that's how I found out that my sister was  
24 murdered.

1                   And I -- I looked at my phone. I -- it was  
2 -- it was absurd. I almost chuckled at it because, you  
3 know. But once we got -- we -- we went around -- we were  
4 just around the corner from meeting with the detective too.

5                   Oh, the way that they knew so early is  
6 because they were there filming Loretta being dug out of  
7 the snow. And I, I did end up going to meet the detective,  
8 and Yelchin -- Yelchin collapsed, and I -- they didn't  
9 really have to say anything. They didn't have to say  
10 anything.

11                   And then I just turned into a beast. I -- I  
12 -- I became an animal. I don't know what it was. And my  
13 friend, Amy, said, "Like I saw Loretta's fierceness come  
14 out of you then." Because like I -- I just like stormed  
15 through. I could feel like, rage and stuff pulsing through  
16 my veins. I could, like I can almost feel it now, like  
17 tingling of like -- I was vibrating.

18                   And because that's -- that's not what I  
19 wanted to hear. They -- that's not -- that's not the way  
20 that I wanted it to end. And that's not the way that I  
21 should have been approached with the news. So that was --  
22 that was a really difficult thing to deal with.

23                   Another thing that I've -- I made a point to  
24 do -- like during the appeal hearing, I had mentioned that



1       you know, while we're lucky that my white passing sister  
2       received some level of justice, or what Canada considers  
3       justice, there are families out there that don't -- don't  
4       receive the same level of justice. And that's something  
5       that Loretta -- Loretta made sure that I was aware of that.  
6       Because she was -- she was very aware of that.

7                   And that's -- that's one thing that I want  
8       to really bring forth and really emphasize because I've  
9       seen it. I've seen it play out. I've seen families --  
10      even I was speaking with Bernie, and she -- she -- like the  
11      things that are going on in Salmon Arm now. How the women  
12      are just being painted as prostitutes. And the families'  
13      truths aren't being brought forward. I've seen that. I've  
14      seen that very stark contrast. That dehumanization that is  
15      very -- very prominent. It's -- you can't -- you can't  
16      miss it. So that's one side of the media.

17                   I -- I did see them as a useful tool to be  
18      able to -- to call -- to appeal to the public to -- to ask  
19      if they had seen Loretta's car. To see if anyone had seen  
20      her, or had any information.

21                   And with the police I -- I do understand why  
22      they couldn't give us a lot of answers. Because when I  
23      landed in Halifax I immediately went to the police station.  
24      They did ask me a couple of questions, like "Did Loretta

1 own a white purse?" Loretta owned a lot of purses, but I  
2 knew which one they were talking about. And I -- they did  
3 ask some weird questions. They asked about the text  
4 message that I got from Loretta's -- no, I got a Facebook  
5 message, and it just said, "Hey." It was on Valentine's  
6 Day, so it would have been Victoria or Blake, her  
7 murderers, messaging from her phone. And so they -- they  
8 did ask those questions.

9           They told me to stay away from the  
10 apartment, but I -- I didn't. I had to go see that her car  
11 wasn't there. I had to go see that she wasn't there. I  
12 expected to see her on her bed, surrounded by papers,  
13 surrounded by books, studying. It was reading week, so I  
14 figured, you know, she -- her phone might have died. She  
15 might have -- like her phone might have been cut off. She  
16 was going through financial issues.

17           And there was a cop sitting on a chair  
18 outside of the -- outside of our apartment door. And  
19 the -- the cop, I said, "Hey, like this is mine and my  
20 sister's apartment. Can I -- like what's going on?" And  
21 she called the detective who told me to stay away, and she  
22 said, "Are you going to come talk to the family?" And I  
23 think they knew at that point. I think a part of me knew  
24 at that point too, but I wouldn't -- I wouldn't acknowledge

1 it.

2 The police -- we did switch investigators a  
3 few times. I don't know, I think -- I think they'll want  
4 to talk more about like the police interactions. I was  
5 more so on the ground with posters, dealing with media, and  
6 sometimes the police, but media was where I have the most  
7 issues.

8 **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** I'd just like to try  
9 to -- to say a few things. Talk about Loretta just for  
10 about a couple of minutes, not very long. I hope I don't  
11 break down.

12 Well, my little girl, she was really a smart  
13 girl, really smart. Well, she had five brothers and two  
14 sisters, and really they were all smart. They were all  
15 really good in school, you know, getting good marks, and  
16 everything like this. And they got along with everybody at  
17 school most of the time. Well, except for a few people  
18 that -- well, we all know what's school's like.

19 Anyway, you know, but my girl, she was --  
20 and like I said, she had five brothers and two sisters.  
21 And besides that we had -- we practically reared up two of  
22 my brother's children, two boys. And we had quite a few  
23 foster children coming and going, you know.

24 And (indiscernible) and not one of them

1 foster children or brothers and sisters could -- they  
2 couldn't say nothing wrong with Loretta. Because you know,  
3 she could get along with anybody. And anybody -- and she  
4 made friends wherever she went to really quickly, like,  
5 hey. Well, excuse me, and Loretta too, same as -- same as  
6 the rest of her family you know.

7 Me and my wife, we didn't drink while they  
8 was all growing up. We didn't do no drugs while they was  
9 all growing up. And that was just wasn't allowed in the  
10 house simply allowed. And nobody was allowed to come  
11 around with it. Things like that. And except for the last  
12 two of my children I got to say I've had a beer with them,  
13 Delilah and Cameron (ph). You know, they seen us having  
14 beer and that in the house when they got a little bit  
15 older, and things like that and -- and...

16 Anyway, Loretta, she went to Sunday school.  
17 She went to Sunday school with her -- with her brothers and  
18 sisters. And not only, not only her brothers and sisters,  
19 me and her mother would go, you know. That's how ...

20 And I got to say, you know they were pretty  
21 smart too. They could read the Bible at a very early age,  
22 and that.

23 Delilah -- you take Delilah here, and her  
24 brothers they could even read before they went to school,

1 and we get a lot of credit to that because they sat down at  
2 the table, read the Bible, and every week they used to have  
3 to remember a little Bible verse and get up and say it in  
4 Sunday school, which, you know, they all done very well.  
5 Sometimes they wouldn't -- might need a little help once in  
6 a while to get the verse out, but they all managed to do it  
7 anyway.

8 So, you know, that -- that was the -- the  
9 way that -- that was the way that we reared up our  
10 children, and those who stayed with us.

11 But you know -- but all good times got to  
12 pass, hey, and our children they grow older, make their  
13 (indiscernible), they grow older and make their own  
14 decisions.

15 Sometimes -- sometimes, you know, when  
16 they're still too young, and I believe that's what -- the  
17 beautiful social services comes in when a kid turns 15, 16  
18 and they think they know everything. You know, that's  
19 where the wonderful social services people kick in and  
20 start to listen and that you know, and I would say that the  
21 wonderful social services -- I got to say that they draws  
22 them away from family. You know, you try to -- we tried to  
23 rear the very best, yeah.

24 Now, I must say too, that, you know, that

1 the teachers in school was no help at all. All -- a kid  
2 got to go no matter what. And they complain to a teacher  
3 and the teacher runs to the social services and the social  
4 services comes down hard on the parent, and they don't know  
5 what the fuck they're talking about.

6 And the social services, I do believe run  
7 around that like so bad because they got the RCMP to back  
8 them up. All they got to do is run to the RCMP and the  
9 RCMP threaten to press charges against you. For what?  
10 Trying to -- you know, trying to take care of your kids the  
11 best way you -- they can.

12 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** You're doing good,  
13 love, you're doing good.

14 **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** Yes. Well -- well,  
15 you know, my little girl, when she got very -- when she was  
16 young she -- I guess she just wanted to go out and explore  
17 the world, I guess like any other teenager who shouldn't --  
18 should be still home. What could you do? If anybody could  
19 tell me.

20 What could you do when you got the mighty  
21 social service woman, a little snotty-nosed kid just  
22 getting out of university or something. Going and telling  
23 parents that three (indiscernible) kids who almost reared  
24 up and ready to go, and them little snotty-nosed -- that

1 little snotty-nosed social services kids ordering you  
2 around. What could you do? You don't want the RCMP  
3 throwing you in jail because you're trying to look after  
4 your kids.

5 We never ever hurt our kids. Never ever  
6 did. Never ever drank around them. Never ever smoked any  
7 dope around them. What could you do when the little  
8 snotty-nosed social service worker knocking on your door  
9 and the RCMP standing on your back. Your kids have told  
10 them something. Well, was nothing bad they told them about  
11 us anyway, but maybe a little smack on the butt or  
12 something. What they needed -- what they really deserve.  
13 That was enough for them to come run down, you know.

14 Anyway, my girl, she decided to wander off  
15 and go ahead and got a boyfriend, I think, when she was  
16 maybe around 16 years old, or whatever, 16 to 17 years old.  
17 She -- yeah, she got into a few things after that, after  
18 she got out. She got into drinking and drugs. You know,  
19 and wanted to travel across Canada, I suppose.

20 But anyway she -- she met this certain guy  
21 who was no good for her and you can't tell them that  
22 anyway, you know. No good for her. They runs off to  
23 Montreal. And she lived out on the streets and that, and  
24 after a little while she come to find out that it's a

1           horrible -- horrible place out on the streets.

2                       I think she told her mother that too, that  
3           you know, on the streets out there, and she could see how  
4           they -- the people was living there. Especially the girls.  
5           Especially the Aboriginal girls. She seen them on the  
6           street. She seen them on the -- living -- and how -- how  
7           they was treated.

8                       I think, I think too, that she was in heavy  
9           drugs at that time; my girl was. But you know, anyway her  
10          mother took her out to rehab, and all this, and out around  
11          there and she seemed to be doing fine, but then that must  
12          have waken her up I think that she -- she wanted to go and  
13          have a -- a better life. She wanted to make a better life.  
14          She wanted to -- she wanted to make her father proud of  
15          her. Her mother proud of her.

16                      And then she decided to go back to school.  
17          But she wouldn't go to school in Goose Bay. She -- I guess  
18          she wanted -- didn't like it but, she wanted to go to  
19          Hopedale for school. She wanted to go down there and get  
20          her education, so that's what she done. She went down  
21          there, and she was very smart down there. She got her  
22          education very fast because all she done was study and  
23          work.

24                      And I mean she was a real -- real model to



1 the -- the -- the ones that were -- who was going to school  
2 down there. And how -- how she got through so fast. And  
3 that -- that encouraged a lot -- a lot of young people  
4 in -- in Hopedale.

5 Yeah, they were, they were doing better.  
6 They started doing better in school down there. Anyway the  
7 rest of the kids they started studying, you know. Then our  
8 -- our (indiscernible), you'll think -- I think they're  
9 still doing good down in school.

10 I -- I don't have that little  
11 (indiscernible) but I likes to show off, I don't think  
12 about what the kids made -- made for her after she was  
13 murdered. Send a little booklet, but -- the -- the little  
14 children made from the school and they send it to us. To  
15 encourage us, you know, and -- and help us to get over her  
16 death. Well, I wouldn't say just an ordinary death, she  
17 was -- she was murdered. Well, here's her -- here's her  
18 little pad -- book what they made up for her.

19 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** The languageness (ph),  
20 okay.

21 **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** Oh, and -- and my  
22 wife reminded me. That's the little eagles that --

23 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** That's the  
24 languageness that is in Hopedale, from my home community.

1                   **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** Yeah.

2                   **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** They take them from  
3 newborn to till they get to school and all day long, like  
4 they get just talking Inuk to them. So that's the little  
5 class who sent it to us was the little languageness that --  
6 that's where, where we lost our language, so they're trying  
7 to -- they're using that to try to bring our language back  
8 to the younger generation.

9                   **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** So that was quite  
10 encouraging, hey. Yeah.

11                   Well, my daughter anyway she got -- she got  
12 her diploma finished, the rest of her education in  
13 Hopedale, and she was very happy. She applied for  
14 university, St. Mary's, and she got that and she was even  
15 happier. She was glad that she will go.

16                   But I told her, "You got to be careful out  
17 in the city, my girl. You don't know who you -- what's  
18 going to run across." But she pretty well happy. And she  
19 still started in university.

20                   I mean she was settled down, settling down  
21 really good. And she was doing really good in school. She  
22 was really happy. She was -- she was getting good marks in  
23 university because all she done was study most -- that's  
24 the most thing that she would do, studying.

1           The reason for that is because she wanted to  
2 get something done in her life. She wanted to make her  
3 father and mother proud of her. And she was really doing  
4 that because she was a really smart, hard worker.

5           I -- I remember when she first started  
6 writing her thesis, I think it was her mother encouraged  
7 her to write her thesis on the Aboriginal people. And she  
8 put her heart in that.

9           My -- my -- as far as I know my girl, when  
10 she started writing her thesis, she -- she didn't just pick  
11 stuff out of the books, I don't think, or got newspapers  
12 clippings, and all that, and, and looked at it -- wrote it  
13 in her thesis. She really had interviews with people, real  
14 live people. And she interviewed them. I do believe her  
15 professor said it was one of the longest thesis that he  
16 ever had, and one of the best written ones. I mean, that's  
17 what my little girl was like.

18           And children, she really loved children. I  
19 know that. She'd go a hundred miles, and she did, and even  
20 farther just to visit kids, children.

21           Well, anyway, my -- my little girl -- I  
22 think I might have called her Loretta once or twice, maybe  
23 three times in her lifetime because she was a princess and  
24 that's what I called her. And she knew that she was one.

1 And that's all I ever called her.

2 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** (Indiscernible) called  
3 her Loretta (indiscernible) called her.

4 **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** Yes, she used to  
5 be -- she'd get upset with me anyway if I called her  
6 Loretta. I had to call her princess, or I had to call her  
7 girly-girl. I used to call her girl because I was in the  
8 delivery room with her, and I used tell her the story too,  
9 and she used to like it, yeah. I was -- I was in the  
10 delivery room when -- when she got born and you know, when  
11 she was born the doctor picked her up, hold her upside and  
12 smacked her bum when she -- and she peed. And then the  
13 doctor said, "It's a girl." And that's how I called her  
14 girly-girl ever -- ever since then. She was a girl. And  
15 her mother said to me, "That's your baby." And I said,  
16 "Yeah."

17 And, and I took her and she -- and you know,  
18 I practically raised her up -- well, my wife was there.  
19 You know, I didn't do all the work, like changing diapers  
20 that much. But you know, I took care of her most of the  
21 time.

22 And, yes -- yeah, she was -- she was quite  
23 the girl, and we all miss her. We -- we all miss -- we all  
24 miss Loretta, our girly-girl, our princess, we all miss

1 her.

2 And anyway, she -- she was -- everybody was  
3 -- it's just so bad things like this got to happen. As  
4 I -- as I say, you know, she -- Loretta wasn't murdered  
5 because of her thesis. She wasn't murdered because she was  
6 a Native. She wasn't murdered because she was Aboriginal.  
7 Loretta -- Loretta was murdered for I believe, just a  
8 little bit of rent money, or something, but I do believe  
9 too, that those cold-blooded killers. I might as well add  
10 was cowardly -- cowardly -- cowardly cold-blooded killers,  
11 murder a -- I don't even know if it was for -- for money.  
12 I think it was for being jealous. They were jealous,  
13 cowardly, cold-blooded murderers; that's all they was.

14 Those cold-blooded murderers had no thought  
15 for anybody's life. From what I hear those people that my  
16 daughter let stay in her apartment. She took care of them.  
17 She brought them to restaurants and paid for the food.  
18 Took them to movies and paid for it.

19 What could you say about cowardly, cold-  
20 blooded murderers? I mean my girl, she wasn't a big woman.  
21 She was about the size of my -- my wife. And this big  
22 cowardly, cold-blooded murderer of what -- what he calls  
23 his self a man, doing that to a little woman for.

24 And that woman what called herself a woman

1        didn't -- is nothing but a cowardly cold-blooded murderer.  
2        If that thing couldn't stick up and say something to my  
3        girl, who was bigger than my girl, bigger around than my  
4        girl, then what could you say about people like that?

5                    All they -- all of the -- you know, they  
6        were just cowardly cold-blooded murderers. And you  
7        don't -- the people, or the women and girls that my  
8        daughter was writing about, what could you say about all  
9        those men who kill women? What are they? They're nothing  
10       but cowardly cold-blooded murderers. They're scared. They  
11       will run away from a real man; I bet you. But they will  
12       murder a poor little woman. How awful, hey? Really awful.

13                   And my daughter, you know, wanted change. I  
14       do believe in her thesis that I didn't read it all, but she  
15       had things wrote in there. She wanted things changed, the  
16       social services stuff. She wanted the RCMP -- she -- she  
17       was getting ready to give that to the university, and maybe  
18       then they would have let the -- the -- the RCMP and the --  
19       the Government -- Government of Canada to look it over and  
20       really see what this country -- this -- this big mess this  
21       country is in. About letting men murder women.

22                   Yes. And my wife just reminded me that  
23       pregnant women, pregnant women being murdered. You don't  
24       think -- you know something about a pregnant woman being

1 murdered? The cold-blooded murderers are allowed to get  
2 away with murdering that little child what's inside of a  
3 woman. You know I asked women before -- after my daughter  
4 was murdered, and I said, "When you get pregnant do you  
5 consider that little thing what's in you a human being?"  
6 Every one of them said, "Yes, it's a human being." Once a  
7 woman gets pregnant that is a human being growing in there.

8 And yet because of this stupid -- stupid  
9 abortion law, you know, it's not considered a human being.  
10 And not only that I've got in mind to tell you not only  
11 that I think my wife looked it up in -- in whatever, you  
12 know, about pregnant -- well, yes, if -- if a woman wants  
13 the baby you know, and don't have abortion, or whatever, if  
14 a woman wants the baby that you -- that's a human being.

15 My daughter wanted a baby. I wanted it.  
16 And -- and my wife did too, wanted it, wanted that baby.  
17 And my daughter wanted it. So there's no reason why -- no  
18 reason why, I think if the lawyers looked up that law and  
19 saying that's a human being, those two cowardly cold-  
20 blooded murderers they should be charged with a double  
21 murder. They should be charged with a double murder. I  
22 don't...

23 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Because in the -- it  
24 said in the law abortion is illegal unless a mother and the

1 doctor approve of it, and she didn't approve of her baby  
2 being killed with her, that's what he was trying to get at  
3 too.

4 **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** Now I'm going to tell  
5 you something might be hard for some of you to -- might be  
6 something hard for you to hear out there, but I only -- I  
7 do believe in my heart that only somebody who had somebody  
8 murdered in their family you know, in such a -- want to --  
9 do believe things are going to happen, you know. I often  
10 said, or said you know, if my daughter was in that  
11 apartment and they got into an argument and maybe you know,  
12 and one of them just pushed her. You know, not  
13 intentionally to hurt her, but just pushed her and like if  
14 she fell and hit her head of the coffee table or something  
15 you know, then -- then I would -- you -- I wouldn't  
16 think -- I would be sad about it, but then I know it wasn't  
17 intentionally.

18 But those cold-blooded murderers they --  
19 they went right to the length of putting her in a hockey  
20 bag, dragging her and throwing her in a car, and taking her  
21 and dumping her. Now, if that's not a cowardly cold-  
22 blooded murderer, I don't know what is.

23 And I really do think that Canada should  
24 have the death penalty for those cold-blooded murderers



1       like that. I think they should have the death penalty.  
2       And I know some of you don't even want to hear or speak of  
3       the death penalty, but those cold-blooded murderers,  
4       something got to be done about them. The killings are  
5       not going to stop. This is going to keep on going, no  
6       matter how (indiscernible) try to make it and -- and fix  
7       it, and all that.

8               They only knows are -- the one who got 25  
9       years, well, he got life. After that, he can get parole  
10      after 25 years. Twenty-five years is almost gone, four  
11      years anyway. And he's still be only a young man getting  
12      out of that jail. He'd be only in his 50s; that's all.  
13      He'd be walking free. That -- so what's he's doing? Out  
14      walking around looking for another victim maybe. Another  
15      Aboriginal girl. Another white girl. Another coloured  
16      girl. You don't know. He's just a cold-blooded murderer.  
17      A cowardly one at that.

18             And my daughter, in her thesis, she wrote  
19      about a good many of them. Some of them not even found.  
20      Some of them probably going on yet.

21             I hope I -- I hoping this, speaking for my  
22      daughter here, not -- it's coming from me, but I hope it's  
23      her, I hope that's the way she would think that these --  
24      these killers -- these killers, you know, they're going to

1 go on. They're not going to stop. Girl after girl after  
2 girl is going to be murdered unless you got really --  
3 really tougher penalties. The penalties are -- or they got  
4 -- they got put in some prison out on some island where  
5 they never see the light of day again.

6 I suppose I said too much to you, but I --  
7 I think I just give it up now. Thank you.

8 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Yeah. Thank  
9 you, thank you, Clayton.

10 One -- one other area that I think that we  
11 talked about in preparation for today is the court process,  
12 the -- the trial and preliminary hearing and the appeal and  
13 your experience in that. Do you want to talk about that?  
14 And also, your experience with victim services, I think you  
15 talked about.

16 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** I -- one thing that  
17 really came up is while we were in the courtrooms, and  
18 stuff, and the -- and Blake and Victoria were there --  
19 well, we -- me and my mom and my eldest brother, Edmond, we  
20 couldn't go into the -- the courtroom during the  
21 preliminary hearing because they called us -- they had us  
22 written down as witnesses, and that was pretty difficult.

23 But throughout the court process, and stuff,  
24 it was -- it was hard not being able to live our emotions.

1 It was hard not being able to -- it -- that, that part was  
2 difficult, but with victim services I think they need to  
3 have a more culturally competent -- culturally competent  
4 process. I found -- they -- they just gave me a list --  
5 sent me a list of counsellors.

6 And the counsellor that I got actually he --  
7 he was kind of creepy. He kept talking about how  
8 attractive Loretta was. He -- he was the only one on the  
9 list that had a homicide grief on there. He spoke about  
10 how attractive she was, and stuff. And I wasn't in a good  
11 place. I -- I don't really want to go into any more detail  
12 with that part.

13 There -- there's some other stuff that made  
14 him really inappropriate. But I think -- I think having  
15 culturally competent processes is really important. One  
16 thing is they're -- they're so -- they're very triggering.

17 They sent -- I -- I unsubscribed from the  
18 updates. You can get updates about the -- the two  
19 murderers about whether they're going -- leaving the prison  
20 for a hospital visit or if they're being transferred to  
21 different prisons. If -- just up-dates.

22 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You said subscribe.  
23 Is it electronic?

24 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** No. Well, you can

1 get in the mail. I just like, completely -- I -- I just  
2 told the victim services worker that we dealt with that I  
3 didn't want to be a part of it because it was very  
4 triggering for me. And it's -- it's very triggering for  
5 everyone in my family, I think.

6 I -- I -- I feel like -- one thing my mom  
7 brought up earlier, how -- how when a family -- a family or  
8 an individual goes through an experience like this, these  
9 services look at you as if you had never been through  
10 anything else. They don't look at the culmination of  
11 issues that you faced.

12 I -- I mentioned earlier that I went to a  
13 treatment centre, Mi'kmaw Centre and they -- they had a  
14 very holistic approach in terms of addressing like your  
15 four aspects and working with you on different -- different  
16 levels of your aspects, and really incorporating ceremony.  
17 And while sweat lodges and stuff aren't my traditional  
18 like, my ancestor's ceremonies, they -- they still really  
19 helped me, and have -- I've also been learning a lot more  
20 about like, Inuit culture and spirituality and ways of  
21 healing.

22 But I think -- I think that's one thing that  
23 really needs to be addressed is they expect you to go in  
24 and not act human and not react to your emotions or your --

1 your -- your experience. And when you're hearing these  
2 really horrific things...

3 When I was reading my victim impact  
4 statement -- I -- I -- I prepared something, but I -- I  
5 couldn't read it from the paper. It -- it wouldn't come  
6 out. And I -- I kind of rushed off the -- the -- the  
7 witness stand, and I screamed at them. I screamed at Blake  
8 and Victoria, and then I stormed out. They did end up  
9 letting me come back in to read, but I -- what else did I  
10 mention? I'm kind of blank.

11 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Do you want to  
12 tell us...

13 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Oh, well the -- I can  
14 say it, I guess. The counsellor -- the counsellor I got  
15 with victim services, he -- he was the one that spoke about  
16 Loretta being attractive and like, talking about her a lot,  
17 and it was -- it was weird. I had only met with him maybe  
18 a handful of times and I was with in a really bad place. I  
19 was homeless. And I -- I didn't end up doing it, but I --  
20 I -- I spoke to him about, like me thinking of like,  
21 stripping and stuff, and doing sex work. I didn't end up  
22 doing it.

23 But he like, started touching my leg and  
24 stuff. And that -- like, I was trying to confide in him as

1 a counsellor, like trying to get out of that state of mind,  
2 and this is someone that's recommended by victim services.

3 He also -- his name came up, I got a duffel  
4 bag full of case files of Loretta's case, like tips and  
5 stuff that were sent in because Blake's cellmate, he -- he  
6 convinced Blake to write a so-called -- convinced Blake  
7 that he could write a chapter in his book and make money  
8 off of it if he wrote about Loretta's murder. And that  
9 became a piece of evidence because he didn't address it to  
10 his lawyer he addressed it to his cellmate and then you  
11 know, they ended -- they ended up finding it because cells  
12 got tossed, or whatever.

13 Anyway, that was submitted. The old  
14 cellmate, he -- he got me a bunch of these -- he ended up  
15 reaching out to me and my family and he gave us like, tons  
16 of case files. I still have them. And in one of the tips  
17 the, the counsellor's name comes up, and he had called in,  
18 said that he saw Loretta's car and that a black guy was  
19 driving it, or something.

20 But it's his name that's like, you know, his  
21 number and stuff on there. And that's, you know, that's an  
22 experience with the victim services counsellor.

23 And I was very fortunate. I don't know  
24 where she is now, but Sandra Miller (ph), I met her at one

1 of the MMIWG pre-inquiry engagement sessions, and she's  
2 been absolutely amazing. And yeah, you guys have got a  
3 gang around you.

4 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Did you want to talk  
5 about the court stuff? Court and victim services?

6 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** I was too hooked up --  
7 I'm more -- I'm more worried about what's going to happen  
8 and -- no, not right now. I'm not.

9 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Thank you all  
10 so much. This is not the first time we've met, and talked,  
11 and I just thank you for sharing with me, with the inquiry,  
12 with the country. I have a couple of questions if that's  
13 okay.

14 It's -- I also know it's into lunch hour and  
15 I want to make sure our Elders are okay if we continue a  
16 little bit. Everyone in the room --

17 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** My dad's diabetic  
18 too, so he probably has to eat.

19 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Okay, so we  
20 could pause now if that's better for everybody. I just  
21 have a couple of questions, mostly about recommendations  
22 and -- and what we do moving forward, and about Loretta's  
23 thesis. I'm hoping we can get a copy. So I leave it to  
24 you. I don't -- health is important, so let me know what

1       you'd like.

2                   **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** For recommendations,  
3       I -- I know that journalists have some sort of code of  
4       ethics. I -- I know that they have to follow some sort of  
5       code. I'm not sure what it's called. But I feel like  
6       there -- there has to be a revision. There has to be  
7       something in there in terms of dealing with families and  
8       you know, I've -- I've come across journalists who have  
9       been so amazing, so compassionate, and like they're --  
10      they're dealing with the situation appropriately and could  
11      definitely be models for other journalists, but I feel  
12      there needs to be something that -- that should be adhered  
13      to officially.

14                   Because as I mentioned earlier, the media is  
15      one of the most powerful institutions in the world. We  
16      live in a very media driven society, and I feel that --  
17      well, it's not just that I feel it -- it's -- it's the  
18      right thing to do to stop dehumanizing our women and to --  
19      to respect these families and their truths and not label  
20      women as less than because of something that they do to  
21      survive.

22                   I -- I really feel that they need to do  
23      something to -- to better that system.

24                   Oh, and I -- I mentioned earlier the



1 culturally, culturally competent -- the need for cultural  
2 competence in victim services. Because you do have a lot  
3 of -- you have a lot of Indigenous families going through  
4 the system dealing with situations like my family has. And  
5 you know, the support wasn't there from the Nunatsiavut  
6 government. We wanted to go to one of their camps on the  
7 land, for healing on the land and they -- they denied us.  
8 But you know, we're -- we're not getting that level of  
9 healing from anywhere. You know, it's very inaccessible.

10 What else was (indiscernible). And -- and  
11 the triggering stuff with victim services. Okay.

12 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** I don't even know the  
13 question that I --

14 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Do you have  
15 any recommendations?

16 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** For what? For --

17 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Oh, for healing  
18 centres.

19 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Oh, yeah, we need -- we  
20 need better access to healing centres. Like -- like she  
21 said, we -- we asked for -- if I -- me and my -- we were  
22 falling apart. I was practically very -- I got very  
23 violent with my husband. And I realized I'm capable of  
24 murdering too, given -- putting me in certain circumstance

1 that's how bad it is -- it was with our family.

2 Recommendations that we do -- when we do go  
3 to our people or do, we have access to our healing centres,  
4 thanks to you First Nation people I would -- I went to  
5 Eosegoundtowes (ph) -- I mean they paid for it, but how was  
6 -- how was I going to do reach out to our people if we're  
7 not healing -- in healing centres together and dealing with  
8 it together?

9 Like I said, this is not my first murder and  
10 they -- my cousin and my parents, my dad and them went  
11 through -- my dad's brother was murdered. They had to deal  
12 with it and then my cousin's son was murdered, and the  
13 people wasn't in jail very long though. Now they're in the  
14 same -- they're in the same community.

15 I know when we were growing up if people got  
16 into trouble in the community, the, the community had  
17 Elders who dealt with it, and they kicked them out the  
18 communities if they didn't continue. We need more  
19 traditional ways back into our -- in our -- into our  
20 communities where we -- we have our traditional ways of  
21 dealing with them.

22 We did. I don't know what's going on with  
23 them now because I -- I haven't been invited to any of the  
24 meetings. Maybe they have it on Facebook, or on -- on --

1 in -- in some media, but I don't look at stuff. I'm in  
2 work, and that's all I do at work, then I'm home. So we  
3 need more -- more healing centres or more access to it.

4 And I recommend that people that got  
5 children, who's being involved with child welfare too, that  
6 I -- I know because like I said, my son was out looking for  
7 his sister and his girlfriend had the child apprehended and  
8 -- and then he met up with another girl and they got two  
9 children and they're in care now.

10 And my son was -- he wasn't even in Hopedale  
11 when -- like I mean he was in Hopedale, but he -- he didn't  
12 even touch the girl, but all she said she was scared and  
13 her brother called the cops. Next thing you know he was  
14 kicked out and the kids were apprehended.

15 So I'd like to -- I'd like to have an  
16 Aboriginal, like more -- because I used to be there as an  
17 Aboriginal liaison worker before I went to work with the  
18 hospital where I'm to now. And I would recommend --  
19 recommend that they have a Aboriginal person there that  
20 knows -- knows this --

21 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Like an advocate.

22 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yeah, advocate and who  
23 got children and knows what they're talking about. Like my  
24 husband said they come out -- they come out of university

1 and they don't -- and -- and they don't even have children  
2 of their own, and same as social services.

3 Those people they're already far enough put  
4 down, having to be on assistance and in our -- in our  
5 community, like I said, the prices are different and we're  
6 in Labrador and in Newfoundland is way cheaper, they should  
7 look at the rates for our people that's on the coast  
8 compared to the rates that we're getting in Newfoundland.  
9 You could get probably a cartful -- in Newfoundland to --  
10 maybe two little Co-op bags or two little bags full in our  
11 communities. I think that needs to be looked at, why it's  
12 so high rate because they're not eating proper. Then  
13 they're going to hospitals, they're left with go on a bus  
14 pass, some of them end up on, down the road on the street.

15 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** (Indiscernible)  
16 problem.

17 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yeah, and to Ottawa,  
18 and like they go to Ottawa. Well, I don't -- I've never  
19 had to. I don't -- I can't speak -- but I guess it's  
20 familiar. Yeah. But like to me, like they need to see  
21 that what those people who are on assistance, and how  
22 they're treated, I can tell you they are treated just like  
23 when I was a young girl, and you do this, and you do that.  
24 Right. I think they should -- it's gone back to the old

1 way, the way -- when they first come in and start taking us  
2 over, and for a while it was going good and then all of a  
3 sudden the residential schooling come, and that's finish,  
4 and now they got to have something else to keep us -- and  
5 to have our...

6 See we're Inuit. And there's Innu. The Innu  
7 -- our -- and our people are dying off. The Innu are  
8 allowed to have so many caribou for their Elders. Our  
9 people -- like we're allowed to have -- they get it for the  
10 Elders. Our people are not allowed to (indiscernible)  
11 permanent, and now they're -- they're on low income they  
12 got to try to -- and if you look at the food in our stores  
13 they're in -- on the coast, they're old, that's, and I  
14 wonder why the government is saying by 20 what, there's  
15 going to be how many Aboriginals dead? I seen them dying,  
16 a little girl with ten-year -- six years old, her uncle, my  
17 -- that's my daughter-in-law told me, her uncles -- her  
18 little niece, little girl was six years old, had -- she  
19 kept -- they kept bringing her to the hospital for bad  
20 chest -- chest infection. They said, "Oh, just a cold."  
21 She was six years old. She died with TB. And before  
22 the -- the father could do anything about it, he was given  
23 a cheque for \$4,000. I guess that -- I guess he signed the  
24 paper not to sue on.

1                   And so people are done with TB now, and my  
2 mother was cut up with TB. She was experimented on, I  
3 believe, for two years, and you never heard of TB and all  
4 of a sudden my people are dying with TB, this day and age?  
5 And why? Like, why all of a sudden, right? So I'd like to  
6 see recommendations and child welfare being looked in. And  
7 why our children, all of a sudden with -- when our  
8 government -- like we're getting so much money, they say,  
9 for preventing it, but I know from experience they do not  
10 help the families.

11                   My son is -- he's told, "Keep away from her."  
12 Now they -- like I said, his second lot is gone in --  
13 second lot has gone into care. He got four kids in care  
14 with two different women, and each time they said, "they're  
15 not allowed together. Break up." You know, instead of  
16 saying okay, do...

17                   He should -- they should have done that with  
18 the first relationship because he's FA. He's adopted. I  
19 had him adopted, and he's -- I know he's FAE. So instead  
20 of working with him, they turned around and they just take  
21 the kids and say -- they don't work to you -- with you.  
22 When they -- when he had his second little girl born,  
23 because he had the first -- my first grandchild, the second  
24 little one, they wouldn't even let her breastfeed her. She

1 wanted to, and they said, no. So I knew then forget it.  
2 They're not even -- they're not even going to try to get  
3 her back.

4 Because when I was working in -- in -- in  
5 child welfare a mother even -- if even if we apprehended a  
6 newborn, if they wanted to breastfeed we had to let them.  
7 Now, they're not even allowed to do that. Yet the  
8 government is paying money to teach them to breastfeed.

9 You don't even need to teach a puppy how to  
10 breastfeed. You don't have to teach animals. Why they  
11 going to -- why don't they spend money on the prevention?  
12 And you know, that's monies going into places where people  
13 is getting paid to help put our breast in a baby's mouth.  
14 When that should helping prevent the kids from going into  
15 care and putting supports for the family, not just saying,  
16 "Okay, you two got to keep away. Which one of yous of you  
17 wants the children?" And that's what happening to my son.

18 They want to know, okay, this one is not  
19 working, but really, and then they're trying to sneak  
20 around together because they want to be together, but  
21 they're told they're not allowed to be together.

22 So I think child welfare and social -- I  
23 think there needs to be a stop on our families and our  
24 girls having to live like little cheat -- and then be sent

1 to the hospital with \$20 a day to eat and -- and if they're  
2 not going to do that, I think they should cut off their  
3 insurance. They should have the same coverage as what  
4 they're -- they're giving to my people.

5 The -- they'll get their insurance cut off or  
6 they get -- or they up their -- up our people's -- like the  
7 medical with the social services. They either give -- I  
8 know back then I got quite a bit when I went on -- on  
9 meetings. If they're going to get \$75 a day -- the -- the  
10 patients who go to the hospital should get \$75 a day. You  
11 know what I'm saying? They wouldn't have jobs if they  
12 didn't have people on assistance. And I think they need to  
13 remember that. Yeah.

14 And I think -- isn't that when they become  
15 social workers for child welfare don't they promise to make  
16 -- promise to do their best to do -- to help the families,  
17 but they don't. I think they really need to -- child  
18 welfare really needs to be looked in big time.

19 Oh, one more thing, one more. And where we  
20 were from Labrador, when the RCMP tried to coordinate the  
21 things for us, instead of we having to call and say -- like  
22 when my daughter was found in a bag, I heard -- I didn't --  
23 I didn't hear from them. I called up and I said, "Is that  
24 true? My daughter was found in a bag?" And, "Can't tell



1       you." And I said, "I wants to know if my daughter was  
2       found in a bag," because then I -- then I really freaked  
3       out. I thought oh God, she's cut up. They got her all cut  
4       up.

5                       They had to go to a point -- the family was  
6       looking for a bag to try to fit -- fit herself in, so one  
7       of his sisters tried to go look for a bag so she could show  
8       me you didn't have to be cut up to be in there. So I  
9       think, especially where we're out the province, I think  
10      they need to have more coordination with our police, so  
11      they could get, get and bring it to us or we could -- you  
12      know, they -- we -- they could tell us face-to-face, you  
13      know. They need to work more together from province to  
14      province. Like Loretta was murdered in Nova Scotia, but  
15      they wouldn't work together with the police that -- the  
16      RCMP that was in our community.

17                      Not that I like the RCMP because another  
18      thing. I told you, said that was that. But another thing  
19      is after -- when my -- before my daughter got murdered my  
20      husband asked me -- I -- I was put on a sleeping pill  
21      because I -- me and she was dealing with my alcoholism.  
22      And they put me on a sleeping pill, and my husband was  
23      having a few beer and he said, "Mom, can you go buy me a  
24      six pack?" And I said, "No, I'm --" I -- I too tired I had

1 my -- well, it was earlier, I had my sleeping pill, and so  
2 I called taxi.

3 But it was wore off, this was around eight  
4 o'clock because I was on-call till eight o'clock. I was  
5 charged for impaired. And I wasn't even drinking. And I  
6 pled guilty because I put that Loretta was helping me to  
7 plead not guilty and I was too -- because I was -- didn't  
8 know what to do, so she -- but after she was taken I needed  
9 the retainer money for to get my sister out to come to the  
10 court with me, so I plead guilty because I -- Loretta  
11 wasn't there and I never had nobody to give me the courage  
12 to go through with it.

13 And he said, I drink seven to nine beer. I  
14 can't even drink three and I'm drunk. You know. So like  
15 there's another thing is we have to -- they lie. He lied.  
16 He lied about me. And they lie. They get away with it.  
17 And they lie. And I just want to put that in.

18 (Indiscernible) suicide as well.

19 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Oh, and checking into  
20 suicides and suspicious deaths. There are -- there are a  
21 lot of -- a lot of deaths that seem really out of character  
22 and the police aren't doing proper investigations.

23 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** And accidental  
24 (indiscernible).

1                   **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Yeah, or a ruled as  
2 accidental.

3                   **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Oh, yeah, I have one  
4 more. Yeah, because when my niece committed suicide, there  
5 was six or seven -- six or seven of them that -- in that  
6 month or -- and when my niece -- when my cousin's little  
7 girl died in the -- in the -- in the foster care all they  
8 told her -- but that's how quiet our people are. And they  
9 do, they do introduce us as quiet people, and I'm hoping to  
10 take our people out, and not let them be quiet, not let  
11 them be scared to show them. People who know me, knew what  
12 I was like. And they can be just like me. They don't have  
13 to be scared anymore.

14                   **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** Lots of suicides down  
15 there.

16                   **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Lots of suicides.

17                   **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** When they have a  
18 suicide they don't report it like (indiscernible) you don't  
19 hear that on the news or radio. If you did it would be  
20 steady -- steady care (indiscernible) it's like that. It's  
21 like that. One person down there commits suicide look --  
22 it's like two or three follows, you know. It might happen  
23 every -- once a -- once every year or something, or once  
24 every six months, but there's -- there's -- there's a lot

1 of them. And it's -- it's young people too. Really young  
2 people. So I think that should be looked in pretty good.

3 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Do you want us --

4 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Do you want to say  
5 anything else? Because I'm going to start talking again.

6 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** I see that the  
7 *qu'liq* is starting to dry up as well. So I think it needs  
8 fuel and -- and everybody here does too.

9 Is there anything else you wanted to say?

10 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** We're good.

11 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** No, we're -- we're  
12 good.

13 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Okay. I wanted  
14 to -- I don't have any other questions. I want to express  
15 my gratitude, and part of the -- what you've given us is a  
16 gift. A gift of knowledge. A gift of understanding. A  
17 gift of sharing with us and, and allowing us a window into  
18 what you've experienced in helping shine light on what  
19 needs to be done.

20 We've got some gifts that we want to give to  
21 you recognizing the gift you've given us.

22 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And their courage  
23 too, so thank you.

24 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Very much.

1                   **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** It's only her  
2                   qualities, the Lord and God and He gives us.

3                   **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You're not quiet,  
4                   darling. You're taught to be humble. That's the pillar or  
5                   foundation of our culture is humility. Right. And when we  
6                   break off from being humble we're not being ourselves and  
7                   that's why -- that's what -- that's a barrier for us.

8                   **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** And that's -- that's a  
9                   gift Loretta gave for me learning from you people. If it  
10                  wasn't for you people I wouldn't -- probably wouldn't be  
11                  here today. And I thank you all because it's your people  
12                  who gave us the courage. And it started off with Loretta  
13                  in university -- coming -- I met the lady who, group she  
14                  met.

15                  **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Mom.

16                  **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yeah?

17                  **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Can I go next, or...

18                  **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Okay. So the  
19                  gifts we -- we want to give, some are gifts from other  
20                  communities and Nations we have some *manittak*, the wick for  
21                  the *qu'liq*, also some Labrador tea, and the matriarchs of  
22                  Haida Gwaii for the last few months have been gathering  
23                  Eagle Feathers from their territory to give as gifts to  
24                  families and survivors who have spoken and shared, so we

1 would like to give you these gifts now.

2 **MR. JEFF WARD:** Just as they're wrapping  
3 up with the gift giving, we just wanted to remind the next  
4 family is at 1:40, 1:40 is the next family, also lunch  
5 is being served in Goose Cap B, which is the room right  
6 next door. So if anybody is hungry, lunch is next door,  
7 and the next family be at 1:40, 1:40. Thank you.

8 Wela'lioq.

9 **-- Exhibits (code: P1P04P0101)**

10 **Exhibit 1:** Folder of electronic images displayed on  
11 monitor during the public hearing.

12 --- Upon recessing at 1:08 p.m.

13 --- Upon resuming at 1:59 p.m.

14 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Good afternoon,  
15 Commissioners. Before I present to you our next witness  
16 she asked Elder Cathy Marten to share a song and I would  
17 like to ask the audience to stand as she sings the song.  
18 Thank you.

19 **--- OPENING SONG**

20 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** *Migwetch*. Thank you,  
21 Catherine. Commissioner Audette, Commissioner Robinson,  
22 before I introduce you to our next witness I will ask Mr.  
23 Zandberg, registrar, to swear in Monique Fong Howe, and she  
24 will give oath with an Eagle Feather.

1                   **MR. REGISTRAR:** Good afternoon, Monique.

2                   Good afternoon.

3                   **MONIQUE FONG HOWE, Affirmed:**

4                   **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you. So  
5                   Commissioners, I would like to introduce you to Monique  
6                   Fong Howe. She will be sharing her story as a survivor of  
7                   different types of violence throughout her life, but she's  
8                   here today showing us how resilient and strong she is.

9                   So Monique, I would ask you to introduce  
10                  yourself to the Commissioners. And what would you like to  
11                  share this afternoon with the Commissioners?

12                  **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Okay, hello. My name  
13                  is Monique Fong Howe, and I'm a mother, and a grandmother.  
14                  I'm also a survivor of violence, many forms of violence.  
15                  And I want to share a little bit about my -- my history and  
16                  how far I've come. And when I first walked up here and  
17                  noticed all the empty chairs, and it was reminded to me  
18                  that there's many women sitting around me even though  
19                  they're not here physically. They're here with me. So  
20                  that's very comforting for me.

21                  I -- I thank for allowing me to come in and  
22                  share with you and I hope that you'll be able to take some  
23                  of it -- of my life and hopefully make it better for our  
24                  children and our grandchildren.

25                  I went to -- I heard about the inquiry, you

1 know, through the news, and I noticed on Facebook one day  
2 that it was going to be held in Halifax. I was at work --  
3 I work for the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network, and I  
4 thought, I'm going to go over there. I just like -- on a  
5 whim, just decided to go over there and -- because I wanted  
6 to be supportive to -- if there was any women who were  
7 living with HIV or Hep C. I wanted to be supportive for  
8 them.

9 So I went there and I was not expecting to  
10 share my story at that time. Kind of caught me off guard,  
11 but it was -- it was -- it was time. I guess it was time  
12 that I -- that I do that. So I -- I -- they asked me if I  
13 would come in and talk to them and then I decided I would  
14 do that. And I talked for two hours. Sharing my life with  
15 these women that I'd just met. And it was very  
16 overwhelming because for a long time I have never -- I  
17 haven't shared my story.

18 So I know a lot of people, I've been living  
19 here in the Maritimes for about 30 years now, and many  
20 people see me in my role now as an advocate and a worker,  
21 but they don't know my -- my history. Why I decided to do  
22 the work that I do. So it's -- it's kind of strange for me  
23 to share with people who I know, my story, but I will do  
24 it.

25 So I was born in Saskatchewan, I'm Cree. And



1 I've been here, like I said in Mi'kmaq territory for 30  
2 years now. I'm married here. I started -- I started --  
3 when I was very young my parents separated and divorced and  
4 from a lot of that trouble I had to take care of my  
5 brothers and sisters, like we all kind of took care of each  
6 other.

7 My father was working up in the -- up in Fort  
8 McMurray, so he was working. My mom was -- had left for  
9 some time, and we stayed with my father until my mother, I  
10 guess got set up and then we split -- they split us kids  
11 up. There's four of us. And so that was when I was quite  
12 young, maybe about six or seven I guess. My youngest  
13 sister was a baby, maybe two years old. And so we -- we  
14 pretty well just had our own -- our own way of doing things  
15 with our family and we just kind of took care of each other  
16 until I moved in with my father, my step-father and my  
17 mother. And my two other siblings moved with my -- stayed  
18 with my father. Me and the youngest went with my mom.

19 During that time I -- it was very hard for me  
20 knowing that our family was not going to be together. The  
21 one, I think really good thing was that my step-father is  
22 still with us. We didn't have a lot of different men in  
23 our -- in our lives with our mom, so it was pretty  
24 consistent, so he -- he became like our father as well.

25 And when I was younger I -- I also

1 experienced sexual abuse and the combination between that  
2 and my parents' separation caused me to have loss of my  
3 memory. So I don't really remember very much from -- like  
4 some families and some people can remember right from when  
5 they were a baby, their childhood, and I can't remember.

6 The -- the trauma has taken those memories  
7 from me, which was really hard because sometimes I just  
8 wanted to remember the good things about our family. You  
9 know, so the fact that I couldn't remember it. Like I  
10 would remember like, bits and pieces of it, and sometimes I  
11 can -- you know, I'll be sitting and I'll -- I'll remember  
12 something, but I'm -- I'm -- it's been you know, it's -- a  
13 lot of my memories are gone.

14 When I was around -- I don't (indiscernible)  
15 young -- young person, I -- I started to experience sexual  
16 abuse and that was really hard for me to understand why  
17 that was happening. And living that life -- living that --  
18 that story was -- was very difficult because I always  
19 believed that you know, your family is supposed to take  
20 care of you. There's no doubt in my mind my -- my abuser  
21 loved our family, but it was just very confusing for me.

22 So I guess from a young age I started to  
23 realize and -- and understand that I linked it -- a very  
24 unhealthy link -- linkage was that sexual abuse, or sexual,  
25 anything sexual meant love. So as I continued to -- to

1 grow up, I lived a very promiscuous lifestyle and I lived a  
2 very unhealthy life. The abuse went on for -- for a while.  
3 It seems like forever. In my mind it seems like it  
4 happened for a long, long time. And it really messed me  
5 up. It really -- it really stoled a lot from me.

6 I left home when I was about 13 years old and  
7 I went to go hang around the streets. Became -- I lived on  
8 the streets for many years. A lot of the people that I  
9 hung around with then have either been murdered, been -- or  
10 missing, or -- you know, died from drug overdoses. They're  
11 gone. You know, and that was really -- that was our  
12 reality you know, our, our street life was a reality that  
13 people who -- who've never seen it or never lived it, don't  
14 understand.

15 You know, like -- you know, I heard -- heard  
16 earlier about you know, sleeping in parks, you know, I've  
17 done that. I slept, you know, with people for a place to  
18 live, for a place to stay, for food. But that is what  
19 survival does, that's survival for you, right? You -- you  
20 do what you need to do in order to continue to live and to  
21 continue to survive.

22 I was very fortunate in -- in one aspect, I  
23 had a street mother. And I haven't been able to find her  
24 yet, but I wanted to thank her because she helped me learn  
25 how to survive on streets when I was only 15, 14. That was

1 not the kind of life you ever want to see a young girl  
2 living -- living in, and Mary (ph) really took good care of  
3 me. You know, she helped me a lot. She guided me.

4 And I see that missing now with a lot of the  
5 young girls on the street. I -- I see -- there's that  
6 guidance missing, that caring, and that love. You see a  
7 lot of girls on the street now and they're lost. You know,  
8 if I could go and take each one of them home I would.

9 I still do that. I still talk to the girls  
10 on the street if I see a young girl working I go give her  
11 condoms, of course, because that's what I do. I do HIV  
12 education and prevention. I give them condoms and I talk  
13 to them and I tell them that they're loved because a lot of  
14 them don't feel that. A lot of them don't feel that love.  
15 I don't know what their stories are, but you can feel that  
16 pain from them. And sometimes that's all they just want is  
17 someone to acknowledge them. Someone to care about them.  
18 I know that's what I wanted.

19 So I grew up living on the street. Being  
20 involved in drugs. Being involved in drinking and  
21 partying. We hitchhiked all over the place, that's how we  
22 got around. We would hitchhike from Regina, to Saskatoon,  
23 to Edmonton, to Calgary, didn't matter where. We would  
24 always go. Me and my -- a couple of girlfriends, two of  
25 them are -- are gone now. One died from complications of a

1 car accident. She was my best friend. We did everything  
2 together. She's my angel. Her name -- her name, Donna  
3 (ph) like she just was a good person. And the other girl,  
4 she committed suicide.

5 And that's another thing that we don't talk  
6 about. All the women that have killed themselves because  
7 of the violence. Because of the pain that they feel in  
8 their families. That's something we need to acknowledge.  
9 Like those are women that are -- have given up, thinking  
10 that life is over because of their stories and their -- and  
11 their history. I felt like that many times. I think, so  
12 we would hang around. We would go all over the place  
13 and -- and it was -- it was always...

14 I always was in violent relationships when I  
15 was younger. It seems like the most violent men I was  
16 attracted to. And I would get lickings after lickings and  
17 live in -- live in fear all the time. I remember you know,  
18 being beat up with my young son in my arms.

19 My son wasn't always with me. I had him when  
20 I was 17 years old. For the first three years of his life  
21 he stayed with my sister and my -- I still call her my  
22 mother-in-law, they would take my son and take care of him  
23 when I was not able to, so I would see him maybe once a  
24 month, maybe -- whenever I could, like whenever I was  
25 sober. I would go see him. So he -- he had to grow up

1 without me for the first three years because my drugs and  
2 my alcohol were a priority.

3 The violence that I experienced in my life  
4 has made me I think, more understanding to the women that I  
5 work with. A lot of them don't realize when I hear their  
6 stories, I hear myself, so when I was -- when I was younger  
7 and on the street it was very -- very difficult.

8 I remember seeing girls getting beaten up all  
9 the time. Shooting up. Living that lifestyle. Always  
10 fearful of what was going to happen next. And I was scared  
11 even though I may not have acted scared, I was scared.

12 I remember going into bars and I used to be  
13 one who would shoot up all the women in the washroom, so my  
14 cousins, some of my cousins and friends were not very good  
15 people and they had threatened me that if I ever started  
16 shooting up when I was younger they would break my legs.  
17 And I truly believed them. So I didn't shoot up until I  
18 was older. Till I was about 18. But I was always the girl  
19 in the bathroom that would shoot the other girls up, so  
20 that was part of my role. I learned how to inject people  
21 with their drugs very young. Even though I was under age  
22 in the bar, it didn't seem to matter. No -- nobody seemed  
23 to matter that I was there and that I was so young, but  
24 that was a part of my role.

25 So from a very young age I learned -- I

1 learned all these survival skills, I call them, like even  
2 though that -- like, you know, who wants to brag that they  
3 know how to shoot people up on drugs? So I started to -- I  
4 started to -- I always wanted a different life. I always  
5 wanted a different life for me and my son.

6 And even though I -- I remember the last time  
7 when I was in Saskatchewan, when I was younger, and still  
8 using and still drinking, and still being in violent  
9 relationships, I went into the house for battered women, so  
10 I must have been around in my 20s, I guess. And my step-  
11 father and my mother moved here -- moved to Nova Scotia.  
12 And they came down to visit. I hadn't talked to my mother  
13 in a long time because she didn't -- of course, she didn't  
14 agree with what I was doing. She didn't like what I was  
15 doing. She knew I'd been on the street I think -- I know  
16 it was very shaming for her. I can't take back all that  
17 pain I know I caused my mother.

18 So my father, my step -- my step-father and  
19 my mother came down to Saskatoon and I was in the house for  
20 battered women then. And my step-father told me that I had  
21 one month. That he wasn't going to leave without me  
22 because he knew that I was in a bad place. He knew I  
23 wasn't taking care of myself. He knew that I was using  
24 drugs. I was -- by then full-blown injecting. Drinking  
25 every day. Putting myself at high risk for everything.

1 And as I said, like, years went on and I would see more and  
2 more people go from being murdered, and -- and killed, and  
3 drug overdoses, and I wanted a different life.

4 So my -- my step-father came and told me I  
5 had a month. I kept saying, "No, I'm, I'm not going  
6 anywhere. I'm not going anywhere. I'm going to stay  
7 here." And as time went on, for that month, I realized  
8 that I needed to get away from there. So I phoned one of  
9 the pawnshop guys that I knew, because with my life I knew  
10 a lot of people and I asked him, I said, "Come and buy  
11 everything that you -- that I have, and get me a ticket to  
12 Halifax." And he did. He took all my stuff and he gave me  
13 a ticket. I know that I did not have anything worth any  
14 kind of money, but I think he seen something -- the  
15 potential of me living a different life and he gave me the  
16 break that I needed.

17 My mother hardly spoke to me that month. But  
18 my step-father kept telling me, you know, "You've got to  
19 get out of here. I can't leave you here. You're going to  
20 die." So I packed up and I took my son and we moved to --  
21 he was only three years old, and I had, you know, all  
22 intentions of staying here for six months, and here I am 30  
23 years later still here.

24 And I -- when I -- when I moved here one of  
25 my boyfriends came from -- from Saskatchewan and he lived



1 with us. He had been in and out of jail again that's part  
2 of that history that I had with men. They were violent.  
3 They were in and out of jail. They were controlling. They  
4 were possessive, you know. Get beaten just for looking at  
5 someone you know, just terrible people.

6 And he came to live with us, and AJ (ph), my  
7 son, was young, he was like four, five years old, and when  
8 I was working that man was abusing my son. I trusted him.  
9 And he took my son's spirit away from him. My son still  
10 struggles because of that. I have seven children. He's my  
11 oldest, and he's, he's the one who struggles the most.  
12 Because I was still using and drinking when he was young.  
13 My other kids not so much because I never had that life  
14 around them.

15 When I found -- I didn't even know he had  
16 done that to my son till years later. My son told me when  
17 he was in his teens, what happened. He got mad at me one  
18 time and he said, "You must have known," and I didn't know.  
19 I knew what my son had went through because of what I had  
20 went through. And I blamed myself -- blame myself for  
21 trusting that person. I haven't seen him yet -- that man,  
22 but one day I know I'll see him and I'm going to tell him  
23 how I feel and what he's done to my son.

24 My son's going through that same cycle of  
25 going in and out of jail. But all I can do is pray for him

1 and hope that he finds the help that he needs and guide him  
2 and most importantly love him.

3 So that man left, and I -- I got married to  
4 my first husband, and I had two more children, two more  
5 beautiful kids. During my relationship it was -- a lot of  
6 people would -- and I'm -- you know, we made it look so  
7 easy, married life, but it wasn't. I ended up leaving my  
8 marriage. And when I did leave my ex-husband would not let  
9 me see my children for four months, including my oldest  
10 son, wasn't even his child. During that time I tried to  
11 take my life because I couldn't be without. That was very  
12 hard being away from my kids.

13 He charged me with assault because he had  
14 grabbed me and I kicked him and he charged me with assault  
15 for kicking him. So I had a no contact order. I wasn't  
16 allowed to go to my house. I wasn't allowed to see my  
17 children. And that was not a good -- not a good thing. It  
18 really hurt, and that's how he wanted to hurt me. He  
19 wanted me to feel pain. And I felt it. I fought in court  
20 because -- and I lost. He had full custody of my children  
21 because of the assault. I couldn't see them all the time.  
22 I had to pay him child support. But that was all. Was it  
23 worth leaving? It was worth leaving. But it was not worth  
24 my kids being taken.

25 I see some of the pain still with Michael

1 (ph), Megan (ph), but I know that they know I love them,  
2 and I know that they may not know the whole story because I  
3 never wanted them to feel that stuff.

4 But we don't -- that's another thing we don't  
5 talk about. We don't talk about how people use children as  
6 a way to cause pain. A way of controlling people to make  
7 them do what they want, so they dangle your child. That's  
8 got to stop. We got to start listening to women. We got  
9 to start believing them and what they're saying. It's  
10 important that we believe them. If they're saying that  
11 something's happening in the home and that they have to  
12 leave -- don't give the power to the people, the abusers,  
13 don't do that. Don't let that happen. Don't let that  
14 continue to happen. There's too many of our kids living --  
15 living in homes, and with people who just use them, and  
16 that's not fair. It's not -- it's not fair to them.

17 I left my -- I left my husband, and people  
18 would always accuse me of, you know, I -- soon after --  
19 soon after I met my current husband, we had been working  
20 together and people used to always accuse us of fooling  
21 around, but we never did. We just -- we -- we fell in  
22 love. And we're still together. And he helped me during  
23 that time. He helped me when I didn't have my kids. He  
24 helped me. And he helped take care of me. I know that I  
25 trigger him sometimes.

1                   After I finished doing this speak in Halifax  
2 I got triggered real bad and there was days where I  
3 wouldn't get out of bed and he would -- he'd say, "Honey  
4 you can't do this. You can't lay in bed. You got to get  
5 up. You got other kids that you got to take care of.  
6 You've got to continue moving on." He gave -- he helped me  
7 see the strength inside of me that I didn't know I had.  
8 And I -- and I thank him for that. I'm very grateful for  
9 my husband.

10                   I've been working in HIV for many, many years  
11 about 19, 20 years, helping women, be an advocate. I was  
12 telling my girls today, I said, "You know I could speak in  
13 front of hundreds of people, but doing this is very  
14 different."

15                   So I met my husband and we end up having a  
16 daughter, Emily (ph). Emily is my little angel. She's --  
17 she was a sick baby. She would always be in the hospital  
18 and I was working for an agency here in the Atlantic and I  
19 had to go, one of our clients of our agency passed so I  
20 went to her community and I became -- I just spent time  
21 with them 'cause I knew her. Joslyn (ph) was an amazing  
22 woman, and she -- she went through a lot. You know, she  
23 died of AIDS complications at home and I went there and I  
24 took, you know, I helped the family and I helped take care  
25 of them.

1           **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** If I may, Monique. I have  
2 a few questions for you, and you give me permission. I  
3 would like to ask you when you were abused as a child did  
4 you tell it to anyone in your family? Your parents?

5           **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** I didn't tell any of  
6 them because I was scared to tell them. And I -- I didn't  
7 even know if they would believe me anyway. I ended up  
8 telling my mother years -- years later, and she really  
9 didn't take me seriously, you know, she didn't -- like, she  
10 didn't. I don't know if she really believed me, or she  
11 wanted to believe me because it was one of her -- it was  
12 one of her family members, one of our family members, so I  
13 think she didn't really want to acknowledge it.

14           And you've got to remember too that my -- my  
15 mother was in residential school, so I think it -- every --  
16 when I told her it probably triggered her from when she was  
17 in school. I remember one time I had to do my, I had to  
18 tell -- when she went to court for the residential school  
19 she wrote down her story. She said, we need to type it up  
20 for her. She never talked about being residential school.  
21 She never talked about it at all with us, and I remember  
22 she -- I was reading, and it took me like three hours to  
23 type it up reading all the stuff that they did to her. You  
24 know, they used to cut her open with a scalpel, across her  
25 back. She had the scars across her back. Who does that to

1 people?

2 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Can you tell me how it was  
3 to -- what was the environment in the home with your  
4 parents and your siblings?

5 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** What was that, sorry?

6 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** What was the environment,  
7 home, when you were a child?

8 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** It was, like I said,  
9 my parents had separated when we were young and I remember  
10 -- I do remember it being good. But again, you know,  
11 because my parents hid a lot. My father drank a lot. He  
12 was always gone out, and he was always working, or  
13 drinking, or partying. My mother was not like that. My  
14 mother, as far as I remember, she was not, she always --  
15 always at home taking care of us. I don't really remember  
16 her being, drinking. I remember sitting outside of bars  
17 waiting for my father, with my chips and my -- bag of chips  
18 and my pop, you know. Sitting out there waiting all day  
19 for him to come out.

20 My father was an alcoholic. It's not  
21 something that he would have done intentionally to us. I  
22 think my father was never a mean drunk. He was always  
23 happy, happy drunk. Was happy and singing songs and we  
24 never got any violence from our parents.

25 So when my mom -- when I told my mom she

1 didn't really react that way. And then when I read her  
2 story it made sense. She didn't teach us about sex. She  
3 didn't teach us about protecting ourselves. She didn't  
4 teach us what's good touch, what's bad touch.

5           You know. She -- she got taught something  
6 totally different about being in residential school and  
7 listening, and I -- I -- my mother now has dementia. I  
8 think that it's because of all the abuse she went through  
9 when she was young in that school. She goes away. I want  
10 her back. I want her back. I remember this one time I  
11 went to go see her when I went home to Saskatchewan and she  
12 called me baby. That was the first I had ever heard her  
13 call me baby. She was always so prim and proper. She  
14 never ever talked to us like that. It was just -- we knew  
15 she loved us.

16           But now she goes away, and she doesn't make  
17 sense, and I'm grateful for my sisters and siblings, they  
18 take care of her. She's in a home. Because they can't, my  
19 step-father has a hard time taking care of her. She gets  
20 delusions. She thinks people are coming into the house.  
21 My step-father called me one time and said, "Your mother  
22 made supper for us at five o'clock in the morning."  
23 He -- she went to go wake him up, and she said, "Come and  
24 eat supper." And he was saying, "No, darling it's like  
25 five o'clock in the morning." And she goes, "No, it's not.

1       It's suppertime." She said, "Go get the kids, they're  
2       playing outside." And my father said, "Well, who? Who's  
3       outside?" And he said, "Monique, Andrew, and Yvette (ph),"  
4       and so he went to the door and he played along and he said,  
5       "Okay, everybody come inside for supper."

6                        She had made us all our plates, to feed us,  
7       but we weren't there. We were already grown up and gone,  
8       but in her mind we were still those little kids, and she  
9       was sitting there watching, waiting for us to finish eating  
10      our supper. Telling, giving us heck. Saying that we  
11      wouldn't get dessert if we didn't eat our supper. We  
12      weren't there, so my father just played along with it. So  
13      we have to do that. We have to play along with it, with  
14      her.

15                      But I think that trauma that she experienced  
16      when she was young has made her go somewhere else, and  
17      there's not, like I've been looking for people to help me  
18      make that linkage between trauma and dementia. I've met  
19      one lady who's doing her PhD, who's looking, and exploring  
20      that. And I'm going to work with her because I need to  
21      know where my mom is, and I need to help other moms who are  
22      gone because of that. And that makes me angry knowing that  
23      they took her -- her childhood away from her.

24                      My aunties and uncles went to residential  
25      school. They have similar horrible stories.



1           **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Can I can you, Monique, how  
2           -- why did you leave home? You said that you left home,  
3           you were about 13 years old and you ended up on the  
4           streets. Can you tell me how did you end up in the  
5           streets? Why did you leave home? Did something happen?

6           **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Well, because of the  
7           sexual abuse that I went through and not really feeling  
8           like anybody would help me or, I -- I -- I left. And I  
9           didn't want to look back. I wanted to just escape from all  
10          of that pain and all of that stuff. I don't know what you  
11          want to call it. I just wanted to run and get away from it  
12          and it just took me to a deeper level of sexual violence.  
13          A deeper level of violence that I was not expecting. You  
14          know, many year -- many of those years being on the street  
15          I was raped a number of times. Drugged, raped.

16                   And I tell this story today because I never  
17          want that -- my daughters and my granddaughters to ever go  
18          through that. I'm very protective over my daughters.  
19          Probably too protective. But I pity anybody who comes and  
20          hurts them.

21                   But -- so, when I -- so I met my husband, and  
22          I was working here in the Maritimes, and doing work, and I  
23          went to spend time with the Paul (ph) family, and when we  
24          lost Joslyn they were very welcoming and they've actually  
25          adopted me into their family.

1           Joslyn, when she was -- when they had her  
2 funeral home -- like when they took her to the funeral home  
3 they told the family that had to be a closed casket and  
4 they -- their mom -- her mom didn't get to say good-bye to  
5 her. So she said, "I want you to open the casket, and I  
6 want see my daughter, and I want to say good-bye to her."  
7 So they opened the casket.

8           And they had -- the family had brought  
9 outfits and a blanket for Joselyn to be wrapped in. So  
10 they wanted to see what clothes they put on her and when  
11 they lifted up the blanket she was wrapped in a plastic bag  
12 and she was naked. She wasn't dressed.

13           Just because she was HIV positive they  
14 thought they could get HIV from her after she was gone.  
15 That was very hard to know that our women are, are not even  
16 respected after they're gone. It really -- it really hurt  
17 me knowing that people could be so fearful of people living  
18 with HIV. And we just provided as much support to the  
19 family as we could. But that was very harmful. That was  
20 very hurtful. I remember we went to go back there to visit  
21 the family one time. This is hard.

22           **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Monique...

23           **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Then we went to -- we  
24 went to the community, we were driving back, me and one of  
25 my co-workers, and we were driving back, we got to Nova

1       Scotia and -- and he was driving and this car passed us,  
2       this purple car, funny how you remember smallest of  
3       details. This purple car passed us and I notice that there  
4       was a man and a woman in the car afterwards, but when they  
5       passed us they were driving really fast and I told my -- my  
6       co-work, I said, "They're driving really quickly, that's  
7       crazy."

8                   And all of a sudden we seen the girl's head  
9       pop up and he made a comment of, "That's probably why he  
10      was driving fast 'cause he was getting, you know, sex from  
11      this young girl, or this girl that he was with," and I just  
12      thought that was weird observation that he made. And he  
13      said, "I'm going to drive faster, I'm going to pass them."  
14      I said, "You're driving, go ahead." So we drove past them  
15      and when we passed him he grabbed my head, put his -- put  
16      my head down to his groin, and this is a man I trust. He  
17      was in the delivery room with me with my daughter.

18                   I couldn't believe he just did that. He held  
19      my head down and I couldn't get up. I couldn't believe he  
20      was doing this to me. Here I am in my 40s getting still --  
21      you know, still that dirtiness. I felt all of those times  
22      come up. I tried to get my head up, but he wouldn't let my  
23      head up right away. He held my head down. And I told him,  
24      finally I just yelled, I said, "Let my head up." He let my  
25      head up and he -- all he did was laugh at me. Telling me I

1 looked funny. I was in disbelief. I didn't hardly say  
2 anything to him.

3 We came to this town and I asked him, I said,  
4 "Do you mind if we pull over for a sec?" And he said,  
5 "Okay." Because I was scared. I had known his man for  
6 many -- many years. He was my best friend. And I was  
7 scared to death of him. I shut down. I felt myself shut  
8 right down. I felt myself shut down. And I -- we pulled  
9 over and I, I jumped out of the car and my, I was trying to  
10 call my husband and he always falls asleep early, so he  
11 wasn't there and I called my sister and I told her what  
12 happened and I said cried and I was upset and I said, "I  
13 just got to get out of here. I got to get away from him."  
14 I said, "I feel like leaving him here." My sister said,  
15 "Just leave him."

16 And you know, and I'm the type of person that  
17 wouldn't leave him. I took him back to Halifax with me  
18 knowing what he'd done to me. I went and found him in  
19 there. Gathered myself up, went inside the store and I  
20 said, "Okay, let's go. And I'm driving." And I said, "I'm  
21 turning on my music and I'm drowning everything out." And  
22 all he did was laugh and make fun of me.

23 And it was very hard to drive home knowing  
24 what he had done to me. It was hard driving home with him  
25 because he was trying to make jokes and he was trying to --

1 told me how funny I looked. Anyway, I drove -- I drove  
2 home. I dropped him off. As soon as I dropped him off I  
3 started crying, and crying, and crying until I got home.  
4 And I crawled into bed with my husband. I told him, I told  
5 him, "I just need you to hold me. I don't want you to do  
6 anything. I just want you -- I just to hold me." He did.  
7 He held me and he said, "Let's go back there. Let's go  
8 over there. I want to see him." And I said, "No."

9 I went back to work and I phoned the board  
10 and told them what happened and they didn't support me.  
11 They didn't -- I asked them. I needed time off because  
12 they weren't going to give him a suspension. I had to ask  
13 them, pretty well beg them to give him like a suspension.  
14 They suspended him for three months with pay and that to me  
15 was just, that to me was just a -- I couldn't believe that  
16 they -- we were doing work with women who are sexually  
17 violated all the time, who were positive, who faced family  
18 violence all the time, and they're supposed to be leaders  
19 in the community and this is how they treat leaders (sic)  
20 -- like, as leaders this is how they treat women. I was so  
21 disgusted.

22 I ended up leaving my job and I got a text  
23 message, "Thank you for your work." After working there  
24 for 14 years that's what I got. A text message.

25 My partner, many people were encouraging me

1 to charge him and I couldn't. I was scared, even though I  
2 knew he couldn't hurt me anymore than what he'd done. I  
3 couldn't charge him. I tried one time to go to the Halifax  
4 Police and they said, "You have to go to the RCMP office  
5 and you have to report it there, and they have to deal with  
6 it."

7 So my husband kept asking me, you know, "Do  
8 you want to charge him? Do you want to charge him?" It  
9 took me six years, and I finally -- took me that long to go  
10 in and tell them what happened -- what happened to me. And  
11 the cop, the RCMP was just, "Do you realize what you're  
12 going to do to his life if you charge him?" And I'm like,  
13 looking at this police officer and I'm thinking, what he's  
14 done to -- what I'm going to do to his life? This man was  
15 a social worker. This man did -- worked in the community  
16 with young people. And they were more worried about what  
17 was going to happen to him than they were about me and the  
18 trauma that it caused me.

19 And I told my husband, "See, I knew that they  
20 would not take me seriously." Just like the board did not  
21 believe me. They told me, "Get over it. He was joking."

22 I've seen one of them since I left my job.  
23 And he told me that he believed me and that he was sorry.  
24 I felt so good when he told me that. I thought one person  
25 believed what I said. The cops didn't believe me. They

1 investigated -- because it happened so long ago they still  
2 investigated and I told you I know what he's going to do.  
3 I know. I told them exactly what he was going to say. I  
4 told them exactly what he was going to do. And that I  
5 believed nothing would ever happen.

6 But I said, "I need to come here, and it took  
7 me this long. I need to tell you what happened. And I  
8 need the truth to be out there." They ended up not  
9 charging him. They ended up just dismissing it.

10 So he worked -- he worked with -- back at the  
11 agency, after I left the position, as executive director.  
12 They hired him back after I left to do -- continue doing  
13 that job. How messed up is that? Knowing when he had done  
14 to me. They still hired him back.

15 I had -- didn't talk to him for a long time.  
16 He ended up committing suicide. I still hurt because of  
17 that. No matter what he had done he was still a person.  
18 He still had people who loved him. And I guess that just  
19 shows the kind of person I am, right? I still cried for  
20 him when he died. I still -- there's days where I still  
21 miss him because he was my best friend. But that's -- he's  
22 gone now. And he can never hurt anybody like that again.

23 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Can you tell me, as we were  
24 preparing for this moment you said that when you moved to  
25 Halifax you changed your lifestyle. You became sober. Can

1       you share with the Commissioners what triggered that  
2       decision? That life changing decision in your life?

3                   **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Probably about a  
4       year-and-a-half after I moved here I had been going through  
5       a lot of the DTs and a lot of the withdrawal from the drugs  
6       and the alcohol. I was going to school at the friendship  
7       centre and I was -- I had a lot of really supportive people  
8       up round me, Noel (ph), Shirley (ph), Gordon (ph), and they  
9       -- they kept encouraging me to you know, get in -- finish  
10      my grade 12, and to get sober, and so I decided -- I  
11      decided to quit drinking. And I've been sober now for  
12      what? Twenty-eight years, 27 years.

13                   **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** What keep -- what keeps you  
14      going in that lifestyle? In that sober life?

15                   **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Well, a lot of tears.  
16      A lot of counselling. I went to counselling -- I went  
17      counselling -- for the first two years I went every week  
18      and I -- I don't even know how I managed to pay for that.  
19      I don't -- I don't -- can't even remember, but I went to  
20      counselling every week for two years, and then the third  
21      year I went every -- once every two weeks, and I worked  
22      through that pain and I worked through that abuse, and I --  
23      as I went on I got stronger and I realized that I had so  
24      much more to offer.

25                   Mainly because I was trying to -- I wanted to



1 -- whenever I go home to Saskatchewan I go downtown and I  
2 think about all those people that I knew that are gone, and  
3 I walk and I pray for them. I used to always think -- I  
4 was telling Andrea (ph), I used to think, "Why did I get  
5 out and they didn't? Why did I live and they didn't?" I  
6 believe that, that's part of the reason why I'm here. When  
7 I think my friends like Valerie (ph) and Donna, Shirley,  
8 Ursula (ph)-- one -- one of my friends was found beheaded  
9 in the downtown Eastside. One of the girls that we knew.  
10 I go back and I remember those -- those women, and my  
11 friends and I think I got to continue life.

12           And as time goes on and my children are  
13 getting older and I'm becoming a grandmother I continue on  
14 my work because of that.

15           This month has been crazy hard. My father  
16 got diagnosed with stage four cancer. My grandchildren got  
17 apprehended. My daughter-in-law went missing Thursday.  
18 They found her Saturday, so she's safe. I don't know,  
19 sometimes where that strength comes from. I honestly don't  
20 know because right now I don't feel strong.

21           I'm sharing this story because of my friends  
22 who didn't make it. A lot of people that know me in this  
23 room have never heard my story. They just see me, how I am  
24 now. They see me as sober, been married for, with my  
25 partner for 16 years. I've got seven children. They see

1 my life now. They don't know how I've come here, and I was  
2 really scared of that today. I was scared that I would  
3 lose friends because of what I'd tell them today. But I  
4 know -- I know that I just have more -- more to do. More  
5 work to do.

6 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** I believe also Monique,  
7 that you would like to share with the Commissioners some  
8 recommendations and suggestions.

9 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Part of -- part of my  
10 work -- part of my work I do -- I work with women who are  
11 HIV positive, and I work for CAAN, and I'm very grateful  
12 that they have not given me a hard time for being here, but  
13 I also sit on a number of committees and boards, and like I  
14 said, when I sit is in those committees and boards I think  
15 of the women, and I think of the people that can't be here  
16 with us anymore.

17 I think of the transwomen who get murdered  
18 because people find out that they're trans. People find  
19 out that they're HIV positive. And I don't hear people all  
20 the time acknowledging them. At CAAN what we did was we  
21 invited the transwomen into our circle, into our women's  
22 circle because we wanted them to feel like they belonged  
23 because they do belong with us. And that was a really  
24 powerful ceremony when we invited them into our circle.

25 I want to -- one of our -- one of our

1 documents that we use still today that was developed in  
2 2009, it's not there. I'll give it to you later. It was,  
3 a research project called: Our Search for Safe Spaces.  
4 And it talks about the link between HIV and sexual  
5 violence.

6 So one of the recommendations is culturally  
7 and gender safe HIV health services. We need a place where  
8 women can feel safe without having to worry about their  
9 story. That where they can feel -- they can walk into the  
10 door and they can feel not judged.

11 We need increased awareness by HIV and  
12 healthcare providers of the role of violence in Indigenous  
13 women's lives. We need women to be believed. We need them  
14 to be heard. We need them to be accepted. We need more  
15 opportunities like this where you can learn from their life  
16 stories.

17 We know that there's many women that when  
18 find out they're HIV positive some of the families don't  
19 want to have nothing to do with them. They're kicked out  
20 of the reserve. They're kicked out of families. We can't  
21 do that. We can't do that to them.

22 We need culture appropriate and gender  
23 specific counselling. We need that.

24 You know, like even with what's going on with  
25 the, with this inquiry, one of the things that happened to

1 me was I was triggered big time the last time I met with  
2 Andrea and Fanny, I was like -- I was really messed up for  
3 about a week. I really shut down. I put -- like I was  
4 telling you earlier, I had put this big wall around me and  
5 my husband just let me live like that for a little while.  
6 He just knew that I needed my space. But he said, "You  
7 know, you should go to counselling. You should get back in  
8 there and -- or go to ceremony." So that's important that  
9 we -- we don't just walk away from here, leaving us raw.  
10 Not that that would happen, but you know like there's -- we  
11 need to make sure that the women know and the families know  
12 that they're not going to be denied counselling by FINIB,  
13 or by agencies that they should be able to have counselling  
14 paid for, and that they're taken care of. That's really  
15 important to me.

16 They should provide opportunities for women  
17 to help themselves and help one another. You know like,  
18 even -- even here you can feel the energy. I was telling  
19 Andrea, "You can feel the energy. When you came into the  
20 community when I drove into the community yesterday you  
21 could feel the power here." We need to continue that.

22 This is only one community out of, you know,  
23 endless across Canada. We need our women to feel that  
24 power no matter where they are. And that it's a safe place  
25 to do so.

1           There was a statement made by one of the  
2 ladies that says, "Violence makes women vulnerable to HIV  
3 and HIV makes women vulnerable to increased violence." We  
4 know that there's a lot of women who face violence when  
5 they become HIV positive. There's a lot of women living in  
6 fear. We need to make sure that they know that there's  
7 help and support for them.

8           For those -- for women who prefer not -- not  
9 to go to counselling, but maybe through ceremonies, one of  
10 the things that FINIB could do is to recognize the need for  
11 healing ceremonies, and getting to healing ceremonies, so  
12 that they pay for the mileage or -- or getting the Elders  
13 to them or them getting to Elders, so we need FINIB to  
14 recognize that there's more -- there's other ways than just  
15 mainstream therapy and counselling that -- I have -- you  
16 know, around me right now many women -- you know, strong  
17 women and healing -- healing women, who can provide more to  
18 me than a lady sitting across from me with a PhD. And we  
19 need FINIB to realize that that's something that's valuable  
20 and maybe the inquiry can make that happen; let's hope.

21           Mandatory trauma informed care training in  
22 the government. You know, going through your agencies and  
23 seeing what could trigger a woman or a man who's faced  
24 violence in their past. What are things that are around  
25 the room that could trigger a person. How do you make it

1 safer for them, how do you make it more open for them  
2 to -- to share.

3 I went to -- we had a -- a conference this  
4 past summer. A lot -- in September, one of the ladies told  
5 us there's 275 Indigenous women in prison right now, 70  
6 women, Indigenous women, in healing lodges. A lot of those  
7 women have faced violence in their past, through family  
8 violence, sexual violence, and what are we doing them women  
9 that are in the prisons? Are we providing them with  
10 services and programs that can help them begin their  
11 healing journey? Are there Elders in the community who  
12 understand that relationship between violence and them  
13 being incarcerated?

14 That's really important for us to acknowledge  
15 and have people in the prisons who are going to be trained  
16 who can -- who can help women and men through that. The  
17 Elders in the prisons are essential, right, to the healing.  
18 You know, I know that there's sweat ceremonies in the  
19 prisons, we can't -- we can't let them take that away from  
20 -- from our people who are inside. And remember PS -- post  
21 traumatic stress disorder is a reality. And we need more  
22 programs to address that in our communities. I live with  
23 post traumatic stress disorder every day. I cope with it  
24 in my own way.

25 But I -- I -- I would like for more people to

1 understand what it can do to you. How sometimes I can't  
2 get out of bed because of what I've lived through. It's  
3 not because I'm lazy. Not because I don't want to work.  
4 It's because I just get stuck in those thoughts.

5 More -- really important, we need to be  
6 believed. I think that if I was believed when I was  
7 younger. If I was believed by the police officers. If I  
8 was believed by my work. Things would have been different.

9 I know we talk a lot about reconciliation and  
10 we talk about healing. We need to start within the  
11 government as well when it comes to healing. I just want  
12 to share one final story. I went to -- I was in Toronto  
13 when Stephen Harper apologized. My husband was in meetings  
14 and I was -- I went to Tim Hortons. I was sitting --  
15 sitting in there waiting for him -- for the day to end,  
16 there was of course, it was all over the front page news,  
17 Stephen Harper apologizes. A lot of controversy. And I  
18 was sitting there, and there was these two ladies sitting  
19 not far from me, these two ladies who worked for the  
20 government, I seen their government passes.

21 And I -- minding my own business and then  
22 they -- you know, they started talking and I could hear  
23 what they were saying. They said, "What more do they want?  
24 You know, they're getting the apology. What more do they  
25 want?" And they just kept on and on about how we get free

1 education. We get free housing. We get -- and I'm sitting  
2 there and I'm getting really upset. So I stand up and I go  
3 and talk to them and I tapped them on the shoulder and I  
4 said, "You women should be more careful about what you're  
5 saying and who can hear."

6 I said, "If my mother-in-law and my mother  
7 were here they'd be ashamed. They'd be crying. You would  
8 traumatize them all over again because of what they  
9 experienced in those school -- in those schools." I said,  
10 "Here you are sitting here just acting like it's no big  
11 deal, but my mother would be upset." I said, "And that  
12 would hurt me. It hurts me now. Thinking about what  
13 you're saying, you're just dismissing." I told them, I  
14 said, "My mom used to get cut. You think apology is going  
15 to take away that scar from her? No, it's not."

16 I didn't yell at them. I didn't curse at  
17 them. I just told them, "Be careful, your words hurt  
18 people." And I said, "As government employees you should  
19 know better. You should know better than to hurt people.  
20 You are representing the government. You work for us."  
21 They didn't know what to say to me at first. They just  
22 looked at me. And then guess what they said? "I'm sorry."  
23 I said, "How ironic. You girls are telling me you're sorry  
24 and you're complaining about this." I said, "So please, be  
25 more aware of what you say and who is around." And I went



1 and sat back down, finished my lunch and I left. And I  
2 thought -- I walked out and I cried because I thought about  
3 my mom and my mother-in-law and all my aunties. And I  
4 said, "I hope I did you good."

5 So we need to make sure that that happens.  
6 We need to make sure that the government understands that  
7 this is not just a word about reconciliation. This is not  
8 just a word about making these band-aid solutions. This is  
9 about people's lives.

10 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** And I believe, Monique,  
11 that you would like to share two documents with the  
12 Commissioners. Can you explain what are those?

13 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** So one of the  
14 documents is: Indigenous Women HIV and Gender Based  
15 Violence, it was done by the Canadian Legal Network. They  
16 support women and men who have been charged because of  
17 their -- not disclosure sometimes, and different  
18 situations. Another one is just the stats on HIV and  
19 Indigenous people in Canada.

20 Again, the more knowledge we have -- and I  
21 don't have the other document right now, the research  
22 document that I was talking about earlier: Our Search for  
23 Safe Spaces. I wanted to give you a copy that too, and  
24 those are available through me.

25 But I -- I want to thank you for listening to

1 me. And I want to thank them for being here. And I want  
2 to thank my mom for giving me life. So thanks.

3 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you, Monique.

4 I will ask -- I will leave with the -- if the  
5 Commissioners have questions or any comments, I will invite  
6 you to do so.

7 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Okay. There  
8 is a bird. We found it. *Merci*, (speaking native language)  
9 thank you.

10 And last night when I was saying good-bye, or  
11 good evening to the families and survivors at the supper I  
12 had the privilege to sit beside you for a moment --  
13 short -- too short I found, but -- and when I came here and  
14 I saw you in this room, I said, we were meant to be.

15 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** M'hm.

16 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** And I'm so  
17 blessed, so honoured, so thank you, thank you. And you  
18 know, when a mother says, "I think I'm overprotecting my  
19 girls." I'm a mom too, and I'll -- I don't think we do.  
20 Fanny is a mom too. Many women here are mothers here. In  
21 the world that we're living, and in this country, like  
22 Commissioner Robinson said in her opening remark, it seemed  
23 like there's two Canada --

24 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** M'hm.

25 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** For our

1 Canadian sisters and the Indigenous women it's not a same.  
2 Many of you, many of us don't feel safe, so it's okay that  
3 we want to be over protective. But also what I -- I see in  
4 you, it's the -- the strength of many women that we met so  
5 far across Canada; amazing warriors like you. The one I  
6 have in mind and in my heart is Rachel (ph), Rachel in  
7 Winnipeg. A strong woman. Strong. And I heard her voice  
8 through you, and I can hear you when I'm listening what she  
9 gave me, you know, the -- the gift, and I see that out east  
10 you're that voice too.

11 Your own -- your own voice and we -- we are  
12 our own voice, so Rachel was one of them and you are the,  
13 the one that is telling me that the strength often we don't  
14 feel it. We don't see it, but it's there. We block, but  
15 there's something that is pushing us back for our girls or  
16 our son.

17 And there is lots of recommendation. I know  
18 I tried to take, wrote them down but we have technology  
19 that will bring exactly what you said to us, and like we  
20 said this morning, some recommendations can be already in  
21 action --

22 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** M'hm.

23 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** -- we believe,  
24 in this country. We don't need to wait a final report.

25 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Yeah.

1                   **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** That I'm very  
2 transparent. But we want to make sure also that we will  
3 bring what you said in this report, and I have to say the  
4 work that you want to do for your mom about what -- her  
5 trauma and the result today -- you have all my respect --  
6 all my respect, and I hope we'll stay in touch.

7                   **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** M'hm.

8                   **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** That you tell  
9 me, or you share with me where are you with this, and I  
10 have to say to conclude I -- it's always one of my  
11 question, what help you do change another path? What made  
12 you the woman that you are today? And I know in your truth  
13 you're telling us that there is lots of cause, systemic  
14 cause.

15                   **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** M'hm.

16                   **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** You know, and  
17 many of us across Canada don't want to say, or denounce  
18 what this man, or those men did to us.

19                   **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** M'hm.

20                   **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** What -- what  
21 gave you that strength that day, that's it. I have to say  
22 it?

23                   **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Ceremony, you know,  
24 love that I have, like, that I've gotten from different  
25 people. My children. My grandchildren. I'm going to get

1       them. I know I'm going to get them. We're applying for  
2       custody of my grandchildren. That was one of the things my  
3       grandmother always had us -- a bunch of us kids at her  
4       house ever summer. I told my sister the other day, I said,  
5       "My -- our grandmother set us up so that we'd always take  
6       our grandchildren." She taught us that from a very young  
7       age, always take care of your grandchildren. So I'm going  
8       to get them.

9                   But I think one of the -- the main things, is  
10       going back home and walking those streets again, that's  
11       what made me strong. That's what makes me continue going  
12       on this path that I'm on now. Hearing the stories of the  
13       woman that I work with. They lift -- they lift you know,  
14       they give you so much strength. I try to give that back to  
15       them all the time.

16                   I'm a true believer in giving love, even to  
17       the men who hurt me. I pray for them all the time. I  
18       don't blame that. I just hope that they get healed. I  
19       hope that -- who knows their life story. They could have  
20       been abused in their life. I don't know.

21                   So I'm just going to continue to pray. That  
22       was one thing that my grandparents always taught us was  
23       pray. My grandfather was a very traditional man. My  
24       grandmother used to make us do our rosary eight o'clock  
25       every night. We learned to respect both ways, and that's

1 what I think has really kept be going, was knowing that I  
2 had that Creator's love in my heart, God's love in my  
3 heart, that I needed to continue it on.

4 So when I think about how I've made -- made  
5 it through -- those are the main ways, remembering, never  
6 forgetting what I've gone through, always praying and  
7 always pray for the people that hurt you. Always pray for  
8 them. It's hard at times. At times I did not want to pray  
9 for him. For them, but I did because I can't carry that  
10 anger. I don't want to.

11 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Well, to  
12 conclude on my end, it's -- I have to say that you said,  
13 "Thank you for listening." Well, I have to say thank you  
14 for you for opening to us and sharing to us. And also  
15 educating, if you were saying in my -- over here my bubble,  
16 what I -- how I see educating in capital letter, very big.  
17 Those two women who worked for the Federal government,  
18 instead yelling at them or being mad you shared them your  
19 truth, your belief, and how it should be and that's what I  
20 say for me to my girls, you know, if you want to build  
21 bridges with the -- we have allies, we have Canadian, we  
22 have women with us that believe that if we want to make  
23 that change it's by educating, sometimes it's --

24 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Yeah.

25 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** -- but you did

1 it so well so you're teaching me too. *Merci beaucoup.*  
2 Thank you.

3 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** I want to thank  
4 you as well and I want to ask a question, thank you so much  
5 for -- for sharing with us and the recommendations that --  
6 that you shared. I'm thinking you know, you talk about  
7 going back home and walking the streets and there's still  
8 so many women there. How -- how do we reach them? How?

9 It's -- you -- you had -- your -- your --  
10 your step-father, you had -- and your convictions, what are  
11 some steps we, as service providers, as friends, as  
12 neighbours, as a community, can do to help women take those  
13 steps that they need to take?

14 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Talk to them, go to  
15 them. You're going to meet them, you know, through harm  
16 reduction. Philosophy is meeting people where they're at.  
17 So if it means you walking the street, you know, we -- we  
18 -- sometimes when we go have conferences in B.C. we go down  
19 to the downtown Eastside, we see people, we talk to them.  
20 We acknowledge them. You know, peer mentorship is amazing.  
21 You have, you know, many people out there who will, who  
22 will work with people.

23 I remember this young man one time. I was  
24 working in the prisons doing workshops, and he told me, he  
25 said, "Monique, when I get out of jail use me." He said,

1 "Give me the information. Give me the needles, and I will  
2 meet you somewhere, and I will give out that information  
3 because they trust me." If they -- if -- yeah, if you walk  
4 up to some girls on the street they're going to be looking  
5 at you, like, "Okay, why are you coming over here looking  
6 at me like this?" Right.

7 But once they see why you're there, and once  
8 they feel why you're there, if you're going there with the  
9 right intention they're going to feel that from you and  
10 they're going to want to listen to what you have to say.

11 You know my -- my -- my deceased mother-in-  
12 law, Maddy, she -- I never got to meet her, but I hear so  
13 many good stories about her, about her talking with women  
14 and her really representing women, listening to them, and  
15 figuring out ways, if it meant you know, fundraising for  
16 years to get a women's -- she started the Native Women's  
17 Resource Centre in Toronto. There's a house built for her,  
18 Maddy Howe (ph), Harper-Howe (ph). I think it's Maddy  
19 Harper House (sic), yeah, in Toronto.

20 She really got down to the ground level of  
21 helping people so you know, meeting people where they're at  
22 is number one, and continually to do this. You know, make  
23 it so that the women feel welcome to come here and share.  
24 Don't make it -- don't make it so that they can't. You  
25 know, having childcare provided, having Elders, having



1 people that they know in the community, yeah. So there's a  
2 lot that you can do. It's just a matter of -- of you know  
3 meeting them where they're at.

4 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Thank you. I'm  
5 Michèle's translator sometimes. I won't try and speak  
6 French.

7 As a -- as an expression of our gratitude for  
8 the gift of -- of -- of your experience, your knowledge,  
9 and for the time you've spent with us we want to extend a  
10 gift from us and -- and our team to you. Included are  
11 Eagle Feathers from the matriarchs of the Haida Gwaii  
12 Nation who gathered to give to families across the country  
13 as well. The seeds --

14 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Thank so much. It  
15 means to me so much.

16 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Also, a gift of  
17 seeds to represent new life and growth. And I'm going to  
18 stop talking now.

19 --- **CLOSING SONG**

20 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So Commissioners, I will  
21 ask to adjourn this hearing.

22 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Yes, hello?  
23 We'll stand down for a bit, ten, ten minutes, and then  
24 we'll reconvene with the next family, thank you.

25 --- **Exhibits (code P1P04P0102)**

1       **Exhibit 1:**       PDF of "Chapter 8: HIV/AIDS Epi Updates,  
2                               July 2010 - HIV/AIDS Among Aboriginal  
3                               People in Canada" posted on Public Health  
4                               Agency of Canada website, 38 numbered pages.  
5                               Printing date 7/11/2017; date modified  
6                               2015-05-15. (Link: [https://www.canada.ca/  
7                               en/public-health/services/hiv-aids/  
8                               publications/epi-updates/chapter-8-hiv  
9                               -aids-among-aboriginal-people-canada.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/hiv-aids/publications/epi-updates/chapter-8-hiv-aids-among-aboriginal-people-canada.html))

10       **Exhibit 2:**       PDF of "Indigenous Women, HIV and  
11                               Gender-Based Violence," published by the  
12                               Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, March 2017  
13                               (28 numbered pages)

14       --- Upon adjourning at 3:44 p.m.

15       --- Upon resuming at 4:21 p.m.

16                       **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Do I have to stand up?

17                       **MS. JENNIFER COX:** No.

18                       **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Okay.

19                       **MS. JENNIFER COX:** I'll just hand you the  
20       microphone to you.

21                       **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** And then I'll just talk  
22       with it.

23                       **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Once -- once -- once  
24       you're finished with (indiscernible) you might want to  
25       talk, right:

1                   **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Indiscernible)

2                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** -- and then  
3 (indiscernible).

4                   Bryan, whenever you're ready.

5                   **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:**           Okay.  
6 (Indiscernible) where's the Feather?

7                   **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Right there.

8                   **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:**   And the red  
9 box. Okay, all right.

10                  **MS. JENNIFER COX:**   So this is Rebecca Moore.  
11 And Rebecca's come to tell her personal story to the  
12 National Inquiry of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women  
13 and Girls.

14                  So Mr. Registrar.

15                  And lift up your microphone.

16                  **MR. REGISTRAR:**   Okay, good afternoon,  
17 Jennifer, welcome. I understand you wish to affirm with  
18 the Eagle Father.

19                  **MS. REBECCA MOORE:**   M'hm.

20                  **MR. REGISTRAR:**   Okay. Good.

21                  **REBECCA MOORE, EAGLE FEATHER**

22                  **MS. JENNIFER COX:**   And sitting beside Rebecca  
23 is her sister, Sarah (ph), who also may speak to the  
24 inquiry, so we can have her also sworn, please.

25                  **MR. REGISTRAR:**   Okay, good afternoon, Sarah.

1       **SARAH MOORE, Affirmed:**

2                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So Rebecca -- yeah, it's  
3 quite loud.

4                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah.

5                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So if you want to just  
6 start to tell your story and maybe we'll start with a  
7 couple of questions from me.

8                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Okay...

9                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** The first question that I  
10 would can you is, where are you from? Where were you born?

11                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** I'm from Halifax, Nova  
12 Scotia. I was born and raised in Halifax. I'm a member of  
13 Pictou Landing First Nation.

14                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay. And what family do  
15 you belong to?

16                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** The Cope (ph) family,  
17 yeah.

18                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

19                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah.

20                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And where -- did you live  
21 in Pictou Landing at any time during your lifetime? No.

22                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** No.

23                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So you always lived in the  
24 city?

25                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah.

1                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

2                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

3                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And your family members,  
4 did any of them attend residential school?

5                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah, my grandmother was  
6 a survivor.

7                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Of the...

8                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Shubenacadie Residential  
9 School.

10                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

11                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

12                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And so I'd like to you  
13 tell the Commissioner what your childhood was like, so  
14 starting from when you were little, who you lived with and  
15 what it was like at home for you when you were a young  
16 girl.

17                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Okay. Growing up I lived  
18 with my whole family; so mom, father, sisters, and mostly  
19 raised by my grandmother, where my parents worked full-  
20 time, and stuff. My mother ended up leaving us when I was  
21 about ten years old. And she left the family to go --  
22 like, party basically, and so we wouldn't see her for  
23 months at a time; things like that. And my dad was still  
24 working full time and so we didn't really see much of our  
25 parents after that. Just our grandmother and then she

1 passed away when I was 15. M'hm.

2 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So up until the age of 15  
3 what kind of role did your grandmother play in your life?  
4 What kind of things would she do for you?

5 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Everything. So my  
6 grandmother was basically the closest thing we had to a  
7 disciplinary. She was the only person who made sure that  
8 we had like, clothes and things for school. She was the  
9 only person that we had to disappoint; do you know what I  
10 mean? She was the only person that made sure that we were  
11 fed and -- and taken care of, so, m'hm.

12 And I was also really close to her too, so  
13 like, in her last years I would make sure that she had  
14 everything she needed. Like, you know, I would do -- I  
15 would take her blood sugar, give her her insulin needles.  
16 Her hair, foot massage. Always visit her in the hospital  
17 every day if she was there, that kind of thing, so we were  
18 very close. M'hm.

19 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So you have a sister  
20 that's sitting beside you, Sarah.

21 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah.

22 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And how many other  
23 siblings do you have?

24 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** I have two other sisters,  
25 so there's four of us all together.

1           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

2           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

3           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And did -- so when your  
4 grandmother passed what was life like for you?

5           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** When our grandmother  
6 passed away, it was almost like -- like, things got really  
7 rough after that. Things were rough before that, but they  
8 just got worse after that. I would say our childhood was  
9 very great -- good up until about the time my mother left  
10 and then things started getting difficult there. And --  
11 because when she went, she went and partied, and she  
12 partied with these like, violent type of people.

13           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Um-hum.

14           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** And stuff so, there was  
15 that. And then -- so after my grandmother passed it felt  
16 like our family was almost hit by like -- like -- I don't  
17 know. We went through a lot of stuff after that time. It  
18 was just difficult. We didn't have our main support person  
19 around anymore.

20           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Um-hum.

21           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** And almost felt like --  
22 like an orphan, but not. Yeah.

23           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay. So during that  
24 period of time when your -- after your parents split up, I  
25 think you said -- how old were you when they split up?

1           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** I was about ten.

2           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

3           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** They got -- their divorce  
4 was finalized when I was about 12.

5           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

6           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. And --

7           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And after they split who  
8 did you live with?

9           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Our dad.

10          **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

11          **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** We had a choice, through  
12 the divorce we had a choice of whether we wanted to go live  
13 with our mother or our father. Our mom was fighting for  
14 custody because she wanted to keep us, mostly for alimony  
15 purposes, and we didn't want to go with her because it was  
16 a really dangerous environment where she was drinking all  
17 the time with these -- they were mostly Russians, and --  
18 and so we knew for a fact, because we were just -- we were  
19 still little girls, and we knew for a fact that if we went  
20 with our mother the chances of us being sexually abused was  
21 very high by these -- like men that she had around partying  
22 all the time.

23                   Like, I couldn't trust my mom to keep us safe  
24 so -- so when we had a choice between choosing -- between  
25 who to live with, it was you know, unanimously we're going



1 with dad, you know, not with you, because our father was  
2 not the one who was you know, he was just working and --  
3 and absent.

4 MS. JENNIFER COX: M'hm.

5 MS. REBECCA MOORE: But we didn't have the  
6 same threat of having strange people around.

7 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

8 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

9 MS. JENNIFER COX: But your grandmother would  
10 come and sort of, do the extra things that --

11 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

12 MS. JENNIFER COX: -- dad didn't have time to  
13 do?

14 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah, my grandmother was  
15 more like a mother, like hands-on and took care of us  
16 almost, and my mom's almost more like -- like a friend.

17 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

18 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

19 MS. JENNIFER COX: And that was your mother's  
20 mom, right --

21 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

22 MS. JENNIFER COX: -- your grandmother? And  
23 that was the same person that went to residential school,  
24 correct?

25 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

1           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Right.

2           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

3           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So after she passed  
4 what -- what did you do? Did you continue to live with  
5 your dad?

6           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah -- yeah. Lived with  
7 dad. I remember one of those men, Yuri (ph), that my  
8 mother used to party with, he actually raped my mother when  
9 I was about 12 years old. So, like, I knew what kind of  
10 group she was with, so I know that for a fact that that  
11 would have happened to us.

12                   But -- so we didn't go with my mom, and she  
13 ended up being raped by one of those men, and she took it  
14 to Supreme Court. It went all the way to highest court, or  
15 whatever. She didn't win. I forget why. But I -- I  
16 remember watching her go through all this like, court  
17 process and stuff. And I remember not being surprised  
18 because I knew what kind of people were around, and -- and  
19 that sort of thing. And I remember feeling, like, you  
20 know, just reaffirmed like, you know, this is why we don't  
21 live with her, and things like that.

22           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** But -- but one -- one of  
23 the things that happened as -- after your grandma died you  
24 changed the place that you were living; didn't you?

25           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah -- yeah. After she

1 passed away I left home. I was in between living  
2 arrangements for a long time, so technically, like  
3 homeless.

4 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm. And how old were  
5 you then?

6 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Fifteen.

7 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

8 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. I was homeless  
9 from 15 to 16, and I got into -- I had my guardianship  
10 terminated so that I became my own legal -- became legally  
11 independent at the age of 16, and I guess when you have  
12 your guardianship terminated and you become you own --  
13 like, legal guardian, or whatever, legally independent,  
14 then you become an automatic ward of the province because  
15 you're still a minor.

16 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

17 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** So then I was a ward of  
18 the province, and I went and I lived in Phoenix Youth  
19 Programs in Halifax.

20 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

21 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** And Phoenix Youth  
22 Programs is a youth organization that has -- they have  
23 shelters. They have group homes. They have supervised  
24 apartment programs -- like what I lived in.

25 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And -- and what -- who are

1 the people that live at Phoenix, or (indiscernible) youth  
2 services? Are they just youth?

3 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** That -- that lived there?

4 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Yeah.

5 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Oh, yeah, youth between  
6 the ages of 16 and I think, 24.

7 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

8 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah.

9 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So when you went to live  
10 with Phoenix what happened?

11 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Well, I finally had the  
12 environment to be able to go to school and volunteer, and I  
13 ended up getting involved in a lot of community type  
14 things, like activities -- and like, the youth centre at  
15 the Mi'kmaw Friendship Centre, or the Gigabou (ph) Youth  
16 Centre -- I was -- started getting involved with them. And  
17 then I started being the president of their youth council  
18 and -- and I was given a lot of good opportunities through  
19 -- through them.

20 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Through the friendship  
21 centre?

22 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Through the friendship  
23 centre, at -- their -- their youth centre, but they don't  
24 have a youth centre anymore.

25 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

1           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** So they -- so that  
2 support for urban Aboriginal youth is gone; it's not even  
3 there, so -- in Halifax.

4           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

5           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

6           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And so the -- the Phoenix  
7 -- did -- did you live by yourself, or did you live in a --  
8 in a group home, like...

9           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** I lived in a house.

10          **MS. JENNIFER COX:** A house.

11          **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** So like, the supervised  
12 apartment program.

13          **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

14          **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** I lived in a house with  
15 three other girls and a supervisor.

16          **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

17          **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** A staff member.

18          **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

19          **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

20          **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And that worked for you?  
21 You were happy with that?

22          **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah -- yeah, m'hm.

23          **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay. Why don't you tell  
24 the Commissioner what are the things that you liked about  
25 that?

1           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** The things that I liked  
2 about that was -- well, I made a deal -- I had a deal with  
3 the social workers at the time, and it was if I proved  
4 myself responsible in this program for a year then they  
5 would fund me to -- to have my own apartment, so that's  
6 what I did.

7           And, so by the time I aged -- like I turned  
8 18, I was like, "Okay, I've been here for a year and I've  
9 proved myself responsible, and whatever." And then they --  
10 they actually tried to keep me in that program because they  
11 thought that I needed more support for longer and stuff,  
12 but I was really just itching to -- to be out on my own  
13 because I had a little sister, and she was under the age of  
14 16 at the time, but she couldn't visit me because of  
15 different -- like -- like insurance things, to do with --  
16 in the system.

17           And so -- so for reasons like that -- like  
18 because -- like, younger people couldn't come visit, and  
19 whatever, I really wanted to be on my own, so when they  
20 tried to keep me after I proved myself responsible for a  
21 year, and they tried to keep me in that program. I  
22 basically told them that, "I'm leaving anyway, you know,  
23 whether -- you can help me transition out on my own, or --  
24 or not," but I was leaving. So that's how I left there.

25           But they were really supportive for me, for

1 that time though. And then they did end up -- community  
2 services did end up funding me when I was younger to -- to  
3 be out on my own.

4 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

5 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah.

6 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And what types of things  
7 did they help you with? What was Phoenix good with helping  
8 you with besides providing you a place to stay?

9 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** They have -- Phoenix,  
10 they have PLEC, Phoenix Learning Education Centre, which  
11 helps you do things like resumes, and look for jobs, and  
12 they can give you -- they provide different programing  
13 around education.

14 Phoenix also has extracurricular activities.  
15 They have art programs. They have -- they even provide --  
16 like, they provide everything, like -- like, they have  
17 their own little food bank. They have -- like, in the  
18 building -- so a place where you can go do laundry -- like,  
19 they have a drop-in centre where you can go and do laundry  
20 if you need to. You can go take some food. They have  
21 like, clothes they you can, like, go through, if you need  
22 them. It's for most -- mostly street youths.

23 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

24 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** And -- and then they also  
25 have, like somebody come in -- that comes in and does like,

1 free haircuts, like, once a month, like that kind of thing.  
2 So basically, all your basic services for...

3 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

4 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

5 MS. JENNIFER COX: And so then after you left  
6 Phoenix did you have -- did you -- were you able to get  
7 housing?

8 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

9 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay, and where did you go  
10 from there?

11 MS. REBECCA MOORE: I moved into an apartment  
12 with some friends of mine that were roommates, they were  
13 also a young Indigenous couple that I was close with. And  
14 I lived there for awhile, and they helped me move my  
15 things. But then I eventually went out and got -- I stayed  
16 there for a few months and then I went out and got another  
17 apartment, so, yeah.

18 MS. JENNIFER COX: And did you live within  
19 one of the housing programs? Was there...

20 MS. REBECCA MOORE: No, no. Like then -- oh,  
21 then after that I went into Tawaak, yeah.

22 MS. JENNIFER COX: Housing?

23 MS. REBECCA MOORE: (Indiscernible).

24 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay, and for the -- for  
25 the benefit of the Commissioners, why don't you explain a



1 little bit about Tawaak Housing is.

2 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Tawaak Housing, that's  
3 Native housing in Halifax, so it's like public housing for  
4 Native people. And -- and they're really slummy. They're  
5 like slum lords, so they have a lot of problems. The  
6 apartment -- me and Sarah lived there, we lived there for  
7 five years. The back door was -- like the wind could -- it  
8 was insecure, so like the wind could blow it in, and stuff,  
9 and it was like that the whole five years.

10 From before we moved in to after, and it  
11 eventually lead -- so it was insecure the whole time, and  
12 even though I stressed to them, "You know, it's -- it's me  
13 and my sister, my younger sister, like, we're young women  
14 and we live on our own, and you know, it's really unsafe,"  
15 they never fixed it.

16 There was one time when I caught -- we caught  
17 somebody trying to break into our place, and -- like, I  
18 chased him down the road and everything. And then I called  
19 Tawaak Housing, flipping out, because our back door wasn't  
20 secure. And they sent someone in and they just -- I said  
21 they put an Indian lock on it, because they cut a two by  
22 four and then they put it between the back stair and the  
23 back door and they left it like that.

24 They said that they were going to order  
25 another door and -- and it never came, never showed up.

1 They never did anything about it, so needless to say they  
2 didn't really give a -- a crap about me and my sister's  
3 safety at all.

4 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm, so during that  
5 period of time as well, did you have relationships,  
6 romantic relationships?

7 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah.

8 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

9 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

10 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And how did those go?

11 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** I had two domestically  
12 abusive relationships in -- in that apartment, but the last  
13 one, and -- and that back door being insecure is  
14 essentially what made me eventually move away and leave  
15 town.

16 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

17 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Because that person was  
18 really violent and they -- their violence escalated really  
19 -- really quickly, and really fast, and -- so that person  
20 was in jail for breaching and things that had to do with  
21 our domestic, like, situation.

22 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

23 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** And so I kept on having  
24 nightmares of that person breaking in to my house because  
25 they knew where I lived. And so I couldn't really sleep

1 well there, so when they were -- they were in jail for a  
2 month, until their court date. And during that time,  
3 because I was really worried about what this person might  
4 do when they got out, I ended up just skipping out on my  
5 rent because I didn't -- like, the apartment wasn't safe  
6 anyway, and I ended up moving to the other end of the  
7 country. So I moved to Vancouver --

8 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

9 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** -- for almost a year,  
10 yeah. Just to get away from the person and that whole --

11 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

12 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** -- thing.

13 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And when you were younger  
14 you also -- you talked a little bit about being involved in  
15 the youth programs at the friendship centre.

16 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

17 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** What types of things --  
18 opportunities were you given?

19 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** At the friendship centre?  
20 Well, I was involved with a lot of -- basically all the  
21 youth organizations in the city, in Halifax. But I find  
22 the friendship centre -- like, where -- where I was the  
23 president of the youth council there. I went to like, you  
24 know, my first national networking opportunities were --  
25 were through the friendship centre, so -- like through the

1 NAFC AGM and things like that. So...

2 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And what did those  
3 opportunities do for you? What kinds of things?

4 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** I think they just, sort  
5 of, like, they build character, you know. Like, you go and  
6 learn and you network, and you meet people from all over  
7 the country, like other Indigenous youth and it  
8 strengthens, like your community base, and -- yeah.

9 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Did you learn about  
10 culture as well?

11 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Oh, yeah, yeah.

12 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

13 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** I learned how to -- like  
14 I learned drumming and singing at the friendship centre,  
15 and I'm still a drummer and a singer. And -- yeah, that  
16 kind of thing.

17 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So when you were in  
18 British Columbia you stayed for a year, you said?

19 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

20 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay, but then you did  
21 come back to Nova Scotia?

22 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

23 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And when you came back to  
24 Nova Scotia did you have a place to stay?

25 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** No.

1           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

2           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** No, I didn't. So I  
3 was -- like I find -- like housing security is a big issue  
4 for a lot of the Indigenous women that I know back home.

5                       So, like, for me and my family, we're always  
6 sort of, like teetering on whatever.

7                       Yeah, so I think that housing security --  
8 well, I can only speak of Halifax really, but that's a  
9 reoccurring issue that I always see our women struggle  
10 with. And it's for all kinds of different reasons, you  
11 know. It's not always just financial, you know. Like, a  
12 lot of the times I have a full-time job, or I'll have the  
13 money, but it's just either difficult to get one, find  
14 one...

15           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So difficult to find a  
16 place to live, like an apartment?

17           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. Or -- or you have  
18 to leave one that you're at for whatever reason. Like, it  
19 could be, like I said, domestic, or it could be -- it could  
20 be unsafe in some way, or -- or it could have like,  
21 problems, but housing is -- is a big issue.

22           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** In -- in Halifax?

23           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. And...

24           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** What about in British  
25 Columbia? Was it easy to find housing out there?

1           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** It was not as much an  
2 issue for me because I stayed with the same people the  
3 whole time.

4           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

5           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. But I find it is  
6 back home, where I'm at, because I don't have -- I don't  
7 have family that I can just really go stay with. Like,  
8 they don't really have room for me, so I can't like, go  
9 back and live with my parents, or something like that.

10          **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

11          **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah, so housing is  
12 always difficult.

13          **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And so at this point in  
14 time in your life, Rebecca, what are you doing? What --  
15 how do you take of yourself?

16          **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Right now I pretty much  
17 pay the rent doing a lot of different community events, and  
18 like facilitating and -- and gigs, or openings, drumming  
19 and singing; that kind of thing.

20                 So, like I'm lucky enough to have been  
21 involved enough in my community and to get enough  
22 opportunities to be able to support myself that way.

23          **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

24          **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** But that's not -- I'm --  
25 like, that's unusual. That's like an unusual situation --

1 exception, you know, like, not every Indigenous woman in  
2 Halifax is like me, that can do that sort of thing. But  
3 that's how -- that's how I support myself at the moment.

4 I'm also still working at the Ecology Action  
5 Centre on some climate job round tables. I do a lot of  
6 stuff about green energy. And -- yeah, so I have a  
7 contract in with them as well, and -- m'hm. I'm --

8 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Do you --

9 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** (Indiscernible).

10 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** -- did you have any other  
11 struggles when you were younger?

12 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah, I struggle with an  
13 alcohol addiction for most of my life, from the ages of 12  
14 to about 25.

15 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

16 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** So this winter will be my  
17 second year of sobriety.

18 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

19 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

20 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** But you did a lot of  
21 things when you were still...

22 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. I was a very  
23 functional alcoholic --

24 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

25 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** -- when I was younger,

1       yeah. And I kept -- like, that world very separate from --  
2       from my community type world -- like my extravert, like  
3       whatever. Like, they were very separate. So there was --  
4       there was -- there was the -- my life that was really good,  
5       and I had a lot of opportunities, and whatever, and then  
6       there was the -- the side where I struggled with my  
7       addiction in private, and stuff, yeah.

8                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And so were you -- was  
9       there any services that helped you overcome your addiction?  
10      No?

11                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** No. I did that. I kind  
12      of isolated myself for like a year almost and kind of dealt  
13      with that on my own. But it was just out of pure  
14      resentment that I quit drinking, basically.

15                   And it's also because -- while my belief  
16      shifted and I think that's why. Because I simply didn't  
17      believe in -- in doing that anymore.

18                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

19                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** I don't believe in -- I  
20      look at it like self-harm; do you know what I mean? And I  
21      had so much resentment for how much it weakens people, and  
22      how much it weakened myself, my family and everybody I  
23      loved and all the -- all the problems that it was, you  
24      know, keeping going, that I just -- I hated it so much that  
25      I just stopped it. I chose not to partake in it anymore.



1 I chose not to -- not to weaken myself, and to have a  
2 different mentality of where instead of harming myself. I  
3 just don't believe in doing things that...

4 Like with this whole -- like Murder and  
5 Missing Indigenous Women thing, and being -- being an  
6 Indigenous woman in Canada, like I know that I am like,  
7 statistically speaking, I know that I am larger target for  
8 violence or -- you know.

9 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Why don't you tell the  
10 Commissioners about one of your experiences when you were  
11 walking down the street in Halifax?

12 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** I'll get to that in a  
13 minute.

14 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

15 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** But -- so with that --  
16 with that knowledge of just recognizing that as an  
17 Indigenous woman in Canada we are -- like, you know, way  
18 more likely to experience violence and -- and whatever.

19 And then also when I was younger and having  
20 an alcohol addiction, and a very active alcohol addiction,  
21 and just how susceptible to violence I was. Especially  
22 when you're two sheets to the wind and you have your guard  
23 down, and anything can happen.

24 I just shifted my mindset. I don't believe  
25 in doing that anymore. I don't believe in taking part in

1 that anymore. And almost like having more of -- more of a  
2 warrior mentality that way because the only person that can  
3 not drink for me is me. And the only person that cannot --  
4 like, I really believe that I'm only person that can  
5 protect myself. And so that's why I just don't do that  
6 anymore. But -- yeah.

7 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So the experience that  
8 you had in Halifax, you want to talk about that?

9 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** There's a bunch of  
10 different experiences in Halifax. Halifax is a very creepy  
11 city. We have a lot of johns driving around all the time.  
12 We have a lot of sexual harassment on the street happening  
13 all the time.

14 I think the time that you're reminding me of  
15 specifically was when one time I was walking home around  
16 midnight. I lived by the mall. And there was this car  
17 that pulled up, and they had their trunk open, and there  
18 was three guys in it, and the driver got out and he cut me  
19 off on the sidewalk and he -- and then the passenger had  
20 his door open and his legs out like he was going to jump  
21 out. And -- and they cut me off on the sidewalk and  
22 there's nobody around. And -- because it was by the mall,  
23 and -- and after -- after the mall closes there's like,  
24 nobody around.

25 And -- so yeah, they -- they had their trunk

1 open. One of them was now on the sidewalk in front me.  
2 The other one was -- had his passenger door open and his  
3 legs out like he was going to get out. And he said  
4 something to me, and I was listening to music, and I took  
5 my earphones out and I said, "What?" And he said, "Hey."  
6 And then -- and then the guy who cut me off on the sidewalk  
7 said, "Oh, he's just being romantic," is what he said.

8 And, so then like I saw the setup. I caught  
9 the play. I didn't let them get close enough to actually  
10 grab me or anything.

11 And the street that I lived on, there was a  
12 string of us, so like me and my sister lived down here, my  
13 other sister lived on this end of block, and then my cousin  
14 lived on that end of the block. So I'm just really lucky  
15 that I had a lot of family on that block.

16 And so I just backed up. Like I started  
17 walking backwards instead of going forwards, and I went to  
18 my sister's house and freaked out, but -- but -- yeah, and  
19 then they walked me home after that. But -- yeah, that was  
20 one thing.

21 And -- and where we lived too, it was right  
22 on Bayers Road, so it's right by the highway -- it's a  
23 highway that goes right out of the city, m'hm. So that was  
24 creepy.

25 And there was also a girl that was attacked

1 later on that week, or later on that winter, I think,  
2 actually, and sexually assaulted in the bushes on the same  
3 area. And -- yeah, that kind of thing.

4 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Rebecca, because of  
5 your experiences you came to the inquiry also to talk about  
6 things that you think either were helpful for you, or  
7 recommendations that you have of things that you'd like to  
8 see --

9 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

10 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** -- right?

11 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

12 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So what are the things  
13 that you think were the most helpful for you? Let's start  
14 with that. The resources and programs.

15 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Growing up what was  
16 really helpful for me was the -- the housing programs.  
17 That's what I needed. At the time I really needed a safe  
18 space, so I think safe space is -- is huge.

19 I feel like there's a lot of talk about  
20 murdered and missing Indigenous women, and -- and there's a  
21 lot of known facts about, you know, that we are greater  
22 targets of violence statistically, and things, but I don't  
23 see enough protective actions going on, so -- and not just  
24 preventative, but I'm talking about protecting Indigenous  
25 women because we're Indigenous women, and because we are --

1 we face a lot more of those issues on a daily -- so like,  
2 housing, more emergency housing.

3 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** What about the friendship  
4 centre programs?

5 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** The friendship centre  
6 needs to get its youth centre back. There is no cultural  
7 youth centre for urban Aboriginal youth in Halifax anymore,  
8 as it's -- right now.

9 I find a lot of my -- my networks now, so  
10 like if I have a problem -- if I have a situation, and I  
11 needed help with it, I don't go to services. I don't go to  
12 anything like that. I always reach out to my grassroots,  
13 like, sisters network, and -- and they're the people that  
14 always come through for me and have my back and will pick  
15 me up if I am stuck or stranded. Will house me if I need a  
16 place to crash. Will feed me, or clothe, or anything --  
17 you know.

18 If I have any issues, or an emergency, I  
19 don't go to services too often so. I find that we just  
20 kind of have a network where we take care of each other.

21 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And the network -- where  
22 did you meet a lot of these people?

23 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Everywhere.

24 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Was it through the  
25 programs, or any of the things that -- like, the

1 conferences?

2 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Some of them.

3 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

4 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah, some of them.

5 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And how does that network  
6 make you feel nowadays? Being a part of that network?

7 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Good. I feel the safest  
8 when I'm among my Indigenous sisters, especially the ones  
9 that, you know -- I think -- no, I think that's hands-down  
10 where I feel the safest all the time.

11 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** M'hm.

12 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

13 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So supporting people  
14 to -- to have those kinds of groups would be helpful;  
15 wouldn't it?

16 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

17 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

18 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yep.

19 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Is there any other  
20 specific suggestions that you would make to the  
21 Commissioners?

22 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Well, I want to talk  
23 about, like, thinking systematically, and thinking  
24 historically, and about colonization, and about some things  
25 that -- like there's a lot of things that put us -- put us

1 at risk, you know. A lot of different things. There's the  
2 way -- there's stigma, and stereotypes. There's -- you  
3 know, domestic issues. There's addictions. There's --  
4 there's creeps, johns. Then there's colonial violence.  
5 And then there's intergenerational traumas.

6 And there's also a lot of sort of, putting  
7 yourself out there, putting yourself on the line in like, a  
8 frontlines context. So like, when you're trying to, you  
9 know, protect the water, protect your land as well you're  
10 also putting yourself in that type of risky scenario, so.  
11 And -- and you know, that's -- that our duty as women.  
12 That's what I'm taught is -- is to protect the water. And  
13 that's our inherent duty as Indigenous women. So a lot of  
14 times that requires us to like, literally put ourselves out  
15 there on the line. And -- and you know, that's systematic  
16 as well.

17 And -- and the lengths that some of these  
18 companies will go through to get you out of their way is  
19 very real. Especially if you want to look at it on an  
20 international scale and not just Canadian. But what they  
21 do to Indigenous peoples who try to protect their lands all  
22 over the world.

23 And so there's -- really if you think about  
24 it, a whole shit ton of stuff, sorry, like, that could  
25 happen. And -- and I think recently too, if I want to add

1 and talk about stigma, and talk about like, historical  
2 colonial violence. And the mainstream even today, even now  
3 -- because I'm a really active person, and vocal in the  
4 community, and I did a lot things this summer, surrounding  
5 the Cornwallis statue and that -- that whole ordeal.

6 And one thing that the Mayor of Halifax  
7 wasn't listening to was how that statue -- Cornwallis  
8 specifically back in -- in my city, where I talk about, and  
9 how that actually -- it being there -- like, its physical  
10 presence, and also what it represents, how that perpetuates  
11 violence against Indigenous peoples, even further, even  
12 still, even now, even like, today.

13 And so it's creating currently a lot of  
14 tension in the city, and -- and where me, and Grizzly Mom,  
15 and Elizabeth (ph), and -- and a lot us, we're very -- like  
16 strong vocal advocates, so we also made ourselves very much  
17 more visible to people, I guess you could say, with  
18 opposing views; you know what I mean? So since that  
19 happened and since we became even like, a lot more visible,  
20 I feel like when we advocate for ourselves, and -- and  
21 stuff like that, you also put yourself more at risk, more  
22 of a target, and further danger, and whatever.

23 So that's one thing that -- that the Mayor of  
24 Halifax doesn't take seriously. He doesn't see how -- or  
25 maybe he does and maybe he just doesn't care. But he



1 doesn't see how keeping that there perpetuates violence in  
2 our communities and with us.

3 Like, I know -- like, Grizzly Momma has  
4 gotten threats, for example. And other people have gotten  
5 threats. I haven't gotten threats, not online, but like,  
6 in person, like people -- and...

7 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And maybe, Rebecca, what  
8 we should do is take a little bit of step back so that the  
9 Commissioner understands what you're talking about. So  
10 what happened with the statue of Cornwallis?

11 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** There was one thing that  
12 happened...

13 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Explain to her where it  
14 is.

15 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Okay, so on Canada Day,  
16 so there's a -- there's a statue of Cornwallis, who, as the  
17 founder of Halifax -- in downtown Halifax, and -- and this  
18 is the guy who put the scalping proclamations on -- on  
19 Mi'kmaq people.

20 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Catherine...

21 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Oh, sorry, is that...

22 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Scalping...

23 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** That's what I said,  
24 scalping proclamations. And so for Canada Day, like  
25 when -- when everybody was celebrating Canada 150, you

1 know, for us it's not as -- as happy because -- so -- so  
2 what Grizzly Momma and I did was -- and -- and she was  
3 mourning, and she was -- like, healing, and on her own  
4 journey.

5 And -- and -- like we decided to have a  
6 mourning ceremony for all of the lives of our Indigenous  
7 people that have -- that has happened so -- yeah, all the  
8 lives of Indigenous people that were lost as a result of  
9 colonization.

10 And so, you know, naturally it was just  
11 fitting to sort of, have that there. Like, that gathering  
12 there in front of his statue because he's still there. And  
13 so that's what we did. And then that was interrupted by a  
14 bunch of -- The Proud Boys group, like those...

15 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** The Proud  
16 Boys, they call them?

17 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** They call themselves,  
18 the Proud Boys. Basically, they're kind of like -- they  
19 call them themselves -- they're basically white  
20 supremacists, but they call themselves...

21 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** White supremacists.

22 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** They call themselves  
23 some type of...

24 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Neo-Nazis. That's  
25 it.

1                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** They're like -- what are  
2 they -- something chauvinist, modern chauvinists. Anyways,  
3 only because it's not cool to like come right out and say  
4 you're a white supremacist these days, but basically that's  
5 essentially what they are.

6                   And -- and so their little group came and  
7 interrupted us and they said a lot of really rude things,  
8 like - like how -- like when they were told that, you know,  
9 this is Mi'kmaq territory. They said stuff like, "No, it  
10 was Mi'kmaq territory. Like, now it's Halifax," and  
11 whatever, and they were very -- they were like actively  
12 oppressing us. And they interrupted our -- like, ceremony  
13 of mourning that we were doing. And they were chanting,  
14 God save the Queen, when we were basically mourning like,  
15 the loss of -- like we were basically, like -- like, whole  
16 like genocide of people, you know, we're mourning that  
17 basically.

18                   And -- and then they come up singing God  
19 Save the Queen very disrespectful. They were drunk and --  
20 and whatever so. And it almost got -- it almost got  
21 violent, and -- and stuff. So -- so that happened because  
22 the Cornwallis statue is still there because it has a  
23 presence there. That these -- these tensions still happen  
24 in the city. And then that blew up.

25                   And then I guess we found out that the --

1 the founder of this -- this Proud Boys, white chauvinist  
2 group is this guy, Gavin McInnes, and he's the co-founder  
3 of Vice, and -- Media, and he's the founder of Rebel Media,  
4 and so some -- and anyways, so it's bigger, and he has a  
5 following like all over the States and Canada and stuff.

6 And so it blew up into this whole thing  
7 where we got -- we got an apology from the Admiral of the  
8 Navy, because they were all -- they were all in the Navy.  
9 They were all Canadian Armed Forces too. So it looked  
10 really bad on them, so we got an apology from the Admiral  
11 of the Navy. We got an apology from the Defence Minister  
12 of Canada.

13 And they said that they did an investigation  
14 of those guys. They basically got like, a paid summer  
15 vacation because they were taken off duty, but they still  
16 got pay. And eventually they were re-instated back into  
17 active duty. And so they didn't even really get rid of  
18 them.

19 And so that all happened, and -- and we  
20 dealt with a lot of, you know, backlash and things, and --  
21 and like...

22 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And when you say we, it's  
23 you and...

24 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** It's me, Grizzly Momma,  
25 our allies.

1           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** People that were there  
2           having the ceremony?

3           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah.

4           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

5           **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And supporters.

6           **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. Our allies and  
7           supporters. And...

8           **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And so what did you have  
9           to say about the way the media characterized you?

10          **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Well, I'm getting into  
11          that. So -- so that happened, and then so as a result  
12          because -- because that Cornwallis statue was the center of  
13          the conflict basically. Because of that we had a remove  
14          Cornwallis event, right. Where we were going to -- well,  
15          we were advocating for the removal of the statue.

16                   And so the city freaked out. They didn't  
17          really know what we were doing, but they called it a  
18          hostile protest. They were going to treat it as a hostile  
19          protest, and so basically -- oh, and they called us  
20          violent. They said that were violent, as if you know, we  
21          were going to be violent to this inanimate object, or  
22          something. But -- yeah, so they labelled us violent and  
23          hostile.

24                   And -- and -- and then like we really didn't  
25          like that because we didn't feel violent. We didn't

1 hostile. Like, we're just basically -- we're like a group  
2 of Indigenous women who just didn't like how we were  
3 recently actively oppressed at one of our gatherings, and  
4 shit like that, so.

5 And then that put us in danger too, because  
6 once the media and the Mayor labelled us violent then it  
7 triggers something in people's minds that, you know, these  
8 women are violent, and almost sends a message like it's  
9 okay to commit to violence against us; do you know what I  
10 mean? Because they already put that label on us. So -- so  
11 that's how they dealt with that this summer. And they  
12 villainized us basically. And --

13 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Threatened.

14 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** -- threatened us, yeah.  
15 And -- yeah, so -- so that is a little bit, and you want to  
16 talk about the history of, like -- like how, like  
17 Cornwallis -- he offered more for women and children;  
18 didn't he?

19 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah. The pay for --  
20 the pay for one female scalp equals a year's salary for one  
21 officer.

22 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. So --

23 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'll repeat that.  
24 The value -- the most expensive scalp were the women's  
25 scalps, so the value of one Mi'kmaq woman's scalp equaled a

1 salary of one British officer for one year. His annual  
2 salary was the same as one Mi'kmaq woman's scalp. And  
3 that's -- that's what we had an issue with, so it was  
4 genocide.

5 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm. So it's like that  
6 history and -- and it's still on the books, she said. The  
7 scalping proclamation is still in the books. They never  
8 really changed it.

9 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It's the law.

10 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** So -- so that's how,  
11 like that -- that colonial mentality is being acted out,  
12 and -- and remembered, and still causing tensions even  
13 still in Halifax specifically, like in -- in our territory.  
14 And that's how, like -- and people who are vocal about  
15 it -- like women like me, and others, and my allies and  
16 stuff, are being targeted for further violence.

17 Like, there was actually these -- now we're  
18 basically like heap bags for Nazis, and stuff like that.

19 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** What?

20 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Heap bags for Nazis, I  
21 said.

22 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** You might -- you might  
23 want to use other...

24 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** We're basically like a  
25 big -- like more of a target for -- for Nazis and white

1       supremacists. And -- and they even issued -- like, some of  
2       our allies are on like, Nazi and like -- what do they call  
3       themselves? Socialists? Is that it? Websites. And...

4                   **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Fascist.

5                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Fascist websites, and  
6       they even published like a list of some of us and our  
7       allies, and descriptions of our temperaments and our --  
8       where our workplace is and -- and where we live, and stuff  
9       like that. So they're like, publishing personal  
10      information on us and -- and stuff like that. So -- so  
11      like I would say that us, and our allies, in Halifax are  
12      definitely currently big targets right now by white  
13      supremacist as of lately. And -- yeah, so.

14                   And then I also do a lot of stuff with like,  
15      fighting Alton Gas from branding the Shubenacadie River, so  
16      trying to save and protect the Shubenacadie River. And  
17      it's mostly -- it's not all, but it's mostly Indigenous  
18      women out there on the gate, blocking that company, and so  
19      they're out there; if you know what I mean, as well.

20                   And -- yeah, so these are some of the some  
21      of the things -- and all those things that I just told you,  
22      like that all just happened like this past summer. And,  
23      yeah, so that's a little bit of what's going on in Halifax  
24      I guess.

25                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So Sarah, is there



1 anything that you wanted to add?

2 **MS. SARAH MOORE:** There was the one time --  
3 that one incident on Treaty Day.

4 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. Oh, she was just  
5 talking about a time when a police officer called me a, a  
6 savage on -- on Treaty Day. But -- and how law enforcement  
7 deals with Indigenous peoples. I don't think I really want  
8 to get into that too much.

9 I think I'll also talk about -- yeah, I'm  
10 trying to think. I think I talked about some of the  
11 history of colonial violence, some current things.  
12 Struggling with addictions. How struggling with addictions  
13 also puts you in more dangerous scenarios, and -- yeah, I  
14 think -- I think that's pretty much everything I need to  
15 talk about. M'hm.

16 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay. So I think we can  
17 conclude Rebecca's testimony before the inquiry.

18 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Let me think.

19 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay, we'll give you a  
20 moment.

21 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** There is also like  
22 different things that happened during my years with active  
23 addiction. So when I was struggling -- because I started  
24 drinking at a young age, at 12 years old, and I had a very  
25 active addiction up until about 25. So that was like,

1 basically half my life, like, the bigger chunk of my life.  
2 And through that addiction that I struggled with, there was  
3 a lot of different violent scenarios that -- that happened  
4 and times throughout there, so like, all the -- all the  
5 shit that comes with -- with that lifestyle. I don't know,  
6 like, now even when like my friends go out and drink, I'm  
7 like, I'm scared for them because I don't even do it.

8           You know, I'm like I -- I consider myself a  
9 -- a strong person and a brave person, but I'm like -- I  
10 don't even go and put myself out there like that anymore.  
11 And so I am very worried for our people who still are  
12 suffering with active addictions because you never know  
13 where you can end up, and how you can end up, and -- well,  
14 like what could happen, it's very -- yeah.

15           So with those things like, I experienced  
16 almost everything like, when I was going through those --  
17 so -- and that's from you know, a lot of -- I've been in a  
18 lot of fights because of my addictions, growing up. I've  
19 been raped multiple times because of my addictions growing  
20 up. I've been beaten multiple times by men because of --  
21 while -- like growing up because of all of that. And --  
22 yeah, so.

23           I would say that that part was probably my  
24 most -- I don't know when I was more at risk, or if I'm any  
25 less at risk because I don't drink. I really don't know.

1 I would -- I still think about that because you know, I  
2 felt like I was more at risk -- most at risk when I was  
3 actively partaking in -- in that -- you know, like, high  
4 risk activities and stuff like -- like -- like drinking and  
5 -- and whatever, partying.

6 I thought I was most at risk then, but then  
7 when I started advocating for you know, like, land defence,  
8 and when I started advocating for, like the removal of the  
9 Cornwallis statue, and things like that. I think I'm just  
10 at -- in as much danger as back when I drank, being an  
11 activist in Halifax. Even actually maybe even more danger  
12 because I think I'm pissing more people off.

13 So -- yeah. It's kind of like I went from  
14 being at risk and being like, a partier, and being at risk  
15 in that way to like, now I'm still -- I'm still an  
16 Indigenous woman at risk because you know, I did turn my  
17 life around, and I did turn my life around trying to make  
18 things better, and I did for the most part, but I'm still  
19 just at -- as at risk if not more, so.

20 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** More enemies.

21 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah, more enemies, I  
22 would say. Enemies. Yeah, so I think of -- I'll probably  
23 leave it with that, yeah.

24 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Well, that concludes  
25 Rebecca's testimony.

1 MS. REBECCA MOORE: M'hm.

2 COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: *Merci*  
3 *beaucoup*, Rebecca. Thank you. You mention in your  
4 testimony, "I don't go to those services. I don't go get  
5 help through those services."

6 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

7 COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Can you  
8 explain to me what are those services? And why?

9 MS. REBECCA MOORE: I don't even know what  
10 those services are.

11 MS. JENNIFER COX: I think the question that  
12 I posed was services, so I was asking her if she utilized  
13 addiction services or --

14 COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Okay.

15 MS. JENNIFER COX: -- anything like that.

16 COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: M'hm.

17 MS. JENNIFER COX: And so she's saying that  
18 she did it on her own without help.

19 MS. REBECCA MOORE: M'hm. So she was asking  
20 like -- like how did I overcome, like, my addictions and  
21 stuff and -- yeah --

22 MS. JENNIFER COX: (Indiscernible).

23 MS. REBECCA MOORE: -- I just did that by  
24 myself.

25 COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Okay.

1                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

2                   **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Well, you're  
3                   amazing. I have to say, just when I saw you just before we  
4                   were here, I stopped there -- very -- you have something  
5                   very powerful. And yes, probably because the work and the  
6                   passion that you do, along with your sisters, is making  
7                   women, and you, more vulnerable.

8                   **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm.

9                   **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** And I don't  
10                  think it's acceptable, you know, I don't at all.

11                  And in your presentation or testimony -- and  
12                  I hope Canadian watch and listen. I hope that every level  
13                  of government, including the municipalities, listen. How  
14                  Indigenous people are everywhere. We are everywhere. This  
15                  is -- some of us will say Turtle -- Turtle Island. My  
16                  people will say *nitassinan* and because we're -- you're  
17                  defending that land, or making sure that the ceremonies are  
18                  alive, that your life is threatened.

19                  We have to take this seriously and mention  
20                  it somewhere that for us it never die, and it's still there  
21                  and because of you and your sisters making sure that we're  
22                  doing those ceremonies.

23                  My last -- my last question, where can we  
24                  get that book about *La Proclamation du Crâne* -- that scalp  
25                  proclamation.

1                   **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Indiscernible) the  
2                   scalping -- it's still law in --

3                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Legislation.

4                   **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** -- Nova Scotia.

5                   **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Pardon me?

6                   **MS. JENNIFER COX:** It's legislation. I can  
7                   get it --

8                   **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It's still law.

9                   **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** So it's  
10                  something we --

11                  **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You should ask the  
12                  Premier of Nova Scotia, my dear.

13                  **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** I'll ask  
14                  Jennifer Cox.

15                  **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Please do.

16                  **MS. JENNIFER COX:** I will get it.

17                  **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** I think he  
18                  heard you. But, yes, I need to have that, please.

19                  **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Yes.

20                  **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** We're in  
21                  2017. I can find it tonight on Internet, but I want to  
22                  make it official that this inquiry will receive that, and  
23                  I'll read it, and I'm sure my colleagues will too.

24                  And don't stop. Don't stop. Please, don't  
25                  stop. And you have strong women that don't stop also, and

1 our warriors for many, many century never stopped. And --

2 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Thank you, because  
3 they always try to stop us.

4 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Don't.  
5 Don't. Please. And do it -- yes, you do it for you, but  
6 what you're doing will bring also peace to my girls, to my  
7 children, and to our families. So when we have women like  
8 you across Canada, we're strong, very strong. And you had  
9 this moment where Canada, the rest of the governments  
10 across Canada, but us here in this room to say thank you  
11 for what you're doing. (Speaking Native language 5:18:11).

12 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** We have gifts. We  
13 have gifts. You want to present it?

14 **MS. DEBBIE REID:** So on behalf of the  
15 Commission, you've shared a gift of your truth and of  
16 course in our culture we exchange gifts, so Commissioner  
17 Audette has a couple of gifts for you. One is an Eagle  
18 Feather. The matriarchs of the Haidi Gwaii, of which  
19 Bernie is a hereditary Chief in waiting, sent out a call of  
20 Eagle Feathers to be harvested in the Haidi Gwaii, and  
21 those matriarchs have given those Eagle Feathers to us to  
22 give to all of you who tell your truth.

23 We also have for you a packet of seeds. And  
24 what we hope is that you will plant those seeds and take  
25 pictures of them as they grow and we're going to keep a

1 diary of all our seeds across the country from our -- from  
2 our women who have told their truths.

3 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Indiscernible).

4 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Before you eat it.

5 **MR. JEFF WARD:** So as we're concluding, and  
6 doing our gift giving, and concluding this testimony today  
7 here, a few announcements in regards to supper in Goose Cap  
8 B for the Commissionaires and Commissioners and the  
9 families who've testified there'll be supper next door in  
10 Goose Cap B, and also for the communities and for the  
11 guests who come out from far distance, and the staff too,  
12 the guys behind the cameras. You guys are doing an amazing  
13 job. We'd like to invite everybody to the number 2 rink,  
14 the number 2 arena upstairs on the second floor. We'll be  
15 having Salmon, so just to let -- let you guys go because --  
16 we want to -- these guys behind the cameras they look  
17 hungry, so I'm going to take care of you guys. All they're  
18 dressed in dark. You guys just look thin. I get it. I  
19 get it now.

20 But before we end our day we want to close  
21 with a closing prayer, and ask our -- our Elder, Katy, at  
22 this time, and if -- please, rise if you can, if you can't  
23 it's fine -- that's fine. We're going to do a closing  
24 prayer.

25 -- **CLOSING PRAYER**

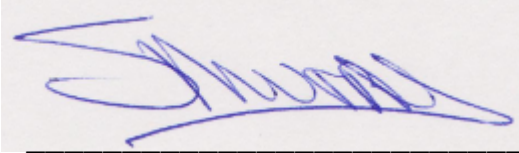


1                   **MR. JEFF WARD:** And thank you, everybody.  
2                   And tomorrow 8:30 a.m. opening prayer, and we'll see you  
3                   tomorrow morning at 8:30 a.m. *Mi'walatl*, thank you. Drive  
4                   safely. Drive -- have a good night.  
5                   --- Upon adjourning at 5:28 p.m.

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14                   LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

15  
16                   I, Shannon Munro, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I  
17                   have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and  
18                   accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this  
19                   matter.

20  
21                     
22

23                   Shannon Munro  
24                   February 8, 2018