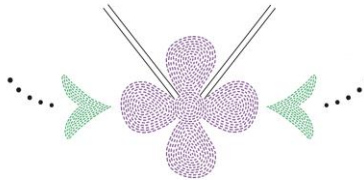


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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 I Public Hearings
Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel
Elmbridge Room
Metro Vancouver, British Columbia**



Public

Friday April 6, 2018

**Public Volume 100:
Nicole Danjai Bresser**

**Heard by Commissioner Michèle Audette
Commission Counsel: Breen Ouellette**

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II

APPEARANCES

Assembly of First Nations	No Appearance
Government of British Columbia	Sara Pye (Legal counsel)
Government of Canada	Lucy Bell (Legal counsel)
Heiltsuk First Nation	No Appearance
Northwest Indigenous Council Society	No Appearance
Our Place - Ray Cam Co-operative Centre	No Appearance
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada	No Appearance
Vancouver Sex Workers' Rights Collective	No Appearance
Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak / Women of the Métis Nation	No Appearance

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Clerk: Bryana Bouchir	
Registrar: Bryan Zandberg	

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	None.	
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1 Metro Vancouver, British Columbia

2 --- Upon commencing on Friday, April 6, 2018 at 1:22

3 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Thank you,
4 Commissioner Audette.

5 My name is Breen Ouellette and I am a lawyer
6 with the National Inquiry. It is my very great honour to
7 introduce to you today Nicole Danjai Bresser who's
8 travelled here from Victoria. Nicole has brought someone
9 in support who I will ask her to introduce.

10 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** My brother has
11 flown here from Winnipeg to be here in support of me. This
12 is my brother Rymeran (ph). Thanks for being here, Ry
13 (ph).

14 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Mr. Registrar, Nicole
15 has requested to affirm using an eagle feather.

16 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Nicole, do you solemnly
17 affirm that the evidence you will give will be the truth,
18 the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

19 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I affirm.

20 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Okay. Thank you.

21 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** Can I hold this
22 for strength?

23 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Yes, I was going to ask
24 you that.

25 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Nicole, would you

1 start by telling us about yourself, your occupation and
2 your achievements?

3 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** Everyone, thank
4 you so much for allowing me this opportunity to be here
5 today and to be a part of my journey of healing.

6 My name's Nicole Bresser. Most people call
7 me Nikki. I grew up in between Vancouver and Victoria but
8 my home community is from Manitoba. I'm Métis and I've
9 been so lucky and privileged to live in these territories
10 and live and work. I've worked my way through a variety of
11 careers but was in social services for eight years working
12 with children and youth who were a part of the Child
13 Welfare system or experiencing mental health issues, only
14 ever working as an advocate for Indigenous children and
15 youth. And now, after a long battle, I'm a lawyer working
16 in -- for the Province of B.C.

17 It's odd to talk about achievements but I
18 understand it's good. Some of the things that I can say
19 that I'm really proud of is in 2012 I was asked to
20 represent Canada as a national Aboriginal role model due to
21 all my volunteer experiences and commitment to my
22 community. Last year I was selected as one of 250
23 Canadians to participate in the Governor General Leadership
24 conference, which was amazing. I got to travel throughout
25 Nunavut and meet some amazing people.

1 I've survived and I think that's the biggest
2 achievement of my life. And I'm -- you know, some fun
3 facts, I'm a really good fastball player and have played at
4 the national level, so just kind of a bit about me.

5 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Thank you.

6 In conversations that we've had prior to the
7 hearing I've come to understand that you are a survivor of
8 violence. Have you experienced physical and sexual
9 violence?

10 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** Yes, I've
11 experienced both.

12 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** What was your life
13 like growing up?

14 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I have to say
15 that I had a -- you know, I've got an amazing family. And
16 it's one of the reasons that I wanted to talk about my
17 story and had been encouraged to talk about my story is my
18 experiences with violence have transcended all socio and
19 economic standards, all things that are normally
20 precursors. It happened to our family and my family was
21 great.

22 I have an amazing mother. She worked
23 really, really hard at night shifts to give us what we
24 needed. My dad was in the RCMP at the time. I had my
25 brother at home growing up. We always had pets and this

1 was -- we were in Port Coquitlam growing up and it was --
2 by all means, I never had to worry about food on our table.
3 And, you know, we didn't have a lot of money but we had
4 food and I had love.

5 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And when did you start
6 experiencing violence in your life?

7 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** The first
8 experience of violence was when I was about six years old.
9 My parents -- we had a babysitter named Michelle and she
10 wasn't able to babysit us any longer. She had kind of
11 gotten older and they knew the family and her brother
12 offered to help babysit us. And when he babysat he would
13 put me to bed at night and would climb on top of me and
14 take out his penis and rub it on me and ask me if I liked
15 it and tell me that I had to like it, and did that over and
16 over and over again every time he babysat. And he told me
17 that I wasn't allowed to tell anyone and that I was good
18 girl for not telling anyone.

19 And this went on for the better part of a
20 year. It wasn't that he babysat a lot but it was for a
21 long time it felt like. And I remember knowing it was
22 wrong but not knowing what to do with it. And I remember
23 being really confused because what do your parents tell you
24 when they leave? Be good for the babysitter; right? You
25 make sure you listen to what that babysitter says.

1 And I did and sometimes I would tell him --
2 like, I remember smiling sometimes thinking that's what I
3 was supposed to do and having a really hard time, thinking
4 that I encouraged him somehow to do it, but I was just a
5 little girl. I didn't encourage him.

6 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** So how did your
7 parents find out?

8 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** So eventually I
9 decided to tell my parents and I told my mom. And I'll
10 never forget, because my mom's a really good momma bear.
11 She did everything to try and protect us. And she just
12 fell on the floor. And I remember thinking I've just made
13 my mom upset telling her. But she just started to cry and
14 she just held me and she's so sad. And they phoned my dad
15 and luckily, unlike so many other survivors, my dad was in
16 the RCMP and I think that helped because he was able to
17 talk to some colleagues at his office and get us support
18 right away.

19 And the -- I don't know when but I remember
20 another officer coming over and with my parents there and
21 talking to us. And I think they talked to my whole family,
22 talked to Ry (ph), talked to my mom and dad. And they told
23 us how the next process was going to go. And the police
24 officer told my mom that because of the laws it would be
25 way harder on me to press charges and they had to protect

1 me, so do everything they could to protect me and don't
2 make me go through court because that would be horrible and
3 I'd be more traumatized. So the police officers and my
4 parents decided not to press charges on the condition that
5 this boy -- Brad was his name -- would get some help.

6 And, you know, my mom since told me that his
7 mom wrote her a letter afterwards that said, "Oh, well, you
8 know, kids will be kids. I'll get help." But she was
9 really dismissive of it. And Brad used to keep on coming
10 around our house even afterwards. We'd see him at the park
11 down the road from our house even though he didn't live
12 really close and, yeah. That's kind of what happened.

13 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Do you know the name
14 of the RCMP detachment that investigated?

15 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** It was the RCMP
16 in Coquitlam. And the officer, I've since learned, is
17 Brian Tuckery (ph).

18 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And so in the
19 aftermath, when you would encounter Brad in public, what
20 would happen?

21 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I would shut
22 down. I would freeze. I was really afraid. I remember a
23 time when we were at the mall and there used to be this
24 store called Pandora's Box. I don't know why it sticks out
25 so much. And he was right outside Pandora's Box and my mom

1 said I just shut down and stopped and she was so mad that
2 he was even around. And we -- as a result, we ended up
3 moving from Vancouver. My mom told my dad to put in for a
4 transfer because it was too hard that he was around and she
5 wanted to protect me because every time I saw him, every
6 time my family encountered him, it was just another
7 trigger. So we moved to Victoria.

8 But before that, we went to counselling as a
9 family. Brad was supposed to go to counselling as well,
10 although I understand that he only ever went to one
11 counselling session. The name of the doctor that I went to
12 go see was Dr. Gossage. He was in New Westminster. And we
13 had to stop seeing him because he was inappropriate with my
14 mom and would ask her to go out for dinner and would hug
15 her and be inappropriate with her. I don't remember if he
16 was inappropriate with me. I don't remember a lot of that
17 time, to be honest. I think I've stuffed it somewhere so
18 far that I don't know where it is. But we found out later
19 that he was charged with sexually abusing children that he
20 was seeing and with this inappropriate conduct with
21 parents.

22 And so I have always felt like there's
23 another person who was supposed to be helping me that
24 turned out to be a total sham, that anything that the
25 healing maybe -- like I said, I don't remember the healing

1 but anything that he taught me wasn't right.

2 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** When you became older,
3 did you try to take any action against Brad yourself?

4 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I ended up going
5 away to university in Prince George, which was amazing, and
6 really trying to find myself after I was there. You know,
7 you grow up and you leave home. And I really thought it
8 was time for me to do something about this myself. And so
9 I came back to Victoria and contacted the Sexual Assault
10 Centre in Victoria who provided a lot of support. I can
11 say that they were really great to me. And they encouraged
12 me to press charges as an adult. And I wanted to do that.
13 I was never given the opportunity to have my healing.

14 And they helped me contact -- they,
15 themselves, contacted the RCMP and I was told that the
16 officer said there wasn't -- the officer told the Sexual
17 Assault Centre, which then told me, there was no way to
18 press charges at a later date because there was apparently
19 an agreement that was made and therefore it was a
20 settlement. So I had no opportunity to press charges,
21 which is -- I accepted.

22 And now, after becoming a lawyer and being
23 illuminated to the law a bit more, I don't know that that
24 police officer was in any position to be giving a legal
25 opinion about if I could or could not be pressing charges

1 at that time. It -- I don't know. I just -- it was
2 stopped. I was never given the opportunity to restorative
3 justice. I was never given the opportunity to have my own
4 healing. It was just stopped.

5 And I don't know where he is. I don't know
6 if he's done this again. I am scared that he's done this
7 to other children. I think he didn't get any help. And if
8 you're doing that to a little girl already, it's probably
9 continuing and it makes me sick to think that he could be
10 doing it and I could do something to change it and other
11 kids are going through it and I've done nothing to stop it.

12 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Going back to the move
13 to Victoria, what was your reaction to the move?

14 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I was really
15 angry to move to Victoria, although, you know, mommas know
16 best. It was the best thing she could have ever done. At
17 the time I was very, very angry. You don't understand
18 leaving your friends and moving your house and everything.

19 And so we moved two weeks before my ninth
20 birthday. And I remember not having any friends. And you
21 know what that's like as a kid; right? You want to have a
22 birthday party and I had nobody. And my parents did the
23 best. My brother did the best. Like, it wasn't that, just
24 it was really lonely.

25 And so I started school and school wasn't

1 good. I was already the outcast. They put me in a class
2 where it was like a Grade 4/5 split and they put me in a
3 class with all just the new -- there was only a couple of
4 us Grade 4s and they were just the new kids. And you know
5 how mean kids can be; right? And so no one liked me and
6 didn't have any friends when I got to school. And I was
7 chubby, this chubby little thing that got picked on a lot.

8 And there was one little boy who was the
9 same age as me. I'll call him WC because he was just a
10 little boy. And WC wanted to be my friend, which was
11 great. So we would go. And, you know, you're old enough
12 at nine years old to play alone. And he told me if I
13 wanted to be his friend then I had to touch him. And he
14 told me that I had to perform oral sex on him because
15 that's what you do to have friends. And he told me I had
16 to have intercourse because that's what boys like. And he
17 told me that that's the only way he would hang out with me.

18 So what do you do? I already uprooted my
19 whole family. I already had so much blame that it was my
20 fault we moved from (inaudible) over to Victoria. Like so
21 I just internalized it and I did it. And I told myself I
22 had to because that's what you do to survive. You just do
23 it.

24 And so I never told anyone. I just did it
25 and hung out with this boy. And I don't know how long it

1 went on for. But every time I saw him he used to make me
2 do things. And I just remember him saying over and over
3 again, "This is what it takes to have friends. This is how
4 you become friends with boys. This is what my brother told
5 me is how you would be friends."

6 And so I just lived with it and I shoved it
7 somewhere really dark. And I don't know what happened to
8 him because I think when I left middle school or went to
9 middle school starting in Grade 6 he wasn't there. Thank
10 God or whoever that he wasn't there. And I don't know
11 where he is now.

12 I don't think I told people about it too
13 because it was really confusing having somebody your own
14 age do that to you. I didn't understand at the time that
15 he raped me. Like, I didn't get that because you think of
16 these things as, you know, an older person. But this was a
17 boy my age. And, you know, I've since come to realize that
18 he probably -- someone was probably really hurting him bad
19 too I bet you. And that gives me a little bit of relief I
20 guess, but he still really hurt me and I had a really hard
21 time with that and a lot of guilt for a really long time.
22 And I still carry a lot of guilt about it. I should have
23 done something, in my opinion, but I didn't.

24 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And could you tell us
25 the name of the elementary school?

1 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** It was at
2 Cordova Bay Elementary School.

3 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And did you have other
4 problems at Cordova Bay Elementary School?

5 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I think the
6 biggest thing at Cordova Bay was that I just -- none of the
7 teachers cared. I was this new student and it was obvious
8 that I was being picked on. And when -- I remember in
9 class one time this girl just picking on me so bad and she
10 -- over and over. And every time she walked in -- across
11 the aisle she would bump into my desk purposely and all my
12 stuff would fall out. And I remember the teacher looking
13 and I remember looking and being, like, what the heck? But
14 that's just how mean the kids were.

15 And one day I just stood up and punched that
16 girl in the face. And, you know -- I'm sorry that I
17 punched her in the face but I didn't know what else to do;
18 right? And, of course, I got suspended and I'm the one who
19 got in trouble. But, like, I don't know why they didn't do
20 anything. They put us in a class totally isolated with all
21 these older kids that were picking on me. They knew I was
22 this new kid from Vancouver and they just -- they didn't
23 care. They'd see me walking around alone by myself at
24 lunch or the kids running away from me at lunch. Like, I
25 know they did because I remember turning and looking and

1 they didn't do anything. I don't know why they didn't. I
2 was just a kid. Like, why don't they do stuff?

3 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And how did that make
4 you feel about yourself?

5 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I hated myself.
6 You know, I found my old diary. I don't know. It would
7 have been about 10 years ago. I found an old diary; right?
8 The best thing for a little girl: a little diary with your
9 very own little lock. And it was horrible. You can see
10 the tears. You could see the tears on every single one of
11 the pages. And all I kept on saying to myself was, "I'm so
12 fat. I'm so ugly. Why does everybody hate me?" And they
13 were just tear-soaked pages.

14 And I look -- my little niece is nine.
15 She's a little girl. She shouldn't have to hate herself.
16 And that's what I did. I grew up hating myself.

17 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Where did you go to
18 middle school?

19 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I went to middle
20 school in Victoria as well as Royal Oak Middle School.
21 And, you know, there was maybe some changes. I started to
22 develop some friends there. It was, like, four different
23 elementary schools coming together. There was more kids.
24 I still didn't have a lot of friends but I started to form
25 some friendships.

1 I was in baseball more so that was amazing.
2 I was in swim club and I always remember thinking all the
3 girls who were mean to me at school, they were nice to me
4 on the ball field or they're nice to me at swim club. So
5 when their friends weren't around or when I was doing good
6 at something they were nice. And so sports became my life.
7 It's always been my saviour. It's -- and so I played a lot
8 of sports.

9 And Royal Oak -- I was still picked on a lot
10 and kids are pretty mean but I started to develop some
11 supports. I remember though, like, just how cruel kids
12 are; right? Back in the day of -- these were Ikeda jeans
13 and I wore a purple Club Monaco shirt and a purple pair of
14 pants. And for the whole entire year they called me
15 "Grimace" because I was this fat little kid that was
16 wearing purple on purple and, you know, Grimace from
17 MacDonald's. And that was my name. Or they called me
18 "manger", which was to eat in French and because the
19 teacher made me hold that card up in class when we were
20 doing a French exercise. And kids are just mean. Like,
21 they found that to pick on me. So those were my names all
22 throughout middle school is "Grimace" or "manger". It says
23 a lot for B.C. considering didn't know a lot of French too
24 that they could find a French name to pick on me about;
25 right? God, it's very embarrassing.

1 So, yeah, middle school was trying. But
2 there were some strengths that were there. You know, I
3 became part of student council and I actually got an award
4 for being the best at student -- like, a big student
5 council award because my big achievement was getting slow
6 dances for the Grade 8s. You know, started a young age of
7 advocacy. But it wasn't -- I don't look at that time as
8 being good. It was still hard but it was, I don't know,
9 school.

10 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And then where did you
11 go to high school?

12 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** And then I went
13 to Claremont. So there was a big transition that happened
14 in between Grade 8 and 9 for me. And I was playing so many
15 sports and went from this really chubby kid to a young
16 woman. And, like, it was literally over the summer of
17 Grade 8 and 9. And all of a sudden I entered into Grade 9
18 with a whole bunch of new attention that I'd never had
19 before.

20 And people didn't like that very much, the
21 other girls. And they -- there was a hazing ritual that
22 was there and they selected me out of all the Grade 9s to
23 be part of that hazing ritual where they made me walk down
24 the hall on my hands and knees with a dog collar around my
25 neck in front of everyone, barking like a dog, in front of

1 all the teachers, in front of everyone. And they made me
2 lay down in the parking lot of the school in front of
3 everyone and roll around in mud as everyone stood and
4 laughed at me. And that just started off my Grade 9 year
5 of who I was going to be in that school.

6 I was the pretty girl now all of a sudden
7 who was just going to be picked on by all the older girls.
8 And they made my life hell. They literally did. And they
9 even went so far as to in -- at Christmas the school
10 counsellor pretended to be Santa Claus and read out a list
11 of wants for the school, so it was supposed to be a fun,
12 joking thing. But instead, for me, they wrote a list that
13 said, "Nikki Bresser wants a list of all the Grade 12 boys'
14 phone numbers." And knowing that that would be something
15 to humiliate me about and knowing something that it wasn't
16 a good thing. It was because I was getting this new
17 attention. And everybody turned at me in school and
18 laughed and called me "slut" and called me "whore" and
19 called me all these different things. And this was a
20 teacher who read that out.

21 And I talked to the teacher about it
22 afterwards and they published it in the year book. So
23 there's that list that's out there in my permanent year
24 book. And people don't get it. Like, I didn't know what
25 to do. Like, I wasn't promiscuous. And even if I was, it

1 shouldn't have mattered. But coming from where I'd come
2 from and everything that had happened and then they just
3 were so mean to me and didn't beat me down even more.

4 And I tried to get some help with all the
5 girls that were bullying me and I went to the school
6 counsellor. And I don't know what was said. All I know is
7 that I ended up in the parking lot afterwards with those
8 girls and them yelling and screaming at me and trying to
9 beat me up because I went to the school counsellor. And so
10 I skipped a lot of school.

11 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** That hazing ritual,
12 did teachers see it happening?

13 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** They were
14 laughing at me. They thought it was hilarious. I don't
15 know how you could think that's funny. Like, I guess in
16 some worlds, like, there's something to be said about oh,
17 funny, ha ha. Like, there's an initiation process, but
18 initiation doesn't mean singling out one kid and
19 humiliating them in a parking lot. And, like, people
20 bugged me about that for years. The names that they called
21 me, like, "shut the fuck up, dumb bitch", you know. "Roll
22 in the mud." Who says that? And they were there. Like, I
23 remember the principal or the parking lot attendant there
24 as I'm by myself rolling around in mud. I remember going
25 home and skipping class afterwards.

1 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Was there anything to
2 make you proud of your Indigenous heritage?

3 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** No. I laugh
4 because it was such a joke at Claremont. There was nothing
5 that was there. No one acknowledged it. No one did
6 anything. And to -- you know, when I look back there was
7 two Indigenous kids that I went -- two kids that I knew of
8 who were Indigenous and went to the school and one of them
9 committed suicide. And no one did anything. It was just
10 one day he was there, one day he wasn't. No one talked
11 about it. Like, there was literally nothing.

12 I remember the day in class in Grade 11
13 where we learned about Indigenous stuff. And it was
14 literally, like, one day in class and we never learned
15 about residential schools. We never learned about Sixties
16 Scoop. We never learned about anything. It was kind of
17 here are some people who were here and that was it. There
18 was nothing. There was no supports. There was no safe
19 place. And, if anything, I don't even think that -- like,
20 the goal of that school was just to be the best middle
21 class kid you could be. I just tried to survive to get
22 through there.

23 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And what affect did
24 all this pressure and shame have on you?

25 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** So after

1 everything I -- finally when I was about 15 I thought
2 enough was enough and I tried to kill myself. And I ended
3 up in the hospital and I had taken a bunch of pills. And I
4 remember my mom coming in and just seeing pills everywhere.
5 And she said, "What did you do? What did you do?" And she
6 just ran me to the hospital.

7 And we drove and I remember having to take
8 all this charcoal stuff and it tasted so gross and it was
9 all in my teeth. And there was another girl who was there
10 from high school and my mom and I -- like, I was just so
11 embarrassed that this girl from high school was going to
12 see me and then now the high school's going to know that I
13 just tried to kill myself.

14 And so -- if I'm honest with myself,
15 sometimes I still wish it worked. I have so much to live
16 for now and just but it's still so painful that sometimes I
17 wish it worked.

18 But from that there was a really good
19 program. And I have to say, there was a woman there, Mary-
20 Jane Oberny (ph), who she was with Project Alive, and
21 because I had gone in under this -- or she was assigned to
22 me. And she really helped me. She used to come pick me up
23 from school. And she had a car that had a -- like, a -- it
24 was almost a convertible. And I remember thinking that was
25 the coolest thing ever.

1 And she'd take me away from school to get me
2 outside of that and we'd go for coffee. And she'd just
3 tell me I was okay. And she just really, really, really
4 helped me. And she was my advocate. She -- if things
5 weren't going good, it wasn't just me on my own anymore.
6 She was -- helped my parents with maybe better ways to cope
7 and stuff and she was really great.

8 And she -- at one point I remember, you
9 know, her husband -- I forgot about this until now. Her
10 husband was a lawyer actually. And he was going to help me
11 maybe find some compensation from Victim Services or
12 something from what happened to me as a kid but it never
13 happened. I don't know why. But she was really -- I
14 remember her thinking -- I remember that she said, "Maybe
15 there's something we can still do to help you."

16 And I think that she left being a clinician
17 and has gone to a different practice and that's why I
18 didn't see her anymore. But she really helped.

19 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And were there -- were
20 the teachers at the high school also not supportive?

21 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I never found
22 any of the teachers overly supportive. I think when -- as
23 I've mentioned, like, when I went to try and seek help it
24 just caused more problems for me. There is nothing
25 Indigenous there. There was no one really I could talk to.

1 It was -- I remember Mr. Stack (ph). Like,
2 I went to go get help with English. And I was really
3 struggling. We were learning about Shakespeare. Still
4 blows my mind that you learn about Shakespeare. And I had
5 to go ask him for some help because I didn't get it. And
6 he said to me I wasn't going to amount to anything anyway
7 so he wasn't going to waste his time helping me. And I
8 internalized that. I think I got a C in English.

9 I ended up leaving Claremont in Grade 11 to
10 go to a different school because it wasn't going well, but
11 I went to a different school and, you know, you're the new
12 kid then, so I just went for one semester and then I came
13 back to Claremont. And I think I spent most of my Grade 12
14 year skipping class and just avoiding everything and
15 playing sports.

16 I always went to enough classes so I didn't
17 get kicked off my sporting teams. And I've always been
18 lucky enough that I could get pretty good grades even
19 though I didn't try and that saved me too, because I would
20 have been in a lot of trouble had I been failing a lot more
21 classes and stuff.

22 After high school I had to go and do what I
23 called my Grade 13, which is one more semester, to upgrade
24 my marks so I could go to university, but I did it, and I
25 was really proud when I got an A+ in -- an A, sorry, in

1 English, because I had the right support. I didn't fail it
2 like with Mr. Stack (ph) so.

3 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Would you share with
4 the Commissioner the time you were physically assaulted by
5 a group of men when you were 16 years old?

6 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** So it just feels
7 like when I share my story there's just never been a break.
8 You know, like there's these glimmers of hope but then, you
9 know, we just go back to this other time. And what had
10 happened in that situation was I was out at a movie store
11 with some guys. And they had been involved with some other
12 guys the week before, unbeknownst to me. And we went to go
13 get in their car and the car had been busted all in with a
14 baseball bat and everything while we were in the movie
15 store.

16 And so they went back in -- sorry. They
17 went back in to call the police and I went back out to get
18 my book of CDs because at 16 those were the priorities is
19 your CDs. And these guys came out from behind the building
20 and asked us where these other guys were. And some words
21 were exchanged and these two guys physically assaulted me
22 and beat me up pretty bad. I had a bleeding nose and a
23 black eye and was down on the ground. I remember them
24 kicking me. And I don't know how it stopped, to be honest.
25 I think that they got scared away. But what I do know is

1 that those 2 6'2" guys that I was hanging out with didn't
2 come in to help me. It was just for whatever reason they
3 stopped.

4 So we went to the police office afterwards
5 to press charges. And at that time I felt like I could
6 press charges. I pressed charges and I didn't know these
7 guys beforehand but it turns out they were involved in some
8 gangs. And they continuously harassed me and would drive
9 by my school and pretend like they were shooting at me
10 through the windows. They would send me pictures of my
11 house that they were driving past. They told me they were
12 going to kill me. And they told me I had to drop these
13 charges.

14 And there was a police officer with Victoria
15 Police who is very kind. His name was Peter Gill and he
16 was very kind and supportive. And he encouraged me that
17 having the testimony was good because actually it was --
18 showed that they were out after their probation time and so
19 they would be in breach of probation and that would lock
20 them up even longer. And I remember thinking how is a
21 breach of probation more damaging than beating up an
22 innocent girl on the side of the road? And I remember
23 thinking that but not doing anything about it, but it's
24 something that stuck with me that that's how we value women
25 in society, young women, you know. Like, your breaches is

1 an easier slam dunk for the cops than a assault of a woman.
2 And I never had any justice in that sense from that is it
3 just was how it was.

4 And those guys continued to harass me for a
5 long time until there was another guy in high school who I
6 was friends with who somehow was friends with them. I
7 don't know the exact story but he told them to back off and
8 they did and that was it. And I've never had -- I haven't
9 had to deal with them in general afterwards.

10 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** I understand you were
11 also sexually assaulted twice when you were 19 years old.
12 Would you please tell the Commissioner about that? The
13 first time was at a bar I understand?

14 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** Oh, I don't know
15 if I was sexually assaulted. When I was 19 and these same
16 guys owned a nightclub and I -- oh. Sorry. Thank you.

17 There were two situations that happened and
18 the first was I went to the club, as so many 19-year olds
19 do. And these same guys who actually were involved in this
20 altercation before were at the club. And I don't know what
21 had gone on. I had just gotten off work. I went to go
22 order a drink from the bartender and I don't remember much
23 after that except for I woke up in a different club in the
24 bathroom with the security guard dragging me out. And my
25 nylons were all ripped and I was laying there in the

1 bathroom.

2 And they -- one of my friends was there and
3 saw me and just took me outside. And I couldn't hold
4 myself up. I was falling down. They sat with me on their
5 lap and held me up like this because I literally couldn't
6 keep my head up straight. And I ended up back at a
7 friend's house and they said that I was convulsing all
8 night. I don't know why people don't phone the hospital or
9 911 but I just convulsed there all night and I don't know
10 what happened. I don't know.

11 I know that's where they found me. And it's
12 two blocks away in between those two clubs. And that's all
13 I remember of that.

14 And the second incident was I was out and I
15 ended up meeting these guys and going to -- later on at
16 night going to a house party. And I look back now and I
17 still blame myself. I shouldn't have gone by myself, you
18 know. Number one lesson in life, you don't go by yourself
19 to places, but I did and I found out afterwards these guys
20 were also involved in gang-related stuff. And they kept me
21 at this house and I tried to -- I didn't have my car
22 because they had picked me up. And at one point they
23 grabbed me and one of the guys was behind me and another
24 guy he was holding on to me with the guy in front of me.
25 And he pulled down his pants and rubbed his penis on me and

1 thought it was the funniest thing ever that I was standing
2 there.

3 And I ended up leaving really shortly
4 afterwards and walking for about two hours to get home
5 because I didn't have a cell phone and it was early in the
6 morning and I didn't know what to do and you don't -- so I
7 just walked. And I walked and walked and walked until I
8 got home.

9 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** You mentioned earlier
10 that you attended UBC [*sic*]. Could you tell us about that
11 experience?

12 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I went to UNBC,
13 yeah, which is in Prince George. And I think that's where
14 I started to -- it was the best move I ever made. I needed
15 to leave Victoria because of all the sadness and bad people
16 that were around. And I went up there and I met -- I got
17 involved in Métis studies. They actually had a class
18 called Métis studies, which was amazing.

19 And my professor, who is my Elder and one of
20 my best friends now, Earl, he just loves me so much for me.
21 And we -- he taught me so much about our culture and he
22 introduced me to sweat lodge and he helped me prepare for
23 this. He helped me so my baby was going to be okay. And
24 he just helped me realize that there was more to life. And
25 he also made me realize that the things that I had gone

1 through I wasn't alone, that we were -- there's a lot of
2 our community who's gone through this. And he really,
3 really helped me.

4 And UNBC was great. In a lot of ways I had
5 created a lot of independence. I started working at the
6 Sexual Assault Centre. I started working as an RA. I was
7 DJ in a nightclub. You know, like, and there was a lot of
8 really cool things that were there.

9 But there was a lot of pressure as well and
10 I think I really struggled with that pressure at times and
11 had a lot of my old demons creep back in a lot. And I had
12 support but it wasn't -- it never goes away. It's always
13 there with you all this stuff.

14 And I think there was a couple times that I
15 really wanted to give up and I can say there's a lot of
16 times where I was suicidal up there but I had good people
17 too. And so I survived that too. But it was good. And I
18 ended up with a degree and that really helped me in life.

19 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Did you stay up there
20 for the entirety of your degree?

21 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** No, I ended up
22 leaving to -- I met a guy and so I wanted to come back down
23 and finish my degree at UVic. And I was involved with that
24 guy and he seemed like a really good guy but we got in a
25 very bad car accident in 2004. If I was to look back on

1 it, I'm pretty sure that he was drunk when he was driving.
2 And I ended up flying out the back of the window and waking
3 up in a ditch full of dirt and was pretty damaged from that
4 car accident. I had a really bad concussion and I had soft
5 tissue damage all over my body. And I have a very large
6 scar at the backside of my leg. And after that, he really
7 changed and he became a very bad cocaine addict.

8 And I don't know why I stayed with him for
9 so long but I think I felt like I needed to because he was
10 sick and I didn't love myself enough to think that I was
11 worth more. And he never made me feel good about myself so
12 why would I go anywhere else? And he was just an
13 emotionally bad person. And he was very emotionally
14 damaging on me and he made me feel even more worthless
15 again.

16 And I just remember one time -- I'm, like,
17 "I really want to do a master's degree." And he's, like,
18 "No, how much will that cost me? You're not worth that."
19 Like, that was his answer to everything. And that's just
20 all the things. He did physically assault me once outside
21 of a party where he threw me onto the ground where I hit my
22 head pretty bad.

23 And my family ended up actually doing an
24 intervention where they said, "This is not okay. You need
25 to end this relationship." And they're the ones who stood

1 up. And as -- I did end up going back to him afterwards.
2 But knowing that my family loathed him so much and knew how
3 bad he was for me eventually made it easier. Like, it
4 started to break the ties because I knew I could never be
5 with someone who my family didn't love.

6 But eventually, the reason that I was able
7 to sever ties is that he was cheating on me and he got
8 another girl pregnant and I didn't love myself enough but I
9 loved that unborn little baby enough to know that I didn't
10 want to cause problems. He needed to go be a dad. And so
11 I just blocked his phone number, everything, and just never
12 talked to him again because I didn't want to do anything to
13 harm that little baby. And so I don't think that baby's
14 still alive anymore but that baby saved me and I really
15 appreciate that, for that life.

16 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** How was your life
17 after you left Murray?

18 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I went through a
19 really good period of time where I really started to focus
20 on myself. And was going to the gym every day and I had a
21 really good career. I bought a little condo and things
22 were going really, really well. I was in lots of
23 counselling and doing some good things.

24 And then I was out one night and I was about
25 26 or so. And I ended up meeting a group of people when I

1 was out with some friends. And don't remember a ton of it
2 but I ended up getting in a cab with these guys to go back
3 to this house party where we were going. And luckily, when
4 I walked through the door this -- I knew one of the girls
5 who was there so I felt pretty safe. And it turned out to
6 be one of the worst nights of my life. And these three men
7 raped me while the woman watched. And they videotaped it.

8 And I tried to leave. I kept on trying to
9 call a cab and the cab wouldn't come. I tried to get out
10 of the house. I couldn't leave. They kept on blocking the
11 door. And eventually I was able to go and I left and
12 didn't tell anyone because I thought it was my fault that I
13 got into this cab with them. I'd been drinking. It's my
14 fault.

15 I know I didn't consent to that. I know I
16 didn't consent to having three men do those things to me.
17 And I just didn't do anything about it.

18 And about four years later the irony of it
19 is, is I was actually at -- in Edmonton at the pre-Inquiry
20 hearings helping discuss how this Inquiry was going to be
21 shaped. And I looked at my Facebook and there was a
22 message from that woman who watched me and said, "I need to
23 talk to you." And I never check my Facebook messages so I
24 didn't respond back because it was months. And it went on
25 to a full message about her telling me what a horrible

1 person I was and how I ruined her family and calling me
2 every name under the book and that there is a videotape
3 going around of me from that night and that she was going
4 to ruin my life.

5 And so I have a baby at home. My little guy
6 was only eight months old and I got this message and
7 thought, I'm a lawyer, what am I supposed -- like this
8 can't -- what am I supposed to do? And because I had just
9 put that somewhere. I didn't deal with that.

10 And so eventually I was able to talk to this
11 woman and said, "Like, what -- talk to me. I don't
12 understand. Like, that was the worst night of my life.
13 What are you saying I ruined your life?"

14 So she told me that she knows what happened
15 that night. She was trying to get my attention that they
16 have gone around and bragged to all their friends about how
17 they purposely found me at the bar and drugged me, that
18 they sent out one of the guys and coerced me into the car
19 because he was the best looking of the guys. They knew
20 exactly what they were going to do. They had it planned.
21 And that they've been doing this to other women as well.
22 This is what they do. I was just the first.

23 And she told me that. I said, "I tried to
24 leave." And she said, "Every time you phoned a cab they
25 phoned behind you and cancelled it and that's why you

1 couldn't leave." Because I said, "I don't understand. I
2 remember phoning a cab." And they [sic] said, "No, every
3 time you phoned they phoned right behind you and tried to
4 cancel it."

5 After that night her husband, who was part
6 of the assailant, he assaulted her very, very bad and ran
7 over her with a car and that's why she's blamed me for this
8 -- she's since gotten a divorce from her partner. And
9 she's going through her own healing I think. And hearing
10 me say that I wasn't consenting to that and that I don't
11 remember and that the parts that I do remember I don't want
12 to remember I think has helped her a bit.

13 But I asked some colleagues if I should
14 press charges. I found out in this conversation that these
15 guys are involved in gangs. And I became very scared for
16 my family. I couldn't sleep. I was worried about my baby.
17 I kept on having dreams that they were going to shoot my
18 house. I kept on thinking I didn't know what to do. I
19 didn't want to leave the house. I had dreams that I'd run
20 into them in the mall and that they shot me and my baby. I
21 completely shut down.

22 And I talked to some colleagues and they
23 said you can't press charges, because being a lawyer you
24 will be cross-examined on everything that happened that
25 night. And you don't want to have a public record of that

1 somewhere in such a small community where you've got to
2 live and breathe and have the defence lawyers who next week
3 you're going to have to be in court with knowing everything
4 that happened to you and reliving these men making me do
5 the most horrible things.

6 I don't know if there's still a video. I
7 don't know. There could be. I don't know what to do about
8 it. I feel powerless. I can't press charges. Like, what
9 do I do?

10 So I just live and my parents ended up
11 having an opportunity for us to move into their basement
12 suite. I talked to my husband. And there was other things
13 going on in their life but I said I wanted to move because
14 I don't feel safe in my house.

15 So here I am, 36, not wanting to leave
16 because I'm too afraid that they might find out where I
17 live and I'd be by myself. And every time I see -- I know
18 they work for the City in Victoria. And every time I see
19 construction crews and stuff I shut down. And I've seen
20 them around town and I just think two things. One, I know
21 you're doing it to other women and I feel like such a jerk
22 that I'm not stopping it. I hate myself for not doing it.
23 And then I feel really scared that what if they find out
24 any of this and they hurt me? So I just leave it.

25 And I want to move from Victoria because

1 it's unsafe for me, but I don't want to leave my family and
2 my job. So I just live. And I have all these successes
3 and everything's great and I do all these wonderful things
4 and I volunteer, and yet I just live.

5 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** What do you hope will
6 happen today as a result of your testimony?

7 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I hope that we
8 start caring as a society for our girls and for our women.
9 I hope that we realize that all of this started as I was a
10 little girl and it started this cycle of me feeling
11 horrible about myself. And every day as I put one foot in
12 front of my -- the other, some of the choices maybe weren't
13 the best but it wasn't my fault. It was because I was
14 trying to survive. And I really want people to understand
15 that cycle of trauma and understand that when these people
16 hurt children it doesn't just hurt that child that one
17 time. It's going to be with me forever and it hurts my
18 family.

19 And it -- you know, my mom's at home right
20 now sick to her stomach. She can't even -- she's helping
21 take care of my son but she's sick to her stomach that I'm
22 hurting right now. She's still hurting because of what he
23 did to me when I was younger. She still hurts because
24 she's still my mommma. It's just all of this affects
25 everyone. It's like this horrible, horrible roots that

1 intersect into families. And I just want people to
2 understand that.

3 I think I want there to be some serious
4 shifts in how we prosecute crimes against children and
5 women. There are horrible people walking around. And I'm
6 a -- I've done a lot. And I can't even access the justice
7 system. So I just think someone like me who should be able
8 to, what about all those other families out there who don't
9 have the supports I do? It's so unattainable. So we need
10 to find a way to start looking at how we can prosecute
11 these crimes or find healing for people. And I don't know
12 I have all the answers for that but I know that what's
13 happening now isn't working. And the message that's being
14 sent by it not working is that women and children don't
15 care. That's -- and I think that's what's being rippled in
16 society. That's why there's men out there doing this to
17 women and girls because that's the message that we send.
18 And we need to stop it.

19 I think we need to do some major education
20 in the school systems about what trauma looks like. And,
21 like, I know they -- we talk about bullying but why don't
22 we talk about how trauma informs the way people act and
23 how, you know, maybe sometimes these kids who are acting a
24 little bit different are going through some really tough
25 stuff too.

1 And you know what? I really want the
2 government to stand up and say, you know what? We're going
3 to educate our men. We're going to educate our men on how
4 to treat women, because these are all men who have done
5 this to me over and over and over again. And somebody
6 needs to stand up and say this is enough is enough. And
7 whatever we're promoting, this rape culture, this mo-
8 cheese-mo manhood isn't working. And the government needs
9 to stand up and say it's okay for men to be loving and
10 caring. And it's okay for men to not have these
11 preconceived attitudes against women. And they need to
12 start educating little boys about how we treat women and
13 what consent looks like because it's not my job to teach.

14 I think we need to find a better way to have
15 adults be able to prosecute crimes and find healing,
16 because I really would have liked to have some level of
17 restorative justice or something for my childhood crimes,
18 even if there wasn't criminal proceedings from it. As an
19 adult, I had that choice taken away from me and that's not
20 fair.

21 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Can I also ask you to
22 talk about your thoughts on slut shaming?

23 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** Yeah, I think
24 there's kids who go through sexualized violence maybe act
25 out in different ways and are big targets to the rest of

1 society. And I think that we've got to take a long, hard
2 look in society about how we're treating those women who
3 maybe are promiscuous or maybe are dressing provocatively
4 or something and ask the questions, is this something that
5 they're doing because they have no self esteem because
6 they've been taught to just expose their bodies in certain
7 ways? And what's the point of slut shaming them? Like why
8 are we, in media, saying the most terrible things about
9 these girls? Like, why? I'm seeing this all over right
10 now about just treating girls, you know, really
11 inappropriately. But the things that they were wearing,
12 like, they were somehow asking to be raped or -- I know
13 we've come a long ways in that area but we still -- there's
14 still so much bullying and the media.

15 And, you know what, like, we got to do
16 something about those comment sections. Like, how --
17 there's nothing more hurtful than me reading the comment
18 sections of these people with ambiguities saying the most
19 terrible, horrible things. And that's where you see what
20 Canada's thinking. You see them slut shaming all these
21 individuals. You see them bashing Indigenous people. And
22 there's no accountability for just spreading that hatred
23 all over the place. It's just hurtful.

24 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And can you share with
25 us your thoughts on the role of school boards?

1 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I think that,
2 you know, school boards need to step up and start making a
3 change. Like, I understand that there's a lot of pressures
4 right now on what's being taught in schools, but school
5 boards needs to be trauma informed and school boards needs
6 to understand that this education that is provided at even
7 a very, very young age about how we treat each other is
8 imperative to how adults will be later on in life.

9 And I really think school boards too need to
10 stand up and say, "Let's look at how our boys are going to
11 be treating our women in the future." You know, like, why
12 can't they have classes on how to be a good boy? Like, you
13 know, like, how do you treat women with respect? How do
14 you just treat yourself with respect but let alone, like,
15 women? And start sending that message to kids really,
16 really young, because, you know, there's an acceptance out
17 there of this locker room talk and there's an acceptance of
18 how all of the -- how many men are being raised. And I
19 strongly believe that that's why we have so many rapes and
20 assaults because some men don't even realize. They just
21 have grown up that way and they can treat people this way
22 and they don't understand the repercussions.

23 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** I also know you're a
24 big advocate of sports. Would you talk on that for a
25 moment?

1 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And what would you ask
2 Canadians to do after listening to all the families and the
3 survivors who have come to share their experiences with the
4 National Inquiry?

5 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** There's so much
6 to this. I guess first I want to say I need Canadians to
7 take a really, really, really hard look inside themselves
8 about how they're participating in this because I can tell
9 you that every single one of those boys that did this to me
10 wasn't Indigenous. These were white kids from middle class
11 families, and in one case a south Asian kid. And I think
12 Canada needs to look inside its dirty little secrets itself
13 and stop saying that this is an Indigenous problem. This
14 is a Canadian problem. And these are your sons who are
15 doing this; right? Like, this isn't -- these are your
16 babies that have been raised in this environment. So we
17 need to talk about that and stop placing blame. Let's
18 start looking inside ourselves and say, "I'm responsible
19 for this as well. I am accountable for this and I, as a
20 Canadian citizen, am going to stand up and do something for
21 this" because I can't do this on my own.

22 I've gone and gotten your education. I've
23 become a lawyer. I've survived. And I'm just one person,
24 so I need the rest of Canada to do this with me.

25 And this has been one of the hardest things

1 I've ever had to do, to come and testify this. I don't
2 want to be here ever again. I don't want to be sitting
3 here in so many ways. So I need Canadians to remember
4 that, that they don't want to see another one of me up
5 here. They don't want to see their niece or nephew up
6 here. They don't want to see their little kids. And I
7 want them to know that I had the courage to do this because
8 I am trying to protect their kids as well. This isn't just
9 about my babies. It's about everyone's babies and
10 something has to change.

11 And I want Canadians to stop being so
12 afraid, afraid of making a better Canada. I don't know why
13 there's so much resistance to treating Indigenous people
14 equally, because you know what, if we're all equal it's
15 going to be a better Canada for everyone. And I want
16 Canadians to stop being so afraid of that and know we all
17 have a part in this.

18 I guess I just also wanted to say, you know,
19 thank you Michèle, Commissioner Audette, for listening. I
20 want to say it. I'm giving you this. I'm giving you my
21 story because I want something to change. And I know
22 that's a lot of responsibility and you have so much
23 responsibility right now but I'm just begging from the
24 bottom of my heart, please, whatever powers you have -- and
25 I don't know all of them. We don't know yet. But, please,

1 I just need something to change as a result of all this
2 pain.

3 And I want to say thank you to all the staff
4 and healers because I know you're hearing all of the trauma
5 and this is really hard. This is really tough work and the
6 Commission has had to do a lot of really, really tough,
7 tough work here. And I want to say thank you for being
8 here for that and for hearing people's hearts and I know
9 something's going to happen from this. Miigwech.

10 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** I will now ask the
11 Commissioner if she has any questions for Nicole.

12 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Well, for me
13 it was Nikki. And our wonderful staff or colleagues give
14 us willsay before we meet with the families. And when I
15 was reading your willsay I said, "She has the same name of
16 a woman I met once and had the privilege to work with."
17 And I read it and read it and I said, "No, that's not her."
18 And that was my first reaction because the couple years
19 that I had with NWAC and you, never ever I saw a piece of
20 what you shared to us today, ever.

21 I saw a strong woman. I saw a dynamic woman
22 full of life, full of life. And I envy you. As a survivor
23 too I said, "Gee, she's strong." Beautiful role model and
24 very articulate and always proud to be surrounded by women
25 who fought for their education and became whoever they want

1 to be. But you, with being a lawyer -- and I understand
2 when they say you might be touched if you hear this story
3 because of the -- because, but also when we know the person
4 it's tough. And knowing your brother also, c'est bon de
5 t'avoir et merci d'être ici.

6 I was going to speak English with a
7 Francophone accent, although I have that accent anyway, but
8 very important to have support and beautiful to see that
9 you're close to your brother. C'est vraiment beau,
10 vraiment important.

11 And I don't have question because you --
12 like many survivors who came here, they spoke and gave us
13 the answer in their testimony and their strong, powerful
14 message like you did also. And Maître Ouellette also was
15 able to raise what went wrong or what was missing. And the
16 beautiful part where you talk to Canadian and there were
17 moment I was afraid because those two men or those men are
18 still out there. So I was afraid for your protection and I
19 still is today, now.

20 And, yes, media, they have a role to educate
21 instead hurting us. And the system, the criminal justice
22 system, you know, révision mesure. I don't know how we say
23 that in English. A major -- something needs to change,
24 that's for sure. And most, like you say, for our young
25 girls, the young girl that you shared to us.

1 And it is sad to hear when your dad or your
2 parent says you cannot press charge because you don't have
3 evidence. I know what you mean. Thank you.

4 So we going to change it together for what
5 happened to us but thousand of us, I should say, to any of
6 us. And I know you're beautiful. I know you're going to
7 make a change. But this tool, this Inquiry has, yes, the
8 responsibility. You share that to us. And we will
9 continue to carry that responsibility, your truth, so our
10 daughters and boys have a safer place here in Canada. I
11 know I can count on you for that. You can count on me for
12 that but other people who works at the Inquiry also.

13 And what a powerful message to say to the
14 rest of Canada who's listening. But I would like to add,
15 if it's okay for you, our own leadership also, our own
16 organization, that we all have a part in that, a
17 responsibility to protect, to change and to make sure that
18 we are in a safe place.

19 And beautiful to hear also about sport. We
20 don't hear enough about this that it's also a place for
21 healing, a place where your self-esteem can be rebuilt
22 because it was broken. Merci beaucoup, Nikki, for that.

23 And we have to find ways. So, when we say
24 that we were sexually abused or because there's no sperm or
25 no skin under the nails, that they believe us. That needs

1 to change. You have me on that 100 per cent.

2 And I know you will follow this Inquiry and
3 remind us, stay close to us if there will be soon the
4 institutional part, the second phase, institutional
5 hearings. And don't be afraid to connect with us, to
6 remind us or if we forgot to ask the right question.
7 Please, I'm inviting you.

8 For your courage -- and still I'm shocked
9 because I didn't know that when I was working with you. I
10 didn't know that, but you're more beautiful now. You're
11 stronger for me. You're powerful. And it's nice to see
12 that your kids. There's a say in my region that my nation,
13 that the kids choose their parents, their little star in
14 the sky. They choose a beautiful one. Just want to.

15 We would like to give you something if you
16 accept, if you accept. And the dialogue is still open if
17 you think you need to share more. I know I didn't say that
18 to every family but it's the same for every family that
19 came here and they want to add, because we probably nervous
20 and forgot to say something. So we're still there.

21 An Elder from here could give you a
22 beautiful eagle feather if you accept.

23 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** I'd be honoured.

24 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Oui.

25 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** Thank you.

1 Absolutely honoured.

2 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Beautiful.

3 It started here in Haida Gwaii from the women up there and
4 then it become a beautiful wave across Canada where people
5 gave us eagle feathers because they see how powerful it is
6 for families and survivors. And some young men took their
7 feathers from their regalia, some from their traditional
8 hat or some went to the river close by and harvest feathers
9 along the river. So there's unique stories behind each
10 feather. And those one are from Thompson, Manitoba.

11 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** Close to home.

12 Yeah.

13 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Yeah, yeah,
14 yeah. So we would like to give you that ---

15 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** Thank you.

16 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** --- for your
17 courage.

18 **MS. NICOLE DANJAI BRESSER:** Thank you so
19 much.

20 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Merci.

21 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** There you are. The
22 one who told her story. Come here.

23 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Of course
24 it's okay. I was going to say I don't have to say it.

25 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Commissioner Audette,

1 I request that we adjourn this hearing.

2 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Bien sûr.

3 Merci beaucoup, Maître Ouellette.

4

5 --- Upon adjourning at 2:43

6

7 LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE


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9 I, Janice Gingras, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I
10 have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and
11 accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this
12 matter.

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Janice Gingras

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April 17, 2018

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