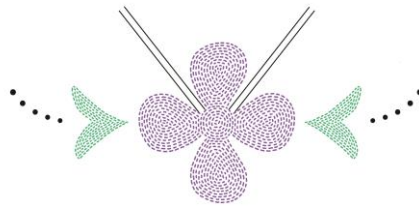


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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
Sheraton Cavalier Hotel, Central Ballroom
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan**



PUBLIC

Tuesday November 21, 2017

**Public Volume 26:
Delores Stevenson & Laura Apooch,
In relation to Nadine Machiskinic:**

**Pernell Ballantyne, Margaret Doucette, Dionne Doucette, Doreen
Warren, Trent Doucette, Shirley Henderson & Conrad Burns,
In relation to Monica Burns:**

**Lance Stone, Everett Stone & Sonia Bear,
In Relation to Sylvia Stone**

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II

APPEARANCES

Assembly of First Nations	Julie McGregor (Legal counsel)
Advocate for Children and Youth Saskatchewan	No Appearance
Government of Canada	Christine Ashcroft (Legal counsel)
Government of Saskatchewan	Colleen Matthews (Legal counsel)
Iskwewuk Ewichiwitochik (Women Walking Together)	No Appearance
Kawacatoose First Nation	No Appearance
Native Women's Association of Canada	Neegann Aaswaakshin (Legal counsel)
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, Saturviit Inuit Women's Association of Nunavik, AnânuKatiget Tumingit Regional Inuit Women's Association Inc., Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre, Manitoba Inuit Association	No Appearance
Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Circle Corporation	Virginia Lomax (Legal counsel)
Women of Métis Nation/Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak	No Appearance

Note: For the purpose of establishing this record of attendance, counsel and representatives are considered present whether they attended one or all of the public hearings held over the course of the day at the Sheraton Cavalier Hotel - Central Ballroom (i.e. the main public hearing space).

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1 Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

2 --- Upon commencing on Tuesday, November 21, 2017 at 9:30

3 **MR. MILTON GAMBLE:** ...greet each and every
4 one of you in a humble way, in our Creator's name. We
5 thank you for coming out to help sharing your stories and
6 taking this opportunity to come and support the families
7 that will be sharing their stories as well.

8 I want to thank our Elders for lifting pipe
9 this morning, for asking that this day be blessed in a
10 humble way, in a good way, that the families that are going
11 to be sharing their stories receive that strength and
12 recognition from our communities, from our country, from
13 our peoples. So, we thank you all for coming out and
14 helping support the families in this way.

15 I'm going to ask Elder William Duquette to
16 come up and say a -- do an opening prayer along with Elder
17 Sylvia Popowich. I'm going to ask the cameras, that they
18 be shut off during this time. And, those that of you who
19 can, please rise and remove your headgear.

20 **(PRAYER BY ELDERS)**

21 **MR. MILTON GAMBLE:** We have Commissioners
22 who are going to be offering a gift of thanks to our
23 Elders. At this time, I'm going to ask to do an honour
24 song, and a blessing of our ceremonies and our grounds with
25 how we do in -- in our ceremonies, and our Pow Wows. We do

1 what we call blessings of the ground. We also do what we
2 call blessing of ceremony. I'm going to ask Dancing Horse
3 to provide us with that -- with that song at this time.

4 **MR. HAROLD WILTON:** Good morning. I'm
5 Harold Wilton (phon), and I'm from the Touchwood Hills.
6 We're connected to Treaty 4 and we are Dancing Horse. We
7 always respect the teachings, our ways of life. And, one
8 thing yesterday I forgot to say in our language for our
9 women, we say (speaking in Native language). It means
10 women's spirit. We always think about them in that way, in
11 a good way. I thought I'd mention that good word for I'm a
12 Cree, and I thought I'll pass that good message on to our
13 people.

14 We always love our people. We always love
15 our ways of life. And, this song we're going to sing is
16 going to bless this area. We're going to sing two push
17 ups. We don't want to take too much of your time, because
18 the families today, our hearts goes out for you. Our drum
19 group, our dancers, anytime you need us, we'll be there.
20 That's how we were taught.

21 **(MUSICAL PRESENTATION)**

22 **MR. MILTON GAMBLE:** Thank you, Dancing
23 Horse. Just some housekeeping announcements that I'd like
24 to share. Lunch will be at noon, 12:00, in the next room.
25 We have health support available. You see the purple

1 shirts that are out there? We have counsellors, Elders
2 that are available for us. We also have our sacred fire.
3 It's in the teepee down the street. And, we had that fire
4 going since yesterday, since we started the ceremony.
5 There's a fire going there 24/7. Those that are wanting to
6 go and burn your offerings, there's sacred fire there. If
7 you want to go burn your resolutions, there's sacred fire
8 there for you. And, we have our fire-keepers there
9 available to make sure that protocol is all being respected
10 in a good and humble way.

11 Being in this territory, I have also been
12 asked to pass on the message of our protocols, and the
13 importance of protecting our way of live here in Treaty 6
14 territory. We have seen in different communities and
15 different provinces that when you had opening ceremonies, a
16 woman was walking in carrying a drum and singing, and
17 that's good because that's in their territory. I've been
18 asked to share that here in our territories, our women, we
19 don't -- they're not allowed to carry the drum and to sing
20 in this way. And, I've been asked to share that on behalf
21 of our ceremonial keepers.

22 And, that's not to be disrespectful to those
23 women that do have a drum, that do sing. It's to respect
24 the territories that we're in. We respect the way of life
25 in these communities, so we respect their protocols. I

1 share that in a humble way and a respectful way. I don't
2 mean to disrespect in any way to those that have that right
3 to do that, to carry those drums. I don't mean to
4 disrespect you. Like, I'm saying we're in our Cree
5 territory. This is how we do things in this way. And, I
6 share that in a humble way.

7 We have an Elders' room available across
8 from the elevator where we had pipe just down the hallway
9 over here. Programming is available at the Friendship
10 Centre. We have shuttle service that will be available to
11 come and pick you up to take you to the Friendship Centre.
12 They have beading, moss bag making, a lot of different
13 programs that they have at the Friendship Centre. It's a
14 good place to go and release some of the stress, the
15 tension that you're going to be going through within the
16 next couple of days, next few days. You're going to be
17 going through some very challenging times, and you're going
18 to hear those families share their tough stories, and we
19 all need that release.

20 And, when we lit pipe this morning, that's
21 one thing that we asked for, was for our Creator God --
22 however you identify him -- to come and help us, to come
23 and have pity on us, carry us through this tough time,
24 carry those families through that tough time. Help them
25 share their tears. Let those tears fall. The teachings of

1 our Elders, they always share you need to cry. You need to
2 let your tears fall. That's good medicine. That's healing
3 medicine in our way of life. So, we ask you now support
4 those families in a good way.

5 There's a resource room available across the
6 street, also at the Delta Bessborough. We have staff out
7 there that are available to -- to help you through that
8 time. We have (indiscernible) available throughout the
9 days to help to guide you through these -- point you in the
10 right direction to our Elders, to our resource people.
11 Again, look for the purple shirts that we have out there.

12 At this time, it gives me good honour to
13 introduce the Chief Commissioner Buller to say some opening
14 comments.

15 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Thank
16 you. Good morning, everyone. I'd like to introduce my
17 dear colleague, Commissioner Brian Eyolfson. Commissioner
18 Michèle Audette has already started with in camera hearings
19 today. So, if you're wondering where she is, she's already
20 working. And, for those of you who know Commissioner
21 Michèle, you're not surprised. Commissioner Robinson, who
22 is not here this week with us, sends encouraging words to
23 us. She says, "Speak Up. Speak Out." I'm very pleased to
24 work with these three Commissioners.

25 I want to take this time to recognize and

1 honour the spirits of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous
2 Women and Girls, young girls, transgendered, and two-
3 spirited people, and welcome them into this space this
4 week.

5 We welcomed you here through sacred
6 ceremonies held yesterday, and again this morning. As we
7 work here to protect your memories, we know your spirits
8 guide us and are always with us. We feel comfort in
9 knowing that your spirits are here with us.

10 This week, we're gathered in Treaty 6
11 territory. I want to acknowledge the original stewards of
12 this beautiful land, the Cree, the Dakota and the
13 Saulteaux. We're also hear in a vibrant Métis community.
14 And also, we have a vibrant Inuit community here. So, I'd
15 like to acknowledge and welcome each one of you into this
16 space.

17 This territory is also very special to me,
18 because I'm a member of the Mistawasis Nehiyawak,
19 Mistawasis First Nation. Both my parents grew up not too
20 far from here. I want to also thank the leadership who
21 have welcomed us here in a good way.

22 These are our sixth hearings that we've held
23 across Canada so far. There are more to come. Like all of
24 the previous events that we've had, we started this one in
25 ceremony. The sacred fire remains lit around the clock,

1 not too far from this hotel, as Milton has already
2 described.

3 I want to give my special thanks to the fire
4 keepers, Elders and knowledge-keepers who are carrying this
5 work with us and help us every day in our hard work. It's
6 no secret this work is not easy. As we continue to travel
7 across this huge country coast to coast to coast, we are
8 hearing truths, many of which have not been shared publicly
9 before, maybe not even with other family members. While we
10 see pain and grief and suffering, we see healing and we see
11 hope.

12 We also see that with great change comes
13 great obstacles and doubt. We are aware of what
14 experiences and truths are shared, that much will be
15 unearthed overtime in the next few days. We know that
16 things will get uncomfortable, and people will be
17 frightened. But, it will get better.

18 Through ceremony, sharing and healing, and
19 truth we continue what Indigenous people have done for
20 centuries, before this land was even something called
21 Canada. It carries us forward.

22 Despite all of that, it's encouraging to see
23 so many families and survivors of violence here with us.
24 Thank you for your trust that you put into the National
25 Inquiry. Your truths are what carry us on and carry our

1 process. I hold up my hands to each one of you in this
2 room, and those listening on live stream, for your courage
3 and your commitment.

4 The City of Saskatoon is unique in many
5 ways. There are five urban reserves within city limits.
6 It is the city where many First Nations, Métis and Inuit
7 people come to start over again, and it's a place where
8 many people come for employment and education.

9 This week, we'll hear about those
10 transitions, the good and the bad. It's also a place where
11 there are institutions such as jails and prisons that house
12 many of our Indigenous women. This is also a place where
13 there are high rates of sexual exploitation of our women
14 and girls. Like every other place we visited so far, there
15 are truths about the impacts of residential schools here
16 too. Let's all listen to the truths with open hearts and
17 open minds.

18 It is so important to all of us within the
19 National Inquiry to be here with you in Saskatoon, a part
20 of Canada where there's a significantly high number of
21 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, LGBTQS2
22 people. We remain committed to the families, survivors,
23 and lost loved ones of the heart. This is your time to
24 share your valuable stories that we consider sacred gifts
25 that you're giving to us.

1 I'd also like to say a few words to the
2 public, both in this room today and watching on live
3 stream. Thank you for welcoming us into your communities
4 across Canada. Also, thank you for making space in your
5 daily lives for those carrying the weight of Missing and
6 Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls every day. You also
7 have a vital role in making Canada a safer place for
8 Indigenous women and girls, because this is not just an
9 Indigenous issue. It is a Canadian problem. It is a
10 Canadian challenge. To all Canadians, I want to
11 acknowledge your place, as we move forward in a good way,
12 in addressing this national problem, this national
13 challenge that faces all of us.

14 Together, we will all hear about how to make
15 lives better and safer for Indigenous women and girls, and
16 LGBTQS people all across the land. Together, we will act
17 on recommendations, and together we will raise healthier
18 generations that will share the same space in this country
19 that we call home. Thank you all. Welcome. We'll move
20 forward in a good way.

21 **MR. MILTON GAMBLE:** Thank you. I think I
22 broke the mic. I guess I'm done. I thank our Commissioner
23 for her hope and prayer. I want to take this opportunity
24 to thank each and every one of you for coming in and
25 helping with this, with the hearings. We're going to be

1 asking the families to come up and share your stories. We
2 have -- your seats are available here for you. The
3 families that are here, we ask that you make your way up
4 here. No?

5 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** The first family.

6 **MR. MILTON GAMBLE:** The first family?

7 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Yes.

8 **MR. MILTON GAMBLE:** The first family. We've
9 got the first family ready to go.

10 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** I think we need a
11 couple of minutes.

12 **MR. MILTON GAMBLE:** A little bit of
13 housekeeping here.

14 --- Upon adjourning at 9:49 a.m.

15 --- Upon resuming at 9:59 a.m.

16 **Hearing # 1**

17 **Witnesses: Delores Stevenson and Laura Apooch**

18 **In Relation to Nadine Machiskinic**

19 **Heard by Chief Commissioner Marion Buller**

20 **Order: that the details of the Coroner's report and autopsy**
21 **reports be sealed, except the portions that are made public**
22 **through the oral testimony of this hearing.**

23 **Commission Counsel: Christa Big Canoe**

24 **Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge-keepers: Florence**

25 **Catcheway, Sylvia Popowich**

1 Registrar: Bryan Zandberg

2 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Good morning, Chief
3 Commissioner. I would like to introduce you to the first
4 family that will be providing testimony today. They will
5 be talking about their beloved Nadine Machiskinic. And
6 actually, Delores, who is sitting right beside me, as well
7 as her mother, Laura, will be affirming on an eagle
8 feather. So, I ask that the head registrar do that.

9 MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG: Good morning.

10 MS. DELORES STEVENSON: Good morning.

11 MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG: Do you promise to tell
12 your truth in a good way today?

13 MS. DELORES STEVENSON: Yes.

14 MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG: Thank you.

15 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: If we could call up
16 -- actually Delores has provided a presentation that she
17 would like to start with and share with you.

18 MS. DELORES STEVENSON: Good morning.
19 Today, I wanted to share Nadine's story. It's been a long,
20 too hard -- it's been a long process for myself and my
21 family to process everything that's happened with Nadine --
22 with Nadine's death, and just the horror that we've had to
23 go through in the last two years to get to where we are
24 today, and to continue to share her story. But, okay, I'm
25 just going to get right into it and -- with the power

1 presentation.

2 Okay. So, maybe I'll just give a little
3 brief of -- of Nadine. Nadine was born May 7th, 1985. She
4 was raised by my mother, Laura Apooch. Her mother is also
5 sitting with us today, Floria (phon).

6 So, Nadine was raised with my mother for
7 most of her life, and Nadine attended residential schools
8 as well. Nadine had some struggles, but she was also a
9 mother, she was a daughter, she was a sister. And, she had
10 children that she loved very dearly. And, her presence is
11 very much missed by my family, and I wanted to present her
12 case today, as well as her life.

13 So, on the night of January 10th, 2015,
14 Nadine had entered the Regina Delta Hotel Radisson in the
15 early hours of January 10th, 2015. She had wandered into
16 the hotel, and -- and found her way to the 10th floor, and
17 -- sorry, just bear with me. I'm kind of trying to present
18 this in a -- okay.

19 So, she was seen entering the elevator with
20 two unidentified men in the early hours of January 10th,
21 2015. She was witnessed on the -- on the 10th floor with
22 the chaotic scene of a fire alarm being pulled, fire
23 extinguisher smashed. The only guest on -- the only guest
24 on the 10th floor that night had witnessed Nadine screaming
25 around on the 10th floor, screaming, "Fire", banging on the

1 doors. Fire alarm was pulled. And, Nadine was found at
2 the bottom of the laundry chute, unconscious.

3 And so, I wanted to get into the details of
4 her investigation, because I know that it's an important
5 part of her story, and I know that it's an important part
6 of today, and presenting everything that I'm going to be
7 presenting today.

8 Nadine was -- sorry, I'm just -- so, Nadine
9 died at 6:30 in the morning at the hospital. She was
10 pronounced -- she was pronounced deceased at the hospital.
11 And, for my family to go through this was tragic. It was
12 tragic in itself hearing the violent way that she had died,
13 and not really knowing what happened in the beginning, and
14 not really knowing how to go about it, or what to say, or
15 who to talk to her, or how to get answers in her case.

16 So, I just wanted to read something from the
17 Public Complaints Commission, PCC, which is -- everything
18 that I'm presenting here is a part of the documents that I
19 have submitted. Everything that I'm submitting here --
20 I'll just say that again. Everything that I'm submitting
21 here is a part of the documents that I have submitted today
22 from the coroner's reports, from the Public Complaints
23 Commission, from -- it's just all the evidence that I have
24 gathered up in the last two years.

25 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Yes. And,

1 Commissioner, we do have, actually, documents that I'm
2 going to pass to you and the Registrar. But, I am going to
3 ask for a specific order in relation to any of the post
4 mortem or coroner's reports, anything that details anything
5 in relation to Nadine. And, the reason we're requesting
6 this order is to respect the dignity of the deceased, and
7 to honour her in death, so that this part that describes
8 what's in the coroner's report is not publicly available.

9 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Okay. So, during
10 the first part of Nadine's investigation, myself and my
11 family didn't feel that her investigation was being taken
12 seriously. We didn't feel that her death was being taken
13 seriously. We didn't feel -- we felt like her death was
14 not being taken seriously from all the people that were
15 involved within this investigation. So, I'm just going to
16 refer back to the Complaints Commission, because I had
17 filed a complaint. I had filed a complaint against the
18 Regina Police, and how her investigation was handled and
19 conducted. And so, I'm just going to read some -- some
20 outlines from her investigation.

21 "The Public Complaint Commission, PCC, the
22 independent authority appointed by the government to
23 provide civilian oversight of public complaints against
24 municipal police officers in Saskatchewan. The following
25 were findings from the PCC. Systematic Racism. The Delta

1 Hotel staff believed Nadine was unconscious due to alcohol
2 and drugs. Her belongings were thrown away. Her purse and
3 her shoes were thrown away from the Delta Hotel staff. Her
4 purse and her shoes were never recovered from the scene."

5 This is all -- all this PCC is in response
6 to how these systems had responded to her death, and I'm
7 just going to lay them out. One was with the Delta Hotel
8 not -- throwing out her stuff. The second was -- the
9 second one was Emergency Services, and this is also in the
10 PCC report.

11 "Cursory examination at the scene believed
12 Nadine was suffering from an overdose. EMS did not request
13 police to attend." So, we have the -- we have the Delta
14 Hotel staff already, and we have the EMS who are responding
15 to the death of Nadine. And then we have the coroner's
16 office.

17 "The coroner attended to the hospital at
18 6:30, the time of her death. Nadine was succumbing to
19 injuries sustained from the laundry chute. It was never
20 determined if she fell, jumped, or was put in the chute.
21 The coroner became involved, but did not contact police.
22 The family was" -- the family, myself and my family --
23 "were concerned that the matter in which the investigation
24 was handled is a reflective of systematic discrimination
25 against Aboriginal people in general. This injustice is

1 not a burden by individual families, but one that is borne
2 by the Aboriginal community at large."

3 So, when we had -- when we had these
4 services responding to the death of an unconscious woman,
5 Aboriginal woman, found at the bottom of the laundry chute,
6 everybody's assumption is that she's overdosing;
7 everybody's assumption is that she's drunk. There's never
8 any assumption that she fell down a laundry chute. There's
9 never any assumption that anything further happened, except
10 that it was an overdose, a stereotype bred by society about
11 Indigenous women, Indigenous people in general.

12 So, we're going to go on to the next slide,
13 the next slide, which is the coroner's office. I'm
14 speaking with respect to all the -- again, all the -- the
15 places that I've come across. So, I -- so, right away I
16 had -- my family had problems with the coroner's reports,
17 and the determining of Nadine's death. There were two
18 conflicting autopsy reports. The first report was done in
19 January 2015. And, the opinion of the coroner's office, it
20 determined her death was -- it had determined that her
21 death was undetermined.

22 Over all the -- and this was found in the
23 opinion of the first and original report. "Over all the
24 levels of drugs present would make it unlikely that she
25 would be able to climb in the laundry chute on her own. As

1 such, manner of death should be listed as undetermined."
2 This was the original autopsy report that we had received
3 from the coroner's office.

4 We had received another coroner's report
5 after this. The second report was revised without
6 reference to the original findings. The opinion changed to
7 accidental. So, we have her reports going from
8 undetermined to accidental.

9 And, in this opinion, it was revised. And,
10 it went on to say, "I do not believe there is sufficient
11 evidence to conclude that she would have been incapable of
12 climbing in the laundry chute without assistance. The
13 police and coroner requested a second opinion, and the
14 manner of death was changed to undetermined to accidental."

15 So, we had an undetermined report, and then
16 we have an accidental report. "Chief Coroner Kent Stewart
17 denied any reopening of the investigation of the death of
18 Nadine Machiskinic. He stated, "should any additional
19 evidence be discovered, it would occur." Attorney General
20 Wyant, Gordon made the decision and overruled the Chief
21 Coroner, and announced a coroner's inquest. Minister
22 Wyant, in his statement, announced 'I am concerned that the
23 confidence of the coroner's office in an administration of
24 justice has been put into question'. An internal review of
25 the coroner's office was conducted, and the findings of the

1 review have not been made public. Currently, an external
2 review of the coroner's office is being undertaken due to
3 allegations of racism."

4 So, on March 27th to the 31st, we had a
5 coroner's inquest into the death of Nadine Machiskinic in
6 Regina. The jury overruled the findings of accidental back
7 to undetermined. It was two years -- it was two years from
8 Nadine's death to the coroner's inquest; two years that my
9 family had to go through this process of fighting to get
10 undetermined to accidental, back to undetermined. That
11 doesn't feel fair that my family had to continue to fight
12 to get fair results, and to get truth, and to get dignity
13 with respect to Nadine's death and the manner in which she
14 died.

15 And, that's just -- that was just my issues
16 with the coroner itself, alone. I experienced issues with
17 the Regina Police Service. There was a 60-hour delay even
18 getting started in Nadine's case. A 60-hour delay. Now, I
19 don't feel like Nadine was given a fair investigation when
20 60 hours it took for police authorities to go into that
21 hotel to corner off a scene and to start an investigation.
22 And, that's a problem when emergency services aren't
23 responding in a timely manner, especially when it's -- when
24 Nadine's death was considered suspicious to begin with.

25 So, I encountered some problems with the

1 Regina Police Services. The police left -- it took five
2 police officers who attended the scene to collect blood
3 samples for Nadine -- from Nadine. Her toxicology samples
4 were left on a shelf for six months before being sent away.
5 My family never got those results for over a year -- those
6 toxicology results for over a year. That, again, tells me
7 that her case wasn't being taken seriously on any level if
8 it's been -- if it was sitting on a shelf for six months,
9 unattended.

10 Hotel footage from that night was not
11 obtained for over a year. These are the findings from the
12 investigation in itself. It took the police over a year to
13 obtain hotel footage from that night. Hotel guest lists
14 were purged, and police only received and reviewed half of
15 the guests that night. CCT footage was released a year and
16 a half later of the two identified men who had walked into
17 the laundry room -- into the elevator with Nadine, going up
18 -- I don't know where they went, but...

19 So, we had these two -- we had these two
20 identified men in Nadine's case, and the Regina police only
21 released their image a year later, and their images were
22 taken off their website a month after they posted them.
23 Were the individuals identified? I don't know. They were
24 certainly a big part and a big portion of imagery shown
25 from the coroner's inquest of these two individuals in her

1 case. The two unidentified men were never located. It is
2 questionable if a search for them was done. And, thus,
3 they were never questioned about -- were they ever
4 questioned about their -- about the evening?

5 Regina Police at the same time declared her
6 case closed and indicated no foul play. I went through
7 this process for two years with my family. And, to half
8 way come through this investigation into Nadine's death to
9 turn up with the results of no foul play when we had so
10 many mistakes that were being done, when we had so many
11 errors that were taking place, and the conclusion is no
12 foul play, where is the justice in that?

13 The Regina Police Services, advised by
14 myself and my family, to conduct an outside review of the
15 police investigation into Nadine's death, and how it was
16 handled. Currently, the RCMP of Regina -- "Currently, the
17 review of the Regina Police investigation is being done by
18 the RCMP. Its findings will not be made public. At this
19 time, the family is not sure if they will receive the
20 findings from the RCMP review." And, that in itself raises
21 a lot of questions, but I'm not going to get into that.

22 So, the other people that were involved were
23 the Delta Hotel, because that's where she was found. Delta
24 Hotel displayed negligence by not calling the -- by not
25 calling the police immediately upon finding Nadine. They

1 did not immediately release hotel guest lists. And, the
2 list sent to the police was half the guest list, and the
3 list was purged from the records. The hotel did not have
4 proper, secure protocols. The camera recordings were
5 glitchy and unreliable. Doors that should have been locked
6 were not locked, and they were accessible to anyone.

7 The hotel disposed of her belongings. Her
8 purse, shoes were never recovered. The hotel denied any
9 responsibility in her death or her safety that night. The
10 family is -- our family is currently undergoing a lawsuit
11 against the hotel -- a civil lawsuit against the hotel.

12 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** If I could actually
13 ask that the pictures from the Delta Hotel please be put on
14 screen? And, when these pictures come up, we just want to
15 let you know that these are pictures taken not of the
16 scene, but of the locations in the hotel.

17 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Yes.

18 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, we just want
19 folks to be mindful that this was the space where Nadine
20 became injured and unconscious. But, it's not taken -- the
21 pictures are not taken when she was actually there, or
22 immediately after she was there. But, if we could have
23 those pictures brought up, then Delores can explain them.

24 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** So, this picture is
25 the basement of the laundry chute where Nadine had fallen

1 from. And, she was found in that area of the laundry room.

2 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, if we could get
3 the other two pictures as well, please?

4 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** This is another
5 picture of the laundry -- the bottom of the laundry chute,
6 and of the area where she was found. And, this is the --
7 this is the laundry chute in which she had went into. When
8 you see it, when you actually see it, it looks pretty
9 small. And, I questioned how she could have even gotten
10 into that laundry chute on her own. I raised many
11 questions of how she could have gotten into that laundry
12 chute on her own, given the high levels of the intoxication
13 that she was in -- under that night.

14 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, we're seeing a
15 picture that has a person's hand on the chute. So, when
16 you talked about the size -- we don't have the full -- the
17 full picture of the chute. But, at what height is this
18 chute. Is it low to the ground? Is it mid-body, or high
19 up?

20 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** It's about -- it's
21 about half way off the ground.

22 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you.

23 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** So, my family have
24 -- so, I have been advocating on behalf of Nadine, on
25 behalf of her children, and on behalf of my family to seek

1 justice, to seek accountability, and to ensure that -- that
2 changes happen within our country, within the justice
3 system, within how things are being conducted and handled,
4 whether that's police investigation, whether that's the
5 coroner's office.

6 So, my family raised concerns about the 60-
7 hour delay in Nadine's case. We believe that somebody had
8 harmed Nadine. This was something that we had expressed to
9 the police authorities, that we didn't believe that Nadine
10 would put herself in the laundry chute. And, we raised
11 concerns about this. Again, we raised concerns about the
12 seriousness of how her investigation was handled.

13 "The police communicated little or no
14 information to the family on the status of their
15 investigation in the beginning." We reached out to various
16 agencies to assist with advocacy in our quest for justice.
17 I had been in contact with the Chief and Council of Yellow
18 Quill First Nation, and they were unable to assist with any
19 costs associated with the pursuit of justice, as they did
20 not have funds for individual bands in such circumstances.

21 I reached out to the FSIN. And, that was a
22 long process going through the treaty rights protection.
23 And, they offered -- they did not assist with any financial
24 means, but offered the family to apply to the Treaty Rights
25 -- Treaty Rights Protection Fund. The Treaty Rights

1 Protection Fund mandate is to protect treaty rights, and
2 missing and murdered Indigenous women. It may not fall
3 under this -- something that may not fall under this
4 review.

5 This process required five signatures from
6 Yellow Quill First Nation. It's a long and complicated
7 process, and approval comes from the Board that will
8 determine if the application falls within the mandate of
9 Treaty Rights Protection Fund. How does the case enhance
10 or forward inherent treaty rights? The FSIN has created a
11 fund for missing and murdered women to support the
12 families, and other related initiatives. Nadine's -- my
13 family did not receive any assistance from this fund.

14 I'm just highlighting these agencies,
15 because when I had to go look for sources for a lawyer for
16 the inquest to represent my family, I had to go through
17 many of these sources to get the resources that we needed
18 as a family to pursue justice, to pursue what -- to pursue
19 what we were trying to pursue.

20 I went to the Saskatoon Tribal Council.
21 Same response. Family -- they did not have the financial
22 resources for the family. I've reached out to Saskatchewan
23 Aboriginal Women's Corporate Circle. Response to family,
24 were able to offer moral support. They did not have any
25 financial resources to assist the family. And, that was

1 one of the biggest issues that I encountered doing advocacy
2 work for Nadine as a family member, trying to get the
3 financial resources to get a lawyer and get the justice
4 that we want for -- wanted for Nadine.

5 The Regina Treaty Status Indian Service
6 provided support throughout the coroner's inquest. And, I
7 thank them for that. I thank them for standing beside my
8 family, for providing and helping my family with --
9 throughout the inquest. The cost for a lawyer to date is
10 -- was \$10,550 and other costs.

11 Nadine left four children, and they are
12 being raised by my mother and myself. I raised Nadine's
13 youngest little girl. The impact upon the family was
14 magnified -- has magnified the grief and trauma, and is
15 triggered with every interview, plea for assistance, and
16 every step in the pursuit for justice. I've done a lot of
17 media. I feel that I've had to -- I've had to put myself
18 out there for the media, just to have Nadine's story heard.
19 I've had to continually go to the media and replay the
20 events that happened in her story over and over and over
21 for the last two years to get somebody to listen, to get
22 somebody to hear that this is a bigger problem, that these
23 issues are bigger. That this is not just another
24 Indigenous woman, but this is a problem that is arising in
25 Canada with our Indigenous women being -- going missing and

1 being murdered. And, it's been traumatizing. It's been
2 very traumatizing to have to take my family through this
3 over, and over, and over, and over.

4 I have some recommendations. I have
5 outlined Nadine's case, the advocacy that I've had to do,
6 the problems that I have encountered within the justice
7 system. So, I've laid out some recommendations.

8 Accountability in the case of the coroner's
9 inquest. There was no real punishment for so many people
10 making mistakes that impacted the chances of getting any
11 form of justice for Nadine. I've been feeling this for a
12 long time, that there needs to be an accountability.

13 And, in my own personal experience going
14 back from the coroner, to the police, to the coroner. "No,
15 it's their problem. No, it's their problem. No, it's
16 their problem." Well, whose problem is it? Whose problem
17 is it to acknowledge that they're -- that these are not
18 simple errors. And so, accountability for the 60-hour
19 delay. Where's the accountability? Where's the
20 accountability in the lack of investigating? Where is the
21 accountability in the coroner's office in ruling determine
22 -- ruling the manner of death and putting my family through
23 what we had to go through to get from undetermined to
24 accidental, back to undetermined. And, all the missteps,
25 all the missed opportunities, all the -- everything that

1 had happened. Where is the accountability?

2 The needs for family advocacy specific with
3 advocacy plan developed by families. When I first started
4 out in Nadine's -- in Nadine's investigation, and getting
5 involved as an advocate, I didn't know where to go. I
6 didn't know who to turn to. I didn't know what resources
7 were out there. I didn't even know how to go about --
8 about telling someone that this is just not right. This is
9 not right that my niece fell from a laundry chute, and
10 nobody is taking it seriously, the fact that I've had to
11 uncover everything that I've uncovered, and that it should
12 have not to come to this. It should not have had to come
13 to for me to continually go to the media to continually
14 expose cracks and flaws within the system and traumatize my
15 family.

16 Family advocacy is not Victim Service or a
17 liaison officer, a paid position to navigate systems and
18 advocate for families. Families are fighting to get real
19 investigations and real access to justice that they had to
20 become full-time advocates. That comes at a great cost,
21 including self-care. When I got involved in Nadine's case,
22 I did not understand the cost that I, myself, would have to
23 -- would have to pay. To invest my time, to invest my
24 emotions, to invest everything at the expense of a system
25 that is not taking our loved one seriously.

1 Financial resources to be established to
2 assist families to advocate and seek truth, and bring
3 attention to the deaths of our missing and murdered loved
4 ones. Funds be established for children of murdered and
5 missing First Nation families rarely have life insurance,
6 and in many cases, do not have the family finances to
7 secure life insurance. My family, we raise Nadine's
8 children, and it's -- it just hasn't been easy.

9 I also have in six, an independent civilian
10 oversight of police investigations, not other police
11 forces. There is high level mistrust of First Nation law
12 and enforcement, the ingrained institutional racism that is
13 applied to First Nation women as was done in Nadine's
14 death. The emergency service response to Nadine was
15 systematic racism, and failed to identify her injuries as a
16 result -- as a serious assault or attempted murder. They
17 failed to contact police, and assumed Nadine ended up at
18 the bottom of the laundry chute by her own devices. It's a
19 form of racial profiling.

20 The systems involved all respond that Nadine
21 was at fault, and communicated it via body language, word
22 usage and demeanour in speaking to the family. They're
23 insensitivity to the family and uncompassionate resource of
24 Nadine's serious injuries exemplifies deeply ingrained
25 attitudes and prejudices they hold. The family initially

1 started far beyond the starting blocks of non-Indigenous
2 families.

3 And, transparency within these systems. For
4 example, the RCMP review findings which was told to my
5 family that it would not be made public. Where is the
6 accountability in that? And, the coroner's office findings
7 be made public. There was a coroner's office review
8 because of Nadine case. The findings were not reviewed to
9 the public nor will the RCMP's review of the investigation
10 be made public.

11 So, I have to question, where is the
12 accountability within this system? Where is the
13 accountability within the police forces that are
14 investigating these cases? Where is the accountability
15 within the coroner's office when there's no professionalism
16 in how they're conducting and ruling our loved ones'
17 deaths?

18 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you. Thank
19 you for preparing that presentation as well. It's very
20 obvious that you've done a lot of advocacy, and that you
21 hold a lot of the information. So, those recommendations
22 are very helpful. I'm just wondering if I can ask a couple
23 of questions in relation to first, the documents, and then
24 a couple in relation to the recommendations?

25 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Okay.

1 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you. So, one
2 of the things you started with was the Public Complaint
3 Commission. And so, in the package that we provided to the
4 Commissioner, there was a letter to advise you the Public
5 Complaints Commission had reviewed the Regina Police
6 Services. And, we saw the points that you had put up on
7 your presentation that spoke to all of the issues. Did you
8 -- can you tell us, how did the public complaints process
9 begin? Did you initiate that?

10 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Yes. I did initiate
11 that. When I didn't feel that Nadine's investigation was
12 being handled properly, I took it to the next place, which
13 was the Public Complaints Commission.

14 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And so, it was your
15 advocacy -- it was the family's advocacy that actually
16 resulted in that being reviewed?

17 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Yes, it did.

18 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Okay. And, now, you
19 had explained to the public and to the Commission the back
20 and forth with the coroner's office. And so, the family
21 receives a report. So, as next of kin, you are entitled to
22 a coroner's report. And, that first one says that the
23 death is undetermined?

24 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Yes.

25 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And how did -- how

1 -- what -- who got the report for you? How did you get the
2 report?

3 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** The report was given
4 to me at a meeting with the Regina Police Services and the
5 Chief Coroner. When they had come to their conclusions and
6 -- of Nadine's case, I was given the original report that
7 had ruled her death undetermined.

8 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And then a second
9 report comes. But, how, in terms of the second report
10 where there was a new opinion that we saw you put up on
11 your presentation, and in terms of how did you get your --
12 how did you get a copy of the second report with the new
13 findings?

14 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** At the time, the
15 Chief had -- the Chief Coroner had contacted me and told me
16 that he had given me the wrong report. I had to question
17 -- in this respect, I have to question if it was -- if it
18 was ever intended for me to receive that original report.
19 But, nevertheless, I received it. And then I received the
20 second report that ruled it accidental. And, there was
21 some slight changes, and some slight revises to the
22 documents that were -- that were not made mention in the
23 second report, with reference to the first report.

24 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** In your
25 presentation, you explained that there were contradicting

1 opinions. And, this came out in the inquest, the public
2 inquest, actually. Can you tell me who you recall -- and
3 this was all a matter of public record in the public
4 inquest -- the first pathologist's name, and the position
5 he took?

6 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** The first
7 pathologist was Doctor Shaun Latham, and he had originally
8 deemed the death to be undetermined.

9 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, he had provided
10 an opinion, as per your presentation, that he didn't
11 believe, or he couldn't confirm that Nadine could get
12 herself into the chute.

13 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Yes. He has
14 confirmed in the first report that, overall, the levels of
15 drugs and alcohol in her system, it would be highly
16 unlikely that she could have put herself in the laundry
17 chute, so her death should be listed as undetermined.

18 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, I'm just -- to
19 help with this point, I'm just going to refer to a
20 newspaper article out of the inquest.

21 And so, in the material that the
22 Commissioner has in her binder, there is an article. The
23 article's name is "Pathologist found that Nadine likely
24 didn't go down the laundry chute on her own." And then
25 there is a discussion about the original autopsy report

1 being altered. And, there's an explanation that they
2 sought the opinion of another coroner from a different
3 jurisdiction. Can you tell me a little bit about that?
4 Not just from the article, but from your memory of the
5 inquest.

6 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Yeah. I actually
7 have to question why, also, that they had requested a
8 second opinion. But, they did request a second opinion.
9 And, I was quite shocked when I got the second report that
10 it was deemed accidental. So, that was a big frustration
11 for myself and my family to all of a sudden go from
12 undetermined to accident. That's a big change. I didn't
13 agree with -- I didn't agree with the findings. I had
14 approached the coroner's office on many occasions and asked
15 them how they had come to the conclusion. Given the very
16 little evidence they had, given the lack of investigation
17 that was done, how did they come to the conclusion that
18 they were going to rule it an accident?

19 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So, when you finally
20 get the second coroner's report, it includes that opinion.
21 But, you had to -- you had to actively seek and request it
22 repeatedly, if I understand correctly; is that true?

23 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Can you repeat the
24 question?

25 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** The second coroner's

1 report that included that Alberta opinion, you had to keep
2 asking for it before you actually received it; am I
3 correct?

4 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** No. They had -- the
5 autopsy report was a long way in coming. And, I didn't
6 understand why it was taking so long until it was later
7 explained to me. I don't know. When we received the --
8 when we -- when we received the final report, it was my
9 understanding that it was because they had sought out a
10 second opinion.

11 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, during the
12 inquest, the jury came to a different finding. So, it
13 wasn't actually the chief examiner or a pathologist
14 opinion, but the jury who actually made the finding of
15 undetermined. Is that true?

16 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Yes, that's true.

17 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, can you tell me
18 a little bit about how you felt when you heard what the
19 jury had to say?

20 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** I was relieved that
21 the decision had come back to undetermined. But, at the
22 same time, I had to question, you took my family through
23 this for two years when it was originally deemed
24 undetermined, and we went through this process for two
25 years, and had to go through a coroner's inquest. And,

1 again, the trauma and the nightmare that my family had to
2 go through to go from undetermined, and two and a half
3 years later, it's back to undetermined. I don't get it.

4 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** At one point -- and
5 you talked about, in your presentation, the media, and you
6 having to go to the media. Can you tell me what your
7 feelings are on, you know, the good parts of dealing with
8 the media, and what some of your concerns about having to
9 deal with the media are?

10 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** I think some of my
11 concerns in the beginning were how the media was portraying
12 Nadine as an individual. And, I struggled a lot with that.
13 But, I've also had some good experiences with the media in
14 her story, and getting it out there, and letting other
15 people know the facts of her story.

16 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, you became the
17 family spokesperson fairly soon. And, when you were
18 talking about the advocacy you did, and how it was helpful
19 to actually raising the profile, when you did advocacy, and
20 when you had the media actually listening and paying
21 attention, it had an impact. And, can you talk to us a
22 little bit about that?

23 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Yeah. It had an --
24 it had an impact because we -- my -- the story was getting
25 out there, and the facts were getting out there. And, it

1 brought together a community that had actually helped me
2 with the legal costs for a Go Fund Me campaign to pay for
3 the expenses for the inquest and the lawyer fees. So, a
4 community that had come together to raise funds for justice
5 for Nadine, that meant everything to me. That meant a lot
6 to me that a community cared, that a community was willing
7 to step out there with me and help me to get the financial
8 resources that we need to -- needed to seek justice.

9 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, if you had
10 advice for other families -- I know you made some great
11 recommendations. But, having gone through everything that
12 you've had to go through, if you had advice for other
13 families that needed to have people listen to them, because
14 it sounds like a lot of the story was people weren't
15 listening until you sort of pushed the issue out there.
16 What would the advice be for other families?

17 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Well, first of all,
18 I don't think that families should have to go to that
19 extent to be listened to and to be heard. I don't think
20 any family should ever have to be put in that position, to
21 continually have to go before the media and be re-
22 traumatized over and over, to have systems listen, to have
23 people listen and take accountability, and acknowledge the
24 mistakes that were made, and acknowledge the things that
25 were happening.

1 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** No. Thank you.
2 Today, you brought something very special. Can you tell us
3 a little bit about the blanket of this beautiful picture of
4 Nadine?

5 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Yes. This blanket
6 was blessed to my family by the sisters in spirit. I can't
7 remember the organization. But, they had blessed my family
8 with this. We've used it to host many vigils and walks in
9 remembrance of Nadine. And, yeah, it's a special part of
10 our -- of something that we hold dear, and we hold close.

11 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Okay. So, we also
12 have Laura with us. And, I just had a few questions for
13 Laura. Good morning. Thank you for being with us today.
14 I had a couple questions. We heard Delores talking about
15 the fact that you helped raise Nadine. And so, a couple of
16 the questions I had for you is, if you could just share
17 with us some of her strengths, or what it was like when she
18 was a kid and growing up with her -- raising her?

19 **MS. LAURA APOOCH:** About raising Nadine. I
20 came from Yellow Quill First Nations. My name is Laura
21 Apooch. I raised Nadine since a little girl, since
22 newborn. He [sic] went to residential school maybe for
23 four years -- four years. He went to residential school
24 until he's 18 years old. That's where I let him go.

25 And, I have two -- two boys from Nadine.

1 One is 15, one is 14. They left them behind -- behind to
2 me, two boys. And, one for Delores, and one boy in foster
3 care.

4 The last time I seen Nadine, January 10th,
5 2015, I seen him the last time. I drove him downtown to go
6 see a lawyer. And, from there, I didn't see him alive till
7 the next morning they call me from general hospital.
8 Around 7:00 in the morning, there is ringing that phone.
9 Then I pick it up. And, "This is Laura?" "Yes, this is
10 Laura." And, Nadine die in hospital. And, I shock that
11 phone was. I shock. I threw it. I don't know how did I
12 throw it, I shocked.

13 And, my son, Danny, he pick it up. He
14 picked it up, that phone. Then he told me we have to go to
15 the hospital right away. The only way we're going to see
16 -- the only way we're going to see is if we go there to the
17 hospital right away. We have to go right away, he told me.
18 Then we went there to the hospital where is the body are.
19 We went there, and I seen him just like sleeping. And,
20 they have bruise right here, and they have bruise on one
21 side, one side the eye. And, I wonder -- I wonder, why
22 they have bruises? What happened?

23 And -- and we left. We left from the
24 hospital. And, maybe after we phone Delores, that time we
25 went to Manitoba. And, two weeks later maybe -- is that

1 two weeks?

2 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Mm-hmm.

3 **MS. LAURA APOOCH:** Those investigator, we
4 seen them about two weeks later. And, I didn't -- I didn't
5 believe. I didn't believe what was happen, they're saying.
6 Like to me, I can recognize a person. When I see a person,
7 I can recognize them. He's not -- he's not -- he's not
8 right. He's not right investigator. I can recognize that.
9 I recognize those -- those -- just like they're not real
10 investigators, writing beside us. Why is that? God, he
11 show me that. That's why I recognize them.

12 I've been through lot, lot, lot, tough,
13 tough, tough. Boy is suffering. My granddaughter, Nadine,
14 I've been through that lots, lots of suffering. Even when
15 I drive around, I used to cry around. Very, very, very
16 tough. I've been through this death, Nadine. Maybe not
17 just me been through that kind of stuff. Maybe there's
18 others too. It's not easy. It's not very easy. But, who
19 I knew -- he didn't put himself in that laundry chute, I
20 know that. He didn't put her -- she didn't put himself
21 there. I knew that. I am not -- I am not an empty person
22 to not know anything what's going on.

23 Sometimes very -- sometimes I'm angry with
24 those people, but I can't do nothing. The one over there
25 who's been watching (speaks in Indigenous language). We

1 call him God, the Father, Lord Jesus Christ. He's the one.
2 He knows everything. He knows everything what was -- what
3 was going on that night for Nadine. But, I pray. I knew
4 there's going to be end soon, that suffering. I knew that.
5 What he showed me yesterday, the Lord, when we together
6 over there, he showed me something there. He showed me
7 something there. I am not the only one suffering this kind
8 of stuff. There's lots of people around the world.
9 They're suffering. But, I thank God I found him. I used
10 to be an alcoholic, too. I turned away from alcohol for
11 maybe 30 years. Not any -- not any those bad stuff.

12 Just about -- just about I'm done here, but
13 there is another thing. Those boys, I have very difficult
14 time. One young -- one young boy. When we lost our loved
15 one, Nadine, they were very, very difficult time for one
16 boy. And, not too long ago, we went -- we went to that
17 graveyard where Nadine was buried.

18 We went over there not too long ago. Those
19 boys, we took them there. And, one boy was crying. The
20 youngest boy was crying. And, I said to him, I said to him
21 don't cry, don't cry. This is just -- just grave. Nadine
22 was gone to heaven. He meet with the Lord Jesus. He went
23 to heaven, I told him. That's what I'm -- that's what I'm
24 -- just graveyard. There's nothing. There's nothing.
25 Just graveyard. He went. He's gone. He's gone to heaven.

1 I told my grandson, one of these days we're
2 going to see -- we're going to see Nadine again. There is
3 hope, I told him. And, he was okay. He was okay. Very,
4 very, very difficult. Very, very difficult life what we've
5 been through. We're suffering. We're suffering.

6 But, I believe Jesus was suffering on the
7 cross. And, I guess the same thing we've been through,
8 where he was suffering and there is hope to forgive us. To
9 forgive us all our suffering. To forget, to heal, to be
10 healed. To be healed where we have our broken, to be
11 healed. In Jesus name, I pray that.

12 I pray that right now, to be healed in the
13 name of Jesus, because he's the one who changed my life.
14 He's the one who's creating us. He's the one who is taking
15 care of us in everyday life. But, I thank him so much. I
16 thank him so much what he's done on the cross for us. I
17 thank him so much. And, I thank everyone who -- who
18 listening here. And, I pray for everyone. I pray for
19 everyone. I thank God for all everyone. I praise the Lord
20 for all everyone. I thank him so much.

21 Suffering is going to be end soon. It's
22 going to be end soon. I thank -- I thank God for that.
23 And, I thank all my family who came -- who came with us.
24 That's it, I'd like to say. Praise God.

25 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you. I just

1 want to check before -- the Commissioner may have some
2 questions for you. But, we do have a picture presentation.
3 So, I was going to see if the Commissioner had any
4 questions for you before we go through that.

5 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Okay.

6 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Commissioner, did
7 you have any questions that you want to ---

8 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** I don't
9 have any specific questions. Although, what I want to do
10 is just for details, I'm going to make an order that the
11 details of coroner's reports will not -- other than what
12 has been disclosed in testimony, will not be made public.
13 Thank you.

14 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you. Now, I
15 understand that you have a presentation, a picture
16 presentation that we're going to ask. And, I believe it
17 will be coming on the big screen. So, we may just have to
18 take a moment, or sort of turn to look at the bigger
19 screen.

20 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Okay.

21 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Before we go into
22 these pictures, I think one thing that's, you know, we
23 talked a lot about the circumstances of Nadine's death.
24 But, before we see these pictures, maybe you can tell us a
25 little bit about these pictures? And, maybe you can tell

1 us just a little bit about Nadine's strengths? Because I
2 know that she was a many wonderful thing. And, before we
3 actually start with music, maybe you can just make some
4 comments of why these memories are important to share?

5 **MS. DELORES STEVENSON:** Okay. We've
6 collected a bunch of pictures from the time Nadine was born
7 to the last days of her life. And, like I said, Nadine was
8 a mother, she was a sister, and she was an important part
9 in my family. And, as you'll see from the pictures that
10 she was a big part of our family. And, she loved children,
11 and she loved being with family. And, you'll see that
12 through these pictures. And, you'll see that -- the
13 impacts of her loss, and then and how it's affected our
14 family.

15 Oh, yes. And, we had -- we had chosen the
16 music just because my family has the beliefs in
17 Christianity. So, that's the music that we chose, and the
18 music that we have for our faith and that.

19 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** If we could play it?

20 **(VIDEO PRESENTATION)**

21 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Commissioner Buller,
22 this is what the family has wanted to present to you, and
23 they want to end on that note. So, I want to welcome any
24 comments you may have.

25 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Well,

1 first, thank you for coming today and sharing your
2 beautiful memories of Nadine. We're very grateful. And,
3 the pictures are very moving. So, thank you. I appreciate
4 hearing your recommendations. They're very helpful in
5 moving ahead, because we don't want this happening to other
6 families.

7 Because you've shared with us a precious
8 gift, and that's Nadine, we have some gifts to thank you.
9 By way of a little bit of background, the matriarchs, the
10 grandmothers on Haida Gwaii on the west coast knew that
11 families would be coming forward and sharing their stories
12 all across Canada. And, they wanted to, in their own way,
13 help families to be strong, and to be powerful, and to help
14 share their burden. So, they asked that eagle feathers be
15 gathered, and sent to us through family members. So, we
16 have some eagle feathers for you to help give you strength
17 from the clan mothers.

18 Also, we have bags of seeds that are gifts
19 from us to you as well. Seeds are significant in many
20 different ways. What we'd like you to do, maybe when the
21 weather is a little better, is to plant those seeds and see
22 if anything grows. And, if something does grow, will you
23 please take photographs and send them to us? Because we
24 want to see new growth, newness, new beginnings all across
25 Canada.

1 Thank you again. It's been very moving,
2 very helpful. And, we'll not forget her. Thank you.
3 We'll take a break until 12:30. Thank you.

4 --- Exhibits (code: P01P06P0101)

5 **Exhibit 1:** Powerpoint presentation given by Dolores
6 Stevenson to Chief Commissioner Buller during
7 public hearing.

8 **Exhibit 2:** **SEALED ** Autopsy report and related
9 documents.

10 **Exhibit 3:** CBC article "Woman, 29, found fatally injured
11 in Regina hotel, police investigating, CBC
12 news posted January 13, 2015 5:38 PM CT last
13 updated January 13, 2015 5:38 PM CT, one-page
14 copy.

15 **Exhibit 4:** "How did a Regina mom fall 10 storeys down a
16 laundry chute to her death?" by Geoff Leo,
17 CBC News posted September 22, 2015 5:30 AM CT
18 last updated September 22, 2015 5:28 PM CT,
19 three-page copy.

20 **Exhibit 5:** "Pathologist found that Nadine Machiskinic
21 likely didn't go down laundry chute 'on her
22 own'" by Geoff Leo, CBC News posted June 25,
23 2016 2:04 PM CT last updated June 26, 2016
24 4:29 PM CT.

25 **Exhibit 6:** "60-hour delay before Regina Police called in

1 laundry chute death" by Geoff Leo CBC News,
2 posted May 16, 2016 5:30 AM CT last updated
3 May 16, 2016 5:30 AM CT.

4 **Exhibit 7:** "Police chief's comments on Nadine
5 Machiskinic's deaths adds to family's
6 frustrations", CBC News posted March 31, 2017
7 11:52 AM CT last updated March 31, 2017 5:21
8 PM CT, two-page copy.

9 **Exhibit 8:** DVD presentation presented near the close of
10 the hearing.

11 **Exhibit 9:** Colour photograph of a woman in white woolen
12 cap holding a child.

13 --- Upon recessing at 11:17

14 --- Upon resuming at 1:30

15 **Hearing # 2**

16 **Witnesses: Pernel Ballantyne, Margaret Doucette, Dionne**
17 **Doucette, Doreen Warren, Trent Doucette, Shirley Henderson,**
18 **Conrad Burns**

19 **In Relation to Monica Burns**

20 **Heard by Chief Commissioner Marion Buller**

21 **Orders: none.**

22 **Commission Counsel: Jennifer Cox**

23 **Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge-keepers: Florence**

24 **Catcheway, Sylvia Popowich**

25 **Registrar: Bryan Zandberg**

1 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Chief Commissioner,
2 I'd like to introduce you to Pernell Burns or, sorry,
3 Pernell Ballantyne. He's here to speak about his sister,
4 Monica Burns. And I'll let his family members introduce
5 themselves, but before we do that, Pernell would like to
6 take a promise to tell the truth on the feather.

7 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Well, actually while
8 you were gone, we kind of discussed it, we're going to do
9 it in a little bit of a different way based on what the
10 family was hoping to do. So, if all of the ones who will
11 be speaking, I think it was Margaret and Trent and --
12 everybody wants to stand up and take that eagle -- there's
13 actually an eagle feather right there and I'll get that for
14 you. Standing in a circle, yeah. So, Margaret, I'll give
15 you the (audio cuts in and out).

16 Okay. Welcome everybody. Does everybody
17 promise to tell the truth in a good way to the Commissioner
18 today? Okay. Thank you.

19 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, for the purposes of
20 the record, beside Pernell is his wife, Dionne Doucette and
21 beside Dionne is Dionne's mother, Margaret Doucette. And
22 beside her, last name Warren, Gayle Warren and beside Gayle
23 is Doreen Warren. And beside me is Shirley Henderson. I
24 have Conrad Burns here from Victim Services, who is a long-
25 time friend of Pernell's. And beside him is Trent

1 Doucette. And Pernell would like to start before he speaks
2 with a video that we were able to locate on CBC, and it's a
3 video that depicts the efforts he made to bring awareness
4 to his sister's disappearance. So, on the screen you will
5 see, and he'll talk about it after.

6 **(VIDEO PRESENTATION)**

7 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Pernell, if you'd
8 like to begin perhaps talking a little bit about the video
9 that we just saw, so that the audience understands what it
10 was about?

11 **MR. PERNELL BALLANTYNE:** In this video here,
12 I'll tell you a story about it. My common-law's cousin
13 came over in the morning and talked about his brothers that
14 were -- had passed away and then -- so, that gave me the
15 motive to do what I had to do for my sister, Monica. And
16 so, we brainstormed it, me and my common-law, Dionne, and
17 then we said, well, let's go talk to our mom, and mom said,
18 well, let's do it. We've got to get on the phones. I've
19 got \$80, we've got to get on those phones and see what kind
20 of support we've got. And so, we got on the phones and I
21 wanted to do it like 7:00 in the morning, so that's how it
22 all started. It was at 7:00 in the morning. We talked to
23 APTN (audio cuts out).

24 Doing this walk was -- it was like a journey
25 for us and journey for me too, to kind of put it in a

1 positive way instead of running to, like, drugs and
2 alcohol, bottling it up and, you know -- and it was -- it
3 was a journey and a half. It was (audio cuts out).

4 We had -- that bond that we had was family,
5 friends, they keep us together to move forward as one, you
6 know, as a group, as a friendship, a bond, to bring
7 awareness to this murdered and missing Indigenous women and
8 girls. And this is the way I wanted to reflect for my
9 sister that she's never been -- never ever been forgotten.
10 And then I wanted justice for my sister to (audio cuts out)
11 to have justice.

12 And it took us two and a half days to walk
13 from Saskatoon to Prince Albert to meet up with the other
14 group that was already waiting for us in Prince Albert.
15 And, the song that keeps playing on here was like, "I'll be
16 Missing You" from Puff -- you know, Puff Daddy and Faith
17 Evans, is that it brought us together and be humble and to
18 find a solution to this murder and missing women and girls.
19 You know, it was tough to take that little journey. Well,
20 I wouldn't say little. It hurt my feet, you know, and it
21 was tough (audio cuts out).

22 **MS. MARGARET DOUCETTE:** Excuse me, I like to
23 speak in front of people, not with my back turned. My name
24 is Margaret and I'm Pernell's mother in-law. And the
25 journey we took -- I took with my son in-law was a really

1 experience journey for the missing and murdered Aboriginal
2 women and girls.

3 When Pernell called me that morning he
4 wanted to start walking, and I said it doesn't happen like
5 that, Pernell. I said, we have to make phone calls, we've
6 got to prepare. And what happened is, Dionne is a big
7 support of Pernell. She got on the phone. I told Pernell,
8 we have this \$80, I'll gas up, we'll get our coffee. So,
9 he contacted Mr. Burns and he arranged for the drummers to
10 come and meet with us at the Petro -- Esso? Esso, right at
11 the end of -- just before you leave Saskatoon for PA.

12 We met there 7:00 in the morning and they
13 did the song for the walkers, and we stumbled through our
14 hurdles. And it was the police or the Department of
15 Highways that stopped us at the end of 51st -- past 51st
16 and we had to go on the phone. Dionne was on the phone
17 just talking, talking because it takes time to make this
18 walk, because you need to talk to Department of Highways
19 for safety, and you also have to make contact with the city
20 police or RCMP to make them aware of what's happening.

21 We stopped there for about an hour or two
22 hours and it was a go. I knew we were going to stumble
23 through this. It was cold and then we -- when we
24 continued, when everything was a go, we kept going.
25 Pernell was walking ahead of my vehicle and I kept praying,

1 watching him walk for Monica.

2 We got to Rosthern that night. She had her
3 uncle and auntie with Pernell. She -- they did the walk
4 so, I decided as we got halfway to Rosthern, I'd play a
5 song. It touched my heart while I was playing this song,
6 "I'll be Missing You", because we all lose our loved ones
7 and they're always in our hearts all the time. So, I
8 turned it up, I blasted it up and her -- his auntie started
9 dancing down the highway, just jogging and it was blowing
10 snow and just really cold. So, I kept playing that and it
11 energized them. There was energy there and there was
12 tears.

13 We stopped at Rosthern and there's always
14 somebody guiding you, guiding you no matter what you do in
15 life, in this world. If you're doing good, there's always
16 somebody in your path to come along and help you. I seen
17 it, I experienced it; that's why I say that. We did an
18 offering in Rosthern and (indiscernible), and we camped
19 over in Rosthern.

20 The guy that invited us in his motel, he got
21 up, he put on the grills and he made the biggest supper at
22 1:00 at night. There was food galore all over. There was
23 about, what, 15 of us? And, there was food all over the
24 bed, all over the counters, whatever. But we were cold, we
25 were hungry. And then to make it better, the guy, the

1 manager, did massage for all of us, our backs, Pernell's
2 feet. I felt so blessed by this man that did that for us.

3 We continued our journey. Pernell kept
4 saying, mom do you want to walk? I said, "Wait, I'll
5 walk." We'd stop because I'm right beside them, I'm
6 driving. We kept going, kept going. "Mom, are you going
7 to walk?" "Yeah, just wait, I'll walk." We get to PA, I'm
8 still -- he's still waiting.

9 So, we get to the City Hall and there was a
10 couple of chiefs there that met with us and we had to walk
11 back up to John A. MacDonald building, and it's a hill. I
12 drove up there and when it was flat, where I can walk close
13 to John A. MacDonald, I got out of the car and I started
14 jogging as if I came from Saskatoon. And I'm hanging onto
15 Pernell just puffed right out, as if I just came from
16 Saskatoon.

17 But, I was there for Pernell. And Pernell
18 came to our lives, to Dionne's life, and I'm grateful to
19 have Pernell as my son in-law. I also keep asking them,
20 when is the wedding? If not, I'm going to ask him to marry
21 me if Dionne doesn't. They've got two beautiful kids and
22 they also foster two of my grand twins, Trent's twins. So,
23 for now, I'll take -- give the mic back to Pernell because
24 he was stuck.

25 But Monica, I met a couple of times, and

1 Monica needed help. Like I always say to my community
2 leaders, there's got to be frontline workers to help our
3 people, anybody, everybody that needs that help, that when
4 we go through crisis, you're alone, you're standing there
5 along and you don't really know who to go to, who to
6 confide with, who to talk to. And you feel so alone, so
7 lost when you lose your loved ones.

8 I always say, there's got to be workers to
9 work with people that deal with this kind of situations,
10 any situations that families need. I always look back at
11 Alkali Lake, Williams Lake, when the community went dry.
12 I'm not afraid to say, my own community, 99 percent of the
13 people, kids, were drunk in my days, and that's the way I
14 lived in my community. I'm not afraid to say today, 99
15 percent of my young people in my community don't speak our
16 language and it's sad to say that. That's why we need the
17 government to help us with resources.

18 What I see in my own community, there was an
19 Aboriginal Cree teacher, and she did a good job by speaking
20 her own language to the students, grade 8 to 12. And those
21 young people count -- can tell you numbers from 1 to 100.
22 I couldn't even do it because I lost part of my language,
23 but I can speak my language today because I went back to
24 it. I always want to speak my language.

25 None of my kids speak my language. My

1 husband was from Ontario and every time there was that
2 communication, I couldn't speak Cree to my kids. That's
3 why that's another resort for the government to step in to
4 have that curriculum in schools, to speak our own language
5 because we're losing it. But before I lose it here, I'm
6 going to give the mic to Pernell. And I want to thank you.

7 **MS. DIONNE DOUCETTE:** My mom wants me to
8 stand up and face you all. I want to talk about -- well,
9 my name is Dionne Doucette. But I'll talk about the walk.
10 It was such a positive impact it had on us during that
11 critical time when we lost Monica, January 17th. And it
12 was towards the end of January 17th we did the walk. So,
13 immediately, we took action on finding ways of that outlet
14 of the trauma we were going through, the loss, the
15 grieving.

16 And coming together and, you know, being
17 together critically after that was really part of our
18 healing, instead of, like Pernell said, going to other ways
19 of dealing with our loss. So, during the walk, like the
20 song says, "every step I take", is a lyric in that song and
21 that's what we're doing. It was every step we were taking,
22 we are healing as we walk forward.

23 The people that came, that showed up, that
24 supported us, like my mom mentioned the man in the hotel,
25 his name was Jackie Chan Lee, and he was worried because

1 outlet. She was a very kind woman, never once made me feel
2 like I was out of place, you know, being new in our
3 relationship with Pernell.

4 And she loved our daughter because she
5 always used to say, "She looks like my daughter when she
6 was a baby," and she would always hold her and hug her and
7 cuddle her. And she'd come visit us and the one time we
8 were decorating for our daughter's birthday, and Monica
9 came upstairs and was helping me, and it was a really nice
10 birthday. A lot of the family members came together.

11 But me and Monica had that time to decorate
12 and just us because Morgan was sleeping while we were
13 decorating. It was really one of my very good memories
14 with her. She was -- it was -- I wish there could have
15 been of that. And it's just -- it's so tragic. So tragic.

16 Our services that need to be available is so
17 hard for us to access, I just -- you know, when you need to
18 go to rehab, it takes so long for that process. When you
19 need, you know, health, that's a process, when you're
20 trying to take care of yourself. And, to have all these
21 setbacks in you path and not having that support and
22 strength to fight through each step to get to your goal is
23 -- it's like things holding you back for our women.

24 Our women are -- it's hard as an Aboriginal
25 woman in Canada. Part of it is with discrimination and the

1 frontline workers that are maybe not knowledgeable that
2 don't have that education on our history of or people.
3 There needs to be more education for the workers that are
4 dealing with our -- that we need help and like with
5 medical, health, justice, education, everything. All part
6 of it.

7 Even me, as I was in my younger years trying
8 to access help, I felt a lot of racism, discrimination and
9 it wanted to set me back. But I had a good support system
10 with strong women too in my life, and she's a strong woman.
11 She pushed me through, you know, not being scared. Like,
12 she got me to come up here and talk and now I'm rambling
13 on. But I'll hand the mic to Pernell and thank you for
14 your time.

15 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Pernell, I'm
16 wondering if we could talk a little bit about how quickly
17 you put that walk together? For the benefit of the Chief
18 Commissioner, how quickly did that come together?

19 **MR. PERNELL BALLANTYNE:** It happened so
20 fast, like in less than 20 hours to put all this together.
21 And it wasn't Conrad Burns that was with us, it was Mike
22 Scott. And so, I contacted Mike Scott to help us with the
23 drummers, and I met with him outside of our house. So, he
24 said, what time is this all going to happen? I said, well
25 7 o'clock tomorrow, can you get the drummers? He said,

1 I'll text you and we'll be there.

2 So, that -- the same day, these two women
3 here said, well, we need an escort from the cops and we've
4 got to go get that permit. So, they went down there and --
5 they went down there and -- to fill out that permit and it
6 was like the wrong permit and it's not a big event. It's
7 just, you know -- and it's -- there was a woman that helped
8 them with that permit, right. And she said, I'll get you
9 guys those escorts there first thing in the morning. And I
10 thought -- I thought it was only going to be like one car,
11 two cars, here we had like four cop cars. And I was like,
12 holy smokes, I didn't expect this, like you know, to be a
13 big thing at 7:00 in the morning.

14 So, I was talking to APTN, too. And so, we
15 started on that journey too and it was like things just
16 fell into place. Like, you know, as far as you go, the
17 more support you have, and all these little communities
18 down that highway, like Duck Lake, Rosthern, PA, even like
19 these other communities like Beardy's, One Arrow, Sturgeon
20 Lake and Peter Ballantyne.

21 So, I was walking and this one lady comes up
22 to me and out of the ordinary she started crying. And I
23 said -- I said, what's wrong? And she said, "I feel your
24 guys' pain and I feel -- because I lost one of my -- one of
25 my loved ones and I know how it is to -- not to keep

1 inside. I kept it inside for the longest time and you guys
2 are out there and trying to do awareness for them."

3 So, she gave me these two rocks and she
4 said, "Can you take these with you on your journey?" I
5 said, "Sure, I will." And then -- so, we started walking
6 and I told her thank you and we'll do something, we'll do a
7 prayer with these rocks and, you know, take them in a
8 sweat. And so, she gave us all a handshake and -- before
9 she left, and then this is where I got this grandfather
10 from, is on that journey from Saskatoon to PA.

11 I think everybody knows this guy. His name
12 is Sam Badger. He was on Shanghai Noon. He was the chief
13 on there. And I guess he gave Jackie Chan Lee a powerful -
14 - of what the pipe was and he said to me, "Pernell are you
15 really traditional?" And I said, "Yes I am." "Do you know
16 to smudge?" I said, "Yes I do." "So, I'm giving you this
17 gift for your journey." I said, "Okay." "You take this
18 feather wherever you go with this murdered and missing
19 Indigenous women and girls, you take this and represent
20 this feather. I said, "Okay, I will do that."

21 And I said -- and he goes and every stop
22 that you guys make for the night, you lay down the protocol
23 to smudge, you pray for the day, pray for the night and
24 have a good sleep. And you start back where you started
25 from and move forward. I said, oh and then -- so, we did

1 that. And on that journey, there was like four
2 Clydesdales, these horses walking with us so far in this
3 farm yard where the fence is, you know, just to acknowledge
4 that we were there. You know, like, the grandfathers were
5 watching us doing our journey.

6 And so, I told my mother in-law, "Look at
7 those horses" and I told my common law, "Look at those
8 horses walking with us." And we all said a little prayer
9 and on they went. And then -- so, we got to MacDowell. We
10 stayed -- we did our offering there and then we -- PBCN
11 paid for our rooms at Super 8 for the night. Two nights,
12 right?

13 So, we -- everybody was racing, racing to
14 the tub because everybody's legs were so sore and stiff.
15 And me, you know, me, I'm so patient. I'll wait for
16 everybody to do their -- you know, do their self-care. And
17 then after all that, we had -- like, we gathered with the
18 other walkers on Central -- on City Hall. I was just
19 thinking to myself, too, later on, I said, how come they
20 didn't come meet me up on Marcus Road? I don't want to
21 walk down that hill and come back up that hill and do the
22 rest of the Marcus Road to go into John A. MacDonald. I
23 thought about that after the fact, you know.

24 And, like, before we -- like, there was my
25 uncle and my auntie and my sister, they were saying on the

1 now. And we all started crying. It's like that relief of
2 that pain and suffering that we did for this journey just
3 went away, like just phew, that stress, that grieving.
4 It's like our answers were met.

5 To this day, I still miss her. I still love
6 her. I even promised myself I wouldn't cry, but it's hard
7 to lose a loved one that was so young and vulnerable. And
8 I always try to tell my sisters, "I'm here for your guys to
9 talk to me. My door is always open, no matter what. Phone
10 me, text me, inbox me, whatever you need to do to get a
11 hold of me. I'll come and talk to you guys."

12 So, that one -- now, before everything this
13 -- all this started, I got that one phone call I really,
14 really didn't want to hear, but nobody prepares yourself
15 for this kind of tragedy and this kind of -- it's hard when
16 you don't have a solid ground to be on. Like, I have my
17 mother in-law, but I don't got my mother. My mother was
18 the rock of the family, you know. And I teach -- and I
19 teach -- I tell every one of my friends, everybody I know,
20 to love your mother no matter what because you'll never
21 know when she's going to be gone. Live those moments with
22 the women that you love because you never know; tomorrow is
23 never a promised day.

24 That's why I do what I do for this woman,
25 for my mother in-law, for my wife, my common-law that's

1 going to be my wife. And so, that's what this whole
2 journey was, when I did that walk, was all for the women.
3 For the women and also to show kind of not -- that they're
4 not alone. Men are always behind them to support the
5 women, to be there for the women.

6 I showed my common-law I'll be there for her
7 no matter what. I showed my mother in-law, I'll help her,
8 no matter what. And my job won't be done. I got a seven-
9 year-old daughter that I still have to raise, to teach her
10 from the bad to good, the -- who's stranger danger, you
11 know? It's all that stuff comes to this Inquiry about our
12 future girls. And my niece Denataya (phon), she'll never
13 get those answers. She'll never, ever get to see her mom
14 again. She'll never have that love and caring that she
15 would have from her mom, that TLC, that bond between a
16 mother and a daughter.

17 When a teenager, you don't get that bond
18 when they tell, like, gossip, you know, whatever women do
19 that we don't know. Well, you know what all I mean, you
20 know, the gossip, you know. Like, I teach my son to
21 respect women. I teach my son to work hard for a woman, to
22 plant trees with a woman. This elderly lady next door to
23 our house shows my son a prime example to show him how to
24 take care of a tree, a garden.

25 That's what we need to do with our

1 generation, to show them the love and caring for each and
2 one of -- it doesn't matter what race. You got to love
3 each and one of our Canadian citizens. Even welcome the
4 newcomers to our country. That's a love for Canadian. I
5 think I'm rambling on here.

6 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Pernell, did you want to
7 talk a little bit about how Monica's case was portrayed in
8 the media?

9 **MR. PERNELL BALLANTYNE:** That's another
10 tough story. Well, anyways, I'll tell you about myself.
11 I'm 37 years old. There's seven siblings of us. There's
12 Candace, Michelle -- Michelle was the twin of Monica Burns.
13 I don't know how she feels to lose a partner that was a
14 bond in the womb. I don't know how she feels. I don't
15 know how she can cope with it. But there's other - other
16 ones that we have like, Stephen, Chris and Justin.

17 We're all siblings that this trauma that we
18 had separated all of us. Everybody went down their own
19 paths. But I still try to keep in contact in each and one
20 of them, I try. I don't push them. I'm so patient to wait
21 for them to come and see me. I'm so patient.

22 So, when this court case came along,
23 everybody wanted -- was so angry at him for taking my
24 sister. And that same day he had court and said -- the
25 court was at 9:00 or 9:30. So, everybody showed up there,

1 like 10 minutes to 9:00, and they already did the process.
2 He was already gone. Because if we would have met him that
3 same day, you know how much fire and hatred for that guy to
4 do that? It was hard at first, and then we waited and we
5 waited for the -- like, the other court and then he -- and
6 then he pleaded not guilty. I said, how can you plead not
7 guilty for the thing he did to my sister? Everybody was
8 frustrated, and everybody was mad why he pleaded not
9 guilty.

10 So, when it -- when it came time to go to
11 trial, we went to trial, it went from second degree, he
12 pleaded guilty to manslaughter. Manslaughter.
13 Manslaughter is like lower than second degree. So, we all
14 did our impact statements, we talked to him face to face,
15 he was putting his head down and everything. And my sister
16 Michelle said, "You look at me when I talk to you in my
17 impact statement."

18 So, she told her side of the story. And
19 it's like the justice system was just so rush, rush through
20 just to get it over and done with. Then he -- when he got
21 sentenced, 13 years. Thirteen years. And then that time
22 and a half that they serve in remand, so it knocks to 10
23 years and 3 months. I said, "That's not enough time for
24 the pain and suffering that I -- we all have to do, go
25 through. There's no time for what you did to my sister."

1 But that's not us to judge, to judge about
2 the law, the justice system. Like I was telling somebody,
3 I said, if you hurt or if you kill an endangered animal,
4 they get automatically 10 years or even 15 years, or even
5 -- you know, max penalty for endangered animals for -- and
6 then you get a big hefty fine. But taking a life, wouldn't
7 that be more endangered than anything else than an animal?

8 That's why I don't really believe in
9 justice. We don't ever, ever get justice, because justice
10 is just like -- I can't -- I can't really elaborate on
11 justice because justice is just like -- it should be more
12 harsher for killing a human being. Harsher penalties, more
13 time, for people that hurt our women. Not only our women,
14 even our men too can get killed, get murdered, you know.
15 It's just -- it's just like we need to have more harsh
16 penalties for the people for their own actions that murder
17 people, especially our women. Women are so sacred in
18 society today because they're life givers. Anybody else?

19 **MS. DIONNE DOUCETTE:** It was always very
20 hard how the media portrayed Monica. It really hurt the
21 family. It was something that was unnecessary for them to
22 label her as -- when it doesn't matter what we do in our
23 life, but who we are; a woman, a mother, a daughter, a
24 grandchild, an auntie. But for the media to turn around
25 and plaster that all over about her really impacted and

1 just hurt the family even more with what they were dealing
2 with already.

3 The lack of support still that isn't there
4 for the family that is still suffering, it's not there,
5 like right in our face. We need it, kind of thing. It's
6 if you want it, you got to go find it. And a lot of times
7 when people are hurting, they don't think properly, they
8 don't think straight. They don't -- they need that help
9 and support and it seems like it's just not there. The
10 education too for -- now, I'm stumbling. I totally lost
11 who -- yeah, go for it.

12 **MR. PERNELL BALLANTYNE:** Like, when she's
13 talking about media, about labelling our women as a sex
14 trade, that really makes me mad too, because you target our
15 women as a vulnerable person. That's why maybe if they
16 would have thought about it and came up with a different
17 word, maybe our women wouldn't be so targeted.

18 Being targeted as a sex trade person and
19 then you walk down the street and wearing this shirt and
20 somebody saying, "Oh, I remember that person. She's a sex
21 trade person, right?" That -- that really gets me mad
22 because my niece needs to deal with that, to hear that,
23 that trauma living over and over again. There's no --
24 that's what I mean when there's no justice for my niece
25 here that has to go through this trauma over and over and

1 over.

2 My niece needs to -- my niece needs that
3 support and those resources for like, trauma, to have that
4 aftercare and self-care. And also, to teach her, her
5 grassroots, to go back to her culture, to deal with the
6 loss that she had. To know -- she only known her mom for,
7 I don't know how old she was, maybe six or -- six or five,
8 I think around there. Eventually she'll be -- maybe one of
9 these days my niece will be a strong leader one of these
10 days to deal with our issues today. Maybe one day she'll
11 bring awareness to everybody.

12 When we had the pre-inquiry, that pre-
13 inquiry at Radisson, my daughter asked me, "Dad?" I said,
14 "What?" "Can I hold that eagle feather?" "Yeah, go ahead.
15 Here you can have it. You can hold the eagle feather." My
16 daughter held this eagle feather, raised it up high so
17 every woman in that room, even in front of the Minister
18 Caroline Bennett and also our justice -- what's her name?
19 Yeah, she was there, and she said, "One day, I wish you can
20 come to Parliament and raise that same feather as a leader
21 as you are, as a woman." That made me proud, that one day
22 I cried, I really did, when my daughter raised this feather
23 at that pre-inquiry. So, our women are really, really
24 sacred.

25 **MS. DOREEN WARREN:** Hello, everyone. My

1 name is Doreen Warren, and I'm from Sandy Bay. Pernell
2 calls me auntie. I was in Sandy Bay when they were doing
3 this walk, and Margaret kept phoning me and telling me --
4 actually keeping me posted where they were and how cold it
5 was, things like that. It was quite the journey for them.

6 And, today, I praise them for having gone on
7 that journey and they're here now. I really praise Pernell
8 and Dionne and Pernell being Monica's brother. He's gone
9 from that point to now, and that is so important because
10 the man he is now wasn't the man when he started that walk.

11 Pernell has grown so much since the loss of
12 his sister and I'm proud of him. And that man he is today,
13 I pray that he can be an influence to young men like
14 himself, as well as Dionne, young women like herself. Our
15 young people suffer, and they suffer so much in any way
16 like Monica did. Monica had her spot in life and it was
17 taken. A thief came along and took her life, and in my
18 understanding, God is not a thief.

19 I believe that, you know, Monica is in a
20 good place today. She's safe. She's certainly not in the
21 sex trade that is labelled at her passing. And any young
22 woman that walks today, that's what she labelled as, sex
23 trade. And a lot of them are Aboriginal, young girls and
24 women. I pray for them too, that they come around and it
25 doesn't have to be like that. And how come it doesn't have

1 to be like that? Us people, you know, that are wealthy
2 with good hearts, wealthy with kindness, wealthy with
3 caring, those are the kind of people that need to reach out
4 to young men and women that are suffering.

5 I was a very young girl when my mother left
6 me. I was 13 years old. My dad was alive. But when
7 you're that young and you have to walk, you know, life,
8 it's really hard. I was 18 years old when I got married to
9 Margaret's brother. We've been married for 43 years. And
10 you know, if I hadn't of found that family, that place,
11 maybe I would not be here today.

12 So, I'm blessed with many things in life,
13 good family, good friends. And I also reach out to touch
14 those that need help. Alcoholism and drug abuse hurts our
15 people. And that was another journey I was on. I was 28
16 years old when I stopped using. And, you know, in 29 days
17 I'll be 61.

18 You know, I'm proud to be here today. It's
19 really very overwhelming to be touched by people that are
20 suffering, people that are hurting, people that will walk
21 the whole length to make things better, that's where I want
22 to be. I want to make things better. Children, this young
23 girl that lost her mother, I hope there's someone there for
24 her today that can replace that absence of her biological
25 mother that was taken from her.

1 So, the National Inquiry is something very
2 big. I listen to it on the radio at home. I hear about it
3 all the time. And I'm glad things are coming to this point
4 where right across the country, world-wide, you know, we
5 need to know each other. We need to know we all have the
6 same problem and we're all going to fix it so that, you
7 know, with God's grace we have a good life living and it
8 doesn't have to be the way it is for the ones that are
9 suffering.

10 I thank my family, Pernell, Dionne,
11 Margaret, Gayle, Trent, for being here, and George. And
12 thank you to everybody that's listening. I -- again, I'm
13 very touched by what's going on and we walk together. I
14 have an Indian name it's (speaks in Indigenous language)
15 and that means, golden woman -- golden eagle woman. I
16 always keep it to myself. I want to fly like that golden
17 eagle. I seen a real beautiful bird, a golden eagle, and
18 he was just pure gold on his back, for real and that's how
19 I want to fly. Thank you.

20 **MS. DIONNE DOUCETTE:** I was just talking
21 with Pernell about how when Monica's case was being
22 investigated and how fast action the police and the
23 investigators were. And there was this one -- was he the
24 Chief of Police? Or who was that one that -- the main
25 investigator, right? I don't know.

1 Anyways, they knew our history, our
2 background. They were culturally sensitive to the needs of
3 the family, their understanding. I felt like they handled
4 that well. I wish more police -- I wish it was -- there
5 was no such thing as, you know, the discrimination and
6 that, but the police handled it well with us. Even came on
7 the walk, they supported us.

8 Only that situation where the RCMP in Warman
9 were trying to hold us back from the walk, but I said, "You
10 know, this is part of our healing. This is part of --
11 we're using our culture, you know." "No, you can't go on
12 the highway, you have to get a permit." The RCMP refused
13 to let us go. And I said, "This is part of our culture,
14 you know. We have a right to practice it," and then his
15 response was, "If anyone's killed, Pernel's responsible
16 for it, you know, getting hit on the highway or whatever."
17 But we were -- we were trying to be as safe as possible.

18 But how that police handled the
19 investigation, I believe, helped solve because they took
20 into account a lot of things. And I'm sure a lot of
21 investigations of the women and girls may not have been
22 handled so well, not understanding, and that's how I think
23 they helped, by not discriminating against us and having
24 that understanding was really supportive too through -- I
25 think it was the RCMP, right? And the city police working

1 together.

2 So, and I will stop my talking. I want just
3 one last thing to say and that is, I hope someday in my
4 lifetime that my daughters, my nieces, all our girls, our
5 Elders, our women can live in a safe country of Canada that
6 they don't have to fear, they don't have to feel less than
7 or be labelled, but be treated as sacred women that we all
8 are. Thank you.

9 MS. JENNIFER COX: Dionne, I'm just
10 wondering if we could clarify for the purposes of the
11 record who the police forces were that -- particularly the
12 ones that you felt were really -- that worked really well?

13 MS. DIONNE DOUCETTE: Troy Cooper was the
14 one that was very supportive of us.

15 MS. JENNIFER COX: And which police?

16 MS. DIONNE DOUCETTE: Chief of Police, and
17 the investigator, Jason Stonechild (phon).

18 MS. JENNIFER COX: And were they with the
19 Prince Albert city police or with the RCMP?

20 MS. DIONNE DOUCETTE: City police.

21 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

22 MS. MARGARET DOUCETTE: Again, I want to say
23 a few words. Obviously, you can see my family sitting here
24 and it all boils down to families. I've always tried to
25 keep my family together and safe, but along the system

1 we've been through, there was -- we stumbled through that
2 system. We were stopped. I was stopped. When I needed
3 that help, it wasn't there.

4 Today, I want to open that floor for my
5 family to see what's really happening to the outside world.
6 My son, my youngest son that's here with me, he's been
7 through the system. Also, what Dionne was talking about,
8 young people that are addicted with drugs and alcohol will
9 do anything, will do anything to get that fix.

10 A lot of my people are stuck in that, I
11 guess that hole, you can say, because it boils down to
12 poverty. As a child, I remember being on that system.
13 There was no employment back home. There were certain
14 people that worked in the hydro, where I'm from, Sandy Bay,
15 so just certain people. So many men worked there; the rest
16 were on welfare. And the rest had to do it on their own.

17 My father was a hunter. My father was a
18 provider. My father, when he killed his -- when he was out
19 hunting, he'd feed the community because there was a lot of
20 people. In them days, they didn't have guns. They didn't
21 have transportation. There was no skidoos. So, we had dog
22 teams and they used to pay a high price for a dog team, and
23 that was their transportation. That's what my father had.

24 He helped the community. When my father
25 turned his life around to see the damage that was happening

1 in my community, he became -- he became an overseer. At
2 grade two, he was the Mayor of Sandy Bay. He sobered up
3 the people in Sandy Bay by reaching out and helping and
4 talking to the people. He sent people to Prince Albert, to
5 Saskatoon for treatment centre for the addiction of
6 alcoholism. People would come home; it's like a new life.
7 I'm pretty sure it was 85 percent of my community were
8 sober.

9 Like I said, my community at one time, the
10 young people and most of the adults were drunk in my
11 community. And the way my people lived, it was sad. It
12 was a sad thing to look at. Today, it's still sad because
13 that resources isn't there for people to help the young
14 people. They've got to go through the red tape to seek
15 help. Six weeks before you can go for help if you want to
16 get detox.

17 So, people, the young people walk away.
18 They don't want to help me. They get frustrated. People
19 -- the young people in my community, every time there's
20 court there's young people, straight young people in court
21 because of what? Because of alcoholism and drugs. Now,
22 where's the frontline workers that are supposed to be there
23 to help our young people, our young youth?

24 This young woman, she had an addiction.
25 There used to be such thing as people that worked on the

1 street to help people like them. They'd walk on the street
2 to get people like them out of the street. That was a
3 project they had in some cities that I know of.

4 But, like I say, I like -- as a result with
5 my father, when we lived in a trap line, he went hunting,
6 and resources came to Sandy Bay when they first came to
7 Sandy Bay in the 60's, the resource conservation officers.
8 They arrested my father for providing food for his family
9 and for the community because people would come and get
10 food from my dad. Whatever he could bring home, he'd share
11 it with the community. He went to jail for that. It was
12 hard for my mother; it was hard for my family.

13 That's why I like to get my family involved
14 because that's where it starts from. Like, Pernel was
15 talking about that seed, and that seed is his daughter.
16 She's going to become a beautiful young girl. Miss Morgan;
17 we call her Miss Morgan. That's how you bring your family
18 up. I always dreamt of a happy home, a happy, clean home
19 with my mom and dad. Clean. My mom and dad were both
20 alcoholics. We were poor in my community. And it was hard
21 and it was tough. The floor is here.

22 I always want to show Dionne, Gayle, Trent,
23 the others, that systems have to come in and help our
24 community people, our reserves, our communities, people in
25 the city, urban people, people in general. Because we're

1 not the only ones that live in poverty. There's people
2 that have two, three jobs. They suffer doing those jobs.

3 We have to teach our kids to go out there to
4 get their education and to go to work. A lot of my people,
5 my kids, my young youth people are on the street trying to
6 be gangsters. We weren't raised like that. And how --
7 what do they do today? All that music and wrapping their
8 heads up with bandanas or whatever, you know?

9 I stick to what my mom taught me, and I
10 think she taught me well because today, I fight with her.
11 I fight with her because I want her to go on that right
12 path, not -- not the other way. I don't want to see that
13 as a mother, as a grandmother. It's hard for this young
14 baby girl. Who's going to take care of her in the end?
15 Does she have that love, a motherly love? No, she doesn't.
16 She doesn't have that motherly love.

17 My heart has been so heavy this past week.
18 I lost my son eight years ago, November 15th, here in
19 Saskatoon. He lost his life through violence. It's been
20 very hard on me. It's been very hard, but we have to think
21 of the little ones. I take care of my three grandkids and
22 they keep me going. There's times I'm down, but they keep
23 me going. But they'll never forget their -- the love of a
24 father. They -- my grandson said, "Grandma", comes to me,
25 "They're making father's day cards in school. What can I

1 do?" I kind of got stuck. I said, well Drayton (phon), I
2 said, "You can make a card for me. I can be like your
3 father, too, and your grandma and your mom," because I
4 raised them. I've been with them six years.

5 I cry in my heart. I cry in my room. I cry
6 when I walk, when I think of my son. It's not easy. Life
7 isn't easy. It's how you want to live. I quit my drinking
8 about 42 years ago. I don't drink and I don't drug. I
9 never drugged -- used drugs, nothing. It's not an easy
10 road. And I know it boils down to poverty. Most of the
11 reserves and communities, the job employment is next to
12 nil. There's only certain people that work in our
13 communities. They have to fight over the student summer
14 jobs and it's not fair for them.

15 We need help from the government to help our
16 young people today. And I want to thank you again and I'm
17 a big cry baby, I'll cry anytime, anyplace, anywhere. You
18 cry, I'll cry; that's how our Aboriginal people are. We're
19 caring people. Thank you. You can say a few words.

20 **MR. TRENT DOUCETTE:** Hello, my name's Trent
21 Doucette. I'm here to support my sister, and my brother
22 in-law, and my mom, and everyone else here, and I thank you
23 guys for coming here. And I just would like to say a few
24 words; then I'll give other people a chance to talk. I'd
25 just like to see the government helping out our people a

1 little better in our communities and with our Chief and
2 Council and just to let the young people and the missing
3 and murdered people and the victims that there is hope.
4 There is help out there; it's just a matter of getting out
5 there and getting the help you need.

6 And that -- but most people just turn to
7 drugs and alcohol, like my mom, my sister and brother in-
8 law just said. They don't know how to deal with their
9 problems inside; they hold it in. And drinking and
10 drugging is the only way that they can -- they can cope
11 with it.

12 I've been in and out of the system pretty
13 much all my life, in and out of institutions and I've had
14 -- I'm a suicide victim myself. I tried numerous times
15 taking my own life and there's a reason why I'm here today.
16 I don't know what it is but, you know, I want to find my
17 purpose here on earth and I want to get -- you know, I want
18 to get my word out there to people that are suffering and
19 going through these problems and putting themselves out
20 there. To go -- to get themselves into trouble and
21 drinking and drugging and stuff and -- and I just -- just a
22 lot of -- I've been doing a lot of thinking lately about
23 -- about what I was going to be saying here and it's just
24 -- there's a lot of things I would like to say, but my
25 family pretty much said everything. And I thank them, and

1 I thank you all once again for being here. I just would
2 like everyone to know that there is help out there. Just
3 don't be afraid to go and get it, and thank you for
4 listening.

5 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Pernell, did you have
6 some recommendations or things that you wanted the National
7 Inquiry to consider?

8 **MR. PERNELL BALLANTYNE:** Well, first of all,
9 I want to acknowledge my supporters, my family that be here
10 today. My colleague here, Conrad Burns, he walked through
11 -- he walked -- I can say he walked through Canada, to
12 ocean to ocean, for -- for women against violence. That's
13 a big role that he has to fulfill. He brought awareness to
14 Canada about women against violence. And when he was
15 walking from Prince Albert to Saskatoon, I said, "I'll walk
16 you out."

17 So, I walked him out of Prince Albert and I
18 said to him, "Be careful on this highway. It's kind of
19 tough." And so, and then I walked with him, I don't know,
20 maybe not even a mile and I turned back. I said, "Well
21 enjoy your journey and I'll see you on Facebook or wherever
22 you are." And, Shirley Henderson is my next-door
23 neighbour. I'm so blessed to have good people like this in
24 my life, to have a positive outcome on this Murdered and
25 Missing Indigenous Women and Girls. A positive outcome of

1 this inquiry would be a perfect ideal for our people.

2 I always tell my family to be humble to
3 whatever outcome it is. You can't get mad at the system;
4 you can't get mad at anything. If you don't agree about
5 the system, then fight for your rights to be heard.

6 Now, what we're going to do now is do some
7 recommendations. What I remember in school when I was in a
8 residential school, this book that keeps coming to my mind
9 is that -- I wish they would have brought it back. It's
10 that little booklet; it's like an activity book. It
11 teaches you keep the circle strong. I remember learning
12 that in the residential school, keeping the circle strong.
13 I believe Canada will be strong once again if we all come
14 together as one, one person, one nation. And my
15 recommendations to the Commissioner is that we need
16 facilities, like for, like trauma victims, like dealing
17 with their loved ones, like culture-wise.

18 **MS. DIONNE DOUCETTE:** Facilities for us to
19 utilize as a family for healing because it's not just one
20 person affected; it's all of us that are going to be
21 affected throughout our lives. And I believe part of our
22 healing and recovery will be going back to our grassroots,
23 our sweat lodges, our land, our culture. And then how we
24 envision this facility is like, a family -- family units
25 can be there with you through this healing. You can --

1 it's -- you know, there's -- everything about it would be
2 our cultural way of healing. It'll be -- I can just vision
3 our people working there, being employed. You know, having
4 services available for our children.

5 We really need to start healing our people,
6 our women, and bringing awareness of -- a recommendation, I
7 think is, you know like how they have these stop smoking
8 campaigns and things like that? Big, you know, posters and
9 signs of, you know, quit smoking here's, you know, help
10 number -- help number to call. But showing pictures of our
11 women in good settings and good images and being portrayed
12 as the strong, powerful women that we are. Not like that
13 one in Edmonton or one of those reserves they showed in the
14 newspaper, "Head lice in school", and they show a little
15 Native girl. Like, seriously? But turning that image into
16 something very positive and letting the world, the country
17 know that you support us and that it's there. We can see,
18 you know, a man holding his little daughter and a nice
19 saying underneath him about love and respect and dignity
20 and honour. I'd like to really see those visuals for
21 everyone to see.

22 There's a lot of recommendations. Just
23 making sure that our women and these services are
24 available, the help is available, and to stop that
25 degrading. Like, back then they used to call Native women,

1 like my uncle mentioned, squaws. And what is a squaw, you
2 know? Like, a dirty woman, Native woman. In Cree, how do
3 you say a white woman, in Cree?

4 **MS. MARGARET DOUCETTE:** *Moniyaskwew.*

5 **MS. DIONNE DOUCETTE:** That means, like,
6 beautiful, white woman, when our people talk about a white
7 woman. But how a -- we were is a squaw, and that's not
8 what we are. We're very powerful women. We're -- the
9 image needs to be erased and changed of how we're viewed,
10 and if there's other ways of doing that, by all means, try
11 every outlet. Exert yourself that you've tried everything
12 to help our women and we are there to back you up and want
13 that help.

14 **MS. MARGARET DOUCETTE:** Can I get him to
15 speak?

16 **MR. CONRAD BURNS:** Well, thank you for this
17 honour, for allowing me to speak. On behalf of the family
18 and knowing the traditional ways that we -- our men should
19 be approaching women, we talk about the teepee teachings:
20 honour, love, obedience. Inside the teepee is the fire;
21 the woman is the fire that keeps the teepee warm. She
22 keeps everyone inside safe and cared for.

23 As a traditional man, our role is to provide
24 for that woman. We give her everything and she supports us
25 in every single way. We have our roles of supporting each

1 other and strengthening our families through love, support,
2 caring, obedience. And along the way through residential
3 schools, we've lost that. Through loss of identity,
4 through loss of culture, through loss of our languages, we
5 lost a sense of who we are as a people.

6 In the absence of who we -- we lost that gap
7 inside of our being. We take whatever is given to us:
8 drugs, alcohol, gangs, abuse, neglect. Through the loss of
9 the family structure we don't know how to treat our loved
10 ones anymore. We don't know how to treat our mothers, our
11 sisters, our grandmothers. By healing the family, by
12 healing the individual and overcoming the hurts of the
13 past, we give back self-identity, we give back self-belief,
14 self-confidence and overcoming the barriers.

15 A woman is truly powerful. Wally Ipestore
16 (phon), one of my teachers, would say it like this. In a
17 community where he grew up when he was younger, the
18 families would be on one side of the community celebrating
19 at an outing, and the Elders were on the other side. A
20 male Elder stood up and all the families sat down to listen
21 to that male. When a woman stood up, that male sat down to
22 listen to that woman. She held that much power in the
23 community. For where I'm from, a woman decided who the
24 Chief was. She held the power in the community. We were a
25 matriarchal society until the residential schools. We

1 forgot how to treat our women with the respect that they
2 deserve. They are the centre of our community.

3 So, my suggestion is cultural education.
4 Empowering men to be a positive role model in their lives
5 and teaching men how to treat women properly. Pernelle, I
6 highly admire you and respect you, you and your wife,
7 because you're teaching your children how to treat a woman
8 right. You, my dear, the power that you are, you're
9 teaching women how to treat their men right. And this is
10 what's reinvigorating our culture, identity and who we are.

11 We need to showcase this to society, role
12 model it for our youth and highlight this. We talk about
13 how alcohol and drugs have affected our communities and
14 your father helped heal them and helped bring them back
15 together. Role modeling, taking initiative and growing.

16 Things are changing and by strong people
17 like you, Pernelle, taking the initiative and walking from
18 Saskatoon to Prince Albert in minus 40 weather in spite of
19 all odds has given hope and healing to a society of women
20 that have lost their voices, and I appreciate you, your
21 sacrifice for that. Thank you for letting me speak.

22 **MS. SHIRLEY HENDERSON:** Good afternoon. I'd
23 like to thank Pernelle, his wife and Margaret for inviting
24 me here today to be one of their supports. I'm the Chair
25 of the Prince Albert Grand Council Women's Commission and

1 have been the chair for about 25 years. And, as I was
2 sitting here thinking about some of the things that's
3 needed, we have applied for women's shelters for the north;
4 we've been refused. We applied for a wellness centre so we
5 could heal our families that are suffering from all the
6 addictions that take place in the north; again, we've been
7 refused.

8 We've applied time and time for grounds, but
9 it's always the same answer: no funding. There's no
10 funding for programs, but yet, our families continue to
11 carry on with the health system. We're spending millions
12 of dollars trying to heal people, but we're not healing
13 their addictions. That's where we have to start. We're
14 doing things totally backwards.

15 And I've been in council for my band for 22
16 years and I see the same thing in our community. It's very
17 frustrating. Our leadership doesn't get a lot of money,
18 our tribal councils don't get a lot of money. The outside
19 world doesn't see that, but yet we struggle and carry on
20 the best that we can do.

21 We've had our walk in Prince Albert for 14
22 years. We started off as a missing sister's memorial walk,
23 and then found out that we have men that have gone missing,
24 too. So, we changed the walk to our missing brothers and
25 sisters. We were going to do the walk for ten years and

1 then change it and do something else, but families came to
2 us and said, "We enjoy being here at your walk. We can
3 talk to one another. It's our way of communicating." And
4 I think we need to get our families together more often.
5 We need to talk, we need to debrief with one another. So,
6 again, I'd like to thank everyone for being here. I really
7 wasn't expecting to speak, but thank you to the
8 Commissioner and your staff. Again, *teniki*.

9 **MR. PERNELL BALLANTYNE:** My recommendation
10 to see, what Shirley was saying too, to come as family, my
11 recommendation for missing and murdered Indigenous women,
12 why can't we have, like, a tribute, a true event every
13 year, families come together and share their stories and
14 talk about it and have healing at the same time, like a
15 round dance, a Pow-Wow one year?

16 I wouldn't mind seeing a true event like
17 that every year, different provinces holding it, hosting
18 it. Just like the States has Independence Day, why can't
19 we have murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls
20 true event like that, to have families come together and
21 heal as a nation, as Aboriginal people? Or even -- not
22 even Aboriginal; different cultures. It doesn't matter
23 what kind of race you are. Just come and celebrate and
24 heal. Do some self-caring, some aftercare. Like, even
25 going to a -- going to a spa, like, that kind of treatment

1 event to heal that trauma you have in your heart of the
2 missing of a loved one, a sweat. That's what I would
3 recommend to see. I don't know what else.

4 My other recommendation is, what kind of
5 benefits are out there for the loved ones that they left
6 behind? What kind of resources or compensation, or what
7 would Canada do for the ones that got left behind? What
8 kind of ---

9 **MS. DIONNE DOUCETTE:** What he's probably
10 trying to -- what he's trying to say is, making sure that
11 the children are taken care of, that they don't fall
12 through the cracks in the system, in social services or,
13 you know, correction, justice. Making sure that they have
14 the support they need to grow and have the healing that
15 they need as -- for the children, making sure the first
16 priority that they're well taken care of and that they're
17 going to get the help and support that they need, whatever
18 it may be, individual needs. So, thank you.

19 **MS. MARGARET DOUCETTE:** I'll come up again.
20 What I'd like to recommend is to have safe homes for
21 mothers, for the youth. Anyway, you want me to continue?
22 I'll give you a whole list. Safe home for mothers. Here
23 in Saskatoon, there's an interval house for -- a safe home
24 for mothers. I was there about 35 years ago, but it wasn't
25 the same because I'm an Aboriginal and I go to the white

1 system there and I always stayed in my room. I wonder why.

2 That's why we need safe homes in the cities
3 for urban -- for the urban Aboriginals that live in the
4 city. Young people that go to school in the city could be
5 using it on that youth safe home. There's a lot of victims
6 in our community that are out in the street. They don't
7 know where to go. They go to their cousins and there's 20
8 people in -- living in a three-bedroom house, so that's not
9 pretty safe for them. A lot of girls in our community need
10 a safe home.

11 We also need a rehab -- a rehab facility for
12 our people to do -- to do the mix with our cultural ways in
13 there because you can't do it at Calder (phon). You can't
14 go and -- I don't think you can go and light a sweet grass.
15 But if we have these facilities to help us get us going,
16 there'd be employment.

17 I'd really like to see a childcare in our
18 community. There's a lot of people that don't have
19 transportation in our communities. They go out in a taxi.
20 They leave their kids behind. They can have that childcare
21 to leave their kids there, two, three days till they're
22 done with their medical. That's one of the -- one of the
23 things my father established in our community. We had a
24 childcare building and we worked with the Department of
25 Social Services. That's how we got funding. We had a

1 group home. My father established a group home. He also
2 established a rehab centre in Sandy Bay. And all of those
3 are gone.

4 But, it went well and like I said, I'd
5 really like to see a rehab for our people. And what
6 Pernelle was talking about, and my daughter, was when there
7 was a lot of recommendations done when we did those first
8 inquiries, but I think there should be a compensation for
9 this young girl. She's with her auntie today, but if there
10 was a package for her when she reaches 18/19, if she's in
11 school, she'll have money there for herself or funding for
12 her to be taken care of.

13 I take care of my three grandkids. They
14 were babies. It wasn't easy to make that choice, because I
15 just lost my granddaughter. She was 16. I lost my husband
16 a year after. A year after that, I lost my son. And I
17 have to take care of my grandkids and it's not easy. It's
18 not easy at all. I have to fight with the department. Now
19 I stopped. I don't want to fight. I'll do what I can do
20 for my grandkids. And I'm proud of them. The ten-year old
21 is in grade five. The middle one is in grade three and the
22 baby is in grade two. I'm really proud of my three
23 grandkids.

24 But, they have no father. That's the sad
25 part. Same with her. Same with the thousands of kids that

1 lose their mothers or their grandmothers. There should be
2 something, a compensation for these young people that lose
3 their mothers.

4 There's another thing I wouldn't mind
5 recommending, is a group home or a care home for our young
6 people in our community. There's a lot of young people
7 with mental illness and they wander around our community.
8 It breaks my heart to see these young people walking around
9 when they don't even eat properly; they don't rest
10 properly. Some of them need their medication. They're not
11 being helped. But, just a lot of things we can use and
12 tell Mr. Trudeau that we need money in Saskatchewan. Thank
13 you. Thank you.

14 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Madam Chief Commissioner,
15 I believe that's it, unless you have any questions.

16 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** No, but I
17 want to mention a couple of things. Sometimes -- I know
18 it's stressful coming to events like this. If, in a couple
19 of hours, or a couple of days, or a couple of weeks, you
20 think of a recommendation that you wish you had told me
21 about but you didn't, and I'm not being critical, it
22 happens to me too, tell Jennifer. She'll get it to me,
23 okay?

24 I want to thank you all very much. My first
25 response to hearing about your walk was, my goodness, your

1 feet must have been sore. But I'm sure it was worth every
2 step and then some. So, thank you all.

3 Because you've given us special gifts about
4 your stories, we have gifts for you. And I'm going to ask
5 them to share with your whole family. Awhile ago, the
6 matriarchs, the clan mothers on Haida Gwaii, on the coast
7 of -- west coast of British Columbia, learned that these
8 sorts of events would be happening, and they wanted to be
9 able to help families, to lift them up, to support them, to
10 give them strength because they know how difficult this is.

11 So, they directed that eagle feathers be
12 harvested. And so, once harvested, they asked us to pass
13 along these eagle feathers to family members and
14 representatives of the families as well, because they want
15 to give you strength and support.

16 Also, I'm going to, today, give you some
17 seeds because I'm going to ask a favour. When the weather
18 gets a little better, I'm going to ask you to plant the
19 seeds and if something grows, will you please take a
20 picture and send it to us? Seeds are symbolic in so many
21 ways, and we're hoping that this National Inquiry will lead
22 to new growth. I'll cry if I talk anymore.

23 **MR. PERNELL BALLANTYNE:** I just wanted to
24 say thank you for listening to my story, listening to my
25 journey. Thank you everybody. Have a great day.

1 MS. JENNIFER COX: We'll take a short break.

2 Thank you.

3 --- Exhibits (code: P01P06P0102)

4 **Exhibit 1:** Link to APTN news clip:

5 <http://aptnnews.ca/2015/01/30/monica-burns->
6 [family-gain-comfort-murder-charge-daughters-](http://aptnnews.ca/2015/01/30/monica-burns-)
7 [death/](http://aptnnews.ca/2015/01/30/monica-burns-) (Title: "Monica Burns' family gain
8 some comfort by murder charge in daughter's
9 death").

10 **Exhibit 2:** Folder of one image displayed on monitors
11 during public hearing.

12 --- Upon recessing at 15:39

13 --- Upon resuming at 16:12

14 **Hearing # 3**

15 **Witnesses: Lance Stone, Everett Stone and Sonia Bear**

16 **In Relation to Sylvia Stone**

17 **Heard by Commissioner Michèle Audette**

18 **Orders: Seal Exhibits 2 & 3.**

19 **Commission Counsel: Christa Big Canoe**

20 **Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge-keepers: Florence**

21 **Catcheway, Sylvia Popowich**

22 **Registrar: Bryan Zandberg**

23 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Good afternoon.

24 Commissioner Audette, I would like to introduce you to the
25 next family. Sitting closest to the Spirit Chair is Lance

1 Stone, beside him is Everett Stone, and closest to me is
2 Sonia Bear. They will be sharing the story of Sylvia
3 Stone, who was murdered on June 21, 1981, while she was
4 trying to make a better life and home for her family in
5 Edmonton. She had left her community of Mosquito First
6 Nation in Saskatchewan for Edmonton.

7 I anticipate the family will share that they
8 did not know what happened to their mother for a number of
9 years, and that was very disturbing for them. But, that
10 they have done some advocacy work, and more recently, have
11 learned a lot that they would like to share with you.
12 But, the place that we would like to start is to ask the
13 Registrar to affirm each of them in on an eagle feather,
14 starting with Lance, please.

15 **MR. LANCE STONE:** Hi. My name is Lance
16 Stone. I am one of the sons of the late Sylvia Dorothy
17 Stone.

18 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So, Lance, we're
19 going to have the Registrar just administer the promise on
20 the feather, and we'll do that for all three of you first.

21 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Hi, Lance. Do you
22 promise to tell your truth in a good way today?

23 **MR. LANCE STONE:** Yes.

24 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Thank you. If you
25 could just pass the microphone to your brother? Do you

1 promise to tell -- oh, I'll wait until you have the
2 feather. Do you promise to tell your truth in a good way
3 today?

4 **MR. EVERETT STONE:** Yes.

5 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Okay. Thank you. Hi,
6 Sonia.

7 **MS. SONIA BEAR:** Hi.

8 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Do you promise to tell
9 your truth in a good way today?

10 **MS. SONIA BEAR:** Yes, I do.

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

12 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, if you'd like,
13 we can put that on the Spirit Chair. And so, Lance, I'm
14 sorry if I interrupted you. You were introducing yourself.
15 And, one of the things I know the family wants to do is to
16 start with what they know -- what you know about your
17 mother, talk about some of her strengths. And, maybe you
18 can share the story about the picture that you've just set
19 there?

20 **MR. LANCE STONE:** What I know about my mom
21 was she was -- at seven years old, knowing just a little
22 bit of what she was to me was a loving mother. She was
23 always there for us when we wanted comfort and stuff like
24 that.

25 The days that she was hardly ever around was

1 the days that, like, weren't really clear to us, because
2 she -- we barely seen her. And, the news that we got the
3 day that she had passed on, and we had heard the news from
4 our grandmother, it was traumatizing. Not knowing where
5 she was or what happened to her for the past 36 years
6 really took a toll on us.

7 It took a toll on me as well, because
8 growing up not knowing anything about what happened to her,
9 and the stories that we heard growing up, we weren't too
10 sure if they were actually true or not. And, the thing
11 that was most puzzling to us was, how did this happen to
12 her? Why did it happen to her?

13 Things we know now today, as a family, and
14 there's three of us out of seven that are sitting here in
15 front of you people. And, we are here to tell you our
16 story of the way our family has lived for the past 36
17 years.

18 We were raised in a cultural society with
19 our grandparents right after -- not long after our mother
20 had passed on. The grandmothers were the ones who -- they
21 spoke on behalf of the kids to find out what was going to
22 happen to them. My grandma on my dad's side had taken us
23 brothers, I mean my brother Everett and my other brother,
24 Trevor, under her care. While, the older ones, my late
25 brother, Ryan, and my older sister, Sonia, went with our

1 mom's mom. And, they had raised us in that way where not
2 to lose the family. You know, they kept us together, and
3 kept us communicating. Our other two younger siblings
4 weren't so lucky, because they were given up to foster
5 homes at birth. So, they didn't get to know anything of
6 our mother.

7 The history that we have was never told to
8 anyone until today. We come from the Nakota Nation of
9 Mosquito. We don't really know the language, but we are
10 still learning it. Our background comes from the Plains
11 Cree on the Red Pheasant First Nations side of our
12 grandfather and our father, who was -- he was a Plains Cree
13 Indian himself.

14 As parents, they did a lot of things for us.
15 They had worked a lot. They had went -- travelled many
16 places, but they kept their kids together, which was the
17 main thing that was the real reality of the life that we
18 knew when we were kids. Today, the grandkids want to know
19 about their grandparents, their great grandparents. There
20 is a history there that was never told. And, we'd like to
21 at least tell our side of our story that we know about our
22 mother.

23 I was seven years old when my mother died.
24 I didn't really know her that well, but in that era of me
25 remembering her, she was always loving, and she was always

1 caring for us. She protected us the best that she could,
2 until her death.

3 My other family, like my brothers, all these
4 years we had kept ourselves together, and we made sure that
5 we knew who we were. We didn't meet our younger brother
6 and our younger sister, Pamela and Christopher Stone, until
7 -- what year was that? I think that was probably about in
8 the early 80's, '83/'84.

9 We all went to school at St. Joseph's
10 Catholic School in North Battleford. That's where we met
11 our younger siblings. We didn't know who they were. We
12 just heard about their names, and we went and asked them if
13 they were actually the real ones. And, they told us that,
14 yes, we have brothers, they named us. So, that brought us
15 back together again, not knowing that our lives were going
16 to be different for everybody else, especially with us,
17 because we had to live a life of not knowing our mother for
18 36 years.

19 Our grandparents try to tell us a lot of
20 things about them, the things that they remembered about
21 them. But, it was kind of hard for them to tell us,
22 because it was -- in our way of what we seen, it was hard
23 for them to tell the story of how she was killed. We know
24 what's all in the files, and today we understand, but there
25 are also some questions. The main thing is that we're here

1 today to let the people know that 36 years of not knowing
2 anything about an unsolved murder, and a forgotten mother,
3 because she was forgotten for the past 36 years.

4 I was the one who had gained the strength to
5 actually go ahead and tell the story about our mother, as
6 nobody else will. None of our family from our mom's side
7 had ever told the stories of the way she was. We are happy
8 that there are friends of hers still today that are alive
9 that could vouch for her, and the way she lived, and the
10 way she had raised her kids.

11 Today, we kind of got the strength in that
12 way knowing that we had gotten this far, to get all this
13 stuff that we have today. And, we have this Inquiry here
14 that is helping us. We are trying to get some answers from
15 this unsolved file for 36 years, and we don't know where to
16 begin. But, the first thing is just to tell our story, and
17 that's the thing that we all, as brothers and sisters, we
18 have to do that today. Let the nation know that she was a
19 forgotten person, too, you know.

20 I am fortunate today to be alive because of
21 my grandparents, the teachings that they had taught us, the
22 knowledge of the culture, and the traditions that were
23 passed down to us. We are just finding strength in each
24 other, to go forward and to find closure. It's kind of
25 hard for all of our family to actually try to communicate

1 in a happy and loving way, knowing that there is this
2 tragedy and the trauma that we lived all these years to
3 come up in front of us today, and to have us sit here and
4 talk about our loved one that was murdered in 1981.

5 Thirty-six years is a long time for a family
6 not to know anything. And, they could have at least let us
7 know back in them days. Why couldn't they have done that?
8 You know, to this day, we still wonder about that. And, we
9 are here to find answers. You know, my other family, I'm
10 not too sure if they were aware that we are doing this, but
11 we are here today, and we're here to help the other
12 families that are lost, and not knowing about their loved
13 ones.

14 We lived the life for 36 years of not
15 knowing anything, and we had the strength, and we are here
16 today. We are all in our 40's, most of our brothers and
17 sisters are all in our 40's now. We have the support, the
18 love, you know, we have the traditions that were passed on
19 to us as Native people, because us Native people, we can't
20 just give up and not know anything that's out there. And,
21 for all the other families, I just want to say that we are
22 here. We understand your guys' pain. We understand where
23 you guys are coming from, because we lived all of that life
24 all these years growing up, and we know how that pain is.
25 We still live it today.

1 And, for me to be up here to speak on behalf
2 of my mom, and my family, it gives me great strength to
3 know that I can actually stand -- sit up here and talk
4 amongst the whole nation.

5 My mother had a lot of friends. She had a
6 lot of, like, party buddies, back in the day, because she
7 was an alcoholic when we were all young. You know, and we
8 all had a good life, until she had left us. And then from
9 there after that day, we were lost. We were lost for the
10 past 36 years. Now that we are here today, I'm happy to be
11 here and have my family with me, and all the support that
12 we have for our mother, and for the other families as well.

13 We can't give up. We have never given up in
14 the past 36 years of our lives to find out what was going
15 on with our mother. We're here for answers. And, we want
16 to tell our story to everybody else that doesn't know what
17 happened to our mother, and to the rest of us that are
18 still alive today, and the way we live today.

19 I am a traditional person. I grew up in the
20 Pow Wows, and the ceremonial sweats and that. I have a
21 late grandmother who had taught us this, and her name was
22 Bertha (indiscernible) Bear. She was our mentor. And, she
23 took us everywhere, the places that we never seen in our
24 lives, all across Canada, all over the States.

25 She had taught us the traditional aspect on

1 how to live the proper way, and taught us about respect,
2 and not to be greedy, you know, and to help other people,
3 because that's what us First Nations people need. We need
4 that help. We need to form a nation as one, to become one
5 strong person or, you know, a nation as itself.

6 We are still dealing with a lot of stuff
7 from the past. My brother had lost a daughter to suicide.
8 That was his oldest daughter. It was my brother, Everett,
9 here. We haven't addressed that yet ourselves, you know,
10 and we are still dealing with all the hurt. We are still
11 dealing with the answers that weren't given to us. Even
12 with our late mother as well, you know.

13 We have all the support. We know that she
14 is not suffering anymore. And, we pray every day, as a
15 family, to gain the strength, the love, the understanding,
16 of who we are, and where we come from, and how we are
17 today, and what we could have been back in them days.

18 It's kind of hard to try to explain 36 years
19 of not knowing whatever happened to our mom, because we
20 were never notified in 36 years about this. It took a
21 person like me, her own son, to get out there and go and
22 find answers, and bring justice, or find something that
23 could help us in the long run, and to find closure for our
24 family.

25 The grandkids are already asking about their

1 grandmother and what happened. We don't know what to tell
2 them. You know, it's kind of hard for us to explain
3 everything. But, maybe now they will probably see this,
4 and they will understand what we are going through, and
5 what we are trying to do for them. And, it's not only just
6 for them, it's for everybody else. Whether you are a
7 Caucasian or a First Nations, we all have to get together,
8 we all have to get along.

9 It's not all about power or other aspects of
10 government and policies. It's all about the respect of
11 other people. And, we need that in the First Nations, and
12 we also need that with the non-First Nations as well, to
13 communicate and to become -- and come down to an agreement
14 with something that we would like to see out of what's
15 happening with this inquiry, and with the families that are
16 involved.

17 I, myself, think that if I didn't do this
18 for my family, we would never have known anything. It's
19 kind of in that era of when we lost her, we lost a big
20 piece of our lives. And, we don't want to have to see that
21 with other people, other families. Just to let them know
22 that we are here, we are living, but we dealt with the 36
23 years of not knowing what happened to our mother. But,
24 we're all here.

25 I'd like to give a big thank you to the

1 FILUs of Alberta and Saskatchewan teams that have helped us
2 with this, to bring up this file of my mother, because we
3 need closure. And, we'd like to find something in that
4 aspect where if we can find the people that know what
5 happened to her, and just ask them to come forward, let us
6 know, because we don't know. We were kids when she had
7 left us.

8 In a way, I am kind of relieved that I got
9 this far with this, with my mom's file. I am happy to know
10 that she is not suffering. And, the thing that still hurts
11 us the most is the questions of why. Why was she taken
12 from us? Why weren't we ever notified? You know, the
13 things that we have gone through already are -- we suffer
14 through mental anguish, lost feelings, the untold truth of
15 something we never knew in 36 years.

16 Today I sing, I sing in honour for my mom.
17 I dance from the strength she gives me. It's hard to find
18 out that somebody like her had gone, not knowing anything
19 about her, only bits and pieces of her life. It gives me
20 strength, and I think that the old people that helped us
21 all our lives, without them, who knows where we would be?

22 I would also give thanks to the people that
23 are behind this today. I give thanks to the people that
24 still tell the stories of our mother, the people that
25 actually knew her personally and still talk about her

1 today, because they see the resemblance in us.

2 There is so much hurt. There is so much
3 unanswered questions. There is so much mixed feelings in
4 our family today. The lack of social support, the
5 communications, the lack of occupant -- like, to get jobs,
6 keep a job, keep going to school, to live the straight and
7 narrow road. We had all fallen off of that path one time
8 or another. And, still today, we still are here today, and
9 we are trying to stay on the path of the straight and
10 narrow. It's hard for some of the family, because they are
11 lost in that system already.

12 So, have I. I have been lost in the system,
13 too, as well. I'm not proud of it. But, it happened. It
14 happened while I was growing up, while I was mourning,
15 while I was in trauma. It was -- it's all there, and we
16 live it today. We are the ones that are still hurting. We
17 are the ones that are here today to let the people know
18 that she is not another forgotten person. What about
19 Sylvia Stone? Where was the help for her back in 1981?

20 And, we find out that she was a Jane Doe,
21 No. 5, in 1981. What about the other four before her?
22 Jane Doe No. 1, 2, 3 and 4? That doesn't make any sense to
23 us. It doesn't make any sense to me that she was treated
24 like that. And, we just want to have that known, that we
25 are here. We are here for the people, and the families

1 that are in need of help. We are going through the same
2 things as you all are as well. And, I'm more than happy to
3 speak with you people. If you guys need to let us know
4 about your story. Tell us your story, we'll tell you ours.

5 My other siblings here know more about my
6 mother than I would, but I just wanted to let the people
7 know that this is real. This is reality that we are
8 living. We lived this for a long time, and we have not
9 told anybody our story. My other siblings here have other
10 stories and memories that they have of her. I'd like them
11 to share with you guys as well. So, I'll just turn it over
12 to my brother here.

13 **MR. EVERETT STONE:** Hi. My name is Everett
14 Stone. I'm the fourth oldest of the seven. I remember my
15 mom. I was probably her worst egg. I was always on her
16 and, you know, everywhere she went, I was right behind her.
17 She wouldn't leave me behind, so...

18 I'll start by knowing what I know about her.
19 I was five years old. I remember she was always -- she
20 kept all of us -- you know, we have an old house in
21 Mosquito, and we were all kept -- we all lived with her.
22 You know, throughout our years, she sent us to school. You
23 know, back in those days, we had to go out and chop wood,
24 and make fire for the house, keep us warm. We used to wake
25 up cold in the mornings, you know, and she would start the

1 fire right away.

2 Before she left, she had gave us over to my
3 late grandfather, Douglas Buttney (phon). And, before
4 that, we were with my other grandmother before that. So,
5 she always kind of left us at home with our grandparents.
6 So, before she left, she gave us right over to my
7 grandfather and he raised us like that. He took us to
8 rodeos, and Pow Wows, and stuff like that. And, we got the
9 news, you know, when she was murdered, when she left. I
10 remember, and Lance remembers, I remember the wake, the
11 burial, all that. It was hard. You know, I was only eight
12 years old.

13 And, my grandfather would take us into North
14 Battleford, and we would drive up and down the street when
15 we'd go shopping, and we would see our mom here and there
16 when she was alive, to give us money. She would give money
17 to my grandfather, you know, to take care of us. And,
18 after she left, we'd be driving down the street. You know,
19 every time I would see a woman with long black hair, I'd
20 say, "There's mom right there." My brother would say, "No,
21 mom left a long time ago." I was just a kid. I just kept
22 forgetting about it, you know, thinking she was still
23 alive.

24 I remember her. You know, she was a really
25 caring woman. She always kept us close, you know? She

1 loved us, you know? She knew how to cook real good, and
2 all that, you know? But, after my dad had passed away in
3 1977, he drowned in the Battle River just south of North
4 Battleford, and she witnessed that. And, after his burial,
5 she took it hard. She turned to alcoholism, you know?
6 And, she left. You know, she took it hard.

7 So, I think that's -- you know, she felt
8 lost, you know? I could say that much about her but, you
9 know, she had seen a lot in her time, I guess, before she
10 left. You know, she was only 30 years old when she left.
11 And, 36 years, you know, had gone by. We're still
12 mourning. You know, we're still mourning, because we don't
13 have no answers for her. We've never gotten any contact
14 about what happened into this. And, we're here to search
15 for answers, you know, and hopefully get some.

16 Going on, that's -- I remember her. She
17 used to take me to the circus, you know? She took me to
18 the circus once, and we travelled around quite a bit, me
19 and her, you know? And, after she left, we all kind of got
20 split up. Like, Lance said, we were raised by our
21 grandparents. Same with my sister here, Sonia. And, my
22 two younger siblings, Pam and Chris, were raised in a
23 foster home all their life. So, that's how we grew up.

24 And, it affected us. It affected us
25 emotionally, physically, you know? Even to this day, it

1 still bothers me sometimes. It affected my relationship
2 with my wife, Charlene, that's sitting here. But, you
3 know, we've been together 22 years. We have nine beautiful
4 kids. But, like Lance said, I had lost a daughter a few
5 years back, and I've just been through a lot. You know,
6 it's even hard to come here, even to deal with this, you
7 know? But, we're all here.

8 I thank my aunties for being here, Reggie.
9 These are our supports, you know? I'm glad to have them
10 here today.

11 My mom was a beautiful person, you know?
12 She was smart. And, she got into trouble, too, from time-
13 to-time. She can -- see this picture here? This was taken
14 in front of the Pine Grove. That was probably about 1980
15 or so. And, this is -- all we have of her is this
16 photograph. That's all we have of her. You know, we have
17 nothing else. We don't have no IDs, nothing, you know, of
18 her. Just, like -- you know? But, all I have is just the
19 memories of her, you know? And, I'm hoping we can get some
20 answers into this, and I hope that we can sit here again in
21 front of you guys, in the future, maybe, you know?

22 Like, it's hard for us to speak here, like
23 Lance said, you know? It's really hard to talk about her.
24 I'd like to say that, you know, we've come a long way. We
25 were raised, like, the cultural way. We did the sweats,

1 the chicken dance, the sun dance, you know? And, North
2 American church, we come from there. And, that's how we
3 cope nowadays with our mourning, with what we still feel.
4 You know, that's the way we go. We go to church sometimes,
5 you know? Like, we were raised like that, too, you know?

6 What I'm really trying to say is that I'd
7 like to have some answers into my mother's death, and I'm
8 hoping the inquiry can help, or at least give us some
9 answers that we're seeking. We may not get them, but it's
10 worth a try.

11 But, my recommendations for the inquiry is
12 maybe get better policing, less racism, you know? Look
13 into an investigation longer than just 50 days, you know?
14 Like, this is serious. Our story is unique. Thirty-six
15 years, we need answers into this death. That's what we're
16 seeking. That's why I'm here. That's why my brother is
17 here, and my sister is here. We're here to find out.

18 I'd like to pass the mic on to my sister,
19 Sonia; okay? It was an honour to speak in front of you
20 guys. But, like I said, it's hard. Okay.

21 **MS. SONIA BEAR:** Hi. I remember quite a bit
22 of my mom. But, my brothers here pretty well summed it up.
23 She was a loving, kind woman. She always made sure her
24 kids were fed and clothed, had a roof over their head. She
25 wasn't mean. She never disciplined us with her hand or

1 anything. She always talked to us, made sure she knew both
2 sides.

3 And, yeah, we grew up pretty rough. I, for
4 one, felt out of place even living in my own reserve. I
5 felt like a stranger. I had no one to go to with my fears,
6 my problems. I'm here for some answers, and some closure
7 for myself and for my kids. That's all I have to say.
8 Thank you.

9 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, if I could even
10 get the family and the supports that are behind the family
11 just to introduce themselves? Actually, the family will be
12 introducing some documents about what they've learned, and
13 I think we'll be spending a little bit more time on some
14 family history. But, it would be nice, and I know it's
15 important for the family to recognize the people that are
16 sitting behind them. So, maybe if they could introduce
17 themselves and explain the connection? Maybe, do you want
18 to start? That would be great. Thanks.

19 **MS. VIOLA HOUSE:** My name is Viola House
20 (phon). I'm an auntie to Lance, Everett and Sonia. And,
21 I'm happy to be here.

22 **MS. VERNA ROSETTE:** Hi. My name is Verna
23 Rosette (phon). I'm Lance's spouse. We've been together
24 for over 20 years. And, I can say that I'm glad he has
25 done this, because living with him all these years, there

1 was -- he always spoke of his mom, and he was always
2 regretting that he didn't have parents. And, sometimes he
3 seemed lost, and I could never help him. But, I'm here to
4 support him today, and I'm glad our family is all going
5 through this.

6 **MS. KATHLEEN STONE:** I'm Kathleen Stone.
7 I'm the daughter of Sonia Bear, and the niece of Everett
8 and Lance. And, I'm just here to support my mom and my
9 uncles in the best way I can.

10 **MS. SHERYLENE GADWA:** Hi. I'm Sherylene
11 Gadwa (phon). I'm from Kehewin. This is *Okisikosis*. Her
12 name means "angel" in Cree. I have been with this family
13 since I was 18. I've known Everett since I was 16. We've
14 been off and on for many -- like, off and on in our
15 relationship. His mom's -- his loss of his mother has been
16 -- it's been hard on him. And, I've always been there,
17 I'll always be there. But, yes.

18 **MR. REG BUGLER:** My name is Reg Bugler
19 (phon). I am a friend of the family, the Stones and the
20 Watinees (phon). And, I was a neighbour to their late
21 mother, Sylvia, when she stayed with their late dad, Kenny
22 Watinee. Kenny had older and younger brothers, and we were
23 -- just like neighbours, we were always gathering together
24 on the res, in Red Pheasant, and I would go out there and
25 play with her brother-in-laws, her younger brother-in-laws.

1 They were -- three of them are deceased now, unfortunately,
2 along with their dad. But, I knew Sylvia in my younger
3 years, and she was a very, very pretty lady. You know, and
4 she came from Mosquito, and caught the heart of Kenny, who
5 kind of -- Everett kind of looks like his dad, and that's
6 probably why she babied him so much.

7 But, his dad, Kenny, was a hard-working man,
8 I know. And, you know, he was a small-time farmer on the
9 reserve, along with his grandfather, Douglas. And, Sylvia
10 was a housewife, providing for Kenny and the kids. And,
11 they would move back and forth from Mosquito to Red
12 Pheasant. And, it's unfortunate that Kenny lost his life
13 in a drowning accident in 1977, as Everett explained.

14 And, Sylvia, unfortunately, took it really,
15 really hard, and turned to alcohol as, you know, as a pain
16 killer. And, her responsibilities of her parenting, I
17 guess, she kind of left those to her then surviving parents
18 and in-laws. So, as the brothers and Sonia said, they were
19 raised by both.

20 And, the grandparents did the best that they
21 could under the circumstances of the trauma that they
22 suffered. They were orphaned, this family. Along with
23 that was the unknowing part of their mother, losing their
24 mother, the matriarch of their love for their mother. She
25 was gone and they didn't know the answers to why that

1 happened. That's quite unfortunate that the Edmonton City
2 Police weren't more diligent, and more caring, and
3 compassionate in their investigation of that specific
4 homicide.

5 And, like Everett's recommendations, I would
6 support those, because the RCMP and the various city police
7 forces across Canada should be more diligent and more
8 compassionate when they come to investigating the
9 unfortunate loss and death of missing and murdered
10 Indigenous women and girls. You know, even if they were to
11 make a substantial effort on that part, the relationships
12 would become more respectful.

13 And, a lot of families here at this
14 gathering are looking for answers, and I think, you know,
15 answers have been provided to the best of the
16 Commissioner's ability and inquiry. And, the pain and the
17 suffering is unimaginable. Growing up, you know, just
18 sharing this story. You know, I've known this family for a
19 long, long time. You know, I know Everett and his
20 brothers, and their sister, Sonia. I didn't realize there
21 were seven of them, but there are only six remaining
22 siblings. And, they are here seeking answers, and hoping
23 that answers can be provided to some extent, so that they
24 can bring closure to the unknown of why, how, and who
25 maybe. Who was responsible for that homicide? That would

1 be a big, big relief for them. It's a big heavy burden on
2 their shoulders, carrying that for 36 years.

3 So, I just happened to come here today to
4 come and listen in on the inquiry, since I was working. I
5 work in the city here. And, they came and asked me in a
6 really polite way to come and support them. And, I told
7 them, "I knew your mom." You know, I told Lance, "I knew
8 your mom when I was young." And, he just smiled right
9 away, and he felt good.

10 There's a lot of people that know her. They
11 just have to seek. You know, my brothers, they all knew
12 her. My sisters, they all knew her. Because we were
13 neighbours, and we were all visiting back and forth all the
14 time. We were neighbours to the late Douglas and Bertha
15 Watinee, and I was friends with all their uncles. So,
16 there is a lot of history that we know about them.

17 Their dad was a really good mechanic. You
18 know, he fixed all kinds of vehicles with whatever
19 resources he had. And, he was a hard worker, like
20 everybody was back in the day. There was no welfare at
21 that time. You had to go out in the bush, cut pickets,
22 posts -- you know, haul hay bales. You know, whatever work
23 you could do, pick roots, pick rocks. And, all the men
24 were hardworking men back in those days.

25 So, I'm here to support the family, and

1 hoping that they can find some kind of closure here. I'm
2 sure some closure will be -- you know, will come upon them
3 upon this inquiry here. So, that's all I have to say to
4 the families, that I knew your mom. She was a very, very
5 fine woman. Very good mother, took care of her children,
6 like they said, made sure that they were cared for. But,
7 unfortunately, you know, she went down a road of grief and
8 loss, and couldn't recover from that, and met her untimely
9 death in Edmonton.

10 And, not knowing what happened and when it
11 happened, and all those unanswered questions are huge, huge
12 for them. So, lucky they had very good supporting
13 grandparents. I know both their grandparents still quite
14 well. Very ceremonial, you know, that kept them on the
15 straight and narrow. Lance is an aspiring dancer, singer.

16 I watched him dance here last month in North
17 Battleford, and I couldn't recognize him. He's a very good
18 grass dancer, and I said, "Who is that dancer? Boy, is he
19 ever good." And then later he walks by me, and I said,
20 "Hey, Lance, that's you. Right on. Good for you. Keep it
21 up." And, I seen him last week and I says, "Did you
22 place?" "Oh, they put me fifth", he says, "because I was a
23 home boy." You know, North Battleford is his hometown.

24 But, it's good, it's good to see them. And,
25 I don't know what Everett does. I see him every now and

1 then. And, I'm honoured to be here to support them at this
2 hearing. (Speaking in Native language).

3 **MS. VIVIAN STONE:** (Speaking in Native
4 language). Hi. My name is Vivian Stone, and I'm from
5 Mosquito First Nation. And, I was just introducing to the
6 relatives and to the friends, the visitors, telling them in
7 Cree that I was happy to see them here, and that I greet
8 them all in God's name.

9 I will talk a little bit about the history
10 of my cousin, late Sylvia Stone. I was young at the time,
11 too, when she had -- last time when I was with her and the
12 family at her mom's place. How I know -- the way I know
13 Sylva is she was a very outgoing person, and she had a lot
14 to -- she had a lot of laughs. You know, she was happy all
15 the time. She was a joking woman. She liked joking,
16 laughing, making everybody smile, you know?

17 And, what impacted her was, I believe to
18 this day now, now that I'm all grown up, too, and starting
19 to realize what so many women go through, is that her
20 husband's death in '77 had impacted her a great deal.
21 Knowing them back then in Red Pheasant, I know that they
22 had a very good home, a beautiful home that Kenny had
23 provided for his wife, Sylvia.

24 I know they had a beautiful home, and they
25 were loving parents to their children. However, things

1 didn't go right that one year, when Kenny passed away in a
2 drowning accident. After that I can recall that she had --
3 she couldn't deal with that loss. It impacted her a great
4 deal. She left her children to her in-laws, to her mom,
5 you know, to her parents. These were just little children
6 at the time. And, I don't know how she left to Edmonton,
7 but -- I don't know how she left. I don't know if she
8 hitchhiked. I have no idea.

9 But, she was -- that's where she died, she
10 passed away, out in Edmonton. And, that was a really -- a
11 shock to us at that time, to hear of her loss. And,
12 everybody in the whole community, Sylvia's mom, you know,
13 right away the whole family, the whole unit, you know, they
14 were concerned about these little children.

15 So, what -- it was a shock. Like, I don't
16 know -- like, it was -- we didn't know how to deal with
17 that loss that time. And, everybody just focused on the
18 children right away, because we didn't know what's going to
19 happen to them now. And, I believe that the children of my
20 late cousin, Sylvia, these children were impacted by her
21 death. And, they knew, they knew that something awful had
22 happened, that they will never see their mom again.

23 However, later on in life, it was very hard
24 for them. I couldn't imagine living without parents. I'm
25 pretty sure the death of their mom, you know, they had met

1 up with crisis as little children. They probably had
2 nothing to eat most of the times. Maybe they didn't have
3 no clean clothes to wear, too, at the times, because when
4 you are motherless, when nobody is around, it really
5 impacts you a lot in many ways.

6 But, then again, their grandparents were
7 there. Their grandparents. They were guided by their
8 grandparents through the traditional ways of life, which
9 brought them to where they are today. They were led
10 through ceremonies, through Pow Wow dancing, by their
11 grandparents. I thank those grandparents today for pouring
12 their love to the children.

13 It is so very hard to -- it is so very hard,
14 probably, I imagine that it is very hard for them to go
15 through that kind of life. And, especially to come and
16 meet, and see, and hear the result of how their mom passed
17 away, it's really hard. I know. When they were telling
18 me, I couldn't believe it. I didn't know what -- what am I
19 going to say here? Why did the justice system fail on them
20 in those years?

21 Many times I think about that. Why? Why
22 the First Nations people? And, many times I get angry,
23 too, you know? Because they're not working hard enough on
24 us as Native people. They don't look at us seriously many
25 times; that's what I think. But, that's not what it is.

1 It's hard sometimes to talk about stuff like this, but the
2 truth has to come out. I feel that -- how I feel right now
3 holding this feather, this eagle feather, is the one that's
4 going to make me -- make people see or understand where I'm
5 trying to come from. Because, as Native people, God had
6 given us strength to stand up on this Mother Earth.

7 I hope that my nieces and my nephews, you
8 know, once they find closure, you know, that they will be
9 able to be happy, to see what happiness is all about. To
10 see that light, to find themselves, who they really are,
11 because right now they're not. They're in agony, they're
12 hurting, they don't really know where they're going, where
13 they're coming from. But, I hope, you know, once this
14 comes to a closure that, you know, it will change their
15 wellbeing. Hopefully that someday, too, that the justice
16 system will look more upon the First Nations people with
17 positiveness, and that they will continue to try and help
18 us Native people.

19 That's one of my recommendations, you know,
20 is that things will work out as the years, the days, the
21 weeks, go by, that we will be able to all connect one way
22 together with positiveness, and that we will work together.
23 That's about all I would like to say. I'd like to thank
24 everybody for being here today. And, I'd like to also
25 thank Saskatchewan, or the government, for their input into

1 this kind of inquiry. It is really helpful, and thank you
2 all. *Hay-Hay.*

3 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Is it okay if I ask
4 you guys a few questions before we actually -- I know --
5 thank you, by the way, for sharing, the family members.

6 Thanks, Lance. And, actually, your auntie
7 just touched on a good point that we had a brief
8 conversation on. A couple good points, but one of the
9 things, you know, when your auntie talked about the fact
10 that without a mother there were some things you didn't
11 have. And, Reg touched on a good point, too, that your
12 grandparents did the best they could in the circumstances.

13 But, I understand when you guys were growing
14 up, you grew up in a good way. You know, you were in a
15 house. Can you tell us a little bit about that life?
16 Because it was rich in some ways. But, in terms of what
17 you guys had access to or what you didn't have access to?
18 Were there some poverty issues? And, it wasn't -- I don't
19 mean wealth of, like, the money kind, because it seems to
20 me there was an abundance of that in your family. There
21 was a wealth of culture and love, and stuff, but can you
22 tell us a little bit about what it was like once your
23 mother was gone, the issues of clothing, of feeding, of
24 opportunity?

25 **MR. LANCE STONE:** Yes. The feeling that I

1 had when my mother had gone was, what am I going to do now?
2 Where am I going to turn? Who am I going to talk to? How
3 do I deal with this? My grandparents were the ones who
4 tried to speak to us as best as they could, to make us
5 understand the loss that we had gone through. Back then,
6 we weren't allowed to go to the funerals; we weren't
7 allowed to view the body. So, we were restricted to so
8 much that we had access to.

9 After the fact that we had learned that our
10 mother had passed on, it was a big deal of not knowing
11 where and what was going to happen to us next. The
12 struggle of knowing how are our futures going to turn out?
13 Are we going to finish school? Are we going to get good
14 jobs? Are we going to have kids? Are we going to tell our
15 story to them? To this day it's here, and we're dealing
16 with it, and we're trying to let our younger generations
17 know that it was a hard life growing up like that. It was
18 a hard life not knowing that -- our grandmothers and our
19 grandfathers were there for us, but the love that we had
20 for our immediate mother was not there.

21 Knowing that she was gone, and that our
22 father was gone as well, it took a toll on me, because I
23 wasn't too sure where I was going to end up. I could have
24 been dead. I could have ended up in jail doing life.

25 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, on that point,

1 I think it might have been Everett, but one of the two of
2 you had said, you know, your mom was a bit of a
3 troublemaker, and you guys got into a little bit of trouble
4 yourself when you were young. Was that an impact of losing
5 your mother and not having those opportunities that, when
6 you were younger, before you got on that straight and
7 narrow road, can you tell me a little bit about those
8 impacts in your life?

9 **MR. LANCE STONE:** Yes. We had grown up with
10 our cousins, my auntie's sons, and they weren't the best of
11 role models for us, and we ended up getting into a lot of
12 trouble with them. The cops would always come and drop us
13 off at our grandmother's place. And, right away she would
14 ask, "Well, what happened?"

15 A cop would bring us home, 11-year old kid,
16 you know, in the back of a cop car, and my grandma would
17 say, "What happened, what did you do?" The thing was that
18 we didn't have that guidance. We didn't want to listen to
19 it. We didn't want to see it, because of what we dealt
20 with in here, the loss that we had that we didn't see in
21 front of us.

22 You know, now, today, I see that with the
23 younger kids, too, today, it's happening. They're getting
24 into gangs, they're doing lots of drugs, and they're
25 carrying guns. You know, like, we never did that. We

1 weren't taught to be like that, to carry guns, to have that
2 kind of mentality to protect yourself with any means
3 necessary. We fought old school, with the fists.

4 You know, those were the days that we had to
5 protect ourselves, because we didn't have no family there
6 to protect us. We protected each other. Sure, we got into
7 our own arguments, our own little scuffles, but that was
8 what people know it as brotherly love, or sisterly love,
9 you know? Not everybody goes through those kinds of
10 problems in their own family. But, in our family, that's
11 the way it was, that's the way we grew up.

12 We had to grow up tough. We had to fend for
13 ourselves. We had to learn how to chop wood. We had to
14 learn how to make a fire. We had to learn how to keep
15 ourselves clean. We had to learn how to cook for
16 ourselves. We had to learn how to do everything, to learn
17 on our own.

18 And, to this day, we still have that
19 struggle in front of us, to try to learn, and to try to
20 keep ourselves in that straight and narrow road. It's hard
21 to do it, and sometimes people fall off. And, there's a
22 lot of us that have done that in the past, and maybe we
23 still do have our problems. But, the thing is that, as a
24 family, we are here, and we are who we are today. We
25 tried, as best as we can, to understand.

1 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, you've said
2 that, you've said it a couple times, like, "I'm here
3 today." And, Everett, if I could ask one question, I think
4 you said something to the effect "we grew up". So, you
5 know, you had a little bit of trouble in your youth. You
6 had some good times, too. When did you grow up, and what
7 did that mean, like, when you realized you needed to sort
8 of get on the straight and narrow and focus?

9 **MR. EVERETT STONE:** Well, I didn't grow up
10 until I was about 15 years old. My sister here raised me
11 from when I was about 14 years old. After my mom had
12 passed on, my grandfather had raised me from there. And,
13 he was strict. I was disciplined. I was disciplined, you
14 know, old school way, you know?

15 I was on my own when I was 15, and my sister
16 raised me. She took over, took over me, and I lived with
17 her for a lot of years. And, back then I used to race
18 horses. Back then I was a horseman, yes, and I grew up
19 like that. I grew up on the rodeo trail with my late
20 grandfather. He wanted me to be a bull rider, but I went
21 to rodeo school. But, it didn't happen.

22 But, it impacted me a lot of ways. My
23 upbringing wasn't so bad. Like I said, me and my siblings
24 were split up. So, I, more or less, went on my own when I
25 was 18/19. I left home for Alberta, and I've been out

1 there ever since. I'm 44 years old now. I'm a -- I did
2 wild land firefighting for 16 years for Alberta. And, I
3 saved a lot of communities, houses, lives, you know?

4 I just came out of retirement five years
5 ago. I worked in the oil field. I'm a Class 1 driver.
6 You know, I tried bettering myself, going to school. I
7 went back to school and took a lot of training, and tried
8 to better myself, you know? Even though I don't have
9 parents now, you know, I've learned to live with that.
10 They're gone now. I was brought up in a good way, cultural
11 way, and to this day, I still practice my culture.

12 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, you told us
13 about your nine children. A couple of them are in
14 university, too, right?

15 **MR. EVERETT STONE:** Yup.

16 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And so ---

17 **MR. EVERETT STONE:** I have my two older
18 ones, Kenneth and Janessa (phon), are university students
19 in St. Paul, Alberta, the Blue Quills School there. That's
20 where they go to school. My daughter, Janessa, is going
21 for social work. And, my son, Kenneth, the oldest one, is
22 going for engineering, or teacher, I think. I don't know
23 what he's trying to go for, so...

24 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, your youngest
25 one here, little Angel?

1 **MR. EVERETT STONE:** Oh, my little Angel
2 here, *Okisikosis*, she's nine months. Yeah, she's a real --
3 she's a miracle to us, because we weren't supposed to have
4 any more babies. The doctors told me and my wife that she
5 couldn't carry anymore. So, we proved them wrong.

6 And, her name just -- her name is Sky Beam,
7 that's what her name means, eh? She came from up there.
8 So, she came into our lives and -- losing my daughter, you
9 know, I gained one, you know, but she will never replace my
10 oldest daughter. But, you know, she brings a lot of
11 happiness and everything to my family. Her siblings call
12 her, Face Time her every day. If she was here she would
13 probably be making a ruckus here. But, I'm glad she's
14 sleeping now.

15 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And so, I've heard
16 Lance say this, and you too, part of the impact is that you
17 feel like you're missing a piece of the history, or
18 something you can share with your kids. So, what are you
19 doing now so that they know more about your mom, more about
20 Sylvia?

21 **MR. EVERETT STONE:** Well, I showed them
22 their pictures when they were old enough to understand.
23 Same with their late grandfather. We have another picture
24 of them together, our parents. So, yeah, I talk to them
25 about her. You know, they know -- they know where she came

1 from, and they know what happened to her. So, I just try
2 and talk to them about how beautiful she was, caring, and
3 -- you know, growing up with her, I knew her. So, I try to
4 keep them informed, you know, about her, not to forget
5 about her. I hang up her picture on our wall, you know?

6 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Can I ask Sonia the
7 same question, in terms of impacts? And, your daughter is
8 here, too, and she spoke. We've heard you guys talk about
9 the fact that for 36 years you didn't know exactly what
10 happened. How has that impacted your parenting, or what do
11 you do now to ensure that Sylvia's memory is alive with
12 your kids?

13 **MS. SONIA BEAR:** Well, when my mom passed
14 away, I was, like, 13 years old, and I was out in the
15 States visiting my auntie. And, I just happened to be
16 visiting my neighbours that night. I camped over. I was
17 the first one up, of course, the first to get the best
18 cereal and watch cartoons. And so, the phone rang, and I
19 answered it, and it was my uncle John, John Newman. And,
20 he didn't know what to say to me right away, but in his
21 voice, I could tell there was something wrong.

22 So, I kept asking him, "What is it? What is
23 it?" And, I said, "Is it about my mom?" Which I meant was
24 it about my grandma, because she raised me, and I called
25 her Mom. And, he said, "It's about your real mom." And, I

1 said, "What? What happened?" He told me that she was
2 murdered, and they found her dead in Edmonton. He couldn't
3 get a hold of my auntie who was probably sleeping at the
4 time.

5 So, I just dropped the phone, and ran all
6 the way to their house, and kept banging on the door. And,
7 finally, they opened it for me, and I told her, standing
8 there I told her, what I just heard from the phone call.
9 And, the first thing she did was slap me. She slapped me
10 real hard. And, at the time I didn't know why. But, I
11 kept telling her the truth, and she said, "Don't lie.
12 You're lying." I said, "Why would I lie about something
13 like that?" So, she just grabbed me, and I went inside,
14 went running inside, locked myself in the room for days.

15 And, finally, we made it to Canada for the
16 wake. And, after that, it had a really great impact on me.
17 As I got older, I started taking off from my grandma,
18 running away, stealing my uncle's truck, even down to
19 borrowing horses. And, as I got older, I started turning
20 to alcohol. And, the first time I tried it, the feeling I
21 got out of it, I figured, well, hey, this is a good place
22 to hide.

23 And, that's what I did, started drinking,
24 doing drugs at the age of 18. I had my first kid -- my
25 child, at 18 years of age, not knowing what to do, or how

1 to even look after a kid, because I wasn't taught how to be
2 a mom, or prepared to be a mother at all. My grandma was a
3 sickly woman. When she started watching me, she was very
4 sick. So, she couldn't really do much, like what a healthy
5 mother would do. So, I always kind of stayed away, avoid
6 being a problem, but here I was already being a problem to
7 society, and not caring, not fully understanding.

8 There was abuse in the family, for me, for
9 many years. I didn't dare tell nobody. I did more
10 drinking, more drugs, harder drugs. I started leaving my
11 kids, not caring. And, all through that time, wishing my
12 mom was -- wishing she was there for me. As soon as I got
13 older, I started realizing maybe this is not what she
14 wanted for me. Maybe it's time that I straighten out and
15 try to do it right, try and do something for my kids that
16 she couldn't do for me. And, I'm still trying, I'm still
17 struggling. But, I think my children know now what I've
18 been through, what I'm still going through.

19 And, what I'm learning throughout this
20 inquiry about my mom, all I want is some answers as to why
21 she was taken from us, and why nobody told us why? Nobody
22 was ever questioned about it. Why do you let those people
23 go?

24 So, I just pray that we get some closure out
25 of this, and that way we can further heal, heal ourselves

1 and our families. Thank you.

2 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you for
3 sharing. And, Sonia, I have another question for you, and
4 I think it's actually probably going to go back to Lance.
5 But, I do note that we have some documents, and the
6 documents are specifically from the medical examiner, and
7 they include the complete autopsy report, and it's actually
8 written to your attention.

9 **MS. SONIA BEAR:** Yes.

10 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And so, I have a
11 couple questions about how you guys came to these
12 documents. But, first, I'm going to ask, make a request
13 for an order to Commissioner Audette. There will be some
14 documents that we are going to be providing to the
15 Commission, that the family will describe how they came to
16 them, but I am going to ask for an order to seal the
17 documents, because they disclose fairly graphic details of
18 the post-mortem and the scene. And, in order to respect
19 and honour, and to provide dignity to Sylvia, we are asking
20 that the order be -- that there is an order made for both
21 the coroner's documents, as well as police documents that
22 we will be providing.

23 **COMMISSIONER AUDÈTTE:** Maître Big Canoe,
24 *merci beaucoup.* I grant that order.

25 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you. And, in

1 that same way I ask, then, that with that order granted
2 that these documents are not part of the public record.
3 However, if the family is -- anything they say in the
4 public hearing is part of the transcript.

5 **COMMISSIONER AUDÈTTE:** *Merci.*

6 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So, I had actually
7 asked Sonia because you will notice the documents in
8 relation to the certificate of the medical examiner, and
9 autopsy report, are addressed to Sonia. But, I actually
10 believe Lance may know -- may be able to provide the most
11 details about how the family came to get the documents from
12 the coroner's office.

13 **MR. LANCE STONE:** It all happened last year,
14 when we heard about the inquiry, I just happened to be
15 incarcerated at the time in Edmonton, and I heard it on the
16 news that they were having the inquiry. The number of the
17 contact person for the inquiry and for the help line was on
18 the TV, on the TV screen. So, I had written that number
19 down and I had called it, and I let them know that we were
20 wanting to know more answers about our late mother.

21 Back then, I didn't know how to go about it,
22 so I spoke with this lady named Brenda Bear from the
23 Alberta FILU in Edmonton. She was the one who had
24 organized all the access for us. And, she was the one who
25 had -- she was the one who gave us the guidance to opening

1 and getting the access to her file.

2 They had needed -- they wanted DNA from me,
3 and they wanted IDs from my mother and from my siblings.
4 My sister fortunately had her birth certificate on her, the
5 old one, the big blue birth certificate, that had our
6 mother's maiden name on there. So, that was another piece
7 of -- form of ID that linked us to our mom. And, the DNA
8 testing that they had ordered -- that I had ordered for
9 them to use to gain access to her file, I am not too sure
10 if they used it, but somehow Brenda had managed to access
11 all of that. And, I had given her authorization to access
12 all of that, and filled out all the files, and gave them
13 all the information that was provided from us, as the
14 family.

15 I asked them if, like, well, how would I be
16 able to do this, like, go about accessing everything for my
17 family? So, Brenda said, "Just leave it to me. I will
18 help you guys." And then probably about a month later she
19 had Laurie Davies of the Alberta FILU, was the one who had
20 helped us organize this file, and access all of it. She
21 had asked me for authorization, and she had guided us with
22 other forms, gave us a meeting in Edmonton. Me and my
23 sister Sonia had attended.

24 We signed all the files. We saw the autopsy
25 report, the police report, and we requested a meeting with

1 the medical examiner, and the Edmonton Police Services.
2 But, the Edmonton Police Services would not. They said
3 they were too busy. So, we left it like that.

4 We accessed the police report, and we also
5 had our meeting with the medical examiners on that day,
6 about a month ago. About three weeks ago. So, my sister,
7 Sonia was the one who filed for the release of the autopsy
8 report and everything. At the same time, they had let us
9 know that, well, okay, this is what's going to happen.
10 They are going to be meeting with the health people, the
11 support people, and there's going to be a lawyer there.

12 We had met with them, and then at the same
13 time when we had got access from the Alberta FILU for the
14 files, Laurie Davies introduced us to the Saskatchewan FILU
15 team, with Dorothy Myo and all her associate team members,
16 too. So, they are helping us with what we're here for
17 today. And, I'm grateful for their help, both teams,
18 Alberta and Saskatchewan.

19 I'm not too sure if we're the only ones that
20 actually ever did this. You know, I'm not too sure if
21 we're the only family that has a file that's this outdated,
22 36 years, and there is no information that was given to us
23 as a family since then. But, I also give credit to Ms.
24 Christina (sic) here, Big Canoe, for helping us with
25 everything else, too.

1 You know, getting us this far, there was no
2 pressure -- yeah, and helping us bring our story out with
3 the inquiry, without any of the help from these people that
4 I mentioned, we wouldn't be here today to tell our story.
5 And, my mom would still be a forgotten person, still.

6 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you for
7 explaining that. And, actually, when you were explaining
8 this process, you're talking about FILUs, and I know that a
9 lot of the people in this room are people who are in this
10 process might know what that is. It's a Family Information
11 Liaison Unit. And, you guys have been fortunate enough to
12 have had the help from not one province, but two provinces'
13 FILUs.

14 **MR. LANCE STONE:** Yes.

15 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** But, that is
16 slightly different than what the National Inquiry is doing.
17 So, when you are talking about these processes, because
18 people who are watching -- they're different processes, but
19 you have been getting this help, and been able to access
20 documents. And, for you guys, what has that meant, to have
21 this type of help, and to get some more answers from the
22 documents the FILU have been able to get?

23 **MR. LANCE STONE:** It gives us hope in that
24 way, in that sense of finding answers later on down the
25 line. We don't know what's going to happen from here until

1 the next time. We're hoping, like my brother said, that we
2 can come back again in the inquiry some time in the near
3 future, if it's possible, you know?

4 For us knowing what it is today, where we're
5 at with this file, and with the inquiry, it gives us great
6 hope to at least find closure. And, I recommend that the
7 justice system needs to be revised. There needs to be more
8 information for First Nations people. More access for
9 programs, and more support for other missing and murdered
10 Indigenous women.

11 And, there is also the problem with the
12 government ignoring certain things that the First Nations
13 people are actually trying to access as a whole. There's a
14 lot of roadblocks that we had to go through to get to where
15 we're at today. We kind of felt in that way where we were
16 kind of getting let down, you know, because they'd throw up
17 another roadblock, and then we'd say, "Oh, what are we
18 going to do?"

19 Through prayer, you know, and strength, and
20 persistence, and the help that we had today, it gives us
21 more of a reality check. You know, to recommend more
22 community support, more family information for traumatized
23 kids, you know, and for even for the lost families of the
24 missing and murdered Indigenous women.

25 You know, for us, as examples, we had our

1 grandparents, we had our traditional teachings. We had the
2 guidance. But, what about the other kids? What about the
3 other families that are out there? How are the parents
4 supposed to be parents without having to actually learn
5 their real culture and to be strong? You know, we all had
6 to grow up in a different lifestyle one way or another, you
7 know, and I would strongly recommend that there are
8 programs that need to be created for families of, like,
9 suicide, mental health. You know, address the
10 discrimination that's out there, because it needs to be
11 addressed.

12 You know, and I would like to walk with my
13 head up, not down, you know, because it would be better for
14 me to have more confidence to stand up there and stand in
15 front of 10,000 people and tell them, yeah, my name is
16 Lance Stone. I am a First Nations person, and I am a
17 victim of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

18 And, it's a big thing for my family, because
19 it gives us the opportunity to share more. You know, and
20 to make the other nations understand where we come from,
21 and how we lived all these years. And, we need to see
22 something happen within the government. The government has
23 to at least, you know, recommend, you know, more Native-run
24 programs, more Native-run schools, rehab centres, you know?
25 What ever happened to all that stuff back in them days?

1 You know, we don't see that in very many communities
2 nowadays.

3 Nowadays it's the drugs, the alcohol that
4 you see. The crime, the gangs that are out there. Those
5 kids that are in those gangs, they go to jail. One day
6 they end up in that jail cell. Are those gang members
7 going to help those kids to stay out of there? I don't
8 think so, because I was part of that. I know. I know how
9 that part was in my life, because I lived a lot of crime,
10 and I lived a lot of anger, you know, and losing my respect
11 for my own self.

12 You know, and it's -- I see it to this day
13 where these young kids, they don't have no respect today.
14 The parents need to at least let them know, you know, there
15 are programs, there are people out there. There are
16 Elders. There are a lot of people that actually care.
17 And, I'm one of them that could be a role model for kids
18 nowadays, or even other older people, right?

19 Sure, I've done a lot of drugs, a lot of
20 alcohol in my days, but today, you know, I realize what my
21 life was all those years. And, thinking back, when me and
22 my brothers were growing up, and all the crazy stuff we
23 used to do, all the drinking and the fighting we used to
24 do, we just hurt ourselves, and we were doing that because
25 we were still mourning. We were still hurting for our

1 parents. We needed that guidance so bad, but we couldn't
2 get that access to it, because there was nobody there for
3 us.

4 I'm happy that I have my support here, my
5 wife, my family, and my aunties, and -- I take him as an
6 uncle, Uncle Reggie. That's what we called him, eh,
7 because he was always there for us. He spoke with us, to
8 this day, you know, letting us know that our parents were
9 people. They were good people. But, they got taken away
10 from us at such a young age.

11 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So, Lance, I'm going
12 to ask you a couple of questions about the documents. And,
13 I'm going to say to you, like, only as much detail as
14 you're comfortable giving. But, since you've had these
15 documents, and since you've had the Edmonton FILU help you
16 set up an appointment with the Chief Medical Examiner's
17 office, what have you learned about your mom's death?

18 **MR. LANCE STONE:** What we learned about our
19 mom's death was that -- in the autopsy report, they said
20 that her trachea, or the whole -- her -- yeah, esophagus
21 lining and all that, had ruptured, it was torn. That is
22 what they said that was the cause of her death. And, all
23 the fluids leaked into her chest and into her lungs, and
24 she basically drowned.

25 But, the other picture is the police

1 statements, too. They say different in those. Even with
2 the autopsy report, their conclusion was that she died of
3 excessive alcohol use. That right there, to me, is
4 questionable, because why would she have all these bruises
5 all over her face, all over her body? Why would all of
6 that show without them even saying that in the autopsy
7 report?

8 You know, there's a lot of things, like,
9 they say that she had cysts in her ovaries. You know, she
10 was already sickly, and she didn't know that she was
11 sickly. And, how were we ever supposed to know this, that
12 our mom was going to die, even regardless if she didn't
13 pass on the way she did?

14 You know, the autopsy report said that she
15 had a broken ankle. It said that her bruises were old.
16 And then in the police report it says otherwise, it says
17 different. Her eye was blackened, black, blue, and green.
18 And, it said that it seemed like it was blackened recently.
19 But, in the autopsy report, it says that they were old
20 bruises.

21 That brings to a question, why would the
22 Medical Examiner's Office conclude something like that when
23 it was something different? And, they had a pathologist
24 conclude all of this for them. You know, even in the
25 police report, it says that -- at first it was a sudden

1 death. Okay, and then you tell another story later on when
2 you read and it says, oh, it was a homicide, it was a
3 suspicious death because of the bruising, and all the marks
4 and everything, and the way it all played out. We don't
5 know anything about it. You know, it's what we read in the
6 reports, is what we know now.

7 But, there's a lot of unanswered questions
8 there for us, you know, and we'd like to at least find some
9 answers, some closure, maybe even justice to be served.
10 You know, it doesn't state in the statement that the person
11 she was with -- it never mentioned that she already had
12 bruises or anything. It doesn't state nothing like that in
13 the report, when she met this guy.

14 You know, to this day I still wonder, you
15 know, like, what really happened? Who was this person? A
16 lot of things are blacked out, you know, that they don't
17 want to tell us. So, like, that brings another thing to
18 question. Like, why even would my mother be under INAC as
19 the next of kin for the past 36 years? Her mom was still
20 alive in 1981. She didn't die until 1986. So, her mom
21 should have been her next of kin. And, we never found this
22 out until just recently, when we got the file. And,
23 there's a lot of unanswered questions, a lot of red flags
24 that we'd like to know. You know, and that we'd like to
25 see answered.

1 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, just for the
2 purpose of the record, too, though, I'm not sure if you
3 have your copy with you. But, the letter actually
4 indicates that some information has been redacted, and
5 that's all pursuant to legislation, like, *Freedom of*
6 *Information* legislation. And, this is in part because you
7 were accessing. And so, if I understand, it's with the
8 FILU. They helped explain to you how you access it, and it
9 meant that you were accessing this information. And so,
10 the *Freedom of Information Act* applies. Is that true?

11 **MR. LANCE STONE:** Yes.

12 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And then the other
13 thing about this is, and I think you said it already,
14 you've got a whole bunch of new information, but you don't
15 necessarily understand what it all means. So, sometimes --
16 what would help you to better understand what you now have
17 in front of you?

18 **MR. LANCE STONE:** Just to -- something that
19 would help us understand this kind of a file and, like,
20 even this kind of an autopsy report and the report itself
21 would be, like, just to access as much information as we
22 can for the people. Our own file here is -- it's got ---

23 **MS. SONIA BEAR:** More answers to some of the
24 questions we have. Like, the police report says that it
25 was -- it looked suspicious at first, because there was

1 bruising on her body, the room was disoriented, and the
2 witness that was there with her at the time of her death
3 claimed that he was -- they were both sleeping in the
4 afternoon/evening, and he got up and he sat around for a
5 while, tried to wake up my mother, and he claims that she
6 didn't respond, so he sat down and started drinking again,
7 and kept on drinking.

8 And then he tried to wake her up again, and
9 she wasn't responsive. And then he said, "I cleaned her
10 up. I cleaned her up. I put on her clothing, what she had
11 on, and then called the police." Like, why would he do
12 that, and then call the police?

13 And, when the police got there, they stated
14 that there was dried blood between her fingers, and that
15 there was some blood stains on a white shirt, which we
16 never seen, or they say they lost some evidence. There is
17 a photo, one Polaroid photo they have, and that we never
18 seen, and a photo drive. And, those, they said -- were
19 those the ones they lost, they claimed to have misplaced or
20 something?

21 So, those are the questions I want answered
22 and, you know, if there is an interpreter that can explain
23 to us in English, pretty well. I don't know how else to
24 put it, sorry. But, those are the ones I would like to
25 know, those kinds of questions. Like, why did this guy

1 clean her up before he called the cops, you know? Was
2 there something he was hiding, you know?

3 And then there was another witness that saw
4 him fighting another guy outside before he went upstairs
5 with my mother. Like, those are the questions we have.
6 Like, what was that fight for, you know? Was it because of
7 my mon? Was it the two knew each other from before? And,
8 why was she bruised up so much? Her head, her chest, her
9 foot, her fingers -- like, these are answers that I want to
10 see, and I want to hear.

11 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you. So, I
12 understand that it was listed as a suspicious death. Has
13 anyone advised you whether or not the Edmonton Police have
14 this as an unresolved or an open case?

15 **MR. LANCE STONE:** No, they have not even
16 contacted us. I'm not too sure ---

17 **MS. SONIA BEAR:** You never talked to ---

18 **MR. LANCE STONE:** No, we did not talk to the
19 Edmonton Police Service while we were there.

20 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** You just received
21 the file?

22 **MR. LANCE STONE:** Yes.

23 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, the coroner's
24 report, the finding of death is accidental?

25 **MR. LANCE STONE:** Yes.

1 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So, you have
2 questions between, sort of, the information you have now?

3 **MS. SONIA BEAR:** Yes.

4 **MR. LANCE STONE:** Okay. It's still a cold
5 case file to this day. They closed it within 51 days, her
6 file. They -- I don't know back then there was no
7 internet, right? There was only paper, all you had to fill
8 out was paper. And, they didn't take DNA back then. There
9 was no testing whatsoever back in them days. They had the
10 evidence that was there. And, in the file, it says that
11 the police chief had -- it had no -- there was only limited
12 space for files back then, is what they had written on the
13 reports. So, they wanted to destroy the evidence.

14 It says, back then, September 3, 1981 they
15 had destroyed the blood samples, and stuff like that. The
16 Edmonton Police Services Chief had authorized this. What
17 about us? How come -- where did we stand in this
18 authorization of her file being closed?

19 Yeah, they even thought that she was a Métis
20 woman. She didn't have no ID on her; no record in
21 Edmonton. Her fingerprints, they took her fingerprints and
22 they didn't show up in Edmonton, or even in Alberta. They
23 didn't know her name. Even with -- she was considered Jane
24 Doe No. 5, like I mentioned earlier before. It was all
25 questionable.

1 And then when I phoned INAC and I asked,
2 “Well, do you guys have a file on Sylvia Stone?” They
3 said, “No, we don’t.” Jane Doe is like an unknown name,
4 unknown person. And, she was considered that when -- at
5 the scene of the crime and everything, right? And, even
6 her middle name was wrong. Her middle name is Dorothy, and
7 they have on file it’s Lynn, Sylvia Lynn.

8 So, like, there’s a whole bunch of
9 unanswered questions here that we’d like to know. Even her
10 address wasn’t known. Whatever happened to all the
11 exhibits, like the newspaper with the blood stain on it?
12 It was taken from the floor at the foot of the bed. There
13 was a yellow t-shirt taken from the floor. What happened
14 to that? There was her bra taken from some place and time,
15 and it was Exhibit No. 2. What happened to all the
16 exhibits that were taken from the scene of the crime, plus
17 her jeans, her sandals, her ID, one green shirt -- you
18 know, whatever happened to all these exhibits that were
19 seized by the constables?

20 You know, they have never notified us about
21 anything in the past 36 years. And, why would they just
22 close a cold case file like that within 51 days? It just
23 doesn’t add up.

24 They also took a statement from two other
25 witnesses at the same time, right? And, those people, we

1 don't know if they're still alive. We don't know if they
2 even knew our mother, or whatever happened. There is a lot
3 of unanswered questions that are here in this file that
4 we'd like to know today. And, nobody was even charged.
5 You know, the person that they interviewed that was there
6 with her, said that they -- him and a friend were in a bar
7 drinking before he met my mom there and asked her to go
8 home, like, go back to his room to have some drinks with
9 him. Who is this other person?

10 You know, we don't know, really, too much.
11 The statement doesn't really say too much about anything.
12 Even with the witness statement, it just doesn't add up.
13 He says he slept for three hours, and he got up and tried
14 to wake up my mom, and then we don't know anything -- it
15 doesn't really state too much about it, about the time
16 lapse, the people that were there. It doesn't tell us
17 anything that this guy even mentioned anything saying,
18 "Yeah, she was bruised up when I met her." It doesn't say
19 nothing like that in the reports.

20 So, we'd like to ask for some answers, you
21 know, even with this pathologist's assistant, his assistant
22 in this medical examiner's report. Because we had spoken
23 to the guy for the medical examiner's report, and he never
24 really mentioned anything, because it was only like a 27-
25 minute meeting. And, he kind of rushed right through it.

1 So, he didn't really give us any answers. He was like,
2 well, yeah -- and, he kind of seemed like he was nervous to
3 see us there, 36 years later, asking questions about our
4 mother.

5 You know, it was his first year when he
6 started at that job, too. So, he probably -- he's been
7 there in that medical examiner's office for 36 years. You
8 know, why couldn't they give us more information? Yeah.
9 And, we couldn't understand the medical terms that he was
10 telling us, so we had to, kind of, get help from other
11 people, you know, to better understand where we're at
12 today.

13 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So, did you have any
14 other comments that you wanted to make on those documents,
15 before we turn our attention to just a couple last
16 questions?

17 **MR. EVERETT STONE:** I've read the file, too,
18 I understand what's in that file. If there is any way we
19 can maybe get these old detectives, maybe the witnesses, if
20 somebody can get a hold of them somehow, if they're still
21 alive. I don't know how the inquiry is going to look into
22 this, but we'll leave it in your hands to figure out all
23 these answers that we're seeking here.

24 I don't want to say too much on the file
25 myself, but there's a lot of red tape in there. It just

1 doesn't add up.

2 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So, first of all, I
3 know you've shared a lot and we appreciate it. This is the
4 part where I say, have we missed something? Is there
5 anything you want to add before Commissioner Audette has
6 questions or comments for you? Anything we've overlooked,
7 or anything you want to say, some last words?

8 **MS. SONIA BEAR:** I would just like to thank
9 everybody for their help in getting us this far, and for
10 your support, and open arms. And, for the family and
11 friends, I'd like to thank you all. Thank you.

12 **MR. EVERETT STONE:** *Hay-Hay.* It was an
13 honour to come and talk to you. Thanks for all the people
14 showing up today. Thanks to my family, and Reggie for
15 coming to sit with us here today. I'll be leaving back
16 home this evening, so it was nice meeting all of you. *Hay-*
17 *Hay.*

18 **MR. LANCE STONE:** I would like to see more
19 in the government, like, the government itself, like, even
20 with the Edmonton Police Services, you know, that Medical
21 Examiner's Report, the offices, they all take contracts
22 with the government. They sign these contracts with the
23 government to assist, to help, and to try to help other
24 people, the communities, and government establishments with
25 First Nations people, and non-First Nations people.

1 We need to hold them accountable for the
2 things they do, especially with the First Nations people,
3 because a lot of them, they take these government
4 contracts, and they don't fulfil them. In that way, as I
5 know, that's fraud against the government. That also leads
6 to corruption in the justice system. I feel that that's
7 where we were at ourselves with our mom's file.

8 You know, they let us down. The government
9 has let us down. The Edmonton Police Services let us down.
10 The City of Edmonton let us down, not even keeping in
11 contact with us for 36 years. And, that's a long time for
12 a family to wait for answers.

13 You know, I would like to see in the justice
14 system some kind of a program that could be created for
15 First Nations people to have, instead of having barriers
16 thrown in front of you, to have access to whatever it is
17 that the First Nations people are trying to receive today.

18 The poverty line that's out there, you know,
19 the housing that's out on the reserves, the water that's
20 out there -- you know, there's a lot of things that us
21 First Nations people on reserves, we still live like that
22 today, that we lived 30-40 years ago, we still live that
23 today. We still live in those old houses. The old houses
24 that are on these reserves are still being used. People,
25 the Elders are getting sick from all that stuff.

1 You know, where is the government held
2 accountable for that kind of stuff that us First Nations
3 people need? You know, we need to change some policies
4 with the government for our First Nations people, because
5 if we don't, we're just going to fall into that system.
6 Look at the Native population in the correctional systems
7 today are overwhelming, and they're staggering because most
8 of the people that are in jails are First Nations.

9 And, there was all these things that were
10 coming up in that Alberta Edmonton Sun, in the newspapers,
11 and in the news, saying that Aboriginal people and black
12 people are four to five times more likely to be carded than
13 a non-Aboriginal person. And, that's a grim reality today
14 all over Canada, all over North America.

15 So, we need to find answers, or we need some
16 kind of program or programs implemented that would better
17 help our First Nations people. And, it's mostly policing
18 in investigations like this; 36 years waiting for this lady
19 here, for answers, and as family here sitting today, 36
20 years later, we are still waiting for the answers. And, we
21 need better policing. We need more information for our
22 First Nations people. We need more access to government
23 funding for healthcare, you know, housing. It's all got to
24 be addressed to this day.

25 And, I'm happy that I'm here today, and I'm

1 sitting here in front of the inquiry, in front of you, you
2 know, and in front of everybody else, because they don't
3 know our story, and I'm happy to have told it. And,
4 hopefully, there will be an extension to this inquiry,
5 because there's -- it's going to be over in 16 months, is
6 what we had heard. So, that would be another thing that
7 we'd recommend, is for an extension for this inquiry, so
8 other families can tell their story just like we did today.

9 And, that's basically all I've got to say.

10 Thank you.

11 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Commissioner

12 Audette, did you have any questions or comments for the
13 family?

14 **COMMISSIONER AUDÈTTE:** Merci beaucoup,

15 Maître Big Canoe. Before I make some comments, I have to
16 say *merci beaucoup*. Thank you so much for showing us and
17 showing the rest of Canada all your strength, your courage,
18 your resilience, but your willingness, and your -- I don't
19 know how we say in English -- I want to have answer.

20 And, not long ago, we presented an interim
21 report of the work of many reports that were done for the
22 past 20-30 years, 90-something reports. And, when they
23 created this inquiry, it was because of the women, the men,
24 that pushed for many, many years the families and
25 survivors. So, *merci beaucoup*.

1 Lots of them said we want to know what
2 happened to our mother, loved one. We want to know how the
3 investigation went, what went wrong, or what was there.
4 They were hoping, also, when we read the pre-inquiry
5 reports, and when we were meeting with families, that this
6 inquiry would reinvestigate, re-open the files. It was
7 asked by an organization to the government in the pre-
8 inquiry exercise. But, when they created this inquiry,
9 they didn't put that mandate to us. They didn't give us
10 the authority, the capacity, and the okay, we will reopen
11 all those cases.

12 So, this is why we're pushing again an old
13 recommendation. We didn't invent it. So, we are putting
14 back again on the agenda to say to the federal government,
15 and all governments who are listening to us that families
16 deserve answers, they need answers, for many good reasons,
17 but also for human rights reasons.

18 And, I'm not afraid to say today we're
19 urging the federal government to put in place two things.
20 To make sure that we can send you, as family members to,
21 what we're asking to create -- I don't know in English,
22 it's in the report that when you feel that your file, or
23 your mother's file wasn't done in a proper way, so there's
24 expert people who can re-look, and do that exercise.

25 And, yes, you mentioned about the extension,

1 but I have to say the second thing. We're not the police.
2 I'm not even a lawyer, but I'm a passionate person. We
3 cannot be the police in this situation, but I want to make
4 sure that the Commissioners, along with our legal team, and
5 all the rest of the team of this Inquiry, make sure that we
6 look at all the files, that we're able to ask the right
7 questions, the proper or that specific question when we do
8 that phase with the institutions.

9 So, I will need your help. The
10 Commissioners will need your help on what do we ask. You
11 know, making sure that we use that momentum, opportunity,
12 to write the proper question. And, that's something I
13 believe is very important. They listen to you. Maybe
14 they're not all in this room, but they do listen to you.
15 And, they know also -- we say in French (speaking in
16 French). I won't say in English, I will put it more
17 beautiful way, I have a caribou head, very stubborn. Okay?
18 Or, moose head. That I will come back and I will make sure
19 that my colleagues, the other Commissioners, we have to ask
20 those questions to the institutions.

21 And, we will have the help, of course, of
22 Maître Big Canoe, and that's the commitment. Are we going
23 to have answers? Who knows? But, we will push. We will
24 push. And, my comment to you also, or question, did you
25 ask all the exhibits missing in the police file, I was able

1 to watch quickly, where are they? And, did they give you
2 an answer?

3 **MR. LANCE STONE:** They had told us, when we
4 had asked about that, they had told us that they had went
5 missing.

6 **COMMISSIONER AUDÈTTE:** They went missing?

7 **MR. LANCE STONE:** They had went missing,
8 yes. They said they had misplaced them within the Edmonton
9 Police Services. So, who knows? How could evidence go
10 missing like that, you know?

11 **COMMISSIONER AUDÈTTE:** Did you meet with the
12 police? Did they explain to you the file or the report?

13 **MR. LANCE STONE:** No. They did not even --
14 they said they were too busy to even ---

15 **COMMISSIONER AUDÈTTE:** You made the request?

16 **MR. LANCE STONE:** Yeah, we made the request.

17 **COMMISSIONER AUDÈTTE:** Okay.

18 **MR. LANCE STONE:** We even requested to even
19 have them sit in front of us to talk to us about this file.

20 **COMMISSIONER AUDÈTTE:** Okay.

21 **MR. LANCE STONE:** They not even budged.
22 They came up with some kind of excuse.

23 **COMMISSIONER AUDÈTTE:** Okay. I encourage
24 that they sit with you. Strongly encourage. *Merci*
25 *beaucoup. Merci beaucoup*, and for the family behind also,

1 or beside -- right now you're behind but I'm sure you're
2 beside. I always say when they say -- when there is a
3 great man, the woman is behind. No, no, no, it's beside
4 him. There is a great woman also beside. And, it was
5 beautiful that you brought your daughter, the Angel, or the
6 special gift. And, this is why we're doing this, for our
7 children. *Merci beaucoup, beaucoup, beaucoup.* Thank you
8 so much.

9 **MR. LANCE STONE:** Thank you.

10 **COMMISSIONER AUDÈTTE:** Explain in English,
11 you're better than me.

12 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Okay. The
13 Commission would actually like to take the time to provide
14 to the three of you, for sharing your sacred story about
15 your mother, a sacred gift. And, where the sacred gift
16 comes from is the grandmothers, the matriarchs of Haida
17 Gwaii. Council had decided that in order to support
18 families that are going through this process that they
19 wanted to harvest and gift eagle feathers to people for the
20 courage of sharing their stories, and for their journeys
21 moving forward, whether that's healing, or just for sharing
22 your story. And so, they began actually doing that.

23 And then, of course, you can only have so
24 many eagle feathers. So, they made the call out to others.
25 And so, many have now been giving the feathers to the

1 Commission to gift to you, based on what the matriarchs,
2 the grandmother matriarchs in Haida Gwaii did.

3 There is also another gift, and it's
4 Labrador tea. And, Commissioner Audette is from Labrador,
5 so for her it's a special -- it's nice to be able to give
6 that to you.

7 And, actually, Reg is just going to say
8 something here, too.

9 **MR. REG BUGLER:** I'd like just to say a few
10 comments in regards to this whole process that happened
11 here this evening. Very, very retriggering for the family.
12 And, a lot of the statements made were very bravely made,
13 and confident by the family. We would like to thank them
14 for all their research and all their diligence in trying to
15 find closure.

16 The important thing here is that most of the
17 families appearing in front of the Commission, they need
18 closure. And, as Native people, Indigenous people right
19 across Canada, we have a different spiritual ideology than
20 the Western ideology. We need closure when we lose someone
21 who goes on to the next phase of their spiritual journey.

22 And, in this case, I didn't even know, and
23 it's true, that young children are not allowed to go to the
24 wakes years ago. Even though they know that their deceased
25 mother was there, they were not allowed to go and say their

1 goodbyes. Maybe Sonia was old enough to sneak in there,
2 but the other siblings weren't allowed to go. So, all
3 these years they live with that. They couldn't even go and
4 say their final goodbyes to their mother who was lying in
5 her casket.

6 A lot of the families here that appear
7 across Canada, they cannot come to a conclusion of closure
8 without a ceremony. By rights, the federal government
9 should contribute some monetary fund for them to put up a
10 ceremony, like a feast, or maybe even a memorial round
11 dance, so that they can bring back, you know, the spirit of
12 their ancestor in ceremony, and then to send their
13 ancestors off to that -- (Native word), they call it in
14 Cree. Heaven.

15 A lot of Aboriginal people, they have that
16 ideology to do that. If you guys could contribute some
17 money for that, that would be truly appreciated. It would
18 bring that ultimate closure for them to finally put this at
19 ease. Even though if you can't get answers from the
20 previous, you know, fumbling investigators who checked into
21 the circumstances, I think that that should be addressed at
22 some point.

23 It's very important that you seriously
24 consider what I'm saying, because it's true. They have to
25 have some point of, you know, assistance in bringing

1 closure to this. All of these other gestures are
2 meaningless. I just had to say that, because I didn't
3 realize that they weren't able to say goodbye to their mom,
4 even though she was lying in her coffin.

5 Yes, part of the gift I was given, I guess,
6 is intended for that, but still. There's still more that
7 they want to do in memory of their beautiful mother. I
8 remember her, you know, and now her granddaughter is
9 carrying that name, Angel Woman. Sylvia was like that.
10 She was like an angel to many. She was very -- she had a
11 very uplifting, you know, I don't know, like, personality.
12 She made people feel good and laugh. And, unfortunately,
13 she met, you know, a dire circumstance. I thought I would
14 just like to...

15 And, I acknowledge Lance for adopting me as
16 his uncle. I will take him as a son from this point on.
17 And even, you know, the other boys if they choose to, and
18 Sonia, if she wants. I can be their uncle. *Hay-Hay*.

19 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Commissioner
20 Audette, I believe that concludes hearings for today in
21 this space, and I understand that hearings commence again
22 tomorrow in Public 1, in this room, at 9:00 a.m. So, if
23 you could please officially close, that would be great.

24 Merci. So, we are closed for today. Thank
25 you.

1 --- Exhibits (code: P01P06P0103)

2 **Exhibit 1:** Digital copy of only photograph the family
3 has of Sylvia; shown on monitors during
4 public hearing

5 **Exhibit 2:** ****SEALED**** Edmonton Police Service covering
6 letter

7 **Exhibit 3:** ****SEALED**** Alberta Justice and Solicitor
8 General letter

9 --- Upon adjourning at 18:37

10

11

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

12

13 I, Shirley Chang, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I
14 have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and
15 accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this
16 matter.

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Shirley Chang

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February 13, 2018

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