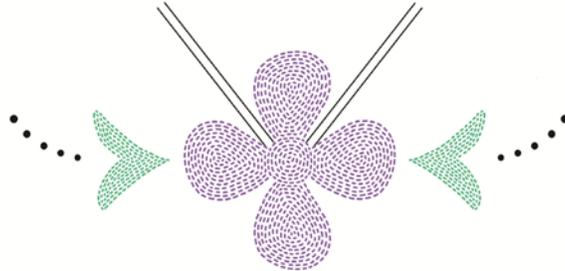


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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 Statement Gathering
Best Western Plus Norwester Hotel
Thunder Bay, Ontario**



PUBLIC

December 5, 2017

Statement - Volume 165

S.D.

Statement gathered by Francine Merasty

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II

ORDER

Pursuant to Rule 7 of *Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice*, Chief Commissioner Marion Buller ordered that all names be made anonymous in this transcript and any related documents. The order for anonymity was made June 25th, 2019.

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Documents submitted with testimony: none.

1 Thunder Bay, Ontario

2 ---Upon commencing on Tuesday, December 5, 2017 at 2:55
3 p.m.

4 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Okay. This is
5 Francine Merasty of the National Inquiry into Missing and
6 Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, speaking on the record
7 with [J.D.] of [Ontario community 1]. And she's travelled
8 here from -- did you travel here from [Ontario community
9 1]?

10 **MS. J.D.:** Toronto, Ontario.

11 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Okay. She's
12 travelled here from Toronto, Ontario. We're here in
13 Thunder Bay, Ontario, and the date is December 5th, 2017.
14 [J.], you're here to voluntarily give your statement in
15 your own matter as a survivor. And present with us in the
16 room are [B.F.] who is a friend of [J.]. Yvonne Johnson
17 (ph) who is also a statement taker. [B.]?

18 **MS. B.S.:** *[Gives last name]*.

19 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Is a health support
20 worker, and [D.K.], health support worker. Your statement
21 will be audio recorded today, and you've also allowed us to
22 videotape your statement. Can you please confirm you'll
23 agree with this?

24 **MS. J.D.:** Yes.

25 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** And what do you want

1 to tell the Commissioners, [J.]?

2 MS. J.D.: I want to tell the Commissioners
3 my story of the game and how I got out.

4 MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay. So you can
5 begin wherever you want to begin.

6 MS. J.D.: I was human trafficked from like,
7 2008 to 2014. But I think my family had a lot to do with
8 how I got to there -- into the hands of a trafficker in
9 Toronto. So when I was, like, young, like, six years old I
10 was being abused by family members. And I don't know who
11 else as I was growing up, but that was always there. Like,
12 that if you told somebody they wouldn't tell the police or
13 anything. We were always told not to tell anybody 'cause
14 that's bad.

15 We knew not to talk to Child Welfare because
16 we knew we would be taken away. So when I got 13; to the
17 age of 13, 14, I was out of control. My grandma couldn't
18 control me no more or handle me. She raised me, so she
19 gave me to my mom.

20 MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: [J.], where did you
21 grow up?

22 MS. J.D.: I grew up in [Ontario community
23 2].

24 MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So the events you're
25 speaking about right now happened in [Ontario community 2]?

1 MS. J.D.: Yes.

2 MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay.

3 MS. J.D.: And my mom couldn't -- my mom
4 couldn't control me either. And I watched her my whole
5 life doing needles, all different kinds of men all the
6 time, stealing, in and out of jail. Stuff like that. I
7 grew around bikers. And that's what she told me too, and
8 she couldn't handle me no more, so I -- I went and stayed
9 with one of my aunts, and she introduced me to some bikers.
10 And I was like, 14, 15. I had unlimited supply to like,
11 cocaine, crack, money, guns, anything I wanted.

12 And she told me he's my -- he's my sugar
13 daddy and I didn't have to use my body to -- to get what I
14 want, because my mom -- she's seen what my mom was doing to
15 me; dropping me off to hotels with guys, but I didn't
16 understand what was going on. So that I ended up in jail
17 when I was like, 18, and then I turned 19 in jail. And I
18 got transferred to Penetanguishene. And this girl said,
19 "Oh, you want to make some money? I know this guy that'll
20 like you so much. He'll take good care of you." So I was
21 like, "Okay." You know, he sounds like my sugar daddy,
22 kind of, up north. So I was like, "I'll give it a shot."

23 I always wanted to come to Toronto, so I
24 came down. I met the pimp. He went by 'Blue.' And he
25 brought me to a hotel, and the first night he raped me when

1 I was there. He splashed a big -- lots of money in my
2 face. And he's like, "You want to make money?" And he was
3 asking me if I could dance, and I was drunk and high. And
4 I -- I was like, "Yeah. I can dance," and I was showing
5 him. And I thought it was just like, 'cause me and my
6 girls back home on the reserve, we just have drinks and we
7 dance. That's what we did, but little did I know, he was
8 trying to see if I was a good enough dancer to be a
9 stripper.

10 And for the next like, month or so, he was
11 buying me like, nails, getting my nails done. Buying me
12 anything I wanted. He would drive me anywhere. Like, I
13 felt like a princess. He called me a princess, and then a
14 month later he -- he just kept telling me I had to make
15 money. And I was like, "Okay." And then I got like, my --
16 my social assistance money. He's like -- I went to go cash
17 it, he's like, "Where's -- where's the money?" I'm like,
18 "What do you mean, where's the money? It's my money." And
19 he hit -- he hit me. He's like, "You -- you have to give
20 it to me or you can't stay with me." So I gave it to him,
21 'cause all that month he was like, I -- I fell in love with
22 him. And I got pregnant. And that was it.

23 After he -- he hit me that first time, that
24 was it. The next week he dropped me off to the strip club,
25 and he said, "Go make some money, you broke bitch." And

1 then that's how I got in there. And I -- I was in that
2 strip club, it's called the -- The Devil's Playground in
3 Etobicoke, in Toronto. And I didn't leave there for like,
4 two years. Two-and-a-half years I worked in all the strip
5 clubs, up in -- up in Mississauga, Toronto.

6 And during those times in 2008, the
7 recession hit and girls were expected to pay a minimum to
8 their pimp, or their men, they called them. A \$1000, and
9 then right when I started to gain the recession hit.
10 You're lucky if you could come home with \$20, and this pimp
11 had this expectation on me. It was impossible to make it,
12 but then I got really good at making money, and I'd make
13 like, \$2000, \$3000 a day, but during those times, and I
14 didn't know nothing, he would beat me standing outside in
15 the front, all hours of the night, 'cause I didn't have no
16 money.

17 And I didn't know my way around Toronto.
18 He'd just leave me out there. And he'd beat me. This went
19 on for like -- I was with him 2008, '9, '10. I left him,
20 and then met my daughter's dad, but he got killed when I
21 was pregnant. He got murdered. And I called the pimp, and
22 I'm like, "Oh, I'm pregnant and my man got killed." And
23 then he told me, "Come see -- see him." And he told me to
24 have an abortion and I was like, "No." I was like, "How
25 can you even say that? This is not -- this isn't your

1 kid." And I'm like, "You had your chance. I had like,
2 eight -- eight abortions for you from your -- from -- from
3 you." And I was like, "You remember what you told me?"
4 Said, "You -- you told me if I don't get rid of it, I can't
5 stay with you," so I listened to him because I was in love
6 with him.

7 And when I got pregnant from another guy, I
8 didn't want to let it go, because I know he was a liar.
9 And then I finally got what I wanted, but my daughter's dad
10 left. Right away, just (indiscernible). I don't know why,
11 but he was just gone. Like -- and then 2011, '12 I had my
12 daughter. And she got taken away on me. And I fought and
13 fought and fought and fought.

14 2013 I gave my daughter to my grandma, to
15 her dad's mother. And the clock ran out for like, the two
16 years, Child Welfare. So I was desperate, I gave her to
17 her dad's mom, and then she got -- they were beating her
18 there. So they took her away again, and then they -- she
19 fought for her. Child Welfare gave her back. And this
20 time when -- when she got taken away on them, they burnt
21 her hand on the stove, and that's -- I met my baby father
22 for like, my son. And he was with me when she got taken
23 away from her grandma.

24 But in 2014, I went back to my pimp. I was
25 just about to get my daughter back, and he's -- I met him

1 and he's like, "I'll help you get your daughter back." And
2 I made an agreement, he'd help me get a place, and get my
3 license and stuff. And I'm like, "Okay. No games or
4 anything this time." And it was all good at first. I had
5 my place, and then he brought his other girls around and
6 she'd like to like, bully me and try to torture me in all
7 different kinds of ways. Me and her would always be in
8 competition with each other, see who could make the more --
9 the most money, so we were like, it was like this: whoever
10 made the most money, the pimp would be in your bed. That's
11 how it was. And I didn't know that.

12 So I called him out on our agreement. He's
13 trying to kick me out of the place, and I wouldn't -- I
14 wouldn't back down. I was like, "This is my place. This
15 is our agreement, and I'm sticking to it." And he told me
16 he's going to hurt me. I said, "Well, can you please do it
17 now, so I can get out of here?" And he told me, "No." So
18 I told him, "Well, when you're going to hurt me, don't do
19 it when my back is turned like a coward."

20 And a couple days went by. I had dreams of
21 this happening before it happening. And in my dream was --
22 I was looking in the mirror, and he came and smashed my leg
23 with a piece of glass. And my Achille's tendon, I could
24 see it was popping out in my dream. And I just seen the
25 evil on his face. And that day came. I lived across the

1 street from the cemetery. Every day I'd wake up there I
2 said, "He's going to put me in there."

3 And he did. That day came. Like
4 premonition my dream came true and he smashed my leg with a
5 -- a glass and my Achille's tendon popped out. I had 15
6 stitches. And I never seen him again after that. He just
7 ran away. He -- he said, "Don't put me in jail." So when
8 I left the -- that's when I left the game.

9 And I was -- and I realized like, the
10 difference. What I had back home, I had a sugar daddy
11 giving me everything I wanted, and then I came down to
12 Toronto and everything flipped on me. I had a pimp. I had
13 to work for everything. Get beat up for it if I didn't
14 listen to him. And also, like, how a Native woman -- I was
15 a little girl. I used to love watching Pocahontas movie.
16 I had a cat, Pocahontas, and people called me Pocahontas;
17 my family members. And I never knew the history of her,
18 the real Pocahontas or anything.

19 So when I went in -- went to the strip club,
20 my -- that turned into my stripper name. My striper name
21 was Pocahontas. And people would make fun of me. They're
22 like, "Do you know what happened to the real Pocahontas?"
23 But I didn't know, and I just didn't care. So when I left
24 the game I -- I got Pocahontas tattooed on my arm right
25 here, and I learned what really happened to her. And I was

1 like -- I just cried for her.

2 And now they're still -- people still bring
3 up Pocahontas' name like, Donald Trump, Nicki Minaj, people
4 like that. How our Native women are being sexualized and
5 how it's normalized. And they're using us. Like, all my
6 life I've been a walking target. I've been attacked, I
7 don't know how many times, by men. And I just want -- I
8 just want our women to be -- stop being trafficked. And
9 our families stop exploiting us, putting us out there,
10 exposing us.

11 And my pimp, I put him in -- I put him in
12 jail. He got 13 years and everything I tried to -- to heal
13 up; I tried the Western ways. I had a holistic or
14 traditional counsellor, I had a Western one. I've tried
15 Koran religion, I've tried Roman Catholic religion.
16 Nothing worked for me. And I did -- and I was like, one
17 day I was like, the only thing I didn't try was my Native
18 culture to try to heal. And ceremonies and picking up a
19 bundle.

20 And I started my -- my journey when I left
21 the game with the tobacco tie just like this. And I held
22 it in my hand every time I was in the hotels or even when I
23 seen that pimp. If I went -- if I was --

24 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** How -- how old were
25 you at this time?

1 **MS. J.D.:** When I left the game?

2 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** M'hm.

3 **MS. J.D.:** I was like, 25. And I -- this
4 little red tobacco tie was what saved me from the game.
5 And I started with that, and then I got a feather, a smudge
6 bowl, medicines. Then I'd collect my stuff as I went
7 along, and I'd hold that and I wouldn't stop. I wouldn't
8 stop holding my tobacco tie wherever I went.

9 So when I -- I didn't know what to do with
10 the tobacco tie, so I went with my -- my friend. She's a
11 healing practitioner and we went and found a tree in the
12 woods. And it was, like, open. Like, you can -- it was
13 hollow. We went and put -- put that stuff, that tobacco
14 tie in there. And I let it go. So when I left the game,
15 like, if any girls want to heal, like, the answer to get
16 out of it is picking up our bundle and that's what -- it
17 can get us out of there. I don't know what else to say
18 right now, at this moment.

19 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So who -- is there
20 anybody that you talked to like, any -- your spirituality,
21 like any Elders or?

22 **MS. J.D.:** Yeah. I -- I -- I -- I've always
23 went to see four, five healers on my journey. I always go
24 sit with them, tell them my dreams and stuff like that.
25 Figure out all these feelings that I'm feeling because the

1 first time I left them, I used drugs to not feel nothing.
2 And then this time I'm -- I'm sober. I went through this -
3 - two pregnancies. Went through two trials. And yeah, I
4 used -- I used a lot of our services, but as I went along,
5 I, like, learned -- I learned something, like, spiritual.
6 Like, something came to me. I was -- my Native name was
7 Earth Woman, and I learned my -- my clan was wolf. It's
8 wolf. And I got two eagle feathers that day. My colours
9 are green and blue.

10 And, like, a long time ago when I was, like,
11 in grade 5, I made this painting in my Ojibwe class. And
12 they put it -- I painted, my colours blended, green and
13 blue. There's a Native woman holding the feather to the
14 sky like this, and another feather like this. Like it's
15 falling in the sky. And I put a wolf in -- on the cliff
16 howling to a moon. So when I left the game, and I got my
17 name in colours and clan and that, and the two eagle
18 feathers, I was, like, well, there was that painting I did
19 a long time ago. So like, now I know I've -- I've
20 completed my journey because it came in a full 100. I
21 figured out what -- who I am and where I'm supposed to be.
22 And I knew I was supposed to come back to the game a second
23 time to finish it.

24 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So did all -- all
25 this happen in Toronto? Like, getting back to your

1 culture?

2 MS. J.D.: Yeah.

3 MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay.

4 MS. J.D.: Yeah.

5 MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So you talked about
6 your mom as well being a drug addict, and do you know
7 anything about her background? Like, did she went to
8 residential school? What -- was she (indiscernible)?

9 MS. J.D.: She told me like, her story's
10 very -- very much like mine. And it makes me wonder, like,
11 what did my grandma go through? How -- and I would ask my
12 grandma how her life was, but she wouldn't tell us nothing.
13 Tell me nothing. So when I tried to figure out, like,
14 where is this all coming from? Like, how is -- why is
15 there a woman going through stuff like this? The same
16 stuff. All the women in her family are like this. Every
17 single one. I got maybe two male cousins. I got no uncles
18 'cause none of my aunties -- no -- no woman in my family's
19 with their boyfriend or husband. Not one woman is with
20 them.

21 And I -- I notice that my mom, she had the
22 same cut -- a man cut her the same way on her Achille's as
23 me. She has the same one. My [Aunt 1] got cut the same
24 way by a man with -- on her Achille's. So I'm, like, is
25 there, like, a curse on us or something? 'Cause the three

1 women in my family, we both got attacked the same way. I
2 was in the game, they're generations different. I don't
3 know why -- like, what did we do to deserve this? And why
4 -- and I know what my -- my mom, I tried to explain all
5 this to her, but she doesn't get it. She doesn't get it.
6 I could tell her that, "You did all this to me," and she
7 said, "I didn't do nothing. Your grandma did that to you."
8 And she -- she denies it. Probably 'til the end of her
9 life she will -- she didn't do nothing.

10 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** And where is your --
11 your father?

12 **MS. J.D.:** My father -- I met him -- he was
13 around. I remember someone saw this guy following me
14 around and taking pictures of me when I was, like, five
15 years old. Early in the morning when I'd go get on the
16 school bus, and it was my first day of school, and some guy
17 came and took pictures of me. And I told my mom after
18 school, and I didn't forget his face. And then years, as I
19 grew up, almost every year I would see him come look for me
20 and see me or come walk by me. He wouldn't bother me, but
21 he would be there.

22 And so now I'm, like, 11, 12. My mom and
23 grandma's, like, "Oh, your dad wants to meet you." And
24 I'm, like, "No. I'm scared." So they're, like, "No,
25 you're meeting him." And I'm, like, "Okay. Fine." So I

1 went outside and played in the snow. And I was waiting for
2 him to come. And he didn't show up. And my mom said, "He
3 didn't come." So I was, like, "Okay."

4 And I was living with my mom, something
5 happened all of a sudden, then he and my -- my sister had
6 to go live with my grandma, and my grandma came and grabbed
7 me one night and she's, like, "Come, sit down by grandma."
8 "Mommy, I have to tell you something." And I knew it
9 wasn't good. She told me when her dad died, and I -- and I
10 -- and I said, "I thought he was supposed to come see me,
11 and he didn't come, and now he's gone?" And she's like,
12 "Do you want to go see him?" I was, like, "You know, I
13 don't want to. I'm scared." She's, like, "No. You're
14 going. I'm making you," so we went down to the lodge on my
15 reserve from [Ontario community 2], 'cause we lived in the
16 city, and I -- I went to go see him at his -- at his
17 funeral, the first time in my life I met him.

18 And everyone was whispering, "Oh, she just
19 looks like her dad." And I met my great-grandma there on
20 my dad's side. And that's how I met him. And after that,
21 I started spiralling. Started drinking and drugs. I quit
22 school. And when I grew up --

23 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Sorry. Go ahead.

24 **MS. J.D.:** -- I've seen him at -- at the
25 funeral. And I didn't know 'til the few years later after

1 I was -- I was, like, "Okay. That guy that was always
2 around when I was growing up," I was, like, "That was my
3 dad that was there, but I just didn't know it."

4 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Was your mom a single
5 parent?

6 **MS. J.D.:** Yeah, she would take us, but then
7 she would -- she would relapse. She was a heavy -- heavy
8 drug user. Like, she told us it was her medicine. She
9 would snap at us. She would steal. There would be
10 detectives knocking at our door every other day. We knew
11 when the -- I was in, like, grade 4; we knew not to open
12 the door to the police. We tell them, "Oh, our mom's not
13 here. We can't open the door," even though, like, they'd
14 be, like, "We're the police." "Yeah. But what if you're a
15 liar? We don't know that." And, like, we'd wait 'til our
16 grandma would come.

17 Like, I don't know, like, if I would be
18 better off in Child Welfare growing up or just where I am,
19 but I'm here today and I'm going to speak for the woman
20 before me in history. And I'm going to help -- help
21 support the woman in the future after me to stop this.

22 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Did you have
23 siblings?

24 **MS. J.D.:** Yeah. I have a younger one, and
25 she'd always cry, and cry and cry for my mom. And I'd

1 always have to baby her up. My grandma wouldn't -- she'd
2 give me -- she'd slap me up for me babying up my little
3 sister and telling -- telling her, like, "Oh, it's okay.
4 She's coming, you know? And I'd just have to -- I'd just
5 have to love her and make her stop crying. Like, growing
6 up she was like my daughter. I'd get mixed up calling her
7 my daughter, or my daughter or my sister all the time.

8 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** M'hm.

9 (indiscernible) but I'm having a hard time, you know,
10 breathing. And -- but anyways, so you grew up in [Ontario
11 community 2], and after that you were in -- in prison or
12 jail you said for a while?

13 **MS. J.D.:** Yeah. For, like, four, five
14 months in Penetanguishene.

15 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Okay.

16 **MS. J.D.:** Me and my mom were in jail
17 together. And we were sharing a holding cell. We got
18 transferred from Algoma Remand Treatment Centre
19 (indiscernible)to Penetanguishene, together in the paddy
20 wagon. Then we were on the same range together.

21 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** M'hm.

22 **MS. J.D.:** And then someone told on us that
23 we were a mother and daughter, so they separated us.

24 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** M'hm.

25 **MS. J.D.:** My mom was really sick. She

1 almost died in there, and then I met that girl. She was my
2 cell mate.

3 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Yeah.

4 **MS. J.D.:** Yeah.

5 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** And you were 18?

6 **MS. J.D.:** Yeah. Just turned 19, yeah.

7 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So immediately after
8 that you moved to Toronto?

9 **MS. J.D.:** Yeah. Some guy's, like, "Hey, you
10 want to come to Toronto with me?" And I was, like, "Oh,
11 okay. Free ride, nice." I'm going to take this girl up on
12 her offer, 'cause it sounds pretty good.

13 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So you've been there
14 ever since that time?

15 **MS. J.D.:** Yeah. And my grandma died when I
16 was down in Toronto. And I told my pimp. He wouldn't --
17 he didn't believe me.

18 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** M'hm.

19 **MS. J.D.:** And he -- he wasn't going to take
20 me out there. I'm, like, "My grandma died. I have to go up
21 there." And he just dropped me off at the Greyhound. I
22 went up there and missed her funeral, and he -- he stole
23 that away from me, 'cause when she was alive, I could have
24 still went up there, but he wouldn't let me. He stole that
25 from me. I will never see her again.

1 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** What do you think
2 might have helped you growing up?

3 **MS. J.D.:** I had a cousin [Cousin 1] that
4 would come all the time. One time I broke my arm I was,
5 like, in grade 1 and I broke my arm and my teacher asked if
6 my grandma was hurting me at home. And so they'd come ask
7 me questions and I'm, like, "No. I fell down and broke my
8 arm," but I had that cousin that would come throughout my
9 childhood and ask if anyone's touching me, if anyone's
10 okay. Am I okay? And then he wanted to -- he wanted to
11 take me away, to go live with him out in Calgary.

12 So my grandma said, "No." And I think that
13 would have stopped me from where -- where I was led to. If
14 she would have just let me go live with him, I would have
15 been okay. And today, my cousin, the same cousin, he has,
16 like, ten degrees in university. Like, I just think about
17 that, but my journey is -- this is what I'm meant to be
18 here for.

19 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So you said you
20 wanted to make things better for future generations. Do
21 you have any ideas or any recommendations? I know one of
22 the things you said was for people to get involved with
23 their spirituality?

24 **MS. J.D.:** Yeah.

25 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Yeah.

1 **MS. J.D.:** That's my main recommendation,
2 picking up your bundle.

3 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** M'hm.

4 **MS. J.D.:** That's what got me out of the
5 game, was picking up my bundle. Family members have to
6 keep reaching out to the younger generations and whoever's
7 in the custody of these children and see if something
8 better for them out there. And some -- like, other
9 families offering, don't -- don't give that up. Let the
10 child go. Let them. Don't let them -- don't let them go
11 through what we went through. How can -- my grandma I
12 said, how come she let my mom go through that, and then how
13 come my mom let me go through that? Why wouldn't she just
14 let me go if she knew something was out there better?

15 Like, I don't know why. And I know that
16 I -- I acknowledge and I recognize what's going on. And I
17 see the cycle and that. And I think it's, like, it's
18 colonialism that's causing all this. And if Justin Trudeau
19 doesn't take out the sex discrimination and the Indian Act,
20 the Native woman [sic] are not going to stop getting
21 murdered. Nothing's going to stop. We're never going to
22 stop having these Inquiries.

23 And I have a daughter. And when I was
24 pregnant for her, I know when we carry a female, we carry
25 our granddaughter when we're pregnant. And all I thought

1 was to the past two, three generations before me and I'm
2 thinking about the next ahead of me. How I'm going to be a
3 grandma one day and I'm not going to let that -- watch my
4 daughter -- I'm not going to let my daughter go what -- go
5 through what we went through or pass that on to the next
6 generation.

7 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** (Indiscernible). Is
8 there anything else you'd like to share?

9 **MS. J.D.:** Not at the moment. Just pick up
10 your bundles. All it takes is a tobacco tie like this.
11 This is what got me out of the game. It looks like
12 nothing, but a lot of prayers went into that. Every time I
13 was in trouble, I prayed, I was desperate. I'd beg. I'd
14 cry. And then, all of a sudden, my prayers are answered,
15 and Creator, he comes in the most mysterious ways. And
16 people don't -- people seem so silly, seem so silly when we
17 pray and cry to someone that we think that isn't there and
18 that isn't there. The past generations drilled into our
19 brains, "Oh, that stuff doesn't work." It -- it really
20 does work. And I highly recommend that, you know, every
21 single Indigenous person in this country pick up their
22 bundle and starting using it, and living in our
23 (indiscernible) ways and not in the Western way.

24 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** This -- thank you for
25 sharing. (indiscernible) ask you (indiscernible) come what

1 you were like as a girl? Like, what things you liked with
2 your colours (indiscernible)?

3 **MS. J.D.:** When I was a little girl, we
4 never had too much toys, so we were always, like, using our
5 imagination. You're climbing trees, we were skating, we're
6 playing on the [Ontario community 2]. Me and my cousin
7 [Cousin 2] we -- there's a river, and we'd just hop up,
8 we'd just go on the rocks and hop up one rock to the other.
9 And we'd -- we'd make up a simple game and it was so fun.
10 And like -- like, whoever -- we're going to hop from one
11 end of the river all the way to the top and whoever gets
12 the soaker by the time we get to the top loses.

13 We'd make up funny games. We'd go swimming.
14 We were dangerous. We'd play in the rapids, where the
15 water is and if we fell in the water, like, we were dead.
16 We'd do dangerous stuff. We'd hop on the train from one
17 end of the city to the other. We would act out sometimes,
18 but, like, we all stuck together, me and my cousins. And
19 we're all in different places today. I'm in a very
20 different place than where they are. I was so happy, but
21 when I started getting abused, when I was a little girl, I
22 didn't know what was going on. And no one didn't listen to
23 me. I -- I would hide in my closet. And I didn't know
24 what to do. I remember more bad stuff than good stuff, but
25 I always remember my grandma coming to save me.

1 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** M'hm. All right,
2 well, if you have nothing else to share, I'm good to close.

3 **MS. J.D.:** Okay.

4 **MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So it's December 5,
5 2017. It's 3:26 p.m. in Thunder Bay, and we're done.

6 ---Upon adjourning at 3:26 p.m.

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Anja Curuvija, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this matter.



Anja Curuvija

March 11, 2018