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
Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre
Whitehorse, Yukon

PUBLIC

Thursday June 1, 2017

Public Volume 3

Shaun LaDue, Terry Ladue, Hammond Dick & Lloyd Caesar, In Relation to Jane Dick-Ladue;

Ann Maje Raider, Cecilia Gobeil & Mary Charlie, In Relation to Tootsie Charlie;

Joan Jack, Lorraine Dawson, Bryan Jack, Allan, Heather Jack & Jane Anne Carver, In Relation to Barbara Jack;

Gina Gill, In Relation to her Auntie Sophie & cousin Linda Joe;

William Carlick, In Relation to Angel Carlick & Wendy Carlick

VERBATIM WORDS WEST LTD.
260 - 13711 72nd Avenue, Surrey, B.C. V3W 2P2
t. (604) 591-6677 f. (604) 591-1567

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ORAL TESTIMONY ONLY; NO EXHIBITS ENTERED

Whitehorse, Yukon
June 1, 2017

(HEARING RECONVENED)

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

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

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

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

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

Have a good day.

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

ELDER WILLIAM CARLICK [speaking without a microphone]: Let's take a moment to shut down the chatter in our mind. When we do that, we become good listeners. We need to listen for the Creator to come to us in a good way. We need to be good listeners so that we can hear what the ancestors and helpers have to say. We have to be grateful [indiscernible] never ask for anything from [indiscernible]. He has given us everything we need. Everything. All we do is give thanks, be grateful to Him. And always remember that we need to follow His great law, His unwritten law.

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

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

know it or whether we don't know it, that's not important, only that we believe in Him. I pray to all our ancestors to have pity and have mercy on us, and to have mercy on me because I'm so pitiful but yet I'm so grateful. [Aboriginal language spoken]

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Ms. van Tongeren, are you ready?

WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Yes. Thank you.

So June 1st, scheduled for 9 o'clock till 10:30 the key speaker will be Shaun Ladue, S-h-a-u-n L-a-d-u-e. And as a first request, Madam Commissioner, I would ask that Shaun Ladue present a prayer for the group today for the room.

SHAUN LADUE: [Aboriginal language spoken] I thank you for watching over my cousins, my brother, my relatives as we come together to tell our stories. And I pray that the commissioners continue to hear us with open hears and open minds, and that Canada can follow our path to healing as we tell these stories. [Aboriginal language spoken]

WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Mr. Registrar, this witness, Mr. Ladue, would like to affirm with an eagle feather, please.

BRYAN ZANDBERG: Just grab that feather here.

WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. And, Lloyd, would you like to join in swearing with the eagle feather. Just come forward and hold it together.

BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. So we've got Shaun and Terry, and, sir, your name?

LLOYD CAESAR: Lloyd.

WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Lloyd --

BRYAN ZANDBERG: Lloyd? Okay.

WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- Caesar.

BRYAN ZANDBERG: Lloyd Caesar? Great.

WENDY VAN TONGEREN: C-a-e-s-a-r --

BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you very much.

WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- L-l-o-y-d.

BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you.

Good morning. Welcome. Do the three of you solemnly affirm that the evidence you will give today will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

SHAUN LADUE: I do.

TERRY LADUE: I do.

LLOYD CAESAR: I do.

SHAUN LADUE, TERRY LADUE and LLOYD CAESAR, affirmed.

BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you very much.
WENDY VAN TONGEREN: And Shaun now has another request of the Commissioner, please.
SHAUN LADUE: I request that the commissioners also take an affirmation to continue to listen to our stories across Canada with an open mind and an open heart and free of prejudice.
BRYAN ZANDBERG: Chief Commissioner Marion Buller, Commissioner Qajaq Robinson, do you both solemnly affirm that you will continue to do this work with an open heart, with an open mind, and without prejudice as you go across the country?
COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: I do.
CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Yes, absolutely.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER and COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON solemnly affirm.

BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Okay, thank you.

First hearing
Shaun LaDue, Terry LaDue, Lloyd Caesar, Hammond Dick
(Family of Jane Dick-LaDue) with Wendy van Tongeren
(Commission Counsel)

WENDY VAN TONGEREN: So may I call you "Shaun"?
SHAUN LADUE: Yeah.
WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you. Everyone who comes into this room to speak to the commissioners has made a choice and they have made choices about what they are prepared to share, what they seek to share with the commissioners, and in this context with many, many more because this is a very public forum. Shaun, I'm going to ask you to just summarize here at the beginning what are the topics that you intend to share with the commissioners today?
SHAUN LADUE: Today I'm going to share about my mother, her death, the impact all of this has had on my family, my -- my four siblings and myself.
WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you. Now, before we actually get into the body of -- of those topics,

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

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

> We didn't start the fire
> It was always burning since the world's been turning
> We didn't start the fire
> No, we didn't light it, but we tried to fight it

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Speaking to staff]

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

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

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

Okay. So that's number 2, please.

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

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

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

The social worker, Ms. Lafayette (phonetic),

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Aboriginal language spoken]

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

SHAUN LADUE: No.

WENDY VAN TONGEREN What would you like to do now?

SHAUN LADUE: Do you have anything to say?

My brother will talk for a minute.

WENDY VAN TONGEREN Okay.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

pictures of my dad and -- or who I thought was my dad. Pictures of my family coming to me. I still don't know why I didn't let go, but I'm here and I don't -- I don't question it. Maybe [indiscernible Aboriginal word] had a reason for me to climb back over there and come back across, I don't know, but I know that that's -- that's what made me realize that I don't need to do that to myself anymore. I don't need to punish myself because it wasn't my fault, and for many years I blamed myself for it. Out of all those people in that picture, I'm probably the only one that was willing to help everyone. I'd go -- bend over backwards because that's what I think family does. When you say you love your family, you'd do anything for that family member, and I would. Even though I never grew up with either one of them, I would always be there for them. I don't know what happened or what changed in my life, but I know that dealing with this today for me is letting go of something that I haven't let go of for 52 years, and that's the anger I had towards the government officials, and the anger I have towards against the RCMP, the anger I have against [indiscernible] people. I don't trust. And if you want my trust, you've got to earn my trust. And if I see this fall apart, I'll never trust again. [indiscernible]

WENDY VAN TONGEREN Thank you, Terry.

Shaun, is there anything that you need at the moment?

SHAUN LADUE: No, I'm good. I'm good.

WENDY VAN TONGEREN Okay. So, I'm wondering whether or not I can ask you the question that we talked about.

SHAUN LADUE: Go for it.

WENDY VAN TONGEREN Okay. So, Terry, you are called by many "The Bridge", B-r--

SHAUN LADUE: That's Terry, I'm Shaun.

WENDY VAN TONGEREN I'm sorry, Shaun. "Wendy, please remember who you're talking to," to self.

Shaun, many people call you "The Bridge", B-r-i-d-g-e.

SHAUN LADUE: I'm considered a bridge because --

WENDY VAN TONGEREN There's just a little bit more to the question.

SHAUN LADUE: [indiscernible]

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

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

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

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

What was the other part of that question?

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

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

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

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

SHAUN LADUE: Yeah.

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

SHAUN LADUE: Yeah.

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

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

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

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

[indiscernible]

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

LLOYD CAESAR: Good morning.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you.

LLOYD CAESAR: Thank you, Hammond.

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

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

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

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

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

SHAUN LADUE: I still love chocolate cake.

[Audience laughter]

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

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

You had some questions?

WENDY VAN TONGEREN: You actually --

SHAUN LADUE: [indiscernible]

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

SHAUN LADUE: You came to Ross River.

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

SHAUN LADUE: You got to meet my daughter.

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

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

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

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

WENDY VAN TONGEREN: A wonderful example and congratulations.

Are there any questions from the commissioners?

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

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

to use your words again, and I'd like your permission to do that.
SHAUN LADUE: Yes. Thank you.
COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you.
SHAUN LADUE: [Aboriginal language spoken]
COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I don't have any questions.
WENDY VAN TONGEREN: I think we have some seeds, if ... I think Shaun, it would be all the more special if it came from you, rather than me give it.
[indiscernible]
CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: We're so grateful that you came today and shared your wonderful stories with us. And we have a very small gift for you, they're seed packages. They're important because they can give new life. So, thank you.
[hearing din]
CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: We'll take a break until 10:45.

First hearing Exhibits
Shaun LaDue, Terry LaDue, Lloyd Caesar, Hammond Dick
(Family of Jane Dick-LaDue)

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

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

Second hearing:
Ann Maje Raider, Cecilia Gobeil and Mary Charlie (Family of Tootsie Charlie) with Christa Big Canoe (Counsel)

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

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

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

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

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

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

VARIOUS SPEAKERS: Mary.

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

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

ANN MAJE RAIDER, CECILIA GOBEIL & MARY CHARLIE: Yes.

BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you.

ANN RAIDER, CECILIA GOBEIL and MARY CHARLIE, affirmed.

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

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: [indiscernible]

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

ANN MAJE RAIDER: [Dene spoken]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you.

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

Cecilia, may I ask you some questions?

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

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

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

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

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

CECILIA GOBEIL: Okay.

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

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

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

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

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

I have only one more question for you, if I can, Cecilia. You had -- you had told the commissioners and you have referred to Lower Post and we all now know that Lower Post was one of the residential schools. When Tootsie died, where were you guys? Where were the children? Where were her children?
CECILIA GOBEIL: I think we were all at Lower Post. I can't remember. I was very young and I can't remember what has happened. I think -- I'm pretty sure it happened when we were down -- we were going -- we were still in Lower Post, but I wasn't too sure really. I just -- my mind is blank. I can't -- can't remember.
CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So is it fair to say you didn't know at the time of her death? No one told you because you guys were at school?
CECILIA GOBEIL: I didn't know -- put it this way, I didn't know about my sister's death for a long time. I don't -- I can't remember. I can't remember. My -- my mind is just blank. I don't know when. Maybe because I just don't want to welcome it, I don't want to accept it, I don't know. I just can't -- can't remember.
CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.

Ann, may I ask you some questions?
ANN MAJE RAIDER: Yes.
CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So we've heard some stories about your sister. So maybe I'll start with that, to see if you want to add anything else about Tootsie to help the commissioners understand who she was.
ANN MAJE RAIDER: Sure. So we had a family circle last night and we both cried, all cried, and we laughed. And ... So, I know Phoebe was -- because Phoebe is the -- the oldest sister. She remembered quite a bit more about Tootsie and she shared about Tootsie's love of

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANN MAJE RAIDER: Yeah. Well, like my niece said yesterday, she lost her mom twice. They took her away to the residential school, or prison camps, and then they -- they -- the way the *Indian Act* -- the *Indian Act* was written, First Nations

weren't allowed alcohol, so for having a drink she -- she had to go to jail.

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

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

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

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

ANN MAJE RAIDER: Well, racism, well, still exists, of course, but, I mean, as -- like I say, as we move to be -- become more conscious people, you know, and more -- more awareness on education on who we are as Dena people. And ... There's just a lot of ignorance. You know, there -- there is a lot of ignorance of ... Because of ignorance people say the wrong things and do the wrong things. They -- and we're tired of educating people really. It seems like a lifelong process, right? But I think -- I -- I know that Canada can do more and I know that Canada can do better. And

we speak today and give voice to our sister, who never had a voice. She wasn't allowed the voice. She wasn't allowed legal counsel to fight her charges because in the '60s First Nations were not allowed legal counsel. She didn't have a forum to give voice to the racism. She didn't have a voice to say end the violence. So, we're going to do that across Canada for her as Indigenous women. We're all going to do that for her.

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

ANN MAJE RAIDER: The *Indian Act*.

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

ANN MAJE RAIDER: Mm-hmm.

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

ANN MAJE RAIDER: "'Intoxicant' includes 'alcohol, alcoholic, spirituous, vinous, fermented malt or other intoxicating liquor or combination of liquors and mixed liquor a part of which is spirituous, vinous, fermented, or otherwise intoxicating and all drinks or drinkable liquids and all preparations or mixtures capable of human consumption that are intoxicating.'"

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

ANN MAJE RAIDER: [indiscernible]

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

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

CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Now, that says off reserve, but there is another provision on the next page. Could you please be so kind to read in section 96

of the 1951 *Indian Act*.
ANN MAJE RAIDER: "A person who is found with intoxicants in his possession or her possession or intoxicated on a reserve is guilty of an offense and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of not less than $10 and not more than $50, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months, or to both fine and imprisonment." [as read]
CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So on your understanding and what the family had to talk about their understanding when Tootsie was arrested in Watson Lake or in -- from her home and taken to Whitehorse, it was because of the *Indian Act* said that Indians were not allowed to drink intoxicants, is that true?
ANN MAJE RAIDER: That is true.
CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And how does the family feel about that?
ANN MAJE RAIDER: Our families feel that it's -- it was a racist piece of legislation that killed our sister.
CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And it's fair to say that -- that the fact that Indigenous people in the Yukon were being arrested up until '66 or '67 --
ANN MAJE RAIDER: Yes.
CHRISTA BIG CANOE: -- on this law has caused harm?
ANN MAJE RAIDER: Yes. And our family lived in poverty. So when she was taken to jail, she had no money to get home. Yeah.
CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And so with -- with no way to get home, but please remind the commissioners how far away is Watson Lake from Whitehorse.
ANN MAJE RAIDER: Well, it depends who's driving, but ... (laughing)
[Audience laughter]
CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Fair enough.
ANN MAJE RAIDER: It's roughly around 300-and-some kilometres. ANN MAJE RAIDER: Yeah.
[Various overlapping speakers]
ANN MAJE RAIDER: Oh, yeah, a long -- yeah, that's right.
[indiscernible]
CECILIA GOBEIL: Yeah, at that time it was, well, longer to get to Whitehorse. I think it was about 10 hours, 8 hours to -- because they have the roller coast, the road was a roller coaster.

But now about four hours now. So, it's total different.

CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And so if she's in Whitehorse and she has to get home 10 hours without a ride or money to -- to get home, is it fair to say she was at risk of harm?

ANN MAJE RAIDER: Very at risk of harm, yes.

CHRISTA BIG CANOE: We've talked and the commissioners have heard the family talk about Indian Residential School and that the children were in residential school and that you were in residential school. The whole family was in residential school --

ANN MAJE RAIDER: Yes.

CHRISTA BIG CANOE: -- is that true?

ANN MAJE RAIDER: Yes.

CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And is it fair to say, without getting into details or sharing any particular things, that a number of this family suffered a lot of harm at Lower Post or other schools?

ANN MAJE RAIDER: Yes, that's true.

CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Cecilia might want to answer this one question. When the kids were taken away from Tootsie, what was she like before? Because I understand the family said that when the kids -- when the kids were taken away that's when Tootsie started -- or had -- had started to drink. Is that fair? Can you tell us a bit more about that?

CECILIA GOBEIL: I can hardly hear what you said. Can you repeat that?

CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Sure. When -- when the kids, when Tootsie's kids were taken away to school, did she drink more?

CECILIA GOBEIL: To be honest with you, I was very young and very -- I have, as I said, a little picture of her. And I don't remember her being -- drinking. And I remember her coming to see me and dropping me off some dry meat and giving me a hug and trying to get me out of there. But she always -- always -- I remember just a very little bit of her. And she was -- she was dressed nice. And she was happy to see me, but I -- I don't remember her drinking. I don't remember her -- I have got no memories of her or Matthew drinking. So, I think all that happened when -- when the kids were

taken away.

CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Does that -- do Ann or Mary want to add to that?

ANN MAJE RAIDER: Yeah, I think -- I think it's important for the public to understand some background and some context within this story. We have a big family in the Southeast Yukon. We come from a really powerful lineage. My great-grandfather was Maje. His name was Maje, whose name I have got, I have taken. I have chosen to take that name because I want that name to live. I want it to be passed on. But our family lived up on the land. We spent -- we're a nomadic people and we spent a lot of time living on the land. Our father trapped and earned his living through trapping. And we lived in Pelly Banks and we lived in Frances Lake, beautiful traditional territory.

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

Development happens up there, we have no say. We're not asked. Our elders have said no

to mines, a couple mines. They're -- they're ignored. You go to Frances Lake today, you still see the trails. You see the trails of our ancestors because they travelled, they travelled that land. They knew the land like the back of their hand. They never complained.

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

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

And so one of the other --

ANN MAJE RAIDER: [indiscernible] want to say? [indiscernible]

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

ANN MAJE RAIDER: Absolutely. There is not a doubt in my mind, in my soul, in my heart. Indigenous people, we have such a deep spiritual connection with the land. You harm the land, you harm us. Yeah.

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

ANN MAJE RAIDER: I do have some recommendations.

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

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

"loon".

So as Indigenous people we are very distinct, with unique heritage, language, cultural practice and spiritual beliefs. So, I want everybody to know what it means to be "distinct". The dictionary says unmistakable, easily distinguishable, recognizable, visible, obvious, pronounced, prominent, striking. That is we as Indigenous people. We have proven that you can never assimilate us and you can never change us. The White Paper of 1969 tried that. It didn't work. The colonial policies and structures continue on the path of assimilation today. A good case is the child protection in Canada. There is a direct correlation between child apprehension and murdered and missing Indigenous women. There is a direct -- direct correlation between child protection and homelessness and people on the streets. In the Yukon 90 percent of children in care are First Nations. In the Yukon there is racist policies that need to change in child protection. Families are not compensated at the level that foster parenting is compensated. That is unacceptable.

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

I believe that our wellness, because Canada committed -- committed a horrendous act of cultural genocide, we need to repair that fabric of culture. We need to come back to ourselves. Our children need to come back to who we are, so healing has to be culture. In our culture there is a lot of spiritual teachings. My mom lived on land and she would live at Simpson Creek, dry fish. Every summer when we came out of that prison camp, she was drying fish, making dry meat, making moose hide. I would sit in the little mosquito tent and read my *True Confessions* and my mom would be working very hard to feed me. And people would come on the highway and she taught us how to be generous. She gave. She gave fish. She gave dry meat. She gave people.

They stopped for coffee, they stopped for tea. She'd feed them, she'd cook them bannock. That's who we are as Dena. You don't teach these things, you live these things.

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

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

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

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

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

Our organization, I work for Liard Aboriginal Women's Society, and we signed a Together for Justice Protocol with the RCMP on March 8, 2012 because there was never a

relationship with the RCMP. Historically never. So -- and the women's organizations, women have always been ignored as to the direction, what are their priorities in the community. So we -- we did a two year process, the RCMP, with the RCMP, with a lot of elders, a lot of women, a lot of very, very powerful women advocates, and we worked with Dr. Allan Wade from the Centre of Response Based Practice and we talked about violence and understanding violence from a response-based approach.

So, in order to address violence we have to get out of the woman's head. We have to stop saying that she had something to do with it, that she contributed to the act, that it's because she didn't have good boundaries, it's because that she attracted that person or it's because she didn't have a good self-esteem. It's all about her. It's not about her.

Everything -- you -- you avoid what the -- the perpetrator has done. And in oftentimes we overlook how the woman resisted and we overlook how did she respond to the violence.

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

There -- there is a terminology that really bothers me that the health professions are using and it's this notion of vicarious trauma, which I think is more damaging than doing any good. Vicarious trauma to me has a notion that you can catch some trauma from another person because you're hearing their story. Therefore, you may

pack their garbage and you may take it home, thus it will be very burdening on you. My mother was very compassionate. As Dena people we are all very compassionate. Somebody comes to you for help, somebody is burdened by their problems, you never think about vicarious trauma. I look at the commissioner yesterday, I asked her, "How do you stay so fresh, you look like you haven't --" she was with us at 7 o'clock last night. And she says, "It's because I enjoy what I do." So if it's tiring you and it's burning you out, you're in the wrong profession. So let's lose that term, "vicarious trauma". Let's stop scaring people from getting into helping people.

I have been very blessed to have worked with professionals and -- from the Centre for Response Based Practice. I have gotten to see through their -- through their training how damaging the justice system is. The justice system -- in order to address violence, you have to address it in the context of safety and justice. In our community we have circle court, we have circuit. So what happens is the court cases are always put off, always put off, and so there's no swift justice for -- for victims of violence. And somehow the system has to change so that there's more swifter justice because a woman, you -- you -- the anticipation, I can't imagine the anticipation of a court case coming, only to go to the court and find out that it's been moved again to another date. And oftentimes the -- the abuser is in the community, creates fear. And a large percentage of women are not reporting violence and not reporting sexual violence because oftentimes a woman's life will fall apart. There isn't a justice system. I heard somebody refer to it as a legal system. There's -- there is blame. It's just a -- and what happens, what's happening too is RCMP are investigating cases, if somebody reports a sexual violence, the RCMP reports it, and then if they don't believe they have sufficient evidence, it -- it becomes an unfounded case. And I believe we should have cases -- how many cases in the Yukon are unfounded? I'd like that information. I'd like that information in Watson Lake, how many are unfounded. So if it happens

again, if a woman has her case unfound the first time, why would she report?

Also in terms of the criminal system, there's a language that needs to be change. The slamming mutualizing. For instance, I'll refer to one section, I -- I don't know what section it is of the *Criminal Code*, but it refers to invitation to touch. And mutualizing language I speak of is -- it -- it -- language either conceals or reveals violence. And through the justice system today, it's concealing violence. We refer to -- when children are raped, we're referring to it as sex. A child cannot consent to sex, so I don't know why they're using that language.

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

[Audience applause]

CECILIA GOBEIL: I'd like to point out something. I'd like to point out something. I consider myself lucky because I've got two moms. And because my sister raised me and then I went back to my mom. And we went to -- we went to -- we didn't go to all this, you know, welfare stuff or nothing. We just -- they just kept going, they looked after the kids, that's all. They should bring it all back, you know, instead of having the kids go to the welfare. So, you know, they raise the kid. You know, welfare just step in through the family and take them. They shouldn't do that, you know. They should bring back the old -- old ways. Like, it was too much for my mom, so my sister stepped in to take -- take over and looked after me. And I always think why she do it, my mom why she did it. But while I get older I understand why she did it, because it's too much for her. And my sister, she's the oldest and she took over because I understand that I am -- I was hyperactive. I always going, going all the time, it was too much for my mom. So that's why I was -- Matthew called me monkey, because I was climbing everything, I was climbing around, and

can't -- can't control me. I was climbing around. So, I think that's why the reason. So, what I'd like to say, welfare -- to -- to this day welfare, they step in to people's -- people's place. And there's one going on right now in Carcross. Grandma wants to get her kids back, but they say, no, the welfare took the situation over. It -- it wasn't right. I thought she should go see somebody to fight because she don't drink. So, I think the -- you know, the family should step in, the grandparents should step in when the -- when the parents can't do it. So, they should -- should be involved, you know, with -- with the government. And the government should step in, offer money to them instead of saying -- because the grandparents don't have no money but they want to take over the kids, you know. It's -- they should be treated like equal. When the government give money to foster parents, they should give money to the grandparents, you know, to help them. Thank you.

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

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

[Audience laughter]

MARY CHARLIE: So, anyway, you know, to this day I figure, you know, the -- if they treat us more better, like they -- like they picked up my sister when she was drinking, you know, she would

have been in the bush with her -- with her kids every summer. That's where we go every summer when I come out from residential school. And Matthew used to take the kids out after she was -- she passed on. We went to [indiscernible place name] with the kids. But the kids never really been raised up on the land after their mother passed on. And then the -- and they lost all being with her, knowing her, and she got quite a few grandkids that the kids don't even know her. And we don't even have a picture of her to -- to show them.

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

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

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

And as a very small token of our appreciation of your sharing today, we have seed

packages because seeds are life, new life. So, thank you very much.

Second Hearing Exhibits
Ann Raider, Cecilia Gobeil and Mary Charlie (Family of Tootsie Charlie)

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

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

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

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

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

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

KAREN SNOWSHOE: The Jack family has kindly offered the smudge. For anyone else in the tent here today who would like to smudge, please feel free to access the smudge just behind the family here. And just a tiny reminder about cell phones, to please turn off, or at least turn off the ringer. Thank you.

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

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

Joan I would like to offer you this tobacco in support of your truth telling today and I understand that you're also -- when you introduce your family, you're also going to explain the families way that their consciousness are bind and the way that they ceremony around truth telling.

JOAN JACK: (Aboriginal language spoken)

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

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

(Singing Inclucupmoke Song)

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

are.
GRETA JACK: My name is Greta Jack, Juh-neek is my Indian name. I'm from the Wolf Clan, Henietti (phonetic). My sister-in-law made my vest. I'm very proud of it. Thank you. (Aboriginal language spoken). Lorraine Dawson. And I'm glad to see everyone here. Guh-nes-chee.
LORRAINE DAWSON: Guh-nes-chee.
BRYAN JACK: My name is Walted (phonetic). My English name is Bryan Jack. I'm of the Wolf Clan. My mother is Dockake (phonetic) and my father is Chief Henry Jack Huh Jack (phonetic) and I'm part of the Taku River, Tlingit First Nations peoples.
ALLAN: Good afternoon, my name is Allan, my native name is Yunatondon (phonetic). I'm also of the Wolf Clan From the Taku River, Tlingit First Nation. I just wanted to show you the vest, the Wolf Clan vest, and I wear it proudly today, for out -- in support of our women folk that have passed on, not only have passed on but are still here with us, living and showing us the way ahead, the future.
HEATHER ALLEN: (Aboriginal language spoken) Heather Allen, English, Uhawtoasoc (phonetic). I'm with the Kokatong (phonetic) Clan from Atlin, B.C., and the blanket I'm wearing today is actually my grandmother's blanket that's been passed on to my mom and I'm wearing it here today.
JANE ANNE CARLICK: Hi my Tlingit name is Iskee-kut too lee-seen. And my English name I Jane Anne Carlick (phonetic). Thank you very much.
EVONNE JACK: I'm Evonne Jack. My Tlingit name is Kha-sane. I'm from the Wolf Clan and Whatseyit (phonetic) is my first cousin on my mother's side. Ganachis (phonetic).
I think now, we talked about it this morning and we've been talking about it all week and we've been talking about it for two weeks and I think this morning Greta is -- oh I should have, sorry, before you go Greta I should have said that I laid out the little regalia here. This little regalia is -- the design is by -- I forget his name, Wayne's name? We're all drawing a blank, my brother Wayne who's going to kill me later. (Laughter) We're lucky to have a master artist and carver in our family and my husband and I look after children in our family and she's

not named yet in Tlingit, but Mia Carlick wears this and dances it and she's two. And so she couldn't be here with us today because she would be making too much crazy noise and these are her little goochin (phonetic) moccasins for the goochin, so... She represents Yandakinyah (phonetic). That's okay. Whoof. And then I've also brought, and I need a chair put beside Mia's, if somebody could bring a chair, this is the human design from the Tlingit culture to represent the space for all human. Yeah. We'll put it here, yeah.

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

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

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

So, my sister Barbara, was fifth oldest and I remember coming home for the two month holiday from residential school and there was my little sister and -- very beautiful little girl, and mom and dad by that time had started drinking. They already had too many children being taken away from them to go to residential school, so I think that Barbara was a alcohol syndrome baby. She was still very smart, very strong and very tall compared to us. So, my mom was quite abusive to her, so I don't think that -- she was made to work like we were because we had a large family, we had to look after the youngster and the house,

mom was a bit of a perfectionist, so there was never really any time to play or just be ourselves. We were caretakes from as small as we could remember and I cared for Barbara along with my sisters because we were transferred after seven or eight years in residential school from the oldest. I was luckily -- I was only there for four years and ...

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

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

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

So Barbara eventually had to leave to Whitehorse. As well, both my parents died within nine months of one another. My dad first at age of 73, no 74. And my mom, nine months after at the age of 46 and the young ones were sent to Yukon Hall in Whitehorse. And another family took my sister in and I saw -- I went to see her at the school when I was over there and asked her how she was doing, did she like it there and she chose to come to Whitehorse with me. So, she stayed with me, I think, for seven months and she was pretty good, but she saw -- she saw -- met some friends who she teamed up with and they

began to drink. She was 14, and began to drink and the girls still tease me to this day about when they were out with Barbara how they would see my car coming and they would run around the corner and hide and peek and see if I was still there looking for them and ...

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

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

So that kind of sticks in my mind, you know, that -- sometimes how worthless people think of our being First Nations People and I just get so

afraid to get in touch with that anger that I feel underneath. I'm trying to manage my life in a more positive more productive way than I was when I was drinking. So, sometimes it's very hard to choose the right path and to stay on it. I think there are lots of people who have long since given up with any support. There's lots of talk about it. But for the person that lives at ground level and goes for support, where is it? I had to knock on many, many, many doors before I found the support that I could to stay clean and sober.

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

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

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

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

But there were two women that came forward after a man died and they said do you know -- do you know, and it was years after Barbara died, years, and they said do you know that so-and-so that just passed away, I said well no, that I didn't. But they said that he was last one to be seen with my sister Barbara and -- and I said why didn't you tell me. Like why didn't you say

something? And they said they were scared. They were scared that something might happen to them. And that's common of First Nations people, you know, we were taught, "Don't say anything, you know, the police are going to come and get your kids. Don't say anything the police are going to come and take your mother and send her away for three months because she was drinking when she was [indiscernible]. You know don't say anything about the moose because the game warden is going to come and take it and give it to the towns people and fine you. And if you don't have any money for the fine they'll sent you to jail." You know, it's like we had to live in silence. And we don't anymore. We could speak out and I think, unless we acknowledge the shame and the guilt that we are -- and the fear that we are carrying around we'll never be able to do anything about it. And God in Heaven, like we need workshops, we need land based healing camps, we need culture camps, we need, we need to be out on the land because as far as I'm concerned, I went to about four treatment centers, but to me all it was was an institution, where you'd walk -- I wasn't even aware of it that I was walking around in fear that, you know, I was going to be badly punished if I didn't listen and that was all I could do was get that feeling. I remember when I was a little girl at home I would get a feeling and I would go and stand in the middle of the floor and I'd tell my mom, "Mom, Suzy Quawk (phonetic) is going to come and visit you today." "Oh, that's nice." And I'd go and sit down and Suzy Quawk would come to visit. And she said, "Oh one of the kids said you were going to come and visit me today." "I did mom. I did." And she had a little puppy at the door and I was looking at the little puppy. "Mom, he's thirsty." She said, "There's a whole lake down there. If he was thirsty he would go and have a drink." And I said, "No mom, he's thirsty." "Okay." So she gave him water and he drank the whole bowl.

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

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

I've forgotten what I was going to say, but I just want to be well. I -- it was frightening to have the two, well the three First Nations people beaten to death in our -- in Whitehorse here. My heart goes out to the family and it's just so hard to believe that something like that could go on. And it just brings back a load -- the load of fear that we've been carrying all our lives from physical -- you know physical abuse or sexual abuse if -- if that's what took place, which was an aftermath of residential school. You know, it wasn't so much what they did to me there but it was what they took me from. It's what they took me from. The God that gave you everything, the sunshine and the water and the leaves and the fish and the animals to a Jesus that was going to send you in hell to burn forever. And I couldn't understand it and yet, you know, you'd go to the stations of Cross, like why are doing that to God, like why are they -- it's kind of like it was totally, totally different than what we were taught to believe in, to be grateful for everything as opposed to residential school. Be fearful of everything, because boy you're going to hell if God didn't agree with what you were doing and they were telling me to be a good girl, well what the hell did that mean. You know, I didn't know what good or bad was, we were, you know, so, you know, they took us from our very -- you know, someone -- someone said to me, you know, that Hitler, he massacred the people, but the Church in that day took our children and that's worse. They took our children and that was the quickest way to annihilate and integrate the Indian people into the European way of living. And I didn't understand it at -- like I mean I had to think about that and my instructor said, well, you know, I'll leave it with you and, you know, I could see the damage that has been done because I think there would have been less frustration and

drinking if -- if it wasn't for residential school, you know, and if Barbara hadn't gone there. She was sexually abused there, as were lots of -- I don't know how -- I was such a, "I'm going to tell dad," you know, "I'm going to tell sister." I was a big tattletale, which is -- which kept me out of lots of trouble, got me into lots too, but it certainly kept me out of a lot of things that could have happened to me there.

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

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

I think even, it didn't only affect our parents to lose one child, like first it was Lorraine that went to school, then it was Lorraine and Doug, then it was Melvin, there goes a third kid and on and on and on right down to the -- well the 13th child. And I remember when it came to my sisters turn to go to school and I was the oldest one left, it was so lonely. The family -- it affected the children too. I mean the streets were no longer filled with children that were playing baseball or dodgeball or -- or you know, playing cowboys and Indians or playing

house or, you know, it was just so quiet and lonely. And there was some of us who were taken from -- out to the trap lines so that the children wouldn't be taken and boy, my Uncle Willie was one of them and is he ever champ to this day. He doesn't know how to read or write, but, you know, man-o-man he's quite the character.

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

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

And being an aware little child, I mean to see that and to have to live with it when I -- just growing up. How do I get over it. You know, how do I just drop it like I can an old pair of shoes and walk away and, "Oh, I'm better. I'm good now, boy I'm over, I'm healed." The pain lessens I think and the frequency between remembering and feeling it in your heart how much it hurt. I think is there, but I would like to see us go back to our ways of sweats, I know the Christians aren't going to think much of it, but I've tried it. I've tried the Catholic way, I've gone to every single Church, I've gone to Bible Camps, I've gone everywhere to try and find a way, because we were taught, "Oh, you know, witch craft, you know, you're not allowed to say thank you God for the sun because that means you're worship." I'm not worship, and I felt that I was, it's kind of like, "Oh my god, I can't thank God for the sun because I'm worshipping the sun now." And the water, they saw it as worship. I was just thanking God for the gifts he gave us, but it was scared into us, the things the residential school wanted us to believe. So I search long and hard before I decided. I know our religion is strong and true and I want us to go back to sweats, I want us to go back

ceremonies, I want us to get Indian doctors because we have tried it the White man way for how many decades and decades and decades. It's time we did it our way.

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

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

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

I would also like to say that there are many

strong honourable men that stand behind their women. And my brother Bryan has supported my sister-in-law Joan for 25 years. And believe me she's a handful, you know, (Laughing) she's -- she's all over the planet, like she is everywhere and she's -- she's doing this and running over there and, you know, if somebody needs to be -- need a good talking to, she's the one to do it. She can talk the birds out of the trees. (Laughing) And he has stood behind her with patience and he's a very humble man and I'm so proud of him and I would like to thank all the humble supportive men out there that support their wives that are trying to live the right way without drugs and alcohol and live -- do to traditional pursuits and unify us and I'm sure there are many out there. We would like to see more of you.

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

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

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

LORRAINE DAWSON: (Aboriginal spoken) Two days ago I woke up not realizing that I'm going to be here, that I'm going to be talking about my sister that I never really had a chance in my life to know. Because of residential school, yippee, took me away from home when I was just going on six. Then I had TB. I was just going on six, so I had TB, no explanation, no goodbye mom, no goodbye dad, no goodbye brother, I didn't know where I

was going. They just put me on the plane, that was it. Mom didn't know, Dad didn't know. Thirteen months I stayed out in Edmonton. Once in a while I got a letter from my dad, mom, little bit of money, 'cause I was just a little kid anyway and I bought candy with that. But I didn't know where I was. I don't even think I had a chance to know what it was to cry because who was there to cry for. My mom and dad wasn't there, I didn't have no brothers and sisters. I was all by myself.

Then I came home, back to school. I didn't go home after 13 months. I didn't go home. They took me right back to school. Oh, I was excited, six year old, going to see my brother, I never see him long time, I don't know where I was. Going to go see him. So I knew a shortcut through the dining room from the girls rec room, straight across the dining room right down the hall to the men's. They wouldn't let me go. All I seen was my brother on that end. He's passed away now, but he was next to me. And I hollered, "Douglas, Douglas," and we're just going to run and that nun pulled me back, pulled Douglas back. We couldn't go see each other, we couldn't talk, we couldn't hug, we couldn't anything. So Douglas felt so bad, he turned around, he started crying and he said, "I hate you, I hate you, I hate you, you went away from me and left me alone," he said. "Douglas, Douglas." He's way down there. I tried to holler to him and explain to him. No, he was hurt too bad. He went away, I went away. That was supposed to be forgotten.

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

There was always somebody, education wise, knew more than me, that can talk, then I hear that word shut up lots, so I start shutting up. And then when I did open up my mouth I said the wrong things because I didn't know how to speak right. So there was a lot of tortures, but some reason another, something in my head keeps

saying, and still saying, "Lorraine, you go ahead, no matter how tough, go ahead."

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

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

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

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

Barbara, who she -- I don't know who she was with in Lower Post or if she even made it to Lower Post, because there was so many in our family that mom was just looking after us, one after the other. I really wanted to get to know her, but everything going on and her alcohol, she had alcohol problems, I got alcohol problems and she never really, as far as I know, mingled with us, me anyway being the oldest, 'cause she never really knew me. I never really had a chance to know her. All I knew is by name, that's my sister.

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

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

And like my sister said, all I knew about my sister Barbara, and I'm very glad, very proud, very, very everything that this came up, because the other day when I heard this was coming up, I just heard it, and I thought, oh my God, how long has she been gone and I never even thought of it and by the grace of God and the good people, all you good people, you put this thing on, you're

going to get more back, because I'm pretty sure there's lots of others like me too that didn't know anything about this and then my sister, very good sister-in-law, the bestest in the westest (Laughing), came to my house, because I say that because we have our own little things. I call them little. She came to my house and she told me about this going on. Well I didn't know what this was about and then after she left I thought finally, finally, somebody is thinking about the women.

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

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

wood.

So, it's a really lost world there. Seems like it anyways. And when I came here, I said to myself, "Well, what are you going to say? Are you going to talk about Lower Post?" I just, all I can say is I don't want to even think about Lower Post. I'm trying to think about Barbara. That's the one I trying to think about, because I never really knew her and I wish to God I had.

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

Thank you very much.

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

Did you want to take a break first?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah.

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

(PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)
(PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED)

CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Are we ready to start?

KAREN SNOWSHOE: Yeah.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Go ahead.

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

JOAN JACK: [indiscernible].

KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you.

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

BRYAN JACK: (Aboriginal spoken) I was listening to my two sisters talking about, this is around missing and murdered women. What I had acknowledged was that they were both -- both

discussing the residential school. I think as -- I think that we have to start connecting the dots on the issues around missing and murdered women, because if it is as important as we say, we have to know that the residential school is attached to the missing and murdered women. Because the residential school took our independence away. It took our self-confidence away as a people. Attempted to take the traditional lifestyle that we had away.

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

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

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

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

We have laws about murder. We have laws about everything in our lives and we as

indigenous people are supposed to adapt to that. How could we adapt to it when the issue around missing and murdered women has not been dealt with. They're still fishing our people out of the Red River in Manitoba today.

The thing that I want to share with the people here is I'm a traditional person, I was brought up in a bush. And I wish in my life right now that life would have been at a standstill where I could still be out there and I could be in a sense, but time is of the essence as they say. Oh, I watch and my life as a child, for my parents fought, the abuse of women was a reality in my life, past tense. In today's world we make it an art. Because right now the confidence that we've taken from our women in residential schools, it's working pretty damn good, because the women that are abused in our communities, go back to their abuser. And there's people that call them stupid. When are they going to learn. When are they going to get a life. They'll get a life when the professional people put the word worldwide that abuse to our women stops. If we have laws that are supposed to make our lives better and they're written down on books, then why aren't our lives getting better?

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

We have to start looking at the realities around our lives as human beings and start working with that. Do an assessment. We make

laws to stop everything and nothing ever stops.

Going back to my sister, I knew her when she was a child and starting to grow up and ... I remember in my life when there was -- when I acknowledge where my brothers and sisters went. And I lived in wood camp. We had a crib that was about four feet long, about three feet wide, somewhere in there and we were just small kids, we had four children in there, we had a tent frame about seven by 14 and were -- somewhere in there anyway, it was a tent frame. We lived a beautiful life out in the bush, but eventually alcohol and drugs and whatever got a hold my family and, you know, you see the fights that went on between my parents and -- and I'm going to be straight up, like it's something that -- I mean you talk to people and they say well that happens in every family. Here I am standing in front of people that say, "Hmm, hasn't happened in mine." You know, but the thing about it, the system that was built on abuse to women was built with alcohol. It was built with residential school.

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

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

I think that -- I want to share a moment with you and it's coming from residential school. I was one of the very few children that ran away from school, because there was about three of us, and sometime in the winter time, sometime in the

springtime, sometime in the -- you know, whatever time of the year, as long as I had a chance, I wasn't going to stay in those schools. You know, I got beaten up, I got abused, the whole nine yards. I went to this one café, I had already hitchhiked 15 miles away. I walked into this café, my hair was all dusty, it was pfff, I was tired, I didn't really give a shit, I was about six years old, five/six years old, I can't really remember, I got to have been about six anyway, and this one lady she said, "The bathrooms over there on your right, behind the counter." And she said, "Just make it fast." And I could hear her talking because them days the walls were thin. And the -- she was talking with that lady and I couldn't hear that lady what she had said, but she said, "Yeah, I know." She said, "I could throw them out," she said, "But there'll be just another one coming in the next day." There was other children running away from -- or running away from school also. So it was on a consistent basis, the children ran away from those schools.

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

So I'm going to let it go at that and I just

want to acknowledge the people that have supported this and I think this inquiry is something that has to be strengthened. We need a solid foundation under our feet. We need something to work off. We need more people that can come in and say we need protection of our women. 'Cause the way I look at it as man, is that if it wasn't for our women I wouldn't be here today, so I thank all the women on the face of this earth, no matter what race, no matter where they came from. (Aboriginal language spoken)

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

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

ELDER JAL TUN: Good afternoon again. My name is Jal Tun and I'm so filled with emotions, you know, after listening to the family, you know, I grew up beside and I got to know each and every one of them and our families are huge, but it's still, when there's one missing out of the family, that hurts. And with our family, with our traditions, the women are the leaders, they govern a lot of our society. It's just today, that's been happening for thousands of years. So, before the European people came our people were at one with one another, we knew where our women, where they supposed to be, they were supposed to be up, but it seems like in today's society we have to start turning the concerns back onto the government. Educate the law, educate RCMP on how to talk to our people. You don't just come into a society and start calling them down because of whatever.

RCMP need education. Our people, they've been trying to educate us in the proper way for as long as I can remember. But thank you, those teachings are the wrong ways. Especially through the government, through the Church, and now how the laws repressing us from talking out and protecting -- protecting our women. They seem to shrug it off.

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

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

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

JEAN: [indiscernible].

JOAN JACK: Okay. Awesome.

JEAN: I just want to talk about Barbara a little bit. Barbara Jean and I are about the same age. We

kind of hung out together when we were very young teenagers, 'cause me too I ran away from home and I lived on the streets of Whitehorse when I was very little, same old as Barbara Jean. I think she's either, she's probably one year younger than me. That close, so ... We hung out for a little while in Whitehorse here when we were living on the streets when we were 14. I think Barbara went missing when she was 14 and I remember my last time with her and it wasn't really good. We got into some pills or something, but that was the last time I saw her and as the years went by I thought of Barbara Jean a lot. I know my kids, my daughters remember me mentioning her lots of times throughout my life and I ask myself, "Where's Barbara, how come nobodies looking for her." I asked myself that, "Why, why do they -- is she not important." And I question myself over and over about that throughout the years because I don't know what's going on. And then my cousin, Angel, another one that went missing and to me the way it feels looks to me as like nobody's going to do nothing. Nobody's going to do nothing about it and try and find out why they went missing. That's hard. You know, I don't know Barbara Jean that much, but I know she drank lots just like I did. And we ran away from home and were homeless. It was hard, you know, we lived in the ship down here at the shipyards. That's where we lived. And I don't know how long. Then all of a sudden she was gone and I never seen her again. And that's hard when you see your relatives disappearing and nobody looking for them.

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

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

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

HELEN: Hi. So, I don't speak in front of people very much. I'm a little bit emotional after my mom's

crying, so just give me one second.

So I was quite blessed as a child. Like there was chaos, there was craziness, but there was also some blessings that I received. One was my grandparents. I was like the apple of their eye. Their first grandchild, so I got a lot and a lot of love put into me. Another one of my blessings was my mom. She's a story teller. Like, you wouldn't know it to speak to her unless you are beading with her or working on regalia or going for a drive or sitting around a campfire, but she tells stories and she tells them well. And so through her eyes I've been able to see some things about my people. And so, like, Bryan talked about how he would run away, my mom told me those stories, but she told them in a light where she was so proud of him and he was like their hope. Like, he had such strength and courage and he didn't believe them when they told him that he had to cross a deadly river to get home because he knew which way was to get home and he went that way.

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

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

But one of the things in sharing my story with my Auntie Joan that came to me was that it was normalized. Like those stories that my mom told me about Barbara Jean and the police not really caring are not really, you know, there was no faith that they were going to do anything

about it, that was normal. That was common. That women were being abused inside their homes, outside of their homes, they weren't safe out in the community, that was normal. That was the common reality that I grew up with and that's a bit challenging for me 'cause I have nieces and such and young women that I love and I don't want them to grow up in a world where they are unsafe. And they are more unsafe specifically because they are aboriginal. Because of the colour of their skin and where they come from.

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

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

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

YVONNE JACK: I didn't know Barbara Jean as I was quite a bit younger than all of these old guys here. (Laugher) But I do remember the impact when Barbara Jean did disappear, because of

course my mom is the sister of Auntie Gloria and it was quite an impact when we talk about our reserve. Our reserve is very small and so we were all impacted equally about this tragedy. And again we talk about there has been many stories about the impacts of residential school and the chaos that we were all surviving in. And it was a real traumatic time because the -- on our reserve there wasn't one family that wasn't touched by that kind of physical violence. There wasn't one family that didn't have -- that the women weren't -- the women weren't held up, the women were very abused by their partners.

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

I want to share one story of when I was young. I was sitting with my mom and we were doing something together and she looked at me right out of the blue and she said to me, "Have you ever thought about getting married?" And I said, "Yes, I have." And she said, "What kind of a man would you like to marry?" And I said, "I would like marry a Chinese man." And she said, "A Chinese man, why a Chinese man?" And I said, "Because they're short like me and I could really fight back when he wants to beat me up." (Laughter) You know, it's sounds kind of comical, but at the same time when you think about that when you're 10 years old, that really tells the story of what it was like and what we had to endure as a people. When we look at the impacts of residential school. And how those residential schools really bred anger, bitterness and resentment. Not only with our parents, they actually fostered that with their children, because they know -- because they didn't know any different.

When we looked at those kinds of things, that's exactly what we're starting to come back from. So when we talk about funding for healing, I think it's important that we talk about not only that, but as well the duration of that funding. It's tragic when there's funding for a

year or two. Thanks, but no thanks. That doesn't work.

In order to be able to create some healing I think it's really important that looking forward we really start to -- we've heard time and time again I think, not only in this particular inquiry, but also in others where they say looking at our traditional ways and having the ability to be able to bring some of those things back.

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

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

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

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

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

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

I'm very grateful to my adopted family, you know my husband's family for indulging, you know, and allowing me to share this platform with them and I've asked their permission and they're okay with that. 'Cause I'm really concerned about some of the larger issues. There's a saying, you shouldn't judge a book by its cover and you never know someone's story. You know, when you see a

strong resilient indigenous woman standing there, it's more -- it's probably more appropriate that you assume, unfortunately, if she maybe, I don't know, 15 or older or what, that she's been raped. You know, that she's been beaten. Like for me, I can say I've survived all those things. You know. I've survived rape on more than one occasion. You know, I've survived domestic abuse. I often joke and say, you know, Bryan is my third husband, third time lucky girls. (Laughing) Don't give up. You know, don't settle and that's the hard part, that the oppression has caused in all of us, men or women, is that we tend to settle, you know, and we get comfortable and we even get -- you can even get comfortable with pain. You know, you hear people say that in the books and stuff, but I've learned that from Bryan, you know, watch and going out in the bush so much with him and being in literal pain that after a while when you're hiking between Atlin and Dunakanaw (phonetic) it hurts so much that you're just like okay with it. And that's how we kind of get in life too. And in some situations that's okay, but as a woman, it's not okay and my job today and in this lifetime, appears to be making space and holding that space all the time.

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

I also wanted to say in general about the Inquiry, you know, I did go on Facebook and do a whole bunch of lives and I have been doing media work and I will be doing more media work, that I think it's really critical that people in the positions of power and decision making be indigenous. And I don't -- I didn't personally have a difficult reaction with learning, just now, today, that you were, you described yourself as a settler to someone, I didn't realize that, I

thought you were Inuit, but I'm not Inuit so I'm not going to say anything about that. And I actually think at the Commissioner level, it's really good to have Canada represented in the fullness of, we're kind of missing a couple of colours, but, you know, in the fullness of our country, but within the organization I did a video yesterday about how as a woman, I can only speak for myself, and my husband talked about, or somebody, one of you talked about how they keep moving the bar. They keep moving the bar. Every time we get educated the bar gets raised and somehow we're just never good enough. Especially as women. You know.

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

I just want to tell one little story about Jackie Williams too and his son was here earlier When I first got out of law school, Yvonne's dad said to me, I want you to do two things, he said I want you to throw out the Indian Act and I want you to raise money for land planning and that was in 1991. So in 1991, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation had the foresight to be thinking about getting rid of the Indian Act and getting money for land planning before anyone even thought of land planning. Sylvester and Jennie Jack were doing that. And so I was doing the research with all the Tlingit people and sitting and listening and listening, and even I talk a lot I'm super good at listening and Jackie Williams was describing, I said, "Well what about, like who talks for the house and who's in

charge?" and he said, "Oh well the men, the men talk for the house." And I thought to myself, huh, I said, "Well that's kind of no good." And he said well that's the way it is. He said, "In your house hour husband talks for the house." I said, "Oh okay." I said, "Well what about if he's a bull shitter. What about if he just goes and says whatever he wants. What about if he doesn't talk to anybody in the house? What about that?" And he looked at me and he said, "You'll be sitting on the other side. You're the opposite clan. Get up and leave," he said, "we'll all know he's bull shitting." (Laughter)

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

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

Looking at the ways in which we as indigenous women are to be treated so that we can grow our girls up into those places and teach our men what their roles are as well. I worry more for the men than I do for the women, 'cause you cannot take away a women's place as a mother, ever. Whether she has children or not, she's going to be somebodies auntie, you know, she's going to be like -- our -- but with men, the economic role of our men, like you heard some of the testimony here, Bryan's their father, he used to hunt for the White people in Atlin when there was no extra foods. You know, so we used -- they used to sell -- they used to sell the meat because they didn't know how to hunt. They'd get to Atlin they'd be hungry. They'd go see Henry

Tad Jack and say I'm hungry. He'd go kill a moose, he'd get paid, he's buy a tin stove. That's what was allowed. That's what happened all over this country until our men weren't needed anymore. Until the White men started hunting for themselves or going Safeway or Extra Foods. So the place, the economic role of our man is something that the Commission should be looking at strongly because as Helen said, we as indigenous women are just as likely to be killed by our own people, like all women she said, are more likely to hurt by their own, somebody they know, and so it's double for us. The racism my husband talked about, we're likely to be killed at home and we're likely to be killed when we leave home.

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

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

So I just want to recap too what Yvonne was saying about the funding, you know. If Canada really valued women in general, all women in Canada are constantly begging for funding. Begging. Like, what is that, you know. I call bull shit on Canada, sorry. You know. And if they're really concerned about us, maybe you

could give us indigenous women all the money we need and we'll help the other women. (Laughing) I'm sure they would welcome our help. But this is really about the money.

You could just look, I'll -- I don't want to take peoples time, but one more example about the land, like you can see what Canada values as a State and it values perpetuating the lie that this is not indigenous land, 'cause we are of more value within the Canadian State broken and not able to go out on our land. We create jobs for people in jail, we create jobs for social workers, now they're probably going to fund a whole bunch of women's shelters, which they should, but, you know, we are so much more than our pain and we are in this pain because of what you're doing. If you'd stop doing what you're doing we wouldn't be in this pain. But then you wouldn't need all the jail guards, hey. (Laughing)

So, the best thing we can each do, I think as women, is sober up. Sober up. You know it's hard. I'm an alcoholic drug addict too. Okay. Hi, my names Joan. You know. I'm also a chip-aholic. (Laugh) Sober up. Find the help you need and like Greta said you might have to knock and knock and knock and knock, 'cause I don't have a lot of faith that this process is going to produce anything, really. It's going -- and so that's what I said to my family, well why should we come? I'll just close with this. Why should we come? I said because we'll heal ourselves. (Laughing) If anything we can find reconciliation within our family, you know, because, you now, last week Greta and I were mad at each other, but now we're not because we've used this process to continue our family healing and I would like to see that come out of this. That there needs to be a conflict resolution process developed by the Inquiry that could be given to Helen in a pamphlet, a booklet, or training, so that families could have that and they could learn how to resolve conflict. Because we don't know how to resolve conflict because of colonization. Residential school, day school, somebody hurts you, you go to court you sue them if you've got money and the justice only

works for the rich in Canada. You know, if you -- if you don't have money to hire a lawyer well you're shit out of luck. Sorry. Sorry, it sucks to be poor in Canada. So the justice system is no hope. So if the Commission could find some money to help us heal ourselves, we know what to do. We know what to do and we know how to do it. But that would require putting us in charge for real, not just pretend.

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

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

(TOBACCO GIVEN TO FAMILY MEMBERS)

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

Okay. Like I said in case someone just tuned in, we own our songs, we own stuff. Don't let anybody think you don't own anything. So in case anybody in Clucupmoke (phonetic) is watching this and sees me sing this and they're going to

be like, what the heck, you know, so even though I don't sing it like Inclucupmoke people, like I said, I'm Ojibway, but Kwankoshakley taught me this song and I felt to sing the first two stanzas, 'cause it's a travelling song and we went on a journey together today and I'm just going to sing the last two and again I'm so thankful to you Kwanko (phonetic), I don't know if you'll ever see this, but, yeah, she's a powerful women in the Nikola (phonetic) Valley who you should talk to too.

(Singing last two stanzas of Inclucupmoke song)

(PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)
(PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED)

Fourth hearing
Gina Gill (Survivor)with Karen Snowshoe (Commission Counsel)

CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Ms. Snowshoe are you ready to start?
KAREN SNOWSHOE: Yes.
CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Good.
KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you Chief Commissioner. Thank you Commissioner Robinson. It is my honour to introduce you today to Gina Gill.

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

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

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

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

GINA GILL: I do.

GINA GILL, sworn.

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

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

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

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

So, and myself personally, I've been through a lot. I was a victim of a home invasion a few years ago, with my daughters were present at the house. My ex came in and wasn't happy with my new relationship and they brutally beat and stomped on all of them and then continued to fight me, broke my nose and my children had to run across the street and call the RCMP. And the whole process was horrifying. You -- you get revictimized through the whole process. But

there's a lot of other issues that take place. And as soon as a woman does speak up about any violence or any wrongdoings, there's lies made up about you. You're threatened. You learn the family dynamics very quickly in a small community, because it creates division. So and I'm still going through that to this day.

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

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

So in my age, most of the women are second or third generation survivors and that being taught don't speak don’t talk about anything. And they grow up with low self-esteem. They have trauma issues, they have low education, no identity, no worth, no respect for themselves. They're just lost. I was there. I was absolutely lost. I didn't know who I was. I grew up in Saskatchewan. I moved back in the Yukon when I was 16. Quite a culture shock. But now today I'm very proud of who I am and I want other women to be proud of who they are too and

you can get through it. You can get through anything. If I can do it, you can do it too.

So with having these sort of things growing up it leads women to unhealthy relationships and especially if a man has been catered to and not taught right, it's hard to get away from them. It's hard to realize they're the ones that are in the wrong. They turn it around and say it's you. Tell everybody they know that it's you, when it's actually them. I found out that men do not like to be told no and they do not like to be called on their actions.

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

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

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

We all have a choice in how we chose to act and behave and we're responsible for our own actions, and I chose at a very young age that I

did not want to treat others bad, even when I was mistreated. I was told you don't stoop to their level and if I stoop to their level I'll never teach them or show them how you are supposed to act. And when I am mistreated I take it like a champ. I swallow it. I still am very respectful to that person despite what they go around and say about you. But, I've given out a lot of respect and I would like it back now. I give a lot and I deserve that back. I don't deserve any mistreatment. Any people making lies about me that are not true, that's not right and they need to be held accountable for that.

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

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

When we were going to court and the sentencing just finished in March, it was a long horrific process right from the get go. We were treated like we were lying and like we were the ones who did the home invasion. We got no support. The Crown didn't help me very much. I didn't know anything. I'm very educated, not in a court system. I've never been in a court system, I don't know how it goes and it does not go well for a victim. It's all for the offenders. The Crown didn't even let me know when the sentencing was taking place and they

knew I was very passionate about it, that I needed to be there, I wanted to be there, I wanted it in our community so that our Elders could hear and see everything. None of that happened despite many people talking for me as well, saying that this is what needed to take place. So when I brought it up about the sentencing, they said, "Oh well we, our Crown support worker is vacant right now and we don't have ..." So I started asking questions about that. What's the turnaround rate for those Crown support workers? And it's very high. Why is that? We need to look into that, maybe speak to the former Crown supports and ask them what are some of the issues? Why couldn't they stay in those positions?

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

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

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

That's all I have.

KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you Gina. Gina, earlier today, oh in addition, I first met you over a month ago here at KDCC and we had a good chance to chat

then, so I know a little bit about what you're hoping to share with the Commissioners today and again we met this morning and you asked me that -- 'cause I was taking notes if there was anything that you had forgotten, you asked that I would be able to ask you questions, so is that okay if I ask a few questions? Thank you.

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

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

So at a very young age I went to treatment. I did three programs. I did that all on my own. I didn't have a lot of support and, you know, your families, sometimes they're -- they feel ashamed or guilt or whatnot. I knew I needed to do it for me. As I never wanted my children or my nieces to ever go through what I went through,

to ever feel that lost feeling, to be searching for their identity to know who they are. We should know that. And we shouldn't have to fight for that.

I am an auntie and the youngest of five. And I'm an auntie of approximately, I think, 35. I take my role very serious. My first niece is only two years younger than me, but I'm very much her auntie. And I knew they're all watching me. And I know my aunties and uncles are very traditional. They're very strict. And I know they are watching me. And also my ancestors, that I need to make them proud. So I dedicated my life to that. I'm not perfect. I don't think anyone is. But I try.

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

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

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

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

GINA GILL: I guess the message I have for them is, like I said, I was the most shy scared girl ever, but I pushed through. I dug deep. Prayers, family, go to anybody who will support you, who will believe in you and stick with them and that's how you're going to get through it. When we were at the pre-inquiry, there was several women, I was very flattered, I was very shocked, saying, "You need to speak, you need to. You need to talk for us. We can't." A lot of them were fearful that, you know, the same things were going to happen that I was talking about. You're going to get shunned for calling people on their wrong. You're going to get shunned for doing what's right because a lot of people aren't there yet. It doesn't matter, keep doing it.

I walk into my community, into my band office and it's not very welcoming sometimes. There's some very negative people there and still yet, I go in, I hold my head high, I work with them, very respectful and professional to them and that's where I say I want that back now. I've dished it out all these years, I want that back. They do not have the right to be unprofessional and the status's and the titles that they hold, it's sending a wrong message to these children, to the next generations. The youth, I work a lot with the youth, and they ask me, "How come that lady's so mean. How come she's -- is she allowed to say that or act like that." They know it. They know what's right and what's wrong, but yet they see these people every day saying they're good people, when we watch their actions and we know. They got some work to do. But how do you tell somebody that that won't see it. That's where we need a lot of help. A lot of those barriers.

There's the division that happens in small communities is amazing. It's profound. So I can

see why a lot of women don't want to speak up. They don't want more trouble. That's where I was and I had a close cousin, like my sister, came up to me and said, "You can't let this go. You have to charge them. You have to go through it." And I was like, uh, I don't want more trouble I just want it to go away. It's going to cause more friction. It's going to cause a family feud. It's going to cause this. No, those kind of actions, they break your spirit. They're breaking your spirit and don't ever allow that. You've come so far. You're -- they said you're a victim. "What, I'm not a victim." (Laughs) That's how modest I am, how strong I am, I don't ask for help I just go and do it. I find out how to do it on my own usually. As you can see there's not a lot of support, it's because I didn't ask. I didn't ask anybody to come and be with me, to come and sit with me, because that's not the type of person I am. Not saying that's very good all the time, but it's how -- it's how I am and it's helped me through.

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

Not knowing how the court system works, I didn't want my children to be re-victimized. That was my biggest issue why I didn't want to go ahead with charges. They were so young at the time. They're 12 and 14 now. That's still young for them to witness an event like that that I protected them from their whole entire life. That was hard. Darn rights that broke my spirit. I worked their whole lives so that they would never go through what I went through, what my mom went through, what my other family members went through. I've worked so hard to break those cycles. But men are very tricky. They tell you what you want. Tell you when -- when they need, at the most critical time they say the perfect things, make you believe they're a good person, make you believe they've changed, make you believe they will change more, that -- and then

you find out into it you're totally wrong. That's a hard hit to take, but again I'm not the type to pity myself, feel sorry for myself, so I choose to uses all of these things that have happened in my life for strength. I take out the negative parts and I just walk with the good.

All these bad relationships made me strong. Now, I wouldn't -- I'm not standing for that ever again in my life and no other woman should. They're worth more than that. We deserve more than that and that's where we need to go. If we all stand together, we're even stronger. It's hard to stand alone. It's lonely. It's a lonely life, but that's all right, it's worth it.

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

KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you.

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

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

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

GINA GILL: Yes. I was in a bad relationship. It was not going very well. Still to this day that man is making lies about me, talking about me, doesn't want to pay child support because he says it's for my addictions. Well I'm not there anymore. We had a domestic violence situation.

I said no. I'm not doing this. That was in 2004, so I took me and my little children, they were very small, McKenzie was only one, Madison was nine months, or about, no she's 15 months, Madison was nine months, and I thought, "No." And McKenzie looked at me and said, "It's nokay mommy, Kenzie's here." And that was my turning point. "No, I am you mom, I should be telling you those things."

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

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

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

GINA GILL: I was born here in Whitehorse. My mother's from Selkirk First Nation in Pelly Crossing and my father is from Saskatchewan. So,

when I was two we relocated back to Saskatchewan, lived there for 14 years and then we moved up here and -- when I was 16. That's why I was saying quite the culture shock. I grew up in a White society, in a White community. I didn't see the Natives very much there, nor did I want to. I was -- the Native people that we seen were very down and out. I was very young and I didn't understand why they were like that or what had happened or the restrictions that were made on them and I guess I judged my own people. It's like that doesn't feel like something to be proud of. It doesn't look like something to be proud of, so I always had that shame in me, that I didn't want to be First Nation.

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

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

Very -- it's very interesting that, you know, just the beat of the drum, it took me a few years to not cry when I heard a drum. So to be -- when I was 16, I jumped right in. I wanted to learn everything and anything about my people. About my ways. We had just signed on self-government, so I was very curious. I wanted to know what that was all about and we had a very

good First Nation that wanted to teach us. So we had youth programs that we had -- we were trained on how to take care of the books, how to take care of everything. We applied for renovations. We picked up our youth centre. We fixed it us and then we had to run it. So once they seen that leadership they, you know, asked some of us, "Would you like to come into the office, I think we could really use you guys." So they started teaching us about the agreements and negotiations and things like that and I was just, I don't know, I love that. Maybe it's because I just wanted to learn everything and anything about my people. So that's what I've been dedicating my live to and that's what helps me and gives me strength. Going back to the land. Practicing our ways, our culture, trying to speak our languages. That will also give the women strength.

COMMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you. Thank you very much and to your daughter and your niece. Thank you.

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

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

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

GINA GILL: Again I would just like to thank this process and I'm only looking forward to the future. I know it's going to be even bigger and brighter. Going to give a lot of hope and strength and I know it's going to give courage to more women. There is many women that are in this situation. Many women that are being demoralized, degraded. Especially when they go to these agencies for help. That needs to change, because it's stopping them. If we have an unhealthy worker, nobody's going to go to them. They don't want to go and be mistreated or looked down on. Especially when that person doesn't have the right to do that. It defeats

the purpose. We need to have healthy workers in these fields of work. Otherwise nobody's going to come forward. But like I said, it doesn't matter where you are in your life, you can get out of it. Dig deep and you'll get it. Do your prayers, do your homework and do the work.

KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you Gina. (Aboriginal language spoken)

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

We'll take a 15 minute break.

(PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)

(PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED)

Fifth hearing
William Carlick (Family of Angel Carlick and Wendy Carlick with Karen Snowshoe (Commission Counsel)

CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Ms. Snowshoe are you ready?

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

Seated directly behind me is Chief Bill, Chief Doris Bill of Kwanlin Dun, welcome Chief Bill and seated next to Chief Doris Bill is the Minister -- Minister of the Yukon Directorate, Jeanie Dendys. And I understand there are also three support people behind, who are paddling as

in canoe, paddling friends of Melissa. Welcome. Thank you.

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

BRYAN ZANDBERG: Good afternoon William, welcome. Do you solemnly affirm that the evidence you will give this afternoon will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

WILLIAM CARLICK: Yes. I do.

WILLIAM CARLICK, affirmed.

BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay, thank you.

KAREN SNOWSHOE: William, thank you for being here. It's an honour. It's a real honour to know you and I will now invite you to speak.

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

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

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

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

This morning I was so honoured to wake up and welcome a new day. We take it for granted that every day's going to be there for our self, because we considered tomorrow. When I was so

honoured to see a new day, I get to see my grandson, my wife, my daughter and all of you.

When they ask me to say the prayer this morning, I was so honoured because every time I say the prayer it brings tears to my eyes, tears of joy, but also tears because I'm so pitiful when I acknowledge the Creator for all the gifts he's given me. When I left here I was in tears because I was so honoured, because I felt the Creator close to me and all the ancestors close to me. When they asked me to say the prayer, our teachings is -- there's no right or wrong way to say a prayer. So I said the prayer that I was meant to say, but when I started that prayer out I reminded everybody, like I will remind you right now, we have this thing in our mind that we call thinking. It's always working overtime. And I said, first time thing I told everybody when I stood there with this mic I said, "Turn that off, that thing go rambling in your mind, you need to turn it off," because only when we turn it off we can start hearing all the things we need to hear. So I said the prayer the way I was supposed to say it. And when I left, my belief and understanding was all the missing and murdered and those that are held against their will that are hearing and able to hear, said a prayer for everyone. I was their chance to say it and I felt good about it when I left here, because to me I did what I had to do.

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

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

My sister and my wife's sister-in-law, my daughter's auntie, when she was going to have little Angel, nobody knew she was going to have

little Angel, she hid it from us all including my mother. My mother, she was up in age, so she seen a lot, she knows a lot and she's done a lot and she's been through a lot, and she fooled mom too. And one day, when it came time to have little Angel come to this physical world, then she finally found that out and was just as surprised as all the rest of us. But little Angel was very dear to her. We used to go down and visit them with my family just to be with them all the time. We watched them grow up. And we -- that's how we grew up as family. That's how the grandson's here because we always stayed connected in spite of all the things that are in front of us we stayed connected.

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

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

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

I can only tell my story before I can tell others story. My sister was born in the early 60s. Right now, the sacred fire, if you ever been there you can see it's a tent with a beautiful spruce bow floor and a little wood stove in the corner. It was 60 below when we lived in that place we call Wood Camp outside of Cassiar, B.C. in the early 60s. My dad was a woodcutter. Mom was expecting Wendy. We didn't have vehicles like we have today, you can push the remote start and off you go. We had a

neighbour that had an old truck that was at the end of its usefulness. Him and my dad built a big campfire right underneath it and they spend a good part of the day trying to get that old truck to go, but the ancestors had things and plans for all of us and they allowed that old truck to start up and my mother got into it in the 60 below weather, made the journey for 15 miles before it finally decided to give up and she was able to get a ride at the maintenance camp and travel to Cassiar and that's where Wendy was born, just before New Year's. And we always joke as a family, including my mother that Wendy had the shortest birthday. We usually spend a whole day on our birthday, but she had less, couple of hours on her birthday before the day was out.

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

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

We knew hunger as a family because my dad, he loved to go up to the bar and spend all his money. We knew violence because when he came from the bar, violence was always within that little place that we call home. But somehow we

came through all of that, and I'm still here for 60 years old. And I don't say that to have anyone anywhere feeling sorry for me. That's not what I'm telling you about.

What I'm trying to convey to you is that what I was part of and what's happening to all our people is part of a bigger picture. And one word that comes to me always is: Where do you point? What direction do you point? Where do you find it to find out why we're at where we're at today and why we're still heading in that direction where our young ones are getting addicted and taking their lives, and why everything to other people seems so hopeless?

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

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

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

One thing I shared with my brother at that time was, you know, I told him, "If that's religion, I don't want to believe anything." And I didn't until I met my wife and she showed me how to be a parent to my children. I met a teacher who carried the sacred ways and told me, "Not having a belief is not a good thing to be." And then I found out there was a good way. It was always there with our ancestors before colonialism. Our ancestors held onto it tight

because they had to because it was survival. They believed in our spiritual ways.

Right to this very day I see that there's still a struggle to acknowledge that the spiritual way is, for no other better word, a good way. The spiritual way that I follow today is -- it's not a religion. It's a way of life. The more I go to ceremonies, the more I become aware. I realize that the Creator has laws, unwritten laws. Now I know what I need to do because those laws are not negotiable.

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

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

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

And going forward, I pray and continue to pray that this process -- like it's been said, it's a good one. It will come to be. It will do what it's supposed to do because it has our ancestors helping us. Whatever direction it takes, they're going to be there. We've opened up that door through ceremony to make it happen. And it only start because we believe in it, and now it's opened many doors. Gunis jeesh (phonetic).

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

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

I'm not perfect. Never will be perfect. The Creator never created anybody perfect. That's why nobody has the ability to judge anybody. But moving forward, my goal in life, whatever day that I have left, is I still work on the one thing: kindness and compassion, the ultimate goal. We all need to visit that kindness and compassion. If we all had kindness and compassion, we wouldn't be here today. We're all one big family. We're all in it together now, but we're all in it with ceremony. So we're all in it with that sacred circle, the sacred circle of life. I'm so grateful for this opportunity to speak on behalf of all my loved ones with me and all the ones that are making the journey now. And we have allowed them to take that journey that they need to take. And we

always say, "We'll see you again." Gunis jeesh.
KAREN SHOWSHOE: Thank you. Thank you. Number four, thank you. Thank you. Thank you, William. Mussi.

I just want to acknowledge, William, your strength and courage. I first met you -- I shouldn't say I first met you. But when you first came to speak to me about participating in the Inquiry, it was just a few weeks ago, and I was so honoured that you had come to me. And part of me was in disbelief that you are able to come here to KDCC and an speak with me because at that time I had understood -- what you had told me is that -- I think it had only been a few days, not even a week, since your sister's body was found at Kwanlin Dün. And I understand that you won't be speaking too much about that as it's an active investigation. I understand that it's been -- has it been ruled a homicide?
WILLIAM CARLICK: Pardon me?
KAREN SHOWSHOE: Do they know -- was it a homicide?
WILLIAM CARLICK: My understanding to this point, from what has been shared by the RCMP, is the statement -- it's always the same statement. It's still under investigation.
KAREN SHOWSHOE: Okay.
WILLIAM CARLICK: And there's really nothing that has come beyond that.
KAREN SHOWSHOE: Okay. Thank you. I just wanted to clarify. So your sister passed, and I understand that was a huge loss. That was Wendy Carlick. And she was the mother of Little Angel, and Little Angel was your niece. And so when you and I met, you had spoken to me about Little Angel, a little bit about her life, and you told me what happened to her. And then you also talked about some systemic issues in terms of what is making our women vulnerable, Indigenous women and girls, vulnerable to violence. Do you mind speaking to the Commissioners just a little bit about how we can honour Little Angel's life, speaking to them a little bit about her life, what happened to her, and maybe some of the issues that led her to be vulnerable to violence?
WILLIAM CARLICK: I only look at it because there's so much of what we can point a finger at in today's society that is part and parcel of it all. You

have to go way back, probably 500 years ago, prior to 500 years ago. You can use your imagination and seek that understanding that our ancestors back then had a spiritual belief system that they clung to as a survival responsibility. But also they had those laws that were unwritten laws that they followed, that today we kind of totally ignore but are still valid.

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

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

But that price need not be squandered by the way we go forward and make those changes that need to be made. And for me, those changes start with accepting our spiritual ways as a realistic -- to support. I'll give you an example, and I shared it with the panel, that we have healers and teachers that are coming to look after the sacred fire, because we need them there to make sure that it's effective, it's safe, and that

everybody's taken care of in a good way.

But yet, when it comes to them being compensated in the western way, they don't have a degree. They don't have a doctor. I worked for the City of Whitehorse for 28 years, elevated myself to being a supervisor running a crew of eight professionals, and they paid me 50 dollars an hour. And I'm looking at somebody like that that has so much responsibility that you can't even put it in a qualification manner. And yet, it's nothing for society to assume that they're going to volunteer their service.

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

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

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

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

from.

But we need that missing zero in our schools. We need our teachings and our traditions, not to be an option, but a good one where somebody getting an effective smudge is not told, "It's not our way." We hear that too much in our part of our society with our people. We hear it too much. "It's not our way." But that same person thinks nothing of just after finishing making that statement, turning on their cell phone and getting onto Facebook, and not thinking, "That's not our way either." So we have to come to terms with not using that statement anymore and accepting what's available and letting somebody make the decision because it's available and it's good

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

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

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

Overcoming grief. We all go through grief. Especially when you get to be 60 years old, you start seeing people that you love leave. But to see young people leave, especially the ones that take their own lives, that's the teaching that needs to be there for them. Then they'll rationalize and realize that where they're going is not a good place. They will think, not twice.

They'll think many times before they even contemplate doing that to themselves. Ceremony will teach them. We owe it to them. We owe it to the ones that gave the ultimate, their lives.

I cannot speak on behalf of my family members that are not here. But if I don't talk for myself, who's going to talk for me? So answering your question, as far as the investigation, all of that side of it, it's still a work in progress. Little Angel passed away in 2000, later 2000, on a beautiful day like today. Right now there's words in the air about getting ready for her graduation and it's what she was doing with her mother and grandma, my mother who made her a nice dress for her graduation, traditional one. And then only to graduate for, what, not even a day? No more information from what happened to her has ever come our way.

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

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

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

We went to Hobema one time where it's a lot of spiritual people and medicine. And a friend of ours, one of the family members, had just finished a ceremony there, and I asked, "Well,

just out of curiosity, what was the ceremony for?" And she said, "We had the ceremony in order to go back to when our ancestors signed a treaty because we wanted to know what that treaty was about." Their ancestors, like we're doing today, created a ceremony around a treaty so when the treaty was enacted, it became a live, spiritual document. It was alive. And so they went back to visit it and see what was the spiritual terms, for no other better word, for that treaty? Because the Europeans at that time think, oh, it's a bunch of Indians who just signed it and they don't know how to write. They don't even know what we're talking about. But our ancestors knew every language. They knew every process. They knew everything. So when they went to them and consulted with them through ceremony, they made that document a live one.

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

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

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

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

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

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

acknowledge that and thank you.

WILLIAM CARLICK: Can I ask that we all join hands in a sharing circle, because when we join our hands, we all bring a circle of goodness. We all bring something that we need to share. And what we need to share is the energy that the Creator sent our way and all of the universe has sent our way as we stand here. That is why I have this hair the way it is. It's long. And they always ask me, "Why do you have long hair?" I shared -- my belief is it's an antenna to catch all the energy that's coming from the universe that I need so that I can help and share with all of you, whether it's what I say, whether it's my presence near you, it's whether I pray for you, it's whether we do this and what we're doing today. And I'd like to acknowledge that as a very important part of what we need to do going forward. And I will put this mike aside because I want to also make that final connection.

(PRAYER) 15:58 to 16:05

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

(PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)
(PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED)

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

Very warm thanks are extended also to the

staff here at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre. They've taken very good care of us, especially the wonderful cook. The food has been wonderful.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this is a true and accurate transcript of these proceedings recorded on sound recording apparatus, transcribed to the best of my skill and ability in accordance with applicable standards.

M. Horvat
Court Transcriber

June 1, 2017