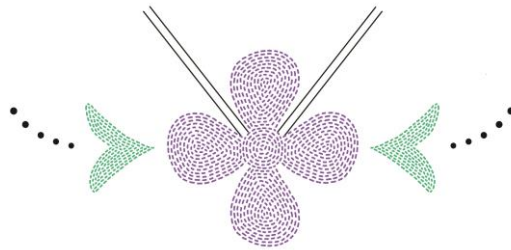


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

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



PUBLIC

Monday October 30, 2017

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**Clayton Saunders, Audrey Saunders,
Delilah Saunders, Miriam Saunders & Paula Saunders,
In relation to Loretta Saunders;**

Monique Fong Howe;

Rebecca Moore

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II

APPEARANCES

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

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

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1 Membertou, Nova Scotia

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

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

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

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

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

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

25 Good morning. If you'd like to take the

1 Bible in your right hand, there.

2 MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS: (Indiscernible).

3 MR. REGISTRAR: Yes, please, yes.

4 CLAYTON SAUNDERS, Sworn:

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

7 MR. REGISTRAR: Good morning, Miriam.

8 MIRIAM SAUNDERS, Sworn:

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

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

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

15 AUDREY SAUNDERS, Sworn:

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

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

19 MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS: Good morning.

20 DELILAH SAUNDERS, Affirmed:

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

25 And I would ask Commissioner, that, that

1 satisfy the requirements of the oath or affirmation. Okay.

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

4 **PAULA SAUNDERS, Affirmed:**

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

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

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

21 So I just want to be able to try to continue
22 her work because she had a passion for our people and the
23 way our people are being treated. And then -- and, and she
24 also had a passion for the murdered and missing.

25 And that's why I'm here. I'd like to be

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

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

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

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

20 And I guess you're all wondering too, why
21 I'm out here and not down -- down to my own community?
22 Because you people were here. You're like my own family.
23 You people were here for me when I first lost my daughter.
24 And to me you all are family because you are the people
25 that -- only people that helped me understand and helped me

1 to be able to get to where I am today. So that's why I'm
2 here. I'd like to explain that's why I'm here in Nova
3 Scotia. I'm not going to be attending the -- like not --
4 didn't stay to attend my people -- my own -- in my own
5 territory.

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

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

17 And my daughter, Loretta, when she came to
18 university in Nova Scotia she started getting traditional
19 ways, and started talking to me, and telling -- like she
20 said, "Mom, do you know we're being killed off by our own
21 government?" By, by the Newfoundland, Labrador government.

22 And I'd like to be able to -- to -- to
23 continue and I'm asking you people to help me, because like
24 I said, this is -- this isn't -- I really don't know where
25 to start. I need -- you -- a lot of you people been doing

1 that she taught me, and I -- I saw how things played out
2 after she went missing and she was found murdered. I saw
3 how her white passing privilege -- it, it helped -- like,
4 it helped the situation. And I've met thousands of family
5 members across the country who, who haven't had that and
6 I've carried a lot of guilt because of that.

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

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

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

15 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** When my daughter first
16 went missing they had it white woman missing, and I started
17 to -- I started to clap because they called her white
18 because I knew they were going to start looking -- when,
19 first when they said she was a white woman I would call --
20 I call to the investigators and they would answer me. I
21 would talk personally to the investigators and they -- and
22 then they started -- after they started -- when they
23 started calling her Inuk I had start swearing, and
24 everything, at them to get -- to get answers. They had --
25 I didn't get to talk to the investigators after that.

1 I started talking -- and having to talk to
2 this go-between, like, I called -- he was a go-between.
3 And when I asked him questions, he said, "Oh, I can't
4 answer that. I can't --" and I -- I had to start cursing
5 and I could -- I knew my father was rolling over in his
6 grave because he didn't like me cursing. I found -- I
7 found I was (indiscernible) cursing.

8 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Loretta and I, when
9 we lived in Halifax together, we got pulled over by the
10 police and we were, we were buying drugs -- this was a
11 number of years ago -- and we got pulled over by the police
12 and they were really, really sweet to us. They were --
13 they were kind to us even though we were buying drugs.

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

18 And I -- she -- she also -- I helped her
19 with an assignment on missing white women syndrome. And
20 that's one thing that really sticks with me, all of the
21 things that she taught me about, and then I saw with her
22 case, when a white woman goes missing there, there's so
23 much more effort put in to investigating. There's so --
24 there's more public outcry. And I've -- I've seen stories
25 of Indigenous woman and girls who are painted in such a bad

1 light.

2 And the media -- the media tends to -- the
3 media is considered one of the most powerful institutions
4 in the world, and there's no denying that. And the words
5 they choose are so careless and not just careless, but
6 cruel, they're cruel.

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

11 And I was actually travelling across the
12 country, I'd only been moved away from Halifax for a couple
13 of months. I was taking the Via Rail, Greyhound, and I was
14 hitchhiking to B.C. My sister -- she was like, "Delilah,
15 what the F are you doing? Like, what's wrong with you?
16 You don't realize -- like, do you not realize this isn't
17 just happening to one Native woman. This is happening to
18 thousands." And she -- she said this is being considered a
19 national tragedy, a national epidemic, and it -- it did
20 help me be more -- more cautious, but I didn't realize how
21 big of an issue it was until it happened in my family.

22 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** I can remember -- I
23 can remember when she was hitchhiking, I'd be on the phone
24 crying to Loretta because she was -- see -- that -- it's --
25 the thing about my children is they look white. And by our

1 own -- by -- when we lived in Goose Bay it's more white --
2 it was more white than when, before the -- the
3 (indiscernible) cards come out and you -- you were getting
4 benefits.

5 Because when we were -- we've -- I first
6 moved there I was always -- I -- I grew up and I -- as a
7 dirty 'skimo and my children, while they lived in Goose Bay
8 they were picked on by children -- by the people there as
9 dirty 'skimos, but when they tried to travel to my own
10 community, they were called white people, so we've -- I've
11 had a struggle wondering what -- what -- I guess, they
12 really did too, because -- especially my older children,
13 but when the younger ones come in all these benefits was
14 in, so everybody was a 'skimo.

15 People even who -- who -- who call me a
16 'skimo -- now they're -- they're LIA members theirself
17 (sic). And, and they're, they're the ones who's -- who's
18 being the head ones. The head ones are the people who had
19 us degraded and called dirty 'skimos, to a point my father
20 used to work down to Iqaluit, and mostly Frobisher Bay and
21 Sanikiluaq, so we -- the weather where we live, you could
22 go weeks without -- without any income waiting for your
23 cheque. And my dad's cheques used to come. And there --
24 the people who -- who -- who are running us and being our
25 leaders now are the people.

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

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

11 So it's not -- it's not our blood, so
12 there's another thing I'm -- I know. I may lose my job for
13 this, but guess what, I don't care anymore because I'm
14 tired seeing my real Inuk with the full blood being killed
15 off. Like my daughter said, "We do not have to worry about
16 anybody else killing us off. Our own government is killing
17 us off."

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

24 Enough is enough for me. I'm tired of
25 seeing my people treated like animals while the ones who

1 treated us like animals now -- now are our leaders.

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

6 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yeah. I'll just
7 start. I -- like, hard to believe it, I was a real quiet
8 woman, or girl. I was. But my passion -- and I worked --
9 I started off -- like, I worked -- I went to school. I
10 went -- I left home. I was scared. I -- I was frightened
11 to death, even in Goose Bay because we're such a small
12 community. And then I got into -- back into school. I
13 don't think I even -- I didn't even talk. I think it was
14 two people I talked to really in school.

15 One is gone, bless her soul, and she was
16 murdered, Sarah Opid (ph). I want to remember her too,
17 Sarah Opid from Nain. She was my friend. And she was
18 murdered, but guess what? She was -- they claimed it was
19 self-protection. But she was always beat up, so how could
20 it could have been self-protection? She was always beat up
21 in the beginning, but of course, you know, it wasn't --
22 hers was in self-defence, but to me it's murder. Once you
23 take a life regardless, there's no -- no excuse, when you
24 murder a person you murder them.

25 And then I -- I started working in the fish

1 -- but then I started working in child protection. I
2 worked in child protection for 15 years. And the -- I end
3 up out of there. They even went to accuse me. I did a --
4 I made out the cheques. They even went to accuse me,
5 because I had some children with me, but I had to write the
6 cheques out, but the social worker -- I'd like to find out
7 the truth because I never did it. But they even accused me
8 of writing a cheque to myself and signing another person's
9 -- another person -- another social worker's name.

10 And the reason they claim I stole was
11 because I was on my way to St. John's with one of the
12 children. What -- that was my husband's relative -- I was
13 on my way to take him to a hospital and I was allowed to
14 write out my -- I said, "Okay, I'm going to write out the
15 cheque because I need it for in St. John's." They signed
16 it. I throwed -- I didn't even have time to file it --
17 "Oh, yes, you did because it was thrown in your filing
18 cabinet." Have you -- any of you -- anybody ever done
19 something in a rush and then planning to file it after.

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

25 Our children are being taken away, even

1 after my daughter was murdered -- my son -- he -- my son,
2 James (ph), he's -- he -- he -- his brother, Edmond (ph),
3 said, "Come on, we have to go look for sister." And when
4 he did his girlfriend, at the time, they had one girl, a
5 little girl, they said -- she said, "If you go, don't come
6 back." And he never. And apparently, I didn't know, she
7 was pregnant again.

8 But while he was out searching that baby --
9 my granddaughter, who -- who I had -- was very close to --
10 when I lost Loretta I lost grandchildren. They didn't even
11 approach us. Approach us to -- to see if we were
12 interested. I -- I, I never had -- I wouldn't have been
13 able to at the time, yes, but at least they could have
14 approached me and said, "Your -- your -- your granddaughter
15 is going into care. You know, do you want anything?"

16 But like I said, at the time I never had the
17 energy. I had just lost my daughter. She was pregnant. I
18 lost a granddaughter there. I says granddaughter because
19 so many people -- three people, including my husband, came
20 and said it was a little girl, and they described her in a
21 white dress, long blond hair, and white ribbon. How -- so
22 I know the Creator let us know it was a little girl. In
23 our hearts we believe it's a little girl.

24 So my, like -- and then I worked, like
25 there, and the difference in it, we did not take children

1 if there was someone sober, someone reliable with that
2 child.

3 In fact, I worked at -- as client liaison
4 worker for then -- for them then. They, they approached me
5 and asked me to apply for this job. And not -- not very
6 often a child went into care. I would go -- if I had to I
7 would find a babysitter and take them, because I knew, the
8 people, take them to a babysitter and then talk to the
9 parents next day. We gave them a chance. We didn't just
10 take them.

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

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

25 Prior to that he was married for two weeks.

1 They had a stillborn baby, and the day the little -- the
2 day that -- the -- the -- when she -- the girl, when she
3 went in labour she come to me and she said -- she called
4 me, and she said, "Mom, I need to go hospital. I'm
5 paining." So we took her up -- or we took -- I got my
6 husband take her up. They done -- they done -- the, the
7 doctor at the time -- every time she come -- I could tell
8 you, I -- you could tell when a pregnant woman, they're
9 glowing.

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

17 And the doctor -- because I -- every time
18 she come, because I could see -- the last time I seen her,
19 I said, "Did you" -- I said, "Did the doctor -- did the
20 doctor feel you? Check?" "Oh, no", she said, "She never
21 do check me." She said, "But she -- she -- she let me hear
22 the heartbeat." The baby was dead a month. How could she
23 hear the heartbeat? All that time she was hearing her
24 heartbeat.

25 And that's another thing -- like, they're

1 put through that, and it's -- and after he going through
2 all that, and her -- his sister -- his sister was just
3 murdered. They took his daughter and they didn't even
4 offer supports. They treat our people like dog. And then
5 they take them out to Newfoundland.

6 This -- this place that's supposed to be --
7 huh? In Roddickton, Newfoundland, that's supposed to be --
8 that place was going to be closed down, closed. They were
9 going to close it down. The, the social workers weren't
10 going to be there anymore. Instead they took two social
11 workers -- two social workers from Hopedale and Nain, and
12 they kept them, and guess what? All our children is gone.
13 New little industry.

14 And that's where my daughter was talking
15 about, they're killing off our people. They're going to
16 take them out there and they're going to try to make them
17 white.

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

23 And then so I -- so I -- I -- I resigned
24 from social services and I started working at the hospital.
25 And this is where I get to hear and see a lot of my -- I

1 used to be homesick, but now I see my people every day --
2 every day. And you know what, you see certain ones
3 blossoming.

4 But you see my age, and people my age,
5 they're still the little shy woman. They're still the --
6 there's, they're scared to speak up. They're scared to
7 speak up because the same people who had us way down low is
8 the big ones now.

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

17 And I tell you no more seeing my people
18 hurt. I want to speak up for the ones who cannot speak up.
19 And that was my daughter's passion. Was to speak up for
20 the people who cannot speak up, like I was. I know there's
21 a lot of smart people out of there, but guess what? We
22 cannot -- there's no -- there's certain positions cannot be
23 filled by my people because they don't have the education.
24 Yeah.

25 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** You -- when we

1 were talking earlier too, you talked about medical travel.
2 People going from Nunatsiavut to St. John's.

3 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yes, that's another
4 thing. That's what really ticks me off. People on social
5 assistance, and where we're living too, it's very -- like
6 meeting Goose Bay is cheaper than on the coast. Down on
7 the north coast the people -- you see the price, people --
8 I give an example. There was a watermelon -- what was it,
9 \$188? So they check to see why the watermelon was so high.
10 Oh, they made a mistake. I think it was something like
11 \$80, was the right price. For a watermelon. And then they
12 take our caribou away.

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

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

1 So the poor people, they come out of
2 Hopedale. They get there about 10:00 or -- Nain, the
3 coast. And they get out, they get to the airport. They're
4 at the airport. And they got to catch a flight. I'll take
5 an example, one got there about 11:00, 10:00, 11 o'clock.
6 They got on the flight about 9:00. Some of them don't have
7 breakfast, or anything, and some -- a lot of people are
8 diabetics, so they get to -- if you're on welfare you will
9 -- you have to come -- you go -- you have to come and you
10 go to the airport. Lucky enough Nunatsiavut cuts in now,
11 but we shouldn't have to because -- like, we shouldn't have
12 to.

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

19 But if we didn't get involved with the --
20 with the people on the assistance, they would have to be at
21 the airport, stay there, probably didn't have breakfast.
22 No money to buy -- no money to buy a lunch or -- or -- or
23 dinner, what they call -- I call supper and -- dinner and
24 supper, but out here they say lunch and dinner. I'm
25 learning. So they have to wait at the airport. No money.

1 Maybe children with them, hungry.

2 And then they get -- they, they get to St.
3 John's, they'll -- they'll let the van take them to the,
4 they'll let the van take them to wherever they're staying.
5 If they're staying at the Health Science in the hostel,
6 it's perfect because their appointment is there. But if
7 you've got an appointment, other than in that building,
8 they'll give you a five-dollar voucher to get on the bus.
9 Well, we don't know how to get around on buses.

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

22 And I know, I was on assistance myself. And
23 they're like I was. I was quiet to a point where I had --
24 I had -- I was only 17. Can you imagine -- and I had a
25 filling out. And later that dentist, he said, "Oh, you

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

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

1 I wonder, do social services get \$20 a day
2 for their meals when they go on meeting. Is that their per
3 diem? I hope so. I wonder, do their insurance cover only
4 -- that our people -- they don't -- on social assistance,
5 they do not get fillings covered. Automatically, if you're
6 on assistance your teeth is out. And that's why they took
7 mine out. I suppose he got -- he wasn't going to get his
8 little whatever for his one teeth, but he figure, "Oh God,
9 I got a good quiet one."

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

15 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Loretta brought
16 this out in you, this...

17 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yes.

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

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

1 -- why I'm like this.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 the pedophile's home, if they could they could -- a lot of
2 those people would be killed. I believe it.

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

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

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

25 And -- and like I said, I always say, I had

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

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

22 But Loretta said, Mom, you know what, the
23 things that you go through, the way you are, is because
24 your father and your mother was in the real -- real
25 residential schooling. And they were taken as little

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

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

21 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Do you want a
22 break?

23 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** I think
24 (indiscernible) I think -- do you want to take a break,
25 or...

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

3 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** We'll take a five-
4 minute break.

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

6 **(SHORT PAUSE)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** We'll -- we'll
5 proceed.

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

7 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** We'll -- it's
8 -- it's being recorded, and -- and -- we won't miss
9 anything.

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

13 **MS. AUDREY SAUNDERS:** My name's Audrey
14 Saunders, and I'm a survivor of violence. I've been in a
15 few relationships where it was really violent. I was
16 living in Lab City with my two boys. And I got beaten up
17 pretty bad. I broke my collar bone -- broke my collar
18 bone. And I went back to Goose Bay to live with my mom and
19 dad. It was recommended that I do that by Child and Family
20 Services in Goose Bay. There was a social worker that was
21 taking my ex to court for child support, for my second
22 child, that he owed. And -- well, she when she was going
23 to court for child support she started having an affair
24 with him, and I found out and the charges got dropped.

25 And I lived in Goose Bay then and I moved to

1 Hopedale and I started seeing another guy and he started
2 being very abusive to me so I left him. And one night he
3 broke into my house and beat me up pretty bad, where I
4 wasn't recognizable. It took the cops -- the RCMP -- it
5 happened about three o'clock in the morning -- it took the
6 RCMP pretty much 24 hours to come see me.

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

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

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

19 She had called me to see if I could take the
20 boys. I couldn't take them at the time because I already
21 had a son with a mental illness and my second son at the
22 time -- my husband was in hospital and they told him that -
23 - told us that he had cancer, and our first son together --
24 he went out with some friends drinking and they had given
25 him something. He didn't tell me to this day if it was a

1 pill or what and he got sick.

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

6 So she had asked other grandfather and his
7 girlfriend and they -- they decided they would take them,
8 and our understanding it was just till -- because she was
9 beat up pretty bad.

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

13 And somehow the kids end up in care and we
14 were in agreement with it because they went -- he -- they
15 went to the grandfather, and they promised they weren't
16 going to separate them, and next thing you know they were
17 separated and given up for adoption. No -- we were never
18 ever -- again, we were never ever approached to see if --
19 if we -- had any interest in taking them.

20 See there was -- like I said, I work for
21 them, but there was an incident at one point, and I know --
22 and then, like, my daughter, she said -- well, Loretta, she
23 says something that we -- she said, we were passed out, and
24 she was sleeping in between us, and her friend was there,
25 but that's -- that wasn't true, but she couldn't have been

1 sleeping with us because she wasn't there. So this feller,
2 he went and he tried to get at her, right. And they used
3 that against me for what -- for -- for what this guy had
4 done to -- huh?

5 No -- no -- no. About, like about Loretta,
6 that's including with Audrey -- that's because -- that's --
7 that's -- that's excuses that they're using because of an
8 incident that happened with Loretta. She was 19. There
9 was no children under the age of 16 in the house at the
10 time.

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

14 And she -- Audrey, her -- she was beaten up,
15 and they didn't even -- when they decided -- they told us
16 they weren't going to separate them, and they weren't going
17 -- like, they weren't -- they weren't going to be
18 separated, but we weren't even notified.

19 And I was told by the adoptive parents and
20 by them, we weren't allowed to see them. In fact, they
21 came to where I worked with Nunatsiavut at the time, they
22 were going to a children's program, and the lady who had
23 him when -- said, "I'm not bringing him here." I said,
24 "You have to bring him here. He's Native," because she's
25 non-Native, right. "You have to. You have to keep his --

1 him -- let him know that he's -- he's Native." And she
2 said, "Well, I promise to bring him here, if you promise to
3 let him you was Miriam and not -- not your Nana" -- and I
4 did, I did it. For their sake. They do have -- and I kept
5 away because I knew they had good homes, but that wasn't
6 the point.

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

12 My grandsons -- they -- they in-boxed me, in
13 fact, her youngest boy that was in care, he -- he in-boxed
14 me and he said in his class to had to -- they were given
15 three names of people to write about and Loretta's name was
16 there. So he knew he was Saunders's, and he got a hold of
17 his mother, so we are starting to have a bit of contact.

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

23 And it's something we need to -- I need -- I
24 want to stop -- yes, if they're adopted out to -- if the
25 next family's white, just at least don't completely take

1 them from us.

2 I want to -- you know -- I, I -- it's hard
3 seeing your grandchildren there and not being able to hug
4 them the way you were when they were -- because they were
5 older when they went into care. How old were they? Three,
6 four, five, something like that, but they -- they do --
7 they did know us. So that's another thing they -- they --
8 three and five.

9 So another thing I see that's happening to
10 our people, grandparents who aren't able to take care of
11 the grandchildren -- that -- don't give them -- I don't
12 think that should give them a right to completely taking
13 them off -- out of our lives because we still love them.
14 But there are circumstances that we are unable to take
15 them.

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

25 **MS. AUDREY SAUNDERS:** I have another child,

1 Mariah (ph), she lives with me. She's nine. After Loretta
2 got murdered the doctor put me on Ativan and a sleeping
3 pill to help me sleep, and not long after I was asked to
4 leave my home because of my prescription.

5 I wasn't put in a safe place. While I was
6 at that place they put bars at my windows and they were
7 videotaping my bedroom to see me coming and going. So I
8 called Mom, and told them, my brother had been come in
9 town, in St. John's, and he come down, and seen it was
10 true. And he got -- they got me into the friendship centre
11 in Mi'kmaw.

12 They wouldn't let me see Mariah for a whole
13 month. And then they made supervised visits, and I was
14 begging and asking to do drug tests. They wouldn't do it
15 for like four months. There was no court order.

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

20 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** She was kept away four
21 to six months, just because -- yeah, she was kept away.
22 She had been given -- she -- prior, she was -- like, she
23 was a user. After she lost her children. After she'd lost
24 her children she got into painkillers, and then she had to
25 go -- she went and got help for it after -- went onto the

1 methadone problem.

2 And when Loretta was taken, that's what she
3 -- they put her -- the doctor put gave her a prescription
4 to help her with it and then they accused her of using even
5 though it was prescribed for her. And when they said, "Oh,
6 you're using." They put her in a very, very bad place.
7 There was people using and she was -- she was just -- you
8 know, she was on the methadone trying to -- keeping herself
9 clean. And they tried to say -- I know they tried to set
10 her up.

11 But once they found out that she had never
12 ever applied to -- for membership with our -- with our
13 organization -- with Nunatsiavut, she never ever applied
14 because of her fair, for how she was treated.

15 And they would not believe that she -- that
16 her daughter wasn't Inuit. Or she is Inuit, but she's too
17 scared to apply because of what's happening. She's too
18 scared to -- she was too scared to apply because it seemed
19 like the Native children were getting taken away, and
20 brought.

21 And when -- when they took her she begged
22 them to give her the drug test. They cut -- they used to
23 cut her hair. They refused to do it for four to -- was it
24 four months or more?

25 **MS. AUDREY SAUNDERS:** Four.

1 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** They had her in this
2 real bad place. People shooting up. And she called me
3 crying.

4 So I -- me and her brother ended up going
5 out. And we had some help from the -- we got her into the
6 friendship centre, and she started getting help with --
7 from Emilia (ph) and them then. But -- and then I went
8 back -- I went out to healing centre myself. Then after I
9 knew they were okay, right.

10 But she -- social services has been giving
11 her a really hard time. And I believe her because my
12 sister, she also is a social worker, and once they found
13 out she was in residential schooling she's been getting a
14 very hard time.

15 Yeah, they even -- they went to visit my
16 daughter and them and they were questioning about their co-
17 worker, my sister, a social worker, right. So she's
18 getting a rough time too, because she was in residential
19 schooling. Thank you.

20 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Delilah,
21 when -- when we were talking and preparing for this too,
22 you -- you -- you spoke about some of the -- the -- the --
23 the deep connection that -- that you and Loretta had, and,
24 and how that relationship developed. Do you want to talk a
25 bit about that?

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

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

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

7 I lived with her in Halifax. I -- I moved
8 to Halifax about a month after she started her first year
9 of university. I went there to go to a treatment centre.
10 And I chose the treatment centre in Halifax because it was
11 close to her and I ended up just staying there until I was
12 about 21.

13 And she -- we -- we told each other
14 everything. We -- we hung out all the time. There was
15 never one without the other. And we -- there were a lot
16 different facets of our relationship.

17 We -- we really wanted bigger, better lives
18 for ourselves that what we saw back in our communities.
19 And a lot of these situations that we had seen ourselves
20 in, be it substance abuse, or toxic relationships, and we
21 would always say to each other, "we're going to take over
22 the world." And we had -- we had big plans for our
23 futures.

24 She wanted to go to law school. She wanted
25 to be a mother. She wanted to be a wife. She wanted --

1 she wanted to help our people. And she -- she was on that
2 path to do that.

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

8 Okay. So the funny thing about this
9 picture, it's on Facebook, and someone had commented on my,
10 my push-up bra, but they didn't know it was a push-up bra.
11 And Loretta started a big rumor that we didn't -- we didn't
12 fix, I suppose, she started a big rumor that I got breast
13 implants. And so there's a huge thread on Facebook and she
14 was -- she was really silly.

15 She had the best laugh. She had the best
16 laugh. She -- it was just full body. Sometimes almost
17 cackling -- like her whole body would...

18 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Her belly would
19 jiggle.

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

1 Loretta loved driving fast. She loved
2 driving fast. And my mom started crying, and I think she
3 was scared, but she said it was because Garrett was in the
4 car.

5 But that -- that was really a beautiful day
6 and she loved spending time with friends and family and she
7 had a really big heart. She -- she helped me with a lot of
8 -- a lot of my own stuff, in guiding me to find direction
9 in my life.

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

19 But back to the story about -- what was I
20 talking about? Before the picture. What was I talking
21 about?

22 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You were talking
23 about the (indiscernible).

24 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Oh, she, she was at
25 the university. She went to St. Mary's, and she wrote me

1 an email out of the blue. She's like, "Hey, D, I just want
2 to let you know that I'm very proud of you." And it's
3 something that I still read. I was starting to go back to
4 school. And she's like, "This is your year, like, for
5 school," and she's like "thank you so much for helping me
6 make sense of the chaos in my life and being there and
7 listening to me," and that's something I -- I still read
8 quite often.

9 You know, we were always sending each other
10 messages. We were talking all the time, whether she was
11 lecturing me about my poor decisions, or we were talking
12 about things like colonialism and about abuse.

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

18 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Fifteen.

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

20 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Sixteen.

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

25 But she moved to Montreal after St. John's,

1 and she became addicted to drugs, and she was being
2 exploited at the age of 15, sleeping on park benches. And
3 she ended up moving home -- when, mom?

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

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

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

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

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

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

25 She finished three years of high school in

1 eight months, and then she did a transition year to go to
2 university, and she did that in Goose Bay. And then she
3 went onto St. Mary's University.

4 And I remember one thing she talked about
5 quite often was a girl -- she told a girl that she went to
6 high school with, not the eight-month like, adult high
7 school, but that she actually went to high school that
8 she's going to St. Mary's, and she said to Loretta, "Don't
9 you have to be smart to get in there?"

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

19 She -- she's someone that I still look up to
20 and that I feel really guides me. And someone who -- who's
21 still teaching me today through the conversations that
22 we've had and the things that she's lectured me on. But
23 she -- she's still very much in my heart.

24 And I think for a long time I -- I had
25 difficulty calling on her because I, I was really bitter

1 that she was gone. I was achieving things, and I wanted
2 her to be there. And I wanted her to see that I was in a
3 good place because I know I did make her worry. I made my
4 family worry. And she never wanted my mom to worry about
5 anything because my mom is already had a lot on her own
6 plate.

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

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

25 I'm finally able to sit with her now, and

1 while I was bitter that she hasn't been here to be able to
2 experience life with me and I could be an auntie to her
3 baby. And I remember -- while I was bitter about that -- I
4 -- I'm able to experience her presence in a different way
5 now.

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

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

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

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

1 have the heat so high?" And she -- like she'd say --
2 anyway, she hated being way too warm. And we lived on the
3 tenth floor so the summers were -- were bad.

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

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

25 Since losing her we lost a huge part of our

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

25 And I -- I looked at my phone. I -- it was

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

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

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

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

22 Another thing that I've -- I made a point to
23 do -- like during the appeal hearing, I had mentioned that
24 you know, while we're lucky that my white passing sister
25 received some level of justice, or what Canada considers

1 justice, there are families out there that don't -- don't
2 receive the same level of justice. And that's something
3 that Loretta -- Loretta made sure that I was aware of that.
4 Because she was -- she was very aware of that.

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

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

19 And with the police I -- I do understand why
20 they couldn't give us a lot of answers. Because when I
21 landed in Halifax I immediately went to the police station.
22 They did ask me a couple of questions, like "Did Loretta
23 own a white purse?" Loretta owned a lot of purses, but I
24 knew which one they were talking about. And I -- they did
25 ask some weird questions. They asked about the text

1 message that I got from Loretta's -- no, I got a Facebook
2 message, and it just said, "Hey." It was on Valentine's
3 Day, so it would have been Victoria or Blake, her
4 murderers, messaging from her phone. And so they -- they
5 did ask those questions.

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

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

23 The police -- we did switch investigators a
24 few times. I don't know, I think -- I think they'll want
25 to talk more about like the police interactions. I was

1 more so on the ground with posters, dealing with media, and
2 sometimes the police, but media was where I have the most
3 issues.

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

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

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

20 And (indiscernible) and not one of them
21 foster children or brothers and sisters could -- they
22 couldn't say nothing wrong with Loretta. Because you know,
23 she could get along with anybody. And anybody -- and she
24 made friends wherever she went to really quickly, like,
25 hey. Well, excuse me, and Loretta too, same as -- same as

1 the rest of her family you know.

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

11 Anyway, Loretta, she went to Sunday school.
12 She went to Sunday school with her -- with her brothers and
13 sisters. And not only, not only her brothers and sisters,
14 me and her mother would go, you know. That's how ...

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

18 Delilah -- you take Delilah here, and her
19 brothers they could even read before they went to school,
20 and we get a lot of credit to that because they sat down at
21 the table, read the Bible, and every week they used to have
22 to remember a little Bible verse and get up and say it in
23 Sunday school, which, you know, they all done very well.
24 Sometimes they wouldn't -- might need a little help once in
25 a while to get the verse out, but they all managed to do it

1 anyway.

2 So, you know, that -- that was the -- the
3 way that -- that was the way that we reared up our
4 children, and those who stayed with us.

5 But you know -- but all good times got to
6 pass, hey, and our children they grow older, make their
7 (indiscernible), they grow older and make their own
8 decisions.

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

18 Now, I must say too, that, you know, that
19 the teachers in school was no help at all. All -- a kid
20 got to go no matter what. And they complain to a teacher
21 and the teacher runs to the social services and the social
22 services comes down hard on the parent, and they don't know
23 what the fuck they're talking about.

24 And the social services, I do believe run
25 around that like so bad because they got the RCMP to back

1 them up. All they got to do is run to the RCMP and the
2 RCMP threaten to press charges against you. For what?
3 Trying to -- you know, trying to take care of your kids the
4 best way you -- they can.

5 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** You're doing good,
6 love, you're doing good.

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

13 What could you do when you got the mighty
14 social service woman, a little snotty-nosed kid just
15 getting out of university or something. Going and telling
16 parents that three (indiscernible) kids who almost reared
17 up and ready to go, and them little snotty-nosed -- that
18 little snotty-nosed social services kids ordering you
19 around. What could you do? You don't want the RCMP
20 throwing you in jail because you're trying to look after
21 your kids.

22 We never ever hurt our kids. Never ever
23 did. Never ever drank around them. Never ever smoked any
24 dope around them. What could you do when the little
25 snotty-nosed social service worker knocking on your door

1 and the RCMP standing on your back. Your kids have told
2 them something. Well, was nothing bad they told them about
3 us anyway, but maybe a little smack on the butt or
4 something. What they needed -- what they really deserve.
5 That was enough for them to come run down, you know.

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

12 But anyway she -- she met this certain guy
13 who was no good for her and you can't tell them that
14 anyway, you know. No good for her. They runs off to
15 Montreal. And she lived out on the streets and that, and
16 after a little while she come to find out that it's a
17 horrible -- horrible place out on the streets.

18 I think she told her mother that too, that
19 you know, on the streets out there, and she could see how
20 they -- the people was living there. Especially the girls.
21 Especially the Aboriginal girls. She seen them on the
22 street. She seen them on the -- living -- and how -- how
23 they was treated.

24 I think, I think too, that she was in heavy
25 drugs at that time; my girl was. But you know, anyway her

1 mother took her out to rehab, and all this, and out around
2 there and she seemed to be doing fine, but then that must
3 have waken her up I think that she -- she wanted to go and
4 have a -- a better life. She wanted to make a better life.
5 She wanted to -- she wanted to make her father proud of
6 her. Her mother proud of her.

7 And then she decided to go back to school.
8 But she wouldn't go to school in Goose Bay. She -- I guess
9 she wanted -- didn't like it but, she wanted to go to
10 Hopedale for school. She wanted to go down there and get
11 her education, so that's what she done. She went down
12 there, and she was very smart down there. She got her
13 education very fast because all she done was study and
14 work.

15 And I mean she was a real -- real model to
16 the -- the -- the ones that were -- who was going to school
17 down there. And how -- how she got through so fast. And
18 that -- that encouraged a lot -- a lot of young people
19 in -- in Hopedale.

20 Yeah, they were, they were doing better.
21 They started doing better in school down there. Anyway the
22 rest of the kids they started studying, you know. Then our
23 -- our (indiscernible), you'll think -- I think they're
24 still doing good down in school.

25 I -- I don't have that little

1 (indiscernible) but I likes to show off, I don't think
2 about what the kids made -- made for her after she was
3 murdered. Send a little booklet, but -- the -- the little
4 children made from the school and they send it to us. To
5 encourage us, you know, and -- and help us to get over her
6 death. Well, I wouldn't say just an ordinary death, she
7 was -- she was murdered. Well, here's her -- here's her
8 little pad -- book what they made up for her.

9 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** The languageness (ph),
10 okay.

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

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

15 **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** Yeah.

16 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** They take them from
17 newborn to till they get to school and all day long, like
18 they get just talking Inuk to them. So that's the little
19 class who sent it to us was the little languageness that --
20 that's where, where we lost our language, so they're trying
21 to -- they're using that to try to bring our language back
22 to the younger generation.

23 **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** So that was quite
24 encouraging, hey. Yeah.

25 Well, my daughter anyway she got -- she got

1 her diploma finished, the rest of her education in
2 Hopedale, and she was very happy. She applied for
3 university, St. Mary's, and she got that and she was even
4 happier. She was glad that she will go.

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

9 I mean she was settled down, settling down
10 really good. And she was doing really good in school. She
11 was really happy. She was -- she was getting good marks in
12 university because all she done was study most -- that's
13 the most thing that she would do, studying.

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

18 I -- I remember when she first started
19 writing her thesis, I think it was her mother encouraged
20 her to write her thesis on the Aboriginal people. And she
21 put her heart in that.

22 My -- my -- as far as I know my girl, when
23 she started writing her thesis, she -- she didn't just pick
24 stuff out of the books, I don't think, or got newspapers
25 clippings, and all that, and, and looked at it -- wrote it

1 in her thesis. She really had interviews with people, real
2 live people. And she interviewed them. I do believe her
3 professor said it was one of the longest thesis that he
4 ever had, and one of the best written ones. I mean, that's
5 what my little girl was like.

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

9 Well, anyway, my -- my little girl -- I
10 think I might have called her Loretta once or twice, maybe
11 three times in her lifetime because she was a princess and
12 that's what I called her. And she knew that she was one.
13 And that's all I ever called her.

14 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** (Indiscernible) called
15 her Loretta (indiscernible) called her.

16 **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** Yes, she used to
17 be -- she'd get upset with me anyway if I called her
18 Loretta. I had to call her princess, or I had to call her
19 girly-girl. I used to call her girl because I was in the
20 delivery room with her, and I used tell her the story too,
21 and she used to like it, yeah. I was -- I was in the
22 delivery room when -- when she got born and you know, when
23 she was born the doctor picked her up, hold her upside and
24 smacked her bum when she -- and she peed. And then the
25 doctor said, "It's a girl." And that's how I called her

1 girly-girl ever -- ever since then. She was a girl. And
2 her mother said to me, "That's your baby." And I said,
3 "Yeah."

4 And, and I took her and she -- and you know,
5 I practically raised her up -- well, my wife was there.
6 You know, I didn't do all the work, like changing diapers
7 that much. But you know, I took care of her most of the
8 time.

9 And, yes -- yeah, she was -- she was quite
10 the girl, and we all miss her. We -- we all miss -- we all
11 miss Loretta, our girly-girl, our princess, we all miss
12 her.

13 And anyway, she -- she was -- everybody was
14 -- it's just so bad things like this got to happen. As
15 I -- as I say, you know, she -- Loretta wasn't murdered
16 because of her thesis. She wasn't murdered because she was
17 a Native. She wasn't murdered because she was Aboriginal.
18 Loretta -- Loretta was murdered for I believe, just a
19 little bit of rent money, or something, but I do believe
20 too, that those cold-blooded killers. I might as well add
21 was cowardly -- cowardly -- cowardly cold-blooded killers,
22 murder a -- I don't even know if it was for -- for money.
23 I think it was for being jealous. They were jealous,
24 cowardly, cold-blooded murderers; that's all they was.

25 Those cold-blooded murderers had no thought

1 for anybody's life. From what I hear those people that my
2 daughter let stay in her apartment. She took care of them.
3 She brought them to restaurants and paid for the food.
4 Took them to movies and paid for it.

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

10 And that woman what called herself a woman
11 didn't -- is nothing but a cowardly cold-blooded murderer.
12 If that thing couldn't stick up and say something to my
13 girl, who was bigger than my girl, bigger around than my
14 girl, then what could you say about people like that?

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

23 And my daughter, you know, wanted change. I
24 do believe in her thesis that I didn't read it all, but she
25 had things wrote in there. She wanted things changed, the

1 social services stuff. She wanted the RCMP -- she -- she
2 was getting ready to give that to the university, and maybe
3 then they would have let the -- the -- the RCMP and the --
4 the Government -- Government of Canada to look it over and
5 really see what this country -- this -- this big mess this
6 country is in. About letting men murder women.

7 Yes. And my wife just reminded me that
8 pregnant women, pregnant women being murdered. You don't
9 think -- you know something about a pregnant woman being
10 murdered? The cold-blooded murderers are allowed to get
11 away with murdering that little child what's inside of a
12 woman. You know I asked women before -- after my daughter
13 was murdered, and I said, "When you get pregnant do you
14 consider that little thing what's in you a human being?"
15 Every one of them said, "Yes, it's a human being." Once a
16 woman gets pregnant that is a human being growing in there.

17 And yet because of this stupid -- stupid
18 abortion law, you know, it's not considered a human being.
19 And not only that I've got in mind to tell yous not only
20 that I think my wife looked it up in -- in whatever, you
21 know, about pregnant -- well, yes, if -- if a woman wants
22 the baby you know, and don't have abortion, or whatever, if
23 a woman wants the baby that you -- that's a human being.

24 My daughter wanted a baby. I wanted it.
25 And -- and my wife did too, wanted it, wanted that baby.

1 And my daughter wanted it. So there's no reason why -- no
2 reason why, I think if the lawyers looked up that law and
3 saying that's a human being, those two cowardly cold-
4 blooded murderers they should be charged with a double
5 murder. They should be charged with a double murder. I
6 don't...

7 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Because in the -- it
8 said in the law abortion is illegal unless a mother and the
9 doctor approve of it, and she didn't approve of her baby
10 being killed with her, that's what he was trying to get at
11 too.

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

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

6 And I really do think that Canada should
7 have the death penalty for those cold-blooded murderers
8 like that. I think they should have the death penalty.
9 And I know some of you don't even want to hear or speak of
10 the death penalty, but those cold-blooded murderers,
11 something got to be done about them. The killings are
12 not going to stop. This is going to keep on going, no
13 matter how (indiscernible) try to make it and -- and fix
14 it, and all that.

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

25 And my daughter, in her thesis, she wrote

1 about a good many of them. Some of them not even found.
2 Some of them probably going on yet.

3 I hope I -- I hoping this, speaking for my
4 daughter here, not -- it's coming from me, but I hope it's
5 her, I hope that's the way she would think that these --
6 these killers -- these killers, you know, they're going to
7 go on. They're not going to stop. Girl after girl after
8 girl is going to be murdered unless you got really --
9 really tougher penalties. The penalties are -- or they got
10 -- they got put in some prison out on some island where
11 they never see the light of day again.

12 I suppose I said too much to yous, but I --
13 I think I just give it up now. Thank you.

14 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Yeah. Thank
15 you, thank you, Clayton.

16 One -- one other area that I think that we
17 talked about in preparation for today is the court process,
18 the -- the trial and preliminary hearing and the appeal and
19 your experience in that. Do you want to talk about that?
20 And also, your experience with victim services, I think you
21 talked about.

22 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** I -- one thing that
23 really came up is while we were in the courtrooms, and
24 stuff, and the -- and Blake and Victoria were there --
25 well, we -- me and my mom and my eldest brother, Edmond, we

1 couldn't go into the -- the courtroom during the
2 preliminary hearing because they called us -- they had us
3 written down as witnesses, and that was pretty difficult.

4 But throughout the court process, and stuff,
5 it was -- it was hard not being able to live our emotions.
6 It was hard not being able to -- it -- that, that part was
7 difficult, but with victim services I think they need to
8 have a more culturally competent -- culturally competent
9 process. I found -- they -- they just gave me a list --
10 sent me a list of counsellors.

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

18 There -- there's some other stuff that made
19 him really inappropriate. But I think -- I think having
20 culturally competent processes is really important. One
21 thing is they're -- they're so -- they're very triggering.

22 They sent -- I -- I unsubscribed from the
23 updates. You can get updates about the -- the two
24 murderers about whether they're going -- leaving the prison
25 for a hospital visit or if they're being transferred to

1 different prisons. If -- just up-dates.

2 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You said subscribe.
3 Is it electronic?

4 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** No. Well, you can
5 get in the mail. I just like, completely -- I -- I just
6 told the victim services worker that we dealt with that I
7 didn't want to be a part of it because it was very
8 triggering for me. And it's -- it's very triggering for
9 everyone in my family, I think.

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

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

1 But I think -- I think that's one thing that
2 really needs to be addressed is they expect you to go in
3 and not act human and not react to your emotions or your --
4 your -- your experience. And when you're hearing these
5 really horrific things...

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

14 **MR. JOSEPH MURDOCH-FLOWERS:** Do you want to
15 tell us...

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

1 But he like, started touching my leg and
2 stuff. And that -- like, I was trying to confide in him as
3 a counsellor, like trying to get out of that state of mind,
4 and this is someone that's recommended by victim services.

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

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

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

25 And I was very fortunate. I don't know

1 where she is now, but Sandra Miller (ph), I met her at one
2 of the MMIWG pre-inquiry engagement sessions, and she's
3 been absolutely amazing. And yeah, you guys have got a
4 gang around you.

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 you'd like.

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

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

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

24 Oh, and I -- I mentioned earlier the
25 culturally, culturally competent -- the need for cultural

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

25 Recommendations that we do -- when we do go

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

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

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

20 We did. I don't know what's going on with
21 them now because I -- I haven't been invited to any of the
22 meetings. Maybe they have it on Facebook, or on -- on --
23 in -- in some media, but I don't look at stuff. I'm in
24 work, and that's all I do at work, then I'm home. So we
25 need more -- more healing centres or more access to it.

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

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

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

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

19 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yeah, advocate and who
20 got children and knows what they're talking about. Like my
21 husband said they come out -- they come out of university
22 and they don't -- and -- and they don't even have children
23 of their own, and same as social services.

24 Those people they're already far enough put
25 down, having to be on assistance and in our -- in our

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

11 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** (Indiscernible)
12 problem.

13 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Yeah, and to Ottawa,
14 and like they go to Ottawa. Well, I don't -- I've never
15 had to. I don't -- I can't speak -- but I guess it's
16 familiar. Yeah. But like to me, like they need to see
17 that what those people who are on assistance, and how
18 they're treated, I can tell you they are treated just like
19 when I was a young girl, and you do this, and you do that.
20 Right. I think they should -- it's gone back to the old
21 way, the way -- when they first come in and start taking us
22 over, and for a while it was going good and then all of a
23 sudden the residential schooling come, and that's finish,
24 and now they got to have something else to keep us -- and
25 to have our...

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

20 And so people are done with TB now, and my
21 mother was cut up with TB. She was experimented on, I
22 believe, for two years, and you never heard of TB and all
23 of a sudden my people are dying with TB, this day and age?
24 And why? Like, why all of a sudden, right? So I'd like to
25 see recommendations and child welfare being looked in. And

1 why our children, all of a sudden with -- when our
2 government -- like we're getting so much money, they say,
3 for preventing it, but I know from experience they do not
4 help the families.

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

11 He should -- they should have done that with
12 the first relationship because he's FA. He's adopted. I
13 had him adopted, and he's -- I know he's FAE. So instead
14 of working with him, they turned around and they just take
15 the kids and say -- they don't work to you -- with you.
16 When they -- when he had his second little girl born,
17 because he had the first -- my first grandchild, the second
18 little one, they wouldn't even let her breastfeed her. She
19 wanted to, and they said, no. So I knew then forget it.
20 They're not even -- they're not even going to try to get
21 her back.

22 Because when I was working in -- in -- in
23 child welfare a mother even -- if even if we apprehended a
24 newborn, if they wanted to breastfeed we had to let them.
25 Now, they're not even allowed to do that. Yet the

1 government is paying money to teach them to breastfeed.

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

11 They want to know, okay, this one is not
12 working, but really, and then they're trying to sneak
13 around together because they want to be together, but
14 they're told they're not allowed to be together.

15 So I think child welfare and social -- I
16 think there needs to be a stop on our families and our
17 girls having to live like little cheat -- and then be sent
18 to the hospital with \$20 a day to eat and -- and if they're
19 not going to do that, I think they should cut off their
20 insurance. They should have the same coverage as what
21 they're -- they're giving to my people.

22 The -- they'll get their insurance cut off or
23 they get -- or they up their -- up our people's -- like the
24 medical with the social services. They either give -- I
25 know back then I got quite a bit when I went on -- on

1 meetings. If they're going to get \$75 a day -- the -- the
2 patients who go to the hospital should get \$75 a day. You
3 know what I'm saying? They wouldn't have jobs if they
4 didn't have people on assistance. And I think they need to
5 remember that. Yeah.

6 And I think -- isn't that when they become
7 social workers for child welfare don't they promise to make
8 -- promise to do their best to do -- to help the families,
9 but they don't. I think they really need to -- child
10 welfare really needs to be looked in big time.

11 Oh, one more thing, one more. And where we
12 were from Labrador, when the RCMP tried to coordinate the
13 things for us, instead of we having to call and say -- like
14 when my daughter was found in a bag, I heard -- I didn't --
15 I didn't hear from them. I called up and I said, "Is that
16 true? My daughter was found in a bag?" And, "Can't tell
17 you." And I said, "I wants to know if my daughter was
18 found in a bag," because then I -- then I really freaked
19 out. I thought oh God, she's cut up. They got her all cut
20 up.

21 They had to go to a point -- the family was
22 looking for a bag to try to fit -- fit herself in, so one
23 of his sisters tried to go look for a bag so she could show
24 me you didn't have to be cut up to be in there. So I
25 think, especially where we're out the province, I think

1 they need to have more coordination with our police, so
2 they could get, get and bring it to us or we could -- you
3 know, they -- we -- they could tell us face-to-face, you
4 know. They need to work more together from province to
5 province. Like Loretta was murdered in Nova Scotia, but
6 they wouldn't work together with the police that -- the
7 RCMP that was in our community.

8 Not that I like the RCMP because another
9 thing. I told you, said that was that. But another thing
10 is after -- when my -- before my daughter got murdered my
11 husband asked me -- I -- I was put on a sleeping pill
12 because I -- me and she was dealing with my alcoholism.
13 And they put me on a sleeping pill, and my husband was
14 having a few beer and he said, "Mom, can you go buy me a
15 six pack?" And I said, "No, I'm --" I -- I too tired I had
16 my -- well, it was earlier, I had my sleeping pill, and so
17 I called taxi.

18 But it was wore off, this was around eight
19 o'clock because I was on-call till eight o'clock. I was
20 charged for impaired. And I wasn't even drinking. And I
21 pled guilty because I put that Loretta was helping me to
22 plead not guilty and I was too -- because I was -- didn't
23 know what to do, so she -- but after she was taken I needed
24 the retainer money for to get my sister out to come to the
25 court with me, so I plead guilty because I -- Loretta

1 wasn't there and I never had nobody to give me the courage
2 to go through with it.

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

8 (Indiscernible) suicide as well.

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

13 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** And accidental
14 (indiscernible).

15 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Yeah, or a ruled as
16 accidental.

17 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** Oh, yeah, I have one
18 more. Yeah, because when my niece committed suicide, there
19 was six or seven -- six or seven of them that -- in that
20 month or -- and when my niece -- when my cousin's little
21 girl died in the -- in the -- in the foster care all they
22 told her -- but that's how quiet our people are. And they
23 do, they do introduce us as quiet people, and I'm hoping to
24 take our people out, and not let them be quiet, not let
25 them be scared to show them. People who know me, knew what

1 I was like. And they can be just like me. They don't have
2 to be scared anymore.

3 **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** Lots of suicides down
4 there.

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

6 **MR. CLAYTON SAUNDERS:** When they have a
7 suicide they don't report it like (indiscernible) you don't
8 hear that on the news or radio. If you did it would be
9 steady -- steady care (indiscernible) it's like that. It's
10 like that. One person down there commits suicide look --
11 it's like two or three follows, you know. It might happen
12 every -- once a -- once every year or something, or once
13 every six months, but there's -- there's -- there's a lot
14 of them. And it's -- it's young people too. Really young
15 people. So I think that should be looked in pretty good.

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

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

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

22 Is there anything else you wanted to say?

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

24 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** No, we're -- we're
25 good.

1 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Okay. I wanted
2 to -- I don't have any other questions. I want to express
3 my gratitude, and part of the -- what you've given us is a
4 gift. A gift of knowledge. A gift of understanding. A
5 gift of sharing with us and, and allowing us a window into
6 what you've experienced in helping shine light on what
7 needs to be done.

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

10 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And their courage
11 too, so thank you.

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

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

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

20 **MS. MIRIAM SAUNDERS:** And that's -- that's a
21 gift Loretta gave for me learning from you people. If it
22 wasn't for you people I wouldn't -- probably wouldn't be
23 here today. And I thank you all because it's your people
24 who gave us the courage. And it started off with Loretta
25 in university -- coming -- I met the lady who, group she

1 met.

2 **MS. DELILAH SAUNDERS:** Mom.

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

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

5 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Okay. So the
6 gifts we -- we want to give, some are gifts from other
7 communities and Nations we have some *manittak*, the wick for
8 the *qu'liq*, also some Labrador tea, and the matriarchs of
9 Haida Gwaii for the last few months have been gathering
10 Eagle Feathers from their territory to give as gifts to
11 families and survivors who have spoken and shared, so we
12 would like to give you these gifts now.

13 **MR. JEFF WARD:** Just as they're wrapping
14 up with the gift giving, we just wanted to remind the next
15 family is at 1:40, 1:40 is the next family, also lunch
16 is being served in Goose Cap B, which is the room right
17 next door. So if anybody is hungry, lunch is next door,
18 and the next family be at 1:40, 1:40. Thank you.
19 Wela'liq.

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

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

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

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

25 **Hearing # 2**

1 **Witness: Monique Fong Howe**

2 **Heard by: Commissioners Qajaq Robinson & Michèle Audette**

3 **Commission Counsel: Fanny Wylde**

4 **Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge Keepers: Catherine**

5 **Martin, Louise Haulli, Skundaal Bernie Williams, Jane Meade**

6 **Registrar: Bryan Zandberg**

7 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Good afternoon,
8 Commissioners. Before I present to you our next witness
9 she asked Elder Cathy Marten to share a song and I would
10 like to ask the audience to stand as she sings the song.
11 Thank you.

12 **--- OPENING SONG**

13 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** *Migwetch.* Thank you,
14 Catherine. Commissioner Audette, Commissioner Robinson,
15 before I introduce you to our next witness I will ask Mr.
16 Zandberg, registrar, to swear in Monique Fong Howe, and she
17 will give oath with an Eagle Feather.

18 **MR. REGISTRAR:** Good afternoon, Monique.
19 Good afternoon.

20 **MONIQUE FONG HOWE, Affirmed:**

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

1 So Monique, I would ask you to introduce
2 yourself to the Commissioners. And what would you like to
3 share this afternoon with the Commissioners?

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

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

17 I went to -- I heard about the inquiry, you
18 know, through the news, and I noticed on Facebook one day
19 that it was going to be held in Halifax. I was at work --
20 I work for the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network, and I
21 thought, I'm going to go over there. I just like -- on a
22 whim, just decided to go over there and -- because I wanted
23 to be supportive to -- if there was any women who were
24 living with HIV or Hep C. I wanted to be supportive for
25 them.

1 So I went there and I was not expecting to
2 share my story at that time. Kind of caught me off guard,
3 but it was -- it was -- it was time. I guess it was time
4 that I -- that I do that. So I -- I -- they asked me if I
5 would come in and talk to them and then I decided I would
6 do that. And I talked for two hours. Sharing my life with
7 these women that I'd just met. And it was very
8 overwhelming because for a long time I have never -- I
9 haven't shared my story.

10 So I know a lot of people, I've been living
11 here in the Maritimes for about 30 years now, and many
12 people see me in my role now as an advocate and a worker,
13 but they don't know my -- my history. Why I decided to do
14 the work that I do. So it's -- it's kind of strange for me
15 to share with people who I know, my story, but I will do
16 it.

17 So I was born in Saskatchewan, I'm Cree. And
18 I've been here, like I said in Mi'kmaq territory for 30
19 years now. I'm married here. I started -- I started --
20 when I was very young my parents separated and divorced and
21 from a lot of that trouble I had to take care of my
22 brothers and sisters, like we all kind of took care of each
23 other.

24 My father was working up in the -- up in Fort
25 McMurray, so he was working. My mom was -- had left for

1 some time, and we stayed with my father until my mother, I
2 guess got set up and then we split -- they split us kids
3 up. There's four of us. And so that was when I was quite
4 young, maybe about six or seven I guess. My youngest
5 sister was a baby, maybe two years old. And so we -- we
6 pretty well just had our own -- our own way of doing things
7 with our family and we just kind of took care of each other
8 until I moved in with my father, my step-father and my
9 mother. And my two other siblings moved with my -- stayed
10 with my father. Me and the youngest went with my mom.

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

17 And when I was younger I -- I also
18 experienced sexual abuse and the combination between that
19 and my parents' separation caused me to have loss of my
20 memory. So I don't really remember very much from -- like
21 some families and some people can remember right from when
22 they were a baby, their childhood, and I can't remember.

23 The -- the trauma has taken those memories
24 from me, which was really hard because sometimes I just
25 wanted to remember the good things about our family. You

1 know, so the fact that I couldn't remember it. Like I
2 would remember like, bits and pieces of it, and sometimes I
3 can -- you know, I'll be sitting and I'll -- I'll remember
4 something, but I'm -- I'm -- it's been you know, it's -- a
5 lot of my memories are gone.

6 When I was around -- I don't (indiscernible)
7 young -- young person, I -- I started to experience sexual
8 abuse and that was really hard for me to understand why
9 that was happening. And living that life -- living that --
10 that story was -- was very difficult because I always
11 believed that you know, your family is supposed to take
12 care of you. There's no doubt in my mind my -- my abuser
13 loved our family, but it was just very confusing for me.

14 So I guess from a young age I started to
15 realize and -- and understand that I linked it -- a very
16 unhealthy link -- linkage was that sexual abuse, or sexual,
17 anything sexual meant love. So as I continued to -- to
18 grow up, I lived a very promiscuous lifestyle and I lived a
19 very unhealthy life. The abuse went on for -- for a while.
20 It seems like forever. In my mind it seems like it
21 happened for a long, long time. And it really messed me
22 up. It really -- it really stole a lot from me.

23 I left home when I was about 13 years old and
24 I went to go hang around the streets. Became -- I lived on
25 the streets for many years. A lot of the people that I

1 hung around with then have either been murdered, been -- or
2 missing, or -- you know, died from drug overdoses. They're
3 gone. You know, and that was really -- that was our
4 reality you know, our, our street life was a reality that
5 people who -- who've never seen it or never lived it, don't
6 understand.

7 You know, like -- you know, I heard -- heard
8 earlier about you know, sleeping in parks, you know, I've
9 done that. I slept, you know, with people for a place to
10 live, for a place to stay, for food. But that is what
11 survival does, that's survival for you, right? You -- you
12 do what you need to do in order to continue to live and to
13 continue to survive.

14 I was very fortunate in -- in one aspect, I
15 had a street mother. And I haven't been able to find her
16 yet, but I wanted to thank her because she helped me learn
17 how to survive on streets when I was only 15, 14. That was
18 not the kind of life you ever want to see a young girl
19 living -- living in, and Mary (ph) really took good care of
20 me. You know, she helped me a lot. She guided me.

21 And I see that missing now with a lot of the
22 young girls on the street. I -- I see -- there's that
23 guidance missing, that caring, and that love. You see a
24 lot of girls on the street now and they're lost. You know,
25 if I could go and take each one of them home I would.

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

11 So I grew up living on the street. Being
12 involved in drugs. Being involved in drinking and
13 partying. We hitchhiked all over the place, that's how we
14 got around. We would hitchhike from Regina, to Saskatoon,
15 to Edmonton, to Calgary, didn't matter where. We would
16 always go. Me and my -- a couple of girlfriends, two of
17 them are -- are gone now. One died from complications of a
18 car accident. She was my best friend. We did everything
19 together. She's my angel. Her name -- her name, Donna
20 (ph) like she just was a good person. And the other girl,
21 she committed suicide.

22 And that's another thing that we don't talk
23 about. All the women that have killed themselves because
24 of the violence. Because of the pain that they feel in
25 their families. That's something we need to acknowledge.

1 Like those are women that are -- have given up, thinking
2 that life is over because of their stories and their -- and
3 their history. I felt like that many times. I think, so
4 we would hang around. We would go all over the place
5 and -- and it was -- it was always...

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

11 My son wasn't always with me. I had him when
12 I was 17 years old. For the first three years of his life
13 he stayed with my sister and my -- I still call her my
14 mother-in-law, they would take my son and take care of him
15 when I was not able to, so I would see him maybe once a
16 month, maybe -- whenever I could, like whenever I was
17 sober. I would go see him. So he -- he had to grow up
18 without me for the first three years because my drugs and
19 my alcohol were a priority.

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

25 I remember seeing girls getting beaten up all

1 the time. Shooting up. Living that lifestyle. Always
2 fearful of what was going to happen next. And I was scared
3 even though I may not have acted scared, I was scared.

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

17 So from a very young age I learned -- I
18 learned all these survival skills, I call them, like even
19 though that -- like, you know, who wants to brag that they
20 know how to shoot people up on drugs? So I started to -- I
21 started to -- I always wanted a different life. I always
22 wanted a different life for me and my son.

23 And even though I -- I remember the last time
24 when I was in Saskatchewan, when I was younger, and still
25 using and still drinking, and still being in violent

1 relationships, I went into the house for battered women, so
2 I must have been around in my 20s, I guess. And my step-
3 father and my mother moved here -- moved to Nova Scotia.
4 And they came down to visit. I hadn't talked to my mother
5 in a long time because she didn't -- of course, she didn't
6 agree with what I was doing. She didn't like what I was
7 doing. She knew I'd been on the street I think -- I know
8 it was very shaming for her. I can't take back all that
9 pain I know I caused my mother.

10 So my father, my step -- my step-father and
11 my mother came down to Saskatoon and I was in the house for
12 battered women then. And my step-father told me that I had
13 one month. That he wasn't going to leave without me
14 because he knew that I was in a bad place. He knew I
15 wasn't taking care of myself. He knew that I was using
16 drugs. I was -- by then full-blown injecting. Drinking
17 every day. Putting myself at high risk for everything.
18 And as I said, like, years went on and I would see more and
19 more people go from being murdered, and -- and killed, and
20 drug overdoses, and I wanted a different life.

21 So my -- my step-father came and told me I
22 had a month. I kept saying, "No, I'm, I'm not going
23 anywhere. I'm not going anywhere. I'm going to stay
24 here." And as time went on, for that month, I realized
25 that I needed to get away from there. So I phoned one of

1 the pawnshop guys that I knew, because with my life I knew
2 a lot of people and I asked him, I said, "Come and buy
3 everything that you -- that I have, and get me a ticket to
4 Halifax." And he did. He took all my stuff and he gave me
5 a ticket. I know that I did not have anything worth any
6 kind of money, but I think he seen something -- the
7 potential of me living a different life and he gave me the
8 break that I needed.

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

16 And I -- when I -- when I moved here one of
17 my boyfriends came from -- from Saskatchewan and he lived
18 with us. He had been in and out of jail again that's part
19 of that history that I had with men. They were violent.
20 They were in and out of jail. They were controlling. They
21 were possessive, you know. Get beaten just for looking at
22 someone you know, just terrible people.

23 And he came to live with us, and AJ (ph), my
24 son, was young, he was like four, five years old, and when
25 I was working that man was abusing my son. I trusted him.

1 And he took my son's spirit away from him. My son still
2 struggles because of that. I have seven children. He's my
3 oldest, and he's, he's the one who struggles the most.
4 Because I was still using and drinking when he was young.
5 My other kids not so much because I never had that life
6 around them.

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

16 My son's going through that same cycle of
17 going in and out of jail. But all I can do is pray for him
18 and hope that he finds the help that he needs and guide him
19 and most importantly love him.

20 So that man left, and I -- I got married to
21 my first husband, and I had two more children, two more
22 beautiful kids. During my relationship it was -- a lot of
23 people would -- and I'm -- you know, we made it look so
24 easy, married life, but it wasn't. I ended up leaving my
25 marriage. And when I did leave my ex-husband would not let

1 me see my children for four months, including my oldest
2 son, wasn't even his child. During that time I tried to
3 take my life because I couldn't be without. That was very
4 hard being away from my kids.

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

17 I see some of the pain still with Michael
18 (ph), Megan (ph), but I know that they know I love them,
19 and I know that they may not know the whole story because I
20 never wanted them to feel that stuff.

21 But we don't -- that's another thing we don't
22 talk about. We don't talk about how people use children as
23 a way to cause pain. A way of controlling people to make
24 them do what they want, so they dangle your child. That's
25 got to stop. We got to start listening to women. We got

1 to start believing them and what they're saying. It's
2 important that we believe them. If they're saying that
3 something's happening in the home and that they have to
4 leave -- don't give the power to the people, the abusers,
5 don't do that. Don't let that happen. Don't let that
6 continue to happen. There's too many of our kids living --
7 living in homes, and with people who just use them, and
8 that's not fair. It's not -- it's not fair to them.

9 I left my -- I left my husband, and people
10 would always accuse me of, you know, I -- soon after --
11 soon after I met my current husband, we had been working
12 together and people used to always accuse us of fooling
13 around, but we never did. We just -- we -- we fell in
14 love. And we're still together. And he helped me during
15 that time. He helped me when I didn't have my kids. He
16 helped me. And he helped take care of me. I know that I
17 trigger him sometimes.

18 After I finished doing this speak in Halifax
19 I got triggered real bad and there was days where I
20 wouldn't get out of bed and he would -- he'd say, "Honey
21 you can't do this. You can't lay in bed. You got to get
22 up. You got other kids that you got to take care of.
23 You've got to continue moving on." He gave -- he helped me
24 see the strength inside of me that I didn't know I had.
25 And I -- and I thank him for that. I'm very grateful for

1 my husband.

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

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

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

22 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** I didn't tell any of
23 them because I was scared to tell them. And I -- I didn't
24 even know if they would believe me anyway. I ended up
25 telling my mother years -- years later, and she really

1 didn't take me seriously, you know, she didn't -- like, she
2 didn't. I don't know if she really believed me, or she
3 wanted to believe me because it was one of her -- it was
4 one of her family members, one of our family members, so I
5 think she didn't really want to acknowledge it.

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

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

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

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

25 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** It was, like I said,

1 my parents had separated when we were young and I remember
2 -- I do remember it being good. But again, you know,
3 because my parents hid a lot. My father drank a lot. He
4 was always gone out, and he was always working, or
5 drinking, or partying. My mother was not like that. My
6 mother, as far as I remember, she was not, she always --
7 always at home taking care of us. I don't really remember
8 her being, drinking. I remember sitting outside of bars
9 waiting for my father, with my chips and my -- bag of chips
10 and my pop, you know. Sitting out there waiting all day
11 for him to come out.

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

17 So when my mom -- when I told my mom she
18 didn't really react that way. And then when I read her
19 story it made sense. She didn't teach us about sex. She
20 didn't teach us about protecting ourselves. She didn't
21 teach us what's good touch, what's bad touch.

22 You know. She -- she got taught something
23 totally different about being in residential school and
24 listening, and I -- I -- my mother now has dementia. I
25 think that it's because of all the abuse she went through

1 when she was young in that school. She goes away. I want
2 her back. I want her back. I remember this one time I
3 went to go see her when I went home to Saskatchewan and she
4 called me baby. That was the first I had ever heard her
5 call me baby. She was always so prim and proper. She
6 never ever talked to us like that. It was just -- we knew
7 she loved us.

8 But now she goes away, and she doesn't make
9 sense, and I'm grateful for my sisters and siblings, they
10 take care of her. She's in a home. Because they can't, my
11 step-father has a hard time taking care of her. She gets
12 delusions. She thinks people are coming into the house.
13 My step-father called me one time and said, "Your mother
14 made supper for us at five o'clock in the morning."
15 He -- she went to go wake him up, and she said, "Come and
16 eat supper." And he was saying, "No, darling it's like
17 five o'clock in the morning." And she goes, "No, it's not.
18 It's suppertime." She said, "Go get the kids, they're
19 playing outside." And my father said, "Well, who? Who's
20 outside?" And he said, "Monique, Andrew, and Yvette (ph),"
21 and so he went to the door and he played along and he said,
22 "Okay, everybody come inside for supper."

23 She had made us all our plates, to feed us,
24 but we weren't there. We were already grown up and gone,
25 but in her mind we were still those little kids, and she

1 was sitting there watching, waiting for us to finish eating
2 our supper. Telling, giving us heck. Saying that we
3 wouldn't get dessert if we didn't eat our supper. We
4 weren't there, so my father just played along with it. So
5 we have to do that. We have to play along with it, with
6 her.

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

16 My aunties and uncles went to residential
17 school. They have similar horrible stories.

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

23 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Well, because of the
24 sexual abuse that I went through and not really feeling
25 like anybody would help me or, I -- I -- I left. And I

1 didn't want to look back. I wanted to just escape from all
2 of that pain and all of that stuff. I don't know what you
3 want to call it. I just wanted to run and get away from it
4 and it just took me to a deeper level of sexual violence.
5 A deeper level of violence that I was not expecting. You
6 know, many year -- many of those years being on the street
7 I was raped a number of times. Drugged, raped.

8 And I tell this story today because I never
9 want that -- my daughters and my granddaughters to ever go
10 through that. I'm very protective over my daughters.
11 Probably too protective. But I pity anybody who comes and
12 hurts them.

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

18 Joslyn, when she was -- when they had her
19 funeral home -- like when they took her to the funeral home
20 they told the family that had to be a closed casket and
21 they -- their mom -- her mom didn't get to say good-bye to
22 her. So she said, "I want you to open the casket, and I
23 want see my daughter, and I want to say good-bye to her."
24 So they opened the casket.

25 And they had -- the family had brought

1 outfits and a blanket for Joselyn to be wrapped in. So
2 they wanted to see what clothes they put on her and when
3 they lifted up the blanket she was wrapped in a plastic bag
4 and she was naked. She wasn't dressed.

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

14 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Monique...

15 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Then we went to -- we
16 went to the community, we were driving back, me and one of
17 my co-workers, and we were driving back, we got to Nova
18 Scotia and -- and he was driving and this car passed us,
19 this purple car, funny how you remember smallest of
20 details. This purple car passed us and I notice that there
21 was a man and a woman in the car afterwards, but when they
22 passed us they were driving really fast and I told my -- my
23 co-work, I said, "They're driving really quickly, that's
24 crazy."

25 And all of a sudden we seen the girl's head

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

10 I couldn't believe he just did that. He held
11 my head down and I couldn't get up. I couldn't believe he
12 was doing this to me. Here I am in my 40s getting still --
13 you know, still that dirtiness. I felt all of those times
14 come up. I tried to get my head up, but he wouldn't let my
15 head up right away. He held my head down. And I told him,
16 finally I just yelled, I said, "Let my head up." He let my
17 head up and he -- all he did was laugh at me. Telling me I
18 looked funny. I was in disbelief. I didn't hardly say
19 anything to him.

20 We came to this town and I asked him, I said,
21 "Do you mind if we pull over for a sec?" And he said,
22 "Okay." Because I was scared. I had known his man for
23 many -- many years. He was my best friend. And I was
24 scared to death of him. I shut down. I felt myself shut
25 right down. I felt myself shut down. And I -- we pulled

1 over and I, I jumped out of the car and my, I was trying to
2 call my husband and he always falls asleep early, so he
3 wasn't there and I called my sister and I told her what
4 happened and I said cried and I was upset and I said, "I
5 just got to get out of here. I got to get away from him."
6 I said, "I feel like leaving him here." My sister said,
7 "Just leave him."

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

15 And it was very hard to drive home knowing
16 what he had done to me. It was hard driving home with him
17 because he was trying to make jokes and he was trying to --
18 told me how funny I looked. Anyway, I drove -- I drove
19 home. I dropped him off. As soon as I dropped him off I
20 started crying, and crying, and crying until I got home.
21 And I crawled into bed with my husband. I told him, I told
22 him, "I just need you to hold me. I don't want you to do
23 anything. I just want you -- I just to hold me." He did.
24 He held me and he said, "Let's go back there. Let's go
25 over there. I want to see him." And I said, "No."

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

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

17 My partner, many people were encouraging me
18 to charge him and I couldn't. I was scared, even though I
19 knew he couldn't hurt me anymore than what he'd done. I
20 couldn't charge him. I tried one time to go to the Halifax
21 Police and they said, "You have to go to the RCMP office
22 and you have to report it there, and they have to deal with
23 it."

24 So my husband kept asking me, you know, "Do
25 you want to charge him? Do you want to charge him?" It

1 took me six years, and I finally -- took me that long to go
2 in and tell them what happened --what happened to me. And
3 the cop, the RCMP was just, "Do you realize what you're
4 going to do to his life if you charge him?" And I'm like,
5 looking at this police officer and I'm thinking, what he's
6 done to -- what I'm going to do to his life? This man was
7 a social worker. This man did -- worked in the community
8 with young people. And they were more worried about what
9 was going to happen to him than they were about me and the
10 trauma that it caused me.

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

14 I've seen one of them since I left my job.
15 And he told me that he believed me and that he was sorry.
16 I felt so good when he told me that. I thought one person
17 believed what I said. The cops didn't believe me. They
18 investigated -- because it happened so long ago they still
19 investigated and I told you I know what he's going to do.
20 I know. I told them exactly what he was going to say. I
21 told them exactly what he was going to do. And that I
22 believed nothing would ever happen.

23 But I said, "I need to come here, and it took
24 me this long. I need to tell you what happened. And I
25 need the truth to be out there." They ended up not

1 charging him. They ended up just dismissing it.

2 So he worked -- he worked with -- back at the
3 agency, after I left the position, as executive director.
4 They hired him back after I left to do -- continue doing
5 that job. How messed up is that? Knowing when he had done
6 to me. They still hired him back.

7 I had -- didn't talk to him for a long time.
8 He ended up committing suicide. I still hurt because of
9 that. No matter what he had done he was still a person.
10 He still had people who loved him. And I guess that just
11 shows the kind of person I am, right? I still cried for
12 him when he died. I still -- there's days where I still
13 miss him because he was my best friend. But that's -- he's
14 gone now. And he can never hurt anybody like that again.

15 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Can you tell me, as we were
16 preparing for this moment you said that when you moved to
17 Halifax you changed your lifestyle. You became sober. Can
18 you share with the Commissioners what triggered that
19 decision? That life changing decision in your life?

20 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Probably about a
21 year-and-a-half after I moved here I had been going through
22 a lot of the DTs and a lot of the withdrawal from the drugs
23 and the alcohol. I was going to school at the friendship
24 centre and I was -- I had a lot of really supportive people
25 up round me, Noel (ph), Shirley (ph), Gordon (ph), and they

1 -- they kept encouraging me to you know, get in -- finish
2 my grade 12, and to get sober, and so I decided -- I
3 decided to quit drinking. And I've been sober now for
4 what? Twenty-eight years, 27 years.

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

7 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Well, a lot of tears.
8 A lot of counselling. I went to counselling -- I went
9 counselling -- for the first two years I went every week
10 and I -- I don't even know how I managed to pay for that.
11 I don't -- I don't -- can't even remember, but I went to
12 counselling every week for two years, and then the third
13 year I went every -- once every two weeks, and I worked
14 through that pain and I worked through that abuse, and I --
15 as I went on I got stronger and I realized that I had so
16 much more to offer.

17 Mainly because I was trying to -- I wanted to
18 -- whenever I go home to Saskatchewan I go downtown and I
19 think about all those people that I knew that are gone, and
20 I walk and I pray for them. I used to always think -- I
21 was telling Andrea (ph), I used to think, "Why did I get
22 out and they didn't? Why did I live and they didn't?" I
23 believe that, that's part of the reason why I'm here. When
24 I think my friends like Valerie (ph) and Donna, Shirley,
25 Ursula (ph)-- one -- one of my friends was found beheaded

1 in the downtown Eastside. One of the girls that we knew.
2 I go back and I remember those -- those women, and my
3 friends and I think I got to continue life.

4 And as time goes on and my children are
5 getting older and I'm becoming a grandmother I continue on
6 my work because of that.

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

13 I'm sharing this story because of my friends
14 who didn't make it. A lot of people that know me in this
15 room have never heard my story. They just see me, how I am
16 now. They see me as sober, been married for, with my
17 partner for 16 years. I've got seven children. They see
18 my life now. They don't know how I've come here, and I was
19 really scared of that today. I was scared that I would
20 lose friends because of what I'd tell them today. But I
21 know -- I know that I just have more -- more to do. More
22 work to do.

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

1 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Part of -- part of my
2 work -- part of my work I do -- I work with women who are
3 HIV positive, and I work for CAAN, and I'm very grateful
4 that they have not given me a hard time for being here, but
5 I also sit on a number of committees and boards, and like I
6 said, when I sit is in those committees and boards I think
7 of the women, and I think of the people that can't be here
8 with us anymore.

9 I think of the transwomen who get murdered
10 because people find out that they're trans. People find
11 out that they're HIV positive. And I don't hear people all
12 the time acknowledging them. At CAAN what we did was we
13 invited the transwomen into our circle, into our women's
14 circle because we wanted them to feel like they belonged
15 because they do belong with us. And that was a really
16 powerful ceremony when we invited them into our circle.

17 I want to -- one of our -- one of our
18 documents that we use still today that was developed in
19 2009, it's not there. I'll give it to you later. It was,
20 a research project called: Our Search for Safe Spaces.
21 And it talks about the link between HIV and sexual
22 violence.

23 So one of the recommendations is culturally
24 and gender safe HIV health services. We need a place where
25 women can feel safe without having to worry about their

1 story. That where they can feel -- they can walk into the
2 door and they can feel not judged.

3 We need increased awareness by HIV and
4 healthcare providers of the role of violence in Indigenous
5 women's lives. We need women to be believed. We need them
6 to be heard. We need them to be accepted. We need more
7 opportunities like this where you can learn from their life
8 stories.

9 We know that there's many women that when
10 find out they're HIV positive some of the families don't
11 want to have nothing to do with them. They're kicked out
12 of the reserve. They're kicked out of families. We can't
13 do that. We can't do that to them.

14 We need culture appropriate and gender
15 specific counselling. We need that.

16 You know, like even with what's going on with
17 the, with this inquiry, one of the things that happened to
18 me was I was triggered big time the last time I met with
19 Andrea and Fanny, I was like -- I was really messed up for
20 about a week. I really shut down. I put -- like I was
21 telling you earlier, I had put this big wall around me and
22 my husband just let me live like that for a little while.
23 He just knew that I needed my space. But he said, "You
24 know, you should go to counselling. You should get back in
25 there and -- or go to ceremony." So that's important that

1 we -- we don't just walk away from here, leaving us raw.
2 Not that that would happen, but you know like there's -- we
3 need to make sure that the women know and the families know
4 that they're not going to be denied counselling by FINIB,
5 or by agencies that they should be able to have counselling
6 paid for, and that they're taken care of. That's really
7 important to me.

8 They should provide opportunities for women
9 to help themselves and help one another. You know like,
10 even -- even here you can feel the energy. I was telling
11 Andrea, "You can feel the energy. When you came into the
12 community when I drove into the community yesterday you
13 could feel the power here." We need to continue that.

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

18 There was a statement made by one of the
19 ladies that says, "Violence makes women vulnerable to HIV
20 and HIV makes women vulnerable to increased violence." We
21 know that there's a lot of women who face violence when
22 they become HIV positive. There's a lot of women living in
23 fear. We need to make sure that they know that there's
24 help and support for them.

25 For those -- for women who prefer not -- not

1 to go to counselling, but maybe through ceremonies, one of
2 the things that FINIB could do is to recognize the need for
3 healing ceremonies, and getting to healing ceremonies, so
4 that they pay for the mileage or -- or getting the Elders
5 to them or them getting to Elders, so we need FINIB to
6 recognize that there's more -- there's other ways than just
7 mainstream therapy and counselling that -- I have -- you
8 know, around me right now many women -- you know, strong
9 women and healing -- healing women, who can provide more to
10 me than a lady sitting across from me with a PhD. And we
11 need FINIB to realize that that's something that's valuable
12 and maybe the inquiry can make that happen; let's hope.

13 Mandatory trauma informed care training in
14 the government. You know, going through your agencies and
15 seeing what could trigger a woman or a man who's faced
16 violence in their past. What are things that are around
17 the room that could trigger a person. How do you make it
18 safer for them, how do you make it more open for them
19 to -- to share.

20 I went to -- we had a -- a conference this
21 past summer. A lot -- in September, one of the ladies told
22 us there's 275 Indigenous women in prison right now, 70
23 women, Indigenous women, in healing lodges. A lot of those
24 women have faced violence in their past, through family
25 violence, sexual violence, and what are we doing them women

1 that are in the prisons? Are we providing them with
2 services and programs that can help them begin their
3 healing journey? Are there Elders in the community who
4 understand that relationship between violence and them
5 being incarcerated?

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

17 But I -- I -- I would like for more people to
18 understand what it can do to you. How sometimes I can't
19 get out of bed because of what I've lived through. It's
20 not because I'm lazy. Not because I don't want to work.
21 It's because I just get stuck in those thoughts.

22 More -- really important, we need to be
23 believed. I think that if I was believed when I was
24 younger. If I was believed by the police officers. If I
25 was believed by my work. Things would have been different.

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

13 And I -- minding my own business and then
14 they -- you know, they started talking and I could hear
15 what they were saying. They said, "What more do they want?
16 You know, they're getting the apology. What more do they
17 want?" And they just kept on and on about how we get free
18 education. We get free housing. We get -- and I'm sitting
19 there and I'm getting really upset. So I stand up and I go
20 and talk to them and I tapped them on the shoulder and I
21 said, "You women should be more careful about what you're
22 saying and who can hear."

23 I said, "If my mother-in-law and my mother
24 were here they'd be ashamed. They'd be crying. You would
25 traumatize them all over again because of what they

1 experienced in those school -- in those schools." I said,
2 "Here you are sitting here just acting like it's no big
3 deal, but my mother would be upset." I said, "And that
4 would hurt me. It hurts me now. Thinking about what
5 you're saying, you're just dismissing." I told them, I
6 said, "My mom used to get cut. You think apology is going
7 to take away that scar from her? No, it's not."

8 I didn't yell at them. I didn't curse at
9 them. I just told them, "Be careful, your words hurt
10 people." And I said, "As government employees you should
11 know better. You should know better than to hurt people.
12 You are representing the government. You work for us."
13 They didn't know what to say to me at first. They just
14 looked at me. And then guess what they said? "I'm sorry."
15 I said, "How ironic. You girls are telling me you're sorry
16 and you're complaining about this." I said, "So please, be
17 more aware of what you say and who is around." And I went
18 and sat back down, finished my lunch and I left. And I
19 thought -- I walked out and I cried because I thought about
20 my mom and my mother-in-law and all my aunties. And I
21 said, "I hope I did you good."

22 So we need to make sure that that happens.
23 We need to make sure that the government understands that
24 this is not just a word about reconciliation. This is not
25 just a word about making these band-aid solutions. This is

1 about people's lives.

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

5 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** So one of the
6 documents is: Indigenous Women HIV and Gender Based
7 Violence, it was done by the Canadian Legal Network. They
8 support women and men who have been charged because of
9 their -- not disclosure sometimes, and different
10 situations. Another one is just the stats on HIV and
11 Indigenous people in Canada.

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

17 But I -- I want to thank you for listening to
18 me. And I want to thank them for being here. And I want
19 to thank my mom for giving me life. So thanks.

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

21 I will ask -- I will leave with the -- if the
22 Commissioners have questions or any comments, I will invite
23 you to do so.

24 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Okay. There
25 is a bird. We found it. *Merci*, (speaking native language)

1 thank you.

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

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

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

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

17 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** For our
18 Canadian sisters and the Indigenous women it's not a same.
19 Many of you, many of us don't feel safe, so it's okay that
20 we want to be over protective. But also what I -- I see in
21 you, it's the -- the strength of many women that we met so
22 far across Canada; amazing warriors like you. The one I
23 have in mind and in my heart is Rachel (ph), Rachel in
24 Winnipeg. A strong woman. Strong. And I heard her voice
25 through you, and I can hear you when I'm listening what she

1 gave me, you know, the -- the gift, and I see that out east
2 you're that voice too.

3 Your own -- your own voice and we -- we are
4 our own voice, so Rachel was one of them and you are the,
5 the one that is telling me that the strength often we don't
6 feel it. We don't see it, but it's there. We block, but
7 there's something that is pushing us back for our girls or
8 our son.

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

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

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

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

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

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

25 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** That you tell

1 me, or you share with me where are you with this, and I
2 have to say to conclude I -- it's always one of my
3 question, what help you do change another path? What made
4 you the woman that you are today? And I know in your truth
5 you're telling us that there is lots of cause, systemic
6 cause.

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

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

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

12 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** What -- what
13 gave you that strength that day, that's it. I have to say
14 it?

15 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Ceremony, you know,
16 love that I have, like, that I've gotten from different
17 people. My children. My grandchildren. I'm going to get
18 them. I know I'm going to get them. We're applying for
19 custody of my grandchildren. That was one of the things my
20 grandmother always had us -- a bunch of us kids at her
21 house ever summer. I told my sister the other day, I said,
22 "My -- our grandmother set us up so that we'd always take
23 our grandchildren." She taught us that from a very young
24 age, always take care of your grandchildren. So I'm going
25 to get them.

1 But I think one of the -- the main things, is
2 going back home and walking those streets again, that's
3 what made me strong. That's what makes me continue going
4 on this path that I'm on now. Hearing the stories of the
5 woman that I work with. They lift -- they lift you know,
6 they give you so much strength. I try to give that back to
7 them all the time.

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

13 So I'm just going to continue to pray. That
14 was one thing that my grandparents always taught us was
15 pray. My grandfather was a very traditional man. My
16 grandmother used to make us do our rosary eight o'clock
17 every night. We learned to respect both ways, and that's
18 what I think has really kept be going, was knowing that I
19 had that Creator's love in my heart, God's love in my
20 heart, that I needed to continue it on.

21 So when I think about how I've made -- made
22 it through -- those are the main ways, remembering, never
23 forgetting what I've gone through, always praying and
24 always pray for the people that hurt you. Always pray for
25 them. It's hard at times. At times I did not want to pray

1 for him. For them, but I did because I can't carry that
2 anger. I don't want to.

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

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

17 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** -- but you did
18 it so well so you're teaching me too. *Merci beaucoup.*
19 Thank you.

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

1 It's -- you -- you had -- your -- your --
2 your step-father, you had -- and your convictions, what are
3 some steps we, as service providers, as friends, as
4 neighbours, as a community, can do to help women take those
5 steps that they need to take?

6 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Talk to them, go to
7 them. You're going to meet them, you know, through harm
8 reduction. Philosophy is meeting people where they're at.
9 So if it means you walking the street, you know, we -- we
10 -- sometimes when we go have conferences in B.C. we go down
11 to the downtown Eastside, we see people, we talk to them.
12 We acknowledge them. You know, peer mentorship is amazing.
13 You have, you know, many people out there who will, who
14 will work with people.

15 I remember this young man one time. I was
16 working in the prisons doing workshops, and he told me, he
17 said, "Monique, when I get out of jail use me." He said,
18 "Give me the information. Give me the needles, and I will
19 meet you somewhere, and I will give out that information
20 because they trust me." If they -- if -- yeah, if you walk
21 up to some girls on the street they're going to be looking
22 at you, like, "Okay, why are you coming over here looking
23 at me like this?" Right.

24 But once they see why you're there, and once
25 they feel why you're there, if you're going there with the

1 right intention they're going to feel that from you and
2 they're going to want to listen to what you have to say.

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

12 She really got down to the ground level of
13 helping people so you know, meeting people where they're at
14 is number one, and continually to do this. You know, make
15 it so that the women feel welcome to come here and share.
16 Don't make it -- don't make it so that they can't. You
17 know, having childcare provided, having Elders, having
18 people that they know in the community, yeah. So there's a
19 lot that you can do. It's just a matter of -- of you know
20 meeting them where they're at.

21 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Thank you. I'm
22 Michèle's translator sometimes. I won't try and speak
23 French.

24 As a -- as an expression of our gratitude for
25 the gift of -- of -- of your experience, your knowledge,

1 and for the time you've spent with us we want to extend a
2 gift from us and -- and our team to you. Included are
3 Eagle Feathers from the matriarchs of the Haida Gwaii
4 Nation who gathered to give to families across the country
5 as well. The seeds --

6 **MS. MONIQUE FONG HOWE:** Thank so much. It
7 means to me so much.

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

11 **--- CLOSING SONG**

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

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

17 **--- Exhibits (code P1P04P0102)**

18 **Exhibit 1:** PDF of "Chapter 8: HIV/AIDS Epi Updates,
19 July 2010 - HIV/AIDS Among Aboriginal
20 People in Canada" posted on Public Health
21 Agency of Canada website, 38 numbered pages.
22 Printing date 7/11/2017; date modified
23 2015-05-15. (Link: [https://www.canada.ca/](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/hiv-aids/publications/epi-updates/chapter-8-hiv)
24 [en/public-health/services/hiv-aids/](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/hiv-aids/publications/epi-updates/chapter-8-hiv)
25 [publications/epi-updates/chapter-8-hiv](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/hiv-aids/publications/epi-updates/chapter-8-hiv)

1 -aids-among-aboriginal-people-canada.html)
2 **Exhibit 2:** PDF of "Indigenous Women, HIV and
3 Gender-Based Violence," published by the
4 Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, March 2017
5 (28 numbered pages)

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

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

8 **Hearing # 3**

9 **Witness: Rebecca Moore**

10 **Heard by Commissioner Michèle Audette**

11 **Commission Counsel: Jennifer Cox**

12 **Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge Keepers: Catherine**

13 **Martin, Louise Haulli, Skundaal Bernie Williams,**

14 **Jane Meade, Katy McEwan**

15 **Registrar: Bryan Zandberg**

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible)

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

4 Bryan, whenever you're ready.

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

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right there.

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

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

14 So Mr. Registrar.

15 And lift up your microphone.

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

19 MS. REBECCA MOORE: M'hm.

20 MR. REGISTRAR: Okay. Good.

21 REBECCA MOORE, EAGLE FEATHER

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

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

1 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

2 MS. REBECCA MOORE: M'hm.

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

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

7 MS. JENNIFER COX: Of the...

8 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Shubenacadie Residential
9 School.

10 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

11 MS. REBECCA MOORE: M'hm.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

2 MS. REBECCA MOORE: M'hm.

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

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

13 MS. JENNIFER COX: Um-hum.

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

20 MS. JENNIFER COX: Um-hum.

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

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

1 MS. REBECCA MOORE: I was about ten.

2 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

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

5 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

6 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah. And --

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

9 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Our dad.

10 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

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

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

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

4 MS. JENNIFER COX: M'hm.

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

7 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

8 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

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

11 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

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

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

17 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

18 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

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

21 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

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

25 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

6 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Fifteen.

7 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

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

16 MS. JENNIFER COX: M'hm.

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

20 MS. JENNIFER COX: M'hm.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

25 But they were really supportive for me, for

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

4 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

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

8 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

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

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

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

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

22 MS. JENNIFER COX: Housing?

23 MS. REBECCA MOORE: (Indiscernible).

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

1 little bit about Tawaak Housing is.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4 MS. REBECCA MOORE: I think they just, sort
5 of, like, they build character, you know. Like, you go and
6 learn and you network, and you meet people from all over
7 the country, like other Indigenous youth and it
8 strengthens, like your community base, and -- yeah.

9 MS. JENNIFER COX: Did you learn about
10 culture as well?

11 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Oh, yeah, yeah.

12 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

13 MS. REBECCA MOORE: I learned how to -- like
14 I learned drumming and singing at the friendship centre,
15 and I'm still a drummer and a singer. And -- yeah, that
16 kind of thing.

17 MS. JENNIFER COX: So when you were in
18 British Columbia you stayed for a year, you said?

19 MS. REBECCA MOORE: M'hm.

20 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay, but then you did
21 come back to Nova Scotia?

22 MS. REBECCA MOORE: M'hm.

23 MS. JENNIFER COX: And when you came back to
24 Nova Scotia did you have a place to stay?

25 MS. REBECCA MOORE: No.

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

2 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** No, I didn't. So I
3 was -- like I find -- like housing security is a big issue
4 for a lot of the Indigenous women that I know back home.

5 So, like, for me and my family, we're always
6 sort of, like teetering on whatever.

7 Yeah, so I think that housing security --
8 well, I can only speak of Halifax really, but that's a
9 reoccurring issue that I always see our women struggle
10 with. And it's for all kinds of different reasons, you
11 know. It's not always just financial, you know. Like, a
12 lot of the times I have a full-time job, or I'll have the
13 money, but it's just either difficult to get one, find
14 one...

15 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So difficult to find a
16 place to live, like an apartment?

17 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. Or -- or you have
18 to leave one that you're at for whatever reason. Like, it
19 could be, like I said, domestic, or it could be -- it could
20 be unsafe in some way, or -- or it could have like,
21 problems, but housing is -- is a big issue.

22 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** In -- in Halifax?

23 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. And...

24 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** What about in British
25 Columbia? Was it easy to find housing out there?

1 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** It was not as much an
2 issue for me because I stayed with the same people the
3 whole time.

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

5 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. But I find it is
6 back home, where I'm at, because I don't have -- I don't
7 have family that I can just really go stay with. Like,
8 they don't really have room for me, so I can't like, go
9 back and live with my parents, or something like that.

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

11 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah, so housing is
12 always difficult.

13 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And so at this point in
14 time in your life, Rebecca, what are you doing? What --
15 how do you take of yourself?

16 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Right now I pretty much
17 pay the rent doing a lot of different community events, and
18 like facilitating and -- and gigs, or openings, drumming
19 and singing; that kind of thing.

20 So, like I'm lucky enough to have been
21 involved enough in my community and to get enough
22 opportunities to be able to support myself that way.

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

24 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** But that's not -- I'm --
25 like, that's unusual. That's like an unusual situation --

1 exception, you know, like, not every Indigenous woman in
2 Halifax is like me, that can do that sort of thing. But
3 that's how -- that's how I support myself at the moment.

4 I'm also still working at the Ecology Action
5 Centre on some climate job round tables. I do a lot of
6 stuff about green energy. And -- yeah, so I have a
7 contract in with them as well, and -- m'hm. I'm --

8 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Do you --

9 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** (Indiscernible).

10 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** -- did you have any other
11 struggles when you were younger?

12 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah, I struggle with an
13 alcohol addiction for most of my life, from the ages of 12
14 to about 25.

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

16 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** So this winter will be my
17 second year of sobriety.

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

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

20 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** But you did a lot of
21 things when you were still...

22 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. I was a very
23 functional alcoholic --

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

25 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** -- when I was younger,

1 yeah. And I kept -- like, that world very separate from --
2 from my community type world -- like my extravert, like
3 whatever. Like, they were very separate. So there was --
4 there was -- there was the -- my life that was really good,
5 and I had a lot of opportunities, and whatever, and then
6 there was the -- the side where I struggled with my
7 addiction in private, and stuff, yeah.

8 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And so were you -- was
9 there any services that helped you overcome your addiction?
10 No?

11 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** No. I did that. I kind
12 of isolated myself for like a year almost and kind of dealt
13 with that on my own. But it was just out of pure
14 resentment that I quit drinking, basically.

15 And it's also because -- while my belief
16 shifted and I think that's why. Because I simply didn't
17 believe in -- in doing that anymore.

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

19 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** I don't believe in -- I
20 look at it like self-harm; do you know what I mean? And I
21 had so much resentment for how much it weakens people, and
22 how much it weakened myself, my family and everybody I
23 loved and all the -- all the problems that it was, you
24 know, keeping going, that I just -- I hated it so much that
25 I just stopped it. I chose not to partake in it anymore.

1 I chose not to -- not to weaken myself, and to have a
2 different mentality of where instead of harming myself. I
3 just don't believe in doing things that...

4 Like with this whole -- like Murder and
5 Missing Indigenous Women thing, and being -- being an
6 Indigenous woman in Canada, like I know that I am like,
7 statistically speaking, I know that I am larger target for
8 violence or -- you know.

9 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Why don't you tell the
10 Commissioners about one of your experiences when you were
11 walking down the street in Halifax?

12 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** I'll get to that in a
13 minute.

14 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay.

15 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** But -- so with that --
16 with that knowledge of just recognizing that as an
17 Indigenous woman in Canada we are -- like, you know, way
18 more likely to experience violence and -- and whatever.

19 And then also when I was younger and having
20 an alcohol addiction, and a very active alcohol addiction,
21 and just how susceptible to violence I was. Especially
22 when you're two sheets to the wind and you have your guard
23 down, and anything can happen.

24 I just shifted my mindset. I don't believe
25 in doing that anymore. I don't believe in taking part in

1 that anymore. And almost like having more of -- more of a
2 warrior mentality that way because the only person that can
3 not drink for me is me. And the only person that cannot --
4 like, I really believe that I'm only person that can
5 protect myself. And so that's why I just don't do that
6 anymore. But -- yeah.

7 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So the experience that
8 you had in Halifax, you want to talk about that?

9 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** There's a bunch of
10 different experiences in Halifax. Halifax is a very creepy
11 city. We have a lot of johns driving around all the time.
12 We have a lot of sexual harassment on the street happening
13 all the time.

14 I think the time that you're reminding me of
15 specifically was when one time I was walking home around
16 midnight. I lived by the mall. And there was this car
17 that pulled up, and they had their trunk open, and there
18 was three guys in it, and the driver got out and he cut me
19 off on the sidewalk and he -- and then the passenger had
20 his door open and his legs out like he was going to jump
21 out. And -- and they cut me off on the sidewalk and
22 there's nobody around. And -- because it was by the mall,
23 and -- and after -- after the mall closes there's like,
24 nobody around.

25 And -- so yeah, they -- they had their trunk

1 open. One of them was now on the sidewalk in front me.
2 The other one was -- had his passenger door open and his
3 legs out like he was going to get out. And he said
4 something to me, and I was listening to music, and I took
5 my earphones out and I said, "What?" And he said, "Hey."
6 And then -- and then the guy who cut me off on the sidewalk
7 said, "Oh, he's just being romantic," is what he said.

8 And, so then like I saw the setup. I caught
9 the play. I didn't let them get close enough to actually
10 grab me or anything.

11 And the street that I lived on, there was a
12 string of us, so like me and my sister lived down here, my
13 other sister lived on this end of block, and then my cousin
14 lived on that end of the block. So I'm just really lucky
15 that I had a lot of family on that block.

16 And so I just backed up. Like I started
17 walking backwards instead of going forwards, and I went to
18 my sister's house and freaked out, but -- but -- yeah, and
19 then they walked me home after that. But -- yeah, that was
20 one thing.

21 And -- and where we lived too, it was right
22 on Bayers Road, so it's right by the highway -- it's a
23 highway that goes right out of the city, m'hm. So that was
24 creepy.

25 And there was also a girl that was attacked

1 later on that week, or later on that winter, I think,
2 actually, and sexually assaulted in the bushes on the same
3 area. And -- yeah, that kind of thing.

4 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Rebecca, because of
5 your experiences you came to the inquiry also to talk about
6 things that you think either were helpful for you, or
7 recommendations that you have of things that you'd like to
8 see --

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

10 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** -- right?

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

12 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So what are the things
13 that you think were the most helpful for you? Let's start
14 with that. The resources and programs.

15 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Growing up what was
16 really helpful for me was the -- the housing programs.
17 That's what I needed. At the time I really needed a safe
18 space, so I think safe space is -- is huge.

19 I feel like there's a lot of talk about
20 murdered and missing Indigenous women, and -- and there's a
21 lot of known facts about, you know, that we are greater
22 targets of violence statistically, and things, but I don't
23 see enough protective actions going on, so -- and not just
24 preventative, but I'm talking about protecting Indigenous
25 women because we're Indigenous women, and because we are --

1 we face a lot more of those issues on a daily -- so like,
2 housing, more emergency housing.

3 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** What about the friendship
4 centre programs?

5 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** The friendship centre
6 needs to get its youth centre back. There is no cultural
7 youth centre for urban Aboriginal youth in Halifax anymore,
8 as it's -- right now.

9 I find a lot of my -- my networks now, so
10 like if I have a problem -- if I have a situation, and I
11 needed help with it, I don't go to services. I don't go to
12 anything like that. I always reach out to my grassroots,
13 like, sisters network, and -- and they're the people that
14 always come through for me and have my back and will pick
15 me up if I am stuck or stranded. Will house me if I need a
16 place to crash. Will feed me, or clothe, or anything --
17 you know.

18 If I have any issues, or an emergency, I
19 don't go to services too often so. I find that we just
20 kind of have a network where we take care of each other.

21 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And the network -- where
22 did you meet a lot of these people?

23 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Everywhere.

24 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Was it through the
25 programs, or any of the things that -- like, the

1 conferences?

2 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Some of them.

3 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

4 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah, some of them.

5 MS. JENNIFER COX: And how does that network
6 make you feel nowadays? Being a part of that network?

7 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Good. I feel the safest
8 when I'm among my Indigenous sisters, especially the ones
9 that, you know -- I think -- no, I think that's hands-down
10 where I feel the safest all the time.

11 MS. JENNIFER COX: M'hm.

12 MS. REBECCA MOORE: M'hm.

13 MS. JENNIFER COX: So supporting people
14 to -- to have those kinds of groups would be helpful;
15 wouldn't it?

16 MS. REBECCA MOORE: M'hm.

17 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

18 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yep.

19 MS. JENNIFER COX: Is there any other
20 specific suggestions that you would make to the
21 Commissioners?

22 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Well, I want to talk
23 about, like, thinking systematically, and thinking
24 historically, and about colonization, and about some things
25 that -- like there's a lot of things that put us -- put us

1 at risk, you know. A lot of different things. There's the
2 way -- there's stigma, and stereotypes. There's -- you
3 know, domestic issues. There's addictions. There's --
4 there's creeps, johns. Then there's colonial violence.
5 And then there's intergenerational traumas.

6 And there's also a lot of sort of, putting
7 yourself out there, putting yourself on the line in like, a
8 frontlines context. So like, when you're trying to, you
9 know, protect the water, protect your land as well you're
10 also putting yourself in that type of risky scenario, so.
11 And -- and you know, that's -- that our duty as women.
12 That's what I'm taught is -- is to protect the water. And
13 that's our inherent duty as Indigenous women. So a lot of
14 times that requires us to like, literally put ourselves out
15 there on the line. And -- and you know, that's systematic
16 as well.

17 And -- and the lengths that some of these
18 companies will go through to get you out of their way is
19 very real. Especially if you want to look at it on an
20 international scale and not just Canadian. But what they
21 do to Indigenous peoples who try to protect their lands all
22 over the world.

23 And so there's -- really if you think about
24 it, a whole shit ton of stuff, sorry, like, that could
25 happen. And -- and I think recently too, if I want to add

1 and talk about stigma, and talk about like, historical
2 colonial violence. And the mainstream even today, even now
3 -- because I'm a really active person, and vocal in the
4 community, and I did a lot things this summer, surrounding
5 the Cornwallis statue and that -- that whole ordeal.

6 And one thing that the Mayor of Halifax
7 wasn't listening to was how that statue -- Cornwallis
8 specifically back in -- in my city, where I talk about, and
9 how that actually -- it being there -- like, its physical
10 presence, and also what it represents, how that perpetuates
11 violence against Indigenous peoples, even further, even
12 still, even now, even like, today.

13 And so it's creating currently a lot of
14 tension in the city, and -- and where me, and Grizzly Mom,
15 and Elizabeth (ph), and -- and a lot us, we're very -- like
16 strong vocal advocates, so we also made ourselves very much
17 more visible to people, I guess you could say, with
18 opposing views; you know what I mean? So since that
19 happened and since we became even like, a lot more visible,
20 I feel like when we advocate for ourselves, and -- and
21 stuff like that, you also put yourself more at risk, more
22 of a target, and further danger, and whatever.

23 So that's one thing that -- that the Mayor of
24 Halifax doesn't take seriously. He doesn't see how -- or
25 maybe he does and maybe he just doesn't care. But he

1 doesn't see how keeping that there perpetuates violence in
2 our communities and with us.

3 Like, I know -- like, Grizzly Momma has
4 gotten threats, for example. And other people have gotten
5 threats. I haven't gotten threats, not online, but like,
6 in person, like people -- and...

7 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And maybe, Rebecca, what
8 we should do is take a little bit of step back so that the
9 Commissioner understands what you're talking about. So
10 what happened with the statue of Cornwallis?

11 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** There was one thing that
12 happened...

13 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Explain to her where it
14 is.

15 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Okay, so on Canada Day,
16 so there's a -- there's a statue of Cornwallis, who, as the
17 founder of Halifax -- in downtown Halifax, and -- and this
18 is the guy who put the scalping proclamations on -- on
19 Mi'kmaq people.

20 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Catherine...

21 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Oh, sorry, is that...

22 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Scalping...

23 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** That's what I said,
24 scalping proclamations. And so for Canada Day, like
25 when -- when everybody was celebrating Canada 150, you

1 know, for us it's not as -- as happy because -- so -- so
2 what Grizzly Momma and I did was -- and -- and she was
3 mourning, and she was -- like, healing, and on her own
4 journey.

5 And -- and -- like we decided to have a
6 mourning ceremony for all of the lives of our Indigenous
7 people that have -- that has happened so -- yeah, all the
8 lives of Indigenous people that were lost as a result of
9 colonization.

10 And so, you know, naturally it was just
11 fitting to sort of, have that there. Like, that gathering
12 there in front of his statue because he's still there. And
13 so that's what we did. And then that was interrupted by a
14 bunch of -- The Proud Boys group, like those...

15 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** The Proud
16 Boys, they call them?

17 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** They call themselves,
18 the Proud Boys. Basically, they're kind of like -- they
19 call them themselves -- they're basically white
20 supremacists, but they call themselves...

21 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** White supremacists.

22 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** They call themselves
23 some type of...

24 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Neo-Nazis. That's
25 it.

1 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** They're like -- what are
2 they -- something chauvinist, modern chauvinists. Anyways,
3 only because it's not cool to like come right out and say
4 you're a white supremacist these days, but basically that's
5 essentially what they are.

6 And -- and so their little group came and
7 interrupted us and they said a lot of really rude things,
8 like - like how -- like when they were told that, you know,
9 this is Mi'kmaq territory. They said stuff like, "No, it
10 was Mi'kmaq territory. Like, now it's Halifax," and
11 whatever, and they were very -- they were like actively
12 oppressing us. And they interrupted our -- like, ceremony
13 of mourning that we were doing. And they were chanting,
14 God save the Queen, when we were basically mourning like,
15 the loss of -- like we were basically, like -- like, whole
16 like genocide of people, you know, we're mourning that
17 basically.

18 And -- and then they come up singing God
19 Save the Queen very disrespectful. They were drunk and --
20 and whatever so. And it almost got -- it almost got
21 violent, and -- and stuff. So -- so that happened because
22 the Cornwallis statue is still there because it has a
23 presence there. That these -- these tensions still happen
24 in the city. And then that blew up.

25 And then I guess we found out that the --

1 the founder of this -- this Proud Boys, white chauvinist
2 group is this guy, Gavin McInnes, and he's the co-founder
3 of Vice, and -- Media, and he's the founder of Rebel Media,
4 and so some -- and anyways, so it's bigger, and he has a
5 following like all over the States and Canada and stuff.

6 And so it blew up into this whole thing
7 where we got -- we got an apology from the Admiral of the
8 Navy, because they were all -- they were all in the Navy.
9 They were all Canadian Armed Forces too. So it looked
10 really bad on them, so we got an apology from the Admiral
11 of the Navy. We got an apology from the Defence Minister
12 of Canada.

13 And they said that they did an investigation
14 of those guys. They basically got like, a paid summer
15 vacation because they were taken off duty, but they still
16 got pay. And eventually they were re-instated back into
17 active duty. And so they didn't even really get rid of
18 them.

19 And so that all happened, and -- and we
20 dealt with a lot of, you know, backlash and things, and --
21 and like...

22 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And when you say we, it's
23 you and...

24 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** It's me, Grizzly Momma,
25 our allies.

1 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** People that were there
2 having the ceremony?

3 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah.

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

5 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And supporters.

6 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. Our allies and
7 supporters. And...

8 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And so what did you have
9 to say about the way the media characterized you?

10 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Well, I'm getting into
11 that. So -- so that happened, and then so as a result
12 because -- because that Cornwallis statue was the center of
13 the conflict basically. Because of that we had a remove
14 Cornwallis event, right. Where we were going to -- well,
15 we were advocating for the removal of the statue.

16 And so the city freaked out. They didn't
17 really know what we were doing, but they called it a
18 hostile protest. They were going to treat it as a hostile
19 protest, and so basically -- oh, and they called us
20 violent. They said that were violent, as if you know, we
21 were going to be violent to this inanimate object, or
22 something. But -- yeah, so they labelled us violent and
23 hostile.

24 And -- and -- and then like we really didn't
25 like that because we didn't feel violent. We didn't

1 hostile. Like, we're just basically -- we're like a group
2 of Indigenous women who just didn't like how we were
3 recently actively oppressed at one of our gatherings, and
4 shit like that, so.

5 And then that put us in danger too, because
6 once the media and the Mayor labelled us violent then it
7 triggers something in people's minds that, you know, these
8 women are violent, and almost sends a message like it's
9 okay to commit to violence against us; do you know what I
10 mean? Because they already put that label on us. So -- so
11 that's how they dealt with that this summer. And they
12 villainized us basically. And --

13 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Threatened.

14 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** -- threatened us, yeah.
15 And -- yeah, so -- so that is a little bit, and you want to
16 talk about the history of, like -- like how, like
17 Cornwallis -- he offered more for women and children;
18 didn't he?

19 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah. The pay for --
20 the pay for one female scalp equals a year's salary for one
21 officer.

22 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. So --

23 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'll repeat that.
24 The value -- the most expensive scalp were the women's
25 scalps, so the value of one Mi'kmaq woman's scalp equaled a

1 salary of one British officer for one year. His annual
2 salary was the same as one Mi'kmaq woman's scalp. And
3 that's -- that's what we had an issue with, so it was
4 genocide.

5 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** M'hm. So it's like that
6 history and -- and it's still on the books, she said. The
7 scalping proclamation is still in the books. They never
8 really changed it.

9 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It's the law.

10 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** So -- so that's how,
11 like that -- that colonial mentality is being acted out,
12 and -- and remembered, and still causing tensions even
13 still in Halifax specifically, like in -- in our territory.
14 And that's how, like -- and people who are vocal about
15 it -- like women like me, and others, and my allies and
16 stuff, are being targeted for further violence.

17 Like, there was actually these -- now we're
18 basically like heap bags for Nazis, and stuff like that.

19 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** What?

20 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Heap bags for Nazis, I
21 said.

22 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** You might -- you might
23 want to use other...

24 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** We're basically like a
25 big -- like more of a target for -- for Nazis and white

1 supremacists. And -- and they even issued -- like, some of
2 our allies are on like, Nazi and like -- what do they call
3 themselves? Socialists? Is that it? Websites. And...

4 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Fascist.

5 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Fascist websites, and
6 they even published like a list of some of us and our
7 allies, and descriptions of our temperaments and our --
8 where our workplace is and -- and where we live, and stuff
9 like that. So they're like, publishing personal
10 information on us and -- and stuff like that. So -- so
11 like I would say that us, and our allies, in Halifax are
12 definitely currently big targets right now by white
13 supremacist as of lately. And -- yeah, so.

14 And then I also do a lot of stuff with like,
15 fighting Alton Gas from branding the Shubenacadie River, so
16 trying to save and protect the Shubenacadie River. And
17 it's mostly -- it's not all, but it's mostly Indigenous
18 women out there on the gate, blocking that company, and so
19 they're out there; if you know what I mean, as well.

20 And -- yeah, so these are some of the some
21 of the things -- and all those things that I just told you,
22 like that all just happened like this past summer. And,
23 yeah, so that's a little bit of what's going on in Halifax
24 I guess.

25 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So Sarah, is there

1 anything that you wanted to add?

2 **MS. SARAH MOORE:** There was the one time --
3 that one incident on Treaty Day.

4 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah. Oh, she was just
5 talking about a time when a police officer called me a, a
6 savage on -- on Treaty Day. But -- and how law enforcement
7 deals with Indigenous peoples. I don't think I really want
8 to get into that too much.

9 I think I'll also talk about -- yeah, I'm
10 trying to think. I think I talked about some of the
11 history of colonial violence, some current things.
12 Struggling with addictions. How struggling with addictions
13 also puts you in more dangerous scenarios, and -- yeah, I
14 think -- I think that's pretty much everything I need to
15 talk about. M'hm.

16 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay. So I think we can
17 conclude Rebecca's testimony before the inquiry.

18 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Let me think.

19 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay, we'll give you a
20 moment.

21 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** There is also like
22 different things that happened during my years with active
23 addiction. So when I was struggling -- because I started
24 drinking at a young age, at 12 years old, and I had a very
25 active addiction up until about 25. So that was like,

1 basically half my life, like, the bigger chunk of my life.
2 And through that addiction that I struggled with, there was
3 a lot of different violent scenarios that -- that happened
4 and times throughout there, so like, all the -- all the
5 shit that comes with -- with that lifestyle. I don't know,
6 like, now even when like my friends go out and drink, I'm
7 like, I'm scared for them because I don't even do it.

8 You know, I'm like I -- I consider myself a
9 -- a strong person and a brave person, but I'm like -- I
10 don't even go and put myself out there like that anymore.
11 And so I am very worried for our people who still are
12 suffering with active addictions because you never know
13 where you can end up, and how you can end up, and -- well,
14 like what could happen, it's very -- yeah.

15 So with those things like, I experienced
16 almost everything like, when I was going through those --
17 so -- and that's from you know, a lot of -- I've been in a
18 lot of fights because of my addictions, growing up. I've
19 been raped multiple times because of my addictions growing
20 up. I've been beaten multiple times by men because of --
21 while -- like growing up because of all of that. And --
22 yeah, so.

23 I would say that that part was probably my
24 most -- I don't know when I was more at risk, or if I'm any
25 less at risk because I don't drink. I really don't know.

1 I would -- I still think about that because you know, I
2 felt like I was more at risk -- most at risk when I was
3 actively partaking in -- in that -- you know, like, high
4 risk activities and stuff like -- like -- like drinking and
5 -- and whatever, partying.

6 I thought I was most at risk then, but then
7 when I started advocating for you know, like, land defence,
8 and when I started advocating for, like the removal of the
9 Cornwallis statue, and things like that. I think I'm just
10 at -- in as much danger as back when I drank, being an
11 activist in Halifax. Even actually maybe even more danger
12 because I think I'm pissing more people off.

13 So -- yeah. It's kind of like I went from
14 being at risk and being like, a partier, and being at risk
15 in that way to like, now I'm still -- I'm still an
16 Indigenous woman at risk because you know, I did turn my
17 life around, and I did turn my life around trying to make
18 things better, and I did for the most part, but I'm still
19 just at -- as at risk if not more, so.

20 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** More enemies.

21 **MS. REBECCA MOORE:** Yeah, more enemies, I
22 would say. Enemies. Yeah, so I think of -- I'll probably
23 leave it with that, yeah.

24 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Well, that concludes
25 Rebecca's testimony.

1 MS. REBECCA MOORE: M'hm.

2 COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: *Merci*
3 *beaucoup*, Rebecca. Thank you. You mention in your
4 testimony, "I don't go to those services. I don't go get
5 help through those services."

6 MS. REBECCA MOORE: Yeah.

7 COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Can you
8 explain to me what are those services? And why?

9 MS. REBECCA MOORE: I don't even know what
10 those services are.

11 MS. JENNIFER COX: I think the question that
12 I posed was services, so I was asking her if she utilized
13 addiction services or --

14 COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Okay.

15 MS. JENNIFER COX: -- anything like that.

16 COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: M'hm.

17 MS. JENNIFER COX: And so she's saying that
18 she did it on her own without help.

19 MS. REBECCA MOORE: M'hm. So she was asking
20 like -- like how did I overcome, like, my addictions and
21 stuff and -- yeah --

22 MS. JENNIFER COX: (Indiscernible).

23 MS. REBECCA MOORE: -- I just did that by
24 myself.

25 COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Okay.

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

2 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Well, you're
3 amazing. I have to say, just when I saw you just before we
4 were here, I stopped there -- very -- you have something
5 very powerful. And yes, probably because the work and the
6 passion that you do, along with your sisters, is making
7 women, and you, more vulnerable.

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

9 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** And I don't
10 think it's acceptable, you know, I don't at all.

11 And in your presentation or testimony -- and
12 I hope Canadian watch and listen. I hope that every level
13 of government, including the municipalities, listen. How
14 Indigenous people are everywhere. We are everywhere. This
15 is -- some of us will say Turtle -- Turtle Island. My
16 people will say *nitassinan* and because we're -- you're
17 defending that land, or making sure that the ceremonies are
18 alive, that your life is threatened.

19 We have to take this seriously and mention
20 it somewhere that for us it never die, and it's still there
21 and because of you and your sisters making sure that we're
22 doing those ceremonies.

23 My last -- my last question, where can we
24 get that book about *La Proclamation du Crâne* -- that scalp
25 proclamation.

1 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Indiscernible) the
2 scalping -- it's still law in --

3 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Legislation.

4 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** -- Nova Scotia.

5 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Pardon me?

6 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** It's legislation. I can
7 get it --

8 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It's still law.

9 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** So it's
10 something we --

11 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You should ask the
12 Premier of Nova Scotia, my dear.

13 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** I'll ask
14 Jennifer Cox.

15 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Please do.

16 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** I will get it.

17 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** I think he
18 heard you. But, yes, I need to have that, please.

19 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Yes.

20 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** We're in
21 2017. I can find it tonight on Internet, but I want to
22 make it official that this inquiry will receive that, and
23 I'll read it, and I'm sure my colleagues will too.

24 And don't stop. Don't stop. Please, don't
25 stop. And you have strong women that don't stop also, and

1 our warriors for many, many century never stopped. And --

2 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Thank you, because
3 they always try to stop us.

4 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Don't.
5 Don't. Please. And do it -- yes, you do it for you, but
6 what you're doing will bring also peace to my girls, to my
7 children, and to our families. So when we have women like
8 you across Canada, we're strong, very strong. And you had
9 this moment where Canada, the rest of the governments
10 across Canada, but us here in this room to say thank you
11 for what you're doing. (Speaking Native language 5:18:11).

12 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** We have gifts. We
13 have gifts. You want to present it?

14 **MS. DEBBIE REID:** So on behalf of the
15 Commission, you've shared a gift of your truth and of
16 course in our culture we exchange gifts, so Commissioner
17 Audette has a couple of gifts for you. One is an Eagle
18 Feather. The matriarchs of the Haidi Gwaii, of which
19 Bernie is a hereditary Chief in waiting, sent out a call of
20 Eagle Feathers to be harvested in the Haidi Gwaii, and
21 those matriarchs have given those Eagle Feathers to us to
22 give to all of you who tell your truth.

23 We also have for you a packet of seeds. And
24 what we hope is that you will plant those seeds and take
25 pictures of them as they grow and we're going to keep a

1 diary of all our seeds across the country from our -- from
2 our women who have told their truths.

3 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Indiscernible).

4 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Before you eat it.

5 **MR. JEFF WARD:** So as we're concluding, and
6 doing our gift giving, and concluding this testimony today
7 here, a few announcements in regards to supper in Goose Cap
8 B for the Commissionaires and Commissioners and the
9 families who've testified there'll be supper next door in
10 Goose Cap B, and also for the communities and for the
11 guests who come out from far distance, and the staff too,
12 the guys behind the cameras. You guys are doing an amazing
13 job. We'd like to invite everybody to the number 2 rink,
14 the number 2 arena upstairs on the second floor. We'll be
15 having Salmon, so just to let -- let you guys go because --
16 we want to -- these guys behind the cameras they look
17 hungry, so I'm going to take care of you guys. All they're
18 dressed in dark. You guys just look thin. I get it. I
19 get it now.

20 But before we end our day we want to close
21 with a closing prayer, and ask our -- our Elder, Katy, at
22 this time, and if -- please, rise if you can, if you can't
23 it's fine -- that's fine. We're going to do a closing
24 prayer.

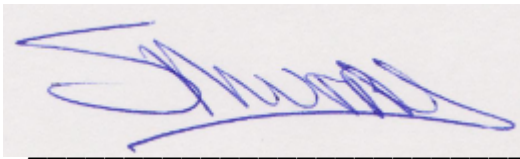
25 -- **CLOSING PRAYER**

1 **MR. JEFF WARD:** And thank you, everybody.
2 And tomorrow 8:30 a.m. opening prayer, and we'll see you
3 tomorrow morning at 8:30 a.m. *Mi'walatl*, thank you. Drive
4 safely. Drive -- have a good night.
5 --- Upon adjourning at 5:28 p.m.

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LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shannon Munro", is written over a horizontal line.

Shannon Munro

February 8, 2018