

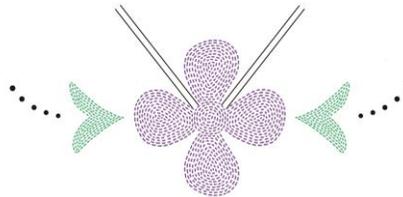
National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-gathering process – Part I Public Hearings
Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel
Minoru C**

Metro Vancouver, British Columbia



Public

Wednesday April 4, 2018

**Public Volume 87:
Juanita Desjarlais**

**Heard by Commissioner Brian Eyolfson
Commission Counsel Fanny Wylde**

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II

APPEARANCES

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

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Commission Counsel: Fanny Wylde	
Clerk: Christian Rock	
Registrar: Bryan Zandberg	

1 Metro Vancouver, British Columbia

2 --- Upon commencing on Monday, April 4, 2018 at 13:22

3 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Good afternoon,
4 Commissioner. Before I introduce you to our next witness,
5 the witness would like to share a song, an opening song.
6 So, I would like to invite the elder to come forward.

7 --- SONG PERFORMED

8 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you for this
9 beautiful song. So, Commissioner, I would like to
10 introduce you to Cintesapa Taweya (ph), Juanita Desjarlais
11 will be sharing today her story as a survivor of many forms
12 of violence. Before I do let her speak, I will ask the
13 Registrar to please swear in the witness, and the witness
14 would like to provide oath with an eagle feather.

15 **MR. CHRISTIAN ROCK:** Juanita, do you promise
16 to tell the truth of your story in a good way today?

17 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** I will try my best.
18 That's all I can do.

19 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you, Mr. Rock. So,
20 Juanita, I would like you to invite you to introduce
21 yourself to Commissioner, and maybe start by where you're
22 from.

23 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Okay. My
24 traditional name is Cintesapa Taweya, and that's who I am.
25 I am known to Creator and to my ancestors by my traditional

1 name. And, here, in Canada, my colonial name is Juanita
2 Desjarlais. My relatives are from Northern Alberta, Naheal
3 (ph) and T'ina (ph). And some of my relatives, they come
4 from Fort McKay, Beaver Lake, Chard, Lac la Biche (ph), and
5 La Loche, Saskatchewan.

6 So, I am a survivor of colonialism. I'm a
7 survivor of genocide. I'm also a Seventies Scoop, but
8 Sixties Scoop survivor as well. I'm also a survivor of
9 violence. And, I believe that my journey has, in life,
10 from the time I was born until now, it's taken me all this
11 time to be able to share my story and my experiences in
12 life with the people to hopefully inspire. This is for our
13 past, present, and future generations. And, that's my
14 belief.

15 And, I hope to inspire or encourage any
16 young people who are living remotely in -- and even our
17 women in remote communities and communities throughout
18 Turtle Island, to be able to step forward to promote
19 healing and to promote change and talk about those things
20 that are unspoken. Those secrets that are hidden in the
21 small communities.

22 So, I'm here today to share my story, to
23 share my strength, to share my love with the people, and
24 that love for myself and my family here. And, I'm also
25 here for that healing for my generation, my son, you know,

1 both of my sons, and my future grandchildren, and our
2 future generations.

3 And, also, hopefully to promote changes
4 within the judicial systems, and policy changes within the
5 RCMP detachments, Vancouver Police Department, and
6 throughout institutional organizations. And, individually
7 as well, because I believe that this is a human issue. We
8 are all responsible for our words, for our actions, for our
9 beliefs. And, I think that it's about time that we stand
10 in, in that change, and promote self-awareness and healing,
11 and to be able to stand up and speak up about those things.

12 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you. So, Juanita,
13 maybe you could start by sharing how you were brought up?
14 What was your childhood like?

15 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Son say (ph), I
16 love you, Mom, and none of what I have to share is intended
17 for any harm to you, no disrespect, and I love you, and I
18 understand today that it's a deeper issue, other than I
19 know that it's -- what happened to us is a result, a direct
20 result of colonialism and genocide against Indigenous
21 peoples.

22 My family is not the only family who
23 suffered at the hands of violence, addiction, alcoholism,
24 and I pray that, you know, we can move forward in a good
25 way. And, just know that I love you, no matter what. And,

1 I love you with all my heart, and I respect you.

2 So, as a little girl, I have -- my fond
3 memories are when I was an infant. I was gifted in life
4 with the ability to be able to have memories of when I was
5 a baby. And, I would share that with my mother. And,
6 she'd say, "How do you remember that? You were just, like,
7 a baby?" And, I was like, "I don't know. I just kind of
8 remember." You know, I remember the walls, and I remember
9 people crying, and I remember there being, like, this big
10 wooden casket. I didn't know it was a casket when I was a
11 baby, but I definitely remember seeing my mom upset. And,
12 she said I was just, like, I don't know, how old?

13 **MS. DESJARLAIS' MOTHER:** Two, three.

14 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Was I? I thought I
15 was younger.

16 But I have other memories, too, and those
17 are memories of my *kokum*. And, I remember feeling so
18 happy, you know, with her, and so proud, and you know, that
19 love that I experienced from her. She was always, like,
20 very proud of me. She bought me clothes and would take
21 pictures and stuff of me. And so, you know, I am very
22 thankful for that.

23 So, that was, like, the early part of my
24 childhood. And then somewhere along the lines, you know,
25 things kind of changed; right? I never, you know, like --

1 I grew up learning my language. My mother would speak to
2 me, you know, in her traditional language, and she speaks
3 two languages, and fluent in one, or two? In two. So, as
4 a young child, you know, that's what I knew. And, I grew
5 up on the reserve and out in the wilderness, and I remember
6 the love for my family, you know. I remember that deeply.

7 And, at some point, you know, I was sent out
8 to a cabin with extended family. I'm not sure if she was
9 my biological family or not, but, you know, I have very
10 fond memories of then too. And, you know, my mother had
11 sent myself and my brother out there, you know, probably
12 for protection and safety. And, you know, this woman, she
13 was elderly, and she had this cabin. And, there was no
14 running water. There were no, like, toilets or anything
15 inside. And, she was a trapper.

16 And so, she would take my brother and I out,
17 you know, basically every day to go and check those
18 traplines. You know, and we'd have to get a bucket inside,
19 you know, to go to the washroom, because it was very cold
20 outside; right? But, still, you know, those are really
21 fond memories that I have of being a little girl. And, I
22 don't know how long we stayed out there.

23 She taught us how to work with moose hides,
24 and to sit, and to be -- even though we probably didn't
25 know what we were doing. But, you know, that culture and

1 that way of life, you know, is very strong. And, she never
2 spoke to us in English. She spoke to us through her eyes.
3 She spoke to us through her language. And, you know, I
4 have good memories, you know, being with my mom, and
5 walking with my mother, you know, and hearing those
6 traditional stories about the Northern Lights and to not
7 whistle; right?

8 So, I have good memories. And, somewhere
9 along the line I think I was probably five years old, and
10 you know, I have -- I think it probably started before
11 five, but after we left that cabin was when things began to
12 change. And, my memories that I have are not good. And, I
13 remember how I felt.

14 And, I remember that, you know, I was being
15 touched, you know, in ways that weren't appropriate, so in
16 my private area. And, this was a person that I was
17 supposed to trust. And so, what he did was -- what I
18 believe today is he began to groom me, you know, into a
19 lifestyle where eventually I became sexually exploited as a
20 youth and as a young person. So, I was molested as a
21 little girl, and I have memories of, you know, being --
22 it's just very graphic, very horrible.

23 But, you know, I never really talked about
24 my experience. I was in therapy for -- that I found on my
25 own later on in life. I had to go to therapy for a minimum

1 of eight years, because I had no life experience. I had no
2 idea whether my emotions are accurate or not. I had no
3 experience with life being sober. I had no experience at
4 all.

5 I didn't know -- I knew rage. I knew rage.
6 I knew how to disconnect from my body. I knew how to
7 disconnect from people. And, that's kind of what I
8 experienced growing up. So, when I was first apprehended
9 from my mother, but I don't believe it was for that, I
10 believe it was because my mother, you know, had an alcohol
11 problem. And, today, I understand it to be different. You
12 know, my mother also experienced colonialism and genocide.

13 And, my views changed after I started
14 working with a feminist organization, and I grew to
15 understand, you know, the harms committed against our
16 people. And, my mother and I, you know, were able to
17 reconcile and make peace. And, you know, I respect my
18 mother deeply with my heart, because she gave me life.
19 And, I try my best, you know, to try and be the best
20 daughter I can be. But, I respect my mom. You know, and,
21 I don't say bad things and stuff to her anymore. But, that
22 was part of, you know, my cycle of change as well.

23 So, when I was a little girl I also
24 witnessed violence in our community. I witnessed violence
25 as a result of the alcoholism which was in our homes. And,

1 very graphic and extreme, so, you know, blood, gore,
2 horrible. To this day I can't watch horror shows. Also, I
3 don't like how it depicts those acts of violence against
4 women, because it's mostly women who are being impacted by
5 violence in horror movies. Very sick.

6 I think I was probably five years old. I
7 think I was in Grade 1 when I told the teacher what
8 happened to me. And so, I remember being taken, I don't
9 know how long, but I remember going to the hospital or to
10 an examining room or something. And so, they, you know,
11 looked me over and tried to find, like, some sort of
12 evidence or something that this in fact had actually
13 happened to me. But, I knew what had happened to me, and I
14 think that I trusted my teacher, you know, for her to be
15 able to, I don't know, help me or something in some way.

16 So, after that, there was nothing found,
17 like, no conclusion, and there were no charges that were
18 brought forth to my stepfather. And so, you know, my
19 childhood I was back and forth between foster homes and my
20 mom. And, I think my very first foster home that I went to
21 -- I don't have a lot of recollections, like the
22 recollections that I do have are of trauma. So, you know,
23 I know that I suffered from forms of torture. And so, with
24 that, that means that I was confined while I was in a
25 foster home. So, that meant that the door was locked.

1 I had no human contact. I was fed food from
2 under the door. I remember I was on the third floor, or
3 whatever. There were windows below me, and then the
4 ground. And, I jumped out of that window, and I took off
5 and I wanted to see my mom. I didn't have, like,
6 visitations with my mom at all. I didn't have any
7 visitation with my family.

8 I remember being in one foster home, I must
9 have been seven, because I think I became a ward of the
10 court when I was seven years old. And, during that time I
11 remember being in foster homes. And, I don't ever
12 remember, like, having any bonding. I never had, like,
13 that bonding or that love provided to me, like children
14 should have. I also didn't have any counselling services
15 or connection to culture provided to me. And, I never got
16 to see any of my family either during that time.

17 So, my good friend, John Samm, you know, he
18 talked about some of his experience being a Sixties Scoop
19 survivor, and he talked about his life as a white man. You
20 know, and I believe that, you know, when I was a little
21 girl that they tried to make me live like a white girl.
22 Sorry. And, I don't mean to be disrespectful, but in some
23 ways, I kind of think it's a little bit funny.

24 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Juanita, I'm sorry, do you
25 mind if I ask you a question?

1 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Okay.

2 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** The foster home, how old
3 were you when you first went into a foster home the first
4 time?

5 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** No, no, the first
6 time. Hold old was I? Was I four?

7 **MS. DESJARLAIS' MOTHER:** Seven.

8 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** I was seven?

9 **MS. DESJARLAIS' MOTHER:** Yeah.

10 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Was I seven?

11 **MS. DESJARLAIS' MOTHER:** Yeah. You were big
12 already.

13 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** I think I read in
14 my files, though ---

15 **MS. DESJARLAIS' MOTHER:** You have four
16 siblings that are younger than you. And, you and Shane are
17 three years apart.

18 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Oh. Well,
19 somewhere in my files I think it said I was five.

20 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Okay. And, were the
21 foster homes outside of the community or in the community?

22 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** I think they were
23 -- I remember that I was born in Alberta. And, I remember
24 being first apprehended when I lived in Fort McMurray,
25 Alberta; right? Yes. Fort McMurray, Alberta. There were

1 other times -- like, I did go back to live with my mom a
2 few times, and then we were apprehended again. I don't
3 remember, like, fully, the ages. But, I believe that by
4 the time I was seven or eight, I think I was seven, because
5 I did attempt to read my files from when I was a child.
6 But, at that time, I wasn't fully ready to be able to face
7 that.

8 And, they shipped me from Alberta with my
9 perpetrator. So, the man who sexually abused me and
10 molested me as a child was the one who they placed me back
11 into his care to move here to B.C. to be -- I think we were
12 wards of the court at that time. And, I'm not sure how old
13 I was. My mother says I was seven or eight, but I believe
14 I was probably around that age.

15 And, all the times, like, you know, I was
16 with these different families, and I have no recollection
17 -- like, I remember, like, one was RCMP bomb squad guy.
18 And that's the gist of my memory. I remember having a
19 bedroom, and a TV in it, and a double bed. But, I don't
20 remember having a relationship with the people; right? All
21 I know is that I didn't have any relationships with the
22 people, and my heart always, you know, mourned and cried
23 for my family.

24 Like, I cried. I cried, and cried, and
25 cried, all the time, for my mom. And, I think the last

1 time I was actually able to see her was while we were here
2 in Vancouver. And, that wasn't long after we got shipped
3 over here from Alberta. And, that was the -- and, she
4 gifted me some moccasins; right? Yes, she gifted me some
5 moccasins. And, I believe that, you know, she probably
6 knew that that would be one of the last times that she saw
7 us.

8 And then after that we went to another
9 foster home, where we were all to be shipped out to
10 different places. And, my younger brothers were the ones
11 to go first.

12 **MS. DESJARLAIS' MOTHER:** 1983.

13 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** 1983. It's funny,
14 because in 1986, I came to Vancouver, and I lived in the
15 downtown east side at that time. And, all that time I was
16 a ward of the court, ward of the government, where they are
17 supposed to know better. They took me away from my family
18 to be a part of that exploitation of myself, because -- and
19 the Crown. So, the Crown, meaning, you know, the RCMP, the
20 social workers, and Vancouver Police Department, because
21 they are all employed by the Crown.

22 You know, there were a few people, actually
23 -- I can't say that -- it wasn't, you know, all bad,
24 because there were a few people who went above and beyond
25 in my youth, where, you know, today I see, you know, those

1 seeds that they planted in my life. And, one of them was
2 Jerry Adams. I just want to say, "I love you, Jerry.
3 Thanks for being a part of my childhood in a good way."

4 But, yeah, I don't know where I was.

5 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So, maybe if you could
6 share a bit about when you were living on the downtown east
7 side of Vancouver, the lifestyle you started when you ran
8 way?

9 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** So, I actually -- I
10 don't know what age I was. I might have been eight when a
11 social worker actually -- his name was Vaughn (ph), and he
12 sat me down, because none of the houses that I had lived in
13 ever worked out. I never felt like I was a part of the
14 family, or I never felt like -- that I was loved or cared
15 about.

16 And so, at seven or eight, I remember being
17 in a park with Vaughn and, you know, I was running and
18 jumping around and having fun, because I was outside, and
19 it was good. And then he asked me, he says, "What do you
20 want?" And, I'm a seven/eight-year-old girl, and I said,
21 "What do you mean?" He's like, "Where do you want to live?
22 Who do you want to live with?" And, I was like, seven or
23 eight, and somehow, I came up with, "I want to live with my
24 own people. And, I want them to have lots of kids, and be
25 connected to sports." Because that's all I -- I don't

1 know, somehow, I got that from I think like TV or
2 something. I may have seen something on TV at some time,
3 because that was my only kind of, like, connection.

4 I remember seeing Buffy Sainte-Marie on
5 Sesame Street, and she was my hero, because I saw someone
6 that had long hair. Oh yeah, and that was another thing.
7 So, somewhere between five years old and seven or eight, I
8 had long beautiful hair that used to go -- well, yeah, just
9 like now. Except, you know, in one of the homes that I
10 moved in, they cut my hair. And, they didn't ask me if
11 they could cut my hair. And, I remember just feeling very
12 sad, you know, and disconnected, because that was a part of
13 me. You know, I had lot of memories, you know, of my mom.
14 My mom, you know, brushing my hair and braiding my hair and
15 that. So, yeah.

16 So, when I was with Vaughn, and he asked me
17 those questions, you know, somehow, I told him that I
18 wanted to live with Native people. So, he put me in his
19 car, and he took me for a drive, and he went past -- this
20 was in Mission, actually, Mission, B.C. And, we went past
21 this big, giant building that was a school. What I didn't
22 now then was that it was a residential school. And, that
23 residential school was called St. Mary's.

24 And so, he goes, "Do you want to go to
25 school here? This is a good school." And, blah, blah,

1 blah -- I don't remember what else he said. And, I just
2 remember looking at that school, and I didn't see any kids
3 outside. I didn't see any, like, laughter, I didn't see
4 anything like that. And, something told me, you know, I
5 didn't want to go to that school. So, I told him, "No, I
6 want to go to school where all the other kids go to school,
7 wherever that is."

8 And so, they found a Native home placement
9 for me, and I grew up in Chehalis, which is in the lower
10 mainland. And, I believe that it was probably one of the
11 longest places that I ever actually lived as a child. So,
12 I think I was probably 15 years old, and I had been raped.
13 So, basically, I went to a party that I wasn't supposed to
14 go to, and one of the neighbours raped me. And, I came to,
15 and he was on top of me. And, I felt nothing but shame and
16 guilt and dirtiness because, you know, that had happened,
17 and it was wrong, and he didn't -- you know. I don't
18 believe he was held accountable, either, for what he had
19 done to me.

20 So then I went to, well, what I thought was
21 my friend, but she wasn't a friend of mine. And, she told
22 me to come to Vancouver. She goes, "Go to Vancouver, and
23 look for this person, so-and-so, Remy, or whatever. And,
24 change your name. And, here's a bag of clothes."

25 So, off I went to Vancouver. You know, and

1 I was-- like, I didn't know about jails, really. I didn't
2 know about that kind of lifestyle, kind of. So, I got in
3 with a -- people eventually, kind of, like, took me in,
4 because I had no place to go. And so, what they started me
5 on was pills, at that time. You know, I wanted to fit in,
6 and I wanted to be cool. But, I didn't really understand
7 the dangers and everything else. So, I had smoked some --
8 I can't remember what I smoked, but it was a pill. And so,
9 I remember waking up one day, and, apparently, I was out
10 for four days. And, I woke up in this stranger's room.
11 And, there was two men in there, you know. And, I was
12 laying on the bed. And, I can only imagine, you know, what
13 happened to me. That was my first experience -- or my, I
14 don't know what experience, how many experiences of rape I
15 had experienced at that time.

16 And, my next -- I guess some of the things
17 that I'm talking about are some of the more significant
18 things that I remember. But, I have a path full of
19 instances, experiences like that, that no child should ever
20 have to experience. One of my recommendations is that rape
21 should be punishable by a minimum of ten years. If I wear
22 a face mask when I go out to a rally, or to show my support
23 to Mother Earth, or the land, or the water, as spiritual
24 people, I can go to jail for ten years for wearing a face
25 mask. Where is the justice?

1 Why isn't, you know, our judicial system --
2 I hope to see those changes. You know, not just for me,
3 but every other little girl and little boy out there. You
4 know, every woman out there, you know, who has experienced
5 rape, molestation, child abuse, you know, those ways,
6 because it's very important to send a clear message. And,
7 somehow our government, Harper, Trudeau, all the Ministers
8 beforehand, they haven't addressed that issue, in a way.

9 And, I challenge, you know, Trudeau to step
10 forward to do what's right, you know, to protect the little
11 girls, the little boys, and the women, you know, from those
12 harms. They can easily make those changes and
13 recommendations in the Senate if they can make those
14 recommendations to get ten years for wearing a face mask,
15 you know, hiding your face. And, you know, a lot of the
16 laws are outdated. But, where was I?

17 Oh yeah. So, you know, I talk about my --
18 well, not my, but I talk about the perpetrator, who was my
19 stepfather. I believe he groomed me along that path to be
20 sexually exploited. I heard this one woman share one time,
21 and she was very powerful in sharing her story, and she
22 really inspired me. You know, because a lot of what I
23 experience today, in terms of shame, you know, it's not my
24 to own, and it doesn't belong to me. That belongs to the
25 perpetrator.

1 And, there's a lot of perpetrators out
2 there, you know, in our communities. It's a direct result
3 of colonialism and genocide. And, also, that relationship
4 between the RCMP and the police departments, they
5 contribute, you know, to that discrimination and racism in
6 a huge way. I experienced violence at the hands of the
7 police many times as well, you know. And, they released
8 me, you know, so that they didn't have to take me in,
9 because they knew that people would talk about it; right?
10 And, because it was still out there, my addiction, you
11 know, I wanted to go back and use drugs. And so, you know,
12 they were perpetrators.

13 But, when I was about 16, I had been
14 introduced to cocaine, and I had also started -- that was
15 also the time where I was put out onto the street, and I
16 was told that I needed to be able to make money for the
17 drugs that I was consuming, and that I owed them. So, I
18 did what I was told to do. Because I think at that time I
19 felt like I didn't have a choice, because I was living or
20 staying with these adults, you know, who wanted to use me
21 for their own purposes, whether that be sexual or monetary
22 wise. So, I wasn't viewed as a human being, or a young
23 girl. I was subjectified.

24 And so, I remember my first experience, and
25 I couldn't do it. And, I begged, and I pleaded, you know,

1 with that guy to give me money or I was going to get beat
2 up. And, somehow, that guy felt sorry for me; right? But,
3 you have to remember that I was a 15-year-old girl, and
4 this was, like, a 50-year-old man; right? Somebody's
5 husband, somebody in the business area, or something.
6 Maybe he was a minister, who knows? But, I can tell you,
7 from my experience, that there were many men and walks of
8 life, mostly they were Caucasian men, but men of, you know,
9 all colours.

10 And, I apparently was part of the problem.
11 But, that has to do with, you know, the history of
12 colonization; right? The time where women would rather
13 accept money for it, than to be forced to be raped, or to
14 watch their children be raped. So, I believe that that's
15 how the brothels came to be.

16 But, you know, during that time, too, it was
17 the women, you know, who would be arrested and jailed for
18 that, and the perpetrators, again, you know, being set
19 free. You know, a slap on the wrist. These pedophiles.
20 They are pedophiles; right? And, you know, I know for a
21 fact that I did run into police officers. And, I remember
22 talking with the lawyer here, and she asked me, "Did any of
23 those officers ever ask you if you were okay?" And, I
24 don't recall any of them asking me.

25 Actually, later on in life, I was probably,

1 like, 17 or something, and I remember one officer asking me
2 if I was okay. And, he didn't arrest me, and I had a
3 warrant. So, he was genuinely concerned for my wellbeing;
4 right? So, that was a good thing.

5 So, my life, being sexually exploited, you
6 know, continued from there. And, I think by the time I was
7 16, I experienced -- well, the lifestyle at that time, all
8 I really knew was violence; right? Whether I had to
9 survive and, you know, I was violent, or I had that
10 violence subjected to me. And, I was stabbed. I believe I
11 was 16. Yeah, I may have just been, like, 16. And, it
12 happened at the Brandee's (ph). And, it was somebody that
13 I knew, and we got into a fight, and then I remember, like,
14 you know, feeling like a wound or something, and then
15 commotion, and then I woke up in the hospital. And, I came
16 to, and I had had surgery, and I didn't know what happened.
17 And, I was in there, I think, for probably six weeks.

18 And, you know, the funny thing was is I
19 don't recall seeing the police; right? They may have come
20 in when I was, you know, half-groggy or coming out of, you
21 know -- I have no idea. But, I don't recall them coming
22 in, and I believe I was in there for probably about, I
23 think a minimum of six weeks, for sure.

24 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Do you remember, Juanita,
25 if you filed a complaint following that stabbing?

1 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Yeah, actually.
2 Well, the social workers did help me with that. So, we did
3 take it to some place, Victims of Crime or something. I
4 don't know. Yeah, Victims of Crime. And then they didn't
5 want to hep me, because they said that I had created or
6 caused that to happen to myself. And, I kind of got mad,
7 and, I don't know who was helping me, but I did get help.
8 Mostly it was monetary. And, I said, regardless, you know,
9 if I knew the perpetrator or not, or pressed charges,
10 because I was still involved in that lifestyle, I was
11 afraid to come forward; right? I was a young girl. And, I
12 said, you know, I was still a victim of a crime regardless.
13 I had been stabbed, and my life was, you know, at stake, in
14 not just one way.

15 And so, there was then. So then after that,
16 I met a man who was probably in his thirties. And, he was
17 very violent. He deliberately got me addicted to heroine.
18 I had no idea -- oh yeah, I think at that time I was doing
19 T's and R's until, like, cocaine and heroine. I was 16,
20 16/17 years old. And, you know, I was forced to bring
21 money. So, whatever that meant, like, getting money from
22 other people in whatever capacity, that was how I did that.
23 And also, I was a sexually exploited youth, and so that was
24 just part of that path that I was on at that time.

25 I also became pregnant from my abuser. And

1 my abuser fed me cocaine and heroine and probably other
2 things, too, I just can't remember. I think I was eight
3 months pregnant and somehow I wound up back at the group
4 home. But, during my time at the group home I believe I
5 may have been sober or something maybe for 12 hours. I
6 don't know. And, I had to go to the hospital because I
7 didn't feel any movement, and I didn't know what was
8 happening to me was because I was also withdrawing from
9 heroine at that time.

10 And, I had to give birth to a stillborn
11 baby. But, I believe today that that was supposed to be
12 like that, because I believe that she would have suffered,
13 and the Creator took her, you know, to a place where she
14 wouldn't have to suffer and hurt, because she would have
15 suffered a great deal.

16 So, anyways, I don't know how long after,
17 but I went into the -- I remember being in a depression. I
18 was in a foster home. I didn't know I was in a depression,
19 but they told me I was in a depression. I was asleep for,
20 I don't know how long. But, I remember just waking up
21 sometimes, and they would try and make me eat and get me to
22 go to the washroom and stuff and have something to drink.
23 So, I was being cared for at that time.

24 And then somewhere along the line I -- well,
25 I had a funeral for the baby that I had and a burial for

1 her. And, not long after I went back out and started using
2 again. And, I went -- well, I didn't go and look for him,
3 but he found me. He found me. And, I had, like, no choice
4 but to go back there with him at that time.

5 So, somewhere along that dark road -- well,
6 all this while I experienced violence, extreme violence,
7 and horrible graphic sexual violence at the hands of this
8 man. And, one night, or day, I can't remember, I was
9 violently assaulted, and my ribs were broken. And, I was
10 beaten to the point where -- like, I was in a lot of pain;
11 right? And so, my mobility was not 100 percent.

12 Anyways, the violence escalated, and I was
13 -- I believe I was stabbed on the bottom floor, but this
14 person knew that where they stabbed me that there was an
15 artery there and that I would bleed out.

16 So, anyways, I got to the top floor. This
17 person brought me up, floor by floor, and I think it was on
18 -- I don't know what floor I was on, but I remember that.
19 And, I remember seeing all of my blood, and it was all,
20 like, coagulated, and I, like, had no movement in my leg at
21 all. And, my ribs were broken. And, I believed that that
22 day I survived a homicide or a potential -- whatever you
23 call that. I survived murder that day. And, only because
24 I found -- nobody would answer their hotel room, nobody. I
25 knocked on so many doors. I dragged myself out of that

1 bathroom and, somehow, I had a will to live or get away or
2 something; right? And, I knew, and I was able to use my
3 survival skills to get away.

4 And so, on that last floor, I believe it was
5 like divine intervention or something, you know, I was
6 supposed to live. I was supposed to live to, you know, to
7 share my story, to encourage and inspire our young people,
8 our girls, to be brave one day, you know, to talk about
9 those things that aren't supposed to be talked -- I mean,
10 they are supposed to be talked about. They are supposed to
11 be talked about. They are not supposed to be kept secret.
12 And, there is a time that's coming where our younger
13 generations will rise up for what is right, and that
14 healing will begin. And, all those perpetrators that are
15 out there will be ousted, because I believe in that greater
16 good.

17 So, I found a room that was open. And, I
18 dragged myself there. And, I don't know, I managed to -- I
19 ripped the sheet up, tied my leg. There was a footrest,
20 and I remembered hearing something about raising your
21 injury or whatever above your heart so that you don't bleed
22 to death. And, I know that I would have been dead. I know
23 that.

24 Anyways, the next day I woke up and dragged
25 myself, painfully, through the building. And, I don't know

1 if it was the lobby who called for an ambulance, but they
2 brought me to the hospital. And so, I remember two
3 officers coming. I'm pretty sure I received a blood
4 transfusion at that time, because I lost over half my
5 blood. They said if I would have lost any more than I
6 could be gone. But, you know, I remember two officers
7 coming to the hospital.

8 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Do you remember what
9 detachment the two officers were? RCMP or ---

10 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Oh, that would have
11 been Vancouver Police Department.

12 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you.

13 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Yeah. That would
14 have been the Vancouver Police Department. So, they came
15 to the bedside, and they asked me some questions. And, I
16 don't think they stayed very long. I'm not sure, even,
17 what kind of state I was in, because I wasn't well; right?
18 I mean, I was -- yeah. And so, they maybe stayed for,
19 like, half an hour or something and then they left. And,
20 that was the last I seen of them.

21 And, you know, when I was going over that
22 with the lawyer here, about ten days ago or something, I
23 was able to feel my feelings that I wasn't able to feel
24 back then. And, I tell you, you know, I was -- excuse my
25 language -- I was pretty p-ed off; right? Because my life

1 mattered, and all of my sisters' lives, you know, mattered
2 as well. You know, I knew over half of the women that were
3 murdered from the downtown east side.

4 And, you know, when I thought about that,
5 you know, I was really taken aback, you know, and I was,
6 like, didn't my life matter? You know, I was just a young
7 girl. You know, why wouldn't they go further? Why
8 wouldn't they care about me; right?

9 And, I was really disappointed to know that,
10 you know, another human being that is in this so-called
11 position of authority, you know, could be so detached and
12 inhumane, in my eyes, you know, ignorant, racist,
13 discriminatory; right? Or, even -- what's that called when
14 you get -- oh, desensitized. That's a huge thing. And,
15 yeah.

16 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So, I understand that two
17 officers came to see you, but there was never any
18 investigation following when they came to see you. Do you
19 know if there was any prosecution to a suspect?

20 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** No. There was no,
21 in both cases -- in all cases, really. Oh, except for one,
22 because I took the police back when I was raped and beat up
23 and the guy had my clothes; right? And so, I took the
24 police back to the location where the assault and rape
25 happened, because I was too scared to go there alone. They

1 found a book. They found a book with his -- I don't know,
2 with one of his -- I think he lived with his mom or
3 something. And, anyways, they -- I don't know, took his
4 van or something, and they found, you know, my DNA in
5 there. They found my tooth in there. They found -- later
6 on, I also found that they also found a thumbprint of blood
7 that didn't belong to myself or his family, but it wasn't
8 allowed to be used in court.

9 So, I don't know if they were able to look
10 at, you know, any connections to any violence or rapes or
11 murders, you know, to him; right? I don't know how old I
12 was then, but that's what I was told afterwards.

13 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So, if we can take a few
14 steps back, when you were, as a child, when you reported
15 what happened to you to the teacher, was the authorities
16 alerted when they examined you? After they examined you,
17 did you meet with any police officer?

18 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Yeah. And, the
19 funny thing was that there was no evidence. They didn't
20 believe me. And, yet, you know, they believed the
21 perpetrator.

22 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** And, also, when the first
23 -- when you said that at 15 you were raped, did you report
24 it to any authorities?

25 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** No. I don't know.

1 I don't know if I may have said something to one of the
2 social workers. I can't recall. I just knew that, you
3 know, how I felt. And, I felt very ashamed. And, you
4 know, part of me felt like it was partly my fault, even
5 though today I know that it wasn't my fault. Rape is never
6 anybody's fault, except the perpetrator's.

7 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So, with this environment,
8 living with a very violent man, working on the streets, how
9 did you manage to get out of that lifestyle?

10 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Well, I think I
11 first started getting sober in 1990. I met a man and
12 started a relationship. And, I became pregnant. I think I
13 met him while I was pregnant. I think I had another
14 stillborn. But, anyways, a child did result out of that
15 relationship. And, I was sober and clean. But, you know,
16 his family was racist and discriminatory against me and,
17 also, I believe, against my son. He grew up with them.
18 But, you know, I knew that they didn't like me because I
19 was Indian. I thought that, you know, I was stereotyped,
20 and that, you know, I was no good for nothing.

21 But, my son, you know, grew up with those
22 views. And, I took them to court, and I did all the things
23 that I was supposed to do. I paid for therapy for my son.
24 They were supposed to bring him to therapy sessions,
25 because they were concerned that by seeing me that it was

1 going to do damage and stuff to him. But, there was always
2 an excuse that he didn't want to see me.

3 But, I continued, you know, trying to see
4 him, week after week. For years I would go to their front
5 door, knock, and I would say, "I'm here to see my son."
6 And, it was the same thing. "Oh, just wait, I'll go see if
7 he wants to see you. I'll talk to him this time." Maybe
8 it was, like, every couple of weeks or something. And, she
9 would come back to the door, "No, he doesn't want to see
10 you right now." So, I'd say, "Okay." Right? And, I
11 thought I was doing the right thing by leaving him there.
12 But what I discovered was that he, too, didn't get to grow
13 up with that same love and care.

14 He came to live with me when he was 15 years
15 old. We lead a different way of life today, because I did
16 get sober. And, I really got sober, I don't know, like,
17 maybe 12 years ago, 10 years ago, 11 years ago, something
18 like that. Like, really, really. When I found this
19 cultural, spiritual way of life. And, my son and I had
20 gone to -- well, we were going to sweat, and then we got
21 invited to go to sun dance. And so, we went to our first
22 sun dance. And, because I was just newly sober, even
23 though I was only out there for a month, but to me it
24 seemed like a lifetime, and everything spiralled out of
25 control.

1 But he -- I knew, something inside of me
2 just knew that that was the place for healing. That was
3 going to help our family. Mostly it was going to help my
4 son so that we could rebuild our relationship, that we
5 could get that support, unconditional love, the teachings,
6 you know? And, everything that I had felt, you know, at
7 that ceremony, was completely opposite to what I
8 experienced, you know, like, going to therapy -- well,
9 except for with my one therapist, because she was pretty
10 awesome. But, you know, like any of the other groups, like
11 I never, like, really ever felt like, you know, it matched
12 me, or that, you know -- it was just different.

13 But, I knew through there that that was our
14 doorway. That was our doorway to change, and that change
15 happened, right, and is still happening today. And, my
16 son, you know, he gets to have a different life than what I
17 experienced. Because everything I did with him was
18 completely backwards to the Western way of live, the
19 Western way of living. And, because I chose to do that in
20 that manner, right, my son, you know, has been surrounded
21 by very, very strong, you know, spiritual people, spiritual
22 men who walk in a good way. My son, you know, has had very
23 strong spiritual life-givers, you know, on his path to help
24 bring that balance and those good things in life and, you
25 know, those skills and those medicines and all those

1 teachings. He doesn't go to school; he goes to Indian
2 school, you know. And, that's a good thing so that he can
3 continue to carry forward, you know, those teachings and
4 traditional way of life, those medicine songs, to carry
5 that medicine forward for our young people.

6 And, I think that's why, you know, I was
7 able to live, because Creator chose me, my son chose me to
8 be his mother before he came to me. And, because of that
9 gift of life, my life is different. Because it was through
10 his spirit that my life was allowed to change, or that
11 changed, you know. And, through that, because I have a
12 harder time at life, then I too was gifted with things to
13 help me on my path. And, now it's up to me to share that
14 medicine, that strength, that bravery, honesty, humility,
15 truthfulness, generosity, to continue walking in that way,
16 to share with our young people, our women and our men.
17 Because our ways haven't been forgotten. They've been put
18 away, and our people are coming back even stronger.

19 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** I would like to invite you
20 now, Juanita, if you'd like to share ---

21 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Oh yeah, one more
22 thing. Culture saves lives.

23 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So, if you're ready,
24 Juanita, I would like to invite you to share observations
25 or recommendations to provide to the Commissioner.

1 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Oh yeah, I just
2 wanted to share, too, that our family member, Violet
3 Herman, was murdered in the downtown east side in 2003.
4 And, you know, I had gotten to know Violet a little bit,
5 you know, at that time. And, I know that we are distant
6 family, but for me, at that time, you know, knowing any
7 family, because I didn't get to grow up with any family at
8 all, was somewhat meaningful to me. And so, Pavel was, I
9 think, maybe two or coming up to be two or something like
10 that, at that time.

11 And, you know, I can only -- you know, I
12 look at her life and the loss, you know, to the family, to
13 her direct family, to her mother, to her father. My mom
14 knows better than I do regarding family and that, but to
15 this day her murder is also unsolved; right? And, when you
16 look at all the stories that are shared, people's
17 experiences, like, these aren't just stories, these are
18 people's real-life experiences of, you know, doors being
19 slammed, you know, in faces, and lack of, you know,
20 humanness. You know, they are -- I don't understand, like,
21 how people, like, especially like the police services, you
22 know, they don't have a heart. Like, their profiling is
23 racially profiled. You know, if someone has a history of
24 running away or something, they don't take it seriously,
25 you know.

1 But, all these experiences, you know, during
2 my time in the downtown east side, I spent a lot of years
3 doing other things, other kinds of crime and stuff like
4 that, but during which time, you know, I was also assaulted
5 by various officers of the Vancouver Police Department.
6 Most times I was dropped off, you know, like, at the edge
7 of town and, like, pepper sprayed. You know, they take you
8 away in the paddy wagon, yeah, and so they would, you know,
9 kick you out at the end of town so that they didn't have to
10 take you back to the detachment, like to city cells,
11 because once they book you in, then they have to record
12 everything; right?

13 But, yeah, I've been assaulted by Vancouver
14 Police officers a number of times. And then I remember one
15 day I got angry. I think it was an Asian cop, and it was
16 right by the cheque cashing place at Main and Hastings, in
17 the little indent or whatever, like in a doorway thing, you
18 know, and he started pushing me around. And, I got mad at
19 him. And, I told him, I said, "You're an insult to your
20 uniform. How dare, you know, how dare you assault me, push
21 me around. You took an oath to protect and serve. You're
22 a disgrace to your uniform, you know. You're part of the
23 problem, you know, projecting that violence against women."

24 I may have been 80 pounds, maybe 90 pounds
25 at the max; right? And, here was a healthy man, in a

1 position of authority, pushing around a 90-pound woman, or
2 girl. I was a girl; right? I was stunted because of my
3 time out there.

4 But, yeah, I was also out there when a lot
5 of the women were being plucked off the streets. And, I
6 was never interviewed by any police officer. I reported at
7 one time -- I didn't know at that time that Pickton was
8 murdering people. So, I reported seeing a man in a red,
9 like, kind of like Datsun or something. It was like a
10 reddy-brown or red little two-seater pick-up truck, Datsun
11 or whatever, and it had -- he had facial hair. But, what I
12 remember the most was that there was a woman who was in the
13 passenger seat, and I was like walking down the street, and
14 it was down by -- what's one block before Astoria?
15 Princess? Somewhere around there.

16 Well, anyways, it was around Princess Street
17 or something, and I don't know what I was doing, but I was
18 walking up the street. And then there was an alley, and
19 then I don't know what made me turn around and look, but I
20 turned around and I looked, and the red Datsun was going
21 by. And, there was this woman in there, and she had blonde
22 hair, and her eyes were open, and she had like a blueish
23 tinge to her, and she was just laying there. And, like,
24 there was a blanket or something on her; I don't know.

25 Anyways, I was like, oh my god, did I just

1 see that? And, I could have swore that that woman was
2 dead. I could have swore. And, I did tell somebody, and I
3 told Dave Dixon. And, at that time Dave Dixon also asked
4 me to keep an eye out, an ear out, for any officers that
5 were -- what did he say? Any officers that were dirty,
6 dirty cops. There was some sort of investigation or
7 something on at that time.

8 But, you know, like had -- so, I reported
9 that, and I always wondered like why, you know, police
10 didn't come around and like, you know, talk to women and
11 that; right? But, you know, at that time, I believe I may
12 have, may have, seen Serena Abbotsway. I may have been the
13 last person, or not the last person, besides the
14 perpetrator, you know, seeing her being picked up.
15 Because, at that time in my life, I was in the downtown
16 east side, and I was in that block there. And, you know, I
17 saw her jump into a vehicle. And, had the police, you
18 know, like, come and done the missing person's report and
19 come downtown and talk to people, well, maybe, you know, at
20 that time my description of the vehicle, you know, like,
21 other vehicle maybe, maybe they would have found it. Maybe
22 they would have found her. Maybe they would have found,
23 you know -- they would have stopped, like, the murders, you
24 know, of our other sisters; right? But, I didn't know at
25 that time that all that stuff was going on.

1 And then Dawn went missing as well. Dawn
2 Cray went missing as well. There were a few other women
3 that went missing and stuff as well. I was friends with
4 Sarah de Vries. I knew Sarah since I was like 16 years
5 old. The first time she was gutted, I was one of the
6 women, like, who got to talk to her as soon as she was out
7 of the hospital. Like, she left the hospital, and she used
8 to have all these staples in her belly. And then she told
9 me, "Oh yeah, I just got out of the hospital." And, I was
10 talking to her. I was like, "Well, do you remember, like,
11 what happened?" And, she told me how it happened, but she
12 didn't remember anything, like, after that. And then she
13 was found in a garbage bin or a garbage -- one of those big
14 dumpsters.

15 I'm kind of going all over the place here,
16 but it's kind of what happens sometimes. Like, oh yeah, I
17 remember this and, oh yeah, I remember that. And, oh my
18 God, I forgot this. And, I tried my best to take some
19 notes.

20 But, one of my recommendations is that there
21 be an equal, equal, no reference to ethnicity, so that
22 there can be a universal, fair, hopefully, process in which
23 investigations are done. And, a more thorough process, set
24 of steps, protocols, that, you know, are developed with
25 community input or input from the families; right? Because

1 I think in order for things to work, they can brainstorm
2 and think-tank all they want, but really they need to
3 engage, not with the same family member, but a group of
4 family members. You know, people who can, you know,
5 create, you know, those bridges so that change can happen,
6 so that there is no discrimination happening. Because,
7 essentially, we are all human beings; right?

8 I am not that person that I was back then.
9 I was born an innocent baby, just like anybody else in this
10 room, you know. And, my life wasn't destined to be an
11 alcoholic or an addict. My life wasn't destined to be any
12 of those experiences that I experienced out there. But,
13 because I suffered from trauma, from colonialism, and
14 genocide, and loss of culture, loss of language, and loss
15 of family, I suffered even more trauma as a result.

16 So, in terms of changes -- I lost track
17 there. But, I did write some things down here. So, it's
18 in regards to family violence and sexual violence on the
19 reserves, or in remote communities, even in the city, but
20 mostly for -- because I came from a small community, and I
21 came into the city, a lot of the sisters that were murdered
22 were from smaller communities as well, and they came into
23 the city. So, it's not uncommon. It's actually very
24 common. So, in order to address or invite healing, that --
25 I've also, you know, had the privilege of being able to

1 work with girls, with women, and also with women who work
2 in those remote communities, to be able to hear of the
3 challenges, you know, that they face. And so, most times,
4 you know, what's dividing the perpetrator and the victim is
5 a shower curtain.

6 Like, how does that happen? Where is the
7 privacy? Where is the respect, you know, for -- and, most
8 times, that's a little girl with a man, like an elder --
9 sorry, not an elder, a senior citizen. You know, the
10 rights, you know, of that little girl are not protected,
11 you know. We're not doing our best to be able to humanize,
12 you know, the experience. It's dehumanizing. And, we need
13 to do better.

14 We need to do better to protect our girls.
15 We need to have medical services on reserve; right? Not
16 just a fly-in doctor or whatever. There needs to be some
17 sort of medical station on each reserve. Who cares, it
18 costs money to build, but I'm sure there are people who are
19 willing to donate their time as long as the government or
20 somebody, you know, is willing to donate the materials.
21 You know, together people can do and create, you know, all
22 sorts of great things; right?

23 But, you know, I know that medical services
24 are one of the things, you know, according to Jordan's
25 Principle, right, you know, and it also helps the

1 communities; right? Like, people can actually go in and
2 get an exam, you know, get examined if they've been violated.
3 Or, they can get that support, right? And, it's a
4 beginning. Safe houses or a safety house where it's
5 clearly safe and where the community supports that action
6 and that change; right? Instead of protecting the
7 perpetrator, which might be your cousin, it might be your
8 uncle, and it's really sad, but it also might be your
9 grandpa or your brother.

10 But, I do believe in change. I believe that
11 through our cultural ways, and through education, and the
12 implementation, you know, of support services, and real
13 change, right, in the communities, especially the remote
14 communities. We have a responsibility to each other.

15 We also have a responsibility to promote
16 that dialogue, to promote change and safety, to support our
17 unintended, like, victims. I hate saying that word,
18 "victims," right? So that those services be there for our
19 young girls and our boys, because we know it's happening.

20 I can tell you a stat about one of the
21 communities. And, I think I saw something recently and it
22 said 98 percent of the community in the Nitinaht Nation has
23 been subjected to sexual abuse, 98 percent. What does that
24 say? Two hundred years of colonialism, the impacts upon
25 our people, rape, violence, and, you know, genocide. What

1 does that mean? That means that they want to change us.
2 They want us to stay sick, but that needs to change.

3 I had some other things. Oh yeah. So, one
4 of the other things was I'm also a Sixties Scoop survivor,
5 and I'm Indian. Actually, I'm Neehehow (ph) and I'm Dene,
6 and because I don't have a paper saying I am Indian, and
7 because of genocide, I don't belong to a specific community
8 or any nation because of that. But, through my family and
9 word of mouth, I know where I belong now. The government
10 doesn't provide that to me, or for me, or make it easy or
11 accessible, but instead discriminates against me.

12 I want to have that same right. I'm Native.
13 And, who is the government to say that I'm not. You know,
14 to step forward to sue. There's currently a case -- well,
15 part of the Sixties Scoop is that you need to be status
16 Indian in order to sue. But, I can tell you that my
17 mother, my father, all of my aunties, my uncles, my *kokum*,
18 and my *mushum*, they were all brown. And, my dad is brown.
19 And, I'm not -- yeah. And, I shouldn't have to prove that
20 in order to, you know, share my story again with the
21 government.

22 One of the other recommendations that I want
23 to make is changes in policies, or changes in legislation
24 regarding -- so, currently there is legislation that has
25 been changed, and it is in support of women fleeing

1 violence. So, there is legislation as of 2015, Quebec,
2 Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and Ontario have legislation in
3 place for women fleeing violence. So, basically that
4 legislation states that women who are fleeing violence,
5 there is a clause that women can get their damage deposit
6 back. They don't have to give an explanation. They get a
7 full refund to be able to go and move and find a safe place
8 to live and not have to depend on, sorry, a man, or
9 whatever – I mean, domestic violence actually happens in
10 both races and stuff – so that the person can move forward.
11 And, I think we live in a time where if we want to, you
12 know, take some good action and be proactive, that we can
13 support that.

14 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you, Juanita.
15 Anything else?

16 **MS. JUANITA DESJARLAIS:** Yeah. It's that
17 one day I would like to really see that change where our
18 women and our men are considered to be equal. Where there
19 are policies put in place where -- it's so stupid how it
20 should have to take policies, you know, and recommendations
21 and everything else to make changes. But, yeah, I'd like
22 to see more of those policies, you know, be changed at, you
23 know, every bureaucratic level. Also, one of the other
24 recommendations that I have -- because of my involvement,
25 you know, in the community, you know, sitting on

1 committees, you know, obviously my past and, you know, the
2 continuation of challenges and hardships that people
3 experience, at a judicial level I would like, you know, to
4 have the judges partake in cultural competency, but beyond
5 that; right? And, cultural competency doesn't mean just
6 one nation of people. It actually means all nations of
7 people, where one race does not supersede the other. And,
8 I think that really needs to be taught everywhere. You
9 know, that education needs to happen everywhere.

10 The other recommendation I have is that, you
11 know, because of the continued challenges between the RCMP
12 and indigenous peoples, there are many acts of violence
13 that are committed against our women, because of the
14 colonial history, and also -- yeah, mostly because of the
15 colonial history, right, where it could be anything from
16 being out on the frontlines, you know, in a spiritual way,
17 standing, you know, for our spiritual views, right, our
18 responsibilities, just as our ancestors, you know, prayed
19 for us. But, most often it's the women, you know, who are
20 targeted by the police, you know. And, that kind of stuff
21 continues. But, I think what I am basically saying is
22 that, what I've seen to happen all across Canada and the
23 United States is that a police officer, who is in a
24 position of authority, can assault somebody and can use
25 excessive force; right? And, they should actually be bound

1 by a code of ethics and also employment standards, where
2 they are considered to be equal employees, just like
3 regular people.

4 So, if they're going to bring harm against
5 somebody, and it's intentional, they should be fired
6 without pay, or they should be reprimanded, but without
7 pay; right? So, I don't understand, like, why the system
8 supports, you know, this entity, or, like, RCMP officers
9 and police officers, you know, to continue violating
10 people. Like, I understand that there are perpetrators,
11 you know, like, currently within the RCMP detachment and
12 other places. So, does that kind of make sense?

13 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you, Juanita. I
14 will now leave Commissioner Eyolfson if he has any
15 questions or comments. This is your space.

16 **COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON:** Thank you.
17 Thank you, Juanita. I don't have any specific questions
18 for you. I just want to thank you for coming here. You've
19 shared a lot with us today, and you've given us a lot to
20 think about. I just want to acknowledge your strength and
21 resilience in coming here and sharing some of these
22 difficult and horrible experiences you've been through, but
23 also telling us about finding healing. And, on behalf of
24 the Inquiry, we are grateful for that gift you shared with
25 the Inquiry to help us do our work together. So, thank you

1 for participating. And, I also want to acknowledge your
2 mom being here, as well, in support. Thank you.

3 And, as a sign of reciprocity for this
4 wonderful gift you've shared with us, we just have a small
5 token of appreciation for you. And, I'm going to let
6 Grandmother Blu explain this little gift that we have for
7 you, before we adjourn.

8 **ELDER LAUREN BLU WATERS:** So, as a small
9 token of appreciation we would like to offer you this eagle
10 feather, Juanita, to help you with your journey, and to
11 help you with your healing, and to give you that strength
12 to keep going in a good way, to honour you for the way
13 you've turned your life around, and the way that you've
14 become a warrior for those other women, to help them with
15 their journeys. And, some seeds for you to plant so that
16 you can see the growth and see the beauty that lies in each
17 one of us and to help you with your work. So, we'd like to
18 offer this to you.

19 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Commissioner Eyolfson, if
20 we can adjourn this session? Thank you.

21 **COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON:** Yes, thank
22 you. Let's adjourn.

23 --- Upon adjourning at 15:15

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LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Shirley Chang, 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.



Shirley Chang

April 13, 2018