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 & Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls

Truth-Gathering Process - Parts II & III

Institutional & Expert / Knowledge-Keeper Hearings

"Colonial Violence"

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Panel III: Decolonizing Practices (continued)

Witnesses: Jeffrey McNeil-Seymour, Jasmine Redfern & T.J Lightfoot

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Iqaluit, Nunavut

--- Upon Commencing at 8:16 a.m. on September 13, 2018.

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: Ullaakuut. It means, simply, in the morning, because before we didn't say good morning to each other. And, when the term "good morning" was introduced, we started finding the same -- we tried finding the same phrase in Inuktitut, but it simply means "in the morning". So, now, some of us are trying to say "in the nice morning". So, in the nice morning translates "ublaahatsiatkut." A very good morning and thank you very much. Are we ready? Commissioners, good morning, a very good morning, and also, MLA, lawyers and everyone, good morning. And, also, our presenters, good morning. Thank you very much for coming back. And, we are now going to proceed, start, and we will start with a prayer and also with the lighting of the qulliq. And, we have it lit all day, the qulliq. It follows us everywhere we go.

The qulliq has been with us, with the Inquiry, since the very beginning, and has been lit and stays lit during the whole hearings. Meeka Arnakak, who is here from Pangnirtung, let's welcome her. Meeka came in from Pangnirtung to be our qulliq keeper. Nakurmiik.

ELDER MEEKA ARNAKAK: Let's proceed to light the qulliq.

(LIGHTING OF THE QULLIQ)

Thank you. Good morning. It's a very good morning, but we had a bit snowing during the night, and there's a lot of snow out there in some places, and I appreciate for inviting me here because I have always wanted to come to this meeting in this kind of gathering. I'm very happy and pleased to be here, and we will start the meeting with a prayer.

(MORNING PRAYER IN INUKTITUT)

...to give the witnesses the strength to make their statements, and also to bless the people that we have left behind at our house, and we are very pleased that we are able to be here to have discussions, to hear the actions we're going to be taking to prepare for some conclusion.

And, there's healing where it seems like we have never went through a turbulent period, and turbulence has a way of disappearing if you work on it. Hurt people heal in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thank you. My husband will say a short comment. I just wanted to say I have been wanting to come to this kind of gathering, and I envy the people that are going to these gatherings because I know the gathering helps benefit the people, and there are good news going on, and we can learn from those, and that's what I wanted to say. And, my husband and I have been helpers of people

healing, and we have healed a lot of people, and we have gone through different communities when we're invited here in our country. And, also, we have gone to Ottawa and Toronto -- near Toronto, a penitentiary that we've gone to, and also, here at the correctional centres. We have gone to different communities, and sometimes we go more than once to the same community when they ask, because, in the earlier days, we were so hardened. We were hurt and affected, and now they -- a lot of them have healed, and this seems to be the last part, or the last part of the hurt that we've felt in earlier days.

We were going through a lot of things that we would not speak about, but things do get over. So, we have to give hope to people if we're going to start using healing process for those who are -- when we gather, those people who are hurting. And, this is apparently -- the hurt that we feel is part of our daily lives without knowing, and it can be healed.

All of these things that we've gone through, and we appreciate those who are front workers to help these people that are hurting to their life, to better their lives so that we can have a normal life as a human being, and also to be a good society. Although we have different cultures, I'm very pleased to be here, and I enjoy it, because we are trying to help our people, and

we sometimes see the people that we have helped again, and they are very appreciative, and that they have a way to go forward. And, we can feel these things. We feel these in ourselves, within our deep feeling, and they can come out, and I thank you very much for inviting me here.

And, my husband would like to say some comments. And, he sometimes wants to go on and on, so I might have to poke him. Sometimes when he wants to speak so much, like he's eating something, not wanting to stop. Thank you.

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: Thank you very much for the very -- your very good comments. Merci beaucoup, Meeka, pour vos mots aussi sages, si doux, tellement beaucoup de pensées à nous donner, important.

Thank you so much for your beautiful and wise words, Meeka. J'aimerais maintenant présenter le Monsieur qui est à côté de lui, c'est son mari. Mais c'est aussi un homme important dans la communauté. Il s'appelle Abraham Arnakak. Et il y a longtemps, bien même jusqu'à aujourd'hui à Pangnirtung, il y a un centre de formation pour des Inuits même unilingues qui veulent devenir des ministres anglicans. Alors, il a pris cette formation, puis il est devenu un ministre, un leader, un guide pour la communauté. I would like to introduce this wonderful looking man beside him who is Meeka's great

support as well, as he has a message he would like to share with us. He is from Pangnirtung, and up to today, there is a training centre, a school for Inuit, even unilingual Inuit, those who speak only Inuktitut, to become Anglican ministers, and he followed that program and became one of the leaders and guides for his community, Pangnirtung.

He also has training in ministry in Pangnirtung. Even if you are unilingual, you are able to take this ministerial training. We had a chat last night, and he has worked to represent his community, and he has some comments to make to us. Thank you.

ELDER ABRAHAM ARNAKAK: Good morning. Thank you. I'd just like to talk to the people. When people are gathering, I like to say thank you to (Inuktitut spoken) and our people, and all those people who listen to radio.

And, I get along well with the people at Pangnirtung, and they depend on me. In the past, I didn't know how to get along with other people because I also have been hurt and I've been taking -- releasing them out of my body and a very good thing came out of that, and that's why I'm working and I'm not carrying heavy stuff anymore.

I say good morning to everyone. What I

wanted to bring up in the gathering is -- in the past, because we are given a notice of events or conferences or people going out. What I'd like to bring up in this gathering is we used to have little camps within our field work, and there weren't many to a household. And, I cannot forget, and I also have wrote a letter on it to our organization as a post camp (ph), a place called (*place in Inuktitut).

And, there was a plane in the morning, one of these mornings, and that was the first time we ever seen a plane. And, it was RCMP, one-propeller plane, that landed in front of us, and we didn't know what it was, what it was doing or what they were going to do. And, we don't usually have any excitement within our camp or any problem because we were living in harmony, and the RCMP had no reason to go there.

When it landed in front of our place, they also had an Inuk, an interpreter for the RCMP. My brother-in-law, her *[sic]* father was given a notice before they even entered the house, and when we got in the house, somebody read it. Apparently, they were picking us up. We weren't expecting nothing. We didn't bring anything. We just took off the way we were because they told us that we had to go to Pangnirtung. They told us that we would have everything we need in Pangnirtung.

It was cold. It was in the winter. We had no house. We had no place to stay in Pangnirtung, because my parents were living now in Pangnirtung; we have to go there. A lot of times we had no choice but to go when these things happen, and we're living in harmony, the ladies visiting each other, and the men would gather together. The community was very well put together as a harmony community.

And, I wanted to bring this up because I don't think all of these stories are heard. When we were picked up to go to Pangnirtung, so we moved, and we stayed with our parents, my parents, because they had a hut, and there were a lot of people there. And, we had Coleman stoves that are not being used these days anymore. You could hear all these stoves on, and it's almost like the river was flowing from the noise. And, here we were in our camp, we didn't hear all these strange noises, and sometimes they sounded like they were water flowing in the river.

And, after that, after our lives started to go down, because Pangnirtung had some things, and there were was some gambling, and when we started to go into these communities, we started to turn back from our relatives, and we started mistreating our spouses. So, we started to break our family unit because of moving into

these communities. That's how broken we were, and that's what I'm telling you.

And now that this is being slowly corrected, and I appreciate that, we are slowing trying to go back to the way we were. We were lost for the longest time. Our relations, the way we treat our spouses, we turned away from the harmony that we have and we were starting to be covered with anger. And, sometimes during the night. These days, we were asked in middle of the night to counsel people that are in -- having problem. And I wanted to bring this up, and I appreciate that we are slowly going back to the values that we had as a community, and I really appreciate those. And I really wanted to bring this up so you have a little bit of a -- more understanding.

I do have more things. And I want you to know that we are lifting up, but when we first started to move to the community, really breakdown as a family, and it started from there, and I know that for sure. But today, we are getting happier and getting lift up. Maybe we eventually will go back to the harmony that we have. And as Inuit we are able to go after what we want, and we are -- it's like crawling up, but we will get there. Because we were suppressed, suppressed so much.

And I had wanted to bring this up a lot of

times. Thank you for allowing me to speak to you.

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: Thank you very much, Abraham. Very understandable. Thank you very much.

ELDER ABRAHAM ARNAKAK: These were the things that really affected us badly because we were located -- we took the anger and kept it with us for a long time, and so we are happy that these are being dealt with in the gatherings like this. Thank you. Thank you. That's the only English I know. Thank you.

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: It's the only thing I say in English. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: You said that very well. You didn't speak too long.

Vous avez très bien fait ça. Et bien sûr, sa femme vient de lui dire « Tu as fait ça parfaitement. C'était pas trop long. »

Nakurmiik. Maheluk (ph). Thank you very much.

Un dernier mot avant que tout le monde commence ici. Un petit dernier mot. Alors, un grand remerciement des gens qui nous aident et qui nous accueillent, qui nous font à manger ici à Iqaluit.

J'ai entendu que hier soir il y avait un vol qui est atterri à Iqaluit en urgence d'Angleterre.

Alors, Iqaluit a accueilli une autre fois plus de 255 personnes qui sont venues à l'hôtel. Et alors les gens qui travaillent au restaurant ont préparé toute la nuit la nourriture et le petit déjeuner pour eux. Et en plus de ça, ils nous ont préparé et encore été si gentils de nous accueillir ce matin. Alors une grande main aux gens de l'hôtel.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: A word of thank you to the people who work at this hotel, who managed, again, another time, to welcome passengers of a flight that came in last night on an emergency landing. And so, apparently, they got up in the middle of the night and made and prepared food for those passengers, and also, welcomed us with still wonderful and warm smiles this morning. So that's a big thank you to them.

There was a emergency landing from overseas with 200 -- over 255 passengers. During the night, the hotel staff were working all night to make meals for these people, and they were very welcoming. So the hotel kitchen also -- were also giving us a good breakfast this morning and still smiling at the same time. And we appreciate them and thank them. Thank you.

I think we are ready to go. I think we are ready to start. So I open the floor to you,

Commissioners, and counsel.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Good morning, Chief Commissioner and Commissioners. We had ended yesterday with the examination in-chief of the three witnesses that are before us on the third panel, and I'm just advising that also for anyone who might be watching the live cast or just joining us.

We are now about to move into cross-examination. We did have just a couple of housekeeping notes, if I may please.

So we overlooked putting before you one document that we would like to put into exhibit, and it was in Schedule E of the material of T. J. and Jasmine. It is -- it's titled -- it's kind of hard to guess what is the first title, but in the upper right hand -- left hand corner it's Evidence in Brief: Inform Your Practice, Because LGBTQ Health Matters. And the title of the actual article is Two-Spirit and LGBTQ2 Indigenous Health.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Okay. The document, Two-Spirit and LGBTQ2 Indigenous Health will be 33 please.

--- EXHIBIT 33:

Rainbow Health Ontario Evidence Brief "Two-Spirit and LGBTQ Indigenous Health," (nine pages)

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you. And there was one more procedural note that I would like to raise. The cross-examination order, which I believe you each have a copy of?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes. There is -- there was a typo in relation to two parties.

Listed as Number 9 is the Independent First Nation. Their time is listed as 22.5; it should actually be 25 minutes. So I ask that the Registrar note that as well. And listed as Number 11, the Vancouver Sex Workers Rights Collective, is also 25, not 22.5. So if we could -- and the same with parties -- if we could just amend that on yours it will save us reprinting it, and -- just so that everyone has an awareness of the time that all parties have.

So with the housekeeping out of the way, I would like to move into cross-examination. Turn -- we have rules in place, and I just want to explain this briefly.

While the witnesses are testifying in their chief examination, parties with standing aren't allowed to talk to them about their evidence. And while the parties are doing their cross-examination, we're not allowed -- those that have led the evidence, the Commission counsel

in this case -- to speak to the witnesses about their evidence. That doesn't mean we can't talk to them in general about their day, if they'd like coffee, but rather, that we can't talk into the detail of their evidence. And that's just so that the parties have an opportunity to ask questions.

And the cross-examination is a non-adversarial process. It's really designed to ascertain and deduce more information that's been presented in the chief. As you heard yesterday, there were a lot of documents that came in, and we didn't necessarily hear them out loud, but the parties are now able to ask questions about those as well.

And on that basis, if we could now commence into cross-examination, I would like to call the first party with standing, the Eastern Door Indigenous Women Association. Ms. Natalie Clifford is counsel for Eastern Door, and she will have eighteen-and-a-half minutes.

--- PANEL 3, Resumed:

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD:

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Good morning. Thank you to our Elders for providing such great context to the issues that we're talking about here this morning. That was greatly appreciated.

My name is Natalie Clifford. I'm with

Eastern Door Indigenous Women's Association. So we represent Mi'kmaq and Maliseet women primarily from the Atlantic Region. And, thank you to the three of you for your testimony yesterday. Is it okay if I call you all by your first names? Thank you.

So, I would like to start with you, T.J. I read your paper, Predators Without Reprisal, and I know it's a decade old, and sometimes I read my old papers too and think good points but -- you know? So, I take your point yesterday that there are things that you have learned, but I really appreciated it, I thought it was great content.

And, I noted overall you have connected the historic colonizers view that women were chattels with directly to the devaluation of Indigenous women, and you said that colonial authority has taught that only women are not worth as much, and that abuse is acceptable and the abusers likely will not be prosecuted. And, I think that sums up why we are here; right?

So, I wonder -- because I noticed an absence in your paper of mention of LGBTQ2 and two-spirited people, so I wondered why that is.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: So, I think, at the time, it didn't come from a place of deliberately not placing them in the document, but the fact at the time was that

there was very little resources talking about LGBTQ2 people. And, even within the feminism course that helped shape that paper, there only existed two readings at the time that we had access to. So, I think some of it is due to my own, like, naivety at the time, but also due to the lack of resources and the lack of -- kind of echoing what Jasmine had said yesterday, the lack of Indigenous people being able to write about our own experiences from a LGBTQ2 frame and have that funded through with the institutions that produce the material that we have access to as undergraduates. I don't know if that makes sense.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Yes. So, then, that being said, and the summary that I have just provided of your position, do you think that that notion extends straight to LGBTQ and two-spirited violence or are we dealing with a different set of issues?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: In my opinion, I think it does. I think that's why I, kind of, loosely said that women in that paper under the understanding that it is self-identified women, so to make room and space for people that are masculine identified women or feminine identified males so that they are not excluded from that kind of research because they do share in the same experience. And, as we know from LGBTQ2 people, like their rates of sexual violence are much higher than

cisgendered people.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: So, then, if you wrote this paper today, it would be a little different in that you would likely talk more about these issues. So, can you provide some insight into the past decade, and how the representation has improved and how, you know, in your own personal journey, you have been able to have more access to these?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Absolutely. So, over the last ten years, there have been documents put out there, like Feminism for Real, which is a book collaborated by Jessica Yee, where she had specifically sought out LGBTQ2 self-identified folks that allowed them to put in their own research.

So, the field is growing very fast. And, thankfully -- like, with back then, social media didn't exist, even our social networks were much smaller, but with the advantage of social media, the increase -- even the broadband capacity is expanding, so that people have the accessibility to more documents and more scholarly articles than what we had before. So, I think the work is being done now than what we see -- like, at that time, when I was a youth, I think we had maybe two or three cited articles talking about the experience -- like early colonial experience of Indigenous women ad LGBTQ2, but I

know that it's much broader now. Where was I going with that? But, yes. Okay.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Okay. Thank you. I wonder if -- so you mentioned social media. Can you shine a light on how maybe mainstream media has played a role over the last decade, whether for better or worse, I'm interested to hear.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I think it has allowed for us to have a bit more visibility and it has allowed for us to maintain those connections. Like, at least now I am able to hear what my cohort -- like, what our colleagues are doing in B.C., in Vancouver, whereas before, our access might have been limited to, like, radio and what we see on just CBC.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: So, you're talking about social media?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Social media and mass media. So, through the Native Youth Sexual Health Network, I know that there was work being done on documents for families and missing and murdered Aboriginal women and self-identified LGBTQ, so that they can put their family histories together into one database. So, they were working with CBC at the time to develop this database.

So, I think that in some instances, you can

see whether the media has been helpful towards people like us, but I think that there still needs to be more work to be done and I think a part of that comes from the unfounded rates.

So, there was an article put out, I think it might have been two years ago now, which documented the RCMP unfounded rates, which are when someone comes to present violence or sexual violence that has happened to them, they make a statement to the RCMP, and from there, the RCMP officers collect whatever evidence and the statement, and then they decide whether or not there is enough information to go forward with charges. And, in certain territories, and when it comes to Indigenous people, what we find is that the North has the highest rates of unfounded cases. And so, even just having access to that information, that being published, it allows a bit more visibility to understand the intersectionalities. I don't know if that makes sense.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Yes. Thank you. Jasmine, do you have any insight into the same topic? I just wanted to touch on how you have seen media, and I'm not just talking about -- I don't mean social media, I mean CBC and CTV, and what we call mainstream media, playing a role in representing LGBTQ and two-spirited stories.

JASMINE REDFERN: Yes. I would agree that the representation is getting better, I still think that there is a lot of room to grow. What comes to the top of my head is, a couple of years ago, one of the artists whose images we shared, Erin Konsmo, Erin was featured along with a bunch of other incredible youth in a Globe and Mail profile. And, thinking about how much of a step forward that is from the time when we were younger and we wouldn't have seen people who are doing -- young people who are doing activist work, who occupy gender-fabulous spaces. We wouldn't see any of that language or any of those types of work being featured in a national publication. And, we're slowly starting to see more of that happen and I think that's very positive and very helpful, and I still think that there is room for more of that.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Thank you. Switching gears, but still with the two of you. When I was reviewing the Indigenous -- the LGBTQ and two-spirited Indigenous health fact sheet, which has just been entered as Exhibit 33, I noted a sad reality within that sheet, that suicide completion rates for two-spirited and LGBTQ Indigenous people are not known. And, the fact sheet goes on to say that more data should be collected about measuring suicidal ideation, suicide attempts and suicide

completion in two-spirit communities. And then further, there's an encouragement for Indigenous communities to be the data collectors and LGBTQ and two-spirited communities to also be the data collectors.

So, I wonder then, because you talked about your experience in -- I think it was specifically in relation to environmental consultation, T.J., where you are put off in the corner and given donuts, and then you are consulted with. So, starting from that approach, how can we tell the people that have good intentions about consulting with youth and consulting with your communities, you belong to a couple of communities, what is the best way to talk about these really sensitive issues and get meaningful input without traumatizing?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I think there's a number of ways. In some organizations, there's dedicated seats for youth to be on their regular boards. Not only that, but that the programs for youth are core funded. They're sustainable in some certainces (phonetic), but I think that that needs to be replicated and carried throughout.

So, organizations like NTI and QIA and even the GN and within our band councils that when they're electing council members, that there should be a designated seat, one for youth that maintains -- you know what I mean? Like, we should have a youth delegate

elected always. It shouldn't be just, like, token. It should be someone that -- there should be multiple reps so that if we're sitting on a panel of four people, there should be a youth voice, and an elder voice, and there should be LGBTQ2 people as a designated person as well, so that all of our perspectives, all of the intersectionalities to the best of their ability are represented.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: And, can you offer some insight about how to do that outside of a community, say in an urban setting?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: So, in an urban setting, I would say, like, even to the Board of Directors for health, like, that there should be active recruitment, that the position should be paid, that they should be treated as equals. And, if there is mentorship, if there is -- say the person doesn't have the experience, that the onus, kind of like Dr. Smylie had said yesterday, the onus is that you should work yourself out of a position, realizing the fact that these youth that are up and coming, they are the sustainable parts of our communities and we should be investing actively in them, not just giving them t-shirts and donuts. That part of investing in them is bringing them to meetings, showing them how to take notes, allowing them to be the notetakers and

allowing them to have a say in all of the processes at every level.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: So, switching gears a little bit again, T.J., specifically for you, and thank you for that, and I'm mindful of my time and there are a couple of things I wanted to cover. You used the example of Elizabeth Penashue and Sheshatshiu, and in her lifetime of activism, notably first -- or in your paper the first noted protest against low-level flying by NATO and the effects that that had on her land and way of life, and this is for context for the room, a grandmother, an Innu grandmother who is a fierce activist as well.

So, then you used the examples of decades later, so NATO, low-level flying, she has her son by her side and protesting, and then decades later, her son is effectively a tool being used by resource developers to discredit her publicly. Would you agree that that's what happened in that case?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Absolutely.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Okay. Would you agree that this strategy of discrediting land protectors, resource protectors and women is a form of colonial violence?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, absolutely.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Okay. And, have you

seen it used since then?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I've seen it used in many arenas. I've been subject to it myself, not just with -- you know, for Elizabeth, I've got to say that Elizabeth is my hero.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Mine too.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: And, her daughter, Kanani, as well. She's also often her translator and her activist, and she makes sure that her mom gets full representation, which is an interesting dynamic there.

But, when it came to consultations for Muskrat Falls, over 10 years Elizabeth has been talking about the fallout, the fact that her family's graves, like, that the Innu communities' graves, their ancestral walking grounds are going to be flooded, that they're going to be subject to methyl mercury poisoning, she kept raising these points and it kept being dismissed.

And, it's interesting, too, that only until the non-Indigenous river keepers, which are also doing great work, it's interesting that until they started having a voice and raising the point, that's when she started to become acknowledged as, oh, maybe she actually knows what she's talking about here.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Thank you.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Thank you.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Jeffrey, I just have a quick question, and I'm still sort of reeling from your testimony and your documents because they're very -- they're amazing and very complicated for me to understand. So, I want to ask a simple question that I've experienced in my own life, and this is around decolonizing education, which I think is what you've said decolonizing the classroom, and I hear it as decolonizing education. I think it's the same sort of notion.

So, I just wondered -- if we talk about the concept of community and social sciences, it's not just limited to a physical community; correct?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Correct.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: So, what are some of the -- what makes a community?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: What makes a community? I think if we look at it through, say, a two-spirit and LGBTQ lens, is found community, found family. A community can make up -- be made up of any hobbies that you have. It can be a hobby. It can be an online presence. It can be different chat groups that you might be a part of. Yeah, I think community is also open to an individual's definition of what that looks like personally for them as well.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: And, could a

classroom be a community?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Most definitely.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Is it always a community?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: It is in mine.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: So, this notion of found family, I wonder whether -- and you talked about and I really liked what you said about how we're all walking each other home, and this notion that I think internationally the LGBTQ and two-spirited community is bound, the Indigenous community has shared relationships and qualities, would you agree?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I do agree.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: And, that we have things to learn from each other around the world that ---

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think in terms of the LGBTQ community that's not Indigenous, there's a little bit more weights to be picked up in terms of reciprocity, in terms of our social justice initiatives.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Do you think that the colonized approach to community accepts found families? So, when we talk about institutions -- sorry to interrupt you -- institutions, for example, do you find found families are having an easy time?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: In acceptance in

what context?

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Perhaps in dealing with healthcare provision and police?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think with regards to healthcare provision, for sure there's a little bit more. But, in terms of police, I don't know that I could speak to that entirely.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Okay. One final question and then I'm finished. I wonder, because I appreciate but don't fully understand that the concept of two-spirit is vast and very different among communities all over, Indigenous communities all over the world. So, then, how can healthcare providers even begin to understand and then properly serve and not immediately traumatize two-spirited people when it's such an immense, diverse thing to understand in the first place?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think that the best thing that people can do is to ask how a person self-identifies. I think that there is such a diversity that, historically, it is understood as being social location of gender diversity. I've had a few conversations where people, and particularly non-Indigenous people are, like, no, it's about gender, and in a contemporary sense, if we're only locating it from within a gendered perspective and we're excluding other youth from having an opportunity

to identify with their Indigenous identity and their LGBTQ identify, however that is developing for them, I think that a really great way to engage with a two-spirit person is also, too, to ask them about their community, but also to ask them about their nation of origin. What are their two-spirit teachings from their nation of origin and what did that look like historically? And, how are they actively living that now?

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Thank you.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you.

MS. NATALIE CLIFFORD: Those are my questions.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you, Ms. Clifford. Next, we'd like to invite the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. Melissa Cernigoy will be representing the Congress, and she has six minutes.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. MELISSA CERNIGOY:

MS. MELISSA CERNIGOY: Thank you all for your presentations and testimony yesterday. I'm Melissa Cernigoy, representative for the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, and we work to represent the interests of Métis, status and non-status First Nations, and southern Inuit people living in urban and rural settings across Canada.

I'd like to ask if I'd be able to address you by your first names? Thank you.

First to T.J. and Jasmine, you touched on identity throughout your testimony yesterday and I'd like to ask for some additional perspectives on this topic. I like the term you used, Jasmine, of the constellations of identity, because people cannot be categorized according to one identifier. What I'd like to ask is, would you agree that a form of colonial violence is that the state has not accepted some Indigenous peoples as being indigenous?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes. Let's go with that. Yeah, absolutely. I think that there's a lot of policing, not just on our identities of LGBTQ2, but also which Nations and communities we identify with. You see it with the sixties scoop, right? Like, it's not the fault of people that have been removed from their communities through the child welfare system. They're still Indigenous even if they are raised by -- for lack of a better term --- alien families. You know, whether they're -- just some form of non-Indigenous that ---

MS. MELISSA CERNIGOY: Thank you.

What I'd like to ask next, have you seen this issue of a lack of recognition of Indigenous identities intersect with some of the issues you've raised in working with Indigenous LGBTQ communities, and what

harm does this cause?

MS. JASMINE REDFERN: Yes. I have absolutely seen it, and I have absolutely seen how it is harmful to especially young people. When I was living in Vancouver, there's a popular idea that if you're living in an urban centre, divorced from community in the traditional sense of your land-base, that removing yourself from your community is removing yourself from that Nation, or of being able to entitle yourself to self-identify or to claim your roots and background.

And I see the confusion and the pain that it causes, and I see -- but I also see a lot of young people who are actively resisting and finding community amongst each other and finding a voice and standing up for each other. And that includes people who have been granted status using that privilege of being able to include people who haven't been granted status in their analysis, and in helping to invite them into spaces that they're not necessarily already having access to.

MS. MELISSA CERNIGOY: Thank you.

I'd also ask, like to ask, are you aware of any examples of this impacting access to services, for example, mental health supports?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yeah, I would say it would be mental health supports, frontline health services, even

when it comes to accessing -- I know I say the RCMP a lot, but just that's because of my own experiences of bringing clients to the RCMP to make statements.

MS. JASMINE REDFERN: I agree. I've seen people who aren't able to access mental health service specifically, the well-funded mental health services, like the Indian Residential School Survivor Support Program. And one example is midwifery care. So there's recently been some funding allocated to providing maternity care, and specifically, midwifery care services for Indigenous women. But that comes with the caveat that you have to be able to provide a non-insured health benefits number to be able to access those services.

And that can be particularly difficult for people who have -- for people who are non-status, or who already face these stigmas, and discriminations, and lack of support and resources, in a very vulnerable time when you're pregnant, when you're expecting. That's a particularly vulnerable time for people and a perfect opportunity for wrapping around somebody and wrapping around that unborn child, ensuring that they're brought into the world in a good way, in a grounded place. And we're seeing a lot of people being turned away from those services.

MS. MELISSA CERNIGOY: Thank you. And just

a question for you, Jeffery. I'd like to ask you about Exhibit 28, the "Where Am I Going to Go?" report. And in this report, it talks about the vulnerability to homelessness of LGBTQS youth. I'd like to ask for your perspectives on the urban environment and how this is connected to that vulnerability. You mentioned that there's other colonial determinants as well, so I'd like to ask about that transition to urban environments and the vulnerabilities of youth.

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: So youth coming from smaller communities, the migration perceiving larger centres to be a space where they'll find acceptance within the LGBTQ community. But then there's a bunch of more complexities in terms of, how Native they look, in -- if they can get employment. That there is issues of tokenization or exotification from within the LGBTQ community, and that finding that -- a solid foothold of stability coming to a larger centre also is a leading contributor to not being able to find a home, or couch-surfing, or doing that sort of stuff, yeah. Thank you.

MS. MELISSA CERNIGOY: Thank you very much, that's all my time.

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you. Next we would like to invite up Ms. Baddeley -- sorry. We'd like

to invite up Mr. Victor Ryan from NunatuKavut (inaudible). Mr. Ryan will have 11 and a half minutes.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. VICTOR RYAN:

MR. VICTOR RYAN: Good morning. As said, my name is Victor Ryan and I'm here on behalf of NunatuKavut Community Council, representing Inuit in south and central Labrador. I just have a few questions that arose as a result of yesterday's testimony. And again, thank you to all three of you for your testimony.

You mentioned the Muskrat Falls project, but your documents that you gave to the Commission talk about resource extraction. And so, I just want to make sure on the record, when you talk about resource extraction, do you consider that to include the construction of hydroelectric dam projects?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, absolutely.

MR. VICTOR RYAN: And so, in your testimony, when you describe the negative impacts that come from resource extraction projects, you would agree that that is inclusive of the construction of hydro-electric dam projects?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, absolutely.

MR. VICTOR RYAN: And so, keeping in mind as well that the mine survey and the report, that it's not your report, but it does contain recommendations on how to

better consult with people and how to better train, I guess, the companies and the corporations that make these projects. You would agree that those recommendations are also helpful in the context of the construction of hydroelectric dam projects?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, I think that the knowledge is transferrable to almost any resource extraction.

MR. VICTOR RYAN: Thank you. I just wanted to turn again to your testimony yesterday. You talked about the use of internet for LGBTQ2S Indigenous youth, and I just wanted to clarify a little bit more about that. So would you agree that creating safe spaces, or maybe brave spaces online is important for LQBTQ2S Indigenous youth?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MR. VICTOR RYAN: And would you also agree that these online spaces can particularly benefit youth in smaller communities that are geographically far away from cities where the services may be physically present?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, but I also would like to add that they need to have access to that kind of infrastructure. So places in the north often don’t have adequate access to internet or broadband services.

MR. VICTOR RYAN: That leads into my next

question, which is -- I guess maybe I'll just try to drill down, would you agree that a lack of adequate high-speed internet can be a barrier for LGBTQ2S Indigenous youth in accessing these online spaces?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, absolutely. Because the reality is if people need to text, or access there are specific resources out there to help LGBTQ2 youth where you can send a text or you can send messages through whatever social interface you need to. If they don't have access to that infrastructure, then that is a barrier.

MR. VICTOR RYAN: And so, would you also agree that access to high-speed internet is an important and a required factor in improving access to information and to safe connections for LGBTQ2S Indigenous youth?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MR. VICTOR RYAN: Thank you very much. Those are my questions.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Thank you.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you, Mr. Ryan. Next, we would like to invite up Ms. Beth Symes on behalf of Pauktuutit and other partners. Ms. Symes will have 18-and-a-half minutes.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. BETH SYMES:

MS. BETH SYMES: Thank you. I would like to begin this morning by acknowledging the presence of

Elisapee Sheutiapik and her honour, the Honourable Minister is the government house leader. She is the Minister of Family Services. She is the Minister responsible for the status of women in Nunavut, and she is the past President of Pauktuutit. And, we are so honoured that she has come for all four days of these hearings, and I just want to acknowledge that and her presence.

I want to begin, Jasmine, with questions of you. And, I am asking the questions of you because you are Inuk and you part of an Inuit community. You spoke yesterday about the challenges of -- that Inuit LGBTQ2S persons experience. And, were those that you talked about in Iqaluit or did it include all of Nunavut?

JASMINE REDFERN: So, Iqaluit is obviously quite a unique community. It is far larger than any other community in Nunavut, and we are the only community with a hospital, a full hospital, and we also house the headquarters for many of the government services. We have far more government services available to us.

So, I try to -- I always try to be mindful of the experiences of my peers in other communities. And, I think a lot of those barriers extend -- the barriers that I named extend to the smaller communities, but I would provide that with that their barriers are significantly greater. Whereas, here in Iqaluit, we have

gay/straight alliance in our only high school. I am not aware of any smaller communities that have that same support service available to their youth.

And, in our conversations, T.J. and I, leading up to this proceeding, and with Shelby, we had talked a bit about the need often in funding requirements to specify how many youth are going to be able to access a service in order to receive funding for it. And, how that disproportionately affects the smaller communities because, whereas there might only be one or two youth in Baker Lake who self-identify and request specific safe or brave spaces, that funding might instead go to Iqaluit or Rankin Inlet where the numbers are far greater. But, that can only mean that those spaces are that much more needed in the smaller communities. And so, we had hoped that instead of focusing on quantity, we would focus on need for youth services, for LGBTQ2S youth.

MS. BETH SYMES: Now, you spoke yesterday about hearing person or persons say that they didn't agree with a man sleeping with another man; right? I got you correct about that?

JASMINE REDFERN: Mm-hmm.

MS. BETH SYMES: Now, that is clear disapproval of relationship -- that kind of a relationship; right?

JASMINE REDFERN: Yes.

MS. BETH SYMES: And, you would agree with me that if someone acted upon that, that would be clear discrimination?

JASMINE REDFERN: Yes.

MS. BETH SYMES: And, that is contrary to Section 7 of the *Nunavut Human Rights Act*, which specifically protects and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and sexual orientation?

JASMINE REDFERN: Yes.

MS. BETH SYMES: Okay. And, anybody then who actually acted on those words that is "I don't agree with a man sleeping with another man or a woman sleeping with another woman" would be acting contrary to the Act, to the Human Rights Act?

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Sorry, can we stop the time? I don't know if in this circumstance she is able to answer that question. I do understand the line of why you are asking it and the way you are potentially setting up a question. Maybe you can rephrase it. She is in no position to determine legally or within a rights-based framework based on how she has been presented as a witness here to answer that question fairly.

So, maybe -- but I do understand your purpose, so I am not -- I know what you are trying to

explore, but maybe you can just rephrase it? Because she is not going to be able to positively answer whether that is true or not with the requisite knowledge to answer it.

MS. BETH SYMES: Sorry, I'm -- she was qualified as a second year law student, and it was on that basis that I was asking the question. Why don't we ask her if she can answer it?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: It just simply goes to weight and probative value, so go ahead.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay. So, please recommence the time.

MS. BETH SYMES: Are you able to answer that question based on your legal studies to date?

JASMINE REDFERN: No. So, I am a second year law student in the Nunavut Law Program ---

MS. BETH SYMES: Yes.

JASMINE REDFERN: --- which is the equivalent of a first year law student in a southern-based law program. So, my courses in my first year focused primarily on foundational years, introduction to legal writing and Inuit-specific legal contexts.

I would refrain from providing an expert, legal opinion. My understanding of the *Nunavut Human Rights Act* is that it is a little bit more sophisticated than simply providing comments or perceived actions.

There are greater qualifications on what actually constitutes being contrary or prohibited under the Act, so I would be...

MS. BETH SYMES: Okay.

JASMINE REDFERN: Yes.

MS. BETH SYMES: Let me ask you then from a lived experience point of view what you have seen, heard or experienced is, in your view, do you understand then that Inuit culture, Inuit traditions on -- are open to LGBTQ2S persons?

JASMINE REDFERN: Yes, my understanding of our history and the teachings that have been shared with me is that, prior to contact, even existing today within our naming traditions, our naming traditions don't recognize gender, so it is very common for a child or a newborn to be named after a relative, an ancestor or family member regardless of that gender. And then in Inuit tradition that person, that child, that baby then becomes part of -- like they share that spirit, they share that personality. And, that, my understanding is, prior to contact, that was that much stronger. The child would then also be raised as the gender of their namesake at least up until puberty.

In terms of same-sex relationships, I have to admit I don't have as much information. I am still

looking for elders and teachers who are able to share more about that history with me. But, from the little bits and pieces that people have shared with me, it does appear as though that exists.

MS. BETH SYMES: And so, today then, an LGBTQ2S youth, let's say, in one of the small communities, would you say that based on what you have experienced and heard and seen that they would be safe in that community? They would feel safe in that -- in their community?

JASMINE REDFERN: I think the perception of safety is very subjective and very personal. It depends on the supports and the resources that that particular individual has around them in order to feel safe, because you can be in Iqaluit, where arguably there is a lot of support services, but you might be in a family or in a particular social environment where you do not feel safe, and that goes both ways for smaller communities. People might have a particularly strong family, a particularly large family where they are able to be wrapped around and supported, and so that might impact their feelings of safety.

I would be very careful in trying to point smaller communities as inherently more dangerous for LGBTQ and two-spirit youth. I think that homophobia and -- let me rephrase that. I think that part of the colonialism

and part of the colonial project is trying to, kind of, divide and conquer, and try to create those separations in communities. And, my belief is that homophobia is part of that agenda and is part of that experience. I don't think it originates from our communities. And, I think it can be harmful to young people to say, your community is the problem. I don't believe that. I think colonialism is the problem. And, I think that the answers are within communities and we just need to rebuild our networks.

MS. BETH SYMES: Okay. Thank you. Jeffrey, I wanted to ask you about the training of social workers of which you have been a part at Thompson Rivers, I guess, since 2015, and now at Ryerson. I understand that your classes are stressing the importance of seeing people and issues in context, and you had that great slide, who are you, where are you from and why are you here. And, I have put the emphasis on a different place than what you did in the slide and as you presented it.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm.

MS. BETH SYMES: Do you teach that as the fundamental of social work, that these are key to dealing with, do you call them clients, people who come to you for help?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: In our practice, in our educational practice, we use the words of people

who we walk beside, people we are in service to. We try to refrain from using the word "clients", but "client" becomes the word that we use to talk about our work with our colleagues.

For me, those questions are just foundational for circle work. And so, for decolonizing my space and asking my students to do that work of looking inward, inside themselves, that's why those questions are there and that's why they come up repeatedly throughout the duration of their time with me.

MS. BETH SYMES: The reason I ask you is that -- obviously you were teaching in Kamloops and you were using First Nations land in that area and you talked about, for example, picking sage with your students. Now, if your student were to get a job in a remote community in Nunavut as a social worker, you would agree with me that it is different land?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Definitely.

MS. BETH SYMES: Different use of land and the dependence on it?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm. Yes.

MS. BETH SYMES: Different language?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Different language.

MS. BETH SYMES: Different history?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm.

MS. BETH SYMES: Different culture?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes.

MS. BETH SYMES: Different traditions, different ceremonies?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm.

MS. BETH SYMES: And so, my concern -- or the concern of my clients are that in Nunavut, in fact in Inuit Nunavut, Nunangat, the social workers who come from the South come without any knowledge of all of those things.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Hm.

MS. BETH SYMES: Can you explain to us how the way you teach your social work students is supposed to at least inform how they carry out their walking together?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: How they would walk and particularly in the context of how they would be in service to Inuit culture, is that what your question is?

MS. BETH SYMES: To the Inuit people who come to them.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Right. Yes, of course. So, in my approach, I stress repeatedly that everything -- your service is going to look different wherever it is, whoever's nation you are walking in, and

that there is going to be a time of building those relationships, coming to understand.

At the beginning of my course or of any other public lectures that I do, if I have not done it with them before, I will pop up a map of North America as it is constructed now. And so, I will ask the question, you know, how do these lines, how do these territories, or what have you, inform your sense of belongingness or attachment or nationalism.

And so, after we have that conversation, I will ask the question, well, when we go to other places in the world, like another country, we get to know a little bit of the language, the culture, you know, just to have that little bit of that foundation before going to those places. And, typically, we are always thinking of, like, going over to Europe or South America, and that sort of thing.

And so, then, I pop up my next slide and it is a map of all the diverse nations of Indigenous peoples on this place called North America. And then I ask the question, why should that be any different here? And so, that's a main stressor at the beginning of my course, is to come to understand that they have to do that work to come to build relationships.

And, even as a person, myself, I share in

my classroom the first time that I moved back to Kamloops, to my nation -- like, to where my ancestral ties are from, I was under observation for how humble I was and how I contributed to community for three years before I gained access to some of the knowledges I was asking about.

MS. BETH SYMES: And, Jeffrey, you said three years. Did you know that in Nunavut for example, where we are, that the social workers tend to stay for two years or less?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Hm.

MS. BETH SYMES: Hard to learn all of those important teachings in order to be able to walk with Inuit, do you agree?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Definitely. Oh, for sure. That's unfortunate. I didn't know that.

MS. BETH SYMES: T.J., I wanted to ask you about Exhibit 24. Have you got that?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Which document?

MS. BETH SYMES: That's the Impact of Resource Extraction on Inuit Women and Families.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: The Pauktuutit report? Yes.

MS. BETH SYMES: When did you first read Exhibit 24?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: A couple of weeks ago.

MS. BETH SYMES: And, were you given it by Commission Counsel?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: No.

MS. BETH SYMES: You have quite fairly said it is not your research?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. BETH SYMES: Okay. And, did you seek Pauktuutit's permission to use Exhibit 24 in your evidence before the Inquiry?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: No.

MS. BETH SYMES: Thank you. Those are my questions.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: We would like to invite up next, Ms. Elizabeth Zarpa with ITK. Ms. Zarpa will have 18.5 minutes.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA:

MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA: Ulakuut (phon.). I want to say thank you for everybody's testimony yesterday and your cross-examination, you're sifting through it. Thank you for answering these hard questions. I also want to acknowledge the elders in the room, thank you for showing us your pride in Inuktitut.

So, I am Elizabeth Zarpa, I am a lawyer and I am representing Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. And, I want to start a little bit with the idea that colonization, I

think the colonizer's gaze is almost, sort of, these orienter, these people that kind of need, sort of, support and help from (indiscernible), which is somewhat true to an extent. But, also, I want to, kind of, break away from that and build a little bit upon what Dr. Smylie spoke about yesterday briefly, and she quoted Scott Momaday, and she said:

> We are who we imagine ourselves to be. The greatest gifts -- the greatest of gifts is to imagine ourselves richly. (As read)

And in this context of community, where you see yourself as educators, advocates, as students, as a community member, as a person, in the context of where you come from, what would that look like, to imagine yourselves richly as sort of people of community to live a really good life, in terms of just the community that you find yourselves working, living, studying, mothering, teaching? It's open to each of you.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: So imagining ourselves, what would our best life look like ---

MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA: M'hm.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: --- in terms of if we -- okay.

MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA: Attach to community.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: All right. For myself right now, I would imagine that I wouldn't not be working at Thompson Rivers University, that Thompson Rivers University would have found a way to grow and to nurture an emergent scholar like myself so that I could be at home in my home territory and be doing that work and be contributing to their campus culture.

That I could be at home and I could be standing beside Kanahoos (ph) on the frontlines as we fight the Kinder Morgan Pipeline project. My best life would be that I would be helping to nurture youth coming up through our communities and being a part of the resurgence projects in my home nation, rather than being a guest in another's territory.

MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA: Thank you.

JASMINE REDFERN: I guess -- okay. I think to imagine myself and my community richly, I want to acknowledge that here -- my community here in Iqaluit is quite rich. We have so many families from so many different regions that have settled here in Iqaluit. And in order to imagine our community more richly, I imagine everyone having equal access to food and nourishment and shelter, everyone having a roof over their head and a roof that -- a house that is safe, a house that isn't overcrowding.

I would imagine our community for all people, young and old, to have healthy and gratifying relationships, and for all young people and for all Elders to have those intergenerational access in relationships.

I would imagine there to be rich programming and rich access to land-based programs for everyone who doesn't have within their families the financial means or the knowledge to be able to access and use the land, for people to still be able to gain that knowledge.

And I would imagine if our community was as rich as could be, that we would all have strong Inuktitut language skills.

MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA: Thank you.

T. J. LIGHTFOOT: What Jasmine said. No, I'm just kidding.

(LAUGHTER/RIRES)

T. J. LIGHTFOOT: I think if I could imagine where I want things to go, and kind of where I see things going, it would be communities that are proactive, that are anticipatory, that are celebratory. That they are focused on wellness and supporting people from the ground up. And that we don't have to keep having these narratives of the harms that are done us that we're talking about, the realities of each other's needs that --

so that my colonial brothers and sisters, their needs are equal to my own, and that I am able to support them and they're able to support me in my best possible self.

I'd be working full time on nation building through doula care as a full spectrum doula with my sister here. Yeah, that we would be working and connected to our environments instead of having to continue the capitalist machine, which is the reality for our people.

My daughter often says to me, like -- I know she does love school, but she often says to me, like "Why can't we just go berry picking today? Why can't we just go stay with our friends?" And so when -- you know, like that there is equal value to our traditional skills, to spending time with Elders, to learning our languages and cooking together, like that is given equal priority as helping the capitalist machine, I guess.

Like if we have to accept it because it's a reality it's not going away in our lifetime, that the harms are held in balance with those resiliency building projects.

MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA: Thank you all for that. I appreciate each of your answers. And I just want to highlight a little bit about the experience and the testimony of Inuit throughout Inuit Inuvialuit has -- the testimony this week has focused on also the experience of

the slaughter of sled dogs, the relocations, the residential schools, the federal day schools. And just in like a century so much has changed.

And I want to ask the question: If in your ideas -- and I'm going to focus on T. J. and Jasmine -- living Nunavut, do you think that colonization, in sort of the past tense, is it something that has ended, or does colonization in sort of Nunavut or experience in Nunatsiavut, T. J., does it look -- is it still ongoing, and if so, what does it look like?

T. J. LIGHTFOOT: Yeah. I would agree that colonization is still ongoing. So the act of removing children from one group to another, the act of placing like foreign ideas and ideologies on a group of people, making them change their way of life, like that's still a reality for Inuit in Nunavut and Nunatsiavut, and other regions.

The fact that we have to -- like capitalism is a growth of colonization, so if we're still perpetuating capitalism in the system, then, yes, we're still on -- we're still going through colonization. But also, if you look at the employment numbers, like the obligation -- like you have written in your legal documents Article 23, which talks about the obligation to hire Inuit at equal or higher levels than non-Inuit. The

fact is is that that's not happening.

Even if you look at the GM's self-reports on -- actually, I don't know if it's the GM self-reports, but the article that came out recently that talked about the majority of people that receive staff housing are non-Inuit. So people with the financial background to be able to afford, say rentable housing, where the majority of Inuit from even Iqaluit, the original inhabitants of this territory, they don't hold the positions that are able to provide rent to maintain those spaces.

So there -- again, they're still in a position of repression; right?

MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA: And how, in your -- and I'm going to get to Jasmine's answer next, but I would like to follow up with regards to what, in your opinion, and your experience would help address that sort of inequity that you named?

T. J. LIGHTFOOT: So one thing that would be great is if people could actually hold Article 23 -- that that article -- hold that at value and put it into practice so that across every division of government that there is equal amounts of Inuit, if not more than what there is now.

So in the hiring processes, sometimes people get pulled in on CSAs from the south directly

hired. And I -- like I understand that the argument there is that we need people with the skills first. Well, if we're not brining Inuit in on the same level and not mentoring them into that role or helping them attain those levels of education, it's going to keep perpetuating, and that's what we're seeing now.

So part of that would be, one, increase access to immersion so that Inuit can obtain the same levels of education as what the employers are asking for, but also that people work in faith to actually fulfill that article. Okay, thank you.

JASMINE REDFERN: Yes, I would -- I absolutely believe that colonization and colonialism is ongoing. I think, as T.J. mentioned, employment is a big one, and is one where it's most immediately obvious. But, I would also mention for people who aren't from Nunavut in the room, in Nunavut, you are only able to receive Inuktitut as your primary language of instruction until the Grade 5 level. There is no immersion programming.

So, if you're from a family that has lost their language, your only option is to put your children in full Inuktitut classes or -- up until the Grade 5 point, or to put them in English and deprive them of their ability to learn Inuktitut within the school system. And, at Grade 5, there isn't a transitionary year; there isn't

a transitionary program. The children who have been instructed solely in Inuktitut are then thrown in with children who are English as their primary language.

So, that discrepancy of being able to fill government paid positions within the territory starts from age 5 where we determine whether or not -- where we determine that we are going to operate a system of education that unequally deprives Inuit children of the ability to be able to achieve academic success, and to be able to go on and study in university, and to be able to then hold these professional or expert positions that earn higher wages and come with things like housing.

MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA: And, under the *Education Act* in Nunavut, is it mandatory to graduate from Grade 12 and it's a prerequisite that you -- or a mandatory prerequisite that you need to graduate with -- to be bilingual, to either speak English and French or English and Inuktitut? Are you aware of that?

JASMINE REDFERN: Not that I'm aware.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I'm not aware, unfortunately.

MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA: Okay. All right. Thank you for your answers. I also -- I wanted to get a little bit into the idea of -- I know in your testimony, I think it was T.J. or Jasmine, the idea of suicide within

Inuit communities. And, I know throughout this week, there is a suicide conference, prevention conference happening in Baker Lake.

I know that Inuit have, if not the highest, one of the highest rates of suicide nationally, and I just want to ask if -- you don't have to go into great detail, but if there are any things that you have seen throughout your work experience or your educational experience, and living in Nunavut and Nunatsiavut that would be a key program to -- or initiative or things that would really address that, that very difficult reality?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: So, I'd like to speak just from my lived experience from Nunatsiavut where Nunatsiavut right now is actually one of the leaders in the highest rates of suicide, unfortunately. This year, we've lost quite a few people. But, one of the things that we've seen, or at least that I have observed myself, like, programming that has worked and helping is increase in housing, safe and adequate housing. The Nunatsiavut government is putting money and infrastructure dollars into the communities. But, unfortunately, it's not meeting the needs, like, the high-level needs for communities like Nain and Hopedale, which have the highest rates.

But, one of the things that I've seen

that's been working well is breakfast and lunch programs for youth, that everyone that goes to school from K to 12 has access to food security, at least for those two meals during the day, which is huge when we look at the social indicators through, like, the ITK report where they talk about the need for safe housing, the need for access to healthcare, the need for food security. And, even though it's not food sovereignty, it still makes an impact. And, that they have access to a youth centre that is available 24/7. Like, it's a safe space for our youth to go, and I think that's kind of a key.

When you look at the Steiner curve of which age groups actually are at higher risk for suicide, you find that it's young men and elders for some reason. But, so, putting the financial dollars into having spaces that are open 24/7 without gaps or boundaries, that those be sustainable models. I do believe in my own opinion that they have an impact on suicide rates.

JASMINE REDFERN: Yeah, I would agree. I think doing as much as we can to unburden people's lives, ensuring that people have the basic social determinants of health met and cared for. One thing that we've been talking about here in Nunavut is early childhood education and early childhood development as an opportunity for intervention in ensuring that people build healthy

relationships, build healthy social emotional skills that can help foster resiliency across the lifespan.

I think we talk a lot about services for young people. We talk a lot about crisis services, but I think another piece of that is that we also need to support people before they're in immediate crisis. And so, building a culture of wellness where we're not always asking people to only come forward when it's immediate is normalizing health-seeking, help-seeking behaviours across the spectrum.

MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA: Okay, thank you. And, I have one last question. In doing the hearings in Iqaluit, are there certain aspects throughout the other 25, 24 communities that we're missing, and if so, could you please highlight what those potential things might be?

JASMINE REDFERN: Unfortunately, I haven't been here for the other days of testimony. I've been in class. So, I'm not aware of what has been brought up by the other people who have testified. I know I've heard a couple of snippets on radio. So, unfortunately, I don't think I can speak to what hasn't been brought forward.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yeah, I'd just like to echo the fact that, like, we're not from a small community. So, it feels -- like, we would never adequately be able to explain the realities. I mean, I've

lived in small remote, like, communities in Labrador, but that specifically situates me in that frame. So, I can't speak to Nunavut.

MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA: Thank you.

MS. SHELBY THOMAS: Thank you. Next, Commission counsel would like to call Joelle Pastora-Sala from Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, and she will have 18.5 minutes.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA:

MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA: Good morning, Commissioners, elders, family members and survivors. My name is Joelle Pastora-Sala. I am legal counsel to the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. This is my first time up here, so I'd just like to acknowledge and thank the Inuit Nunangat for welcoming me in this territory for a short but beautiful time.

Good morning, panel members. Is it okay for me to refer to all of you by your first names as well?

My questions today will focus primarily on the topic of -- or the link between resource extraction and sexual exploitation or assault of Indigenous women. And so, for that reason, my questions will primarily be for T.J. and Jeffrey, but Jasmine, if you hear anything that you'd like to comment on, feel free to just kind of go ahead, or give me a nod, or something.

So, Jeffrey, I'll start with you. I would like to begin by referring to the article you provided, the Indigenizing the Gay Agenda, which I believe is Exhibit 30 for the Commissioners, and you are the author of this article?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: And so, it is fair to say that you are familiar with the contents and the topics discussed in the article?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: Would it be correct to say that the article does speak to the link between colonialism, land dispossession and violence against Indigenous women as well as LGTBQ2S?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: It does speak to dispossession, yes. And, in terms of specifically speaking to the dispossession of women, I believe I was -- a few LGBTQ2 and from two-spirit, that was just more of an assumed inclusion.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: But, the article speaks directly to the link between colonialism, land dispossession and violence against Indigenous women, girls as well as LGBTQ2S?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes. Sorry.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: I would like to

give you the opportunity to expand on this link. Because of the time, I don't think we are -- you -- I don't think you have done so yet. So, are you able to expand a little bit on that topic?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: The link between colonialism and violence on Indigenous women and LGBTQ people?

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: And, resource extraction or ---

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: And, resource extraction.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: --- land dispossession. Correct.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: As it pertains to this article?

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: Just generally, the topic.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Just in general? Okay. Great. Okay. I can only speak to that from my own territory, from my own nation. And so, the -- so how I have come to think about the ongoing colonial project is that land dispossession has always -- like has been -- historically, the settlement has been naturalized through the dispossession of persons from our lands and their land bases.

In this particular article, I was talking about Vasquez de Balboa, I believe was the name. And, back in the first contact in South America where -- when he came to the Chief's community there, and I am forgetting the nation of that place, the Chief's brother had a -- sorry, the Chief had a brother that was a gender variant person.

Anyways, I was making the link in this article talking about just how the -- our traditionally accepted spaces were seen as deviant, and that alongside -- and dispossessing women's roles from land bases from our matriarchal societies that alongside that, but often suffering in silence, two-spirit persons were also targets of being dispossessed from land bases. But, with all of that land base dispossession, it has been about resource extraction and the taking of resources.

And, particularly for within Secwepemcul'ecw, our Sir Wilfred Laurier memorial speaks to a sharing of 50/50 of, like, the resources. Settler -- the second wave of settlers that were coming into the community were welcome. And so, the settlers that were welcome there, they were welcome because of the abundance of our land. And so, yes, that is my answer.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: And, how does that link to violence against Indigenous women and girls

and LGBTQ2S?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Okay. So, that links to -- well...

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: Maybe I can ask another question, and then maybe it will prompt you?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes. Thank you.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: Would it be fair to say that one of the themes contained in that article is that Indigenous women are historically associated with the land?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes. Thank you.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: And, also in the article, it states that attitudes towards the land mirror attitudes towards Indigenous women; is that correct?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: Can you expand on that?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I should have reviewed my article this morning.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: If you have it, it is at page 141. I don’t know if that helps you.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Great. Can I just grab it?

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: Is there any chance I could pause my time while he finds it?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you. I just recently brought this article back. This is an article that I haven't -- I have never used in my classroom because it is my first published one, and it is not my most favourite.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: If it is okay, I would like -- maybe what I will do is -- can I give you time to review, and then I can ask T.J. a couple questions?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes, yes. Please.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: Would that be okay?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you. Yes.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: So, I will come back to that. And so, T.J., I will come to you. I was really struck by the artwork that you shared of the woman surrounded by resource extraction and, like, the hole dug out from her stomach. I really felt it when I saw that picture. I am wondering if you could comment on the link between attitudes towards Indigenous women, and the land and resource extraction.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: To the best of my ability, yes. So -- do you guys still have that image? I don't know if you can -- okay. Well, in that sense of the image, so what you are talking about was the -- you know,

there is the oil rig coming out of her leg and there is the hole, which is obviously to mining; right? The big pits. And then there is a tree stump that had been cut off from her breast.

So, early colonial attitudes -- so this is linked into -- like if you look at the very, very early documents, the Europeans were writing about North America and writing about Indigenous women, there was an (indiscernible) of Indigenous women. There -- so there was a dual role. There is actually an article talking something about the Pocahontas Complex? I don't know if you guys are familiar of it. Yes, and I did cite it in my article as well.

So, the idea is that while North America is exotic, it is also free from the taking, and so that the resources that were abundant in North America at the time could feed the colonial machine back in England. And so, if you look now, Canadian economy is still operating on a staples economy, which is just the idea that resource extraction masses what feeds your economy, which is still happening. And, in order to accomplish that, you have to divorce people from the land.

And, the people that feel the brunt -- the most extreme force of that are Indigenous women, because we are the ones that are perpetuating life, that the

contaminants that happen as a result of these resource extractive industries end up in our wombs. They end up in -- being held on in the fat cells, which women have a higher rate of fat retention than men do, that it ends up in the breast milk of pregnant and nursing mothers, and so that it interrupts generation -- the next generation and it interrupts their wellness right from their very first cells. And so, I guess that -- like that is the first intimate connection between what happens to the land happens to Indigenous bodies, but that women feel it a bit more acutely than what men do.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: And, are you able to comment on -- you spoke about man camps. And, are you able to comment on the factors and consequences leading to violence against Indigenous women and girls as well as LGBTQ2S as a result of some of those man camps?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: So, not as an expert, but under my understanding from reading different articles and research and accounts, I will do the best of my ability. So, the understanding is that these man camps bring in an influx of what are called transient employees, and often they are non-Indigenous. And, like I said yesterday, they locate themselves, typically, outside of Indigenous communities.

And, from the articles that I have read and

from the testimonies that are present in these articles, they mention that Indigenous women and children are being abducted and found in these man camps if they're found at all. The reality is that people have made statements saying that their loved one was last seen in or near the man camp and then traces of them have been lost. So that there have been accounts of children that have been sexually assaulted in the camps and been found wandering. I know there's, like, a well-referenced bit, and I think that is in the -- I think that's actually in an NWAC document somewhere. I could find the link later on.

This concentration of people influxing around vulnerable communities and vulnerable spaces brings with it those realities.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA: Can I ask by way of undertaking that you provide that article quote?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I can find it somewhere.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA: Not right now, but just ---

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Okay. Yeah.

--- UNDERTAKING

MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA: Yeah. I'd also like to refer you to the Pauktuutit article which talks about the Inuit women who are working on resource extraction projects who are temporary employees and are

primarily in what they call unskilled jobs.

Can you comment on how, if at all, this may contribute to the vulnerability of Indigenous women, broadly speaking, to sexual exploitation or abuse?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yeah. Broadly speaking and not that I'm an expert, but my understanding, that link is that -- so the people, again, the transient employees that are in the positions that are skilled positions just naturally by gender dynamics, they're in a position of power. They have access to wealth. They're being accommodated whereas the female Inuit employees that are in these positions, often they're paid lower. They might not have access to adequate housing. They're not just physically vulnerable, but that their power dynamic sets up so that they're exploitable because they're seen as less than.

There's this attitude that if someone is a cook, they're not equal to, say, someone that is a truck driver. In Iqaluit, you know, even though it's not a resource extractive place, I argue that the intellectual resource extraction is still happening, and that what we're seeing is — I've seen myself — is young, Inuit women being preyed upon because these people have access to alcohol and drugs, and they've been getting young girls hooked, and then they use them. They sexually exploit

them. And, if you're a person that's vulnerable to housing or unsafe -- the reality is if you have unsafe housing at home that this looks attractive or you get looped into the cycle and that this is a reality for some of our people.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA: Recognizing that you may not be an expert in this area, but just commenting on the literature that you -- or your lived experience or knowledge, would you be able to comment on whether Indigenous women and LGBTQ2S experience any challenges in obtaining justice for sexual assault resulting from resource extraction projects? So, whether that be challenges in reporting or obtaining justice in other ways?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: So, I think if you look at it from two points, LGBTQ and Indigenous women across the board face those barriers, regardless of resource extraction or not as a nature of the colonial machine.

For Indigenous women, and this is, again, based on my opinion and what I've read, you can very easily see that for women living in remote communities, if they've been transported outside to these man camps or other camps of that sort, that trying to get back to report is a problem. And then it's oftentimes that worker's word against yours if the worker is ever brought

to justice, that, in my own experience, I've seen indifference on -- I say it cautiously, but on RCMP -- on their fronts that there's been -- also, we need to be cognizant of the fact that RCMP -- some RCMP officers are only brought into communities for short periods of time and then sent out, and that their own internal attitudes can impact whether or not someone feels safe enough to disclose what happened to them. And then, further on, if they decide to collect evidence or if they decide to give them a referral to, say, Victim Services because that doesn't always happen. And then, furthermore, whether or not they decide themselves as an individual officer to submit the evidence.

So, I think that there is a real barrier. And, I think if you're accessing service and the message immediately that you're being given is, well, were you using drugs? Were you using alcohol? And, if you're a two-spirit person, unfortunately, sometimes people say it like the attitude is that because you're two-spirt, you don't need consent to sexually exploit a person, and that that's a reality that I've seen.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA: I'm going to try to take you a little bit further on this topic, and you tell me if you're not comfortable answering this question.

Would you agree, based on your knowledge,

that the cost -- when considering cost of resource extraction projects development, whether it's hydro development or otherwise, that there is a social, cultural, personal cost to resource extraction?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I believe so, yes.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA: And, are you prepared to comment generally, if at all, whether this cost should be considered in impact assessments and whether it is considered?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, absolutely. I think that even if you look at the -- so, speaking to Nunavut, if you look at the (indiscernible) process when they go through -- when companies go through the application process, they're supposed to, under my understanding, in their impact in benefit agreements, they're supposed to discuss and outline medicable factors such as the social economic impact on Indigenous people. It's not necessarily gendered, but it should be, I think.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA: On that note, would you agree that a gender-based analysis on impact assessment would be a good thing?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes. But, I also think that analysis should be on every level even when it comes to analyzing the healthcare system.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA: Jeffrey, I'm

going to try to come back to you on a -- thank you.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yeah.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA: Quickly on your report relating to "Where am I going to go?"

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Sorry, given that the time is 5 seconds, I think that in fairness, you should allow Mr. McNeil-Seymour to answer the question you've already put to him before you introduce a new one. And, I note that you wouldn't have the time to introduce a new one. You're over time now, but I do believe he should be able to answer the question you've already asked him, and if he's now read the page to be able to respond. Is that okay with the Commissioners?

MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA: Jeffrey, would you like the opportunity to answer the question from earlier?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Sure. Could you just repeat the question one more time?

MS. JOELLE PASTORA-SALA: I was hoping you could comment on the link between the -- essentially, the resource extraction and violence against Indigenous women generally. And, I referred you to page 141, which talked about the attitudes towards Indigenous women, which are similar to the attitudes towards the land. So, I was hoping to get your comments on that topic generally, just

giving you the opportunity to do so.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you for the time to review. When I look at this particular part of this chapter, I'm thinking through, like, Elizabeth Furniss' frontier myth in terms of thinking about how settlement naturally occurred by having the land being socially constructed as something to be conquered, something to be won, to get out there, to take what you want from the land, that sort of stuff. And, I don't think that our rural -- that Canadian culture has necessarily not looked at women in that particular way too. And, the next piece that I would think through in terms of explaining this a little bit more to you is perhaps even through, like, this hypersexualization of Indigenous women through Halloween costumes, and costuming that sort of piece. But, to think about just that disposability; right? How those things are linked -- I'm going way too big with my ideas here. Sorry. So, yeah. So, historically, just that dispossession and the violence, and how we can look at, like, the state of the land and we can look at the state of people as well; right? So, flying over British Columbia right now, you will see a popcorn landscape, and they're logging, like, right up to the line of sight. It's -- yes. Anyways. That's my answer.

MS. JOELLE PASTORA SALA: Thank you. Thank you all. Thank you.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: At this time, I am going to request that we have a morning break. It's now 10:15, I will suggest a 15 minute break, and we can return at 10:30.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: 15, please.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.

--- Upon recessing at 10:16 a.m.

--- Upon resuming at 10:36 a.m.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I note that Ms. McGregor is already at the podium. And, Commission Counsel would like to call the Assembly of First Nations next. They have 18.5 minutes for their cross-examination.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. JULIE MCGREGOR:

MS. JULIE MCGREGOR: Good morning, everyone. Thank you, Commissioners and to the panel members for their evidence that they provided. I don't think I'm going to -- I always say this, but I truly believe it this time. I don't think I'm going to take up all my time. I just have a few short follow-up questions for the panel, and again I thank them for their excellent evidence that they provided for the Inquiry.

I am going to direct this both to Jeffrey

and T.J., or if either of them feel they don't want to answer it, that's fine as well. And, you're both okay with me calling you Jeffrey and T.J.; is that right? Okay.

So, your evidence touched on the issue of man camps, and I know my colleagues have asked follow-up questions about that. I don't want to get too much into it, but I do want to talk about, in terms of your own perspectives from your own cultures. What would be a respectful way in terms of countering that sort of action when resource comes in? Because we have communities across the country, some are not -- some are opposed to any sort of development, some do want to engage in development, resource development projects. But, the issue of man camps and men assaulting Indigenous women is something that's always an afterthought or not thought of at all. And, it has to be culturally specific, right, to everybody, it has to feel right for them in their own territories.

So, how do you feel about that, how do you feel that -- if you have any recommendations for the Commissioners, or the government or whoever, how would you want to see culturally appropriate ways to counteract those activities?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: So, in my territory, so

speaking in Wabanaki terms, looking at elsiebookdook (phon.) and our experiences there, and though we didn't have man camps, we did have our own camp that was set up where the resource extraction was going to happen. One of the things that happened in that territory is that we set up our own -- we have our own warrior society, and again I use that term loosely. Like, we have our own group of community individuals that were set up to ensure the safety of our community. And, that they were informed to do this in a peaceful way and that it wasn't violent, that there's no weapons, and these kind of things. But, the attitude from the resource extraction, specifically SWN, was that they were adversarial, and that they were there to cause problems, and there was the enforcement from the police side.

So, the reason why I bring that up is that, in situations where we have our own people organized to be our peace protectors, to be our safety nets, that they should be given the same amount of respect as say, like, the RCMP coming into our territory, because you need to understand that, in our territory, we are a sovereign First Nation, we didn't give up our land, and so we have a right to ensure the wellness of all our people, so that it should be held on the same level of respect.

But, also, when there's recommendations

made from our nations, in the consultation process, or through the policy process or even through the wildlife management boards, that those things need to be given weight. So, the recommendation, I would say, would be to give equal respect to what we have to say.

MS. JULIE MCGREGOR: Thank you.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: While I was sitting through the -- yesterday, I mentioned that I was a part of one of the family representatives for our traditional governance council for our fight against Ajax KJHM Mining Corporation. I referenced violence on the land, violence on our bodies, and asked specifically the representatives from -- the provincial and federal representatives that were in attendance, how they planned to mitigate the social impacts, how with the fires that happened in Fort Mack, that in Kamloops, domestic violence skyrocketed by 400 percent, and then of course all of the other issues that are resultant of resource extraction coming into territory, and they never responded to mitigating those causes or thinking about what sort of resources they would put in, because Kamloops again too, also has to turn away people, like, seeking shelter at night. Our shelters are overwhelmed. So, thinking about that, I don't think that that's necessarily mitigating those causes on the radar. Yes.

MS. JULIE MCGREGOR: As a follow-up question to that. Like, when these big natural resource projects start, there's always a -- in terms of accommodation, companies start to think about, well, we're going to hire so and so many people from X amount of First Nations that are surrounding or whatever, and that planning starts -- hopefully it starts early on in the project, but that's part of their discharging of their obligations.

Do you think that that's also something that needs to be thought of right from the start, as how you are going to mitigate those sorts of damaging effects when you have resource projects starting?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I'm sorry, could you repeat the question just one more time?

MS. JULIE MCGREGOR: Yes. So, when you have these resource projects that are going forward, and some of them are -- you know, whether they are contested or not, they seem to be just going forward anyway. And, in terms of accommodation always, you see circumstances where the government, whether provincial or federal, will say, well, we have to accommodate the First Nations in the surrounding area. As part of their duty, they consult, or in their obligations to accommodate the First Nations interests, and so they'll say, oh, well, we will make sure

that there is X amount of Indigenous people or First Nations people from around the areas will be employed, or we will do this, we will do that, we will ensure that, you know, the area -- certain area gravesites, or whatever, are not touched, or whatever. But they don't think of the social aspect of it as much. They only think about this -- the situation of having a bunch of men coming into these areas, these remote areas and not having a whole lot to do. And they don't think about all of how that makes the community feel in terms of their safety and the safety of the women.

So do you think that there should be some similar obligation on resource companies when they come in, should they be thinking about what their impacts will be? Should the government be thinking about what their impacts will be, socially?

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Absolutely. They should be thinking through and putting forward recommendations and also planning financially for -- for those projects, to be considering those impacts, should the communities want to move forward with those projects after all.

MS. JULIE McGREGOR: Thank you. I'm going to move on to another somewhat related question. So the government -- the federal government has been putting a

lot of emphasis on gender-based analysis these days and I think a colleague of mine had brought it up earlier. And in terms of Bill C-69 which is the environmental assessment bill which will bring in a new impact assessment process framework, there's talk of it in the Bill about there being a gender-based analysis.

But I'm wondering what you both think about the fact that it should -- do you think it should be also culturally -- culturally appropriate gender-based analysis? Because as you said in your testimony, both of you, this affects you very differently depending on your Nation and your culture.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yeah. Absolutely. Like, I think even when I was doing my graduate work the whole reason why I was dissecting that bill -- well, Bill C-45, although different, is because these -- the impact review assessment doesn't necessarily take into consideration all the ways that will be culturally impacted.

So maybe they'll talk about the physical impacts, and maybe they'll talk about the economic drivers. But they don't necessarily take into consideration food sovereignty, or the ability to continue to transmit our cultures by accessing the land that they're physically impacting. So yeah, I do think that there should be that kind of analysis.

MS. JULIE McGREGOR: Thank you.

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes, definitely. So with regards to the Kinder-Morgan Pipeline coming through Secwepemculecw, right where they're planning to put the man-camp is right where one of our berry-picking areas. The pipeline runs along, like, mere metres away from our (inaudible), which is the North Thompson River.

And any -- we've seen the fishnets, or the anti-spawning mats that have gone into the fish-bearing streams, and any damage to -- like, for instance, say if there was a pipeline spill, that bitumen will inevitably impact the fry. And as Secwepemc People we are salmon people. Any sort of damages to the remaining salmon stock, as it stands now, would be detrimental in its impacts to us as a people for sure. And I don't think that that's been taken into consideration.

MS. JULIE McGREGOR: Thank you very much. I am finishing early this time. Those are my questions.

Thank you again. Meegwetch to the panel for your -- for sharing your important information today. Thank you.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you, Ms. McGregor.

Next, we'd like to invite up the Regina

Treaty Status, Ms. Erica Beaudin will be representing Regina Treaty Status and she has 18 and a half minutes.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. ERICA BEAUDIN:

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Okay. Good morning. Nakumeek to the Elders for the lighting of the quilliq and the prayers for a good week.

Final time saying this, as well as a citizen of Treaty 4, I acknowledge the traditional homelands of the Inuit People and bring well-wishes from our Treaty area. My name is Erica Beaudin and I hold the position of Executive Director of the Regina Treaty Status Indian Services Incorporated.

This has been an incredible week of learning, not only by the stellar testimony of the witnesses on all three panels, but because it gave opportunity for all of use to experience the immense beauty of this land and its people. The languages, animals, plants, food, and clothing have been given, have given me but a keyhole into what I know is a lifelong learning process.

This week has also provided me with a better understanding of my connection as an eehow(phonetic) and Métis woman with the Inuktitut woman in another area of the country, as well as my responsibility to become a better advocate for that

advancement of all of us. So thank you.

Nakurmiik to Jasmine Lightfoot, Wela'lin to T.J. -- or pardon me -- oh I got -- sorry.

MS. JASMINE REDFERN: We got married.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: I apologize. I married the both of you. Congratulations.

MS. JASMINE REDFERN: She is like a little sister.

(LAUGHTER)

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: It is because I'm so hoping that I don't butcher this next -- and kotsgen (phonetic) to Jeffery McNeil for your heartfelt and educating testimony yesterday. Your words and teachings are necessary for every single one of us to hear and to be recorded with the National Inquiry.

So I am team lead the Urban Services for Indigenous People who reside in the city of Regina and have done so for the past 10 years. So my questions relate mostly to the urban experience of our people.

First question, system burnout is reality for many urban Indigenous People, for all of the reasons you gave yesterday and more. If you could give any recommendation for coping mechanisms, or ways for us who are in helping positions to recognize and assist those through advocacy with those systems who are young and

experiencing this burnout, what would it be? Is there value in paid advocacy roles to assist individuals navigate through these systems, and should they be in community agencies, as opposed to government?

MS. JASMINE REDFERN: Okay. I want to do a good job of answering your question, so if you wouldn't mind repeating it so that I can write down all those different elements?

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Sure. Is there advocacy in paid -- or is there a value in paid advocacy roles to assist individuals? And should they be in community agencies?

MS. JASMINE REDFERN: Yes. I absolutely think that there is a role for advocates in our communities, and I think that people should be paid for the labour of that advocacy. And I do also think that they should be in our community organizations and in our grassroots organizations, because I think that changes the ability of that organization.

I think most of us have the understanding that governments are slow, and at times cautious in ways that can be overly cautious. Whereas, our grassroots organizations have more immediate relationships with community and often have -- often are governed by community themselves.

And I absolutely love the idea of advocates who can help individuals navigate complex systems. I think for a lot of people, in trying to access systems they can be so siloed. And so, having a centralized person who can help you access the different services available, and who has that awareness, and who is able to very gently assess or work with you to self-assess what your needs are, is absolutely valuable and I would love to see that as an investment.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Thank you.

There was a brief discussion yesterday about same-sex partner violence. Should policies change to state partner violence as opposed to assumptions it is male on female violence? Should the be more education and services for partner on partner violence, and should there be deliberate consideration for LGBQT2S situations? And should it be mandatory for LGBQT2S to participate in those policies and services?

Would you like me just to go one by one? Is that -- I think that that's what I need to do. My -- I'm trying to get through my minutes here really quickly. So first question is, should policies change to state partner violence as opposed to assumptions it's male on female violence?

MS. JASMINE REDFERN: Sorry, can you

clarify if these questions are directed at me specifically, or if they're open for everybody?

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Oh, I'm just looking at you because you're looking at me.

MS. JASMINE REDFERN: Okay.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: It could be to any of you. Absolutely. Whoever feels to jump in.

JASMINE REDFERN: Sure. Yes. I think that in creating policies and delivering services, we absolutely need to be anticipatory and aware of the spectrum of relationships that are possible, and that intimate partner violence is possible in any of those relationships.

And in that being anticipatory, not putting that need on people who are immediately coming to you with a need in a crisis situation, because as we mentioned, the system burnout, it can put people at greater risk. If we're -- they're coming to us for services and we're saying, "Okay. But can you help us figure out how to actually do that?" while you're also coping with this immediate crisis situation.

And I think if I'm remembering correctly your follow up question, I do think that reaching out to communities in advance and having them participate in -- paid advance in being able to help interpret those

policies and identify areas of need or attention.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Absolutely. Thank you. So once again, for anyone who feels they would like to answer. In terms of safehouses and other crisis or critical services for those who are experiencing violence, could you discuss the need for the LGBTQ2S and non-binary people to feel welcomed and receive specific and relevant services?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think that in terms of safehouses, that there should be safehouses that are specifically designated just to persons that live within and walk within the spectrum of gender and sexual diversities. That the needs are unique.

And that you -- for a person seeking service, they can't always be confident that they're not going to brush up against homophobia or transphobia from other persons staying there, and/or also it can be a barrier accessing those services too because the frontline person could also be still in a space of having homophobic or transphobic perspectives.

I'd also like to just quickly answer your first two questions as well. Is there value in paid advocacy roles? Definitely. I think that we have people that need to actively have persons assigned to them to take them from Point A, to Point B, to Point C, to

navigate assistance in the city or -- sorry, agencies in the city.

And then should they be at agencies? Absolutely, but I think that there also needs to be policy developed around that and that those funding dollars can only be accessed by Aboriginal agencies.

Because we see, for instance, with work around HIV, and, particularly in Toronto, that places like the 519 can go for those funding dollars and it's not going to the spaces that they need it because they can apply for those same -- that same body of money and get it.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Thank you very much. Should the governments make it a requirement to have people from the LGBTQS and non-binary to be a part of policy changes that affect that group? Governmental policies.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think that there should be -- if we're thinking about the federal and provincial levels, and if there is any policy development, that there should be a diversity of advisory persons from across Canada because of the diversity of Indigenous nations that exist here, so that we can glean, if you will, multiple perspectives and experiences in the development of said policies.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: What services and education should be available to parents, teachers, daycare workers for children who identify before the age of 5 that they are LGBTQ2S or non-binary? And could you explain what would have assisted you?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: For cross-sensing as a culturally restorative practice, every single one of my participants identified gender identity reinforcement. So like if we're going to small children, being like, "Oh, do you have a little boyfriend?" or "Oh, do you have a little girlfriend?" But for those of us that recognized that we were a little bit different from a very young age, that that didn't create a space of feeling safe enough to be able to identify that we -- that that wasn't for us. And so that was one of the recommendations that my participants said, is to not impose that on smaller children. Yeah.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: What services should agencies have to support youth in a safe manner as they discover who they are?

T. J. LIGHTFOOT: Sorry. Can you repeat that?

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Sure. What services should -- what specific services should agencies have -- of course, all services should be safe for everybody --

but what services should agencies have to support youth in a safe manner as they discover who they are?

JASMINE REDFERN: I know that one service that I've seen that's been very helpful is accessible drop-in spaces, where there are knowledgeable and askable *[sic]* safe adults who are able to provide either one-on-one or shared support, creating safe spaces for youth to be able to interact with their peers. To be able to create spaces that young people are able to explore who they are in a way that is very low barrier, very accessible and gentle, without trying to push people in any one direction.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Thank you. Jeff? May I ---

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I ---

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Oh. My apologies.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think that in the delivery of any future services that we have so many amazing two-spirit persons living in their home communities but don't necessarily have a western education in terms of a post-secondary. So not having access to employment is being a barrier. That grounded cultural knowledge or service also can be recognized as being of the same value of gaining that mentorship positioning within agencies.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Thank you. Jeff? May I call you that?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes, please.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Okay. I'm very interested in your discussion regarding reconciliation and your commitment to assist non-Indigenous people understand the reality of Indigenous people and their responsibility. In the concept of what the Canadian government is rolling out reconciliation, do you believe this is true reconciliation?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I believe in Ottawa there is a monument or some sort of installation -- I haven't seen it because I haven't been, but I've heard about -- that in a enclosed glass that there is, from the moment that Stephen Harper made the apology, that each different item or action that's happened is reconciliatory is being added to that, creating a timeline, if you will.

And I feel like that this process that we're sitting in right now is -- very much could be at risk as being viewed as part of that move to innocence. And so we have to remain, you know, on point in making sure that the recommendations that come out of here don't just, you know, become like our cap; right? And I know that that won't because there are so many amazing people sitting in the room that we're going to keep pushing

forward.

But I believe that reconciliation is, as a project, has been co-opted in that we can see in Canada that just different events -- I feel like the monies that are spent to heal communities or to do that sort of stuff, that that just becomes more of a body of evidence of being like, "Well, we've done all of this", and "We're doing this thing".

But I don't feel like people -- the project itself, the cultural project of reconciliation also needs to be recognized as also -- a large part of the responsibility and the heavy lifting should be done by our (indiscernible) counterparts, and that any sort of reconciliation initiatives, particularly...

I'll just say like, for instance, Thompson Rivers University, just had a reconciliation designate position for their faculty of social work and of education, and absolutely, they should be hiring our language speakers to be -- they should be trilingual, right? They should have the -- they should be written in the languages of the nations that they're being constructed in or that those projects are being deployed in.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Do you believe it's possible for true reconciliation without reclamation of

lands?

JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: In my heart of hears I would like to see -- we don't have a treaty with British Columbia, we don't have a treaty as Secwepemc people with the Canadian government.

Absolutely I think that for Nations all across this place called Canada that we should have our lands and our original territorial boundaries returned to us, and it should be a true nation-to-nation relationship between the Federal, provincial, and Indigenous governance structures.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Thank you.

Can any of you on the panel explain how disconnection from the lands and the community, your own individual nation, affect -- or a person's own individual's nation affect the LGBQT2S community more, and how we as urban agencies can promote the connection back to the land's canon nations?

And then I will add my second part of that because it is very close to it; does the government have a responsibility to promote this through funding?

JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Can you repeat the first part of your question?

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Sure.

Can any -- okay. Explain how

disconnections from the lands and the community affect the LGBTQ2S community more, and how we as urban agencies can promote the connection back to the land's canon nations?

JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: In my article, *Cross-Dancing as Culturally Restorative Practice*, all of my participants, and my research also, too, said, "Teach us the land," as one of the recommendations. And so for whatever reason, those participants didn't feel a strong connection to Secwepemcul'ecw.

And I can speak because -- Tk'emlupsemc were at Ground Zero for residential school, so that strong connectivity, homophobia and transphobia are very much present in our community. So that attachment, that cultural attachment isn't strong there. I can just speak to my own territory and my own community for that reason.

Absolutely I think that because of the residential school system and its imposition of homophobia and transphobia into our communities, cementing that; the blurring of the lines between paedophilia and homosexuality; you know, that that misunderstanding of those two very different things, that absolutely the Canadian government has a responsibility to create opportunities for a restorative moment for Two-Spirit people to reclaim their sacred spaces in the circle.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Anyone else?

T.J LIGHTFOOT: Yeah. I think that the reality is sometimes that some of our dispossession from the land comes from a place of not being able to find safe and approachable Elders or adults that can teach us our ways that we used to be connected, or maybe they've lost the knowledge and don't necessarily know how to support a youth that's -- or a person that's LGBTQ2 in a way that would have been meaningful to them prior to colonization.

And so I think that, like, the more access we have to other Elders that are LGBTQ2 that are open to help with that knowledge transmission and to take us onto the land, or even to find heterosexual Elders that are open and supportive and come from a harm reduction point of view, if we can support them to foster us and take us out in these roles that it can help us come back to the land, absolutely.

In my own experience, I was mentored through Darrell Nicholas, and there's another Elder who has since died from cancer, and she was a LGBTQ2 person; she was Two Spirit. But they are taking the time and not teaching us like we're alien. But also being able to speak to the different aspects of ourselves and bringing us actually physically on the land, where it was inaccessible because we didn't have -- like, at the time, we didn't have access to a vehicle and didn't know where

to go in our home communities because we had travelled to -- like, we chose to live in an urban setting because it was safer for us at that time, as opposed to going home. But that those small parts of going home are possible if there are people or Elders that are willing to identify themselves as safe people, if that makes sense.

MS. ERICA BEAUDIN: Thank you.

My time is up, so thank you very much.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.

Next we would like to invite up Ms. Sarah Beamish. She will be first speaking on behalf of the Independent First Nations, but you'll note the list has her second counsel responsibility to Association of Native Child and Family Services.

We would like to maintain the time, though, for each of the organizations she represents, so Ms. Beamish will have 25 minutes as counsel for Independent First Nations.

---CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. SARAH BEAMISH:

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Good morning, T.J, Jasmine, and Jeffrey.

My name is Sarah Beamish; I belong to the Ngāruahinerangi people and I'm here on behalf of Independent First Nations. This is a group of 12 Oji-Cree, Haudenosaunee, and Anishinaabe Nations in Ontario.

And each of these nations has lost women and girls to violence.

So before I begin my questioning, I wanted to say there's been some discussion among parties after the testimony yesterday and this week wanting more connections made about some of the evidence offered and the sort of hard task we're here to do, which is trying to understand and prevent violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-spirit people.

And there was something on the violence, violence on the land, violence on the bodies document that I think really gets at that point. It says:

> "Violence against Indigenous women is structural, not coincidental." (As read)

And in some places in the evidence we've talked about quite direct cause and effect relationships. So for instance, Jasmine and T.J, you've talked about, you know, a man camp is set up and sexual violence occurs. That's pretty -- we get that.

In other cases we're talking about things where the links with the crisis of missing, murdered women is maybe not as obvious to everyone who's participating with this, and so things like what terminology do we use? Things like why contaminated breast milk matters. Why a

ceremony of returning cedar and salmon bones to a river matters; what does that have to do with why we're here?

And so I wanted to take a minute to maybe say how I understand that and then see if you'd like to add to that.

So it seems to me that what we're doing here is exploring the devastated and polluted ecosystem that we call colonization. And this is an ecosystem of domination and violence, and this is a system in which people are dying.

And we know that in any ecosystem, events or imbalances in one place are always the effect of something that happened somewhere else and they can have effects and cause things to happen in other places, and it can take a lot of observation to help to understand those relationships.

And in the same way, understanding how we maybe rebalance or restore the health of the ecosystem, or as Grandfather Abraham said this morning, how we get back to a place of harmony; that also takes a lot of observation and understanding and thought.

So that's how I understand what we're doing here with some of the evidence that you've given us. Would you say that that's right, and would you like to add anything to that?

You're welcome to just say "Yes" or "No" as well.

JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes.

T.J LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

(LAUGHTER)

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Because we're not always taking the time to make an explicit connection between what you're saying and what causes violence but -- okay, thank you.

So moving into my questioning, I have so many questions for all of you; you had such interesting testimony. First I think I'll ask a few questions to Jasmine and T.J, and either or both of you can answer them.

My first set is about policing and incarceration. So you spoke in the -- sorry, your report, the Violence on the Land report talks about increased rates of incarceration as a form of environmental violence. And the fact sheet document also talks about the over-incarceration of Trans people and Two-Spirit people in particular. Can you talk about the recommendation and moving beyond a carceral approach, that is in your documents, and why that is important when we consider solutions to violence?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I don't think I have all

the answers, but I think that from my understanding and the way that I wanted this evidence to be put was that often there is an inequality in the way that the reasons why we are incarcerated when it comes to defending our land or defending our brothers and sisters from colonial evidence, and when you look on the counterpart -- like, going back to Jeff's slide yesterday, he showed the fine that the mining company had received from the courts, and then the fine that the elder received for peaceful occupation of the homeland, I think part of the understanding of the incarceration needs to come from the fact that, like, we have a right to exist in our homelands in a peaceful way without being automatically seen as a threat.

And, I think that part of that, like my -- one of my recommendations come to removing that document that -- I don't know if it has been removed actually, I say first, but publishing a document that says that Indigenous people are terrorists? Do you remember when that happened in the media? And, the message that it sends to us is that we are inherently a threat by being Indigenous people and being invested in the wellbeing our homelands, that those things are intersectionalities. So, I don't think that fully answers your question, but...

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: I am not expecting you

to fully answer the question, but that is helpful. Thank you. Jasmine, would you like to add anything or should I move on?

JASMINE REDFERN: Sure. I think looking at models that are alternative to incarceration are important. Going back to the point that you highlighted from what Abraham said this morning is, our goal should be to make our communities whole again and just taking someone out of the situation. What we don't see when we just take somebody out of the situation is that person coming back better or more whole. And, what we also don't see is that that immediately helps the rest of the community or the rest of the family, because that looks at an individual as only the thing that they have done which is prohibited or it is reducing somebody to the mistake that they have made.

And, some models that we have seen that work here in Iqaluit, we have a really good transformative justice process. I think they use different language around it though. Restorative justice process, which more closely follows one of the ways that Inuit traditional counselled somebody who had done something wrong is taking them aside and working with them to identify what happened, how did we get to the point where they did something that we don't want them to be doing, and how can

we help them to see the harm in what they have done and help them to get to a place where they are not going to make those same mistakes again.

And, I think that that is an important alternative to just incarcerating people, because especially in our small communities, what we see is people aren't just the mistakes that they have made. People are also providers. People are also parents. People are also important members of the community. And, removing them from the community doesn't always help the rest of us.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Thank you. I would like to ask you a question about another -- something else that was mentioned in the Violence on the Land report. It talked about how NIHB mental funding only pertains to crises and must be resolved in, sort of, x-number of sessions.

Now, yesterday -- or two days ago, we heard from Dr. Smylie about how mainstream approaches to trauma are very based on, sort of, soldiers experiences. They are not really designed to deal with chronic, intergenerational trauma. Do you have any recommendations perhaps funding changes or policy changes that would make services like this, these mental health services more useful for Indigenous people?

JASMINE REDFERN: Sure. What I would

really like to see is these funding programs framed in a way that allows people to self-identify what a crisis is, and not to have to quantify what it means and to allow people to also identify when that need ends. And, again, we mentioned whether or not it is status, non-status and needing to quantify your eligibility for those programs, I think I would love to see for us to come to a place where we all acknowledge that every single one of us has times where we need additional help and to make those programs as accessible as possible.

When someone comes to us for help, I would like to see the policy be, let's figure out how to get this person help and we will figure out the details afterwards, because they are coming to us with a need now, and now is the time when we are going to provide those services.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I would just like to add to Jasmine's point that I think that part of the problem, like on a policy level, is that it is coming from a deficit point of view that mental health is just related to illness and we just need to treat the illness instead of looking at the person as a whole. And so, I think I would like to see policies change towards wellness so that the literature is like, something is out of balance with that person in some area of their needs, so how can we

help build them on a path of wellness, whether that be housing, or food or just needing someone to talk to.

The thing I like about Ilisaqsivik is that you can call them. And, their definition of crisis is so very broad, and they are willing to meet and talk to you just like that. We have used them as a service provider. And, you know, those models, because they come from Inuit communities, like, for Inuit communities, by Inuit, they are sustainable. They are culturally informed. And so, our priority should be on those kind of models.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Thank you. I think I will just ask the two of you one more set of questions, and then I will move onto Jeffrey. I wanted to ask you about patriarchy. It comes up a number of times, particularly in the Violence on the Land report. And, there were two lines from it that really jumped out at me.

One was a line from a woman in New Mexico and she said, "Almost every hotel was completely booked by oil industry workers and they were everywhere. It's just men everywhere. That was scary. Even just walking to our rooms, they were out there and they were just staring. Just eyes everywhere."

And then the second line was the testimony of a girl, I believe, in Canada who was also near some industrial development. And, it was about how she had --

she used to like to do a lot of hiking in her traditional territory, but now that there were all -- there was a man camp there and all these men there, she was no longer -- no longer felt safe to do that.

There are sort of two lines of patriarchy that I think you have talked about. And, one is the issue of how, a quote from the report, "patriarchy has permeated Indigenous nations." So, there is the issue of patriarchy and how it has affected Indigenous men. But, of course, we have also seen in some of the other evidence that Indigenous women are disproportionately the victims of violence that comes from men outside of their families and communities as well. So, there are limits, maybe, to what can be solved by just addressing Indigenous masculinity. So, do you have thoughts on what do we do about the violent or toxic masculinity that is coming from outside of Indigenous nations?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Again, not like a silver bullet or anything, but I think it comes back from -- we need to start looking at things maybe from a feminist point of view, but feminist from an Indigenous perspective, even for a non-Indigenous so that men are free to embrace the feminine parts of themselves from a very early age. And so, I think this actually comes back to the need for education on multiple levels, this need

for undoing of disattachment parenting. So, there is work to be done, I think, for mainstream, like, to allow them to express themselves as full people and, you know, we should be doing the same.

I think that, like, the Senate being hired to have, like, 50 percent -- like, so that in every space that there is 50 percent women, for 50 percent men, depending on how they identify as gender, you know, the -- we need to be pushing in every realm, every arena for equal representation of everyone within the spectrum.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Thank you. All right, Jeffrey, I have some questions for you. I want to ask you about spaces, and particularly urban spaces. So, in your "Indigenizing the Queer Agenda" article, you touched on spaces. You talked about gay villages and you talked about some other things, and I guess to preface my questions about that, would you agree that community, including being recognized, known and noticed if you are missing, is something that keeps both queer and Indigenous people safer?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Definitely.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. And, would you agree that space to gather is an important part of building and maintaining community?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Definitely.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Now, we know from various people's testimony and materials that Indigenous, queer and two-spirit youth are often coming to the cities because of homophobic or transphobic things they're experiencing in their communities, and at the same time, the queer spaces in the cities may not be safe because they have anti-Indigenous biases; so there can be a tension.

And, I'm thinking about you as someone who has just, I guess, moved to Toronto and working in Ryerson. I live in Toronto as well, and there's the Gay Village there that's sort of just to the east of Ryerson, and then to the east of that is the main -- the neighbourhood where a lot of the Indigenous services and agencies are, and there's a big Indigenous community there, and it's separated by the park where Allan Gardens is.

And, there's a big difference between those two communities, certainly in terms of income, in terms of the overall, you know, feeling of them. And, it makes me think about something we heard from another witness, Nakusa (phon.), in the hearing on shelter. She talked about how there was a public park where Inuit women in particular gather -- homeless Inuit women in particular gather. But, because those Indigenous spaces are often so

heavily policed, sometimes they're pushed even out of those spaces.

And so, I'm thinking of the challenge of safe spaces for queer Indigenous community. I'm looking for, I guess, recommendations from you, and I'm wondering if one would be the provision of free public spaces for gathering by cities? Do you want me to rephrase that?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: For gathering by cities?

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: No, sorry. I'll rephrase that. So, do you think it's important that cities provide free public gathering spaces where communities like the queer Indigenous community can gather?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Definitely. I fully believe that for sure.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Thank you. Sorry, that was a bit of a rambling introduction to that question.

Now, one other thing I want to ask you about, which I don't want to go down into too much of a rabbit hole with, but I think is important, is you talked about homonationalism. I don't want to get too much into unpacking that term because that's a big discussion.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Right.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: But, something that other witnesses have talked about is the importance of challenging this idea of Canada as this sort of wonderful, peaceful, you know, benevolent perfect place. And so, I want to tie that to what you said -- some of what you said about homonationalism in your article, and tie that to, sort of, international Indigenous and queer solidarity.

So, we often see -- would you agree with me that we often see a western LGBTQ lens being used to deem some states good and some states bad?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Definitely.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Now, I'm going to -- and would you agree that in the way that's done, it often obscures the histories and realities of colonization, both by and of queer people?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Definitely. I think it operates in a way that it assumes that there's one common experience in terms of engaging with gender and sexual diversity and fluidities from a cultural perspective. And, that dominant LGBTQ-ness of North America, I really feel permeates and kind of sets the tone in terms of how people engage with their understandings, departures and arrivals with the acronym.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. There was a stat in one of your documents, and I'm sorry, I've forgotten

which one it was, but it referenced a study conducted among two-spirit and queer Aboriginal people in Manitoba who had recently migrated, and it said that one-third of them indicated they had been forced out of their communities because of sexual or gender identity. And, this also made me think of -- do you remember the story of the two men from Ghana who came to Canada as refugees; one of them because he was gay and one of them because he was suspected to be gay? And, in crossing the border, they suffered frostbite and lost their fingers. And, that story was really framed as, "Well, Canada is so wonderful. Finally, a safe place for these, you know, these gay men to be."

But, it struck me that it was the same, sort of, European colonial mindsets that influences histories and violence that have made their own homeland unsafe them for them, as gay or suspected gay men, and that same system that set up the borders here in Canada that required them to endanger their bodies and their lives to get here. Do you have thoughts about that?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Are you saying, like, just from the dominant LGBTQ community to make those linkages in itself to think through what the celebration of, say, LGBTQ refugees coming from other places in the world, coming to Canada as this imagined safe haven and

champion of social justice issues?

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Mm-hmm.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think that definitely that there perhaps is -- that becomes influenced by, like, a white saviour complex as well, and that people start -- you know, "Oh, look at what we've done. We've brought these people here," but, at the same time, not making those other connections of how their bodies are, in fact, oppressive to persons that existed here. If not disrupted, those refugees -- the connectivities to those refugees also seeking asylum here from the homelands from which they're seeking asylum -- or sorry, they're escaping from.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Now, I want to ask you about -- and this is building on something that T.J. brought up. In your slide show yesterday, you had that awful quote by David Dodge about people are going to die protesting the Trans Mountain Pipeline, and he used the words "fanatics" and "religious zeal" to refer to these land defenders.

And, this made me think about, I guess, the link that T.J. made between terror discourse and terror language and the way we talk about Indigenous people in, sort of, mainstream media. And then, also, colonial history, some of which we've heard about of kind of

dividing Indigenous people into sort of good Indians and bad Indians.

Would you agree with that assessment of, sort of, the history of that quote by David Dodge, and the discourses that it's drawing on? Do you understand my question?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: No.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Let me -- would you agree that, I guess, ways of -- ways like that of talking about Indigenous people are -- like, you had talked about a divide and conquer tactic. Would you agree that that kind of thing is an example of that?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I would -- yeah, for sure. I think that the good Indian/bad Indian analogy for sure even just plays out in our own communities, and that some people's choices in terms of what their direct action looks like may not be palpable for other people in our communities. And so, they become ostracized or left out to pasture, if you will, and not, yeah, looked after in a good way.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: And so, would you agree that keeping all Indigenous people safe requires resisting notions of, sort of, good and bad Indians?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm. We're all just walking each other home.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Yeah. And, you had talked yesterday about looking after the frontline people who are fighting, and who may often be fighting in those, sort of, unpalatable ways. What are some practical things that you mean by that?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Of looking after?

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Mm-hmm.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think that the persons that are doing that direct-action frontline work, making sure that they have the resources that they need to look after themselves, to -- encouraging people for the call to action as well, creating opportunities for people that would like to join on the frontlines with people, that there are ways in which to find those people to get there. That's another one of the big issues, is transportation to be able to join those very important land and water defender pieces. Yeah.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Would you say that that kind of work is often incompatible with paid employment?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think that depending on what you do can put a person at risk, for sure. Yeah.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: And so, would you say that it's important that we, in considering how to take care of those, sort of, frontline -- some of those

frontline Indigenous land defenders, that we consider policy that affects people living in poverty more broadly? So, for instance, social assistance rates and things like that.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I'm sorry, can you repeat ---

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Sure. Do you think that when we think -- when we're talking about how we take care of some of these people doing that frontline work, for instance living in land defence camps or something like that, that we have to consider the social policy around poverty more broadly, so for example, social assistance.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm. Well, I think that there is a huge risk that persons that are on -- - like, receiving social assistance, to be found doing that sort of frontline work, that there is a risk of that assistance being cut. I -- who knows. I'm just, kind of, imagining through that. Yes.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. And, one final question, you have made a number of recommendations about resource that is needed. Would you also recommend that this research be led by Indigenous people in accordance with Indigenous research methodologies wherever possible?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Whenever and

always.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Thank you. So, that's my last couple of seconds and now I am going to move into the next set of questions.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Sorry. If it is at all possible, I ask if we just have a brief 5 minute break just to allow one of the witnesses a quick health break.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Sure.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, if that is possible? I did not want to interrupt you ---

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Thank you.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: --- Ms. Beamish, but if we could do that. That would be appreciated.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Sure.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Sure. 5 minutes.

--- Upon recessing at 11:36

--- Upon resuming at 11:44 a.m.

--- PANEL 3, Resumed:

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay. We're about to get started again. I see that everyone's ready, and that we have the witnesses back and counsel, who will be asking questions.

So on that basis, I would just like to note for the record that Ms. Beamish now has 18.5 minutes on

behalf of the Association of Native Child and Family Services.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. SARAH BEAMISH:

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Hello again. Is this on?

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Yeah. Okay. Hello again. So the ANCFSAO, for your background knowledge, is a provincial association of member agencies that works for Indigenous child well-being, and so my questions now will mostly be focused on child well-being and the child welfare system.

So Jeffrey, I'll ask you a few questions first. Do you -- I know that you've done some research work with youth communities, and particularly, homeless youth communities. Have you -- in that experience, have you seen whether an Indigenous youth's queerness or two-spirit identity is taken into account when placing them into homes?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: My social work practice isn't one of child protection, so I can't speak to that, other than my relationships that I have with persons that have survived the child welfare system.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: And so I know, for

instance -- and I'm not going to disclose names -- but that those persons that I -- I'm in relationship to have bounced around from home to home because of a lack of safety.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: M'hm. Okay. Would you recommend, then, that child welfare agencies do more to consider this as a factor in what is a safe placement for Indigenous youth?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Definitely.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. And would you also recommend that child welfare agencies do more to build relationships with queer and two-spirit community resources and Elders and facilitate access to those resources and people by youth in care?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: The child welfare agencies to facilitate the access?

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: I recognize there may be some problems with that, but what I'm getting at, for instance, is making available like funds for Elders to work with children in care, especially if they're in situation -- if they're placed in homes that may have sort of no ability or intent to foster those connections themselves. Do you think that when a child welfare agency takes an Indigenous child out of their community and Indigenous family, they have a responsibility to do

something to maintain some of those connections?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Absolutely. Through Estelle Simard's culturally restorative practice, I feel that child welfare agencies have a requirement -- that the child welfare worker has a requirement to -- if they cannot connect the child in care back to their nation of origin, that they have to establish some sort of connectivity to a person from their -- from the same nation. And I also think that we should get away from centring responsibility on Elders' shoulders, but also broaden that to knowledge keepers and/or other persons that are deemed to be of good -- a good person to mentor under.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: M'hm.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: M'hm.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: And so to follow up on that, would you agree that an element of keeping children connected with their culture, it's not just about the Indigeneity element of it, it's also about, I guess, getting everything that comes into two-spirit? So for two-spirit youth ---

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: M'hm.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: --- that that dimension, in particular, of who they are has to be given attention and kept alive?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Definitely.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: In my time as a court worker in Toronto, that the majority of the people that I was working with that were involved in the Canadian criminal justice system, what I recognized at the end of my time with Aboriginal legal services was that the vast majority of them had been involved with child and family services at some point, if not their entire young lives.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: M'hm.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: M'hm.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Thank you.

I'd like to ask something about language. So in -- your materials talk about the ways that language itself can frame and colonize how we understand things like gender and sexuality, and you talked about even the term two-spirit as, you know, complicated from that point of view.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: M'hm.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Would you extend this kind of analysis to how we understand family? So what I mean by that is do you think that Indigenous languages offer possibilities of having different default assumptions about family in care arrangements?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: In care

arrangements, I think that the consideration of our extended kinship ties, persons that are adopted into our family or just because we're of the same nation or the same clan, are also our family. Sorry. Could you repeat the question?

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: I think you're sort of answering it.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Okay. Yeah.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: But my question ---

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I just wanted to -- there's another part of it there.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Yeah. So -- yeah. So my question was, like you've talked about how Indigenous terminology for -- within a particular language for what we might call two-spirit or what we might call gay can hold all sorts of other knowledge and very different perspectives.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: M'hm.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: And so I'm asking if that analysis could extend to language about family?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Definitely.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yeah.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Thank you. And would you recommend that child welfare systems -- and by that, I

also include the legislation that governs the child welfare system -- do more to centre those conceptions of family that are held in Indigenous languages?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: My specialization isn't child welfare. I do talk about decolonizing it through, again, the lens of culturally restorative practice. So I don't know that I can necessarily speak to legislation.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. That's fine.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yeah.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Thank you. I wanted to ask about something that was also in the -- Indigenizing the gay agenda paper. It talked about different life stages for -- in your nation in particular,

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: M'hm.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: And I believe it talked about six or seven different life stages and how people move into adulthood well into their thirties. And I'm interested in that from the perspective of the child welfare system because this is a system where you generally just sort of stop being a child right at 18.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: M'hm.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: And care may be quite swiftly pulled from you at that point. And there have been some, you know, baby steps towards sort of

transition. For instance, some governments are now paying tuition for youth who have been in care, but for the most part, you're sort of out of the system.

And leaving aside the question of whether that's appropriate for anyone, I'd like you to -- I wonder if you have anything to say about whether this is appropriate, inappropriate or harmful for youth coming from the kind of cultural perspective that you talked about in that paper?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: So the disconnect between human development -- ideas of human development?

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: The idea of childhood and youth that is used in the child welfare industry ---

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Right.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: --- and the idea of childhood and youth that Indigenous peoples themselves may hold.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Right. So to put a cap on, just like at 18, that's problematic, because -- particularly, for intergenerational survivors, that trauma that we carry forward developmentally, like some of us...

Like I'll just say for myself, my own personal experience, not coming from the child welfare system, but I didn't really figure out that I wanted to go back into academics, transitioning from hairstyling, until

well into my thirties. I don't think that I had the maturity to really get to that place. And I know that that's not a unique experience, a shared experience by other intergenerational survivors.

So I think that there -- I know that in the conversations that we had at Thompson Rivers University that in our social work program there that we're talking about those disconnects, right. So we're not considered in Secwepemc culture to be transitioning into our...

We have a naming ceremony. So for my 35th birthday, my father took me to one of our Kukpi7, one of our chief's homes, and my uncle, Percy Casper, led the ceremony to find my name, Simrau (ph), and Simrau is my adult name and marked my transition of becoming an adult. Although sometimes I don't feel like one, that ceremony -- it was a clear indicator. So we're observed as youth all the way up until 35.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yeah.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Thank you.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: M'hm.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: And recognizing that you've said your expertise is not in child welfare, would you recommend, sort of in a general sense, that child welfare systems should consider making changes that

reflect different Indigenous conceptions of life stages, including childhood and youth and what kind of care and support is needed in those stages?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Absolutely.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Thank you.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: I think -- I'm just going to ask you one more question, then I'll move on to asking Jasmine and T. J.

You made a point yesterday about black Indigenous solidarity ---

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: M'hm.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: --- and how you've seen that as an important part of the work that you do. And I'm glad that you raised that because when we talk about missing, murdered Indigenous women and girls, we are often -- we sometimes are talking about black Indigenous missing, murdered women and girls, and that hasn't had a lot of prominence in the Inquiry so far. So, I wanted to, I guess, just give you a moment to make any reflections on that that you would like to. Ideally, we would have a black Indigenous person here to make these reflections, but I would like to give you the opportunity.

I know that is a big question, but is there -- and you are welcome to just decline to answer it. But,

based on your -- the work that you referenced, the words you referenced having made about this issue, is there anything that you would like to say about what should be considered about black Indigenous missing, murdered women and girls?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think about my -- in my family back in Kamloops, we have a beautiful diversity of other racialized or other ethnic persons that -- my nieces and nephews come from a diverse background themselves. So, absolutely, I think that thinking about those violences and thinking about the intermixing, for a lack of a better term, I am tired, given the histories of both communities that when I reflect over this process or over the conversations of MMIW that I can't really recall a strong presence or voice of black Indigenous persons being represented in this process.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: And, would you agree that black Indigenous people -- I mean they share -- as Indigenous people, they share the histories we have been talking about, but they also share the history of black colonization and black trauma, and that that also has to be considered and understood when thinking about that group of people who may be subject to violence.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Absolutely.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Thank you. So,

with Jasmine and T.J., I have a few questions for you. The first is about -- the first set is about hypersexualization and sex.

So, you talked yesterday about hypersexualization is a state that Indigenous women and two-spirit people live in. And, I made a connection with something in the Violence on the Land report. And, it talked about how girls around Chemical Valley, and I think also around some other places, are experiencing early -- very early onset of puberty because of contaminants in their environment.

And, in that way, would you agree that these girls in these places are sort of literally being hypersexualized in the sense that they are being forced into perceived sexual maturity at an unnaturally early age?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, I would agree. I also think that, like, even in the education system within community how we treat each other. When they start showing signs of physical maturity, even if it is at a young age, unfortunately the way we talk to them changes. All of a sudden your mind frame treats them -- people start treating them as if they are older or more mature, that they can -- they somehow have the skills to deal with the reality of what is happening to them, and they don't.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: And, would you say that when they reach that stage, they are more vulnerable to violence?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I can't definitively say, but I would probably agree, yes.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Now, I want to I guess make a connection between that and sex as a specific sphere of healing. Now, I'm acknowledging, of course, that there are asexual people. Would you agree that, generally, sexuality is a very important aspect of one's self-expression and fulfilment?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. And, would you agree that sexuality is also an important aspect of healthy families and nations given that sex is how we create the new lives that sustain our communities and nations?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Absolutely.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Now, I am going to move onto talking about solutions and resilience but, first, I want to ask you something about the negative, I guess.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Mm-hmm.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Would you agree that as a result of things like residential schools, abuse in

foster care, abuse in homes, abuse in prisons, abuse in sex trafficking that there is a major problem of systemic intergenerational sexual violence and trauma in the Indigenous community?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. And, would you agree that this pervasive sexual trauma is a major root of violence?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. And, would you agree that an important part of addressing violence against Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people is there for healing sexuality and restoring Indigenous people's sense of health, joy, autonomy, pleasure and freedom with respect to sexuality?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Absolutely.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. In the Violence on the Land report, it had -- it talked about the project, Body Sovereignty -- Sexuality and Body Sovereignty Project by, I think, Nathana Bird. And, it says, "Nathana's work asks women and young people to consider sex as sacred or sex as ceremony, because there is a whole spiritual connection that happens behind having sex. What does it mean for Tewa people to have sex and to really embody this Indigenous view of our bodies?"

Would you like to take the last few minutes to maybe talk about some of the work that you have been doing and some recommendations you have about healing Indigenous sexuality specifically?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: So, yes, absolutely. I think that sex is such an important part of our lives, both as young people -- I know some people don't like to hear that youth have sex. Jasmine and I have talked about that in length, in that it is enjoyable and that, you know what, people are doing it and they are going to continue.

So, one part I would like to say is that the work that I do and will continue to do is grounded from an understanding of, like, trauma-informed care. And, that us, as youth, we have really cool networks out there right now that promote safe sex, but promote it from an Indigenous point of view where it is non-shaming. It is from a harm reduction standpoint. And so, like, that work needs to continue and it needs to have -- needs to be sustainable, because we are getting old and we are not always going to be youth. But, that work around sex should start from birth all the way throughout the lifecycle.

So, there is also often a disconnect, even not liking to talk about elders having sex. Guess what? Elders have sex. Your grandmas are getting it on. Maybe

with each other. Maybe with -- anyway.

(LAUGHTER)

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: So, you know, we need to support them and it needs to be part of our regular conversations. I think one of the fallouts of colonization is that, you know, for a lack -- and I am going to be very blunt, and I am very sorry, I apologize, white people don't like to talk about sex. Like, as -- our teachers don't like to talk about it. They don't want us to talk about it. We are taught at a very young age -- and I am saying teachers because the majority of teachers that happen to come to our communities are not Indigenous. So, often, your main messaging about sex, and healthy sexuality, and celebrating life and all these things come from people that are not Indigenous.

So, one, we need to support people that are doing awesome, healthy sex work, like the Native Youth Sexual Health Network. We need to support our midwives and the resurgence of midwives, and the right to have to give birth in our communities. We need to support the resurgence of doulas and doulas in their roles in the community as being providers. Like, those were our aunties, those were our grandmothers, those were our two-spirit helpers that -- so the work that I am going to continue doing is in that aspect. But, we need to provide

information to each other in a way that is helping and lifting each other up, and let us be okay to have sex.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Do you think that sex -- youth sex education should include culturally specific sex education?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, absolutely. And, one further, I think that it should be grounded in Indigenous languages from -- you know, from Indigenous people, by Indigenous people, for Indigenous people.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Jasmine, it looked like you maybe wanted to add something?

JASMINE REDFERN: No, I am just emphatically agreeing.

MS. SARAH BEAMISH: Okay. Wonderful. Well, you know, I have other questions, but I think that is a good note to end on. Thank you so much.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Thank you.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Chief Commissioner and Commissioners, it is now 12:00. I am going to suggest that this may be a good time to have our lunch break. When we return, we would have three parties with an estimated remaining 50 minutes and some redirect left. And then it could go into Commissioners' questions.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Okay.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, if it is all

right with you, I would kindly ask that we have a 1-hour lunch break and return at 1:00.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: 1:00, please.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.

--- Upon recessing at 12:03 p.m.

--- Upon resuming at 1:06 p.m.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Chief Commissioner and Commissioners, at this point, we would like to invite up the Vancouver Sex Workers Right Collective. Ms. Carly Teillet will have 25 minutes.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. CARLY TEILLET:

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Tashi, bonjour and good afternoon. I would like to start by thanking the community for welcoming us, again this day, to their Inuit territory. And, I would like to acknowledge the survivors, and the families, and the elders that are in the room with us, the sacred objects that travel with us and the medicines that are here so that we can do the work in a good way.

And so, I have the fortune of following my colleague and continuing to ask some really wonderful questions, and I am going to begin with T.J. and Jasmine. And so, yesterday, you asked us to involve the voices of youth, and in particular of LGBTQ2S individuals, in the

work that we do, in our conversations and to provide safety and support.

And so, I want to ask you about strength, support and empowerment. And, yesterday, you both mentioned being involved with the Native Youth Sexual Health Network; is that right? Can you briefly explain what the Native Youth Sexual Health Network is?

JASMINE REDFERN: Wow. So, our involvement with the Native Youth Sexual Health Network started about 10 years ago. And, at that point, it was just a couple of people who had very strong vision, started by Jessica Danforth, at the time Jessica Yee, and it has grown to so much more than that.

It is as a transnational organization and, very loosely fitting, allows any person who aligns with those views and those causes to affiliate themselves. And, they provide advocacy, direct support, they do a lot of the heavy lifting for young people to be able to access funding and to materialize their visions in their own communities. And, help to facilitate connections between young people and elders in their communities, and elders who align with certain values, so helping young people to find an elder who is a safe person for them, to be able to access teachings and history. And, I mean, you can jump in here too.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Sure. I would add that the Native Youth Sexual Health Network has been a lifeline for myself. It is an organization by and for Indigenous people. And, they have representatives from different regions, so there are -- Jasmine, at one point in time, was the Inuit rep. I don't know if we had anyone from Northwest Territories.

JASMINE REDFERN: Yes, we had.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes. So, the idea is, hopefully, that there is one rep from each territory and province. At one point in time, I sat for Nunatsiavut and New Brunswick because there wasn't a rep in New Brunswick.

So, the idea is that we develop resources by and for Indigenous people, from what youth want to see and hear in the gaps. Like, in some communities, there aren't resources or it's not built into the education model. And, Jessica started very young in her basement making this organization. She was, like, one of the youngest EDs ever, and it's branched out to include the...

JASMINE REDFERN: The National Indigenous Youth Council for Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: And, also a sub-project of that is the National Indigenous Young Women's Advisory Council which Jasmine and I both are co-founding members with.

JASMINE REDFERN: And so, the Beyond "At Risk" piece that was submitted into evidence, that was a product of the Native Youth Sexual Health Network.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: They also provide direction for the development of, like, this toolkit that was provided. They also do amazing artwork which ends up all over the place, like Erin Konsmo, her artwork is everywhere. They also recently are working in collaboration with Indigenous Birth of Alberta to start rolling out full spectrum doulas in our communities. And, they have also worked on, like, the MMIWG project, the Families of Sisters in Spirit, they work closely with NWAC, so pretty much every community you go to, admission (indiscernible) is there at some form.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Thank you for that. I understand that there is very important work being done, that's why I just wanted to give you an opportunity to speak to that.

I would like to focus in on some specific projects or terms that the Native Health Network uses. So, I understand that there's many focuses, but one of them is about reclaiming and restoring bodies. Can you talk a little bit about that?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: So, I'm not the expert on this piece because I think that Erin and Krysta probably

do more, but just the underlying philosophy is that it's a space where you can express yourself in whatever your gender-fabulousness is and whatever that means. So, cis, non-cis -- all of it.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Great. Continuing, kind of, on this theme, would one of you be able to speak to a little bit about the idea of support, not stigma or shame? So, what does that mean, support, not stigma; or support, not shame?

JASMINE REDFERN: So, I think that comes from a place of understanding that people have complicated lives, people live in a number of contexts and circumstances, and in the dominant narrative, we often go to a place of blame and shame. And, understanding that sometimes our intentions can be, oh, well, we want them to recognize them that that's a harmful situation for them to be in. But, we know. When we are in complicated situations, we know that they are complex, complicated, and messy and sometimes harmful.

And so, the idea of support, not stigma is don't tell us what to do. Don't shame us for the decisions that we make that aren't always actually decisions or choices, and instead work with us and help us to identify the ways that we can find safety, the ways that we can find community, and to help up with the

situation that we're in and let us determine where we're going to go from there.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: So I'd like to now know, or draw a link, or ask you, if supporting the autonomy and choice, and bodies of Indigenous women and LGBTQ individuals, does that include access to reproductive health tools, like birth control?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, and so not just birth control, but like access to information about sexuality and healthy sexuality in a way that's, like, informed safely. So -- and from a harm reduction point of view.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: And have you in your experience with these organizations, come across people that have had to choose, who are potentially homeless, having to choose between birth control and food, or birth control and shelter or clothing? And that's a real choice that some Indigenous women and LGBTQ2 individuals have to make.

MS. JASMINE REDFERN: It's not something that I've personally encountered, but I'm not in any way trying to negate the existence or possibility.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Thank you. I'd like to move to asking Jeffery some questions. So yesterday you mentioned bringing Indigenous knowledge into colonial education and colonial social work space. And that while

doing so, you raised two examples of active resistance to that. And what I would phrase -- I don't think these are your words, but potentially harm to you while trying to do that work.

And so, in particular I want to first talk about the Dean's response to you prioritizing your Indigenous way of thinking about land and safety, and asking the university you're working at to divest from a -- divest their interests from something that was actively harming your territory. And you said that your response was met with the assumption that there was something wrong with you. There was the mental health issue possibly happening.

So would it be fair to say that the response to that request wasn't, "That is a legitimate Indigenous response to this." Your response wasn't valued as legitimate input?

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: No, it was not.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: And you raised the other example of resistance to Indigenous styles of teaching, so storytelling, which is the way that we pass on knowledge, as being rejected by your students, or potentially rejected by your students. And I hope you'd agree that these two responses to Indigenous perspectives,

Indigenous knowledge, ways of teaching, are signs that colonial institutions of education and social work have a lot more work to do.

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: With regards to the school of social work at Thompson Rivers University, the -- my colleagues there stood behind all of my decisions of what I wanted to -- where I wanted to take that course, recognizing my ancestral ties to that place. With regards to the institutions -- I can only hypothesize that that's the institution's response to me because I was approached in a manner of wanting to -- of myself needing care when that visitation occurred.

And so, I was -- these women arrived on my doorstep, recognizing that I was "tired". So I just would like to provide the context of what that means for the Indigenous two-spirit person who is from territory, living, working, being, doing, loving everything in your own territory. I have responsibilities to my family. I have responsibilities to my community. I'm called to action as a nominated public speaker for my Nation, as one of. And then also the national and international work that I like to step into. So of course, I'm going to look tired.

Rather than saying, "Hey, you look tired." How about say, "Hey, how can I help?" And those are the

responsibilities there that visiting Indigenous academics to territory have, is to be the frontlines of building those relationships and understanding what the community needs are. And when I put forward -- what I was asked to do was, because I'm t'kemlips and because of the proximity protocol, I out -- in essence, trump any of the other Secwepemc persons that are working at TRU.

My uncle who's the medicine carrier for my family, my auntie who's a medicine carrier for the family told me that I had to speak up in those spaces. That I'm speaking for the best interests of our territory, of our Nation, and I don't believe that acceptance of $500,000 from Kinder-Morgan is by any way, shape, or form. And I had a response from the President of the university saying that they're neutral in that -- in that they'll accept money from anywhere. So I'm like, "Oh, so does that mean like, any sort of right wing organization you're going to accept money from?" Anyhow, so that was the response that I received from there, and you know, in the letter that I wrote, it was a really good seven-pager.

But just, you know, identifying all of the harms that happen and continue to happen in our territory. And I've said, with my authority, my jurisdiction, divest from Kinder-Morgan.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: I want to ask you a

little bit about your class, and your role as an Indigenous Professor in a University, and in social work. I think you mentioned that there were only one or two -- you and possibly another person -- in the faculty; is that correct?

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: As Indigenous?

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Yes.

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Dr. Natalie Clark is my -- was the only other colleague that I had at the time. Dr. Shelly Johnston, who is the Canada Research Chair for the Indigenization of universities across Canada, is also positioned at TRU as well.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Okay. And the faculty was around 250 people? Is that right? Do I have the number right?

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: The faculty count of ---

MS. CARLY TEILLET: So one or two people out of how may is my question.

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Oh, sorry. So yeah, one of two people -- sorry. Natalie and I are two people out of school of social work, which we had 7 colleagues.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Oh, seven. Okay.

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yeah. So it's

a small school.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Your class, was it mandatory?

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes. My class was a fourth year required core course for these students to graduate from the program.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Okay. So I'd like to take a moment just to clarify with you some examples about, kind of, the application of the theory that you shared with us yesterday.

So you talked about interrupting normative colonial narratives and having difficult conversations. And I think this is so incredibly important that I kind of want to unpack that a little bit. So this is my -- this is kind of, my understanding of the information you shared, is that you asked students to think about the stories that shaped their ideas.

So for example, that in a normal family there's two parents and children, or that normal relationships are men and women, or that land -- or sorry, for example about land, that land was empty when people arrived here -- when settlers arrived. So to ask students to recognize that there are other stories and that there are different ways of understanding than their story. And then to do the difficult work of trying to figure out

where their understandings are coming from. So where are they getting their concepts of family, gender, relationships, and land? And really kind of coming to a place that those are based in colonial, or racist, or other harmful ideas of institutions.

Is that a really crass summary? I'm trying to -- that's my understanding of, if I could kind of summarize. And so, would it be fair to say that your work is asking settler individuals, or non-Indigenous individuals, particularly within these colonial institutions of education or social work, to constantly think about how their decisions that they make are based on colonial assumptions, colonial stories. Is that what you're asking?

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yeah. I'm asking them to think about their own rich, cultural background. And if they don't know what that is, to find out what those stories are and to find confluence with the Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing that wherever their practice is happening, to consider what that looks like for themselves.

How I did that -- how I was doing that in t'kemlips was by having them read the Trout Children's story or have someone come in and perform the Trout Children's story for them.

And so Jacko Lake where the proposed mine that I mentioned before was going to go in is the site of where our (indiscernible), our water spirits, the birthing place of them, it's a very sacred place for us. And so for them to engage and think about their sites of practice.

Because the story of the Trout Children's story tells us what to do when we miss our kin, it tells us what to do when we have to discipline our children and our grandchildren. And you know, every time you hear it, I always take something new from it. And then that's the beauty of the storytelling, and it just gives them a whole new perspective in terms of thinking about how they're going to approach their practice in the future.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: So I'd like to, if possible, kind of workshop an example to get to what we're hoping to -- what -- hoping the children -- or sorry -- social workers -- what the hopeful outcome is of this teaching, what benefit our communities are going to see from this teaching in these social workers.

And so I want to just kind of start a little bit with land, to go back to land. So in B.C., in particular, and that's the example I'm familiar with, we're seeing some progress in that social workers are now starting to recognize that land is important to Indigenous

children, but something that's happening is that that idea of land still hasn't been interrupted, what does land mean.

And so some children are being placed in families of different nations. Some children, when they get to that place, the foster parents' idea of connection to land is going to a park, being outside, and that's not what land means to most of us.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Right.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: But if you think about land as a settler idea of land, the whole process of colonization is I see land, I can go there, I could take it, I can make it mine. So if you go until we move a child and they can make that land theirs, that doesn't work for us necessarily in the same ways.

And so if a social worker goes through this process and thinks about, okay, what do I mean by land and what does this community mean by land, can you give us -- and I'm just -- sorry. I'm just cognizant; I have very little time left and I still have more questions I want to get to. But could you give us an example of if you do that ---

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Sorry.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Oh, I'm sorry.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: We need

to stop. I just need to stop the clock. I received a message from Commissioner Audette that there is no sound. Sorry. On the live feed.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Is it my mic?

MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG: No. Check 1, 2. That's on CPAC?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: On the live feed. Yeah.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: While we're waiting for this technical, just so it's clear that the archival videos and everything have still recorded. For the purpose of the record, what has already been asked will have been recorded in another format. This is just in relation to the live feed. And at this point, without the AV being able to ascertain, it could be the recipient's volume issue as well. So we'll give it a minute so we can figure it out.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: We're good. We're good now.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Okay.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And we're good now.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Yeah. Okay.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: But just so it's clear, you will not have to go back and ask questions.

What was actually recorded as the answers on our archival and for the purposes of the record will stand, and, you know, if there has been some volume missed on the live feed, we apologize; sometimes there's technical glitches.

But if you could please carry on, Ms. Teillet, that would be wonderful.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Okay. So my question is, is if you have a social worker that's come through the program and has learned how to interrupt these dialogues, these kind of colonial assumptions, how does that help our communities? What would you -- how do you expect that to change their interactions with our families and our people?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: One of the slides that I asked to skip over actually were just unsolicited responses from my students. And a few of my students actually, when I knew that I was going to be coming here, also have sent in -- you know, have sent me letters of support of the work that I do. And so for instance, I believe one of -- my PowerPoint presentation has been submitted as a document. Anyways. One of the students says:

> The learning I experienced in your classroom was absolutely profound and your teachings were so multi-layered

that they continue to unfold for me over time. When we spoke of space and place, it altered my way of thinking, allowing me to begin to eye/see in, but when I began working in the field, your teachings took on an even deeper meaning. In the last year, I have found myself reflecting on your teachings almost every single day, re-examining and continually unpacking them in every situation I encounter, both professionally and personally. I couldn't be more grateful for your class, if not only determined -- not only determined my future career, but it continues to impact everything I do as an ally and a social worker. (As read)

MS. CARLY TEILLET: And so, we have -- that's a wonderful feedback from someone who has gone through. I'm wondering if we have the other side of that feedback?

So part of the reason why I'm wondering this is because at the institutional hearings in Regina, we heard repeatedly from police forces that they're going

to institute training, or they have training to educate people that interact with our communities in, someone described violent ways, or enforce laws that our communities don't like. "We're going to train them and that's going to make things better", was kind of some of the messaging we were getting.

And so my question is, is we now have another institution that we've heard about how it interacts negatively with some of our families -- social work. That the removal of children is an issue for a lot of our communities and a lot our families.

So do you have feedback from the community that this kind of training is assisting them and making them feel more safe, or they're improving their -- like their perspective or their interactions with the social workers? So from kind of the other side of that relationship.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I can say that my past students have been hired directly by my Tk'emlups community now and are working in our social development agency, and are a huge strength to that work, that -- yeah.

I -- in terms of tracking what my pedagogy has meant in other places, and whether that's impacted in positive ways, I don't know, I haven't asked that

question. But I think that's a really great thing for me to start looking at the further my career develops and the more people that I have an opportunity to be a co-learner with.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Thank you.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Because some of what we're talking about is trying to find tools to see what works, and so we are -- we know of some tools and we're still developing other ones, but we still don't have what works. We know a lot about what's not working, and so ---

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: But I think that that's territorial-specific. It has to come from the nation in which people are practicing, and it has to be led by someone from -- who has that grounded relationship with the land, with the water, with the people who can facilitate that learning or unlearning, can share things like the Trout Children's story with people so they have a different perspective of space and place, and to develop syllabuses, if you will, that are also relational, experiential, and vulnerable.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Those are my questions. Thank you very much. Merci.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: Migwetch.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you, Ms. Teillet.

Next, we would like to invite up Ms. Catherine Dunn on behalf of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Coalition of Manitoba. Ms. Dunn has 6 minutes.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: Thank you.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. CATHERINE DUNN:

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: There has been a lot of information given, a lot of terrific questions asked, and a lot of unbelievable answers in the last couple of days that I've heard. So I'm going to keep my questions relatively short and really with a view to clarifying the record on some of the terminology that has been used this afternoon.

And specifically with reference to the word, colonization. And, I throw this question out to all of the panel. Colonization, as I understand your evidence, it results in a state policy, is that where it begins?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Does colonization result in a state policy?

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: State policy created colonization. That is a government, whether it was federal, territorial or provincial, imposed its own

policies upon a particular group, in the circumstances of the Inquiry, a group of Indigenous or Inuit people.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Definitely in the context of my territory.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: Yes. And, part of that policy was to remove land and to remove resources from Indigenous peoples and Inuit peoples, is that fair?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: And, the term, colonialism, in that respect, is not a past tense term, it's an ongoing problem ---

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm. Definitely.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: --- would you agree with that?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: And, similarly, the term de-colonialism or deconstruction of colonialism is not something that has happened, it is something that we are trying to manage at this particular point in history, that is we have not deconstructed or reached de-colonization yet. You just have to say "yes" or "no" for the record.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes -- no. Sorry. No.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: And, if you take that construct about state interference with Indigenous peoples and Inuit peoples, that is a policy that is ongoing?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: That is a policy that is and continues to be intentional?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: That is a policy that can be changed by political will?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Whose political will?

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: The state's political will.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: And, we heard evidence yesterday of a group of individual midwives in Toronto who were able to organize a midwifery facility in 14 months, that is to get the funding and to get the physical structure in place in 14 months. That is an indication of political will, would you agree, or is that too general a term? It's not specific to your evidence, so I will move on.

Jeffrey, you had mentioned in your evidence that Stephen Harper rendered an apology to the Indigenous peoples in 2008, and you reference that as a move to

innocence; is that correct?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: What do you mean by that?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: In Tuck and Yang's article, Decolonization is not a metaphor, it was one of the colonial tactics, or technology if you will, of easing feelings of guilt and shame.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: All right. And, if the apology was heartfelt, one would think -- or do you think that 10 years on past that apology, that the state of various systems in Canada, for example child welfare in which social work would have a direct impact on, would be in a better state?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: One would hope.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: Yes. And, people who teach, such as yourself, have made it very clear for a very long time in the research, in the literature, in instructing their students and others, that Indigenous people have a right to the land in this country?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: Is that fair?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: And, you have taught your students this, and you have taught your students that

they have a right to their language?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: And, yet, political will does not go along with your teachings, is that fair?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: That's fair.

MS. CATHERINE DUNN: And, it's not that hard, if we have political will, to change these systems in a way that will allow Indigenous people and the general Canadian society to live harmoniously together. Those are my questions, thank you.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you, Ms. Dunn. Next, we would like to invite up the Northwest Territory Native Women's Association. Ms. Casebeer has 18.5 minutes.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. JESSI CASEBEER:

MS. JESSI CASEBEER: Thank you. Good afternoon. It's a bit of a hard act to follow, that would have been a good note to end off on, but here I am. And, all of my colleagues have asked such insightful questions today that I think we have gotten a lot of good testimony. You all have been courageous and amazing to listen to, so thank you.

While I understand, perhaps Jeff, if I may call you that, that your contextualizing questions are

meant for a more deeper, perhaps less formal setting, I thought I should situate myself a little bit. I am Jessi Casebeer and I am here to represent the NWT Native Women's Association. This organization serves all Indigenous women throughout the territory which means women from 33 different communities across a vast (indiscernible) territory from each nation. And, it is based in Yellowknife, which is the traditional territory of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, and I personally have had the incredible experience of growing up as an uninvited settler on (indiscernible) land. I am very grateful for that experience.

In light of the fact you have answered some fairly broad questions and we have tackled some big ideas, I will start with T.J. and Jasmine, I wanted to draw a little bit on your lived experiences of living in a city like Iqaluit and working also in Nunatsiavut on the frontline. And, perhaps what we can do -- we have talked about things that we can do to avert people in crisis, getting help in their crisis moments and stopping that from the very beginning. But, do you have any input on how to deal with people in their constellation of identities in the context of organizations with lack of capacity, that are dealing with people in crisis? Are there places where we can start building that capacity

from really small steps where we are now, in the context of, like, a regional hub dealing with a lot of different people?

JASMINE REDFERN: Yes. I want to acknowledge that on the frontlines it can be really hard, you are always overworked, you are always under resourced. And, I think that is where that role of a paid advocate who can be there to support organizations who have the will and the interest in conducting those organizational reviews, and those policy reviews and help facilitate interaction with LGBTQ and two-spirit communities. Yes.

MS. JESSI CASEBEER: Did you have anything you wanted to add, T.J.? Thank you. You have both talked a little bit about coming from a place of harm reduction. I wondered if you could talk a little bit more about that and what that means to you when you do your work.

JASMINE REDFERN: Sure. I think that comes back to that concept of support, not stigma. Instead of expecting clients, patients, community members to come meet you where you are able to provide services for them, and sometimes that means expecting people to suffer in dignified ways, sometimes that means not expecting people to come and show up sober, or sometimes that means expecting people to conceal or withdraw or, in other ways, minimize certain parts of their identities, and instead

being able to meet somebody exactly where they are at and saying, I am the one that is providing the service, you are the one that needs the service, I am coming to you because you are valid, because you need help, because you want support and you, as you are, deserve that.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I would like to echo Jasmine and just say that it is coming from a place of wanting to do no further harm, that it is supposed to be coming from a place of no judgment, so that we just accept people as being equal and worthy of rights regardless of who they are, wherever they are at.

MS. JESSI CASEBEER: Do you think there is maybe a need, especially in places like Iqaluit and other communities in Nunavut and in -- throughout the Northwest Territories as well -- well there are several transient workers, perhaps, working on these frontline roles who maybe aren't grounded in the territory and with the people, do you think there should be space for the government or somebody providing these people training before they are put into these roles?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Speaking to my work experience, absolutely. I also think that -- so there is the need to -- the onus should be on the people, like, the structure providing the education, yes. But, also, that the -- people coming to the territory should be coming

with the understanding that they are grounding themselves in the culture and language of the people that they are interacting with.

But, I would also like to go one further and say that there needs to be a designated numbers hire of actual, like, Indigenous people providing those support services for themselves. So, unfortunately, in the territory right now as it sits, those are mostly staffed by people that are not Indigenous. And so, even if they could allocate so that they are obligated to hire half-and-half and help meet those educational needs, that would be really helpful.

MS. JESSI CASEBEER: Thank you. I don't know if either of you are aware, if there is some data, or there have been studies, or you have read articles about the particular complexity of domestic violence for marginalized people, but also in the specific context of northern communities?

JASMINE REDFERN: I am -- not specific to inter-partner violence. But, ha-we-ya-tay (phon.) Health Research Centre provided some -- gathered some information about the health status of Inuit women, which took a pretty broad social determinant's perspective, which encompasses some forms of violence too.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, I think even if you

look to agencies like the Native Women's Association of Canada, ITK and Pauktuutit, they all have reports on their websites which are accessible to the public that, you know, you could look back and do the research.

MS. JESSI CASEBEER: Thank you. Jeff, I am just going to ask you some questions about, more broadly, the work that you have been doing with your pedagogy, decolonizing social work. Do you see that -- did you kind of envision it as being a model for other professions or government structures in the future? Like, is that the goal moving forward that we all engage in this?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think it wasn't an intended outcome of developing the course to where it was -- sorry, to where it is today. But, I think as a syllabus that I developed, it stands as a, perhaps, strong resource for people to sculpt something that is more better situated to their community needs. But, I do have, you know, assignments and those sorts of things that help that unpacking process. And, I definitely stand by the work and would love to see an opportunity to see how the syllabus would run somewhere else as well. Mm-hmm.

MS. JESSI CASEBEER: And, thinking of using your unpacking and decolonizing of traditionally imperial or colonial institutions, if you are in a place like Yellowknife or Iqaluit where maybe the capacities and

organizations are run down, capacity maybe isn't there and the government is providing funding or government is trying to take a role to support this, do you see attention there or are there any concerns about having government involved? And, can we alleviate that in some way?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes, I don't know about, like, government involvement with that. I don't think that that would be -- like from a settler perspective and, like, a state-ran sort of thing, no, I don't agree with that. I think that it could be us standing back up our agreements between nations that existed from before contact; right? So, between the Syilx, and the In-kl-a-ham-uk (phon.), and the Secwepemc, and the -- you know, those relationships in terms of being able to facilitate that nation-to-nation and helping communities that are close by to do that work. Yes.

MS. JESSI CASEBEER: So, perhaps if I can pair that back to you a little bit, settlers in the Canadian -- the place we call Canada, as you phrase it, has a responsibility to help build back up what they have torn down and engage -- like it is our responsibility to take on that role to build the capacity so there are people who are grounded in their communities to begin this process of unpacking?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I believe that for settler bodies that the conversation needs to turn back into their settler communities to do that work, because the emotion and labour is quite taxing. And, the work of Indigenous bodies is the work of resurgence. Mm-hmm.

MS. JESSI CASEBEER: Thank you. I think that will be my time for today.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you.

MS. JESSI CASEBEER: Thank you all so much.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you. So, that would conclude the cross-examination. Commission counsel does have a redirect, and we would like to use our redirect. On that basis, we sort of standardly have been using 20 minutes, so I would ask that the time be set for 20 minutes in order to do the redirect.

--- RE-EXAMINATION BY MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And, I actually only have redirect for 2 of the 3 witnesses. And, I am going to start with you, if that is okay, T.J.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Mm-hmm.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, T.J., in your examination in-chief, you had mentioned that you are the mother of an Inuk daughter?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And, if I am not

prying too much, can I assume you also have an Inuk partner?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And, you do live here in Iqaluit and work in Iqaluit?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And, can you remind me again for how many years?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I have been -- so I lived here originally for three years, and then returned home for a terminal family member in Labrador, and then came back to Iqaluit.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: But, you think of, currently, Iqaluit as home?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Right. And, is it fair to assume that you actually get to experience a lot of the beauty of Inuit culture through your partner's view and also just being in a relationship with an Inuit woman?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, absolutely. We are loving and investing in our community.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you. It is obvious your academic work that you have done and the research you have done, as well as your activism and passion means you are relatively well-read in the areas

that interest you. I just want to check. You chose the materials, all of the materials that you spoke about in your testimony today?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, I did.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes. And, in particular, the one report that was a collaboration done by partners was the assessment, the qualitative assessment, the Impact of Resource Extraction on Inuit Women and Families?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And, I am sure I will mispronounce the Inuit words here. But, I understand that this was a partnership between the British Columbia School of Social Work as well as Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay. And, would you agree that this qualitative assessment included a survey of questionnaires of Inuit women ---

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: --- in specific regions because it was focusing on the impact of resource extraction, something you wanted to testify about?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay. And so, if I

could just walk through a couple points. This doesn't require you to actually turn the page, but you have read it and you did provide the material. So, is it fair to say that the report itself talks about a number of things and important things? Specifically, it is talking about -- - in the overview, they talk about a literature review. So, you agree that part of this quantitative assessment was questionnaire and surveying of Inuit women, but another part of this was also a literature review if I understand?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And, if we actually did look at the Appendix A, we would see that the literature review required review of 64 publicly available documents. So, a lot of what came out of the literature review component of this assessment looked broadly at a number of other work done on resource extraction ---

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: --- you would agree with me on that?

Specifically at page 6, and again you don't have to turn it up. If you want to, you are welcome to. There is a statement that the role of mining and resource development in the creation of unequal outcomes and the disposition of some of the advantage of others is an

international concern. So, this was -- is it fair to say that this is part of the reason why they had to look at 64 other publicly available reports?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And then as well, on page 9, there is an acknowledgment by the researchers that were commissioned to do this assessment under the focus on woman, that the complexity of these issues is real, and our focus on Inuit women in this study has been deliberate. It is significant, given the limited attention paid to the impacts of mining on Indigenous women, and in the case of the arctic, to Inuit women.

When you came across -- I had asked you earlier (Indiscernible), how did you come across this article? Did you find it online?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yeah, I found it online through a public search engine.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And, you were, like, literally typing in some phrases to find reports that probably -- I'm going to guess, but please correct me if I'm wrong, that touched on Inuit, on arctic, and on resource extraction, and that's because you have a genuine interest?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yeah, because of my genuine interest, but also wanting to make those linkages

that what happens to Mi'kmaw women, to Maliseet women, to First Nations women, Métis and Inuit that it's a shared experienced. So, I just wanted to make sure that people don't think that what's happening to Inuit is happening in a silo, that we have this shared colonial history, that it's as a result of methodological individualism.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Right. And, I mean, the report, the assessment itself, you know, acknowledges a number of things. When it's talking about the literature review, it actually -- the literature review actually contains suggestions to improve women's safety and empowerment on an offsite of, like, a mining resource like this one. And so, was part of the reason to bring this to also talk about some of those solutions?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay. And, would you agree that public access to this type of quantitative assessment is valuable in its understanding the issues as they do relate to different or diverse Indigenous groups?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Absolutely.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Do you think speaking about this and contextualizing your evidence, it was a way to support not just your personal opinions, but to show people, look, there's work in this area, not singular?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Mm-hmm.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, it was helpful, I'm assuming?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes. It comes back to that whole burden of proof; right? Like, that oftentimes, people want a large literature review to prove your point or, like, help support where you're coming from so they don't think it's coming out of a silo.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, how do you understand Pauktuutit, like, as an organization or what they do? Are you aware of, sort of, what they do generally? I'm not asking you to give me their, you know, their mission statement, but if you could let me understand how you know Pauktuutit?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: So, my understanding from, like, reaching out to using them as resource, myself in my own, like, frontline work, in my education work, and as partners through Sisters in Spirit, like, years ago, is that they're a public lobbying body supposed to be by Inuit women for Inuit women, I believe.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, now, I'm going to ask the question, and it turns back to the personal. As a mother of Inuk daughter, do you think that the research collected from an Inuit woman's organization demonstrating their perspective is important to be

publicly available and a used resource?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes, absolutely. I'm invested in who she is. I can't deny -- like, if there's something that's going to impact my daughter as an Inuk woman, that's in my vested interest. I want to know everything I can about it. That comes from my own personal drive, but also, because my spouse is Inuk, like, as hopefully as being a good partner, at least I hope she can tell me if I'm not, you know, I want to understand the realities of her life. Plus, I'm a nerd, so I want to be able to talk about these things intellectually with her and hope that I'm understanding from not just her perspective, but her community's perspective, and from her raised experience. Like, I want to make sure that I'm well informed and not being -- well, you know.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And, again, because this was a public and important document, the inclusion was specifically just to support your assertations in your testimony?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I have kind of a question that follows from yesterday. Yesterday you were wearing a shirt. What does today's shirt say?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Today's shirt says "Breastfeeding is food sovereignty".

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Excellent. Thank you for answering my questions.

Jeffrey, I have two questions for you. One is I noticed a number of my colleagues were asking questions, relying on some of your material and talking and kind of using the terminology of LGBTQ and two-spirited. Now, some acknowledge that it's more detailed than that. In their limited amount of time, they weren't able to unpack that.

But, I did want to ask you, because I know you write about it, the differences, the difference between at least, sort of, in thought between two-spirit expressions versus the LGBTQ?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: From my understanding, and my thinking about it, is that LGBTQ, lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans, these are all recently constructed words. And, what I mean by that is that they've only been around for the past 150-plus years. That creates a very particular idea about who a person is when they align with these particular locations, social locations or identity constructs.

So, when we think about lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer, we have to ask the question, why these terms and whose purposes do they serve? While I was doing a reading at a conference at UBC, Lee Maracle

was sitting in the audience, and I stumbled, and I totally got all embarrassed because Lee Maracle was in the room, and I was, like, "Oh my God, Lee Maracle is in the room." And then this boisterous laugh came from the back, but while we were talking about sexualities, she spoke up and said there's no homosexuality, there's no heterosexuality. Before contact, there was just human sexuality, and that was the first time that I had heard anything like that before.

So, the difference is that I see, at present, our -- around our social justice initiatives in that lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans have, you know, fought for rights to get married, for spouses to have rights after, you know, their spouse passes on, to adopt, and to serve in the military. But, I suggest that if we are to be included within the LGBTQ acronym as two-spirit people that our sovereignty, our land and water defence, in thinking through reciprocity should matter to the rest of our LGBTQ community and family just as much. And, that those social justice initiatives that are our own should be wholeheartedly supported by dominant LGBTQ populations in this place called Canada.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you. My last question for you is you have talked about and answered questions about, you know, walking home. Or, yesterday in

your chief, you described that part of your responsibility now is to stand and protect, and it reminded me to ask you, can you tell us about the tattoo on your chin?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Well, part of the resurgence project is that we're seeing a resurgence of our ancestral tattooing coming back. And so, a week before I moved out to Toronto, I was up in Blue River where (indiscernible) Tiny House Warriors and is camped out there. And, it's a really unique space up there. That's actually -- we used to hold our territory there. There was Mohawk, people that came over the mountains there. It's just so rich in history.

Anyways, (indiscernible) wanted to give me this marking before coming out here, because this is one of our traditional markings that identifies me in my community as being a truth speaker, and that I have a responsibility to speak the truth in spaces where truth needs to be spoken. And, the two dots that are right underneath of my lip mark this as a two-spirit facial tattoo. The full marking, however, has two other lines coming out this side of the corners of my mouth on an angle. And so, the fourth line, of course, you know the significance of number 4 in our communities is actually my voice. But, I'm just not entirely ready for the other lines there. But, for now, I can just do this one.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, you said it's right below your lips?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Right below my lips I have the two marks.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And, why is it placed there instead of where you might more traditionally see it lower on your chin?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: The lower markation is for a two-spirit woman from our territory. That's the marking where she had hers done. And so, mine, I had felt like that -- I needed to be a bit higher.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And, is it the higher so that you're always in front to protect?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Mm-hmm. As a warrior, yes.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: As a warrior.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yeah. We are a warrior society, the Secwepemc people.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you. I just thought it would be helpful to explain that. We are going to turn our attention -- sorry, that concludes my re-direct. We are going to move into the Commissioners' questions, but I just wanted to put on the record that Jeffrey has offered, when you are done your questions, to actually do an honour song in his language, if the

Commissioners permit it.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Well, of course. Thank you. Yes. We need to take about a 10 minute break so that we can hook up Commissioner Audette.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: So, 10 minutes, please.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you. We will take a 10 minute break.

--- Upon recessing at 2:04 p.m.

--- Upon resuming at 2:18 p.m.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Chief Commissioner and Commissioners, I understand that now you have some questions and that we will be beginning with Commissioner Audette. Hello, Commissioner Audette.

--- QUESTIONS BY COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Hello to you. I see that you have your headsets on already for translation purposes. Hooray for technology, I am able to follow what you are doing either by phone, either on CPAC and on Skype as well. So, thank you very much to the technicians, thank you for gaining the sound back, because during the cross-examination or the exchange between the parties with standing, unfortunately I lost the sound and I did not want to miss a beat. So, thank you very much

and I apologize for this inconvenience. But, thanks to all of this, a good portion of Canada was able to hear you, those of you who speak French.

As Maître Catherine Dunn was saying, as well as the counsel for NWT Native Women's Association, I don't have any questions which is extremely rare, especially coming from me, especially in my case, but what I really wanted to do, I wanted to make sure that it thanked you. I even texted the Chief Commissioner, I said, I can't answer *[sic]* questions because every time I have a question, they are answering my question without me even asking. So, thank you for your know-how, your savoir fair, your knowledge, and thank you for having -- felt comfortable enough to speak on topics that are very taboo.

I am from the North, you all know what it is like there, (indiscernible), Commissioner Robinson will say, no, no, the North is Iqaluit, Nunavut and et cetera, I'll spare you the list. So, yes, you are right, it is the true north, but nevertheless, we are an isolated or remote community in terms of plane or boats, and other portage methods allow us to get to where we want to go. And, there are some roads, but we do have a very strong reaction when we hear about our youth, our men, our women who are living discriminating situations because they express themselves as being two-spirited.

It always impresses me how comfortable you are with all of this. And, you really debunk or remove any ill-ease that we fed into way too long -- for way too long a time now. So, thank you, thank you for telling us about the impacts that all of this has and teaching us, within the framework of this National Inquiry, there -- the violence side of things in all its shapes and forms, colonial violence, but also day-to-day violence. And, our brothers and sisters can experience all forms of violence, including the two-spirited. So, congratulations.

Congratulations also for showing us through your experience, your knowledge within the context of academic institutions or government institutions, you are trying to exercise a form of influence, you are trying to bring forth some change. And, thanks to the texts you have given us, the exchanges we have had together, the answers you have given to the counsels, Commissioners, the legal team, et cetera, you *[sic]* will be able to come up with recommendations, tangible recommendations that will reflect as closely as we can your message. We are going to be working on this.

But, the three experts, the three panellists, very beautiful people I might add, if you would like to formulate some last recommendations that perhaps you would have forgotten to mention, or to bring

forth or to share, I am offering you this possibility at this point in time. Do you have more recommendations? Because I saw the list of your recommendations in your presentations, but verbally here and now, in the context of this Inquiry, is there anything you would like to add?

JASMINE REDFERN: Sure. Oh, I should take this off. So, along with one of our friends who came to ask some questions of us, mentioned an advocacy position. And, along with that, in our conversations leading up to our testimony, we had talked about patient navigators which builds on a similar concept of safe people that can help us navigate systems and create linkages between services to establish that continuity, and to support individuals accessing services.

Recognizing that accessing services can be a very intimidating process for people, and the structure of particularly the medical system means that you are always, kind of, rushed, and doesn't always make space for your immediate reaction to the questions or to the information that you are being given by your service provider. So, having something like a patient navigator who can do, you know, a pre-check-in before the appointment and say, okay, what are some of the things that you would like to get out of this? These are the types of anticipated questions, are you comfortable

answering these types of questions? And then being with a patient or an individual through the appointment, can offer that emotional support during the appointment, and then also the follow-up. So, reminding maybe a patient in the appointment, before we met with the doctor, you had mentioned you wanted to know a little bit more information about this type of treatment. Do you want us to ask that right now or after the appointment saying, okay, so this is the information that you were given; these are the things that we talked about. Are you comfortable with everything that happened? Do you want us to help refer you to additional services, or do you want us to help you research into some of the advice that has been provided to you?

And, again, that continuity piece, I think, is especially important for northern and rural communities where you might only see that service provider one time, and the next time you go to seek the exact same services or for a follow-up to that same appointment, you might be seeing a different face, and that can also be additionally intimidating. And, having that continuity of somebody who is there and who is aware of the kind of arc of your treatment or your navigation through the health systems or service systems can be very grounding for people.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Well, I

agree that it could be intimidating for people and I can confirm that it's the same for the south, for Indigenous people in the south. Last night, I was with a beautiful group of Indigenous women who moved to Quebec City or settled in Quebec City, and during the talking circle, all of them said exactly what you mentioned.

I know, to conclude on my end, again, I have to say thank you. I have to say since day one, very, very impressed with your -- all the presentation, and of course, this panel, and I know -- I think the two of you are working at the Nunavut government, if I understand well?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: No. So, I ---

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: No? Okay. I read something about that.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: So, I'm working with the Government of Nunavut, but I am not representing the Government of Nunavut in these hearings, just very clear. And, Jasmine is a second-year law student.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Okay. Thanks for the clarification.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Commissioner Audette, actually, Jeffrey wanted to answer your first question.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Je ne vois

pas Jeffrey. I don't see him. Je ne le vois pas, Jeffrey, ici. Okay, merci.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And, after him, T.J. also wants to respond.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Merci beaucoup.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Okay. So, my final recommendations, I had to sit and think about that for a minute. But, isn't to the Commissioners, but it's to the federal Government of Canada to revisit their decision to not fund for the additional funding. I think that this is a large cultural project that really needs, you know, full funding until we get to the bottom of it. And, I feel we've only just scratched the surface. So, revisit your decision, Canada, and let's re-centre the families in this.

My other piece is just coming from an educational standpoint, and that accessibility to higher education, or post-secondary education, or what kind of knowledges that we value, that universities, you know, thinking about that as an institution and to think about how those are regarded as not safe spaces for some Indigenous persons, one of the barriers to accessing education in Secwepemcul'ecw is being able to get to and from the campus sites. More additional funding is needed

to help people to do -- to get the education that they need to get to that next level, or to help that resurgence project that they might be interested in, in their communities.

So, I would suggest monies for satellite classrooms to pop up in remote communities, and I think that those would be my last two.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: T.J.?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yeah. So, I have three quick added points that I'd like -- recommendations that I'd like to make. The first be that no matter who you are, if you're providing a public service or government service, that you make your practice trauma-informed, regardless of our backgrounds. Like, even our colonial brothers and sisters, they need that care, too, and they deserve it as well, but us more acutely as First Nations people.

And, my second recommendation would be that any of these systems that have intake forms, any, like, education, healthcare, social work, all these systems have maybe a built-in policy where there is a review of intake forms every couple of years so that they change to be more fitting to the realities of where we are.

Just acknowledging that information changes, and even for non-Indigenous populations that we

should be supportive of all of us and all of our realities. So, whether that be changing the ticky boxes to say "male, "female", "other", or even the school intake forms, that those, right from the get-go, can set up barriers for our children.

And then the third is more, I guess, to other L'nu people in the country, ourselves, is that even if the government support is not necessarily there, or the finance dollars aren't there, there's things that we can do in our everyday lives that are random acts of resistance that can help build our nations. So, whether that's driving soup to people on the frontlines, or opening up our own soup kitchens, or providing free tutoring to younger people, that we support people -- if we're not doing the work ourselves, that we should be supporting each other to do that. So, even if it's, you know, your nieces and nephews going through university and college and they're away from home, do what would happen to us and give them money for their groceries so that we can ensure their success through the post-secondary institution. Core fund youth programs.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Merci beaucoup, Maître Big Canoe. Pouvez-vous me diriger vers M. Seymore? Dernière question pour Jeffrey.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Sure.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Merci Maître Big Canoe.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Can you see him?

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Merci. Oui.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Allo.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: I thought you ran away from me. Okay. Je vais poser ma question en français. Vous travaillez dans une institution académique. Toutes mes félicitations.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Mais d'après vous, est-ce que -- en ce moment vous avez la chance d'instruire et de partager et d'échanger avec des gens sur votre savoir, mais pensez-vous que c'est une volonté -- comment je pourrais dire -- de certains individus de vous faire cette place? Et que s'il y a un changement à la direction d'une université ou d'un collège, des gens comme vous peuvent du jour au lendemain perdre leur emploi et ne plus, justement, éduquer les gens sur les réalités autochtones, est-ce qu'il serait important, comme enquête, d'amener des recommandations qui obligent — mais je n'aime pas le mot « oblige » — oblige les universités, les collèges à faire un espace officiel sur l'histoire, la vie d'aujourd'hui, les aspirations de demain sur les questions autochtones?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Yes, most definitely. While I was at Thompson Rivers University, I could count on one hand how many Secwepemc people worked at that institution. So, absolutely. Recruitment and retention of per persons from the territories that those institutions found themselves in should be of, you know, of great concern and of great interest to that, you know, that work of reconciliation. I think that that's a really good example of reconciliation and action. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Bien, merci à tous les trois. Thank you so much, and thank you for the clarification. I thought that the two of you were working at the government, but thank you for the clarification. And, you will be a great lawyer. I know so many lawyers now.

(LAUGHTER)

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Commissioners, do you have a specific order?

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Yes, I am going to start.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay.

--- QUESTIONS BY COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON:

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: First of all, I want to thank all three panelists so much for coming here and sharing your evidence with us, and for, you know,

providing us with such thoughtful answers, and for making it interesting and refreshing for us. It has been really great.

I have a few questions for you. They are more in the nature of follow-up questions and a couple of questions may seem like fairly basic questions, but I think it is important. I want to start by asking you about what it means to be two-spirit. So, I just want to back up and do that. And, I think it would be helpful for the people that are watching these proceedings, but also so that we have a good record on this.

So, that is the first thing I want to ask you about, what does it mean to be two-spirit? But, we have also talked about the term -- or you have talked about the term "intersectionality". So, I want to ask you about what does intersectionality mean in the context of Indigenous two-spirit, LGBTQ people?

And, just with respect to the term "two-spirit", I know in one of your paper's, Jeff, that you filed, you described the term "two-spirit" as being colonized when it is just used to identify LGBT Indigenous people. And, in terms of intersectionality, I think, T.J., you referred to a constellation of identities yesterday, I believe.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: That was Jasmine.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Was it Jasmine? Sorry. And, I think, Jeff, also, in your paper, you described two-spirit in light of its intersectionality as encompassing all aspects of who Indigenous people are.

So, those are the first two questions I want to ask you. And, I feel a bit odd asking you about what it means to be two-spirit when I am a two-spirit person myself, but you are the witnesses, and -- so I have to ask you today. So, those are my two questions to start with. So, can you comment on what it means to be two-spirit or what it can mean, you know, in terms of possible multiple meanings, but also what does intersectionality mean in the context of Indigenous two-spirit LGBTQ identity?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: So, for myself, I use the term "two-spirit" when I am referring to myself so that I can kind of situate and get people to understand, I guess, from an outside point of view. Each nation has its own understanding of what it means to be two-spirit, but the way that I use it to situate myself is that I was -- thought I present feminine some days, I don't always, like the mainstream idea of femininity. But, that I -- there are many masculine parts of myself and that I have always felt that I have walked in two different worlds.

So, I was always a tomboy, and my sexuality

at a young age was taught to me as in, like -- I guess I was treated in that way that I was a tomboy, and I was allowed in with men and in those masculine roles. There was an acceptance there to some degree. And, like, I was allowed to participate in hunting, I was allowed to rock climb, and build fires, and learn how to fix cars, and all these things. But, at the same time, I was also fostered in, like, traditional -- like sewing skills.

My grandmother-in-law was my mentor, and she made sure that I had the skills needed to clothe my wife and child, and the next generations, and that I was open to teaching men and women and everyone that was interested in learning those skills. So, just using two-spirit as an understanding that I feel like I fit within both.

I feel both masculine and feminine, and that changes on the day, because I actually, in my own -- so I use -- for people that don't know me or not familiar with discourse, I use two-spirit. For myself, I use gender fluid or sexually fluid to describe myself. And so, there is an intersectionality there where I just -- taking off the label saying that, like, I am who I am, it changes on a day-to-day basis, and that is how I understand myself, because of how I was born.

And so, even within myself, you can start

to see those intersectionalities. Intersectionality referring to the fact that we are very dynamic individuals. Like, I have a qallunaat father, my mom is Mi'kmaw, and I am able-bodied. I am not cis-gendered. So, there are so many different expressions of who we are. So, it is just a term to express those diversities.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Thank you. Jasmine, do you care to comment?

JASMINE REDFERN: So, two-spirit isn't part of my teachings. I feel very thankful that a lot of two-spirit elders have brought me under their wing. I think you met with Albert McLeod, who is an amazing elder who I have had the fortune of working with. But, I will decline to give an explanation of my interpretation of somebody else's teachings to me.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Thank you. Jeffrey?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: For myself, two-spirit represents a doorway through which to create avenues of understanding between diverse communities. It is a way of asserting our space, our place, our sovereignty as Indigenous people, as being in relation to dominant LGBTQ communities or just -- and, sorry, not with dominant, just with our communities, with our LGBTQ families that are also non-Indigenous.

I think I need to point to clarify that the differences between two-spirit and LGBTQ for a time, I did think about, you know, well, we are using the English language to identify ourselves, and we are not using our ancestral social locations, if you will, or the words in our own languages to describe ourselves. But, as we know, culture isn't static and it is constantly in motion, so we have to also evolve with that.

And so, I think that -- again, I really like that constellation piece, and that the two-spirit or Indigenous LGBTQ people that it is important that we hold space for people to be able to self-identify how it is that they see that fits best for them. And, that can change over time, and we also have to be open to that.

You know, in my early 20's, I was very androgynous, and I would get, you know, "Will that be everything, ma'am?" And, I would get a kick out of that, because I would answer at the check-out line at the grocery store, "Yes."

(LAUGHTER)

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: And, it became really uncomfortable for the other person, and I would just giggle and walk out. Anyways, you know? So, just thinking about, you know, any given point -- it was, like, Terry Tafoya who says if we take the continuum of LGB --

like of gender and sexuality and bend it into a circle that, over the course of one's lifetime, there becomes infinite points for a person to identify. So, that would be my answer.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Okay. Thank you. And, my next question is this, sort of, follow-up question on, then what is the experience of two-spirit Indigenous LGBTQ people in terms of spaces? So, to your knowledge, do Indigenous 2SLGBTQ people still often feel their lives are compartmentalized, I think that is the word I heard yesterday, by spaces that are Indigenous, but not recognizing two-spirit or gender diverse experience? Or, on the other hand, LGBTQ spaces that do not recognize two-spirit and Indigenous LGBTQ realities? Are things changing?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I am hopeful that they are changing. I can't say that I have, like, a vast amount of experience. I just know from my own experience that it is a reality in some spaces that -- again, similar to the feminism quote that I had talked about where those intersectionalities are sometimes pushed to the side, and I am hopeful that they are getting better, but I know that it might not be the reality right now.

JASMINE REDFERN: I do see positive shifts. I am so excited that here in Iqaluit there are so many

young people and very young people who feel safe and supported to explore a diversity of identities, and that just wasn't the case when I was younger. So, seeing them be accepted and supported and loved as Inuit, as gender diverse, as gender fabulous, as sexually fluid individuals is so exciting and promising, and has me so excited about what our children's experiences in school and after school are going to be like.

I do see that positive shift, and I think -- I think people are becoming more aware, and I think it's just a question of insisting on that awareness or that curious humility of not making those assumptions that because someone might dress the way that I do that they have the same experiences or identities that I do is approaching it with gentle curiosity and allowing people to unfold themselves to us.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: That's good to hear. Thank you.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think within the context of my own community, about 10 years ago, there was a trans two-spirit jingle dress dancer who took first place. I believe there's a short little film on the NFB that you can find, and it is a documentation of this individual's and this person's accepted space in their community, and how highly regarded they are as a knowledge

keeper, but were ashamed in my community at our Pow Wow. I wasn't living in community at that time and only had heard about that once I moved home, but they took away the title from this person because the elders had decided that she wasn't a woman.

You know, our Pow Wow society has since made amends for that and has honoured this individual, but one of the recommendations from my participants in my study was that visibility at Pow Wows was a really important thing for them. And so, to take care of the final parts of my research, I called for a two-spirit round dance, and it was pretty awesome, because the entire arbour filled with people. And, my sisters were with me, and they were, like, "It looks like your face was going to break. You were smiling so much."

To see from a place where my community caused harm to a place of welcoming and holding up and valuing and letting our two-spirit visitors know that they're valued and loved was a really wonderful expression. But, I think that we're just -- on a national level, recently on social media, there was a person who was identifying who was non-Indigenous were saying that they liked the two-spirit identify, which sparked a lot of conversations about the appropriation of our two-spirit identity, because it just feels (indiscernible) aligns

with, and some of the responses that were happening was that we were isolating and not holding space for our people to express themselves how they want to.

But, two-spirit is very particular to Indigenous identities, and I think that one of the really exciting things, particularly from the curated show that we opened in Montreal last year is it kind of started the spring season, and then all across Canada, we saw all of these different two-spirit events happening, ending in Vancouver with another two-spirit curated art show. So, that resurgence and that wave that's happening is really exciting, because I feel like us two-spirit people are here to bring back balance and to be the go-betweens in all of those traditional roles and identities that we have.

But, I also -- would also have to put forward that in understanding those spaces or those community responsibilities that we were said to have had that we don't romanticize them as well, because that could also cause further harm. A lot of people are going through identity formation because locations like seer, or visionary, or mediator, those are pretty big shoes to fill.

So, we just have to hold space and allow people to locate themselves how it best fits for them.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Right. Thank you. And, I think you've answered or started to answer my next question, which is, what are or where are the strongest, safest spaces and places for Indigenous two-spirit LGBT people where they can thrive? I'm just wondering if you have any further examples of what these strong spaces are or could be.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I think we make our own safe strong places. Like, in Iqaluit, there is a Pride Society, like I mentioned yesterday, but feeling like it wasn't a space that was really welcoming for Inuit or other Indigenous LGBTQ2. We have informal networks that we use within the communities to make ourselves space. And, even, like, even on campuses, there's -- I think there's collections of student groups that will find natural ways organically to come together and support each other. But, when they do get established, let's support those guys and make them sustainable.

JASMINE REDFERN: Yeah. I would -- do you mind if I bring up our -- okay. One of the things that we did, T.J. and I, along with one of our colleagues, Jessie Fraser, is in part of creating those safe spaces and creating spaces that we wanted to see, one of the -- we held an event, and it was all ages, family friendly, which is, I think, something that sometimes is missing,

especially missing for us in our own childhoods.

You know, there's these pride events, and sometimes they are adults only, sometimes they're with drinking involved, and there's kind of that segregation of, like, children and adults and elders. And so, we created an all-ages drop-in space where we brought together children who have LGBTQ or two-spirit parents, or parents brought their children who identified as LGBTQ or two-spirit, or were exploring the possibility of those identities, and grandparents.

And, I think that's -- that was important for us, because it builds that role modelling. It builds that healthy relationships, healthy intergenerational relationships that respect those intersectional identities. I know for myself growing up, I didn't meet another gay Inuk until I was at least 13. And so, I didn't know that that was possible, and that was some of the lateral violence that I experienced. I'm very obviously mixed. And so, being told, "That's your white part". And so, that's, "You're not actually a gay Inuk, you're a gay white woman, and there's this little part of you that's Inuk, but it's not gay."

And so, being able to meet other gay Inuit and knowing that this is a valid experience in our community and seeing what was possible, that you could

still be a mother, that you could still be a lawyer, or some other professional. You can go to school. You can have all of these positive experiences, and yeah, just having our eyes open to the diversity of experiences and realities and that, that we can control our own destinies was, I think, really important for us and important for a lot of the children that came together and got to hang out.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you. I've definitely shared that experience as well, being of mixed ancestry, that I've overheard elders in my own community say, "It's usually only the half-breeds that are two-spirited", so creating that space there, which is interesting. I'm a bit of a trickster, so in any sort of cultural gathering, I'll be outside doing men's work, and then I'll be in the kitchen and it really upsets the men. They're, like, "What are you doing in the kitchen?" I'm, like, "Just helping the ladies."

So, there's that, but definitely nurturing spaces for intergenerational relationship building. Like, for those of us that are doing the work now, and I think about, like, Alex Wilson, and Raven Sinclair, and Manichukabe (phon.) and, like, all these amazing people that are just blazing trails and clearing pathways for those that are coming up behind us that for those that

don't feel safe and need to migrate to the cities that perhaps we could, like, establish like a witness protection program sort of thing, where we can help support or facilitate strong attachments and that intergenerational standpoint, but also give people a firm footing to be able to move and establish themselves in larger centres if that's part of their learning journey at that time in their life.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Thank you. I have a couple of more questions. So, we have talked a bit, and you have given evidence about some of the challenges or the barriers to two-spirit and Indigenous LGBTQ people living in smaller, more remote or Indigenous communities. And, of course, our mandate at the National Inquiry is to look at underlying causes of violence and what leads to people being vulnerable to violence, and also look at things that reduce violence and make safer places for Indigenous women and girls, and 2SLGBTQ people.

So, I'm just wondering, and some suggestions have been made, but if you have any further recommendations or suggestions in terms of what needs to be done to overcome the large vulnerabilities of 2SLGBTQ people in more rural, remote Indigenous communities.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I would like to really stress the need for housing in support of designated LGBTQ

spaces, even in small communities. So, if there is, like, a youth drop-in centre in every community, that there at least be one person on staff that is understanding and open, and that if you can somehow write it in that they are educated, and accepting and providing services in a trauma-informed way to LGBTQ2 people, I think that would be helpful.

I know we have made a lot of recommendations -- yes, I will stop there.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Okay. Thanks.

JASMINE REDFERN: Yes, I want to echo that, that we need to have available to us competency, building awareness, building, training -- and not just for people on the frontlines or the service providers, it needs to be at all levels. We need to ensure that our political leaders are also aware so that they are not making statements that are harmful or inadvertently giving directives that create programs or policies that either exclude or don't intentionally include LGBTQ or two-spirit people. Sorry could you repeat the question?

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Yes. Are there any other things that can be done to reduce the vulnerabilities to violence and increase safety for two-spirit and Indigenous LGBTQ people in smaller, more remote

or Indigenous communities.

JASMINE REDFERN: And so, like T.J. said with housing, I would extend that to all social determinants. Ensuring that people have housing, people have access to services, people have access to training or education, anything that facilitates every single person in the community, and intentionally ensuring that that includes LGBTQ and two-spirit people to access the necessities of life.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Thank you.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: In terms of thinking about prevention, I think that we also need to stand up and celebrate the resiliency of two-spirit people to not only promote us as being in the deficit, and ensure that the data sets revealed that our youth in British Columbia are the most at risk, but we also have to counter that with also standing up the amazing accomplishments that are happening now. Someone who I am following, Chevi Rabbit, from I believe Edmonton, just watching their, like -- the accolades that they are acquiring already is just amazing to me.

One of the other things that I think is really important though too, is the normalization of our -- and ancestrally accepted spaces, and for -- I will speak to my own community, because some of my critiques of that

is, when we have our men's groups and our boys groups, I'm asking the facilitators, how are you including dialogues about creating space to have safe conversations?

Because some of the other work that I'm also involved with, I just recently, this past spring, met with all of the frontline health care workers for MSM, men who have sex with men, gay men in the interior British Columbia. And, the group that is experiencing transmission of sexually transmitted infections are men who have sex with men but do not identify as gay, and all those sorts of things. And, of course, being and living in your home reserve community, you also hear stories from days gone by. So, thinking about health in that way too, to normalize those conversations also needs to be a priority so that we can, yes, begin to turn those numbers around. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Okay. Thanks. And, my last question has to do with urban environments. We have heard, of course, that Indigenous youth that are two-spirit or LGBTQ may feel pressure to move to the city because they don't feel accepted, there are other disruptions in their home community, but also Indigenous youth may move to cities to pursue education or employment. But, when they get there, they may face barriers, they may face difficulties accessing mainstream

services or not feel welcomed by mainstream LGBTQ community. So, in terms of, again, reducing vulnerability to violence and increasing safety, what could be done to overcome the barriers in urban environments?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I think to some degree there is some work happening there. I think that -- like, the need of friendship centres, the organizations. Like, some of them actually are pretty welcoming spaces and they do have people on staff. But, I think it -- it just reinforces that advocate role, like the need for multiple spaces to have people on staff that are advocates, that can go with LGBTQ2 people and support them throughout the whole process.

So, in Iqaluit, there are two victim services workers for the whole territory, but they can go -- and they are very well knowledged, and they are very accepting people, and they come from a harm reduction point of view, and they can go with people, if they need to access the hospitals, if they need a rape kit done, if they need to go to the RCMP. They can accompany people along those lines. And, even if they need to go see family -- did I say family services? Well, public health, all those types of entry points into the system; right?

But, you know, the potential is there, that model is replicable and could be invested in, but the

political will has to be there. And, if you can make it from an LGBTQ2 or even just from a trauma-informed space, how helpful that would be.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Thanks.

JASMINE REDFERN: So, that is something that I experienced. I left Iqaluit at a very young age because of complicated life circumstances, including experiencing homophobia. And, relocated about five times in my high school career, and every time, that move was motivated by either wanting to conceal that part of my identity for fear of rejection again, or experiencing anti-Inuit racism, and so constantly, kind of, moving. And, it was finally in Vancouver where I settled down for a number of years, and what helped me to settle there was things like KAYA, the Knowledgeable Aboriginal Youth Association, the Native Youth Sexual Health Network, the friendship centre.

And, what helped me was, they were very well publicized and very accessible services. And so, everywhere I went, there was this awareness that these are services that are available to you. And so, there was those gentle -- no one forced me or told me I had to go to these spaces, but there was always that invitation, that gentle invitation is, you know, you could come to this, this is this art event, this is this workshop that's

happening.

And, I didn't go immediately. But, through the welcoming Coast Salish peoples who made space for me as an awkward little Inuk girl, very far away from home, that really helped to build my self-confidence back up and to help me to get some of the help and services that I needed. And, in turn, gave me the strength to be able to come back home, because that -- there's a strength in being on your home territory that you can't -- you can't access in other places. There's a strength in being surrounded by family. And I'm just so thankful that those services existed, and I really hope that those models can be -- I don't want to say replicated because that implies that, like you're taking that model and building something identical. But that we can have the political will and the finances provided to be able to -- to be able to help the people in other communities build services that respond to those needs in all communities. Because I do think it saves lives, and I think it played a really big part in helping me to have the strength to be where I am now.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: That's wonderful. Thank you.

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think funding dollars aside, that those -- maybe use a sign-up

list for people migrating to the city. That we have aunties or uncles that can just locate themselves as a safe person. For people coming to the city to be able to connect people so that they have, you know, say need some peer support or whatever.

And so, since we're on a national broadcast I'll locate myself as one of those, because I've been getting those sorts of call -- like, requests from people in my territory, you know, it's telling me that their niece or their nephew has just located as two spirit and needed some resources. And so just doing some online work like that to be able to talk through and to reassure them that they're awesome is another strategy that I think that we could do too.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: That's great. Thank you everybody for answering my questions.

--- QUESTIONS FROM COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Thank you. I'm going to build a little bit on what some of Brian's question.

And I like this, these words, gentle curiosity. And Jasmine, you're talking about positive shifts and the importance of gatherings. Because of that it helps create a belonging and an understanding. I was hoping that from each of you, you might help all of us

understand the importance of, or why it is so important to understand your constellation, within the constellation of your people. Do you know what I mean?

So understanding -- and there's that vacuum you said, of within the LGBT community, that it is from a certain perspective. For you as a Mi'kmaq person, as an Inuk, how important is it to understand your constellation within that? And I suppose my follow up question is in turn then, how does understanding that better and regaining that knowledge -- what does that mean for all of us, and for the safety of our children and us?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: I think that under -- like the importance of understanding though, that constellation, the different expressions of who we are as LGBTQ2, or two-spirit people. It's important because it -- it can potentially undo the harms of compound trauma. It has a potential and still, instead of compounding our trauma, it can do the exact opposite. It can help us nation-build and connect.

And like Jeff said, it can bring us home. Because the reality is for people like me, like, we -- I'm home now, in a territory that's not my own, but I feel connected and I have people that accept me for who I am. And back home in my community I have that now too, but it just helps not perpetuate that cycle of violence, so that

I'm okay to exist in the space that I am. And that -- you know, that adds to my mental well-being and my family's success, and my family's wellness, and that has a ripple effect, right?

We know that everyone in life effects 10 other lives. So if we're doing things to upheld, and celebrate, and accept people just for as they are, that has a ripple effect on everyone else around us that's exponential.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Do either -- Jeff and Jasmine, do you want to talk a little bit about that?

MS. JASMINE REDFERN: I think when we're talking about intersectional identities, when we're talking about constellations of identities, it's particularly important for LGBTQ and two-spirit people. But it's important for every single one of us. And every single one of us has multiple identities.

And so in building that safety for LGBTQ and 2S people to acknowledge the complexity of their identities, we're also doing that for people who are mothers, people who are single mothers, people who are of different faiths, people who are of mixed backgrounds. Going back to Indigenous black people, and black Indigenous People. It makes space for every single one of

us.

And whenever, in my head I'm trying to conceptualize healthy communities, or kind of, the goal of where my actions are trying to get us is, I think of (speaking in Indigenous language) our interconnection, our community, our circle, and creating a space where every single one of us has place and belonging, and part of that is seeing and acknowledging that our differences are also our gifts and also help to -- help to create a more complete circle in society.

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I was just thinking about my response. Could you just repeat the question?

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Just in the importance of understanding your constellation -- I love this word -- within -- within your community, within your history, within where you belong, you know? And how it's the link.

MR. JEFFERY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: So yesterday I referenced the self and relation model, and so thinking about that model, it's very much about being cognisant, or very aware of the present space that you occupy, while being respectful of those that have come before you. And as well as being very aware of the eyes that are watching you and those that are yet to be born. So I've always

regarded the work that I do and the spaces that I unsettle, both in the LGBTQ community as well as in my home Secwepemc Nation, is to always self-identify.

It's important that people see us in the community, you know, two-spirit isn't necessarily the word that I choose within my linguistic group, but it's the most recognized, right? So if I was to say (speaking in Secwepemc language) people wouldn't know two-spirit, right? That that's the doorway through which I'm going to arrive at my cultural, social location.

But it's just -- I think, about the documentary "Kumu Hina" which is a Pacific Island, or a Hawaiian trans person who is a purveyor of culture. She passes it on and just an amazing person. But it was really great, because when I saw the trailer to that, I was thinking a lot about locating, or my identity isn't central to just my sexuality, or just my current gender expression. Those are just on the periphery. What matters is to model how humble you are in community and how you contribute to it. And those were the words that, that's what I was thinking at the time, and that was the messaging that they were saying in their documentary. So it was just neat to see that confluence happen and things that I was thinking about.

So yeah, I think it's important to just be

very aware that we do what we can and clear as much of a pathway for those coming behind us, or coming up behind us as best we can, while looking after ourselves in a good way.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Thank you. When we were talking -- I am going to switch to the topic of the extraction industry and the idea -- well the concept of man camps. I mean, I think that -- correct me if I am wrong, but the defining characteristics of man camps are a transient population, gender predominantly male and there is a form of either isolation or segregation.

And, as I think of those three predominant characteristics, I look at what we heard about with -- on the first day with Inukshuk and Hagar about the QTC report and the history in the Baffin region, and you see this transient gender imbalanced and, sort of, dynamic with segregation and isolation in a number of areas, and it is not just the extraction industry.

I would say that it is something we see, in the north, in the construction industry. For the record, "mm-hmm" means yes. During the presence of the due line and even any time you see military, in the north, that dynamic is what we are seeing. Early on within the clergy, I think you could say that that was a -- those

were characteristics of their presence in the north. The RCMP, I would say even up and to today. Eyebrows being raised, for the record, means yes and I will take it. To scrunch your nose, I know what that means too.

I think that if you look at some of the dynamics or demographics, maybe within teachers? Within nursing? Within the Hudson's Bay Company and other industry? Eyebrows again, raised. We have heard that a lot of these industries continue today, even within communities, would this be something that you would agree with my assessment?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

JASMINE REDFERN: Yes.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: And, with this dynamic, the threats that we have to the safety of women and girls, Indigenous women and girls is a result of man camps as being mirrored within communities when there is predominantly transiency, gender imbalance and an isolation and segregation?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Okay. I have connected those dots and I just wanted to make sure I wasn't off the point. So, would you agree with me that in every area of our lives, these are things we need to be looking at, not just the extraction industry?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Okay. Thank you.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: You talked a little bit about the resource extraction industry and the decision making process of this. Within your note, you talked about, like, the NIRB process. And, in the course of our work, we are being tasked to make recommendations to government agencies predominantly, but not exclusively.

When we look at how these bodies make decisions, within Nunavut, I know that they are -- the process is a result of the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement. There are institutions of public government, the Impact Review Board, the Planning Commission that play a role. Also, the Inuit organizations play a role when it comes to the negotiation of impact benefit agreements.

So, as I ask this question, I am thinking about those bodies, the bodies with the decision making power. And, I also then, on a national level, think about the National Energy Board. I would really like to hear your views, all three of you, and maybe their existence is the problem, but if you take these institutions, these decision making bodies, do you have any recommendations for these bodies on how they could do their work to make

sure, sort of, these issues are addressed or considered, and that the voices that need to be heard are there?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Is it okay if I go first? So, specifically just looking at and thinking about the NIRB, the Nunavut Impact Review Board. And so, if you are not familiar, they take advice and consideration -- people can submit their concerns to them on specific projects for resource extraction in Nunavut. Often, they hear the voice of the hunters' and trappers' associations. They hear the voice of people like Pauktuutit. I have a document here that was actually submitted to the NIRB on behalf of Pauktuutit, which are all publicly accessible records. You can go to the NIRB website and pull up every interaction, every email that was submitted to them.

So, I think part -- so it is kind of a flip of maybe potentially what I am trying to get at. So, the NIRB actually does have access and hears the voice of the communities and what they want to happen. And, they put forward their input, and they have the deciding factor, yes, but they also are under pressure from the federal family. So, from the Department of Lands and Resources, from Fisheries, like DFO.

And so, I don't think it is actually -- and this is just my opinion, I don't think from what I have seen that it is actually the NIRB or -- that our

industries needing to do better. It is actually the pressure from the companies and from the federal families that they need to respect. If organizations are saying no and we have done the research, and we are hearing these concerns from the community and we are siding with the community, that it should be actually flipped, that the onus should be on the federal family to stop and listen to what our actual Impact Review Boards are saying. So, I can only -- like I said, I can only speak to...

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Thank you.

JASMINE REDFERN: In terms of consultation processes, speaking as a student and a mother who is very engaged in the community and wishes I could be that much more engaged in the community, one thing that I wish there was more of is accessibility to community consultation.

So, often in the evenings, I have the sole care of my two children. And, very often, these consultations happen right around suppertime and conclude around bedtime. And so, I have to make those decisions about whether or not I am going to create a healthy meal for my kids or get them to bed on time and maintain a stable routine for them, or if I want to go and be able to hear more information and be able to voice my opinion on some development projects that are going to -- that are possibly coming to our community.

And, I think if the -- if our organizations were able to build into the consultation process, better accessibility of advance materials so that we can educate ourselves beforehand to streamline the actual consultation process. And, also, if we can have organizations and consultants be more aware of the need for child-minding services at consultations.

And, I mean, I would be very thankful if our regional Inuit orgs could also help facilitate in that process in creating a one-page in advance that tells us these are the issues that are to be considered, these are the things to think about so that I don't have to read 3,000 pages for every single consultation, and these are happening weekly, monthly, all the time, so that I can know which ones impact me and which ones I want to invest my time into being prepared for and being able to turn up for. I think that we could do a better job of facilitating each other being knowledgeable and being better prepared to respond to consultation.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think that -- I just want to be clear that just with any sort of any consultative processes that even -- it doesn't mean that I'm for resource extraction. I think about my territory in that in the 20 year -- or sorry -- in next 10 year projection, the Number 1 resource coming out will be

gravel. And so gravel pits all over our territory. That's not okay. So to radically think how we're going to live differently I think is really important, but -- anyways, I'm going to go off topic.

I think that just, you know, to mitigate the costs or the social impacts by just putting monies towards social service agencies isn't the answer either. And there was more to your question. Could you just repeat your question one more time? Sorry.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Yeah. Well, it's not so much about consultation. Between you and me, I think it's got issues. It's really about the decision-making. How do you make sure these perspectives, these values, these wants for one's community are part of these decisions? That it's not always a question of convincing five people on a panel. That you're part of it. And how do we make sure that these bodies, not just listen, but they are reflecting the constellation?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think that if these bodies can't immediately answer how they've answered the calls to action from the TRC then they're not starting from a good place, and that's coming from non-Indigenous side -- the non-Indigenous side of things.

I think that that's a really important project in that -- I'll just bring it back to education --

that restorative projects, reconciliation projects that there should be some sort of measure in terms of authenticity and accountability put into these initiatives in relationship-building and -- so that we can stay away and move away from the performative and just making sure that everything kind of stays the same and that the...

So projects of decolonization, reconciliation, Indigenization, so that they don't become co-opted, and maybe they already have, I don't know, but to make sure that everything is centred from the territories that they're being deployed in.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Thank you.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: One final question, and it's -- again, I have a thought, and I want to know what you think.

We've heard from so many families about an impact of poverty and safety. And so often government reaction is, okay, well let's create jobs in this area, and then -- well, we have to say yes to industry because it will create jobs in the area. But then we have also heard about how wage economy -- so there's the destruction of poverty, and I think -- object if you want -- a lot of the poverty you see has been orchestrated, it's created poverty. Whether it's relocations -- you know, you look

at what happened in the Prairies, and in many, many places.

So to say, okay, well let's address poverty by then creating an economy, I think is missing a huge point. Because we've also heard about how the wage economy has been a disruption as well.

We were listening to Elisapi talk about the work of (indiscernible) which is the work of living, the work of living together, being a community together. And it kept on like being called a program, something you do after 9 to 5. That Indigenous life, that being community relationships and everything, is to happen outside of the school or outside of the workplace; it's in the fringes.

So when I think about well then addressing poverty, but then the wage economy also seems to have played a role in disrupting families and relationship and community roles. It's disrupted the ability to be a land protector, a water protector, and have that role and responsibility and that be part of your contribution and then this community in turn supports you. The role as a mother, the role as a child or someone, you know, transforming from child to adult.

I think of youth who age out and then don't have anything, there's this disruption and denial of place and purpose. And I am beginning to see how the wage

economy has done that, and in turn, is obstructing revitalization.

Am I off the mark? Okay. So noses scrunches, heads shook. Okay.

There is a -- an idea, a concept, and it's out there, there's been some pilot projects in Canada and in other countries of a guaranteed annual income, where the needs of -- our fundamental needs are met. Food. Shelter. Water. What do you think of this as a means of creating safety? And we've heard about what revitalization means to safety, what do you think of this idea as a means of creating safety?

T. J. LIGHTFOOT: How do we want to do this?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I think that prior to contact, that say if a family in our nation didn't have enough to make it through the winter that a family that had excess would bring to that family. And how we would take care of that would be to host a feast, that family would then have to host a feast to honour the family for helping them out in the winter.

And so my cousin, Johnny Perry, for urban Secwepemc people, he's started -- he's one of my two-spirit relatives -- started a Secwepemc food share. So bringing out traditional foods to the city for our

relatives that are living there, or any other persons in need.

And so it's beautiful, like that giving economy that we need to bring that back, and I think that that's a really important piece. I mean, I -- I mean, it already exists, but to promote it more so and to normalize that, I think is really important. But -- yeah.

T. J. LIGHTFOOT: Yeah. I would actually say that the things that you're pointing to are in support of Marxist theory that capitalism creates alienation, alienation from self, community, and environment, and is basically, essentially, what we've been talking about, kind of broader and philosophically. And so if people -- if everyone had meaning -- and I do like the idea of a universal basic wage, but I also would hope that it would be a meaningful basic wage. So one that actually meets -- that comes in hand with housing for everyone, wage so that it more than just meets the bare minimum of nutritional requirements to get by in a day, which is what happens with...

This is why I'm not in -- a fan of food security as a title, because that's just your minimum basic caloric intake food sovereignty. Like so that we actualize that, so that we can -- with the extra left over we can support our hunters and trappers to have a

important role in our communities again so that they can give. So that there is extra time for the seamstresses and the extra excess to resources for seamstresses to make sure that everyone in our communities aren't cold, and warm and safe, so that these things would breed wellness everywhere in our community.

That it would be possible that if you're in excess of wealth, that you could share and you wouldn't feel greedy over it and that, you know, not just for Indigenous people, but for Canadian citizens that -- you know, if we are helping to make them well and we are well, you know, how much greater could things be.

JASMINE REDFERN: Yes, I agree with the points made by my colleagues. And, in particular to food sharing, there are quite a number of full-time hunters who are providers for the entire community, and it's by community somewhat heavily policed. There are a number of hunters who have tried in the past to sell country foods in order to support themselves, and there has been a lot of pushback against that.

And, my intention is not to comment on whether that is right or wrong, but to say that some of these hunters are then also on income assistance, and the threshold of income assistance is poverty, is absolute poverty, but these are the people we are relying on as a

community to feed us, to feed our children.

And, the potential I see for a guaranteed basic income is that we compensate adequately and fairly the people who provide so much for the rest of our community, because every single person deserves dignity in what they do. And, spending your days hunting is absolutely valid and I would want to see our providers compensated.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Those are all my questions. I want to say kúkwstem, nakurmiik, criyamonik (phon.) and malalian (phon.). I'm practising.

--- QUESTIONS BY CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Wow. Thank you. There are both advantages and disadvantages to going last. I know it has been a long day, so hopefully I will get right to the point.

Jasmine, in your testimony, you said that we should normalize health seeking behaviours. Can you give me some examples, please, of health seeking behaviours?

JASMINE REDFERN: So, going into the health centres and asking for routine check-ups, asking for STI checks, asking about the availability of services and what those different services are and how they can be of benefit to us, and mental health services.

All of which at this point in time, I think, are quite stigmatized and can be barriers to people who are in immediate need of service from going to access services, because there is, particularly in smaller communities, one health centre where you probably know the person who works there. And, if somebody sees you going to the health centre, there is an assumption of un-wellness, illness or need, whereas from a wellness perspective, we should be interacting with the health system as much as possible to ensure that we're not just, you know, functioning at a basic level, but that we are thriving. And, an important part of that is making sure that it is not stigmatized to interact with health systems.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Okay. Thank you. Jeffrey, you said something yesterday I didn't quite understand and perhaps you can explain this to me. You were asked about homelessness and urban centres, and that creating vulnerabilities -- and I'm paraphrasing, I'm sorry -- you said that this could lead to tokenization and glamorization of a person by the community. What did you mean by that?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thinking through just personal experience, coupled with some intakes that I had conducted while working at Aboriginal Legal Services

in Toronto, that there was a shared experience that I had with some of the clients that I was working with, that when they first moved to the city, that there was tokenization from other, in these cases, non-Indigenous gay men. So, tokenization or exotification. So, yes, does that...?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: That helps.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Okay. Yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Yes. Thank you very much.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: And, for all three of you, and this is my last question, I want to understand the gist of your evidence, what you have told us. And, tell me if I'm headed in the right direction. That in order to reduce the vulnerability of Indigenous women and girls, and 2S people, we, as Indigenous people, must, should or could identify and work as full equal partners with governments to identify and eliminate barriers to employment, health, housing and services.

Have I got the gist of what you have said? And, correct me, please. Now is your opportunity. And, there are a lot of people out there who would like that opportunity. And, I can repeat that more or less if you

would like.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Please.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Okay. Gist. In order to reduce the vulnerability of Indigenous women and girls, and 2S people, we, as Indigenous people, could, should, would, must identify and work as full equal partners with governments to identify and eliminate barriers to employment, health, housing and services.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I would also add education.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank you.

JASMINE REDFERN: I agree.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Yes.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Ceremony.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Ceremony in what context?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: I guess specific to however a person is choosing that they want to practise their own spirituality.

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Did you say something about land?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Would that be in the context of access to land?

T.J. LIGHTFOOT: Access to land and the

ability to consent or not consent to our lands being used.

JASMINE REDFERN: And, I think our histories, having access to know about the history of our people, the history of our land, and access to the traditional knowledge of our place and our people.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Any other comments at this point?

JASMINE REDFERN: I want to acknowledge that we are just three people doing our very best to speak for all the people who have -- not for the people, but to bring forward the stories, the realities of the people in our lives who have gifted us with their stories. And, I want to speak to anybody who is watching, who is a member of our community, that I hope that we have done a good job, and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to come and speak my truth and to do my best to share the stories of the people of my life.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank you. Well, I have to say, all three of you have been nothing less than brilliant in your testimony and we are all very grateful for the help that you have given us. Jeffrey, you mentioned earlier about a song?

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Hm.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: I would be very grateful. After we have had the gift of your

song, we have some gifts for you as well. Thank you.

JASMINE REDFERN: We have some family on screen here.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Hi, guys.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: We are giggling up here because we can see Commissioner Audette and her kids.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Is Audrey here? She stepped out? That's okay. I just -- where were the...

JASMINE REDFERN: Oh, she is here.

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Audrey, would you come stand with me, please? Thank you. This song -- this is a Secwepemc honour song that we sing to celebrate things that need to be celebrated. But, we also -- for celebrations of a person's life as well. So, I just -- I haven't sang for a while, so that is really the real reason why I am doing this. No, I am kidding.

(LAUGHTER)

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: Gotta clear my pipes. Just kidding. I just offer this song to those that are missing or have -- who have died because of colonization. I offer this to the families that are in healing. I offer this to -- especially to our hosts here on this land in this place. I offer this to those on the

sidelines helping support this process. And, I offer this to all the Commissioners and everyone here. And, you, and you, and you, and the camera guys also.

(LAUGHTER)

JEFFREY McNEIL-SEYMOUR: See, two-spirit people are fun. I am going to make you guys wait for it.

(LAUGHTER)

(MUSICAL PRESENTATION)

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: And, with that, we are adjourned until Québec City.

--- Closing Ceremony

(PRESENTATION OF GIFTS)

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: Alors, ça a été quatre jours d'écoute intense, de questions intenses, de discussions intenses. Alors, on est très bien d'avoir achevé.

So, it has been four days of intense discussions, intense questions, intense answers as well, but all incredible revelations and from all very smart people throughout these four days.

And, we have been here for four days, four intense days listening to the presentations, the comments, the answers that were coming from very wise people, intelligent people, and today marks the end of this hearing. But, then again, we have nation-wide travelling

to do.

Nous avons plusieurs personnes à remercier qui nous ont aidé à faire nos travaux ici. Premièrement, j'aimerais dire un gros merci aux interprètes. J'aimerais juste les nommer parce que c'est pas souvent qu'on les voit et j'aimerais entendre leurs noms. Ladina (phon.), Mandy Cury (phon.), Lisa Apili (phon.) d'Inuktitut à l'anglais, Denise Bourgeois (phon.), Christiane (phon.), Marie-Christine Renaud (phon.), Sharon Braveman(phon.). Merci à vos tous. Il s'agit des interprètes de français à anglais et d'anglais à français. Merci à vous toutes. Thank you very much to all these wonderful and very specialized knowledge interpreters.

Et, aussi tous les employés de l'hôtel qui nous ont bien accueilli ici. Et, aussi, comment on dit, pas travailleurs, mais les spécialistes de nos équipements audio-visuels. Merci beaucoup d'avoir si bien fait cette connexion pour que tout le monde à travers le Canada puisse écouter les audiences ici. Thank you also to the audio/visual crew who has really done a fantastic and fabulous job in making sure that we are connected to Canada, all across.

Qui ont fait la très belle connexion avec Michèle et Iqualuit. Thank you. And, during this week, we have concluded our hearings, and we had a member and

who initiated hearings on the missing and murdered Indigenous women, Micah Arreak, who will be making comment. Qui fait parti du cercle des familles conseillère pour l'enquête nationale à venir nous donner des mots. I would also now like to invite Micah Arreak to come and bring us some closing remarks. She is a member of the National Family Advisory Circle.

MS. MICAH ARREAK: Thank you. I won't be speaking in three languages. I will be speaking my mother tongue, Inuktitut, just because when I went to residential school, federal day school, I was hit when I spoke Inuktitut. So, everywhere I go I -- although I was a translator for 40-something years, whenever -- every chance I get, I shall speak Inuktitut.

Okay. First of all, I would like to acknowledge the other family members that are watching and has been watching. And, although we rarely see one another, we keep contact through Facebook that they have developed. I would like to thank everyone here with us, and also the staff who did a wonderful job and all those people who asked us for advice.

We are representing all the provinces and territories nationwide. And, even though there might have been more people in attendance and due to financial limitations, we are here even though there is only a few

of us, and we are very thankful for that.

A long time ago, when the Europeans started coming, they treated us as less than intellectual beings, at about the par of animals. But, we are now able to participate in these forums, because there is a day for everything. Today is our day as Inuit.

The Inuit are in hardship right now from way back, from the time of my parents of my grandchildren, and my grandparents who went through the transitional period, who obeyed and did what they were told to do. They don't like -- to us, it seems far-fetched or something you can't believe, but the truth is now coming out today. And, once the truth comes out, and because we don't retaliate as Inuit and as Aboriginal people, we are warriors today.

And, I thank you, I thank the First Nations people and the French people, and I am very glad that there was no -- there were no wars when we were getting encroached by the other nations. And, I am very glad that you are able to give us a place in these types of forums and to hear what we have to say. We didn't have any country food or soul food, so to speak, but maybe the next time when you come up, we -- you can have an opportunity to try our food, our country food. I look forward to that.

And, because of the importance of these forums, we -- if I have a cut -- if you have a cut anywhere, we bleed the same colour. My great-grandparents -- and if they tested their blood -- there are only 22,000 Inuit, we would -- today, we could look at the genealogy, and we can trace back to the whalers, to the Hudson's Bay Company personnel, and to the RCMP personnel that were up here, and it's not something to be ashamed of because, of course, there's always evolution in Canada, and I'm very pleased with that.

Again, the Inuit kinship terms should be kept. If you want to know who you're related to, you can find out whether that individual referred to is on the grandfather's side, on the great grandfather's side, or the grandmother's side, or your mother's side, or on your father's side.

My older brothers, my older sisters, my younger brothers, my younger sisters, my uncles on my mother's side, my uncles on my father's side, my in-laws, those kinship terms are what we use to identify which individual you are referring to. But, today, we use just one term, which is in the English, the English terms.

For example, if you're pregnant, there is taboo about what -- about certain foods, about eating foods that are good for you, and the father also has a set

of taboos that they were to follow by. And, during the term of her pregnancy, it was taboo to eat foods that are not good for you or for the baby, and from that time, from the time of pregnancy to the end, it would be taboo in practice along the lines. And, you always go back to the time. Everything comes around. For example, the sun is always moving in a circle, and again, life is like that also.

And, one individual cannot fix a problem. Way back, it was not one person who made a decision. They used to come together, have a discussion, and come to a decision, because they know it's going to have a long-term effect. And, it's the father who impregnates the woman, but the men alone cannot make a decision that would have an effect on the whole population in the future, because we repopulate. We have to work together in order to have a better future.

Again, the Inuit language, Inuktitut, if I had never seen or if I have never gone through it, I don't want to try to explain it because I've never practised it, I've never used it. So, that's one of the hinderances of the Inuit. Using myself as an example, my great grandfather and the kinship terms which I mentioned earlier, and as I said, that's the nuclear family. If one of them dies or passes on, the family members go through

different grief periods.

We always made sure that we were a close-knit family to deal with the problems or losses so that the family stays close. Losing a mother or losing a child are different sets of grieving. But, we have to look for solutions using different sets so that is comparable to the level of grief. If there's a loss in the family, for example, in Nunavut, if there is a loss of a family member, we have to make sure that the family members are informed. We have to fix the communication system because it's not right, right now. We have to do something about it so that there's proper channels of communication between the family members.

And, I would like to thank everyone here. Just a smile takes you a long way, even when you don't say anything. And, also, I would like to thank the staff here who have kept us in a safe environment. We have not had to cook a meal. All our meals are prepared. And, you don't even have to boil the water if you're going to be washing up, which is luxurious. I even showered twice when I first came down here because I know that the water is not going to run out.

And, I would also like to thank you for coming to Iqaluit. So, now you understand what it's like for us to go down there. It takes two, three days to go

to a southern destination, and no matter who you are, going by many, many hours on a train affects you, whether you are a male or a female. It has an effect on you, even though you travel one day, and some of them travel for more.

I don't want to say too much, but I would like to thank you for taking me here. I am able to see my siblings and my immediate family members. They were informed that I was coming here, and they were able to come to this meeting, and the staff were very receptive to my relatives.

Just saying thank you sometimes is too small, saying the word thank you. I'll leave it at that. I would like to thank everyone who approached us, which is also helpful to me, and not only to the individual who approached us. It's been seven years since I lost my daughter, and I couldn't see myself here or landing here in Iqaluit again, because it looks so dark every time I came through here. It was so dark that time.

But, this past week, I came here and I was very happy that I'm able to be here, and I finally noticed that Iqaluit had sun and it was bright. My relatives and the Elders have been very patient with us. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: Merci, Micah, pour

ces mots pleins d'espoir et de force. Merci. Thank you so much, Micah, for these wonderful and hopeful words that truly touch us.

Maintenant, on va célèbrer l'esprit Inuit de façon masculin et aussi de façon féminin, mais qui apporte tous les deux ensemble aussi. Alors, j'aimerais presenter maintenant un homme, un beau homme de Iqualuit qui est présent toute la semaine, cette semaine. Qui va nous montrer comment il fait son tambour.

I am going to present now -- we will celebrate our Inuit spirit right now in the way Inuit men dance and in the way Inuit women sing. So I would like to introduce this handsome man who has been here all week, and who will show us how he drum dances.

Jacopoosie Tiglik, who will be drum dancing.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MR. JACOPOOSIE TIGLIK: I am very happy I'm being called a very handsome man. And I thank you. And I would also like to recognize Abraham and his wife. I grew up in Puvirnituq, and I've been here in Puvirnituq for the last 18 years. And when I was in Puvirnituq, I got into counselling through Abraham and his wife, and I thank them very much for that contribution, and their being here in person.

I will be drum dancing. The Southern Baffin have not practiced drum dancing for a very long time, but we are -- it is -- we -- I started drum dancing again when I moved here to Iqaluit.

I think it was in -- around 2000 when I broke my left arm and it was shattered and 10 cracks. I didn't go hunting, or anything for a whole year, and I felt like a handicap and being a burden.

So that's when I -- I will be singing or maybe two songs that I will be singing that I made myself. Me yearning to go out hunting, and seeing the men going out hunting, and here I was stuck in the house.

(DRUM DANCING AND SINGING)

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MR. JACOPOOSIE TIGLIK: And this one, I made -- we -- I see seal bones all over, and we used to use them as toys when I was kid and before today's dolls and toys were brought to our community. So we would use seal, flipper bones, and use them as toys because there was no other toys to entertain or amuse the children.

(DRUM DANCING AND SINGING)

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: Merci beaucoup Jacopoosie. Thank you very much. That was powerful. It was wonderful to listen to.

I think most of you understood what he said about the second song? Yes. Good. Okay. Thank you, Jacopoosie. It was -- they were very good. Two songs. Thank you.

Alors, maintenant, j'aimerais inviter deux belles femmes d'Iqualuit. Alors, Mary Lucasi (phon.) et Yaki Prilapas (phon.) qui vont nous chanter une belle chanson.

I would like to now ask our next performers, showing the Inuit women spirit, to come and throat sing for us. (Speaking in Inuktitut).

MS. BECKY KILABUK: (Speaking in Indigenous language). Mary Torjak (phonetic) is with me. And, before we proceed, my late mother, I want to remember her, I want to mention about her. She made this amautiq for me.

In remembrance of my dear mother who fought hard not just for -- for decades for Inuit rights and for Inuit women. She was, you know, a politician. She made this for me and I just wanted to talk about it briefly before we throat sing because I have seen so much strength in this room over the last few days. I was observing and hearing stories, and et tout ça c'est très très puissant and everyone who shared, it has just been so powerful.

My mom created this over a period of seven

years, on and off. And, she had been to residential school, so she didn't do a lot of beadwork growing up and all of that, but she was inspired when she was taking care of her sick sister who was soon to pass away in the hospital. So, she spent about two months taking care of her. And, as a way to stay strong, she started doing beadwork in the hospital.

So, my mom always used this when doing workshops with young people, in talking to young Inuit. She wanted to show the butterfly because her message was, isn't it amazing that we have butterflies in the Arctic? She would say, you know, (speaking in Indigenous language) she said that the small butterfly -- this little butterfly survived in the Arctic, and she said, how much more resilient are we as people? And, how -- you know, we are able to survive so much.

And so, I just wanted to share because that was always her message of resilience. And, throat singing for me has been a huge source of just -- like we were saying in the introduction that we celebrate and we use our arts as Inuit, and so throat singing is something -- I am very happy that you have invited us.

So, we are just going to start with a song and then we will speak a little bit more after. This is anuru The Wind. It's my favourite song. I always love

starting with it. And, we are actually going to include another song called the Love Song and tie it in a little bit. It's a bit of an ode to Baker Lake because they are having a United for Life suicide prevention conference in Baker Lake right now. So, our love to them as they are having their own, kind of, heavy, but hopeful week this week. So, okay, we'll start slow.

(MUSICAL PRESENTATION)

(APPLAUSE)

MS. BECKY KILABUK: Sorry about the mic positioning here. So, throat singing, like the song that you just heard, I just want to share that throat singing in the very early origins actually started between mother and baby, and then it became a form of competition and a game between women.

So, as you know, we carry our babies on our backs -- I always love sharing this bit of history. When you create the very deep sounds, it creates vibrations down the mother's back, and so the babies -- oh. So, the babies feel vibrations. And then you will notice a lot of throat singers will sway back and forth like this, it's because we are putting our babies to sleep or soothing them. And then like the song you just heard, it's like a lullaby. And, Inuit being nomadic for a millennia, we did not use our precious resources for things like musical

instruments, so throat singing, that is how it started.

And, something for us to be proud of, the science channel, the Discovery channel, Daily Planet, they, at the end of a two year study, said that Inuit throat singing was the most complex, most sophisticated form of human vocalization on the planet. So, it is something for us to be proud of.

(APPLAUSE)

MS. BECKY KILABUK: Okay. So, throat singing -- there are different types of throat singing and it is different for different regions, but there are also different ways of throat singing, you can compete; you can sing a time honoured song, like we just sang; or there are imitation songs. So, we are going to demonstrate an imitation song for you.

These are fun because you challenge yourself and each other to try to imitate the sound of something that you would hear in nature or around you. And, one of my favourite examples of that is the saw, a wood saw. So, you are welcome to close your eyes and imagine us cutting through wood, even though we do not have trees up here traditionally. So, this is a newer song I think. Okay.

(MUSICAL PRESENTATION)

(APPLAUSE)

MS. BECKY KILABUK: Did that sound like the real thing? I hope so. So, since you guys have had, kind of, a heavy tough week, I want to get you guys to try some throat singing. Do you want to? I think it will be fun.

So, this next song, it's -- because with throat singing, it's fun. Like, before we even -- like, for a long time, before we did it before audiences, it was a game between, you know, two girls. So, this one, you challenge yourself to be able to make certain sounds that are challenging. So, if you want to try with me. Try ha-ba-ba. Just ha-ba-ba. But, now add that voice, that gut. So, it's ha-ba-ba. You guys are experts. But, then now say, "he-be-be", but you have to breathe in, so it's "he-be-be". I am impressed. So, now, you have to put it together. (Throat singing). A-plus. Excellent.

Okay. So, we will have fun with this song. You are able to switch it up. You challenge each other. In throat singing, you have a leader and a follower. The follower could steal the lead. You steal it back, and you can change the song and have fun with it.

(MUSICAL PRESENTATION)

MS. BECKY KILABUK: She sped it up so much. I was like, don't do this to me. But, that is the spirit of katajjaq, the spirit of throat singing. You challenge each other. It keeps you sharp. It keeps you alive. You

get your blood bumping. It is so much fun.

So, our last song, we will do a competition, which means we don't exactly plan who is doing what. And so, we don't always know how it is going to turn out. And then we are going to start with maybe the (speaking Inuktitut), mosquito song, and try to transition into a bunch of other songs. So, let's do it. It is not the coat that is making me warm, it is the ab workout, throat singing.

(LAUGHTER)

MS. BECKY KILABUK: Okay. Do, re, mi, fa, so, la, ti, do. Just kidding.

(LAUGHTER)

(MUSICAL PRESENTATION)

MS. MARY LUCASSIE: Also, I would just like to add that I support more opportunities for Inuit youth to learn more about our culture such as throat singing, because throat singing has given me a huge confidence boost and also more knowledge about my culture and more strength. Yes, I would just like to add that.

MS. BECKY KILABUK: And, I will just close by thanking everyone here. The organizers and the speakers were so brave to speak and to share from your heart. I know it is not easy. And, I want to say given our history, and what we have experienced and what we have

been through, I want to say to my fellow throat singers I have so much respect for you and how hard you have worked to keep the art form alive, because it almost died completely. And, also, I want to say to my fellow Inuit who are not throat singers, especially Inuit women, because it is a woman's art predominantly, that I also have so much respect for you and that it is never too late if it is a desire for you to learn.

I taught -- I started teaching my mom as she was an elder, because she went to residential school. When she was an elder or elder-in-training, I started teaching her throat singing, and I just saw so much joy in her -- that it gave her in her life; you know? So, as Inuit women, it is never too late. It is yours. It is not mine to tell you. It is not anybody's. It is yours. (Speaking Inukt). Us, as Inuit women, it is yours. Be proud of it. Learn it at your own pace. Okay. Thank you.

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: (Speaking Inuktitut). C'était vraiment beau. That was beautiful. Thank you so much. Becky, Mary, (speaking Inuktitut).

Maintenant j'aimerais inviter les commissaires de nous parler dans ce temps-ci. I would like to ask now the Commissioners to bring in their closing remarks. And, maybe you could tell us who is

going to be first?

Alors qui va aller en premier? Who is going first among the Commissioners?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank you. I want to start off by saying, yes, we are tall on the prairies. Everybody should be glad to know that the microphone directly in front of me was turned off during that practice throat singing exercise.

(LAUGHTER)

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: I just had to add that.

Well, thank you everyone for a wonderful week here in Iqaluit. First, I want to repeat something that one of the witnesses said earlier this week that many people look at a map of Canada, look at the north, and see the size, and how vast it is, and assume it is empty. Well, are you ever wrong. The north is beautiful and it is full of people who are warm, generous and kind.

So, thank you to the Inuit of the self-governing Territory of Nunavut, part of the traditional Inuit Nunangat who have hosted us so graciously and so warmly all this week. This is not a barren land at all. And, on behalf of so many of the National Inquiry Team, I want to tell you that we have fallen in love with your beautiful territory.

I want to acknowledge and thank our elders, Louise Haulli and Meeka Arnakak. Thank you for keeping the qulliq burning and thank you for your generosity and spirit and knowledge.

Thank you also to traditional knowledge keepers who have guided us through this week; members of the National Advisory Circle for their prayers and their help, and their guidance as always; and to our grandmothers who accompanied the Commissioners. I don’t know what we would do without you?

To the honoured witnesses who have shared their knowledge and expertise with us, I want to thank you for your very valuable contribution to our work. What you've told us this week has made a big difference to our work. What you bring -- all of the witnesses -- is very important, very important gifts.

Singers and our dancer/drummer this afternoon, thank you. And I'm always just so in awe of people who can drum and people who can sing.

Lisa, I thank you for keeping us more or less on time during this week, and I am in awe of your ability to speak three languages so beautifully. I have problems with one.

I want to pass along a very personal observation. And sorry, Michéle, that you're looking at

my back.

I have been reminded this week of the importance of storytelling, and I realized for the first time the National Inquiry is one big story, but a very important one, made up of many smaller parts, many smaller voices that united are one big voice, and through our final report and recommendations, will become an even bigger voice.

First, we heard from families and survivors, we heard their stories, their truths, and we learned from them and we still continue to learn from them. And we've also heard stories from witnesses, like the witnesses we've heard from this week, again, adding to those voices, adding to those truths.

And what we're developing through this National Inquiry is many voices, many truths, becoming a bigger truth that will become an even bigger truth with our final report and recommendations.

The truth is very important. We are, through our voices, telling truths that Canada and the world have never heard before, and as we gather the momentum of our truths and our many voices, our stories, our truths will become even bigger, and they cannot be denied.

So every little voice that we hear, every

truth we hear adds one on the other, adds strength to each other, adds what some people call credibility to each other, so that the truth cannot be denied.

We don't have all the answers yet. We don't have all of the recommendations yet. They're coming. But they will be based on truth, truth that hasn't been told before, or if it has been told, hasn't been heard.

So we're listening to truth. We act as vessels or conduits for the truth, and our final report will be the truth in writing.

We still need your help with that, we still need your guidance and your thoughts. We have so much yet to learn, but we have learned a lot, through stories. And we hope to tell in the end the greatest that we can, based on truth, that will change, that will change the world for the better.

We move forward because we can't stop. Now, we can't stop the truth that has started to be told, started to be heard and started to be written. It's moving. It's gaining momentum. People are listening. People are paying attention to the truth. Even if, even if we can't do all that we had hoped to do, the truth, as they say, is out there and cannot be denied.

I'm going to leave it at that because I

know my dear colleagues have much to say that is profound and full of love, and full of optimism. But just remember the importance of storytelling and the importance of the story that we as Indigenous people are telling.

I look forward to seeing everyone in Québec City, and as a final thank you, parties with standing, yes, I look forward to seeing you in Québec City. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: Nakurmiik. Thank you very much, Chief Commissioner Marion Buller. Merci beaucoup.

Brian. Yes? Commissioner Brian Eyolfson. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Thank you, Lisa.

Wow. What a wonderful week it's been. The evidence has been amazing, interesting, refreshing. Just being up here in this territory has been wonderful. I got a bit of a chance to get out and walk on the land. I hope you all did as well.

And I just really want to thank and acknowledge the Inuit people for inviting us here and welcoming us here to their territory. It's been a really great week. Everybody's been so welcoming and friendly,

and I've really enjoyed being here, and I hope to get back to visit again.

I just want to say some thank you's as well to our Elders. I want to acknowledge and thank our Elders, Meeka Arnakak and Louise Haulli for sharing with us and for their prayers each day and for keeping the Qulliq lighted for us. I also want to thank Abraham Arnakak, who joined us and shared with us as well.

And I want to thank our grandmothers, who travel with us, and they've been here with their ongoing support and guidance for us. And members of our National Family Advisory Circle, who support the work that we do, including Meeka Arnakak, who has joined us this week. I want to thank her for her comments. And also, thank you, Lisa, for being such a wonderful MC. Thank you very much. And I didn't realize we were going to have throat singers and drummers and dancers. That was really amazing. Thank you so much for that.

And I want to acknowledge the contributions made by the witnesses, their important truths that they shared with us, their knowledge, their recommendations. And I also want to thank the parties with standing, who have helped us more fully understand the issues concerning safety and wellness of Indigenous women and girls, and two-spirit, and gender diverse peoples this week through

all your thoughtful questions to the witnesses.

So this week, we've heard important testimony from witnesses, including experts and knowledge keepers. They have shared their insights, their experience, their expertise with us, to help us understand, among other things, how colonial violence has affected the health and wellness of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQ2 people. But we've also heard about the resilience and the knowledge that our Indigenous communities have and that knowledge that our communities have always had.

So I think the testimony that we heard over the last week will provide us with some important information and some further context. We can now analyze that, reflect on it, incorporate it into our work, and it will support the final recommendations that we put forward.

So again, I want to thank all the families and survivors and all the witnesses who have shared their truths with us throughout this National Inquiry process and have helped us honour our murdered and missing loved ones with their presence, with their knowledge, with their contributions.

So I wish you all safe travels, and I look forward to seeing many of you in Québec City next week as

we continue to gather evidence so that we can make this final report as robust as possible with the time and resources we have left. Thank you. Merci. Qujannamiik.

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: Merci beaucoup, Brian. Thank you so much, Brian. Nakurmiik, (Indigenous language).

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Hi. I would like to recognize and thank the people of Iqaluit. And, also, Meeka and Abraham, I thank you for being here, and you have taught us a lot even just by being present. Louise, as usual, I know I'm going to cry.

I appreciate everything you did. You stood with me, and for teaching me and giving me advice when I'm not going so straight. We are working on very difficult issues this week. It has been hard, but when it's hard, a new role is created. If we didn't work hard, we would not -- we won't be able to move forward. Let it be difficult, if it wants to be difficult, because we have to go through it.

And, thank you for teaching me these things and reminding me of them. And, also, Micah, thank you, too, for teaching me and guiding me. Thank you. And, those who are from Iqaluit who are helping us, and Pangnirtung, Cline River, I thank you very much for being here. When there's difficult issues, it's okay to cry

because we do work hard, and you are there with us, and we appreciate that. And, for those who work for (indiscernible).

I would like to (indiscernible) Lillian, Violet Ford, (indiscernible). She's right there and (indiscernible), Barb Sevigny, who is not here, but we worked with them for quite a while, and I would like to thank you, and I appreciate your teachings. What we do will be able to benefit the Inuit or the people. We're not done yet.

When you're trying to create something and that for the first time have been created, it was very difficult. We didn't have any resources, but because of your knowledge and your feelings, we try to follow those, and that's how we proceed with our work. And, especially being able to work together, and you have been -- we have been thinking of others. Therefore, we're able to go forward, and this is a very good teaching. Very good, and I appreciate that very much.

And, for those who are here to listen, and the people who are listening through the internet, I appreciate. And, those who were experts, I also thank them, because you expressed the feeling from your heart and the struggle that you went through, and the things that you are proud of, and that teaches us a lot of

things, especially for Canadian people.

When I want to talk to Canadians, I have to speak English.

What has been shared with us, and what I have learned this week that I think is of most significance, is that for those state actors, governments, the Queen's soldiers, whoever they were that came, came with the belief that they had the authority. They could do it. They had the right to take it, a right vested in an understanding of their place in the world that was rooted in supremacy; white supremacy, ideological supremacy, religious supremacy.

We've heard about those impacts this week. We've heard about, also, the resilience, and we've also learned that what we should have always known. Inuit, Indigenous peoples have always had the answers, and continue today to have those answers.

So, what do we do? We heard a lot about space, and I think one of the most important things that I learned this week as a non-Indigenous person is the importance of vacating space that is not yours. There was never any reason and there is no longer any reason or excuse to demand that Indigenous people justify to the state their legitimacy and ability to take care of their own lives, families and community. Time's up.

So, if anything was learned this week, I hope it was learned by those that occupy spaces that aren't their own. And, I liked your reference to storytelling, because storytelling does not always connect the dots such as the great thing, and I felt so stupid asking people who were telling brilliant stories, truths, to connect the dots for me, because that's work that has to come in here and here.

So, I encourage all those listening who are sitting in their spaces, and I challenge you. Are you part of the disruption? And, I ask you to interrupt that disruption. Look inward and do that as individuals and then take that to your kitchen table, and then take that to your boardroom, and take it to your staff room, and your office. Take it to your church. Take it to the grocery story.

I'm going to end with that. I didn't know what I was going to say, but it's important that we know where the problem is, and it's not in Indigenous communities. It's in the halls of those with the power who aren't vacating the space. That's all I'm going to say. See you in Quebec City.

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: Thank you very much. That was very understandable, Qajaq Robinson. Thank you so much for your words of wisdom. Very clear message.

Merci beaucoup pour votre message si clair, Commissaire Robinson. Alors, je pense qu'on est aux dernières, ma chère commissaire Michèle… right now?

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Oui! Est-ce que vous m'entendez?

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: Oui, on vous entend très bien! Allez-y!

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Thank you so much. Nakurmiik. Thank you for the elders, for the Inuit people. It was amazing although I was here in Québec City. I hear myself in French, so I guess I better speak only French.

Merci beaucoup – c'est les traductrices, les interprètes que j'entends! Alors, un gros gros merci à tous les gens qui ont été en mesure d'accueillir l'équipe, nos aînés, les commissaires, mes amis, ma famille, des gens pour qui j'ai énormément de respect dans le beau territoire du peuple inuit, mais aussi un endroit où ma grande amie, ma grande sœur Qajak Robinson a donné son premier souffle de vie et je suis fière de travailler à tes côtés, Qajak.

Merci Mika pour toutes ces belles paroles lors de ton message pour la clôture, la fermeture. C'était puissant, j'ai trouvé ça très fort et j'espère que le Canada au complet a été en mesure de t'entendre parce que

la SÉPAQ a arrêté un moment donné la télédiffusion. C'était vraiment touchant, surtout venant d'un membre d'une famille et une femme du Nord.

J'ai écouté tous les témoignages, tous les experts, les gardiens du savoir et encore une fois, j'ai vécu des émotions à partir de Québec; parfois de la frustration, parfois surprise de voir comment les gens ont avancé ou réfléchi ou bougé sur certaines choses et certains enjeux très importants pour l'Enquête nationale. Ça, je vous dis un gros gros merci d'avoir, comme dit Commissaire Eyolfson, mon grand frère, d'avoir apporté ses preuves auprès des commissaires et de l'Enquête nationale. Félicitations et je suis fière de dire que nous sommes des milliers d'autochtones, Métis, Inuits, Premières Nations, à détenir un savoir incroyable, à détenir, comme Qajak vient de mentionner, les réponses aux enjeux auxquels on fait face.

Il faut s'assurer que les alliés soient là; il faut s'assurer que les gouvernements soient là, nos gouvernements autochtones, mais aussi les institutions en général. Il reste tellement de travail à faire pour éliminer toutes les causes de violence puis créer un environnement sécuritaire – comme vous le voyez, je suis avec mes jumelles en ce moment, Shiska et Awastia (phon.), un environnement sécuritaire pour nos enfants, mais aussi

pour tous les enfants autochtones au Canada. Et ça, moi, je me suis engagée personnellement et professionnellement et je sais très bien que l'ensemble de l'équipe nationale, on travaille fort pour ça.

Certaines d'entre nous, on est des grands-mères, certaines d'entre nous, on est des tantes, des oncles, des marraines, des parrains, donc on s'engage pour s'assurer que la sécurité atteint son plein potentiel au Canada.

Je vous dis qu'on va tout faire ; Marion, notre commissaire en chef, a fait un discours qui m'a fait pleurer – d'ailleurs, Awastia m'a dit : « Maman? Tu pleures? » Et j'ai dit : « Oui, parce que la commissaire en chef, son message était… » …comment je pourrais dire, m'a ramené à l'optimisme au lieu de rester dans : « Je suis fâchée parce qu'on a juste six mois d'extension. »

La commissaire en chef et les experts et mes collègues me ramènent à : « Il faut maximiser le temps qu'on a pour justement, comme Marion dit, de contribuer à cette histoire-là qui est en train de se créer. Et de faire en sorte que Docteur Smiley, qui nous rappelle de l'importance de la tradition orale puis de raconter nos histoires peut tellement être une forme de guérison ou la forme de guérison qu'on a priorisée comme commissaires.

Alors, merci Marion pour ces

encouragements-là puis de me rappeler que c'est fort, ce qu'on fait et c'est grand, grâce à toutes ces petites voix là qui sont devenues une voix à l'Enquête nationale : nos familles, les familles puis les survivantes. Thank you!

Puis pour terminer, j'aimerais ça dire que… je veux remercier nos grands-mères qui sont présentes, les grands-mères qui accompagnent les commissaires, je veux remercier les membres, les grands-mères qui accompagnent les commissaires… Je veux remercier les membres du NFAC, qui nous guident au quotidien, nos amis, nos conjoints, nos partenaires de vie. Ce n'est pas facile comme mandat, mais je peux juste me rappeler comment une membre d'une famille ou une survivante doit, au quotidien, soutenir cette tragédie-là, mais qu'elles deviennent nos mentors aujourd'hui pour amener des solutions.

La semaine prochaine, c'est moi qui vous accueille! Ma petite famille, on vous accueille à Québec avec les commissaires et l'Enquête nationale pour, encore une fois, des travaux très importants sur le système judiciaire et criminel. Les travaux vont faire en sorte qu'on va entendre des experts et des expertes qui vont faire état des problèmes, mais aussi amener des solutions. Puis j'ai ma petite Awastia qui, à chaque fois que je quitte la maison pour venir travailler à l'Enquête nationale, me dit toujours : « N'oublie pas, Maman, de

dire aux femmes que je les aime » et elle vous a fait un beau message :

MICHÈLE AUDETTE'S DAUGHTER: I love you all! [Rires]

MICHÈLE AUDETTE'S OTHER DAUGHTER: I love you me too! [Rires]

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Merci! I miss you! I'll see you next week in Québec! I love you all!

MICHÈLE AUDETTE'S DAUGHTER: I love you! [Rires]

MICHÈLE AUDETTE'S OTHER DAUGHTER: I love you! [Rires]

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: We love you too! On vous aime aussi! (Applaudissements et rires) Merci Michèle! Merci! Merci beaucoup! Alors, nous allons aller à notre prochaine étape, on n'a pas encore terminé, alors parce qu'il y a encore du monde à remercier.

Alors, I am going to ask Bernie to come here right beside me right now as there is still a very important step to take in thanking the people who have been here, who have stayed all along with us, supporting us. And, I would like to thank Bernie who has been with us since the creation of this Commission, and I will leave her to say her words.

GRANDMOTHER BERNIE WILLIAMS: I want to say Haw'a. I would like to invite my niece, Audrey, up here, and the grandmothers, and Elder Leslie, Grandmother Kathy, Grandmother Louise and Grandmother Blu, and also the Commissioners. I want to say hello to my Dr. Commissioner Michèle Audette.

I just want to say Haw'a. I really apologize, I am sort of kind of having, like, a little meltdown right now. I am really tired. I spent three days at the airport just to try to get here, and I'm exhausted, jetlagged more or less. And -- but I want to say haw'áa to the people in this beautiful territory.

My name is Gul-Giit-Jaad. I am from the House of the St'langng Jaanas in Haida Gwaii. I'm a very long way from here. But Gul-Giit-Jaad means Golden Spruce Woman. I took that name. I was given that name where my grandmother and at the territory of Yakun (ph). My colonial name Bernie Williams-Poitras, and I am one of the grandmothers to Michéle Audette, Dr. Michéle Audette.

I want to say haw'áa. I was -- I had the good fortune to be taken out last night to see the beautiful land, like your territory here. And when I was flying in the other day, I started to cry because this reminded me so much of home, and -- but -- and to the Elders of this territory, and for lighting the Qulliq.

I want to acknowledge the grandmothers here. And I'm just a young one still in training yet, and I've made a lot of mistakes, and they're very patient with me. And to the Commissioners, and I want to say haw'áa to them.

But also to the men and women, you know, who are behind the scenes too. It's -- I watch them and -- like the hard work that they do. I also want to acknowledge them.

And I want to explain about the copper. I'm going to ask my niece to come up here to take over and that. The copper in my culture in like the Haida Gwaii territory, formerly called like Queen Charlotte Islands, the copper is the highest gift that you can give. It's like our -- it's our platinum. And my understanding when I was coming here is that the copper is very sacred to the people here to.

And I'd like to ask my niece to explain the rest to them. But I just want to say haw'áa to you for welcoming me. And for a little time that I've been here I am -- I've been so blessed to meet some really well incredible as warrior women, and I just want to say haw'áa to you for allowing us to do this work in your beautiful territory. Haw'áa.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MS. AUDREY SIEGL: I also say Nakurmiik to the people of the land, to the ancestors, to the land itself for caring for us and loving us. I've been saying all week this is the happiest land I have ever been on. I actually feel like it's smiling at me everywhere I go and welcoming me. And that's important when you're dealing with what we're dealing with, the truths and the pain. But from that comes the healing.

And that's what these gifts are from my aunt, who is, in my mind, the most amazing artist because what she carves, it doesn't just come from her hands, it comes from her heart. She is very humble. She won't share with you that she was mentored under Bill Reid. She won't share with you that she is one of the few Haida women carvers because women aren't supposed to carve. But she does.

So she gives these gifts from her heart because she doesn't just know what it's like to survive, she knows what it's like to heal and to care for others, and from the strength that she has that has come from a lot of suffering.

She shares these with community members everywhere we go to honour you, to hold you up high so you can wear it and look at it and you know you're loved, you know you did good, you'll know that you were recognized

for that good work that you've done. And if we had them to share with everybody we would love to.

So from our ancestors that travel with us everywhere we go, to your ancestors, the ones who made sure that we're still here, my people, we say (indiscernible). We raise our hands. Nakurmiik.

GRANDMOTHER BERNIE WILLIAMS: I would like invite our sister, Lisa, to come up here and I'm going to be giving the pendants to the grandmothers to give to the Commissioners to give them. And I am reminded that -- I'm going to let you guys know that I was reminded that the Elders will not come up, that we go to them. I just learned that, however, teaching myself.

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: So this is to show our appreciation, and they will given to Abraham and Meeka. Meeka Arnakak is one of the persons who will be receiving the gift. You may go to her. Yes, please. And to Abraham, her husband, who have accompanied us this week, they had hoped that they would be here right at the beginning of the week, and unfortunately, because of fog, were able to make it only a couple of days ago. And we thank them. Nakurmiik. Merci beaucoup.

We thank the Elders from Pangnirtung. On remercie beaucoup, beaucoup nos deux ainés de Pangnirtung qui nous accompagnent cette semaine. Alors, nakurmiik.

Et aussi, Micah Arreak, on peut demander (speaking Inuktitut). And also, a gift for Micah. Please come.

Puis on remercie beaucoup Micah pour son travail de soutien à l'Enquête nationale. (Speaking Inuktitut). Nakurmiik.

Adam Arreak (speaking Inuktitut) Lightstone. (Speaking Inuktitut).

We would like to thank Adam Lightstone, who has participated in these forums and also lobbies on behalf of the murdered and missing Indigenous women.

Depuis qu'il a été élu, je crois qu'il est le plus jeune membre de législature ici au Nunavut, du gouvernement. Et depuis qu'il a commencé son travail dans le gouvernement, il diffuse de l'information sur les femmes inuit et les enjeux avec lesquels les femmes sont subites.

Jocelyne accepts on behalf of -- Jocelyne est la soeur de Adam qui prend le cadeau pour lui donner plus tard.

The Honorable Elisapi, we would like to show our appreciation.

On remercie Elisapi. Depuis qu'elle est élue dans le gouvernement, elle est le ministre des Services de famille et Status of Women. Je suis désolée.

Je viens d'oublier comment le dire en français, mais elle fait beaucoup de travail dans la communauté pour que les femmes inuit soit reconnues depuis qu'elle a toujours travaillé aussi pour l'Association de femmes inuit Pauktuutit. On la remercie énormément.

Maintenant j'aimerais demander à ma sœur Terrelyn Fern pour venir parler des gens qui vont aussi être donnés des cadeaux.

I'm asking Terrelyn Fern, who is the Director of the Community Relations and Health of the National Inquiry to come and take my place.

MS. TERRELYN FERN: I am not worthy, and I can't fill her mukluks.

MS. LISA KOPERQUALUK: You have to wear them.

MS. TERRELYN FERN: Good afternoon and thank you, Lisa.

My name is Terrelyn Fern and I just want to acknowledge I am a visitor on this beautiful territory. My family name is Peters, and I'm from Glooscap First National Akmagi (phonetic). So hello to my Mi'kmaq sisters and to all of you gracious hosts.

It has been a challenging four days, and a lot of information and wisdom and knowledge that has been shared, and it can be hard at times to hear this type of

information and to be reminded of some of those hurts in the past, but recognizing, understanding and moving ahead, we heard a lot of resilience and strength.

There's a lot of work that goes behind the scenes to prepare and plan. I want to acknowledge the Inquiry staff, our logistics teams, our legal teams, our health and community outreach folks.

At this time, at every hearing and event that we go to, we try to create a really strong circle of support, individuals in the community that have the biggest hearts and the innate ability to surround individuals with love and strength as they sit and witness this testimony, this information. And I want to take some time to acknowledge those individuals.

We want to say thank you to Eliyasaksovut (phonetic) for their counsellors that have come to support for the past four days, to Northern Counselling, to First Nations and Inuit Health Branch for their amazing resolution, health support workers and cultural support workers that have taken the time to stand in strength and to circle around us and around you as we journeyed together for the past four days.

So I would like, the commissioners and the grandmothers would like to gift you as well, and so I would like to -- I'm going to call some names. I would

like for you to come up. Elisapi Kwasaq (phonetic), Elisapi Aningmiuq, Nash Sagliatuk (phonetic), hiding in the corner, Jekoposi Tiqliq (phonetic), Elizabeth Sheen (phonetic), Cami Anderson and Jamie Mike (phonetic). And I want to acknowledge that Rebecca Williams, Sarah Philippe, we did gift them as well. They had to go. Her, I believe, daughter or relation is having -- is in labour at the moment. So I want to acknowledge them, and we did gift them as well.

I have the graciousness to work with these amazing individuals. We are very happy.

Parnabah (phonetic) from Pauktuutit as well. Is she here? Wonderful. Thank you.

I'm always amazed, when we go into communities, at the wonderful people that are supporting all of us. So from the bottom of my heart, I want to acknowledge you and say nakurmiik (speaking in Mi'kmaq) for your time, your dedication, your love, your laughter and your tears. I thought Mi'kmaq people were funny, but the Inuit people of this land are way more funny. We've had a great week and lots of laugh, which is healing as well.

Finally, we'll try to get through this. I know everybody wants to go. There's a few other women that we would like to acknowledge, and they are members of

our NI staff, amazing women that have -- let me call them first: Lillian Aglugark Lundrigan, please come up, Violet Ford, Looee Okalik and Lisa Koperqualuk. I tried to hide this from Lisa because she's the MC and I didn't want her to know.

I want to honour -- we want to honour these women for their brilliance, their strength, their resilience, their knowledge, their wisdom. They're reminding us that you can be strong and firm and gentle and that we are stronger together, and that it is important to be inclusive and to have the Inuit voice, and I thank you, (speaking Mi'kmaq) for your love. And on behalf of everyone at the National Inquiry, we want to thank you and honour you for sharing of yourselves, for welcoming us here to this land.

So thank you.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

Mme LISA KOPERQUALUK: Alors, merci tout le monde. On va terminer notre semaine très stimulante aussi, très touchante, très intense, comme on savait que ça serait.

So we will be ending our week now at this last part of our ceremony, our closing ceremony, with the extinguishment of our qulliq.

I would just like to explain very quickly

how the qulliq has been travelling again. I mentioned it earlier, but our qulliq, the Inuit seal -- originally seal oil lamp or bowhead whale oil lamp has been travelling with the National Inquiry as one of the sacred objects, and at every hearing, no matter where it is, whether it's in Montreal or in Calgary or Quebec City or Inuit nunagivaktangat or aillaiq nunagivaktangat (phonetic) in the reserves, for example, wherever the National Inquiry has been, the qulliq has followed and is lit.

(Speaking in Inuktitut).

Let's have our closing prayer and the closing of the qulliq. Meeka (speaking indigenous language).

ELDER MEEKA ARNAKAK: (Speaking Inuktitut). Thank you very much. Qallunaat, because we are able to be on the same page even though I can't speak English, I am very friendly with qallunaat and also Inuit women, young people. They are in my mind -- and who have given me a little of support. I am sure that we will have better things coming, so this is my hope and this has been my hope. And, we have been as one culture, as one person, and we are proceeding.

Even though I cannot speak in English, I look at all the Canadians from what I hear through TV, although I don't understand it, but I feel for them and my

body seems to understand that. And, I appreciate for giving us our strength to proceed.

But, according to being an elder, I won't be able to do too much of the work I have been doing, although my mind is still eager. And, I have somebody give me a great gift of love that I never felt for a long time, and the hurt that I had is gone. And, my mind, my breathing and my -- the thing that was stopping me -- because I couldn't live properly or be normal. I used to envy people that were mixed around with other people. I couldn't do that, but now -- and I ask myself, why can't I get mixed in with the other people? And, a lot of times I ask myself that. But, when I had an understanding after going through healing with my wife, Meeka, and it was -- I realized that I was carrying things that I shouldn't be carrying. And, everything I do is now with love.

I used to cry because I love my wife, my children and the people. And, for those reasons, we came here not too long ago. I am very happy of what is going on, but I just don't say anything. I am full of love. I am very proud of our qallunaat, I am very proud of Inuit, men, women, and I give this to you to thank you. For what we heard will not just disappear and we will work on them, and we have a hope for the future from the things that I have heard and I recognize them because it is all for --

to have a better life in the future.

And, it is the very first time that I have been into a hearing like this, and I have thought about it. I have been a minister -- a lot of times -- and when we meet -- there are a lot of people. Sometimes we disagree too. But, here, what we went through, I have not heard any disagreement and anybody who objected, and I am very proud of that, because we are working on something very important that is -- that will be used for the future even if we don't use it right away. But, it will be used to better our future in the future. And, I thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you.

ELDER MEEKA ARNAKAK: Maybe I am the last one? I will say a prayer and sing a hymn for this meeting -- part of this meeting. It is a short one. I will sing first, then I will do the closing prayer.

(MUSICAL PRESENTATION)

ELDER MEEKA ARNAKAK: (Speaking Inuktitut). Amen. That is it.

--- Upon adjourning at 17:56

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Sean Prouse, 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.

Sean Prouse

Sep 13, 2018