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APPEARANCES

Assembly of First Nations
Julie McGregor (Legal Counsel), Stuart Wuttke (Legal Counsel)

Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society
Carly Teillet (Legal Counsel), Anne Maje Raider, Mary Charlie, Dr. Shelley Bonnah (Representative)

Aboriginal Women’s Action Network
Fay Blaney (Representative), MiKenze Jordan (Representative), Sophie Merasty (Representative)

Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women’s Circle Corporation
Kellie Wuttunee (Legal Counsel)

NunatuKavut Community Council Inc.
Roy Stewart (Legal Counsel)
Truth-Gathering Process
Oral Submissions

Chair: Christa Big Canoe (Commission Counsel)
Second Chairs: Thomas Barnett & Francine Merasty (Commission Counsel)

Heard by Chief Commissioner Marion Buller and Commissioners Michèle Audette, Brian Eyolfson & Qajaq Robinson

Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge-keepers & National Family Advisory Circle (NFAC) members: Gerald Meginnes, Alvine Wolfleg, Norton Eagle Speaker, John Wesley, Skundaal Bernie Williams, Leslie Spillett, Louise Haulli, Myna Manniapik, Darlene Osborne, Pam Fillier, Lorraine Clements, Lesa Semmler

Blackfoot Confederacy Drummers: Leo Wells, Clarence Wolfleg Jr., Norvin Eagle Speaker, Sean Cutter

Clerks: Bryana Bouchir & Maryiam Khoury

Registrar: Bryan Zandberg
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--- The hearing starts on Thursday, November 28, 2018
at 8:21

**MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO:** ...had a good
rest last night. I certainly did. We’re just waiting for
our drum group to setup. We have our Elder here, Gerald,
the Commissioners. Everyone’s here.

Yesterday I was away, so my apologies for
not being here for closing yesterday afternoon. But I do
want to thank the Downtown Eastside Women’s Centre,
because they had mentioned my cousin Verna Simard who was
killed Downtown Eastside.

And when I heard that it really touched me,
because besides my family talking about my cousin in our
testimony, we never heard her name throughout any
presentations, et cetera. So on behalf of my family and
my cousin, chi-miigwetch for that.

I just want to -- it’s been a good week.
And I was thinking yesterday and I was talking to some of
the NFAC members about normalcy. And on Facebook you see
all these posts about girls missing. Women and girls
being killed - our women, our girls - and trying not to
become stuck. Trying not having -- for that to be normal
for us. Trying not to forget about them. Trying to, you
know, always keep them at your heart.
And sometimes it’s difficult when you see that on a daily basis happening and I think all of us together we always have to -- when we see posts like that and situations, we always have to keep those individuals at our heart, because they are someone’s mother, daughter, sister, aunt, cousin, friend, so it’s important that we keep them center.

So while the drum’s setting up, I’d like to call upon our friend and Elder, Gerald, to come up and start us off in a good way.

MR. GERALD MEGINNIS: Thank you.

Good morning. I missed out on yesterday’s prayers. Forgive me for that. First time I’ve slept in and when I looked -- woke up I was wondering where the heck I was.

But yesterday was very -- when I was sittin’ listening to all the speakers, it really hit home. But the thing I’m trying to say is, right, boils down to the women, the women that we lost. Some are closely related that are here today. But without our women where would we be? That’s what I was thinking.

And the thing I have to pray for is that we have to all come together as one, like I said the day before, to work together to try and solve this problem.

And the thing that I was thinking about
last night when my kids came to visit, why is it they’re picking on women? But things happen and we cannot. We have to either think about it and move on, but it’s hard to say -- I mean it’s easy to say “move on”, but especially if you’re close to this person that you lost it’s hard.

But the thing I’ll say is think of all the good things that you did with this person when she was alive. And think that way and that’ll take the burden -- the sorrow that you have -- but the hurt is always there.

So with that have a good day. I guess what I would say, Commissioners, the Elders that are here, the drummers, that we’ll all have a good day.

This day is one that’s going to come. It’s not -- we’re never going to see it again, so let’s try and live the day today in a good way and try and do the best we can. That’s all I can say.

As long as we’ve got the support of each other to understand that we all are here together to try and solve this problem and it’s very -- I’m very humble that I was asked to come here to pray each day, so with that I’ll say an opening prayer.

(NATIVE LANGUAGE)

So what I prayed for is for everyone in here today that we have clear minds and to express our
feelings. And like I said, it’s hard when we lose a loved
one, but we have to keep going to make things better for
girls in the future. To make that path a safe path.

I often wonder why it is us people, why is
it it’s always us that get the, you know, always the end
of the stick, but knowing that you here today will try and
solve this problem, and in the future we’re trying to set
a path for the girls that’s coming up, that they’ll have a
safe passage and that we work together as a nation, not as
an individual, and that we all know that we work together.

With that, I thank you for listening to me
and I hope each and every one of you have a good day and
that the day goes nice for each and every one of us. So
thank you very much for listening to me. Thank you.

MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO: Migwetch.

Now we have the Blackfoot Confederacy Drum Group that will
open us up with an honour song. Migwetch.

(SINGING)

MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO: Oh,
migwetch. Now we’ll have Myna with the lighting of the
qulliq.

--- LIGHTING OF THE QULLIQ

MS. MYNA MANNIAPIK: I didn’t mean to.

(LAUGHTER/RIRES)

MS. MYNA MANNIAPIK: Good morning, (NATIVE
LANGUAGES), bonjour. (NATIVE LANGUAGE)

(SHORT PAUSE/COURTE PAUSE)

**MS. MYNA MANNIAPIK:** Thank you for reminding me that I still have a strong heartbeat. This week has been really close to my heart. I’ve been thinking about my late mother, you know, lighting this and handling the Qulliq. My mother was one of the Indigenous people that had to die early because of neglect of health care system in the north. By the time she got diagnosed, after my sister took her to another town for examination, it was too late, as she had cancer. Her cancer had spread. Before that, she’s been going to see the nurses for a year, and they never did anything. So like I mentioned yesterday, that I -- I’m a cancer survivor twice. I think I’m one of the lucky ones because I happen to live in the south where there’s doctors, and I got diagnosed early, twice. But it’s not like that in the far north where there’s no doctors.

I just like to say, in a -- even during these very heavy issues we have to deal with and listen to, it’s good to laugh sometimes, you know. Laugh -- laughter to us is, you know, it’s very essential in our lives. And a lot of times it, you know, I live in Edmonton, if I hear people laughing, then I look right away, they’re Indigenous people. It’s -- it’s a good
thing.

I just like you to know, this is not my trade here. Lighting Qulliq is not my trade, but now it seems to be. I used to sit in one of those booths behind you. I’m a certified simultaneous interpreter/translator by trade. And as -- to you, young people and relatively young people, please treat your Elders with respect because we’re all heading that way, you know. No Oil of Olay is going to hold our age.

(LAUGHTER)

MS. MYNA MANNIAPIK: And when one time -- now, I have arthritis, and so on, as we age, something like that we’ll meet along the way. And one time I was really suffering hard, I put some cream on, and I went out and this older man said, “What kind of perfume are you wearing?” I -- I knew I wasn’t perfume. “It’s called Bengay.”

(LAUGHTER)

MS. MYNA MANNIAPIK: You can get it from a drug store. Well, have a good day, everyone.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good speech.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE).

MS. MYNA MANNIAPIK: Oh, migwetch.

MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO: Okay. So
just a couple of housekeeping notes. We do have our
Elders here. We have Alvine and Spike and Gerald here for
spiritual guidance. They’re not just here to open and
close every day. If you need some ceremonies, you need
some healing, you know, please feel free to come up and --
and utilize them as well because they are our Elders and
our teachers. And we need to respect them and -- in order
to heal and move on as part of our journey. You know, we
need that ceremony in our lives too.

Again, the Elders in the Health Rooms are
past the elevators. They’re the Mariposa Room and the
Silver Willow Room. And we have Gerry and Cora Lee doing
healing through beading within the Elder -- Elders Room as
well. So have a good day, and I’ll hand it over to
Christa.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you,
Christine. Before -- before we get started, I’ll invite
the first party to -- to take a seat up here by the
podium, and then more formally ask that we open the record
a few minutes early. Chief Commissioner, Commissaire
Audette, Commissioner Robinson, Commissioner Eyolfson,
today is day 4 of the Closing Submissions by Parties with
Standing. And the first party that we’ll be inviting up
will be Assembly of First Nations. But also, just for the
purpose of the record, I’m Christa Big Canoe, and I’d like
to introduce Associate Commission counsel, Francine Merasty, and also Mr. Thomas Barnett will also be calling parties today. And with that, I will invite up the Assembly of the First Nations. Ms. Julie McGregor and Mr. Stuart Wuttke will be doing the submissions on behalf of the Assembly of First Nations, and they will have 40 minutes for their submissions, and the Commissioners will have ten for questions.

---SUBMISSIONS BY MS. JULIE MCGREGOR AND STUART WUTTKE:

MS. JULIE MCGREGOR: It’s a little bit. Okay. We’re good? Okay. (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE). Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Julie McGregor. I’m an Algonquin from Kitigan Zibi, and I, along with my colleague, Stuart Wuttke, will be presenting final submissions on behalf of the Assembly of First Nations.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the territory of the Treaty 7 people, and also the sacred items in the room. And I’d also like to thank the Elder for his prayers, and for the Elder for lighting the Qulliq. I have to start off by -- at the outset by warning you. I’m recovering from a cold right, and I’m hoping that my voice will -- will not give out, and I won’t have a coughing fit or a sneezing fit in front you. But if I do, please bear with me. My apologies. As I mentioned, I’ll be splitting my time with my colleague,
Stuart Wuttke. And given the time we have, it’s probably impossible for us to cover all the issues. That will be covered in the AFN’s written submissions, so I’ll refer the Commissioners to our written submissions for greater detail. And I also note that the written submissions will include a full list of the AFN’s recommendations for the Commissioners.

The Assembly of First Nations is a national representative of 634 First Nations and First Nations citizens across Canada. As you know, First Nations have their own histories, languages, and relationships with Canada. These relationships are founded on the inherent self-governing authority of First Nations, historic peace and friendship treaties, military alliance treaties, treaties relating to trade, pre-confederation treaties, the numbered treaties, modern treaties, self-government agreements, and other arrangements.

The AFN is comprised of several main bodies, including the AFN Women’s Council. The AFN’s Women’s Council works with the AFN Secretariat to ensure that the concerns and perspectives of First Nations women and form the work of the AFN. The Women’s Council actively participates in the Executive Committee of the AFN to provide perspective -- the perspectives of First Nations women. The Women’s Council provided leadership
and engagement in pre-inquiry activities, and the Women’s Council’s members participated in regional pre-inquiry meetings.

The AFN leadership, in conjunction with the AFN Women’s Council, has provided for increased awareness and communication on many issues on involving violence against Indigenous women and missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. The AFN and the AFN Women’s Council advocated for many years for the establishment of the -- of this National Inquiry, and called on all levels of government to address the systematic ...causes of all forms of violence, including sexual violence against indigenous women and girls.

The AFN’s advocacy work on this issue is supported by several chiefs in assembly resolutions. Resolution 61-2010 called on the AFN Executive to advocate for the establishment of an independent Public Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and called on all levels of government to engage with First Nations on the national, regional and local levels to develop action plans, to support families and address the root causes of violence against indigenous women.

In addition, Resolution 61-2010 directed the AFN Executive to call upon governments to support community-based initiatives and to ensure proper resources
for victims of crime and to advocate and to lobby for the protection and safety of First Nations women and children across Canada, in according with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

The AFN and the AFN Women’s Council have made the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls a priority and have worked to address the issue of ending violence against indigenous women and girls, including the identification and examination of practices that have been effective in reducing violence and increasing safety.

The AFN has actively participated in all aspects of the National Inquiry’s hearings, including 14 community hearings and all of the institutional and expert hearings that were carried out across the country.

The AFN firmly believes in and has always advocated for a family’s first approach to the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. This is evidenced by Resolutions 37-2014, which mandated the AFN Executive to take a family’s first approach, ensuring that there is respectful inclusion of voices and perspectives of families in the discussions and in the development of action plans on the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

In addition, the family’s first approach
was emphasized in Resolution 57-2017, support for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and Resolution 78-2017, support for the extension of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

The AFN and the AFN Women’s Council have also advocates strongly that the National Inquiry adopt a human rights approach to examining the root causes of the national epidemic of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

Articles 21(2) and Articles 22(2) of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, and Article 7 of the American Declaration on the rights of Indigenous People states that:

“Indigenous women have the right to the recognition, protection, enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms provided for in international law, free of all forms of discrimination. States must recognize that violence against indigenous peoples and persons, particularly women, hinders or nullifies the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.”
The UN Declaration specifically recognizes the duty of states to take measures in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to ensure that indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.

In the international law context, states have obligations to demonstrate their due diligence to prevent human rights violations.

The AFN submits that these important principles must form the foundations of the Commissioners’ recommendations in their final report.

As I have stated, the AFN has participated in all aspects of this Inquiry, and here we are now at the conclusion of this journey. It has not been an easy journey, and I don’t think anyone ever expected that it would be.

Commissioners, you have travelled across the country and you have heard from survivors, family members, advocates, academics, experts, service providers, the police, Crown prosecutors and government officials. And what did you hear?

You’ve heard from survivors and family members who have had the incredible courage and strength to share with you some of the most traumatic and painful experiences anyone can ever face. You have witnessed
their strength and their undying dedication to their loved ones and their struggle to seek justice in the face of systematic racism and prejudices.

You have heard from First Nations leadership, the frustration the sadness and the powerlessness they feel when their citizens and, in some cases, their own loved ones go missing or are found murdered. You have heard about the lack of resources they receive, the need for funding for land-based and culturally appropriate mental health and healing programs.

You have heard from frontline workers and service providers about the lack of funding their receive to provide much needed support and prevention services for First Nations women and girls who are affected by trauma, battling addictions or who are involved in the sex trade and who are at risk of experiencing violence.

You have heard about the onerous reporting administrative hurdles and prejudices these service providers must overtime in both urban and remote areas.

You have heard from leading indigenous experts who have demonstrated the many types of institutional racism and prejudice First Nations people experience in the criminal justice system and in the provision of essential services such as health and social services.
You have heard from numerous academics on how First Nations’ inherent rights, jurisdiction and legal traditions must be recognized and upheld in order to truly -- in order for true reconciliation to occur in this country.

You have heard from police forces who have admitted and even apologized for failing the families of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, and LGBTQ2S people.

You have heard from several government officials about the types of programs and service they provide to address the issue of violence against indigenous women and girls, as well as the initiatives they are now taking to be more inclusive of indigenous people and indigenous culture. You’ve heard about their implementation of cultural awareness or cultural competency training and their initiatives to create partnerships and relationships with First Nations. And while this has all been informative, many of these institutional witnesses, with some notable exceptions, did not provide evidence on exactly what are the mechanisms of internal lies, or systematic prejudices and racism within their institutions that contribute to the problem of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls in Canada.

Some refuse to acknowledge that racism or
prejudice in their organization even exists at all. Yet we know that First Nations people are continually over-policing, overcharged, over-incarcerated in the justice system.

We know for a fact that government officials have historically never -- and in some cases still don’t -- provide the same level of funding for First Nations for services on reserve as they do other populations.

And we’ve heard directly from survivors and family members that when First Nations Women and Girls go missing, their families’ complaints are not taken seriously. Their cases are not investigated properly. Their families are not updated about their loved ones’ investigations and their cases are prematurely deemed accidents. And the perpetrators are not apprehended or punished in the same manner as when the victims are non-indigenous.

We know that the history of colonialism and racism in this country plays a significant role in the violence experienced by First Nation women and girls.

For example, the evidence of Jeffrey McNeil-Seymour described the links between colonialism, violence, land disposition, resource extraction and the negative effects that this has had on indigenous women,
girls and LGBTQ.

The growing prevalence of man camps in the natural resource sector and their correlation with violence and human trafficking has its roots in colonial violence and the land disposition of First Nations. Man camps, which are often located near remote First Nations, expose women and girls to greater risk to gender-based violence, harassment, family and domestic violence, human trafficking, racism and other violations of their human rights.

Natural resource projects bring influxes of mostly non-indigenous, transient men into remote areas. The nature of resource work is isolating, dangerous and unstable, and this, coupled with high-paying jobs, creates circumstances where there’s increased likelihood for the use of drugs, alcohol and the occurrence of violence.

Due to the unequal funding for health services, social services and policing, First Nations lack the resources needed to handle these large increases of population, socioeconomic problems and consequential violence which is perpetrated against First Nations women and girls.

As you see it’s a domino effect which is based upon and perpetrated -- and perpetuated, sorry, by racism and discrimination, the denial of human rights and
the violation of First Nations relationships to their lands or the extinguishment of their rights.

Dr. Dalee Sambo Dorrough testified during the Human Rights hearing in Quebec City, that the extinguishment of rights can also lead to the heightened poverty and other vulnerabilities experienced by Indigenous women. And she stated in particular that unilateral extinguishment of rights of Indigenous people has a serious adverse impact.

She went on to state and I quote from line 6 - 7, on page 248 of the transcripts:

“As far as Indigenous women and girls, and missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, the diverse legal context in my view range from the lack of law enforcement, to the judiciary, to penal institutions and the denial of equality, whether it is relative or substantive equality. And for Indigenous women and girls this has generated not only insecurity of person and immediate family, but also damaging impacts upon every dimension of womanhood, as Indigenous women and girls, their relations with all
others, their relations with their own
terms and their lands and
territories and society overall.” (As read)

So you see all of these things, colonial
violence, racism, the denial of human rights and the
disposition of land and extinguishment of First Nations’
rights are inextricably linked to the prevalence of
missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

As Commissioner’s of this inquiry, you are
mandated to examine the underlying historical, social,
economic, institutional and cultural factors, that
contribute to violence -- to the violence experienced by
Indigenous women and girls, and to their greater
vulnerability to this violence and also to examine and
report on the systematic causes of all forms of violence
against Indigenous women and girls in Canada, by looking
at patterns and underlying factors and to issue
recommendations to eliminate systematic causes and
increase the safety of Indigenous women and girls in
Canada.

This is a monumental task. As I have
stated, many factors contribute to missing and murdered
Indigenous women and girls, and they are all
interconnected and far ranging.
There’s obviously going to be many unanswered questions with respect to how to eliminate systematic causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls. However, I suggest to you today that the solutions to any of these problems will always be found within our nations, within our people, within our lands and within our cultures.

As Dr. Dalee Sambo Dorough indicated in her evidence, any type of national action plan in response to these issues must start with a dialog with First Nations people concerned and the exercise of their right to self-determination, because they are the self in self-determination, and they need to identify the priorities and what specific problems are -- what the specific problems are, and what the potential solutions are.

The legacy of this inquiry will not be judged by any parties appearing before you. The legacy of this inquiry will be determined by perhaps the greatest judge of all - and that is time.

Time will tell if this process was meaningful for survivors and family members. Whether they felt supported or whether they felt their voices were heard. Time will tell if your recommendations will receive the attention they deserve, by those with the power to make the real systematic changes.
We know from other enquiries, including the Manitoba Justice Inquiry, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, that change is difficult and institutional change is seemingly impossible.

For real change to occur concrete long term and most importantly implementable recommendations are needed.

And ultimately time will tell if our First Nations women and girls are safe. If they no longer go missing or are found murdered. If they are no longer targets of violence just because they’re First Nations. If First Nations women no longer fear letting their daughters play outside or walk down the street. If First Nations families can trust that when they -- that their children -- when their children move away to urban areas to attend school, they won’t disappear or be targets for violence or human traffickers. If they, the next generation of First Nations women and girls and the generations to come, can walk on their lands and territories and feel as free, and as safe, and as secure, as any other, that will indeed be the ultimate test and legacy of this inquiry.

I would like to end my submissions by thanking the Commissioners and the staff of the National
Inquiry. I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge my colleagues who have represented the parties with standing at these hearings, some of whom are also Indigenous women themselves.

They are all fighters, they are our future and it’s been a privilege to have known them and to have worked along side them. Chi-miigwetch (NATIVE LANGUAGE).

Those are my submissions, thank you.

**MR. STUART WUTTKE:** Good afternoon. My name is Stuart Wuttke. I’m general counsel with the Assembly of First Nations. I’m also a member of Garden Hill First Nation, from Treaty Number 5 in Northern Manitoba; a citizen of the Oji-Cree Nation.

I’d also like to start off by acknowledging that we are in Treaty 7 territory.

Like my colleague Ms. McGregor, I’d like to state at the outset the importance of this case and to reiterate the importance of this inquiry to the families. Also, to the First Nations, the Assembly First Nations, our Chiefs, our Elders, who put many years in advocating for this inquiry.

When I first started out in my legal practice over 20 years ago, this was an issue and I was working with organizations who were trying to pressure our government into having an inquiry and into doing something
about the number of Indigenous women and girls that were going missing.

At the same time in pushing and advocating for the inquiry, we must all feel empathy for the families of those who have missing and murdered women and girls. Because all these women are either someone’s mother, sister, niece, daughter. They’re all precious to our families, to our communities.

And we also need to think about the girls and women who are still missing. Where are they, are they safe and can we get them back.

In addition to the murdered, missing Indigenous women, this inquiry also heard about the current government practices with relation to child welfare and a number of children that are continued to be stripped from their families, from their communities, under the child welfare system and the inherent damages that causes to those individuals.

We are mindful that all these people, all these women and children, are human beings. They’re entitled to human rights, they’re entitled to their dignity, they’re entitled to their safety.

And at the outset one of the tasks of this inquiry is to look at the contributing factors that leads to murdered and missing Indigenous women. And throughout
the parts 1, 2 and 3 hearings, you’ve heard a number of
issues and evidence with respect to the state’s role in
this.

And AFN would like to focus the next 15
minutes – 20 minutes, on the state bearing responsibility
for this -- for murdered and missing Indigenous women.

Clearly Federal Governments and Provincial
Governments are not far from -- are not beyond reproach in
this. They have created a number of policies, setup
programs, that have led to chaos and harm in First Nation
communities.

So it would be the AFN’s position that in
coming up with its recommendation, that this inquiry also
look at the role of the state and come up with a number of
recommendations for the Federal Government and provincial
governments to go beyond and change their policies, to
revoke legislation that causes harm to First Nation women
and children. The history of the Federal government’s
failed policies dates back right to the beginning with
respect to the establishment of the Indian Act. And this
inquiry has heard evidence from a number of witnesses that
talked about the disenfranchisement of First Nation women
from their communities under the Indian Act.

The federal government’s first policy was
to begin removing First Nation women as status Indians if
they were married to a non-native man. And clearly, a
woman’s status was tied to their husband, or to their
father. This policy had the effect of stripping women
from their communities, their Indian status, their
identity, their culture. You heard evidence how some of
these people couldn’t even go back to their communities to
even visit their families.

The federal government bears
responsibilities in this failed process, basically
isolating, taking the women away from the protective
nature of their families, from the safety of the
communities, and tossing them out into the world where
they were left alone. And alone, they faced
discrimination, they faced adverse employment prospects,
and they were not treated fairly by Canadian society.

The next thing the federal government did,
of course, was establish the residential schools, and this
inquiry heard a number of witnesses speak about the
impacts that residential schools had on individuals,
families, and the communities. And relatively new
information coming out with respect to the
intergenerational trauma that passes from one generation
to another generation, which all can be linked to the
Indian residential schools.

The AFN has always put a case forward that
focusses on the impacts of the Indian residential schools on First Nation communities and for Indigenous women and girls. Families and communities suffer from the impacts of residential schools. We know that the schools were set up to kill the Indian in the child. They were punished for speaking their language, they were punished for acknowledging any of their culture.

And in the evidence, there was a picture of a boy that was taken, sent to residential schools. When he got to residential school, he wore his traditional outfit. They show a picture of him standing beside a flower pot all -- hair all cut, wearing a suit. And really when you look at the symbolism of that picture and what the Canadian government was trying to perpetuate and trying to portray, was that you’re taking these, basically at that time they thought, savages, from the land and taming them. Giving them and education and making them like Canadian -- the other Canadians.

But also symbolic in that is how the land is looked at. They looked at the land, the whole vastness of Canada being wild, ready for taming, something to be cultivated. We know that the Indian residential schools was not set up to be nurturing and supporting of children. As Ms. Josie Nepinak stated in the transcripts, which is Volume 7, page 175, she states, and I quote:
“And I’ll talk about the violence for Indigenous women as a result of colonization and the whole experience around colonization, this possession of our sacred ways. The dispossession of our grandmothers, and a dispossession of our Elders. And it’s manifested through oppressive policy such as the Indian Act for First Nations women, and it’s manifested through the residential school by killing the child and killing the -- I mean -- killing the Indian in a child and killing the spirit of the child. And it is manifested in those abuses that have suffered through, whether it has taken place in a dark room, or being told we’re savages, or being told that we cannot speak our language. It is manifested in all those areas and all our vulnerabilities are then pushed to these unsafe environments and in these domains where we are further -- where we are at further risk to the extent
where we don’t even realize anymore,
we’re in a violent situation, or that
we’re in risk of violence.” (As read)

So it is manifested through colonization
and mass destruction of our traditional systems. The
residential school had a profound affect on First Nation
communities. It has done a lot of damage to our culture.

Towards the end of the Indian residential
schools, where it was realized that children were not
getting a good education, that people were better off not
attending in the residential schools, the next step the
federal government took was a look at Child Welfare. And
the sixties scoop happened where again, mass number of
children were taken from loving families, taken from the
communities, and adopted out. Again, isolating children,
women, young girls, and young teenagers from their
families, from the safety of their communities.

And let’s look at -- I gave evidence and
it’s found at Volume 7 of the transcripts at page 150, she
states -- I mean they state that:

“Well, just the fact, you know,
because of the sixties scoop and
because of the way that non-Indigenous
people bringing up Indigenous
children, a lot of times it’s more
hurtful than it is good. And I think the way the media has in the past portrayed Indigenous people and that’s all that they’re getting their knowledge from.” (As read)

So they’re not learning about Indigenous people from history books. The only thing they see is what’s on TV, or what they see in a sociological book -- sociology book, which is usually super, super negative.

The effects of the sixties scoop on children was also supported by Dr. Bombay in her testimony. In replying to a question about children being removed from -- during the sixties scoop, how that would impact and whether the impacts to the child would be similar to that felt by the residential schools. Dr. Bombay at Volume 10, at page 179 of the transcript states that:

“A lot of sixties scoop survivors do describe having similar experiences of children of residential schools, and certainly for these that experience a lot of those same adverse early life experiences, we would expect the same, or negative health outcomes later in life.” (As read)
Once the sixties scoop ended, the federal government also looked at forced relocations. A number of Inuit communities, or Inuit People, were relocated in Northern Territories. A number of First Nation communities were relocated to other areas because of natural -- I should say, natural resource extraction. A lot of hydro dams were built, their community lands were flooded, and they were sent to areas that weren’t ideal for human settlement.

The continued dispossession of First Nations People from their territories, from their resources also plays an impact -- I mean, also plays a major role in how Indigenous communities continue to suffer from colonization. It deprives First Nations of their traditional economies. It provides -- deprives them of any future economic prosperity by being on lands that are not ideal for settlement. And as my colleague, Ms. McGregor stated, setting up these camps in areas has a detrimental effect as well.

But in all the patterns in the past, and I’m going to move on to child welfare. But really, we see from government policy is number one, the removal of children from their families and communities. Secondly, the chronic underfunding of programs and services for these people that have been removed. Number three, the
pattern of departmental control of the lives of First Nations People where the Department of Indian Affairs always has the main control over Indian -- First Nation Peoples. And last of all, knowledge by government officials that their policies are destructive. They are causing harm and they still do not do anything about it to remedy any of the negative impacts.

Child Welfare is the newest policies and legislation that both the federal government and the provinces have enacted to destroy First Nations families, to attack our women and children. There was evidence provided by the -- by a number of individuals regarding the Child and Family Caring Society case against the federal government at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. And in that case what really came out of that is the federal government had known for over 20 years in working with the Assembly of First Nations and getting reports and studies that really point to the destructive nature of child welfare.

Federal government developed this process where it created a perverse incentive. Meaning, if a child was going to be -- if a child or a family needed a service, the only way that the family or child could get the service would be to apprehend the child. Whereas, when you look at the provincial regimes and the way they
treat non-native children, they provide a service. They keep the child in the home and removal of children is at the last resort.

The federal government set up a system where removal of the children was first and foremost. And it came out in the evidence of the Tribunal that if the federal government so decided to remove all children in a province such as Manitoba, they would spare no expense, they would pay for removing all those children. But when it actually came to providing services to provide some programs for First Nations children to stay in the home, they were not made available.

We also know that most children from First Nation communities are apprehended as a result of neglect. And Cindy Blackstock talked about this at transcript -- I forget what transcript it is, but at paragraph 46, basically, two forms of neglect. One of them is a failure to supervise, the other one is poverty related, dealing with failing to provide basic needs, education, housing, clothing, food.

And Mary Ellen Turpel commented on this as well with respect to a number of children being taken from their homes, from loving homes as a result of neglect, and the high numbers, which is completely unnecessary. And Mary Ellen Turpel was asked a question about the removal
of children from their homes from their loving families.

A question was posed to her that:

"...we note...in many of these cases, we have...heard [that] from...videos, [and] obviously they came from [the] caring families [these children come from caring and] loving families, I [find] it quite disturbing in your report that, you know, despite the fact that children are being apprehended for neglect from potentially...loving families, they are being put into a system that would put them in danger of sexual exploitation [and] sexual abuse, and [that's not] really acceptable."

Ms. Turpel-Lafond replied by stating that:

"Yes, I think [that's] fair to say that [in] those circumstances."

And she later on states that:

"...[even if] there is actual violence [in the home], or serious violence toward the child, [it's] still [a] fact that they [were] placed into a system where they are at [an] elevated
risk of sexual violence [and] sexualized violence, particularly girls, and boys, but girls and creating...additional trauma[s]."

So we know that removing children from caring homes for neglect for poverty-related issues, you're taking that child, you're putting them into a foster home or a group home where they're at an elevated risk now of sexual abuse, of human trafficking, and all these other evils that this Inquiry was made aware of, that is a result of child welfare legislation and the operation of child welfare in Canada today. It's unacceptable, and those policies need to change.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MR. STUART WUTTKE: And Mary Ellen Turpel also talked about -- provided a number of reports she drafted with respect to problems that children have and the abuse they suffer when they're in child and group homes. And it's safe to say that if these children stayed in their homes, even in an impoverished state, they would never have faced sexual abuse from their loving and caring families, but we're actually taking them out and putting them in those situations.

Now, we had some evidence put forward with respect to intergenerational trauma, and this was provided
by Dr. Bombay, but also Sarah Clark spoke about it at Volume X of her transcript. And she talks about the cumulative intergenerational trauma and the impacts it has on First Nation communities, and the hurtful behaviours, and how the cycle repeats over and over again.

And essentially, she states that residential schools was basically the creation of that dysfunction in First Nation communities, that somehow people that went to those schools came home, they didn't know anything other than violence and harm, and they brought that to their communities.

But Dr. Bombay provided scientific evidence of how that occurs, and she was qualified as an expert in collective trauma. And she really points to the fact that how -- when people are facing adverse situations or abuse in the home, especially -- particularly at a young age, how that affects one's brain. And she showed a picture of two brains, one of a healthy child and one of a child from a Romanian orphanage where they suffered abuse and neglect.

And it --and that picture stated -- it showed that children that are put in abusive situations, their brains do not develop like normal children. And that has a long-term, lifelong, lasting consequence on those children. As they grow up, they become more
susceptible to risk, they become more risktakers, and a whole host of substance abuse issues comes up. They basically put themselves or find themselves in greater risk of all these social problems.

And Dr. Bombay also alluded to the fact that if someone was pregnant and they were in an adverse situation where they're facing abuse, beatings, that type of life, that also has an impact on the child in the womb, and that there are hormones that lead to development of children, some switches go on early, too early, some switches don't go on at all. Again, that has an impact on the child's wiring of their mind.

So Dr. Bombay talks about the intergenerational effects and how they're particularly pronounced at the younger age group, and she states that:

"The intergenerational effects, it seemed to be particularly pronounced at the younger age group leading to us to wonder whether there is something about intergenerational trauma and the early onset of symptoms, as really as emphasizing the importance of intervening at an early age and as early as possible." (As read)

In conclusion, the issue of murdered and
missing Indigenous women is not linked to one single source. It is a cumulative effect of the many policies, government policies that have occurred over generations, over hundreds of years. And really, these government policies have also reinforced negative stereotypes that have been garnered and supported by mainstream society, particularly white people.

What do we find today? Well, we've heard in this -- in the hearing about children going missing, police not looking for them. Why is it up to First Nation families and communities to send out search parties themselves and look for their own children? When meanwhile, you heard evidence where when a white child goes missing, the police set up a huge search party, and they go looking out.

Clearly, the state's role in perpetuating and creating these legislation policies that looked at dehumanizing First Nations women and children, and especially attacking First Nations women, has been absorbed by the Canadian population. And you find the rampant discrimination that my colleague, Ms. McGregor talked about.

Essentially, what we need to do is look at deconstructing all of that, and that is a task of this Tribunal, I mean of this Inquiry. You have an important
role to play. We ask that you be bold in your recommendations. You look at Canada and the provinces' role in this unfortunate and harmful place that we see ourselves and where our First Nation women, Inuit women, Métis women go missing and they're murdered, and the families are looking for answers, and they deserve those answers. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MR. THOMAS BARNETT: Thank you, Mr. Wuttke and Ms. McGregor.

Chief Commissioner and Commissioners, if you have any questions.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: I have a comment while you're preparing your question. It's more a comment, and it's rare that I don't have a question, because I think both of you, your presentation or your oral submission was right to the point, showing Canada and the rest of the world that are watching us many, many examples of what was shared to us. Many examples, and many truths or bringing back the truth from the families and survivors.

So -- and I want to say that few family members who were watching were texting me and very touched by your presentation. So they will get it by -- when -- everything will be officially submitted to us, but also
the (indiscernible) I guess tomorrow. So I wanted to pass that message to both of you. So families were very touched by you.

And I'm glad also that you brought again -- because we didn't hear that much during this journey important journey, the impact of Bill C-31, Bill-C3, or who's Indian, who are not. And we're still facing that, I would say, systemic violence or -- and it brought also lateral violence among ourself and our communities. And I saw some warriors not long ago so I'm sure they'll be pleased that AFN brought that to us.

Thank you so much.

And also to conclude, if they're ready, when you compare on how we treat the non-Native versus our sisters, people need to hear that.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Thank you both very much for your submissions.

Ms. McGregor, you talked about our recommendations needing to have the attention they deserve, and the importance of having concrete, long-term implemental recommendations.

I look forward to your final written submissions but I'm just wondering if you can comment any further on, you know, what helps make recommendations
implementable in your view? Or it might be difficult to
talk about in the abstract but if you had any further
thoughts or comments on that, it would be appreciated.

MS. JULIE McGREGOR: Well, I think one
thing we’ve heard about from a lot of inquiries and
reports that have been written is that, you know, there
are very -- there’s a lot of thorough evidence that are
presented and these are important recommendations that are
made, but then they get shelves or they’re collecting dust
or whatever, what have you.

And I think a lot of what has come out
recently, including just after the TRC, because we’re in
an era where we’re looking at the calls to action and
we’re trying to figure out how are we going -- and most,
let’s say, institutions are now looking to how can they
incorporate those calls to action into policy changes,
into laws, into ways in which they can make actual
systematic changes for the good.

And I think that that’s -- that maybe that
you will need to be giving them a bit of a roadmap to
where they need to get to, in terms of implementation,
because that seems to be the delay and the problem is we
have these amazing recommendations from amazing
Commissioners and yet the follow-through is difficult.

And so while I can’t, at this moment, give
you specific ones, I undertake to provide that in our submissions but -- our written submissions. But I will say that that’s one thing that we’ve definitely heard is that there needs to be some guidance in terms of implementing your recommendations, for governments, for the public, for whoever your recommendations are targeted to.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Thank you both. I received a teaching yesterday, “Ogi” is the greetings on this land so I’m trying to use that.

I hope I said that right, Alvin (phonetic).

The question I have relates to jurisdiction, in essence.

Julie, you spoke of the importance of recognition that the solutions will always lie within the communities; with the people, with the land and the culture. Yet we’ve talked about systems and our report is to governments who have the jurisdiction. And there’s something contradictory in -- or somewhat problematic, very problematic, that we’ve heard repeatedly and now reiterated by you, that the solutions are within the community and with the people, with Indigenous peoples. But if Indigenous peoples don’t have the jurisdiction, the political, legal, economic space to do that because it’s
consumed by other governments, our directions to say a province and territory or the federal government about child welfare, if we were to just, you know, “Change your policies, change your legislation,” we’re failing to recognize that when it comes to Indigenous children, they don’t have that right to even have the legislation, if we recognize inherent rights and jurisdiction of Indigenous peoples.

So for your clients to be able to assert and take that, use that jurisdiction, I see there as being a step that we must look at in terms of that question of jurisdiction, and who’s taking this space, and how do we ensure that your clients, who want to exercise those inherent rights, can do so.

**MS. JULIE McGREGOR:** I think that from the ANF’s perspective -- and our position is obviously that we have jurisdiction. That has to be the first fundamental understanding is that there’s a recognition that we have jurisdiction. We have our jurisdiction over our families and we have jurisdiction over our children, and that just need to be recognized.

I don’t think -- I think we’re done with the in the past asking people for permission for things. These are our rights. They’re our rights.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)
MS. JULIE McGREGOR: And they need to be recognized.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: So a key step in terms of us making recommendations would be for the government to acknowledge, recognize, and uphold and create the space for you to exercise those rights.

MS. JULIE McGREGOR: Yes. And my colleague has further ---

MR. STUART WUTTKE: The other thing I would answer to that question, and the AFN has been embarking on is the discussion with the federal governments, and the provincial governments with their role, too, the road of reconciliation.

The Supreme Court of Canada has acknowledged in case law that First Nation governments -- First Nations peoples were self-governing. They existed in Canada long before the assertion of sovereignty. And, really, the road to reconciliation is how to bring back Indigenous nations to their rightful place. They do have -- as Julie mentioned, we do have law-making authorities, we do have inherent rights, we have treaty rights, we have Aboriginal rights.

But Canada and the provinces have to begin to acknowledge, and so do the courts, that reconciliation is not about First Nations finding themselves a way to,
you know, co-exist with Canada. Reconciliation is a two-way process; it’s a process of give and take.

Canada and the provinces cannot continue to assert that they have jurisdiction over our internal affairs, over our people, over our languages, our cultures. They clearly don’t. First Nations themselves, the Inuit, the Métis, have that.

Reconciliation’s about Canada and the provinces recognizing that they have to give up their assertion that they have authority in those areas and allow First Nations to take their rightful place in this country. Obviously in the end our end goal would be Constitutional changes where a -- order of government, as stipulated by the First Nations themselves, are recognized as an order of government, with their own authorities, their own Section 91, 92-like powers. That’s the end goal.

But clearly this -- the Inquiry can make recommendations to inform the process of reconciliation which I think may be helpful.

COMMISSIONER QAQAQ ROBINSON: Thank you.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: I have one question. I’m watching my clock here.

Assuming for the moment that we make, as you say, and others have said, bold recommendations;
recommendations that in their totality call for a complete change in the Canadian social order to decolonization, a human rights lens, and a validation and an acceptance of our own rights. What role, if any, do Indigenous organizations, at all levels, from AFN, NWAC, to frontline service providers? What roles do they have in ensuring that that complete change in the Canadian social order happens? Because if you’re asking for bold change, it’s going to take a lot of work.

MR. STUART WUTTKE: I agree there are definitely some bold changes. In developing recommendations, what you can probably look at, which we would recommend, is you look at some low-hanging fruit to begin with, some really short-term changes that nobody should have a problem, such as child welfare reform. That’s clearly one that can be easily be done. With respect to some of the broader societal changes, and changing the whole paradigm that we live in, clearly that will take quite a bit of effort. And, obviously, role -- organizations such as the AFN, ITK, regional organizations such as -- such as The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, and et cetera. We -- and we all have a role to support First Nations and support Nation building.

AFN is not a government, it doesn’t purport to be a government, never will be one. But clearly, our
role is to advocate on behalf of our members, First
Nations, for the Indigenous Nations themselves, support
the work that they’re doing by providing, you know,
further research study, whatever work they need us to do.
But clearly, the AFN has a role in advocating for societal
change, and I think we have been doing that. We’ve been
doing that on a number of fronts. We have been going the
political route, getting changes to legislation. We’ve
been doing it through the courts, such as a child welfare.
That was an initiative, a legal process completed by First
Nation Child and Caring Society and the Assembly of First
Nations as co-complainants. We intervene a lot in cases
that have gone before the Supreme Court of Canada.

But also, on the ground, the societal
changes. I mean, clearly, we are looking at assisting
organizations in developing programs, access funding for,
you know, the -- for broader healing to get beyond
residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, and all the
destructive policies that have been heard in the past.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Okay.
Then what I’d like you to do, please, is in your written
submissions, give us a -- the road map that you’ve
described --

MR. STUART WUTTKE: M-hm.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: -- to
make recommendations so that grassroots, front-line organizations who are going to bear the brunt of radical, complete change in the Canadian social order because they’re the front-lines, as well as other organizations, perhaps, not front-lines. What’s their work plan? What -- what recommendations can we make for their work plans to make sure that this complete change in the Canadian social order to the colonialization and human rights happens? Would you do that, please?

MR. STUART WUTTKE: We would undertake to do that, yes.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank you. Thank you. That’s it. So thank you both very much. I’ve also been getting messages, hands up to AFN lawyers for being so passionate, so thorough, and so -- so precise in your submissions. We thank you very much. It’s been a delight to work with you. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. THOMAS BARNETT: Chief Commissioner, Commissioners, we are scheduled for a 20-minute break at this time. So if we could re-convene at 10:40.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: 10:40, please.

MR. THOMAS BARNETT: Thank you. --- Upon recessing at 10:21 a.m.
--- Upon resuming at 10:41 am.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Breathe.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** The next Party with Standing is Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society, represented by Ann Maje Raider, she’s the Executive Director, and she’ll be speaking first, and then next would be Carly Teillet, counsel.

--- SUBMISSIONS BY MS. CARLY TEILLET AND MS. ANN MAJE RAILER:

**MS. CARLY TEILLET:** All right.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** You can begin.

**MS. CARLY TEILLET:** (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE). Bonjour and good morning. I want to acknowledge that we’re gathered on the traditional territory of the Nations of Treaty 7, and the homeland of the Métis Nation. And to acknowledge the spirits of our stolen sisters, the survivors and families. And to say, (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE), to the Elders, and for the honour song and big drum this morning. And nakurmiik for the lighting of the Qulliq, so that we could have warmth and light today. Thank you for the prayers and the sacred bundle and the medicines that are here, so you can do the work in a good way.

As mentioned, my name is Carly Teillet, and I’m the great-granddaughter of Sara Riel. She was the
niece of Louis Riel. And I am Métis from the Red River community, and I have the honour of acting as counsel for the Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society. I’d like to introduce Ann Maje Raider. Ann is a mother, a grandmother, auntie, and sister. And she was the first woman to become Chief of the Liard First Nation. She then founded, with other Kaska women, the Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society. She is their executive director. She was awarded the Polar Metal by the Governor General in 2017 for outstanding service preserving culture and heritage in the north. And her work to fundamentally change policing in the Yukon and in the Kaska Nation has been recognized internationally by the United Nations.

We are also joined today by Mary Charlie. She’s a Kaska Elder and a member of the Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society Board, and Dr. Shelly Bonnah from the Centre for Response-Based Practice. Ann.

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE). My name is Ann Maje Raider, and I will speak to you today, sometimes in my language, sometimes in the non-Native language. (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE). In our language, we say, (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE), which means respect, which mean dignity. And today, I’ll talk to you about much about dignity, and how we wanted to be treated with dignity. We do this presentation today, and we’re
joined in our presentation by -- with the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women’s Council, The Yukon Aboriginal Women’s Council and the Women’s Coalition. Although, they couldn’t be here with us, they joined us and helped us to develop our presentation for you today and for Canada.

I’ll tell you a bit about each of the organization. Whitehorse Aboriginal Women’s Council was established approximately ten years ago, and they have a mandate to represent all women in the Yukon and give voice to the issues of Indigenous women in the north. In spite of their limited funding, they’ve -- they’ve done amazing work. They’ve launched -- recently launched their book, Finding our Faces, which depicts former students of the Whitehorse Baptist Mission. They’ve also done a monument in Whitehorse, Yukon, to honour former students of the residential school. They also have done -- completed feasibility study. They really want a women’s centre in Whitehorse for Indigenous women of the north.

Our other partner is the Yukon Aboriginal Women’s Council. They’ve been established for 40 years. And their mandate is also to represent Indigenous women of the north. They have been steadfast in their work in being the voices for missing and murdered Indigenous women, and we thank them for the work that they’ve done to bring us this far.
Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society was established in 1998. We’re -- we’ve been recognized for many trail-breaking initiatives and forging strong networks in our community of Watson Lake. A few of our projects are, Together for Justice. We’ve signed a protocol -- I say, Together for Justice protocol in -- on International Women’s Day, March 8th, 2012 in Watson Lake with the RCMP Watson Lake Detachment. We have completed a three-year project, Youth for Safety. That was run in the Watson Lake High School. And this project was about empowering and engaging youth to understand violence and addressing violence against women and girls.

So we often had conversations about response-based approach to understanding violence. And we also talked about Dena Aunasen (phonetic). We had a lot of Elders in the classrooms, engaging youth, having conversations with youth because there’s such a disconnect in our community. Although, we’re a small community, we’ve become disconnected with our youth. The Elders have -- are not connected with the youth. So going back to this school has helped us to reconnect with our younger generation and to -- to teach them. So ...having conversations with the youth, you know, these youth are amazing. They get the ideas of response-based practice. They get the ideas of safety. They know what is going on.
They also -- as part of the project, they launched campaigns -- youth campaigns -- every year. They did the December 6th vigil. They did March 8th International Women’s Day celebration. They also did a monument to recognize missing and murdered women in the Yukon and that’s going to be put up in the sign posts forest.

Watson Lake, if anybody here knows about Watson Lake, it’s -- they always talk about the Sign Post Forest, so we’re going to put this monument up of a woman in a red dress as one of our signs.

So we attribute our success to our Elders, our community agencies. We have a really strong board and the board continuity has helped us to remain steadfast for as long as we have.

We are also blessed to work with the Centre for Response-Based Practice for the last 18 years and I just want to say thank you to Dr. Wade, and Dr. Richardson, and Dr. Bonnah, for working with us for all these years.

We also have strong networks with Daylu Dena Council, Liard First Nation, RCMP, the schools, HelpandHope. We work a lot with Beringia Planning from Vancouver who has -- who had helped us do a lot of the evaluation on our programs and has helped us develop some
And the Yukon Women’s Coalition was born out of the Yukon policing review. In 2010 the Yukon did a policing review and the Women’s Coalition has also signed a community safety protocol with the Whitehorse RCMP Detachment.

So we want to thank you for the opportunity to present our calls to action today. We thank the commissioner for changing our initial presentation time of Monday to Today. We thank you so much for doing that for us.

And we’re so honoured to carry the voices of our sisters in the Yukon. Yukon Indigenous women have always taken this process very seriously and have want a desperate end to the violence against our women in the North.

So it’s evident from the numbers of missing and murdered Indigenous women and violence against Indigenous women that Indigenous women have taken the blunt of colonization.

**MS. CARLY TEILLET:** The Liard Aboriginal Women Society came together with the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women’s Circle, the Victoria Faulkner Women’s Centre, the Yukon Aboriginal Women’s Council, the Yukon Status of Women’s Council, in an inclusive process. So together
with our sisters in the North we call for action on behalf of all the women in the Yukon.

Today we’ll be presenting some of our calls to action and our written submissions will discuss all of them. Finally, we call on everyone to take up and implement the calls to action of Yukon Indigenous women.

We call on the government of the Yukon and the Government of Canada to immediately provide long term adequate core funding to Indigenous women’s organizations and shelters.

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** So we are a strong force of women in the north. We have a successful track record. We have proven accountability and transparency. We have our financial records on our website.

We are experts. We know what works when it comes to helping our community. We would like the way -- our women to set the direction, rather than having to follow governments’ priorities for the pots of funding.

So what happens because we don’t set the course, is that the Board really can’t set the direction for the year of what to do with the funding, because you’re so -- we’re so into government funding and what government wants us to do, so -- and also when we go to our AGM, women want to do recommendations and resolutions to go in this direction. We really can’t do that.
So it puts Indigenous women’s organizations -- it has our members losing confidence in the work that we can do.

So we have a lot of ideas if you say, “Well what do you want to do if you get core funding”. Well we have an -- we have a strategic plan. We want to build a women’s center where women come, gather, eat together, share together, sew together. Do what Kasko women love to do most, is -- come together and share.

We wanted to develop an on the land treatment program, we wanted to develop a program for men that face violence - have violence issues - and we want to teach about our medicines, we want to continue Sew Regalia for youth. As you see, we do a lot of that in our work.

**MS. CARLY TEILLET:** We call on the Government of Yukon and the Government of Canada to immediately fund Indigenous organizations to provide safe rides for our youth and our Elders.

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** So in White Horse we were -- we had conversations and they were talking about the youth being stopped outside of these group homes and men stalking our youth. So when our youth come out, they’re saying there’s vehicles there waiting for our young people. So we want to have -- they want to have safe rides for our youth.
MS. CARLY TEILLET: We call on the Government of the Yukon and the Government of Canada to immediately fund the development and sustainability of on the land cultural treatment centers and centers in all communities in the Yukon.

MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER: The Auditor General of the Yukon in their 2012 report reviewed 49 child protection files. Of these files 76 percent involved First Nations children. Of the 49 child protection files, substance abuse was a key factor in 90 percent of the cases.

The residential schools that are better called “prison camps”, that stole the children, are still operating in the north, only to take on another form. We are creating generations of addicts. We are. So it would make sense that we have a treatment center on our land.

If children are being apprehended because of addiction -- and I’m telling you my heart is torn, I see mothers who have their children removed. They are devastated.

They want help with their addictions, but the government refuses to provide any funding to us to fund an addiction center. We have a plan – a strategic plan for addictions – but they don’t want to fund that.

Every First Nations community in the Yukon
and in Canada recognizes the power of culture to heal and
have been asking for years for a treatment center on the
land. We -- LAWS has partnered with Liard First Nation
and we’ve developed a 10-year treatment strategy and we’ve
had 400 community members that came and were a part of
that process.

We’ve lobbied government, we’ve lobbied
Federal Government, we’ve lobbied Territorial Government,
we’ve lobbied the mines. And every time you go to the
Federal Government, they tell you to go to the Yukon
Government. You go to the Yukon Government, they tell you
to go to the Federal Government. You go to Mine and then
you tell you to go to the Yukon Government, and it just
goes round and round.

So we believe in the Yukon. Our Indigenous
people are creating a thriving economy. Sad but true.

We are putting people to work. There’s
such a disproportionate amount of Indigenous people in the
system. WCC has got about 90 percent of Indigenous
people. The hospitals, the morgues, it’s all primarily
our people. We want this to end.

We are the experts ---

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MS. CARLY TEILLET: We call -- pardon me.

We call on the Government of the Yukon and the Government
of Canada to immediately fund the development and running
of youth safe spaces in all communities in the Yukon. We
call on the Government of the Yukon and the Government of
Canada to acknowledge that systemic, cyclical, short-term,
under-funding of Indigenous women’s organizations has
directly contributed to the murdered and missing
Indigenous women and girls.

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** So in the Yukon, we
have the highest rate of violence against women in Canada.
Watson Lake has the highest rate of violence in the Yukon.
So we see in Canada, a lot of work being done, a lot of
campaigns. But, yet, violence is escalating.

So let’s look at key factors contributing
to the missing and murdered, and high rates of violence of
Indigenous women. Let’s look at some of those. Let’s
look at the stolen children. There’s a correlation between
(phonic) -- between the child welfare system and missing
and murdered Indigenous women. We’ve heard that many
times throughout the Inquiry. We see that in the north.
Let’s look at the court circuits. They last about two
years in the north because courts happen not on a regular
basis, and things are always put off and put off to the
next case, the next case. So often times, a woman will
have to tell her story about three times to different
Crown prosecutor. It’s less likely the media will give it
much attention. All too often, when an Indigenous woman reports violence to the authorities, her life falls apart. She faces negative social responses from the RCMP, from health care professionals, the courts, the community who blames her. She has -- she fears risk losing her children under failure to protect.

We ask -- you know, I hear a lot of people when a woman is abused, they say, “Oh, why doesn’t she leave? How could she just stay there? I wouldn’t do that. I wouldn’t put up with that.” Maybe, we should be asking, “What’s he doing to keep her there?” Family Violence Model that’s usually used is outdated. The family violence (phonetic) -- family violence model that we use, we see the honeymoon cycle, where he explodes, then things go good. Well, that model just doesn’t serve women or men.

First of all, it doesn’t look at the context in which this violence happens. For instance, when I talk about context, you know, you can be in a bar with 200 people, and a husband is beating his wife. She’ll react differently in that situation than when in the Yukon in an isolated cabin way out in the -- in the land. Violence there, she’ll act differently. So women at times are trying to -- are always resisting violence, and they’re always responding.
The other issue with the family violence model is that it demeans our men. By saying, “Oh, he just explodes and goes off.” But does he really? Let’s break it down. So we have a man beating his wife in his home, and the doorbell rings. There’s a pizza man there. He goes and answers the door, pays the bill, is very cordial to the man. For somebody that doesn’t know what he’s doing, he’s -- it’s pretty obvious he knows what he’s doing when he’s with the pizza guy. So let’s -- let’s put that away.

Violence is deliberate. Violence is deliberate. Violence is unilateral. It’s a -- violence, it’s an act of one person against another. Violence is not a relationship problem. So let’s stop mutualizing it, and saying that the woman has a part in it. We continually put the blame of violence in the woman’s head. We must stop doing that. We say that it was her fault, so we put her through a -- a self-esteem workshop and a boundaries workshop. Yet, all these models, they obscure perpetrator responsibility.

Court documents, they obscure perpetrator responsibility. So when we talk about violence, if we really want to change the stats, we must make it real. We must look at perpetrator responsibility and take the blame off the women.
(APPLAUSE)

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** Through the use of mutualizing language in our courts, we hide that perpetrator responsibilities. Are -- also, our judges, lawyers, police, doctors have very little training and understanding in violence, or know who we are as Indigenous people. We have service providers coming into our community with preconceived racist ideas. We, and as Indigenous people, we do a lot of time training agency people that come in. It’s time they paid us to train them. Enough freebies here. So we also have, on the other side of the coin, we have -- also have a lot of service providers who have a lot of compassion and do treat our people with a lot of dignity.

**MS. CARLY TEILLET:** And so, again, we call on the Government of the Yukon and the Government of Canada to provide long-term sustainable core funding to Indigenous women’s organizations and shelters.

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** Why would our government put so much stress and pressure on our shelters by expecting them to negotiate agreements every year? The shelters are desperate for funding as women are desperate for a safe place. So enough of this annual funding negotiating every year. Give the shelters the adequate dollars that it needs.
MS. CARLY TEILLET: We call on the Yukon Forum to acknowledge the exclusion of Indigenous women’s organizations, and the lack of support that has contributed to the murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls.

MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER: The Yukon Government meets regularly with Chiefs of Yukon First Nations. And Indigenous women’s organizations are not invited to these tables. Today, we hear our government use terms such as reconciliation, collaboration, partnership to the exclusion of Indigenous women’s groups. If government -- if -- is sincere about reconciliation or partnership or collaboration, then women would be at that table. Our women’s organizations would ensure that violence against Indigenous women and issues of child protection are brought to that table at all times.

MS. CARLY TEILLET: We call on First Nations leaders and the Yukon Forum to develop a plan of action, in partnership with Indigenous women’s organizations, to bring life to the commitments they made in the Yukon Regional Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, and the Declaration made on February 12th, 2016.

MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER: In February 12th, 2016, during the Yukon Regional Roundtable for Missing and
Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, the Yukon Government, First Nations Chiefs, and Indigenous women’s organizations signed the Declaration for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in the Yukon. We feel that there needs to be an action plan to bring to life those commitments made by the leaders at that table.

**MS. CARLY TEILLET:** We call on the Government of the Yukon to recognize that the child protection system is continuing the forceable removal of Indigenous children that began at contact and has directly contributed to the murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls in Canada.

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** The 2016 Canadian census data revealed that just over 51.2 percent of children in care across Canada are Indigenous decent. Within the Yukon, however, a full 91 percent of children in care are Indigenous decent.

Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society has developed a ten-year treatment plan with community members. From 2008 to 2010, we have lobbied Yukon Government to fund this damn treatment strategy with no avail.

**MS. CARLY TEILLET:** We call on the Government of the Yukon to provide long-term sustainable core funding for an independent First Nations Indigenous
Women’s Authority to develop and implement solutions for the care and protection of our children and families.

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** Yukon Child and Family Service Act came into effect in April 2010. It recognizes that First Nation -- First Nations should be involved in the planning and delivery of programs and services to their members. We are still waiting for that to happen because the government has not provided the resources to make that happen. Although, we are pleased today that the current Yukon Government, Minister Frost, is calling a review on the Child Protection Services in the Yukon, so we commend her for that.

The other issue with Child Protection is that Yukon is the only province without an independent body to oversee child protection. We propose that funding could be provided for the development of an Indigenous women’s child -- children’s advisory body. This body could develop traditional custom adoption, advocate on behalf of parents, review child protection legislation, collaborate with child protection services for the best interest of the child and the family.

**MS. CARLY TEILLET:** We call on the Government of the Yukon and the Government of Canada to make resources and support currently provided to foster parents for an Indigenous child in care directly available
to the Indigenous child, their parents, and family, prior
to the child being removed. We call on the Government of
Yukon and the Government of Canada to make resources and
support fully and directly available -- pardon me. That’s
a repeat. Moving onto the next one. My apologize.

We call on the Government of the Yukon to
amend all relevant laws so that no Indigenous child be
found in need of protection and removed from their family
due to poverty. And we call on the Government of the
Yukon and the Government of Canada to immediately review
the files of all children in care in the Yukon, and
provide to all Yukon First Nations, and Indigenous women’s
organizations in the Yukon, the number children of each
Nation that is in care, where they are placed. Are they
in non-Indigenous homes? Are they in foster homes
(photonics) or group homes? Where the -- where the
children are receiving medicine. How many children are
being medicated and what types of medication are they
being given?

MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER: So Liard Aboriginal
Women’s Society in partnership with Liard First Nation, we
embarked on a data collection last fall. We wanted to see
what impact addictions have -- are -- are creating on
our -- on the systems. We wanted to see how many of our
people are in WCC. We wanted to see how many our -- our
people are in child protection, like our children in child protection. We wanted to see the numbers. We wanted to see what types of medication they’re given because we are concerned that they’re given too much Ritalin and being misdiagnosed.

For instance, I’ll tell you a story. You know, a grandmother, her grandson was given that and put in a home. And he -- she would -- he would come and spend time with her once and awhile, and she’d take him to the land. And she said, “You know what? When he’s out on the land, he doesn’t need his medicine. He doesn’t need that Ritalin because he sleeps really good, and he’s very peaceful.” We are concerned that the over-medication of our youth is creating another big epidemic on addictions.

I will quote Dr. Allan Wade. He presented in Winnipeg. He said: (as read)

That DSM should never be used to diagnosed Indigenous children. Full stop.

So going back to our data collection. We were really disappointed and shocked. We wrote letters to the Ministers, and they were, of course, agreeing to give us the data. Well, we went to collect the data, they don’t collect data. They did not have the numbers for us, sadly. So our recommendation is, YTG, how do you know
you’re making a difference? How do you know your practices are working if you are not collecting any data? Data helps us to plan. Data helps you to see if you’re making a difference.

Our Kaska Grandmothers are concerned about the children, and we want to know where our children are at, and we want to -- we want to teach our children. (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE).

**MS. CARLY TEILLET:** We call on the Government of the Yukon and the Government of Canada to review and amend the Criminal Code of Canada to accurately reflect the true nature of the violent crimes against children.

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** So this is a -- another big area. We know that our court systems are flawed. We don’t call it the justice system, we call it the legal system. The legal system is very flawed. So language used in the Criminal Code obscures perpetrator responsibility for violent crimes, in particular, against children. For example, there are Sections that mutualize language. They refer to sex with children. It is an assault, not sex. As Dr. Wade said, “When you --

**MS. CARLY TEILLET:** Rob.

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** “When you rob a bank, it is not a financial transaction.” Why are we so clear
when it comes to bank robbery? But, yet, when it comes to violence against women, we obscure it, we mask it, we want it to go away. But it’s not going to go away because women across Canada have the voice to say enough of this.

(APPLAUSE)

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** The other slogan that Dr. Wade likes to use is, “If you hit someone on the head with a frying pan, you don’t call it cooking.” So the Sections in the Criminal Code that are problematic, in particular, is: Section 151, which is called Sexual Interference; Section 152, Invitation to Sexual Touching, it makes it sound very mutual; and 153, Sexual Exploitation. In the Criminal Code, it is against the law to have sex with a minor under 16 years. So these Codes are an oxymoron. It contradicts itself in the law.

**MS. CARLY TEILLET:** We call on the Government of the Yukon and Government of Canada to immediately implement Jordan’s Principle. Funding and resources need to be made available for thriving, healthy Indigenous children.

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** Policing and justice. So the Liard Aboriginal Women’s signed a protocol in 2012 with the RCMP. So how did this protocol come into force? Like, what ...happened that made this protocol happen? I mean, the RCMP didn't come to us and say, "Hey, Ann, we
want to form a relationship here with you guys”. That didn't happen.

So in 2010, some horrific things happened in the north. In Watson Lake, two RCMP members were charged and later acquitted for sexual assault of a new woman that came into the community.

Raymond Silverfox died tragically in cells in Whitehorse with the RCMP not giving him the help he needed, but made a lot of racial slurs as he laid there dying.

So the Yukoners got pissed off and called for a review of the RCMP, so the Minister of Justice called a review of the RCMP. And at the same time, laws — we contacted Sergeant Tom Halther(phon) of the Watson Lake detachment and we had an idea of, hey, why don't we secure some funding and we will embark on a process of relationship building and you can understand who we are as Dene people and, at the end of it, we'll -- our process, we'll develop a protocol.

Because prior to that, the RCMP had no interest in who we are. They didn't come to our office. They didn't have conversations with us. So that was an issue.

So we embarked on a two-year process, meetings in Whitehorse and Watson Lake with the RCMP. And
we talked about violence. Straight language about violence, understanding violence from a response-based practice.

We had countless numbers of Elders and women throughout the process, and at first the RCMP were very tense, crossed their arms. They were -- you could cut the air with a knife because it was so tense.

But through it all, we learned that there are amazing men in the RCMP, amazing people. And they found out what amazing culture we have and what amazing women we are.

And this protocol that we have, it sets out commitments. We've made commitments to each other about how we're going to work together.

But the problem is, we don't have any funding to really implement that protocol. There needs to be a person, a liaison person, who's going to keep that protocol going because one of the things in the protocol is that we're going to have regular response-based training because, as you know, RCMP are very transitional. So the people that were in that training, that two-year training, have left to other parts of Canada.

And we're hearing that what they've learnt in the Yukon they're using in other areas of Canada, so -- and what made that process very successful was the
courageous women that -- and the Elders that were part of
that journey.

And the other thing was the leadership of
Commanding Officer Peter Clark.

Peter Clark attended all of the meetings.
Because the RCMP are a paramilitary organization, what
happens at the top goes down, so he led the course. And
because of him and many others, it was successful.

And of course, the great leadership of Dr.
Allan Wade and Dr. Catherine Richardson, who took on the
task of facilitating it.

The other thing about this initiative, it's
in the United Nations as a best practice model. And we
believe that this model can be adopted in other places in
Canada.

It was interesting at the end of the two-
year training from the beginning because at the end, the
RCMP were very friendly, very calm, very relaxed through
it all. So it was just -- the transition was just
amazing.

And the other thing that came out of the
policing review was the sharing common ground, which is
online. And the other report if -- was "If my life
depended on it", and it was written by -- the report was
done by Lois Moorcroft, one amazing activist in the Yukon.
So because of that protocol, we're involved in hiring of the last Sergeant in our community, but we want to be involved in hiring all of the officers in our community because we want to be there weeding out the bad apples.

We have other recommendations, but we're noting time, so I'll just conclude here.

So the Yukon is very rich in minerals. And in Kaska territory, we have billions of dollars taken from our land, but we still live in poverty.

We are done with going to Yukon government or going to mining companies, and they -- we are done with them saying no. I mean, I don't understand why the mining companies cannot put funding aside to help with the issues of violence against women.

The other thing I want to say about mining companies is there's a correlation between development and murdered and missing indigenous women. And the mining companies need a safety plan.

So in closing, I acknowledge and thanks our partners, Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Council, Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council, the Women's Coalition, Help and Hope for Families, Dena Justice, Liard First Nation, Daylu Dena Council, RCMP, the Watson Lake Secondary School, Johnson Elementary and the many great agencies and
people that has helped through our journey and, in particular, the staff of Health Canada, Women's Directorate, Social Service, Status of Women Canada and Minister Dendy. Thank you so much.

Your door, we know, is always open to us. Thank you.

And in closing, like everybody else that has presented this week, we take our recommendations very seriously and call on Canada and the Yukon government to implement our calls to action.

And one last message I would like to leave. To indigenous women across Canada, I want to say there is nothing wrong with us. There is nothing wrong with our brains. There is nothing that is saying that genetically we're carrying any genetic trauma forward. Let's get over that.

What we're carrying forward and what's in our DNA is our culture. It is so strongly encoded there that it can never be removed, so don't buy into this notion that there's something wrong with your brain.

Thank you.

MR. THOMAS BARNETT: Thank you.

And counsel, just before the Commissioners ask any questions, just to clarify for the record, there's been a PowerPoint that's been playing periodically to the
presentation. Would you like that marked as an exhibit for the record?

**MS. CARLY TEILLET:** Yes, please. Thank you for raising that, counsel.

**CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Exhibit 6.

--- EXHIBIT NO./PIÈCE No. 6:

"Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society"

Powerpoint presentation (35 slides)

Submitted by: Carly Teillet , Counsel for Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society

**COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Oui, j'ai une question.

It's not fair. I have to think in English now. We're losing time.

Merci, merci, merci. I'll say after.

You've made a powerful presentation, and I commend you very much. You're amazing.

The women organization like your organization put in place so many initiative or programs, so -- to make sure that our life as indigenous women is better, so thank you.

But you talk also about the government or self-government. In the context where so many parties that came to us, do you think that it's -- see, because of
the English.

The solution to the systemic issue flow through the self-determination and self-governance? If yes, how do you envision the role... ...of the women in those government and also the organization? Should it go under the government or we have to keep the women's organization?

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** With -- I attribute LAWS’ longevity in our community because we’re a separate entity. And because in our community there’s a lot of politics and, you know, you breathe and it’s political; right?

So I believe that women need to be at the forefront when we talk about self-governing and we need to ensure to protect women in the constitution - in our own self-government constitutions. And we must have laws in our constitution that specifically say how we’re going to address violence against women.

**COMMISSIONER MICHELE AUDETTE:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** One quick question, you used an acronym: W-C-C.

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** Oh, yes. Whitehorse Correctional Centre.

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Okay. That’s what I thought. I just wanted to make sure.
And then one of the other questions I had is about mining and the money going to the people. Under the many land claim agreements, are any of those mines having to either give royalties or through benefit impact agreements give back to community?

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** M’hm.

**MS QAJAQ ROBINSON:** And is any of that happening?

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** Yeah. So I forgot to mention that Kaska Territory is unseated territory. We have yet to enter into any land claim agreement. However, the mines have to enter into a CEPA agreement with our First Nations.

And my personal opinion is they’re not good enough. There’s still something wrong with these agreements when we’re not seeing -- we’re still seeing poverty at our community level there is something wrong with the agreements.

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** And I’m assuming they don’t address safety plans?

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** Nothing at all, because Indigenous women are not a part of that process. M’hm.

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Thank you very much for your presentation.
MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER: M’hm.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: I just want to say thank you very much for your presentation and I look forward to reading your written submissions, thanks.

MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER: I have time to breathe.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Yeah, I -- no, you don’t.

(LAUGHTER/RIRES)

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: You mentioned a recommendation about safe spaces for youth.

MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER: M’hm.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: And I didn’t hear anything more about what that vision is. Could you describe it, please?

MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER: Well, you know the Elders are always saying that -- and the youth are calling for a place where they can call their own and where there will be structures of safety setup. Maybe they could have more teachings, more Dena (NATIVE LANGUAGE) teachings from the Elders. You know, more culture. Culture works. There’s no doubt about that; right?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Okay.

MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER: Yeah.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank
you.

**MS. ANN MAJE RAIDER:** Thank you.

**CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Well, once again, you’ve made a big difference to our work. Thank you all very much for being here and taking time to give such thoughtful recommendations. That apply certainly in the Yukon, but all across Canada as well for a new social order. Thank you very much.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

**MR. THOMAS BENNETT:** And Chief Commissioner, Commissioners, I do note that we are scheduled for a lunch break now, so could we take a one hour lunch break and reconvene at 12:30?

**CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Twelve-thirty (12:30), please.

**MR. THOMAS BENNETT:** Thank you.

--- Upon recessing at 11:32 p.m./L’audience est suspendue à 11h32

--- Upon resuming at 12:38/

L’audience est reprise à 12h38

**MS. FRANCINE MARESTY:** Good afternoon, Chief Commissioner, Commissioners. Next, we have up Aboriginal Women’s Action Network, represented by Fay Blaney.

---SUBMISSIONS BY MS. FAY BLANEY, MS. MCKENZIE JORDAN, AND
Good afternoon, Commissioners, Elders, parties with standing, counsel and those who have come to witness today. I’m grateful to be a guest on Treaty 7 today.

I live in Vancouver and have been part of the Aboriginal Women’s Action Network for the past three years; not long compared to its beginning in 1995.

I wanted to share some of my journey and my childhood, but my story is not that different from what has been shared during all of the hearings in Part I, II and III.

I was affected by the circumstance of my childhood. I can draw parallels and see clearly the patriarchal colonial systems of the Canadian Government who decided who I was supposed to be.

When I was here for the hearings in June, I found it emotional right from the start. There are so many memories for me in Alberta. A foster child adopted into a non-Indigenous Christian home, violence, racism. The everlasting notion I was not to be Native, but always knowing that I was different, I didn’t think I was enough.

Abuse, physical, psychological, sexual. Asking why did they adopt me. We wanted to save you they said. Why didn’t somebody save my mom. …Depression,
I want to share a few points so I could preface what I really wanted to talk about, how did I deal with these things. Counselling, doctors, different types of treatment centres, asking for mental health support.

Finally, in 2008, full of anxiety and not knowing if I made the right decision, I walked into the Native Court Workers in Vancouver.

I had never tried seeking Aboriginal services. In the next hour I was being the medicine wheel and booked a counsellor.

In the next few months, I was shown smudging, sweat lodge, healing circles, drumming and singing, and the native community. This was the first time for all of these things. It started my journey at Wulpeset (phon) in northern B.C.

I sought out trauma treatment. I attended a five-week residential treatment centre on the island, and it changed how I saw my life.

I started to trust myself. I started at the Native Ed College in Vancouver, and it was my first experience of being in an Aboriginal community, and that was in 2010.

There were women who truly understood me. It was overwhelming to learn so much about our history,
about why I had this life. I had only started having the
tough conversations.

Sharing with each other, learning I wasn't
alone, I started working at first and then second stage
transition homes, then taking a position at our head
office. There, my ED shared with me about a program
called "Indigenous Women and Community Leadership in Nova
Scotia".

I applied, not expecting to get in. I
still carried a lot of shame, struggled with my identity
and confidence. I was accepted.

This course really provided a catalyst of
change for me. It was the process of being in a circle of
21 strong, amazing indigenous women from across Canada.
It challenged me. I had to really fight to keep my head
up.

Immediately we had a strong bond. I knew
these negative thoughts were not serving me or the circle.
I came home determined.

I have been paired with a mentor from my
project, and this is how I met Fay Blaney. What an
amazing indigenous women.

She taught me, encouraged me and answered
all my questions. There were a lot. I felt safe and not
judged, as there was so much I didn't know.
I posed a research question for my project, "Is there a need for an indigenous women's healing centre in Vancouver?"

I spoke with many indigenous women over those three months. There was an astounding yes.

My project was successful. We were invited back to Nova Scotia the next year to continue the research and development of what this healing centre might be and what it might look like.

We used asset-based community development built on the principle that the community knows best what they need. Sounds familiar from some things I've heard at these hearings.

We have a model. We designed it as a circle, each layer offering a different service; housing, recreation, place for ceremony, et cetera. Whatever the community wanted.

We had homes for Elders, crisis housing and tiny homes which would be permanent housing for these women and children. It would be somewhere where the women and children could come to live, not just to escape the violence they experience.

I would definitely recommend indigenous women developing some type of model like this.

At the beginning, I shared about June being
a tough week. It was truly overwhelming to think back on
everything I had been through.

When I lived here before, I was not
connected to my culture, my identity. I did not have
Aboriginal women friends. I know I am a different woman
today.

The tears are for how much I had grown,
learned and let go, and the anticipation of what lies
ahead. These past eight months have given me the courage
to use my voice, trust my judgment, use critical thinking,
be in the conversations, not quietly, politely listening.
The time to observe has passed. I know too much to be
silenced.

This Inquiry process and its success is for
women and girls like me. We will continue to remember and
search for our indigenous sisters, and we will continue to
meet with the strong indigenous women leaders and non-
inigenous leaders who have done this work tirelessly,
courageously for decades. It is the reason I'm here.

There was also another reason that Monday
in June. It was the formal apology to the sixties scoop
children for me.

I thought about the reason we're here. I
was very thoughtful. I know the murdered and missing
women have a story like mine. I want to honour them.
The changes and reforms to come will be for these still here. I will use this experience to support other women, to be a model that can change and will happen. I want to influence women I work with, indigenous and non-indigenous.

We will continue to organize as women's groups, fight for justice and equality, and stand in solidarity with all of my sisters, our allies beside us, behind us and with us. We will hold the state accountable at all levels of government. We will continue our consciousness raising.

I will continue to do this work and bring more women with me. We need more women centres. We need more circles.

As this Inquiry comes to the end, remember where you came from and how you'll be changed.

One thing I've learned is that there are so many amazing indigenous women around me, and across Turtle Island, fighting for the same thing. I'm truly blessed to have been -- to have this life that I've been given, and I am proud to say that I am a Cree woman from the Montana First Nation of Treaty 6 territory.

Thank you. All my relations.

I want to invite Fay Blaney, my mentor and my friend. She's amazing, and she has taught me so much,
and she will continue teaching me today.

**MS. FAY BLANEY:** She makes me shy.

I want to -- I want to mention that Sophie Merasty is behind me, and she was going to speak to her story as well, but she would like me to talk a bit about what she presented in Richmond.

It's kind of weird telling her story. I did this in our A-1 meeting as well because she wasn't able to come, so I told her story. And it just feels weird telling someone else's story.

Sophie lost her sister, Rose, in the early nineties, and she kept trying to access information about her sister. And for, I think she said, 27 years she wasn't able to get any information. And the only way that she managed to get some information was because of her testimony at the inquiry in Richmond.

She finally got some information, and it's really brutal what she did find out.

The man that murdered her sister got off with time served. His charges were decreased from manslaughter to aggravated assault. And she also found out that he went on and probably did the very same thing to someone else.

She couldn't access that information because of his privacy, but he is an indigenous man from
Alberta here, and he's serving a life sentence somewhere in this country.

And so that man was allowed to go on and perpetrate the same male violence against indigenous women.

And the other elements of her story that we were really moved by were very similar to what Mikenze was speaking about, as in, you know, the -- the stories that we’ve heard over the past year and a half at the Inquiry are encoded in Sophie’s life as well. She was reinstated through Bill C-31, and you cannot imagine how difficult that is to be ostracized from your own community. Her mother was full Dene, never spoke a word of English, and was non-status because of who her mother married. And so that law really needs to be changed, and we believe that that should be a recommendation that the federal government should adhere to Bill C-3 all the way.

She also spoke about how Rose, that’s her sister, lost all of her children and that was part of how she began to spiral downward when her children were removed from her. There’s still one child that’s not been found and -- adopted somewhere, and she just met her nephew about three weeks ago, I believe. It was an incredible meeting. She met her nephew, and that was her sister Rose’s son. And he’s a young man now. And that
young man was also trying to access information, and he was denied. So he never ever got any information about what happened to his mother, and so Sophie shared what she had with him.

One of Rose’s daughters was adopted by her non-Indigenous grandmother on the other side and grew up in the white world and was really disconnected from -- from Sophie’s community. And I think she just passed from a fentanyl overdose. She passed from a fentanyl overdose about a few months ago, recently. And Rose, her sister that she lost, her granddaughter is heading down that very same track. She’s the daughter of the woman that just died from the fentanyl overdose.

And so the -- the amount of tragedy and trauma is just overwhelming. And I came to the Inquiry to tell my sister’s story when it was in Richmond. And my sister’s story is very much the same. You know, she was sexually assaulted at the age of two. And before she either was suicided or murdered, she had identified 27 offenders. Or was it 26? But the police wouldn’t deal with what was going on because she was a child and couldn’t remember the -- the dates, the locations, witnesses, all those sorts of things.

Out of Sophie’s recommendation, and it’s also coming from other Parties with Standing I believe, is
the need to have survivor benefits for the children of the murdered and missing. And, specifically, that those survivor benefits not be attached to the child welfare system. And that the child welfare system absolutely must close their file on those children, on the surviving children from the murdered and missing.

Another piece of Sophie’s story was that at 12, probably 12 years old, she was sexually assaulted at knife-point. Yeah. Yeah.

**MS. SOPHIE MERASTY:** Good afternoon, Commissioners. I -- I asked Fay to share my story because I didn’t know that I could stand up here and talk about all these tragedies in my family because there’s been trauma upon trauma. But I would -- I would like to speak to this personally because I didn’t think that I would be able to talk about my testimony again, as I had already given it.

I am a Dené, Siouxliny (phonetic), and Cree from northern Manitoba. It’s a really remote little community on the north shore of Reindeer Lake. You can’t come out of Brochet, except by plane. And seasonally, in the winter, you -- you know, people can drive to Saskatchewan and the -- there’s a highway coming out of the nearest town in Saskatchewan. So it’s quite isolated.

And at the age of 13, I was raped by a man
on -- brutally raped by a man in our community at knife-point. In that same year, a few months later, he raped me again, and threatened my family -- threatened to kill me or my family if I -- if I told. So, of course, I -- I lived in terror. And there was no escape, you know, I was underage. I tried to run away once, but the priest went to the airport because my mother suspected that I was going to run away. And he went to the airport and -- and told the pilot not to let me on the plane. My brother -- older brother who knew that I was being abused was waiting for me in the nearest town in Lynn Lake.

It wasn’t until I was 35 years old that I finally made a statement to the police about the rape in Winnipeg. What happened to me, you know, put me at high risk to be a missing and murdered woman because it set me up for a victimization later on in my life. However, it took awhile for me to finally have my day in court. And I was really fortunate. I had a very good court coach through Victim Services. Her name was Regela Bear (phonetic). And she was excellent. Without my knowledge of what she was doing, she coached me in court to, you know, in the way that -- like, she, you know, simple things such as, if you don’t hear what your -- what’s being said to you by the -- the defence lawyer, you can ask him to repeat it. As -- something as simple as that.
And so I -- I realized that the defence lawyer was trying to insinuate things about me, such as, like, you know, it was dark, how would I know. And I didn’t know exact -- exact time, location. I -- I knew the location, but I didn’t know the exact time and date. I just knew it was the end of summer, but she coached me in such a way that I -- I knew he was insinuating something because he lowered his voice, so I am -- I asked him to -- to repeat it, and when he repeated it, he couldn’t affect the same tone of voice, which, you know, to me was -- you know, manipulative and whatnot.

So I was really grateful for that because it made me a really good witness, and I think that’s something that many woman need is that kind of coaching. He -- the man who rape me had some conditions because, of course, he pled not guilty and called me a liar. And my understanding is this is something that happens to a lot of women and girls when they press charges is that they -- the accused always plead not guilty. The offenders always say they’re not guilty, initially. Anyway, with conditions, he was asked to come back to court six months later and was found guilty, and acknowledged that he was wrong, and he apologized. I -- I wasn’t there, but this is what I got. I didn’t have to return to court.

So I found it very empowering for me to
have some form of justice. You know, I know that many women haven’t had the kind of justice I’ve had or that opportunity. I was fortunate I had a female judge, members of my family were there to support me and I was heard, and I was believed.

And so, he went to prison, but I think it’s really important that there be strong advocacy. Victim support, service workers who are Indigenous that are skilled and know how to deal with -- you know, people who are -- let’s say a woman such as myself who will have to go to court and deal with these types of things.

So my recommendation is that there be some type of training for a stronger advocacy in all the different areas for women. And with that, I just want to say thank you for listening and giving me the opportunity to share my story. (NATIVE LANGUAGE)

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

**MS. FAY BLANEY:** I just want to say that Sophie is definitely a success story. She is an actress and does an awesome job in theater. And Mikenze too is so awesome as a worker in a women’s transition house and we are so blessed in the Aboriginal Women’s Action Network to have women like that, that we work with.

We, in A-1, do not have any government funding whatsoever since 1995. We did do two research
projects and did get funding for that - just specifically for that - but none of us ever got paid anything for the work that we did and that we continue to do now.

And this inquiry has kept me hopping. I’ve learned so much more than what I already know about male violence against Indigenous women.

For my presentation I wanted to start with the concept of matriarchs and our matrilineal traditions - our clan system.

So I wanted to start off with some questions. How is it that we Indigenous women, as the glue for our clans, for our communities, are now the disposable members of our society? How have we as life givers become cast as squaws, as easy, as promiscuous, as sexually available?

When did we as Indigenous people begin to believe this evil story that was told to us, that we are not worthy, that we are not loveable, that we’re not equal to other human beings?

And when did our male relatives stop believing in us, in our ability to hold our clans together? When did they stop believing in our traditional knowledge for the good of our community? In our ability as healers and as medicine women?

At what point did we accept that we are bad
mothers, deserving of having the church and the state
raise our children for us, raise our grand-children for
us?

When did we give up on our clan relations, on our matriarchal traditions, in our belief that our
mothers and grandmothers were the leaders, the glue, the backbone, of our societies?

And most importantly how can we reclaim our privileged roles in our families? What is our -- what is
rightfully ours. Our right to raise our own children, our right to teach our culture, our traditions, our
spirituality, our clan relationship systems.

The right to be free to build happy, healthy, safe communities free of male violence against
women, free of rape, free of incest, free of prostitution, free of the capitalist system that brought us poverty.

Can somebody get the ---

So how do we reclaim our role as matriarchs? I honestly believe that that is the right question that ought to be the focus of this inquiry. The framework that can lead to thriving communities.

And my answer to that is the creation of autonomous Indigenous women’s groups. That’s what came out of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in the early seventies. That’s what came out of the National
Action Committee on the Status of Women, of which I was on the executive in the late nineties, early two-thousands. Michelle is nodding and remembers.

In these groups of autonomous Indigenous women -- and I have to say what “autonomous”. “Autonomous” is independent. It means being unfettered by other demands, the primary focus is women. Putting women at the center of the conversation. That’s such a novel concept. It never happens. I’m telling you. Very rare do we ever focus our time and our energy on women and put us at the center of the conversation.

So what the women before me shared is how our consciousness raising groups work. So they share their story. Out of that comes a little summoning up of courage, a little bravery, to say, “Yes, that happened to me too”. And we, through that, identify what the oppression is in our lives and what action can be taken as a result.

We can -- when women get together, we always talk about the misogyny in our communities. The things that women have to go through when they aspire to leadership. It’s incredible the levels of male violence coming at women when they’re trying to aspire to leadership.

Personal spaces are invaded, men yell and
swear in their faces, they threaten them with rape and I’m not making this up. In fact, Madeleine Redfern was sharing something similar in the media fairly recently.

So we do have misogyny within our communities and it’s been talked about how we face oppression outside of our communities as well just as bad as inside.

What we need are the building blocks to put in place women’s groups, autonomous Indigenous women’s groups, so that we can talk about what’s happening in our lives.

With these groups there’s so much that can be done. We can be our own advocates rather than be silent bystanders and allowing someone else to decide what we need, someone else healing us, someone advocating or whatever, teaching us. We can do that ourselves.

Naiomi Metallic talked about the 1951 Amendment to the Indian Act and I learned so much more about that issue from her. I had to dig deep to find that information in university myself; no one taught it. And she taught me that much more.

When you bring Indigenous women together invariably, they will talk about what’s happening in the education of their children and the fact that we’re not treated equally. That we’re treated like we have mental
disabilities, that we’re intellectually challenged, that we need special needs classes.

When Indigenous women come together to talk about our children, we can find solutions to the problems that we’re facing with education.

The health care system. I was so triggered when I heard this woman from Saskatchewan, Alana -- I can’t remember her last name. The one that’s taking the class action suit on the forcible sterilization.

She’s got 60 women that are involved in that class action. Sixty (60) women who have been forcibly sterilized. I was triggered by that, because there are so many women in my community that deal with that very same thing.

That’s one health issue that women deal with when they’re together and they find solutions. They find ways to respond to these circumstances.

We need the benefit of the doubt that we have never been given. We can do it ourselves. We don’t need help. We just need the building blocks, the opportunity, to be able to do these things.

Child welfare. I was very involved with the Indian Homemakers Association. I’m so proud of that organization and the work that they did when they transformed into a political voice.
The actions that they took on child welfare that’s what happens when you bring women together.

Our understandings of our suffering changes. We can shift the narrative from us being dysfunctional and needing healing to a different one that recognizes that the oppression has constructed our reality.

When I was in university, I was reading Roland Chrisjohn and Tanya Wasacase and the things that they said about the residential school, at a time when everyone was talking about how wonderful the residential schools were. That it taught us English, that it gave us an education and all these. Reminds me of the narrative around the police in this inquiry, by the way.

But these two had us thinking that there was way more to be said about residential school and that’s what can happen when we bring Indigenous women together.

We don’t have battered women’s syndrome. What we have is male violence against women. These men are beating us. They’re raping us and we need to stop that. We don’t need healing from that syndrome.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

**MS. FAY BLANEY:** I want to move on to the issue of prostitution and it’s very clear from my
testimony that I’m an abolitionist. I have spoken out here about the poverty pimps in the urban settings.

I am so fed up with the level of suffering that our women go through, because these agencies want to keep pumping their numbers, they want to keep Indigenous people in that state of being oppressed so that they can continue to get funding and continue to deliver services to the same people.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

**MS. FAY BLANEY:** We can make our own choices. We can move and change the world if given the opportunity and we don’t need the poverty pimps. We can – we need our own women’s center and that was said by Sophie and some of the other women in our group, that in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver we need an Indigenous women’s center.

And I agree with what Hila said yesterday, that given more options, more opportunities, that Indigenous women would not be, “Choosing prostitution”.

And the fact that we’re such a large number in the survival prostitution industry is an indicator of that. Our mayor that recently got elected said that about 60 percent of prostitution in Vancouver are Indigenous women in the survival sex industry.

We need more exiting. Currently we have
church groups that do exiting. Meaningful exiting, healing lodges. We don’t need counselors where we can talk around and around and around about what -- the harm that’s being caused to us. We need concrete services. We need a healing lodge for women that want to leave that horror.

We need the laws to be enforced and I’m speaking primarily to the Vancouver Police Department who refuse to enforce the prostitution laws. We need more research. It seems like there’s a blockade being put up by universities. These well-to-do libertarians in this country that seem to think they know better of what we need. That we need to be sex workers. To hell with that says Carol Martin.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MS. FAY BLANEY: You know we want the right to be able to talk to our women, to research what is needed within prostitution. Not to be steered into these pro-sex-work groups.

The Ontario Native Women’s Association have recently put out a report and they talk about how challenging that was to -- just to be able to do that research. We need more of that.

In terms of the nordic model, you know Canada put in a law that illegalized pimps and johns. And
some people want to legalize the pimps and johns, which I don’t get.

The other elements of the Nordic model are the substantive equality for women. We need that in this country. Women’s status have seriously diminished in the past decade or two. And we also need the services aspect that improves the living conditions for women.

Some of the women in our A-1 meetings talked about needing wrap-around services for women that have dual-diagnosis or that are street entrenched and there’s so many of us that have mental health issues. How can you survive what Sophie went through or what I went through without having mental health issues? We have mental health issues.

We need women only treatment centers. I’m running out of time I see. In B.C. we have co-ed treatment facilities. When I was first sobering up I was trying to deal with the sexual violence in my childhood. Sitting across from me was an offender telling what he did as he offended and it just doesn’t work.

We need women only treatment centers. Indigenous women only treatment centers. We need detox on demand. We need more transition houses. We need second stage housing. We need an end to the homelessness crisis. That’s a new phenomenon.
This government and all it’s -- anyway, I’m going to get sidetracked here with free trade, but ---

(LAUGHTER/RIRES)

MS. FAY BLANEY: But this issue of homelessness is -- it’s skyrocketed. You know, I’m old now and when I was younger there wasn’t such a huge crisis and what does that tell you? The government has done something serious to construct this homelessness crisis and that needs to be addressed.

I agree with guaranteed livable income. Indigenous women’s work in caring for our clans, our kids, our Elders. Caring for our community is not honoured and respected in this capitalist system that we live in, so we need a guaranteed livable income. We need childcare. I have one minute left.

We need -- okay, I’m moving on to the justice system just very briefly. I really -- my hair stands up when I hear about improving relations with the RCMP or any other police force. I’m so offended at the way they window dress such a glorious scene here, when they’ve come and give testimony here.

And Mikenze stood -- called them out on that when we were in Regina and I really appreciated that.

I’ve heard Pam Palmater speak. She says, “There’s no such thing as a bad apple theory here”. There
isn’t one bad apple. It’s an entire culture within policing.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MS. FAY BLANEY: That’s where the problem is. Window dressing within an investigation I won’t spend too much time on that.

Accountability in cases that are not brought forward. Oversight -- you know all of these recommendations, by the way, the Legal Strategy Coalition compiled all those recommendations from all the different inquiries. Seven hundred (700), I think. Seven hundred (700) recommendations. They’ve all been made already. What we need is for the government to implement those recommendations.

Just 32 seconds. Recommendations. The -- I was reading about the British Government and their National Women’s Commission. I would really like to see an Indigenous Woman’s Commission be established beside government in this country.

The commission would consist of feminist Indigenous groups, anti-violence women’s groups, Indigenous women’s groups, anti-poverty groups and human rights advocates.

And that commission would be responsible for putting together an annual report and making
recommendations to parliament. That it would have an action plan in place, that it would do research in education, that it be linked to international bodies like UNDRIP and CEDA and other international instruments.

There’s a lot more to say about that, but I hope you’ll ask me questions about that one. I keep thinking Thelma Chalifoux, but that’s not her name. The other senator that’s doing the bill.

**UNKNOWN SPEAKER:** Lillian Dyck.

**MS. FAY BLANEY:** Lillian Dyck, that’s her name. I was racking my brain this morning.

I’ve heard her speak about her bill on making Indigenous offenders accountable. I have a cousin whose niece was murdered by her boyfriend. And that guy, the murderer got off, because of the Gladue. He got off with a fairly light sentence and she wants to know that he’s doing some healing as a result of having attended residential school.

So Indigenous men should not be escaping prison time because -- at the expense of Indigenous women who are experiencing violence.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

**MS. FAY BLANEY:** I ask that the clock to be set for 10 minutes for Commissioners’ questions.

**CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Can you
-- excuse-me. Can you please set our clock to seven minutes 20 seconds, please?

Any questions? Comments?

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Comments, yes. Fay, Mikenze et Sophie, merci beaucoup for your courage and you’re powerful. And you’re cute.

(LAUGHTER/RIRES)

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: And I’m anxious to receive your final submission. The last, recommendation to have an Indigenous Women’s Commission, I think we need to have more discussion around that. It’s a powerful one. Merci.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Can she do that for the next six minutes? That’s what my questions are about. My question is (inaudible). Do you have questions?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Okay.

No, you go ahead.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Okay. Can you elaborate more about that commission?

MS. FAY BLANEY: I read a bit about it with the British model when they were dealing with second wave feminists. My friend Cherry Smiley(Ph) has brought me onto that stuff. She’s saying that there’s so much to be learned from second wave feminism. We’ve been hating them for excluding us, but there’s so much to learn there.
So they brought together a whole variety of community groups and it very much fits with what some groups are suggesting to you about an implementation plan for your recommendations.

You know, there’s a fear that your report will get added to the many others and nothing will ever become of it, so this Indigenous Women’s Commission could monitor the progress and be the watch dog to make sure.

And I think that the other question that you were posing to someone else, around provincial orders in council, I think a more affective way might be the way that the Royal Commission was done which is that the Federal Government provides leadership, that it provides funding to provinces for women’s programming, but it have human rights conditions attached to that funding rather than expecting the provinces to cherry pick which ones of the recommendations that they want to adhere to. This way, you know, we can press the Federal Government to be the implementer.

I love the research component as well. Like the -- you know, the need for more research. I suggested prostitution. I think there’s so much more research that needs to be done into the Fentanyl crisis, because in B.C. the rate of deaths of women is way higher than the rest of the country.
In the country I think it’s like 80 percent of the deaths are men and 20 percent women. And I think in B.C. it’s like 50 - 50.

**COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** M’mh.

**MS. FAY BLANEY:** So women are dying at pretty astronomical rates from Fentanyl, so that’s one area that could be researched.

**COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Oui. And when you talk about the Indigenous Commission and to be reporting to the parliament, were you referring to the Federal Parliament or each government across Canada, or both?

**MS. FAY BLANEY:** Probably the federal, because I would really like to see the Federal Government take leadership, provide funding for the recommendations. Like when it provides funding for child welfare, for instance, that there be conditions attached to -- I mean that’s already in place.

The fact is that the provinces make a big buck out of apprehending our kids and if the feds change that formula they would put more attention to, like Mikenze said, “You know where was the support for my mom”?

**COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** If I can continue on that, so what do we do when we know that it’s a provincial or a municipal jurisdiction like the police
of Vancouver or the Indigenous police? How the commission
would be able to recommend or ask or do research when it’s
not federal jurisdiction?

**MS. FAY BLANEY:** Yeah, that’s a tough one.

I think I would come at it from the other end, where we
have the autonomous Indigenous women’s groups at the other
end and I really learned from what we went through in
Vancouver.

When they were drafting their policies on
prostitution they consulted with all the pro-sex groups
and it’s right there documented. And we banged that door
down when Jim Fisher was arrested in the Vice. He was
arrested for sexual exploitation of the girls that were
supposedly -- he was caring for.

So we got in that way and presented our
views on abolition and discovered we’ve never been heard.
They’ve had these consultations and never included us.
Deliberately excluded us. And so, on the ground, at the
grass roots level, if we’re organized, we’re able to do
that lobbying from that perspective.

And it is -- I don’t know if the link or
the connection was made, but what I was trying to do was
to say there’s a very strong link from that recommendation
to our matriarchal traditions to reclaim who we were as
Indigenous matriarchs.

(LAUGHTER/RIRES)

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: That’s always my fault, the time. I would appreciate if in your written submissions you expand a little bit more about this Indigenous Women’s Commission, because we’d really like to hear more. Especially about dealing with provincial and territorial jurisdiction and how that would fit, so we would really appreciate if you could do that.

MS. FAY BLANEY: We will.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: You know it’s not easy to say goodbye to any of the parties with standing, because we’ve come to work with all of you --

MS. FAY BLANEY: M’hm.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: -- and really enjoy working with all of you. Fay, Sophie, Mikenze, it’s been a real pleasure working with you and I hope this isn’t the end. Thank you all very much.

MS. FAY BLANEY: And we will do what we can to support the recommendations and to press our feminist allies to support the work that you’re doing.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank you, we’ll be counting on you. Thank you.
COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Merci.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MR. THOMAS BARNETT: Chief Commissioner, Commissioners, I do note that we are scheduled for a 20 minutes break. I do note also that we are running 10 minutes behind, so I will leave that up to Chief Commissioner and Commissioners if we should come back at 1:45 or 1:50.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: One fifty (1:50), please.

MR. THOMAS BARNETT: Thank you.

--- Upon recessing at 1:30 p.m.

--- Upon resuming at 1:51 p.m.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Chief Commissioner, Commissioners, next we have Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women’s Circle Corporation, represented by Counsel Kellie Wuttunee.

---SUBMISSIONS BY MS. KELLIE WUTTUNEE:

MS. KELLIE WUTTUNEE: Good afternoon, Chief Commissioner and Commissioners. I’d like to first start off my presentation with a traditional jingle dress honour song, sung by Spike Eagle Speaker from the Siksika Nation. If you could all please stand in honour of this medicine dance song.

(SINGING)
MS. KELLIE WUTTUNE: Thank you. So

So the English translation to that is my
name is Kellie Wuttunee. I’m from Red Pheasant Cree
Nation within Treaty 6 Territory. I’m grateful for this
opportunity to speak here and welcome all here and I am a
woman of the law representing Saskatchewan Aboriginal
Women’s Circle Corp.

First off, I’d like to acknowledge the
Traditional Territory of Treaty 7 including Siksika
Nation, Tsuut’ina Nation, the Kainai Blood Nation, Morley,
Bearspaw, Chiniki, Wesley First Nation and the homeland of
the Métis.

I’d like to acknowledge the Elders, the
pipe, the families of the missing and murdered Indigenous
women and children. Thank you for being here. To the
Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry,
thank you for this good work.

First off, I’d like to go to the PowerPoint
presentation I have prepared for my client. If we can go
to the second slide.

So just a brief overview of what I’ll
discuss is the background of the Saskatchewan Aboriginal
Women’s Circle Corporation, their role related to the
national inquiry, recommendations and on behalf of the
Goforth and the Morrin families we’ll honour the families
that gave testimony.

So the next slide. Saskatchewan Aboriginal
Women’s Circle Corp. is a voluntary not-for-profit
organization incorporated on September 11th, 2003. SAWCC
provides support and advocacy to Indigenous women and
their families of all Nations, communities and
environment.

Next slide. SAWCC partners and
collaborates with several grass root agencies and
community groups, business, law enforcement, government
departments.

Next slide. Saskatchewan -- SAWCC provides
volunteer, administrative and other supports to non-profit
organizations and communities such as the Saskatchewan
Sisters in Spirit, Place of Reflection, (NATIVE LANGUAGE),
Sisters in Spirit Vigils, International Woman’s Day,
Elimination of Violence Against Women and the Provincial
Partnership Committee on Missing Persons.

During 2017 and ‘18, SAWCC’s office
responded to over 800 inquiries ranging from the
individual and family support, to educational and
employment funding, intimate partner violence, sexual
assault, child welfare, housing, legal human rights and
community engagement.
Over 480 calls were specific to the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and LGBTQ, and two-spirited.

SAWCC also takes an active role in national and international advocacy, participating at the United Nation Commission on the Status of Women in New York and the Summit of the America in Lima Peru, participation and support to the families in the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and LGBTQ, two-spirited.

SAWCC’s role -- SAWCC has taken an active role in the pre-inquiry design, pre-inquiry information sessions, pre-inquiry health and legal preparation for families, the Truth Gathering hearing, statement taking, expert and institutional hearings.

The next slide. SAWCC has taken an active role in proving aftercare support planning, delivering, training on grief and ambiguous loss for frontline workers and families, supporting families through the Saskatchewan team-leads providing support and advice to the National Inquiry for Saskatchewan Activities, hosting annual ceremonial feasts and advocating for an extension for the National Inquiry to allow the many families that have not yet been able to share their truth with the Commission.

Over the past 15 years SAWCC has worked
towards ending violence against Indigenous women and girls with the family members of missing and murdered, and collaborating partners. So SAWCC has collaborated with NWAC and advocating at a local, provincial, national and international level.

SAWCC received standing in parts I, II and III of the National Inquiry, which included the Truth Gathering hearings, Expert and Institutional hearings.

SAWCC participated at some of the hearings by attending and bearing witness to the testimonies. Other families -- other family hearings were attended by a live stream as SAWCC has only recently received a contribution agreement to participate.

SAWCC attended some of the Expert and Institutional hearings exercising our right as a party, with standing to cross-examine witnesses at these hearings.

So SAWCC’s, part of their advocacy is raising awareness and this is a project that they support, is Faceless Dolls Project. And what this does is it raises awareness through the creation of physical and visual memorial in honour of missing and murdered loved ones, so each statistic tells a story.

So again, good afternoon, Chief Commissioner and Commissioners. My name is Kellie
Wuttunee and I’m legal counsel for Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women’s Circle Corporation, which is a not-for-profit voluntary provincial organization and a provincial tutorial membership association of the Native Women’s Association of Canada.

SAWCC is dedicated to promoting and enhancing the lives and status of indigenous women, their families and their communities. SAWCC represents indigenous women, including First Nation, Inuit, Métis and LGBTQ, two-spirited and disenfranchised women. SAWCC has provided over 15 years of service to indigenous families in Saskatchewan through education and employment, funding, programs to increase community safety, support services to families of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and engagement sessions on legislative and policy matters.

The foundational pillars for SAWCC are education, economic opportunities, advocacy, research and resource sharing.

So my client SAWCC asked today: “What is it going to take to keep indigenous women and girls safe within Canada? What would policy recommendation to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls look like?”

I will begin my submission by explaining
this Commission’s inherent jurisdiction for implementing recommendations from my client, Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women’s Circle Corp, then discuss why the recommendations are required. Next, I will provide reasons for why the Canadian, provincial and territorial governments’ policy makers and other decision makers must acknowledge and implement the recommendations brought forward by my client.

I respectfully submit the following recommendations on behalf of SAWCC. It is well documented that First Nations, Métis, disenfranchised women and girls and LGBTQ2S face violence and harm more often than non-indigenous women, and we must come together as a society to change that. The number of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls continues to climb in our communities. They have an inherent and treaty right to be protected and live in peace and safety.

Throughout the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, it has become apparent throughout Parts II and III of the hearings that indigenous women and disenfranchised women are severely overrepresented in the judicial system and marginalized by Canadian society.

SAWCC recommends the following in order for accountability to specific key systems in Saskatchewan in
order to look forward to what is possible.

SAWCC submits that the Government of Canada move on its commitment to implement the United Nations Declaration of the rights of indigenous people into law, Bill C-262, without delay.

Article 22:

"Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous Elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities in the implementation of this Declaration. States shall take measures in conjunction with indigenous peoples to ensure that indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination."

In the Winnipeg hearing transcript, Mary-Ellen Turpel-Lafond stated at page 241, line 7:

"If you look at section 7 of the Charter of Rights in the Canadian Constitution, which is on life, liberty and security of the person, and what are the principles of natural
justice, unfortunately, things like best interests of a child have not yet really been brought into our human rights system adequately. A lot of these areas just simply do not have the appropriate focus, instruments like UNDRIP that have really critical provisions like Article 8, not permitting the forceful removal of children or antidiscrimination, the UN Convention. These human rights principles are really significant and resetting Canadian law around those principles or giving that new framework to work it out would be immensely helpful. Article 8, which really identifies states having to take initiatives to prevent the forceful removal of children, and while some will say ‘Well, that was one case’, when you step up and look at the fact that it really is all indigenous children, I mean, it’s the bread and butter of child welfare in particularly Western Canada, but other
parts of Canada. UNDRIP is significant to reframe how we think about things, but it does suggest some very powerful concepts.”

In Exhibit B-2, page 100, from the Quebec hearing transcript, Brenda Gunn wrote that:

“The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is critical to understanding the normative content of international human rights of indigenous peoples. The UNDRIP is the most recent articulation of indigenous peoples’ globally recognized fundamental human rights. The UNDRIP provides a framework both in substance and process for engaging in nation-to-nation relationship with indigenous peoples and is less critical to informing the Inquiry. Canada has stated its commitment to recognizing and respecting Aboriginal title and rights in accordance with Canada’s Constitution, international treaties and other key instruments, such as the United Declaration of Rights of
Indigenous People, which Canada plans to implement. Given Canada’s commitment to implement the UNDRIP, the standard it sets out should inform the human rights analysis of the Inquiry. However, the UNDRIP is limited in the articulation of indigenous women protection against all forms of violence. The UNDRIP has also received criticism for failing to fully account for indigenous women’s rights, only mentioning indigenous women as vulnerable groups. Despite these limitations, the better recognition of social, economic and cultural rights also apply to indigenous women, and thus should inform the conceptual framework of human rights.”

With leadership from indigenous women and LGBTQ, two-spirited and indigenous communities, ensure that the findings of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the recommendations from the families who participated in this Inquiry lead to the development and implementation of a
national action plan to address violence against indigenous women and girls. This action plan must respond to and eliminate the structural roots of the violence and improve the accountability and coordination of government bodies charged with preventing and responding to the violence.


To the provincial government of Saskatchewan, SAWCC recommends the following:

Establish an independent, Special Investigation Unit in the province for reported incidents of serious police misconduct, including rape and all other forms of sexual assault. This mechanism should be independent and civilian in nature, with the authority to conduct systemic investigations. Within the unit, there should be a specialized division with staff who have expertise and specialized training in responding to violence against women, to investigate allegations of physical and sexual assault by police.

Ensure that the chief commissioners of the
above mentioned civilian oversight bodies are mandated with the power to require chiefs of police to comply with the recommendations of these civilian oversight bodies.

To the Saskatchewan Police Services and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, SAWCC recommends the following, in accordance with international policy standards, Canadian constitutional requirements and the recommendations of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission:

End body frisk searches of women and girls by male police officers in all circumstances, and until they end, that any such searches are required to be fully documented and reviewed by supervisors and commanders.

Prohibit all strip searches of women and girls by male police officers.

Ensure that women in custody are ordered to remove their bra only in exceptional circumstances in which there is credible evidence that it is necessary to prevent them from doing harm to themselves and/or others or to obtain evidence related to the reason for their arrest.

Ensure that the policing protocols related to intimate partner violence within same sex and intersex partnerships requires officers to understand clearly who the principal or dominant aggressor is and lay charges
against that individual. This protocol should distinguish assault from defensive self-protection and prevent dual charges against both the victim and the perpetrator of the violence.

Again, SAWCC submits that degrading and abusive body search, body and strip searches by male officers of Indigenous women in Saskatchewan must stop immediately. Train police regarding intimate partner violence when same sex and intersex partnerships are involved. Ensure only that the perpetrator of the violence is arrested and not the victim.

Establish a communication protocol with Indigenous communities to follow up on what police are doing to secure their safety, and how they are being protected both from the police and from outside sources.

In Saskatchewan, Indigenous people -- sorry, Indigenous children are disproportionately living in poverty. SAWCC submits that the Saskatchewan provincial government must amend their Child and Family Service Act and can no longer use poverty as a means of apprehending a child in Saskatchewan.

Similar to Bill 223, recently passed by the Manitoba government, the Child and Family Services Amendment Act removes poverty as a ground for apprehension. We know more often than not, poverty is the
fundamental contributing factor as to why our children are apprehended by Child and Family Services. Bill 223 seeks to remedy this approach and instead encourage prevention and intervention, keeping families together.

SAWCC submits that a trust fund be established for the children of missing and murdered Indigenous women to address the ongoing and aftercare required for them when they are left behind. This trust fund would include, but not limited to basic necessities, such as food, clothing, shelter, and safety, mental health and wellness, and education, along with additional family supports. There needs to be adequate supports in place for the families and children that are left behind and that they should not be left alone.

DAWCC submits that the RCMP and police services in Saskatchewan provide an oversight committee consisting of Indigenous, Métis, Inuit, disenfranchised, and LGBTQ2S members, in developing a guide to address how the officers are being held accountable for their treatment of Indigenous women and girls during crisis.

SAWCC submits that the RCMP and police services must adhere to the requirements of the Saskatchewan Mental Health Act and police officers follow legislation and allow individuals proper treatment and assessment.
SAWCC submits that the Saskatchewan health system must adhere to the requirement of the Saskatchewan Mental Health Act to be carried out when it involves Indigenous women and girls, as well as Indigenous men and boys. Being arrested pursuant to section 20 of the Saskatchewan Mental Health Act, to reduce further traumatization by the health system while receiving treatment.

In St. John’s Newfoundland transcript Exhibit 39, page 217, Chief Joe Boland shared a story that an 18-year-old university student went home. She was in exam period and had a breakdown. She had a mental health crisis breakdown in a family that had no history with the police, and the young girl had no history of mental health. They called 9-1-1 and the 9-1-1 operator hearing the call and the disturbance in the background put the call through to the police.

The police then sent Chief Joe Boland, sent two cars and a supervisor to the call. When they got to the residence the young girl was in the kitchen and her crisis escalated. She ended up being put on the kitchen floor to be handcuffed. While she was on the floor, she took her face and smashed it against the floor. The mother screaming at the office said, “If I had known I would never have ever called the police.” Completely
treating the young girl like a criminal.

Chief Joe Boland stated on page 219 of his evidence that he met with the Minister of Health and presented the Memphis model, which is the plain clothes response. Plain clothes officer with a health care provider in an unmarked vehicle assisting individuals in mental health crisis, which collaborates the health and justice system. And the service is located right in the police station and is the only police service that has it in Canada.

Chief Joseph A. Boland from the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary sits on the mental health mobile crisis team implementation committee and is a member of the provincial steering committee on the violence against women and girls.

SAWCC submits that the Memphis model be reviewed and studied for relevance for possible implementation by the Saskatchewan RCMP and police services when dealing with Indigenous people, women, girls, men, and boys, with mental health crisis or issues.

SAWCC submits that an oversight committee must be developed with the Saskatchewan health system for health staff to be accountable for the treatment of Indigenous women and girls, as well as all Indigenous people, and revamp their systematic prejudiced assessments.
that -- questions, when dealing with Indigenous women and
girls.

SAWCC submits that funding supports be
available for grandparents and other family members who
are raising the survivors of the -- like, survivors, the
children of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

SAWCC submits that funding must be provided
for supports in urban centres for Indigenous, Métis, and
disenfranchised women and their children that are escaping
poverty on-reserve and are struggling in the urban and
rural centres.

SAWCC submits that programming for
Indigenous women and their children in urban and rural
centres is much needed for their continued support and
safety.

SAWCC submits that the aftercare program
funding provided by the National Inquiry be extended and
more funding associated with health and wellness.
Families are in need of grief and trauma support and
counselling. There is a need for more therapists to make
themselves available and for more time to be made
available for therapy as these families are dealing with
vicarious trauma. They need to be able to access this
support in a timely manner. The aftercare program would
be extended to include all family members who wish to
participate.

SAWCC submits that Indigenous counselors be utilized to help families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. The families have indicated that they felt supported with Indigenous counsellors specifically trained.

SAWCC submits that there be more funding and support for families that live in poverty and experience loss. For example, my client, SAWCC provides financial assistance to families of missing and murdered Indigenous women for searches, travel, child care, and to buy minutes for their phone so that they could communicate with staff from the -- with the National Inquiry. There is a huge problem related to computer literacy as well and communication barriers and challenges for families living in poverty.

SAWCC submits that the communication and access to communication technology is a persistent issue. And programs to address communication technology should be established.

SAWCC submits that there needs to be an organization that provides a safe space for Indigenous women and children. The families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls felt a positive impact when people showed that they cared. This included having other
families support the families that lost loved ones.

Enabling the family to go to public events and rallies and
to go to other support agencies, like victim services and
the missing persons liaison.

SAWCC submits Indigenous women and girls
must be safe in university by providing support for
Indigenous women and girls who are postsecondary students
with safe spaces, grants, bursaries for financial relief.

SAWCC submits that the National Inquiry
into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls
establish an oversight committee consisting of a minimum
of seven Indigenous women, ensuring the recommendations to
this National Inquiry are implemented, similar to the
Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

So if we can please turn our attention to
the PowerPoint where my client highlights their seven
specific recommendations.

Recommendation one, that there is a
conscerted effort by the RCMP to enhance communication and
build trust between the RCMP and families of missing and
murdered loved ones.

That a trust fund be established for
children of missing and murdered Indigenous women to
address the serious concerns of aftercare, including basic
necessities such as food, shelter, clothing, mental health
and wellness and education.

Recommendation 3, that the National Inquiry ensure that there is a public mechanism to track the progress of the recommendations included in the interim report and the final report.

Recommendation 4, that the federal government provide the funds and the National Inquiry host a national family gathering in February 2019 for family members to review the draft of the National Inquiry final report and ensure their voices are properly heard in the final report, and to have input into the recommendations before the final report is submitted to the federal government.

Recommendation 5, that the National Inquiry supports the efforts of the Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Circle Corporation to host a gathering in May 2019 for Saskatchewan children of missing and murdered indigenous women.

Recommendation 6, that the provincial government of Saskatchewan establish a mechanism such as an independent special investigation unit for reported incidents of serious police misconduct, including rape and other forms of physical and sexual assault.

Recommendation 7, that indigenous women organizations across Canada receive the funding they
require to help prevent missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. Expert witnesses have stated that the systemic and cyclical short-term funding of indigenous women's organizations and shelters has directly contributed to the ongoing crisis of murdered and missing indigenous women and girls of Canada.

We respectfully acknowledge support and say hay-hay migwetch to the families who were able to share their truth and to the families who are waiting to share their truth.

We remember Kelly Allison Goforth-Wolfe, born April 21\textsuperscript{st}, 1992, passed away September -- was murdered September 25\textsuperscript{th}, 2013.

We remember Ashley Morin, March 24\textsuperscript{th}, 1987, date missing July 10\textsuperscript{th}, 2018.

Many families have stressed that the National Inquiry's work must go on so all voices can be heard and to allow the Inquiry to complete the necessary work. Pictured here is Ashley Morin, date missing July 10\textsuperscript{th} of this year.

Continued action is essential. Remembering, honouring, supporting. The family of Ashley Morin takes to the streets and community centres to raise awareness through walks, vigils to bring attention to their missing daughter "#bringashome".
We give our heartfelt thanks to each and every family member whose path we met throughout the community meetings, hearing, statement takings, feasts, vigils, walks and other interactions. We also say thank you to the Commissioners, Family Advisory Circle and all the staff of the National Inquiry for your dedication, thoughtfulness and caring.

So in conclusion, the number of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls are staggering. Throughout the research by Amnesty International and the Native Women's Association of Canada, indigenous women and girls in Canada experience higher rates of violence than other women and girls in Canada.

Our activism and solidarity with indigenous activists over many years has helped to raise the profile of this issue, and we hope this raised profile will lead to concrete and lasting change. The Inquiry is needed because indigenous women have been missing and murdered since colonization.

SAWCC respectfully submits to the National Inquiry that the Commission accept the recommendations of my client, Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Circle Corporation. The evidence given by the witnesses throughout the hearings between August 2017 and November 2018 is sufficient evidence to necessitate the
implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations of
my client.

Working in partnership with agencies,
organizations and governments in Saskatchewan as well as
the Native Women's Association of Canada, the Saskatchewan
Aboriginal Women's Circle Corporation seeks to increase
communication, collaboration, partnership and access to
the necessary resources toward our common goal of equality
and justice for all.

Thank you, Chief Commissioner and
Commissioners. These are my oral submissions.

MR. THOMAS BARNETT: Thank you, counsel.

And just before the Commissioners might
have some questions for you, just to clarify for the
record, the PowerPoint presentation that you referred to,
would you like that marked as an exhibit for the record?

MS. KELLIE WUTTUNEE: Correct.

---EXHIBIT NO./PIÈCE No. 7:

“Oral submission for the National
Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls” Powerpoint
presentation (27 slides)
Submitted by: Kellie Wuttunee, Counsel
for Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women’s
Circle Corporation
COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Merci beaucoup. Thank you very much.

And I'm pretty sure Judy is watching you. She told me she will because she wanted to apologize for not being here.

And thank you for all the hard work you've been doing in Saskatchewan.

And my question is -- the first one, you mention in your recommendation about the -- to enhance communication and trust between the RCMP and the families and, of course, the survivors. I hope so.

So I guess there's a mistrust when a recommendation is brought like this or to make sure that it's going better.

And then we've heard also during the testimonies and even this week that there is some mistrust also with municipal police or provincial police.

MS. KELLIE WUTTUNEE: Yes.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: So I believe that you have municipal police in Saskatchewan?

MS. KELLIE WUTTUNEE: We have RCMP in that usually are policing the First Nations if First Nations in Saskatchewan do not have a tripartite agreement, so usually the RCMP are the first ones called out when a crisis happens on a First Nation.
COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: And what about in the city, Saskatoon?

MS. KELLIE WUTTUNEE: City police.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: City police.

MS. KELLIE WUTTUNEE: Yes.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: So is your recommendation number 1 could also include the other police force?

MS. KELLIE WUTTUNEE: Yes. Both RCMP and police, city police.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Okay. Merci.

And you talk about also the civilian oversight commission. Did I understand well like seven women, at least seven?

MS. KELLIE WUTTUNEE: At least seven. We would like to have seven women be a part of an oversight committee to ensure that recommendations are put forward from this report and implemented.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Okay. And - - merci.

In your oral submission when you'll represent us le mémoir, do you explain how it would work or the structure?

MS. KELLIE WUTTUNEE: Yes. It'll be part
of my written submission.


That is very important so we can understand the guidelines or how ---

MS. KELLIE WUTTUNEE: Of how to do it.

Yes, correct.

COMMISSIONER MICHELE AUDETTE: Merci beaucoup. Thank you so much.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Well, it's been a pleasure. We look forward to reading your written submissions from your clients, and it's been a pleasure to work with your clients as well.

So thank you on behalf of all of us.

MS. KELLIE WUTTUNEE: Thank you.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Chief Commissioner, Commissioners, next we have NunatuKavut Community Council Incorporated, represented by counsel Roy Stewart.

---SUBMISSIONS BY ROY STEWART:

MR. ROY STEWART: Good afternoon, everyone.

My name is Roy Stewart, legal counsel to the NunatuKavut Community Council.

I first want to acknowledge the Treaty 7 territory, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and give thanks for allowing us to be here today. I want to give thanks
to all the families, survivors and communities that have contributed their statements and stories.

Thank you to all the Commission staff, Elders and healers that have made this process possible. And thank you to all the parties with standing and for everything you've contributed.

And finally, we want to thank you, Chief Commissioner and Commissioners, for giving the NunatuKavut Community Council the opportunity to be heard and to provide their Inuit perspective.

So we know that this Inquiry has a three-part mission; finding the truth, honouring the truth, and giving life to the truth. And we know there are many different indigenous groups in Canada, which means there are many indigenous truths. Each is of equal value and importance.

And in order to make the appropriate recommendations, it's important to understand who the Inuit of NunatuKavut are and the realities that women and girls from these communities find themselves in today.

The word "NunatuKavut" means "our ancient land". It is the territory of the Inuit in southern and central Labrador. And my client is the representative organization for the approximately 6,000 Inuit in NunatuKavut.
Now, the history of NunatuKavut Inuit is like that of other indigenous peoples across the country. They have for generations lived through colonization. Early Inuit society reflected a balance between men's and women's roles, with both being equally respected. However, historical accounts of NunatuKavut Inuit have been viewed through a patriarchal lens. European reporting of their communities in the 18th and 19th century was always male focused and ignored or dismissed the work and contribution of Inuit women. This has resulted in a false narrative of who the NunatuKavut Inuit are, and especially of the women in the communities. This has also caused some to deny their very Aboriginality.

It has resulted in a lack of government programs, problems with policing and a neglect to engage in a study of the needs of their communities. So ultimately, a theme of NunatuKavut Inuit history is that of attempted erasure, an attempt by outsiders to erase their Inuit identity.

Now, these Inuit communities in southern Labrador have had grandmothers, mothers, aunts, sisters and daughters either stolen or placed in violent situations where losing them was a real possibility. And in addressing the root causes of violence against women
and girls from NunatuKavut, there's no reason for us to
have to prove that they have it the worst of the worst in
order to be taken seriously because we've already heard
that this Inquiry and the recommendations cannot be
quantum based, that one missing or murdered indigenous
women or girl is one too many.

At the criminal justice hearing, Ellen
Gabriel stated that, "We know what the root causes of
violence are and we are placing our hope in this inquiry
to make the appropriate recommendations."

Also from this Inquiry, we know that
anything that marginalizes and devalues women and girls
contributes to their vulnerability and thereby increases
the risk of violence they face. So that leads me into the
first root cause of violence I'd like to address, which is
racism.

During the community meetings held by this
Inquiry, racism was the issue most frequently cited by
families, survivors and loved ones. And this isn't really
surprising to us because for decades, and for reasons to
displace and alienate them, NunatuKavut Inuit have had
outsiders tell them who they are or, rather, who they are
not. They have had academics and policymakers attempt to
erase and minimize their history.

This external racism has impacted their
relationship with government and even impacted their relationship with other indigenous organizations.

Until recently, there has been a lack of recognition by and inclusion in Inuit working groups, including in this very Inquiry process. For example, the national Inuit submission on the pre-Inquiry phase of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls details the consultation process with the Inuit that occurred to determine how Inuit like to see this very process unfold.

Within that report, the Inuit of NunatuKavut are absent from all discussions with respect to Inuit regions in Canada.

And during the human rights framework hearings in Quebec City, there were numerous Inuit-specific research reports and studies entered as exhibits, and each failed to acknowledge or give any recognition to the specific needs of Inuit women and girls in NunatuKavut.

So that leads me to our first recommendation, which is that the federal and provincial government and academics must not limit their engagement, studies, funding and focus on national indigenous organizations to the exclusion of NunatuKavut Community Council communities.
The exclusion, whether international or not, of the NunatuKavut Inuit contributes to and perpetuates the silencing of the voices of Inuit women and girls in these communities.

Lateral racism, whether intentional or not, is as damaging to their southern Inuit culture and well-being as other forms of violence. Community members begin to accept what they hear, they begin to accept how they are excluded and marginalized, and it becomes almost normalized.

Now, on that note, I want to stress that my client represents Inuit people. The Government of Canada recognizes them as being Inuit. The Courts in their province takes the same view. They have been granted standing in this Inquiry because they have a direct and substantial interest in the subject matter. But despite this and despite being an indigenous collectivity, women and girls from NanutKavut communities are currently faced with generations of trauma with little to no programs and services to effectively address their needs.

Residential schools is but one example. This was one of the horrific acts flowing from racist ideologies that have had a lasting impact on southern Inuit communities.

Additional harm has been done to their
Inuit culture and family relationships through the residential school process.

Children from their communities were forced to attend these schools in Labrador and in the island in Newfoundland. Their Inuit children were forced to attend -- or who were forced to attend, they were told how they should speak, act and identify themselves. To do otherwise was considered dirty.

Now, the inter-generational trauma caused from this is still being felt throughout NunatuKavut communities. Because of this, there needs to be culturally-based intervention services in their communities.

Now, on a positive note, my client is included in the work being done with the federal government with respect to healing and commemoration from the residential schools. However, there is still a lack of shelters, trauma support, crisis intervention, addiction support and numerous other health services that are unavailable to the communities.

This ultimately means that the inter-generational trauma will continue to persist in their communities.

Due to a lack of funding and due to a lack of autonomy over their own lives, NunatuKavut Inuit have
been unable to implement these services required of women and girls. Many of their communities are faced with serious daily issues such as water security, obtaining and purchasing fuel, transportation barriers and voids in other community infrastructure.

This has a disproportionate impact on women and girls in those communities because -- I quote Amy Hudson who gave evidence at the racism hearing:

"Women are the caretakers and the providers. Men are usually travelling for work or out hunting in our communities, but the women are ones at home primarily dealing with the consequences and the burdens associated with the lack of services with lack of infrastructure of which our people and communities and women have been discriminatedally impacted by."

On that note, I just want to shift to the topic of government health services and the role that plays in violence against Inuit women and girls.

We know that health is perhaps one of the most important factors contributing to the safety of indigenous women and girls. Therefore, health services required of NunatuKavut communities cannot continue to
operate on a government knows beset approach simply
because this approach has resulted in either a complete
absence or an inadequate level of health services
available to their communities.

Like many indigenous women across the
country, Inuit women in these communities do not have
access to Inuit-based prenatal or midwife services or
Inuit-based infant or mental health services. Women from
these communities may have to travel to a city far from
their homeland just to give birth. When this occurs, the
woman and the newborn are -- they’re separated from their
families and communities. They have to leave their
support networks behind. Ultimately, this isolates,
causes a sense of disconnectedness and increases the risk
of violence they face.

Now, for First Nations and Inuit people in
Canada, we’ve already heard this week that the First
Nations in Inuit Health Branch Services, otherwise known
as FNIHB, is a means of addressing some Indigenous-
specific health needs.

And at the Government Services Hearing held
here in Calgary, the Assistant Deputy Minister, Dr.
Valerie Gideon testified. The majority of Dr. Gideon’s
evidence focused on two main areas of FNIHB activity
related to violence against Indigenous women and girls,
those being access to healthcare services and access to mental wellness services.

Now, dating back to the mid-1990s, my client has been requesting FNIHB coverage for its people, but this has not yet been approved. This has resulted in a denial of access to non-insured health benefits and a wide range of necessary health-related services that come with eligibility for that program.

To be eligible for this program, an individual must be a First Nation person who is registered under the Indian Act or an Inuit person recognized by an Inuit land claim organization, or children of one of those.

So it’s therefore clear that non-insured health benefits are available to Inuit people. It’s clear that my client represents Inuit communities.

Canada and my client are currently in a process directed towards self-determination and rights implementation of the Inuit Peoples. So if Canada is recognizing NunatuKavut Inuit as being Inuit with Constitutional rights, then providing non-insured health benefits should be a predictable result.

Ms. Ellen Gabriel testified at this Inquiry, and as per her evidence, recognizing NunatuKavut Inuit as Indigenous peoples but then denying them access
to health services, turning a blind eye on their communities that have no running water, requiring women and girls to travel hundreds of kilometres to access basic healthcare services are all a violation of these women and girls’ human rights.

Dr. Janet Smiley also testified and explained that it’s an act of cultural violence that harms the health of Indigenous people when their Indigenous communities are excluded from programs such as the non-insured health benefits, programs and services.

Dr. Janet Smiley also expressed her concern that it’s unconstitutional to do so, and in her expert opinion, denial of access to programming under FNIHB is an act of cultural erasure that perpetuates colonial violence.

So it should be obvious that our next recommendation is immediate action on the part of the federal government to provide NunatuKavut Community Council members with access to non-insured health benefit services.

The lack of Inuit-specific programming for NunatuKavut communities in the field of healthcare means that women and girls are faced with an absence of culturally appropriate reporting and intervention services. The result is ultimately a risk of re-
victimization.

For example, if a woman is victimized, whether it be physically, sexually or emotionally, but then she does not have an adequate or safe avenue to turn to such as appropriate health services, she is not only marginalized and excluded by institutions that should be there to help her, but in the end, she’s likely to return to the violent situation that ultimately gave rise to the need for services. So ultimately, she’s re-victimized.

Transportation services are also an issue and a barrier to NunatuKavut communities, which is another adverse effect flowing from the lack of health services that are available through federal programming.

At the Sexual Violence Hearing, Jennisha Wilson discussed the increased risk of violence that occurs when women and girls are forced to relocate or travel in order to access health services. Ms. Wilson explained that women having to go out of their way to access services will often be pushed to either: 1) not access services and continue being vulnerable; 2) come up with their own alternatives, which may or may not be the best solution or; 3) they will go to services that are not helpful and that may be potentially harmful just because those services are closer.

The next factor contributing to violence I
would like to jump to is that of housing and shelters. Housing and emergency shelters and the substandard or overcrowded housing is often linked to negative health effects for the inhabitants, and such housing conditions we know are more frequent amongst Indigenous populations.

A factor linked to the inadequate state of housing in NunatuKavut that must be addressed is the lack of funding. Now, this has already been flagged in the Inquiry’s Interim Report, and I read a quote from the Interim Report which states:

“It’s important to recognize that much of the federal funding designed for Indigenous people is available only to individuals with Indian status and, as a result, federal funding does not adequately address the needs of Inuit and non-status Indigenous people.”

Now, the lack of funding is felt by NunatuKavut communities. A Statistics Canada report found that housing for Inuit is deteriorating and their percentage of housing in need of major repairs was rising in all Inuit regions, with the exception of Nunatsiavut in Labrador. And this lower rate of overcrowding and inadequate housing in Nunatsiavut was credited to new housing construction funds that was contributed from the
Now, my client and their members received no housing benefits as an Inuit region, and this ultimately has an adverse -- the adverse effect flowing from this is it disproportionately impacts women and girls.

So our next recommendation would be that the Newfoundland and Labrador and/or federal government consult with my client to determine and then address the housing needs of their communities.

In addition to safe and affordable housing required to live healthy and fulfilling lives, safe spaces and emergency shelters are also required for women and girls in these communities.

However, for NunatuKavut women and girls, the options are extremely limited when they need a safe space to turn to. For some communities, there are no options at all. Because many of their communities are geographically bound, if a woman or girl finds themselves in need of emergency services or somebody to turn to, she is not likely to have the funding that’s needed to travel far away to access a safe space or a shelter.

So that leads me to our next recommendation, which is the provincial government consult with the women and girls of NunatuKavut with the goal of
funding accessible and safe women shelters in or
accessible to their communities.

Now, not only do the gross shortcomings and
health services, housing and funding need to be addressed
in order to reduce the risk of violence against women and
girls from these communities, but the rights of these
women and girls to access and use their traditional
territory must also be recognized and implemented.

This is because the NunatuKavut Inuit are a
people whose identity is shaped by the land, the sea and
the ice. It’s through their relationship with the land
that their people learn and form their identity. The
transmission of their Inuit culture to successive
generations requires that ongoing relationship to the
land.

Yet as recently as last year, a NunatuKavut
community was forcibly relocated. This was done despite
the provincial government having said they would no longer
forcibly relocate Indigenous communities because they
recognized that important link between Indigenous people's
well-being and the connection to their ancestral land.

To achieve its goal, the government began
to eliminate essential services in the community, such as
the minimal health care services and schooling. Once the
services were gone, the result was a broken community as
people had to disperse to access those services elsewhere. This is certainly an act of cultural violence, one that also disproportionately impacts women and girls.

Outsiders have also come into NunatuKavut and exploited its many resources using government-issued licenses and government employees to push aside Inuit peoples from their land. NunatuKavut community members' inability to practice their inherent rights because of this ultimately contributes to the economic strain on their people, as they are forced to buy goods from stores which they have traditionally, you know, harvested from their own land.

And we know that economic stability is one factor that can affect women's security. And the more NunatuKavut communities are disconnected from their ability to achieve economic security, the greater the risk of increasing the vulnerability of women and girls from their communities.

So that leads me to our next recommendation, which is that the NunatuKavut Community Council must, at minimum, be partners in the planning of development projects in their territory, and the Inuit of NunatuKavut must begin to share in the wealth that is generated from its lands and waters, wealth that is currently directed to non-Indigenous project proponents in
government.

Now, when NunatuKavut Inuit do attempt to exercise their traditional practices on their land, they are often met with forcible resistance from the police. When Inuit women from these communities peacefully protest government decisions that exploit and harm their lands, these women are often met with police physically suppressing their voices.

So this Inquiry has heard testimony on how new RCMP officers, fresh out of training, are often posted to detachments in or near remote Indigenous communities, often for a brief period of time. And for Indigenous communities that are policed by the RCMP, this means they are faced with high turnover rates of these junior officers who have limited to no knowledge of the local Indigenous culture.

For NunatuKavut communities, this is the case as they are policed by the RCMP. Instead of understanding their Inuit culture and history, the focus of the RCMP is on controlling the communities. Predictably, this results in conflict between community members and RCMP officers.

Now, the RCMP does deliver a community conflict management course that focuses on developing skills for officers engaged in such conflict. RCMP
Commissioner Lucki explained how this course teaches officers to work with Indigenous communities prior to protests or conflict to ensure the officer is cognizant of the Indigenous group's history and rights and that those rights are respected.

Commissioner Lucki also stated that all RCMP officers should have this training. That's something we agree with; however, as it currently stands it's only select members of the institution that are given this training.

So that means if there's a protest involving Indigenous people or a conflict involving Indigenous people, and the nearest RCMP detachment does not have such a trained officer, then as Commissioner Lucki explained, they can be deployed to such incidents if required. Well, this is problematic because not all protests or conflict are planned. So if a conflict arises and an officer is deployed from far away that's ultimately going to be insufficient. Instead, the result is inadequately trained officers engaging with Indigenous people's in an overly aggressive manner.

For example, in recent years, after a few hours of some NunatuKavut Community Council members peacefully protesting on their traditional territory, RCMP officers, unprovoked, suddenly moved in and aggressively
dragged away members. Multiple peoples were arrested and taken away, some of those were women. These women were taken into custody, taken away from their family, their friends, and their communities, all without notice.

On another occasion, an Inuk woman, who was a grandmother and a grandmother, was protesting a resource development project when she was arrested and subsequently detained in a men's maximum security prison in St. John's.

Now, being arrested, especially for a peaceful action such as this, we know can have a long-lasting and detrimental impact on the individual. It can have an impact on their friends, family, and community members as well. Arresting women for reasons such as this, for reasons of innocent behaviour, ultimately breeds a sense of distrust and it can ultimately deter Indigenous women from turning to the police when they actually need their services. So RCMP officers must be educated on how their actions and responses can impact Indigenous women.

So that leads me to our next recommendation, which is that the RCMP operational plans, policies, and strategies relating to Indigenous women and girls must include an analysis of all risk factors contributing to the violence against Indigenous women and girls, including that of police officer conduct.

As part of the RCMP's relationship with
Indigenous people's, the entire institution needs to immediately improve on its cultural competency. Evidence given at this Inquiry demonstrates there is an overwhelming shortcoming of cultural awareness by the RCMP with respect to the different Indigenous groups across this country. And we know that understanding an Indigenous community's history and perspective is vital to delivering competent police services.

Now, we know that the RCMP and the Assembly of First Nations have a relationship-building protocol agreement which is directed at working towards the safety and security of First Nation communities without discrimination on the part of officers. However, because my client is an Inuit representative organization, it does not fall under the umbrella of AFN, and there is no similar agreement that exists to serve as a relationship builder between the NunatuKavut Inuit and the RCMP.

But Commissioner Lucki did explain that an agreement with the RCMP and Inuit groups is a possibility, and Deputy Commissioner Butterworth-Carr further explained that such agreements are not limited to national Indigenous organizations, but they can also be with regional representative organizations, such as the NunatuKavut Community Council.

So that is our next recommendation, which
is the RCMP consult with NunatuKavut Community Council to
determine the concerns and needs as it relates to policing
services in our communities.

Now, just as education is required of the
RCMP, improvement in education is required across the
board in our society to effectively address the violence
against Indigenous women and girls. We have heard this
quote many times, but Senator Murray Sinclair has stated
that "education is what got us into this mess and
education will get us out".

Supporting this at the criminal justice
hearing, Ellen Gabriel stated that "if we're going to
decolonize any system it must be the education system".
This is because there is power in words. The stories that
make it into the Canadian education system, into the
textbooks we learn from, they operate to suppress and
exclude Indigenous people from our history.

As I explained earlier, what has been
written and reported about NunatuKavut Inuit has been done
almost exclusively by non-Inuit men, who came into their
communities, made observations, and then built their own
culturally-biased and patriarchal narratives that excluded
the role and value of Inuit women in these communities.

And at the racism hearing, Amy Hudson
explained how the history of Inuit women in NunatuKavut
has not yet been given the opportunity to be told they
continue to be marginalized and supressed. So our next
recommendation is that all research studies, reports, and
publications on NunatuKavut, Inuit history and culture,
must be in collaboration with NunatuKavut community
knowledge holders, Elders, women, and community
researchers.

Now, to decolonize the education system,
the public school curriculum is a good place to start.
This is because when there is no Indigenous voice,
knowledge, or history in the school curriculum, students
will be continued -- they’ll continue to be taught a
history of Canada that is inaccurate and incomplete.
Students will continue to be taught in an educated --
education system that facilitates racist ideologies and
assumptions.

For example, at the racism hearing Amy
Hudson explained how this can result in outsiders denying
and Indigenous identity. She explained a situation she
encountered at an airport in Labrador. She was with a
crew from the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network at an
airport in Happy Valley Goose Bay when a security employee
walked up to them and asked, you know, “What is APTN doing
here?”

The airport employee then proceeded to
inform everyone that was around that there were no
Indigenous People in the local NunatuKavut community. The
employee was adamant that there were no Indigenous People
in that particular community, and she could guarantee this
because she had a friend who was a teacher in the
community at one point.

So whether this erroneous view is the
product of the airport employee’s own education, or the
product of the curriculum provided to her teacher friend,
it’s just but one example that highlights the importance
of revising public education curriculum to be inclusive of
Indigenous content.

We have also heard at this inquiry how
Indigenous children are more attentive and perform better
when their own history is reflected in their school
curriculum. So if Indigenous children are more focussed
and perform better they are likely -- or they’re more
likely to stick with school and grow up to be in a
position where they can achieve economic stability, and
perhaps contribute to breaking the cycle of
intergenerational trauma their families and communities
face.

So our next recommendation on that note, is
that public school curriculum must be inclusive of
Indigenous histories in an accurate, respectful, and
fulsome way. And any Indigenous content in educational materials must be developed and approved by the relevant Indigenous group.

Now, Indigenous language is also an important part of Indigenous education. This includes ensuring that Indigenous language is given space to be revitalized, and that each is equally valued. Now, approximately two years ago the federal government made a commitment to enact Indigenous languages legislation. Results from that early engagement sessions demonstrate that participants overwhelmingly indicate the Indigenous language are an Indigenous right. And many participants made direct reference to Aboriginal and Treaty rights as set out in section 35.

Participants are also of the view that Indigenous Peoples, regardless of where they reside, have a right to have their language accessible, preserved, and acknowledged.

Now, reflecting this, the government of Canada website detailing this process states that, I quote:

"All languages and age groups are equally important. No language and no demographic can be left behind."

Well, contrary to this statement, my client
has not been invited to participate in this process. But this is not surprising as this is usually what happens when certain processes get funneled through national Indigenous organizations, of which my client is not affiliated with or represented by.

In reference to my client’s exclusion, at a previous inquiry hearing Ellen Gabriel explained how this -- this exclusion is how colonialism works and how it succeeds. She explained that language contains our traditions and culture, and that if NunatuKavut Inuit lose their language, they lose a sense of their being.

So our next recommendation is that the federal and/or provincial government fund my client for language revitalization and my client be included in consultation on the Indigenous languages legislation process.

I next want to skip just to the topic of recommendations and what will be included in your final report. While all Indigenous Peoples in Canada have had to face injustices brought about by colonialism, the continuing effects of colonialism on the southern Inuit in NunatuKavut cannot be accurately understood by looking at the social, economic, political, or cultural circumstances of any other Indigenous group in Canada. The Inuit Peoples in Canada cannot be viewed as a homogenous group.
On that note, we ask that in your review of our written submission and the evidence before you, that you make regional, Inuit specific recommendations. The recommendations must be cognisant of the unique history, culture, and needs of Inuit women and girls in NunatuKavut. The recommendations must also be cognisant of the fact that women and girls from these communities have been predominantly left out of the conversation.

And lastly, the root causes of violence against all Indigenous women and girls, all must be approached through a human rights lens. Because ultimately, it’s their rights that continue to be suppressed and trivialized, because it’s Indigenous women and girls that continue to be placed in vulnerable and violent circumstances.

And I just want to thank you for hearing us out today. And our written submission has already been provided to the Commission and to the parties with standing, and it contains our full more complete set of recommendations.

(APPLAUSE)

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: We’re time managing. I want to thank you for your written submissions and your oral today.

I just wasn’t -- I just wanted to confirm
that in the recent apology and the announcement of the
settlement of the claim -- for the settlement of the claim
for the residential school and day schools within
Newfoundland and Labrador; were the NunatuKavut People
included in that and recognized in that?

MR. ROY STEWART: That’s a part that I
haven’t been included in or been kept in the loop on. But
that’s certainly something I can, you know, inquire with
my client and get back to you.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Okay. You
just reference the -- sort of the denial of recognition of
that history, and I was wondering about that.

MR. ROY STEWART: I know they have been
involved in, you know, like the whole commemoration and
healing aspect of it. But you know, how extensive I can’t
say.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Okay. And in
terms of the communities within NunatuKavut, are they --
in terms of their current legal status, are there -- are
the municipalities within the province? Or -- because I’m
-- as I understand, they -- the communities within your
client’s territory are not reserves. We’re not dealing
with ---

MR. ROY STEWART: Correct.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: --- Indian
Act reserves, not subject or established via Treaty. They
are communities that have existed forever in -- or but are
now -- or are they now recognized as municipalities in the
province? Are they receiving services through the
province exclusively? Like, are they only recognized in
that provincial municipal framework?

MR. ROY STEWART: I think that’s a question
they’d ultimately like worked out through this.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Okay.

MR. ROY STEWART: I mean, I know many of
the communities are in, or in and around provincial
municipalities. But as to their status and how the
province is treating them as community by community, I
think that’s ultimately a process, perhaps that may get
worked out through the Canada NunatuKavut Community
Council process that’s currently in play which began in
July of this year.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Okay.

MR. ROY STEWART: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Because I’m
trying to under -- you’ve shared with us, and I want to
thank you throughout the -- the hearings that we’ve had, a
perspective that you’ve brought that, for even myself, I
didn’t know. There’s a lot I didn’t know, and you -- and
through your client, through you have -- have raised my
knowledge, and I thank you for that. And you’ve shared a lot about your clients being denied and made invisible within the federal scheme, but are they also made invisible in the citizen -- Canadian citizen scheme under the provincial legislation? And that’s why I’m -- I’m asking these questions.

**MR. ROY STEWART:** Historically, yes. I think that was the position taken that it -- by the provincial government until relatively recently. But there does seem to be a step towards a more collaborative approach, but it hasn’t yet solidified into, you know, the recognition of, I guess, you know, you previously mentioned they’re not reserve communities. It hasn’t advanced to a state where, you know, their -- such autonomy over their own communities.

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Yet, there isn’t a -- a recognized federal, provincial obligation out. That’s part of the challenge?

**MR. ROY STEWART:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Okay. I asked President Obed on the issue of services provided by Indigenous Services Canada, especially, FNHIB, the challenges in relation to looking at these services as programs. In addition to asking that, we make recommendations that your clients be recognized as
beneficiaries of these services. Do you also have
thoughts about how these services are characterized as
either programs versus a rights-based obligation to
provide?

MR. ROY STEWART: Well, I haven’t received
that input or thoughts from my client, but I know from
discussions we’ve had to date, that they have Aboriginal
rights. They have Aboriginal rights to access certain
services. And, to me, it doesn’t matter if you classified
it as a program or a right. If they have the right, they
should access it. But from my experience, the language
has been it’s a program or a benefit, and not in and of
itself a right.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: That’s my
understanding as well. Thank you, again. And do you have
questions now? I’m going to pass the mic. Nakurmiik.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Do you
want to say something?

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: After you.
I’m nice, eh?

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Okay.
Mr. Stewart, it’s been a real pleasure to work with you.
Thank you for educating us about your clients, their --
their lives, the struggles they face, their strengths as
well, I should add. You’ve been an exemplary advocate for
your -- for your clients. Thank you very much.

MR. ROY STEWART: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER MICHELE AUDETTE: I just want
to say I was very, very impressed by the mémoire you gave
us, very well submission. Mémoire in French, now. You’re
learning, too. And very -- very well written, and very
clear and easy to follow. And the recommendation are all
there. You covered a lot more than I though. And me too,
I was learning about the -- the NunatuKavut people. So
it’s always good, always important, because I missed the
hearing in your territory -- the territory of your people
in Labrador. So I want to say thank you, and bon travail.

MR. ROY STEWART: Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

COMMISSIONER MICHELE AUDETTE: Did you
notice I didn’t say, “You’re cute, too”?

(LAUGHTER)

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Commissioner
Eyolfson has one other -- Commissioner, Commissioners,
this actually concludes the Parties with Standing that
will be providing closing submissions. So for the purpose
of just the -- the record, I’m going to ask that --
because there will be closing ceremony, I’m going to ask
that we adjourn until December 10th, 2017 (sic). The
hearings will be heard in Ottawa, Ontario at the Weston.
And at that time, we’ll be hearing from 37 Parties with Standing, so the days will be a little longer than this.

And if I just may add, it has been a pleasure this week to listen to the submissions, and it’s like a little different than other weeks where we’ve heard evidence in some ways. But one of the similar ways, I couldn’t help but observe, is the way in which there’s love in the room, and that people are treating each other with kindness and support, including the Parties with Standing supporting one another. And I thought it was noteworthy that we saw a lot of good comradery this week as people are providing you with their final submissions.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Yeah.

Yeah. I got that. Yes, certainly. We’re adjourned to December 10th, 2018, Ottawa, for a continuation of closing submissions.


CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank you. We’re closing for the day, and -- and we’ll re-convene December 10th in Ottawa.

MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO: Good afternoon. Good afternoon, good afternoon, good afternoon. So we are starting our closing ceremonies.
We’re ending a little early because one of our Parties with Standing wasn’t able to make it, so we’re going to end a day early. So right now, I would like to call upon the National Family and Advisory Circle members, Melanie Morrison, Darlene Osborne, Lorraine Clements, Lesa Semmler, and Pam Fillier to come up to the front, please. What? And Darlene’s going to be making the closing comments for the Advisory Circle.

**MS. DARLENE OSBORNE:** (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE). Good afternoon. My name is Darlene Osborne. I’m from Norway House Cree Nation, northeast Manitoba. On behalf of the National Family Advisory Circle, we would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thank you to the Parties with Standing for your submissions. I really -- it just hit my heart for supporting the families. Thank you to the Treaty 7 territory, Elders, drum group. Thank you for the healing prayers and songs. It’s been a long week, and we have heard recommendations that reflect what the families had been asking for. This will be a good road map for our Commissioners when writing their final report. (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE). Thank you very much. We want to wish best wishes and safe travels to everyone. God bless.

(APPLAUSE)

---CLOSING CEREMONY:
MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO: And there goes Commissioner Audette, our little road runner.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: I have to go there?

MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO: No.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Okay.

MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO: I said here goes Commissioner Audette, our little road runner. Okay. So now, I would like to call up Commissioner Eyolfson to make his closing comments.

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Hi. We wanted to do a joke on -- to you. So -- yes, I'm a man.

(LAUGHTER/RIRES)

COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: Brian. No, sorry, we just decided that we will switch so he can do what he needs to do.

Je veux dire un gros, gros merci aux gens qui nous ont accueillis sur le territoire des Black Foot. Merci beaucoup pour la cérémonie de la pipe. Merci à toutes les familles qui nous écoutent aujourd'hui, en français et toutes celles qui prennent le temps de nous voir via internet.

Merci aux parties ayant la qualité pour agir ; votre courage, votre connaissance, votre passion, merci infiniment. Votre travail, votre connaissance, votre
savoir sont essentiels pour le processus de cette enquête-là, surtout pour la partie rapport et recommandations.

In English. You can tell I was running. I won't tell you why though. What I said in English, just for the two of you, I'll keep secret. I want to thank you so much for the ceremony at the first day we started with you. Thank you for welcoming us in your beautiful territory. Thank you so much. And I love your sense of humour. And I hope you will introduce me the women that you were mentioning earlier at lunch.

Thank you to the Elders. NFAC, of course I miss your speech, your message. I am so sorry. I apologize. Thank you for being there. Thank you for helping us, for lifting -- whatever. You understand what I meant. Non? And for telling us when we're, you know, off track. Thank you so much. And thank you for the love you have for all of us, all of us, and giving me hugs every day.

Thank you also for the grandmothers. Thank you so much. I love you all, young, in-between, or, you know, not that old. Your wisdom is very important.

I have to say thank you also for the women who travel, not that far compared to me, but travel in a big gang from the Downtown East Side. We can follow if the presenter was good or not that good. You know, I can
hear sometimes just one or many, "yay". No, I think they were all amazing. So thank you for being there.

Grassroot women who spoke to -- all week, and also, you went beyond your stress, because you said often to us outside, I'm not a lawyer, well, me too, by the way, then you understood that your voice was important and your presence here matter, very much. So thank you for your courage, and Kellie said it better than I did, I do.

You, Party with Standing, huh? Remember the first day. There is one more week, but you won't be there, or maybe you'll be there in Ottawa. I have to say thank you. Your message, your knowledge, your passion, how you represented the groups or the people from organizations or the movement that you represented here during the past many, many months, I will say almost 2 years, I really appreciate it. I say thank you. We say thank you.

You will help us in the writing of the report, although it's already started, don't worry, but also, about the recommendation. You will help us a lot. You will help me. Because we gathered with your presence and we receive as much as knowledge as possible before the end of this mandate. We're almost at the end, like Maître Big Canoe said. So for me, I believe, love,
passion, and knowledge will lead us to action.

And to conclude, I have to say that maybe, yes, we're at the end, almost at the end of a gathering like the next one in December, but I have to reassure you that we are reading all the testimonies. We are looking again all the testimonies that families shared to us in private, or public, or written submission, or written testimony, and so on, we are sharing this among the four of us to make sure that we don't miss something. So yes, we are still very, very busy. And I guess we will be very busy until June in 2019.

Again, thank you to the staff. Super MC. I enjoy your presence. Thank you to our lawyers, and the work you do and you did so far. Amazing. The help people, the community relation, you in the end, in the back, making sure I understand what they say, but do they understand what I say, that's something else. I call them my, they don't know, the fish in the aquarium. It's so dark in the box over there. They make sure I receive everything from you. So thank you very much, AV, technician, and all of you. My god, you're part of my family, so you'll stick with me for another week in two weeks. Bye. Thank you so much.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO: Okay. So I
Closing Ceremony

think Commissioner Audette's ready to come up. No, just kidding.

(LAUGHTER/RIRES)

MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO:

Commissioner Eyolfson.

COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Ogi.

Chi-Megwetch. Thank you. Merci.

I'd like to acknowledge the traditional territories that we have been on this week that we've been welcomed to. So thank you to the Blackfoot and all the people of Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, and also to the Métis Nation homeland here in Calgary Region 3. It's been a pleasure to be back here in Calgary again this week.

And I also want to make some acknowledgements and say some thank you's to the many people who have really helped us with this week and the success that it's been.

I want to acknowledge our respected Elders, Alvine and Spike Eagle Speaker and Gerald Meginnis for getting us started in a good way. We started earlier this week with a lovely pipe ceremony and for all the prayers each day to help us carry along.

I also want to thank our special grandmothers from the Commissioners Grandmothers Circle
that are here with this week, Louise Holly and Bernie Williams, and also Grandmother Velma Orvis, who is helping us along the way in providing us with guidance and support.

And I also want to, again, acknowledge and thank the members of our National Family Advisory Circle, who have been with us on this journey providing us with much guidance and advice, Pauline Muskego, Lesa Semmler, Lorraine Clements, Darlene Osborne, Melanie Morrison, and Pamela Fillier. Thank you for your commitment and for walking with us.

To those who have joined us in person or by webcast to honour the spirits of missing Indigenous women and girls and two-spirit and trans people, thank you for joining us.

And I also want to thank all of our staff, all of our teams for their hard work and dedication, including our legal team for organizing their schedule and supporting the work with the Parties with Standing this week. So thank you, Christine, for being our MC and keeping us on track this week.

But I especially want to thank the Parties with Standing for continuing on this journey with us. So thank you for sharing your perspectives, your views on the key things and issues this week and providing us with your
thoughtful recommendations that will assist us as we develop our findings and recommendations for the final report and determine how we're going to address the issues that have been raised at national and regional levels.

And I think the valuable submissions that we've heard this week will definitely help us address the many issues raised in this Inquiry and raised by our broad mandate and in developing our final report and recommendations that are due April 30th, 2019.

And I just want to mention that, as we heard a number of times this week, the launch of our final report is not the end of this very important work. All of us, all Canadians have a responsibility to support the safety and healing of Indigenous women and girls, including two-spirited peoples.

So I look forward to hearing further submissions from Parties with Standing in a couple of weeks in Ottawa, and again, I just want to thank all the Parties with Standing who have shared with us here in Calgary this week and who have honoured our missing and murdered loved ones with their presence, with their knowledge, with their hard work and contributions, and I wish you all a safe journey home to your home fires.

And I'm going to try this (speaking Indigenous language). Chi-megwetch Merci.
MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I would like to call up Commissioner Robinson.

COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Okay.

Nakumiik. Merci. Thank you.

I, of course, want to start by acknowledging the land and the people who have welcomed us, the Blackfoot Nation, as well as the Métis Nation of Alberta, Alvine, Spike, Gerald, for your prayers throughout the week, for your prayers over the summer and since spring, and for your presence every day.

There’s been a lot of recommendations about, you know, “have Elders present“, and I’m not sure it’s appreciated behind the cameras, but the accountability that I feel, that all processes, I think, must then raise to when there are Elders and Knowledge-keepers in the room is something that I feel. And thank you for holding us accountable as guests on your land, to follow your protocols and to respect our place while we are here, and I thank you for that.

I want to thank the drummers and the drum very much. Thank you. Myna, nakumiik for your light, the warmth of the quliq and your truth, and the laughs. Thank you so much for that.

I remember the place around the quliq or the place around a fire in a home, in a tent is where
everything rotates, circles, and I love when I see the quliq in our process. It has tissues beside it, some water, all the things we need to keep things going. It becomes the heart of a space, and I see that. And thank you for keeping that space.

I want to thank the Elders that come with us, travel with us and guide us always. Louise, (Speaking in Aboriginal language), Bernie Williams. I also want to thank Thelma and Leslie Spillich (phonetic), who is part of our team and who works predominantly with our Executive Director, but I always feel so lucky to have part of your teachings and your love near us as well, and I appreciate you for that.

Members of our National Family Advisory Circle, Pauline, Lisa, Lorraine, Darlene, Melanie and Pam, thank you, thank you, thank you.

I want to thank our health support. I want to thank Gerry and Korley for your beading and teaching us how to take care of ourselves and how to use that creative part that sometimes we forget. And I always know how stressed I am, depending on how tightly I hold my needle. If it starts bending, I know I need to breathe. So I really appreciate having that test for me.

Christine for being our MC and keeping us on track, our legal team, our staff, all those here that
make this happen, AV, Security, Translators, all of you, thank you so much, as well as the hotel for hosting us so kindly and warmly. Apparently we shared this space with the Dallas starts last night. Who knew? But I think we’re the starts. That being said, thank you for our hosts.

Parties with standing, thank you. Thank you for coming, representing your clients, representing yourselves, representing the future generations with so much compassion and love and commitment. It’s been so wonderful to receive and to hear how you feel and believe we need to understand what we’ve heard and the recommendations we have to put forward.

I also want to thank you for helping to contextualize all of this. We’re all dealing with such a tight and short timeframe, but you’re hearing what has been shared by families and survivors. I want to thank you for anchoring so much in that truth, not reports, not observations, but by those with the lived experience directly affected every day. I think that’s important that we continue to honour and lift up the truths of the families.

I’m going to keep it short. I want to again say thank you to you all. Nakumiik (Speaking in Aboriginal language). Until next time.
MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD—CHICAGO: Thank you, Commissioner.

Now I’d like to ask our Chief Commissioner Buller to come up and provide some remarks.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank you. Ogii, ekosane (phonetic), thank you, merci, miigwech.

I want to start by acknowledging the spirits of the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, including members of the 2S, LGBTQ, QIA community. Their spirits have been with us this week, and they’ve helped us every day in remaining focused.

Thank you also to the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Thank you for coming and joining us this week, either in person or through the webcast. You’re why we’re doing this work.

Thank you to the people of Treaty 7 for once again being warm hosts, the Métis Nation of Alberta, again hosing us so grandly. Thank you all. It’s been a wonderful week and a very comfortable week here in your territory.

Thank you to our respected Elders, Alvine and Spike Eaglespeaker. We can’t do this work without
you.

Thank you also to Gerald Meginnis and my new best friends, I hope, the Blackfoot Confederacy Drum Group. Every day you got my heart beating and reminded me that the drum is our heart and it’s beating strong and getting stronger all across Canada.

Nakumiik, Myna, for keeping the flame burning and making sure that we’re headed in the right direction. The quliq has often -- I hate to say it -- distracted me from the business at hand.

Thank you to our grandmothers, Louise and Bernie. Again, we can’t do this work without you.

Thelma, Leslie, thank you for holding us up.

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank you also to the traditional knowledgekeepers, our health and support teams who are here and the greatest thanks and respect for our National Family Advisory Circle, members who are here with us this week, Pauline, Lisa, Lorraine, Darlene who spoke earlier, and Melanie and Pamela. I don’t want to leave out Fred and John. They really keep us all together. Thank you.

Gerry Pangman, where would we be without beading? Thank you.
AV and Translation, thanks for keeping us moving and thanks for making sure all the voices are heard. Thank you at the back of the room.

Thank you to the fabulous National Inquiry staff who, as I say time and time again, work miracles to make these hearings happen. Your dedication, your long hours, your kindness and generosity always are exemplary.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: ... ...

Our legal team. Wow. I think we've got the hottest legal team in the country. Thank you all very much for your hard work.

Christine, you know how important it is to me to stay on time here, and I appreciate that we were even ahead of schedule on occasion, so you made my week. Thank you.

Thank you to -- also to parties with standing. I hope I heard your submissions correctly this week and I hope I'll read your submissions that are coming in very quickly, thank you.

And correct me if I'm wrong, and I think you will if I'm wrong, you've asked us four Commissioners to be bold in our recommendations. You've asked us to be courageous.

A couple of things stand out in what was
said this week.

In reference to efforts of colonization, including the residential school program, the sixties scoop, to name a few, the goal was, in some words, to kill the Indian in the child or to take the Indian out of the child.

Parties with standing, tell me if I've got this right. You're telling us to put the Métis back in the Métis child. You're telling us to put the Inuit back in the Inuit child. And though I don't necessarily like the terminology, you're telling us to put the Indian back in the Indian child.

I'll take that as a yes.

And you're also telling us that we must celebrate those valued, treasured children. We have to teach them to value themselves and understand the beauty of themselves. And we have to tell all of Canada about the beauty of our own children.

What you're asking us, and again tell me if I've got this wrong, that we have to recommend that there be a new social order in Canada, that there has to be a new social order, a new contract amongst all Canadians based on decolonization and basic human rights. Most of all, respect.

I think I heard you, but tell me if I'm
wrong because that's what the families and survivors have told us as we've been travelling across Canada, be bold, be courageous and demand a new social order where women and girls can be safe. All of Canada will win.

It takes courage. What's standing in the way? Fear. Fear is standing in the way, and sometimes the biggest fear is in ourselves.

But I can tell you I've seen a change in doing this work. We as indigenous women, and men too, are standing up to authority in a respectful way, being brave and saying no, that won't do.

It's already happening, that new social order.

So I hope you'll tell me if I'm wrong, but that's, I think, where we're headed, a new social order, a new contract with the rest of Canada.

Let's celebrate ourselves. As we heard today, we're strong. There's nothing wrong with us. Let's celebrate our own strengths. There's nothing to be afraid of.

Thank you all for this wonderful week. I have a lot to think about now.

I wish you all safe travels home to your families, to your warm beds. Please, when you get home because I know you've been away from your families and
friends, hug them all and kiss them all, and tell them
that you love them.

Thank you.

**MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO:** Wow, those
were some pretty powerful words there. Really touched me.
Migwetch.

Now I'd like to call up some folks that I
was able to spend time with today, and it was quite the
honour to get some of the teachings that they provided me
in our couple minutes' discussions outside. And it means
a lot.

So I'd like to call up Gerald, Alvine and
Spike to come up and start us off with our closing
ceremonies.

**MS. ALVINE WOLFLEG:** I just want to say
something.

I do have recommendations, too.

(NATIVE LANGUAGE) On behalf of myself and
my family and Siksika Nation, Satina, Dakota, Métis, I
thank you all for your respectfulness of our protocols,
our language, our culture. Also have been our true
relations from across Canada with a true uniqueness of
lifetime teachings from our ancestors.

We will stand strong. We will speak with
honesty and we will continue to be that gigantic family
with one loud voice.

In this way, we will be heard and accomplish what we as the first people on this land had and continue the dreams of our ancestors. We, myself, and my best friend, my partner, Spike Senior, will continue to smudge and pray to the Creator so the Creator is humble.

And even if things seem hard to manage, there is always a way to change challenges.

We will find our families, but always call to the loved ones that you have lost because they're on their journey home. We will love you and we'll see you and every one of you again.

In Blackfoot, these are the encouraging words that our Elders have always told us, (NATIVE LANGUAGE). Try harder. (NATIVE LANGUAGE) Love each other. (NATIVE LANGUAGE) Help each other.

(NATIVE LANGUAGE) Do not give up.

These are my recommendations.

I promised myself I was going to cry, but having such beautiful family like you is hard to say goodbye. So in my language, I'll just say (NATIVE LANGUAGE). I will see you later.

MR. GERALD MEGINNIS: Well, everybody must know me by now. It's hard sitting.

When you get old, it takes a lot out of
you, but the information that I heard over these last few
days, I have to take it back to my people and let them
know why I came here. When I was asked the other day, I
said yes, because when you're asked -- when a person asks
for help, you have to go no matter what. You don't just ... ref
use. It's something that we are trying to help -- each
and every one of us are trying to help each other. The
reason why we're here today is for these girls and women
that left us, not in a good way. But when I pray, I know
that they are here with us today. That we are trying to
make a difference for them, to find that they -- where
they are. And that the things that happened over the past
week, we're going to try and do something about it. That
things like this would never happen again. But we have to
work together. Like I always say, we work together as a
group.

I know the families that lost their loved
ones, I know the feeling that you have. Over the few
years that I've been -- I've lost a lot of my loved ones,
and I kind of give up, but the thing that I found out is,
one of these days, I'll be with them. And it was told to
me by my brother, "You're at the age you have to tell the
young generation clearly and to make them understand what
we say today that will carry them." Because it's the
future for these young generation to make them understand
why we are here today. When these -- when the
Commissioners go home, I pray that they got their
(Indiscernible) in their thoughts on what they going to
write down will guide them.

I ask the great Creator, that the words
they put down are strong words to help us and the people
that are came here today. I pray for the ones that are
going home, the long ways home, that the path be clear for
them. With that, there’s not much I can say. But to the
Commissioners, in my language, I’m going to say (SPEAKING
NATIVE LANGUAGE), and that means, try your best. Remember
that word. (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE), means all of you,
try your best. That’s all I can say. But don’t forget,
I’ll be there praying for you people. Don’t think that
I’ve forgot you. And I really appreciate when you --
things like this, we have to stick together. And I’m glad
I’m here with my brother and my sister here. I’m glad I
talk with them. And I hope in the future, things be
better for each and everyone of us. So with that, thank
you for listening to me, and that’s about all I can say.
So thank you very much.

MR. NORTON “SPIKE” EAGLE SPEAKER: I’ll
just keep it real short. I just want to thank the
Commissioner and the people here that are involved, The
respect that you gave my partner and I through prayers all
this week. Every day I come in here, and I hear the stories of the loved ones that have been lost. All I can say about that is, the treatment of our women and our child -- and our girls, has been a national disgrace. Shame on you. Bye.

(APPLAUSE)

(CLOSING PRAYER)

MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO: And because we’re in Treaty 7 territory and following protocol, I’m going to ask Myna to please extinguish the Qulliq, and then we’ll proceed with the drum after that.

MS. MYNA MANNIAPIK:  (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE). Thank you. I wasn’t prepared to finish today, so I’m just going to make it quick. (SPEAKING NATIVE LANGUAGE). I’m really thankful and grateful that I was invited to come -- come and participate in this very important matter. And I’m so grateful that I was asked by the Commissioners and the staff to look after this flame. I’m so grateful that I was able to meet new friends from all over. And, perhaps, some day we’ll meet again. And I’ll be with you in spirit when you’re handing in your final report. And have a safe trip home. Thank you. I now officially close this hearing.

MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO: Oh, migwetch. Now, I’ll hand it over to my brothers,
Blackfoot Confederacy Drum.

(SINGING)

(APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENTS)

MS. CHRISTINE SIMARD-CHICAGO: And one final thing I forgot to do was to hand out the gifts to our Elders. I'd like to call Alvine, Spike, Gerald, and Myrna to come up please.

(PASSING OUT OF GIFTS)

--- Upon adjourning at 18:39

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST’S CERTIFICATE

I, Félix Larose-Chevalier, 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.

Félix Larose-Chevalier

Nov 30, 2018