National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Statement Gathering
Nuu-Chah-Nulth MMIWG Gathering
Tseshahaht First Nation [Ts'ishaa7ath] - Maht Maws
Port Alberni, British Columbia

PUBLIC

Wednesday September 13, 2017

Statement - Volume 178(a)
Marcina Joe, Betty Knighton, Bernice Touchie, C.K.,
Maureen Knighton, Julia Joseph & Jolene Joe,
In relation to Florence Violet Joseph

Statement gathered by Breen Ouellette,
Commission Counsel

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ORDER

Pursuant to Rule 7 of *Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice*, Chief Commissioner Marion Buller ordered that the name of C.K., both in this transcript and any related documents, be rendered anonymous. This order was made June 7, 2019.
The use of square brackets [ ] in this transcript indicates that amendments have been made to the certified transcript in order to replace information deemed inaudible or indecipherable by the original transcriptionist. Susan Grant, Legal Assistant with National Inquiry viewed the source video recording of the proceeding to make the amendments. In particular, Ms. Grant has identified many speakers; their names now appear in square brackets. Ms. Grant made these and other amendments on August 17-22, 2018 at Vancouver, British Columbia.
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Documents submitted with testimony: none.
Tseshalt First Nation / Port Alberni, British Columbia

--- Upon commencing on Wednesday, September 13, 2017

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay, we started
recording the statement taking for the Joseph family.

For the record, I am noting that one of the
people here today to give a statement has requested not to
be in the video and she is sitting outside a frame. But
she has agreed to be recorded for audio purposes and we
will identify her shortly.

So starting on this side of the table, could
you state your full legal name for me?

MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE: Bernice Touchie.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: No middle name? Okay.

And Touchie is T-O-U-C-H-I-E? And can you tell me your
date of birth?

MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE: [Date of birth], 1948.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And where do you
presently live?

MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE: Ucluelet, B.C.,

Ucluelet.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Can you spell that for
me?

MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE: U-C-L-U-E-L-E-T.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay, thank you.

And then next? Could you tell me your full
Statement – Public
Joe, Knighton et al
(Florence Violet Joseph)

1 legal name please?

   MS. JOLENE JOE: Jolene Cindy Joe.

2 MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Jolene, J-O-L-E-N-E?

3 MS. JOLENE JOE: Yes.

4 MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Cindy, C-I-N-D-Y?

5 MS. JOLENE JOE: Yeah.

6 MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Joe, J-O-E?

7 MS. JOLENE JOE: Yeah.

8 MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And can you tell me your date of birth?

9 MS. JOLENE JOE: [Date of birth], 1980.

10 MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And where do you currently reside?

11 MS. JOLENE JOE: Port Alberni, B.C.

12 MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Thank you.

13 And yourself, could you tell me your full legal name please?

14 MS. BETTY KNIGHTON: My name is Betty Knighton, K-N-I-G-H-T-O-N.

15 MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: No middle name?

16 MS. BETTY KNIGHTON: M.

17 MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Just an M?

18 MS. BETTY KNIGHTON: Yeah.

19 MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. And can you tell me your date of birth?

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MS. BETTY KNIGHTON: [Date of birth], 1942.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And can you tell me where you currently reside?

MS. BETTY KNIGHTON: In the city or?

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Yeah, the city.

MS. BETTY KNIGHTON: Port Alberni.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Port Alberni?

MS. BETTY KNIGHTON: Yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And yourself?

MS. JULIA JOSEPH: Julia Ida Joseph.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: J-U-L-I-A, I-D-A, J-O-S-E-P-H? And can you tell me your date of birth?

MS. JULIA JOSEPH: [Date of birth], 1958.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Nineteen fifty-eight (1958). And where do you presently reside?

MS. JULIA JOSEPH: Nitinaht Lake, B.C.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: What was that?


MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: N-I-T?


MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: A-H-T Lake in B.C.?

MS. JULIA JOSEPH: Yes.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Thank you. And yourself? Your full legal name?
MS. C.K.: [C.K.].

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Do you have a middle name.

MS. C.K.: No.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. And do you know your date of birth?

MS. C.K.: [Date of birth], 1936.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Thirty-six ('36). And which city do you currently reside in?

MS. C.K.: Currently?

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Yeah.


MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Nanaimo.

And yourself, could you tell me your full legal name?

MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON: Maureen Donna Knighton.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: M-A-U-R-E-E-N?

MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON: Correct.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: D-O-N-N-A?

MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON: Correct.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And Knighton, the same as the others?

MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON: Yes.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And can you tell me
your date of birth?

MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON: [Date of birth]

(inaudible) ['62].

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And can you tell me where you currently reside?

MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON: Port Alberni.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And I’m now referring to the person off camera. Could you tell me your full legal name?

MS. MARCINA JOE: Marcina Lillian Rhonda Joe.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And could you spell Marcina for me?

MS. MARCINA JOE: M-A-R-C-I-N-A.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: C-I-N-A? And could you spell Lillian for me?

MS. MARCINA JOE: L-I-L-I-I-N-A.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And your second middle name?

MS. MARCINA JOE: R-H-O-N-D-A.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And Joe is J-O-E?

MS. MARCINA JOE: Yes.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Thank you. And can you tell me your date of birth?

MS. MARCINA JOE: [Date of birth], '86.
MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And can you tell me where you currently reside?

MS. MARCINA JOE: Ahousaht, B.C.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And could you spell that for me?


MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Thank you.

Before we begin talking about your experiences, could we discuss the reason you have appeared here today? Specifically, what do you hope to see occur from providing your experiences to the National Inquiry and what you hope to see come from the work of the National Inquiry? And please just speak as you feel ready.

MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE: I want the National Inquiry to ensure that each person in the case of violence or death receive the same justice system as anyone else in Canada, that their case be investigated immediately as any -- as especially a murder, early investigation as possible, and that these persons be as much trusted as our own people in our own culture -- cultural trust, be some First Nation or trusted persons who investigate.

That times communities need a neutral policing system in order to litigate or in order to say, "That person has hurt me. That person may be part of the murder." A lot of communities are afraid to report
violence due to community backlash or fear of police, maybe. Yeah.

**MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Thank you.

Does anybody else want to talk about the outcome that they hope for from testifying today and from the work of the National Inquiry?

**MS. JOLENE JOE:** Well, it's been four years and I would just like justice for my mother.

**MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And for you, what does justice mean for your mother?

**MS. JOLENE JOE:** I just want closure, knowing what exactly happened because I really -- I don't know. And I need to know.

**MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Okay, thank you.

Does anybody else want to say what they hope for as an outcome?

**[MS. JULIE IDA JOSEPH]:** I want to see support for the family, continued support for the children of these -- of our sisters, ongoing support, if it's daycare or respite, education, anything, any way you can be helping the children of my sisters because I see them very -- struggling with life.

Help for anybody, all the First Nations. I have my own kids and they're struggling with things like daycare.
MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Thank you.

[MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON]: I just have the same thought as Bernice did about the RCMP taking a stand and looking at each crime that had -- the way they would with any other one and not leave it to family to have a say as to whether or not they should proceed with a case. It should -- any other cases they're on, they're investigating it and that's what I want to see, is the equality across the board.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Would anybody else like to speak about outcomes?

MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE: Maybe more provincially and federal statistics regarding how many deaths and for what reason because I notice that there's -- especially a White person is murdered it's immediately on the news and it's immediately reported. And there's nothing stating what's happening with First Nations. Yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay.

MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE: And in the case of violence which was -- ours was spousal abuse -- I wanted to go to Port Renfrew and take my sister away because they'd already been in vehicle accidents and her life was at stake. And she had already had broken bones and this man was still violent. And did -- I'd like to know what the community attempted to do to help her.
And I'd like to disclose that I was physically abused as well and people didn’t come help. People heard the abuse and did not help in our community, including a leader. Is there that stigma toward helping abused women or is it cultural? I don't know.

And then if you call the police they'll take an hour to two hours. Meanwhile, what's happened to you? And the men will straighten out by the time the police come.

**MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Okay.

So my understanding is that the family has come together today to talk about more than one individual and could we start with the first person to suffer this tragedy?

**MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE:** We'll start with my sister Vi who is just a little over a year younger than me.

**MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Okay. Do you know Vi's full legal name?

**MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE:** Violet Florence Joseph.

**MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And so that would be spelled V-I-O-L-E-T, F-L-O-R-E-N-C-E, J-O-S-P-H?

---**[MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON]:** It's Florence Violet.

**MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE:** Was her first name
Florence?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Oh, maybe it was the other way around, yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay.

MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE: But she used Violet.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She went by Violet.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: That's quite common.

I've seen that before.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay, so Florence ---

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Violet.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: --- Violet Joseph.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And does anyone know her date of birth?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: It was on that picture you brought but I couldn't see it.

[MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON]: It's March 28th, '49.

[MS. JOLENE JOE]: Forty-nine ('49)?

[MS. JOLENE JOE]: Oh, that picture was for ---

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Forty-nine ('49) or '50?
[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Nineteen forty-nine (1949), remember?

[MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON]: I don’t remember.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: It was in March?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: And a year younger?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: It would have been '49.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah, it was just a year. We were just the same age for two weeks so maybe a little over a week here.

So it must have been 1949 but if you want to check and take that picture out of the frame her birthday's on that picture you have, Maureen. Her birth date is on that picture you brought.

[MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON]: Oh, okay.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Well, what I'll say for now is I'm going to go with 1949 and if there's any -- ever any information that we talk about here -- but because memory is what it is, it doesn’t come back to you until a later time, please contact me and I will take the additional information, okay?

And so -- sorry?

MS. C.K.: I was just coughing, sorry.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Just a cough, okay.
Not a problem. We'll just wait a moment for the water.

So with Violet, are we here today because she's missing or because she was murdered?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: She was murdered.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: She was murdered?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Was this an instance where she went missing and was found murdered or this is an instance where it was murder?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Spousal murder.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Spousal murder?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And did the police investigate the spouse as a suspect?


[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: He was jailed for, well, not very long.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: He got two years.

[MS. BERNICH TOUCHIE]: Two years.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: So he was convicted?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: M’hm.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSHEPH]: Yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And what was his name?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: [Husband]. I don't know his middle name.
MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Last name [spells last name]?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yes.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And he was sentenced to two years or do you know the full?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: No, I don't know all the details.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: It was a few years?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. And what was the date of the murder?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I wouldn't have that -- any detail right now.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. Nobody knows?

MS. C.K.: No. She lived somewhere else and we -- I didn’t -- I don't know, yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: It's okay. Where did the murder take place, the city?

MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE: Here in Port Alberni.

Port Alberni.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Port Alberni? Okay, so now what I want to do is I want to turn it over to the family. Whoever feels comfortable speaking just speak when you feel it's time.

And what I'm asking you to do is to describe
your experience from the start, whatever that may be.
Generally with a murder somebody has contacted you to tell
you about the murder. So if somebody wants to volunteer to
start then we can go that way and just continue from there.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Well, I'll start
with what I know but what -- I was a student at the time at
University of Victoria. And she was getting a hold of me
in concern for her children. She had had internal surgery,
injuries, because of being kicked in her abdomen. I don't
know how many times. I don't know the detail. But she was
kicked by her spouse.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: How many children did
she have at the time?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: She had two.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. So she was
getting surgery. Do you know where the surgery was?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I think she was in
Nanaimo or Victoria. I'm not sure.

Do you know, Betty?

MS. BETTY KNIGHTON: She was in Port
Alberni.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Was she in Port
Alberni for her surgery?

MS. BETTY KNIGHTON: Oh, I don't know.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: She came out of the
surgery and then had complications and she passed away in
her second hospitalization. And I know now that she was
probably aware that she was seriously injured and was
worried about her children.

And I inquired to -- all about them that day
with a social worker, Department of Indian Affairs social
worker. And I said, "I feel my sister wants to see me but
I don’t have the funds to get to her. And I know she's
concerned about her children."

And he said he can't place them with me
because I have not a big enough housing and I don't have a
job. I was a student at that time.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Do you remember who
denied you?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: [B.] (phonetic).

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: [L.B.]?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: [B.], wasn’t that
his name?

[MS. JULIE IDA JOSEPH]: Yeah, [B].

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: How do you spell it?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: I don't know how
it's ---

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: All right.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: It was as B though.

[MS. BETTY KNIGHTON]: Yeah, it's a
(inaudible).

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Like, [B.]? I don't know.

[MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON]: [L.B.].

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: [L.]?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: [L.]? [L.B.].

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: For now I'm going to go with [spells name] unless anybody thinks there's a better spelling.

[MS. BETTY KNIGHTON]: That sounds more close to it.

[MS. BETTY KNIGHTON]: The way he said his name, eh?

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And so [L.] was -- sorry, was with which institution?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: He's -- he was still with the Department of Indian Affairs.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And he denied you taking ---

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: He denied me taking ---

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: --- care of the children?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I wanted to try keep them together, yeah. I was raising my own toddlers by
then.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Do you know what happened to the children since you were unable to take care of them?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: They were adopted by separate families. Mind you, they were Native families from the Ucluelet area where I eventually was my marriage tribe. But I really hurt because I've heard they were both sexually abused even in those Native homes.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Did you hear that from the children themselves?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: M'hm.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And so they were adopted after Violet's death?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: M'hm. They were legally adopted. It was in their foster home.

My parents also tried to keep [Child 1] but -- the daughter -- but they were told they were too old to adopt children. And they were very hurt. She had -- they took her away from them.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: He was the social worker for Nitnaht, [L.B.]. He was the one that went down there to investigate. So he was listening to what other people said because I was there too. I was not quite 18 because I remember thinking too, hey, I want to keep her
because she was with me a lot because I was still at home. I was the youngest sister.

But that's another worry of mine too, is what happens on the reserve? Who decides who takes, apprehends? Who gets apprehended?

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: So your parents and Violet's parents, they wanted to adopt one of the girls. I just need to get the names. So your parents' names?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Robert Joseph.

[MS. BETTY KNIGHTON]: Senior.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Robert Joseph Senior.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah, Senior.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And your mother?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Edith Joseph.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And what was the name of the grandchild they tried to adopt?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: [Child 1]. Her legal name, her adoptive name became [Child 1].

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: Was she [Child 1’s middle name]?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Huh?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: Was she [Child 1’s middle name]?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: [Child 1’s middle name], I think, is her middle name. [Child 1].
MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And [Child 1], is it
with a [spells name]?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: [spells name].

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: [spells name]?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: [spells first name],
yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: [Child 1’s middle
name] as it is normally spelled? And do you know how to
spell her current legal name?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: [spells last name].

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: [spells last name].

And so you had said that your parents were denied because
they were too old?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: M'hm.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Do you know who
denied?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: [L.B.] denied them.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Do you know how old
your parents were at this time?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I don't know. What
would they have been?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: Well, I think I was
17 then.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: Forty-two ('42),
'52. Probably 59.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: So they were about 59 years old?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: Yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: I know I asked the date. Do you know the year or even the month when your sister died?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Any idea? I was in school then so it would have been in between September and April for sure. But I don't know.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: (Inaudible) it was middle of winter during the ---

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: It was winter of?

[MS JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: Well, somewhere anyway in winter.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah, winter of 70 - - 19 -- between '74 and '78 was my B.A. or ---

MS. C.K.: (Inaudible) the only thing I felt in my heart then.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Nineteen seventy-four (1974) to '78?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Around there, yeah.

Seventy-five (75), I think.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I can't remember.
MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: I was still in high school.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And so the -- your parents, they would have been in their late fifties? Did anybody else in the family offer to adopt the children?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Not that I know of. I don't know any details.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. And so how did you come to know that she had died? Who contacted you?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I can't recall. It probably was Mom, my mother.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Was it a family member for everybody? Was it family for everybody that was there to be told that Violet had died or was it ever an official from the government or the police, that informed you?

MS. C.K.: Seems like it was unofficial. I mean, I heard way after through the family.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah, it was just family.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. So what happened after she died with respect to an investigation? Does anybody remember how it was investigated? Did anybody talk to the police directly? Did the police ever come asking?
[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I wasn’t here.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: They never came and asked me and I seem to remember being in the taxi that went to the hospital with her because she took herself to the hospital and was leaned over. She was in lots of pain.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: So when she was attacked she contacted you?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: I may have been there because I used to stay there but I can't remember.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: M'hm. And did you stay at the hospital with her?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: I seem to remember it, yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Yeah? Do you ever remember the police visiting her at the hospital?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: She couldn't talk. She was taped. Her eyes were taped shut and her mouth was shut.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Oh.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: Her arms were taped down.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. Do you remember if this was the first time she had to go or was this because of the complications after?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: Complications after
the operation, yes.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I have to remember

her the first time she was in the hospital. She was

imagining her son was with her. She said, "I'm okay.
[Child 2] is here." She was hallucinating.

Do you remember that in her -- when you went
to see Vi, Betty? She's saying -- laying there, you said,
and she said, "It's okay. [Child 2] is here."

MS. BETTY KNIGHTON: Oh, gee.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Do you remember any

police coming at that time?

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: So did anybody have

any knowledge of the police investigation? No? Okay.

And does anybody remember how her husband
came to be charged?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Probably Vi once

reported him as the person that kicked her the first time

in the hospital.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah. They knew

right -- and it seemed to be known who had done that, that

he had done it.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. Did anybody

attend the trial from the family?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I didn’t know when
it was or anything.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: I did but I didn’t remember anything.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay, don’t remember any of the details?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: No.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Do you remember if you felt that you had proper access to be able to understand what was happening at the trial? Did anybody assist you in any way?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: No, no. That was —

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Did you speak to any of the lawyers?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: --- 2016 or '17. No. I didn’t.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Were any of your family that aren't here with us today -- did any other family attend the trial?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: I don't remember.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Not that you can recall? Okay. And so when [Husband] was sentenced did anybody tell anybody in the family about that? Was there any communication about his sentencing?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I heard somehow, by
probably family, that he had been sentenced but for how long, I wasn’t told how long.

MS. C.K.: No.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: No, we didn’t even have phones at home.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: M’hm. Right, but nobody ever came to tell you anything?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: No.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Are you okay?

MS. C.K.: Yeah. This thing fell.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay, just want to make sure you're not hurt.

MS. C.K.: Thank you.

[MS. BERNICE JOSEPH]: Where she came from had only minor communication systems in probably just the main office, eh ---

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: M’hm.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: --- right at that time.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Did you have any -- when did you find out that he had been released?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I didn’t find out. I just heard that he was in an extended care now.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. Nobody heard that he was released?
MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And so you found out that he was out how much later?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Not til -- I didn’t hear anything about his incarceration or nothing, only that it was two years and that he was in -- now in [Assisted living facility 1].

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: M’hm.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: And he has breakdowns about the whole incident. And I have a daughter that works there occasionally so if he recalls the incident and has -- I don't know what happens but it's ---

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: So he's still alive?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Where is he in extended care?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: It's called -- it's [Assisted living facility 1].

[MS. BETTY KNIGHTON]: [Assisted living facility 1].

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: It's [Assisted living facility 1].

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: [Assisted living facility 1]? And that's located in which city, [City 1]?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yes, [City 1].
MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And so Violet was living with a man who was violent to her at least once. But what was that home life like before her death? Was she in an ongoing domestic violent -- domestic violence relationship? Does anybody have anything to say about that?

MS. C.K.: She lived far away so I ---

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: She never reported it. I didn’t even know she was with him. I don't think she'd been even with him very long. It's not the father of her children. I only heard of her being with him when the incident happened.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: What about her circumstances? What about Violet's circumstances made her susceptible to violence? And in saying that, you know, as an example, oftentimes people that have been through residential schools or religious day schools, they've been exposed to violence as children; there are lots of systemic failings that can have occurred that set people up to be vulnerable. Did Violet -- was Violet in that kind of a position? Had she ---

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I would say that our time, our experience of the residential school and the constant flailing and strappings and punishment ---

MS. C.K.: Yes.
[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: --- and then we went home to my father who was also abusive when he -- he wasn’t a chronic alcoholic but he went on binges and we witnessed the violence between our parents as well.

So she was susceptible to her level of what -- we had a very limited gauge about what is violence, what is not right, and what's wrong because of our experience with the residential school and we accepted everything as what -- as parenting was. The standard was very limited.

Maybe at that time it was rampant in the violence level. The alcoholism, the violence, was rampant at that time, of my parents' time.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Did your parents attend at residential school as well?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Just my mother. She went all the way to the mainland to ---

[MS. BETTY KNIGHTON]: Coqualeetza.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: --- Coqualeetza Residential School.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Do you know how to spell ---

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: It was in the twenties, I think.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Sorry?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: In the twenties, I
guess.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: In the twenties?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: Yes.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Do you know how to spell that residential school?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I think it starts with a C.

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: K-O-K?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Huh?

[MS. JULIA IDA JOSEPH]: Isn’t it K-O-K?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Maybe it's K.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: K-O-K?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: A-L.

MS. MELODY CASELLA: Is that the one in Chilliwack?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah.


[MS. JOLENE JOE]: Would you take a five-minute break?

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: For the record, that’s ---

[MS. JOLENE JOE]: (Inaudible) a five-minute break?

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Melody Casella

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Could you spell that one more time?

**MS. MELODY CASELLA:** C-O-Q-U-A-L-E-T-Z-A.

**MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Clearly nobody was going to spell that right. Thank you, Melody.

**MS. MELODY CASELLA:** My dad has worked up there.

**MS. JOLENE JOE:** Can we get a five-minute break please?

**MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Yes, now is an okay time. I'll just pause the recordings.

--- Upon recessing

--- Upon resuming

**MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Okay, we're back from a five-minute break.

So before the break we were talking about some of the contributors to Violet’s situation. And your father was abusive and had an alcohol problem. Violet attended residential school. Your mother attended residential school.

Which residential school did Violet attend?

**[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]:** Port Alberni. Here.

**[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]:** AIRS, Alberni Indian Residential School. I guess we all did, eh? Except [C.K.] was in the TB hospital.
MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. And did any of you ever talk with Violet about her experience during residential school? No?

[MS. BETTY KNIGHTON]: She was closer to her than me. We were already on our own, me and my older sister.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: All I know is, she was rebellious. She had the nerve to run away. I could never do that. She used to just be with friends and then face the punishment when you come back, when you get caught.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay, and would you expect that your experience in residential school was similar to hers?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: M’hm.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: So what types of violence would you have experienced in residential school?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: We experienced severe discipline. Crowded dormitories meant it was easy. At times, if we didn’t confess who was caught or was out of bed or was talking, the entire dorm would get spanked on the bare bottom. Or if nobody confessed who stole somebody’s silly bag of cookies or something, if you ate the cookies too you got strapped on the hand. I’m just telling you what I recall.
MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: M'hm.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I got strapped the very first night I was there because I didn’t understand that you weren't supposed to be going to the washroom when the lights were out already. And I was caught jumping back into bed. And I had just what I thought was the ugliest nightie on. Ripped off me and just strap, strap, strap about 20 times and I just rolled and rolled and rolled.

And how many times, how many people were strapped like that, I don't know. I've seen people strapped just because they dumped the sock bag out and made a mess. It was called a mess and they got strapped.

Washing stairs down top to bottom for punishment.

We witnessed the men fighting in the dining rooms with the male supervisors. We witnessed our -- some of our senior women fighting each other, eh? There were violence against each other.

And despite this punishment, my sister had the guts to run away and so did my brother, one of them. And we lost that protection. Sometimes men have more respect for you when they know you have your brothers watching over. And we lost all -- we lost four of our brothers, and only the youngest one left.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And when you say you
"lost" your brothers, how did that happen?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: They passed away in two drownings because of spousal troubles. A brother, a younger brother was hit on the highway. He was a very radical -- what would you call -- he was ---

[MS. BETTY KNIGHTON]: He belonged to the American Indian Movement.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: American Indian Movement, yeah. So he was always afraid that he was on a hit list of some kind. And that was Larry.

Who am I missing? Oh, my brother committed suicide; the most senior brother committed suicide with a gun. So yeah. We lost that kind of security of our brothers.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: So for Violet, was there anything that might have helped her avoid this tragedy in her life? What should have happened, what didn’t happen that should have happened?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Someone reporting that that fellow was violent, maybe from his own community that she should maybe not be with him.

I don't know if I -- if there's a backlash involved with Anne’s death [Registrar’s note: see Statement Volume 178(b)] but my own cousins were acting cold somewhere after the incident. And we were swearing we were
going to follow up because there was a video for the
(inaudible) [Anne’s death]. You could tell by her bruises
that they were old. And she had already been in car
accidents with this fellow and yet he was still beating
her.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: And so to return to
Violet for a moment, it sounds like she was a strong person
---

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Yeah.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: --- the way you
describe her. What were her strengths and her resiliencies
as a person?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I think she spoke up
when there were injustices. I remember her speaking up to
our leadership in Nitinaht. And they were kind of -- they
liked to believe the community, the leadership we had at
her time. And talk was in very harsh voices and she wasn’t
afraid to voice her opinion.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Just a couple more
questions about Violet. Do you have any hope that police --
--

[MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON]: Just when you're
talking about her resilience and what she had to
contribute, she was with my mom one time.

My mom came -- my mom was there and she had
started asking me what had happened. I was raped by my neighbour with a knife.

And I told my mom and my Auntie Vi was there. And she said, "Betsy, we got to go phone the cops. Your daughter was raped. We have to tell them," she said.

So then that -- and that day she found there was just radio phones and I don't know where they went. I didn’t understand what they were doing or anything. But my Auntie Vi was the one that pulled her out and said, "We have to report this to the cops."

So for me, that was -- she wanted to protect me. She wanted to give me justice. And so my bond with her got really close. I always wanted to be with her after that because she felt like my protector.

And there, that's when I started doing things for her too. I wanted to give back to her. I thought I was helping her. I used to babysit for her not realizing that I was only enabling her to go out and drink.

So somewhere along the line she knew that what had happened was wrong, illegal, and wanted justice done.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: How old were you when this happened?

[MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON]: About 11.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: In those days the
police didn’t even come either. They'd just sit back.

[MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON]: They did.

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: Did they?

[MS. MAUREEN KNIGHTON]: Not right away but they did.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Before I move on I just want to be sure; does anybody else have a story about Violet, about her strength, about her resiliency?

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I always admired how she -- she'd quit school and my fear was that I had to get education for security. But she was able to just leave. But then she became good at traditional, like, fish cutting and basket weaving and not all of us can do that. But she had that kind of -- she didn’t appear to be patient but she did learn a lot of traditional things that I didn’t learn myself.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Thank you.

One last question. Does anybody have any documents in their possession in relation to Violet's murder?

MS. C.K.: Any documents on what?

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Any documents about Violet's murder in terms of reports by police, coroners, hospital records?

MS. C.K.: I didn’t get anything.
MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: M'hm.

MS. C.K.: Because they didn’t report anything. I think that we just heard about it through (inaudible).

[MS. BERNICE TOUCHIE]: I think all of the documents were sent to the band, to the band office, and a lot of times did not -- they never reached the families because I understood that my father's death certificate was sent there but we never got it. Things like never reached the families.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. Before we move on is there anything else anybody would like to say about Violet? Are there any questions that I should have asked that I overlooked, or any other information that you want to share about Violet?

MS. C.K.: Violet (inaudible) what went on. We were kind of helpless. Those (inaudible) here (inaudible) tell us way after. So we can't even get to find help.

MR. BREEN OUELLETTE: Okay. As we agreed at the five-minute break, we'll pause now so that everybody can have lunch.

--- Upon adjourning
LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST’S CERTIFICATE

I, Karen Noganosh, 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.

Karen Noganosh
September 4, 2017