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Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Statement Gathering
Best Western Plus Norwester Hotel
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Statement - Volume 160

Ina Commanda & Margaret Beardy Angeconeb,
In relation to Viola Panacheese & Marilyn Munroe

Statement gathered by Jayme Menzies

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NOTE

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. Amendments were completed by listening to the source audio recording of the proceeding; amendments to this official transcript were made by Maryiam Khoury, Public Inquiry Clerk with the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQ, August 10th, 2018 at Ottawa, Ontario.
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Documents submitted with testimony:

1. Photocopy of “Family Violence hurts everyone” brochure (1 page)

2. Photocopy of brochure to promote MMIW walk (1 page)

3. Photocopies of 2 commemorative posters (2 pages)

4. Photocopy of Winnipeg Free Press newspaper article dated February 24, 2016 (1 page)

5. Photocopy of Winnipeg Free Press newspaper article dated February 26, 2016 (2 page)

6. Photocopy of unidentified newspaper article by Alexandra Paul (2 pages)

7. Photocopy of unidentified newspaper article by Sioux Lookout staff (1 page)
Statement - Public

Commanda & Beardy Angeconeb
(Panacheese & Munroe)

Thunder Bay, Ontario

--- Upon commencing on Monday, December 4, 2017 at 2:25 p.m.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Starting now. This is starting now. I’ll introduce myself. My name is Jayme. I’m from Winnipeg Crown [currently]. My Metis family is from the Red River area, and I grew up in Dauphin. And – [I’m grateful that you’re with us here today. Thanks for joining us and] great, so I’ll let you -- (indiscernible) with today and (indiscernible) sharing your story. The date is December 4th and it’s 2:25. So if you don’t mind also introducing yourself?

**MS. MARIANNA DUNKIN:** My name is Mariana Beardy Dunkin (ph). I’m from Vasilin Lake (ph). And my family comes from all the Treaty 9 and I’m here for health support for any family members that are sharing their stories this week.

**MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB:** My name is Margaret Beardy Angeconeb and I’m here to support Ina. She’s my cousin, and originally I’m from (indiscernible) [Sachigo] Lake. And (indiscernible) [I’m just glad to be here].

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** My name is Ina Commanda. My last name used to be Munroe, and I’m from Sachigo Lake, but I live here in Thunder Bay. And I’m going to tell
about my sister, Viola, and my niece, Mary.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay. And where would you like to begin? Start as young as you’d like.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Well, first of all, I’d like to tell you about my sister, Viola. She went to residential school also in Kenora and in Pelican. And -- but we grew up in Central Patt, Ontario, which is like a lake. My dad was a miner there, and anyways, she had her -- she got married. Had her family. She -- she has seven children. Five girls and two boys. And she was living in Sioux Lookout there, but she was visiting her daughter in Sioux Lookout when she went missing in August of 1991.

My dad phoned me from Sachigo two days after she went missing, and he told me that she -- she was missing. And -- and her and I were so close all the time. Like, every time she’d get sick she’d come to me. And she’d say to me, “I just want you to hold me. I feel better when you hold me,” she says. So that’s what I would do. I would rub her back and just look after her.

And her and I were so close that I knew when she needed me or vice versa, eh? And there’s many, many times that I heard her calling me before she disappeared. And I’d go -- go to where she was. And one time she says, “What took you so long? I’ve been calling you for a long
time,” she says. That’s how close we were. And when -- when days went by, nobody heard anything, my parents left Sachigo Lake and went to Sioux Lookout.

And I was working here in town that time. And I’ve got time off from work to go get my parents in Sioux Lookout, but they didn’t want to stay there and my dad was determined to go look in the bushes in Sioux Lookout. So this would be then when we went and looked, but you know, that -- at that time, already I knew that she was gone.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And you know, I’d never find her alive again. So I had that feeling that she was totally not here on Earth anymore.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And, but my mother -- my mother was a strong Christian, but she -- she believed that she was taken by rapture. And I’ll try and explain rapture to you if you don’t know what it is. It means when -- when -- when somebody’s suffering so much, God takes them away.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** You know? And that’s what my mother believed, ‘cause my sister was also suffering from cancer that time.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.
MS. INA COMMANDA: She had -- you know, it was called myeloma. It’s like a -- it’s in the blood, eh? They can’t do nothing for it.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: But anyway, that’s what my mother -- she died believing that --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- that God already had her. But you know, her disappearance did such an impact on -- especially her family. Her -- her children, you know, they turned to booze and whatever, or to forget I guess, eh?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And, but me, myself, I knew that she was gone. Although I did have hope that she would -- that we would find -- find her, so we can have a burial for her. And my -- her oldest daughter was having -- she was -- she still lives in Sioux Lookout, and one of her daughters still has all of her things.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: All of her medication.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And -- and she was getting her cancer pills or whatever she was taking from -- she had a doctor in Winnipeg, and I spoke to that doctor,
and he says, “I’ll let you know if anybody ever comes in for a refill.”

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And he never did. But her oldest daughter’s -- you know, one of her daughter’s still has her clothes and her medication. And you know, there’s a -- we try and have hope that at least to find -- find her so we can bury her, but it hasn’t happened yet. It’s going on 26 years. You know, it’s 26 years now. She -- but she’s -- I still talk about her. I still have conversation with her in my head, you know?

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And you talk about her, eh?

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Yeah.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** About school, when we -- when she -- when she was more closer to her age, eh?

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Yeah. They sang together in choirs and you know like stuff like that, yeah. I -- I sincerely hope, I pray that we can find her. At least something.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm. Yeah.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Because, people say that when you can’t have a burial, their spirit doesn’t leave --
leave the Earth.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know, it stays in between there. And that’s my -- my -- and I have so much respect for her children. You know, they -- they -- they try and do things to -- to find their mother, eh?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And it’s -- it’s so hurting to see that. It’s really, really -- it just leaves a big hole.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And my parents, oh. She -- basically if you would have seen my parents -- my dad when we were -- we -- I usually tramp all over the bushes in Sioux Lookout. Every road that I can turn my truck into I’d go there.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And he wouldn’t give up until it was dark. And the police lost -- lost her files, so there’s no police files on her as of today.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: That -- that -- that’s my understanding anyway. And her daughter will know more about it. Different -- like, even the pictures that we gave them --
MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- they’re all gone.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Apparently there was a flood, so they say. I don’t know this.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: They didn’t tell me -- like, when we went to Sioux Lookout with my parents, we just went and told them we were her family. That we were here to help in the search. And they didn’t search very long either.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know, they didn’t -- ‘cause she was reported being seen in different places. And you know, I -- and that’s about Viola. I could tell you lots of stories about Viola, but --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Can I ask you some questions --

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- about Viola?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Pardon?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Can I ask you some questions about Viola?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yes.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: I’m a little bit curious
about the police investigation. So they didn’t search very long. Do you remember how long they searched for her approximately?

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Let me see. I can’t -- ‘cause she -- I think she went missing on the Sunday. I think it was a Sunday. Like, that [indiscernible] must have been [indiscernible] [Tuesday] because he said, “It’s going on two days now since she’s been gone.”

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Yeah.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And I had to leave the range myself -- my -- for my job, to leave.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** I -- you know, everything’s so hazy, yeah.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm. M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And it must have -- I don’t think they searched very long.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Couple weeks, maybe a month kind of thing?

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Not even.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Might have been that long?

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** I would say maybe a week.

And from my understanding, they didn’t even use dogs.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Although, somebody said that they used a helicopter.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know, one of those -- that lights.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know the heating -- heating thing that -- except that --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, okay, but (indiscernible) [body heat]?

MS. INA COMMANDA: But did -- yeah, but doesn’t that work only if they’re alive?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm. That makes sense to me?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. And you know what? Like I said, I was so close to my sister, Viola.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: She -- I dreamt about her three times.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: The same dream.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And I dreamt that her and I were walking, and we came upon this clearing. We’re
trying to get to Winnipeg, her and I.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And we came on this clearing. And there was like, makeshift tents and stuff like that around I think that clearing. And she says, “I know who will help us.” So she got this guy and he took us by boat to Winnipeg. I don’t know where we were, but we were in the bush. And when we came to Winnipeg, there’s a dock there. Big, long dock and you could see lots of people standing there. And everybody’s looking into the water. Then when we came closer, we looked in the water too, and there’s a white guy tied up to one of those poles. And somebody tied him there.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And that’s where my dream would end.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And I had that dream three times, and I spoke to an elderly woman here in Thunder Bay. I can’t even remember her name. And she was telling me, “She’s trying to tell you where she is. Concentrate.” But you know, you don’t plan your dreams or anything.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** No.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** They just come to you,
eh? And -- but the more I thought about it, the more fuzzier it got. I -- she says, “Try and recognize the trees.”

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know, she’s trying to tell you where she is.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Hmmm, that’s hard.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. I -- I couldn’t do it.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: But my nieces have gone to medicine men to -- to try and find it. I -- I even went to a medicine man, and he told me that she was buried under leaves.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Hmmm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: But -- and then he told me, “I can’t take you to her. You have to find somebody with those kind of powers to lead you to…”

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: But my parents didn’t believe in that. My parents believed in the Creator which is God, eh? And my dad says, told me, “Don’t go there.”

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: So I never, talked to my person again.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm. Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. There’s a --

there’s even my niece told me she -- she was walking in the mall, and she seen this sign that said mystic or something. And she -- she says, “I feel like somebody pulled me in there.” And all of a sudden, she finds herself in there, and this woman is telling her about her mom. And oh, she was really, really upset.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: They told her that she was in the cabin somewhere, that she was alive. She didn’t know where she was. She didn’t -- but she -- she kept seeing the word, Munroe, the name Munroe in her --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- whatever her dream or I guess, I don’t know what -- what they do.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: See a lot of people too give you a false hope, eh? They say they seen her and all that. I’m sorry, but you were asking me?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: No. You -- you’ve answered the questions, and this is all good. I’m glad you’re sharing this.
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MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: You can finish your thought if you’d like about -- about visions, or false hope, or how people have helped you along the way or like, I guess --

MS. INA COMMANDA: But you know, like -- like, it seems to me like the police don’t really do anything. Especially when it become -- it comes to Aboriginal people.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know? I -- I’ve seen that.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: They -- like, even the -- I have my -- I’m looking after my great-grandchildren right now and two of them are girls. And one didn’t come home one time.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And they just said, “Well, you know, 12 hours, 12 -- if they’re missing more than 12 hours that’s when you have to put out a report.” But you know, anything can happen in those 12 hours and she’s only 14, you know? So I’m always checking out her shoes and every time I get up to go to the bathroom I look for her shoes just to see [indiscernible] [that she didn’t
sneak out]. (Indiscernible) [There’s a lot of things, a lot of evil] people.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Yeah. The police force who are in charge of the search, did they -- the local Sioux Lookout Police? Is that what --

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Yeah.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Yeah? And during that period of time, were there any supports offered to your family or to her children for example? Or the Victim Services or?

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** No.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Nothing like that?

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** No, nothing. They never told my mom and dad nothing.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** No?

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** No.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** And it wasn’t after they stopped looking? Is there a report offered to you guys or any kind of summary or anything like that?

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Well, like I say, her -- her oldest daughter, Vivian (ph) is her name --

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Okay.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** -- she kept going over there to find out if any --

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Oh, okay.
MS. INA COMMANDA:  -- anything new --

MS. JAYME MENZIES:  M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA:  -- like, they can tell her. And then all of a sudden, they tell her that her - her file is gone.

MS. JAYME MENZIES:  Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA:  It’s missing.

MS. JAYME MENZIES:  Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA:  So I don’t know if she’s -- if she’s going to pursue it --

MS. JAYME MENZIES:  Right.

MS. INA COMMANDA:  -- that way, eh?

MS. JAYME MENZIES:  M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA:  Like, why -- why is it gone?

MS. JAYME MENZIES:  M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA:  I don’t know. But she’s -- but she’s supposed to be here today.

MS. JAYME MENZIES:  M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA:  But it’s weathered out, eh? She’s going to try and drive in though.

MS. JAYME MENZIES:  Okay. So her children might be speaking in another statement --

MS. INA COMMANDA:  Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES:  -- or with other
MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: She’s at commission, yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And her name is Lily Southwind (ph).

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: So if (indiscernible) [you run across her, that’s her] so --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And now about my niece, Marilyn.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know, this is so something. We went to a Missing and Murdered Women’s thing in Winnipeg last February.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Well, no. It’s going to be two years she’s been gone. Two years ago.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And it -- it was at the Lombard Hotel.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.
MS. INA COMMANDA: In -- in the corner there.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: My brother James, was there. And -- and his daughter, Marilyn lived in Winnipeg.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And we were there, and he kept saying, “I wonder why Marilyn hasn’t called.”

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Hmm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And he says, “She knows it’s my payday too. She’s always phoning me on payday,” she -- he has, eh too? “She never called.”

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: So shortly after we got home, I forget when -- anyway, I forget what date that was when -- what -- when they had that meeting in Winnipeg. So anyway, all of a sudden on Facebook this guy she used to live with, he puts out something on Facebook and says, “Has anybody seen Marilyn? And we -- and her family’s concerned about her.” That’s what he put on that Facebook. And the -- later on that day, that’s when they found -- found her body in that house that they -- they were renting. But she -- but according to the coroner, she -- she’s been gone for a long time.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.
MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. Cause it was a closed casket.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And they never even -- even the police never told us how she died.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: No?

MS. INA COMMANDA: No. And when we -- I asked at the funeral home how -- how it was going to be and that’s what that guy -- funeral director said. He said that it had to be closed. He says, “I want the family to remember her as she looked. She was mummified,” he said. So she -- she had been gone for a long time. Not just recently, eh? From the -- from the time they found her.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Hmmm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And they found her -- I -- I hear that she was all tied up in a chair. But I don’t know if that’s true. And that -- and police don’t say anything. And their reason is because he says, “If I told you how she died, you would tell somebody, but it wouldn’t be the same as -- when -- that same way as I told you, because,” he says, “we have to keep it quiet for now,” he said.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: “Because of the investigation.”
MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: So did they ever lay charges on anyone?

MS. INA COMMANDA: No.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: And is the investigation still open? Or was it closed?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Last year it was, ‘cause when we had that memorial for her --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- I -- I spoke --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: They were still investigating?

MS. INA COMMANDA: And there’s only one person they’ll speak to, which is my niece, and she lives in Big Trout Lake.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Hmm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: She’s a spokesperson for the whole family.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: But I -- I talk about like, my niece told me what he said to her. And I was so upset too, you know? So I called him. I got his name and number off of my niece, Joelly (ph). And I said, “There’s something that’s really bothering me about something you
said.” And I -- I talked to him on the phone. And he
said, “What is that?” And he said, I -- I said, “You told
Joelly that it was her lifestyle,” and -- and I said, “What
does that have to do with what happened to her? Or you --
the way you guys are investigating?” And he was all -- you
know, he was all apologies and stuff.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And he says, “I’m sorry
that you got it the wrong way,” he said. He says, “I
didn’t mean it the way it sounds.” So I don’t know.
She -- yeah, and really you know what he meant by that, you
know? Like, I tried to ask him.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And he says, “I’m the
voice that speaks for this woman,” he says. He says,
“Don’t,” you know, he says, “don’t feel like I did anything
wrong,” he said.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** He -- and he did
apologize -- apologize for that.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Yeah, he -- nothing he
hasn’t heard anything.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Okay. And when has your
niece heard from them most recently? Or have they kind of
stopped talking?

MS. INA COMMANDA: I think they -- she hasn’t said anything.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: I used to phone her all the time to find out eh -- last year was the last time I spoke to that detective.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm. And -- and now, this happened a bit more recently --

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- than the other situation? Were there moral supports put in place for your niece’s family? I mean, during the process of this investigation, were there anything -- were there Victim Services offered to your family or maybe a counsellor or a therapist or cultural, traditional, spiritual healing? You know, like, was --

MS. INA COMMANDA: No.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- any of this stuff offered? No? Nothing?

MS. INA COMMANDA: No. See she -- she left two little kids behind in Winnipeg, yeah?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah, and the father looks after them, but I -- I talked to him, when was that?
This past summer, anyway, I -- I talked to him. And -- and he says -- I said, “Does anybody ever call you?” And he said, “No.”

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know, like, for his kids.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. And that’s why my brother has to be here.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: He needs somebody.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Like, when he -- when he -- when this was being arranged, I guess he was talking to maybe Barbara or somebody. I don’t know if you know Barbara?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: I don’t, no.

MS. INA COMMANDA: But he -- I was telling Barbara that you know how men are? They don’t share their feelings, really.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know? They -- they sit there and -- but he needs somebody. My parents are gone.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.
MS. INA COMMANDA: And he says to me, “But I want you to sit beside me, wherever I’m going to be I want you there,” he said to me. I said, “Yeah, I can do that.”

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: I said, “I’m trying so hard for him to come here.” He needs -- he needs somebody.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: How old are the -- the children? The two children?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Her children?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: My -- [Marilyn’s Son] I think is 15, and [Marilyn’s Daughter] must be about 12.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: They’re -- they’re still young.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: And do you know, maybe -- maybe you’re not the best -- maybe I should be asking someone else this question, but do you know if there has been any sort of impact on them or were they too young to remember all that? Or, you know, have they sought out help or support for (indiscernible) [at all]?

MS. INA COMMANDA: I -- I -- maybe -- maybe [H.] is taking them.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Like I say, I haven’t talked to her boy since --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- this past summer. And with the -- I know the little girl is really -- you know, she wanted to be by the coffin all the time.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: We had the service in Winnipeg, and then we had the service in (indiscernible). I just --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- by the (indiscernible).

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And she stood right there until the last bit of drape --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- covered that coffin.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And she was only, what? She must be about 12. Maybe about ten.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Hmmm.
MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm. Yeah, and --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: And there was -- you --
you mentioned earlier that they didn’t want to tell you at
the time the causes of death, but has there been any update
or report on that since? No?

MS. INA COMMANDA: No. I don’t know, maybe
they’ll be able to talk about it.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: You know what? If you
want to encourage him to open up about it, he’s welcome to
speak to us and just share the positive memories he has
about his daughter. He doesn’t actually have to speak
about the negative incidents or since then at all. He can
just speak about his memories of her childhood, and you
know, the good times he shared and what kind of person she
was, and what the family loved about her, and things like
that. So if that’s more what he wants to share, that’s
also an option. And for that matter, if -- if you two want
to talk about -- if you want to talk about your niece, or
if you two want to talk about Viola, and just share your
positive memories about them, that’s part of what we want
to hear too.

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: ’Cause that’s important
too. So if you might have an easier time talking about
that stuff then that’s okay.
MS. INA COMMANDA: You can tell her what you know about Viola.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah, maybe.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Do you mind if? Okay.

Are you comfortable with that? Yeah.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah,

Viola -- when we grew up that was at the residential school.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah. But I -- I knew her too when she was married and with all her kids in (indiscernible) town [Balmertown].

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: And I lived in Red Lake.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: I see.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah. And so I mostly -- I grew up was in Red Lake. And then I went to Kenora when I was six to the residential school. I went to a high school from there too.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: But then she was always -- like, we always hanged around together, the four or five of us. And -- and the things that I remember about her was her stories, and she was funny. And -- and
she liked to dance.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah. We

shared the same music.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah. And

then when she got sick that -- I remember my brother
telling me that -- that she had cancer and all that. And I
was living here in Thunder Bay. And my father had stayed
with you. Did he stay with you?

MS. INA COMMANDA: (Indiscernible)?

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: No, he stayed with Paige

(ph).

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Paige, yeah

with our daughter. Yeah. That’s where he was staying, and
he was telling me about Viola.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: How he was -

how she was. And said that I -- I feel sorry for her,
’cause she can’t -- ’cause sometimes she can’t remember
what -- where she was.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: She would

lose her sense of something, but then she was
(indiscernible) [doing]. He was telling me that about her.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm. Was that related to the cancer? Is that what?

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: I think so.

I --

MS. INA COMMANDA: I -- I think he was on so much pills, eh?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh.

MS. INA COMMANDA: (Indiscernible) [Like --]

and --

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: ‘Cause she basically go te -- like, her (indiscernible) [would break out too, on her face].

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: One of those --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Just ‘cause side effects and stuff like that.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: She was --

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah.

That’s what he was telling me about her anyways. And we kind of felt for her.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.
MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: But she was going through. But when I heard that she went missing, (indiscernible) [That --] that took a lot of toll.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah. But every time when -- when we go for a ride --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: -- in the bush, I always think, “Oh, Viola, where are you?”

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm. Yeah.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: This would kind of just always be on the back of your mind?

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah. And that’s about all but we had good times.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: (Indiscernible) [Nothing like music and dancing --] dance and

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- (indiscernible) [to bring people together, that’s good].

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Oh, we were having fun too.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.
MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: As her kids.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: And she talked a lot about her kids. And even to the principal that we had when we were in residential school.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: She used to phone -- phone them up. They would tell her, “Viola, you’re going to have a high telephone bill.” She said, “Oh, that’s all right. My husband’s working.” But I remember our principal telling -- telling me that ‘cause I used to go and visit them too.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah. Especially their daughter. The principal’s daughter.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Did -- sorry, did those kids go to the residential school?

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: No.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay. She just was touching base? Okay.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm. She used to tell them about her life and her kids.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: That’s what they told me.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah. How many kids did Viola have?

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Seven.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Seven.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Seven? Wow.

MS. INA COMMANDA: They’re all grown up now. Beautiful.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah. Yeah?

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: So that’s my -- some of my memories of her that I can --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: -- that stood out with me about her.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Do you have anything else you can share about any (indiscernible) [Viola? Maybe] when you guys were growing up or?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Well, you know I -- I’m going to residential school two year apart. Like --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- and -- but when -- in the summer time, we used to all go home. And I’d be working, because you know, my dad would be in the hospital
with -- in the sanitorium with TB or my mom. There’s always one parent missing.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And I’m the second oldest in my family. And I used to do house work, so I could feed my little brothers and sisters. And I used to work for food.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Okay.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Doing housework. And they’d wait for me. And I -- like, and then later on, when we didn’t have to go to -- to residential school, I -- I never went back after 1958. And we’d go in the bush and cut wood.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** And then haul it back home. All of us and it used to be fun doing that, you know? And we didn’t use a power saw or anything. We used a hacksaw, or you have to --

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** M’hm.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** -- move your arms, eh? And you know, nowadays my grandchildren, I ask them to do something and they’re barely moving their arms. So (indiscernible) [slow motion]. Yeah, but the -- I -- I remember working really hard just to put heat in --

**MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB:** M’hm.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- put food on the table little bit.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know, ‘cause there was no welfare in those days. You had to do or starve, you know?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And she’d be right there behind me helping me doing everything I wanted to do and you know, like that. Even when we were -- already had our own families, she lived in -- like, in Balmertown and a few miles down the road there’s Ear Falls (ph) and that’s where I lived with my own little family.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And she’d come over there, bring all of her laundry to my house, and she’d take a cab and that’s about -- where the hell (indiscernible) [I wonder how many miles that was?]

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: That is --

MS. INA COMMANDA: Quite a ways. Maybe from -- maybe Thunder Bay to where -- maybe --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Past Nipigon.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- Nipigon? Anyway, it was quite a long trip --
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- and she’d take, like, bring a cab over there with he laundry just so --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- we could spend time.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Do a long weekend?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. So one time, you know, I bought a wig, and the next time I seen her she had a wig. And I said, “How come you -- you bought a wig?” And she says, “Well, you did.” She’d want to do everything I wanted to do. And then she ended up having more children than me. Yeah. She had seven kids.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: So you know? And her best friend -- Viola had five girls and two boys. And the -- her best friend had five boys and two girls. The -- and there’s another one that she was really close to. She wanted -- everything had to be the same, you know? I -- I have a lot of good memories with her. That’s where the -- when I -- when I say my prayers, I -- I thank God for -- for giving me the ability to laugh, you know?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: ‘Cause so many days I don’t feel like laughing.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.
MS. INA COMMANDA: And I have a lot of good memories of her.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: I just hope that she’s --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- warm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know?

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: ‘Cause when she was small, I always made sure that she was warm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: So she (indiscernible) missed? [Is she one of the youngest]?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Oh yeah. Oh yeah, she’s -- like I said, she’s --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- (indiscernible) [She’s closer] to her [age] and --

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- I’m 72. She would have been 68 --

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: 69, 68.

MS. INA COMMANDA: 68 -- 68. ‘Cause there’s
me, and then Henry, and then her.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: But yeah, I have a lot of
good memories of her.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And you know one other
thing? You know how siblings squabble?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Well, we didn’t do that.

We had a few disagreements, but nothing earth shattering,
you know?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: (Indiscernible) [It’s
really --]

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: I don’t even
think she ever argued or talked back. When we were growing
up, she was just always fighting in the (indiscernible)
[bubbly and laughing] and teasing and --

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah.

That’s the way she was.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: And I never
heard her to complain about anything really. Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.
MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah. You would have liked her too.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: If she was anything like you two, seems pretty fun.

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Well, one thing that could be helpful for the commissioners is just to properly commemorate Viola’s memory, is if you guys have any specific recommendations for them -- because hopefully, at the end of this Inquiry, we can, you know, create some real change in the systems, right? So if -- if there are any ways that you think maybe the police investigations should change or the justice system should change, or you know, maybe you -- the way that your family was or wasn’t supported during that process. If there’s any recommendations that you have that you hope future families will have a better you know, a better time with, this would be a good time to kind of share those ideas if you have them.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Well, you know, on the police part --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.
MS. INA COMMANDA: -- like, I really think they should try and -- how would I say that? Like, work on to one on that person, you know? It could be a parent or a sibling or --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- you know?

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: ‘Cause they leave everything hanging.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm. Have a relationship with the family a little bit more?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. ‘Cause I found that out through my sister, Viola, and now my niece.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: They’re not saying nothing.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: They always say, “We can’t say anything because of our investigation.” I respect that. But what about us?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know? At least they could say, “Well, we’re going to do it -- we’re going to do it this way,” or whatever. Whatever happens. How would I know? ‘Cause nobody says anything.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know, I don’t know how they go about --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- investigating anything. You know, they don’t say anything. They -- they don’t even say anything to my brother James.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And they certainly never said anything to my parents when they were alive. And I don’t know if they say anything to -- to my sister’s oldest daughter.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: But according to Lillian (ph) and you know, they can’t really go anywhere because of that lost report. It would be nice. Like, most -- most police men are you know, they’re -- they’re good, but you know, there’s some of them that --

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: That speak (indiscernible) [negative --].

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- you’re feeling you’re bothering them.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: They speak negatively about them -- woman.
MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: That’s the way I find it.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know, like, don’t bother me, I’m doing something else, you know? Like, that’s -- like, that kind of attitude.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: To have support for families and --

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Would it have helped your family, your families do you think, if there were you know, Aboriginal Elders there throughout the process for you? Or culturally relevant therapy? Things like that. Would that have -- do you think if that were available in the justice system, that people would benefit from that?

MS. INA COMMANDA: I think so.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: You think?

MS. INA COMMANDA: ‘Cause a lot of people that lost their loved ones through murder and all that, it’s really frustrating for them. And they really want to find out more about them, you know, what they’re doing.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: The police or you know?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.
MS. INA COMMANDA: Inspection -- inspecting everything, that they really want to know so for that you know, a little bit closure maybe at least --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- they’ll have that.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. You know, until I had a dream, and I dreamt that my mother was coming to get me. My mother had already passed on. And I dreamt she came to me and she says, “I know where Viola is,” she says. “But I want you to go get her,” she says to me. So I went. We had to climb this big hill. And then in the valley there were so many people and I could see her in the valley, my sister. And my mother kept telling me, “Go get her. Go get her.” So I went down and -- but you know, the -- I’d almost touch her.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: But the cloud would be pushing me.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And oh, that was so weird.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And I could hear somebody knocking and knocking. And I thought -- but I -- I was
still dreaming. That was -- living in Winnipeg that time.

  MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And that was my sister, Liz (ph) she’s knocking on my door, and I’m just crying in my sleep ‘cause I was getting so frustrated to I -- I could almost touch her, but I -- I couldn’t.

   MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

   MS. INA COMMANDA: And anyway, I went -- I was sleeping on the couch and I got up and answered the phone and that -- the door, ‘cause I heard her banging on there. And she says, “What’s the matter?” And I says, “I can’t find Viola.” I think she -- I think Liz thought I was -- I had lost it. Anyway, I was telling her about my dream. And she says, “It’s a good thing you didn’t touch her.” She says, “You -- maybe you would have died in your sleep.”

   MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

   MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.

   MS. INA COMMANDA: That’s what she told me. Yeah. And you know, even -- even like you say to yourself like, you know I can -- I can go through this. I’ve -- I’ve been -- I’ve gone through a lot, through lots.

   MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

   MS. INA COMMANDA: And each time I think, “I’m not going to survive this one. I’m not.” But you do,
you know? And I think that’s what she was afraid of. Yeah. There’s so -- you know, I -- and I also lost a grandson here in Thunder Bay.

Ms. Jayme Menzies: Who?

Ms. INA Commanda: And there’s nothing on --
you know, even men get abused.

Ms. Jayme Menzies: Yeah.

Ms. INA Commanda: But nobody’s saying anything about that.

Ms. Jayme Menzies: No.

Ms. INA Commanda: His girlfriend stabbed him three times in the heart. That’s what I mean. You know, each time I think I’m not going to survive it, but you do.

Ms. Jayme Menzies: Yeah.

Ms. INA Commanda: And all you’re left with is memories. Even though some of them -- some of them are really good. So that’s what keeps me -- all these memories.

Ms. Jayme Menzies: M’hm. Do you have any about your niece that you’d like to share?

Ms. INA Commanda: About who?

Ms. Jayme Menzies: Memories about your niece that you’d like to share?

Ms. INA Commanda: Marilyn?

Ms. Jayme Menzies: Yeah.
MS. INA COMMANDA: Oh yeah. She was -- she was great (indiscernible) [crazy]. But you know what? My dad was -- my dad was [-- he was always joking around, eh?] kind of, “You’re always looking around, eh?”

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. And I -- he gave all of his grandchildren nicknames. All of our kids have nicknames. But anyway, I think that he taught -- he taught us how to be happy.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: My -- my father, eh? And he looked after his grandchildren all like, my niece and her brother. He raised them up. My parents raised those kids up. And they’re -- and they’re always joking around, you know? Laughing and --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- yeah, she was -- she was -- she was a beautiful girl. Yeah. And my brother, he’s gone too. He -- he named her Marilyn. And everybody was saying, “Why’d you do that?” “There’s only one Marilyn Munroe ever in this world.” Yeah, she used to get joked around about that, eh? But she didn’t mind. She says, “I’m beautiful anyway.” Yeah. Yeah. And her name was Marilyn Rose.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.
MS. INA COMMANDA: She had four kids. Her oldest boy, my sister raised. And there -- he’s in Constance Lake, and her daughter is here -- had a baby. I, we should have brought her.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: She’s welcome to come.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Oh yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: If your other family members --

MS. INA COMMANDA: That -- that’s her mother.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. She’s got -- she’s severely -- I think she’s scared. But you know, talking about supports. You know, like, you know, my brother’s the type not to ask for anything.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: That’s what I mean.

Like, he’s hurting so -- so bad. And then he’s not asking for it. I don’t -- I don’t know if he prays. He -- he must pray, because we were taught as kids to pray, eh? So -- but he, even sometimes, not very often he’ll talk to me about Marilyn.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know, he always says,
“Are you going to be there when I find her?”

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: He always wants me there.

I hope I can be there for him.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Oh yes.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah, she was really --

she was like, a -- she didn’t want lots of things, you
know? If she had a -- if she had a mattress, didn’t matter
if she didn’t have a box spring. You know, that kind of
person? That’s how she was.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: She didn’t -- she didn’t
really -- she -- she wanted love.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And she -- I think she
ended up with the wrong guy. I truly believe that -- well,
maybe I shouldn’t say this, but I think he had something to
do with it. How can a person hide something like that too,
you know? He came to her funeral. We had a service in
Winnipeg.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Then we took her home to
[Osnaburgh].

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Did they investigate him
as a suspect? I guess --
MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. He was in there for a long time. Because it’s so weird, you know? She -- he had that on Facebook, what I was telling you about her missing. And then in a few hours they’re taking her out on a stretcher.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: But she had been dead already for a long time. Because I have to ask what mummified meant. I don’t know what it meant.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: That means she already turned all darker. Like wax. It’s a such an awful word. You know, you picture her and her looking like that. It’s not right.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: So many ways I could tell you that it is (indiscernible). And she was such a happy person out there. And trusting.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Totally, totally trusting. You know? I -- I know -- I know a little about -- a little bit about FAS.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And she was FAS.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.
MS. INA COMMANDA: You know how those kids are so trusting of people?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. INA COMMANDA: They just want to hug and love you?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: That’s how she was.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: She didn’t have no like -- say money, like if she had 20 bucks, if you wanted 20 bucks she’d give it to you right away. She wouldn’t say, “Well, I want some change back,” or anything, you know?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: She -- if she wanted to, she’d give it to you.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know? That’s how she was. Yeah. So sometimes it’s hard to believe that they’re gone. You turn around, you want to ask like, I say, “Oh, Marilyn,” you know? And then I realize she’s not even here. But you know what I thank God for? For the people who are willing to help. It’s such an awful thing. I can’t imagine hurting another person like that, you know? I -- I can’t. I had to give a testimony to -- when my
grandson got killed, the -- the trial was here.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: We had to make impact statements.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And one of the things I struggled with was forgiveness. I had a hard time with that. And I -- and I was more -- her name was [P.]. Anyway, and I -- I -- I thought to myself, if I ever seen her laying on the side of the road hurt, would I stop and help her? And you know what? I couldn’t answer it. And my friend told me, “Yes, you would.” I said, “How do you know? I don’t even know myself if I would.” And she says, “I know you.”

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: “You would.” Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: I think I already know that about you.

MS. INA COMMANDA: But it’s a good thing that there’s good people. I -- you know, and we

(indiscernible) [have to keep believing that there are good people]. And our justice system too. I have a hard time knowing that, but I -- you guys, it’s -- that’s really something. It means a lot.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.
MS. INA COMMANDA: You know? That you can

feel our pain.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And my cousins, and my
grandson.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. (Indiscernible)?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And then when we go home

they’ll say, “Oh, I want you --,”

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh yeah, you know what?

If you go home and you think of something or you dream

about something you know, and you want to come back
tomorrow and add anything at all, even if it’s just ten

minutes; I forgot to say this, you can do that.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Okay.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay? So while we’re

here all week, you come back tomorrow and say I will make

sure to add on testimony if you want.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: That’s good.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: So don’t stress too much

about that if you feel like -- if you think of something
else.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Well, can -- can I ask a question?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Absolutely.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Can you explain, after all this is over, how -- how the most families -- how is it going to help?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: That’s a very good question. So we’re speaking to a lot of families across the country. And there are so many different issues, but people ask, and they want different things. And some families are asking for change in how police investigations are being handled. Some people are asking for education about -- more education available about residential schools and foster care systems and all of those systems that are you know, treat Aboriginal people so negatively, so poorly. And so some people want that education to be in schools and universities and things like that.

Some people want the justice system to be -- to have different sentencing or maybe to have more rehabilitation. Or you know, certain laws changed. Some people are asking for more -- more cultural supports in -- in ever town or community. So for example, more money for therapists, or counsellors or outings for youth in the bush. You know, like, things like that.
MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: So it’s kind -- kind of like a really broad range of requests and recommendations. And the -- the commissioners will be listening to every single testimony we take. So they’ll watch this as well. And then they’ll kind of create different topics. And then they will write a big report and we will say -- they will give it to the government, and they’ll say, “This is what our families told us and so this is what we think you should do. This is what the families and us think that you should change or think you should give money to,” or things like that.

And so there will be a lot of recommendations for the education system, justice system. Even health care, and you know, things like that.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Housing.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Sorry?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Housing.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Housing, yeah, yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mental health. Like, there’s going to be recommendations for all of those -- all of those systems.

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: And we hope that the
federal government actually makes some real change about it. The other part of it; so there’s the recommendation part -- the other part of this Inquiry is to commemorate and to honour the victims and the families. So there will be one part it, of this that ends up being recommendations. The other part we’re hoping to create a way to remember our lost loved ones.

So whether it’s monuments across the country or -- or songs, or you know, a chain of powwows. You know, we’re trying to think of the ways where we can properly, maybe a day of the year or something (indiscernible) to [-- a way that we can] honour all of our lost loved ones and the family.

So there’s kind of those two things that are hopefully going to come out of the Inquiry. Recommendations for change, and a commemoration.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Okay.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** So that’s the hope. You know. So even if you go home tonight and you think, “You know what? I think Thunder Bay needs a -- a bush school where kids learn how to hunt.” Whatever that you can -- your imagination, right?

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** M’hm.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** You can come tomorrow, and you can say, “Commissioners I think that Thunder Bay
needs a bush school [for kids to learn how to hunt],” and (indiscernible). Maybe that will be something that they’ll consider. So we’ve had all sorts of really unique ideas and really powerful recommendations. Now we’re just really hoping that we can put together a really strong product and that our government will act on it. Does that kind of answer your question?

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm. Yeah. But there’s such a broad --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: It is.

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know, I don’t know about you, but with me, like, you got to focus on one thing. You know? That’s how I am.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: I can’t all over the place trying to fix this and that and that, you know what I mean?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: I do.

MS. INA COMMANDA: It’s -- it’s got to be one -- and then you know, once you have that, then you can move on to the next one.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm. Yeah, it’s a little overwhelming isn’t it?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. M’hm. But you know what? Personally, myself, I don’t think it’s going to
change very much because of a -- about our police forces
do, and their feelings towards Native people. I -- I
notice that you know? Like --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Racism?
MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. And Thunder Bay is
one of the worst places --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm. Yeah.
MS. INA COMMANDA: -- I hear.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: I hear the same thing.
MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.
MS. INA COMMANDA: You know? Although I got
a real good landlady. Really good to me, but yeah. I
don’t know. It’s -- it’s too bad. You know, it’s like a --
but you know, it’s got to change here with you.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah. Exactly.
MS. INA COMMANDA: Not that officer or that
office, you know?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.
MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.
MS. INA COMMANDA: It’s got to start at
home.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.
MS. INA COMMANDA: Because you know, even
when my great-grandson, my great-grandson I’m raising
before we went to West Gate, and he’s -- and my grandson
[O.] is very fair. He’s about as -- maybe fairer than her, eh? He’s got grey eyes or blue eyes, whatever. But his best friend is dark.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: White and like, you know, he’s just (indiscernible) [doesn’t go to school there anymore]. But that’s the reason why he didn’t like it.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Why?

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know what they used to call him? Salt and Pepper.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Wow.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And he just hates that.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: He even hates being called a white boy because of his colouring.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: He says, “I’m not white. I’m a Native person.” They don’t -- see what I mean? And I spoke to the principal about that, and I told -- told the principal, “That’s why he doesn’t like to come to school because of what the -- what they’re saying.” And he says, “Well, we -- we don’t practice that here.” I said, “But it starts at home.”

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: But you can’t tell all of
Canada that.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** How to raise their kids?

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Yeah. You know, if there’s enough people --

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Yeah.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** -- always telling you how to raise kids.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Yeah. I -- I -- I do really agree with you and -- and that’s what keeps me up at night sometimes, but --

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Yeah.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** -- there’s definitely what happens at home, but I guess it would be a start anyway --

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Yeah.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** -- if it changed institutionally, right?

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** Yeah.

**MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB:** M’hm.

**MS. JAYME MENZIES:** Because Canada -- Canada’s institutions have been working against First Nations people for way too long, so at least if we can change some of that, maybe it will trickle down. Maybe the attitude will trickle down.

**MS. INA COMMANDA:** M’hm.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: You’re right; there’s a way -- there are a lot of broad problems to deal with.

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: But you know, we just need to take the steps that we can.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Even some Native people are prejudice against their own people, right?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah, I know. We’ve dealt --

MS. INA COMMANDA: They -- they’ve been treated -- that’s why.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah. Yeah. When you’re told something about yourself for so long, and you start to believe it, right?

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm. Yeah. You know, my grandmother was raised by my grandmother? And she never seen a white man --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: -- ‘til the first pilot landed in Red Sucker Lake, Manitoba.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh yeah. Yeah. She was (indiscernible) up there.

MS. INA COMMANDA: She’s trying to feel her
skin, and then looking at his skin, and she’s
(indiscernible). Yeah. She never -- she never had apple
or sugar or --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: A little bit different.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. It was so -- so

nice. I -- I really enjoyed living with my grandma.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: I was never cold. I was
never warm -- I mean, I was never cold or hungry.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And we always lived in
the bush. Even in the winter time we lived in a tent.

Isn’t that something?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah.

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Until I was about five.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: Yeah. But I have a lot
of memories.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: But anyway --

MS. INA COMMANDA: That’s (indiscernible)

[good that you listened to me].
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh yeah, thank you for sharing.

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: I know that you made that look easy, but I know it’s really difficult to open up about those hard --

MS. INA COMMANDA: M’hm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- memories. So I really, really appreciate you be willing to share them. And I hope that your family members will feel comfortable enough to share what they need to share too.

MS. INA COMMANDA: I (indiscernible) [know it’s hard].

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yeah. I don’t have any other questions for you guys, but if you have any last comments?

MS. INA COMMANDA: (Indiscernible)?

MS. MARGARET BEARDY ANGECONEB: Yeah. Yeah. That’s -- that’s (indiscernible) [pretty much it for today].

MS. INA COMMANDA: Any way, right?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: That’s -- that’s it?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Do you want me to speak any?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: My grandmother -- my
Metis family, my grandmother spoke (indiscernible) [Michif].

MS. INA COMMANDA: Oh yeah.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: But then when she was a teenager, she got such -- so much bad treatment about it, she stopped speaking it 'cause it was just --

MS. INA COMMANDA: Hmmm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- not accepted in her area (indiscernible) [of the Province], right?

MS. INA COMMANDA: You know, I took the -- the -- there was the course in Winnipeg. Native language course.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: M’hm.

MS. INA COMMANDA: I took a two-year course there.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh yeah?

MS. INA COMMANDA: Because I was always interpreting.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, okay.

MS. INA COMMANDA: And I was too scared to go in to the justice --

--- Upon adjourning at 4:00 p.m.
LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST’S CERTIFICATE

I, Anja Curuvija, 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.

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Anja Curuvija

March 8, 2018