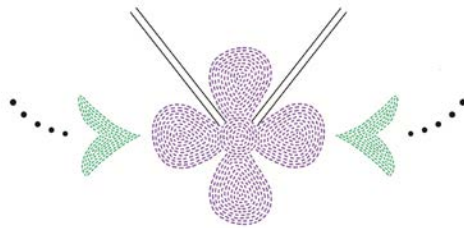


National Inquiry into  
Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls  
Truth-Gathering Process  
Part 1 Statement Gathering  
Chateau Nova Hotel  
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories**



**PUBLIC**

**Tuesday January 23, 2018**

**Statement - Volume 197**

**Lina Gon-Austin**

**Statement gathered by Yvonne Johnson**

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Documents submitted with testimony: none.

1 Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

2 --- Upon commencing on Tuesday, January 23, 2018

3 at 3:07 p.m.

4 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: I'm Yvonne Johnson.

5 I'm a statement-taker with the National Inquiry into

6 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls at

7 Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, on January 23rd, 2018,

8 and it is seven minutes after 3:00.

9 Today, I'm speaking with Lina Gon of the

10 Fort Rae Behchoko nation where she resides, and she's here

11 to tell her truth of her experience in Behchoko. There is

12 no one else in the room.

13 Also, for the record, Lina, you are here

14 voluntarily to provide your truth and to provide your

15 personal truth as a survivor regarding your experience in

16 your community of Behchoko or Fort Rae?

17 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

18 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Thank you.

19 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: You're welcome.

20 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: We're ready to go.

21 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: I was born in

22 Behchoko, and I was born in 1955 on January 28th. On

23 January 28th, I'll be 63 years old, and I'm one of the

24 residence school survivors.

25 I was hospitalized. I was in a school --

1 I was picked from my hometown when I was young. I was  
2 going to school in my hometown, and when they came, they  
3 said, "You, you, you," and they took us away from our  
4 families, and they sent us to Fort Smith.

5 We were hospitalized -- we were in the  
6 hospital there, and we were looked after. We were treated  
7 really bad, got called names, harassed by people, tomboys.  
8 We were kicked around. We were hit around. Even the nuns,  
9 they don't see what was happening to us, but for about five  
10 years, I was there.

11 I was hospitalized for three years, and --  
12 all broken bones from downhill skiing and going to Girl  
13 Guides. There was a Girl Guides -- not in the hospital,  
14 not in Verna Hall (ph). It was at the church. It was at  
15 the church, St. Pat or something, that big church in Fort  
16 Smith. Down below, they had Girl Guides. I was with the  
17 Girl Guides there when -- growing up with all the Guides,  
18 like Brownies and Girl Guides.

19 We were hit by tomboys when we were going  
20 back to residence school, but we were chased by them, and  
21 when that young girl -- when we were young, that young girl  
22 was pushed onto me when we were all running, and I was put  
23 in the hospital. And my leg was swollen right up, and I  
24 was hospitalized because -- I think they had to operate on  
25 my leg, but I don't even know if I have -- if I have my two

1 kidneys. I think I just have only one, because I got to go  
2 -- got to go washroom, and I was put in a hospital in --  
3 Shaw Council (ph) Hospital for operation when I was young.

4 In five years of being in Fort Smith  
5 school, I come back here in 1970s not knowing any Dogrib  
6 language. I lost it in the hospital, being put in the  
7 hospital in Fort Smith and lost my language, but I fought  
8 to get it back.

9 The only shopping we were doing from Fort  
10 Rae was only into town -- into town here was shopping.  
11 Shopping back and forth, catch a ride back to Rae, about 90  
12 miles.

13 Bringing groceries back, and I was raped.  
14 I was grabbed by about five guys when I was walking. They  
15 grabbed me from behind, and there was one girl with me --  
16 was helping those guys. She helped them in rape me, and  
17 there was a baby born in 1970.

18 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: That was your baby?

19 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes. I was 13 years  
20 old when the baby was born, and the baby died at birth.  
21 They buried the baby here. Because of what happened here  
22 in Yellowknife, that's where I was raped. That's why the  
23 baby was buried here.

24 I was married -- at before -- after that  
25 happened -- well, before that, I had my own company. It

1 was a co-op doing cutouts and beadwork and everything in  
2 Rae, and sometimes washing diapers with the hospital there,  
3 Stanton Hospital in Rae. They had an old hospital there.

4 I remember my dad always worked with the  
5 church, always worked with church. Potato fields, you  
6 know, growing vegetables for them and stuff, and he was  
7 always a trapper, too, and he was a builder. He built  
8 houses and stuff, and those houses was built in 1970. I  
9 worked in those houses side-by-side with my dad and my  
10 uncles, and those houses was built in Rae. That was all my  
11 dad and my uncle. They built them.

12 I remember each one. They never were paid  
13 good for building those houses, too. They only got \$100  
14 each. I remember that. I remember the guy's name Marlo --  
15 was the carpenter. I can't remember the other guy's name,  
16 but...

17 When I got married in Lacombe, Alberta, in  
18 1971, travelled -- I travelled with my son all the way to,  
19 BC because it was just -- I was working and I was pregnant,  
20 and in a year or so, I come back to work, but instead we  
21 end up on the farm helping his mom and dad on the farm.  
22 This is after my son was born in Vancouver. We travelled  
23 all the way down there to Vancouver until my son was born.

24 My Auntie Lucy lives in Cumber River. Her  
25 and her old man, they're miners. They're miners from --

1 they're from Yellowknife here.

2                   After when my son was born, I was resided  
3 in Clive, Alberta, between Lacombe and Red Deer for about a  
4 good ten years, I think, and maybe more than ten years,  
5 until my son was old enough. I was going back and forth  
6 from the farm working in Rae, and then I got placed in 1970  
7 in Edzo. The houses was done. In '71, the houses was  
8 done. They gave me a house.

9                   I was working in Chief Jimmy Bruneau  
10 School in Rae, and I was working in Elizabeth Mackenzie  
11 School in Edzo. I was working in both positions. I was in  
12 language, translating in English into Dogrib, and the same  
13 thing with -- I was working every position at the hospital  
14 in Edzo, too.

15                   So I was working every position there more  
16 than ten years, back and forth, every position, like even  
17 janitors when they need it. Sometimes when they need a  
18 cook, I -- they needed me there, and then to be with the  
19 doctor, side-by-side with the doctor. If I'm not working  
20 in those jobs, I'm doing the school, with the library or  
21 with special needs -- special needs teacher.

22                   Then, I'm doing -- I have my own company,  
23 Shell Oil Company, Shell Oil and Gas Company, and it's --  
24 in the 70s, in those days, being an Indian, you can't even  
25 borrow money from a bank or any place. So that's why I

1 borrowed a chunk of money from my father-in-law.

2 My ex have nothing to do with gas and oil.  
3 I asked him to take it, and he won't. He says he'll take  
4 it if I would do it, if I take that business, doing my own  
5 business there, and I said yes, because my people need gas,  
6 and if they do it, get it hauled from Hay River or  
7 Yellowknife or from Ernie Stanton (ph), it's going to cost  
8 them double. I know, because I know Esso was here, but  
9 nobody wants to deal with Esso.

10 So I was -- the only gas pump I was  
11 hauling to was run out of service in Yellowknife in 1970  
12 here. It was located between Red Apple and that area there  
13 -- Red Apple. In 1970, they had no gas in Yellowknife, and  
14 they asked me to come in and bring a load. When I brought  
15 a load in, about 6:00 o'clock in the morning, around there,  
16 there was a big line-up. I could see all the line up from  
17 past that Red Apple all the way to Yellowknife Inn. I  
18 remember that. They had no gas in Yellowknife. I remember  
19 that, and that...

20 I borrowed that money from my father-in-  
21 law, and eventually my ex must have paid it back with his -  
22 - with my teaching or my nursing, my nursing cheques,  
23 because when we were taking a load, we never -- I don't  
24 even think we even got a cheque from my hometown.

25 That's what I -- like, I couldn't believe



1 it. Like, here I am serving gas. I never even seen, you  
2 know, from Housing, a big cheque from them after hauling  
3 all that gas, working so hard. Nothing like that happened,  
4 but my father-in-law got paid back by my cheques anyway, I  
5 know that, from teaching and the gas.

6 My ex was a real alcoholic and really  
7 jealous type. He was really abusive. So I couldn't even  
8 look at another person or be gone for an hour, and that's  
9 why -- like, if I could get away, I would stay away, and  
10 I'll take any business from anywhere if I could, because I  
11 don't want to be in his face. He was so jealous that he --  
12 he didn't want any woman to do better than him. And I had  
13 to kind of hide myself away from any guys, because if  
14 anybody looked at me, already I slept with that person;  
15 that's how he looked at me.

16 When he married me, he never asked any  
17 questions, but after, when he married me, when he found out  
18 I was raped, I think he wants to hurt all those people,  
19 because, you know, what they have done and all this.

20 That's why I don't like alcohol, because  
21 they almost kill me underneath alcohol. They cover my  
22 head, hold my nose. They hold my nose. They were covering  
23 my eyes, and they were holding my nose when -- every time  
24 the bottle was in my mouth -- that's how they got a hold of  
25 me. All of them grabbed me from behind, and I don't know

1 who it was.

2 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: You were 13 when this  
3 happened?

4 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yeah. I could  
5 remember that girl's voice. If I mentioned that girl, I  
6 want her brought in court, and she'd probably remember all  
7 those guys' names, because she's the one that was helping  
8 them --

9 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Do you remember her  
10 name?

11 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: -- to sell the girls  
12 to those guys so she can make money on the girls. Yes,  
13 [Woman 1].

14 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Is she around?

15 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: From here, Ndilo.  
16 Yes.

17 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: She's still alive?

18 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: She was in residence  
19 school. I guess she must have know how to plan with those  
20 guys, because she's one of those kind of people, I guess.

21 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Do you ever see any  
22 of those guys?

23 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: No. Well, I don't  
24 never seen those -- I don't even know those guys, but I  
25 know her. She was helping them. Because she lured me

1 right into -- behind Yellowknife Inn until I didn't see who  
2 was behind us, nobody, until they grabbed me from behind.  
3 All I followed was that girl. She lured me right in, and,  
4 like, I almost got killed because of that, because of her  
5 and whoever guys paid her to...

6 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: What happened  
7 afterwards?

8 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: After?

9 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: You were assaulted,  
10 and then what happened after that? Did everybody leave?  
11 Were you left there? Did somebody pick you up? Can you  
12 tell me what happened?

13 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: I was left in a  
14 place -- I don't even know where that place was, but I  
15 remember getting out, and I don't even know -- I couldn't  
16 even see straight where I was going. I remember going into  
17 the Yellowknife Inn, waiting around until I finally found a  
18 ride back to Rae. I don't even know what happened to the  
19 groceries or anything, because I bought a whole bunch of  
20 groceries. I left it at Yellowknife Inn, and it was --  
21 everything happened like that, and I found out later.

22 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Did the police come  
23 and see you, or any --

24 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: There was no police  
25 involved those days, because I don't even know what

1 happened, and I don't even know how I end up in there when  
2 I just came around the corner with this one girl. She was  
3 in residence school. She used to be in residence school.

4                   When I told my mom what happened, my mom  
5 was just crying because I told her I was raped. I don't  
6 know who. Like, this girl talked me into it, and then --  
7 the same girl come into my hometown trying to pick up my  
8 uncles, and she must have because I heard she had one of my  
9 uncle [Family name 2]'s kid, and everybody knows her, was  
10 really after my uncle, one of my uncles. She'd do anything  
11 just to have him, you know. She did, I guess. So she  
12 wants to have her son from him.

13                   I don't know, like, because of her -- you  
14 know, I remember when she came into my hometown there,  
15 Auntie was -- Auntie was kind of -- I don't know. I heard  
16 that Auntie was getting beat up because of that woman. She  
17 really ripped everybody's marriage, I think, and really  
18 ripped my life, anyway. Because of that, every day, I just  
19 couldn't enjoy myself. Like, if I try to enjoy myself, I  
20 feel like everybody is laughing at me. That's how I look  
21 at it. So...

22                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: When --

23                   MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: I couldn't even --

24                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: When your mom found  
25 out, when you told your mom and she got upset, did she do

1 anything? Did she call anybody?

2 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: No, because we were  
3 Indians.

4 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: She didn't call  
5 anybody? She didn't call a nurse or a doctor?

6 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: No. Because if we  
7 talked about it, they probably would have me killed on the  
8 street.

9 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: And your dad?

10 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: My dad? My dad is a  
11 carpenter, and he worked all his life.

12 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Did he know that you  
13 were assaulted?

14 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes, he knew. My  
15 dad knew -- knew he was -- they were really hurt, my mom  
16 and dad, really hurt, what happened to me, but I had to go  
17 through it and went through it.

18 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Then, a few years  
19 later, you met somebody who was controlling --

20 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

21 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: -- and jealous. Do  
22 you think that had anything to do with that experience,  
23 when you were raped?

24 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Seventeen years of  
25 marriage. And I think so, because I still can't believe

1 it. His mom is a really nice person. I never hear them  
2 get mad at each other when I was over there, sometimes when  
3 on the phone, but something like that is -- maybe he  
4 thought he picked out the perfect person.

5 It really bothered me after that for a  
6 long time, and then I just put it aside. I just got  
7 stronger because I put it aside. That's it. Like, some  
8 day I'll write a book and throw it all in their face.  
9 That's how I look at it. Because it's really -- every  
10 position, I was put down. I even have scars from residence  
11 school. I even got beat up really bad. I don't even know  
12 if -- some days, I'm lucky to be alive, when I think about  
13 it. I was put in the hospital, in the Shaw Council  
14 Hospital. They thought the bones could be broken or  
15 something. I don't know, but I made it through that.

16 And then, five years of residence school  
17 come here -- come back from residence school, and then got  
18 married in 1970.

19 First, I had my own business with my dad,  
20 because he had the house, and I had my own co-op, because I  
21 would do cutouts and stuff like that for people, and that's  
22 how the money came was -- whatever craft my dad did and  
23 whatever beadwork I did, and you know, money came from  
24 that.

25 Money came from doing -- washing diapers

1 in the hospital or selling crafts to RCMP or just doing all  
2 kinds of things like cleaning, doing dishes, and in the  
3 '70s, I worked part-time in the Miner's Mess. So sometimes  
4 that weekend, I come in to do -- to work in the Miner's  
5 Mess at Yellowknife Inn, and that's what I was doing. And  
6 then, I was doing this -- it was every position I was  
7 working, and I was only -- my own trucking, too. I had my  
8 own trucking when I got married. I had my own trucking.

9 I was looking after my sister when my mom  
10 -- my mom was always getting sick, so she's always in the  
11 hospital, looking after my little sister. Her name is  
12 Angelina. She was about maybe going on two years old. She  
13 ran into a table and from there, she was 14 years in and  
14 out of hospital, brain tumours, and then, when she turned  
15 14, she end up -- her eyesight was going -- her eyesight  
16 was going, and she still going for treatment in Edmonton.  
17 So she finally found somebody to look after her in  
18 Edmonton.

19 She has got to be looked after, because  
20 they had to operate on her brain and look after that  
21 tumour, tried to get it back down. So she was in Braille  
22 school there. That's why I had to let somebody look after  
23 her there, and then, when I was put her for Braille school  
24 over there, I was going back and forth from Edmonton to  
25 Fort Rae, Behchoko.

1                   One day, I had to pull her out, because  
2 she was -- I felt like the people that was looking after  
3 her was harassed her and neglected, because they didn't  
4 look after her good. Because when I went there, a couple  
5 of times, I took her out and got her some brand new clothes  
6 and stuff like that. All these -- all the old clothes,  
7 like, old bra that was torn and there was strings hanging  
8 off it. That's the kind of bra they put my sister in, and  
9 old panties that looked like my -- way back in the '60s --  
10 '60s, '50s, maybe '50s or '30s, around there. It looked  
11 like pantie and bra, that kind of pantie and bra they had  
12 on her, and she was just a young girl. She shouldn't have  
13 to be using that kind of stuff. She just got, like -- she  
14 was only about nine, ten years old, around there, but she  
15 was like 18 years old. She was -- because of that  
16 treatment from her head.

17                   She was going to Braille school. I pulled  
18 her out. So my father-in-law said that he would look after  
19 her, because I was going back and forth, back and forth,  
20 and I was, like, going crazy there, I think, worrying about  
21 my sister, and I had to look after the farm for my father-  
22 in-law, too. So I was going back and forth.

23                   So he was willing to look after my sister,  
24 so he took my sister to the farm, and once in a while, he  
25 picks her up for weekend, like, this -- from Edmonton,



1 Braille school, to close to Red Deer there, in Clive,  
2 Alberta. It's between Lacombe and Red Deer.

3                   So my sister was looked after until --  
4 until she finished her school, Braille school. She turned  
5 21 years old, and after she finished school, this was the  
6 end of June when she turned 21 in -- she just finished  
7 Braille school, and she went back in the hospital, and she  
8 passed away, brain tumour, cancers in her head. She passed  
9 away, 21 years old.

10                   In the meantime, I was still going back  
11 and forth because of the -- I was looking after [Man 1],  
12 [Man 2]'s son, was put in the Mission Centre in Red Deer by  
13 social services because the mother couldn't look after him.  
14 He was older kid, and he had seizures, and I guess the kid  
15 eventually tried to hurt his mom, tried to -- with a knife  
16 or something. So that's why he got sent over there.

17                   So I was going back and forth from Rae  
18 with special needs -- I worked every day with special needs  
19 with -- with blind people or deaf people. So I was going  
20 back and forth, and they told me to come and teach that  
21 kid. So I was working on the farm there, so it was not far  
22 from there, so I was going back and forth. In the  
23 meantime, sometimes come back to Rae and work at the  
24 schools there, too. So I was going back and forth.

25                   My house was taken away from me in 1970.

1 Eventually, when I had a vehicle accident, I couldn't go  
2 back and forth. I was put in the hospital because of a  
3 vehicle accident, and my ex got -- my ex told me that we  
4 got kicked out of our house in Edzo. In Edzo there, and I  
5 said, "How could that be? We don't even have a bill. How  
6 we have a bill of" -- it was \$500 for power bill. Because  
7 I did lots of work with my dad and my uncle, and none of us  
8 was paid. My uncles were all paid \$100, like that, and I  
9 was lucky if I got that, sometimes, to even pay that,  
10 because the first time I put something down on Ski-Doo,  
11 that's when I did was the first time I put something down  
12 on Ski-Doo in '70s. Yeah.

13 I was going back forth every -- like, I  
14 was going back and forth -- I was married for 17 years to a  
15 farmer, and we ran a -- I think it was over 2,000 pigs and  
16 over two -- I don't know. From what I know, I think it's  
17 over -- I don't know how many acres. It's lots of acres.  
18 We look after -- that's counting without babies or the  
19 father or you're selling these pigs. You know, that's  
20 counting without them. Other than that, it's just like a  
21 big factory.

22 We looked after that, and my son was with  
23 me on the farm all the way, back and forth, but he went to  
24 school. Sometimes, on Sundays, I had time to drive him  
25 into town here for swimming. He always liked swimming, so

1 I always drove him to swim -- for swimming, and I like  
2 swimming, too. I used to like going skating with him, too,  
3 and did lots of things with him.

4 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: You only had one  
5 child? Just one?

6 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, out of  
7 my marriage. I think I would have had more, like, if -- as  
8 far as I know, hadn't went through a abortion -- abortion  
9 because of being raped, and --

10 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: When you were 13  
11 years old, you were raped. You got pregnant. You had a  
12 child, and it was born as stillborn.

13 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: I had a child born  
14 in '70, and that's from the rape, and then, my son -- when  
15 I got married, my son, was married to this farmer for 17  
16 years, and then, out on the farm, when I was on the farm  
17 there, I went through real bad medical problems, because I  
18 went through -- I was working on the farm there by myself.  
19 I stepped over this big stump, and the big stump -- I  
20 didn't even know the big stump had another hole under it,  
21 on the other side of the stump, and I stepped over it, and  
22 I went down on the stump and the whole -- the whole stump  
23 that was stuck in, like, just, the whole inside this -- the  
24 whole inside -- ripped a hole from the inside of that  
25 stump. I had to be put in the hospital because of that.

1 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: What happened?

2 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: The stump that --

3 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: That you stepped  
4 over?

5 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yeah, a big log  
6 sitting there. There was an old stump there. It was a  
7 broken stump that was sticking out. When I put over my  
8 hand, the whole stump that was sticking out went right  
9 inside me, and I was ripped inside from here, like -- the  
10 doctor says I couldn't have any more kids because of that.

11 I'd like to know what they say on all  
12 those papers. I'd like to know if I can -- if I could get  
13 it all back and get the courts to straighten things out,  
14 because there was no divorce. I didn't want to be  
15 divorced. I don't believe in divorce. When I was going  
16 back and forth here, I worked in every position in the  
17 Explorer Hotel, and in the kitchen, even at the hospitals,  
18 every position at the hospitals. I was going back and  
19 forth, whatever the jobs -- wherever they call me.

20 My son was looking for me in town here in  
21 2004 on April 16. Tim Caisse killed my son. My son was 33  
22 years old, and he killed my son, and he was put in jail.  
23 That old guy was put in jail. Not even five years, he was  
24 out, and he was put in the Salvation Army. He was staying  
25 in Salvation Army. Not even five years, and here, he got a

1 house, a big fancy -- a big house or something, a place,  
2 and here I am. I'm still struggling and still have no  
3 place, and here is that -- I think it was all set up. I  
4 think it was all set up because of -- I was the only Shell  
5 Oil Company, and I was the only truck driver in Fort Rae.

6 [Man 3], 1970, he was bumming off of us.  
7 He was living with us. He was staying with us. Even so,  
8 we don't even know this guy, and he was living with us.  
9 All the time, he was at our place. Finch Handle (ph) is  
10 mine. Is he trying to take that away from me, too? I  
11 start thinking like that, and then, it's bad enough that  
12 all of the sudden -- he has -- he has bastard kids from  
13 (inaudible) daughter, and then from my cousin [Family name  
14 1]. He wasn't even married, and he had those two kids, and  
15 there were living in Finch Handle. He built a house over  
16 there, and my Uncle Phillip, Phillip Bighead (ph), never  
17 sold the house to them or his land, and they start building  
18 on it, and here he was -- she was living in there, and he  
19 was living with us in Edzo. Like, he was really number one  
20 alcohol with my ex, all the way. He was with my ex all the  
21 way, and all of the sudden, what is he doing, got picked --  
22 judging people of Fort Rae? He was a judge in Fort Rae in  
23 the '70s, and all of the sudden -- all of the sudden, my  
24 business is gone, my house is gone, and he's got something  
25 to do with it. Now they've got the service station, Shell

1 Service Station, in Fort Rae.

2 I was going in and out of hospital because  
3 of the accident, and those people put me in the hospital.  
4 Vehicle accident I went through, and look what happened,  
5 what I'm going through, and then -- I went through lots,  
6 and here -- [Man 3] and Tim Caisse, that's his -- that's  
7 the Treaty 8 -- related to Treaty 8, and [Family name 1]  
8 are all related to [Man 3's family name]. He lived with us  
9 until about maybe ten good years before my cousin married  
10 him. I don't even know if they married. So it's, like...

11 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: A lot of things  
12 happened in earlier '70s, in 1970 and 1971. Before that,  
13 you were raped as a teenage girl.

14 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

15 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Then you married a  
16 man who was abusive and controlling?

17 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

18 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: And you had a son  
19 with him?

20 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

21 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: All this in 1970s,  
22 and you started a business.

23 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

24 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: '70 and '71 was a  
25 significant time for you.

1 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

2 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: There was a lot of  
3 trauma maybe, it sounds like. We keep going back to 1970.

4 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yeah, there was --

5 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: What else happened in  
6 1970? Did something else happen?

7 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: In 1970 was -- my  
8 family were living in -- before I got married, my family  
9 were living at Bay Island. Bay Island, we had the log  
10 house. My dad had a log house there until they start  
11 building houses, and then they put us in a house, one of  
12 those new houses that was built by my dad.

13 Like, me going back and forth, like, about  
14 -- this is about four months ago, I come back. I come back  
15 from the school, from Fort Smith School, and then -- just  
16 to put my mom in old folks' home, and then, not even a  
17 month later, my mom was dead. That's really, really afraid  
18 me, because they took the house away my dad built. My dad  
19 died in that house, and because my mom needs somebody to  
20 look after her, they had to put her in an old folks' home.

21 It really bothered me, when I was feeding  
22 my mom, and then she pulled out a big piece of bone.  
23 That's probably what infected her inside her stomach, and  
24 then she was put in the hospital, and like, she got well,  
25 and then, they send her back, and not long after that, she

1 was back, and then not long after that, she died.  
2 Something's got to do with what they fed her or -- I start  
3 thinking of all kind of things like that, because why would  
4 my mom...

5                   Like, she was not treated good. She was  
6 not treated good at all at old folks' home, because when I  
7 went there, she was -- you don't sit an old woman in front  
8 of -- I used to work at old folks' home in Fort Rae. You  
9 don't put an old lady in front of the table and a plate and  
10 a spoon, fork, knife, and they just ignored her. When I  
11 got there, it must have been going to 2:00, and it's, like,  
12 12:00. Dinner was long time ago, and she's still sitting  
13 there waiting for somebody to feed her, because when I was  
14 going over there, she was going like this in her -- in her  
15 plate.

16                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: She couldn't see?

17                   MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yeah, and it must  
18 have took long time for her to start doing that, because  
19 she won't touch her plate until she knows her hands are  
20 clean, you know, and when I see my mom like that, sitting  
21 there, that these people are not doing their job. You  
22 know? You're supposed to feed everyone. That's why  
23 they're there. They're paid to do, and here, they treat  
24 her like that, and then they -- when I went to the  
25 hospital, I picked up some germs, too, from old folks' home



1 -- I mean, from women's centre, there. From women's centre  
2 when I was staying here, and I had to go see -- visit my  
3 mom, and I picked up a bad flu because I was -- when I went  
4 back to Fort Smith to sign a paper, I couldn't even sign  
5 the paper, and the next day, I had to be back here for my  
6 appointment, my bone specialists. The bone specialist --  
7 what was her name there? It's supposed to be here -- I'm  
8 trying to find out, what would be good for me to walk with  
9 and stuff because of the -- my shoes need some paddings  
10 inside because all this was damaged, so I always need some  
11 paddings for my feet, and my knee is sometimes is giving  
12 problems.

13 I have all this -- I have all this kind of  
14 problem that I have to go back and forth all the time.  
15 From women's centre to the hospital, my mom was sent in  
16 from Rae, and they couldn't even get an ambulance to even  
17 come in to take her back. My mom worked hard all her life,  
18 and here they can't even take a few minutes to bring a van  
19 in when the van was in town. The van won't even take her  
20 back. That was not even nice at all. That was her tax  
21 dollars, and that's my tax dollars, too, because she used  
22 to work at Explorer Hotel. She used to work in Yellowknife  
23 Inn, and me, too. I used to work in Yellowknife Inn, and  
24 that's how they treat people? Who wants to be in old  
25 folks' home? It shows like they might as well burn up the

1 old people. That's how it looks, because that's what --  
2 that's what they would rather do, you know, than looking  
3 after old people.

4 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: How long was your mom  
5 in the home?

6 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Not even -- this was  
7 about -- I came back here. I was school in Fort Smith for  
8 a year and a half. Finally, they gave me a place. I  
9 waited for a place for a long time in Fort Smith, and just  
10 before I come here, three months before I come here,  
11 finally got a place, medical. Medical -- first time I got  
12 a placed under a medical, and then the -- I come back here,  
13 and then I let it go because my mom had, like -- I had to  
14 look for a place here, because I had no place to go to  
15 school from, because my mom, all of the sudden, they took  
16 my mom's house away.

17 This was about -- I was in a place there  
18 for about three months, and I let it go, and here, I've  
19 been here since nine months now. Nine months, no home, and  
20 finally, one month, they gave me a place in the women's  
21 centre. I've been harassed by all those girls, because,  
22 like, they're lazy, they can't even do anything, and they'd  
23 rather just get drunk and do drugs and call old people  
24 down, put them down, and they were garbage to them in the  
25 women's centre. Like, I would rather have my own place

1 than being in that kind of place, but I'm put over there  
2 because I've got no choice.

3 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Is that where you are  
4 now?

5 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

6 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Right now?

7 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: I've got no choice.  
8 Yes.

9 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: In the women's  
10 centre?

11 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: And I'm going to  
12 half a day school at the (inaudible) -- yes.

13 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: When you say "women's  
14 centre," do you mean a women's shelter?

15 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Shelter.

16 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: That's where you live  
17 --

18 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

19 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: -- right now? In a  
20 women's shelter?

21 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

22 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: With other women?

23 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

24 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: When you say, "they  
25 took my home," who took your home?

1 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: My dad built a house  
2 in Fort Rae, Behchoko, and when they put my mom in the old  
3 folks' home, they took that house back.

4 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Who did? Who took  
5 the house?

6 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Housing.

7 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Okay.

8 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yeah, we've been in  
9 -- my dad built those houses in 1970. It's supposed to be  
10 rent-to-own, and my mom's been renting it since 1970.  
11 It's, like, all mould -- you can smell that mould from the  
12 toilet, but, you know, like, there's a big tank under the -  
13 - it's all really old, and, like, the furnace is always  
14 going. There's no heat. Like, the heat -- it's old now.  
15 Really old place in here.

16 They said, if we want it, we have to pay  
17 \$40,000, and who would pay \$40,000 for old place? My  
18 brother said if we're going to -- if you're going to take  
19 it, he told me that, "If you're going to buy it, I would  
20 just tear it down, build a new house over there." But who  
21 wants to build new house right there where all the drunks  
22 is always hanging around? Next door is always hanging  
23 around, all the drunks hang around, the (inaudible) -- I  
24 don't want to be around people that's, you know, alcoholic  
25 and stuff, because I just can't sleep. It's bad enough my

1 nerve is bad when I get out of there, the women's centre.

2                   So I've been staying at my cousin's so far  
3 for three days, I got, so finally, I'm calm -- a little bit  
4 calm, but you should have seen me about three days ago when  
5 I went to my cousin's, and my nerves was just like -- I now  
6 sleep.

7                   Because the place where I'm at, they're  
8 just swearing, upstairs swearing or else there's a woman  
9 that's staying there, they're always coming in, swearing,  
10 like, oh, my God, you know, I have to put up with it, and  
11 then, this young girl living with old people and swearing  
12 at us, too. They're just like every -- it's not good at  
13 all.

14                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: So --

15                   MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: That women's centre  
16 -- women's centre and women's shelter is the same, because  
17 they're underneath tax dollars from 1970s. Like, that was  
18 made when -- that's where the hospital used to be, and  
19 that's where they make that Alcoholics Anonymous. That's  
20 the same place, and they turn it into a women's shelter and  
21 a women's centre.

22                   I stayed in all those places since 1970s  
23 since Dennis Bevington kicked us out from Edzo house, and  
24 I've been in a hospital for check-up and stuff, and I had a  
25 stroke in Edmonton when I was going in and out of Hope

1 Mission. That's another women's shelter, and another  
2 women's centre is another -- another one. I can't remember  
3 what it's called. That one, too. I almost got beat up by  
4 those girls on the street. That's why I never went back  
5 there, because they're just like men, those girls.  
6 Eventually, they killed an old lady in a woman's shelter,  
7 from what I heard. I found out lots of stories about that  
8 one, and they're trying to keep people away from the  
9 women's shelter, because they don't want them to find out  
10 about old woman that's been killed by two people over  
11 there, some younger girls or something, in Edmonton.

12 I was in Edmonton there for about three  
13 years, because eventually, my niece was going on the -- how  
14 do you say? My mouth is dry.

15 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: I'll get you some  
16 water. Sorry, I should have offered you water sooner.

17 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: She's one of those  
18 kidney patients. So, you know, the machine? She's got to  
19 be on the machine.

20 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Dialysis?

21 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yeah. So I helped  
22 her for three years over there. She's got three little  
23 girls, three little girls, one little baby, and another a  
24 little bit bigger. So after that stroke, I came back here.  
25 I just couldn't do -- I can't look after -- help her, and I

1 signed up for residence school in that -- what do you call  
2 it? IAP or something -- I can't remember what you call it  
3 -- with that \$3,000 that's given to people to use it for  
4 computer or back to school.

5 I use it for -- put it in university, and  
6 then I signed up for university to -- to sign up and go  
7 back to school to university, and at Hope Mission, they  
8 were giving a turkey supper and all this. I had food  
9 poisoning for about three weeks. I was down and knowing  
10 that the money was there. So I just used that hotel to get  
11 healed -- so I used that hotel just to get healed in it,  
12 and then, after three weeks, I went back to university to  
13 see if I could still get in. They said, "No, that \$3,000  
14 credit was sent back to your (inaudible) in Yellowknife,"  
15 they said.

16 So they just gave me a big credit, over  
17 \$7,000 credit, because they pull out that \$3,000. So some  
18 people got their \$3,000 through computer, and I didn't.  
19 Every time I went to school, they said they'll give me a  
20 computer, and every time I signed up computer, "Oh, sorry,  
21 we gave your computer to somebody else."

22 It's how many years I've been trying to go  
23 to school, and they keep giving my computer to somebody  
24 else? I would have probably went through -- do all my  
25 practical on a computer and finish it, because...

1 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: With this inquiry,  
2 with the Missing and Murdered Women and Girls, if you could  
3 speak to the Commissioners, if you could speak to them,  
4 what are some things you would like to say to them?

5 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: I would ask them to  
6 keep this thing going, because there's lots of them who  
7 never found their loved ones. Like, we would have not  
8 found this woman. We don't know what happened to her,  
9 nothing. There's lots out there that might not speak  
10 English or might be in shock, and we just keep missing  
11 them, and that's how it looks.

12 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: When you were 13  
13 years old and you were assaulted, you told your mom, and  
14 your mom -- you said there was no police. There was nobody  
15 to tell. That could have been you. You could have been  
16 killed that night.

17 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes. Yes.

18 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: What would your mom  
19 have done? Who would she have told? Would that have been  
20 reported?

21 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: As an Indian, no, I  
22 don't think so.

23 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: What do you think  
24 needs to change? If you could change that, what would you  
25 change?



1 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Everybody got  
2 feeling. Everybody got feeling, and if everybody got a  
3 heart, in their heart, they could see how it feels. Every  
4 day, you have to be with it, what happened to you. It's,  
5 like -- it's always there. This healing, everybody gets  
6 paid by healing and everybody gets paid by counselling and  
7 all this. What good is it? You're tortured inside your  
8 body, but the only thing you could do is just cry out, let  
9 it out, and just go on full, every day, every day, and  
10 that's when I did.

11 If I dwelled on it, I would have been  
12 sick. I would have not been walking. I would have been in  
13 a bad situation by now if I stopped, because of what  
14 happened. It's not the only thing. It's not the only  
15 thing that's been grabbed by -- even when I was married to  
16 my ex, I got grabbed from behind, too, by the truckers. I  
17 don't even know who they are, but that -- I couldn't even  
18 say nothing to my ex, too. What he's going to do? Kill  
19 everybody with his gun? Hillbillies and Indians don't mix.  
20 It's too much, like...

21 Lots of times, I would have walked back  
22 from BC, because he would not let me go, but that was the  
23 time I would have walked back because -- he's older than  
24 me. He's about six years older than me. All the things I  
25 went through -- I think he would have killed me if I tried

1 to beat up his girl friends. I think he really would have  
2 killed me because...

3 What my son going -- went through, being  
4 shot, it really, really hurt inside. It just bothers me.  
5 It tears inside.

6 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Who shot your son?

7 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Tim Caisse. An old  
8 guy.

9 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Do you want to talk  
10 about what happened that time?

11 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Tim Caisse lives  
12 with [Woman 2], [Note: Woman 2 shares Family name 1].  
13 They're number one drunk and drug addicts and stuff. They  
14 lived for years behind Home Hardware, and he's really  
15 abusive to his wife, and his wife is a real bad-mouthed  
16 person. Not a real good attitude people.

17 I remember, when I was walking around Home  
18 Hardware, they were always swearing at each other over  
19 there. All of the sudden, they move halfway towards Fort  
20 Rae. They had a shack there or something. They were  
21 living there.

22 My son -- his friend is [Woman 2]'s son is  
23 my son's best friend. He had disability issues. He had  
24 limpings -- that kid had a limp, and my son used to say  
25 that when his dad -- when his stepdad, they lived behind

1 Home Hardware, he kicked out his stepson, and he -- at 4:00  
2 o'clock in the morning, nowhere to go, he was just freezing  
3 beside Go Range (ph), standing outside Go Range.

4                   So he doesn't want that to happen. So he  
5 always looks for his friend when he come into town, but at  
6 that time, he went there at the wrong time. He went to  
7 their house at -- they're about mile 45 around there, I  
8 think. I think that's where they lived, and my son just  
9 happened to show up there, and I heard [Woman 2] was  
10 nowhere to be seen. She was in the bush hiding from her  
11 old man -- from shooting her. My son just got there, and  
12 my son just got shot at the door.

13                   So it hurt, but I'd still like to know  
14 what -- what was Tim Caisse doing with a knife that he cut  
15 up my son after he shot my son, because they didn't -- they  
16 didn't even say nothing about that, and that old -- that  
17 black guy that lived next -- across from Tim Hortons, from  
18 Tim Caisse, that guy said that Tim Caisse came up with a  
19 knife and he said, "What I'm going to do with the knife?  
20 What I'm going to do with the knife," and he just looked at  
21 him, and that guy just ran and threw it across the street.  
22 That's what that guy said.

23                   So that guy is not in on it, you could  
24 tell -- the black guy. The black guy used to -- did some  
25 work for us in Edzo, made the garage floor for us -- that

1 black guy. I can't remember his name, but he was a nice  
2 black guy. He's a nice person.

3                   Tim Caisse -- what was he doing with a  
4 knife? I'd like to know. They didn't mention nothing  
5 about the knife, but they mentioned that he made the gun --  
6 he made the gun that would kill a big grizzly, they said.  
7 He set it up. That's how it looked, and that's -- [Man 3]  
8 is related to those people.

9                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Your son, he wasn't  
10 the target? It was for his wife, but your son showed up?

11                   MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yeah.

12                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: And he's the one who  
13 got killed?

14                   MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yeah.

15                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Your only son? Your  
16 only child?

17                   MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

18                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: You've had quite the  
19 life experience. Like you've said, you've lived through  
20 all kinds of things, and you've had all kinds of  
21 experiences. Today, you're sharing your truth, and you're  
22 asking the commission to carry on doing what they do.

23                   MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes, and saving  
24 lives. My dad's always been with the forestry, the whole  
25 forestry. He cooked. He did lots for forestry, and he was

1 with a carpenter, and he was with arts and crafts. He was  
2 with everything, builders -- my dad.

3                   You know, it hurts. I can't bring back my  
4 son, but at least the -- you know, they could talk to  
5 people and be aware of things that -- you know, things can  
6 happen. You'd just be happy, and the next thing you know,  
7 you could get grabbed from behind and you don't know who is  
8 raping you. Even going to the bathroom, you can go in the  
9 bathroom and grabbed from behind, and they rape you.

10                   All those kind of things that we went  
11 through in residence school, and we're not smiling. Even  
12 the priest got no right to touch a woman's tits, because  
13 that's how I felt when he -- they got no right to touch,  
14 and they've got no right to touch private spots. That's  
15 how we were raised, and that's why I can't believe the  
16 people that rape -- got lots of guilt, and people are lazy,  
17 they've got so much guilt that they can't even get up to  
18 even wash their face or wash their own plate. Those kind  
19 of people are looking for any reason for people to make  
20 money on people. They'll do anything just to make money on  
21 --

22                   I worked with -- side-by-side with  
23 doctors, nurses, and we went through all kind of disease,  
24 germs, side-by-side with doctors, and some of us don't make  
25 it, and some -- a couple times I fell, just coming out of

1 the hospital, you know, just slipping down, even that you  
2 don't expect to happen. One day, you're just happy, and  
3 the next day, you're just sad because your leg is all  
4 swollen and you can't move. That's the kind of experience  
5 you go through every day growing up.

6 I saved lives, too. I saved lives. I  
7 even -- if somebody was pregnant or some guy come and try  
8 to beat up a pregnant woman, I would beat that person up  
9 until I almost couldn't make him move anymore. That's how  
10 I would -- that's how I am, because when I was --

11 When I was going to school, when I was --  
12 from, like, before residence school, I was going to to  
13 school with a whole bunch of people and coming off the --  
14 after school, we're all holding hands going across the ice.  
15 We didn't see the ice hole, and we all fell in on top of  
16 each other. There must have been about five, six girls.  
17 One was stuck in the mud and couldn't get out. I have to  
18 pull out everybody.

19 I ran to a little island. There was a  
20 log, big log sitting there. I dragged that log back and  
21 put it across and pulled them all out, and the one never  
22 came back out -- that was Maryrose. Maryrose Naskin.

23 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Never made it?

24 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yeah. She never  
25 made it out, and I saw nothing, so I just -- I just jump in

1 real fast and then grab her hand and pull her out. Her  
2 shoe stuck in the mud, just didn't care, just pulled her  
3 out and has got big piece of mud just stuck on her feet and  
4 got her to the -- already, we're just, like -- like, we're  
5 just stiff, like -- it's already freezing on us and all  
6 that. Our families heard us yelling. They're all running  
7 with blankets and everything. The rest of the girls made  
8 it home because I pulled them out before they froze.

9                   When I was growing up, too, a big boat tip  
10 over with us. I made it out.

11                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: With all of your life  
12 experience, what are some recommendations you have for the  
13 Commissioners for the Missing And Murdered Women and Girls,  
14 if you have recommendations?

15                   MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: I would tell them to  
16 -- the guns are for animals, not for people. Not for  
17 little kids. Not for our own kids. Not for people you  
18 love. All the things, it never go away. It never go away.

19                   When we were young, my mom and dad taught  
20 us really good. We were growing up. I seen all my  
21 brothers and sisters. I know how they are, and there was  
22 nothing wrong. We were growing up, being looked after  
23 really good. People were jealous of my mom, because she  
24 was -- she really looked after us good.

25                   When we were young, at Bay Island, I

1 remember my uncle, one of my crazy uncles from Yellowknife  
2 here, he was chopping down the door of my mom's house. He  
3 was chopping the door, and he was going to kill us all,  
4 because he was jealous of my mom, looked after us, like  
5 white people. He was chopping down the door.

6 My mom was crying. I remember her sitting  
7 there with my two brothers or sisters, just holding them,  
8 just babies in her hands, just her tears running down,  
9 sitting there in the living room. She can't do nothing.  
10 The only door we had was upstairs through the little  
11 window. That's the only door we had, upstairs through the  
12 window, because we didn't have no way of out -- going out.  
13 My mom couldn't leave the babies. We couldn't find ways to  
14 get the babies out. It was just me and my brother, David.

15 My brother, David went -- he says, "I know  
16 where dad's hidden the gun and the shells." So he ran  
17 upstairs and put the shells in the gun, and he froze. My  
18 brother froze. He had the gun aimed at the uncle chopping  
19 the door down there. He just -- he froze. He couldn't  
20 even do nothing. I grabbed the gun away. Any time, he was  
21 going to break in and chop down -- chop mom up.

22 So I just push my brother away and grabbed  
23 the gun and just aimed at his foot, and I got his foot, and  
24 all of a sudden, I heard a big yell and he fell down, and  
25 then later on, he ran. The cops came to the house



1 wondering where the gun was coming from, and we told them  
2 what was happening. It's self-defence. I told them self-  
3 defence because he was going to chop down -- chop -- he got  
4 the door. He got the door, anyway. Any time, he was ready  
5 to walk in, and my mom couldn't do nothing. It was, like -  
6 - we didn't have any way to get my mom out anyway. She was  
7 sitting there on a chair, just shocked.

8                   That's why I never did like guns, because  
9 -- if it wasn't for a gun, I think he would have killed us  
10 all. Today, I wouldn't be here to even talk about  
11 anything. Maybe then I wouldn't worry about all this rape  
12 and all this -- we were really put in a bad spot growing  
13 up. I've seen that in my life, and it really happened with  
14 us. That's why I want nothing to do with a gun.

15                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Would that be one of  
16 your recommendations? To have some laws about gun use or  
17 something?

18                   MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: For me, I think they  
19 should have put that old man back in jail. If he was  
20 Indian, it would be 20 years, over -- like, hanging. I  
21 can't believe it. That guy got not even five years, and  
22 he's out and got a house and everything. Like, he kissed  
23 one of those lawyers' ass. That's how it looks. That's  
24 how it looks. All those lawyers are going to be facing God  
25 some day, so I don't need to go down and make them, you

1 know, please themselves, because we are human. We're not  
2 animals. We know when people's going to hurt others. We  
3 stay away from them.

4                   Already seen that in -- when I was growing  
5 up in Edzo, one of the cousins that was raised with us, her  
6 name was Margaret Naskin (ph). This guy -- this guy, he  
7 was living with, and all of the sudden, this guy was  
8 jealous. He came home and just shot her, just like that,  
9 and today, I don't see no sorrow in that guy. He's still  
10 walking the street. Like, how many years he was in jail  
11 for shooting her?

12                   And he got more than -- more than 20  
13 years, because that kid is, like, 40 years old now, and  
14 this woman was shot in the '80s, and I can't believe it,  
15 you know, like, this white guy. Not even five years, he  
16 was out. I wonder whose ass he's been kissing to, you know  
17 -- and how much money he got paid to do that to my son so  
18 they can take that Shell Oil Company away? That's my  
19 company.

20                   I'm a lady. I'm a woman. Because of how  
21 I was taught, I don't look back at anybody and think, like,  
22 everybody's better than me. I'm just like same as  
23 everybody. That's how I looked at it.

24                   I am a teacher and a nurse, and I -- I  
25 drive myself all the way to Red Deer and back, worked there

1 at Mission Centre for maybe one week, and then one week in  
2 Rae, and I was working here, like, in Explorer Hotel, every  
3 position, every job, and then, in Red Deer, I was working  
4 in banquets and Red Deer Lodge and Zellers. In Bay,  
5 they're always working in every position. I translate for  
6 the cops and the police and teachers and nurses and the  
7 priest.

8 Today I'm talking about it because I'm  
9 alive. If my mom was here to listen to me, to hear me  
10 today, I would be really, really happy to say thank you to  
11 mom for raising me good -- and my dad. They raised me  
12 really good. They didn't taught me to touch people's tits  
13 or penis or their cunts or their -- every areas. It's  
14 wrong to touch a woman in the back, bad areas, even men's,  
15 and we were taught like that.

16 And here, everybody thinks Indians, they  
17 all sleep with each other. We're not like [discriminatory  
18 speech - two lines redacted]. We're human. We're human,  
19 and I want the whole world to hear we are human. No many  
20 how many school I go to, they're not going shut me down.  
21 I'm a tax dollar.

22 Because of them killing my son, because of  
23 that guy is not in jail for long time, and because I am  
24 disability from school year, all the roads, I want all the  
25 roads of Northwest Territories and Alberta and BC -- all

1 those roads underneath my son, David Austin, because he was  
2 the only one I worked for all my life. He's my reason why  
3 I was driving for all my people and my -- for medical,  
4 rushing back and forth. That was for my sister, my blind  
5 sister, and I always kept her underneath Indigenous persons  
6 because of her condition, and I bought whole bunch of  
7 shares underneath her name, Angelina Gon, a whole bunch of  
8 shares for our office in Fort Rae, underneath David Austin,  
9 underneath all the Austins and Gons. I bought shares. The  
10 office would not be taken away from our people. We are who  
11 we are.

12 I drove to Echo Bay. I seen so much  
13 miners over there. I never, ever been scared in my life,  
14 but that was a scary part. I've never seen not even one  
15 woman over there. I was the only truck driver over there  
16 in the 1970s, and just to eat in a restaurant, I was so  
17 scared. I almost had a heart attack going down the stairs.  
18 Lots of stairs going down, this small. Everybody's trying  
19 to grab my hair and trying to grab me. I've never been so  
20 scared, but that's the kind of fear I had when they shot my  
21 son.

22 That was the scary part. It's like  
23 everybody can pile up on you. Nobody would know. And I  
24 did that all the way over to Echo Bay, haul things for  
25 people. Any woman that have enough guts would do something

1 like that? I doubt it. In the '70s over there, I was  
2 hauling gas for Ron's Auto Service over here. When I was  
3 coming into town, they had no gas in town, and there's Esso  
4 going -- Esso truck was going to Fort Rae, taking gas to  
5 Ernie Stanton's Service Station in Rae.

6                   When I was passing that truck, there was  
7 two kids -- I remember there was two kids in the truck. I  
8 think it was Robinson Trucking. Just when I passed them, I  
9 seen that -- just when I looked in the window, this big  
10 explosion. The truck just exploded behind me. It was  
11 fully loaded -- that was the Esso truck.

12                   I could just imagine how those families  
13 felt seeing their kids burnt up a truck like that. It's  
14 still -- still is with me, that, too. Just all I could do  
15 is pray for them. People that are gone, that's all we  
16 could do is pray for them.

17                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Lina, there's a bag  
18 there beside you. You could put that in there. It's also  
19 for your tears and whatever, and there's Kleenex here.

20                   MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Thank you. Today,  
21 January 28th --

22                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Today is the 23rd.

23                   MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: I mean, 23rd. On  
24 this weekend, it's going to be my birthday. I'm going to  
25 be 63 years old. All I could do is -- it hurts, because my

1 son's not here with me. I don't have no grandchildren. I  
2 don't have no grandchildren. It really hurts, and the only  
3 thing I can do is adopt, but who can want to adopt a  
4 person?

5 I can't even do too much with cramping up  
6 and stuff. All you could do is just tell your stories. I  
7 can't even walk to school without cramping up. My ankle's  
8 no good. There's no -- they never even give me any  
9 transportation. They never help me with medical, flying  
10 back and forth. The first time they help me in Fort Smith,  
11 fly here, first time in my life, hospital, hoping to --  
12 just to fly to -- all my life I never got help with  
13 medical, nothing, just to fly and even to see. Like, even,  
14 to even get tickets for this and everything I did was on my  
15 own, out of my own pocket, even trucks.

16 In Red Deer, I had a vehicle going back  
17 and forth until that -- some Eskimo woman, which I think  
18 the cops should look into -- her name was [Woman 2] and Mr.  
19 [Man 4]. They're both married couple, and they were using  
20 their own name. Here, they were stealing off people's  
21 cheques, welfare cheques, family allowance, all the  
22 workers' cheques. They even forged my signature on my car;  
23 so I got no car to go back and forth. I had no way of  
24 going back and forth to even teach, and I went to see the  
25 cop station to see if they've seen that woman. They told

1 me, "Come back in ten years, maybe more." Because she was  
2 in jail.

3 I don't have time for that. I hope they  
4 really look into everything, what they have done to these  
5 Indians. I go back to Rae to teach, and then they -- the  
6 cops stopped me over there. They put me in jail for three  
7 days because they don't know me, and they told me I have to  
8 pay \$500 to get out because they don't know me. Yeah, in  
9 my own hometown, Behchoko.

10 I didn't even have \$500 so I told the band  
11 to put my shares on the line for \$500, and then, when I get  
12 out, they're going to return it, they said, and they never  
13 did. It's still in the cop station, my shares. It's about  
14 -- I don't know, five, maybe five shares or more since  
15 1970s, around there, I bought and never got that returned,  
16 and I bought a whole bunch of shares for my sister, and I  
17 got that one. That ones I got returned, underneath my  
18 sister and my mom. We used it, and when mine -- mine is  
19 gone to the cops and it never got returned yet.

20 Underneath my shares, it's Lina Gon-  
21 Austin. My married name was Austin. So underneath that,  
22 my shares should be put back to the complex, and it should  
23 be put back -- it should be counted with it from '70s,  
24 still, because of that stupid cop's mistake. They tried to  
25 say they don't know me so they can make money on an Indian,

1 and this is Indian tax.

2                   So, in other words, this Indian wiped  
3 their ass. That's how I look at it. I'd rather wash dirty  
4 diapers in old hospital than wiping somebody's ass for  
5 their mistake. That's how it looks.

6                   They just used me. They never paid me.  
7 Social Services never paid me to do their job at Mission  
8 centre. People that are not all there shouldn't be staying  
9 at women's centre. That's my tax dollars. They should  
10 send them all to my grandmother's twin sister -- twin  
11 sister in (inaudible). That's where those kind of people,  
12 lazy people, should be living in, and the ones that  
13 seizures. They should be living in there, not torturing  
14 people at women's centre and can't sleep. You don't even  
15 know who can run into you going to to a washroom and stuff,  
16 and womans could be lesbians, and how we know what women  
17 are? What womans? They should have all one place for only  
18 alcoholic and one place for smoking, every -- for smoking,  
19 and one for drugs, and one for just old people sleeping,  
20 need to sleep.

21                   I used to work in old folks' home. Nobody  
22 died when I worked there for over a year. I can't believe  
23 this, you know, like, what they're doing to us. I don't  
24 know how to put it anymore.

25                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Do you think this is



1 a good time to stop, or is there more that you would like  
2 to say? We've covered a lot today. We talked about some  
3 disabilities, how people with disabilities are not treated  
4 well.

5 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

6 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: We talked about  
7 violence against women.

8 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

9 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: It goes unreported.  
10 We talked about violence against your son and how you feel  
11 justice wasn't served. We talked about violence in  
12 relationships, your personal relationships. We've covered  
13 a lot, and you've talked a lot about your experience in the  
14 surrounding area, in this area, and also in Alberta and in  
15 BC. You talked about your injury.

16 One of the things that we did not talk  
17 about is the support systems that are available for you.  
18 There are support systems available. It sounds like you  
19 did a lot of things on your own, and you stood alone. You  
20 don't have to stand alone anymore. There's lots of  
21 support. If you're interested, I could make a referral  
22 with the ladies downstairs if you're interested, and  
23 they'll touch base with you after the inquiry.

24 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes.

25 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: We can do that. If

1 we're ready to close, I don't know if you are or not, but  
2 if you're ready, I would like to present you with a gift on  
3 behalf of the inquiry. If you have more to say, the floor  
4 is still open. We can go as long as you want. What are  
5 your thoughts? Should we keep going?

6 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: I went through a  
7 residence school hearing, too, already, and I made  
8 statement of what's been done to us and stuff like that. I  
9 don't know how to put any more words than that, because I  
10 do miss my son a lot, my dad, my mom, and my sister Angie.

11 My son was born February 15, 1971. My  
12 mom's name is Mary Adele, Mary Adele Able, before she was  
13 married, and my dad's name is Joseph, Joseph Gon. I had,  
14 with me, six sisters and six brothers. My mom raised her  
15 own brothers and sisters with us. I was raised in Finch  
16 Handle and dog teams, and my two grandpas at the bridge of  
17 Finch Handle. Never forget them, my two grandpas.

18 Can I use the washroom, please?

19 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Yes. We'll just put  
20 a pause on this.

21 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yes. Well, we're  
22 finished.

23 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: We're done?

24 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Yeah.

25 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Our machine quit on

1 us, I think.

2 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: I see it. Thank  
3 you.

4 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: I'm just going to try  
5 to pause this. Let's see if I know what I'm doing here.

6 --- (Off-record)

7 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Hi, Lina. We just  
8 had a few minutes' break, but you're telling me that we're  
9 done. We're finished. It's now 4:45 p.m., and we'll just  
10 close off. I just wanted to give you -- this was a gift  
11 that is presented on behalf of the commission for sharing  
12 your story.

13 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Thank you.

14 MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Thank you. We'll  
15 turn this off. I think we lost our video, though. Do you  
16 have anything to say? Anything final? We're done?

17 MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: I just hope people  
18 gets the Commissioners listening. I hope they recognize  
19 some people and keep their stories going, not give up,  
20 because we don't want our kids to suffer when we're gone  
21 anymore, even great-grandchildren and all the nephews, and  
22 all the auntie's kids, all the uncle's kids. We don't want  
23 people to suffer no more. We were not really well-  
24 nourished at residence school. We were not fed good. We  
25 don't want that anymore.

1                   Thank you for listening to me, and I hope  
2 they do something about people that try to get away with  
3 things, not let them get away with things, because all my  
4 life I work, 8:00 o'clock in the morning until 8:00 o'clock  
5 at night. It doesn't matter. After that, I got called; I  
6 went in and worked. I expect that from anybody, not sit on  
7 their ass and expect everything handed out. If they can't  
8 do it, they should be getting some counselling, not people  
9 like us that's hurt doing their dirty job for them. Thank  
10 you.

11                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Thank you, Lina. It  
12 is now 4:49.

13                   MS. LINA GON-AUSTIN: Thank you.

14                   MS. YVONNE JOHNSON: Thank you.

15 --- Whereupon the statement concluded at 4:54 p.m.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I have, to the best  
of my skill and ability,  
accurately transcribed from a pre-existing recording  
the foregoing proceeding.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Zacchigna". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "Z".

Ren Zacchigna, Certified transcriptionist