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Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Statement Gathering
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Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

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Statement - Volume 206
Henry “Raymond” Abel,
In relation to Yvonne Desjarlais

Statement gathered by Kerrie Reay

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MS. KERRIE REAY: Raymond, are you ready?

MR. HENRY ABEL: Yes, I'm ready.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay; all right.

So as I said, I'm just going to read for the record the information required, just to start, to start this -- your testimony.

This is Kerrie Reay, statement taker with the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, at Yellowknife, in the Northwest Territories, on January the 24th, and the time is 10:38.

Today, I am speaking with Henry Abel.

Henry goes by the name of Raymond, so I'll be referring to you as Raymond.

With us today is Raymond's niece, Diana Lockhart, and Raymond's nephew, Bernard Michel(ph).

Raymond is of the Denesuline?

MR. HENRY ABEL: Denesuline.

MS. KERRIE REAY: First Nation?

MR. HENRY ABEL: First Nation.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And also known as Chipewyan? And you reside in Lutsel K'ee Dene.

MR. HENRY ABEL: Lutsel K'ee Dene.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Lutsel K'ee Dene, and that
was formerly known as Snowdrift, here, in the Northwest Territories?

MR. HENRY ABEL: Yes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And today, you are here to speak about the murder of your sister Yvonne Desjarlais, here, in Yellowknife, on December 31st, 2012.

Also in the room today we have Roy Erasmus, that's E-r-a-s-m-u-s, as your health support.

And Raymond, you are here voluntarily, to provide your truth, for your sister, and also to provide any information in terms of your own personal survivorship, that you would like to share with the Commissioners, and you understand that you are both being videotaped and that you're being audiotaped?

MR. HENRY ABEL: Yes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. We have also discussed your evidence today and we are asking the Commissioners for in-camera designation, with anonymity. And I will get you to confirm that the reason that you're asking for this is that your community is very isolated and the information that you may provide today could cause you and your family great difficulty in securing food and using local services. And the isolation is that there are no highway into your community and to get food outside of your community could be anywhere from four hours to two days,
depending on whether you have to fly out, take a boat or use a Ski-Doo.

Is that correct?

MR. HENRY ABEL: That's correct, yes.

[Registrar’s note: the witness subsequently requested that his statement be made public.]

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. So as we discussed, Raymond, the floor is yours. Please start wherever you would like; if you want to start when you were younger and growing up with your sister, or -- it's up to you.

Now, to clarify; you were going to start in your language --

MR. HENRY ABEL: Yes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: -- and that language is Dene?

MR. HENRY ABEL: Dene and some (inaudible).

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Welcome.

MR. HENRY ABEL: (Native language)

I'm happy to be part of this gathering of Missing and Murdered conference. I come from a small community called Lutsel K'e Dene, home of the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation.

Growing up in that community that used to be called Snowdrift and the name has been changed in -- I believe in the 1980's - place of small fish. That's what it
transfers to in Chipewyan (Native language).

Right now I'm in (inaudible) territory, in Yellowknife. Also, in Chipewyan, we call it (Native language). It's another fish of the species of white fish.

And we have been neighbours there through stories that I've heard were in Treaty 8 (inaudible) and through talking about land claims.

In the 1970's, there, I remember a formed Indian brotherhood which is now the Dene Nation. At that time the chiefs got together on this -- to make good for Native people that were caught up in racism and land grafts, and the industrial growth, there, that was happening in Yellowknife, with the gold mine that existed at that time and -- and that gold mine that was here, I was part of it, in work-wise, working underground.

And that was a wages of earning to live in a place like Yellowknife, a bigger place, community, city of -- larger than where I had grown up, and working for wages.

And prior to that I would go back to my name change. I went by the name Raymond, growing up. My parents called me Raymond, elders, people that knew me, same age, knew me as Raymond.

And going to day school up to Grade 6, turning -- less than a month before turning 13, I was sent
to Lapointe Hall, in Fort Simpson. There, I stayed there
for a nine-month school year — 1968-1969 school year, and
I went to Breynat Hall the following year, in Fort Smith.

But in that school year, in Fort Simpson,
there was a person that was my mentor, my grandmother,
passed away while I was in residential school. I wasn’t
aware of it. I was never informed or contacted. When I got
back in June, when school was over, going back home, I
didn’t know what to expect; shy, I had been away for ten
months, and when I got back my grandmother wasn’t there,
and when I got back there my mother informed me that my
grandmother was gone, she had passed away.

And when he said -- what she said about my
grandmother; my mother told me that she didn’t know I had
left for school. Through the time, through the years,
through the months that I was gone, she’s been asking for
me. Grandma has been asking for you; why I was gone, where
I went. But I don’t recall that she did tell me I went to
school or not, but that’s when she told me that. She asked
for me, and she's gone.

Maybe from that point on, I don’t know how
I felt that time. I felt that something was gone, something
was lost but I didn’t know what it was.

To me, with my mother, it's similar. Like
I don’t know where -- I mad over that. To me they're gone,
they're gone somewhere.

There will come a time in my life that I will run into them. I will see them again.

And finally, I have to be there myself and know that they're gone. I won't see them again. But I have the good spirit that I know, being with them, that keeps me going. I remember their words, their laughter.

When I think about this like that (inaudible), it's telling me: Always, always respect your surroundings, the land you walk on. The water you travel on. We travel on a lake every year and the lake we travel on has been respected. Offerings; certain areas we travel. They told me to do offerings. There's something greater than ourselves that we don't see.

(Native language)

Some things that we don't see, that are around us, they're helpers of The Creator and (inaudible) words. Those kind of things that I've learned from my grandmother, who never went to school, that never spoke English. And I'm thankful for being part of that teaching (inaudible) have told me that I have kept.

And elders that I've passed through; same -- similar words: Always respect. Respect the land you walk on. Respect other people's area. You go travel to another place, offer respect and walk in a good way, so the place
will be good. Through that -- growing up through the years of living, understanding two different worlds that I was in, in the English world, speaking English words, and then Dene Lutsel K'e, Chipewyan, where education in today's world is important. At the same time, in this education, you have to struggle to be well educated, in modern times today, of technology, that keeps the world going, and within this technology there are laws and there's also rules that we live by. In my education, learning my ABC's, number and how to say words that are positive, that role make my life in a good way, that I understand in English the same as in my first language. You say you speak the good words, good things will follow. It's the same thing in English for me. If I say good words in English, as I understand it, positive words, good things will follow. Whenever I say negative words, negative will follow on. That's my understanding of reading the Bible. In the beginning, it's the Word, according to God, and that Word is God. How we produce -- how we say our words has come out of our mouth? It's coming from the heart. That's who I've become. If my words are negative, that's no good.
That -- that turns into (inaudible), and when I say good things, good words, people will be happier. They would be happy to hear you say good words, positive words that will be uplifting.

I have a journey that I went through in different ways in a good way and in a bad way, and in the bad way I was stronger in my life and I recognize it. The bad way of living, for me, was taking alcohol. That is what has overpowered me and my surroundings, where I've been -- where it's not a good place for me. I was crawling in the dirt. I was crawling in the dust. I have slept on the streets, with no blanket. I've been dead, walking around.

In English terms, I kind of looked at myself as a dead man walking. I heard the phrase somewhere, dead man walking. I'm under the influence of alcohol; blackout, no memory. I would never remember that, but I'm still walking. I'm dead -- dead man walking. That's how I referred to myself when I was drunk, in a blackout state.

However, by the grace of God I'm still here and I recognize my defaults, my way of being, and I'm fighting that demon that's in there -- in here, through alcohol. That substance that I have taken, was destroying me, my body, my soul, my spirit, and I had no control over it. Once it got a hold of me, it got a hold of me in a bad way where I would go looking for it. How I can get it. And
it came to a point where that alcohol substance came in
place, something that produces alcohol. (inaudible),
mouthwash. I took that with that effect that it's got
alcohol in there. I crawled. I'd be carried physically,
losing weight, not eating. But I didn’t care. I didn’t care
how I would end up. Looking forward to waking up, looking
for -- where can I get my next drink?

And it involved people that I'm around,
that are in the same situation. We would get together. We
would get together and find it, and we did find it.

And through all that my mind goes back to
that eight-year-old, nine-year-old again. Putting myself in
that place. Why am I doing this? I had seen my parents
drinking. I had seen the effect that it does to them, and
here I am. I'm right in the same --

So when my mind goes like that again I try
to get up and there are people there to help me, and they
help me through programs and treatment centres -- alcohol
treatment centres. I counted them; five treatment centres
that I've been to, tacking my alcohol, to understand it.
And it worked. I understand it. I see a little bit more
each time I go a treatment, but I fall, after. Sometimes I
have to get up and I do get up, but I got help. And to go
back to alcohol --

I had a brother (inaudible). Two years ago
he was living with me and he has also got an English name, Peter. His (inaudible) is under Peter - Pierre Germain Abel.

Growing up together he was my older brother that I would look up to. He too went to residential school before me. I don’t know what year he went but me, I remember I went in 1968. The first time he went before me. It could have been 1965 or 1966, when he first went to residential school.

And he too battled alcohol, but he too understands the effect of alcohol, what it does to people. He worked as an alcohol counsellor. In 1983 he passed away and he was working as an alcohol -- drug and alcohol worker, at that time, in Lutsel K'e Dene. I was 28.

And during the funeral, there, it was like this, sunshine, going up to a funeral, for a burial. While we waited for the burial and a car was moving and there was sunshine, and the cars are moving in and they formed a ring and it started ringing right at the burial sight, and it rained heavy. I got soaked. I didn’t expect that.

But then one of the persons -- the elders said: We've got to finish it. We've got to bury it -- bury my brother.

So while standing there, burying my brother, I talked to him, spiritually. In my mind, my
brother, he tried to help people to come back from this
disease of alcohol, but your work is incomplete. You're
gone. You left. I'm going to pick up where you left off.
Standing there, in my mind, speaking to him like that.

    After that -- after that, finally
underground, the funeral, the coffin is put down, I started
putting dirt back on. The (inaudible), the party again and
the (inaudible) came out of that, the sun.

    And standing there, there's spirit that is
there, communicating or talking. I did work for drug and
alcohol after that. In 1983 I went up back upgrading to get
more grades. I had planned to go to a human service
counsellor in Ontario, in Thunder Bay and Toronto.

    I got accepted in Toronto's George Brown
did attend college in Toronto. I didn’t stay on, maybe
three weeks. It was intense and I realized the program is
based on city standards, a bigger place, but where I wanted
to go with that training was -- in a community of 200
people. I realized this wasn’t really what I thought it is.
Their training was based on street life or city life, skid
row. People back home, we don’t live in the city. We don’t
have skid row.

    So I dropped out of that education
training in that area. But I started working in that area
in that field. I did guard -- during that time a young offender opened custody hours. It was guard for them.

And working downtown in a place called Native men's residence, they only had -- it's also had a name -- they called it Nanny rest. And that was for people that had been living on the street and failed to get on their feet. It's not a detox. It's a place where they'll help you get back on your feet, staying sober. You could live up there for three months, in that place, and after three months of going straight and staying sober, finding work. In three months, if you stayed there and find work, you will have enough money to go on your own. That was the kind of place that I worked in. Anybody walking in the door and we smelled alcohol on their breath (inaudible) who lives here, I stayed in there. The alcohol, under the influence, then you're not allowed there. You've got to go, because that place is for people that are trying to go in a good way. That's how I look at it, I think.

So I think my part there, in working that field of alcohol, related to alcohol, and dysfunction a way of being, that was the work I was doing.

But I didn't take care of myself. I fell down again and went back to where I'd been abusing my body again by alcohol. And to be in alcohol, you fall many times, like I said, and when my eight, nine-year-old boy
that helps me get up again, knowing that alcohol is not
good, why am I doing it again. I'm doing it again.

So I would get back on my feet again. Like
a yo-yo, off and on, off and on. Through AA meetings too.
Every time you fall, get up. How many times you fall,
you'll get up. And I tried to understand. I'm a grown man,
now. Why do I do this? I was caught in a cycle.

And that alcohol had done a lot of damage
to me and my surroundings. I learned to relive it and I
stopped going. I stopped going on with my surroundings. I
learned how to be with it. I could help -- it could help
me. That's where I'm at, going through life now. I need
help. I can't do it by myself.

And I started reading the Bible. Reading
the Bible, that I understand Jesus has worked for us, for
me, to be where I am today. Jesus never failed me. Jesus
gave me a helping hand. He gave instructions to go by and I
didn't go by his word.

I'm learning that through the rhythm, the
Bible, in words, in English, where I had my education, in
that way, and through reading that I understand of what and
where I'm going, and how I'm going to conduct myself from
here on.

My understanding is what comes out of my
mouth is what is me. It comes from my heart, how I say it.
I defile in the Bible is what comes out of your mouth defines who I am. If good words come out of my mouth good things happen, and bad words come out of my mouth, bad things are going to happen.

The word is health, good words is health.

And a lot of people have said good words to me that have helped me, gave me a smile to my face. It uplifted me. It makes me feel good.

So that was my helper in where I'm walking to this, reading the Bible and other books, help books that have helped me through the 12-steps program, AA, helped me.

However, to that, because I'm only human, sometimes I lose track and I fall, I fall down, and I fall hard. The alcohol is one of my major, major enemy that I know. It has defused me many times and I ignored that. And I don't it want to be in control of me. This fire water that in English terms we call way before me, 100 years before me, to reading, my understanding the first encounter with alcohol, they called it fire water. And that fire water, it burns.

But it's deceiving. There's fire water and today it looks like water, regular water that we drink in a cup. One is going to be good for my health, the other one is going to destroy me. If you put them side by side, they look the same. They're clear.
And sometimes, when I -- what I see, they look the same, but one is not right. It's deceiving. And I don't want alcohol in me from here on. I do not want it to control my life.

Be gone! Alcohol has got a spirit too. Be gone! You have taken many lives, my family, my brother, my friends, uncles, aunties.

From reading and understanding the English way, I had to get back to my roots, of where I come from, from the land. Chipewyans have always been caribou hunters, caribou eaters, we've been called, and we're still there. Caribou is our backbone and the water that our elders have put forward in and told us to respect.

We have food on the land. We have clean water. We have fish in the water, food. We have birds in the air. There's food. That's how I was brought up. I didn’t go to a store to buy food. I didn’t have no money. Money wasn’t in existence. Warmth, wood - we have wood. We would keep warm. We would have our shelter to build a house.

We would have the seasons of understanding, the four seasons. It's all there. In this time and age, there, with the world going fast in the world of fast food, cheap terms in eastern gratification that we live in, that have no connection to my grandfather -- our
grandfather. That's not healthy. We start losing sight.

I mentioned the land, the caribou. There are parts of that animal that keep our strength, food. The caribou give us a hide to keep us warm. It could be made into a drum. We have to drum. We are not broken. We need to go back and pick up the drum and keep going again, to be better, to give me strength, give us strength.

The federal government has taken control of my life. All this funding, all that money has come out of our area, gold, diamonds, now, uranium, before. They had a mine, there. Before I was born I think they had a mine of -- not that far from my community. It's closed now.

And the government has been going on for resources. We are one of the richest communities here, with that damage, but it's not ours. The federal government claimed it. They claimed the diamonds underground. They made rules. They made laws. It's not ours. The (inaudible) is not ours, it's underground.

Some land claims that are written in treaty say: Yes, it's your land but you're on top. That's your area. That's part of the treaty.

But what is underground is not yours, now. That's the government's ground. Well, how can that be? You have to go through the top to go to the bottom.

But this (inaudible) whatever is here,
(inaudible) with the federal government, but what's underneath, no, it's not yours, it's ours. That is theirs. That's how the law is written. Man-made law. That's man-made law.

And some of these laws that we live through today, some are good, some are not too good. I go out, I could make a fire, keep warm, cook my food. In my area, we (inaudible).

I go to a place, bigger place, different place that's governed by federal law, territorial law, camp grounds here, in (inaudible). You cannot pick up dry wood to burn. They'll charge you for burning dry wood in the park camp ground. They made those laws, the people, provincial, federal law.

But back home, dry wood, we burn it. It's good -- it's good firewood to keep warm. By in the (inaudible) it's different. You get charged for it. You get charged for chopping a tree down. (inaudible)

My grandfather - I never met my grandmother - my mother, my dad, they grew up on the land. They didn’t need these permits from the government to chop down a tree. And today, it's different. Times changed. People made laws accordingly. To whose benefit?

We did have laws, guidelines, when to harvest, when not to harvest, the law of nature.
So I have encountered a lot of laws in different parts of being in my travels.

MS. KERRIE REAY: I'm wondering if I -- because you're talking about the law; we haven't come around to talking about Yvonne. And --

MR. HENRY ABEL: That's where --

MS. KERRIE REAY: That's where you're going? Okay, okay.

MR. HENRY ABEL: -- I was going to, when you mentioned that.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. HENRY ABEL: Through alcohol, that has been a strong destroyer of my people, is alcohol. I have no good things to say about alcohol. And alcohol took many lives. It took my sister's life. My sister was never a violent person. I've never seen her get really angry or be abusive. It wasn't in the nature of her. She's also a residential school survivor too.

And I remember, she got married in 1966. In that same year, her husband passed away. And at the same time her husband passed away, my godfather passed away, together, and his name was Henry, my godfather, Henry (inaudible).

And my sister's husband's name is Nap, Napoleon (inaudible). And that's how I got my name, Henry,
with the government, I believe, through my godfather.

Through that law, with my sister, she had a different (inaudible), and I saw her turn to alcohol. But she wasn’t always stuck in alcohol. She always came out of it too. Like I said, she never got angry, that I saw, or physically fight anybody. She always had something on the stove, recently, before she's gone. There's always people there. Her sons, friends; something on that stove, when you walked in. Have something to eat, bannock.

She always worked in education. She's an assistant teacher, that I remember, when she lived in that community.

But through the times of the laws and the Government of the north, alcohol was a major issue in the communities and the place right here, in Yellowknife.

And even though she had a few to drink she was always friendly. And through alcohol we don’t have no warning signs. We don’t have -- if we have four beers, that's good enough. We don’t have those kinds of switches in our brains and we keep on, keep on drinking until it overpowers us.

But with my sister, she's always friendly or drunk, I would call it, a friendly drunk, happy. But she also had overdone it. It took control of her.

And there are some things that I remember...
she's still happy, and even sober she seemed to have some (inaudible), some unexpected word in her saying, and one of her sayings I recall is when I hear it; my mind always goes there. She was saying: Ooh la la! Is one word. That's her word I heard her saying.

And when she got murdered, I went to the court. I was under the influence myself. I remember going to the court, (inaudible) a little bit, alcohol in my system, feeling strong, no fear. But that was all in my mind, sitting here, looking at it, thinking like that. I wasn’t well, but I think I was well, seeing the person convicted; 13 years for clearing -- to me, that wasn’t enough. My mind was in that space; it's not enough. It has got to be a life for a life. That's how my mind works; life for life. For briefly it crossed my mind. Okay. I'll go to jail and do that. I will take his life, through my alcohol (inaudible). Then, it will be settled. That's how my mind had worked during that trial; angry, a little anger pinching at me. How am I going to do it? Do I need a knife? Am I going to use a knife or hit him on the head? Always different ways.

But -- that was on my mind but I didn’t go through with it. That was the alcohol, the devil talking to me, trying to get me going.

But there were people and there was God on
my side, to help me go through that. And people that have
helped me, I haven’t thanked them yet. When I left her, I
thanked my niece for standing beside me all through that,
through my failures. She helped me get up.

And my nephew, not aware of it but he had
helped me. Seeing the way I had been, seeing words that are
encouraging. At the same time my nephew, we speak in the
first language. We stand on the same ground. (Native
language). English words but Chipewyan words, that's a
different way of understanding. It's two hurdles. In the
English world it's a different meaning of our understanding
Chipewyan words. And then (inaudible) is the space between
that I had to connect. That's how it means -- maybe it
means this way but in the English way I've seen this
different. But Chipewyan words is always soothing, our
first language. When you hear it, it's very soothing.

Yvonne spoke her language, even though she
went to residential school she never lost it. She spoke it
fluently.

And I remember her as always being a
positive person. I never looked at her as a negative
person. And she has touched many lives in her life too, her
children and her husband and friends. And she may be
missed.

I've been back home for over a year now. I
go past where she stayed, where she lived. I will walk in -
different. It's different. I expect her, but nothing.

But only memories remain, now. That time I
learned to be at that place, laughter, positive energy that
has been through that -- some sad times too. Her spirit is
always there. It's never going to leave.

Just like with my spirit, with my
grandmother and my mother; it's not going to leave. It's
going to be with me forever, until I'm gone. I learned to
take what is good in life, leave behind what is not good. I
don’t need it.

Teachings that I learned in true stories
and reading; one of the stories that I remember my
grandmother told me. Like I said, she was blind and she
never saw me, but just by the touch she recognized me.

She had told me stories always positive.

She never told me really scary stories. Positive stories,
good happenings. And going back to why I'm here, to tackle
and come to understand what needs to be done to help me and
my surroundings, and all over Canada and the world, the
violence is not part of us. We don’t need that. We need to
go in a good way, good way on road, the way of life, that
has no sadness, no hurts, no loss, no fear of being put
down. Be happy. Positive words have been helping me to say
to myself: Things are okay. Things are going to be okay,
and the days are going to be okay.

Where do I go from there? Where am I going to go? I have to make my life to be comfortable to me, as to my surroundings. I have a big family that we have tripled through life, and some of them are still struggling. We need to come together and hold hands to keep our strength and help each other to live our heads up and be proud of who we are.

Many times I have put myself down, like I'm not good enough. I'm not good enough for where I'm at, with this alcohol that had taken control of me. And it wasn’t always there. There were times that it was gone, and sometimes it will show up and do it over again.

And doing it all over also made me fail. It made me more stronger now. How many times I fell? Many times I fell into it.

I have struggled and I'm still struggling to go in right way, go in the right path. There are many roads that I have tried. I have tried walking in the ways that will help me. There are little ways, there, that did help me to pick up a little bit; going to church, going to AA meetings, talking to people; my surroundings, where I'm at, sitting by a tree, on a rock, thinking, meditating; listening to birds out there, in the summer and spring. Those things are uplifting to me. In the house we kept

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And going back to why I'm here; alcohol-related, substance, that I'm tackling right now and that has taken me (inaudible) and my sister, I believe that she would be sitting here, if not for the alcohol that has taken control of her.

I would like to pause.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

--- The interview is suspended.

--- The interview resumes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. So we were just off the record for about two minutes, and -- while Raymond took a moment for himself. It's now 12 o'clock.

So, Raymond, a tremendous amount of courage to come and to speak today, and to share your truth and the challenges that you've had with alcohol.

But there's a couple of things that -- as you have spoken, that really, really makes me feel that for you and your family, you talked about alcohol and substance abuse with your parents. You talked about your brother, yourself and your sister Yvonne - all went to residential school - that there was a real separation for you when you went to school and the loss of your grandma. And you talked about -- you didn’t know who you were, and you also talked about -- that Yvonne struggled with her own -- you used the
word for yourself: Demons; but that she too had a really
difficult time with alcohol and the impact that it had on
the family.

And so, were you aware -- was your
generation, the first generation that went to residential
school -- or did your parents go?

MR. HENRY ABEL: No. My parents never did.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. But alcohol had
come into the community. Because you spoke about -- a
number of times you spoke about being eight or nine, so
there was something there for you, at eight or nine,
watching your parents consuming alcohol. And you talked
about being lost.

And I feel that as you have spoken today,
that there's that -- still, there's a sense of loss there,
for you, and trying to understand who you are.

And you keep talking about coming back and
getting back on the right path, and such courage to -- and
the determination that you showed to continue to try to be
well.

So I do hope that that is there for you,
as the days and the months come.

And I'm so sorry for the loss of your
brother, so young, and for your sister Yvonne.

And it just -- if there is anything that
you would like to add in your own language or if there is anything that you would like to say, then you are more than welcome to continue.

Sorry. I did have one question. You talked about Yvonne in residential school. Did Yvonne ever share with you, or did your brother and you ever share about your experiences at residential school?

MR. HENRY ABEL: No.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Did you feel that there were secrets?

MR. HENRY ABEL: Hm-- no.

MS. KERRIE REAY: No? Okay. Okay. But a great deal of pain?

MR. HENRY ABEL: Yes, great pain and being apart.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Yes. And that sense of loss? Yes.

Would you like to close and -- in your language?

MR. HENRY ABEL: Yes, okay. I will do that.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay; unless there's something else you would like to add.

MR. HENRY ABEL: No. I will just close now and stop now.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.
MR. HENRY ABEL: And what I was also 
mention about is the living conditions and one store that 
the community has and --

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay; and the experience 
of racism.

MR. HENRY ABEL: The spread of racism.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. HENRY ABEL: But I'm okay with that in 
here.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Are you sure?

MR. HENRY ABEL: Yes. I'm okay.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. All right, then. If 
you would like to close in your language, or a few words in 
English and then in to close in your own language?

MR. HENRY ABEL: Yes. Okay.

MS. KERRIE REAY: I'll leave that with you.

MR. HENRY ABEL: (Native language)

I would like to thank the people that put 
this together, this Missing and Murdered Women's 
conference. It's been a pleasure to be here, be here and 
share part of my story.

And my recommendation is to respect each 
other and work together in ways that are positive. It could 
be in dancing, singing, get together as a whole and do 
things that are positive.
1 (Native language) - thank you.
2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Thank you.
3 --- Whereupon the recording ends.
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I have, to the best of my skill and ability, accurately transcribed from a pre-existing recording the foregoing proceeding.

Josee Payette, Transcriptionist