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

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Statement - Volume 210

Lawrence Beaulieu,
In relation to Bertha Beaulieu & Frances Beaulieu

Statement gathered by Kerrie Reay

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Witness: Lawrence Beaulieu

Testimony of Lawrence Beaulieu ..................... 1
Reporter’s certification ............................... 48

Statement gatherer: Kerrie Reay

Documents submitted with testimony: none.
Statement - Public
Lawrence Beaulieu,
(Bertha & Frances Beaulieu)

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

--- Upon commencing on January 25, 2018
at 3:02 p.m.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Lawrence, so you're ready?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. So as I explained, I am just going to read into the record who you are, and I have you are Dene from Fort Resolution?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. So today this is Kerrie Reay, it is -- I am statement taker with the National Inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. It is January the 25th at Yellowknife at 3:02 and today with me is Lawrence Beaulieu, Dene First Nation, and a resident from Fort Resolution, currently now living in Yellowknife.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And Lawrence is here today to speak of his two sisters who have passed away, Bertha in 1980 from --


MS. KERRIE REAY: 1988 from alcohol?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And Francis who
passed away in 1990.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And Francis passed
from an overdose, a drug overdose?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: I don't know,
they wouldn't let us open the casket or the nothing,
they said, so I don't know what happened.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. And also in
the room today is sorry [R.T.]. I flipped the page,
sorry. [R.T.].

MS. [R.T.]: [R.T.].

MS. KERRIE REAY: [R.T.] is here as a
health support for Mr. Beaulieu. And just to confirm
that you are willing to have your truth shared both on
an audio recording and a video recording.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And that you are
comfortable with it being public?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yes, I'm not --

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Lawrence, as
we talk, this is your time, this is your truth and your
space, and I invite you to start whenever you're ready?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: No, I would
like to start from right -- remember, (inaudible) 50
miles from Fort Resolution called Gene River (sp), and
from there I remember I think my dad and mom got a letter because things are going out of whack, like, you know, they're getting mad and then they are crying, and they said that we had to move to Fort Resolution. We had to re-locate to Fort Res. And anyways, they sent me ahead, I was pretty young, you know, 1959 I think, or 1960, and I was staying with my aunt and uncle, and you know, every night I go to bed alone, I was six years old, seven years old. And then finally my mom and dad, they moved into Fort Res 1961 I think, '60, and they, my dad bought a -- bought a little caboose, and that's where we lived. Our family got bigger and bigger, and then finally, my dad worked with, I don't know, it was an Indian agent, so they built 20 house, log house, and we got one. You know, we're living pretty good, you know, like, we had lots of groceries in those days, you know, trapping was our job. And my dad did good, I know, you know, like, when we were living in Gene River, I'll take that back any day for the day how I lived and we had everything. But anyways, we had to re-locate to Fort Res, and once we moved into Fort Res everything sort of falling apart, you know, like, we -- my dad had to go look for a job because things slowed down at trapping and all that. So they had to live in Fort Res, you can't go trapping 250 miles away.
Anyways, we started school anyways and we were going to school I think it's 1963 or -- anyways, I remember that by the -- I think Robert Kennedy got assassinated that time, I remember that because I was in -- in that receiving home in the basement, I was sleeping by myself, and I felt very uncomfortable, I know. All night I cried because they said the world is going to end, war. So anyways, I remember that, and then -- but before that, what they did is they pick it up in school, they gather us up, all five of us, my two brothers and my two sisters, they put us in one room, and I don't know, they said they were starving I guess, and they had all kinds of food there, we were there about, I think three or four hours, but we never touched nothing, we knew what was going on. The sun went down, and I know, I look, I looked in the one window there, and the airport lights were on, and they -- they took us all -- all five of us. The cops took us. And I remember my dad standing out -- and they put me in the plane first (inaudible) I could see my dad standing there one cop was holding him back. He just full of tears, his (inaudible) shining of tears and telling the cop, kiss my babies at least, but they didn't let him. That's when we left. We left for 10 years, never saw them, my dad, they come visit me, but I had to go to see
him someplace else, they wouldn't let him go to that home, I don't know why.

And after I got to Fort Smith, things are pretty good, you know, for about a year, year-and-a-half. And then they separate us. They put my two sisters -- they put in receiving home, they call a group home now, and they put my two sisters in the receiving home. They took my two brothers there in Breynat Hall Residential School. That's why, you know, they're going to kill themselves drinking the way I think, you know, and when I was in that home, it was pretty, pretty violent. I mean, you know, the supervisors are mean to the -- especially to the little ones. So anyways, that's why they separate us because I was getting, mean with them too.

Like today, a lot of people told me how come you never smile. I am happy, but I can't smile. But, you know, my two sisters went through lots. You know, once in a while I see them, maybe three times a year sometimes. And I go visit them later on, you know, like after it got 16, I didn't really care, they let me, I walked right in that receiving home, I think. And I go kiss them, and they're both holding me, sometimes they cry, when are we going home? I said, I don't know. Soon to make them happy, but that's why
something happened in there to end up in the Edmonton street to die down there the way they died. My sister Bertha suffered. She was in the hospital. I was in Yellowknife here, my mom told me; I heard your sister is dying. So I grabbed her, I said get me tomorrow, go see social worker. We went to the social worker, we walk in. I don't know, today I think about it, the way they grab that phone there. I said, you know, my mom said you want to go see her daughter before she passes away. Just wait, Alice, she said. I remember grabbing that phone, and she phoned. And then she said, can I speak to a doctor right away to talk to that doctor, and I think it was a lie the way I look at it. They told them my mom, oh, Bertha is going to be okay. Anyway, my mom was just happy, I remember I drop her off at the coffee shop and smiling and three hours later, I pick her up, and you know, she said -- I picked her up, she was just smiling, happy, I took her home, you know, I didn't live with her that time, I was living uptown. A couple days later, I went to pick her up. Holy, I walk in there and she was just crying. What happened mom? Bertha passed away. See, that's what the system didn't -- they should have let her see her, she could have felt better.

Until the day she died, my mom she is always talking about that, crying about it. You know, I
know how it felt like. Even, you know, and Francis same thing, when she came to Bertha's funeral, Bertha, I talked to -- tried to talk to her, boy, it's hard to get -- she was in to that drug, heavy drug, I guess. I talked to her, she agreed with me and everything. Next thing I know, she was on a plane, I heard, last time I saw her, and you know, she fell through the system. You know, I just wanted to bring that up because must have been, they must have went through lots, the way I went through.

And I -- you know, until today, nothing was dealt about mine, so I didn't, no, I just wanted my nieces and nephews to know their mother, they had a good mother. She didn't run away. The system failed. That's what happened to them. That's why they came back in the box. And then not just that, but you know, there is one more thing I got to go back after we left residential -- I mean, we got picked up about two or three years later, we got a call, my oldest brother cut himself on account of this. He couldn't take it. Yeah, that's what happened, you know, nothing, even my dad, his oldest son is gone, all his kids were gone, they stole us away; instead of trying to help us.

Trying to think -- I think I told the important parts what happened to them. My nieces and
Statement – Public
Lawrence Beaulieu,
(Bertha & Frances Beaulieu)

1 nephew, you know, they'll understand now, can you tell
2 them. Yeah, there are so many things, you know, like,
3 in their -- especially when they're in the same home and
4 I live in the basement and I could hear your sister
5 crying upstairs, you know, getting strapped or whatever,
6 nothing. Just for saying the wrong word.
7
Not as -- not just my two sisters, my
8 brothers, I see the other ones are suffering. And
9 today, I check -- I check around for the all the people
10 that were in there, there's not so much of them alive
11 today. So I hope those people they, you know, do
12 something for themselves or you know, so they
13 don't -- so they can help their families too by telling
14 their stories and that --
15
MS. KERRIE REAY: So when you -- before
16 you went to Fort Res and you lived in Gene River?
17
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Gene River,
18 yeah.
19
MS. KERRIE REAY: Do you remember,
20 because you said you went to Fort Resolution about the
21 age of six, dough have any memories of what it was like
22 in Gene River?
23
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Gene River was
24 number 1, they had everything, we had moose meet,
25 buffalo, you name it, we had it.
MS. KERRIE REAY: Was that where your
dad built all the houses?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah, my
grandpa like, you know, they built that town.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: I think 1800,
you know, something.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: There was 12
village there's on the south Great Slave Lake?

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, I know at
the end, there was only four left, Russ River, Buffalo
River, Gene River and Little Fishery, and the rest Peter
Pond came in to wipe us out. He wiped out eight towns.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Who did, sorry?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Peter Pond.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: He brought in
chickenpox blanket.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: That's what
happened to most of my people.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So the people lived
on the land, took care of themselves?
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, my -- we had a big boat. My grandfather had one of those big boats, he ran -- he never sold his fur in Fort Res, Hudson Bay, he took it all the way to Winnipeg.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah. Yeah, I remember that big boat he used to travel on, you know, on the side there, that hot water used to come out, boiling water. We used to make hot chocolate with it, I guess, I'm still okay today.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And so as the -- as a small young boy, life was good in Gene River is what I'm hearing you say?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, I was so happy, wake up happy.

MS. KERRIE REAY: But you weren't the oldest?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: No, my brother George was the oldest.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. And then who came -- who was born after George?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: There was two of them before George, but they both passed away too.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Being little?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah.
MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: So I think there's about 14 of us in the family.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. But you speak -- because you said when you were about six.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, we talk Chip.

MS. KERRIE REAY: You went to Fort Resolution where you stayed with your aunt and uncle?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And all you're aware of is there was some letters sent.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: That required you even though you weren't the oldest?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: That you had to go there?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, because once you were school age. If you don't go to school, then -- I think the letter says tell if the kids don't go to school, you can both go to jail, yeah, that's why --

MS. KERRIE REAY: And do you know why George didn't go to --
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Well, George was the oldest one, and he was already taught for trapping and that.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So he was quite a bit older than you?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, way, and he was already trapping and that, you know, in those days, trapping, one of the top jobs because --

MS. KERRIE REAY: So you went to live with your uncle in Fort Resolution?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And then your parents and your younger sisters and your younger brother came to the Fort Resolution as well?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah.

They had to because the kids are getting old, school age.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right. School age, and so I'm just sort of putting it in context for the commissioners in terms of a bit of a time line because what you've shared so far is so critically important to have the insight of a family who was doing very well to then have their children removed to go to school?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, mmhmm.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So when you were in
Fort Resolution your two sisters, two brothers and
yourself?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Now, you went to Fort
Smith?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, they grab
us in school.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. And in Fort
Smith, you all went to a receiving home?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Is that when you
could hear your sisters upstairs when you first went to
the receiving home?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And then you talk
about that your two sisters went somewhere else?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, they went
to receiving home.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Another receiving
home?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: They built a
big one there, so, yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. And your brothers went to somewhere else?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: They went to Peten (sic)?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, they went to Breynat Hall.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Breynat Hall.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, residential school.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And where did you go?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: I stayed in the group home.

MS. KERRIE REAY: You stayed --

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: They changed it to a group home.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: The receiving home.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, they sent me there.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So being so young, did you have any idea how your brothers went to
residential school, where did you go school if you were at the receiving home, at the group home?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Well, the first time they sent me -- well, the first time, they sent me -- after a little, they sent me to Breynat Hall, but then the way they were treating my brothers, so I was getting aggrieve with the priest, there was a priest there. And I told them, I says, you know, what's going on, I said, every time there's a movies, they don't go movies, it's -- nobody wants to miss movies in those days. Every times there's movies and I go in there and I don't see them in there, so I go upstairs you know, I bring them downstairs watch a movie. They don't do nothing but they know how to do it, next year I didn't come back, so they really did them in, I guess.

MS. KERRIE REAY: As children did you talk about what was happening for yourselves in the different schools, like, when you -- like, did you come together in the summers or did you stay there?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah, in the summer, like, in the residential school, they bring them back to the group home, the two boys, yeah, they bring them back, back and forth, that's what -- you know, we all wanted to go home.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Did they talk --
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: They never --
MS. KERRIE REAY: Did they talk about
what was happening in the school, your brothers?
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, you know,
we get together. When we get together, they always want
to know, they want to get out of here.
MS. KERRIE REAY: Right. Did they
share any secrets what was happening at the residential
school?
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: No, they
wouldn't tell me nothing.
MS. KERRIE REAY: Did you sense
something was wrong?
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, I knew
something, you know --
MS. KERRIE REAY: What did you think?
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: They looked so
pitiful, they never smiled when I see them. But they
wouldn't tell us, you know, those days, the priests or
those guys must have had them because they're pretty
mean, you knows when they look, especially small boys.
MS. KERRIE REAY: Now, I'm not familiar
with Fort Smith. Did you see your sisters if you were
in a group home and they were --
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah,
later on.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Did you see them?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, they won't let me go over there first time, but later on, after I turned 16, oh, yeah, I go see them.

MS. KERRIE REAY: You went to see them?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, when I get lonesome for them, I go see them and I go -- I go right in there or we go sit outside.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Did they ever --

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: They never talked nothing like that, but they're happy to see me, that's it. They don't talk about --

MS. KERRIE REAY: What happened?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And so then as you were 16, when were you able to go home, back to Fort Resolution?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: I just about 19.

MS. KERRIE REAY: When you were 19.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Just about.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Just about 19.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: I think it was
April. That's when I went to Fort Res for Easter. When we got to Easter holidays, yeah, I remember.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And your parents -- sorry.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, when we got there for Easter, I just stayed there and hid. We had to hide until June, and then until one day there, my uncle -- I stayed with my uncle, and one day, they're knocking on the door. He said, they're here. I said don't worry, I'm not going to bother, and I could hear my uncle went to the door there. Opened the door just wide enough to talk to them, what do you want? He told them. It was welfare and the cops and my uncle told them, what do you want. Oh, I heard Lawrence Beaulieu is staying here. No, he says, Lawrence Beaulieu, I give him a ski-doo, I give him a ski-doo suit, everything, sleigh, blanket, tent, he's gone on the trap, he said, if you want to find him, he says, go on the land. And they turn around right there, and about 15 minutes, I heard the plane flying away, gave up on us, I guess. My brother too, run away, [Brother 1], so we stayed away, and my brother [Brother 2], I think, about four years, five years later, only then he got out. I don't think go until 19 or 20.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So [Brother 1] and
[Brother 2] came back to Fort Resolution?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: No, because [Brother 1] stayed in Fort Res, and when [Brother 2] got out, straight to Yellowknife here.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. So [Brother 2], and where is [Brother 2] now?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: He's on -- he's at home.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: He's homeless.

But they gave him a home. But right now, he's right at the edge.

MS. KERRIE REAY: What do you mean by the edge?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: So much booze, you know, like --

MS. KERRIE REAY: More alcohol?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: -- you know, get the boot.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Not just that too, it's not too healthy now too. He's -- he goes to the hospital every once or two or three times a month, you know, blacking out --

MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, dear. Oh, dear.
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: -- of alcohol.

And not eating enough I guess.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And your sisters,

they came back to Fort Resolution?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: My sisters,

eye went straight here too, them, and then they went to
Fort Res to visit my dad. I think they only saw my dad
just a couple of weeks and then they left there, they
came back here.

MS. KERRIE REAY: When you say here,

back to Yellowknife?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, some are
married here and everything. They both have two kids
and Francis moved to Fort Simpson, she stayed there and
I don't know how they made plans, but they met in
Edmonton. And then just like we lost them, they hid in
the streets in Edmonton, they don't find them.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So did they leave the
families to --

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, they
left two kids on both sides. They moved to Edmonton,
and they just, you know, forgot about everything like,
and I don't know, that's how the system did to her, she
left, I know that. The drinking will just cover
everything.
MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah, and these are
the truths that need to be told about the impact of what
residential school did to the lives of all those
children and the families and children like yourself?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah.

You know, like --

MS. KERRIE REAY: So do you remember
about when the two sisters went to Edmonton? Did they
go together or did one of them go?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, they met
over there.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Because they --
MS. KERRIE REAY: When do you think --
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: I guess they
were talking here I guess, you know, we're going to
meet, we're going to take off, whatever, I guess, and
all of a sudden, my mother said, they just disappeared
and --

MS. KERRIE REAY: Did you hear from
them very often?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Well, it's not
just that, too, they couldn't get a job or nothing
around here, they tried. You know how it is sometimes,
you know, they don't give jobs to outsiders they call
Statement - Public
Lawrence Beaulieu,
(Bertha & Frances Beaulieu)

us, and then that's when they took off, they had no --

MS. KERRIE REAY: So did, so when you
say jobs weren't available for them because jobs didn't
go to outsiders, speaks of racism and discrimination?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

That's racism, you

know --

MS. KERRIE REAY: Would you
like -- would you like to share that experience?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Well, it
happened to me too.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Mmhmm.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: You know, like,
I worked with the government on the highways for quite a
while, 1989, and like, when I -- like, some years they
don't take me back because I'm working some place, and
in 1990, 2010 and they turned around, they wanted to get
rid of me, I know. And I turned 58, they wanted me to
class one, you know, she should told me when I was
35. Why now, you know?

MS. KERRIE REAY: Mmhmm.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: So that's what
I see, you know, racism, jealousy. Since I sober up,
just like I lost everything.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And when did that
happen for you? You said you sobered up, when did that?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Sobered up 1995.


MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Twenty-one years.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Congratulations, that's an achievement. That's a big achievement.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: I wouldn't be here otherwise, you know, if I drank.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And so alcohol and drugs became a -- became a significant factor in the lives of you and your siblings, not that you all did drugs and alcohol, but you know, you said one sister died of a drug overdose that you believe?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Well, they went down south, heavy drugs.

MS. KERRIE REAY: But you did make a comment to come back to that you believed that your sister died of a drug overdose but they wouldn't let you have an open coffin.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah. In Vancouver, she moved to Vancouver just before she passed away.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, so Francis moved
to Vancouver?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, she couldn't take Edmonton, lonesome for Bertha.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Lonesome for Bertha.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So she went to Vancouver.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Do you know whether -- where she lived in Vancouver?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: No. I think skid row.

MS. KERRIE REAY: The downtown east side. Did the family hear much from her once she --

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: We heard she took off down there, you know --

MS. KERRIE REAY: And that was all?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: We couldn't locate her. The only time we knew where she was when they brought her back.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And you said when they brought her back that they wouldn't allow an open coffin?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Was there any
explanation as to why?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: I don't know, I think my mom said she had, I don't know sickness, that's what she said. That's all she said. I think AIDS were just coming out at that time too, yeah. Yeah, all those things were coming.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And for you, how does that feel not being able -- like, do you feel that things haven't been closed for you, that there hasn't been closure?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Nothing. Nothing. Like, even, you know, my mother passed away and just four years ago now.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Mmhmm.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: And I never grieved yet because my family has bothered me for her house that I inherited.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah. And are you the only surviving child?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: No, there was eight of us still.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah. And I'm the oldest, and I took care of her too.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: All the way back, 40 years I moved here. I think just about every day I was at her house.

MS. KERRIE REAY: A loving son?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: A loving son?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, I brought her my daughter, that's what she likes, it keeps her alive, keeps her happy.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So you have a daughter?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, two of them.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Two.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, the oldest one is 31, she's got five kids, five children, and my youngest one is 26, she's having a baby in May.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. So you'll be a grandpa again?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, papa they call me.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Papa.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Sounds like a little Mexican.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And they bring you
some joy?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Oh, yeah, I think they keep me alive, happy.

MS. KERRIE REAY: But there's still a sadness, I sense?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, there's always a sadness when they go home and start thinking, like, you know, I've been thinking about since [R.T.] said they are have a meeting here, you know. So I'm here, you know, just go whatever.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, it takes a lot of courage.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Lots of courage to come and share your truth?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: No, I wanted to share because they're not forgotten.

MS. KERRIE REAY: No, no.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, they're always in my heart.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And this is an opportunity to voice, to have a voice.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: To tell and to share that hurt and that anger?
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: A lot of things are done backwards too, like, you know, my mother she got a cheque after she passed away. Now we're having a hard time trying to get it from the government. They're asking me all kinds of questions, you know, wrong questions. (Inaudible) yeah, she got you know, she's -- she got sexually abused in school.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So your mom was part of -- your mom went to residential school?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah, she was in there seven years.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And your dad?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: My dad, no.

Him he was a trapper.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So he was out on the land, so they couldn't find him?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: No, but he was old enough by the time the rules came in. You know, he was already married. This stuff here came in, '50s, '60s.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Residential school?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: No, way back, yes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Yes, but not up here.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Up here, they
were living out in the bush and we had good dogs, nobody could catch them.

MS. KERRIE REAY: That's what I was suggesting is that they couldn't catch you or find you?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, he's got all kinds of, you know, cabs and everything, you know, how are they going to find him, fast dogs and --

MS. KERRIE REAY: Did your mom ever talk about residential school?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Oh, yeah, she did, everything, she'd talk about a lot of stuff in there. She said, they didn't feed you good at all back in those days.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: You know, they give you hung fish, she said. You know, like, my uncle talk about it my mom, they said they give you fish, if you don't eat it, they bring it back at breakfast. And that's when my uncle got kicked out, he said -- he told the other boys, he said if that nun ever brings that dry fish to me again, I'm going to knock her out, and he did. That's how he got out of residential school.

Yeah, that residential is really --

MS. KERRIE REAY: One of the things that, you know, we also see is that some -- some
survivors of residential school end up in the justice system?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: You know, it's a, you know, keeping it all closed in and the pain, and even as you speak, I can feel the pain that you carry with you?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah. Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And was --

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: My uncle I just mentioned there, that knocked out that nun, he spent, I think, most of his life in jail.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: At the end, he got married and he's got, I think, three boys and a couple of girls, and he straightened out his life, he sobered up. When he sobered up, no more jail.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Again, we talk about the substance, the alcohol and the drugs --

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: -- you used to cope with the pain, used to try to get rid of the burden?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah.

This is --

MS. KERRIE REAY: So what changed for you in 1995 when you decided you were done with the --
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Well, you know,
I was -- we had two young girls I told you, and one
was -- one was five and the other one was one year old,
and you know, I start thinking, took me about three
years to quit, but I always thought about it and my
mother didn't like when I drank and me too, you know,
getting really sick and every time I drank you know, two
days, three days I never eat either. So, you know, I
had two girls there, what kind of life are you going to
have? And the words always go back to my dad. He
always told me don't let that alcohol be the boss, and
that's what I did. There was a healing place there Dena
(ph), that's what I did. I checked in. Boy, it was set
up good, it healed me. Why they shut it down. After it
healed me and after about two or three years later, they
shut it down, they said it wasn't working.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Wow, you're a
testament that it did work?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, it did
work, you know, I'm here, 21 years later.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Yes, yes.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: And I see that
woman that healed me she is maybe 20 years younger than
me, and she is in Welladay School (ph) right now. She
just -- she's not doing too much Lawrence, she said, you
know what, maybe we'll go down, do a story, you
(inaudible) so I said yeah any time you're ready, I'm
ready. So maybe they should give her a job, you know,
like, open up that some place, I'll help her. That's
what she told me, let's go open up a healing place, you
know, you could teach them. Because you know, like, to
see a Native in there doing something you are healing.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Mhm. Right.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, I was
taught by white, you know, boy. They did a good job
every -- it took everything out of me anyways and I had
a big pile of papers like that. I should have kept it
for residential school, I was thinking that, and we
burned it anyway. Took everything out of me. But they
told me I was -- I was hanging on to my brother yet, my
oldest brother.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Was that who his
life?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, his name
is George, yeah. Every time I tell my story, I always
go back to him.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And when did George
pass away?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Probably
'60 -- I don't know, I was in Hay River that time, I saw
him in Hay River, he was around 16 or 15, I saw him in Hay River.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So what year would that have been then?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: '66, '67 I think.

MS. KERRIE REAY: '67?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And that was the last time you saw him?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, then they go to Hay River Carnival. Takes that little bus. They came for the -- you know, Fort Res it's pavement, says no problem, he says, I'll have a room in Hay River, as soon as you get there, look for me. I went (inaudible), sitting there, give me the key, he even give me the truck. I had no license, but --

MS. KERRIE REAY: Away you went?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Took me over there.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So how did you get from residential school to Hay River?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Bus.

MS. KERRIE REAY: That little bus you're talking about?
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, I was working in Fort Smith, you know, Paul Kaiser (ph) since I was 13.

MS. KERRIE REAY: They let you work while you were at residential school?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: No, in the group home.

MS. KERRIE REAY: In the group home?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Right.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, I wanted to work, I wanted to make money. I had two brothers that were there, I wanted to give them money, you know, wanted to buy clothes and dress pretty pitiful, one style clothes they all wear. So I used to go in there, you know, I think jeans were 3.50 or $4.00. I used to get them one each, holy man, I just remember proud of it. And those shirts are like this, you know, they make it nice too, that one too. And every -- every Friday I see them. Not just that, I had -- there were movies that time, I'd go to movies, and then there's trips to Hay River, I asked, said sure, as long as you got a place to stay. So I phoned and that [A.], talked with my supervisor, oh, yeah, I'll get him place. I used to go. Maybe they were happy I was gone too.
MS. KERRIE REAY: Do you know if your sisters ever had an opportunity to do -- because you were talking about the treatment centre and how successful it was for you?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: There was nothing for them that time.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Not for them?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: No.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Do you know if they ever tried?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Never -- didn't seem like they had a problem, you know, but I knew they drank lots. You know, like -- like, boyfriends they take off to work they go on a -- out in the sticks, party right away knew they were having a problem. One day, they just run away.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And your mom, did she -- did your sisters stay in touch with your mom?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Bertha did, yeah. That is actually where Bertha stayed. I only visited Bertha a couple of times.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: My mom came back and maybe next trip we'll try to get her back. But she's the one (inaudible).
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Lawrence Beaulieu,
(Bertha & Frances Beaulieu)

MS. KERRIE REAY: How do you think we could honour the lives of your sisters, remember them? Is there something that could be done to honour them for their short lives and how residential school stole from them?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah. Group home and receiving home stole their lives, you know, took their life, you know, I know that. When they were there, I go visit them, they were happy and just like me, I guess, you know, sometimes I'm happy, but I never smiled at some people told me. I told them I (inaudible) too. How come you never smile, they told me. I laugh at Residential School.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Well, you're --

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Smile at those nuns and that. Yeah, the lonely at night after bedtime, a lot of times, I guess, you know, I couldn't get over that hump there, you know, like grade 10 I stayed two years in grade 10. I don't know what's wrong with your supervisor, talk to him, just rough and everything. I don't know I said, I don't know -- other kids get it, but I can't I just can't learn -- get over that one hump. I tried even here, I went back to school here. Just like I was stuck just. Brings me back to residential school when I start writing stuff down and...
MS. KERRIE REAY: You did or you didn't?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: No, you know, I didn't. But when supervisor talked to me when I was wrong, go together, big guy, big (inaudible) about that big, and then that came out 16, after I was 16, he wouldn't do that. Because I think he knew. And I check into that myself too, like, all these supervisors they were all in residential schools too. That's why they did all -- how they treated us.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So the supervisors had attended residential school themselves?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, yeah. All of them just about. Everybody that works there.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So it perpetuates that violence?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, you know, that violence.

MS. KERRIE REAY: It just keeps going?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Them -- they don't care, oh, yeah, I've been treated this way, oh, you're not -- you know, you're not going to get away.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So if I had to take
it, you can take it?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, that's the way it was because they got treated rough.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Mmhmm.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: And when there was food there, they give you food. I remember my two sisters who were sitting there, and then they don't leave that table until the food is gone. Sometimes they give you too much, it was good food, but when you're not hungry, you're not -- you know, how are you going to take it down. Yeah, all those things there. It's so -- I come in one year later, they're still sitting at the table. And then those are, that's my blood, what are they doing, I can't say that either, they put me in detention home. We had a detention home there too.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And that's one of the things that the commissioners are looking for in those truths about how it happens from one generation to another, sort of similar to how the supervisors in the homes that had been in residential school, but also how things go from generation to generation, so as a survivor of residential school, the impact that that had as you raised your two girls, and you know, and how it keeps -- seems to seep into the generations.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.
MS. KERRIE REAY: And so the commission is looking for thoughts on how do we stop that? How do we stop that continuation of -- that systemic intergenerational impacts?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, hopefully this story I did goes back to my two girls. You know, I want them to hear because --

MS. KERRIE REAY: So education?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Is that what I'm hearing?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, to educate them because you know this, what I'm carrying I think they're carrying it too because my youngest one is really -- you can tell, you know, a lot of times, things are coming out of there all the time, and you know, it's all -- it's like a wave.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: It carries on and on, you know.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Yes, yes.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: I think we've got to stop it today, somehow, you know.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So with what you've just said, how do you think maybe your residential
school has impacted your two daughters because they are both mothers, one soon to be and one that has five children?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Can you see or do you feel or have you had any conversations about what life was like for them and about how that wave you talk about, for you to them?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, I talk about what I went through, you know, like, a lot of times too, I don't realize, I tell you, sometimes you can think, and I threw some things at them, you know, what I went through.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Look at how you got it today, I says in my day, you know, you don't see this, you know, and you know, buy them good clothes and some, you know, I don't like this, you know. A lot of times, you know, like, back in my day, things are only one kind of thing sometimes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So you've shared your experience with your girls?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, with my daughters, yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: I told them, like, you know, I only tell them to pray. You know, when things get hard, pray because it seems to work with me. A lot of times, I can't get out of the house, like, my dad told me, pray three times, he says, things will get better, sure enough, the third time, I pray, and then that gets you going, you know. Move around, start cooking, otherwise, you know, I just sit there, and what can I do? You know, oh, you know, can't say to hell with it either, if you say that, you know, your kids are going to do the same thing. So you know, a lot of times, you know, like, my oldest one is really good because she's the one that understands, she's smart. She's got five kids and she understands exactly what I'm -- where I'm coming from.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So she provides support to you then?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Oh, yeah, yeah, she --

MS. KERRIE REAY: That's good.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: She's always by me, she asks, you know, come -- bring me soup, see how I'm doing, yeah, every day. She brings those -- her kids, the youngest one wants to stay with me all the time, and that's when I'm so happy, you know. You know,
I don't think of nothing when they're there, everything is gone out of me.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Those are good moments?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, they know sometimes I'm sad.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Mmhmm.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, that middle one there is ever smart, she just turned seven.

She told me the other day, the 23rd, Tuesday, I went in there, she told me. Boy are you ever short, I told her, I'm short, but I'm seven. Yeah, she's ever smart that one. Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Is there -- as we've been talking, is there anything that you would like that we haven't talked about that you would like to share with the commissioners? And while you're thinking, I'm just going to make sure that the video camera is still recording. Yes. Anything about your experiences, anything you felt was important as a residential school survivor, and really is a '60s scoop because you were taken in the '60s and your younger sisters. You went to a -- you went to go to school, but you ended up in a group home, so not in residential school, about the experience about how it's impacted your life, the
challenges that you would like to say to the
commissioners about what it was like to be taken as a
small child and where you are today?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, I think
today they're still doing it, they are taking children
away from their home. Instead of doing that, you know,
they should get there and help the mothers and the
parents. Give them a good home there and get them
healing, do something for them, not just take the kids
and then those two, when you got no kids, they send you
out on the street, you end up on the street, death row.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right, right.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: So I think
they got to help the people that are having problems,
-drinking, whatever, not taking their children. Because
when you're taking their children, you're taking
everything from them. Their life, I know I got two
girls here. You know, that's why I sobered up, just to
be with them. Yeah, if you've got children, sober up,
look after them, that will make them. Happy -- my dad
always told me, happy home is a sober home.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And how people create
that environment, if part of the problem is the
residential school and the '60s scope like you're
saying, you're just perpetuating the same problem in a
different way?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Or I shouldn't say a problem, the same actions in a different way, and they're occurring today because it's an outcome of what was happening in your community.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Mmhmm.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Any last thoughts?

And do you speak Dene?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, only with the elders.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Well, I just wanted to offer, if you would like to take a moment to speak in your own language here, any closing thoughts that you would like to share in your own language?

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: You see there, it comes to residential school, you know. It's hard to do a sentence, but I understand really good, what, you know I got to be talking to a person, another person.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Another person who speaks Dene? [R.T.], do you speak Dene?

MS. [R.T.]: I do, South Slavey, though.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MS. [R.T.]: And he's Chipewyan?
MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. I was going to invite, I thought it -- just be an opportunity and we have seen that in some of the videos where people would just like to have that space to speak their own language, and even if you were -- even just a few words, it doesn't have to be much, but if you're good with how things have gone today, your space and your time, I'm not looking to shut it down I'm just looking to you as to whether or not you're feeling you're fully heard because that's important is that when you walk out this door, you feel I have been heard, I have had every opportunity, if there is anything else, we can --

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, if you got -- if you got children, you know, on account of residential school, if your children don't listen, don't ever give up, no matter how hold they are because you're blood. And you know, bring them a home -- bring them home or whatever they'll take, but don't give up on them. Because I see lots of them giving up on their kids, don't care, that's one thing I would never want to see is my kids on the street. I think I've just about said everything.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: I will think about it probably later, but anyways there is going to
MS. KERRIE REAY: Well, there will be aftercare, so [R.T.] will speak to you about aftercare, we want to make sure that whatever you need as you leave here that we have touched base with you on that, and make sure that whatever you need in the aftercare appears for you.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Okay.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So are you comfortable with me turning everything off or --

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: I can't think of anything. You know how it is sometimes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right, right.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, when you're in front of a camera.

MS. KERRIE REAY: You've done exceptionally well, you know, as I said earlier, it does take an awful amount of courage especially to come in to a room with somebody you don't know.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Yeah, you --

MS. KERRIE REAY: And to share that pain, that really is something.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: You did a good job, and [R.T.] beside me.

MS. KERRIE REAY: That's important.
MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: [R.T.] has been my support a few years ago.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Yes, good.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: (Inaudible)

talk to somebody, I told her to come see, her little problems, you know.

MS. KERRIE REAY: It's important, though, to have somebody to trust and to talk with.

MR. LAWRENCE BEAULIEU: Oh, yeah, yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. It's 4:01, so we will conclude.

--- Whereupon the statement concluded at 4:01 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.

Stephanie Menard, CSR(A)