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Marie-Louise Niquay, Thérèse Niquay,
Pierre-Paul Niquay & Herman Niquay,
In relation to babies Joseph Jean Antonio & Joseph Paul Emile

Heard by Daria Boyarchuck

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Heard by: Daria Boyarchuck

List of exhibits: none.
--- Upon commencing on Tuesday, March 13, 2018, at 12 p.m.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: I, Daria Boyarchuck, am
honoured to hear these private testimonies and to be here
with you, Marie-Louise Niquay, and your family. We begin
hearing your story at noon to give you the chance to share
your story with all the commissaries and the other members
of your family. Can you please introduce yourselves one at a
time, with your name and how you’re related to Marie-Louise?
Thank you.

MS. ISABELLE DUBÉ: Hello, my name is Isabelle
Dubé, I am a counselor and I’m here to assist Marie-Louise
and her family.

MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: Marie-Louise Niquay

MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: I’m Marie-Louise’s sister.

MS. NANCY OTTAWA: My name is Nancy Ottawa, and I’m
Marie-Louise’s niece.

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: I am with Marie-Louise.

MS. LISETTE NIQUAY: I’m Marie-Louise’s younger
sister.

MS. ROSA NIQUAY: Marie-Louise is my big sister.

MS. MARIE-CLAIRE: I’m the thirteenth child of a
family of 19 children. Marie-Louise is my sister.

M. MR. HERMAN NIQUAY: I’m Marie-Louise’s younger
brother.
MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: Thank you very much. Thank you everyone for introducing yourselves. Now, Marie-Louise, it’s your turn to speak. This is your testimony, you can decide where to start.

MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: I’ll tell you about what I remember, because we just talked about something, earlier that rattled me, that rattled my memories, and my memories go back... I’m 68, and I was 7 when this happened. At 7, I had to go to residential school. We were in the bush, where we always lived; a hunting territory. On the morning of September 2, my brother [Brother 1] and I washed and were going to take the train to go to the Saint-Marc-de-Figuery residential school, in Abitibi.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: What was the name of the residential school?

MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: The Saint-Marc-de-Figuery residential school. They called it the Amos Indian residential school at Saint-Marc-de-Figuery. We washed ourselves in the morning, then put on clothes that our parents had bought for us to travel in. It was a bit chilly in the morning. We had two little brothers who had to be looked after. We lived in tents. We were 2-3000 sons of parents. We were in tents. My mother had prepared food and drink for the babies. We gave them their food and drink. We
brought them to my uncle Mavit’s (phon.) and my aunt Marianne’s tent. My mother had brought Antonio, the biggest, in a blanket, and I brought the smallest one, Paul-Émile. We brought them down blankets that my mother used to make, and we covered them up because it was morning and it was chilly. They seemed to be doing fine. They were sitting up. We made sure they were comfortable. After that, we got ready, had something to eat and packed our bags (I didn’t have much to pack). After that, I went back to see the babies. I kissed them. I hugged them and kissed them. I said goodbye. I wanted my aunt to take care of them while we went to take the train, because they were up and the others were still sleeping, and I was sad about leaving them there, because at 7 I had already taken care of them a lot. From a young age, all the girls would look after children and babies, from the moment we were able to do so. In truth, I remember when they were in the hammock, in the tent, and my mother would put them next to me and say, “Keep the flies off them, make sure the hammock doesn’t flip over and sing to them.” I wasn’t supposed to (inaudible). And my mother would listen from outside, while she was washing herself: “Don’t stop singing, keep going!” We dealt with the flies. [Brother 1] looked after them, too. One time, I was playing with friends and he was looking after them. One of his friends, his cousin,
said, “[Brother 1], come play with us.” [Brother 1] said (inaudible), that means, instead of saying, “I can’t, I’m babysitting,” he said, “I can’t, I’m pregnant.” There was a lot of work to do when we were young, we did what we could, and we took care of the children, under our parents’ supervision, of course. I was very sad about having to leave and leaving the babies behind. We just left. In winter, my cousin Marie told me my little brother had died. Just like that, she said, “Marie-Lou, your little brother is dead.” I looked at her and said, “It’s not true.” I didn’t believe her. I didn’t believe her, but I went and cried in a corner by myself and afterwards told myself that it wasn’t true. But when I went back home on June 24, to the house in Wemontaci (phon.), I asked my mother where the babies were. My mother said, “Didn’t you know? They died.” I had been told, but I hadn’t believed it. I cried and my mother hugged me tightly, and I asked, “We’ll never see them again?” And she said, “No, they’re up in heaven.” (Inaudible). That’s how I remember it. I don’t know what happened in my memories. Some things are probably mixed up, but anyway... I was born in 1949, and when I was 7, I went to residential school. That year, at 7, on [date of birth], I turned 7. On September 2, 1949, I went to the residential school. And that’s the year the two babies died, as far as I can
remember. I saw the two little ones; I remember that little
Paul-Emile looked like one of the twins, he looked like
Herman, and the other, Antonio, I can’t remember who he
looked like. He didn’t look like anyone in the family. I
always wonder now about what they would have been like, how
old they would be, whether they would be married, have kids,
grandkids, what their lives would be like today. I don’t
know. But what I remember from when they were babies,
children, is that I hugged them and that I loved them. For
the rest of the story, I think Pierre-Paul did some
research. My mother told me that one, or both of them, had
drunk and were in hospital. There was a bottle of milk in
their bed. It was stormy outside, with thunder and
lightning, and they drank the milk that was, if we can say,
contaminated by the storm. And they drank that milk and died
because of it. I told Pierre-Paul that I found that hard to
believe. That’s what they told our parents. Pierre-Paul
looked into it; he’s the one working on it, looking into it.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: Marie-Louise, can you tell
us the name of the hospital or the place where the two
little babies died? Which city? Which hospital? Do you know?

MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: I guess they were sent
to La Tuque. We were from Wemotaci, and children were sent
to the hospital in La Tuque.
MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: Thank you.

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: The hospital was called Saint-Joseph.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: Saint-Joseph Hospital?

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: Yes.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: Thank you. Did you speak to a doctor? Do you know if someone explained what happened?

MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: Excuse me?

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: Did the doctors, or anyone from the hospital, like the nurses, tell you what happened to the little baby boys? Did anyone ever tell you anything?

MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: After it happened, no one ever mentioned it again until we were adults. Our parents never talked to us about it afterwards. Because a lot of things are taboo, and we don’t talk about them. Once we started asking questions, they gave us some answers. I don’t know who told them that that’s how they died. That the milk they drank had gone bad because of the storm, the lightning and the thunder. And they drank it and died because of that.

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: In short, the storm altered the quality of the milk, which led to their death.

It doesn’t make sense.

MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: No.
MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: Even for people of the bush, it doesn’t make sense.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: You said you did some research, or you found that in the newspapers?

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: No. Our parents told us those two memories. So it was by oral transmission within the family. They were brought to the hospitals because one of them had a rash on his bottom (inaudible). My grandmother tried traditional remedies. But the problem persisted. They referred him to a healthcare provider from Pam (phon.). That was a city, a town. And a nurse referred him to the Saint-Joseph Hospital in La Tuque. For the other, it was an earache. I can’t remember if it was an ear infection. He was also referred to the hospital in La Tuque. So in both cases—a diaper rash and an earache. Unless the illness got worse... I looked on Statistics Canada, Health Canada, and those aren’t causes of death. I asked for the documents in December 2017. I called.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: Health Canada?

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: No. The hospital.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: The hospital.

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: I asked them if I could get a copy of their medical records. They said, “Sure, no problem.” My brother said, “Both my parents are dead.” I’ll
do it for my family. We want to know what happened. After I called the hospital, Radio-Canada aired their investigative report on “les enfants fantômes” (the ghost children). A great show on babies who disappeared. I went to the hospital and said I wanted my brothers’ medical records. He told me that no, it doesn’t work like that. I told him that I had called beforehand and that they had been willing to give them to me. He said, “No, no, we don’t know, we saw the show and they think it’s easy to just go find records, just like that, but it doesn’t work like that.” He told me I had to go through court. I didn’t go any further, because I knew that the Commission has lawyers that can work on this. On behalf of my family, I demand that the lawyers use their power to help us access the medical records. If they don’t, we’ll have to pay for it. And we’re not rich, we shouldn’t have to pay. So we’re asking the Inquiry again, officially. We can put it in writing, if you want. If the recordings aren’t enough. I request it on behalf of my family. I gave the documents I had, the baptismal certificate, to one of my sisters who couldn’t be here today. Unfortunately, I think it was due to a misunderstanding. The National Inquiry was demanded by women, then by families. The government committed itself. And the Band Council is part of the government. They should have made sure my other sister could
be here, because she’s the one I rely on, who’s more available. Marie-Louise is often available, but she also has health-related commitments. She has to go to the hospital regularly, so I don’t want to bother her. At this age, you don’t make problems for people. You offer them solutions. And my other sister, I didn’t (inaudible). The others are already very busy. In the health sector, and disappearances. In cases of health care delivery services. So, I’ll try to spend some time on it. I’m in (inaudible) and territorial health, (inaudible) and territorial representative, and I’ll dedicate some time to it. But I didn’t prioritize my family; I helped other families first. I’ve finally decided to take care of my own family. It’s been difficult, because there were times when I felt truly alone. It’s how I felt. I have a large family. But when you’re researching something, and they won’t give you the documents or you’re having problems getting the baptismal certificates, it’s not that easy. But I did it. I think that helps. That’s where we are, today. And it’s a step, but we’re waiting, as I mentioned in the circle earlier, with other families and we’re determined. We won’t give up. The Commission, its mandate, they say it will end in 2018 or 2019, but even if it ends, there should be an opening. You can’t take away what possibilities families have of finding missing babies. The possibilities should
stay open. And I think that if we really can’t find them
those who disappeared, we should go to the police. Some
families have already gone to the police and made a
statement about missing or kidnapped people. It’s in the
criminal code. My mind is made up; I have to talk to my
family. Other families have discussed it amongst each other
and decided to go to the police. And participating in the
Commission was the other option, and here we are. And
there’s another option to consider: a class-action suit. And
another thing, they say that this has all the
characteristics of a crime against humanity. Let’s bring
that to the attention of the international criminal court.
About that, I also had the idea to do that to share with
others, because the process can be long. So we thank the
Commission for welcoming us, despite what my brother went
through last week, and I would like him to speak now.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: OK.

MR. HERMAN NIQUAY: I called a week ago, before
leaving home to come here, to the Commission. They told me
that men weren’t allowed to come speak to the Commission. I
wondered if that was one of your conditions or if it was
Indigenous women who didn’t want men to speak. Because they
say that men weren’t affected, but really, the whole family
was affected when the two stepbrothers disappeared. It
wasn’t just the girls in my family who were affected; I was just as affected as the others. My father was just as affected as my mother. Because I know my father suffered because of it.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** So, from what I understand, you contacted somebody from the Commission just last week?

**MR. HERMAN NIQUAY:** Yes.

**MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** I’d also like to add that, of course, after all these years of questioning things, what happened (inaudible), that I’m happy my older sister talked about this. That she shared her memories (inaudible). I think it’s time to start really asking the proper questions about what happened to our family. I have a cousin who worked at the hospital in La Tuque, in those years, I think. I’m not sure either.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Was it the same hospital?

**MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** Yes, the same hospital. She was a helper. In those years, there were a few Atikamekw who worked in those hospitals (inaudible). I was very close to that cousin. She was the same age as my mother. They died the same year. She told me about what she witnessed at the hospital, what it was like for children. People don’t know. Parents weren’t contacted. I had some questions. I didn’t really dare ask my mother questions, because it made her
suffer, caused her pain. But I wondered: How could she bear it? How could she bear living all those years without really knowing what happened? And how were the children wrapped? Like they were being put in little graves... But once at the cemetery (inaudible). That’s what my cousin told me. We went to the cemetery a few times (inaudible); she had told me that the place was empty (inaudible). We entered the cemetery from the far left side, and it was flat, and she said, “That’s where they bury Indigenous children and people—even my grandfather—all in the same corner of the graveyard.” So I lived with that. I kept it to myself, without necessarily sharing it with my sisters, but I thought about my mother often. I tried to imagine the moment he left, that maybe he was the first to die. And the second; it’s like we all carry his pain. My sister was even closer—I don’t remember my younger brother, but...

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** How old were they?

**MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** I was born in 1956 and the others were born in 1956 and 1958. They told me a few months later, when one died, that the other was one year old. I don’t really know.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Do you know if anyone knows how old the boys were when they died? Marie-Louise, do you know how old they were?
MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: I can’t say how old exactly. I know they were little, but they could move around, they could sit up. One was bigger, but I can’t say...

MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: One was more than 10 months; we found his...

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: And that was Joseph Jean-Antonio?

MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: Paul-Émile.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: OK, Paul-Émile.

MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: There’s no date of birth. It says he was baptized on August 13, 1958, and buried on June 12, 1959, at 10 months.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: 10 months.

MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: And the other, Joseph Jean-Antonio, born August 29, 1957, baptized August 30, 1957. But there’s no date of birth. There’s just the godfather’s name, Henri Liguin (phon.) and the godmother’s name, Rowes (phon.). So we brought that because our mother was never present. Of course, we know everything that she had to say about this. We’re still suffering the consequences of the trauma she endured: never knowing where her children were buried. Or the other, where’s the other? But I don’t have any answers. (Inaudible)
The only memories I have... I never knew my brothers. The only memory I have was when I heard my mother talking about them to other women. I knew what she went through. I remember once I left the room because I had just heard about it and it was the first time it really touched me, because I started asking myself about it and wishing I had known them. I remember that I heard several times about the little boys she had lost. Now I can understand how incredibly sad she was. The thing that really affects me is that I’ve been thinking about my mother a lot lately, and how she lived with that, without really knowing what happened. She never got the chance to bury them or pray on their graves, and that touches me, because I have a son who disappeared. Do you know where to find him? But I have a nice memory: my mother had gone to the hospital to give birth. One day, my father was looking after me and he gathered us around. He said he had something to tell us and started by saying, “Two little boys were taken away from me; I lost two little boys. Today, I’m getting two little boys. You’re getting two little brothers; your mother will be with you.” Then he died in 1978.

(Inaudible)

MS. NANCY OTTAWA: Regarding what was said earlier, about men who aren’t allowed to testify, I want to
know as well, because it’s the same for my mother. She lost a son, but because he’s a man, she wasn’t allowed to testify.

**MS. DARIYA BOYARCHUCK:** To begin with, I’d like to thank you, because as you said earlier, that it was probably the Indigenous women who preferred not having men here, now it’s Indigenous women who would prefer it if my colleagues from the Commission and I welcomed both men and women here in this room. That’s why I thank you for coming here even after your phone call. And for that, a big thank you, because you overcame a big obstacle. You came anyway, to support them and testify. And if the two of you want to testify separately, you’re welcome to do so, and I’ll talk to the people in charge of registrations. You can still do it.

**MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** I’m frustrated; I don’t know. Anyway, I don’t like the way my brother was treated. It seems like what’s being done in the current organization that’s working here, is that they’re rejecting centres. That’s not how it works in our society. Men and women are together; they work together.

**MS. DARIYA BOYARCHUCK:** Exactly...

**MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** Otherwise, there’s no connection if they don’t go together, if they don’t work
together. There’s never one that’s rejected, then the other is rejected. It doesn’t work like that. Life can’t keep going on that way.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** I agree with you.

**MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** I’d like for it to come out, to be discussed, and for an apology to be made.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** I also encourage you to do so. After this testimony, I’ll help you with your testimony if you want to do that with me, and we can do it until Friday, as the Inquiry, the Commission, is here until Friday. If you want to do that, you’re welcome to meet us in private or in public. Yes, do you have a question?

**MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** I hope that the little bit of memory I shared helps, that something happens. I hope that it helps with something, that it will lead to something positive, and that it will help us rebuild something for the family, anyway, I wish a lot of good for my family.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Thank you. Do you have anything to add? I’ve heard many of your memories, and also several demands you would like to make. I know that we’ve already talked about including men. But is there anything else you can think of that would help us better include all the other members of society?
MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: There a little thing: there should be more people here who speak French.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: Just francophones you said?

MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: More people who speak French, because there aren’t many people, and it’s hard to reach someone who speaks French.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: OK.

MS. ISABELLE DUBÉ: When they try to reach someone, to talk to someone, they usually end up with someone who speaks English. And that makes it difficult for them.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: OK.

MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: I don’t mind if they answer in English, but “I just want to speak with you [in] French.”

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: Would you also like to say something?

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: Yes. I also came here to talk about my mother–our mother. Her name was Emma Dubé. Daughter of Marguerite Florin. She was married to St-Raymond Dubé (phon.). My mother, her brother and her other sisters lost their mother when they were very young. They had no mother. They lost their maternal support. They told us about how they were placed in other families. And even though she
suffered, she was a very good mother. It’s true that she had suffered, and we could tell by her sometimes very aggressive comments. But it shaped us into who we are today, and we’re good people, according to the data and the information. That’s the gift: we don’t just have her blood, we don’t just have her flesh. She managed to teach me -- And I think she still does. She’s an amazing woman. She had 19 children. During one of her deliveries, in winter, on the reserve, we were chopping wood for the fire, and she said to my grandmother that it was time (inaudible). Our grandmother told us to stay in the tent and she went to my mother. Not long after, we heard a baby cry. We had a new family member.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Brother or sister?

**MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** And our grandmother came and told us to go see the newborn. Our mother kept telling us not to touch him because we played with a lot of things, and to stay at home, stay in the tent. And she went back outside to chop wood. It’s around that time that we were never cold. I don’t remember ever being hungry. We didn’t know where the food came from, but it was very good. We made blankets with what we had. There was no Wal-Mart or anything. We had mattresses made with boiled moose fur (inaudible). For us, that was luxury. We were happy. Today, we have houses where you just turn on the lights, the hot
water, etc. And we’re unhappy in them. We were happier living on our land, and that’s where our relationship with land comes from. We’re one of the last Chicawatawa (phon.) families to have lived year-round on the territories. For that, I thank my mother for telling me about the time my father came to the Manawan village and my mother was told she had to go to the church. She knew that whenever a girl was told to go there, she came out married to someone she didn’t know. My father went there. He had come from (inaudible). They got married. Her godfather, Sergio Filament (phon.), her grandmother’s brother, was happy to be there. He was her uncle. He witnessed the wedding the same day (inaudible). When he left Manawan for the territory of Tenand de Granier de Groelon (phon.). They had a nice territory, many women, many children—they would have 19 children... Then he boarded the Manawan ship. The Manawan’s captain was Duc Lamant (phon.), his witness was (inaudible). Then she said that she would cry because she was losing the Manawan because they were separated for a year. My grandfather has to be careful. A nice story. My grandfather (inaudible) made sure to do it, because my mother used to say she didn’t even know how to cook an egg. For her first teepee, he bought her a wood chip stove.
MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: My grandfather gave her $100 and said, “Go buy what you need.” And my mother came back with half a chocolate and candy.

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: She thought he would live with that. She wasn’t taught how to buy, since he learned he did it for the next 30-40 years. My mother’s spiritual name was (inaudible). We held a rekdance(phon.) ceremony, the Thirst Dance at Wakanaw (phon.) in 2004-2005 (inaudible), I can’t remember, in 2004. She asked for her spiritual name and it was the Thirst Dance woman. Chiniwan (phon.) was her name. We still have the lodge that many people want to visit, and we hold 5 of these ceremonies. That’s where that comes from, from my mother. It started very small, but it’s getting (inaudible). She and her family have the right to know what happened. And I think it’s the government’s duty to help us search for the truth. If it did, we would know what to do, we would take care of it. It would help us live better too. It would also help us with our reorganization activities. It’s that we have to rely (inaudible) on the reconciliation we desire so strongly for ourselves, our children and their children.

MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: There have been inquiry commissions in the past, and many people participated,
including myself, but then we never heard anything more about it.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Yes...

**MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** And also to be able to develop, to continue, to help families discover the truth. Continue to help families in their process to uncover the truth and in their grieving process as well.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Grieving.

**MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** Speaking of my mother, we talk about non-isolated grief, with everything she lived through. Because we were 19 children, and most of us went to residential school. When I think about everything my mother went through, what she suffered, why leave her children and grandchildren and never see them again? But to see these other children leave every year for over a decade, because I went to residential school, there may be (inaudible). There is mourning. There is always mourning. And even if we come back, we’re not the same anymore. The mistakes of this generation: the incomprehension of seeing our parents transform, change and to see them with their issues and addictions. We were strongly affected, including our brothers, by our parents, every time we went through that.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Thank you. Are you the only ones of all the pasallan (phon.) survivors?
MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: Yes.

(Inaudible)

MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: In fact, what she just meant is that my younger brothers were brought to the hospital. For something that wasn’t serious at all. It was really easy back then to send children to the hospital for the smallest thing. Whereas today, children can be extremely sick and not be able to get the care they need where they are.

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: There are doubts that make you suffer, as there was a rumour that Indigenous children were being used to experiment on. There is evidence of that. For us (inaudible) it will be very hard. Other families have already experienced it. It’s like they purposely buried them in communal graves. How can you find your brother’s bones in there? Other families and other nations are almost certain that experiments were carried out. I often think that I’d rather they be dead than find someone who’s been severely handicapped by experiments. It would hurt so much. And if that’s what it turns out to be, we will be appalled. Who would have authorized such experiments?

MR. HERMAN NIQUAY: Who has the power to authorize that?

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: Never, never...
MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY: Who would dare!

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: I would never sign a paper saying we’ll give you this amount for all these stories, but you can’t sue us. They’re doing that for the residential school stories. But for my brothers’ stories, no, the government had better not ask. It would be an insult to our intelligence. We better never get any offers. We want the truth. And there are other families, too. We are united, we are committed. They’d better not try to destroy this dignity that we’re trying to create for all the families. Because that’s what’s going to strengthen our nations’ unity and the unity of all Indigenous nations. That’s why the government is afraid, because that’s what it’s been trying to do, to make us disappear, since 1870 and the Indian Act and Indian Lands Act. It thought the job would be done within 100 years. No, we’re still here. We’re here to stay. There are legal battles, political battles, economic battles and what I would call more clinical battles, but politicians should do their jobs, too. We demanded a national declaration regarding kidnapped children, and we still haven’t had one. We’re in the middle of a commission and we wanted to be heard. I don’t blame anyone, territorial negotiations are well and good, but the people who lived on those lands, the children who were supposed to live there,
didn’t survive. So sometimes that’s quite challenging to our
(inaudible). It’s easy to be outraged, to lose your head,
but no, we want to keep our cool. But we know that it
strengthens our determination. And, up to a certain point,
everything we went through made us a family. Of course, when
we fought, it was because the brothers and sisters weren’t
going along. But we are connected by blood, by the
territory, by the past. We’re doing it now. We’re in the
midst of a reconciliation. But we get heated sometimes,
because sometimes they say it was involuntary. Rejection,
hurtful comments, they come from somewhere. They come from
somewhere.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Yes...

**MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** And that’s just one
effect, but we need to find the cause. If you find the
cause, I’ll no longer have to go through this type of...
That’s why our mother wanted a united family. She never
imagined giving birth to someone who would be against the
others. And everything was on my shoulders.

(Laughs)

**MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** On all our shoulders. We
have work to do. We’re going to do the work. But we’re
asking that the Commission do its work.
MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: I have a question for our youngest member: how do you think this testimony can help future generations? Or how do you and the others think that the stories we share here today in this room, in public and private agencies, how can they help?

MS. NANCY OTTAWA: It helps us understand our family’s injuries: knowing the history, knowing the stories allows us to heal because we don’t want them to affect us and the future generations, as well.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: Yes. Thank you.

MS. NANCY OTTAWA: That’s just what these stories are, a healing process. To be pushed, in part, to forgive our parents if they went through difficult situations.

(Inaudible)

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: Really, these are consequences (inaudible).

MR. HERMAN NIQUAY: To be everything that that triggered, the stories that you heard triggered a lot of problems in my family, because my parents (inaudible) a lot. Today, I’ve become a man. And I know that my parents suffered. I was angry at my parents for a long time, because I lost a twin during a night of drunkenness—a tragedy happened in the house we lived in. I was at my step-sister’s, and I lost my twin and little sister in that
tragedy. Those are all things that were triggered by all the
stories my sister shared, the residential school story, and
my two brothers that were lost and we never got any real
answers.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Yes.

**MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** Such accidents in a family,
jealousy, it’s very hard. I think we lost, in total, a dozen
people due to fires... I don’t know... A dozen? Anyway, in a
pretty short period, that’s a lot of people.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Would you like to add
anything else?

**MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** I already suggested that
there be a national day for the children and babies who
disappeared. And that it be decreed an official day, because
non-Indigenous people don’t know anything about these
things, the history...

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Yes.

**MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** We could use that day to
raise awareness. It was the same for the residential school
stories. At any rate, I want to know how many children
disappeared throughout Canada. There was the Scoop in the
sixties... They didn’t think there was a problem in Quebec,
and now we’re learning that there is a problem there too. So
that’s a suggestion, do you agree? A special day...
MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: A day, yes...

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: It would be a day
dedicated to our little brothers and other children who
disappeared. We’ll make it something special. We can go to
our land and choose a place, if I know that the wakanei
(phon.). I don’t really know what part of the territory you
were camping in at the time. I’d like to know.
(Speaking in an Indigenous language)

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: A special day, and on
that day, we go back to the land...

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: A ceremony or something to
commemorate the children who disappeared...

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: Yes.

MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: I would like to add
something...

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: Yes, please do.

MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: From a very young age, our
grandmother in particular awakened the power we had:
spirituality. She often asked us about our dreams because
dreams have a lot of meaning. And regarding this, a few
months ago, I dreamed about our father and he said, “I see a
woman (wife?) of your brother. Go get your brother.” He was
telling us that he left us the means to do everything we
could to find our brother and what exactly happened with
that? We want to know. It’s important. We have to do
everything we can, because in my dream, he said, “Find your
brother.” (inaudible).

**MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** I think that what
Pierre-Paul said earlier is important: everyone has to work
together...

(Speaking in an Indigenous language)

**MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** One thing.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Yes?

**MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** This recommendation was
already made at a summit, no, an Atikamekw forum on missing
children, on January 23-24, in Wemotaci. This is the year to
create a special unit on missing children. A special
investigative unit. So I would like to see the creation of
an investigative unit. Police officers should get together.
They do it for organized crime, the advisor told me. I don’t
see why they wouldn’t do it for the children. The families
are all available, obviously. We have obstacles, like how to
access information. So if the government doesn’t step in,
we’re the ones who will get stuck having to pay the
expensive fees. In that case, we suggest that the government
help the families get lawyers. There shouldn’t be lawyers
just because there’s an inquiry. After the inquiry, we would
like to have the help of lawyers-Indigenous lawyers if
possible—even if we choose counselors and train them to create training groups. I can study law, I should be trained as a lawyer and so should other stakeholders, other members of this family. Give us this chance and we’ll be able to help more. We’re looking for lawyers and it’s $25,000–$30,000. I’ll do it for free afterwards.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: So, you would like the National Inquiry Commission’s mandate to have a much broader scope, so that when you leave this room, you want to have not just resources, but also the means. For example, I’m a lawyer, and I can contact each of you and try to figure out how we can move forward in getting access to this power of attorney? To access medical records, because sometimes, if I understand correctly, you have the resources, but you don’t know how to move forward, what the next step is. Is that right?

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: Yes, of course, but we’re well aware of the laws and the ones that are holding us back, because hospitals hide behind those laws.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: So you need a contact to...

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: We know how to find them, but once we do, we need a lawyer, and we need money to access the information. So I can’t do it myself. I’ve contacted lawyers and they want to charge me $25,000 to
$30,000. I’ve healed people and not charged them a dime.

There are cancer cases, but if a lawyer comes to see me, I’ll charge him (joke)... We want there to be fewer obstacles. We want to make it easier to get the information we need.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Thank you.

**MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** If we get more ideas after, can we...

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** We’ll stop here, and I’ll help you get in touch with people who can help you after this hearing.

**MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** OK.

**MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** If you want to finish...

**MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** What I’m suggesting is that we get together somewhere, with the family, and we’ll re-commit to an approach, we’ll form a group. Are there any other suggestions?

**MS. ISABELLE DUBÉ?**: And there’s a follow-up as well. You’ll fill out a form saying if you want the person to contact you in a week, a month, or another time frame after your hearing?

... other ways to communicate, so that’s a possibility.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Thank you.
MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: There’s psychological support, sure, but we also want to be part of the action, we want to act, that’s what we need.

MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: Because we can give each other psychological support.

MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY: Yes.

MS. ISABELLE DUBÉ?: I think they can contact you for several reasons.

MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: We need help in the process of finding out the truth.

(Inaudible)

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: Shall we end the hearing here, and after we can talk about...

MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY: Yes.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK: So I’ll just officially say that we ended on March 13, at 1:16 p.m. Thank you.

(END OF RECORDING)

--- Upon adjourning at 1:16 p.m.
LEGAL DICAT-TYPIST’S CERTIFICATE*

I, Félix Larose-Chevalier, hereby certify that I have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this matter.

Félix Larose-Chevalier, September 9, 2018

* This certificate refers to the original transcript in French.