

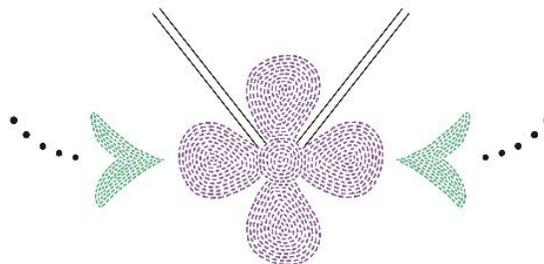
National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth Gathering Process – Part I
Public Hearings**

**Hotel Bonaventure
Montreal, Quebec**



Translation

Tuesday, March 13, 2018

Public Volume 61

**Françoise Ruperthouse,
In relation to Emily Germaine Ruperthouse**

**Heard by Commissioners Qajaq Robinson,
Brian Eyolfson & Michèle Audette**

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Les Résidences oblates du Québec	Non-appearance
	Non-appearance

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(NFAC), Sarah Nowrakudluk (NFAC), Laurie Odjick (NFAC),
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Michael Standup, Elaine Kicknosway, Edouard Chilton, Sharon
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Priscilla Bosum

Clerk: Maryiam Khoury

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Introductory Remarks

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Montreal, Quebec

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--- Upon commencing on Tuesday, March 13, at 9:11 a.m.

MS. KONWATSITSAWI M. MELOCHE: (Mohawk language spoken). We are here this morning. Again, welcome. (translating self) Good morning. (translating self) Hello. Good morning. We are here this morning to start another day of public testimony and we will start our morning with an opening prayer by Sedalia Fazio.

MS. SEDALIA FAZIO: (Prayer in Mohawk language).

So I say good morning and welcome. Welcome to Tiohtià:ke, in my language, known today as Montreal, Kanien'kehá:ka territory.

My name is (Mohawk name). I'm Bear Clan. I'm from Kahnawake.

So I open this day by saying let our minds become one as we think of these families that will be here today and as we think of the loved ones who are lost or the loved one who have passed on in the spirit world. We are here for them today. So let our minds continue thinking about them and our hearts continue praying for them.

And there were people who were wondering why we have this chair behind me. We have this empty chair, and for each family who comes here to testify today, that chair will be occupied by their loved one. That loved one's

1 spirit will be here with us. Remember that. Honour that. So
2 if you're wondering why, this is why we have an empty
3 chair.

4 I was saying this morning to someone that at
5 home, when we have a gathering or a meal, we always have
6 that empty chair and that empty plate, and that's for our
7 loved ones who are no longer with us. And everyone knows to
8 put a piece of their food on that empty plate to feed the
9 spirit of that loved one.

10 So keep them in your minds today as we
11 listen and let us pray that the right words come out, and
12 not only that the right words come out but the right words
13 are heard and understood and that all our allies who are
14 out there start helping us with all these things that hurt
15 us each and every day.

16 Many people don't realize what the
17 Indigenous people of these lands have gone through and what
18 we continue to go through each and every day.

19 You know, we often hear "Get over it; that
20 was 500 years ago." No, it wasn't. It happens each and
21 every day. If you live in our skin and look like we do, it
22 happens to us each and every day. So let's keep that in
23 mind and pray that the right words are heard and the right
24 words are understood.

25 Have a good day. (Mohawk language spoken).

1 Apple Store today, take a good 90-minute, 10-minute walk
2 down to Place Bonaventure, beautiful hotel here -- we're in
3 the basement. We're with Mother Earth because that's what
4 keeps us grounded. That's why we're in the basement a lot
5 of times. But come on out if you were in the Apple Store
6 today or if you're in the Apple Store this week, please
7 come out, because I know people have time on their hands in
8 Tiohtià:ke, in Montreal, because I see them. And sign up at
9 the public registration. You get a tag. You could come on
10 in in here, the hearings. As today, we will be starting
11 with H el ene Fran oise Ruperthouse, our family, community
12 public hearing today.

13 And I want you to also know that the
14 Inquiry, as challenging as it may seem to some people, it
15 is family-led. And if anybody who has ever lost a loved one
16 knows the challenge behind telling our stories, it's a
17 difficult thing.

18 And I have to commend the people who spoke
19 yesterday, Cheryl McDonald and the Blackned family, for
20 giving us their truth. And like Commissioner Audette said,
21 "We have to have truth here."

22 And as Cheryl spoke yesterday, I asked her
23 permission if I could write what she said, and she said,
24 "Yes, when we're being hurt, tell people. And when somebody
25 tells you they've been hurt, believe them."

1 An interesting story: a couple of weekends
2 ago, I went to see a doctor who said to me, "Can you
3 believe that 'me too' is getting so far?" I said, "Could
4 you believe that men too have gotten so far?" So 'me too'
5 is one letter away from 'men too'. So that means we're
6 looking at equality here. And when men have to begin to
7 worry about how they dress when they bend down, who they're
8 walking towards, towards a hall, you will know what it is
9 to be a woman and walk in our skin, because it is a
10 challenge. For me to walk down an alleyway in Montreal,
11 make sure all my Spidey senses are up, and for men, it may
12 be similar, but it's not quite the same.

13 So please hear, listen, take in. And that's
14 what the public hearings do when you come in, is that you
15 will feel a different sense than you will behind a screen,
16 because I watched the hearings behind the screen and I know
17 it's a different sense.

18 So I just want to welcome you all to come on
19 out. And I do know that I have a few people coming in from
20 Ottawa, literally on the train to come in. So, you know,
21 the women, bring your male folk. Bring your young men
22 because the sons and our daughters need to know what time
23 it is. And right now, we have this Commission because
24 somebody heard us. Somebody believed us to a point that,
25 yes, we still have to prove, like Commissioner Audette said

1 yesterday, we still have to prove that there's
2 stereotypical behaviours and prejudices out there, which
3 there absolutely is, and I can attest to myself.

4 But I do thank you all, and I just want to
5 challenge you to come on in today. And thank you for those
6 of you who have come in today. Thank you so much.

7 But please drink water because it is
8 challenging testimony. It is painful. So as our tears
9 disappear from our bodies, I want you to drink water to
10 bring them back in, okay? Because it is a -- it's a tough
11 hear sometimes.

12 Migwetch. Nia: wen. Thank you.

13 So H el ene Fran oise Ruperthouse, we are
14 calling her up.

15 As the family approaches, I just want to
16 thank you all. Thank you.

17 **COMMISSIONER MICH ELE AUDETTE:** So hello,
18 kuei.

19 So, the National Commission has a tradition
20 as it stops in the various locations across Canada. We also
21 have the privilege of having a large Inuit family sharing
22 their wonderful culture that is still very much alive. So
23 while the families get settled and the grandmothers come
24 and stand around the lovely Fran oise,
25 we'll ask Martha Greig to say a few words, please.

1 Thank you.

2 **MS. MARTHA GREIG:** (Inuktitut language). I
3 just want to mention a little bit about the Qulliq again
4 while they're getting ready. As I told you yesterday, this
5 oil lamp is very important to our lives. It gave us the
6 strength and the heat to survive. And also, even the men
7 did have -- did bring portable ones because they also need
8 to be out in the land and cook what they harvested, what
9 they are blessed with.

10 And I just wanted to share that I had a
11 beautiful dream last night that all this room was
12 surrounded by angels. I even had goosebumps. So to all the
13 people that will be speaking, you will be surrounded with
14 love by angels. So that's a good -- I thought it was a very
15 good start to do this.

16 Thank you.

17

18 **First Hearing: Françoise Ruperthouse, in relation to Emily**
19 **Germaine Ruperthouse**

20

21 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So good morning, dear
22 Commissioners. I would like to introduce the first witness
23 of the second day of this week of hearings. On my left here
24 is Françoise Ruperthouse, who will share the story of her
25 sister Emily Germaine Ruperthouse, when she was four or

1 five years old, was brought to the Amos hospital and never
2 returned. They found her several decades later.

3 So before handing the floor over to
4 Ms. Ruperthouse, I would like to ask the registrar,
5 Mr. Zandberg, to please swear in the witness. The witness
6 would like to be sworn in with an eagle feather and the
7 bible, a combination of the two.

8 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Thank you,
9 Ms. Wylde.

10 Before our registrar gets here, I would like
11 to ask our grandmother who is welcoming us, she has
12 something for you.

13 **MS. SEDALIA FAZIO:** I forgot to mention, you
14 will see around the room there are brown bags, and you will
15 see boxes of Kleenex. These brown bags are for tears. Take
16 your Kleenex that you're using, put them in those brown
17 bags. They'll all be collected at the end and they'll be
18 given to me and they'll be burned in the sacred fire.

19 (translating self) I forgot to mention that
20 there are brown bags and boxes of Kleenex. Those are for
21 your tears. All the bags will be collected at the end of
22 week and they'll be given to me and they'll be burned in
23 the sacred fire.

24 So for everyone, just put your Kleenex in
25 those bags, please. Thank you.

Hearing-Public
Françoise Ruperthouse
(Emily Germaine Ruperthouse)

9

1 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Hello.

2 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Hello.

3 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** So Françoise, do you
4 solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give
5 will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
6 truth?

7 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Yes.

8 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Thank you.

9 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So good morning. You have
10 been sworn in, right. Good morning, Françoise.

11 So I would like to ask you to introduce
12 yourself to the commissioners, perhaps starting with the
13 community you are from.

14 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** I'm going to
15 take off my glasses. My glasses are bothering me.

16 Hello. My name is Françoise Ruperthouse. I
17 come from Pikogan, a community of about 1,000 registered
18 members. About 650 of us live in the community. I come from
19 a big family. My parents had 17 children.

20 Earlier we talked about empty chairs. Well,
21 at our house there were two empty chairs. This is for my
22 mother. There were 17 children in the family, 11 girls and
23 4 boys. Why am I the only one here today? Half of the
24 family members have passed away and there are others -- I
25 think the others didn't have the strength to come and talk

Hearing-Public
Françoise Ruperthouse
(Emily Germaine Ruperthouse)

10

1 about all of this. It bothered me at first, but this
2 morning I'm better, calmer. I can understand that today
3 it's hard for both -- if I find it hard, I can imagine the
4 others, how they might feel.

5 So we are a large family, but I'm probably
6 the most stubborn of all of us. That's why I'm here. The
7 reason -- the reason I'm here is to understand and find out
8 what happened to my brother and sister who went missing.

9 One thing I must say before starting is that
10 my mother -- I asked my mother what she wanted me to do
11 when I got here. She said -- she cried. The three of us
12 cried, me, my sister and my mother, because my mother lives
13 with my younger sister. She said, "I'd like you to give the
14 government, the people who took my two children, a good
15 punch." She told me that today. She is living with that
16 anger and pain. She's been crying for the past three days.
17 She's not here because my mother, she doesn't walk much.

18 I said earlier, half my family is dead and
19 my mother is still alive. My father was the first to die,
20 my father who pushed me a lot to find my sister. He never
21 let up. He always said to me, "Keep looking." I was in
22 Quebec City and he said to look for my sister.

23 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So if you're ready,
24 Françoise, I would like you talk perhaps about Emily's
25 birth and her life before she was sent to the hospital.

1 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Okay. I was
2 talking about my mother, her suffering.

3 Fine, my sister was born in Amos. In what
4 year? Sometime in the 1950s. There are so many -- it's hard
5 for me to know. I have all the papers here. You should have
6 them, too. My sister was born in Amos and she was an active
7 little girl. She ran everywhere. My mother said that my
8 sister ran all over the place and that she was a real
9 handful, that she was constantly on the move and that she
10 was always taking off her moccasins in the summer. It was
11 outside. She ran in the field a lot. She liked to -- she
12 was always yelling.

13 And at one point, while she was running, she
14 got stung by a bee. My mother -- my parents had to bring
15 her to the hospital. While she was in the hospital, she
16 disappeared. My mother doesn't know what happened. My
17 parents never knew where she went. It took -- my parents
18 didn't speak French or English. They didn't know what was
19 happening with their child. They didn't know where she was.
20 She wasn't there anymore. She was no longer at the Amos
21 hospital. They wondered what happened and where she had
22 gone. For many, many years, they wondered, "What did they
23 do with our baby?"

24 To start with, this is the second child who
25 left. She is the second child who left, who went missing

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12

1 from the Amos hospital. There was another baby who had gone
2 missing earlier. That was my brother. My brother, he had
3 come from the woods. My mother brought him to the hospital.
4 He was accompanied by -- there were three people who went
5 to the hospital that time. They, they lived in the woods,
6 and they arrived in a helicopter, a seaplane. I remember --
7 I'm not quite sure. Messewin (ph), that means it was a
8 plane. She said that he was brought to the bank of the
9 Harricana River. They brought their children to the
10 hospital. The two others were twins. They were my cousins.
11 They were my Aunt Madeleine's kids. All three went to the
12 hospital, but my mother, it was her first child to go
13 missing. His name was Tony.

14 My mother said that it was a few months
15 after he went to the hospital. My mother stayed -- what my
16 aunt told me yesterday, she wrote to me, she texted me, she
17 said my mother had a house close to the hospital that used
18 to be -- an old credit union that was there. She stayed
19 there and they had visitors who told them that their child
20 had died, but that child, they didn't know where he was.
21 They never brought back a body. There was no body. There
22 was nothing, no certificate. They just said, you know,
23 "Your baby died." That was when he'd been at the hospital
24 for a few months, she said. But listen, the boy entered the
25 hospital and then he went missing a few days later, but she

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13

1 never saw him again. About two or three years later, they
2 said that he had died. And on the certificate -- I don't
3 even know if it was a certificate -- do you call it a death
4 certificate? We have a paper, a paper that says my brother
5 died at the age of seven at the Baie-St-Paul hospital,
6 whereas my parents were told that he died when he was about
7 three years old, after he was brought to the hospital.

8 What did they do with our brother? Why did
9 they hide? Those are the questions my mother is asking now.
10 What did they do with my brother during those years he was
11 at the hospital? What did they do with my brother and my
12 sister?

13 After my brother entered the hospital, a few
14 months later, that's when my sister went to the hospital
15 too and she went missing as well. That's two children. One
16 was not enough; they had to take another one.

17 My parents asked themselves all their lives,
18 "Where is my baby? Where are our children?"

19 It breaks my heart knowing that my mother
20 suffered her entire life, my father wondering what happened
21 to our children, and that today we discover that my brother
22 did not even die at the age of two or three as they said
23 but that he died when he was seven. What did they do with
24 these children?

25 I said earlier that Emily walked everywhere.

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(Emily Germaine Ruperthouse)

14

1 She played like a normal child. "My daughter was a handful
2 and she was on the go all the time." It was always -- she
3 ran in -- she was often in the field. The field was this
4 high, and she wasn't very big and she ran in it. She loved
5 to play there, and then one time she got stung by a bee,
6 and that's when she went to the hospital. But Tony had
7 already gone missing.

8 They don't speak Indian. My parents don't
9 speak French, and they couldn't go back and forth to the
10 hospital. They stayed in the woods. But in the summer, they
11 tried to stay in the city as long as they could.

12 You know, when we say that our children --
13 the children went missing, I remember that -- I don't know
14 who said it, but I heard it. We didn't know where the
15 parents lived. Those are big lies. I think it's a big pack
16 of lies because they weren't able to reach my parents for
17 these children, but they were able to reach all the other
18 children to bring them to the residential school.

19 It's important for us to know what they did
20 with our children. I searched for information everywhere.
21 I'm a person who likes to know things. One of the things I
22 discovered by reading tons of articles was that medical
23 experiments were done on Indigenous children. Is that what
24 they did with my -- my sister and my brother? I want to
25 know what happened.

1 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Members of the technical
2 team, if you will, Françoise would like to show some photos
3 to the commissioners. If you could put them up on the big
4 screen, please?

5 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** This is the
6 picture -- that's the condition we found my sister in. She
7 was disabled. When we found her, they said that -- it was a
8 -- it was a beautiful day. We were so happy to find her.

9 That's at the hospital where we found her.
10 There wasn't even a pillow. Her head was flat. It seemed
11 that she never had a pillow. Her head was always lying
12 flat. They kept her in a lying position. She ran all over
13 the place there.

14 That's another place where -- that's when
15 she arrived in Amos, because we had her transferred -- when
16 we found them, we had my sister brought there. It was
17 radical. I said to the others at the Baie-St-Paul hospital
18 -- this hospital was called, the ward my sister was in, it
19 was called the monster hospital. I think they're the ones
20 who created this. That's what they say, but we have our
21 doubts about them.

22 But that's when she arrived at Amos and we
23 were really happy to see her. She was too.

24 The doctor told us that Emily wasn't
25 conscious, that she didn't know anyone, that she didn't

1 know anything, and she had no -- it's as if to say she had
2 no feelings, but that's not true because that's the
3 condition we found her in.

4 It's funny, isn't it, after several years of
5 searching, I found my sister at Baie-St-Paul with the help
6 of the Centre d'amitié autochtone de Québec [Quebec City
7 Indigenous Peoples' Friendship Centre]. The woman's name
8 was Joanne Pinette (ph). She's no longer alive. She's the
9 one who helped me. She said, "Françoise, if you want, I'll
10 go with you" to see my sister. But I was really -- I was
11 really not in the shape I'm in now, I wasn't able to go and
12 see her because she told me she was disabled and that she
13 was not conscious, that she didn't know anyone, that she
14 didn't recognize people. So I didn't want to go alone.

15 That's when my father was really pushing me
16 to find my sister and that's what -- I went to the Centre
17 d'amitié autochtone in Quebec City for help, and they
18 helped me. So I didn't go then. It was in the '80s -- my
19 daughter hadn't been born yet. She's 26 years old. It was
20 more than 26 years ago. I wasn't pregnant either, so at
21 least 27 or 28 years ago maybe.

22 They called us. At one point, I returned to
23 Pikogan when my father was quite ill. My father, his
24 greatest wish was to find -- that I bring my sister home.
25 He was constantly bugging me, "Bring your sister back. Try

1 to bring your sister back. Work hard at it." We managed to
2 bring her back, although it took time for me to get going
3 on it, because I had to make changes in my life before
4 being able to do something to help others. I had to change
5 a lot.

6 So my sister, when -- I was quite young, but
7 I took care of my sister when she came, when we found her.

8 But at the time, the Baie-St-Paul hospital,
9 they had kept my sister for more than 30 years. They never,
10 never called Abitibi. They never gave my parents any
11 information to say, "Your daughter is doing well; your
12 daughter is like this" or "She's here at our
13 hospital." They never did that. But when she got sick, they
14 did make a call to Abitibi to say, "Your sister is
15 dying." She had pneumonia and she was dying. She was truly
16 on her deathbed. She was in a coma when we got there.
17 Earlier, her eyes were in -- it's probably because they
18 knew that we had -- we had tracked her down a few years
19 earlier.

20 But I say this because why did they decide
21 to call that day when she was dying?

22 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** You mentioned a bit
23 earlier that the hospitals -- the Baie-St-Paul hospital
24 told you that Emily wouldn't recognize you anyway.

25 Can you tell us how the reunion went?

1 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Right, when they
2 called and told us that we needed to come and see my
3 sister, the Pikogan health centre helped us, because our
4 family, we were very poor. There was no money, and we
5 weren't well educated either.

6 So when we got there, they had always told
7 us that Emily would not recognize anyone. She's not
8 conscious. She doesn't know anyone. "She wouldn't recognize
9 you anyway." But when we got there and took care of her,
10 she was in -- she was sleeping a lot, so we took care of
11 her. We put a sponge -- a stick with a sponge at the end of
12 it, I moistened her mouth. We each took our turn. And it's
13 like she came back to life. At one point, we gave her
14 juice.

15 Those are our hospital passes. Look at my
16 sister's colour as she looks at my mother. The first thing,
17 when my sister woke up, she looked at us. She looked at us
18 and she recognized us. She recognized my mother right away,
19 and the first word she spoke was "Mom"! We all cried. My
20 mother was so upset. She said, "All I want is to bring my
21 baby home to Abitibi." That was -- that was one of the most
22 difficult things we had to deal with. My mother was still
23 fit and then she cried and she said, "I want to bring my
24 baby home right away, today." We couldn't even do that.

25 The doctor who said she wouldn't recognize

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Françoise Ruperthouse
(Emily Germaine Ruperthouse)

19

1 us, I said to the doctor, I said, "She recognized us. She
2 even said 'Mom' to my mother." And he was like, "That's
3 impossible." It was quite something to find our sister in
4 that condition even though my mother had seen her run,
5 talk, shout in the past, and we found her in a state that
6 we couldn't even understand what had happened because they
7 didn't tell us. We don't have any medical records for my
8 sister. We don't even know if she was vaccinated. We know
9 nothing, nothing.

10 Like Tony's medical record, the two were in
11 the same hospital. When I said earlier that the two -- my
12 brother and my sister disappeared, they were both in the
13 same hospital. Why both in the same hospital?

14 The feelings we've had, that my mother has
15 had lately, in the past two years, the reporter who came to
16 help us -- I looked for a little help just about everywhere
17 to try to help my parents. I participated in many, many,
18 many things. I want to know, not just me, my mother -- my
19 father is no longer alive, but I know that his biggest
20 dream was to find out what happened to his two children.

21 We lived with Emily for about 10 years. I
22 can say that it's her too who -- she doesn't know it, but
23 it's thanks to her that I was able to get through -- to get
24 through all of the challenges in my life, and I think the
25 same was true for my mother because when I wasn't feeling

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20

1 well, I went to the hospital. In the end, we managed to
2 bring -- I forgot to mention it, but we brought Emily home
3 a few months later. My mother wanted to take her right away
4 when we were at the hospital. She said, "We're taking her
5 back. We're taking her back today." And we wanted to, I
6 wanted to as well, but the doctor didn't. It -- we were no
7 longer the ones who made the decision, besides he also told
8 us, the doctor. He said, "You aren't the ones who are going
9 to decide because the public trustee is responsible for
10 your sister. You're not responsible for her."

11 We took steps to -- that's right, I was
12 angry. I'm the type of person who's very -- my father
13 always said that I was the *enfant terrible* in the family
14 and it stayed with me, but when the doctor said to me, "You
15 can't take her," I said, "We're going to take her
16 anyway." I said, "I do know we're going to take her out of
17 this place, that's for sure. I'm going to take her. I don't
18 care what happens, but we're going to take her." And he
19 said, "No, no, no, you can't." And then he explained some
20 things. I calmed down at one point because I was getting
21 more and more angry. Sadness, anger, we had all those
22 emotions. And my mother wanted to take her too.

23 In the end we -- when she came back to life,
24 my sister -- I forgot this part -- we called a priest. I,
25 already, I went to a residential school and I already don't

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1 believe in priests. Well, listen, there must be some good
2 priests because this priest said a prayer as we had asked
3 before he died.

4 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** The last rites?

5 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Yes. Thank you,
6 Fanny. Yes, she knew all the words.

7 The doctor -- not the doctor, the priest
8 came to say a prayer and that's when my sister woke up. My
9 sister and I, when we -- later, when we talked we said,
10 "She really didn't want to go," and things like "She's
11 allergic to the priest." We don't know what happened, but
12 in any event, she didn't want to go, my sister.

13 It was a sad event, but the way she woke up,
14 it's as if she didn't want to die. It's not that. Maybe it
15 was a way of saying, "Come and get me." That's how we
16 understood it later. It was her way, "I'm tired of being
17 all alone." She must have felt that we existed and that we
18 -- because the doctor, when he told us she had no feelings,
19 no -- you know, she wasn't a robot. She wasn't a machine.
20 Being disabled doesn't mean you're a robot and that you're
21 not aware of anything. That's when we realized.

22 So when we brought her back, my sister, we
23 succeeded a few months later with the help of Isabelle
24 Matachi (ph) who was a social worker, we succeeded in --
25 she worked really hard. My goodness she worked hard. And we

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1 pestered her too. My father was already dead, but his
2 greatest wish had come true. And my mother, she was able to
3 live for a period of time with the daughter she had lost.

4 Any time we had -- I had problems, when I
5 wasn't well, the first person I thought of was to go and
6 see her. And instantly, when I went there, when I saw her,
7 all my problems disappeared. Me, it was nothing. My
8 problems were nothing compared to what she went through and
9 what my parents went through.

10 Just the times when my daughter doesn't call
11 me for two or three days, it bothers me. When my sons don't
12 call me for a few days, it bothers me. How many years did
13 they live like that?

14 It affected the lives of my mother's other
15 children as well. I became terrible, but that, I -- they
16 called me the black sheep because I was more demanding than
17 the others, I guess, but I think my parents didn't want to
18 bring us to the hospital anymore. I remember being really,
19 really sick, so sick that I heard the furniture talking.
20 It's crazy what I'm saying, but it's true. I was so sick. I
21 don't know how to explain it, sort of like -- I saw the
22 furniture. I could only move my eyes and I saw the
23 furniture talking to me, the chairs talking to me.
24 Everything was moving and I was going crazy in my room. I
25 heard my parents talking on the other side of the room, and

1 it was loud, loud. Everyone was talking loud and everyone
2 was talking to me, even the chairs. Wherever I looked,
3 someone or something was talking to me. I was completely
4 delirious. I was really sick, and they never brought me to
5 the hospital.

6 I didn't see my parents bringing their
7 children to the hospital very often.

8 I remember another time, my throat -- I had
9 a sore throat. She didn't want to bring me to the hospital.
10 I must have been about 10. I asked my brother to come with
11 me to the hospital because it was hurting too much. I had a
12 serious case of tonsillitis. I went by myself. I was about
13 10 years old.

14 That's what it did to my mother. Of course,
15 they also started drinking. I can't say that it's only
16 because of -- not just, but I mean, it's not -- the only
17 reason for their drinking problem, it wasn't just that
18 incident, but it was the surrounding incidents as well when
19 their children were taken away from the residential school.

20 My mother, what she's experiencing these
21 days is anger, and she doesn't understand why all of this
22 happened. "Why did I lose my children and why not the
23 others?"

24 You know, it's been just a year and a half
25 or so since we found out that the second one, Tony, died

1 and she never got his body back to be buried. She never
2 buried her baby.

3 Which makes me -- I really want to swear
4 right now. What makes me furious is that they never called
5 my parents to say, "Your child --." Of course they said
6 that one was dead, but the other, why did they never call?
7 Why did they never say, "Your daughter's here."

8 But they were able to find children
9 everywhere to bring them to the residential school, for
10 example. They found my sisters and my brothers to bring
11 them to the residential school, but they weren't able to
12 find my parents to give them news of my brother and sister?
13 There's a problem somewhere.

14 Who decided that my parents' children were
15 to be taken away? Who decided that? I want to know. It's
16 us, the children who stayed who experienced all the
17 repercussions of those events.

18 Two minutes?

19 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** The witness would like to
20 ask for a short five-minute break, please.

21 --- Upon recessing at 9:55 am

22 --- Upon resuming at 10:08 am

23 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So, dear Commissioners, we
24 are going to resume the session. Thank you for giving us
25 this break.

1 So, Françoise, if I may, I understand that
2 you would like to submit some documents to the
3 commissioners. May I submit them now?

4 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Yes.

5 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So I would like to submit
6 to the commissioners a first copy of the medical record of
7 Tony Ruperthouse, the young brother -- who is in fact
8 Françoise's big brother. You can see the birth date of the
9 child, Tony Ruperthouse, on the second to last page of the
10 document. So on the second to last page you'll be able to
11 see the birth date of the child Tony Ruperthouse.

12 In addition, I have a second document to
13 submit to you that the witness would like to file. These
14 are documents the witness had in her possession. You'll
15 find on the last page of the document, which shows the
16 length of time the child Tony Ruperthouse stayed at the
17 hospital. It says that the child remained at the hospital
18 for five years, 1 month and 19 days. So I am submitting
19 this second document to you.

20 And lastly, a third document showing that
21 Tony Ruperthouse was buried in a communal grave in Baie-St-
22 Paul. The third document, please.

23 So, Françoise, if I may, after having
24 submitted these documents, I would like us to take a little
25 time, to go back to the circumstances surrounding Tony.

1 So, about how old was he when he went to the
2 hospital, based on your information?

3 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** He was 2 or 3
4 maybe.

5 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Okay.

6 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Perhaps we'll
7 never be able to -- I will never know exactly what age
8 because my mother has become quite confused. Two incidents
9 happened close together. So -- but what I do know is that
10 when they brought him to the hospital, not long after -- I
11 say not long after because I can't tell you the months or
12 days the people came to my mother's house and my brother
13 Mucho (ph) overheard. My mother asked Mucho to go to the
14 other side. He heard my mother being told that her son had
15 died at the hospital.

16 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So shortly after he was
17 hospitalized, it was announced to your mother that the
18 child had died in hospital?

19 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Yes.

20 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** And the documents show
21 that he died several years later.

22 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Yes.

23 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So that's why these
24 documents are being submitted.

25 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Mm-hm. And

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1 right, these documents, we signed papers, my mother and I.
2 We asked -- there's a reporter who came to do the work we
3 weren't able to do. So she's the one who had those papers.
4 Otherwise, we, we didn't even know what to do. Listen, I
5 said it earlier, it had an impact on the family, both the
6 children and my parents. We didn't really know what to do
7 and the personal, the family value, we didn't value
8 ourselves at all back then.

9 These days, I, I feel it's important to know
10 what happened. My mother -- at one point, my mother wanted
11 to basically give up on finding out what happened, but in
12 the end -- I said, "Mom, what happened is not your fault.
13 They're gone. You had two children stolen from you. It's
14 not your fault." It's because she wanted -- that's when I
15 noticed that I'm also -- I worked in aid relations for a
16 number of years and I still work in the field and that's
17 why I notice that my mother, she doesn't put much value on
18 herself. She finds that it's not -- she doesn't feel
19 important enough for us to be working on this case. It's
20 unfortunate to think like that. It's because that's how she
21 was treated.

22 That's it. I needed to say it.

23 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So Emily was brought to
24 the hospital after being stung by a bee. Did the hospital
25 staff inform your parents that she was transferred to Baie-

1 St-Paul?

2 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Never. My
3 parents never knew, neither Tony nor Emily, they were never
4 told that the children were transferred to another
5 hospital. It was as if -- they disappeared. Where are my
6 children, one after the other?

7 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** And when you finally found
8 Emily years later at Baie-St-Paul, what did you do to find
9 her?

10 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Well, that's
11 what I was saying earlier, that it was the Baie-St-Paul
12 hospital that made a call to Pikogan to say that Emily was
13 very sick, that she was dying. We asked for help. My mother
14 definitely wanted -- I wanted to go too, because we didn't
15 want, we didn't know.

16 Listen, how is it that it took so long for
17 us to be able do something, to move, to go -- how is it
18 that we -- because we were used to living without them. We
19 never thought everything -- we never imagined it was so
20 serious. We didn't know. We didn't know the history. I
21 never - the family never tried to find or get information
22 on what happened, thinking that maybe -- we didn't even
23 think of that. It was only when -- it's my father who
24 pushed me to -- it's my father who got me into it. It's my
25 parents who ended up -- my father finally said, "I want to

1 know what happened. Where are my children?" He really
2 wanted to reconnect -- he really wanted to see his daughter
3 again.

4 Incidentally, I imagine he always thought
5 that Tony died as a baby, young. We say baby. But to know
6 that he died at the age of 7 -- first of all, is he really
7 dead? There's doubt -- we don't know for sure.

8 I've talked to the family a lot recently.
9 I'm in it all the time and I cry constantly. I'm always
10 complaining. I'm always swearing.

11 Vivianne knows how impatient I can get
12 sometimes. That's all I have inside me. What did they do
13 with my brother? What did they do with my sister? Why is
14 she disabled today? I mean she was disabled until the day
15 she died, although she ran all over the place and was quite
16 a handful; she was constantly screaming before she left.

17 Same thing for Tony, he was sick when he
18 went in. My mother said, "I know he had pneumonia." She had
19 children before that. She knew what he was sick with. In
20 the report, we see that it says -- yes, there's not much.
21 What did they do with my brother during those seven years?
22 I have nothing on Emily, but what did they do with my
23 brother? How many pages are there? There's nothing written
24 down. Did they vaccinate him? Did they give -- what did
25 they do with my brother to try to keep him alive? Did they

1 give him something? What happened?

2 My child, me, when he has bronchitis,
3 bronchiolitis, pneumonia, I can bring him to the hospital.
4 I'm close, yes. I speak French. I put up a big fuss if
5 anyone goes to take my children, my grandchildren, but my
6 mother, she brought her baby saying, "He has pneumonia. I
7 know he has pneumonia." And then she never saw him again.
8 And he ended up at the monster hospital. What's that about?
9 Where's the problem? It says that --

10 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** On this point, I ask that
11 the commissioners turn to the third page of the first
12 document I submitted. We see that the child Tony was one
13 year and six months old. There is a tentative diagnosis of
14 bronchitis and pneumonia and the result, it says that he
15 was cured. The first document that I submitted to you, on
16 the third page, you'll see that it says that the child, he
17 was indeed diagnosed with pneumonia, bronchitis/pneumonia.
18 The result at the right says cured.

19 If I may, Françoise, I have a question. When
20 you found Emily at Baie-St-Paul, did you question the Baie-
21 St-Paul staff when she arrived, how she got there? Did you
22 ask questions?

23 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Ah yes. We
24 didn't even have time to ask questions. There was a nurse
25 who came to meet us when we got there. She said, "I want to

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1 see you. I need to talk to you somewhere quiet." She
2 brought us to a quiet corner, I don't know where. And boy!
3 She said to us, "When your sister was brought here, she was
4 walking, talking and shouting. She ran everywhere." I said,
5 "But how did it start? Why is she like this now?" She said,
6 "As for that, I have no idea." She did like this. She
7 backed up. She said, "You're going to have to talk to the
8 doctor about that."

9 At that time, I said it earlier, we were
10 really happy to find our sister. We didn't know what to do,
11 how to act. We just wanted to take advantage of the time to
12 be with her. I didn't take the time to ask the nurse for
13 her name. I didn't take the time to get information. I was
14 too -- we just wanted to be with my sister.

15 My mother -- I told my mother what the nurse
16 had told us. She said, "I know." She said, "I know the
17 condition my daughter was in when she left. She was
18 running, walking and talking. She was yelling all the
19 time." Did something happen? Could her allergy have burned
20 some things in her brain? I don't know. There was just one
21 doctor. I would like to have a doctor validate this. As she
22 got older, did my sister have something that burned because
23 she was allergic to the bee that stung her? Did it break
24 something? Did it affect my sister's physical, intellectual
25 development? Did it break something? Can the doctor tell me

1 that today?

2 They too, when she told me that my sister
3 was running all over the place and talking when she
4 arrived, we started to have doubts. We started to have
5 doubts.

6 My brother, I asked Jeff -- my brother's
7 name is Jeff, one of my brothers, my younger brother -- "Do
8 you feel like going there with me? "No, no, no, I won't go.
9 It's too hard for me." It's hard for me. I've been in
10 recovery for the past 25 years. I understand my brothers
11 and my sisters who don't want to sit here. They all found
12 something. It's okay.

13 The first thing my brother said to me was,
14 "I know, I'm 100 percent sure that they did medical
15 experiments on our brother and sister." We all think so
16 anyway. I would never hide the truth because that's how we
17 think.

18 Just the fact that the nurse called us when
19 we arrived and said, "Come over here; I have something to
20 tell you. Your sister was walking and she was running
21 everywhere when -- we didn't know what she was doing here
22 at the monster hospital."

23 The reporter who worked on the case, she met
24 -- we had to -- I had to go and meet with her, but I can't
25 remember what I had. I wasn't able to go. I think I was

1 sick or I don't know, but we had to go see -- we had to
2 meet with the director at the time, the director who
3 received Emily and Tony. The two children were in the same
4 hospital and they never looked -- they never checked as to
5 whether they were brother and sister. Yet the papers
6 clearly indicate that the father is Joe Alfred Ruperthouse,
7 and the mother, Hélène Joséphine Wylde (ph) Ruperthouse.
8 Emily, it's the same thing, they knew who Emily was. They
9 knew. That's why they were able to contact us. They knew
10 who she was, but they didn't make the connection. They
11 didn't look, check whether they were brother and sister. I
12 get the impression that they couldn't care less. They don't
13 care when there are children, that it's a job. That's sort
14 of how we understand it.

15 We think that medical experiments were done
16 on my brother and sister.

17 Is my brother really dead? I don't know. It
18 raises some doubts. My mother is 84 years old. She just
19 turned 84, and the doctor often says, "She's at least 10
20 years older than normal, than an 84-year-old woman." So
21 physically, she's about 94 years old.

22 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Françoise, after all these
23 years, when you discovered the truth in your research, did
24 you question the Amos hospital? Have you ever asked them
25 why they transferred the babies?

1 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** We never did
2 that. It's only when the reporter came that she started to
3 do some research. She's really the one who did the work.
4 Us, we didn't know what to do. I never thought of doing
5 research, doing something. My mother, she wanted the facts.
6 She wanted where to search -- we didn't think of all that.
7 It felt like a huge, huge, huge amount of work for us. One
8 can find out a lot, but we didn't know where to start or
9 where to go. It's been too long. The story was trivialized.
10 Where are we going to go to search for answers when it
11 happened 60 years ago?

12 But still today, we'd like that -- I would
13 like to turn back the clock and be able to do what I did
14 there.

15 What I want to know -- sorry, Fanny -- I saw
16 that you'd come up -- what I'd like to know most of all is
17 what they did with my brother and sister. What happened at
18 that hospital for -- what happened? Why did they do that to
19 my parents? Why did they decide to take this child when
20 there were also my aunt's twins, who are my cousins, who
21 went at the same time. They took my baby -- I say my baby;
22 it's not my baby, it's my brother. It's my brother who left
23 and went missing. The two others stayed in Amos at the
24 hospital.

25 But I know that my aunt, when she was drunk,

1 her French was really good. Maybe she already spoke French
2 at the time, but my mother, she didn't speak French.

3 God, it's hard to talk about this story
4 because my mother has lived with so much guilt, my father
5 too, to the point where they became -- you know, I strongly
6 believe that when you drink, when you drink, it's to drown
7 something out. When you're addicted, it's because you have
8 a problem. I think my parents were filled with guilt,
9 remorse. It's not my son, it's my daughter, but I live it.
10 And why didn't we do anything about it also?

11 Who in the Pikogan community knew about it?
12 I did some research. Almost everyone knew what happened,
13 that the children went missing, that they left, but there
14 are all kinds of different answers.

15 I was even told that my mother tried to
16 borrow money to go and get the baby's body, the body of the
17 little boy. No one lent her money. No one gave her the help
18 she needed to get her baby's body. She was left -- they
19 were left on their own even. Nobody -- nobody helped my
20 mother, my father, to get the baby when they were living in
21 a community with lots of people who knew what had happened.

22 My mother borrowed money to go and get the
23 body and one answer she got was, "The baby's not there
24 anymore. He's dead. Why waste money like that?"

25 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** If I may, Françoise, I

1 understand that your mother wanted to go and get the baby's
2 body. Is that because the hospital notified her to come and
3 get the body?

4 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** No. She didn't
5 even know where to get the body. She asked to get it, but
6 she didn't know where to go. She didn't even know where to
7 go to get her baby, but she wanted to find him. The
8 reporter is the one who located the baby, but my mother,
9 when she found out that he had died, when they said -- when
10 the people came to tell my mother that the baby had died,
11 she wanted to go and get him, but she didn't know where.
12 But it was her -- how should I say -- her maternal instinct
13 that said, "I want my baby. I want my baby. I want to bury
14 him." Yet she didn't even know where he was.

15 And it was a lie too because he wasn't dead,
16 the little boy. He had ended up at the Baie-St-Paul
17 hospital. He lived until the age of 7. What did they do
18 with the baby during that time? Because they knew my
19 parents were alive. They knew.

20 There's a lot of anger. My mother,
21 yesterday, as I said at the start, she shook her fist at
22 me. It was anger she was showing. It's unfair.

23 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** When you wanted to bring
24 Emily home, I understand that the doctor told you that
25 Emily was now under guardianship.

1 What steps did you have to take to bring
2 Emily back? If you could share that experience? What was it
3 like for you, the challenges you faced in bringing Emily
4 home?

5 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** We left there
6 really frustrated, for sure, pleased that my sister had
7 come back to life and when we left, she was sitting on the
8 floor talking. She was wearing diapers, pyjamas. She had
9 gloves. She was sitting on the floor and looked at us and
10 laughed. She laughed and she had a beautiful smile. And we
11 were crying because it was time to go home, but the doctor
12 said to us, "You can't take her because the public trustee
13 is responsible for her." I said to the doctor, "We're
14 definitely coming back for her. We're coming back to get
15 her. Get ready to lose her. We're coming, regardless."

16 We went outside and we left. When we got
17 there, there was a long silence in the car. It was a long
18 time before anyone talked, not knowing what to say -- talk
19 about our feelings. We weren't able to say it, but we
20 cried. A few times I looked at my mother. She was next to
21 me and she was crying. And I said, "Mom, we're going to get
22 her. We're going to bring her back." We left.

23 My anger is the reason we succeeded. Seeing
24 my mother cry like that, when we got to Pikogan, the first
25 thing we asked, that we said to ourselves that we were

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1 going to do, we were going to meet with Isabelle, and she's
2 the one who would help us do the work. Back then, it was
3 called the Minokin social services. We went to see her and
4 asked for help. We had to bring back -- we absolutely had
5 to bring her back as soon as possible. So she, she was a
6 social worker. It was one step at a time, but for us it was
7 right away. As a dependent person, we wanted her right
8 away. So she worked hard that year. It seems to me that it
9 wasn't very long. We didn't wait for many, many months, it
10 seems to me.

11 We asked for a space at the special needs
12 house, the Clair home in Amos. They found a spot for her at
13 the Clair home in Amos. It wasn't -- oh my God, when we
14 found out that they had a space, we knew, she had to come
15 by plane, bring the things, and they were getting ready at
16 the other end. We were so happy that she was going to be
17 living close to us.

18 That's -- that's when -- because of those
19 special moments, we didn't think to do anything because we
20 were living, living with her. We didn't think to do
21 anything. I didn't know the story. My mother didn't talk
22 about it much. She didn't talk about it at all at home, but
23 we really felt -- I really felt the lack of love. I really
24 need to be loved. I need affection. I need someone to hold
25 me.

1 I look at my daughter's leg. My mother had
2 big legs and she was the one I leaned on. She didn't take
3 me in her arms. I hung on to her leg and she walked like
4 that. That's how I managed to bond with my mother. So
5 affection and all that stuff, there wasn't a lot of it in
6 our house. So it impacted our lives as well.

7 But the moment my sister arrived in Amos, we
8 couldn't be angry, or try to get answers to everything that
9 had happened to my mother, to my parents. I always refer to
10 my mother because my father is no longer alive, but I see
11 her, my mother, today, all her sadness, and her anger. My
12 mother is suffering a lot today. She is truly suffering a
13 great deal. She's been crying for three days solid.

14 My sister texted me last night. She said,
15 "Françoise, Mom's crying all the time." I said, "Let her
16 cry. Just stay by her side." My sister died in 2010. I had
17 gone on a trip outside of Canada. She had pneumonia and
18 wasn't able to -- and how is it that she had pneumonia in a
19 hospital, in a place like that? Okay, it happens to
20 everyone. But just the same, she got pneumonia and died.
21 But you know, the whole time we were living with her, those
22 were good times, so we couldn't stay mad and look for
23 problems everywhere. We just wanted to live with her, and I
24 think that that's what my mother wanted too.

25 But she's no longer here. She passed away

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1 too. Since that time my mother has gotten very, very weak.
2 She lives with a lot of anger, but also a lot of sadness.
3 But we talk about these events and she gets all mixed up.
4 She says, "I lost my husband. I lost my father, my mother,
5 my sisters, my brothers. I lost my children." She counts
6 her children. She lost six children, six children who died
7 plus Tony and Tommy who died. So she's lost a lot of
8 people. She has lost many, many people. So she lets go of
9 all these emotions on me. She has repressed them, but they
10 come out bit by bit. We pick her up. We try to be careful.
11 That's one of the reasons she's not here today. She has a
12 hard time walking. I know -- she also told me that every
13 day, she has her TV in the living room and she sees the
14 people -- the missing children. She says, "They lost their
15 children too." She listens to it. She doesn't even
16 understand French, but she watches and she can understand
17 it. She watches TV all the time.

18 So that's what my mother is experiencing
19 these days, anger, sadness, guilt, remorse.

20 Emily was -- it was one of the best moments
21 of her life, finding her and taking her in her arms. She
22 went to see her all the time and she always recognized us.
23 Every time Emily saw me, when I got there, she would say
24 "Ha!" That's what she did. And when she shouted, "Ha!
25 Ha!" like that, it was because she was happy to see us. She

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1 shouted, and sometimes I teased her. She was very aware. We
2 had some good moments. And when she saw Mom, she still said
3 "Mom! Mom!" That's what she said. It's not true that she
4 wasn't aware, this woman. We had some good times with her.

5 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** In closing, Françoise, I'm
6 going to give you time to give some recommendations to the
7 commissioners, some observations.

8 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** It's time for
9 the recommendations?

10 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** If you are ready, please.

11 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** I have my phone;
12 I wrote them in my phone. I didn't want to forget anything.
13 It's important to us that you look for answers. It's
14 really, really important.

15 The first thing I'd like for us to know --
16 I'd like an investigation into the two missing children --
17 who gave the authorization to send the children to a
18 monster hospital, because that's really what they called
19 it. It was a monster hospital, but my brother and my sister
20 were not monsters when they were at the Amos hospital. We
21 really need to know.

22 My mother is still holding up. I'm sure she
23 wants answers before she dies.

24 The second recommendation is to find out why
25 they didn't inform my parents and who signed the

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1 authorization to send the children to the monster hospital.
2 I say this with a lot of anger because it was not up to
3 them to decide who should send who to a hospital like that.
4 Why did they send her like that? I would like to know who,
5 who signed the papers. Why were my parents not informed? I
6 would like research done on why my parents weren't informed
7 of the whole disappearance? Why did my parents not sign
8 papers to send the children to another hospital, especially
9 the monster hospital. I hate that hospital because they
10 called it the monster hospital. They knew that it was a
11 monster hospital and they sent them there even though they
12 weren't monsters when they were at the Amos hospital.

13 Another one, this is my recommendation. I
14 would like the government to apologize to all the mothers
15 and fathers, who lost, that the government apologize to all
16 the families who lost their children through hospitals.

17 How are they going to do that? I think they
18 need to -- it's up to you to find out how to do it.

19 I would like them to come and see my mother
20 in the condition she's in. Who's living with my mother?
21 It's us. We're the ones dealing with her suffering.

22 Those are my recommendations. It's hard to
23 come and talk about all this stuff here. It's really hard
24 to talk about all of this stuff. I spoke for my mother, and
25 for my family, for my father. I want it to make a

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1 difference. I want something to come out of it. I don't
2 want it to sit on shelves like they did with the
3 residential schools, and like they did with other files.

4 I know that the government has been having a
5 hard time with Indigenous peoples. All they had to do was
6 not take our things and treat us that way. Things would be
7 different today.

8 We need to get something out of this. If
9 someone comes to hurt someone in my family, I'm a
10 grandmother, I'm a mother. I have four children. And I have
11 14 grandchildren. I have one great-grandchild. I work
12 really hard to keep my children, my grandchildren safe.
13 Someone hurts -- hurts them today, I guarantee that it
14 wouldn't go well. I would never let anyone harm my family.

15 And my parents, the fact that they lived
16 through that, it's like treating -- it's as if they didn't
17 have any life inside them. It's as if they were -- they
18 were treated like animals. That's how they treated my
19 parents, "We have the right to take your children as we
20 wish. We're bringing them to the residential school and
21 we're bringing them to the hospital." You know, they're the
22 ones who decided. It wasn't up to them to decide. We have
23 lives. My parents have feelings and they have emotions, and
24 I want justice for that.

25 Thank you.

1 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Migwetch, Françoise.

2 Now I would like to invite the
3 commissioners, if they have any questions or comments, to
4 share them. Migwetch.

5 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** We are
6 showing your community, Amos and Baie-St-Paul, so that my
7 colleagues can see the distance that separated your family
8 and your sister.

9 Thank you, Ms. Wylde.

10 Thanks especially to you, Françoise, first
11 of all, for having the courage to come here, far from your
12 home, to talk about something that has been a heavy burden
13 for a very long time.

14 Thank you for accompanying your friend. It's
15 always important to be supported in the truth process.

16 What you are doing today, there are people
17 who work for the federal government. There are also people
18 who work for the Government of Quebec. So in each province
19 we go to, there are what is called interested parties, so
20 the lawyers representing institutions or governments or
21 Indigenous organizations. Quebec Native Women is also an
22 interested party.

23 So your message is being heard. Your
24 message, it's clear that it's unacceptable. It is
25 unacceptable. You made it clear. Why were people treated

1 that way? And what's sad, we are now able to, the four
2 commissioners -- my colleague is in another room, behind
3 closed doors -- that in Northern British Columbia,
4 Yellowknife, Whitehorse, Rankin Inlet, Goose Bay,
5 Maliotenam, everywhere we have gone, there were children
6 who never returned after they got sick, never returned.
7 These are not isolated cases. Canada must formally hear
8 this. The inquiry unfortunately offers this place to say,
9 "It happened. It's not an isolated case. It happened over a
10 long period of time."

11 You said it right, residential schools, and
12 today, more and more mothers and sisters are going to come
13 and say, "My brother never came back. My little sister
14 never came back."

15 If you stay longer today, there will be
16 families talking about this, and not just one, several
17 families. I really admire them, as I really admire you.

18 The inquiry has special powers that Truth
19 and Reconciliation didn't have, nor the Royal Commission of
20 Inquiry, giving us the right to request documents by way of
21 subpoena.

22 I'm going to let my colleague -- we just
23 talked about this -- she has some more specific questions
24 for which Ms. Duchesne, the reporter, perhaps was unable to
25 get access because she doesn't have the same authority as

1 the Commission in terms of access. We must use it.

2 We also have the ability, Commissioners --
3 yes, there is a report coming out with some
4 recommendations, but in the meantime, it doesn't stop the
5 chief commissioner or one or more of the commissioners,
6 from saying to the governments, plural, that there are some
7 things that need to move forward.

8 So we obviously have the cooperation of
9 Fanny here, who's going to help us go further, to find out
10 exactly what action needs to be taken, and we must do it. I
11 said it yesterday; we won't have two inquiries like this
12 one.

13 For example, on the apology, this is an
14 example, and to link Emily's voice, Emily's spirit with all
15 the other children who have parents who deserve justice.

16 So on that matter, I, I -- I admire you a
17 lot. You've been pushing, you've been speaking up, for many
18 years. So I honour that. I am very honoured by it. And it's
19 unfortunate that this happened to you and it's our job, the
20 Inquiry too, to establish is it because we are Indigenous
21 peoples?

22 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Mm-hm.

23 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** But in a
24 country that needs evidence -- but we said it yesterday, we
25 know it, we experience it in our day-to-day lives. Our five

1 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** -- and all
2 the thousands of parents who lost children.

3 So we are wearing our commissioner moccasins
4 until the government says, "Thank you. You have completed
5 your job." But you know me -- you're going to become
6 familiar with my colleagues -- that afterwards, it's not
7 over either. We will have to fulfil these recommendations,
8 the significance of organizations pushing the state, the
9 provinces, the municipalities to apply the recommendations.
10 I'm going to personally monitor the situation, that's for
11 sure.

12 Thank you so much. Thank you, Vivianne.

13 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Thank you. I'm
14 sorry, I only speak a little French with my son.

15 So I have a couple of questions. I want to
16 thank you very much for having the strength and courage to
17 come and share with us this horrific experience your mother
18 and father and family continue to deal with and to try and
19 find understanding in. As a mother of a seven-year old, I
20 can't imagine this. As a Canadian, I can't imagine that
21 this can happen. It's not fair.

22 I have some questions about the documents.
23 The documents that Fanny provided us ---

24 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** I'm sorry, they were
25 provided by the witness.

1 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Okay. That you
2 handed to us, a technical lawyer, you.

3 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Well, it's on record, so I
4 want to make sure.

5 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** That you
6 provided. Were these -- it was the reporter that obtained
7 these from the government?

8 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Yes. They
9 weren't from the government. She got them at the Amos
10 hospital.

11 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Okay. And
12 these are all the documents she was able to obtain?

13 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** No, we only
14 received the -- she only received Tony's record. As for
15 Emily, she didn't manage to get any of her records. That's
16 why you just have Tony's record. Emily's record, we were
17 told it was the public trustee. She couldn't get them. The
18 request had to be made by the public trustee. So we weren't
19 successful at all.

20 And recently I called the hospital to see if
21 we could get the papers. We need to travel with my mother
22 to take her to the hospital. And I said, "She doesn't even
23 speak French. She doesn't even speak English." I said, "Do
24 you want me to bring her?" She said, "Yes, of course." But
25 I said, "She has a hard time walking." But I said, "Okay,

1 that's okay." I was thinking I would bring just anyone, a
2 mother who is in shape and she'll sign for my mother. She
3 doesn't know my mother. I'm going to do like them. That's
4 what I was thinking.

5 But I called my sister back. I said, "Try to
6 go to the hospital with Mom." You know, my mother doesn't
7 go out with just anyone. She doesn't go out with everyone.
8 She doesn't even want to go out to take -- go for a drive
9 with me. She's always -- either my car's not right or my
10 driving, or I complain too much. To her, I'm the black
11 sheep of the family. They said that. My mother, she has her
12 favourite kids, and I'm not her favourite. But when it
13 comes to complaining, I'm the right person.

14 So I asked my sister, I said, "Go to the
15 hospital with her and ask for all of Emily's records." But
16 she lost custody, so we don't know if she's going to be
17 able to -- we have a file that says we might be able to get
18 it because - me, I could get it because I had been - we had
19 applied for me to be the trustee, that I be responsible for
20 Emily, but I never got a reply.

21 I showed the papers to Fanny yesterday and
22 Fanny said to me, "The judge signed here. I think you're
23 responsible. You could." So that means that I might be able
24 to get the papers at the hospital. But I, I haven't seen
25 those papers. I only saw them when the reporter sent them

1 to me. I never saw those papers. My mother received them,
2 but she didn't show them to me, because my mother, when she
3 had Emily, it was perfectly normal that she wanted to
4 control everything. "It's my baby and I'm the one who's
5 going to --" I said, "Okay Mom, that's okay." I was right
6 there and, you know, okay, right. She handled all the
7 money. Yes, it's true, we did that, but for the doctor's
8 records -- not the doctor's -- but Emily's medical record,
9 I'm going to do something when I get back home.

10 So that's all -- for Tony, that's all there
11 is. There's nothing, nothing else. And that, there's
12 nothing in writing except for one thing that stood out for
13 me, it was that he was diagnosed as ill, idiocy.

14 On which page was it, Fanny?

15 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** If you go to the last page
16 of the second document I submitted to you, you'll see that
17 he was diagnosed at the end with idiocy. This one, at the
18 end, you can see he was diagnosed with idiocy.

19 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** How can you
20 diagnose a two-year-old child as an idiot? Me, I think
21 they're the ones who are idiots.

22 What do you think, dear?

23 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** The commissioners will be
24 reassured to know that in preparing Ms. Ruperthouse's
25 testimony, the Inquiry issued a subpoena to the Milieu

1 hospitalier d'Amos [the Amos hospital], as well as Baie-St-
2 Paul and, according to the information I have to date, they
3 sent or are going to send the documents. Once again, it's a
4 matter of time before we can access it all through our
5 software.

6 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Thank you,
7 Fanny.

8 In the subpoena request -- with the
9 subpoenas, was the trusteeship requested?

10 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** That's a fact that just
11 appeared in the testimony, but after the testimony, we can
12 always submit requests to the institutions.

13 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Is that okay
14 with you?

15 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Mm-hm.

16 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Thank you,
17 Fanny.

18 I was reading the documents you gave us,
19 this one here. I think this is the first package, and the
20 second page, and these were documents that were created
21 back in 1958. Is that correct?

22 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Yes.

23 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** And what
24 strikes me and what I want to read, because I want people
25 listening to see this and hear this, you asked the question

1 why did they not tell your mother and father? They knew
2 Tony's parents. It's right here ---

3 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Mm-hm.

4 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** --- on every
5 page.

6 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Mm-hm.

7 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Joseph Alfred,
8 Tony's father, Emily's father, your father.

9 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Mm-hm.

10 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Marie?

11 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Yes, Marie-
12 Hélène.

13 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Marie-Hélène
14 Joséphine, your mama. They knew.

15 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Yes.

16 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** They also know
17 Tony was an Indigenous boy. It says that he came from a
18 "nation indienne". It also says, "In case of an emergency,
19 contact the *agent indien*, person responsible."

20 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** It was the
21 person responsible. They called it the agent -- back then
22 it was an Indian agent who knew where all the Indigenous
23 people were, the families, where their camps were, where
24 they were located.

25 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** For the

1 federal government.

2 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Yes, for the
3 government, of course. They knew where to find us. It's not
4 true that they didn't know where my parents were when they
5 said that they had to be sent.

6 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Yes. I see it
7 here and it says the Department of Indian Affairs is
8 responsible. I wanted to point that out because it shows
9 that they knew who your parents were. They knew how to find
10 them. So I just wanted to confirm that this was telling me
11 what I'm reading.

12 Thank you so much. Those are all the
13 questions that I have.

14 Brian, do you have any specific questions?
15 Do you want to say something?

16 Thank you. *Migwetch.*

17 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Thank you.

18 **COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON:** I don't have
19 any additional questions for you, Françoise. I just want to
20 really thank you for coming here today and sharing with us
21 and telling us about your sister and your brother and what
22 your parents and your family went through, and for having
23 the strength and courage to do that and coming to be a part
24 of the National Inquiry. So thank you very much.

25 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Thank you.

1 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** So, you and
2 your daughter, would you agree to the Commission giving you
3 a gift, an eagle feather?

4 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Yes.

5 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Then I'm
6 going to ask our grandmothers -- this is the first time I
7 am able to speak in French to our grandmothers, and to
8 Pénélope, Bernie, Blu. You'll see, they're all cute.
9 They're really cute.

10 And where is Louise? I don't see her. Ah,
11 that's because she's tiny. Louise, you too. Look, they're
12 cute. They are great ladies.

13 And I would like you to know the story
14 behind these feathers. They have a lovely story from
15 Bernie's territory.

16 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Mm-hm.

17 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Bernie, she
18 lost her mother, her sisters and her brothers in the
19 Downtown East Side and she has been advocating for 33 years
20 in the downtown area for men and women in a vulnerable
21 situation. So she is helping us with the inquiry.

22 Do you know Pénélope?

23 **MS. FRANÇOISE RUPERTHOUSE:** Mm-hm, yes.

24 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Our lovely
25 Pénélope. Blu is Brian's grandmother. She does a very good

1 job of defending the whole two-spirit community, a very
2 strong woman, very strong. And the wonderful Louise, she is
3 the kokum in Qajaq. We all want to take her home with us.

4 You can explain the story behind the
5 feather.

6 **MS. BERNIE POITRAS WILLIAMS:** They wanted me
7 to explain this to you in French. I'm sorry, I can't. I
8 just want to say howa (ph) to you for your strength. Sorry,
9 I forget, you speak French. I'm all confused. I just want
10 to say howa to you in my language. I just want to say howa
11 for your strength and for your daughter here too. That was
12 very powerful and emotional. And thank you for your courage
13 and your strength to come here.

14 I want to explain. The eagle feather started
15 in my territory, in Haida Gwaii. It started with over 400
16 eagle feathers that the matriarchs picked on the
17 shorelines. So we've done a call-out nationally to every
18 grandmother, Sundance chiefs everywhere in Canada. So this
19 has come from the Sunshine Coast, between Vancouver Island
20 to Vancouver in a reserve that's called Seashell. It's a
21 small, remote area that they've sent the eagle feathers. So
22 it's made its way all over here.

23 So we just want to say howa to you again on
24 behalf of the Commissioners.

25 If you would be so kind to accept the gifts?

(PRESENTATION OF GIFTS)

MS. FANNY WYLDE: As the gifts are being given, I'm going to ask if we can adjourn this session, Commissioners?

Thank you.

EXHIBITS (code: P01P13P0201)

--- **Exhibit 1:** Folder of ten images displayed during the public Testimony of Françoise Ruperthouse [Filename: P01P13P0201_Ruperthouse_Exh_1]

--- **Exhibit 2:** Authorization to provide the information contained in Tony Ruperthouse's record, #DT9060 (nine pages)

--- **Exhibit 3:** Reply to an access to information request concerning Tony Ruperthouse HDP 11054, document provided by the Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux de la Capitale-Nationale (three pages)

--- **Exhibit 4:** Communal grave ("fosse commune") information for Tony Ruperthouse (three pages)

--- Upon recessing at 11:16 am

TRANSCRIPTION CERTIFICATE*

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

Nadia Rainville

Nadia Rainville

March 23, 2018

* This certificate refers to the original transcript in French.