National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
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Statement - Volume 505

H.H.

Statement gathered by Francine Merasty,
Commission Counsel

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ORDER

Pursuant to Rule 7 of Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice, Chief Commissioner Marion Buller ordered that all names be made anonymous in this transcript and any related documents. The order for anonymity was made June 7, 2019.
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Documents submitted with testimony: none.
Toronto, Ontario

--- Upon commencing on Wednesday, October 10, 2018 at 1:11 p.m.

**MS. H.H.:** I'm beating myself up.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Yeah.

(LAUGHTER)

**MS. H.H.:** Okay, that's it. I'm done.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Are you ready to start?

**MS. H.H.:** For sure. Yeah.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** This is Francine Merasty, statement-taker with the National Inquiry Into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. We are in Toronto, Ontario. The date is October 10, 2018, and the time is...

**MS. H.H.:** 12:30?

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** 1 --

**MS. H.H.:** Oh.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** -- 11.

**MS. H.H.:** 1:11.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** P.m.

**MS. H.H.:** P.m.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Yeah. Today I'm speaking with [H.H.] of the [First Nation 1]. She resides half-time in [City 1] and half-time in Toronto. She's here
to tell the truth about herself and her experience with a 2006 assault that happened to her at [Town 1 in Northwestern Ontario], and there's no one else in the room with us. There's only me and [H.H.].

[H.H.], you are voluntarily here to provide your truth in regards to your 2006 assault, and you agree to the video-taping and audio-taping of your truth?

**MS. H.H.:** Yes, I do. Yeah.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Okay. You can begin.

**MS. H.H.:** Okay. Yes, hi. My name's [H.H.], I was a social worker up in [Northwestern Ontario First Nation 1]. It was a new job which I started. It was a year, and I got my two weeks off, and I was only permitted to come in once a month to pick up my groceries and whatever supplies I needed for the month, and one thing they did up there was they paid me in cash, and everybody knows everybody got paid in cash. So whoever came in, everybody knew there was a lot of money, and --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Can -- can you tell me about [Northwestern Ontario First Nation 1]? Like, is it an isolated community? Do you have to fly up there, or --

**MS. H.H.:** Yes. [Northwestern Ontario First Nation 1] is a 3-hour flight from [Town 1 in Northwestern Ontario], and it only flies in and out twice a month, and I
H.H.

was only permitted to go out once a month to do my banking
and pick up my personal stuff.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So it's a really --

MS. H.H.: It's an isolated -- it's a
remote -- no fresh fruit, no fresh meat. There's no trees
on that island. All the water is polluted. They have to
bring in water. They have to bring in the food, and
I -- actually went to the grocery store there. They have a
[Store 1], the only store, and I went to buy a little
80-milligram or 80-gram package of baloney. It was green,
and they wanted almost $20 for it, and that's the food that
the government is giving the people up north.

I picked up a box of oranges, fresh oranges,
those big naval oranges. I took them up. They didn't even
know what they were. What's wrong with the government?
Why can't they send them up fresh fruit? We have -- we
have plenty for the entire world, but yet our own people
are being neglected. They're not being fed the proper
food. They're not getting the health care which
they -- they require. They cannot come and go as they
please. They are isolated. They want to leave but they
cannot leave because there's no jobs, there's no money, and
there's no food. They're just slowly dying one by one, and
I -- I actually believe that -- I was told up there that
they were actually killing people and eating them because
in the winter it gets so cold. What they do is they burn
their furniture for heat, and they eat -- they turn into
cannibals in the wintertime because there's no food and
they got no money to get out, and there's no such thing as
a food bank, nothing up there.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So you were working
there as a social worker?

**MS. H.H.:** I was working there as a social
worker for a -- for a good year, but I was flying for ten
years to different islands because of the high suicide rate
at that time. It was a very high suicide rate, and at that
time, the children -- it was children suicide. They were 5
and under, and I was burying at least two children a week
minimum which were under the age of 5. The parents were
around somewhere, I don't know, but they only had so far to
go on the island. There's nothing on the island, so you
could see -- you could look in the -- in the old shacks.
They're tar shacks, not insulated. It's cold, very cold --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** And what year was
this?

**MS. H.H.:** This is -- was in 2006.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Oh.

**MS. H.H.:** Still happening in 2006.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** And you're saying
5-year-olds are committing suicide?
MS. H.H.: Yeah, and the following year it went up to the teenagers that did the suicides, and the year after that it hit the ones in 20s, and right now since I've been away from contact with anybody up there, I've been busy looking after my injuries and getting myself healthy again, both traditionally and the way the white people -- the traditional white people way, I guess, which is our way because there's many things which they stole off of us, like aspirins. We never got compensated for any of that, and somebody should get compensated because it was the Aboriginal people who originally made it, but they never received anything. There's many medicines out there the government owes thanks to Aboriginal people, and -- and they don't even get a "thank you," which I find extremely rude, and they sit there and they make billions of dollars off of us, and we don't see one red cent or that "thank you." That "thank you" is so important in -- in our culture, and in our culture we don't say thank you. We have say Miigwech or chi-Miigwech, which means "thank you very much" or just -- Miigwech means "thank you."

And what happened on this day in [date in June] in 2016 [sic], I was flying in. I was finished for the year, so I got a motel room, and I stayed there because I was tired, wanted a break away from everything, and all of a sudden I seen my friend up there. She resided up in
[Southern Ontario First Nation 1] where I resided. I had a house up there, also, and she was there, and she had two guys in the truck with her. They looked like biker guys. I never seen them before, and I'm walking down the road with the two big bags, walking to my truck. I just got off the plane, and I got all the cash in my pocket and my wallet, and I'm carrying these two really heavy bags, and they see I was struggling, and I seen a big smile on their face. They pulled over and offered me a ride to my truck, and of course I offered. I knew the person, but we drove right past my truck. I -- I told them -- I yelled at them, whoa, stop, that's my truck here, but she kept going, and then she turned left into a logging road, and then once they got past the logging road around a few trees and that where you couldn't see the truck, they threw me out of the truck, they grabbed a crow bar -- well, first they asked me for the money, and I told them, no, I already went to the bank, but they -- I never knew that they were watching me all along getting off the plane and everything, so they knew I -- I didn't just get off -- that I went to the bank.

So they emptied my pockets right there, and they ripped my pants down to knee-length and dug through my pocket. They got my wallet out of my bag -- out of one of my bags, and then they got all my cash out and they took that. They went to the bank. They emptied my bank
account. They maxed out my credit cards, and the only way
that they got the number -- my pin number was they held
guns to my head and they were firing shots. They wanted me
to dance, but I was beaten so bad I couldn't even walk or
sit.

So they dragged me over to this swamp, and
they dunked my head over, and I remember watching
"Gilligan's Island" as a kid. I was raised very well. My
family did not drink. They did not smoke. I was raised in
a very strict household. My dad was [European
nationality], and he's very strict. When work had to be
done, it had to be done now, and there was no smoking, no
drinking, very strict, but we were fed good. We were
dressed good. We were taught manners, etiquette. We were
taught -- and then we got taught the traditional way by my
mother. After my dad find out -- found out that -- that
the drinking had slowed down on the reserves and there's
dry reserves, that's when he permitted us to go on
reserves. He kept us off as long as he could, but I always
had to go with my mother to all the funerals.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So -- so before -- I
just want to go back to the assault there. So they
were -- they put your head in the water?

MS. H.H.: They put my head in the water,
and I tilted my head just a bit, just enough to get a
little bit of air, and then they kicked -- he -- both of
the guys, they must have been 300 pounds. I don't know who
they were. They had steel-toed boots on. I was on the
ground. They were busy hoofing me. Once they dragged me
to the water, they dunked my head in, and I was holding my
breath, and then when I came up, I just went on a little
tilt like that, just enough so I wouldn't move the water,
and I had myself against two rocks. I was holding myself
up against two rocks like that so I wouldn't slide in or
make a mistake, and I just laid there. It felt like
forever. It felt like -- oh, at least half a day it felt
like, but really, it must have only been ten minutes.

And then I went to get up. I heard the
truck finally start. I heard them leave. I got my head
out of the water and I listened, and I never heard anything
for about 15 minutes, so I got back in my truck after they
smashed it up with a crowbar and left a few souvenirs on my
car, marking it all up, smashing the window, smashing this,
smashing that, because I had to walk to my car, but once I
tried to get up from the swamp/river, I couldn't walk. My
legs didn't operate.

So I ended up walking like a duck down on
two legs, and I got to the hospital. It must have taken me
a good two and a half hours to duck-walk to the hospital.
I was down -- actually, I will show you how I was. I was
down like this, and I had to walk approximately two and a half kilometers in this position. I had to walk two and a half hours, and once I got to the hospital, the doctor called me an effing Indian drunk and to get the hell out of the hospital, and -- so -- so I just went back to my truck, and I got myself back in just like so. It took me a good half-hour. This won't take me a half-hour, but this is exactly how I had to get in, and I was crying all the -- all that time.

And then I finally got myself in, and I waited until 7 o'clock until doctor change, and then I went in. That doctor took me in immediately. They did x-rays, they did everything, and then they didn't have any room in the [Town 1 in Northwestern Ontario] hospital, so they put me up at the [Hotel], and I was there for a month. I lost 80 pounds in that one month, and still to this day I'm dropping weight. I -- I put on 20 pounds, and in one week, I lose that 20 pounds. I --

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So this happened -- so this happened in 2006?

MS. H.H.: This happened in June - [date in June], 2006.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: In [Town 1 in Northwestern Ontario]?

MS. H.H.: In [Town 1 in Northwestern
Ontario], Ontario.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** And what -- do you remember what kind of injuries you sustained?

**MS. H.H.:** Yes. My sciatica got smashed.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** What -- what part of the sciatica is it? Like, the back?

**MS. H.H.:** Right dead centre, and it -- and that's our main nervous -- this controls all our nerves --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Yeah.

**MS. H.H.:** -- in our system, so --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So what -- what happened to you there during the assault? Like, what did they do there?

**MS. H.H.:** During the assault, she used the crowbar, just went nuts on the crowbar. I found out later that they were all stoned on coke, and the injuries which the doctor reported was -- I was supposed to be casted up. They did not cast me up, or else I would have been healed faster. I sustained back injuries. I -- I sustained -- I had a great big goose egg out to here, at least two to three inches, because she got me really good on the side of the head, that --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** With the crowbar?

**MS. H.H.:** With the crowbar, and that's when I dropped and the guy started booting me around, and then
they got everything they wanted. That's when they dragged me over to the lake -- to the stream --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Was this, like, a random attack?

**MS. H.H.:** Yes. It was rare -- it -- it was rare for her to be even there when I pulled up in the plane.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** And you know this person?

**MS. H.H.:** I knew the driver. That was it. I didn't know the two gentlemen that were in there. They must have been 300 pounds. They were both wearing leather jackets, and they were both -- they both had on Harley-Davidson black boots.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Yeah.

**MS. H.H.:** And --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So to this day, you don't know who they are?

**MS. H.H.:** No. I never did get a look at their faces.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** But the woman, you know who she is?

**MS. H.H.:** Yeah. I can pick her -- yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So did -- was there
any assault charges?

**MS. H.H.**: I went to lay charges. I went to Thunder Bay. I got a lawyer, and I asked the [Police Service 1] because the [Police Service 1 officer] that was on duty happened to be the brother-in-law of the woman who beat me, and he was also on coke, and -- and -- he was all part of this -- they had this all planned because my report -- when I went to lay the charges, the -- my reports went missing. I contacted [Police Service 1] to inform them that, yes, I did just do a statement with one of your officers, the statement will be coming in.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY**: So --

**MS. H.H.**: That statement never arrived.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY**: How far is [Town 1 in Northwestern Ontario] to Thunder Bay?

**MS. H.H.**: [Town 1 in Northwestern Ontario] to Thunder Bay is approximately [a certain number of hours].

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY**: Oh, okay. And do they have police services in [Town 1 in Northwestern Ontario]?

**MS. H.H.**: Yeah.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY**: Okay.

**MS. H.H.**: Yeah. And then there's [Town 2 in Northwestern Ontario], which -- which is the [Police
Service 2], and that's who I went to after I went to the
[Police Service 1].

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So why did you decide
to go to [Police Service 1] before [Police Service 2]?

MS. H.H.: Well, because the [Police Service
1] are the ones that took the report first.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay.

MS. H.H.: Well, they took the only report.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Did they --

MS. H.H.: And then --

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: -- take the report,
like, in the hospital or after you got there?

MS. H.H.: They took the report -- they came
into my motel room -- because there was no room in the
hospital as I stated previously -- and I had two witnesses
in my room with me when that officer was there and writing
down the statement. He never gave me a copy of the
statement, and when that lawyer asked me for that
statement, I went looking for it. I went to the [Police
Service 1]. I went straight to the office. I even helped
them look through the files. There was nothing there, so I
went to the [Police Service 2 office in Town 2 in
Northwestern Ontario]. They said maybe it went there, so I
went there. They looked. It wasn't there. It just
disappeared, so I could never lay charges, and -- but I
have been told by at least 15 people from that
reserve -- from [Southern Ontario First Nation 1] reserve
that she was out to kill me for my money, and that was just
my incident which happened to me.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So --

**MS. H.H.:** And --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** -- did you know this
lady before? Like, what kind of interactions did you have
with her?

**MS. H.H.:** She was the one who -- her father
is a Chief of [Southern Ontario First Nation 1] and I just
moved into town. I just got a job with [Employer], and
they offered me double the pay and a house, and -- so I
couldn't turn down the offer. The pay was too good. So I
took that job. I worked there for nine years, and then
I -- and then everybody was not going to school and
not -- not coming to social work and that, so I went
somewhere where I was needed, and I carried on -- you know,
like, even -- even if they needed help, you know, I would
take time out of my day, and I would put them aside --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So --

**MS. H.H.:** We -- we would walk --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So the woman was just
an acquaintance? Like, she wasn't your client or -- she
was just part of the community where you worked?
MS. H.H.: Yeah. Yeah, and she's the one who got me into the reserve because of her dad.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay.

MS. H.H.: And at first, he said I had to share a house with her, which I didn't mind --

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: M'hm.

MS. H.H.: -- you know, because she had her son, and then -- you know, I was by myself by that --

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So she was your roommate?

MS. H.H.: Yeah. I was staying at her -- her place.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay.

MS. H.H.: But I eventually got my own house because I raised 15 of those children from one family.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Yeah.

MS. H.H.: The mother just keeps popping them out every year.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: M'hm.

MS. H.H.: She -- and she's only 49 now, so I don't know how many more -- well, 49 when I left, so I don't know how many more she's pumped out since then. Plenty. Too many. A woman who does not deserve children. And as far -- I got a lot of information from being a social worker, and on the street, I heard it quite a bit of
where the missing women are. There was one gentleman in
[Northwestern Ontario First Nation 1] who knew where bodies
were buried in [Northeastern Ontario Town 1], and I asked
him, how -- how do you know where this is hidden? He goes,
well, my uncle's a police officer, and -- and then he went
on to tell me -- he goes, yeah, he goes, it's -- my uncle
rapes and kills all these little squaws -- and that's
exactly what he called us, squaws -- and I just looked at
him. I didn't even think that word existed anymore. You
know, when he said that, then I got, okay, well, I -- I
know how the police think here. And I went to speak to one
of the friends that I used to work with. I worked with her
for nine years --

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: And where was this?

MS. H.H.: In [Northeastern Ontario Town 1],
Ontario --

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Yeah.

MS. H.H.: -- which is only an hour and a
half from [Town 1 in Northwestern Ontario].

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: And what were you
doing there?

MS. H.H.: I was visiting one of my friends
that I worked with.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Yeah.

MS. H.H.: And she also informed me that
another girl got raped and murdered the night before by another police officer. A week prior, three girls got murdered.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Yeah.

MS. H.H.: And before that, there was close to 25 girls that went missing, never been found yet.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Just in that one place alone?

MS. H.H.: Just in that one area, yeah, that one area, and I don't know what goes on in the rest of the area, but the -- this is just a little area, and this is how much is going on up there, and the government is not stepping up. Go up there with a fake name. I dare any politician to go up there with a fake name and try to live there for one week. I will pay you. I will pay your flight up there and back. You go up there with a different name.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: You're talking about --

MS. H.H.: Justin. I really would like you -- I know you know me, and I want you to go live for one week up -- go live in [Northwestern Ontario First Nation 1]. That's the closest one. That'd be the safest one for you. Everybody carries guns, but there's -- you never hear of anyone getting killed by a gun. So I don't
know what's wrong -- why society does it, but the Natives
don't do it, and we don't sit there and we don't drop 200
bears just for their gall bladder. The animals we kill, we
eat. We feed our Elders first. I would drop five moose a
year. The first one goes to the Elders, and if there's
more Elders that need it, they get it, and then it goes to
the next biggest family, they get it. I usually drop five,
and then other people drop more if they wanted more, but I
made enough -- I made sure I shot enough for the entire
reserve.

But I dare any politician to go up -- go up
with a fake name. Do not use your real name. They'll know
you, and especially you, Justin. They know you. Send up
one of your colleagues. Go stay in [Northwestern Ontario
First Nation 1] for one week. One week. Eat the meat.
Enjoy the food, because you cannot eat the fish up there.
You can't eat the moose up there, and enjoy the green
buffalo -- I mean, the green baloney that you have to eat.
There's no fresh food up there. Go live up there for one
week, please.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: What about the wild
meat? Is it good?

MS. H.H.: No. All the meat is
contaminated. You cannot eat the meat.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: What's contaminating
it?

**MS. H.H.:** The -- all the garbage that they're secretly dumping into the lakes. They do that about 2 or 3 in the morning. They're dressed in white suits. There's two of them. One's holding a big hose, the other guy's -- and right on the side of the truck reads "toxic," and they go at night when they think no one's going by, and they dump it all in the lake, and I sat there and I got pictures of them dumping it in. They -- and on my very last picture, my flash went off. They came running after me. I just start -- just started the truck and I just left. They never did catch me.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Who was dumping this stuff?

**MS. H.H.:** There was no name on the side of the truck. They have been doing it, then, for two years because I caught them six times, and this is late at night because I would go to the bingo. The bingo's not out [sic], and it was a two-and-a-half-hour drive home, and that's when I would catch them, just when they think nobody's around, and I caught them doing that, and -- oh, yeah. You pay the police something, you'll get away with anything up there, and there's many Aboriginal women's bodies up there.

Actually, underneath the [Town 1 in
Northwestern Ontario] hospital, there's over 5,000 newborns; healthy, murdered newborns. There's a doctor which the [Town 1 in Northwestern Ontario] hospital has hanging up -- proudly hanging up, and it's right in the centre the minute you walk in that door. That picture has to be taken down. Excavation has to -- has to be done underneath [Town 1 in Northwestern Ontario] hospital. There's over 5,000 newborn babies. Nothing wrong with them. He killed them, and I got verification from -- there was 75. That was a big circle that night, and every one of them lost the baby, and none -- none of them were sick. They walk -- they -- they walk in pregnant, they walk out not pregnant but with no baby. The baby's under the hospital. Jeez, he forgot to give them the directions. That doctor purposely killed -- I -- I really don't know how many thousands. He was up there for almost 40 years by himself doing this.

And also, there's a lot of dirty lawyers up there along with police. The bands, they are not poor up there. They have the money, but that -- it's the Chiefs who are pocketing the money. There's over a million dollars just -- on one reserve that I know that's being hidden by a lawyer. You guys have him. I'll let you know that. You have charged him, but I hope you figure the rest out because it's for the safety of all the people up there,
of what's left, the ones that aren't starving to death.
Change has to be made.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So going back to your
assault, what -- how has it affected you, like, after?

**MS. H.H.:** I am more -- oh, I'm extremely
cautious. It's made me more paranoid of trusting people.
I -- I have a very hard time trusting people.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** What about
physically?

**MS. H.H.:** Oh, physically, I've been a
physical mess since that happened. I'll -- I'll trip
over --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** I see -- I see you're
using a cane. Were you using a cane prior to your assault?

**MS. H.H.:** No. I never used a cane. I was
healthy as a bean. I -- I could haul out moose. I could
haul out whatever. It didn't matter. I was in tiptop
shape.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** And after the
assault?

**MS. H.H.:** After the assault, I was in a
wheelchair, and then I -- I'm bound and determined to get
healthy without the use of crutches. I have crutches in my
truck. I have my cane right here. I hate using it, but I
have to in order to get better, and I'm in constant pain,
24/7. I'm on the strongest painkillers. I do not even want to be on painkillers, but the doctors cannot find out, cannot heal it. I'm taking epidural steroid shots trying to get rid of the pain so I can get off the painkillers because I hate being on them, and I'm an emotional mess every morning that I wake up. I pray to the Creator for another nice day and a healthy day, and if I get that, that's a bonus.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So you said that you made a statement to the police and then the statement went missing.

**MS. H.H.:** Correct.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So then you couldn't -- they couldn't file charges against the woman --

**MS. H.H.:** That's -- that's correct.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** So then what happened after that? Like --

**MS. H.H.:** I -- my mom called me. She was sick, so I left the hospital and I went and looked after my mom for five years, and she passed, and then I -- and then -- that's when I came down to get fixed down here in Toronto, and I've been down here since.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** M'hm. Can you tell me about your background, like, how you grew up and maybe your education and things like that.
MS. H.H.: Yeah, sure. I had a fantastic childhood. I bought all my toys. I was taught how to take care of your money, buy what you need, but of course I needed my little motorbike, my little toys, my little Ski-doos, and we did not ever do without a meal. There was always three full-course meals a day. My mom was home 24/7.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Where did you grow up?

MS. H.H.: I grew up in [Northeastern Ontario Town 2]-- I was born in [Ontario City 1], and we moved to [Northeastern Ontario Town 2] when I was 2, and I lived there, well, until my mom passed in 2011.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So your dad is [European nationality], you said?

MS. H.H.: Yeah, my dad's [European nationality].

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: And your mom is Anishinaabe?


MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Oh, okay.

And -- and --

MS. H.H.: And my dad passed away --

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: And how many siblings do you have?
MS. H.H.: I have two sisters and a brother.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay. And your dad passed away?

MS. H.H.: He passed away when he was only 53. That was almost 30 years ago --

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay.

MS. H.H.: -- that he passed. He passed young. Massive heart attack, eh?

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So where did your mom grow up?

MS. H.H.: My mom grew up on the reserve in [Northwestern Ontario First Nation 1].

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: And where is that located?

MS. H.H.: [Description of Northwestern Ontario] --

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Yeah.

MS. H.H.: -- and [description of Northwestern Ontario].

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So how far would it be from Toronto?

MS. H.H.: What -- the reserve --

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Yeah.

MS. H.H.: -- or -- oh. From Toronto?

Okay, like, [description of travel].
MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: By road or by plane?

MS. H.H.: Driving.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Driving? Oh, okay.


MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay. And where did -- where did your mother meet your father?

MS. H.H.: They met in Toronto, actually. Mom was working at [Employer].

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Oh, okay.

MS. H.H.: And my dad was -- he could not -- he was taking English lessons at Ryerson, and he was taking electrical as a trade.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Did he move here from another place?

MS. H.H.: No. He got transferred to [Town 3 in Northwestern Ontario]. I don't know why I can't say that.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: [Town 3]?

MS. H.H.: Yeah. Yeah. He got transferred up there, and then my mom got hired up there as a cook.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Oh, okay. Yeah.

MS. H.H.: And then they met again, and then my dad got transferred somewhere else, and my mom got transferred; they met again. But this time my dad had a ring ready, and he proposed to her and they got married
and --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Yeah.

**MS. H.H.:** -- they had four healthy kids, and -- we're all healthy, we're all living. Even though I'm in rough shape, I'm going to be healthy again and a hundred percent.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Yeah. And did any of your -- like, your grandparents or your parents go to residential school?

**MS. H.H.:** Yes. My mother went to residential school. My grandmother went, all my aunts, all my uncles went, 15 of them, and --

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Which one did they go to?

**MS. H.H.:** [Residential School 1]. And there was just as much abuse there as in any other residential school, and my mom passed without even getting the money. She was waiting for that, to take her last trip somewhere.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Yeah.

**MS. H.H.:** She never got it.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Oh.

**MS. H.H.:** So there should be something done about that, you know? At least divide it up among the kids because we had to grow up listening to her stories --
MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: M'hm.

MS. H.H.: -- of her brother not even being a foot away yet they couldn't even talk to each other.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Yeah.

MS. H.H.: And the minute she walked in residential school, she said they shaved their heads because you're Indian, you got fleas. You know? Like, okay. I guess every white person that I see has fleas, you know? That's how they categorize us. I'm just giving an example, you know?

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Yeah.

MS. H.H.: You can't category a million people over -- over one person, and that's what the residential schools did, and they were very mean. They were very abusive. They starved the kids. They -- they didn't let the kids go to the bathroom. They peed themselves. They did other stuff, and -- they weren't fed properly. They weren't clothed properly. They shaved their heads so they didn't have to buy shampoo. They got raped constantly, and my mom said she could remember hearing yells for help, but all -- all the doors got locked. Nobody was allowed in or out, and that's -- that's when you knew there was somebody getting raped or killed.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So -- so you said you grew up in North Bay, Ontario.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: And you had a happy childhood.


MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Yeah. And so can you tell me about your education?

MS. H.H.: Yes. Oh, yeah. My education, I got my Native social service worker program in the college. I took that just for something to do, but then I spotted the social work, and I'm a natural helper for people, and I've been told that by Elders, and it just seemed to fit everything I do because I love helping people, and that's a field I chose, so I went to the [University 1]. I got my Ph.D. in social work. I got my masters in pluralism and ethnic studies. That's, like, a multi-culturalism course. I also have my degree for a neurologist, which I got in [United States]. I'm a mediator, which I attended the [University 2]. I am a [Trade 1]. I took that course up in [Town 4 in Northwestern Ontario]. I'm a -- I'm the second female [Trade 2] in all of Canada. That was in 1978, and --

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So like a [Trade 2]?


[description of Trade 2].

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Oh, okay.

MS. H.H.: [Description of Trade 2]--

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Yeah.

MS. H.H.: -- and shipped to you.

[Description of Trade 2].

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay.


(LAUGHTER)

MS. H.H.: [Trade 1] -- oh, jeez. I know there's lots, but for now, that's all I can remember, too, right now.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: So you said that after the assault, like, it really affected you. Have you been working since that time?

MS. H.H.: I -- yes, I -- I work off and on because there are people that I worked with before in Toronto, and they found out I was in Toronto, and the company that I worked for, they asked me to come to work the minute they found out I was in town, and I had to refuse, and -- so I -- but they asked me if it was okay if they gave my name out to -- for certain people because they'd been asking for me, and I do come just for them, and I do it for free. I don't charge them because they're on ODSP like I am, trying to live off a -- lucky if it's a
thousand dollars sometimes, and I'm in downtown Toronto. Every time you step out that door, it cost you a hundred dollars. It's too expensive to live down here, and why we're always sent down here to get healed, I don't know. There should be a place for us to at least stay till we're healed and then leave, and that's my personal opinion on -- on that.

But I really would love to see a political figure go up, especially with the election going up. It would be to your benefit, and if you help those Natives up there, they will help you in return. There's a lot of information which they have up there which the government would love to hear, the same with MNR.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** Like, what kind of information?

**MS. H.H.:** Where the elk -- where the animals -- because they want to slaughter all the elk, so we protect them and we don't tell them where they go or where they live, and there's a lot of scanning going on, money-scanning with lawyers and Chiefs.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** What's money-scanning?

**MS. H.H.:** They pocket the money that comes in, and then there's no money for people that get hurt, like me, for example. There wasn't one cent available for
me to get a cast put on because Indian Affairs didn't cover a full cast, and -- I think -- maybe I just hit every hard rock that was -- every rock that was in my way at that time. Bad memories. I will never go back up there; beautiful country, and I really would love to go up there, but no, not until a government official goes up there and sees how -- how it's like. I'll be more than willing to go up and help straighten them out. There's a lot of drugs up there. There's a lot of shoe polish. There's a lot of Listerine. There's a lot of deodorant. There's all these things with alcohol in it because since they're dry reserves, they've got to find alternative methods to bring in their alcohol, and many of them have turned to hairspray, and now in [Town 1 in Northwestern Ontario] they don't even sell hairspray on Sundays. You can't buy hairspray on Sundays. Ah. You learn something new everywhere you go.

And that's pretty well -- I'm in a lot of pain. I'm still suffering from -- from it emotionally, physically, and psychologically. It's going to take time for me to heal, but I'm well on my way of healing and being good again.

**MS. FRANCINE MERASTY:** All right. So we've been -- well, you've been talking here for about 40 minutes. Do you want to take a break, or are we done,
Statement - Public

H.H.

or --

MS. H.H.: Yeah, that's pretty well it? Did I get everything pretty well?

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: I think so.


MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Yeah.

MS. H.H.: And nothing too racist, I hope.

(LAUGHTER)

MS. H.H.: The government, though, I want them -- hey, you bastards, you get up there.

(LAUGHTER)

MS. H.H.: I dare you. No, not you, Justin. They know you.

(LAUGHTER)

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay.

MS. H.H.: Because I know. I used to smoke dope with Justin.

(LAUGHTER)

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Oh.

MS. H.H.: That's why he wants to sit there and pass a bill, eh?

(LAUGHTER)

MS. H.H.: He doesn't want to get caught.

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay.

MS. H.H.: See, I can get him kicked out of
office so fast, and he knows that, eh? He phoned me:
[H.H.], I'm running for Prime Minister. I started
laughing. I said, you're a joke.

(LAUGHTER)

MS. FRANCINE MERASTY: Okay. So it's
October 10, 2018, in Toronto. It's 1:57 p.m., and Miss
[H.H.] is done her statement.


--- Upon adjourning at 1:57 p.m.
LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST’S CERTIFICATE

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

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Jenessa Leriger

November 8, 2018