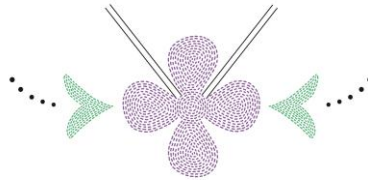


National Inquiry into  
Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls



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  
Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel  
Britannia Ballroom  
Metro Vancouver, British Columbia**



***Public***

**Friday April 6, 2018**

**Public Volume 95:  
Trudy Rose Mary Smith,  
In relation to Pauline Eliza Irma Johnson**

**Heard by Commissioner Qajaq Robinson  
Commission Counsel: Thomas Barnett**

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## II

### APPEARANCES

Assembly of First Nations	No Appearance
Government of British Columbia	Sara Pye (Representative) Rachel Holmes (Legal counsel)
Government of Canada	Donna Keats (Legal counsel)
Heiltsuk First Nation	No Appearance
Northwest Indigenous Council Society	No Appearance
Our Place - Ray Cam Co- operative Centre	No Appearance
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada	No Appearance
Vancouver Sex Workers' Rights Collective	No Appearance
Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak/Women of the Métis Nation	No Appearance

III

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
<b>Public Volume 95</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Witnesses: Trudy Rose Mary Smith</b>	
<b>In Relation to Pauline Eliza Irma Johnson</b>	
Heard by Commissioner Qajaq Robinson	
Commission Counsel: Thomas Barnett	
Clerk and Registrar: Bryan Zandberg	

IV

LIST OF EXHIBITS

NO.	DESCRIPTION	PAGE
<b>Witnesses: Trudy Rose Mary Smith</b> <b>Exhibits (code: P01P15P0301)</b>		
1	Folder containing 17 digital images shown during the public testimony of Trudy Smith.	30

**V**

**NOTE**

*NOTE: The use of square brackets [] in this transcript indicates that amendments have been made in order to correct information that was included by the original transcriptionist. Amendments to this transcript were completed by listening to the source audio recording of the proceeding and were performed by Bryan Zandberg, Registrar for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQ, May 2nd 2018 at Vancouver, British Columbia.*

1 Metro Vancouver, British Columbia

2 --- Upon commencing on Friday, April 6, 2018 at 9:20

3 **MR. THOMAS BARNETT:** Good morning,  
4 Commissioner. My name is Thomas Barnett. I'm Commission  
5 Counsel from the Lac La Ronge Cree Nation. This morning,  
6 we are here to listen to the story of Trudy Rose Smith.  
7 Trudy is sitting beside me.

8 Before we get started, Registrar, I  
9 understand that Ms. Smith wishes to be -- wishes to promise  
10 on an eagle feather, which she is holding in her hand.

11 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Good morning, Trudy.  
12 Trudy, do you promise to tell your truth in a good way  
13 today?

14 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Yes, I do.

15 **MR BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Thank you very much.

16 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Thank you.

17 **MR. THOMAS BARNETT:** Good morning, Trudy.

18 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Good morning.

19 **MR. THOMAS BARNETT:** So, we're here today to  
20 listen to your story, to hear your truth. Can you tell us  
21 a bit about yourself, who you are and where you grew up?

22 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** My name is Trudy Smith.  
23 My real name is Gertrude Rose Mary Smith. I was born in --  
24 my birth certificate says I was born at sea. I was born on  
25 my dad's fishing boat, so...

1 I came with a family of 12; six boys, six  
2 girls. I'm number seven. My parents are Jack and Mary  
3 Johnson. They are passed on now. I grew up in Friendly  
4 Cove, and we lived on an isolated island where there was no  
5 things like everybody had, like, with bathrooms, tubs,  
6 toilets. We have chambers, outhouses. We bath in wooden  
7 tubs.

8 We had a really -- like, with me, myself, I  
9 had a really, really rough life. From age 5 to age 16 --  
10 to age 12, sorry, I was sexually molested. It started off  
11 with family, and then after that, we had moved to Port  
12 Alberni when I was six years old, and I never got a chance  
13 to be in the public school for two days. The second day,  
14 the RCMP picked us up and we were told to get in line.  
15 Because mom and dad had all 12 of us kids, we got taken  
16 away and forced to go to residential school. And, they  
17 were told that if they tried to hide any of us children,  
18 because they had 12 of us, that they were going to put my  
19 mom and dad in jail for the rest of their lives.

20 When I got to Christie [Kakawis] Residential  
21 School, that's when everything got worse. The first day I  
22 got there, I got abused by the nun, and she called me a  
23 dumb, stupid Indian, you know? "Watch yourself if you're  
24 going to be here." A lot of things were taken away.  
25 Because our language wasn't a culture, were taken away from

1 us. We weren't allowed to speak our language. We weren't  
2 allowed to have anything traditional, you know?

3 The second molestation started right away.  
4 The abuse started right away. The nun broke my wrist the  
5 first morning, because when you're there, you're scared,  
6 and you're in Grade 2. You're in a strange place, and  
7 you're busy. I remember watching my mom, when they dropped  
8 us off, wondering why are they bringing me over there?

9 And, I was running after them. And, I could  
10 see my late mother and my dad in the back of the truck, and  
11 I was running and running after, calling "Mommy and Daddy",  
12 "Mommy, Daddy", and the Roman Catholic calls the brothers  
13 Oblay (ph) brothers, and one of them ran after me and  
14 picked me up, and that was when I got my first pain from  
15 the nun. She grabbed my wrist and it sprained really bad.

16 And then because I was in a really strange  
17 place and, you know, kids are so scared, I wet the bed that  
18 night. I got up. First thing I did was I got yanked off  
19 the top bunk, but it's a metal bunk, and I got a scrape  
20 from the top on my back, all the way down. And, the nun  
21 brought out the long whip and, at five years old, your  
22 hands are sticking out. She had one of the girls hold it  
23 and whipped my hand until I was bleeding. And, she ripped  
24 my pj's down and gave me a lot of whipping in the back  
25 hind, and that was the second day. And then because we



1       grew up with long hair in our family, they cut our hairs  
2       straight across, down. And, because I cried a lot for my  
3       mom, my ear, she clipped my ear lobes.

4               My grandmother, she was my mentor. She was  
5       my protector. She gave me a lot of wisdom. She always  
6       said that to me, that, "You know, Gert, you were born with  
7       a mouth to speak. You always speak with honesty, because  
8       if you look things to the positive way in your life, things  
9       will go good for you. You were born with a gift", and I  
10      don't know what that gift is today. I'm 61 years old now,  
11      you know, and I still don't know what it is.

12              The abuse that I had all my life, you know,  
13      and not having a mother's love, not having love of family,  
14      not having love of -- just to be strong in myself was the  
15      main thing. I put some of the people that had sexually  
16      molested me in jail. It didn't bother me, because I wanted  
17      my dignity back, and they were family. But, the hardest  
18      part of it all was the Roman Catholic, Anglican and United.

19              I went to my hearing in Vancouver here. One  
20      thing about -- was said was how come we can't charge the  
21      Catholic brothers and nuns for what they've done to me?  
22      They never got sent to jail. Money don't talk about  
23      anything doesn't mean nothing, because all you need is you  
24      just want yourself to be healed inside.

25              Pauline and I really -- my sister here is

1 Pauline. She got murdered in 1985, and she left three  
2 beautiful children; Paul, the oldest, Crystal, and Sammy  
3 Meyer (ph), the youngest, and the youngest one, Sammy, was  
4 given up for adoption.

5 When the incident happened in Vancouver,  
6 Pauline and I always had gone -- always got to have a lot  
7 of communication with each other. We phoned, and I had the  
8 opportunity to go visit her, and she was really surprised,  
9 but I think she was kind of scared. She didn't tell me  
10 what was going on, and Sammy was just a newborn baby, and I  
11 stayed at her house, and there was a lot of abuse, but she  
12 didn't tell me.

13 I confronted her about it, and the abuser  
14 just left. And, what had happened was I talked to her an  
15 hour before she -- I just told her to be careful. I told  
16 her to take care of herself. And then an hour after that,  
17 I get a call. The RCMP came to see me, and the thing about  
18 it, too, was Pauline had -- always made sure that I'd be  
19 the first one to find out about what happened to her.

20 Sorry. I will say sorry every time I cry,  
21 because I'm used to that.

22 And, my dream is to have justice for  
23 Pauline, and it's going on 33 years. Thirty-three years.  
24 She's got three beautiful kids and she's got 21  
25 grandchildren. She's on her fifth great-grandchild. And,

1 I helped my mom and dad raise Paul and Crystal. In the  
2 summer times, they stay with me.

3 When I went to -- the RCMP came to see the  
4 family, they told us she was murdered, and her body was  
5 found in Port Coquitlam on a logging road. And, she was  
6 badly mutilated. She was unrecognizable. And, I always  
7 said, "Why God? Why is it that all the good people in this  
8 world are totally hurt, and why the innocent people?" She  
9 didn't deserve that. She was a good lady.

10 I used to always fall on my hands and knees  
11 because I never knew anything about love, and I used to  
12 always play a song called, "I want to know where love is,"  
13 because at first where it says, "In my life, I've had  
14 heartache and pain; I don't know if I can face it again,"  
15 I want you to know I want to know where love is.

16 I went and took poetry, and that was my own  
17 survival, of how to write poems. When you're a victim of  
18 sexual abuse and that, and you're running through the field  
19 and that, and aged five years old, and your own family,  
20 your uncle is chasing you, and you fall in the grass, and I  
21 was a little girl and I saw a red rose, I just closed my  
22 eyes. I had long curly hair like I have at five years old,  
23 and I'd look at myself and close my eyes, and I could see  
24 the red rose, picturing me going inside a red rose, and the  
25 petals are closing to protect me, and that's why I love red

1 roses.

2 It's really, really hard, because I feel so  
3 lost and so alone because I just need somebody out there to  
4 help me with this case. And, the RCMP, I've called them  
5 quite a few times. They said it was closed, but that's my  
6 hope, you know? I want to find justice for Pauline so that  
7 she can finally rest, you know? She's had enough pain,  
8 just like I did in my life, but it's a love that her and I  
9 had for each other.

10 None of you guys have walked in my shoes.  
11 None of you guys have seen what I have gone through, but I  
12 have found through my life, you know. I've been in the AA  
13 program since I was 21 years old, because I promised myself  
14 that I would never, ever put my life, and I have one  
15 beautiful daughter and two beautiful granddaughters, and an  
16 awesome son-in-law, and made sure that none of them are  
17 going to be victims like what I went through, you know?

18 And, that picture there is Paul, the oldest,  
19 with his children. He's got seven kids. He has one son  
20 that's in the army right now, and it's just that when my  
21 grandmother, she had seen everything what I had gone  
22 through in my life before she passed away and that she had  
23 Alzheimer's, she always told me, "You know, Gert, you were  
24 born with a mouth to speak. You were born with a gift.  
25 Use that gift."

1           It feels like I'm the only one that's really  
2           fighting the system with my sister, Pauline. Her name is  
3           Pauline Eliza Irma Johnson, born November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1954. She's  
4           a beautiful lady. She had a lot of friends here in  
5           Vancouver. She lived here in Vancouver.

6           I also was a victim. When I saw the  
7           incident that was going to happen to me and that, I'm a  
8           survivor of the Missing and Murdered. And, when this thing  
9           was happening to me with what this guy was doing to me, I  
10          started having really bad flashbacks about my sister,  
11          Pauline. I could just imagine what she went through. I  
12          knew exactly what Pauline was going through, you know,  
13          fighting to live, and I did fight, and I'm here today.

14          I'm paranoid when I go in big cities and  
15          stuff, because I'm scared still. My late mother was with  
16          me at the courts, the court in Campbell River, and the  
17          court went on for three weeks, and I was the 11<sup>th</sup> victim of  
18          this dangerous sex offender, and I always thought about my  
19          grandmother, about speaking the truth with honesty. And,  
20          the gentleman that did a lot of damage to my body, he is in  
21          jail. I put him in jail for life in prison with no parole,  
22          and his name is William Williamson. I'm not scared to say  
23          his name.

24          The youngest one was five years old -- six  
25          years old, and there was a nine-year-old boy, a five-year-

1 old girl, and there was only four of them that came to  
2 speak along with me. And, I told the other victims that  
3 were scared to talk, I said, "You don't have to talk. I'll  
4 talk for you, because I went through the same exact thing  
5 as you did. So, you don't have to worry about it."

6 So, when the court was finally finished with  
7 me, the little girl and little boy came up to me and said,  
8 "Did you do it?" I said, "You know what, sweetheart? We  
9 did it." I spoke for all of you, but we did it. "Well,  
10 what's happening to him?" she said. "Well, he's not going  
11 to be around here anymore. He's going to be put in jail.  
12 He will never, ever get out, and you will never, ever be  
13 touched ever again." That's when I got real big hugs from  
14 them. I still keep in contact with them, and they're  
15 adults now, and it's pretty cool, you know?

16 The only thing is, why isn't there anything  
17 going on with my sister? All I want is my letters and my  
18 pictures back. We communicated with each other all the  
19 time.

20 **MR. THOMAS BARNETT:** Trudy, you just said  
21 that you want your letters and your pictures back. Where  
22 are they?

23 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** I don't know what you call  
24 them, but they were men in suits. I don't know if they  
25 were RCMP or what do you call them. They're almost like

1 FBI. They came to my place and asked for everything and  
2 talked about Pauline. They were the ones that came to my  
3 house and told me that Pauline was murdered, and I think  
4 they were the RCMP from Vancouver, because her body was  
5 found in Coquitlam on a logging road. I don't know if they  
6 were from Vancouver Police or Port Coquitlam.

7 **MR. THOMAS BARNETT:** And, the letters and  
8 pictures, those were of your sister?

9 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Pictures for -- yes, of my  
10 sister and I growing up, because we sent each other a lot  
11 and that, eh? And, a lot of letter writing.

12 **MR. THOMAS BARNETT:** Trudy, if you're able  
13 to, I'm just wondering if you can talk about your sister,  
14 who she was? Maybe share some memories of your sister?

15 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Pauline had a lot of  
16 friends. She's just like me. You know, you're happy on  
17 the outside, but you're hurting on the inside, all the  
18 pain, and there's my sister up there. And, she was really  
19 well liked for a lot of people all over. She grew up --  
20 she was in Port Alberni, and she went to Edmonton, and then  
21 her final home was Vancouver. And, she attracted a lot of  
22 friends, and one of her best, best friends was Linda  
23 Charlson (ph), and she is my best friend, too.

24 Pauline graduated from high school, and she  
25 worked and, you know, because she left, it was like a part

1 of me was missing because she left home. I always think  
2 that if she was here today and if she was alive and that,  
3 we'd never leave each other, you know?

4 **MR. THOMAS BARNETT:** I just have a few more  
5 questions, if that's all right with you? Was the story of  
6 your sister, was that ever reported on in the papers or in  
7 the media or anything like that?

8 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** No. There was nothing.  
9 It was just like my sister was invisible, that nobody cared  
10 about her, and I'm the only one that really cared for her.  
11 I'm the only one that wants justice for Pauline. I want to  
12 find what happened to her and what -- you know? Because  
13 some day, you know, everybody goes unexpectedly, you know?  
14 And, my dream is to find out. You never know when a person  
15 is going to pass away, and that's what I want for her and  
16 for her kids, and for her grandchildren.

17 The picture that I have here, I had all the  
18 kids all over Christmas, and I made this picture for them.  
19 They never had a picture of their mom, because my family  
20 hid it, and I finally came across one. And, I gave them,  
21 every one of them, a picture of their own mother, which  
22 they never knew, you know? Paul and Crystal were the only  
23 two that knew, but Sammy was a baby.

24 **MR. THOMAS BARNETT:** Just a few more  
25 questions to clarify a few things. How many -- how long



1 were you at residential school for?

2 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** I went to residential  
3 school from Grade 2 up to Grade 6. I was one of them that  
4 never ever got to go home, like everybody did, for summer  
5 and Christmas. I was there constantly for -- through the  
6 whole years, I've never seen my parents, and that's when  
7 all the sexual abuse kept going on and on and on, you know?  
8 They didn't care.

9 When the first Indian residential school  
10 came into process, the entire tribal council wrote a book,  
11 and everybody read about this little girl that cried every  
12 night, every night, for her mom and dad, and it was in that  
13 book that was written. And, my second-oldest sister, Barb,  
14 I said, "Oh, I read the book." She goes, "Well, who is  
15 that little girl that cried?" And, she looked at me, she  
16 said, "Gert, that was you." "You mean to say I'm in the  
17 book?" She goes, "Yeah. I made sure that you weren't  
18 going to go there, because I took you out of the dormitory.  
19 I told the nun that the only way that Gert will stop crying  
20 is if I take her to bed with me." And, she took me to bed  
21 with her, and she was a senior and I was a junior, so  
22 that's the only way I stopped crying.

23 The residential school was really bad with a  
24 lot of sexual molestation, a lot of physical abuse, mental,  
25 emotional, which was inflicted on me. I used to always

1 think that, you know, I always wished that I would die  
2 again and be reborn, and be innocent and pure, and not have  
3 anything done to my body, starting from age 5, you know?  
4 But, to be there for a lot of victims, because I know that  
5 a lot of victims are scared to talk about what happened to  
6 them. I've listened to a lot of stories about what  
7 happened, and I told them that I'd speak for them with my  
8 words for strength and power for them.

9 Everything that has been going on with this  
10 Missing and Murdered is -- I'm not giving up on this. We  
11 need -- I don't know if it's the justice system, the RCMP,  
12 to look more into -- especially with Indigenous women  
13 whereas they -- they are not -- they are invisible. But,  
14 when it's Caucasian that are murdered, they're all over the  
15 news. They're all over the newspaper. They're everywhere.  
16 But, with my sister and what happened to me, we're  
17 invisible, you know? Everyone, every victim of the Missing  
18 and Murdered are invisible.

19 A lot of you do not know all the tears that  
20 each and every one of us that are parents, that are  
21 grandparents, that are brothers, sisters, family, friends,  
22 don't know exactly how many tears we've cried for our  
23 Missing and Murdered women. And, there's also -- we have  
24 to acknowledge men, too, boys, because there has been some  
25 boys missing too, you know.

1                   **MR. THOMAS BARNETT:** Trudy, I just wonder if  
2                   there are any other recommendations that you have for the  
3                   Inquiry? Any things that should have been done  
4                   differently?

5                   **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** I just want all our voices  
6                   to be heard. We have the right to be heard about what  
7                   happened to us and what happened to all the Missing and  
8                   Murdered. There has to be people that are willing to be  
9                   strong to help us, to solve the case, the cases. My dream  
10                  is to solve the case of my late sister, Pauline.

11                  **MR. THOMAS BARNETT:** Trudy, those are all my  
12                  questions. Is there anything else that you'd like to share  
13                  with the Inquiry?

14                  **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Whenever you see a rose,  
15                  always think of me, because that red rose is me, because  
16                  that's my poem, my verse, because I always did that to  
17                  survive. I know it's really hard for a lot of other  
18                  victims, a lot of other families that are going to be  
19                  speaking in public, but I want you all to know that I'm  
20                  there with you all in spirit to support you that way,  
21                  because it takes a lot to speak, to talk.

22                  **MR. THOMAS BARNETT:** Thank you, Trudy.  
23                  Commissioner Robinson might have some questions for you.  
24                  Thank you.

25                  **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Okay. Sorry.

1                   **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** That's okay.  
2           Take the time you need.

3                   **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

4           --- Pause during the testimony

5                   **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** You know, I was always  
6           taught to never cry. I was always told to say sorry when  
7           you cry. That's why I have a habit of doing that, and I'm  
8           sorry I cried. I guess this is just all so hard, because I  
9           was -- my -- it feels like I had a lot of things inflicted  
10          on my body where I had to have scars all over, sick things  
11          that the sex offender did to my body that no woman should  
12          ever go through.

13                   I keep calling myself an ugly person because  
14          I've -- my face has been sewn so many times together, my  
15          lips and my eyes. A lot of head injuries getting hit, back  
16          injuries. I've got a fractured back for life after that  
17          incident, and I've got no stomach valve, which was crashed,  
18          because he was jumping on my body while I was knocked out,  
19          kicking me around like a rag doll. And, when I woke up, my  
20          whole face was all pitch-black all over where my eyes were  
21          shut, and my lips were hanging because they were cut, and  
22          they had to be sewn back on, and my eyelids were sewn back  
23          on.

24                   That's why it's really important for me to  
25          let a lot of victims and families know that I want to be

1       there to support them, to let them know. That's why I told  
2       my story, you know? I feel like I'm a leprosy with a  
3       tumour inside my whole body, because of everything that has  
4       happened to me. And, the only thing that really makes me  
5       survive is my beautiful fiancé that I'm with right now. He  
6       couldn't make it because he had to work. My beautiful  
7       daughter and my son-in-law, my two granddaughters, and all  
8       of Pauline's. I call them my kids and grandkids. That's  
9       my fiancé up there. He's actually the one that showed me  
10      love. He's from England, from Yorkshire, and he taught me  
11      things that I never knew about love. I was angry at him  
12      for all the things that he did so nice for me, because I  
13      was so used to being abused.

14                   That's our first picture when we first met.  
15      Live, love and laugh; that's my motto. You know, happy on  
16      the outside, but tumour, sickness inside. But, I want to  
17      be pure inside again, so that everything that has happened  
18      to me, it's -- I'm going to be 62 this year. I never  
19      thought I'd make it about this age, you know? I thought 21  
20      was old.

21                   I just want -- I just want them to work on  
22      my sister's case. Thirty-three years.

23                   **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Can I ask you  
24      some questions about that, about the case?

25                   **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Yes.

1                   **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** And, how they  
2 investigated it? Do you know what they maybe tried to do,  
3 or steps they took, or do you have some thoughts of maybe  
4 what they should have done?

5                   **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** The only thing that had  
6 happened when it first happened was when they came to see  
7 me and they went to see my late mother and my late father,  
8 my mother was really angry, and she said they wouldn't even  
9 give out any information, and she said, "Is it because  
10 she's First Nations that they're ignoring her?" "I don't  
11 think it's right," she said, because we never, ever got  
12 anything from them. Nothing.

13                   **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** No information  
14 about ---

15                   **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** No information.

16                   **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** --- who they  
17 were talking to or what they thought might have happened?

18                   **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** No.

19                   **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Did they ever  
20 interview you? Because you said you spoke to her an hour  
21 or so ---

22                   **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** I was talking to my  
23 sister. I phoned my sister all the time, and we talked all  
24 the time, because that's how close we are. And, I talked  
25 to her an hour before, like, real happy. And, my real name

1 is Gertrude, but she always called me Gert, but I go by  
2 Trudy today, and we just talked. "Hi, sis. How are you?"  
3 "Oh, fine." "Oh, what are you doing? Are you still with  
4 your spouse?" She paused, and I go, "Well, you know what?  
5 You need to be happy. You need to be happy." "Yeah, I  
6 know, sis." So, she says, "Well, I'm going to plan on a  
7 trip down to come see you and that, because I need to see  
8 you again." And, I said -- she said, "I'm going to catch  
9 the bus. I'm going to catch a bus from work on my way  
10 home."

11 She missed the bus by five minutes. Five  
12 minutes. And, the person that did that to my sister, that  
13 murdered her, five minutes she missed the bus to go back  
14 home to North Vancouver, and that was the last time I seen  
15 her -- heard from her on the phone, actually. Yeah. The  
16 last words was, "I love you, sis." And, I said, "I love  
17 you, too, with all my heart. To infinity and beyond." She  
18 always laughed at that, because I always put "infinity" all  
19 the time and that, eh? So...

20 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** And, did the  
21 police ever ask you about that, ask for your statement or  
22 get your evidence about that last conversation with her?

23 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Never did. They just came  
24 and took the pictures and letters, and that was it.

25 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Did they tell

1 you why they wanted the pictures and letters?

2 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** No. No, they didn't.

3 That's what really puzzles me. Why did they take all of  
4 that when they never had me interviewed or anything like  
5 that about Pauline?

6 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Do you  
7 remember which police service it was?

8 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Port Coquitlam, because  
9 they found her body on a logging road in Port Coquitlam.

10 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** You talked  
11 about the man who assaulted you brutally, and you went to  
12 court for that and now he's in jail. How was the  
13 experience of the court process for you?

14 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** When I put William  
15 Williamson in jail, it was a battle for me, because it was  
16 three weeks of court every day, and my late mother sat and  
17 supported me. I didn't want my daughter to be exposed. I  
18 wanted to -- because I felt that when I was in the court  
19 and I had met all 11 victims that were sexually offended, I  
20 was the main speaker of all of them, and I spoke for every  
21 one of them because they were scared. They didn't want to  
22 talk, to tell their story. I said, "Well, the same similar  
23 thing happened to you, it happened to me, so I'll talk for  
24 you."

25 William Williamson was a sex offender. I'm



1 the 11<sup>th</sup> victim. When he was in court, he was very rude.  
2 The last portion of the court system, when they told him to  
3 stand up and said, "William Williamson, you're going to --  
4 you are charged and you're going to go to jail for life in  
5 prison with no parole," that's when he went ballistic.  
6 And, he started swearing at the judge and telling that he  
7 was going to look for me and kill me. "If I ever find you,  
8 I'm going to kill you."

9 And then he made a knife out of a razor and  
10 a toothbrush, and if I had walked straight across and he  
11 was in the box, he would have jumped and swung his knife.  
12 He would have slashed my neck. And, for some reason, I was  
13 going to do that, but I thought, well, he scared me, so I  
14 walked diagonally, and he still jumped out, and the  
15 sheriffs stopped him.

16 I was told that he would be in jail for the  
17 rest of his life, and the think about it, too, is the  
18 parole, they were telling me that they would keep in  
19 contact with me, and I've never had that.

20 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** The Parole  
21 Board has never given you any information about where ---

22 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** They haven't, if he's  
23 still in jail or -- when they are in life in prison, they  
24 are there for life; right? If I was the 11<sup>th</sup> victim.

25 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Thomas, we're

1 getting reasons for decision in that one? Thank you. Were  
2 you given -- Trudy, through that court process, were you  
3 given support?

4 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** With William Williamson?

5 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Yes.

6 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** The only one that I had  
7 there was my mom, my mother, yes. I never had support from  
8 anybody.

9 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Was there ever  
10 any additional protection offered to you? It sounds like  
11 he threatened your life right there in that room.

12 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Yes. There was no  
13 protection put on me for that.

14 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Additional  
15 support? Victim Services?

16 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** No.

17 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** What year was  
18 that?

19 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** 1995.

20 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** You had to --  
21 it was all your own strength and the support from your mom?

22 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Yes. Even though my mom  
23 was never -- I never had a mother's love, but my  
24 grandmother always told me to love your parents no matter  
25 what, and I did. I was always told that 1956 was the worst

1 year, because Gert was born. "You don't amount to  
2 anything," and that's where all the -- because I don't -- I  
3 got no hate for my late mother, because I have a feeling  
4 that something did happen to her when she was growing up.  
5 That's why she took it out on me. The more hurt and pain  
6 that was inflicted on me, the more I loved her.

7 She died of cancer in 2001. I laid on the  
8 bed and she talked to me before she couldn't talk anymore,  
9 and she said, "I don't know why you're here with me, Gert.  
10 I've hurt you all my life." I said, "Well, you know what?  
11 I was taught to love your parents no matter what, and it  
12 was from your mom." "How come you don't hate me?" "It's  
13 because you're my mom and I love you."

14 And, before she passed away, I laid on the  
15 bed with her, holding her hands, and I told her, because I  
16 had a life/death experience, and I saw myself. I know how  
17 it is when you pass away. It's a beautiful experience.  
18 And, I told her, I said, "I'm going to hold your hand. I'm  
19 not going to let go until somebody on the other side is  
20 going to grab your hand. It will be your mom." "I know  
21 you can't talk to me, mom. I know you're so sorry with all  
22 the pain that was inflicted on me. I forgive you." And,  
23 she looked at me. I was laying beside her on the bed. I  
24 looked at her, and she looked at me, and she had tears in  
25 her eyes because I forgave her. She passed away beside me

1 on the bed, and she laid to rest.

2 My mother was a very beautiful lady in the  
3 long run, because she was the chief councillor of the Gold  
4 River Band. She did a lot. She worked for Social  
5 Services. She went to university. My dad was Mr. Mom,  
6 because he took care of us as kids when mom was gone.

7 She worked her way up into working with the  
8 House of Commons. She was with Pierre Trudeau, and that's  
9 how much work my late mother did. And, she fought the  
10 system to bring back all the First Nation children that  
11 were adopted, and she reunited a lot of families together  
12 and brought their kids back to their biological family, and  
13 she had taken a lot of -- she had 12 of us kids, but she  
14 took a lot of other kids in the house that didn't have  
15 family. So, she always had different kids that we called  
16 brother and sister, because she didn't want to see them put  
17 into foster homes, you know? She's a great lady, my late  
18 mom. She was 60 when she passed away, and I'm 61, you  
19 know?

20 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** And engaged.

21 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** And engaged. Yes.

22 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Never too old  
23 for love; right?

24 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Yes. Never.

25 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** You talked

1 about your poetry, how that's been a big source of healing  
2 for you. You know, in the work of the Inquiry, we're  
3 looking at causes of violence and understanding those root  
4 causes, but also solutions and how we can work to overcome  
5 the impacts of the violence and trauma. In addition to the  
6 poetry and the art that feeds your soul, are there things  
7 that you would like to see available for you, supports, or  
8 for other women and families? Could you share some of  
9 those ideas, of what you'd like to see as supports that are  
10 available?

11 **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** I think it's important  
12 that -- one thing about support is be a good listener.  
13 You're a counsellor, you're a -- and you're listening to  
14 the victim, it's always important to listen and give good  
15 feedback, because they deserve to be heard. And, to have a  
16 lot of projects that they want to do for themselves, that  
17 they like. Like, with me, it's poetry. I'm a  
18 photographer; I take a lot of pictures.

19 And, to go back into the traditional ways of  
20 making your own regalia, like shawls, dresses, drums, drums  
21 for the boys. We need to have -- to teach our younger  
22 generation, every generation, the language that was taken  
23 away from all of us. It's important, because all the First  
24 Nations people, we don't want our children to lose their  
25 traditional values, because that's really, really

1 important.

2 We need a system where people can have a  
3 workshop where instead of having to talk about all the pain  
4 that they've gone through, to put up a happy workshop where  
5 you all can sit in a circle and start talking about all the  
6 funny things that you and your sister did, your children  
7 did, not to talk about any negative stuff, but to talk  
8 about everything of a laughter workshop. That's what we  
9 need to do for healing. That's my dream, is to put up a  
10 workshop like that, you know? And, it would be open to  
11 everybody.

12 The most important thing about this, too, is  
13 I love elderlies. I respect elders, because my grandmother  
14 was an elder, and she died of Alzheimer's. She taught me a  
15 lot of wisdom. Take time to listen to every one of their  
16 stories that they tell you, the history of their  
17 background, because it's important to know. To me, that's  
18 the number one thing about with elders, you know, because I  
19 work in -- I worked at the Campbell River for Alzheimer's  
20 and dementia for volunteer, and that's what I did.

21 Use sign language and Braille for people  
22 that can't talk. We need that system to teach the First  
23 Nations sign language and Braille, and that's what they  
24 don't have, especially if there's a victim that had been --  
25 a victim like me that survived the ordeal with the sex

1       offender, what if I couldn't talk? What if I couldn't see?  
2       You need Braille. You need to talk, you know?

3                   It's really, really important to have that  
4       in the system, because elderlies need to be -- elderlies  
5       need to have their stories be told to their children to a  
6       lot of people that they can love and respect, you know?  
7       And, to be heard and not to be ignored. I've been ignored  
8       all my life. I've been hurt all my life, and still today  
9       I'm invisible, because I've never been -- nothing's been  
10      solved for my sister Pauline and her children.

11                   The most important thing that I promised  
12      myself was I have one daughter, and she's 44 now. She's at  
13      that age where I always promised myself that I'd tell her I  
14      love her every day, and I do. Sometimes she says, "Mom,  
15      cut it out. Quit saying that." I says, "Well, I'm going  
16      to say it until the day I die, baby. I love you." And,  
17      she's 44, you know?

18                   **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Thank you so  
19      much for coming and sharing with us, and for sharing your  
20      experience, but also Pauline's. And, you know, I really  
21      like your idea of working with the positivity, working from  
22      strength. And, I wonder, before we finish, if you have a  
23      memory of you and Pauline that is -- that shows that light  
24      and that love that you'd want to share? If not, it's okay.  
25      I just...

1                   **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** We had a lot of fun when  
2 her and I grew up. She -- like, one time, she -- we used  
3 to always tease each other about Kung Fu and that, and she  
4 had four -- what do you call them?

5                   **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Bridge?

6                   **MS. TRUDY SMITH:** Yes, bridges. And, we  
7 were Kung Fu-ing, and she kicked her feet in the air, but  
8 instead, her teeth flew out and hit me in the head, and  
9 then I started laughing, and I went (makes gesture), and I  
10 guess it hit my nose. And, I thought, if I had my mouth  
11 wide open, it would have flew right in my mouth, you know?  
12 And, we were laughing away.

13                   And, another one was when she -- when you  
14 first start wearing make up, and my mom was very  
15 traditional, and you know the eyebrow pencils that you buy?  
16 Well, we got -- we fought over one, and she was screaming  
17 and crying, and I was screaming and crying, and my dad --  
18 said that the eyeliner being about this big, it was that  
19 small, and she wanted to have it back. I said, "No." And,  
20 my dad walked by and looked at us. "What are you  
21 (indiscernible)?" "She wants her eyebrow pencil, Daddy."  
22 And, he goes, "Well, what do you want that little thing  
23 for? It's almost gone. You don't need to fight over it,  
24 eh?"

25                   But, no, she -- we did a lot of things



1 together, a lot her and I. I used to always tease her,  
2 because she was really fair, and I wasn't. She had blonde  
3 hair. I got the dark, curly hair.

4 The lemon meringue pie in high school she  
5 made, and she always said -- the teachers said, "Who do you  
6 want to invite?" "Oh, I want to invite my sister, Gert."  
7 So, they called me on the PA system. "Trudy Johnson, head  
8 to the cooking class." I went, "What the heck?" So, I  
9 went there, and she was standing there with a big smile  
10 that she has here, and I said, "Okay, now what did I do?"  
11 She says, "No, you're going to be the first person to taste  
12 my lemon meringue pie." I went, "Really?" She goes,  
13 "Yeah." "Are you serious?" And, she was smiling away.  
14 So, she took the meringue out, and I looked at it, and I  
15 went, "Do I have to eat it?" "Yeah." "Okay." And, it was  
16 watery, but I ate it, to show my sister I could do it, eh?

17 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Thank you so  
18 much for, again, sharing with us. Before we finish,  
19 unless, Thomas, are there questions that I've asked that  
20 raises questions for you? You're good? Okay. We have a  
21 couple of little gifts for you to acknowledge your strength  
22 and determination in coming here. And, the first is from  
23 the Inquiry, and they are seeds, packages of seeds.

24 And, when we started the work with the  
25 elders that we work with, one of the things that they

1 shared with us was the importance of doing this, as much as  
2 we could, in ceremony and in following Indigenous laws and  
3 protocols. And, one that is common in a lot of Indigenous  
4 nations in the country is laws around reciprocity. You've  
5 given us a gift, and we want to give you a gift in  
6 exchange. It's a small thing, but it's seeds, and seeds  
7 grow, and there's hope and life in the seeds. So, we want  
8 to offer you some of these seeds as an expression of our  
9 appreciation and acknowledgement for you and your sister.

10 And, the second gift is a gift where I  
11 always say we're like the FedEx. We are just the ones that  
12 get to -- we're the vehicle; right? When we started our  
13 hearings, our first one was in White Horse, and our second  
14 one was in Smithers, and the matriarchs in Haida Gwaii told  
15 us, told our staff, that they wanted each woman, each  
16 family, survivor, that came and shared with us to receive  
17 an eagle feather, to acknowledge and to show love. And,  
18 you know when matriarchs tell you to do something, you're  
19 going to do it.

20 It's grown, it's grown, it's grown, and we  
21 receive eagle feathers from across B.C. now. People have  
22 heard about this, and when they come across feathers or an  
23 eagle has fallen and conservation officers find them, they  
24 let us know, and our team, Audrey, cleans them and prepares  
25 them, and wraps them in love and cedar and sacred cloths.

1 So, each of these feathers are received with intention,  
2 prepared with intention, and this feather is taking its  
3 last step in the journey to you, and I'm going to ask Elder  
4 Rita to present it to you. And, Elder Louise will present  
5 you with the seeds.

6 So, we will adjourn this hearing for now.  
7 I'm putting my mic down, and I'm coming to say hi.

8 --- Exhibits (code: P01P15P0301)

9 **Exhibit 1:** Folder containing 17 digital images shown  
10 during the public testimony of Trudy Smith.

11 --- Upon adjourning at 10:28

12

13 LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

14

15 I, Shirley Chang, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I  
16 have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and  
17 accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this  
18 matter.

19

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21



22

Shirley Chang

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April 30, 2018

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