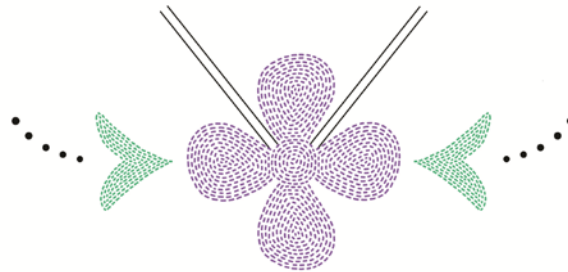


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part One: Truth-Gathering Sessions
Family Home
Maliotenam/Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, Quebec**



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**Gilberte Vachon, Denis Vachon & Patrick Bellefleur,
In relation to Adèle Patricia Bellefleur**

Heard by Jayme Menzies

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II

NOTE

The use of brackets [] throughout this transcription indicates changes that were made to the certified transcription in order to complete several passages that were deemed inaudible or indiscernible by the original typist. The text was transcribed by listening to a recording of the original hearing. These changes were made by Bryan Zandberg, Registrar for the National Inquiry. The corrections were made by M. Zandberg on July 23, 2018 in Vancouver.

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Heard by:
Jayme Menzies

List of exhibits: none.

1 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK, I will introduce
2 myself. My name is Jayme Menzies, I am with the National
3 Inquiry. It is 3:21 p.m. on November 28th. I would now ask
4 that you introduce yourselves. Would you like to start?

5 MR. DENIS VACHON: Denis Vachon, Gilberte
6 Vachon's brother and Adelous, Adèle Bellefleur's uncle.

7 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Adèle Patricia.

8 MR. DENIS VACHON: Adèle Patricia Bellefleur.

9 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Sir?

10 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: Patrick Villeneuve,
11 Adelous Patricia Bellefleur's father. I am...

12 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

13 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: (Speaking Innu)
14 Patricia and Patrick; my name is Patrick. Yes, that's
15 right, I'm retired. And...

16 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: I am Adelous's mother,
17 my name is Gilberte Vachon. This is my partner.

18 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Did you come here from
19 Maliotenam?

20 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: No, we are from
21 [Pessamit].

22 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK, OK.

23 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: My brother is from
24 here.

25 MR. DENIS VACHON: Uh-huh. Yes, I forgot to

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1 mention that. I am from [Pessamit] but have lived in
2 Uashat Maliotenam for over 30 years.

3 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK. OK. Welcome and
4 thank you for being a part of the Inquiry. Are you the
5 main witness or are both of you, together?

6 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: By main witness, do you
7 mean that...?

8 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Do you want to speak
9 first, or...?

10 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

11 MR. DENIS VACHON: (Speaking Innu) Basically,
12 it's because she forgot a part of her, of her statement,
13 I'll call it a statement. When she stood in front of a
14 crowd, you don't realize that you might get nervous. So,
15 she, she wants to continue the part that she left out in
16 front of the commissioners.

17 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

18 MR. DENIS VACHON: So, I think that, I think
19 she thinks that it's important to mention it, and that it
20 comes from her. (Speaking Innu)

21 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu) ... it's
22 a lot for me... (speaking Innu)

23 MR. DENIS VACHON: OK. Basically, what she's
24 saying is that we, in [Pessamit], bodies are viewed in

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1 people's homes, and that day, she had, they took Adelous's
2 body away from her, well, the body, the coffin from her
3 home.

4 She, she didn't want to lose even a single
5 minute with her; she really wanted to be alone with her
6 daughter.

7 In fact, there was someone from the
8 [Pessamit] police station, who came to tell them that,
9 "Look, I have to, it's important that I meet with you,
10 because we want to give you the coroner's report." The two
11 of them were invited, and I was one of those people, among
12 others, I accompanied both of them.

13 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

14 MR. DENIS VACHON: And she didn't like that.

15 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

16 MR. DENIS VACHON: Because there was a
17 tremendous amount of pressure within the community, and
18 what I, what my sister had mentioned, the police chief,
19 when it comes to the aggressors, it was the police chief,
20 it is... his girlfriend was friends with the aggressors.

21 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes.

22 MR. DENIS VACHON: OK? So that's why he was
23 rushing to give them the report.

24 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: And to have it on the

Gilberte Vachon et al
(Adèle Bellefleur)

1 radio.

2 MR. DENIS VACHON: And to have it on the
3 radio. You know what, I'm going to mention something that
4 I experienced as well. I thought that it was hasty.

5 There, there was my cousin, our cousin,
6 [Cousin], her husband is still a policeman here in Uashat,
7 he was the Uashat Maliotenam police force director. He
8 really questioned things, he said, "I can't believe it.
9 How could they ask my brother-in-law and my sister to meet
10 with the investigator so soon?" He said, "That is not the
11 normal practice." That's what he mentioned.

12 I was there, except that it was all too
13 fast, too sudden. We were like, everyone, myself included,
14 I was in a body-- in a vulnerable state of mind. Everyone
15 there was in shock.

16 So, when you're in shock, you don't think;
17 you're caught up in your memories, you're alive... and at the
18 same time, you're not sure, is this really happening to me?
19 Is this really what happens when you're in shock? You
20 can't believe it.

21 So, that's when they invited my sister and
22 my brother-in-law to meet with them outside the house, to
23 see Adelous's body. So, they left, it hadn't even been a
24 week. I think they kept the body for a while to do the...

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1 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: One week because it
2 was...

3 MR. DENIS VACHON: The autopsy.

4 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: The autopsy, because
5 July 1st is a holiday, right?

6 MR. DENIS VACHON: Yes. So they kept it,
7 because...

8 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: They brought it over on
9 the 7th.

10 MR. DENIS VACHON: Yes, they brought it over
11 on the 7th. The body was brought over on the 7th for
12 viewing. My sister, I remember she was adamant that the
13 body be opened up. Because it was said, it was said... that
14 it wasn't right that we open the body.

15 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

16 MR. DENIS VACHON: But my sister wanted to
17 see, and my brother-in-law wanted to see the body. Because
18 what he was told just didn't add up. The body, excuse me
19 for talking about it, but...

20 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: It didn't look like
21 her.

22 MR. DENIS VACHON: It wasn't her.

23 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

24 MR. DENIS VACHON: The head was swollen. And

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1 when, when there was the meeting, there were a few
2 investigators... one was from Baie-Comeau, the other one was
3 from Montreal, I think, or...

4 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: From Quebec City,
5 Quebec City, right?

6 MR. DENIS VACHON: Yes, from Quebec City or
7 Montreal, something like that.

8 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: The investigator
9 from Montreal came, I think.

10 MR. DENIS VACHON: Yes, yes. And there was
11 the [Pessamit] police chief who found himself, quote 'in a
12 conflict of interest,' because it ended up being a friend
13 of his girlfriend's, of his partner. So, we had to get
14 things going and we had to do it fast. And just, I can
15 already see it, I can still see the face of the chief
16 investigator, he was sitting like this and he basically
17 told my sister and my brother-in-law, "It wasn't being
18 kicked that killed your daughter. It was the using."

19 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Of drugs.

20 MR. DENIS VACHON: Of drugs.

21 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh no.

22 MR. DENIS VACHON: And the first thing that
23 my sister and my brother-in-law said was, "No, that's
24 impossible. That's impossible." I remember his reaction.

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1 "They're lying to us." That's what you said, those exact
2 words.

3 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: What's worse, in the
4 autopsy report, they never mentioned anything about drugs.

5 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Well, the coroner said
6 that they went back, I think, six months, to see if there
7 were any traces of drugs. None.

8 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: There weren't any.

9 MS. JAYME MENZIES: So, was the investigation
10 closed at that point? Was there an investigation?

11 MR. DENIS VACHON: The process, even all of
12 the legal aspects were over very quickly.

13 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes.

14 MR. DENIS VACHON: Very fast. It was as if
15 they wanted to get rid of it, because there was so much
16 pressure from the community.

17 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes.

18 MR. DENIS VACHON: But that, after, after,
19 I'll back up a little bit to after the meeting, the police
20 chief encouraged us, encouraged my sister and my brother-
21 in-law, you know, to quiet tensions in the community, to
22 calm the atmosphere and the people..

23 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: We had to..

24 MR. DENIS VACHON: We had to go to the radio.

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1 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes.

2 MR. DENIS VACHON: And, it's not right, it's
3 not normal to act like that.

4 MS. JAYME MENZIES: No.

5 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: I said "yes," it was...

6 MR. DENIS VACHON: We aren't there, we aren't
7 there.

8 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: I wasn't there. I
9 wanted to go back home, but... yeah.

10 MS. JAYME MENZIES: So, the community is
11 quite small, and the police live there? OK.

12 MR. DENIS VACHON: Yes, because when one
13 family is affected, others will also be affected.

14 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Neighbours.

15 MR. DENIS VACHON: It could be your
16 neighbour, your best friend, your cousin, anyone, you know?

17 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu), Denis?

18 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: I don't know if it
19 was... if it was after the investigation.

20 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: It was after the
21 investigation?

22 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: It was when he left,
23 the girls called.

24 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Anyways, I don't

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1 remember anymore, I wasn't there.

2 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: The crown attorney
3 who was supposed to represent us was there (inaudible) and
4 from the crown.

5 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

6 MS. JAYME MENZIES: We'll just take a break.

7 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: (Speaking Innu)

8 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

9 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: They closed the
10 case, excuse me. (Speaking Innu) The case, it was over, and
11 then, they asked us to (speaking Innu). [Attorney], the
12 crown attorney, he was supposed to represent us throughout
13 all of this. (Speaking Innu)(indiscernible) we started
14 talking to...

15 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: The attorney?

16 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: The crown attorney.
17 But he was completely (speaking Innu) the case (speaking
18 Innu). He didn't like that.

19 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: The attorney?

20 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: (Speaking Innu)

21 MR. DENIS VACHON: Did you understand what
22 she said?

23 MS. JAYME MENZIES: A little bit here and
24 there, but that's because you're switching from French...

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1 MR. DENIS VACHON: At one point, they were
2 invited to go meet with the crown attorney. There, he was
3 there, the [Prosecutor]; he was the former police chief
4 here in Uashat Maliotenam.

5 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

6 MR. DENIS VACHON: There was a CAVAC agent
7 and there were, and there were the two of them.
8 Essentially, the court process was over anyway, and he was
9 playing a game of comparison.

10 He said, "Had it been a non-Aboriginal
11 person that had something done to her, he said, you would
12 have tried to find out who did it. But given that it's my
13 daughter, it's..." And then, I think it was the Quebec agent
14 who said...

15 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: "Your daughter, it's
16 the..."

17 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: Before or after?

18 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

19 MR. DENIS VACHON: "Your daughter didn't
20 suffer when she died. She died of a heart attack." When in
21 reality, she was kicked in the head. The attorney then
22 told Patrick, "Fine then, make your own laws, you know."

23 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: Make your own laws.

24 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yourselves.

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1 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: Meaning, you people...

2 MR. DENIS VACHON: The Innu.

3 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: Your Council, the
4 group of Indians, make your own laws.

5 MS. JAYME MENZIES: So, you experienced
6 racism throughout the process?

7 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes.

8 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: Very well.

9 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

10 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: There was even an
11 investigator from the Sûreté because when we saw the
12 reports (speaking Innu) the investigator. His retirement,
13 (speaking Innu) and all that. (Speaking Innu) We already
14 had a (speaking Innu).

15 MR. DENIS VACHON: (Speaking Innu) She went
16 to see an investigator, right, from the Sûreté du Québec,
17 all of that after, to get...

18 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: The reports.

19 MR. DENIS VACHON: To have access to the
20 reports. You know, well, how it happened, how the report
21 was made, essentially.

22 And Gilberte was told that, "Look, we found
23 the lifeless body of a 10-year-old child who died of a..."

24 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: A heart attack.

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1 MR. DENIS VACHON: But she, she answered,
2 "That's not the same way, that the child died, and my
3 daughter." And then, he said, "Because you are going to do
4 just like those before you did by pursuing it, it's winning
5 your case essentially." It was as if we told them, "Close
6 it."

7 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes, exactly.

8 MR. DENIS VACHON: "Because you're going too
9 far, and your daughter, she's like an old rag." A rag is a
10 cloth that you just throw to the ground.

11 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

12 MR. DENIS VACHON: Think of the others.

13 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Think about the other
14 family, too.

15 MR. DENIS VACHON: Exactly.

16 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: I said, "Are you out of
17 your mind? You know, think about the girls who killed my
18 daughter."

19 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: For them, it was
20 nothing. For them, you know, your daughter's future, or
21 grand children or...

22 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: We will never see her
23 again.

24 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: Seeing my daughter

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1 go to university, you know, but then losing everything in
2 an instant.

3 MR. DENIS VACHON: That's what's often said,
4 right? You know, parents, who have lost a member of their,
5 a child, people will always say, you're like responsible
6 for the suffering of the two girls who killed your
7 daughter.

8 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

9 MR. DENIS VACHON: Even our mother has lost,
10 well, a child, our big sister, our older sister, she died
11 in December '63.

12 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

13 MR. DENIS VACHON: She was hit...

14 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: When getting off the
15 bus.

16 MR. DENIS VACHON: By a car when getting off
17 the bus. She said, she always said, "When you lose a
18 little baby, you suffer a lot, but when you lose a child
19 around 16 years old, who you've seen, we've seen our child
20 grow, and when you lose them, it's a, it's hard losing a
21 child like that." She said, "That's when I understood what
22 my mother meant."

23 Now, my sister suffers a lot because of it,
24 my brother-in-law as well. I would say that it's been a

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1 pretty long time since we've gotten together, lately, I'd
2 say we've been distant, because I knew, I knew they were
3 suffering a lot, but at the same time, I was also suffering
4 a lot along with them.

5 Because I know everything that happened in
6 the legal system; there are things that were done wrong,
7 and there are things that were not respected.

8 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu) In the
9 end, they refused us. (Speaking Innu)

10 MR. DENIS VACHON: Exactly. CAVAC is supposed
11 to help. CAVAC is an organization that helps people who
12 are victims of violence for the... the relatives.

13 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: The families.

14 MR. DENIS VACHON: The families and all that.
15 And that's not what she felt.

16 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

17 MR. DENIS VACHON: She felt tossed aside.

18 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: They tossed us aside.

19 MR. DENIS VACHON: Yes, exactly.

20 MS. JAYME MENZIES: So, was CAVAC the only
21 support you were offered?

22 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: They didn't give us any
23 support, nothing.

24 MS. JAYME MENZIES: No support?

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1 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: No, they gave us
2 nothing. Only the doctor (speaking Innu) the family doctor
3 (speaking Innu).

4 MR. DENIS VACHON: Only the family doctor
5 came to them.

6 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu) a
7 cardiac arrhythmia (speaking Innu). An arrhythmia, it's
8 caused by adrenaline, stress and fear. (Speaking Innu). And
9 I, if you go to court, I'm going to testify, because she
10 was my patient and she didn't have a (speaking Innu).

11 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: If they didn't beat
12 her, that night, even if she had... a heart condition, it
13 wouldn't have taken much.

14 MR. DENIS VACHON: So, of course, with the
15 kicking, the adrenaline was too powerful. So, from there,
16 that is what caused the cardiac arrhythmia, from being
17 kicked in the head.

18 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

19 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

20 MR. DENIS VACHON: When the aggressors
21 appeared in court.

22 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu) I don't
23 understand. (Speaking Innu) The journalists, well, there
24 were three, they said, there was a sharp object (speaking

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1 Innu), that's what they said. After that...

2 MR. DENIS VACHON: The journalist, the
3 journalist, how, how is it that the journalist can put that
4 in their report, who said there was a sharp object
5 involved?

6 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: They hit her with it.

7 MR. DENIS VACHON: What was the object? Was
8 it the kicking, was it the shoes? Well that, that's it.

9 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: He was going through
10 a hard time (indiscernible).

11 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Did the media talk to
12 your family?

13 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: No.

14 MR. DENIS VACHON: Only one person came, but
15 it wasn't a very well-known journalist. I think she just
16 wanted to talk about Adelous. I remember her name, Chantal
17 Potvin.

18 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Right, yes, yes, yes,
19 from Pointe-Bleue.

20 MR. DENIS VACHON: She worked for the news; I
21 don't know if she still works for the news.

22 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

23 MR. DENIS VACHON: It's a really local
24 newspaper, it's for the Innu people.

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1 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

2 MR. DENIS VACHON: So, she was like, she was
3 doing a special collaboration and she wrote reports for the
4 newspaper. That was the only person who came among the
5 journalists. And that's all.

6 Yet, I know, I just want to provide context
7 on CAVAC, for what CAVAC did. CAVAC is there to support
8 someone who has been the victim of a crime or the family.
9 So, they are there to help, to give guidance; they are
10 there to give instructions; they are there to offer
11 support, too.

12 I had already followed people and CAVAC was
13 there, all along, all the way to court. And when they went
14 to court, they said to these people, "This is what's going
15 to happen in court: this, this, this." Here are some
16 examples. They really guide people, "When you speak, when
17 the lawyer asks you questions, you speak to the judge at
18 all times. Look them in the eyes."

19 That is what CAVAC does: provide guidance
20 and support services. They set up meetings maybe with
21 psychologists, maybe with a counselor. That's what CAVAC
22 is normally supposed to do. That's not what they did.

23 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK, that wasn't your
24 experience?

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1 MR. DENIS VACHON: They didn't get that,
2 nothing.

3 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

4 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: Yes, they came to
5 get a baptismal certificate.

6 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: A baptismal certificate
7 (speaking Innu)

8 MR. DENIS VACHON: They had to, well, fill
9 out a form about what kind of follow-up there would be, and
10 she had to sign a death certificate.

11 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

12 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: A baptismal
13 certificate.

14 MR. DENIS VACHON: You know, the moment their
15 daughter died, and after that...

16 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

17 MR. DENIS VACHON: "We will study your case
18 and maybe we can get some monetary compensation through
19 that." And after that, nothing.

20 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

21 MR. DENIS VACHON: Nothing, no news from
22 them. We still haven't heard anything.

23 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: (Speaking Innu)
24 crown attorney was here, there were all kinds of people

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1 involved, there was the Sûreté du Québec...

2 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

3 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: And there was, there
4 was CAVAC too and other women who spoke with you.

5 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes, I'm forgetting
6 some things, I've forgotten some things. I don't remember
7 everyone that I met with.

8 MR. DENIS VACHON: And during, during... all of
9 that, there were still people who were filming.

10 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes, it seemed like it.

11 MR. DENIS VACHON: Does it seem like there
12 would have been people filming during the...?

13 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: The fight.

14 MR. DENIS VACHON: The fight. There would
15 have been, the Sûreté would have recovered those bits of
16 film so that they wouldn't be circulated. That, we
17 understand, but why wasn't, why wasn't it used?

18 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Like with my daughter,
19 too, when we went to the hospital, we went there, she was
20 lying on the stretcher and I looked at her and the left
21 side of her hair was all wet, the right side wasn't wet.
22 And I heard that she was hit with a bottle.

23 MR. DENIS VACHON: So you know, just about
24 what Gilberte just said, that the coroner came, and you

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1 know, it was not the blows to the head that killed her, it
2 was, he really put emphasis on drugs. And they knew that
3 Adélous had never taken any drugs.

4 The entire system is complicit; it has
5 always been like that. It has always been complicit in
6 brushing us aside, the First Nations. A lot.

7 MS. JAYME MENZIES: So, do you three have any
8 ideas, ways that the system should change in order to
9 improve this process for others in the future?

10 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: I'm shocked when I
11 watch TV, I don't know, the news, "So, a dog was killed, we
12 are looking for who killed it. The man who killed it is in
13 jail." For goodness sake, my daughter was not a dog. She
14 got nothing.

15 MS. JAYME MENZIES: There's no respect
16 (phon.).

17 MR. DENIS VACHON: She is now one of the
18 missing women. When you look at it properly, murdered and
19 missing. Why missing? They use the term "missing" a lot.
20 Because there is no follow-up. No follow-through on the
21 whole legal process that should be done.

22 But there are women that have been missing,
23 who have been reported missing, Aboriginal names. They are
24 announced on the news. But not ours, not our children.

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1 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: (Speaking Innu)

2 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

3 MR. DENIS VACHON: He said, "Well, maybe
4 because an Innu would cost the legal system too much." It's
5 too much money.

6 And after that, they went to see another
7 lawyer to find a way, you know, to (speaking Innu) overturn
8 the court ruling. Don't forget that the girl was acquitted
9 beyond a reasonable doubt.

10 MS. JAYME MENZIES: And what became of this...?

11 MR. DENIS VACHON: And she is (inaudible).
12 She was...

13 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: One month.

14 MR. DENIS VACHON: Brought to a specialized
15 facility somewhere near Forestville, I don't really know.
16 That's all.

17 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK, just to clarify for
18 myself, there was a court hearing and the girl or the girls
19 that were charged with this...?

20 MR. DENIS VACHON: Exactly, it happened fast.
21 The girl, she appeared; one month later, she appeared in
22 court and was acquitted, it wasn't long.

23 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes, exactly.

24 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

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1 MR. DENIS VACHON: It wasn't long. It
2 normally wouldn't have been like that.

3 MS. JAYME MENZIES: She was absolved?

4 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes.

5 MR. DENIS VACHON: There wasn't, I think
6 that...

7 MS. JAYME MENZIES: No sentence or...

8 MR. DENIS VACHON: You see, there weren't
9 many people who testified.

10 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK. But there was the
11 video you were talking about?

12 MR. DENIS VACHON: Yes, but there were
13 witnesses there.

14 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: We had a bench.

15 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Us, there was a guy who
16 came, I don't know how many months after. (Speaking Innu)

17 MR. DENIS VACHON: A guy, a young man who
18 came to their home from where it had happened. I saw the
19 girl give the blow, the blow.

20 MS. JAYME MENZIES: And he didn't testify?

21 MR. DENIS VACHON: The fatal blow.

22 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: They never asked him to
23 come testify.

24 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: He said, "She, you

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1 know, I didn't run after them, but, we didn't hear anything
2 about a weapon really, you know."

3 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: The witnesses, were
4 there any jury witnesses?

5 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Why do you think that?
6 Was there fear because the communities are small? Why?

7 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Well, personally, I
8 don't think so, it's like (speaking Innu).

9 MR. DENIS VACHON: Maybe, you know, maybe the
10 police chief requested it. His girlfriend, his girlfriend,
11 they're her friends.

12 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK. OK.

13 MR. DENIS VACHON: That murdered his
14 daughter. Maybe he told them, "Alright, speed up the
15 process because well... everyone in the community is
16 angry. Everyone is up in arms, everyone is unhappy."

17 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

18 MR. DENIS VACHON: All of that. I know they
19 told me, they told me about something they've been through
20 recently. They went to see a lawyer, but one they trusted,
21 because it seems like strings get pulled when it comes to
22 complex cases for murder or assault, anyways.

23 His name is [Lawyer], and I'm thinking, how
24 many times did he meet with you?

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1 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: I don't know how many,
2 I don't know how many payments I made.

3 MR. DENIS VACHON: OK. But how many in all?

4 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu) I
5 looked, I looked...

6 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: A buck fifty.
7 (phon.)

8 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: And a half, (speaking
9 Innu) We will handle your request for a conflict of
10 interest but in front of the [Pessamit] council. (Speaking
11 Innu) We will still handle your request.

12 MR. DENIS VACHON: Did you understand what
13 she just said? They went to see him, they paid, they paid
14 the lawyer. Well, of course you have to pay for the
15 services they're going to give. And then, we went to meet
16 him, by the secretary, and there were others, full of
17 lawyers in there finally to be told, "Well, we can't handle
18 your case because of a conflict of interest." It was as if
19 they were working with a sales team (phon.). But they paid
20 anyways.

21 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: And it was me, I had to
22 make the last payment, and I told the secretary, "Anyway,
23 your lawyer, he wasn't honest with us. He should have told
24 us when we first met with him. Told us, "I can't." We paid

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1 him.

2 MS. JAYME MENZIES: It's frustrating.

3 MR. DENIS VACHON: It, I think the system is
4 corrupt. Corrupt in that it says, "They aren't worth the
5 trouble. Aboriginals, First Nations, they aren't worth
6 looking for. The more of them that die, the better it is
7 for us."

8 We are often witness to these types of
9 things, we hear them, we live them. I know, there was a
10 girl here who was missing, Cédrika Provencher.

11 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes.

12 MR. DENIS VACHON: I don't know how long they
13 talked about it. Alright, I know, you know the whole
14 Weinstein ordeal?

15 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Weinstein.

16 MR. DENIS VACHON: Weinstein. Yeah, it's
17 talked about a lot, right? And there's lots of talk about...
18 those who were assaulted. They're famous. They get talked
19 about a lot, a lot, a lot, because we see them all the
20 time.

21 MS. JAYME MENZIES: They're famous, yeah.

22 MR. DENIS VACHON: They're famous. We're
23 famous for our hardship. That's the difference. But it's
24 not talked about. It's not talked about.

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1 MS. JAYME MENZIES: That's why the Inquiry is
2 here, it is...

3 MR. DENIS VACHON: But I will confess one
4 thing, in the words of my brother-in-law. He said, "I'm
5 skeptical about the Commission." It's very suspicious, even
6 my sister is wary. I'm also very wary.

7 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: What will it achieve?
8 What will happen? We are asked questions. Why do we come
9 here? For what...

10 MR. DENIS VACHON: The people, the people
11 here, I think they have a wish, a shared wish. I know it.
12 They would like us to reopen all the inquiries. Even the
13 government won't do it.

14 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: They'll find a...

15 MR. DENIS VACHON: A way to block it...

16 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Exactly, I said, well,
17 she was acquitted, but she committed aggravated assault.

18 MR. DENIS VACHON: Yes.

19 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: They didn't even
20 remember what I said.

21 MR. DENIS VACHON: No, not at all.

22 MS. JAYME MENZIES: It's definitely a common
23 sentiment. A lot of people don't have faith in the
24 (inaudible) for good reason. The commissioners, they are

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1 the spirit of change, for changing things.

2 Did you get a chance to make any
3 recommendations to the commissioners yesterday? When you
4 were testifying yesterday, was there another idea for...?

5 MR. DENIS VACHON: I will speak on behalf of
6 my sister...

7 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

8 MR. DENIS VACHON: Of course, everybody's
9 wish is that it doesn't stay hidden (phon.).

10 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

11 MR. DENIS VACHON: And that we don't talk
12 about it anymore.

13 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

14 MR. DENIS VACHON: That justice is served.
15 She said, "It won't bring my daughter back, but at least
16 justice will be served." She said, "I'm not the one who's
17 going to punish the girls who assaulted my daughter." But
18 justice, it should be served to everyone, equally, I think.

19 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Equal justice, yes,
20 exactly.

21 MR. DENIS VACHON: I don't know what it's
22 like from province to province, but I know that here, we
23 rarely get it.

24 MS. JAYME MENZIES: It's always the same:

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1 there is racism all over Canada, in the system. And that,
2 that's the problem.

3 Do you have any concrete or system-specific
4 ideas, changes that should be recommended?

5 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu) What's
6 the connection? (Speaking Innu)

7 MR. DENIS VACHON: Yes, that's all... it's all
8 just whatever, it's all just however, what Gilberte
9 described. It's that she went to see the chief of police,
10 he said, conversely, the chief of police, his reason was
11 that he spoke about his brother. "Look, I experienced this
12 and this." You get there, you think it'll do some good.
13 (telephone ringing) It's not me.

14 I know that many First Nations people are
15 angry many, many, many, many. Because there is, we're not,
16 we're not treated as equals with non-Aboriginal people in
17 society. And that's what I find a bit distressing for us.

18 I help people as much as I can, and when I
19 help them it's as equals. But that's what we hope is done.
20 Well, I know, I think we think like that for everyone. As
21 equals. But, that's not what we see.

22 And it won't bring Adelous back, that's for
23 sure. But, things have to be done. Will it take 10 more
24 years? I think that's our fear, that's why we're

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1 distrustful. That's why we're skeptical about it.

2 If we change governments, if it's not
3 Trudeau anymore, Trudeau isn't re-elected?

4 MS. JAYME MENZIES: What happens then?

5 MR. DENIS VACHON: And then the next
6 government will say, "We're stopping this, it's too
7 expensive."

8 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Exactly.

9 MR. DENIS VACHON: There will always be
10 excuses like it's expensive, it costs a lot. However, when
11 it's the government itself that decides that such a
12 commission is very important, it happens all the time in
13 the House of Commons, in Parliament. It goes on and on and
14 on.

15 But we, the society... that's why, I always
16 say to myself that the government's true colours will be
17 revealed.

18 Do we have reason to believe that there will
19 be hope? We have hope regardless.

20 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes. (Speaking Innu) I
21 have a headache.

22 MR. DENIS VACHON: They've said what they
23 want to say.

24 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes.

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1 MS. JAYME MENZIES: The Inquiry will make
2 recommendations to the Federal Government. We hope that
3 just like with the inquiry into residential schools, that
4 gradually there will be small changes.

5 Another thing that we hope to gain from this
6 inquiry, we will honour the memory of the victims and their
7 families.

8 So, another aspect of that is I would like
9 to ask you if there is a way that you would like to
10 commemorate your, your family and community members who
11 have been victims? Do you think there is a way that we
12 could honour the girls and women?

13 Because that is something else that we want
14 to do using art, monuments, one day every year; certainly
15 by changes in the government and the systems, certainly
16 that.

17 But in other ways, maybe cultural,
18 spiritual, things like that, if you have any suggestions
19 like that.

20 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu)

21 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: (Speaking Innu)

22 MR. DENIS VACHON: He said to, to honour
23 Adelous, he said, "I would like it if we named something in
24 the community of [Pessamit]."

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1 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

2 MR. DENIS VACHON: I think it's a good idea,
3 for them.

4 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: It's an idea, you
5 know.

6 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes. That's exactly what
7 we are looking for a (inaudible) like that.

8 Because we want to leave, in other
9 communities, art or songs or even drum songs, ceremonies
10 for the victims.

11 A monument, that's a good idea.

12 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: (Speaking Innu) a
13 monument.

14 MS. JAYME MENZIES: So, it's something that...

15 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: We could erect a
16 monument where she died. Put her name on it.

17 MS. JAYME MENZIES: That is a recommendation
18 that the commissioner can take and work with.

19 Are there any other recommendations to
20 honour, to change the racism in the system?

21 Even CAVAC, C-A-V-A-C, right?

22 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Uh-huh.

23 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Even recommendations for
24 them, do you want spiritual support from CAVAC?

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1 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: I went for help ever
2 since the death of my daughter. I was seeing a
3 psychiatrist because I was having suicidal thoughts. Now,
4 I see a psychologist.

5 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK. Was it expensive or
6 was is covered by...?

7 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes, it was covered.

8 MS. JAYME MENZIES: It was covered.

9 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Uh-huh.

10 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

11 MR. DENIS VACHON: I think that when a family
12 experiences a tragedy, no matter what, they should be
13 immediately surrounded by good professionals. Irrespective
14 of race. A lot.

15 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: Yes, because when I
16 was... getting help. I was also getting help, but not for
17 long. I had to, you know, take care of her too, because I
18 knew she had suicidal tendencies, you know. I was working,
19 and...

20 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: He left the house, he
21 worked outside of the house. He wasn't doing well at work.

22 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: I was worried all
23 the time, you know, during the day. I called all the time,
24 two to three times a day practically.

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1 MR. DENIS VACHON: But I'm happy that my
2 sister and my brother-in-law went to get help, they were
3 helped a bit.

4 MS. JAYME MENZIES: But that takes courage,
5 so congratulations, that takes courage. We thank you.

6 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Thank you.

7 MR. DENIS VACHON: Thank you.

8 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: We thank you, too.

9 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Again, if you ever think
10 of anything else and you want to come back, it's OK.

11 Some families have also chosen to send in
12 documents, photos and poems. If there is a way that you
13 would like your daughter to be understood a bit better, if
14 there is a picture of her with her friends or if she drew
15 something, I don't know. If you have any...

16 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: We lost it all.

17 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

18 MR. DENIS VACHON: The house burned down.

19 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: December 11th.

20 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

21 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: In the same year, 2011.

22 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

23 MR. DENIS VACHON: Like six months later.

24 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes.

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1 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK. Even if, I don't
2 know, some people...

3 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: I know that, what's her
4 name? (Speaking Innu) went on (speaking Innu) on her
5 Facebook wall. She posted pictures there.

6 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

7 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: She posted them there.

8 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

9 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes, I haven't closed
10 it yet.

11 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

12 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: I think it's still
13 there, I think, here...

14 MR. DENIS VACHON: It was for Adelous, this?

15 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: Yes, for Adelous.

16 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: It's tagged, yes, it's
17 tagged Justice. Justice Adelous.

18 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

19 MR. PATRICK BELLEFLEUR: (Inaudible) with all
20 the days where it's (inaudible).

21 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: I don't look at it
22 because I don't know where to go. There are quite a few
23 there, there were already 591...

24 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK. And the family knows

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1 it exists?

2 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes. I think I told
3 them, I'm not sure.

4 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

5 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: It's tagged, anyway. I
6 don't know who made it, it wasn't us.

7 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

8 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: But it's tagged
9 "Justice Adalous Bellefleur."

10 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK. And yes, I just
11 wanted to say that if there is anything you want to share
12 with us, we can also take families (indiscernible) and send
13 us a picture of the tree in memory of the person.

14 It's things like that, because it's not just
15 words but also actions, the pictures, we want words, too.

16 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: OK.

17 MR. DENIS VACHON: Excellent.

18 MS. JAYME MENZIES: And you are, you have
19 access to the elders all week, you can eat with us all week
20 long. I don't know if you visited the fire?

21 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes, we visited
22 yesterday.

23 MR. DENIS VACHON: There was a small ceremony
24 yesterday.

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1 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Yes. But we're going
2 there tomorrow.

3 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK.

4 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: We've been here since
5 Sunday.

6 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK. Is there anything
7 else that we forgot?

8 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: No, I think that's
9 everything.

10 MS. JAYME MENZIES: OK, OK. Thank you very
11 much.

12 MS. GILBERTE VACHON: Thank you.

13 END OF RECORDING

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE*

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Anne Michaud".

Anne Michaud, August 22, 2018

* This certificate refers to the original transcript in French.